

A  
Divine Legacy,  
Bequeathed unto all  
**MANKIND,**  
OF ALL  
Ranks, Ages and Sexes:

Directing

How we may live Holily in the Fear of God, and how we may die happily in the Favour of God; both which Duties are of Universal Concern.

The Rules here are, how to be *Truly Valourous* in warring a good Warfare, and in fighting the the good Fight of Faith while we Live, and to be *Blessedly Victorious* when we Die.

By *Christopher Ness*, Minister of the Gospel in *London*.

*Exitus Acta probat, & Finis Coronat Opus*, saith the Philosopher.

*Our Last Works should be our Best Works*, saith our Lord, *Rev. 2. 19.*

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## The Epistle to the Reader.

Candid Christian,

**I** Have been now (through the Grace and Mercy of my good God) a Labourer in my Lord's Harvest, and a Vine-dresser in my Master's Vineyard almost Threescore Years, wanting but a very little of it; and in the space of those last Twenty Years I have (through the good hand of my God upon me, as Ezra's phrase is Chap. 7. 6, 9.) been enabled to publish to the World this following Catalogue of Books, little and great. As, 1. *The Crown and Glory of a Christian, in the Year 76.* 2. *A Christian Walk and Work on Earth, till he come to Heaven, in the Year 77.* 3. *The Chrystal Mirror, or Christian's Looking-Glass, shewing the Treachery of the Heart, in the Year 78.* 4. *An Antidote against the Poison of Popery, in the Year, 78, 79.* 5. *A Discovery of Antichrist in his Rise, Reign and Ruine, in the Year 79.* 6. *The Devil's Patriarch, in the Life of Pope Innocent XI. in the Year 80.* 7. *A Spiritual Legacy to Young Ones, in the Year 81.* 8. *A Church-History, from Adam to this Day, and a Scripture-Prophecy to the End of the World, in the Year 81, 82.* 9. *A New-Years Gift for Children in the Year 83.* 10. *The Wonderful Signs of Wonderful Times, in the Year 84.* 11. *An Half Sheet upon the Comet, or Blazing Star.*  
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### The Epistle to the Reader.

12. *Three Sheets enlarged upon the same Subject.* 13. *A Whip for the Fools Back, who did Ridicule God's Holy Ordinance of Marriage. &c.* 14. *A Key with the Whip, unfolding the Intreagues of Absalom and Achitophel; both these latter are writ in Satyrical Verse.* 15. *Advice to the Painter, about the Earl of Shaftsbury's enlargement from the Tower, in smoother Verse.* 16. *An Astrological and Theological Discourse, upon the great Conjunction ushered in with a great Comet, &c.* 17. *A Strange and Wonderful Trinity or Triplicity of Stupendious Prodigies, namely, consisting of a Wonderful Eclipse, of a Wonderful Comet, and of a Wonderful Conjunction; all these without Date, were written between the Year 82, and 89.* 18. *My First Volume in Folio, called a Compleat History and Mystery of the Old and New Testament, both Logically discussed, and Theologically improved, beginning at Adam, and ending at Moses.* 19. *The Second Volume in Folio, (having the same Title with the first) begins with Joshuah, and ends at Solomon's Birth.* 20. *The Third Volume in Folio, (with the same Title) begins at Solomon's Life, and ends at the end of the Old Testament.* 21. *The Fourth Volume in Folio, (with the same Title) begins at the Birth of Christ, and ends at the Death of John the Divine; which is an Ex-*  

*position*

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*position of the whole New-Testamen: All these Four Volumes are now commended to the World by Three of our Learned and Judicious Divines, namely, Mr. Matthew Barker, M. George Griffith, and Mr. Samuel Slater; which Testimonial is printed at the bottom of the Dedictory Epistle to the Fourth Volume, under their own Three Hands, Tria sunt omnia, & instar omnium, &c. this Work hath taken me wholly up from the Year 89, to this Year 99. And now 22. This Divine Legacy, which is μᾶλλον ἐν μικρῷ, multum in parvo, much in a little. Isocrates wrote his best Book the last; and Plato died at 81, with his Pen in his Hand; and Demosthenes desired to do so, &c. Yet have we better Examples than those Philosophers, for Joshuah when he was going the way of all the Earth, and stricken in years, Josh. 23. 2, and 14. did then give most grave and godly Counsel to the Old Testament Church Chap. 23. and 24. And Paul the Aged, wrote the more effectually to young Philemon, under that Title of Veneration, Philem. ver. 9. And the Beloved Disciple John, who (while Young, leaned upon his Lord's Bosom, Joh. 13. 23, 25.) did under the Venerable Name of Elder. 2 Joh. 1. and 3 Joh. 1. write his first General Epistle to Children, Young Men and Fathers, in the New Testament, 1 Joh. 2. 12, 13, 14. but*  

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~~The Epistle to the Reader.~~

above all, God himself thunders out threatenings against Children, Young Men and Aged, Jer. 6. 11, 12, 13. In congruity to those perfect Patterns, I (an Old Servant of Christ) have drawn up this Directory (talis, qualis est) to all Ages, especially to us that are Old, adding only, (1.) That Old Age is a dead weight: 'Tis then a difficult Duty to turn unto God, when we have been turning and running from him all our former Days. No Spur can move a Founder'd Horse, and Hard Wax takes no impression. When the Body is weak, and Presumption is strong, to say [God is merciful] is said truly, but not lately. Therefore, (2) All must be careful to live well while Young, and then shall we die well, whether Young or Old. (3.) When we have seen an end of all worldly Perfections, then may we best see, that God's Commands are exceeding broad, and all our Obedience to be exceeding narrow, Psal. 119. 96. The Good Lord grant that this Legacy may come to you in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, Rom. 15. 29. Amen.

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THE  
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OF THIS  
Divine Legacy.

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## CHAP. I.

### *Man's Malady and Danger.*

**M**AN's Life is a Warfare, *Job* 7. 1. Margin, which the Septuagint reads *πειρασίμων*, to signifie a place of Pirates, as *Paul* was in perils often both by Sea and Land, *2 Cor.* 11. 26. so are we all while in this lower World; for Satan is both a Robber by Land, that seeks not for Straw, but for Gold (as *Chrysostom's* Thief did say of himself) and he is a Pirate at Sea, hanging out false Colours to get in with us, he seeks not whom to bite, but whom to devour, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. the word [*καταπίη*] signifies to swallow up at one mouth-full, and that no less than our precious and immortal Souls; therefore is he called *Abaddon*, Hebr. A bad one indeed, or the wicked one, and *Ἀπολλύων*, Greek, *Rev.* 9. 3. both which names signifie a Destroyer: He is a broken Bankrupt himself, and ordained for Destruction, and therefore his whole work is to involve all Mankind in his own Misery, accounting it some comfort

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fort to have Companions therein.

*Solamen miseris socios adhibere Doloris.*

He hunts not (as *Nimrod* that Cruel Hunter) for our moneys, houses, lands or liberties, but for our very lives (as the *Harlot* doth, *Prov.* 7. 23. yea to steal away our Souls from God, and the Crown of Glory from us; he is called in Scripture by such names as are all of a destroying nature, as (1.) A Dragon, *Rev.* 12. 7. (2.) A Lion, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. (3.) A Serpent, *Isa.* 27. 1. (4.) A Wolf, *John* 10. 12. (5.) A Murderer, *John* 8. 44. (6.) A Tormentor, *Matth.* 18. 24. (7.) A Fowler and Hunter, *Psal.* 91. 3. (8.) *Beelzebub*, *Mat.* 10. 25. & 12. 24, 27. (9.) Devil, quasi *Do evil* often, and therefore it is no less than a Miracle of Mercy that we are not all of us destroyed by him through his craft and cruelty, his power and policy, especially considering how he hath the upper ground of us, as he is Prince of the Power of the Air, *Eph.* 2. 2. when we are but weak and worthless Worms crawling here below upon the Earth, insomuch that his Territories lay betwixt us and Heaven, which is our Fathers House, therefore was *Lazarus's* Soul carried by Angels through the Regions of the Air into *Abraham's bosom*, *Luke* 16. 22. Beside, it ought to be considered with feriousness how *Satan* our Adversary (as it signifies)

## *Man's Malady and Danger.* 3

signifies) proved too hard for the Innocentest Man *Adam*, too hard for the Strongest Man, *Samson*, and too hard for the Wisest Man *Solomon*: If he could over-master all these Three, who were green Trees, what can we dry Trees expect? *Luke* 23. 31. If this Strong Man, yea and Armed too, even with Armour of proof, *Luke* 11. 21. became a Conquerour over *Adam* in his state of Innocency; how much more may he more easily master the best of us? [*Si hoc Adamo in Paradiso contigisset, quid nobis in sterquibunt*] saith *Bernard*, If this foul fall befell *Adam* in the Garden of Eden, oh what may befall us who are now cast out of Paradise upon the dirty Dughill of this present evil World! *Gal.* 1. 4. It may be said of the best of us, as it was said of young *Troilus's* grappling with great *Achilles*, There was *Impar congressus*, a very unfit and an unequal match betwixt them: Yea so bold and daring is this Devil, that he dared to Assault the Second *Adam* (as he had done before the First *Adam*, hoping for the same success.) Even the Son of God himself, who only could indeed over-match him, not only for himself, but more especially for all his Redeemed: Moreover *Satan* is a Restless Adversary out of his unspeakable hatred against God and all goodness; as it is

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is said of the Scorpion, there is not one minute of Time, wherein he doth not thrust out his Sting, but keeps it in a continual and speedy motion of poisoning and destroying whatever he can reach; even so and much more that Old Serpent will watch night and day to sting our Souls worse than the Fiery Serpents did the Bodies of Israel, *Numb. 21.*

Consider also how *Satan* is an Ubiquitary Adversary; his Circuit he walks is the whole Earth, *Job 1. 7. & 2. 2.* he is call'd the *God of this World*, *2. Cor. 4. 4.* which *lays in wickedness*, *1 John 5. 19.* As the *True God* in the beginning did but speak the word by his Creating Power, and every Creature in the whole Creation was perfectly wrought; so if *Satan* do but hold up his finger, or give but the least whisper to his Vassals, they are at his beck and obedience; he *leads them captive at his will*, *2 Tim. 2. 26.* Yea and this he doth all over the World; no Land or Island is free from him, but the whole Universe may be called (as one part of it is) *Terra Diaboli*, the *Devil's Land*; he is the *Ruler of the Darknes of this World*, *Eph. 6. 12.* He is a *God* in this sense, because there is no *fleeing from his presence*, &c. as *Psa. 139. 7, 8, 9.* our base hearts and a busie Devil will meet in all Lands. Add likewise to the abovesaid, how  
He

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He is an *Everlasting Adversary* both 1. In respect of the *great World*; He began betimes with the first Man and Woman in the World, and he hath continued ever since to this present time, and he will continue even to the end, until our *Lord lays hold on him*, and *chain him up for a 1000 years*, *Rev. 20.* And 2. In respect of the *little World*, *Man*, who is as an *Epitome of the great World*, &c. *Satan* begins betimes, even at our very Conception; for as the *Serpent was more subtle than all the Beasts of the Field*, *Gen. 3. 1.* so *Satan's* subtlety was most manifest in this matter, that when his Luciferian Pride had metamorphos'd him from a glorious Angel (as he was created) into a damned Devil, and therefore was cast out of Heaven into Hell, and understanding how God designed to fill up that Habitation (which he had left with his Angels, *Jude verse 6.* by a Remnant Redeemed out of Mankind. Hereupon he is said to be *come down* (or rather *cast down*) having *great Wrath and Malice* against Mankind, *Rev. 12. 12.* hating Man's Redeemer with a perfect hatred, and sinning that unpardonable sin against the *Holy Ghost* every moment, &c. and that his Cruelty to us is managed with the profoundest Craft and Policy, as is apparent in this, that he stayed not to pour his poison into  
B 3 every

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every Vessel, as it was brought forth into the World, but he pours it into the Fountain or Spring head of Mankind, well knowing that in poisoning our first Parents, he likewise poisoned all their Posterity in all succeeding Ages to the end of the World: Thus, saith the Apostle [*by one Man, Sin entred into the World, Rom. 5. 12. and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned, and v. 14. Death hath Reigned from Adam to Moses (and so down to us in our day, &c.) even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's Transgression:*] So that *Infants* are no *Innocents*, being born with Original Sin, the first Sheet wherein they are wrapped, is woven of sin, shame, blood and filth, *Ezek. 16. 4, 6, &c.* They are said to sin as they were in the loins of *Adam*; just as *Levi* is said to pay Tithes to *Melchisedech*, even in the loins of his Forefather *Abraham*, *Heb. 7. 9, 10.* otherwise *Infants* would not die, for *Death is the wages of sin, Rom. 6. 23.* and the Reign of Death is procured by the Reign of sin, which hath reigned over all Mankind, except *Christ*: All are sinners, infected with the guilt and filth of sin, the Rot (according to the Vulgar saying) over-runneeth the whole Flock. Hence *David* reflects upon Original Sin as the Original cause of all his

Actuals,

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Actuals, saying, [*Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me, Psal. 51. 5.*

Thus *Man's Malady* begins betimes, even in our Conception; this subtle Serpent sowed his Tares very early, so that we are all born in our sin, *Joh. 9. 34. Adam begat a Son in his own Image, Gen. 5. 3.* and his *Childrens Teeth are set on Edge* after he had eaten the four Fruit of the forbidden Tree, *Ezek. 18. 2.* The same Hand that was reached forth to that forbidden Fruit, reached out both Sin and Death to the Fruit of his Loins wherein that Fruit was feminally, as the Branches are in a Common Stock; the actual Sin did not determine the bound of Misery in himself, but it brought a second Misery with it, even the Misery of the whole Nature of Mankind. *Adam* was the *Representative* or publick Person representing the whole mass of Mankind, (as a Parliament-man represents the whole Country he is chosen for) while *Adam* stood, we all stood in him; while he kept his Obedience in his state of Innocency, he kept his whole Estate and Nature safe and entire; but when he fell we all fell in him; in *Adam* all die, *1 Cor. 15. 22.* Tho' we did not choose him, yet God did choose him for us, as our *Representative*

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*sentative*; and his Sin was the greatest Sin (next to that *Sin against the Holy Ghost*) as it had many aggravations against the greatest *Light*, and the greatest *Love* that ever was vouchsafed to any man, and therefore it was just with God so to punish, not only himself, but his whole Nature also for that sinful Act. Hereby all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* came to be deprived of Original Righteousness; we are all *alienated* from the *Life of God*, Eph. 4. 18. born the *Children of Wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. and *come short both of God's Glory*, and of our own *Duty*, Rom. 3. 23.

*Adam* first defiled the Nature of Mankind, and ever since the defiled Nature hath defiled the whole Offspring thereof, leaving them under the Curse of God, and liable unto Death in the latitude of it, even unto *Death, Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal*: The Fall of *Adam* was the Death of himself, and the Death of us; yea, and also it was the Death of our dear Redeemer to redeem us from Spiritual and Eternal Death. Now as is the Root, so are the Branches; as is the Fountain, so are the Waters that flow from it: [ *Generatum sequitur Naturam Generantis,* ] that which is begotten doth follow the Nature of that which begetteth; *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

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clean? not one, *Job* 14. 4. that which is *born of the Flesh is Flesh*, *Joh.* 3. 6. [ *Corruptus parit Corruptum* ] one corrupt thing brings forth another; yea, the Sower soweth clean Grain, yet even *that* brings forth Chaff, (as well as Wheat) from which it was winnowed before it was Sown.

Father *Augustin* saith, There is nothing more certain than *Original Sin*, yet nothing more secret and hard to be understood how it is conveyed from Parents to Children. Many Disputes there be about the manner how Sin is propagated from *Adam* to his Offspring; some of which deserve no better Character than that of *Aristotle de Vacuo* [ *ὁ ἀβυσσὸς παρὰ κενόν, κενὸς δὲ κενόν* ] such discourses upon the empty place are but empty things: 'Tis sufficient for us to know, that God by a just imputation doth realize the Infection into the whole Race of *Adam*, in whom we were, as in a common lump, and in his Leaven we are all sowed. We know that leprous Parents do beget leprous Children, and there be Diseases which are call'd hereditary, and incurable by man; we took this Infection from our Parents, and we transmit it to our Children; so come we to be called a *Seed of Evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters*, as well as corrupted, *Isai.*

c. 1. v. 4. I have read the story of some foolish People, who falling all together into a deep Pit, fell a disputing one with another how they came there, &c. but one wiser than the rest advised them to lay aside those Niceties, and rather consult about some proper means whereby they might all be delivered out of that danger, without which they were in all probability like to perish: Even such are those vain Ventilations about this abstruse point of Sins entrance into the World, whether by that one person *Adam's* fall, or by every ones fall in his own person, the frothy Wits of the *Arminians* do fondly deny Original Sin. But such as are *wise to Salvation* have learnt better Lessons in *Christ's* School, and they feel otherwise in the School of their own smarting experience. Therefore we ought all seriously to consider, how the Greek Fathers call it *πρωτομικη*, the Seed-plot of all Actual Transgressions, &c. and the Latin Fathers call it *Fomes Peccati*, the lasting Fewel that feeds the Fire of our burning Lusts; but above all, how the Holy Scriptures doth Characterize it, calling it the *Body of Sin*, Rom. 6. 6. and the *Sin that dwells in us*, Rom. 7. 17. and the *Law of the Members*, ver. 23. and that which so *easily besets us*, Hebr. 12. 1. and

David

*David* calls it the *Iniquity of the Heels*, (which was ready to trip him up, and to lay him all along upon the ground at every turn and return of the Tempter upon him) *Psal.* 49. 5. And if we do as little *Zachens* did, namely, climb up the *Sycamore Tree* to take a full prospect of his lovely Lord from top to toe, *Luk.* 19. 3, 4, &c. so if we get up into the Mount of the Old and New Testament, and take a full view of the foulness of Original Sin. The right Scriptural Account of Original Sin is this,

1. That man who had been *God's delight* before, *Prov.* 8. 31. became both *hated of God*, *Psal.* 5. 5. and an *bater of God*, *Rom.* 1. 30. the Greek is *μισοῦντος*, signifying to *hate God as Hell*.

2. That fallen man is become *intensively evil*, *protenstively only evil*, and *extensively always and continually evil* in the thoughts and imaginations of his heart, *Gen.* 6. 5.

3. That man's *Heart is deceitful above all things*, and *desperately wicked*, *Jer.* 17. 9.

4. His Thoughts are *Thoughts of iniquity*, *Isa.* 59. 7.

5. He walks in the *vanity of his Mind*, *Ephes.* 4. 17. having his *understanding darkned*, and his *Heart blinded*, ver. 18.

6. His *Conscience* is defiled, *Tit.* 1. 15.

7. His

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7. His *Eyes are full of Adultery*, and he cannot *cease from Sin*, 2 Pet. 2. 14.

8. His *Throat an open Sepulchre*, the *poison of Asps* upon his *Tongue and Lips*, &c. Rom. 3. 13, 14.

9. In a word, all mans Members and Faculties are marr'd and maim'd by the fall of *Adam* (as might more largely be demonstrated from Scripture) the first man defiled Nature, and ever since Nature hath defiled every man; his whole Frame is out of frame; whole evil is in man, and whole man is in evil: As in *Noah's Flood*, not any one part of the Earth could be seen dry. So nor any one part of man can be found that is not infected with this *Original Pollution*; and the chief cause of all our Actual Sins, is charged, not upon Satan, but upon this *Evil Concupiscence* that is inbred in us, *Jam.* 1. 15. The Tempter might strike Fire long enough in vain, if we did not find him dry Tinder for his Sparks to fall upon: We cannot say as our *sinless Lord* said [the *Prince of this World cometh and finds nothing in me*,] that is, to favour his Temptation, *Joh.* 14. 30. But alas, when he comes to tempt us, he finds a Treacherous Party within, this *Birth-sin* of ours, which betrays us oftentimes into his hands, as hath hapned unto some Cities

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Cities besieged, whose Gates have been opened by some Traiterous Citizens within for a free entrance of the Enemy that were besieging it round about. Hence is it, that all men are said in Holy Scripture to be *dead in sin*, Ephes. 2. 1. and *Bond-slaves to Satan*, Heb. 2. 15. and subject to all Calamities of this Life under the *Curse of God*, Gal. 3. 10. Yea and good men, even the *best of men* are but *men at the best*; for *Original Sin* in them is stronger than their *Grace*; for if God should leave us with our stock of Grace that he hath graciously given us, and let us be alone but a while in the hands of our own Counsels, this sin of our Nature would easily swallow up our stock of Grace; *wo to us* when *God departs from us*, Hos. 9. 12. The Reason is, because *Grace* given to us is like the putting of Hot Water into that which is Cold: Tho' this will warm it for the present, yet the Water will reduce it self into its own natural temper of Coldness, unless Fire be kept continually under it. Take another Example, as a River would run (*ceteris paribus*) the nighest way to the Sea (which is the Receptacle of all Rivers) were it let alone to its own tendency by nature; but we see the various situation of the Earth, (in some places higher than others)

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others) and by the Art and Industry of Man the most Rapid River is madd to run in crooked Streams (in and out) to break its forcible passage; even so this Original Sin would drive all persons the nighest way to Hell, were it not that it meets with not only the several Tempers and Dispositions of Nature in the Sons and Daughters of Mankind, which makes it work variously according to their various Constitutions, as *David* saith [ *I have kept my self from my iniquity* ] *Psal.* 18. 23. that is, from my Constitution sin, &c. but also, and that more especially, through the over-ruling Power of God, and that by two ways; 1. Either by giving *Restraining Grace*, even to Pagans, as he did to that Pagan King *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 20. 6. whereby God kept him at a modest distance from meddling with *Sarah*, *Abraham's* wife, which otherwise he would have undoubtedly defiled, seeing so many Kings (tho' called *Christian*) make it their too common practice; or, 2. By giving *Renewing Grace*, even to his own chosen and called ones, whereby he changeth their Natures so, that one of the Antient Fathers tells this Story of a Young Man, who had been for some time intangled with an Harlot, and meeting with some Remorse of Conscience, he withdrew from her upom some occasions

## *Man's Malady and Danger.* 15

occasions he had in another Country, and after a little time returning home, this impudent Whore meets him, takes hold of him, and said to him [ *Ego sum Ego* ] I am the same Woman I was when you left me; at which he smartly replied to her, [ *sed ego non sum ego* ] but I am not the same Man I was, through the Grace of God, whereby he said with *David* [ *The Snare is broken, and my Soul is delivered* ] *Psa.* 124. 7. therefore if any man be in *Christ*, he is a new Creature, old things are past away, behold all things are become new, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. Where *Christ* comes, he saith, [ *Behold I make all things new* ] *Rev.* 21. 5. both all the Members of the Body, and all the Faculties of the Soul: These all were formerly [ *ὄπλα τῆ ἀδικίας* ] weapons of wickedness unto sin, but now become weapons of Righteousness unto Holiness, *Rom.* 6. 13, 17, 18, 19. so that *Christ* makes new understandings, new wills, new memories, new consciences, &c. in the inner man; yea and new tongues, hands and feet, &c. to talk, walk and work for God in the outward man.

☞ Let this likewise be well weighed, how this Original pollution of the faln Nature is like the first Confused Chaos at the Creation of the World, which had the seeds of all several kinds of Creatures in it,



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it, and that prolifick Vertue continues unto this day; even so in Original Sin, lays the Spawn of all several kinds of sins which lasteth all our lives, until death destroy this body of Death at the last, as the *other* will last while the World lasteth: So *This* fretting Leprosie of sin is typically described in the Law of that Plague, *Levit.* 14.4 1.43,44,45. The house which hath that Contagion, all the scraping of the Walls within it will not cleanse it until the house it self, with the Stones and Timber of it be broken down, yea and it begins betimes as well as it lasts long. This four Leaven doth leaven the whole lump with its fowness, and spreads it self over all the *Ages of Man*, as Infancy, Childhood, Youth, and old Age. 1. *Infancy.* *Austin's* story [*Vidi Zelantem parvulum:*] I my self saw a little one rise up in Rage against his fellow-suckling for beguiling him of his Mothers Milk; from whence that Antient Father proves and confesses, that sin began betimes both in himself and in others. 2. *Childhood*; there is much *folly bound up in the heart of a Child*, *Prov.* 22. v. 15. as fardles or packs are bound upon the Carriers Horses back, and these *bonds of Iniquity* keeps him fast in the gall of bitterness, *Acts* 8. 23. so makes not only *Childhood*, but also, 3. *Youth* to be not only  
Vanity,

*Man's Malady and Danger.* 17

*Vanity*, but likewise often abounds with Villany, *Eccles.* 11. 9, 10. with 12.1. where the Preacher presseth upon *Youth* to indulge themselves in their youthful lusts, if they dare do so, adding a stinging [*But*] which marrs the Yonkers mirth, God will judge thee for all thy Tricks of youth; account them not Trifles, which both *Job* and *David* so bitterly bewailed, *Job* 13.26. and *Psal.* 25. 7. Therefore he exhorts such to remember their Creators at that time, as *Psal.* 119.9. before 4<sup>th</sup> Old Age come, which is an *Evil Age* both for sin and misery.

But more plainly, this Truth of Man's Malady and Danger is held forth in that Text [*The strong Man armed, &c.*] which declares *Man's Malady and Danger*, *Luke* 11.21. where *Satan* is described, 1. By his Kind or Sex, neither a weak Worm, or a weak Woman, but a *Man*, one of the stronger Sex, and not of the weaker. 2. By his Quality, a *strong Man*, *δὲ ἰσχυρὸς, ab' ischur*, one that can do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. where the word is used *Ben Chaiil*, Heb. a Man of Valour, so strong, that he is able to Trudge over all the World in his Travels, notwithstanding his long continuance in this round walk, he walk'd it in *Job's* days, *Job* 1. 7. & 2. 2. as he says of himself, when God summons him in to appear before him, as in his High Court of Justice, and he held

## 18 *Man's Malady and Danger.*

on the same, walking round about without weariness, even in *Peter's* days, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. the word is περιπατεῖν, a Peripatetick, as before; yea and he holds up still in the same walk and work, even in our days; for who among us cannot experience that a *busy Devil*, and a *base Heart*, do not daily meet together to work us Woe in our Way to Heaven. This he still is able to do on Earth, tho' he was hurl'd out of Heaven (as *Jude* verse 6.) now almost six thousand years ago; yea and he will carry on the same Cursed Course, even to the end of the Old World, until our Lord come to lay hold upon this Old Dragon, and bind him for a thousand years, and so shut him up, and set a Seal upon him that he should deceive the Nations no more, till the 1000 years be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season, *Rev.* 20. 3. We read indeed of a sort of Philosophers that are call'd Peripateticks (which signifies Round Walkers) but none like this strong Trudg-over, who hath not only out-lasted and out-lived, but also (as it may be fear'd) hath finally deceived all those Pagan Peripateticks, &c. 3. He is described by his Qualifications; he is not only thus qualified as a strong Traveller, but also as a strong Warriour, therefore he is said to be [καθ' ὅπλιστα] i. e. Armed, and not barely  
so,

## *Man's Malady and Danger.* 19

so, for *χρ* in composition signifies *Valde* or *Validè*, compleatly Armed, such are his Accoutrements and Habiliments of War, that he is Armed Cap-a-pee (as the phrase is) *a Capite ad Calcem*, from Head to Foot; so that he is (as *Achilles* was said to be) in all parts *impenetrable*, and not only so, but as he is a Spirit he is *impassive* also, as to man; for 'tis neither man's Words, nor man's Blows that can wound this Spiritual Adversary, who is hereupon found to be the more mortal an Enemy to man's Soul and Salvation. Of this point I have spoke in the beginning of this Chapter. If it be farther enquired how this strong Adversary is armed? To this I answer in general, He is verily a *Goliath*, an *Achitophel* and a *Doeg*, all in one together; more particularly,

1. He is Armed with an Arm of Strength as *Goliath* was, so it may be said to the best of men, what *Saul* said to *David*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 33. thou art not able to fight with this Philistin, for thou art but a Stripling, and he a Man of War from his Youth; as *Amnon* was too strong for *Tamar*, and so Ravished her, &c. 2 *Sam.* 13. 12, 13. And as the *Betrothed Damsel* could not stand before a man that rose up against her in the Field, *Deut.* 22. 26, 27, 28. Even so is this matter, no man, not the  
C 2 best

best of men, (who are but men at the best, as before) can be able to match this matchless *Goliath*, no more than the *silly Dove without Heart* or Grace, (as *Ephraim* is called, *Hos.* 7. 11.) can match the strong Eagle, or the simple Lamb the fierce Lion, &c. no more can any man (who is but a poor worm, *Psal.* 22. 6.) make any effectual Resistance against this Prince, Fowl of the Air, *Ephes.* 2. 2. or against this Roaring Lion, who hath still his concreated Strength of an Angel, *Zech.* 12. 8. for tho' he lost by his fall in his *Morals*, yet not in his *Naturals*, he is so strong still (saith *Luther*) that he is able to destroy the whole World in the space of one hour; if the Lord would but permit him to lay forth his Angelical (or rather Diabolical) Strength to the utmost for such an end. This *strong man* hath conquered all Persons, (yea even *Adam*, *Samson* and *Solomon*, as before) and all People, all Nations and Languages; he hath with *Saul* slain his thousands, and with *David* his ten thousands, yea and with the Harlot, *Prov.* 7. 26. hath cast down and wounded both the many and the mighty: He is the Master of Harlots, as *Rome* is called the Mother of Harlots, *Rev.* 17. 5. Nor do we find in any Age of the World, that any meer Mortal Man

was

was ever able to match him at all times by any strength of his own, none but that *God-Man Jesus Christ* was ever able to stand before him: yet is it worth our observation; Oh! what a prevailing Power had this *strong man*, (by Divine Permission) even over the pure sinless Body of our Saviour himself; first in driving it into the *Wilderness*, *Mark* 1. 12, 13. then in hugging it up to the top of the *Pinacle* of the *Temple*, *Matt.* 4. 5. and then in carrying it up likewise unto the top of an exceeding high Mountain, *Matt.* 4. 8. wherein this *strong man* did far out-do *Goliath*, who could not do so to *David's* Body. Nevertheless *Christ* became the *stronger man*, (as he is called) *Luk.* 11. 22. and did conquer him compleatly in all his three Temptations.

2. As *Satan* is a *Goliath* for Strength and Power, so he is an *Achitophel* for Craft and Policy; he can over-wit us as well as over-power us: 'Tis said [now the Serpent was more subtle than all the Beasts of the Field] *Gen.* 3. 1. So that old Serpent the Devil, (as he is called, *Rev.* 12. 9. and 20. 2.) is more crafty than all Mortals in the World; this must needs be because the Wit of the Angelical Nature doth vastly transcend the Wit of the best Humane Nature. Inasmuch as his Wit is

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not so clogged and clouded with fleshly impediments, which oft make the Mind of man to become a dim, dark and confused Chaos, by *imprisoning* the *Truth* and *detaining it in unrighteousness*, Rom. 1. 18. that is, the knowledge of Truth sometimes is (as it were) so locked up under restraint, that our *Consciences* (which are as a Prophet to the soul of man) may not trouble us in our secure sinning against the Lord; whereas the Wit and Understanding of *Satan* may be called *Spiritual* as he is a *Spirit*, and not fettered with *Flesh*; (as we are) therefore acts more freely and without disturbance, so is more quick and piercing, whereby he can more easily feel the Pulses of mankind, and fit them all a suitable Temptation unto every Person's Natural Temper; he well knew what an *Apple* would do to *Eve*, what a *Grape* would do to *Noah*, what a *Wedge of Gold* would do to *Achan*, what a *Talent of Silver* would do to *Gebazi*; and many more such instances might be added, all to shew how *Satan* is πανῖψ, *ingeniose nequam*, wittily wicked in preparing penniworths for all Persons according to their several Conditions and Dispositions; and what he cannot carry and conquer by *strength*, he will do it by *subtily*; having not only the wit of an *Angel*,

## *Man's Malady and Danger* 23

*Angel*, but also the wisdom of a God, as he is called the *God of this World*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. NB. Observe how the Holy Scripture describes his Furniture.

1. He hath his *νομήσα*, which signifies *Sophistical Counsels*, pretending one thing, and intending another, [*lest Satan should beguile and get an advantage against us, for we are not ignorant of his devices,*] 2 Cor. 2. 11. where the Apostle useth [πλεονεκτῶμεν] for getting advantage, which signifies to over-reach in Bargains, for getting more gain than belongs to him, this *Satan* doth; when that Serpent would hurt and destroy those *herbs of grace* that grow in *God's Holy Mountain*, and will not be confined to *feed upon Dust*, (the *World that lies in wickedness*) which is his *limited Diet*, Isa. 65. 25. *Satan* had got an advantage against the Church of *Corinth* in their over-rigorous Discipline against the Incestuous Person, 2 Cor. 2. 7. And now he cautions them, that this grand Cheater may not cheat them also in the exercise of their Gifts and Graces one toward another, ver. 10, 11.

2. *Satan* hath his πανουργίας, which signifies a cunning crafty dealing among mankind; thus the same Apostle useth this phrase to the same Church, saying [*I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy,*

## 24 *Man's Malady and Danger.*

*sie*, &c. for I fear, lest by any means, as the *Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty* (or cunning Craft), so your *Minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*] 2 Cor. 11. 2, 3. Intimating that *Satan* is an old Sophister and Blood-Sucker (who devoureth not *Widows Houses* with the *Pharisees*, but the pretious souls of most Persons) hath had the long experience of some thousands of years, and knew then well enough how to over-wit, and over-reach them in that time; therefore doth he thus caution them to be upon their watch against his wily Craft. How much more is this *Old Doctor* in our Day (now almost 6000 years old) strong in his so long experiences to feel the pulses of all Persons after the most critical manner, and the better to suit every ones Humour and Disposition, he understands what hath been successful, and what not. Hence it is, that he so seldom miscarrieth in any of his Diabolical Attempts, unless it be when our dear Redeemer (the *stronger Man*) doth engage himself against him for us.

3. *Satan* hath likewise his *μεθοδεας*, his Wiles and Methods as the same Apostle saith, [Finally, my Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, put on the whole armour of God, that ye may

## *Man's Malady and Danger.* 25

may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil,] Ephes. 6. 11. this Greek word for Methods or Wiles, is derived of *μεθ* and *οδ*, that is, by the way, because of his way-layings with his Stratagems and Ambushments which are oft more successful than force of Arms, as *Josh.* 8. 2, 5, 15, &c. the Greek Word is an Allusion unto *Dan's Addor in the path*, Gen. 49. 17. So doth this Serpent, he lies lurking in the way, and bites the Heels of Passengers, whereby he transfuses his poison to the very Head and Heart. The Holy Patriarch *Jacob* compared his Son to an *Addor*, foreseeing by his Spirit of Prophecy, how the Tribe of *Dan* would subtilly and suddenly surprize the men of *Laish*, who lived securely and carelessly, having no Magistrate (or Heir of Restraint, Hebr.) to put them unto shame, *Judg.* 18. 7, 10. Even so and much more than so, doth that *Old Serpent Satan* set upon such Souls as are most lull'd asleep in the Cradle of carnal Security: He hath the sudden jumps of a Lion sometimes, and when the Lion's Hide will not serve his turn in his jumping Assaults, he can then piece it with the Fox's Skin, or with the Serpent's Slough; so that when the sudden jumps of a Lion do fail him, he hath still the secret lurkings of a Serpent, his

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his subtle windings and turnings to circumvent us, and to assault us at unawares, and to set upon us unexpectedly on our Backs, with his furious Conveyances, as he did upon *David* when he thought his *Mountain was so strong*, that he could never be moved, *Psal. 30. 6, 7.* yet how did this subtle Serpent secretly convey his Venom into his Heart, not only in the matter of both his *Adultery* and *Murder*, 2 *Sam. 11. 4, 27.* but also when this *Satan* provoked *David* to number the people at the latter end of his Reign, 1 *Chron. 21. 1.* Provoked, that is, *Satan* would not let him rest, till he had prevailed.

In the third place I come to shew how this *strong man Satan* is not only a *Goliath* for Strength and Power, as also an *Achitophel* for Craft and Policy, but likewise a *Doeg* for Malice and Mischief; he is a more mighty *Hunter* than the great *Nimrod*, *Gen. 10. 9.* who died some thousands of years ago; but this *cruel Hunter* lived long before *Nimrod*, even from the beginning of the World, and lives still, yea and is like to last until the last end of the World, and therefore he is called *Kako-Demon*, the Envious One, or Enemy, *καὶ ἔχθρην*, *Matt. 13. 25, 28.* having many cursed Properties. As

1. He is antiently Malicious, therefore  
our

## *Man's Malady and Danger.* 27

our Lord calls him a *Murderer from the Beginning*, *Joh. 8. 44.* he hath drove this damnable Trade from *Adam* till now.

2. This malignant Adversary is mischievously Malicious, he seeks not whom he may scratch, or bite, or wound only, but whom he may devour, (as before) 1 *Pet. 5. 8.* How maliciously Mischievous he is to the Body of Man, as in the case of that miserable *Demoniack*, whose Body he violently threw into those two merciless Elements, *sometimes into the Fire*, and *sometimes into the Water*, yea and cutting and rending it when he was constrained to leave it, *Mark 9. 22.* How mischievous he is also to the Estates of Men, as he was to *Job's* Estate, which he destroyed by Fire and Storms, &c. as he was afterwards to his *Body*, finiting it with Biles from top to Toe, and every Bile (or Blain) (the *Rabbins* say) had each of them a Devil in them: Moreover (to mention no more instances) see how maliciously Mischievous was *Satan* likewise unto *Job's* good Name, which he would have blasted even to the All-knowing God, in calling *Job* God's self-seeking Servant; as if *Job* had been only byassed with the gain of his Godliness; thus he did fordidly calumniate what he could not possibly contradict: How was it then, that *Clodius* accusat

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*accusat Mæchos*, Vice it self undertook to correct but a falsely called Sin: Whereas the blessedness of an Angel (wherewith *Satan* was at first created) could not engage himself to continue the Servant of his Creator as the Holy Angels which fell not with him, did and do so to this day: But more especially he is mischievous to the Souls of Mankind. It may be said that the Sword of this Strong Man reacheth even unto the very soul, as *Jer.* 4. 10. He both slashes and wounds the Soul, and doth ambitiously aspire like *Lucifer* to be like the Most High, *Isa.* 14. 14. and to have a power to kill the Soul (as well as Body, Estate and Good Name) which is God's Prerogative only, *Matt.* 10. 28. However his main Mark *Satan* aimeth at is to procure evil against our Souls, *Jer.* 26. 19. and therefore as the Syrians were commanded to fight against neither small nor great, but against the King of Israel, *2 Chron.* 18. 30. So our fleshly lusts are those Syrians and Soldiers whom *Satan* commands to war principally against the precious Soul, *1 Pet.* 2. 11. and his Malice is mostly to be mischievous to Saints more than to Sinners; for he tempted *David* (a man after Gods own heart, *1 Sam.* 13. 14.) to grosser and greater sins than ever he did, not only *Saul*, who died in

## *Man's Malady and Danger.* 29

in his Sin; even of self-murder, yet never fell into such foul acts of sin as *David* did, but also than ever he did tempt *Ahab*, tho' he sold himself to work wickedness, *1 King.* 21. 25. yet this none-such Sinner was only tempted to covet his Neighbours Vineyard, and not his Neighbours Wife, yea and life too, as *David* did. The reason is this, because *Satan* is satisfied with the evil state that Sinners remain in, so he needs not to tempt them to evil Acts, well knowing, that such Actions will as naturally flow from them, as Water doth from a Fountain: Thus *David* saith to *Saul* [*wickedness proceedeth* (even naturally) *from the wicked*] *1 Sam.* 24. 13. as if they needed no Tempter, but will Tempt themselves, *Jam.* 1. 14, 15. *Satan* matters not for Actions, but only where he cannot secure persons and still keep them captive in an evil State. NB. This Reason may be rendred, why some civil Moralists do lead more blameless and more spotless lives, than some Saints and sanctified Souls, (who sometimes may be left of God to *Satan's* buffeting Messengers to humble them, as *2 Cor.* 12. 7, 8.) because 'tis enough for the Temper to know that these meer moral men do still abide in a Christless-state, but as to such as are delivered from the power of Belial, and

### 30 *Man's Malady and Danger.*

and are translated into the Kingdom of Grace, Col. 1. 12, 13, 14. Those be they against whom this *Envious One* is most maliciously mischievous, and when he sees that he cannot keep them from Heaven, he will do them all the mischief he possibly can; he will send them (if possible) even hauling to Heaven. Herein *Pharaoh* (that *Dragon of Egypt*, so called, *Ezek.* 29. 3. was a *Type* and Figure of this old Red Dragon the *Devil*, who was calm and quiet enough with *God's Israel*, while he found they could be content to be his Bond-slaves in *Mortar-Work*, &c. but when they begin to be gone out of his Kingdom, &c. then he rages and pursues them with his Chariots and Horsemen, &c. As *Pharaoh* pursued *Israel* as they were passing towards the *Earthly Canaan*, so *Satan* pursueth us in our passage towards the *Heavenly Canaan*; and as *Pharaoh* in his pursuit of *Israel* was at length drowned in the *Red-Sea*: So this may be for strong Consolation to us, that this Saint-pursuing *Satan* shall at last be drowned in the *Red-Sea* of our blessed Saviour's Blood; for we are told to our Comfort, that our *Redeeming Angel* will come down from Heaven, having the *Key of the bottomless Pit*, and a great Chain in his hand, and will lay hold on the *Dragon*, that old *Serpent*,

### *Man's Malady and Danger.* 31

*Serpent*, the *Devil*, and not only bind him for a thousand years, but he will cast him likewise into the lake of Fire and Brimstone, where he (together with the *Beast*, and the *False Prophet*) shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever, *Rev.* 20. 1, 2, 3, and 10, verses. In the mean time we must expect, that this *Serpent* and *Dragon* will be spitting forth the Poison of his Malice against us; for such is his Malice to all the Saints, that he will first tempt them to Sin, and then he will accuse them for Sin; as it is storied of the *Russians*, they are so malicious one against another, that sometimes a man will hide some of his own Goods in the House of him whom he hateth, and then accuse him for the stealing of them; just so doth the *Devil* deal many times with *God's dearest Servants*; thus *Joseph's Steward* first foisted his Lord's Cup into *Benjamin's Sack*, and then accused him for stealing it, *Gen.* 44. 2, 4. So that tempted Souls may say to *Satan*, (when he would tempt them to sin, and after will accuse them of sin) as the young Soldier said to *Joab* his General, [ *Tho' I should receive a thousand Shekels of Silver, yet will I not dare to do what thou (Satan) would draw me into, for the King of Kings hath charged me to the contrary; and should*



should I do otherwise, I shall then *work falsehood against my own life*; for *there is no matter that can be hid from the King*, and thou *thyself would set thy self against me*, 2 Sam. 18. 12, 13, &c. Thus Satan dealt with *Jehoshua* the High-Priest, accusing him for wearing those very Garments that himself had soiled, *Zech.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. yea, and thus Satan dealt with our Dear Saviour himself, to whom he made an offer of his giving to him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glories of them, if he would fall down and worship him, *Matt.* 4. 8. yet afterwards this *Accuser of the Brethren* (as he is called *Rev.* 12. 10.) doth by his Instruments accuse our Lord for aspiring after one of the least of those Kingdoms of the World, namely, that little Kingdom of *Judea*, *Matt.* 27. 11, 29, 37. and this is the Tempters Method with all tempted Souls; he will always *extenuate* sin in the time of his Temptation to it, but after the Commission of it, he will *aggravate* it in his accusation for it, that he may drive the Soul into despair, &c. Thus he dealt with King *Saul*, whom he first persuaded to spare *Amalek*, under the notion of a good Deed or Work of Mercy; hereby he tempted him, and prevailed to spare King *Agag*, and the *fattest* of the *Flock*,

1 Sam.

1 Sam. 15. 8, 9. Yet this same Satan comes to *Saul* in the likeness of *Samuel*, and notoriously aggravates this Action (which before he had presented to him in a plausible Dress of candour and kindness to the Creature, &c.) and sets it home with weight upon *Saul's* Conscience; especially when he saw him almost overwhelmed with deepest Distresses, now representing the same Action as most horrible, heinous and damning, and all to drive him down at once into the Pit of Desperation, 1 Sam. 28. 11, 19, 20. And thus by Divine permission the Devil deals with many Souls, which are far more dear to God, than this *Saul* was, &c.

Hereby the third cursed property of this *Doeg* the Devil is made manifest, namely, that he is not only *antiently, maliciously*, but also *universally* mischievous to all Mankind, even to all Saints, and to all Sinners, at the least intentionally against every individual person of both sorts, only with this difference; as *first* for Sinners, he makes them to become his Hackney-Horses, according to *Tertullian's* phrase [*Impii persecutores infessorem Diabolum habent*] all wicked Persecutors have the Devil Riding upon their backs, whom he whips and spurrs end-ways into an high Gallop, even all the days of their lives, and

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then.

then, when the Night of their Deaths comes upon them, he lodges them at last in the Hot Stables of Hell: And thus Satan made Saul his Hackney, upon whom he sat as his Rider, and spurr'd him forward for many days in his persecuting of David, and to whom he gave but this very cold Comfort at his Death [*To morrow thou shalt be with me, &c.*] 1 Sam. 28. 19, 20. which indeed was no better a place to lodge his Hackney in at his Night of Death, than in the Hot Rooms of Hell-fire. But *secondly*, As to the Saints (who are not the Devil's Vassals as Sinners are, but be indeed the Impropriated and Honourable Vessels of their dear Redeemer) Satan will do all the mischief he can to those *Vasa signata*, or *Sealed Vessels*, as Tertullian calls them; those he cannot touch with any of his Deadly Touches [*Non Tactus qualitativo*] as Cajetan interpreteth [*The wicked one toucheth him not*] 1 John 5. 19. He cannot cause them to fall finally. The Serpent is confined to feed upon the Dust or Dirt of the Earth (that is, the wicked) he is not allowed to devour the Herbs of Grace, or to destroy any Plants on God's holy Mountain, Isa. 65. 25. God hath set the godly man apart for himself, Psal. 4. 3. and God's charge is upon the God of this World (as the Devil is call'd,

2 Cor.

2 Cor. 4. 4. as well as upon the Kings of the Earth, to whom those words were spoken [*Touch not mine Anointed ones, and do my Prophets no harm*] Psal. 105. 15. To say, this is spoken of Kings, and not to Kings, is a false interpretation. How far this wicked one may touch a Saint of God, and that maliciously and mischievously; yea how far he touched our Saviour himself, is abovesaid. Now the Enquiry is, seeing Satan is so universally mischievous both to Saints, as well as to Sinners, how far Satan can force a Saint to sin against God? Ans. We have all great cause to bless the Lord our good God, that this Power of Darknes cannot force us to any work of Darknes; no, God hath left this Power of constraining us to sin out of the Devil's Charter; he hath no Commission to force the Will of Man; he hath indeed a *persuading sleight*, but he hath not any *enforcing might*. 'Tis true, we read [that Satan provoked David to sin against God] 1 Chron. 21. 1. that is, he so dogg'd David daily with his Temptation, and would never let him alone in any Rest, until he had fastned it upon his heart, and gained his consent. However, the Great God had his holy hand in all this, who still held this Dog, this Doeg, the Devil, in his Chain, 2 Sam. 24. 1. God did, and Satan did also,

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but

but how? it was thus, God was angry with *Israel* for abusing their Peace and Plenty, &c. and with *David* for his privy Pride and Creature-confidence, so he lets loose his Dog the Devil upon *David*, and he left *David* to himself so, as at last after his being very long provoked unto this curiosity of numbring the People, he yielded his consent to that *Satanical suggestion*, which brought the *Destroying Angel* upon his sinful Subjects, like as the Dog may be said to Bait the Beast at the Stake, while the owner of the Bait doth stand by, looks on, and suffers his Beast to be Baited. This plain similitude may serve to explain the difficulty, and to understand aright, that tho' it be said, that *God moved David*, and *Satan moved him* likewise, yet these two phrases are not contradictory Terms; they are not *Adverse*, but only *Diverst*, the latter being *subordinate* to the former, as all 2d Causes are *subaltern*, to the first Cause. But still *Satan* is held in God's Chain, and he cannot without Divine permission do the least damage to the Soul of a Saint; he cannot force us to sin, with all his most powerful provocations, as appeareth most plainly in the case of *Job*, against whom *Satan* made so many violent and furious Thrusts to make him *curse God to his face*; yet could he

he not conquer *Job* with all his provocations; but this good man comes off at last with flying Colours, and by the help of his God gets his Tempter trodden under his feet, as *Rom.* 16. 20. And tho' the beginning of the Conflict and Combat was *Satan's*, yet *the End* in the Conquest *was the Lord's*; as 'tis said, *James* 5. 11. This therefore may be very comfortable for us seriously to consider, that the Tempter may strike fire long enough to no purpose, if we do not meet him with Dry Tinder for his sparks to fall upon; for it is our own Concupiscence that carries the chiefest sway; 'tis our own carnal Corruptions wherewith we are *drawn aside* and *enticed*, *James* 1. 14, 15. where the word is [Δελεαζόμενοι] which signifies, we are caught as the silly Fish by the Fisher-man's Bait. *Satan* is a crafty Fisher, and knows what Baits will best tempt and take every ones Constitution and Humour; and tho' *Satan* be a Spirit, and therefore can have commerce with our Spirits, yea and may fix vain thoughts upon our fancies, yet he cannot force the Consent of the Will thereunto; for as he cannot *know the Heart*, (which is only God's prerogative, *Acts* 1. 24.) so he cannot compel the heart much less to any act of sin, unless the *Eve* in us doth betray us into the Tempters hands.

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hands, as *Adam hearkned unto the Voice of his Wife*, Gen. 3, 17. Thus every Son and Daughter of *Adam* hath still an *Eve* (his Tempter) in their own bosoms, and if *Satan's* Temptation do fall passively only on our part upon the Tables of our hearts; it is indeed our Cross, but not our sin, if we consent not to it; for 'tis our consent to it, that makes it our sin; as it was in the case of *Benjamin* before-said; he never consented to the putting of the Divining Cup into the mouth of his Sack; so it was his cross only, but not at all his sin: Therefore ought we in an hour of Temptation to do these two great Duties.

1<sup>st</sup>. To give no place to the Tempter, Eph. 4. 27. *no, not for an hour*, Gal. 2. 5. by way of subjection. And,

2<sup>ly</sup>. To resist him, and he will flee from from us, James 4. 7. especially if we resist him stedfast in the Faith, 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. even with a Resolved Negative, No, No, &c. However, such is *Satan's* Hatred to all the Saints, that he will be universally mischievous to them, and do them all the Damage and Detriment that he possibly can do; and as we may learn from the Story of *Balaam* the Southsayer (who was *Satan's* Servant, when he cannot curse the whole Camp of *Israel*, he will do his utmost endeavour to curse some

### *Man's Malady and Danger.* 39

some part thereof, Numb. 23. 13, 27.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Cursed Character and Property of this Adversary of Mankind is, he is uncessantly as well as universally mischievous. 'Tis said of the *Scorpion*, that there is no minute of Time, wherein he doth not thrust out his Sting, but he keeps it in a continual motion for a speedy poisoning of all whatsoever he can reach with it as before; even so this *Old Serpent* or *Scorpion* the Devil, is restless night and day, and puts forth his poisonful Sting without ceasing to wound us in our Heels (according to his Commission, Gen. 3. 15.) that thereby he may transfuse his Venom from our Heels to our Hearts, &c. And 'tis his constant custom to Assault us both sleeping and waking, for he keeps no holy day (as the Vulgar saying is) nor will he make any Truce, or Cessation of Arms with us; and he will set upon us, both in our Natural, and in our Civil Actions; yea and most of all in those that are Religious. He doth not only tempt us to excess in our Food and Raiment; but he will disturb us also in the Duties of our particular Callings, yet higher above all we meet with most Disturbances in the Duties of our general Callings; so that we can never serve the Lord (either publicly or privately) without Distraction from this Ad-

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versary, 1 Cor. 7. 35. Neither *Week-day* nor *Sabbath-day*; nay, upon the *Sabbath* (which signifies a Rest) is this *Satan* the most *Restless*; for while we are the busiest about God's Service, and the concerns of our Souls, then will he be a most *Busy Devil* with our *Base Hearts*, to interrupt our Communion with Heaven, &c. This may have its Illustration from *Drexelius* his Vision, whereof he gives us this account, [that he saw but *one Devil* at a Market upon the *Week-day*, but he saw ten Devils present at a Sermon upon the *Sabbath-day*] and being asked the reason of this difference of the number of Devils, the good old Man thus answered, That in a Market there was no need of any more than one Devil; for there one Man would tempt another fast enough, the Buyer, the Seller, and the Seller the Buyer, &c. but at a Sermon, where all men do solemnly Devote themselves to God's Worship, then ten Devils were few enough to distract them therein. Thus we read how *Satan* thrust in among the Sons of God, *Job* 1. 6. & 2. 1. & 1 *Kings* 21. 10, 13. As *Satan* ever since the Fall of *Lucifer* never had Rest, *Matth.* 12. 43, 44, 45. so he never would have Rest night or day, unless he be in a sinner's heart, &c.

The 5th Cursed Character and Property of

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of this our *Adversary*, is, that he is likewise *irresistibly mischievous* as to any *Humane Power* for *Resisting* him. This is related before, how the *Innocentest Man Adam*, the *Strongest Man Samson*, and the *wisest Man Solomon*, were none of them able to resist the Assaults of this *strong Man Armed*; the reason is, because his *Angelical* (tho' now *Diabolical*) *Nature* is too strong for any mere *Humane Nature*, we are all as unable to withstand him, (1.) As the *feeble Flye* is the *cunning Spider*, which most easily entangles her in his clammy Threads (spun out of his own bowels) whose first work is to intoxicate her (as soon as entangled) by infusing his poison into her head, and then with more ease he draws her into his Den, and there he sucks out her blood and her life both together. Nor are we poor Mortals more able to resist this *Strong Man Armed*, than (2.) The *silly Dove* is to withstand the furious Assaults of the *strong Eagle*, &c. Thus the Devil is represented in *Eph.* 2. 3. as a *Prince-Fowl* of the *Air* (who hath the upper ground of us sorry Worms crawling upon the Earth) and prying about like a *Bird of prey*, to espy what *silly Doves without hearts* (or *understandings*, as *Junius* renders that, *Hos.* 7. 11.) as are wandering abroad for him to be preyed upon, &c. Nor

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Nor (3.) The *simple Lamb* can withstand the *furious Lion*, when found wandring astray from the *Sheepfold*, &c. These similitudes do illustrate how *Irresistible* is our Adversary as to us, to which many more may be added; As (4.) He is like the Hunter with his *Nets*. (5.) Like the Fowler with his *Snares*. And (6.) Like the Fisher-man with his *Angling-Rods*. All these do most easily over-power the *Beasts*, the *Birds*, and the *Fishes* they meet with; and so doth *Satan* over-power us; yea and much more than so, inasmuch as he finds something in us which betrays us into his hands; tho' it be otherwise said of our sinless Saviour, to whom *Satan* came and found *Nothing* in him, John 14. 30.

The 6th *Cursed Character* of *Satan*, he is *everlastingly mischievous*; as he was a *Murderer from the beginning*, John 8. 44. so he will continue to be so to the end of the World, as is hinted before. Oh what a long Lease hath our Lord lent this Roaring Lion! The *number* of this *Infernal Beast* is much above the number of the *Apocalyptick Beast*, which was 666 years, Rev. 13. 18. or that longer Lease of 1260 years, Rev. 11. 3. This Beast hath already lasted above five thousand years, and will *ever last* (out-living all the Sons and Daughters of Men) until Time shall be no more; for

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for as he is a Spirit, so he cannot Die, as we mortals daily Die, &c. therefore *Man's Malady and Danger* is like to last so long as there is a Man living to be tempted by this everlasting Tempter, until our Lord chain him up, &c.

## CH A P. II.

### *Man's Remedy and Deliverer.*

HAVING shewed at large *Man's Malady and Danger* in the first Chapter, I come now in this *second Chapter* to shew *Man's Remedy and Deliverer*, who is no other but our Blessed Lord, whom *Jacob* calls his *Redeeming Angel* [*the Angel that Redeemed him from all evil*] Gen. 48. 16. and who was named *Jesus*, because he came into the World upon this only Errand, [*that he might save us from our sins*] Matth. c. 1. v. 21. This Name *Jesus* may be derived from the Greek word [*ἰαοῦαι*] *iano* to *heal*, or rather from the Hebrew word [*Yashang*] which signifies to, *save*; from hence *Joshua* is called *Jesus*, in Acts 7. 45. for both those names do signify *Saviours*; and as that *Joshuah* saved *Israel* by bringing them out of the Wilderness

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derness into the *Earthly Canaan*; so our Lord Jesus doth bring all the *Israel of God* (his *Redeemed ones*) out of the *Wilderness* of this *present Evil World*, Gal. 1. v. 4. (which is here below) into that heavenly *Canaan* which is above: And thus the Lord saith [*Vaani Jehovab Rophekab*] which signifieth [I am a mighty *Gyant like Healer* of thee, *Exod.* 15. 26. upon which Text *Tertullian* makes this learned and Holy Descant [*Omnipotent Medico nullus insanabilis occurrit Morbus*] unto such an All-sufficient Healer as our Lord Jesus is, there is no kind of Disease can be found Incurable; and thus the Prophet saith [*By his stripes we are all healed*] *Isa.* 53. 5. and tho' man have for his *Malady Satan* who is call'd [*λέων ὀρνέου*] a roaring Lion seeking whom he may (not only bite or scratch but Devour, or drink up at one Draught, or swallow down at one Mouthful (as the word [*καταπίν* signifies) 1. *Pet.* 5. 8. Yet this is our comfort, that our Blessed Saviour (who is also [a Lion, of the Tribe of Judah] *Revel.* 5. 5. He is called [*ὁ ῥυόμενος*] one who saveth us from the wrath to come, 1 *Thess.* 1. 10. Thus Man's Remedy against all his Malady is his blessed Redeemer; but more particularly even from the mouth of our dear Redeemer himself in his excellent Parable concerning

#### *Man's Malady and Danger.* 45

cerning the strong Man's peaceable possession of his house, until the stronger Man came upon him with a writ of Ejectment and dispossession of him, &c. *Luk.* 11. 21. 22. As the former of those two Verses holds forth Mans Malady and Danger (which is at large discoursed upon and discovered) so the latter Verse gives a most clear demonstration of Man's Remedy and Deliverer, namely himself, whom he calls the stronger Man, and most amply accomplished to effect a compleat Deliverance and Salvation for us sorry Mortals out of all the before-named Miseries. In both those Verses we may behold (as in a clear Looking-glass) and discern whose we are and whom we Serve (as the Apostles phrase is, *Acts.* 27. 23. whether we belong to Satan; or to our Saviour, &c. as we find the witnessings of Gods Spirit with our Spirits, *Rom.* 8. 16. Concerning this possession of the strong Man and the Dispossession of him by the stronger Man, &c. as our Saviour calls himself in ver. 22. which doth represent Gods, Champion coming forth to redeem man fallen into misery by the wiles of Satan, and one who will not be baffled in any of his Undertakings, for our Lord is called [Mans Undertaker] *Isa.* 38. 14. and he saith likewise [O all kind, thou shalt Destroy

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*ed thy self, but in me is thy Help* ] Hof. 13. 9. or as another paraphrastick Reading runs [ *what hath Destroyed thee even the mutability of thy will, Deceived by the grand Deceiver, who was by his Creation an Angel of Light, and propably one of those Sons of the Morning who sung Praises to the great Creator for the Creation of the Heavens Job. 38. 7. Yet afterwards by his Luciferian pride, Isa. 14. 14. was changed into the prince of Darknes, Eph. 6. 12. that glorious Angel was Turned into a Damned Devil, and who first set himself against the great Creator himself, saying with proud Lucifer. Isa. 14. 13, 14. [ Ero sicut Altissimus, I will be like the most High ] and when he found that the thing formed was too weak for him that formed it, and that the Potter had power over the Clay, &c. Rom. 9. 20 21. So that the Creature could not prevail against his Creator, then Satan falls foul upon God's Creature [ Man ] whom he saw Created in the Image of God, wherein he Acted like that malicious Traitor, who when his devilish designe was disappointed of Assassinating the Kings koyal Person himself, he then falls foul upon the Kings Picture, and tears it all to peices. Thus the Devil did with the first Adam ( who was Gods Picture by his Creation ) and prevailed,*

yea

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yea and so, as that he prevailed not only against *Adams Person*, but also against all *Adams Posterity*, by pouring his Poison into the Spring-head or fountain ( as is demonstrated before ) as *Adam* was the publick Person, and Representative of all the whole Race of mankind, hereby we are all *born Children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. *Enquiry*, how did the Creator take this *Affront* and *Indignity* done to him by the Devil in rending his Picture into peices; &c. *was God unconcerned?*

*Answer* the (1st) Indeed it was once at the least a seeming Divine dispensation concerning bloody *Herods* Imprisoning and Beheading *John the Baptist*, that famous fore-runner of the *Worlds Redeemer*, yet all that time God seemed to be silent, as if not at all concerned therein, by any External or sensible Providence of God to testify his dislike and Abhorrency of such a Barbarous murder, *Mat. 14. 3, 4, 5*, to the 13.th notwithstanding Gods seeming silence as to *outwrrd Judgments* upon those malicious murderers, the Lord gave an *Inward plague* in perplexing *Herods conscience* for this bloody Butchery, *Luke 9. 7.* where the word [ *ἀμυρόν* ] signifies, that *Herod* [ *pendebat* ] stood amused and amazed and stuck fast in the mud ( as it were ) and could not stir his feet, but

was



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was ready to hang himself, as the words import ; so in an angry Conscience *Herod* heard an *angry God*, &c. But, *Answer the 2d.* As to this *Original Affront* of *Satan* to his *Maker*, in *Defacing the Kings Image*, by putting the first *Adam* to the *Foile*, and to that foul *Fall*, the *King of Kings* is most highly concerned, and comes immediately to the very place and spot of ground where this very Villany was newly perpetrated, Summons the Offenders personally to Appear, and He saith to *Satan* [ well *Satan*, thou hast prevailed indeed over the first *Adam*, notwithstanding I have my Glorious ends in it. So to over-rule it as to bring forth the greatest good out of that greatest evil by the *Chymical Art* of my *Unsearchable Wisdom*; but be it known to thee, I will send the *Second Adam* into the world, who shall not only match thee, but also over-match thee, he shall dispossess thee of this thy new possession. *The seed of the woman shall break thy Head*, though thou (by thy *Serpentine subtlety*) *hath now bruised mans Heel*, and put him into a limping and halting posture, *Gen. 3. 15.* I will send my Son in the *Similitude of sinful Flesh*, who through his *Death* shall *Destroy him that had the power of Death*, that is, the Devil *Hebr. 2. 14.* and tho' thou hast sinned

from

## *Man's Remedy and Deliverer.* 49

from the beginning ; yet, for this purpose the *Son of God* shall be *manifested*, that he might *destroy the works of the Devil*, (as well as the Devil himself). *1 Joh. 3. 8.* Thus the *Everlasting Gospel* (as it is called, *Revel. 14. 6.*) was preached even by God himself in *Paradise*; and seeing God himself was the first Preacher of the Gospel, therefore that employ of *God's Embassadors* is very honourable Work, and not so contemptible as the blind World doth unworthily account it to be, &c.

Behold here, how our most Gracious Father in Heaven provides and prepares a most Sovereign *Plaister* (made up of the warm Blood of our Blessed and Bleeding Redeemer, who was the *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, *Revel. 13. 8.*) So soon as the *Strong Man armed* had given this mortal Wound to the Root of Mankind, even to Innocent *Adam* in his *Paradise-Estate*, and this *Gospel of Peace* our good God himself did preach thus early, that none of the Spirits of his dear Children (though corrupted by the fallen Nature) might sink in them. N.B. Note well, *Gospel*, quasi *God's Spell*, as if it were a Divine Spell of God's own ordaining, wherewith to catch that *Old Serpent*, the Devil, the good Lord teaches us to spell out the Glad Tidings out of this

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*Everlasting Gospel.* [*When Men are cast down, then shalt thou say, there is a lifting up, Job 22. 29.*] As the design of the first Chapter in this little Book was to *cast down*, and to humble us miserable Mortals under the saving Sense of *Man's Malady and Danger* by the fall of the *first Adam*, by the deceitfulness of the Devil; and oh that many more of us were so sensibly cast down and duly humbled. Accordingly the Drift and Scope of this *Second Chapter*, is for a seasonable *lifting up* of such humble Souls with the *Comforts* of the *Gospel*, by representing the true and only *Remedy* against this matchless *Malady*, to wit, our dear Redeemer. And to the same purpose is the purport of many Gospel Parables, as those *Three* of the *lost Sheep*, the *lost Groat*, and the *lost Son*, from the *History* of all which, I have opened (through Grace) the *Mystery* in my *Fourth Volume*, upon *Luke* the 15th. But here I shall only demonstrate how our Lord's *Parable* in *Luke* 11. 21, 22. hath the same tendency, holding forth to us, that though our *Malady* be *strong*, yet our *Remedy* is *stronger*; that our Lord *Jesus* is *stronger* to *Save* us, than *Satan* is to *Destroy* us; notwithstanding this Prince of Darkness be a *strong Man armed* as to himself, and hath likewise

likewise a whole Kingdom of Devils at his command to help him; yea, and moreover his fully furnish'd Shop of this present evil World, wherein he hath at hand to take out all his tempting Tools, such as the Scripture calleth the *Lust* of the *Flesh*, the *Lust* of the *Eyes*, and *Pride* of *Life*, &c. 1 *John* 2. 16. I may say here as our Lord said, [*What went ye out to see, not a Reed shaken with the wind, &c. Matth.* 11. 7. Behold here is *One* greater and stronger than *John the Baptist*, *Joh.* 1. v. 27. That famous Duel wherein *David* conquered the Great *Goliath*, was a resemblance of this very *Parable*; and so was that sharp Contest betwixt *Michael* the Archangel, and the Devil, *Jude*, ver. 9. but with this difference, that was only an earnest Disputation about the literal *Body* of *Moses*; but this represents both a *Conflict* and a *Conquest* also concerning the Mystical *Body* of the *Messias*. But that most Renowned *Narrative* and *History* of the *Monomachia* or *Duel*, which was fought Hand to Hand, betwixt the two Persons of *Cursed Satan* and our *Blessed Saviour*, as it is largely related in three several *Rencounters*, *Matth.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. All that whole *History*, (wherein the very Abstracts and Quintessence of Power and Policy, and of Strength

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Strength and Subtilty were engaged to their utmost one against the other, &c.) was a most evident Interpretation of the *Mystery* of this *Parable*, concerning the *Strong Man armed*, and this *Stronger Man*, the *Lord Jesus*, who is brought in *there* as *God's Champion* in the behalf of *fallen Man*, who drove away the Devil from him, and defeated him in all his three *Temptations*, *Matth. 4*, &c. And the same *Champion* doth likewise *dispossess* him of his *Palace here*, which *Dispossession* of the *Strong Man* by the *Stronger Man*, *Luke 11. 22.* is most elegantly illustrated by five famous Illustrations. As,

(1st.) By the *Quality* and *Endowments* of the *Dispossessor*; *Christ* is stronger to help us, than *Satan* is to harm us.

(2dly.) By his *Affault* and *Battery*, he makes upon the *Strong Man*, possessing his *Palace*. [*He comes upon him*, &c.]

(3dly.) From his *Conquest* and *Victory* [*He overcomes him*.]

(4thly.) From our *Lord's* *disarming* his *Enemy*. And

(5thly.) From his *dividing the Spoil with the strong*; as *Isa. 53. 12.*

Thus it is made manifest how *Christ* comes to be called *Man's Mystical Joshua* and *David*, our *Goel*, our *Redeemer*, who *delivereth us from Wrath to come*.

1 The

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1 *Theff. 1. 10.* *Luke 1. 75.* And being *delivered* by him, therefore must we serve him in *Righteousness* and *true Holiness*, *Eph. 4. 24.* and that *all the days of our lives*; and that we may serve him the more chearfully without fear, we have this great encouragement, that *He* who is in us, is *stronger* than he that is in the *World*, 1 *John 4. 4.* This great Truth that *Christ* is the *Stronger Man*, may be thus demonstrated: *First*, That it is so: And *Secondly*, Why it must be so: For several *Reasons*:

1st. Of the *First*, That it is so, this is an apparent Truth, because this *Prince of Light* did never Encounter with this *Prince of Darkness*, but he ever proved too strong for him, and put him always to a most shameful Foil. As,

(1st.) Our Lord met him in *Heaven*, and thrust him out for his *Pride* from that *Holy Place*. N.B. Note well, What was this Sin of *Lucifer* and his *Angels*? And what was the *special Object* of their proud Motion at the first in them? There be *Three* differing Opinions: The *First* is, That *Lucifer* did *Affect* and *Aspire* after an Equality with the most High God, *Isa. 14. 13, 14.* The *Second* Opinion is, That he ambitiously endeavour'd to enjoy a *Felicity* in himself, without any dependency

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dency upon his Maker: He would have had an Independent Blessedness, like that of God himself, &c. And the *Third Opinion* is, That he presumed to have the Honour of the *Hypostatical Union*, which appertained only to the *Second Person* in the *Trinity*, namely, to the *Son of God*. The ground of this Opinion is, (as some say) That presently after the Creation of Angels, the Creator did reveal this his purpose of making a *certain Man*, to whom the *Second Person* in the Godhead must be united, and that all the Angels must Worship this *God-man*, as the *Saviour* of the World; no sooner did the *Prince of the Apostate Angels* understand this *Revelation* of the Will of God, but he refused to submit unto this Law, and rather did challenge this Honour as due to himself. And this Conjecture seems to be the more probable, considering, that as God did give his command to *Man*, (as soon as he was created) and that a *positive Law*, [*Thou shalt not eat of the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, &c.*] and this Law was given to him for the trial of his Obedience to his Maker, &c. Even so God might give some *positive Law* likewise to the *Angels*, as soon as he had created them, upon the first Day of the Creation with the *Light*, &c. Now no *positive Law*

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*Law* can more likely be supposed, than this (of *worshipping the Son of God* and his *Incarnation*) to be imposed upon the Angels; and if so, then this *Lucifer*, the Devil, did most directly oppose himself against the Person of *Christ*; and therefore *Christ*, to shew himself the stronger of the two, did violently hurl him out of Heaven, and together with him, all those other Angels, who consented to his Ambition, and were Fellow-Conspirators with him in his Rebellion against his Maker. And

(2dly.) When our Lord had cast *Satan* out of *Heaven*, he afterward did oft meet with him upon Earth; yea, even personally, and proved stronger than he, putting him to the foil at every turn. For thus we are told, how our *Saviour* did encounter *Satan* first in a barren Wilderness in his first Temptation; and then upon a Pinnacle of the Temple in the *second*; and after this, upon an exceeding High Mountain in his third Conflict, yet our Lord *Christ* came off a Conqueror in all those three Combates, so immediately succeeding one another, as they are related by the Evangelists. Some may say here by way of enquiry, how could *Satan* become so bold and daring, as to grapple with the same Antagonist upon Earth,

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whom he had found too strong for him in Heaven, &c?

The Answer to it is this, That our Lord now appeared as a meer Man, and therefore all the Tempters assaults ran, Thus, [*if thou be the Son of God, &c.*] now *Satan* had found himself not only a *Match*, but also an *Over-match* for the *first Adam*, and therefore he thought that he was strong enough to grapple with the strongest of *Adam's* Off-spring; especially, considering how he had long before this been able to master strong *Sampson*, &c. which might make him hope of prevailing against our *Saviour*, who now appear'd only in the *Form of a Servant*, Phil. 2. 6, 7. and having his *Visage* marred more than any *Mans*, Isa. 52. 14. and 53. 2, 3. Inasmuch that the taunting *Jews* took him to be about *Fifty years old*, when he was not yet little more than *Thirty*, Job. 8. 57. Hereupon *Satan* ventures to assault his *Person* with three various Weapons; to wit, the *Lust of the Flesh*, the *Lust of the Eyes*, and the *Pride of Life*, hoping that though one of them did fail, yet the other might prevail, and the rather, because he had found all these wicked Weapons so successful altogether against our *First Parents*; concerning whom we are told, how this same Tempter made them

long

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long for the forbidden Fruit, (there was *Lust of the Flesh*) and he captivated and bewitched their Sight with the Beauty and Loveliness of the Apple (there was *Lust of the Eyes*); and lastly, he perswaded them that their eating thereof would wonderfully Metamorphose and Change them from their present *Humane* into a *Divine Nature*, saying, *Ye shall be as Gods, &c.* there was the *Pride of Life*. Accordingly *Satan* improveth to his utmost, this self same Method against our Blessed *Saviour*, the *Second Adam*; for first, he tempts him with turning *Stones into Bread*, when he was very Hungry after a forty Days fast, there was [*Lust of the Flesh*]; though *Christ* could and would have done it at God's command, yet he abhors to do it at the *Devil's bidding*, as all *Satan's* Slaves do, who win their Bread by Cheating, Oppression, &c. *Satan's* second Assault against our *Saviour*, was concerning *Lust of the Eyes*, when he shewed a Map of all the glittering Glories of this Evil World to our *Saviour's* sight, saying to him, [*Hæc omnia tibi Dabo; All these will I give thee*]. Our Lord look'd upon them, as indeed they were, meer *Shews* and *Shadows*, and just nothing, no more than bare Apparitions and Resemblances of Worldly Glory, which

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which is expressed [*μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*] *Acts* 24. 23. All *Agrippa's* Pomp was but a meer Phancy. Though all these Glories were no more than sorry *Schemes* or *Mathematical Figures* without any Solidity or Substance to affect our Saviour's fight; yet he tells us himself, how *his Spouse* did ravish his Heart with the Beauty of one Saving Grace, *Cant.* 4. 9. Our Lord valued this Image of God more than that offer of *Satan* to him, to make him the Great Pope, as some do Interpret that place, *Luke* 4. ver. 5, 6, 7. Now, when our Saviour had put *Satan* to the foil in this Second Assault, as the Evangelist *Luke* doth rank them in his Sacred Record, *Luke* 4. After this the Tempter takes Christ up again, and sets him upon a Pinnacle of the Temple, &c. *Ver.* 9, 10, 11, 12. and tempts him to fly in the Air, (as *Simon Magus* was said to do, &c.) and then would he act like the Son of God indeed, and appear to be so unto others also; and he promiseth to him that the Angels would protect and preserve him from harm in that presumptuous Action, &c. This was the Devil's thrust at our Dear Redeemer, though this Master-fly, *Beelzebub* had been beaten off once and again, yet returns he the third time to the same place, and like *Periphar's Wife*

to

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to *Joseph*, will be importunate and impudent notwithstanding all former flat denials, he sets upon and follows our Saviour here unto that Sin, [*the Bride of Life*] but being vanquish'd by Christ this third time also, he at our Lord's Rebuke and Command to depart, is vanishing away, and Angels came to him to comfort him with Food, &c.

Then (3dly.) When Christ had conquered *Satan* in his own Person both in Heaven and on Earth, he comes forth as Man's Champion, and as the Conqueror of our Salvation, *Heb.* 2. 10: ever ready for Corporal Presence to Conquer him, and to Cast him forth out of others who are met any that were distressed by him, &c. It is said indeed [that *Satan* departed from our Saviour (who had tormented him thrice in his own Person upon Earth) only for a season, *Luke* 4. 13] shewing how restless this Tempter is, both with Christ himself, and with all Christians; after one Assault or two, or three, be over, we must expect he will still renew his Assaults and Batteries upon us; and therefore in a Calm we ought always to provide well for a Storm. Thus our Lord met the Devil again at many times, and in many places, having taken possession of many *Demoniacs* while he was here present

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sent upon Earth, and where-ever *Christ* met him, he did evermore *Dispossess* him, as *Matth.* 8. 29, 30, 31, 32. and *Mark* 5. 4, 5, 6, 9. And many more Instances might be added to declare it; but this one may suffice, shewing how a whole *Legion* of *Strong Devils*, (which by common Computation amounteth to the number of Six thousand armed Soldiers) all do jointly stoop and truckle to the Command of this one *Christ*, called the *Stronger Man*, *Luke* 9. 27, 30, 32, 33.

But (4thly.) and *Lastly*, As *Christ's Bodily Presence* was of such a powerful and victorious Influence over *Satan*, during all the time that he *Tabernacled* among Men, as the word [*ἐσκήνωσεν*, *John* 1. 14.] doth signify, no less doth his Gracious and *Spiritual Presence* with his Church and Children, to whom he saith, [*Lo, I am with you to the end of the World,*] *Matth.* 28. 27, 29. that is, I will still charm and chase away Devils from you my Redeemed ones, I will not suffer *Satan* to devour so much as one of my Lambs; I will lose none of that number which the *Father* hath given me, *John* 6. 39. and 17. 12. I will preserve you from your Adversaries, I will prosper you in your Enterprizes, I will protect you, direct you, comfort you; yea, I will carry on the Work of Grace in

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in you, and at the last Crown you with Glory: All this, and more is included in this precious Promise, &c.

Now having dispatched the *first Demonstration*, shewing how it is made manifest in a manifold manner; namely, in a *four-fold Respect*, both in *Heaven* and upon *Earth*, both in his *Person* and in his *Spirit*, &c. that *Christ* is the *stronger Man*, and too strong for this *strong Man*, *Satan*, tho' he be armed Cap-a-pee from head to foot. Now I come to the *Second Demonstration*, to shew the *Reason* why it must be so.

The first *Reason* is, The *Creator* must be too strong for the *Creature*: Now that *Christ* was the Devil's *Creator*, appeareth by many Scriptures; as by *John* 1. 3. and by *Col.* 1. 16. and by *Heb.* 1. 2, 3. All which places do declare the *Deity* of *Christ*, for none can have a *Creating-power*, save only the Omnipotent God, who can bring all things out of nothing: Now all things, whether *Visible* or *Invisible*, whether they be *Thrones*, or *Dominions*, or *Principalities*, (which is one of *Satan's* names, *Eph.* 6. 12.) or *Powers*; all things were created not only by him, but also for him, *Col.* 1. 16. and if so, it must follow, that the *Devil* is one of *Christ's* *Creatures*, and not only made by him, but

but also *for him*, that is, for accomplishing the ends of *Christ's* Glorious Will, or as it is expressed, [all were *created* for the *Pleasure* of *Christ*] *Revel. 4. 11.* Now should the Devil be too strong for *Christ*, this could not be *Christ's Pleasure*, but his Pain and Torment to be *mastered* by another, and brought into Subjection, &c. This the Adversary himself doth acknowledge in his saying to *Christ*, [*Art thou come to Torment us before the time?*] *Mat. 8. 29.* wherein he owned not only that *Christ* was over-powerful for him, but also that to be over-powered, and to be dispossessed too, could not be accounted any pleasure to him, but his great torment to be *cast out* of his *Palace*, and to lose the place of his pleasure. Thus it may easily be concluded, that *Christ* must be stronger than his *Creature*, otherwise the *Creature* would not be for his *Pleasure*; it must be *Pain* for a *Superior* to be subdued by an *Inferior*: A noble Prince by a base Peasant, a Prisoner, &c.

The second Reason, why *Christ* must be stronger than *Satan*, is, because *Christ* is likewise the *Upholder* of all created Beings; 'tis said, [*Christ upholdeth all things* by the *Word* of his *Power*, *Hebr. 1. 3.* As 'tis said, [*The Father made the Worlds by his Son*] *ver. 2.* and [*without him nothing*

was

was made that was created] *John 1. 3.* The Son of God was not idle, or unconcerned in the first Creation, but was a *Co-Agent* with the *Father*, and the *Spirit* in that Almighty Work, &c. So here he is brought in as an *upholder* of all things by the *Word* of his *Power*, in the Almighty Works of his *Providence*; and he *upholds* all created Things, both *Secundum suum esse*, & *secundum suum operari*, (as the Schoolmen's Phrase is) that is, *Christ* upholds all things, both as to their Beings and Essence, and as to their Actings and Operations. So that the Fire cannot burn, &c. without the Divine Concourse of *Christ*, as both in the Case of *Moses Bush* which *burned*, but was not *consumed*, *Exod. 3. 2.* And in the Case of those three *Nobles of Babylon*, who were cast into the exceeding *hot fiery Furnace*, but the Fire had no power over their Bodies, nor was *one Hair* of their *Head singed*, &c. *Dan. 3. 23*, &c. How came this to pass? We are told there, that the *Son of God* made the *fourth Man* among them, and restrained the fury of those Flames, so that not any *smell* of *burning* was upon them, *Ver. 24, 25, 26, 27.* Where we are told how *Nebuchadnezzar* heard the *three Men* praising God in the Fire, (as the Septuagint saith there) and



64 *By the stronger Man their Redeemer,*  
and he saw the *fourth* as their Redeemer.  
All which do clearly declare, That the  
Devil (but a Creature) is upheld by  
Christ, both in his Being, and in his Act-  
ing: He could not harm an Hog without  
asking leave from his Lord, [suffer us to  
go, &c. *Matth.* 8. 30, 31, 32.] much less  
any *Lamb of Christ*, who lends him his  
leave, &c. Now the *Borrowing-power*  
can never be *too strong* for the *Lending-*  
*power*, &c.

### C H A P. III.

#### *The Redeemed are Conquerors.*

**T**HIS Third Chapter doth demonstrate  
that *Christ* is still the *stronger Man*  
by his *Spiritual Presence* in all his Re-  
deemed, making them more than *Con-*  
*querors*, through his Love to them,  
*Rom.* 8. 37. and he will continue to be  
so with them to the end of the World,  
*Matth.* 28. 20. The Reason where-  
of is rendred, [For he that is in us, is  
greater than he that is in the World]  
1 John 4. 4. The *Greek* word is, [μείζων]  
that is, greater in Strength; of the same  
Sense with [ισχυέστες] the *stronger Man*,  
through

#### *The Redeemed are Conquerors.* 65

*Luke* 11. 22. Who enabled the Apostle  
to say, [ισχυώ] *I can do all things through*  
*Christ that strengthens me* ] *Phil.* 4. 13.  
And thus our Lord out of love doth  
strengthen all his Members, (as he is their  
Head) to conquer and overcome all those  
Difficulties that they meet withal in run-  
ning their Race which is set before them,  
*Hebr.* 12. 2. That no man (nor Devil)  
may take their Crown, *Rev.* 3. 11. The  
first Enquiry is, What be the cases of Dif-  
ficulty, wherein the strong Redeemer doth  
assist his weak redeemed Ones to become  
Conquerors by his assisting Love? Answer,  
This Work of Love he worketh for us in  
Seven several Cases. As

First, *Christ* enables us for performing  
of Duties, which should be wrought in  
God, *John* 3. 21. both *quoad fontem*, from  
a right Principle; and *quoad finem*, for a  
right End; yea, and *quoad regulam*, by a  
right Rule also; otherwise, while we  
write up Service, God may write up Sin;  
*splendida peccata*, shining Sins in a silken  
Suit, &c. *Zech.* 7. 8. When we go not  
forth in the strength of the Lord to Preach,  
Pray, &c. *Psal.* 71. 16. The Lord help-  
eth the Levites to bear the Ark, &c.  
1 *Chron.* 15. 26. And God's Spirit helps  
our Infirmities in praying-work, *Rom.* 8.  
26. The word [συναρπάσσειν] which  
F is

is translated only [*helpeth*] signifies much more; namely, to bear up the heavier end of our praying-work. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and freedom for performing of Duty, 2 Cor. 3. 17. *If Christ free us, we are free indeed,* John 8. 36.

Secondly, For exercising of Graces; 'tis not enough for us to have the Habits of Grace, but 'tis Christ's work to actuate them, and to draw them forth into acts and exercises, not one grace can *inspire* [breathe forth any fragrantcy, unless Christ's Spirit do *inspire* [breathe upon them. Alas, all Habits of Grace do lay dormant in us in the case of Divine Desertion (as those in holy David did while God was departed from him during his ten Months, &c.) and the Spouse was sensible of this danger, when she so earnestly prayed [*Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow forth*] Cant. 4. 16. Never did the ground stand in more need of the *sweet Influences* of the Pleiades, Job 38. 31. or Garden of April showers to bring forth May flowers, &c. than our Hearts and our Habits of Grace do of the Spirit's Influence to come down upon us like Dew upon the mown Grass, and like Showers that water the Earth, Psal. 72. 6.

T

'Tis said [*the Spirit of God did move upon the face of the first deformed Chaos,* and Gen. 1. 2. and thereby brought forth gradually a Beautiful World: So no better are our Hearts and Habits, until the Spirit descends as a Dove upon us, and give more grace, James 4. 6.

Thirdly, Our Lord strengthens us for bearing Affliction, which every good Soldier of Jesus Christ ought to do, 2 Tim. 2. 3. *ἡγωνισάμενοι* [endure all evils. Now this cannot be done but by virtue of having fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, Phil. 3. 10. and where there is not first an Union, there cannot be any Communion or fellowship; we must first be united to Christ as to our Head, and then he communicates ability to his Members, even to trust in a killing God, as Job did, c. 13. 15. because Christ bears up the heavier end of the Cross, as is shewed in that Resemblance of Simon's bearing the Cross after Jesus, Luke 23. 26. The heavier end of the Cross lay upon Christ's own shoulders; So Simon (in his fellowship with his Saviour in his sufferings) did but carry the small lighter end of the Cross after him: Thus our Lord doth more than *line our Crosses for us*, to make them softer, and less galling to our tender Tempers, but he hath taken away the Curse of every Cross, and

F 2

hath

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hath made them more *Medicinal* than *Pa-*  
*nal*; so that we may now read *Divine*  
*Faithfulness* in them, as *David* did, *Psalm*  
*119. 71, 75.* 'Tis a *filling up* *Christ's Af-*  
*fections*, *Col. 1. 24.* A *Chip* of *Christ's*  
*Cross* doth *dulcifie* the *bitter Waters*, as  
*that Tree* did *Marah*, *Exod. 15. 25, 26.*  
That *Glukuzar* or *Liquorice Tree*, might  
be a *Type* of the *Cross* whereon *Christ*  
was *Crucified*: And we find upon *Record*,  
how the *sweet presence* of *Christ* with the  
*Three Nobles* of *Israel's Captives* in *Ba-*  
*bylon*, did even *sweeten* to them those  
*Bitter Flames* in the *Furnace of Fire*, as  
before, *Dan. 3. 25, 28.*

*Fourthly*, *Christ* the *strong Redeemer*  
causeth his *Redeemed Ones* to be *Conque-*  
*rours* also in *Resisting Temptations*; for he  
having before-hand broken the *Serpent's*  
*Head*, *Gen. 3. 15.* doth only leave *Tail-*  
*Temptations* for the *exercise* of their *Gra-*  
*ces*, and not for the *destruction* of their  
*Souls*. He hath engaged his own *Holi-*  
*ness* and *Fidelity* for assuring us of this  
*great Truth*, in that truly *Golden Promise*,  
*1 Cor. 10. 13.* where he saith [That we  
*shall not be tempted above what we are able*,  
for he is *faithful*, and he will *make a way*  
to *escape*, (tho' we cannot make any such  
way for our own *Deliverance*) and that  
none such *Tryals* shall come upon us, but  
what

**The Redeemed are Conquerours. 69**

what are *common* and *incident* to *God's*  
*dearest Children*. He will not *lead us in-*  
*to any untrodden paths*, but only into such  
ways, wherein the *great Friends* and *Fa-*  
*vourites* of *Heaven* have gone before us,  
whose *footsteps* we are *commanded* to *fol-*  
*low*, *Cant. 1. 8.* and *Heb. 6. 12.*] Yea and  
he hath assured *praying Souls*; [that *his*  
*Grace shall be sufficient for us*] *2 Cor. 12.*  
*7, 8.* and that he will *Rebuke Satan* that  
*Resists us*, *Zech. 3. 1, 2, 3, &c.* which he  
can easily do, as having him in a *Chain*;  
and 'tis but taking up a *Link* or two there-  
of, then our *Souls* are *safe*, &c.

*Fifthly*, He makes them *Conquerours*  
in *mortifying Corruptions*; from which  
none (even those of the highest *Form*) are  
not exempted; *Elijah*, *Paul* and *Barnabas*  
were *subject* to the *like passions* with others,  
*Acts 14. 15.* and *James 5. 17.* The *best*  
of *Men* are but *Men at the best*: There-  
fore it is as great an act of *miraculous*  
*Power* to keep our little spark of *Grace*  
alive in the midst of such a vast *Sea* of  
*Corruption*, as it would be to keep a  
*Coal-fire* burning upon the surface of the  
*Main Ocean*. Our *Graces* (like the *Army*  
of *Israel*) are very small, when our *corrup-*  
*tions*, like the *Syrians*, are so numerous as  
to fill the whole *Country* of the *Isle* of  
*Man*, *1 Kings 20. 27.* therefore is it said,  
F 3 that

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that the *Righteous are scarcely saved*, 1 Pet. 4. 18. that is, they have much ado, and meet with many difficulties before they can reach to Heaven; and Solomon saith, [He that *trusts his own heart is a fool*] Prov. 28. 26. Notwithstanding all this, tho' our corruptions have *Iron Char-ets*; and be *too strong for us*, yet are they not too strong for this *stronger Man*, Josh. 17. 16, 18. and Judg. 1. 19. We must say with *John Baptist* [He is *iswēl-tes*, mighty or stronger than I] Mat. 3. 11. And what *Anakims* or Gyant-like corruptions were ever able to stand before his *Mortifying Spirit*? Rom. 8. 13. his Promise, [he will *subdue our Iniquities*] Mich. 7. 19. where the Hebrew word [*Chabash*] doth not signify simply to *subdue*, but *vi, & violentia subjugabit & conculcabit*] that is, [*Fikbosh Gnawonthenu*, Hebr.] he will tread our *Corruptions* down by force and violence, and will *perform with his hand*, what his *mouth hath spoken*; He will *do what he hath said*, 2 Sam. 7. 25. 1 Kings 8. 15. And, which is more than all this, God sometimes doth give *pardoning Mercy*, where he hath denied *prevailing Grace*; as this latter hath been withdrawn to *humble the Saints*; so the former is granted to *comfort them*, as in that double case of *David and Peter*; but then there must be some proportion be-

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betwixt *sinning and sorrowing*; *Manasseh* had *greatly sinned*, and was as *greatly humbled*. Oh! let all bless the Lord for this, that [*sin hath not Dominion over us*], Rom. 6. 14. It may play the *Tyrant*, but never *Rex* or chosen *King*; it may come as a *Traveller*, as 2 Sam. 12. 4. but it cannot be an *Home-dweller*, or *Master of the House*, in any truly gracious Heart, &c.

*Sixthly*, The next Case of Difficulty, wherein the Redeemer assists the Redeemed to become Conquerors also, is in maintaining their Communion with God. Alas, how heavy are our Hearts, [*Leve sursum, grave deorsum*] heavy things hang downward, as light things press upward, which our Hearts cannot do, having the Stone in them, the *Spouse* was sensible hereof, when she prayed, [*draw me, and we shall run after thee*] Cant. 1. 3. *Anselm's Bird* with a Stone tied to its foot, is a lively Representation of this Case, no sooner did the Bird essay to mount up toward Heaven; but the Stone at her foot did presently pluck her down to the Earth. It may well be said, [*Oh, how weak are our Hearts!*] Ezek. 16. 30. Christ saith to his Disciples [*Can ye not watch with me one Hour, the Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak*] Matth. 26. 41. As if our Lord had said with the kindest Can-

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dour to them, seeing I find *willingness of Spirit* (so far as you are *renewed in the Inner-man* by the Law of the Mind) I will either strengthen you against the *weakness of the Flesh*, or I will pardon it; and not only so, but I will accept of your *willingness* to Watch and Pray, wherein your unrenewed part by the Law of your Members doth discover so much weakness. Thus our Lord excuseth their frailties of *Flesh*, whereof he minds them, lest they should *presume*, yet he most graciously owns and acknowledges the Bent of their Spirits, lest they should *despair*: The purpose of our Hearts must be to *cleave unto the Lord*, Acts 11. 23. and because we cannot duly perform it, for we cannot *serve the Lord without Distraction*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. Therefore we ought to pray with David, [*Lord, unite my heart to serve thee*] Psal. 86. 11. For a loose Heart, (that is not tied fast to God, can never abide at the Mark, but will start aside like a deceitful Bow, Psal. 78. 57. and Hof. 7. 16. Alas, never did the unruly Bullock stand in more need to be *bound fast with Cords to the Horns of the Altar*, Psal. 118. 27. than our Hearts do to be bound fast to God with the golden Cords of Christ's Love in our Communion with him. And thus our Lord speaketh

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eth, [*With everlasting kindness have I drawn thee*] Jer. 31. 3. And [*I drew them with the Cords of a* (or suitable to a) *Man*, even with *Bands of Love*] Hof. 11. 4. Whereas God had complained of his People a little before this, [*that their hearts were divided*] Hof. 10. 2. because *Anima dispersa fit minor*; saith the Philosopher, when the Soul is dispersed among various Objects, it is thereby much weakened in its Actings. Whereas on the other hand, [*Vis unita est fortior*] an *Heart united* and firmly fixed to God, [as David's Phrase is) is thereby so strengthened, as [*to cleave close to the Lord, for he is our Life, and the Length of our Days*] Deut. 30. 20. Oh! happy are such Souls that can carry on their Communion with God, be able to say, [*My heart is fixed*] as David saith three several times, Psal. 57. 7. and 108. 1. and 112. 7. Yea, and can drive away wandring Thoughts in the Worship of God, as *Abraham* drove away the *Fowls* which did disturb him in his sacrificing Work, Gen. 15. 11. And likewise can answer distracting Fancies, as *Nehemiah* did his Adversaries, [*I am about a great Work, and cannot attend you, why should God's Work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you*] Neh. 6. 3. 'Tis observable that *Honey* while it is boiling hot, will

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will not be blown upon by any filthy Flies; nor would our Hearts be fly-blown by *Beelzebub*, the Prince of Flies, (as the Name signifies). If we could but keep them in a fervent Frame, *ending good Matter*, as *David did his heart*, Psal. 45. 1. Hebr. Margent, God commands us to be *fervent* in Spirit, *serving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11. or we cannot keep in Communion with God; but neither this Work, nor any other can we do by any strength of our own, yet may we be able to do all the Works of a Christian through *Christ, the stronger Man*) that *strengthens us*, Phil. 4. 13.

The *Seventh* and last Case of Difficulty in which the Redeemer *strengthens* his Redeemed with a conquering Power, is in making their *Passage forward*, and their *Progress perfect* through the wayless and waterless Wilderness of this present evil World, (so called, Gal. 1. 4.) even into the *Heavenly Canaan*, yea, and home to their Father's House. 'Twas God's Command, [*say to the Children of Israel that they go forward*, &c.] Exod. 14. 15, 16. Though there be a *Red-Sea* before, and an *Enemy* behind, and *mighty Mountains* round about; yet was there no cause of fear, because *Christ* in the *Cloudy-Pillar* went along with them, and was present both

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both in the *Van* and in the *Rear*. The same Office of Love doth the strengthening Presence of *Christ* do still unto all the true *Israel of God*. This is shewed in *Hosea* 11. 1, 2, 3, 4: where *Ephraim the Child*, the Lord taught him to go, or as [*Avastou*] the *Septuagint* word there signifies) to *pace*, leaving his natural *Trot* in ways of Sin, intimating how God put him (as it were) into the *Traces*, as Horse-Masters do young Colts to teach them to *Pace*, &c. So God doth here [taking the Child *Ephraim* by the *Arms*, &c. Where beside that notable Notion of teaching to *Pace* or *Amble* from the *Greek* Version, the *Hebrew* Text represents *Christ* as a *Nurse*, bearing the *Nursling* by the *Arms*, whereby she supports the weight of his Body, then she teaches him how to move his Legs forward step by step. Thus our Lord is said, [to *guide our feet in the way of Peace*] Luke 1. 79. He doth strengthen our *feeble Knees*, drawing us [*fortiter tamen suaviter*, strongly, yet sweetly] through the *Quagmires* of *Crosses* by the *Cords of a Man*, Hos. 11. 4. that is, he Drags us not along like Beasts, but he draws us gently endways by Means and Motives, suitable to the rational Nature of Man, even with *Bands of Love*, irresistibly by the effectual workings of

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of his Holy Spirit, which he hath promised to bestow upon us, *John* 6.44. and 12.32. and which the Spouse prayed for, when she found some Back-biasses, that made her hang backward in her Progreſs toward Heaven, *Cant.* 1. 4. Oh, blessed are they whose strength is in the Lord, they pass on from strength to strength, *Psal.* 84. 5, 7. and grow stronger and stronger, *Job* 17. 9. Such do pass from *Mithcab* to *Cashmonah*, *Numb.* 33. 29. that is, from Sweetness unto Swiftness, as those two Hebrew names do signify. They lift up their feet, and walk lustily towards Canaan, as *Jacob* did after his refreshing Bait of the Ladder at Bethel, *Gen.* 28. 12, &c. with 29. 1. Margent. Oh! happy is that Man [whose right hand the Lord upholdeth in his whole Work, as he did for *Cyrus*, *Isa.* 45. 1. though *Abraham* knew not whither he went, *Hebr.* 11. 8. yet he well knew with whom he went] for he walked with God, as a Child in a Fathers hand, who hath promised to save to the utmost, *Heb.* 7. 25.

The Second Enquiry is, What Conditions doth our strong Redeemer require of his Redeemed, that he may cause them to become Conquerors, &c. Answer, The Conditions are Twofold.

(1st.) We

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(1st.) We must keep constantly in God's Arms, &c. And

(2dly.) We must wholly put on God's Armour.

First, On the (1st.) of these briefly, we must keep constantly in God's Arms, for the Eternal God is our Refuge, and his Everlasting Arms must be underneath us, *Deut.* 33. 27. God tells us, [that our Hearts are weak] *Ezek.* 16. 30. And *David* from his sense hereof, crieth [Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak] *Psal.* 6. 2. And hereupon it is the Churches Prayer, [Lord be thou our Arm every Morning] *Isa.* 33. 2. otherwise we shall do nothing but stumble and fall, like weak Children, that love not to keep constantly in their Fathers Arms, but will presumptuously be venturing to go alone, and so gets many a knock and blow, &c. oh how severe was God's Law against such, saying, [That Soul which dare do any thing presumptuously, doth reproach the Lord (as if such scorn'd his helping hand) and shall be cut off from among his People] *Numb.* 15. 30. Our Lord tells us, That [without Christ we can do nothing] *John* 15. 5. that is, nothing after a gracious manner, neither acceptably or effectually, and therefore are we bid to abide in the Vine, ver. 7. and to abide in him,

1 John

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1 John 2. 28. and yet we can do all things by Christ's strengthening presence, Phil. 4. 13: Alas, our Bow (like that of Joseph's) cannot abide in strength, unless it be strengthened by the Arms of the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob, Gen. 49. 24. 'Twas not enough for Joash to put his hand upon the Bow alone, no, but the Prophet of God (who represented God himself) must lay his hands upon the King's hand also, otherwise there can be no shooting to any purpose the Arrows of God's Deliverance, &c. 2 King. 13. 16. We are like little Boys learning to write, who must have their hand guided by their Masters hand. But Secondly, we must put on the whole Armour of God, Eph. 6. 12, &c. The Reason is, our Adversary is a strong Man armed even Cap-a-pee, from head to foot; and woe to us, if at any time he assault us when weak men and naked, such are easily overcome by High-way-men in their Travelling Journeys. 'Tis sad to be insensible of our own nakedness, Rev. 3. 17, 18. Woful is our case if this Thief in the night find us naked, Rev. 16. 15. The first Adam made himself and all his Posterity naked by eating forbidden fruit, Gen. 3. 7. he lost the Robe of Original Righteousness, both for himself, and for all that were in his Loins, as he was a publick Person and Representative of all Man.

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Mankind, Adam's Nakedness made him Run from God to Satan in his sinful excuses of his sin, and in his Fig-leave coverings, &c. Gen. 3. 10, 12, &c. Now while we remain in this corrupt Root the first Adam, we are easily taken by this mighty Hunter, and led captive by him at his will, 2 Tim. 2. 26. The Greek word there [*ἐζωγενήσθαι*] signifies taken alive in Hunting by this Nimrod] not to be preserved alive, but to be destroyed, 2 Pet. 2. 12. without Repentance unto Life, Acts 11. 18. Thus likewise we are told [How Aaron made the People naked] Exod. 32. 25. so that a double Nakedness was upon them, both that from Adam's sin, and also by their own sin of Idolatry, wherein Aaron was their Instrument. This Golden Calf did divest them of Divine protection, and exposed them to the Wrath both of God and Man, as Numb. 14. 9. we become a Break-fast to Satan, &c. And this our Nakedness God minds us of it. Again, Ezek. 16. 22. where both Gnaram, and Gnarah Hebrew, be used to intimate we are (in the fallen Nature) not only polluted in our Blood (as is at large expressed in the beginning of that Chapter) but that we are both naked and bare too, that is, without Apparel as well as without Armour also; oh great misery, &c!

N.B.



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**N.B.** Note well, seeing we are both *naked and bare* in the fallen Estate, to wit, we are destitute both of *Apparel* and of *Armour*; Therefore in the *first place*, we must look out for some *Tight Apparel*, not only to cover our *Nakedness*, but also such as may secure us from those Storms which *Satan* (that *Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. 2. 2, 3.) will assuredly raise up against us: This our Lord sheweth in his *Parable*, Matth. 7. 25. saying, [*The Rain will descend upon our Spiritual Buildings, &c.* Many a sharp Shower will beat upon us and batter us; and because the *fig-leave Aprons* (which our first Parents made for themselves) was not a sufficient security to them. Hereupon the Lord made *Coats of Skins* and clothed them, Gen. 3. 21. which was there a shadowing *Emblem* of the *Fleece and Skin of the Lamb of God*, we must be counselled to buy of him *white Raiment* that we may be clothed, and that the *shame of our Nakedness* may not appear, Rev. 3. 17, 18. We must be covered with a *Covering of Christ's Spirit*, Isa. 30. 1. and apparelled with the *Robes of his Righteousness*, which is call'd the *Best Robe*, Luke 13. 22. and thus the *Bride the Lamb's Wife* had granted to her to be arrayed in *fine Linnen, clean and white*, which is [*Διζώματα*] the *Righteousnesses*

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*nesses of the Saints*, to wit, the *Grace of Justification*, and the *Grace of Sanctification*; and therefore the Greek word is put into the plural Number, Rev. 19. 8, 9. Oh pray over that Promise [*I will spread the skirts of my Merit over thee to cover thy Nakedness, &c.*] Ezek. 16. 8. and look upon it as a shameful thing, that we can (all of us) be wise enough to secure both our *Bodies* and our dwelling-houses from all annoyances and harms to them, yet not be so wise for our *Souls*, but leave them exposed to all evil; whereas we have need to be like *Noah's Ark*, that was pitched within and without, that it might be able to Ride out the Storm, Gen. 6. 14.

Now in the *second place*, This double Malady must have a double Remedy, as we are both *naked & bare*, Ezek. 16. 22, &c. So when we are remedied of being naked of *Apparel*, then may we not remain still bare of *Armour*; and this *Spiritual* or *Mystical Armour* wherewith we ought to be furnished and fortified, do fall under three distinct denominations in sacred Scripture; the *first* is, 'tis call'd the *Armour of Light*, Rom. 13. 12. so named, because *first*, 'Tis only the *Children of Light*, so called, Luke 16. 8. Ephes. 5. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 5. who are blest and beautified with this blessed *Armour*; all the *Children*

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*children of Darknes* abide both *naked* and *bare*, and continue *Slaves* and *Vassals* to *Satan*, that *Prince of Darknes*, as before, *2 Tim. 2. 26*, &c. But *secondly*, Because those *Children* are (or at least ought to be) careful to keep this *Armour* *light*, *bright*, and *glistening*, as indeed all the parts of this *Armour* are when they come first to them out of God's own *Heavenly Armory*, and of God's own *furbishing* and *polishment*. Now this very name [*Armour of Light*] doth most clearly teach us, that we ought to Exercise all the parts of this *Armour* duly and daily, and to keep them in perpetual *Use*, and never (out of any security or presumption) dare to let them become *Rusty* or soiled by our careless *Disuse* of them. Yea and (3dly) this is called [*the Armour of Light*] because it gives a light and lustre to such as wear it; for the light of *Divine knowledge* teacheth us to walk [*ευχρηστος*] *Handsomely* and of the best form and fashion as the Greek word signifies, *Rom. 13. 13*. Intimating, that we ought by the help of this *Armour* to lead such convincing lives, *walk as children of light*, *Eph. 5. 8*. that all who behold us, may then *Acknowledge us*, that we are a seed which the Lord hath blessed, *Isa. 61. 9*. and our *Light* should so shine before Men, so, &c. as that they may see our good works

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*works* and *Glorify* our *Heavenly father*, *Mat. 5. 16*. We ought to shine as *Lights* in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, *Phil. 2. 15*. & so, as not only to stop the mouths of gainayers from *Reproaching* us, *1 Pet. 3. 16*. but also (to force their Mouths open in commending our comely Conversation in Christ.

The second Denomination of this mystical *Armour* is, the *Armour of Righteousness*, which we are to put on us for our Defence both upon our right Hand, and upon our left, *2 Cor. 6. 7*. 'Tis so called there, (1st.) Because by the Blessed benefit hereof we are kept and confirmed in the way of *Righteousness* and true *Holiness*, *Prov. 16. 31*. *Eph. 4. 24*. And (2dly.) Because *Satan* doth batter us both upon our Right hand and upon our Left, on purpose to drive us out of the good old and middle way, into the *Extremes* upon either hand; for this is the Tempter's wily Method, at the first to assault us with his *Flatteries* and *Allurements*, and when he finds himself baffled herein by this *Impenetrable Armour*, then his second Assault is more furious with his *Frowns* and *Affrightments*; this was the Tempter's way of Tempting famous *Luther*, whom the *Devil's Patriarch* (the Pope) first enticed with great promises of preferring him to a Cardinals

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Cap, &c. if he would turn Papist, &c. but when this great promise, &c. could not fasten upon him, then the Pope turned his Tone and Tune, and sent forth his *Thundring Bull*, and dreadfully threatned to fall upon him foully with fire and sword, if he persisted in his obstinacy, &c. But brave *Luther*, being fortified with this Armour of Righteousness; on his Right hand and Left returns this Answer [*Contemptus ad me Romanus & favor & furor*] that is, I do cordially scorn both the *favour* and *fury* of that Romish Beast, &c. Yea and the same Heroick Soul saith farther, [*Valde protestatus sum me nolle sic a Deo Jatiari*] that is, I have solemnly protested that my God shall not put me off with such low things as those are which the Mock-Vicar of *Christ* doth now tempt me with.

But the *Third Denomination* hereof, it is called [the *Armour of God*] Ephes. 6. 10, 11, 12. that we may be made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, we are commanded to put on the *Armour of God*. It hath this name upon it; First, Because God (who is call'd [*τοχυρος*] *Tychus* 11. 10. signifying a most curious Artificer) is the framer of them, as well as of the *Worlds*, and of that *City Celestial* and without Foundations. What was said of

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*Moses's Tables of Stone* wherein the *Decalogue* was written, that All was the *Workmanship of God*, Exod. 32. 16. The same may be said of this *Spiritual Armour*; All the Furniture and Armory of Evangelical Graces wherewith we are defended from all our Spiritual Enemies, as they are called the *Gifts of God*, Eph. 2. 8. so they are truly the *Workmanship of God*, whereby we are said to be created in *Christ*, &c. verse 10. and become partakers of the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. And Secondly, We are bid to put this *Armour of God* upon us, because we have a most Dangerous Devil to deal with, who is compleatly Armed to Do Evil to us (according to the Descant upon his name [*Devil*, quasi *Do-Evil*] yea and he can do evil to us [*eminus*] that is, at distance with his *Fiery Darts*, afar off, Eph. 6. 16. as well as [*cominus*] that is, hand to hand, by his *Buffetings*, that the Messenger of *Satan* is said to give the blessed Apostle as it were face to face, 2 Cor. 12. 6, 7, &c.) which plainly demonstrates that the Devil is got near at hand to us, and now doth rapple with us as a *Wrestler*, who takes hold of the Arms of him with whom he wrestles; and thus 'tis said [We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, &c.] Eph. 6. 12. so that

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he doth evil to us, not only at a distance, as he is *Prince of the power of the Air*, (and so hath the upper ground of us poor Worms crawling upon the Earth) from whence he throws his fiery Darts at us, as *Saul* did his *Javelin* several times at *David*, &c. but also near hand; for *Job* by Divine permission was within *Satan's Touch*, *Job* 1. 11. & 2. 5. where *Satan* begs leave of the Lord to let him touch *Job's* person as well as his goods and children with some of his pernicious Touches; but tho' we be within the Tempter's Touchings (in his walking to and fro seeking whom he may devour, 1 Pet. 5. 8.) yet blessed be the Lord for his Divine Grace that this wicked one cannot Touch such as are born of God with any of his Deadly Touches, 1 John 5. 18, 19. However it most highly concerns us, that we be not found of him naked and unarmed. Alas how easily did *Cain* prevail against *Abel* whom he found in the Field unprepared for Resistance, &c? and how easily did *Simeon* and *Levi* (those two Brethren in Iniquity) prevail against *Shechem* and his Citizens whom they surprized at unawares, and altogether unable to defend themselves, being still very fore with their Circumcision, *Gen.* 34. 25. *Solomon's* faith [*Poverty shall come upon Idle ones*]

like an Armed Man, *Hebr.* A Man of Shields] *Prov.* 6. 11. that is, it comes with so much force and violence, as it cannot be either avoided or averted, &c. Now if so much be said of such a thing as *Poverty* or *Want*; how much more may be affirmed of such a person as this Prince of Devils, and Darknes, and the God of this World, *Matth.* 12. 24. and 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. who is such a Mark's man as can sling his Stones of Temptation even to an hair's breadth and not miss, as *Judg.* 20. 16. yea and can shoot his Arrows with so much accuracy and exactness, as to wound us between the Joynts of our Harness, as as *Abab* was, 1 *Kings* 22. 34. And if so, then much more when he surprizeth us either Napping or Naked, or both: Therefore our Lord makes an open proclamation [What I say unto you, I say unto all; watch, that none be found sleeping] *Mark* 13. 36, 37. And the Apostle *Peter* publisheth by sounding of his Trumpet, and crying, Arm, Arm, Arm, your selves, [On all of us] 1 *Pet.* 4. 1. in general to all.

This brings us to the third particular, to wit, we must not only Arm our selves, and put on the Armour of Light and of Righteousness; but we must put on the whole Armour of God; as they are distinctly described

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described in order one after another, Eph. 6. 11, to 19. where the *Apostle* having before appointed all sorts of Christians their Ranks in all their respective Relations, and had declared to them their Relative Duties in their several Respects; then he pursues his Divine Documents, how they must be compleatly armed Cap-a-pee, from Top to Toe, intimating, that without this *whole Armour*, we can neither keep our Relative Ranks religiously, nor do our respective Duties (as those that are *Superiour* of Parents, Masters and Husbands, &c. and *Inferiour*, as Wives, Children and Servants, &c. or *equal*, &c.) in a way either pleasing to God, or profitable to man, &c. from *ver.* 22, of Chap. 5: to *ver.* 10 of Chap. 6.

Now this *Christian Armour* (so highly honoured with those three Titles, the Armour of *Light*, of *Righteousness*, and of *God*.) the same *Apostle* lets us know all the parts of the whole, which he bids us to *put on*, particularly both those parts.

1. That are *Defensive*; and then,
2. Those that are *Offensive*: And first he begins with the *Mystical Belt*, or *Girdle of Truth*, *ver.* 14. wherein he alludeth to that Military Belt which the Roman Soldiers did commonly wear, that

was

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was made up of Durable Stuff, beset with many Iron and Brass Plates, whereby their Loins, and the upper part of the Belly (which is most easily wounded) were well armed and secured from Harm: By this he resembleth that *Golden Girdle of Truth and Sincerity*, wherewith every True Christian ought to *gird up the Loins of his Mind*; Luk. 12. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 13. The Loins of our Worldly Affections may not be loose and hanging down, &c. like loose Garments down to the Feet, which will hinder the nimble motion of our Feet in *running the Race* that is *set before us*, Heb. 12. 1. Therefore we must *gird* them up with this *Girdle of Truth*, which makes us firm and stable in all our Religious Undertakings. That vulgar Proverb [*Ungirt Unblest*] doth assuredly hold true here, if ever; for they prove but loose Professors, who want this Golden Girdle, and only wear the Garment of Holiness like a loose Gown or Garment, to be *put on* or *cast off* at pleasure; such an one is called [*omnium horarum Homo*] a man that can turn with the Times, and can shift and suit his Sails to all Winds and Seasons, &c. whereas our Lord saith, that all his sincere Servants must first *gird themselves*, (to wit with this Golden Girdle of Sincerity) other

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otherwise we can never serve our Master as we ought to do, Luk. 17. 8.

The second piece of Defensive Armour is, the Breast-plate of Righteousness, ver. 14. which is the principal Defence for the Heart, the least wound whereof is mortal: 'Tis the *primum vivens*, and the *ultimum moriens*, the first that lives, and the last that dies in the ordinary course of Nature; and therefore extraordinary care is universally taken to secure that Fort-Royal of Life the Heart. Now seeing the Heart doth signify the Conscience, [if our hearts condemn us, &c. that is, our Consciences, 1 Joh. 3. 20. therefore how careful was this same Apostle to secure it with this Breast-plate of Righteousness, saying [I have lived in all good Conscience] Aët. 23. 1. because it was good with the goodness of Integrity, therefore was it good also with the goodness of Tranquility: And he farther tells us, how he made it his daily Exercise and Recreation (as ἐν τῷ ἀσκήσει signifies) to keep his Conscience void of offence both toward God and toward man,] Aët. 24. 16. Moreover he saith [our rejoicing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World, and more abundantly to you

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you ward,] 2 Cor. 1. 12. but more of this after to this same purpose. None such Job saith [My Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, my Heart shall not reproach me, so long as I live,] Job 27. 6. And John addeth his Verdict to this point likewise, saying, [He that hath Righteousness, is Righteous, &c.] 1 Joh. 3. 7. that is, such as have both the Righteousness imputed in the Grace of Justification, and likewise that which is imparted in the Grace of Sanctification; these two are called [δικαιοσύνη τῶν ἁγίων] the Righteousness of the Saints, Rev. 19. 8. The original reading there is in the plural number: We all ought to be unto God what we seem to be unto men, and that at all times and in all places, and our Consciences must bear witness hereof in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 9. 1. If so, this will be χεῖρον σιδήρεα, an Impenetrable Coat of Mail, and Armour of Proof, a most blessed Breast-plate. Thus far the Light and Law of Nature enabled the Pagan Poet to sing,

*Hic Murus Abaneus esto  
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa;*

that is, a clear Conscience is as a Brazen Wall, which will beat back the Shots of a thousand Reproaches and Slanders, &c. and

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and the Apostle better tells us, that this is an *Evidence of our Election*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. If all be *well within* us, it cannot well be *ill* without us. Whereas on the contrary, if *Conscience* be galled, 'tis with us, as with those who have the Skin of their Backs rubbed off; or their Shoulder-blade disjointed; any lightsome load is very burdensome to them, &c. This Consideration caused *Paul* (who was in *perils often*, &c.) so careful of not making *Shipwrack* of *Faith* and of a good *Conscience*; 1 Tim. 1. 19. for *Faith* is the *Jewel*, and *Conscience* is the *Cabinet* wherein it is kept; and if this be safe, all loads on us will be lighter, &c.

The *Third* piece of *Defensive Armour* is, [ *having our Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace*, ] ver. 15. that is, seeing there is much *hard Ground* as *Etham* signifies, betwixt us and *Canaan*, as it was *Israel's* third Stage [ from *Raamses* to *Succoth*, and from *Succoth* to *Etham*, *Exod.* 13. 20. and *Numb.* 33. 6. yea, and many snares of *Satan* in our way to *Heaven*; and indeed every place in our passage thither is full of *Briars* and *Bramble-bushes*, so that we have great need to be well-shod with *Gospel-shoes* of *magnanimity* and *patience*, or we shall prove unlike to the *Right Brood* of *Travellers*,  
who

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who travel lustily home to their *Fathers House*. We read in *Scripture* how *Goliath* had *Greeves* or *Boots of Brass*, 1 Sam. 17. 6. And thus *Homer* characterizeth his *Gracians*, not only to be χαλκίπιδες, *Iron-sides* (as is the Phrase of our times) but also ευνήμυδες Ἀχαιοί, well-booted *Soldiers*, whose *Legs* and *Feet* were well secured from *Hazards* and *Harms* by *Shots*. Thus *Christians* ought to be well fortified with *Gospel-comforts*, (whereby *God creates peace* in the *Soul*, *Isai.* 57. 19.) then may they trudge over hard ground with alacrity; yea, tread upon not only *Briars* and *Brambles*, but also upon *Lions* and *Adders* with safety; yea, that old *Dragon* the *Devil* himself, they shall trample under foot, *Psal.* 91. 13. *Mar.* 16. 18. and *Rom.* 16. 20. *Paul* shook the *Viper* from off his *Hand* into the *Fire*, *Act.* 28. 4, 5. Whereas on the other hand, oh how soon are the ignorant, the timorous, and such as become ashamed of their Profession, put to the Foil by that old subtle *Serpent*, (who hath a liberty in his Commission to bruise the Heel of the Seed of the Woman, *Gen.* 3. 15.) because they are no better shod with the *Shoes* of *Gospel-peace*: This is known by common experience, that those who are tender-footed, or whose Feet are  
either

either beaten or blistered, cannot tread upon Stones or Thorns; they are *Halters* betwixt *God and Baal*.

The *fourth* piece of *Defensive Armour*, is the *Shield of Faith*, verse 16. which we are bidden [*ἐν πίστει*] above all, or *over* and upon all, to take and be armed with; intimating, that whatever other part of this Mystical Armour we want, we must in no wise want this principal part thereof, for this doth cover and defend all the other pieces of the Defensive Armour, because a firm Trust and Confidence in *God* by *Christ* doth after a special manner shelter, and over-shadow the imperfections of all our other Graces: And indeed this *Shield of Faith* doth not only defend our other Graces, but our selves also, as it takes hold of that precious Promise of *God* to *Abraham* [*I am thy Shield, fear not, &c.*] Gen. 15. 1. As if *God* had said [thine Enemies shall first strike through *me thy Shield*, before they can come to reach and wound thee, I will stand betwixt thee and all Danger] and the like priviledge of safety *God* vouchsafed unto *Israel*, saying, [as the *Eagle beareth her young upon her wings*, so hath the *Lord* born you, &c.] Deut. 32. 11, 12. which allusion doth imply, that no Shot can come to harm the young *Eagles* so carried, but it must first pierce

pierce and pass through the body of the *Old* one. By all this it is apparent, how safely doth *Faith* lodge the Soul under the shadow of the wings of *Almighty God*, Psal. 91. 1, 2, 3, 4, to 14. The *just* do live by their *Faith*, Hab. 2. 4. Nor is this all that the *Shield of Faith* doth for us, in securing us from the Assaults of *Satan*, but it also repels and beats back those Darts that he casts at us; yea and yet higher, it more-over doth quench that *Hell fire* they bring along with them; for *Satan's Darts* are like those (that *History* mentions) of the *Scythians*, which were not only pointed and hardened in the fire, but they were also dipped in the poison of *Asps*, and in the venom of *Vipers*, that they might the more horribly torture and torment those Bodies that were wounded with them; even so *Satan* would torture and torment our Souls with his poison'd fiery Darts: The *Lord* strengthen our *Faith*, whereby we may quench the fire, and antidote the poison, &c.

The *fifth* peece of *Defensive Armour*, is the *Helmet of Salvation*, verse 17. which the same Apostle helps to interpret this place, saying, [Take for an *Helmet the Hope of Salvation*] 1 Thes. 5. 8. So that this *Helmet* here is the Grace of *Hope*, the office whereof is, to hold up our heads above



above Water, and raises up the Soul (*with an out-stretched neck*, as the Greek word [*Ἀντὶς κεφαλῆς*] Rom. 8. 23. signifies, which we read, *waiting with groans for the Adoption*, to wit, the *Redemption of the Body*. And the next words *there* are [*for we are saved by hope, &c. and if we hope for that, we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*] verse 24, 25. *Hope* is the Daughter of Faith, its Mother; yet is it as a *staff* for its Aged Mother to lean upon: By Faith we believe the *Truth* of, and our own *Title* to those blessings that we are not yet possessed of, and by *Hope* we *patiently wait* for that which we believe shall surely come to pass: And when they but begin to do so, then *Hope* looketh up and lifts up the head, because our *Redemption* draweth nigh, Luke 21. 28. 'Tis the excellency of *Hope* to take her Turns in walking round about the Streets of the *New Jerusalem*, and sometimes to sit still and sing [*adhuc mea Messis in Herba est*] there is yet an happy Harvest that is hastening in its season for me; *the Lord will hasten it in his time*, Isa. 60. 22. So I will hope against Hope, Rom. 4. 18. Yet more, this *Hope* is so excellent, that it is not only our *Helmet* by Land, but it is also our *Anchor* by Sea, Heb. 6. 19. By *Hope* we have our *Safety* here, and our *Salvation* hereafter

hereafter, both are purchased by *Christ*, who has secured a full Victory over this *strong Man* for us.

Thus far the *five pieces* of the *Christian Defensive Armour* reacheth; now the two following parts, namely, the *Sixth* and *Seventh*, are indeed *Offensive Weapons*, as well as *Defensive Armour*. As the former five were merely, and solely for our Defence; so these two latter are not only for our own Defence, but they are also for Offence of our Spiritual Foes, to wit, the *Sword of the Spirit*, and *Darts of Prayer*.

The *Sixth Apostolical Direction* here for our being compleatly Armed in our Spiritual Warfare, is, *Take likewise to you the Sword of the Spirit*, which is the *Word of God*] Eph. 6. 17. As there is a literal and a Carnal Sword, so there is a *Mystical* and a *Spiritual Sword*: Which Truth may be demonstrated, *First*, By that Example in Scripture-Record [*And it shall come to pass, that him who escapeth the Sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the Sword of Jehu, shall Elisha slay.*] 1 Kings 19. 17. the Interpretation whereof must most plainly imply, that *Elisha* had his *Slaying Sword*, as well as *Hazael* and *Jehu*: And tho' their *Slaying Swords* were both of them Carnal, yet this

this of *Elifha* must be *Spiritual*, as he was a Prophet of the Lord, and more; yea and weilded no other Sword, but that which is called here *the Word of God*: And in congruity with this sense the Lord himself speaketh Secondly, [*Therefore I have hewed them by my Prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth*] Hof. 6. 5. Moreover a Third sacred Instance gives a farther Illustration unto this Myftical Interpretation, namely, [*If any man will dare to hurt my two Witnesses, I will give such a power to my Servants, that Fire shall proceed out of their mouths, which shall devour their Enemies; and if any man (tho' never so many or so mighty) will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*] Rev. 11. 3, 5. And yet to all those three Quotations above-named, this Scripture is most exprefs for this Myftical sense, saying [*Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.*] There be several cogent and ponderous Reasons, why the Word of God is called the *Sword of the Spirit*, &c.

The first is, Because the Spirit was the Artificer, the curious Contriver, who framed and fashioned this Spiritual Sword, the Holy Spirit hath the honour of making this excellent weapon ready to our hands; for thus we are told [*That no Prophecy of Scripture came in old*

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*Time* by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, &c.] 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. The word [*θεόπνευστοι*] signifies that the Scriptures are God's breath, God made them as well as the Heavens, &c. Heb. 11. 10. with the Breath of his Mouth.

The Second Reason is, because the word of God is sharper than any two edged Sword, and pierceth to the dividing of the Soul and Spirit, &c. Heb. 4. 12. the Greek words ενεργης καὶ τομώτερος καὶ ζῶν, signifies 'tis quick, lively, cutting, powerful and energetical, when the power of the Spirit goeth along with it, as Luke 5. 17, &c. It will then ransack the hearts even of wicked men, as it did to Herod, Luke 9. 7. it made him stick fast in the mud, as the original word [*Διηπόρει*] signifies, and as it did to Felix, who was made to tremble thereby, Acts 24. 25. But as to the Godly who tremble at his Word and Judgments (as David did, Psal. 119. 120.) God promiseth to lend a look of Love towards them, Isai. 66. 3.

The Third Reason why the Word is called a Sword, is, because this Weapon of our Warfare, is not weak as Flesh (oft called the old man for weakness) is, but it is mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, and casting down

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imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Therefore Alexander's Sword wherewith he could cut the Gordian Knot, (as it is famous in History) is nothing comparable to this Spiritual Sword that can work all those Wonders before mentioned. We must say the same of this Sword, what David said of Goliath's Sword, *there is none like it, let it be given to us*, 1 Sam. 21. 9.

But the Fourth Reason above all is, this was the Weapon wherewith our Lord Christ did defeat and discomit the Devil himself when he warred this good Warfare against Satan's very Person, and that upon the Devil's own Dunghil, as he is called the God of this World, 2 Cor. 4. 4. We find in Matt. 4. and in the other Evangelists likewise, how our Lord (in his Duel with the Devil) made use of no other Weapon, but this Sword of the Spirit, the word of God, wherewith in three several assaults of Satan upon him, he repelled his Antagonist three sundry times one after another, and that by answering all the three Temptations of the Tempter, only with [*scriptum est, it is written*] three times over: and which is re-

markable,

markable, all those three Scriptures wherewith our Saviour conquered Satan, were drawn out of the Fifth Book of Moses called Deuteronomy. This, even this was the great and strong Sword wherewith our Lord flashed, and cut in pieces that lofty Leviathan, that old and crooked piercing Serpent, as Isai. 27. 1. As David (our Lord's Father and Figure) did choose some smooth Stones out of the Water-brooks wherewith he fought the good fight of Faith against that monstrous Philistin, &c. 2 Sam. 17. 40. and he flings these Stones (out of the Sling of Faith also) at the very Face of the Great Goliath, and God himself going along with the Stone, it gave him a mortal wound, and made him fall flat down to the ground, so that the weight of his bulky Body, (especially so loaded with so much heavy Armour) must make an horrible Earthquake by his fall. Even so our myltical David here doth choose those three smooth Stones out of the Silver Streams of the Sacred Scriptures, and with these, being slung by a Divine Art and Hand, he likewise knocks down the Great Goliath of Hell. All this doth teach us, that the Books of the Holy Scriptures are a blessed Armory, (far beyond that of Solomons, Cant. 4. 4. The Tower of Da-

*vid* was famous for a fully furnished Armory, as the *Tower of London* is now accounted the most famous Armory in the World for all sorts of Armour, so comly fixed in a most beautiful order, which my Eyes have beheld with admiration) whether we ought to hasten in an hour of Temptation, and there we shall be furnished with this *Sword* to defeat the Devil, &c.

NB. Note well, (1st) That this *Sword* may have saving effects for our Souls good; we must learn from *David* to draw the *Sword* out of its *Sheath*, as he did, 1 *Sam.* 17. 51. that is, we must draw this *Sword* of the *Spirit* out of the *Sheath* of the Letter, and not make a Charm of the bare words thereof; for 'tis said [the Letter killeth, but 'tis the *Spirit* that giveth life, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. Yet 'tis the Foppery of Popery to use only a wooden Dagger, and a leaden *Sword* in undertaking to drive away the Devil, by making *Spells* of some certain Syllables of the Scripture, and by crossing themselves with the sign of the Cross, and by being sprinkled with their Holy Water; yea, and by ringing their Baptized Bells, &c. Whereas, alas, 'tis not the dead sign of the Cross, but the living Word of the Cross, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. the power of God, &c. that drives away the Devil; 'tis our being sprinkled with

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Water of Life, even with *Water* and the *Spirit*, Joh. 3. 3, 5. and it is the ringing of *Aaron's Bells*, which typified the preaching of the Word of God) and which the Devil can no more abide than the *Owle* can abide the Light of the Sun, because he is a Bird of Darknes. This was very apparent in *New England*, (as Mr. *Elliot* relateth the story) that when the *Sun-shine* of the Gospel first came into that Country, it so molested the Devil in his former quiet Habitations, that he departed thence with most horrible signs of his Displeasure; and thus it is said, that [God smites the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth,] Isa. 11. 4. and likewise that [the man of Sin shall be destroyed with the Breath of Christ's Mouth, and with the Brightness of his Coming,] 2 *Thess.* 2. 8. 'tis the *Breath*, or *Spirit* (both which are of the same signification) of Christ, that goes along with his Word, which destroys the Devil and his Works, Heb. 2. 14. and 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. Luk. 5. 17.

NB. Note well, (2ly) How highly doth it concern us all to comply cordially with that Apostolical command [let the Word of Christ dwell in you Richly, Col. 3. 16. The Greek word [πλούσιως] there doth intimate, that we ought to have an Holy Covetousness of heaping up an hoard

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of the Sacred Scriptures, and locking them up in the Cabinet of a *Sanctified Memory*, &c. as we all naturally can be careful and covetous enough for heaping up the Coin of Gold and Silver, and securing the same under Locks and Bolts, &c. As we do this latter, that we may duly and daily fetch out of our Treasure so much thereof as will supply all our wants, [*for Many answers all things,*] Eccles. 10. 19. even so we all ought to be (as Appollos was, Acts 18. 24.) *mighty in the Scriptures*; we should have a mighty stock of the knowledge of them, that so, when-ever a *busie Devil* comes to Buffet our *Base Hearts*, then must we have a *smooth Stone* of the Holy Scripture ready to hurl at the very Head of our Adversary, as David did at the Head of *Goliath*. Now as we are told how David gathered many more smooth Stones than he had occasion to make use of in his Sling, for he gathered *five* of them, and put them into his Bag, 1 Sam. 17. 40. yet we find he slung in his Sling only one of these Stones at *Goliath's* Forehead, [*he put his Hand into his Bag, and took thence only one Stone* (in the singular number) and *slung* it with such a force, that it *sunk* in the Forehead of the *Philistine*, and he *fell upon his Face to the Earth*] v. 49.

No

No doubt but David did *sling God himself* along with the Stone (as before) whereby it became so speedily effectual for the killing of that Monster of Mankind, &c. even so we ought to be furnished with a large Stock of Sacred Scriptures in the Bag of our *Minds* and *Memories*, tho' possibly one single smooth Stone of them may serve our present turn to drive away the Devil from us in an hour of temptation, especially if we sling this one Scripture at *Satan's* Forehead out of the *Sling of Faith*, and God himself go along with that Scripture in our behalf, as he did with the Stone in the behalf of David. May we but thus (*through Grace*) *resist the Devil*, he must then unavoidably *flee from us*, Jam. 4. 7. for what created Power can *resist* the Power of the Great Creator of all Beings? [*who hath resisted his Will?*] Rom. 9. 19, 21. Notwithstanding tho' one of those smooth Stones of Sacred Scripture may thus serve us, and save us out of *Satan's* Hands at one time, yet considering that *Satan* is not slain outright in our Victories over him, as *Goliath* was in David's Victory over that Gyant: For as *Satan* did but *depart from our Redeemer*, (after he had conquered him in his Three successive Assaults) *only for a Season*, Luke 4. 13. still designing to return upon him again

again with fresh and renewed Attempts when he could espy out an advantage, or any opportunity: So Satan doth depart from the Redeemed (after their Victories at any time over him) *only for a season*; he resolves to return again, and hence is occasioned the Apostle's caution, [lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his Wiles and Devices,] 2 Cor. 2. 11. Upon this account therefore we ought always to keep our Bag full of those smooth Stones, that we may have them in *readiness* both as *Defensive* to our selves, and as *Offensive* to Satan in his fresh and frequent assaulting us, &c.

3dly NB. We must set the *Word of God* against the Temptations of Satan, (as our Lord taught us by his own pattern and practice, *Matt. 4.*) and then say to the Tempter, [I may not, I cannot, I dare not do what thou tempts me to do,] and we must be sure to bring such suitable Scriptures as afford a full Answer to our Tempter's Temptation, (as Christ did in all his Three Conflicts,) saying, [this Sin, (oh Satan) that thou tempts me to, is forbidden in such a place, and again in such a place; and we must be sure to have such Scriptures all at hand in our Bag ready for our hand, as David had his smooth Stones ready: Thus we are com-

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manded [to be ready for every good Work,] Tit. 3. 1. and [to be in readiness to revenge all disobedience,] 2 Cor. 10. 6. yea and [the Man of God must be fully furnished for all good Works,] 2 Tim. 3. 17. as our Adversary the Strong Man is fully furnished for all evil Works. We should be as ready to Resist, as he is to Assault; and we should have this Sword of the Spirit ready and at hand, as Saul had his Spear ready at his head, [being stuck in the ground at his Bolster,] 1 Sam. 26. 7. but God forbid that such a dead sleep should fall upon us to let this Sword be taken from us, as did upon him, whereby his Spear was taken from him, and he not sensible thereof; some Son of Zeruiah will be too hard for us, as it was in his case, *ver. 11, 12.* 'Tis the practice of some persons (who are Masters of great Families) to stick up their Swords in the upper Floor, and there to hang it at their Beds Head all the night, that the Weapon might be ready for their hand in case of any Assault, by Robbers, in the dead time of the Night. Oh, that we could be so wise, in hanging this *Spiritual Sword* so ready Night and Day, at home and abroad, &c. more especially the *Decalogue*, (or the Ten Commandments,) which is an Abridgment of the Law and the

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the *Prophets*; wherein all sorts of sins are prohibited, even in the lowest degree of them, &c. Yea, and all sorts of Duties (both to God and to Man) are required, &c. There is none like this Sword that can cut asunder every Knot, wherewith Satan would bind our Souls to any sort of Sin, &c. Beside this, let me acquaint you what other particular Scriptures (over and above the *Two Tables*) the Lord hath helped me to use as a sharp Sword, wherewith to withstand the violent Assaults of the Tempter, &c.

As (1<sup>st</sup>) that of *Joseph*, [*How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*] Gen. 39. 9. No, he was hedged in with contrary Principles, and so said [*I cannot do it.*]

And (2<sup>ly</sup>) that of the *Sons of Jacob*, [*we cannot do this thing, to give our Sister unto one that is Uncircumcised, for that would be a Reproach to us;* Gen. 34. 14.

And (3<sup>ly</sup>) that of *Nehemiah* [*shall such a Man as I, sin, who is there, that being as I am, would do it, I will not do it?*] Neh. 6. 11. Here is only a small variation of words, but none at all of sense; for his fleeing from God's Work at that time, would have been his sinning against his God. Tho' I might add many more, yet for brevity sake I shall mention another only,

only, which made indeed a mighty sound in the Ears of my Inner Man, and as mighty an impression upon the Tables of my Heart, to wit, the loud Outcry of God himself, saying, [*Ob! do not this abominable thing which I hate,*] Jer. 44. 4. And indeed as to the main course of my Life (*excepting these Bonds*, as the *Apostle's* phrase is, *Acts* 26. 29. namely my manifold Infirmities) I have evermore endeavoured to observe this as my standing Rule, [*where God presseth, there to perform; and where God forbiddeth, there to forbear.*] And to know this double Duty, what to perform, and when to forbear; 'tis even absolutely necessary, that the word of Christ must dwell in us Richly, *Col.* 3. 16. as before. The knowledge of the Holy Scriptures doth make wise unto salvation, and is profitable in all the concerns of a Christian, yea, and compleateth the Man of God for his Generation-work, as before, *2 Tim.* 3. 15, 16, 17. and therefore every good Soldier of *Jesus Christ* (such as young *Timothy* was, *2 Tim.* 2. 3.) must by all means be girded about with this Sword of the Spirit, hanging fast at the Golden Girdle of Truth; and I must say, that one of those four Scriptures, before named, or any other single Sentence of God's Word (when spiritually improved)

proved ) may do us more service in our *Christian warfare*, than all the witty sayings of *Pagan Philosophers*; or any of the superstitious Charms of the Popish Mountebanks. Assuredly David (*a man after God's own heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 14.) had a Divine Inspiration, when he prescribed that Sovereign Salve, and Sacred Antidote, and preservative against sin, saying, [ *thy word, oh my God, I have hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee,* ] Psal. 119. 11. All which do plainly demonstrate, what an excellent Weapon the *Word of God* is, &c.

Now I come to discourse upon the *Seventh* and Last piece of this Mystical Armour, which is likewise the *Second* of the *Two Offensive Weapons*, (as the *Former* were merely *Defensive* ) namely, we must not only be Armed with the *Sword of the Spirit*, but we must be furnished also with the *Spiritual Darts of Prayer*, ver. 18. which *Duty of Praying* hath here subjoined to it the *Duty of Watching*; but of that afterwards. The same *Apostle* tells us, that *Satan* hath his *Darts*, and those *fiery ones*, to throw at us, ver. 16. And here he comes in ver. 18. to shew, that we must have our *Darts* also, and that *fiery ones* too, to throw at him; for one fire sucks out another, as

is oft tryed in Burnings, &c. so the fire from Heaven in Prayer, sucks out the Fire of Hell, &c. otherwise we cannot retaliate, nor can our *Remedy* carry a proportion to our *Malady*.

This *Seventh* piece of Armour, is not only a part of our *Spiritual Armour*, but also it enableth us to make a right improvement of all the rest; for it was at *David's Prayer* [ that the *Lord* taught his *Fingers to fight*, and his *Hands to War*, &c. Psal. 18. 29, 34. and 144. 1. ] Prayer is our *City of Refuge*, to which we flee when all other *Refuges* fail us. Prayer hath a double excellency, as it hath a prevailing power, not only over the *Devil*, but in some sort over *God himself*.

First, Over the *Devil*, as it is an *holy Charm* against that crooked Serpent, Isa. 26. 16. and 27. 1. When *Israel* was afflicted by *Satan* and his Instruments, they then poured out their Prayers to God, Heb. secret Speeches as Charms, and thereby the *Devil* was enchanted by their Prayers. Hence *Father Chrysostom* calls Prayer [ *Flagellum Diaboli* ] a *Whip* to drive the *Devil* away, ( which is more than a meer Charm, to tie his Hands from harming us. ) This torments him, yea and forcibly thrusts him ( as it were ) into another Hell, especially when our *Darts of Prayer*



Prayer (that we cast at him) be fiery (as his are against us,) and have the fire of Heaven in them, (as his Darts have the fire of Hell, &c.) 'Tis another high Expression of the same Father, that praying Souls should be [*tanquam Leones ignem expuentes,*] which is well englished, Rev. 11. 5. of the two famous Witnesses 'tis said there, [*that Fire proceedeth out of their Mouths, which devoureth their Adversary,*] like the Flame that devoureth the Stubble which stands in its way. Thus Samson's Fire-brands in his Foxes Tails, burnt up the Standing Corn, &c. of the Philistines, Judg. 15. 5. and if the Fire-brands had been fixed in the Foxes Mouths, (as they were in their Tails,) it would have been in some respect a more suitable Resemblance of this devouring Fire that broke forth like a Flame out of the Mouths of those two Holy Martyrs, which must be meant of their

\* The Queen of Scots said, she feared more Mr. Knock's fervent Prayers, than an Army of Twenty Thousand Soldiers. And the Duke of Saxony once said, that he durst not fight against a Praying Army.

Ardent Prayers that they poured forth for the confusion of their Enemies; \* and this is the more probable, because all Praying-Souls are commanded to be *servent in Spirit* (the Greek word

word is [*ζέλος*] which signifies *Seething Hot*) serving the Lord, and to continue instant in Prayer] Rom. 12. 11, 12. And thus likewise David kept his Heart warm in his Praying-work, yea, *boiling hot in this good Matter*, as the Hebrew Margent reads, Psal. 45. 1. And could we but keep our Hearts thus in a boiling frame while we are at Praying-work, this would be the best, and the most blest expedient against wandring thoughts, &c. as before; for Beelzebub, that Prince of Flyes dare not fly-blow Honey while it is boiling hot, &c. and the Prayer-hearing God loves not to hear cold Prayers, &c. And the Rabbins render this Reason why the Shew-Bread in their Tabernacle-worship was taken off from the Table when it was cold, and the Hot Bread was placed before the Lord in its stead, because the Lord loveth not cold Dishes, cold Prayers, &c. 1 Sam. 21. 6.

But, Secondly, As fervent Prayer hath a prevailing Power over the Devil, &c. so it hath by Divine Condescension a prevailing Power even over God himself, who is the Devil's maker, and will be his Rebuker for us, &c. for so gracious is our Prayer-hearing God, that he is pleased to command us, [*that we shall command him, concerning the Work of his Hands*] I  
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Isai. 45. 11. and that [*the Seed of Jacob* (who had power over God, and prevailed by his wrestling with him, Gen. 32. 26. and Hos. 12. 4.) *shall never seek the Lord in vain*, Isa. 45. 19. I have shewed at large in my *Christian Walk* upon Prayer, how it hath a kind of Omnipotency in commanding all the *Four Elements*, &c. yea, and over God himself by *Moses's Prayer* for his People; at which the Lord saith to *Moses*, [*let me alone, that I may consume them*, &c.] Exod. 32. 10. where God (as it were) begs his own freedom, as if *Moses's Devotion* had proved too strong for *God's Indignation*; as if *Moses's Prayer* had bound up the Hands of Omnipotency it self; and therefore the Omnipotent God doth (as it were) intreat *Moses* to let him alone to his own liberty, &c. Now if so, the Argument [*a majori ad minus*] from the greater to the lesser, it undeniably concludeth, that if Fervent Prayer can prevail with God himself, how much more may it prevail against *Satan*, who is but one of *God's Creatures*, and at the command of his Creator! However, this is a most manifest Truth, that when we are in any fore Conflict with *Satan*, infomuch that this *Strong Man* is like to prove too strong for us, and in all probability will soon conquer us,

as, then fervent Prayer must be our winged Messenger to send and call for help from Heaven; and this is our strong Consolation, that our Messenger will easily prevail over our Blessed Jesus to come speedily for succouring us against *Satan*, as those Messengers which the *Gibeonites* did send for that Great General *Joshua*, saying, [*Slack not thy hand from thy Servants*, (who are now entered into Covenant with thee) but come to us quickly and save us, for all the Kings of the *Amorites*, that dwell in the Mountains, are gathered together against us,] Josh. 10. 6, &c. Upon this earnest and affectionate Message and Outcry, General *Joshua* immediately comes from *Gilgal*, (the place of rolling away Reproach, as the word signifies,) and falls upon the cursed Kings and *Canaanites* unexpectedly, and surprizes them all suddenly: Yea, and the Lord himself likewise threw down great Hailstones out of Heaven upon them, and thereby all those formidable Adversaries were quite destroyed; accordingly this is very often our own case. Alas! how weak are our Hearts, Ezek. 16. 30. when this Strong Man armed maketh his furious Assaults upon us. *David* did acknowledge himself as unable to resist his strong Adversaries, (when he cried [*have mercy*

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upon me, O Lord, for I am weak, &c. (Psal. 6, 2, 3, 4.) as the Gibeonites did withstand the Forces of the Kings of the Mountains, &c. much more may we be sensible of our own insufficiency to stand before the violent shoks of this Strong Man Satan; no meer mortal man is sufficient of himself for that withstanding work, (not the Innocentest Man Adam, nor the Strongest Man Samson, nor the Wisest Man Solomon (as elsewhere) [but truly all our sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. 3. 5] and therefore must we send our winged Messengers of fervent Prayers to him, and make out our strong Cries unto Christ Jesus, as the Gibeonites did unto that great General Joshuah, saying, [oh our dear Lord Jesus, slack not thy Hand from thy Servants, (who are, through thy Grace brought into the bonds of the Covenant of Grace with thy blessed self;) oh make no delay, let our extremity be thy opportunity; not only the Philistines are fallen upon us, as upon Samson, but even the Kings of the Mountains, even Spiritual Wickednesses in high Places, called Principalities and Powers do make their furious Assaults upon us. We have put ourselves (oh Lord) under thy blessed Protection. Therefore hasten to succour us, and make no long tarrying, oh our good God,

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God, Psal. 40. 17.] then may we hope to hear the sound of God's goings upon the Tops of the Mulberry-Trees, 2 Sam. 5. 24. and we may have cause to sing with the Spouse, saying, [ 'tis the Voice of our Beloved, behold he cometh, leaping over Mountains, and skipping over Hills, ] Cant. 2. 8. He is coming, he is coming to bring the supplies of the Spirit of Christ to relieve our Souls, Phil. 1. 19. and he will pour down great Hail Stones out of Heaven upon the Heads of our Spiritual Enemies, and discomfit them, tho' Satan and a whole Kingdom of Devils be engaged against us.

This 7th piece of Armour is called *Armatura Armature*, the Armour of Armour, named last, because it buckles all the rest on, and helps to a right improvement of all, both for Defence and Offence, &c. Thus David had such Outcries as these, saying, [ This poor Man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him, &c. ] Psal. 34. 6. And thus Paul had such Outcries also, saying, [ Oh wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me? and then thanketh he his Lord Christ for delivering him, &c. ] Rom. 7. 24, 25. And thus the Betrothed Damsel cried out, when she was assaulted by one too strong for her; and tho' she found no Deliverer, yet is she assured

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fured that *she shall not die, because she cried out*, Deut. 22. 27. But the *Virgin, Daughter of Sion*, fared better, for she had her Saviour to come and succour her at her Outcries after Him, who put a Bridle upon that unruly Beast her Adversary, and so comforted her heart as to make her able even to laugh him to scorn, &c. Isa. 37. 22, 28, 29. In short, all these promises do abundantly demonstrate the excellency of this last part of the Christian Armour, namely, Darts of Prayer, which drives the Devil out of the Field (in our warring this good Warfare) and constrains him to flee from us as one conquered by us. NB. When our own Prayers prevail not, Note well, the Prayer of Christ saved Peter from Satan's Snare Luke 22. 31, 32. more especially if we join Fasting to Praying; tho' Homer tell us, how Nestor in the Wars of Troy must take his Breakfast in the Morning to animate himself the more for his fighting work: Yet our Lord doth better tell us, that there be some Devils of such a malignant Nature, that they cannot be cast out but by Fasting and Prayer, Matt. 17. 21. How well therefore doth the Apostle command us to be *[praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit]*, Eph. 6. 18. that is, all sorts of Prayer

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yea the best sort of Prayer, both that which is edged and animated with Fasting, and more especially that of *[praying in the Holy Ghost]*, Jude ver. 20. for fervent Prayer is a clear Stream that flows solely from the pure Spring of the Spirit of Grace, &c. and that this Praying-work may be the more effectually performed, the Apostle subjoins the Duty of *[watching thereunto with all perseverance, &c.]* ver. 18. that we may not be surprized at unawares, because the Devil watcheth us, and walketh his Round Night and Day incessantly to take us napping, 1 Pet. 5. 8. seeking whom he may devour, as before; therefore is watching so necessary, that it is so often recorded in Scripture as an universal Duty, (as above) and most needful in praying work: Hereupon our Lord joins them both together, *[Watch and Pray lest ye enter into Temptation]*, Matth. 26. 41. as the Apostle doth here; for if we be not upon our Guard continually, and even Watch while we do Pray, both over Satan's Temptations without, and over our own Corruptions within, Satan will be interrupting us, as the Pythonefs (his Instrument) did interrupt Paul in his Praying-work, Acts 16. 16. and as the Fowls of the Air (which is the Devil's Territories, Ephes. 1. 2, 3.) did interrupt

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Father *Abraham* in his *Sacrificing-work* Gen. 15. 11. Yea, and as the *Adversaries* (*Sanballat*, &c.) did molest good *Nebe- miah* in his *Building-work*, *Neh.* 4. 1. 3. 'Tis a certain observation, that amongst all Actions *Satan* will be busiest in the best of Actions, and mostly most busie in the best part of that best Action, as towards the closure of Prayer, when the Heart should be closing it self up with the sweetest comforts, &c. therefore are we bid to *Watch* and *Pray*, and to *Pray* and *Watch*, that *Satan* may not draw us out of our Trenches, as *Josuah* did the *Men of Ai*, *Josh.* 8. 6. therefore our Lord exhorteth us to *abide in the Vine*, *Joh.* 15. 4, 7. and his beloved Disciple saith, [*little Children abide in him*,] 1 *Joh.* 2. 28. that is, *keep Home*, *keep close*, under the shadow of your Father's Wing, *Psal.* 91. 1. Our Lord saith [*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered my Children together, even as a Hen gathers her Chickens under her Wings, &c.*] *Matth.* 23. 37. which intimateth, that those are fond Chickens that dare to straggle at distance from under the Wing of their *Dam*, and expose themselves to the ravenous Claws of the Kite. Naturalists relate of the Bird *Onocratulus*, which is so much inur'd with the Hawk's grappling with her, that she always sleepeth with

with her Beak or Bill advanced for her own defence, &c. Now when the *Law of Nature* or *Instinct* can teach those irrational Creatures such prudence to save themselves from the Birds of Prey, &c. how much more ought the *light of Grace* to teach us [who are *Rational*] how to stand always upon our guard against that Prince, *Fowl of the Air*, &c. We read that chaste *Joseph* did so, *Gen.* 39. 7, &c. where it is said [*after these things, &c.*] that is, after he had lived safe from Temptations about ten or eleven Years (rising all along from a lower to an higher station) in *Potiphar's House*, yet then was he assaulted by *Satan* in his wanton and wicked Mistress, &c. but still the good Man kept constant upon his watch, and so drove away the Devil, &c. ver. 9. But so did not *Dinah*, who out of curiosity, did wander from her Father's House to view the Daughters of the Land, and so was surprized by *Shechem* too strong for her, &c. *Gen.* 34. 1, 2. nor was *David* likely upon his watch, when he looked on, and lusted after *Bathsheba*, &c. 2 *Sam.* 11. 2, &c. Tho' this holy *David* had been (all along before this) upon his watch, and kept himself from this his iniquity, *Psal.* 18. 23. both while he was many years persecuted by *Saul*, and while he Reigned much longer

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longer as King, and employed in continual wars; all this long time he lived in *God's fear*, and had *Respect* to all *God's Precepts*, P<sup>sa</sup>. 119. 6. but at last arriving to *Ease* and *Idleness*, (one of *SODOM* fins, Ezek. 16. 49.) the *Strong Man* found him then neglecting his watch, and pushed him down, giving him such a foul Fall as broke his Bones, which caused his writing his famous Penitential Psalms, &c. and thus likewise this watchful Adversary, *Satan*, found *Peter* neglecting his watch, got him into his Sieve, and shook him to and fro to make Chaff of him, Luke 22. 31, 32. and this he would have effected, had not the *Prayer of Christ* for him most graciously prevented it, &c. alas, a busie Devil and a base Heart did deceive him, when he said, [tho' all forsake thee, Lord, yet will not I,] Mark 14. 20. Matt. 26. 33. (as had been *Orpah's* case before, Ruth 1. 10.) therefore did *Peter* watch that weakest part of his Heart, where *Satan* had broke in upon him, with utmost care ever after; and hence is it, that this penitent *Peter* (who, after his sin, went out and wept bitterly, Luke 22. 63.) gives us so many watch words in his Epistles, as (1.) *Be ye alway ready*, &c. 1 Pet. 3. 16. And (2.) *Be sober, and watch unto Prayer*, Chap. 4. 7. Yea, and (3.) *Be*

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vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil is hunting for you, &c. Chap. 5. 8. whom resist stedfast in the Faith, &c. ver. 9. and our Lord saith, [I say unto all watch, Mark 13. 35, 36. 37. 'Tis very remarkable how the Apostle *Peter* doth symbolize, keeps harmony and concurreth with his beloved Brother *Paul*, as he calleth him, 2 Pet. 3. 14, 15, 17, 18.) about compleating this *Christian Warfare*, and yet with a little addition; for whereas *Paul's* phrase is [give not place to the Devil,] Ephes. 4. 27. no not for an hour, Gal. 2. 5. but stand and withstand, Ephes. 6. 11, 13, 14. as the Apostle *James* saith downright, [Resist him, and he will flee from you,] James 4. 7. so this Apostle *Peter* steps higher, saying, [Resist this roaring and devouring Lion, [σῆσοι ἐν πίστει] stedfast in the Faith,] 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. that is, we must do our utmost under the shield of Faith, not only to defend our selves, but also to offend our Adversary, which we can never do, but first by right means, and 2ly In a right manner. 1st Of the 1st. First, The right means are not (1st) Negatively, nor (1.) any wit or policy of our own to argue *Satan* away from us by parlying with him, for this subtle Serpent doth far exceed and excel us in Craft and Sophistry; as it plainly appeared in our

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our Great Grandmother *Eve* daring to *parly* with him, *Gen. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.* Oh, how cunning was this Tempter to begin his *parlying* with her who was the weaker Vessel, which was according to that old saying, [where the Hedge is the lowest, there the mischievous Beast will leap over.] Alas, we do but shoot with *Satan* in his own Bow, (wherein he can easily beguile us) when we attempt to push back our Tempter only by *parlying* with him. If he proved too hard for *Eve* therein in her state of *Innocency*, and to so green a Tree; how much more hard for us poor dry Trees, in the fallen estate! 'Tis an assured great Truth, that *Satan* is better believed away, and prayed away, than *parlied* or argued away: Nor (2.) is it any majesty or authority either in our awful Looks, or in our hectoring Words that will fright him away from us; the Devil is not a Dog to be scared away so, either with an angry Aspect, or with *threatning Language*, saying, [Avaunt Satan, and Devil do thy worst, I defy thee and all thy works.] But 2<sup>ly</sup> *Positively*, the right means we must resist him with, is by our putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, *Rom. 13. 14.* and the whole Armour of God, *Ephes. 6. 11, 13.* wherein we must stand our ground, and withstand his Wiles, &c.

Secondly,

## *The Redeemed are Conquerors.* 125

Secondly, as to the right manner, we must not be like *secure Laish*, *Judg. 18. 27.* nor like *careless Babylon*, *Rev. 18. 7, 8.* but be always upon our watch and guard, for he comes cunningly like a *fly Serpent*, with Honey in his Mouth, &c. but when he leaves us, he then leaves behind him the Sting in his Tail, and departs like a bloody Lion, tearing in pieces those he overcomes. Nor can we escape by *fleeing* from him, were we like *Ahab*, as swift as a Roe, &c. *2 Sam. 2. 18.* for this great old Red Dragon, *Rev. 12. 3.* hath great Wings wherewith he can easily overtake us, and then is our greatest danger upon a double Account and Reason.

For (1<sup>st</sup>) *N.B. Note well*, Among all this *Spiritual Armour* before-named, there is no part or piece thereof prescribed for protecting the Back, which when *Satan* finds unarmed in his pursuit after us, he most easily pierceth us with his fiery Darts through our bare Backs, even to our very Hearts, &c.

And the (2<sup>d</sup>) Reason is, we then do not only flee from the Devil, but from God too, who hath bid us stand and withstand, and hath promised to protect us in doing those Duties: Therefore all Apostates and Backsliders, who run away from under God's protection, [his Soul can have no pleasure

pleasure in them,] Heb. 10. 38. the Lord will deliver up such into Satan's hands. 1 Tim. 1. 20. and wo to us when God departs from us, Hof. 9. 12. then all evil comes upon us, &c. It followeth then, that the Duty of *Resisting* must likewise be done, as an additional Duty unto *Watching* and *Praying*; and we must spend our whole lives in the *work* of watching, praying and *resisting* to our dying day, &c. Upon those few following *Considerations*, over and above the Arguments before-mentioned.

As (1<sup>st</sup>) Consider well, that the Devil is like the Crocodile, of whom Pliny relateth, that if men pursue him, he will flee from them, but if men flee from him, he will then pursue after them, &c.

2<sup>ly</sup> Consider there is indeed a *playing upon the hole of the Asp*, and a *putting the hand upon the Cockatrice Den*, which Christ hath promised he will secure little Children from the danger thereof, Isa. 11. 8. when he comes to create the new Heavens and the new earth, wherein shall dwell all righteousness, 2 Pet. 3. 13. But we may not do so now; for if we dally with the Devil, in leading our selves into Places and Companies of Temptation, (whereas we pray that the Lord may not lead us into Temptation, in the Lord's Prayer) this is foolish presumption, and a plain tempting of the Tempter. (3<sup>ly</sup>)

(3<sup>ly</sup>) Consider what is required of us in this *Resisting Duty*, 'tis only a *strong negative*, resolving in Christ's strength to answer the Tempter with an holy and pe-emptory No, No, I may not, I cannot, I are not do it; to give Satan a flat denial is no difficult Duty, and 'tis not resisting unto blood. Heb. 12. 4.

(4<sup>ly</sup>) Consider, if we resist not, but yield, (contrary to that Apostolical command) [yield not your Members as weapons of wickedness unto sin (as the Greek word [ἐπαρ] signifies,) Rom. 6. 13, 14, 19. then are we taken Captives by Satan, and led about by him, as his Slaves, at his will, 2 Tim. 2. 26. and not taken to be preserved alive (as before) but to be destroyed, &c. 2 Pet. 2. 12. Oh woful condition, &c.

(5<sup>ly</sup>) Consider, that he who now tempts us to sin, will accuse us afterward for that sin, (as elsewhere;) yea, and those very Snares of Sin (wherewith Satan at present doth entangle us,) will at the last become Chains of Darkness in Hell, &c.

(6<sup>ly</sup>) Consider, this striving against sin, Heb. 12. 4. must be constant, and last so long as life doth last; we should resist wholly with this whole Armour of God, because when we have overcome the prophane Devil, a worldly Devil may prevail against



against us: Or if we have been made able to master a *Swearing Devil*, then a *Lying Devil* may prove too hard for us; and if we can conquer all those and many more *Devils*, &c. After the subduing of all these, then may the *Devil of Pride* rise up and prevail over us; for that old saying of Bernard's, [*Tot Daemonia, quod Crimina*, so many sins as do reign over us, so many *Devils* do rule in us; seeing every such sin hath a *Devil* in it: Now this *sin* of *Pride*, as it is the first that is learned, so it is the last that is left; for there is something of *Pride* even in the best *Hearts*; even good *Hezekiah's* was lifted up in pride, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25, 31.

(7ly) Consider for our Comfort, that our constant conflict against *Sin* and *Satan* is a better evidence of true sanctifying and saving grace, than any perfection of Holiness that can be found in the most sanctified souls. *Paul* himself, who, tho' he had been rap'd up into the *Third Heavens* and into *Paradise* it self, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 4, yet he after this complaineth of a *Thorn in the Flesh*, a *Messenger of Satan* to buffet him, &c. ver. 7, 8, 9. and he saith of himself, [*not as tho' I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I press after it*, &c. *Phil.* 3. 11, 12, 13, 14. and crys, [*Oh wretched man*, &c. *Rom.* 7. 24.

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8ly and lastly, Let us consider, and better consider for our comfort, if we can but know that *Christ* is in us, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. then *Christ* in us is stronger for us, than this *Strong Man Satan* can be against us, *Luke* 11. 21, 22. If our Lord be for us, 'tis no matter who or what is against us, *Rom.* 8. 31. Stronger is he in us, than he that is in the World, 1 *John* 4. 4. As our Lord hath conquered *Satan* (as before) in his own Person, so he hath promis'd to do the same in all his sincere Members; he will not lose so much as one of them, *John* 6. 39. and 17. 12. Oh pray, pray, pray, that *Christ* may strengthen us, *Phil.* 4. 13. that we may shake this *Viper* (the Old Serpent) from off our Hearts, as *Paul* did the *Viper* from off his Hands into the fire of Hell, *Acts* 28. ver. 4, 5, 6, &c.

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CHAP.

## C H A P. I V.

*Shewing the way to Compleat a Conquest in God's Armour.*

*Advice to Young and Old, &c.*

**T**Here be Two Grand Duties (that concern all Mankind, Male and Female, Rich and Poor, Young and Old, &c.) which are coupled together in that one Verse, 1 Tim. 6. 19. to wit,

(1st) *A laying up in store for our selves a good foundation* against the time to come. And

(2dly) *A laying hold on Eternal Life.*

*First*, of the 1st [ *Lay a good Foundation, &c.* ] This is always look'd upon by Wise Men as a Work of great weight, we ought all to be *Builders* of the *Tower of Godliness*, Luke 14. 28. 'Tis compared to a Tower upon manifold accounts. As,

(1.) 'Tis an *high Building*. (2.) *Stately*. (3.) *Difficult*. (4.) *Exposed to Storms* which plain Ground is not obvious unto. (5.) *Costly*, far beyond Hutts or Cottages, &c. (6.) *Godliness* hath all the parts of an *Ædifice*, as *Foundation*, *Corners*, and

the *Roof* or *Top*, &c. Now this Good *Foundation*, is not either *Good Meanings*, or *General Mercy*, or an *External Profession*; these are all *Sandy*, Matth. 7. 24, 26. but 'tis the *Rock Christ*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Acts 4. 12. Col. 1. 15, 17. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Rev. 13. 8, &c.

Now if we fail in the *Foundation*, which is the first of those two great *Duties*, we can never obtain any solid ground of *Hope* for the *Second*, of *laying hold on Eternal Life*, which is the *Top* of that *Mystical Tower*, of which it may be truly said, even without any *Hyperbole*, what is said of the *Tower of Babel*, that the *Top of it reacheth up into Heaven*, Gen. 11. 4. An Antient Popish Limner or Painter drew *Solomon's Picture*, in this *Posture*, of his being one half in *Heaven*, and the other half in *Hell*, &c. Thus the Man that sets one of his Feet upon a *Rock*, but his other Foot upon a *Quagmire*, (contiguous to the *Rock*) where he Sinketh down with his whole Body into the *Dirt*, &c. Thus likewise will it befall us, if we make not *Christ* our *All*, and in *All*, Col. 3. 11. but lean partly upon *God*, and partly upon the *World*; if we halt betwixt the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, alas we then seem to hang (as it were) equally poiz'd betwixt our fear of

K 2 Hell,

132 *Advice to Young and Old,* Cl. He that trusteth in his own heart, is a Hell, and our hope of Heaven, with Solomon's Picture, &c.

NB. Note well, All true Christians (whether Young or Old) should make serious Reflections upon the remainder of the Body of Sin, or the unrenewed part in them, even in the sincerest Converts and in the soundest Believers, which will make us like the Kine that carried off Ark of God to Bethshemesh, (which signifies the House of the Sun,) they were all along lowing, as they went, &c. 1 Sam. 6. 12. Thus the Apostle phraseth it, [this Earthly Tabernacle we groan earnestly, &c.] 2 Cor. 5. 2. and he cries [Oh wretched man, &c.] Rom. 7. Thus if we be truly and thoroughly sensible of the indwellings of sin in us, while we are on this side Heaven, &c. we still keep this straight way to the House of the Son of Righteousness, neither turn to the Right Hand or Left (as is said of the Kine above) yet smarting experience of so much relief of original pollution in us, will cause us to go along groaning to our very Graves. This likewise was one great point of God's mercy in Agur's prayer, [remove, Lord, far from me both vanity and villany before I die, Prov. 30. 7, 8.] he durst not trust his heart either with Poverty or Riches, without knowing what Solomon had said before

He that trusteth in his own heart, is a Fool,] Prov. 28. 26. And it must be bewailingly acknowledged, that sin (like its Father the Devil, having the whole World for its Walk, &c.) is the most Heart-grieving, and the worst Companion that we can have or meet with in our way to Heaven; hereupon we are exhorted [to take heed of an evil Heart, of an evil Heart of unbelief, &c.] Heb. 3. 12. [because of the deceitfulness of Sin,] ver. 13. All which imports, that sin of it self is so deceitful as easily to deceive us; and our own Hearts are deceitful above all things, Jer. 17. 9. yet so as to be easily deceived by deceitful sin, &c. Inasmuch as we can see small ground for security, (tho' some for safety as kept by Christ, Jude ver. 1.) while we are on this side Heaven, &c. 'Tis our caution and fear of falling that in Christ contributes much to our standing. The grace of fear is a great preserver of the Soul, not only all the day long, Prov. 23. 17. but even all our life long also in God's fear, and in God's favour too, &c. He that keepeth alive the fear of God in him, cannot well want the favour of God on him; tho' he may sometimes lose this latter, in respect of Vision, (as in cases of Desertion, &c. yet he never wants it in respect of Union. Thus David lost not his

his *salvation* by his *sin*, he had only lost the *joy of his salvation*; which he beseeched the Lord to *restore* to him, *Psal. 51.* The grand concern of every Christian is *how to live well*, and *how to die well*; *how to live in God's fear*, and *how to die in God's favour*, &c. In order hereunto, our Lord hath most graciously granted us many Divine Rules, both in the *Old* and in the *New Testament*. Namely,

(1st) That of the Prophet, [*What doth the Lord require of thee, O Man, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God,*] *Mic. 6. 8.* This comprehends the sum and substance of the *Ten Commandments*, and is a compendium of the *Law* and the *Prophets*, &c. To name no more but a few;

(2dly) That of the Apostle, [*Keep thy Conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards Man always,* &c.] *Acts 24, 16.* unto which let me add the same Apostle's *three Adverbs*, &c. [*The Grace of God teacheth us to live Soberly, Righteously and Holily in this present World.*] *Tit. 2. 12.*

*Hec tria perpetuo meditare Adverbia Pauli*

*Hec tria sunt vitæ regula sancta tue.*

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I shall add no more than this one of our Lord, (who is Lord both of the Prophets, and of the Apostles afore-named,) namely, his *general precept* and *prescription* to every *particular* and *individual* Believer, [*Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into Temptation,*] *Matth. 26. 41.* wherein the *practick part* of all true Christians is clearly prescribed, demonstrating, *First, The Antidote or Preservative.* And *Secondly, The Disease* we are in danger to fall into by our neglect of the *Duty*. This Text is a part of *Christ's Swan-like Song* a little before his Death; they are the *living words* of this greatest of dying Prophets, a Divine Lecture or Lesson taught by a *Dying Christ* for all *living Christians* to learn. For,

(1st) The *danger* is *universal* [*εισελθῆτε*] lest ye enter, &c. this implies a *possibility*, yea and more than a *probability*, not only of *entring into Temptation*, but also to be off within the *verges* and *circumferences* of it; yea, and sometimes to fall by the power of it, and too often; for if we make an impartial inquiry into the *Book* of our own *experiences*, we shall there find, that we are more, and oftner in *Temptation* than out of it; whereas it should be *Christ's day*, and *Satan's hour*, (according to those two *Scripture Phrases*,

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ses; Luke 22. 53. 1 Cor. 1. 8. Rev. 1. 10. Alas, how oft is it quite contrary, that *Satan* hath a whole Day, when *Christ* hath but an Hour with us; yea, and not that little time without *distraktion*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. How oft may our Lord say to us, as he said to his sleepy Disciples here, [*What, could ye not watch with me one hour!*] Matth. 26. 40. for he had bidden them [*watch with me,*] ver. 38. A.B. Note well, Those Three *Peter, James* and *John* had seen their Master's Glory in his *Transfiguration*, Matth. 17. 1, 2. and now they must be *Eye-witnesses* of his behaviour in his *Agony* also; so our Lord bids them [*watch with him:*] he bids them not [*pray for him,*] for he needed not their Prayers, &c. He was to tread the *Wine-press* alone *Isai.* 63. 3. Observe what *miserable Comforters* were those sleepy and slippery Disciples unto their sweet Saviour, who was deeply concerned for them in the midst of his *Agony*, as he was after upon his Cross, to grant the Prayer of the Penitent Thief, and to lend a look of Love on *Peter*, the Backslider, Luke 22. 11. And both these he did, while himself was paying the Redemption of the World for his Fellow-sufferer, Luke 23. 42, 43. as he had done before for poor *Peter*, while he was answering his Ad-

Adversaries for his own Life. Thus we find those *Three Disciples* were not only in danger of *entring into Temptation*, but they were also got into it, and fain by it, which is the Distemper and Disease it self; for their Saviour found that *Satan* had lull'd them all fast asleep, whereas they should have *watched with him*, and *prayed* for themselves, (tho' not for him that needed no Mediators (seeing they were so near to become *scattered Sheep* at the smiting of their Shepherd. Our Lord had some *lucid intervals*, and a little breathing time in the midst of his *Agony*, wherein he comes to them once and again, and finds he may tread the *Wine-press* alone for any comfort from them. And,

(1<sup>st</sup>) He sharply rebukes them for their former vain conceit of themselves, promising to do great things, &c. Matth. 26. 33, 35. but they were so far from *dying with him*, that they could not so much as *watch with him*, &c. And,

(2<sup>dly</sup>) He gravely exhorts them to this double Duty of *Watching* and *Praying*.

Then (3<sup>dly</sup>) He candidly and kindly comforts them against their *outward weakness* by his owning, acknowledging and accepting of their *inward willingness*; the Spirit is willing, tho' Flesh be weak. Oh, who would not love this sweet Saviour, that

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 that puts such a candid Construction upon his Saints Infirmities ; alas, how oft may our Lord come and catch us napping, and oft offering up no better than yawning Devotion. Alas, how oft a *bare wast* of the *Footmen* (in lesser Temptations) have thrown us down, as was *Jeremy's* case, *Jer.* 12. 5. How then shall we be able to *contend with the Horsemen* of stronger Temptations! While we live in this lower Region, we are exposed to so many violent Temptations from the Tempter, that Prince of the Power of the Air, *Ephes.* 2. 2, 3. therefore are we called to *come up higher*, and to be *Upper-region* persons, and to lead loftier lives than the men of the World can do in an unconverted condition : [ *the way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from Hell beneath* ] *Prov.* 15. 24. *Were but our conversation more in Heaven,* *Phil.* 3. 20. while our *commemoration* is here on Earth, we should then be raised up above the reach of Storms, &c. and [ *if we be risen with Christ, we must set our affections upon things above,* &c. *Col.* 3. 1, 2, 3. for *ye are dead* (namely to Sin, and to the World,) and *your life is hid with Christ in God.* Now to attain unto this happy estate of living above the reach of the Poison of the Old Serpent, (whereof we are in perils often, and in Jeopardy

Ch.4. *to Watch unto Prayer* 131  
 Jeopardy every hour, as the Apostle phraseth it, ) our Lord hath prescribed in the (2d) place a *double Antidote* or *Remedy* to this before-named *Poison* or *Malady*, namely, to lead a life made up of constant and continual *Watching* and *Praying*; and this is the way (having *put on the whole Armour of God*, as is aforesaid, ) to secure our Souls from both entering into, coming in, and falling by every Temptation; and not only so, but also to be *Conquerors*, yea *more than so*, *Rom.* 8. 37. even to be *Triumphant in Christ*, *2 Cor.* 2. 14. *N.B.* Note well, The seventh and last part of our *Spiritual Armour* (as described in *Ephes.* 6. 18. ) hath a concurring concordancy with *Christ's* Command, [ *Watch and Pray,* ] *Matth.* 26. 41. and likewise imports the frequency, constancy and continuance of those two *necessary*, but too much *neglected Duties*, in an additional phrase of [ *Praying always, and Watching thereunto with all perseverance, &c.* ] that is, as we must *pray always*, so we must *watch always*, even all our lives long. The whole life of a Christian consists wholly of *Watching* and *Prayer, &c.*

Beside this *first difference* betwixt those two Texts, which respecteth *Time*, those two Duties must be done *always*, even all our Days. There is a *Second Difference* that

that respecteth Order, for our Lord placeth *Watching* before *Praying*, Matt. 26. 41. but his *Apostle* placeth *Praying* before *Watching*, Ephes. 6. 18. Now all the Inference to be deduced from this difference is this only, that we must *Watch* and *Pray*, as our Lord biddeth us; and we must *Pray* and *Watch* as his *Apostle* requireth us, and that all the days of our lives. The sum of the whole is this in short :

(1st) *Man's Malady* and Danger ; all men, even the best of men are obnoxious, and lay evermore exposed to the evil of manifold Temptations, even from a three-fold original, to wit from the *Flesh*, from the *World*, and from the *Devil* : Thus even those Three Disciples who had beheld *Christ's* Glory in his Transfiguration, (as above) and therefore they might the more have been able to cleave closer to him now ; yet even those of the highest Rank were not only in the *Danger*, but in the very *Disease* it self ; yea, and which is much more, we are told, that [ *our Lord was tempted* like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, Heb. 4. 15. And if this was done to such a *Green Tree*, what may such *Dry Trees* as we are expect ! Luke 23. 31. no place, nor time for security to the best.

(2dly)

(2dly) The Remedy and Deliverance is by a *double Duty*, (understood under *Christ* our Deliverer, as above at large ; ) The first is *Watch*, and the second is *Pray*, as in *Matth.* 26. 41. and in *Luke* 21. 36. our Lord makes an addition, namely *Watch* and *Pray* *always* ; to which the *Apostle's* phrase, *Ephes.* 6. 18. *Col.* 4. 2. and *1 Thes.* 5. 17. do well agree.

First, of the first of those Duties, 'Tis the duty of all *Christ's* Disciples to watch. *Reasons.*

(1st) 'Tis a necessary Duty upon a double Account, (1.) *Necessitate Medii*, as necessary means for our safety. And, (2.) *Necessitate Præcepti*, as it is commanded by the Lord.

(1st) 'Tis necessary as a means whereby we are preserved from Danger, for our life is a warfare, *Job* 7. 1. *Margent*, and we can never accomplish this warfare, *Isai.* 40. 1. without watching ; every *Christian* is a *Soldier*, *2 Tim.* 2. 3. who is list-ed under *Christ* their Captain, *Josh.* 5. 14. *Heb.* 2. 10. Now no Man can be a good Soldier that watcheth not ; how soon is he cut off by a surprizing *Adversary* both *Visible* and *Invisible*, *non Regium est in Belli tempore indulgere Somno*, saith *Plutarch*, *Christ* hath made us *Kings*, *Rev.* 1. 6. and it is not King-like to foster sleep-

sleeping in a time of War: *Baanah* and *Rechab* took off *Ishbosheth's* Head while he slept upon his Bed at Noon, 2 *Sam.* 4. 5, 6. So *Jael* slew *Siscera* when fast asleep, nailing him fast to the ground, *Judg.* 4. 21.

(2dly) 'Tis necessary in our obedience to the Great Lawgiver, who hath often commanded us to watch in Scripture, as *Mark* 13. *ver. last.* 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. 1 *Thef.* 5. 6. 1 *Pet.* 4. 7. and 5. 8. *Rev.* 3. 2. and 16. 15, &c.

Reason the Second; they are pronounced to be blessed Souls that do this Duty of *watching*, beside that in *Rev.* 16. 15. see *Luke* 12. 37, 38, 43. *terque, quaterque beati, felices ter & amplius*, they are three times blest there by Christ, who was sent into the world to *bless* both believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* that watch, *Acts* 3. 26. Yea, such are not only *blessed Saints*, but they are also *blessed Angels*; for *Angels* are called [*εγρηγες*] *Watchers*, *Dan.* 4. 13. Heaven is the Watch-tower of those *Holy Ones*, that never sleep, nor are ever wearied with labour as we Bodily Creatures are; not do they Eat or Drink as we do, whereby our sleep is procured, &c. So that this Watching-work, is likewise an *Angelical* as well as an *Evangelical* Duty, and to be [*ιωδυστοι*] *like Angels*, as Christ hath promised, *Luke* 20. 36. is to enjoy  
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an Heavenly State here, while upon Earth.

Reason the Third; The very Name and Nature of *Saintship* or *Christianity* is to be found in this Duty of *Watching*; for *Saints* are called *the Children* (not of the Night, which is the proper time of sleeping, but) of the light and of the day, which is the appointed season for *Watching*, *Walking* and *Working*, 1 *Thef.* 5. 5, 6, 7. Such as are quickened by the Grace of Christ, *Ephes.* 2. 1. and are awaked out of the sleep and State of sin, *Ephes.* 5. 14. never after this can sleep the sleep of Death, *Psal.* 13. 3. The Spouse of Christ did indeed sleep, (when she should have been upon her watch) but her heart was then awake; so that she could tell all those *Titles of Love*, (*verbatim* word for word) that her beloved Lord had saluted her with, even while she was in her half-sleep; she aggravates the foulness of her fault for her refusing such sweet embraces offered them to her, *Cant.* 5. 2, 4, 5. And the five wise *Virgins* indeed nodded and napped a little, they *slumbered*, but they did not sleep, (as the five foolish *Virgins* did) for it was only by Candle-light, their Lamps were still burning, and they had Oil in their Vessels, as well as in their Lamps, *Matth.* 25. 4, 5, &c. The conclusion



clusion of that Parable is, [ *Watch therefore, for ye know not when the Lord will come, ver. 13.* Thus the choicest and chiefest Saints may sometimes be taken napping: yet the *hidden man of the heart* (as the phrase is, 1 Pet. 3. 4.) is still kept awake in them, as it was with the *Spouse* above.

The Fourth Reason for our *Watching* is drawn from several Emblems of this Duty, &c. First the *Hare* and the *Lion* are given by the learned Criticks as the two *Hieoroglyphicks* or Representations, and Resemblances of true *Christians*, because *Naturalists* do observe, that those two *Animals* always sleep with their Eyes wide open, &c.

Thus likewise Secondly; The *Modern Jews* use to sacrifice a *white Cock* upon *New Years Day*, whose intrails they ordain a *Raven* to fly away with into the Fields, and then to devour them, &c. This is another *Emblem* of Christian Vigilancy; and in this *History* there is this *Mystery*, the *Cock* is known to be the most *watchful* creature, and therefore the *Cock crowing* gives a denomination to the third part of the Night in Sacred Scripture, *Evening, Midnight, Cock-crow, and Morning,*] Mar. 13. 35. and so is a fit Resemblance of the *watchful Christian*; and yet the more fit,  
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inasmuch as the Sacrifice must be a *white Cock*, to represent how *Christians* are washed white in the *Blood of Christ*, Rev. 7. 14. And there is congruity in the parallel of the *Raven* flying away with the *white Cock's* Intrails likewise; for one of the *Spouses* commendable Characters of her Beloved is, [ *His locks are bushy, and black as a Raven,*] Cant. 5. 11. Thus *Christ* is the mystical *Raven*, that flies away with the infirmities and sins of every *watchful, white-washed Christian*, &c. *Christ* is the true *Antitype* of that *Typical Scape-goat* that did carry away all the *Iniquities, Transgressions and Sins* of *Israel* into the *Land* of everlasting forgetfulness, Lev. 16. 21. They shall all be blotted out, Isa. 43. 25. and none of them remembered any more, Heb. 8. 12. Now having answered the first inquiry, in shewing the Reasons why we ought all to be *watchful ones*.

The Second Inquiry is, what is this kind of *Watching* which our Lord doth command us to be found in?

Answer. There be three *Kinds* or *Sorts* of *Watching*: The (1<sup>st</sup>) is that which is *Corporeal Watching*, or that of the *Body*, which is in some cases highly commendable; as in those *Shepherds* that brought tidings of *Christ's Birth*, Luk. 2. 8, 9, 10, &c.

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They were not only *Vigilantes*, but also were [*Ἀγρυπνῶντες*] *they abode in the field, keeping watch over their Flock by Night*: Tho' they had but sorry Lodging there, yet had they a most Curious Canopy over their Heads, to wit, the *Heavens*, or state-ly Firmament, most richly bespangled with glittering and glorious Stars; nor was this all the blessing that those *Bodily Watchers* had, but they were near a better Blessing, even that Glorious Angel *Gabriel* appeared to *them* only, and not to any of the *great men* of *Jerusalem*, &c. no nor to either of those *good men*, *Zechary* or *Simeon*, &c. with these glad Tidings of the Birth of the Worlds Redeemer, &c. Therefore these Pastors, or Shepherds, (of whom it is said [*φυλάσσοντες φυλάκεις*,] *custodiebant custodias, they watched their Flocks*, Luke 2. 8.) may be a blessed Pattern for all good Pastors, or Gospel Ministers, to take heed of their Ministry, which they have received in the Lord, that they fulfil it, Col. 4. 17. The Angel *Gabriel* may the sooner appear to them; as this *Corporeal* or *Bodily* Watching was thus richly rewarded in those watchful Shepherds; so the want of this first kind of watching was sharply rebuked by our Lord *Jesus*, saying to his sleepy and slipper-ry Disciples, [*What, cannot ye watch* with

with me so much as one hour? *Matt.* 26. 40.

The Second Sort of *Watching* is *Diabolical*, as [*the Wicked watcheth the Righteous*, Psal. 37. 32. of this *David* often complaineth, how they *every day wrested his words*, Psal. 56. 5. And thus they watched out dear Lord, (of whom *David* was both Father and Figure, as we read [*ἐμμελέουσιν*] *Mark* 3. 2. These wicked ones lay *catching and carping* at his words, as the Greek word signifies, and that other Greek word [*ἀγασπάζουσι*] used in *Luke* 14. 1. intimates that they pryed as narrowly into Christ's Actions, as ever *Laban* did into *Jacob's* Stuff for his *Teraphims*, *Gen.* 31. 33, 34. Thus *Saul* sent his Spies to watch *David*, *1 Sam.* 19. 11. to kill him. Thus was it the sad complaint of the Prophet *Jeremy* [*all my Familiars watched for my Halting, &c.*] *Jer.* 20. 10. This is a watching that hath the Devil for its Father, as *John* 8. 44. begotten upon a depraved Spirit which lusteth to envy, *Jam.* 4. 5. as upon the Mother of it, God bless us from this, &c.

But the Third kind of *Watching*, is that which is truly *Divine* and *Spiritual*, and which is not *born of the Flesh*, but of the Spirit, *John.* 3. 6. and therefore this third sort is not *Carnal*, much less *Diabolical*

or Devilish, but it is *born from Heaven*, and is an effectual means to help us to Heaven, if we live out our Lives in a careful and conscientious obedience to this great Command of our Lord Christ, saying, [ *watch* ] *Matth.* 24. 42. and 26. 41. *Mark* 13. last, and *Luke* 12. 37, 38, 43, &c.

The Third Inquiry is, What is this true *Christian Vigilancy*, or *Spiritual Watching* Christ requireth here?

*Answer*, It is (in short) *Christian Prudence*, vigorously actuated, or the actual and lively exercise of that Divine Wisdom which the Lord graciously grants to such as are *made wise to Salvation*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. In those, and those only is found a cautious care, and a very wary watchful attention to heed and observe all such matters as our Lord and Maker biddeth to be well heeded and observed. The similitude runs in parallel lines betwixt the two kinds of *Sleeping* and *Watching*, both of that which is *Natural*, and of that which is *Spiritual*: For as in natural or literal Sleep, that immortal part of man (the precious Soul) layeth (as it were) dead and buried in an House of Clay; all its noble parts and gifts seem then to be lost, and *Man* (all the time he lies asleep) doth differ very little either from a Beast

or a dead Carcass, which made that famous General, *Epaminondas*, say, [ *Qualem inveni, talem reliqui*, ] when he was blamed for cruelty in killing his *Centinel*, whom he found *sleeping*, to the hazard of the whole Army, &c. and his Apology was, [ *I left him, but as I found him, &c.* ] He looked upon him as one dead, while he lay asleep, &c. But when those Vapors that cause Sleep are digested and consumed by the Natural Heat of our Animal Spirits, and when those Obstructions of all our Senses are thereby removed, then (saith the Philosopher) [ *Panduntur Meatus, Reditque opus Sensationis, id est, Vigilia, quæ est Sensuum Actio & Motus, quem Calor & Spiritus (in omnia Membra effusus) efficit*; ] that is, the Heat and Spirit being then defused into all our Members from Head to Foot, all the passages of our Senses are opened, &c. and then we *awake* from our Sleep, &c. Even thus it is with us in that which is called a *Mystical* and *Spiritual* Sleeping, and awaking out of it: It was corrupt Humours that caused both the *Spouse*, and the *Wise Virgins* to fall into a slumber, and those Vapors do arise out of the *Body of Sin*, that unrenewed part in us, which do for a time obstruct the operations of a *Spiritual Life* in us:

But when the Spirit of Grace (which is called the Spirit of Burning, Isa. 4. 4.) reviveth and burns up those corrupt Humours in us, then is it that we awake, arise and go forth to shake our selves as Samson did when the Philistines were upon him, Judg. 16. 20. This is called our *awaking unto Righteousness*, 1 Cor. 15. 34. and *standing up from the Dead*, Ephes. 5. 14. *Awake, Awake, saith the Lord*, Isa. 52. 1. and *Arise, Shine, &c.* Isa. 60. 1.

The *Fourth Inquiry* is, what is the proper *Object* or *Subject* of this *Spiritual Watching*?

*Answer*, This *Christian Vigilancy* is most highly concerned in this *Watching-work*, as it hath a *Respect* and *Relation* to a *double Trinity*; the first is a *Trinity of Friends*, to wit, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*: And the *Second* is, a *Trinity of Foes*, namely, the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*. All these both *Friends* and *Foes* are to be duly and daily watched in our *warring the good Warfare*, 1 Tim. 1. 18, and in *fighting the good Fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 12.

*First*, of the *first*, The *Trinity of Friends* that must be watched is, 1<sup>st</sup> *God the Father* must be watched; this Lesson we should learn from *Christ*, who did so, saying, *We speak that we know, and testifie that*

that we have seen, Joh. 3. 11. and farther, [The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do, Joh. 5. 19. and [the Father loveth his Son, and sheweth him all thing that himself doth,] ver. 20. And [as I hear, I do, not doing mine own will, but the will of my Father who sent me,] ver. 30. Now if *Christ* (that holy Child) watched what he saw and heard from the Father, by that Divine and Unspeakable Communication between them, &c. how ought *Christians* to watch likewise, having an *Unction* from the *Holy God*, that *teacheth all things*, 1 Joh. 2. 20. It is said of *Israel*, [Veshameru Mishmereth] Custodiebant Custodiam, they watched the *Motions* of the Lord in the *Cloudy Pillar*, Numb. 9. 19. they kept *Watch and Ward Night and Day* to see when the *Cloud* would arise, that they might be at every hour ready for removing. Thus *David* set *God* always before him, Psal. 16. 8. So ought we to do that we may learn to be *holy as he is holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. Children should learn to be like their Father, *Matth.* 5. last, in the *Quality* of *Holiness*, tho' we cannot come up to an *Equality* of his *Holiness*. Thus we ought to pass more and more into the likeness of that Heavenly Pattern. If our *Eyes wait upon the Lord*, as the *Eyes* of a

Servant upon his Master, &c. *Psal.* 123. 1, 2. then is there Hope concerning both our *Conformity* to God, and our *Communion* with God: We ought to watch God's *Pillar* of *Providence*, as *Israel* did the *Cloudy Pillar*; for there is God's Voice in the work of his *Providence*: Were we but *Men of Wisdom*, to watch, hear and understand it aright, *Mic.* 6. 9. we should learn the sooner to follow *Providence* the better; the neglect whereof doth oft bring damage and detriment to us, &c. But tho' God's *Providence* may be too dark and deep for our dim Eyes to see, and for our dull Ears to hear; yet blessed be God, his *Precepts* and his *Promises* are all so plain, that he who runs may read and hear them; and our not watching them, makes us neglect *Godliness*.

The (2d) Friend is *God the Son* must be watched, for we know not either the *Day* or the *Hour* wherein he will call us either to *Death*, or to the *Day* of *Judgment*; every Man's *Death-day* is his particular *Dooms-day*, &c. as before, and because we cannot foresee it, therefore must we ever expect it, and spend every day as if it were our last day. Hereupon we are all commanded to be always upon our watch, and to be also ready for his coming, *Matth.* 24. 42, 44. where our

Lord

Lord useth seven Argument from ver. 37. to the end of that Chapter, as so many motives to stir us up unto watchfulness; the day and hour knoweth no man, &c. ver. 36. *ideo latet unus dies, ut observentur omnes*, that we might watch continually for that uncertain certain day. The Harlot grew bold to sin on this account, because she knew her Lord would not return till such an appointed time, *Prov.* 7. 10, 18, 19, 20. Whereas secure Sinners may hear, [Thou Fool, this night shall thy Soul be taken from thee, *Luke* 12. 20. He will come unlooked for, and Dichotomize, cut asunder, and tear his Soul from his Body by force, &c. *Matth.* 24. 50, 51. 'Tis a blessed Badge, pinn'd (as it were) upon sanctified Souls Sleeves, that they wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus, *1 Cor.* 1. 2, 7. *1 Thes.* 1. 10. as it was the character of Old Testament Saints, that they waited for the consolation of *Israel* in Christ's first coming, *Luke* 2. 25. how much more ought we to lift up our Heads and Eyes for beholding the comfort of his second coming, *Luke* 21. 28. looking for, and hastning unto it, (as desirous to meet him in the way,) *2 Pet.* 3. 12. crying continually, [O mora, Christo veni,] come Lord Jesus, come quickly, *Rev.* 22. 20. All such as have taken many sweet Turns

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in communion with *Christ* upon the *Mountain of Spices*, to wit, (*Gospel Ordinances*, will cry, [*come, and be like a Roebuck for swiftness,*] *Cant.* 8. *last*. Upon such *Christ* comes not as a *Thief in the night*, *1 Thes.* 5. 3. for they love his appearing, *2 Tim.* 4. 8. and they are blessed, *Rev.* 16. 15. Such as fear to live and see that day, shall not see it to live, &c.

The *Third great Friend* we must watch is the *Holy Ghost*, for 'tis a *Divine Precept*, [*He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches,*] *Rev.* 2. 7. And this is said again and again, both in the 2<sup>d</sup> and in the 3<sup>d</sup> Chapter to all the *Seven Golden Candlesticks*, seven times over; the sense whereof is, we must watch and hearken what *God the Holy Spirit* will speak, *Psal.* 85. 8. not so much with the *Gristle* on the *Head*, but more by the *Ear* of the *Heart*; for *God* may speak once and twice, and man perceive it not, *Job* 33. 14. until *God* bore our *Ears*, as he did *David's*, *Psal.* 40. 6. and open our *Hearts* as he did *Lydias*, *Acts* 16. 14. and until our *Lord* put his *Finger* into the *Hole* of our *Ear*, and looking up to *Heaven*, he cry, [*Ephphatha*] that is, be opened, as he did to the *Man* that was possessed with a *deaf Devil*, *Mark* 7. 34. We must pray with the

Spouse

Spouse for this purpose, saying, [*Lord, thy Companions hearken to thy Voice, cause me to hear it also,*] *Cant.* 8. 13. when this *Quickning Spirit*, (as he is called, *Joh.* 6. 63.) even this *Spirit of Truth* cometh, he guideth us into all *Truth*, *Joh.* 16. 13. and blessed is that *Soul* which watcheth the *Motions* of this *Holy Spirit* in a *Sanctified Conscience*, and can discern a difference of such persuasions as come not from him that calleth us, *Gal.* 5. 8. The *Steps* of a good man are ordered by the *Lord*, *Psal.* 37. 23. Blessed are they that hear the joyful sound, (of this breathing Spirit) they shall walk, O *Lord*, in the light of thy *Countenance*, *Psal.* 89. 15. they follow the footsteps of his *Anointed*, ver. 51. and *David* must then bestir himself, when he heard the sound of *God's* goings upon the *Tops* of the *Mulberry Trees*, *2 Sam.* 5. 24. This *Holy Spirit* is a delicate thing, *Psal.* 143. 10. as *Junius* reads it, and therefore must not be vexed, *Isa.* 63. 10. nor grieved, *Ephes.* 4. 30. much less quenched in its motions, *1 Thes.* 5. 19. they that are led by the Spirit are the *Sons* of *God*, *Rom.* 8. 14. as *Paul* was, *Acts* 16. 6, 7. and *Simeon* was led by the Spirit into the *Temple*, *Luke* 2. 27. Yea, and our *Lord Jesus* himself was led up by the Spirit into the *Wilderness* to conquer the

the Tempter in a Duel upon the Devil's own ground, *Matth. 4. 1.* Thus Abraham (that Father of the faithful) went out, he knew not whether, nor when he should return, nor how he should subsist, &c. yet he well knew with whom he went, *Heb. 11. 8.* for he put himself as a Child into his Father's hand who called him, and the conduct of the Holy Spirit carried him dry-shod to the last. Thus likewise if we be the Sons and Daughters of Abraham, the Holy Spirit will teach us all things, *John 14. 26.* that blessed Anointing is our best Instructor, *1 John, 2. 20. 27.* We should lay our selves (as Instruments) open to the Touchings of this Holy Spirit, and submit to his Discipline, (which requires much self-denial,) then shall we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 22, 23.* which is in all Goodness and Righteousness, and Truth, *Ephes. 5. 9.* And could we but watch its whisperings more and better, so as to obey them, we should not so oft be found in *Fundo Diaboli*, upon the Devil's ground in places of Temptation; but as the Spirit suffered not Paul, &c. to go unto such and such Places, *Acts 16. 6, 7.* even so would it be with us, could we but put our Souls wholly under the conduct of this Holy Spirit. If once we dare presume

sume to break this Divine Hedge, that Old Serpent will surely bite us, *Eccles. 10. 8.* We may not live at Random, and without a Rule, but we must mind and watch the Teachings of this Divine Union, which never teacheth us any thing, but what is consonant to the Holy Scripture, ended by it, *2 Pet. 1. 19, 20, 21.*

Now come we to the Second Trinity, or three sorts of Foes or Enemies to be duly and daily watched.

The first Foe is the World, which is a woful Witch, and must be burned for a Witch at the Last Day, *2 Pet. 3. 7, 10.* and therefore ought we to watch this Witch well, that we may not be bewitched by it. It is well known that such persons as are bewitched, do not only lose their Likeness and Beauty, but also do suffer many sad Paroxysms and Fits of strange Distempers, &c. As all this holds true literally to bewitched Bodies, &c. so no less is it true mystically to bewitched Souls, which are captivated by the two fair Breasts, (or rather Botches;) this Witch the World exposeth to their view, namely, *Pleasure* and *Profit*: Such have horrible Fits of Madness, as Saul had, when the Evil Spirit came upon him, *1 Sam. 16. 14, 23, &c.* and such have Leanness sent into their Souls, *Psal. 106. 15.*

Besides

Besides the World must be well watched, because it is such an *Enemy* as continually besiegeth us, and we cannot flee from it while we live in it; therefore we must be sure to have a Lid or Covering for our Hearts: Those *Vessels* that wanted Coverings, the Law doomed them Unclean, *Numb.* 19. 15. and so are our Hearts without a *Covering of the Spirit*, *Isa.* 30. 1. The Dirt of a dirty World will unavoidably be often falling into an open uncovered Heart, whereby both *Mind* and *Conscience* are defiled, *Tit.* 1. 15. We should keep the World under our Feet, where God placed it, *Psal.* 8. 6. and not set it in our Hearts, *Eccles.* 3. 11.

The *Second Foe* to be watched is *Satan*, who is called [*the God of this World*], *2 Cor.* 4. 4. and dealeth with *Worldlings*, as unlucky Boys do with silly Horses; they first catch them with a little Provender, and then backs them, whips and spurs them into an High Gallop, and rides them till they be tired, and at last lodges them in the Stable at night, &c. We are told how *Satan* considered *Job*, and better considered him, *Job* 1. 8. and 2. 3. that is, he watched all Advantages to Tempt that *none-such Saint*, and Servant of God, &c. Oh then, how much more ought such weak worms (as we are)

to consider him, who so much considers us, and watches us to take all advantages against us, for we are not ignorant of his Devices, *2 Cor.* 2. 11. We read of *Rizpah*, how she watched her *Royal Seed* upon the Rock, &c. and suffered neither the *Birds* of the Air to rest on them by day, nor the *Beasts* of the Field by night, *1 Sam.* 21. 10. Thus every Believer ought to do as *Rizpah* did in watching the *Royal Seed*, even the *Seed of God* in them, that it be not wronged either by night or day, by *Satan*, who is called both a *Prince*, *Fowl of the Air*, *Ephes.* 2. 2. and likewise a *Beast of the Field*, as he is a *Roaring Lion*, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. and therefore are we there bidden to be vigilant, lest we be devoured by him. When this Tempter comes to us, he hath a *Threefold Errand*.

(1<sup>st</sup>) To find something of his own Work in us, as he found nothing thereof in our *sinless Saviour*, *Joh.* 14. 30.

(2<sup>dly</sup>) To get betwixt us and our strong Hold, *Prov.* 18. 10. where is safety, drawing us out of our Trenches, &c. as *Joshuah* did the men of *Ai*, *Josh.* 8. 6. And,

(3<sup>dly</sup>) To gain some Harbour and House-room in any corner of our Hearts.

NB. Note well, Tho' he may have power over our *Naturals*, yet he can have no power over our *Morals* without our consent.



sent. He cannot make his passage into us, unless we sign his Pass, &c. We must watch well hereupon, &c.

The Third *Foe* we must therefore watch the more is our own *Hearts*, which are *deceitful above all things*, and *desperately wicked*, &c. Jer. 17. 9. Hereupon we are commanded [ *to keep our Hearts with all diligence*, even with the best of our keeping, because the *issues of Life*, yea and of *Death* too, flows from that Fountain, according to the *goodness or badness* of it, ] Prov. 4. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. and Deut. 4. 9, 10, &c. This *Hidden Man of the Heart*, (as 'tis called,) 1 Pet. 3. 4. must be well watched, because 'tis like a *troubled Sea*, always casting forth *Mire and Dirt*, Isa. 57. 20, 21. 'Tis *Job's* phrase, [ *am I a Sea*, &c. *that thou settest a watch over me?* ] Job 7. 12. *Abundance of evil Thoughts*, &c. *proceed from the Heart*, Matth. 15. 18, 19, 20. The Tempter can only knock at the Door, he can neither Fire it, nor Force it open; 'tis his gaining our consent, that lets down the *Draw-bridge*, and lets him enter, &c. therefore 'tis not enough to have our Hearts well watched only, but they must be well washed also, as God saith, [ *Wash thine Heart from wickedness, that thou mayst be saved; how long shall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee?* ]

thee, ] Jer. 4. 14. Those evil Thoughts ought to be watched, and strictly examined, yea and clapped up close Prisoners, otherwise they will abuse us, (the *Fathers* of them) as *Lot's Daughters*, did him, their Father; they were awake, when he was fast asleep, and how busie were they to make him drunk, &c. Gen. 19. 31, to 38. Alas how oft do vain Imaginations abuse our Harlot-like Hearts all the night long until the morning, as those *men of Belial* in the City of *Gibeon* did the *Levite Concubine*, Judg. 19. 125, &c. Upon this consideration, we ought to watch well our own Hearts, which is the Source and Seed-plot of all our sins; for thoughts beget delight, delight begets consent, consent brings forth action, action produceth custom, and custom concludeth with laying a law of necessity in sinning against God; *principiis obsta, venienti occurito morbo*, begin betimes to watch Diseases of the Body, &c. how much more those of the Soul; *all principles breed ill practices*.

The Inferences concerning the Duty of watching.

(1st) 'Tis an universal Duty, no Persons, no Time, no Place are excepted from it. [ *all watch*, ] Mark 13. 37.

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(2dly)

(2dly) Every Person must watch the going up to the very top of Godliness, whole Man, both all the Members of the walking along as in a Frame, and keep Body, and all the Faculties of the Soul, the King's high way, not turning to Alas, all have been [*ὁπλῆσι Ἀδικίας*] weapons of wickedness, Rom. 6. 13, 19. No (4thly) We must learn from the Prophet to say, [ *I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the Watch-tower, and will watch to see what God will say unto me, &c.* ] Hab. 2. 1, 2, 3. Now there is How ought we to watch them; many no watching without Eyes, which when have died of a wound in the Eye, &c. Samson had lost, then a little Boy could Job cover'd his Eye with a Covenant, Job lead him. Solomon saith, that [ *a prudent man* ] foreseeth an evil and hideth it, 31. 1. Psal. 119. 37. If our Eye offend us, we must pull it out of the Old Adam himself, &c. ] Prov. 22. 3. 'Tis a good and get it set into the New Man, &c. observation, the Greek word [*ὀφθαλμῶν*] a How ought we watch our Tongues, Psal. wise man is derived from the Hebrew 39. 1, 2. and 141. 3. Eccles. 5. 1, 2, 3. word [*Ἰσοφειά*] *speculator*, one standing Jam. 3. 2, &c. always upon his watch.

(3dly) Secure Souls, that dare neglect (5thly) Let us rejoyce in this, that their watch, consider not that *their way* when we neglect to watch over our selves, is dark and slippery, Psal. 35. 6. and that we have a gracious God, to watch over this world is like the Vale of Siddim, full of Slime-pits, Gen. 14. 10. into which we the Feet of his Saints, 1 Sam. 2. 9. 1 Pet. may slip before we be aware; therefore Jude ver. 1. we may be lost, Respect ought we [*ὀρθοποδεῖν*, to walk warily] Gal. 2. 14. signifying, that we lift not up one of God) Joh. 6. 39. and 10. 28, 29. Foot, until we find firm footing for the and 17. 12. Jude ver. 24. 2 Tim. 1. 12. other; and we ought to [ *walk circumspectly* ] Ephes. 5. 15. the word [*ἀκρίβως*] things is at hand, therefore we must be so, signitie to walk exactly, by Line and by Rule; its Etymology is [*εἰς ἀκρίβειαν βαίνειν*] *this is, the last part of our Spiritual Armour,*

mour; *Ephes. 6. 18. Matth. 26. 41.* which if (by the helping hand of our gracious God) we be made able to improve aright in our Christian Warfare, then shall we be blest to rejoyce with the blessed Spouse of Christ, crying [*It is the Voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping over Mountains, and skipping over Hills,*] *Cant. 2. 8.* Remarks upon it are,

(1st) *Watching and Praying Souls have this, and hear this* [*Kol-Dodi Heb. the Voice of their Beloved*; thus the *Watching and Praying Prophet* had his joyful tidings of the ruine of *Babylon*, and of the restoration of *Sion*, *Hab. 2. 1, 3.* and *Chap. 3.* and this was likewise the Spouse's work here, when she was brought into the *Bridegrooms Banquetting-house*, and his *Banner of Love* was over her, *Cant. 2. 4.* yea, and his left Hand was under her Head, and his right hand embraced her after she had prayed for some of *Christ's Cordials* to be handed in to her Soul which was sick of Love; ver. 5, 6. and tho' she charged others not to awaken him, &c. ver. 7. yet she doth it her self, but not before he pleased for immediately he brings the *Flagons of Wine and Apples of Comfort*; she earnestly cried for; and this she doth acknowledge in this Divine Rapture [*Kol-Dodi,*] 'tis the *Voice of my Beloved*, ver. 8. and in *Chap. 5. 2.* Also,

Remark the Second; As *Christ's Face* is comely to the *Eyes* of gracious Souls, [*White and Ruddy, Cant. 5. 10.* yea, and altogether *Lovely* (as well as *all asunder*;) ver. 11, 12, &c. 16. So *Christ's Voice* is comfortable to their *Ears*: Oh how the very hearing of it put the Spouse into a *Transport*, having a present sense of her Lord's approaching to make some gracious discoveries of himself to her by his Voice! Oh how wonderfully *refreshing*, yea *ravishing* was it to this Love-sick Spouse, and 'tis no less to Love-sick Souls. And

The (3d) Remark is, among all the *five Senses*, the Sense of Hearing hath this surpassing Excellency, that God hath ordained the great grace of Faith must come by bearing; *Rom. 10. 17.* As Satan had made Man's Ear the *instrument of Man's destruction*, when our first Parents listned sooner to the Tempters *base Lies* (who was a Liar from the beginning, *Joh. 8. 44.*) than to the *blessed Truths* of the God of Truth; even so our Gracious Father hath made the same sense of hearing to be the *Organ of Man's Salvation*, &c.

The (4th) Remark is, There is a natural Deafness in fallen mankind: 'Tis not so much *God's Silence*, as it is our *Dulness*; for [*God speaks once and twice,*

and *Man perceiveth it not,* ] Job 33. 14. or it may be our *Childishness*, as it was in the young Child *Samuel*, when he mistook God's call for old *Ely's*, 1 Sam. 3. 4, 6, 8, 10. 'Tis worst of all to be like the *Deaf Adder*, that will not hearken, &c. Psal. 58. 4, 5. This is our case, until *Christ* come and cry [ *Ephphatha* ] *Ears be opened*, Mark 7. 34, 35.

The (5th) Remark is, It is a sad dispensation to lie any long time under Divine Desertions, and not to hear the Voice of our Beloved neither Week-day, nor Lord's day. This was *David's* outcry, [ *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,* I cry night and day, but thou bearest me not, ] (so as not to answer me with thy Voice) Psal. 22. 1, 2. yet he keeps high and honourable Thoughts of even a silent God, saying, [ but thou art Holy, and inhabits Praises, &c. ] ver. 3. and he complains also, [ *Lord, how long wilt thou be Angry against the Prayers of thy People?* ] Psal. 80. 4. And thus it was with the Spouse, complaining, [ *I called him, but he gave me no answer,* Cant. 5. 6. this is sad to Love-sick Souls, &c.

The (6th) Remark is, The Love-sick Spouse, even while slumbering, can know the Voice of her Beloved, Cant. 5. 2, 3, &c. where she saith, [ *it is the Voice of my Be-*

Be-

Beloved that knocketh, &c. ] not only because it was but an half-sleep; for the hidden man of her heart, (so called, 1 Pet. 3. 4.) was awake; but also, because of her former frequent knowledge and acquaintance with this [ *Kol-Dodi* ] or her Beloved's Voice. Thus it is common among us, that we know whose Voice it is that calleth us, when foregoing Acquaintance hath made it familiar to us, tho' we be betwixt sleeping and waking, especially if we shake our selves as *Samson* did, Judg. 16. 20.

The (7th) Remark is, When we have not been so dutiful and attentive to *Christ's* Voice, as we ought to be, so as to obey his Call, &c. yet then must we make serious reflections upon our own negligence, and severely censure our selves for refusing such blessed Embrace-ments as the Soul-sick Spouse did, repeating with regret every Title of Love, and every Accent he had given her, and every Action he had done in order to his own reception with her: All along aggravating her own fault and folly, that a King should court a Beggar and be rejected, Cant. 5. 3, 5, 8.

The (8th) Remark is, This *Kol-Dodi*, &c. is an abrupt passage, proceeding from a pang of Love, whereof she was sick, and

now lies (as it were) languishing at Hope's Hospital, ever listening and Harkning to hear her Bridegrooms Voice; and when she heard it, she rejoiced at it, not only as the Damsel Rhoda did to hear the Voice of Peter, Acts 12. 14. but as Elizabeth did when our Lord's Mother saluted her, as her Babe; so the Spouse's Heart leaped within her, Luke 1. 40, 41.

The (9th) Remark from the Text, Cant. 2. 8. is, *The Voice of Christ is a very precious Voice unto all gracious hearts; as here to the Spouse: she first heard his Voice, and then cries, behold he comes. John Baptist was call'd a Voice to prepare a way for Christ's coming, Mark 1. 2, 3. So the Spouse here looks upon Christ's Voice as a forerunner of himself, and of his coming to her to communicate more of his Graces and Comforts to her Love-sick Soul! No sooner doth Christ's sweet Voice enter into our Ears, and sinks down into our Hearts, but presently we are made to hear of Joy and Gladness, and our broken Bones begin to Rejoice* ] Psal. 51. 8. *the Spouse tells her Friends so, &c.*

Enquiry how we may know the Voice of Christ, our Beeloved, from the Voice of False Lovers, &c.

*Answer the (1st)* There is much difficulty oftentimes to discern a difference, because

because Satan can imitate the Servants of God, his Magicians did the like to Moses's Miracle with their Enchantments, Exod. 7. 11. until God did convince them, Exod. 8. 19. yea, and plagued themselves also for their Cheat, Exod. 9. 11. nor could Samuel himself have spoken more gravely, more devoutly, and more divinely than Satan did unto Saul, who hired the Witch of Endor to conjure him up in Samuel's similitude, 1 Sam. 28. 15, to 20. Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light; it is no marvel then, if his Ministers, False Apostles, Deceitful Workers, transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ, &c. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15. and the cry of Folly is like the cry of Wisdom, Prov. 9. 4, 16. the Voices are alike, and the Words are the same in both, [*Whoso is simple, let him turn in thither, &c.* yet are they distinguishable by many Characters.

*Answer the (2d)* The Voice of our Beeloved doth differ from the Voice of Strangers, (which Christ's sheep will not hear, nor follow, John 10. 4, 5, 8.) By these few Discriminations, The first Discriminating Character is, Christ's Voice hath in it self a self-discovering property; 'tis the excellency of it, to bring along with it its own Evidence; how do we know that

that Light is Light, but by that evidence of Light which it hath in it self, &c. and thus Fire doth discover it self by its own Heat, as well as Light.

The *Second Character* is, *Christ's Voice* is attended with *Authority* and *Power*, infomuch as his Hearers stood *astonished at his Doctrine*, Luke 4. 32. and they were *amazed*, saying, *What a Word is this?* for with *Authority* and *Power* he *casteth out Devils*, ver. 36. Thus *David* tells us, [the *Voice of the Lord* is powerful, and full of *Majesty*, it *breaketh the tallest Cedars*, and the *strongest Oaks*, &c. it *maketh the Hindes to Calve*, (which is the most difficult Birth of all Females, Job 39. 1. they being so narrow-made Creatures, &c.) And the *Voice of the Lord* stilleth the Rage of Rivers and Seas, by *sitting upon the Floods*, and keeping them under his Call,] Psal. 29. 4, 5, 6, 7, to 11.

The *Third Character* is, The *Voice of Christ* reacheth the Heart, it *maketh manifest the Secrets of the Hearts of Unbelievers* at a Sermon-hearing, and causeth them to *fall down and worship God*, and to say, that *God is in his Prophets of a truth*,] 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. Thus when *Christ* speaketh with a *strong hand* (as he did to the Prophet, Isa. 8. 11.) to any person, then *Christ* opens the Heart, (as he

he did the Heart of *Lydia*, Acts 16. 14.) tho' it be called a *small still Voice*, 1 Kings 19. 12. yet having the Lord in it, it is mighty in its Operations for pulling down of the strong holds of Satan, and casting down every high thing, that exalts its self against God in us, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. *Christ's Voice* hath Spirit and Life in it, John 6. 63. and therefore is it only effectual to break the heart for sin, to dissolve the Stone, and to mortifie sin in it, and to quicken it for God, and to change it into the Image of God, &c. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

The *Fourth Character* is, *Christ's Voice* calleth from evil to good, from ways of wickedness to ways of holiness, it always cries, [come up hither to God] Rev. 11. 12. but never [go down thither to sin,] this latter is the Voice of an Egyptian, and when we meet it, we must (with *Moses*) slay it; but the former is an Hebrew Voice, which we must save alive as he did, Exod. 2. 11, 12. *Christ's Breath* or Spirit is called a Spirit of Holiness, Rom. 1. 3. and always calls us to be Holy as he is Holy, 1 Pet. 1. 15. and 2 Pet. 3. 11. Truth calls to forsake the Foolish, Prov. 9. 6. but Error calls to Fleishly Delights, ver. 15, 16, 17. therefore we must reject that Voice, which promotes not the power of Godliness.

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The *Fifth Character* is, *Christ's Voice* is alway consonant to the Light and Law of Nature. This is the remainder of God's Image in fallen mankind, some sherd whereof do still remain after *Adam's fall*, whereby *Cain* knew that *Murther*, *Joseph* that *Adultery*, his Brethren that *Theft*, &c. were all heinous sins, long before the Law was given by *Moses*. Hereby likewise [the Gentiles who have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law; these are a Law to themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience bearing witness, and either excusing, or accusing, &c.] Rom. 2. 14, 15. Therefore that Voice which crosseth the Voice of an awakened Conscience is not *Christ's Voice*.

The *Sixth Character* is, the Voice of *Christ* is alway congruous to the Light and Law of the Holy Scripture; for *Christ* (who is called *the word*, John 1. 1.) cannot contradict himself, *He is not Yea and Nay, but in him was Yea*, &c. 2 Cor. 1. 17, 18, 19, 20. He is the same both in his Voice that is spoken, and in his Word that is written; therefore our Lord saith, [to the Law and to the Testimony, if any speak not according to this word, it is because they have no Light in them,] Isa. 8. 20. The Word written must be the Rule

Rule of our Lives, because it shall be our Judge after Death, as our Lord saith, [the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you at the last day,] John 12. 48. Rom. 2. 16. according to my Gospel: So that if any pretended Voice of *Christ* come to us, which holds not congruity with the Scripture of Truth, Dan. 10. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. we must look on it as a Delusion, &c.

The *Seventh Character* is, The Voice of *Christ* always calls to weighty matters, and that in order, &c. but never to trifling Deeds, and in disorder and confusion. Thus *Nehemiah* perceived it was none of God's call, that called him from God's work, no fewer than five or six times, to trifling discourses with them in private, &c. Neh. 6. 4, 5, 6, 12. and thus *Paul* was exasperated against the *Divining Damsel* for disturbing them many days from their *Praying-work*, &c. Acts 16. 16, 17, 18.

The *Eighth and Last Character*, (to mention no more for brevity sake) is, *Christ's Voice* doth put the Right Hearer of it into an *acting* frame and *doing* posture; for thus he saith, [Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say, Luke 8. 46. 'Tis not Hearers, but Doers whom God respects, Rom. 2. 13.]

Hearers

Hearers only and not Doors deceive themselves, Jam. 1. 22. 'Tis not the hearing and talking, but the walking and working Christian that Christ loveth, &c.

Inferences from hence, (1st) That we may hear the Voice of Christ, we must come to every Ordinance in publick, and to every Duty in private in an hearkning posture; [ *I will hearken what the Lord will say, &c.* Psal. 85. 8. [ *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth,* ] 1 Sam. 3. 19. [ *To hearken is better than the fat of Rams,* 1 Sam. 15. 22. [ *To day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your hearts,* ] Heb. 3. 7. but listen and hearken with *bored Ears*, Psal. 40. 6, &c.

(2dly) Pray for a *Discerning Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 10. that we mistake not the Younger for the Elder, as blind *Isaac* did, Gen. 27. 21, 22. The Voice may be *Jacob's*, when the Hands may be like the rough Hands of *Esau*, &c. and we may think that we are embracing our beloved *Rachel* all the night, when in the morning-light, it proves a *Blear-eyed Leah*, as it was imposed upon *Jacob* by churlish *Laban*, Gen. 29. 25. and therefore must we pray for *God's Spirit to lead us into all truth*, John 14. 26. if it do witness with our Spirit, Rom. 8. 16. This is the *ultimum*, or *last appeal*; then may we say with

with the Apostle, [ *I have the mind of Christ,* ] 1 Cor. 2. 16. and with the Prophet, [ *If I be deceived, my God hath deceived me,* Jer. 20. 7. For the Spirit of Truth doth not only assure us of our interest in Christ, but also of the truth of the Voice of Christ to us, to prevent mistakes, &c.

(3dly) Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good, 1 Thes. 5. 21. Try before we trust, take nothing upon trust; he was a fond Philosopher that said, [ he had rather err with *Plato*, than follow the Truth with others; ] whereas [ *we should follow any that follow Christ,* ] 1 Cor. 11. 1. [ *Wo to them that call evil good, &c.* ] Isa. 5. 20. therefore should we say with *Isaac*, [ *Come near my Son, that I may feel thee,* ] Gen. 27. 21. And *John* turned to see the Voice of him that spake to him, Rev. 1. 12. And the same Apostle saith, [ *our Hands have handled of the word of Life,* ] 1 John 1. 1. the Ear tryeth words, &c. Job. 12. 11. As *Timothy* must lay hands suddenly on no man, 1 Tim. 5. 22. So we on no Thing, no Voice, &c. for we may hear a noise only of Christ, but not the distinct articulate Voice of Christ, &c. as those that journeyed with *Paul* did, &c. Acts 9. 7. with Acts 22. 9. and 'tis said of those Christ-killers, [ *that they knew not the Voices*



*Voices of the Prophets, &c.* Acts 13. 27.

(4thly) The true Voice of Christ discovers it self by its effects, as (1) It makes our hearts leap at it within us, as the Babe leaped in Elizabeths Womb, when only the Mother of our Lord saluted her, Luke 1. 44. much more when our Lord himself saluteth us, &c. our Hearts then must leap for Joy, &c. (2) It makes our Hearts burn within us, as it did to those two Disciples, Luke 24. 32. Christ's Voice ever makes a warm Heart, &c.

(5thly) If we be of God, we shall hear the Voice of Christ, and his word will have room in us, John 8. 37, 47. and every one that is of the Truth beareth Christ's Voice, John 18. 37. by this we may know both whose and what we are as to our State, &c.

(6thly) and Lastly, A Love-sick Soul cannot bear any long silence from Christ, &c. there was silence in Heaven only for half an hour, Rev. 8. 1. that was a wonder, but to hear nothing of Christ's Voice for whole Days, Weeks and Months, &c. is a great grievance to a gracious Heart; this made David cry, [Hide not thy Face from thy Servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily,] Psal. 69. 17. And the Spouse said, [Thy Companions hear thy Voice, Oh, cause me to hear it also,] Cant.

Cant. 8. 13. [Hope deferred, makes the Heart sick,] Prov. 13. 12. Unless God say to us, as he said to Moses, [speak no more to me concerning this matter,] Deut. 3. 25, 26. Thus God sometimes saith so to us in his Works, when he declares his Will contrary to our Wills. Thus David prayed for the Life of his Child, when God had decreed its Death, 2 Sam. 12. 16, 17, 18. And our Saviour himself prayed [let this Cup pass from me, yet with submission to his Fathers Will, Matth. 26. 19, &c.]

## CH A P. V.

### *The Characters of True Conquerors through the Strength of Christ.*

THE Enquiry is, How may this Conquest be made manifest to us, that we may sing victoria with Deborah, saying, [Oh, my Soul; thou hast trodden down strength,] Judg. 5. 21. and say with Paul, [I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me,] Phil. 4. 13. and we are  
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more than Conquerors in [ *all these things through him that loved us,* ] Rom. 8. 37.

*Answer,* This may be known by many manifest *Charatters*.

As the (1<sup>st</sup>) *Charatter* is, Can we say in the *witnessings* of the *Holy Ghost*, together with the *witness* of our own *Consciences*, as Rom. 9. 1. that we find the Lord hath performed ( in some measure ) that first Gospel-promise of *Christ's breaking the Serpents Head in us?* Gen. 3. 15. Hath Satan lost his Headship or Dominion over us, Rom. 6. 14. he is limited, and must have leave to hurt Hogs, &c. This Text, Gen. 3. 15. the *Romish Church* hath most grossly corrupted, ascribing that Honourable Act to the *Virgin Mary*; the Hebrew is, [ *Hu Feshupheka Resh* ] *ille conteret Caput*, not *illa*; for [ *Hu* ] is the Masculine Gender, signifies *He*, not [ *Hi* ] the Feminine, which signifies [ *She* : ] and so *Zerah*, Hebr. for Seed, is Masculine also. Therefore the *Popish Reading* [ *She for He* ] must needs be notoriously false, because it gives the *Glory of Christ to her*, who herself ( as well as we ) was saved by the Merit, Value and Vertue of *Christ*, as *She* herself doth acknowledge, saying, [ *My Spirit rejoiceth in the Lord my Saviour,* ] Luke 1. 47. Had *She* had no sin ( as the *Romanists* say, ) then had *She* no need of this

this *Saviour*, whom *She* called [ *my Saviour* ; ] and why did *She* ( if stood in no need of him ) so rejoice in him : The Greek word is [ *ἡγαλλίασε* ] signifying, as if *She danced a Gallyard* in her transports of joy in him, reckoning that her interest in this her *Saviour* did make it [ *Hilary Term*, ] that is, a *Merry Time* with her : Then if *She* herself stood in need of a *Saviour*, how absurd it is in the *Papists* to pray to her as to a *Saviour* for others. *Chrysostom* saith, [ had not that blessed *Virgin* carried *Christ* [ *ἐν κόλῳ* ] in her Heart, as well as [ *ἐν χερσὶ* ] in her Arms, ( as well as before in her *Womb*, ) *She* had never herself got into Heaven ; therefore we must not set the Crown upon the wrong Head, upon the Mother of our Lord. but upon the Lord himself, to *break the Serpents Head* ; and a wound in the Head is most dangerous and mortal, and therefore the *Serpent* doth secure his Head with the hazard of his whole Body, knowing that his Life lies in his Head mostly, [ *Intorto Capite, sequitur Corpus*, ] if the *Serpent* can screw in his Head, he can easily wrest in his Body. Now the Phrase [ *Conterit Caput*, ] signifies he shall knock thee on the Head, he shall crack thy Crown ; therefore this must be our serious enquiry, Whether *Christ*, in us, the hope of *Glory*,

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Col. 1. 27. (who dwells in our Hearts by Faith, Ephes. 3. 17. and who is the Stronger Man ) hath yet come upon this Strong Man, and overcome him, and taken from his Armour wherein he trusted, &c. Luke 11. 21, 22. Hath our Lord, in us, drawn the Dragon out of his Den, where he lived long peaceably, that is, in our Hearts all the time of our ignorance? Acts 17. 30. And hath he broke the Head of the Tempter, so that he leaves nothing for us to combat with, save only Tail-Temptations! And Christ strengthens his Members both to carry on, and to compleat this Spiritual Combat, and to become more than Conquerors at the last, as blessed Paul acknowledgeth in three places of Holy Scripture. The first is, [ *It is not I that lives, but it is Christ that liveth in me, &c.* Gal. 2. 20. ] The Second Place is Rom. 8. 37. where he ascribeth the Honour of our being Conquerors ( as before to the Life of Christ in him, so ) to the Love of Christ to him, and to all true Christians: And the third place is Phil. 4. 13. where he gives the glory of his one fort of Omnipotency to the power of Christ in him.

The (2d) Character of a Conqueror is, If we find, by real experience, that we do gain ground of our Spiritual Enemies ( those Tail-Temptations ) as Joshua did

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win ground upon the cursed Canaanites in his daily Wars against them: First, he conquered that Land which lay upon the far side of Jordan, and then passing over that River, he conquered them on the other side also, having the blessed Messiah along with him, who said to Joshua, [ *as Captain of the Lord's Host am I come,* ] Josh. 5. 15. yet sometimes we find how hardly he got the Victory over the City Ai, when Achan's sin proved too strong for Joshua's prowess, Josh. 7. 5. Inasmuch that he won ground of the Enemy ( as it were ) by Inches only, according to the word of the Lord, saying, [ *The Lord thy God will drive out those Nations, before thee, by little and little, and not all at once, &c.* ] Deut. 7. 22. and the Lord did order and over-rule it there for Israel's good. Thus it is in our Spiritual Warfare, tho' God's promise is to tread down Satan under our Feet shortly, Rom. 16. 20. yet God will not make his promises good too soon. It was for their own good, as in that fore-named Scripture, [ *lest the Beasts of the Field increase upon thee,* ] for he is a God of Judgment, and waiteth to give us his Mercies, when they may do us most good; and therefore [ *blessed are they that wait for him,* ] Isa. 30. 18. He gives his Mercy in the best Season, tho' not so

soon as we do desire; we long to conquer our *Corruptions* (those cursed *Canaanites*) in one day, which our Lord hath ordered and ordained to be the work of our whole Lives; our *Corruptions*, as the *Canaanites*, are left yet unsubdued, only to prove us in our owning God, &c. Judg. 2. 21, 22. and Judg. 3. 4. This *mortifying of sin*, (as well as *fortifying of grace*,) is *pensum Diurnum & Perpetuum*, both a daily and a perpetual Task. God will keep a Tether at our Foot to keep us humble. Paul must have a *Thorn in the Flesh*, a *Messenger of Satan* to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure with his late *Rapture* into *Paradise*, 2 Cor. 12. 2, 3, 4, 7. There will be work enough for the exercise of Grace, till it be turned into Glory. Notwithstanding the *Canaanites*, with their *Iron Chariots*, were so strong, that *Israel* could not drive them out, Josh. 17. 16. yet the faithful God, (as he is called,) Deut. 7. 9. and *who will not be slack*, ver. 10. did promise that they should drive them out, tho' they had *Iron Chariots*, and tho' they were strong, Josh. 17. 18. the *Lord of Hosts* was too mighty for them. Thus we complain concerning our *Corruptions*, that they fall not fast enough by *mortifying Grace*; but we must know for our Comfort, [our Faithful

God

God will not be slack, (as before) for killing our cursed *Canaanites*. He indeed may seem to be slow in our thoughts, yet he is never slack, but will be ever sure; he will not suffer his *faithfulness* to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his Lips, Psal. 89. 33. what he speaks with his Mouth, he fulfils with his Hand, 1 Kings 8. 24. he will do what he hath said, 2 Sam. 7. 25. whether ancient promises, Tit. 1. 1, 2. which never failed in any Age; no nor his *Menaces* neither, Zeph. 3. 5. nor will he fail in this of treading Satan under our Feet shortly, Prov. 16. 20. In the mean time let us enquire, Do we gain ground of our Spiritual Enemies? doth the House of Saul in us wax weaker and weaker, and the House of David in us grow stronger and stronger, as 2 Sam. 3. 1. can we feel our Lord a destroying the works of the Devil in us, Heb. 2. 14. 1 John 3. 8. tho' as yet they be not altogether destroyed? Are we daily dying to sin, tho' not as yet wholly dead to it? even this may ensure us of Victory at last; let us compare time with time: may we but experience, how heretofore the fleshly law in thee had thy Sabbaths, thy Time, thy Strength, yea thy very Heart and Affections; but now by the power of Renewing Grace) the Law of the Spirit

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 in thee hath rescued (at laest) a little  
 of all the aforesaid, and subjected that  
 little under the *Law* of the *Spirit*; so  
 that thou finds those two contrary *Laws*  
 now in thee, to wit, the *Law of the Mem-*  
*bers*, and the *Law of the Mind*, warring  
*against each other*, &c. Rom. 7. 15, to 23.  
 which makes thee cry out, (as the be-  
*trotted Damsel* did in the field, when she  
 was assaulted by a *man too strong for her*,  
 Deut. 22. 27. as *Amnon* was too strong  
 for *Tamar*, 2 Sam. 13. 14.) so dost thou  
 cry out with *Paul*, [*Oh wretched man that*  
*I am, who shall deliver me from the Body*  
*of Death?* and thank God (with him)  
 that *Jesus Christ our Lord is thy Delive-*  
*rer*; saying likewise, (as he did) so then  
 with the *Mind* I my self do serve the *Law*  
 of God; but with the *Flesh* the *Law of*  
*Sin*, Rom. 7. 24, 25. If we find our selves in  
 no worse a condition than that of the  
 Holy Apostle himself, this cannot be un-  
 comfortable and discouraging to us; the  
 same conflict betwixt two contrary *Laws*  
 is common to all Christians: For as *Paul*  
 had informed the believing *Romans* of it  
 as above: So he affirms, yea, and *Con-*  
*firms* the same Truth to the believing  
*Galatians*, saying, [*walk in the Spirit,*  
*and ye shall not fulfil the lusts thereof;*  
*for the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit,*  
 and

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 and the *Spirit against the Flesh*, and these  
 are contrary the one to the other; so that  
 ye cannot do the things that ye would, &c.]  
 Gal. 5. 16, 17. The meaning whereof is,  
 that as we cannot do the good which we  
 would do, because the *Flesh* doth hinder  
 us; so we cannot do the evil which we  
 would (by the unrenewed part of our  
 wills) do, because the *Spirit* hinders us.  
 Now may we but find by sound experience  
 that the *Law of the Spirit* gains ground  
 of the *Law of the Flesh* in us; this is a  
 comfortable Character, that we shall be  
 Conquerors in this Spiritual Conflict.  
 Thus Satan's Assaults now are feebler  
 than heretofore against us, like that of  
 the old *Gauls*, of whom it is said, *prior*  
*impetus est plusquam Virorum, posterior*  
*minus quam seminarum*, more than Men  
 at first, but less than Women at last.

The Third Comfortable Character of a  
 Conqueror is, that he is able to break the  
 Ranks of the Van-guard, or Fore-front of  
 his Enemies, and so force them to draw  
 back. 'Tis a great encouragement to a  
 General to set his Feet, and the Feet of  
 his Army upon the same ground where  
 his Adversaries pitched their Battalia's  
 against him; he knows, if once they be-  
 gin to *flinch*, they will soon also begin  
 to *flee*, especially if he can gain their  
 most

most advantageous ground from which (as from an higher standing) they did mostly annoy him: but much more if he can shatter and disorder their Front, where the men of greatest Gallantry are ever most politickly placed; if once they come into confusion, and be (as we say) hand over head; then he doth more easily break in upon them, and so rout them out of the field. It was once a notable stratagem of an *English General*, that when he came up close to the face of his Foes, he ordered his Army to make a loud and universal outcry [they run, in the Rear, they run, they run;] this Cry did so daunt the Front, (who feared it to be true) that thereby both the Van and the Rear did run away indeed. Thus is it with us in our Spiritual Warfare; our Spiritual Enemies do not war against us as is done in a Duel, (but *one to one*) but here is many against one; those *fleshly lusts* that fight against our Souls are not one only, but many in the plural number, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. And the manifest works of the Flesh are many: There be no fewer than *seventeen* of them reckoned up, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. and yet not all by much, for Paul comes off with (and such like, &c.) Yea the same Apostle calls our Adversary, [A Body of Sin,]

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Rom. 6. 6. because it wars against us in a full Body, made up of many of Satan's Warriors, a very great Army. Now if we go out in the strength of the Lord as David did, *Psal.* 71. 16. and take the Captain of our Salvation, Heb. 2. 10. along with us, (who teacheth our hands to war, and our fingers to fight, *Psal.* 144. 1.) then are we made able to run through a Troop with David, *Psal.* 18. 29. and to leap over the Wall, yea and to break even a Bow of Steel by our Arms, *ver.* 34. Alas, we have all cause to cry (as Leah did, *Gen.* 30. 11. behold a Troop cometh, yea such a Troop of fleshly Lusts as overcomes Gad) for a while; but this is our comfort, that Gad doth overcome at last, *Gen.* 49. 19. If we can but break the Ranks of our Spiritual Enemies, so that they cannot come up in a full Body against us as formerly, then is there hope in Israel concerning this thing, that we shall better conquer them one after another when they are scattered asunder, (*divide & impera*, divide and rule said Machiavel; but *vis unita fortior est*, strength united is strong;) especially having God's promise of a Conquest, as the King of Babylon had to conquer Egypt, in whose behalf God saith, [I will put my Sword into his Hand, and will strengthen his Arms, but I will break

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*break Pharaoh's Arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man, ]* Ezek. 30. 24. accordingly if we can but say, that the Lord hath put his Sword into our Hands, even the *Sword of the Spirit*, which is the *Word of God*, Ephes. 6. 17. ( wherewith our Saviour himself conquered *Satan* in all his three Assaults, *Matth.* 4. 4, 7, 10, saying, *Scriptum est, it is Written*, against them all ) then the Devil will leave us, as he did our Lord, *ver.* 11. ( at least for a Season, *Luke* 4. 13. ) and *Angels* came to bring Food to him after his forty days fasting. Thus likewise if the Lord will strengthen our Arms also ( as well as put his Sword into our Hands, ) yea and break the Arms of that *Great Dragon, Pharaoh*, as he is called, *Ezek.* 29. 3. then shall he lie groaning before us, ( as in the example aforesaid ) with the groanings of a deadly wounded man. According both to the Church's Prayer, [ *awake, awake, thou Arm of the Lord, art thou not it that cut Rahab in pieces, and wounded the Dragon ; Oh put on strength as in the days of old,* ] *Isai.* 51. 9. and 27. 1. and according also to God's promise, [ *thou shalt tread upon the Lion and the Adder, the young Lion and the Dragon shalt thou trample under Foot,* ] *Psal.* 91. 13. because  
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 he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, &c. *ver.* 14. yea and according to Christ's promise likewise ; [ *They shall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly Poison, it shall not hurt them,* &c. ] *Mark* 16. 17, 18. NB. Note well, This extraordinary Gift lasted until Christ was publicly professed in the World : Indeed this great Red Dragon will be wrongful to the Woman, ( the Church ) and to her Seed, *Rev.* 12. 3, 4, 7, 9, 16, 17. until our Lord come and lay hold on him, and chain him up, &c. *Rev.* 20. 2, 3. and tread down Satan under our Feet shortly, *Rom.* 16. 20. In the mean time we must endeavour to say with *David*, even three times over, [ tho' our Spiritual Enemies be as many as are all the Nations which compass us about, ( even the *Philistins, Ammon, and Amaleck, &c.* ) yet in the Name of the Lord we will destroy them ; yea tho' they be so numerous as to compass us about ; yea and again, they compass us round about, yet in the Name of the Lord we will destroy them : yet higher, tho' they compass us about like a swarm of Bees that carry poisonful Stings with them, which in revenge they will lose, and oft their very lives together, or at least become Drones ever after ; ( just so do Satan's Imps, who matter not, care not

not if they undo and damn themselves for ever, so they may but spend their venemous Spight upon the poor Servants of God, ) yet even of those also, we must say on with *David*, that in the Name of the Lord we will destroy them, even three times over, *Psal.* 118. 10, 11, 12. and that with *David's* faith likewise, who faith before his Victory over them; [ they are already quenched as the fire of Thorns, ] ver. 12. alluding to what he had before said of his Enemies, [ before your Pots can feel the Thorns, he shall take them away as with a Whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath, ] *Psal.* 58. 9. This is here a Comparison taken from *Raw-flesh*, which is pulled out of the Pot, before it hath felt the full force of the Fire; God's wrath shall sweep them away, when they seem to be most vigorous and vivacious to look upon; *David* foresaw their sudden destruction: Oh that it were so with us, as it was with *David*, whose Faith was above his Fear; and Oh that we could foresee the Fall of our Spiritual Enemies, as he did his Temporal, as it infallibly will be so, if the Seed of God be but really in us. Oh, what a shame it is, that a Pagan Dame *Zeresh* could foresee the future Fall of her haughty Husband *Haman*, saying, [ If *Mordecai* be

of the Seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him, ] *Esth.* 6. 13. the Hebrew is, [ falling thou shalt fall, ] that is, irrecoverably: This the spake like a prudent Woman, that had observed how the Jews were noted for a Nation which was very dear to God, and which was oftentimes by an high hand delivered by him from their Enemies, as from *Pharaoh*, &c. possibly the Devil might put this Prophecy into her Mouth, ( as *Satan* in the similitude of *Samuel* had long before preached *Saul's* Funeral Sermon, 1 *Sam.* 28. from ver. 16, to 20. ) However she told *Haman* the truth, tho' it might come from the old Lyar the Devil, yet was it for Devilish ends; for as she had been a bad Counsellor to her Husband heretofore; so now she becomes a most sad and cold Comforter to him. If this poor Pagan could argue thus aright from humane prudence, how much more may true Christians, who learn better Lessons in Christ's School, *Ephes.* 4. 20. where we are taught to believe, that [ whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for the Seed of God remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God, ] 1 *John* 3. 9. *ἡ ἀγάπη ἐν αὐτῷ*, that is, he dare not drive the



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*the Trade of Sin, the Seed will bring forth Fruit like it self, so far as he is made a partaker of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. He cannot sin sinningly, so as to be transformed into the image of sin; he cannot do wickedly with both hands carnally, Mic. 7. 3. he is not past feeling to work all uncleanness with greediness, for he hath not so learned Christ, Ephes. 4. 19, 20. Sin cannot carry it away without some Counter-Buffs. So 'tis farther said, [We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not; (to wit, that sin unto Death, the unpardonable sin; no nor other sins, as other Sinners that are the Slaves of Satan,) but he keepeth himself so, as that the wicked one cannot touch him, (that is, with any of his deadly touches: He cannot thrust in his venomous Sting so far as to destroy the Seed of God in him, that is begotten of God, as he doth into the very Spirits of those called the Serpents Seed, even the World that lieth in wickedness, 1 John. 5. 18, 19. with ver. 16. From whence we may argue, and upon better grounds than that Pagan Dame, before-named, did; that if the Seed of God be in us, if we be begotten and born of God, none of those Principalities and Powers of Hell, nor any of those Rulers of the Darknes of this World,*

*World, nor any Spiritual Wickedness in high places, (as the phrase is, Ephes. 6. 12.) shall ever be able to prevail against us, but they shall surely fall before us. They may indeed sometimes (in case of some Divine Desertion) put us foully to the Foil, but they can never give us a total and a final Fall; for God so puts his fear into the hearts of his Covenanted People, that they shall not depart from him; but he will cause them to fear him for ever, Jer. 32. 39, 40, 41. for here lies the Riches of the Covenant of Grace, that tho' (for some glorious ends of unsearchable Divine Wisdom) it sometimes doth permit a fall, even in the choicest and chiefest of the Favourites of Heaven; yet it always doth ensure Repentance after the Fall, as it was in the case both of David and Peter; they both did fall foully, but neither of them did fall finally, they both got up again by the helping hand of their Heavenly Father: And this may be a little illustrated by the example afore-named of Mordecai and Haman. If a Jew fall before a Persian, (as Mordecai did before Haman,) yet may he get up again and prevail, as did Mordecai against Haman; but if a Persian or any Gentile doth but begin to fall before a Jew, he shall not be able to stop from falling*

falling down, nor to rise up again, as did *Haman* before *Mordecai*; he did fall to the lowest and utmost ebb of disgrace and misery; yea and tho' he was advanced on high upon the highest Gallows, (that we read or hear of) which he had erected for the *Jew Mordecai*, yet he did most fatally fall into the bottomless Pit of Hell also, to be an eternal Companion with proud *Lucifer*, and his fallen Angels, &c. All this may afford matter of great encouragement to us in our Christian Warfare, that the *Seed of God*, in us, will spring up gradually, (notwithstanding the many bitter Blasts of Hail and Snow that fall upon it) and will in due season bring forth a most happy Harvest, as *Psal.* 126. 5, 6. but we must be careful to war this good warfare, *1 Tim.* 1. 18. and fight this good fight of Faith, *1 Tim.* 6. 12. both in *God's Arms*, (which makes our Bow to abide in strength, *Gen.* 49. 24. and which strengthens us with a kind of omnipotency in doing all things, *Phil.* 4. 13.) yea and in *God's Armour* also, *Ephes.* 6. 12. to 19. whereby we may be able not only to stand our ground, but also to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil; yea and if we resist him stedfast in the Faith, we shall put him to the flight, and win the Day, and so wear the Crown of

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querors, *Jam.* 4. 7. *1 Pet.* 5. 8, 9. Let us all along observe the Apostle's Rule, [Whatsoever we do in Word and Deed, let all be done in the Name of the Lord Jesus,] *Col.* 3. 17. *David* acknowledges, it was by *God's strength*, and not by his own, &c. In all those fore-named places of the *Psalms*, and in *2 Sam.* 22. 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, &c. wherein he saith, [that *God was his strength*, and that girded him with strength, so to rout the Ranks of his Enemies, and so to beat them down that they could never rise up any more, &c.] and this was when he hurl'd (as it were) the force of *God himself* at the Face of great *Goliath*; he ascribes all the Glory both of his Valour and of his Victory unto *God's strength*, and not unto his own, &c.

The 4th Character of a Conqueror is, to take the Conquered captive, and to clap them up close Prisoners, as *Joshuah* did with his five conquered Kings, shutting them up in the Cave at *Makedah*, and rolling great Stones to the Mouth of the Cave, that they might be kept there close Prisoners, until the time of their execution, *Josh.* 10. 18. and when he brought them to be executed, he made his Captains to set their Feet upon the Necks of those five Kings, and then he hanged them

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them up upon *five Trees*, ver. 24, 26, &c. Even so our *Joshuah*, or *Jesus*, doth all those Offices of Love for us, as that *Joshuah* did for *Israel*; our Lord *ascendeth up on high*, he *leadeth captivity Captive*, &c. Psal. 68. 18. and Ephes. 4. 8. and then he saith afterward, [as for those my Enemies, that would not have me to reign over them, bring them forth, and slay them before me,] Luke 19. 27. This phrase [of leading captivity captive] is an allusion to the *Roman Conquerors*, who rode through the City, ( *Rome* ) up to the *Capitol* in their *Triumphant Chariots*, leading their *conquered Captives* all along, with their Hands bound behind them, to be disposed of afterwards according to the pleasure of the *Conqueror*, either to present Death, or to perpetual Imprisonment. Thus likewise our Lord, ( who *rideth on Conquering*, and to *Conquer upon the white Horse of the Gospel*, Rev. 6. 2. ) doth lead *Captivity Captive*, that is, those *Spiritual Enemies* that formerly did captivate us: Our Lord doth now ( through grace ) captivate them, and they are principally *Three*, ( which make up this Captivity, ) that our Lord leads *Captive* for us:

The *First* is the *Flesh*, whereof *Paul* complaineth, that the *Law of the Members* did not only war against the *Law* of his

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his *Mind*; but it also brought him into *Captivity* to the *Law of Sin*, and made him cry out, *Oh wretched man*, &c. yet did he look through this *Black Cloud* at *Christ* his *Deliverer*, Rom. 7. 23, 24, 25. as it is said, *If we be in Christ*, and he in us, then have we *crucified the Flesh*, with the *Affections* and *Lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. When *Christ* came into the *World*, it was our sins that *crucified Christ*; and so when *Christ* comes into our *Hearts*, he likewise *crucifies* our sinful *Flesh* in us; as the *body of sin* did *crucifie Christ*, so *Christ* doth *crucifie* the *body of sin*: Now to *crucifie* is not to kill outright at one blow, but it is to put to a long and lingering *Death*, no *Member* being free from pain; so if the *mortifying grace* of *Christ*, ( which is the virtue and power of his *Death*, as an *holy Life* is the virtue and power of his *Resurrection*, Phil. 3. 10. ) be in our *Hearts* by the *indwellings* of *Christ* there, Ephes. 3. 17. then the *Body of Sin* is nailed so fast, that it cannot stir either *Hands* or *Feet*, inasmuch as it will certainly die, tho' it be not presently dead; yea tho' it suffer many sore throbs before it perfectly die: 'Tis like those *Beasts* in *Daniel*, [ whose *Dominions* were taken away, yet their *Lives* were prolonged for a *Time and a Season*, ] Dan. 7. 12. Now *Repentance*

tance is the Nail, that pierceth this Body of Sin; and the renewing of our Repentance doth put the Old Man in us to new Torments, till at last it die.

The *Second Enemy* (which *Christ* conquers and captivates in us, and for us) is the *World*, for he saith to us, [be of good chear, I have overcome the World,] John 16. 33. hence the *Apostle* useth the word [*νικῶμεν* which signifies, we are more than Conquerors by *Christ's Love*,] Rom. 8. 37. because all our work that *Christ* hath left us to do, is only to conquer an Adversary which is already conquered to our hand, before hand: Just as *Josuah* did to his Captains, he delivers the five conquered Kings to them, (as above) and they had no more to do, than to set their Feet upon the Necks of the conquered; even so our *Jesus* hath subdued our Iniquities, Mic. 7. 19. and hath overcome the World, John 16. 33. already for us, so that we are made sure of Victory before hand, in our head *Christ*, Phil. 4. 13. and we now have need to do no more, but to trample all things under our Feet, (where the most wise God did at first place them, Psal. 8. 6, 7, 8.) and over which we should triumph in *Christ*, as the *Apostle* saith, [now thanks be unto God, who causeth us always to triumph in

in *Christ*,] 2 Cor. 2. 14. And indeed to be a *Triumph*, is to be more than a *Conqueror*, for Conquering goeth before, and Triumphant always follows after; and such a *Triumph* was this same *Apostle*, who saith, [God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, by whom the World is crucified unto me, and I unto the World,] Gal. 6. 14. as if he had said, the World and I do well agree; as it careth not for me, so I care as little for it; I look upon it only as a dead thing, as an overgrown Dunghil; I love not to suck her two fair Breasts (or rather her two foul Botches) of Profit and Pleasure. He had learnt that high Lesson in *Christ's School*, of knowing both how to abound with Humility, and how to want with content, &c. Phil. 4. 12, 13. 'Tis said when the World is set in our Hearts, Eccles. 3. 11. (which ought to be under our Feet, as before;) when we are given up to the carking cares about things of this present evil World, (as it is called, Gal. 1. 4.) alas, how sick are some (called Saints) of this dry dropsie, &c! May we not well say, there is as yet no fitness that the Saints should rule the World, (according to the Notion of some Opinionists,) while the World so much doth rule the Saints. It

may be feared that it is no easie matter to find, among many Professors, any such mortified men as *Paul* was, and such a *Crucifix* of *Mortification*, who could cry Quits with the World, as before it is said. The Scripture indeed tells us, [ *whosoever is born of God, overcometh the World, and who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God; and this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith,*  ] 1 Joh. 5. 4, 5. This is not only because by our *faith in Christ*, we are assured of the Victory before we have accomplished our good fight of *Faith*; but also because it is the Nature of *Faith* to put the Soul upon more noble *Exploits*, as well as *Projects*, than those that are about the base things of this lower World: 'Tis said, that *Christ* hath made us *Kings* and *Priests unto God his Father*, Rev. 1. 6. which is called a *Royal Priesthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. So that this *faith in Christ* giveth the Soul such a *Royal Spirit*, as raiseth it above those things that are below, as worldly things are filled, Col. 3. 1, 2. *If ye be risen with Christ, seek and set your affections upon things that are above, and not upon things that are below upon the Earth. Faith* lifts up the Soul above both the *frowns* and the *flatterings* of the World; when

when we are affrighted with the *Frowns* of the World, *Faith* presents the *Torments* of Hell to us, which are far worse than what the most frowning World can inflict upon us; and on the other hand, when we are allured and enticed with the *Flatteries* of the World, then *Faith* represents to us the *Joys* of Heaven, which do infinitely transcend all the glittering *Glories* of this sublunary perishing World; as *Scipio Africanus* said, [ *Vellem, si non essem Imperator,* ] I would, were I not an Emperor; and *Themistocles* [ take thou it up, for thou art not a *General*; ] so it should be below *Christians*, &c. Yea, and *Faith* gives us not only a sight and taste of the *Grapes of Canaan*, the most lovely and desirable *Fruits* thereof, but also feeds us with *Hidden Manna*, Rev. 2. 17. If we be but overcomers, as we pass along through this Wilderness to our *Heavenly Canaan*: Thus *Moses* by *Faith* despised the *Treasures* and *Pleasures* of *Egypt*, when he chose to suffer affliction with the *People of God*, rather than to enjoy the *Pleasures of Sin* for a Season; esteeming the *Reproach of Christ* greater Riches than all the *Treasures* of that Land, (which had been the *Granary* of the World but a little before in *Joseph's time*;) for he had respect unto the *Recompence of Reward*;

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ward; and by the Eye of his Faith he  
saw him that was invisible, Heb. 11. 24,  
25, 26, 27. that whole Chapter demonstra-  
teth by numerous Instances, how Faith is  
a *World-conquering Grace*: And thus it  
was also with Caleb and Joshuah, who no  
sooner had tasted of the goodly Grapes  
of Canaan, but they presently loathed the  
Garlick and Onions of Egypt; they longed  
not at all after them, as the other Mur-  
murers did, even the whole Multitude,  
Numb. 14. 6, 7, 8. saying, 'tis a Land  
worth all our Hazards, &c. How much  
more is Heaven worth all our Hardships!  
Thus our Lord saith, [the Kingdom of  
Heaven suffers Violence, and the Violent  
take it by force, Matth. 11. 12. Such a  
Violent and Valiant Conqueror was Lu-  
ther, (as before) who when the Pope  
tempted him with a Cardinal's Cap, to take  
him off from promoting Reformation, he  
bravely answered [*Valde protestatus sum,*  
*me nolle sic a Deo satiari*, that is, my  
God shall not put me off with such petty  
things; for I breath after better, I am  
born to better things by my New Birth.  
And long before Luther, even Origen did  
make the same choice that Moses had  
made before him, in choosing rather to  
be a poor Preacher (or Catechist) in  
*Alexandria*, than he would deny the Faith  
and

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and turn *Apostate*, as his fellow-pupil Pla-  
tinus did, to procure to himself the great  
Grandeur and Splendor of this World:  
As likewise I cannot but record it here,  
how the *Strengthening* power of Christ  
made my self able to do the like, &c.  
when the Duke of York had imprisoned  
me; and after a long time the Duke of  
*Buckingham* came to release me; he then  
did offer to me one of the fattest Bene-  
fices in the Church of England, if I would  
conform, for he was informed by my Pa-  
tron; and his Father-in-law (the Lord  
*Fairfax*) that I was a great Scholar, and  
had knowledge in all the learned Lan-  
guages, &c. as he was pleased to use  
these Phrases, and many more to the  
same purpose, adding, how much advan-  
tage might redound to our Church, (as  
well as to my self) might I but be one of  
them, &c. My Answer then was this,  
[I thank your Grace for your Great Of-  
fers, but I could not buy my Repentance at  
so dear a rate, in wronging the Light of  
my own Conscience; for I make it my Ex-  
ercise, (my Recreation) to keep it void  
of Offence both toward God, and toward  
Man, Acts 24. 16. All the Favour I request  
of your Grace at this time, is only my  
Releasement from Prison,] at which the  
Lord so inclined his Heart to release me,  
and

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 and that *without* putting any Bonds upon me, &c. Ever since that time my prayer hath been that of Agur, [ *Lord, give me neither Poverty nor Riches, but feed me with Food convenient for me,* &c. as Prov. 30. 6, 7, 8. Indeed it is a shame the World should captivate us; when we should captivate the World.

The *Third Enemy* that Christ captiveth for us; is the Devil himself, who maketh use of our *fleshly Lusts* as his Soldiers that he *presseth*, yea and *presseth* forward too to war *against* our Souls, 1 Pet. 2. 11. and this *present evil World*, Gal. 1. 4. is this *Tempter's large Shop*, where he is fully furnished with all sorts of *Tempting Tools*; his *Bag* for the Covetous, his *Bed* for the Lascivious, and his *Board* for the Luxurious, *Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and Pride of Life*, as before. Now when this *Stronger Man* (our Lord Jesus) comes upon this *Strong Man* thus armed, *Satan*, and overcomes him, &c. Luke 11. 22. he spoils him with all his *Principalities and Powers*, he *leads Captivity Captive*, Ephes. 4. 8. and makes a shew of him openly, as *Tamurlane* did *Bajazet* the *Great Turk*, whom he shut up in an *Iron Cage*, made like a *Grate*, and formed in such a sort, as that on every side he might be seen,

and

and so carried him up and down to be scorned and derided by his own People as he passed along through all *Asia*. Thus our Lord, and our Champion made, the Devil a publick spectacle of scorn and derision, *triumphing over him in it*, Col. 2. 15. He hath already conquered him, *taken his Armour from him* wherein this *Strong Man* trusted; he hath won the Field, and hath trodden him under his own Feet before hand for us, and he will tread *Satan under our Feet shortly*, Rom. 16. 20. and he will give to us the same priviledge that *Jeshuah* did to his Captains, namely, to *set our Feet upon the Necks* of all our *Spiritual Enemies*, for this is God's doom upon all our Spoilers, that [ *when they have done their spoiling-work, they themselves shall be spoiled,* Isai. 33. 1. As *Satan* formerly took us alive [as *captives*] signifies, and led us captive at his will, 2 Tim. 2. 26. So he himself shall be led captive, as our Lord hath long ago promised, Rev. 13. 10. as if he had said [ *be of good cheer,* ] your *Spiritual Adversaries*, (yea even *Antichrist* himself) shall all meet with their match, as *Goliath* did with *David*, and this *Strong Man* with the *Stronger Man*; as they have been long leading you into Captivity, so they themselves shall be led into Captivity, they

they shall all Drink as they have Brewed; they shall have *Blood to drink*; for they are worthy, because they have *sucked the Blood of God's Saints*, Rev. 16. 6. *Talid quisque luat, qualia quisque facit*, God will pay them home in their own Coins. [It is a *righteous thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble us*,] 2 Thes. 1. 6. *to fill them with the evil of their own ways*, as Prov. 14. 14. and God will trouble those Troublers of Israel, yea and that to all Eternity, because if they and we could live together, they would trouble us for ever in this lower World. Now this is the blessed privilege of every New Creature, whereas *sin* and *Satan* did formerly lord it over the Soul, the Soul by this happy change becomes (through Grace) to lord it over *sin* and *Satan*, and then it is, that the Lord saith to us, as he said by the Mouth of *Moses* unto *Israel*, [Those Egyptians, that pursue you thus this day, ye shall see them again no more for ever,] *Exod. 14. 13.* unless it be as they lay dead upon the shoar. Thus converting Grace gives a mortal Wound to the Body of Sin, and causeth it to lie a dying ever after; and how can such as are *dead* (or at least dying) to sin, live any longer therein, and continue in it! Rom. 6. 1, 2. Oh that we may be able

able to say (our Consciences bearing witness in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 9. 1. that Christ in us hath led Captivity captive for us, &c.

The Fifth Character of a Conqueror is, to pull down the Strong Holds of the Conquered: He will in no wise suffer those noisom Nests of Rebellion to be kept standing any longer, but with all expedition he labours to demolish them, to pull them down from Top to Bottom, and to leave them all level with the ground. We ought all of us to make a most strict scrutiny, and a most serious enquiry, whether this Stronger Man, (the Captain of our Salvation, Heb. 2. 10.) hath made the Weapons of our Spiritual Warfare even strong enough and mighty through God, for the pulling down of the Strong Holds of Satan in us, and casting down all vain imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God; yea and bringing into Captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ in us,] 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

NB. Note well here, (1st) The Apostle's modesty, not we (saith he) but our Weapons are mighty, and not through us that wield them, but 'tis through God that works in and by them; 'tis not I, saith he, but the grace of God in me, 1 Cor. 15. 10. (2dly)



(2dly) The Strong Holds of Satan in us are many; 'tis in the plural number; there be sundry strong Forts, Castles, Trenches, Bulwarks, all Cages of Unclean Beasts, inhabiting in our Hearts; we have naturally in us a whole Legion of Domestick Devils, as the Man in the Gospel had, Mar. 5. 2, 9. We are top-full of evil Imaginations, of carnal Reasonings, and wholly filled with all unrighteousness, Rom. 1. 29. so that [*quisque sibi Satan est*] every Man becomes a tempting Devil to himself, and is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed, Jam. 1. 14, 15. Satan hath only a persuading slight, but not any enforcing might; 'tis our own carnal Concupiscence that carries the chiefest stroke in all our sins, which indeed is a compound of many Fleshly Lusts, that all war against our Souls, 1 Pet. 2. 11. as we read of *Joshuah*, how he conquered one and thirty Kings of the cursed Canaanites, boughing all their Horses, and burning all their Chariots with fire (as before) yea, and those Kings of Canaan are named one by one, Josh. 12. 9, to 24. And as we also read of *David*, how one Giant after another did fall by his hands, *Goliath* one, *Jeshbibeob* one, *Sippai* one, *Lahmi* one, and then that Monster of Mankind is mentioned, who was a double Monster,

Monster, both in his Stature, and in the number of his Fingers and Toes, having upon each Hands and Feet a Finger and a Toe more than ordinary, twenty four in all; yet all those monstrous Gyants fell by the Hands of *David*, and by the Hands of his Servants, 1 Chron. 20. 4, 6, 8. Thus the same may be said for of those Souls upon whom Christ (this Stronger Man) hath made a Conquest, and resides there as a Conqueror; that Soul may reckon up (one by one) all the conquered Tyrants who have ruled over it formerly with rigour. As,

(1st) With *Joshuah*, Pride, and its King, one; Passion, and its King, one; Concupiscence, and its King, one; Covetousness, and its King, one; Unbelief, and its King, one; Hypocrisie, and its King, one; and so on forward, until the same number amount up to the number of one and thirty, as in Josh. 12. 9, to 24. and so likewise the Soul may,

(2dly) Reckon with *David*, many monstrous Temptations have been conquered by Christ in me the hope of Glory, Col. 1. 27. I have had monstrous Temptations to Atheism, to Blasphemy, to Self-murder, to filthy Uncleaness, and to many more such Abominations, &c. as 1 Chron. 20. 4, to 8. But now blessed be the Free

Grace of God toward me, my spiritual *Joshua*, my spiritual *David*, even my dear Redeemer, the Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in Battle, Psal. 24. 8. that *Elshaddai*, (which *Abenezra* reads, that Conqueror) the King of Glory, even he hath conquered and captivated all those monstrous Tyrants and Tempters; he hath pulled down also their Strong Holds in me, and for me: And tho' as some Castles (wherein the Enemy seated themselves in our late Civil Uncivil Wars) proved so strong, that a double Difficulty did attend them. For,

(1st) It was a Work of great Difficulty to conquer those so strongly fortified Forts; they stood it out many a long Siege, and cost the Lives of many brave Soldiers, yet at the last were taken by the besieging Commander: And then, when publick Authority commanded that those Receptacles of Rebellion must be demolished, and raced down to the very Foundation. Then,

(2dly) Appeared another Difficulty in pulling them down; it was found the Stones were so strongly cemented together, that they did abide many a lusty Blow, and they did bear many a strong Stroke, yea much Time, Cost and Pains were spent, yet all would not do, no not any Undermining of

of the Walls, until at the last the whole Fabrick was blown up with many Barrels of Gun-powder, prudently lodged in the very Bowels of them; and all this little enough to level them even with the ground; for we have a plain prospect of the Scars of those Castles still remaining unto this day; even so it is with the Strong Holds of Satan in us: As 'tis a Work of great Difficulty to overcome them; so 'tis no less to level them, and quite to bring them down to an utter demolishment, some Scars will still remain in us. Wherefore how ought we to double our Diligence in that most Necessary, yet much Neglected Duty of Self-examination! the Apostle useth a double Spur to stir us up unto a serious Self-trial, saying, [ *πειράζεσθαι δοκιμάζειτε* ] prove yourselves, and try your selves, as the Goldsmith does his Coin, or the Lapidary his Stones upon a *lydius lapis*, or Touch-stone, to discover them from such as be counterfeit. The final Trial of our Eternal Estate doth indeed belong immediately and solely to the Court of Heaven, but the discerning of our sincerity and singleness of Soul God-ward, appertain to the Court of our own Consciences for our own comfort; for if our own Hearts condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts, and will

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 will condemn us much more, &c. 1 John  
 3. 20, 21. As the *Decisive part* belongs  
 to God, so the *Disquisitive part* belongs to  
 us: Therefore it is added, [ *know ye not*,  
*that Christ is in you except ye be Repre-*  
*bates,* ] 2 Cor. 13. 5. which follows that  
 of the same *Apostle* [ about the *pulling*  
*down of the Strong Holds of Satan,* &c.  
 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. through the *indwelling*  
*of Christ*. This is so needful a Duty, that  
 the Precept is double, *Zeph. 2. 1.* Ga-  
 ther up your selves, gather up your  
 thoughts, *excute vos, iterum excute,*  
 (as *Tremellius* renders it, shake your  
 selves, and better shake your selves in  
 Self-examination; the *omission* whereof,  
 as it is much *easie*, so it is most *dange-*  
*rous*. How happy are such Souls, who  
 can say in the witnessings of the Holy  
 Ghost, that this *Stronger Man* hath raised  
 Batteries, and sprung several Mines against  
 the *Strong Holds of Satan* in them, that  
 the Lord hath battered the Walls thereof  
 with his Battering Rams, and with his  
*Great Cannon* of a *Soul-searching Mini-*  
*stry*, and with his *Spirit of Burning* (so  
 called, *Isai. 4. 4.* because it burns up the  
 combustible matter of our Corruptions,  
 refining our Dross, and kindling up Re-  
 pentance unto Life, &c. ) and that *Christ*  
 hath been lustily hammering the Sides  
 and

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 and Corners of those *Strong Holds*, with  
 the great *Hammer* of his *Word*, and with  
 the strong Hand of his Spirit; thus saith  
 the Lord, [ *Is not my word like as a Fire,*  
*and like an Hammer that breaketh the*  
*Rock in pieces,* ] Jer. 23. 29. the *Work-*  
*man's Hammer*, which *Jael* took in her  
 Right Hand to nail great *Sisera* fast to  
 the ground, *Judg. 4. 21.* and 5. 26. was  
 a fair resemblance of this mighty Work  
 of the Right Hand of the Almighty God  
 upon this *Strong Man Satan*. All such  
 Souls (I say) who can truly experience  
 those effectual operations of an *indwelling*  
*Christ* in them, must not be discouraged,  
 although they find and feel this work of  
*Mortification*, or putting to Death ( as  
 the word *Θανάσιμος* signifies, *Rom. 8. 13.* )  
 to be an hard and tedious Work; and al-  
 though after the Walls, be in part demo-  
 lished, yet some Relicks will remain, and  
 much Rubbish we meet with to be remo-  
 ved, ( for we may say with *Joshuah*, that  
 we are not yet cleansed from the iniquity  
 of *Baal-peor*, that *Idol of opening*, in-  
 lustful Contemplations, and Heart-adul-  
 teries, *Matth. 5. 28.* even unto this very  
 day, *Josh. 22. 17.* ) notwithstanding all these  
 difficulties, yet may we be well assured  
 that the *Strong Tower of Babel* in us, shall  
 in due time tumble down, &c. for all the

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*Works of God are perfect Works,* Deut.  
 32. 4. That work which the Lord begins  
 he will *certainly finish*, Phil. 1. 6. He will  
 not leave his Work done to half part only  
 and so to be carried on to perfection by  
 some other hand, &c. for our Lord does  
*save to the utmost all that come to God*  
 by him, Heb. 7. 25. The Angel of the  
 Covenant will *redeem us*, as he did our  
 Father Jacob, *from all evil*, Gen. 48. 16.  
 and deliver our Souls, as he did David  
*out of all adversity*, 2 Sam. 4. 9. and the  
 Lord that stood with Paul, *strengthened*  
*him, and delivered him out of the Mouth*  
*of the Lion*, and (as he saith) shall de-  
 liver me *farther from every evil work*.  
 2 Tim. 4. 17, 18. This is great encour-  
 agement to us, if indeed we be seriously  
 at the work of battering down the Walls  
 of Satan's Strong Holds in us; and in  
 order of doing this the more effectually  
 we must place our Souls under the most  
 powerful Ministry, so that every Sabbath  
 and every Sermon may promote, in some  
 measure, the battering down of its Walls.  
 If those two Brethren in Iniquity did dig  
 down the Wall of Shechem's House with  
 a wicked Mind for denling their Sister  
 Gen. 49. 6. How much more ought we  
 with a godly Mind to be digging down  
 the Walls of the Strong Holds of Satan

wh

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 who hath defiled, and is still in defiling  
 our precious Souls, so as to damn them  
 for ever. From the History of the Walls  
 of Jericho we may learn this Divine Les-  
 son, or this Mystery of Godliness, as Jo-  
 shua did compass round about Jericho  
 with the Ark of God, and his Conquer-  
 ing Army, the compleat time of six days,  
 every day once; yet the Walls did not  
 fall all that time, tho' they might be  
 shattered, and put into a trembling po-  
 sture, and severely shaken, while this was  
 in doing; but upon the seventh, or Sab-  
 bath-day, they then did compass it seven  
 times, as before they had compassed it  
 but once every six days, Josh. 6. 2, 3, 4.  
 and then it was, that together with the  
 Priests blowing of the Trumpets, and the  
 loud Shoutings of the People, that the  
 Walls of Jericho fell flat to the ground,  
 so that the People round about went up  
 into the City, every Man straight before  
 him, and took the City, ver. 5, and 20.  
 and all this is said to be effected by Faith,  
 [by Faith the Walls of Jericho fell, after  
 it had been compassed seven days,] Heb.  
 11. 30. So after the same manner may  
 the Walls of our Mystical accursed Jeri-  
 cho within us, fall: If the Ark of God's  
 Presence be with us, and we pass all  
 along before it, as they did, Josh. 6. 8.

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and

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and if we spend our time in Spiritual Meditation, and not make any Noise with our Voices, until our blessed *Joshuah* bid us Shout, as it was there, *ver. 10.* and if the Priests blowing the Trumpets of Rams Horns, keep going on continually with us, as *ver. 13.* which sheweth, how there must be the *grace of perseverance*; we must hold up, hold on, and hold out to the end; and the nearer we draw to our long Home, then ought we to be much more labouring for a compleat Conquest, as it was in *Israels* case there. Their toil and travel was not greatly troublesome in their compassing *Jericho*, but once at a time in all the *six days*; but upon the *seventh* day, they had the Task of compassing the City seven times, one immediately after another, and therefore it is said [that they rose up early at the dawning of that day,] *ver. 25.* even so ought we to lay out our continual endeavours to pull down the Walls of the *Strong Holds of Satan*, even all the *six days* of our Lives; yet shall we not find this demolishing work perfectly effected, until the evening of our *eternal Sabbath*. Whence we learn likewise, that as upon every *Sabbath-day* we should take seven times more pains for the mortifying of sin, and for the fortifying of grace, than we do upon

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upon all the *six days* of the Week, &c. So when our last *Sabbath* approacheth, we should stir up our selves to the utmost of our ability, that we may then work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, *Phil. 2. 12.* that we may make our Calling and Election sure, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* and that we may make sure work for a better World, before we go hence to be seen no more, &c. All this must be done by Faith also, then down goes our *Jericho*. Then our Lord Christ will say of us, as he said of his Golden Church at *Thyatira*, [I know thy Works, that thy last be better than thy first,] *Rev. 2. 19.* Tho' our beginning was but small, yet our latter end should greatly encrease, *Job 8. 7.* Our last days should be our best days in our earnest pursuit for Heaven. As the Stone descending from an high Tower, the nearer it approaches to its center, the faster it flies and falls; so the nearer we come to the end of our Race, we ought to run with the greater speed, that no Man, no Devil, no Thing, may take our Crown from us; which is promised only to those that overcome, *Rev. 3. 11. 12.* For as old David literally spake to his Captains, [whosoever getteth up into the Gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the Blind and the Lame (Idols) the hatred of

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of David's Soul, he shall be my General, &c.] 2 Sam. 5. 8. This Royal Motion *Joab* embraceth, (that he might recover the King's Favour which he had lost by his barbarous Murdering of brave *Abner*,) 1 Chron. 11. 6. and he conquered the City out of the hands of the cursed *Jebusites*, which was after called *Sion*, and the City of David. So our David Mystical maketh a more Royal Motion to us, saying, [To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne,] Rev. 3. 21. in which place [*ὡς*] for [*ὅτι*,] that is, [even as] for [because,] so the sense is, [because I also overcame,] therefore is it from Christ's love to us that we are made to over, overcome, (as *ὑπερνικῶμεν* signifies,) Rom. 8. 37. it was his helping hand that made David able to run through a Troop, and to leap over the Wall, Psal. 18. 29, 34. as before. And here is a greater Reward promised than *Joab's* Generalship, which soon perished with himself. But here is a Crown (with this Inscription upon it) [*Vincenti dabo*] to him that overcometh will I give it, Rev. 2. 10. and 6. 2. and not only to wear a Crown among Royal Heads, but also to sit upon Thrones above all Chairs of State. There-

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Therefore it most highly concerns us to enquire, whether (with *Joab*) we have scaled the Walls of the Strong Holds of Satan, whether we have gained the Gutter, which is done when we are blest with an hearing Ear to the word of Life; for the Ear is (as it were) the Gutter that conveys even the Waters of Life into the Soul of Man; for thus it is said, [Hear and your Souls shall live] Isai. 55. 3. and [Faith cometh by Hearing the Word of God,] Rom. 10. 17. We must enquire likewise, whether (with *Joab* also) we have smitten those cursed *Canaanites* (the *Jebusites*) namely our own Carnal Corruptions; enquire (I say) what Rule we have obtained over our own Spirits; [he that is slow to anger, is better than the Mighty; and he that ruleth his Spirit, is more honourable than he that conquereth a City,] Prov. 16. 32. This is not only Manly, but Godly also: Whereas he that hath no Rule over his own Spirit, is like a City that is broken down and without Walls, Prov. 25. 28. Such persons are like *secure Hazor*, that had neither Gates nor Bars, Jer. 49. 31. those Souls are not fenced in with the fear of God; and the Strong Man Satan, well armed, and furnished for every evil Work, (as the Man of God is furnished for every good Work, as

as before, 2 Tim. 3. 17. ) keeps still the possession of his *Strong Hold* in them, and they were never yet blest with a Visit from that blessed *Stronger Man*, (the *Lord Jesus* ) to *dispossess* him. Oh thrice happy are they, to whom *Christ* saith (as he did to that *Demoniack*, Mark 9. 25.) [*Come out of the Man, thou Unclean Spirit, and enter no more into him.*] As none by the *Roman Law* were allowed to have the honour of riding *Triumphantly* in the City of *Rome*, until he had obtained *five Victories* in the Field over his *Enemies*, &c. So none of us can ever expect to triumph as *Conquerors* in Heaven, unless we have got the *Victory* over all our *five Senses*; for even all the *Members* of our *Bodies*, as well as all the *Faculties* of our *Souls*, must be rescued from *Satan*, and brought into obedience to *Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 5.

The *Sixth Character* of a *Conqueror* is, *Wholly to disarm the Conquered*. Thus the *Stronger Man*, when he had come upon the *Strong Man*, and had overcome him, he took away all his *Armour* wherein he trusted, Luke 11. 22. that is, those that were his offensive Weapons, to wit, the *World*, *Sin* and *Death*, wherewith he hath prevailed over all the *Sons* and *Daughters* of *fallen Adam*, (after he had foil'd *Adam* himself) for some thousands of Years un-

to

to this day. And *Satan*, finding all these Weapons so successful, is said to *trust in them*, as *Goliath* did in his *Armour*, which made him triumph before his *Victory*, saying to *David*, [come, and I will give thy *Flesh* to the *Fowls* of the *Air*, and to the *Beasts* of the *Field*,] 1 Sam. 17. 44. as if *David* had been some Boy, to be frightened with his big Boasts of his *Carnal Confidence*: and in ver. 45. *David* tells us how *Goliath* trusted in his *Armour*, saying to him, [thou comest unto me with a *Sword* and *Spear*, &c.] that is, thou trustest in thy own *Strength*, and in thy *Armour*, &c. [but I come to thee in the *Name* of the *Lord*, &c. who will deliver thee this day into my hand,] ver. 46, 47. which was accordingly accomplished: Thus he who is call'd both *David's Son*, and *David's Lord*, Mat. 22. 45. The *Stronger Man* encounters the *Strong Man*, that trusts in his *Armour*, and spoils him thereof, Col. 2. 15. even in a *Duel* too as *David* did *Goliath*; for *Christ* trod the *Winepress* alone, Isai. 63. 1, 2, 3. When the fulness of time came, this ruddy *David* appeared with his *Garments dyed Red* with the *Blood* of his *Enemies*; and as *David* put *Goliath's Armour* in his *Tent*, 1 Sam. 17. 54. so our *David* hath buried all the *Damning Power* of the *Devil's*

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Armour in his own Grave, *Rom. 6. 4. Col. 2. 12.* Thus this *Alligory* may be farther enlarged, as *David* carried the Head of *Goliath* to *Jerusalem*, and (as some suppose) set it up upon a Pinnacle of the Temple, (where *Satan* set our Saviour by God's permission afterwards) as an high Monument of his Happy Victory: This *David* did, after he had shewed this same Head to *Saul*, ver. 57. And as for *Goliath's* Sword (wherewith *David* had beheaded the Gyant with his own Weapon,) this likewise was laid up in the *Tabernacle*, wrapped in a Cloath behind the *Ephod*, 1 *Sam. 21. 9.* where we are told, how *David* prevailed with the High Priest *Abimeleck* to restore it to him again, as before it had been his own, won by his Valour, and therefore he accounted *no other Sword like that*, which would be a standing Remembrancer of his former Achievements by the mighty presence of the Lord his God, wherewith he did encourage himself in the day of his great Distress, 1 *Sam. 30. 6.* even so our Mystical *David* destroyed him who had the power of Death, that is, the Devil, with his own Weapon, *Heb. 2. 14.* *Christ's* Death was the Death of Death, and of the Devil also, who had the power of it; *Christ* came to this end, that he might destroy  
the

the works of the Devil, 1 *John. 3. 8.* Accordingly, Oh how happy are those Christians, who, (through *Christ* that strengthens them) have got the head of the Tempter, or of some strong Temptation into their Hand, as *David* had the Head of *Goliath* in his Hand,) and can shew it to the King of Kings, as he did to the King of *Israel*, as before; and who have got also those [*ὅπλα τῆς ἀδικίας*] Weapons of Wickedness (as the Greek word signifies, *Rom. 6. 13.*) which formerly warr'd against their Souls, 1 *Pet. 2. 11.* But now are wrapped up in a Cloth behind the *Ephod* in the *Tabernacle* of the Lord; and who likewise go (with *David*) to the High Priest of our Profession, (as *Christ* is called, *Heb. 3. 1.*) and have got a better Sword of him, than that of *Goliath*, even the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, *Ephes. 6. 17.* of which it may be better said, than was said of the other, [*there is none like that;*] for if the word of *Christ* do but dwell richly in us, as it ought to do in all wisdom, *Col. 3. 16.* and as it did in *Christ* himself, (æque equally for Quality, non equaliter, not equally for Quantity;) for then we may comfortably hope, that with this Sword we shall conquer the great *Goliath* of Hell, as our Lord did only by hurling



hurling three smooth Stones of Sacred Scriptures at his Head, as *David* did at the Head of *Goliath*, and gave him his mortal wound. Then indeed are we *Conquerors* in *Christ*, and then may we say with *David* also, [ *the Snare is broken, and our Souls are delivered,* ] *Psal.* 124. 7. We should be careful to keep all our Monuments and Remembrancers of our former Conquests over both *Satan's Temptations*, and of our own *Carnal Corruptions*, as wrapped up in a Napkin behind the Ephod of a *Sanctified Memory*, even in everlasting Remembrances; then *former experience* may *strengthen our present Faith*, *Psal.* 77. 10, 11. and then no *Weapon* formed against us can ever prosper, as the Lord hath promised, *Isai.* 54. 17.

The *Seventh Character* of a *Conqueror* is, to put his *Laws* upon the *Conquered* according to his will and pleasure; as *Jehoshaphat* and *Jehoram* did by the assistance of *Elisha*, who said to them, [ *this is but a light thing with the Lord ( to give you Water in your want,* ) but he will deliver the *Moabites* into your hands, ] *2 Kings* 3. 17, 18. [ but ye shall smite every fenced City, and shall fell every good Tree, and stop all Wells of Water, and mar ( *Hebr. grieve* ) every good piece of Land with Stones, ] (as if it were a grief

to any good Soil to become useless and unfruitful, ) *ver.* 19. all this was done to *Moab*, *ver.* 24, 25. Thus also if we be *Conquerors*, we must endeavour to batter down all the *strong holds* of *Satan* in us with Sling-stones, ( as was the custom of that time, which is now done by mighty Bullets out of the Mouths of great Cannons. ) The Slingers went about *Kirbath-jeshb*, and broke down only the Towers of it; this was the will and pleasure of the Conqueror, not quite to demolish the Walls of it, as he did the other Cities: It were well if we could sling such smooth Stones ( as *David* did at *Goliath's* Head ) especially such of the Holy Scriptures as our *Mistical David* did at the *Devil's Head*, *Matth.* 4. 3, 7, 10. So ought we to sling such Stones at the Tempter, that we may knock down the Turrets of *Pride* and *Presumption*, &c. which *Glory* is our *Shame*, *Phil.* 3. 19. This we must do at the least, tho' we cannot quite demolish the Walls and Foundation. Oh that we could go thus far, and Oh that we could ( with those *Conquerors* of *Israel*, ) cut down every tall Tree, ( which are of the *Devil's* planting and watering ) that bring forth only wild and sower Grapes, paltry Hedge-fruit, as Crabs and such Trash in us; and Oh that we could mar ( or grieve

every piece of (*Terra Diaboli*) the Devil's Land in us, (as one part of *America* is called) which bears no Fruit, but the *unfruitful works of Darkness*, so called *Ephes. 5. 11.* And Oh that it were a grief to us (as before) to become useless and unfruitful in our Places and Stations; Oh that we could *mar* or *grieve* every *inordinate Affection* in us, which do *mar* or *grieve* our *pretious Souls*: Yet farther, Oh that we could likewise *stop up every Well of Water*, namely, all those filthy Issues of Sin, which nothing can heal us of, save only a believing Touch of our dear Lord *Jesus*, *Matth. 9. 20.* And yet a little higher, Oh that we could *sow* those Lands (we have already conquered out of the hand of the *Strong Man*, by the helping hand of the *Stronger Man*, our pretious Redeemer, our *Goel*) with no other thing but *Salt* as *Abimelech* did, *Judg. 9. 45.* the *City of Sechem*, which he not only pulled down, but he also *sowed it with Salt*, as a token of its utter extirpation. This was the custom of Conquerors which they used against Cities of greatest provocation and affronts to them, because *Salt* is taken in Scripture, not only for a *Sign*, but also for a *Cause* of Barrenness; *Gen. 19. 26.* *Deut. 29. 23.* *Judg. 9. 45.* *Psal. 107. 34.* and *Zeph. 2. 9.* for

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*Salt* made the Land in those hot and dry Countries utterly barren and desolate when it was sown upon it; as nothing but Nettles and Salt-pits were found in *Moab*, when it was devoted to perpetual Desolation. And thus it is with all Spiritual Conquerors, (through *Christ's love* to them, and *his strength* in them;) they pray to the Lord that all their fleshly Lusts, (which *war* against their Souls, *1 Pet. 2. 11.*) may even every one, the best beloved of them may be *put to death*, (as the word *David's*, *Rom. 8. 13.* signifies.) In order hereunto, when those Spiritual Enemies have received their Mortal Wound, whereof they must die, tho' it be of a long lingering death, (like those People that die of Consumptions;) and this Deadly Wound is always given to them at our first Conversion; yet all along (if we be right Conquerors in *Christ*) we must still pray to the Lord, that the Deadly Wound (then given) may never be healed any more, as that was which the *Apocaliptick Beast* had gotten, and was healed again, *Rev. 13. 3.* Our earnest Petition to the Lord must be, that he may put the same *Curse* upon our Lusts, which he put upon the fruitless *Fig-tree*, saying, [Let no Fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever, and immediately the *Fig-tree* withered

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 withered away, ] *Matth.* 21. 19. at which  
 his Disciples marvelled, &c. *ver.* 20. Ac-  
 cordingly we should desire an everlasting  
 Barrenness may come upon those *wild*  
*Olive Trees* (our fleshly Lusts so called,  
*Rom.* 11. 24.) *wild by Nature*, yea and  
 upon that *Root of Bitterness*, (to wit,  
*original Concupiscence*) which *springeth*  
*up* (too too often) to *trouble us*, *Heb.*  
 12. 15. We must beg hard of the Lord,  
 that all these sinful Soils may be *sowed*  
*with Salt*, even to a perpetual Destruction,  
 that we may learn (in *Christ's School*)  
 to *deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts*,  
 (which is the *negative part* of a *Christi-*  
*an*,) and likewise to *live soberly* (as to  
 our selves,) *justly*, (as to all men) and  
*holily* (as to the great God) in this *pre-*  
*sent World*, *Tit.* 2. 12. This is the *posi-*  
*tive part* of a *Christian*; where, *Note*  
*well*, that three Adverbs (*Sobre, Juste*  
*& Pie*) do much exceed the three Adje-  
 ctives (*Sobrius, Justus & Pius*,) for in  
 those latter are included only Acts of  
 Grace; but in the former are included the  
*Habits of Grace*; for it is not one single  
 Act or two, but a constant Habit of Grace,  
 (notwithstanding some interruptions in  
 our way) that gives the denomination  
 of a true Christian. Now this excellent  
 state can never be attained; unless we first  
 be.

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become Conquerors, (through *Christ*) so  
 as to be able to give Laws to our Lusts,  
 (which are called *deceitful Lusts*, *Ephes.*  
 4. 22.) and deal with them as *Joshuah*  
 dealt with the *Gibeonites*, who made them  
 [ *hewers of Wood, and drawers of Water,* ]  
*Josh.* 9. 21. Tho' they had deceived him  
 but once, yet our *deceitful Lusts* have de-  
 ceived us even times, and days without  
 number; and in all other Scripture-instan-  
 ces, we find that evermore the *conquered*  
 become *Tributaries* to the Conqueror. As,

(1st) Those *Canaanites* that could not  
 be driven out, yet they did *serve Israel*  
*under Tribute*, *Josh.* 16. 10. according to  
 the Law of *Moses*, *Deut.* 20. 11.

(2.) Thus the Tribes of *Israel*, when  
 they became strong, did put the *Canaanites*  
 to Tribute, as *Ephraim*, *Judg.* 1. 28. and  
*Naphtali*, *ver.* 33. and the *Danites*, (by  
 the help of *Joseph* his Brother) *ver.* 35.

(3.) Thus likewise did *David* unto  
*Moab*, after he had cast his Shoe over  
 it, &c. *Psal.* 60. 8. as its Conqueror, tread-  
 ing them under foot; then the *Moabites*  
 became *David's Servants*, and they brought  
 him Gifts, 1 *Chron.* 18. 2. And this was  
 a prodigious Gift unto *David's Successor*,  
 namely, an hundred thousand Lambs, and an  
 hundred thousand Rams with their Wool,  
 2 *King.* 3. 4. The King of *Moab* was a great

Sheep-Master, and his Tribute he paid yearly was this vast number of Lambs (with all their Dams also,) and this vast number of Rams, in such a season of the Year, when their Wool was best grown upon their Backs; and many more such examples of Tribute might be added, Oh that we could ask our own Hearts, whether our *Affections* have been conquered by the Lord Jesus, the Stronger Man and Conqueror: NB. Are all our *Affections* turned into Graces, as the *Affection* of Fear into the Grace of Fear, and the *Affection* of Love into the Grace of Love, and so of the rest; then our Lord hath laid his Laws upon them, and they pay each of them their Tribute to Christ. Oh blessed is that Soul, that pays so many thousand Lambs (or devout Prayers) to Christ the King of Glory, which must needs be numerous, if both *Occasional* and *Appointed* Prayers, if *publick* and *private* Prayers; both in our *Closets*, and in our *Families*, for the space of one whole year, be reckoned up all together. If we do all these things, then this Great King will greatly delight in our Beauty, Psal. 45. 10. 11. and give us Victory over our last Enemy, Death, which Christ will destroy, 1 Cor. 15. 26. 55, 56, 57.

## CHAP. VI.

*Advice to the Aged, for saving the Soul.*

THIS the Sacred Sentence and Saying of Solomon, the wisest of Men, that [The Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness,] Prov. 16. 31. Which words do discover a most clear Character of a compleat Conqueror through Christ's love to us, Rom. 8. 37. whereby he strengthens us to a kind of Omnipotency, to wit, of an ability to do all things which ought to be done by us both in Active and Passive Obedience, Phil. 4. 13. The word [Proverbs] in the Hebrew, is [Mashalim] which is derived of *Mashal*, signifying to Command. Oh that this Divine Proverb may have a commanding power and influence over all us Aged Persons, so that all our [Gray Hairs may become a Crown of Glory to us, by their being found in the way of Righteousness.] This Text is a compound of

two principal Parts, to wit, a *Thesis*, and an *Hypothesis*, or a *Position*, and a *Supposition*: The *Position* is first; 'tis positively asserted, that [Gray Hairs are a Crown of Glory,] and then the *Supposition* follows; [if it be found in the way of Righteousness.] There be three *Enquiries* here to be answered, the first, What is meant by that Phrase of [Gray Hairs, or Hoary Head,] to which the Answer is,

(1st) Gray Hairs, and Hoary Hairs or Head, are promiscuously taken in Scripture for one and the same thing, as in *Levit.* 19. 32. *1 Kings* 2. 6, and 9. *Isai.* 46. 4. *Gen.* 42. 38. and 44. 29, 31. *Prov.* 16. 31. and 20. 29. *2 Sam.* 12. 2. *Job* 15. 10. *Deut.* 32. 25. *Hos.* 7. 9. *Psal.* 71. 18, &c.

*Answer the 2d* is, That *Gray Hairs*, *Gray Headed* and *Hoary Hairs* or *Head*, are all Synonymical Expressions with *Old Age*, with all those afore-quoted Scriptures. Thus the *Antient of Days*, *Dan.* 7. 9. and *Everlasting Father*, *Isai.* 9. 6. is described to have *Hair* as white as *Wool*, *Rev.* 1. 14. so *Levit.* 19. 32. There this Phrase [Hoary Head] is used [with the Old Man] for *Doctus in Lege*, one that is learned in the Law of God.

The 2d Enquiry is, What is meant by [the Crown of Glory.]

An.

*Answer 1st.* This signifies the highest Honour that can be conferred upon Mankind, a Crown is above a Garland, a Miter, &c. a Crowned Head is a Title of the highest of all Humane Honours, and there is a great affinity in the Greek Tongue betwixt [γῆρας] Old Age, and [τιμή] Honour; and thus the Lord commanded, [that the Aged should be honoured,] *Levit.* 19. 32. That Silver Crown of Hoary Hairs, which the Finger of God doth set upon the Head of Aged Persons, doth render them Venerable, and to be Reverenced of all, even in all Places and Companies where they come: 'Twas a caution of Restraint in *Rome*, *Cato Videt*, &c. much more *Deus Videt*, &c. in so much that they (as it were) carry an awful Majesty and Authority along with them, both for suppressing of Vice, and for encouraging of Vertue in their presence, (where too much familiarity, yea and too much folly with it, do not breed contempt.)

*Answer the 2d* This Crown is of the best kind of Crowns; 'tis not only a Crown of Silver, (as before) or a Crown of Gold, the best sort of earthly Crowns, but 'tis a *Crown of Glory*, and that in a double Kingdom, namely in the Kingdom of Grace here, (which is oft in Scripture called

called Heaven, ) and also in the Kingdom of Glory hereafter. So that such Aged Persons as are found to be God's *Friends* and Favourites, (as Old *Abraham* had that very Title given to him no fewer than three times of being *God's Friend*, 2 Chron. 20. 7. *Isai.* 41. 8. and *Jam.* 2. 23. ) they shall have a double Crown of Glory, first in this Life, they shall have the Crown of Reverence and Veneration from all, as Old *Abraham* was thus Crowned, whom the very Heathens the *Hittites* most highly honoured, saying to him, [ thou art a *Prince of God*, Hebr. or a *Mighty Prince amongst us*, ] *Gen.* 23. 6. even the Natural Conscience cannot choose but stoop to the Image of God, stamped upon, and shining forth in both the Persons, and Actions of such as are eminent for Godliness, as *Abraham* was; and so it had been done to him before, by King *Abimelech*, and by *Phicol* the chief Captain of his Host, *Gen.* 21. 22, 23. where they (with all imaginable Reverence) make their most Humble Address to Father *Abraham*, that he might make an everlasting League with them, and with their Posterity, &c. For both this King and his Captain, as also did the *Hittites*, all plainly see in him a behaviour that was more than ordinary to Mankind: They

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were affraid of that Name of God, even that *Glorious and fearful* Name, put upon him, and called upon by him, and by all his Seed also, *Deut.* 28. 9, 10, 58. yea still the Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, even all God's People are called *Princes* in all Lands, *Psal.* 45. 16. The *Righteous are more excellent than their Neighbours*, *Prov.* 12. 26. tho' they be never so great that dwell by them, if they have only *Greatness* without *Goodness*. The Jewish Rabins say, that those *Seventy Souls*, which went down with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, were of much more worth than all the *Seventy Nations* whereof the whole known World consisteth: *Christ* makes all his Saints to be Kings, *Rev.* 1. 6. and to be Conquerors also, *Rom.* 8. 37. they are his Glory, *Isai.* 4. 5. 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. and therefore this Crown of Glory is given to them, even in this World; and if we can but become faithful unto Death, then shall we have given us the Crown of Life in a better World, *Rev.* 2. 10. and we may the more have hope hereof, because we are not kept by any power of our own, (which is no better than weakness it self.) Tho' *David* said, [ I have kept my self from mine Iniquity, ] *Psal.* 18. 21, 23. and the *born of God* keeps himself, 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. but [ we are kept by the power of God, through

through faith, unto Salvation, and we are kept for Heaven, as Heaven is kept for us, 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5. that we may receive the end of our Faith, even the *salvation of our Souls*, ver. 9. This great work of a double keeping, is wrought by the great Grace of God given freely to us, whereby we are *made partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4.

The 3d Enquiry is, the *Supposition*, If we be found in the way of Righteousness.

*Answer.* To understand the true meaning of this Phrase, we must know, that it is not enough for us, to begin well, but we must end well also, [*Exitus Acta probat*,] 'tis the *End that Crowns the Action*: The Old Father of the Church saith, some are [*Sancti Juvenes, sed Satanic Senes*,] Young Saints, yet at last prove no better than Old Devils; who begin in the Spirit but end in the Flesh, as the Apostle's Phrase is, Gal. 3. 3. Those foolish ones were like *Nebuchadnezzar's* Image, whose Golden Head ended in Dirty Feet: They did *Run well* at the first, but the Devil hindered them in the way, Gal. 5. 7. not only making them stop, and step back, but also to step aside into crooked Paths, Psal. 125. 5. and ran a whoring from God, Psal. 73. 27. therefore the Lord will lead them forth with the workers

workers of iniquity: The doom of such is denounced [the *backslider in heart* shall be filled with his own ways,] Prov. 14. 14. As he hath made a match with Mischief, so he shall soon have his Belly full of it; as he hath sold himself to work wickedness, as *Ahab* did, 1 Kings 21. 25. so he shall be sure of a sad Paiment at last. He hath drawn back unto perdition, and God saith, [*My Soul shall have no pleasure in you*,] Heb. 10. 37, 38. Such as steal away from their Colours, run from their Captain, and revolt from Christ, must expect no better than Martial Law; Apostates indeed are Renegadoes, they run away, but 'tis into the Mouth of Hell; so a worse condition they cannot choose for themselves: Whereas the Righteous (on the contrary) do hold on in their way, (both in their Youth, and in their Old Age,) and grow stronger and stronger, Job 17. 9. He may indeed stumble sometimes upon some Stumbling-stone or Block, that is laid in his way, as *David* himself had his Stumbling-time, at the prosperity of the Wicked, and his own Adversity, Psal. 73. 13, 14, 15. where we find his stumble was so deep and dangerous, that he was ready to repent of his Repentance; but as he that stumbles, and falls not, gains ground by his stumbling in taking a Inoger

longer stride thereby, so did David here, who upon second thoughts, (ever better than the first) recoiling and reflecting upon himself, saying, [*this is my Infirmary,*] and Oh how he beheasts himself for so *stumbling!* ver. 22. *so foolish was I, and Ignorant, and even as a Beast before thee, my God,*] the Hebrew word for *Beast* is *Behemoth*; which is the plural feminine Hebrew, signifying a Big-bellied Beast, full of Young Ones, (which is a clear resemblance of *Original Sin* in us, the Mother of all Actual Sins,) and the same word [*Behemoth*] the Lord useth in his Humbling Speech to *Job*, Job 40. 15, to 24: whereby is expressed, that Monster of Beasts, the Beast of Beasts, the *Elephant*. By this (and by other Speeches of the same tendency) God so humbled *Job*, as to make him [*abhor himself, and to repent in Dust and Ashes,*] Job 42. 5. Thus likewise that Holy Man *Agur*, who vilifies, yea nullifies himself to the utmost, saying, [*surely I am more brutish than any Man, and I have not the understanding of a Man, &c.*] Prov. 30. 2, 3. Here was true *Humility*, which is derived *ab Humo*, signifying the *Ground*, because this Grace lays us flat on the ground; thus these godly persons (and many more upon Scripture-record) did indeed *stumble in the way*

way of Righteousness, yea and some of them very *fouly*, yet none of them did so *stumble*, as to fall finally from that blessed way; they all did recover themselves by Repentance, they all did return to this way of Righteousness; and they all did persevere therein to their dying day: So their *Gray Hairs* became a *Crown of Glory* to them, being all found in the way of Righteousness, Note well, we must all be found in that way, when both Old Age and Death also come to find us. Old Father *Chrysostom* said, [*Canities tunc Venerabilis est, quando ea gerit quæ canitatem decent,* to wit, then is Old Age most worthily Venerable, then is Hoariness of Hairs most truly Honourable, when only such Deeds are done by it, that doth well become it both in the sight of God and Men: We Old Ones ought to make it our exercise which the blessed Apostle made his, saying, [*ἐν τῷ ἁσκάω*] *Herein do, I do recreate my self,* (as the word signifies) to keep a Conscience void of offence, both toward God and toward Man,] Acts 24. 16. Oh that we could make this same our Exercise, yea even our Recreation both Night and Day; using our utmost Diligence, Skill, Will and Affections, disciplining and inuring our selves herein, and thereby we shall neither be ashamed



ashamed to live, nor affraid to die. We must live (as that Apostle did) in all good Conscience, Acts 23. 1. Good, both with the goodness of Integrity, and with the goodness of Tranquility; we must keep our Consciences clear and clean, better offend all the World, yea all the Witches in the World, than offend our own Consciences; for Conscience is God's Spie, and 'tis Man's Overseer; as it is God's Deputy-Judge, so it is Man's Domestick Chaplain, bearing witness of all our Doings and desirings; and accordingly excusing or accusing, absolving or condemning; yea comforting or tormenting us; And [if our own Hearts (or Consciences) do condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts, and will condemn us much more,] 1 John. 3. 20. Whereas on the contrary, when Hoary Hairs are not found in the way of Righteousness, that Hoariness is so far from being Honourable, that 'tis rather *Mucor* than *Canities*, a nasty Mouldiness, and not a venerable Hoariness. 'Tis sad with such, that the older they grow, they wax worse and worse, 2 Tim. 3. 13. and do no better than stink above ground, being Dead while they Live, 1 Tim. 5. 6. What can be more odious than an old Lascivious Goat, than an old Fornicator, having Eyes full

full of Adultery; and that cannot cease from sin, 2 Pet. 2. 14, &c. Gray Hairs and Green Thoughts make an abominable agreement, such are Heteroclitics in declining Nature, and Monsters of Mankind in the World; in whom it is so far gone with them; and Lust hath such an unlimited power over them, that neither strength of Grace; as Gen. 39. 9. in Young Joseph, strong Grace kept him from that great wickedness and sin against his God; nor decays of Nature can restrain them from their Youthful Extravagancy, as Gen. 18. 12. Sarah said, (after I am old, shall I lust,) old and cold is our English Proverb. It was the aggravation of Solomon's sin that he was in his Old Age so easily drawn away from God and godliness by his Idolatrous Wives, 1 Kings 11. 4. Oh how ridiculous it is to behold a sinner, a Child of *Fourscore* or an hundred years old! yet such shameful fights as these are denounced *accursed*, Isa. 65. 20. But if we indeed be the true Sons and Daughters of Abraham, we ought to do what he did, of whom it is said, that he went to his Grave in a good Old Age, or as the Hebrew hath it, with a good Gray Head; Gen. 25. 8. We must imitate him in this herein, even all we that are Old, that we may be Good as well as Old, that we may

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both Live and and Die in a good Old Age as he did ; for unless we walk in Abraham's steps in this World while we live, we can never expect to lodge in Abraham's Bosom when we die. *Abraham died an Old Man and full of Years*, Gen. 25. 8. He was as fully satisfied to leave the World, as men are wont to be willing to rise from the Table, when satisfied to the full with Food : And thus *Job* said, *I would not live always*, Job 7. 16. but more of this after. It was the saying of *Augustus Caesar*, (that Great Emperor, in whose Reign our Lord *Jesus* was born) *Audite me Senem vos Juvenes, quem Juvenem multi Senes audierunt*, be pleased, Oh ye Young Men, to hearken diligently unto me, who am now Old, whom many Old Men did hear attentively when I was but Young. *David* saith, *I have been Young, and now am Old; come ye Children, hearken to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord*, Psal. 34. 11. and 37. 25. Accordingly, I say in all humbleness of Soul, Oh that all People (both Young and Old) may lend an hearing Ear to me who am now very Old, whom all Persons of all Ages did savingly hearken to, when I was Young ; so that the Lord by his Grace made me a Spiritual Father to many Souls both Young and Old, Male

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and Female, Rich and Poor, yea Bond and Free, *All these are one in Jesus Christ*, Col. 3. 11. whom I have begotten in the Gospel, (as the Apostle doth phrase it,) 1 Cor. 4. 15. who all rise up and call me their *Spiritual Father in Christ*; amongst whom there is one remarkable Passage I cannot but record, which indeed is worthy to be kept in everlasting remembrance, namely, While I was Minister at *Cottingham* near *Hull*, that Ministerial Charge being resigned over to me by Famous Dr. *Winter*, when he went over into *Ireland* to be the Provost of the College at *Dublin*,) there it pleased the Lord so to bless my Ministry, as to honour me with the Conversion of many Souls, both in that place, and in other places round about. But above all, there was one *Thomas Rappin*, an Old Man, and one of the most substantial Men in that great Town, who (through grace) had most evidently and most eminently a new work of Conversion wrought upon his heart in his Old Age, and when Gray Hairs were upon him, which indeed made him a most lively Servant of *Christ* to his dying day, *bringing forth fresh fruit in his Old Age*, &c. Psal. 92. 14. whose Funeral Sermon I then preached, wherein I observed what a rare work of God this was to be

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effectually called in our Old Age; for beside *Abraham* in the Old Testament, and *Nicodemus* in the New Testament, who were both called home from Idolatry, and from Ignorance, when they were Old Men: And very few more such Instances can be found out upon Record in either Testament: Now seeing this signal and singular Favour of God, was vouchsafed to such a worthless Worm as me, about fifty years ago, when I had been but about seven years employed in the work of the Ministry; if the Lord was then pleased to cause Old Persons so savingly to hearken unto my Ministerial Voice, while I was so Young; how much more may I hope now, that all Persons of all Ages will give their most diligent Attention unto that most weighty Advice, (for I cordially profess to speak no otherwise than as an *Oracle of God*, unto all Aged ones, which cannot prove unseasonable to any that are Young; because, if the Lord delight in them to lengthen out their Lives, (and not *cut them off* for their wickedness in the *midst of their days*, *Psal. 55. 23.*) they must come to be Aged also: And therefore let all lend an hearing Ear unto that grave Counsel which I (an Old Servant of Christ) doth declare at this time to you in the Name of the Lord. We are

are told how *Moses* was fourscore Years Old when God sent him with God's Message to *Pharaoh*, *Exod. 7. 7.* to shew, that the words of an Old Messenger of God ought to take a deep impression upon the Hearts of all Hearers, in case they be not Case-hardened as *Pharaoh* was, over and over again, both by himself, and by God, and likewise by the Devil. But I hope this is not the Case of any of you, (as *Heb. 6. 9.*) tho' I mention the Case of *Pharaoh*. Now I who am very near Fourscore may likewise say, [*I am persuaded better things of you, tho' I thus speak.*] 'Twas *Zuinglius* his practice, when he had been inveighing against Vice, to come off with these soft words, [*Probe Vir, hoc nihil ad te,*] this is nothing to thee, Oh thou Honest Man. So my present prospect through Grace is, that I may prevail with many, either to hasten into, or to keep close in the way of Righteousness, if in it already; *how forcible are right words*, *Job 6. 25.* especially to prepared Hearts, more especially when *multitude of Days and Years doth teach Wisdom?* *Job 32. 7.* I have made a long discourse in discovering the many Characters of the *true Conquerors through the Love of Christ*. Now seeing every Conqueror doth win a Crown, which hath this In-

scription upon it, [*Vincenti Dabo, to him that overcometh, will I give it,* Rev. 2. 7, 10, 26. and 3. 5, 21. and 21. 7. but my present Task is to shew some Instances of such Conquerors, to wit, such Aged Ones as are found in the way of Righteousness, the Crown of Life, the Crown of Glory shall be assuredly set and seated upon their Hoary Heads. After the general Discourse upon this Subject aforesaid, that all us Aged Persons may come both to win and wear this blessed Crown, I shall speak more particularly upon that Theme of Old Age, concerning its Nature and its Accidents, and concerning those Duties which ought to attend it, whereby it may be made (like Abraham's aforesaid) a good Old Age, &c. 'Tis fit to the honour of Young Men, that they had overcome the Wicked One, 1 John 2. 13. Tho' youthful Passions be most rapid in them, then 'tis a shame for us Aged ones to fall short of these, &c.

First of the 1st of these, namely, its Nature, Old Age is, without all controversy, a real Blessing of God, in, and of it self, otherwise God would never have made it the matter of this exceeding great and precious Promise, which he was pleased to annex to the Fifth Commandment, [*Honour thy Father and Mo-*

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ther, that thy days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,] *Exod.* 20. 12. *Matth.* 15. 4. *Ephes.* 6. 2, 3. This Duty of Children to obey their Parents in the Lord, the Apostle calls it a Right Duty, *Ephes.* 6. 1. and commends it moreover as a Duty, not only good before Men, but acceptable also unto God, 1 Tim. 5. 4. This Fifth Commandment is called the First Commandment with Promise, *Ephes.* 6. 2. that is, the First Affirmative Commandment, or the First in the Second Table, or the First of all the Ten, with such a Special Promise of Long Life in the Land of the Living, [*that thou maist live long,*] *Ephes.* 6. 3. As good Children do help to lengthen their Parents days, (so Joseph did Jacob's, &c.) So God for encouraging them in their Duty, doth promise to lengthen their Days; and if at any time God take this Long Lease from them here, he grants them a Freehold-Estate of a greater Value hereafter. If God do deny to give them the Silver of a Temporal Life in this lower World, he will be sure to pay them most plentifully with the Gold of an Eternal Life in the upper and better World; whereas on the contrary, such as are stubborn and undutiful Children, as they shorten their Parents

Lives, and bring down their Gray Hairs with sorrow to their Graves: So God often doth shorten the Lives of such wicked Children, and cuts them off in the midst of their Days, as God did to wicked *Abimelech*, of whom it is said, that *the Lord rendred upon him the Evil which he had done unto his Father Gideon*, Judg. 9. 56. Yea, and *Solomon* saith, [the Eye that mocketh at his Father, (as cursed *Cham* did at *Noah*) and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Vally shall pick out that mocking Eye,] *Prov.* 30. 17. God takes notice of the offending Member, and appoints this Punishment for it, and a sad one too; if this be understood of the Infernal Ravens, those Black Devils of Hell, those are cursed with a witness, whom the Holy Ghost thus curseth with such expressions, and in such expressions. Those Ravens of the Vally are to be most ravenous, and to do to a Carcase, as *Horace* saith,

*Effusus Oculos Voret Atro Guttare Corvus.*

And our Saviour adds to the saying of *Solomon*, [He that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the Death,] *Matth.* 15. 4. All this does make it manifest, that

that as a short Life is a Curse, so a long Life is a Blessing; otherwise as on the one hand *Godliness* would never have left to it by the Lord, so many precious Promises, as these, (to name but a few of the many) beside the afore-named.

(1.) God promiseth to his people (1.) [That he will fulfil the number of their days,] *Exod.* 23. 26. that is, they shall dye full of days as *Abraham*, *Gen.* 25. 8. as *Isaac*, *Gen.* 35. 29. and as *David* did, *1 Chron.* 29. 28. They all did fall like full-ripe Apples into the hands of God the right Owner, and the great Gatherer of them.

(2.) That [He will take away Sicknes from them,] *Deut.* 7. 15. that is, he will bestow the great blessing of Health upon them, which is the best of Temporal Blessings; for a sickly Life is a lifeless Life, and no better than a lingering Death: *Non est Vivere, sed Valere, Vita*, saith *Martial*, Health is the Reward of Piety, *Prov.* 3. 8.

(3.) That [they shall be blessed in the City, and blessed in the Country, blessed every where,] *Deut.* 28. 2, 3, &c. mercy and goodness follows them all the days of their Lives, as *David* saith of himself, *Psal.* 23. 6. as before he had said, [he asked Life of thee, and thou gavest it him,

him, even *length of Days, &c.* *Pfal.* 21. 4. and he describing the State of a godly Man in *Pfal.* 91. he reckons up the mighty Power of God in preserving his Person from manifold Calamities, so far as it consists with God's Glory, and the godly Man's good; yea tho' he die of the Plague, (for the best are not exempted from common Calamities) yet shall he be saved from the plague of the Plague, and with *long Life will I satisfie him,* *Pfal.* 91. 16.

(4.) Another Divine Promise is, [*cleave unto the Lord, for He is thy Life, and the length of thy Days.*] *Deut.* 30. 20. Agreeable unto this is, that Godly Wisdom shall add both length of Days and a long Life, and Peace unto such as are blest with it, *Prov.* 3. 2. and thus God told wise *Solomon*, [*seeing thou hast not asked long Life, &c. but Wisdom of me, yet if thou wilt keep my Commands, I will add length of Days to thee,*] *1 King.* 3. 11, 14. Many more Promises of a long Life might be added, but to avoid prolixity this shall suffice, adding only that length of Days is a transcendent privilege, and desirable in general by all Mankind. This was *David's* Doctrine, which he proclaimeth with a challenge to the whole World, crying (as it were) with sound of Trumpet, [*What Man is he that desireth*

*desireth Life, and loveth many days that he may see Good,*] *Pfal.* 34. 12. *Augustine* brings all sorts of Mortal Men and Women, who all unanimously answered to *David's* Question, saying with much eagerness, every one for themselves, [*Ego & Ego,*] *I would, and I would, &c.* All Persons do desire a long Life, many happy Days, and a comfortable Enjoyment of all: But alas how few there be, that take right Courses to obtain the true Happiness according to that wholesom Counsel which *David* doth prescribe for the compassing of it, *ver.* 13, 14, 15, &c. Again,

2dly. What a blessing is *long Life*, may be farther demonstrated by the many direful Threatnings which the Lord hath denounced against wickedness, (as before his precious Promises to Godliness, &c.) that the Wicked shall not live out half his days, *Pfal.* 55. 24. and in many more Scriptures too long here to relate, all shewing that a short Life is a curse, &c. yet know that in some cases it is a blessing, as to those who are *taken away from the evil to come,* *1 King.* 14. 13. and *Isai.* 57. 1. Just as when a Fire breaks forth in an House, then Men carry forth their Jewels, but God conveys his Cabinet into a better World, their Souls enter into Rest and pass to Heaven.

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The Conclusion of this 1st Point then is this, That seeing a *long Life* is *promised* by the Lord to the Godly, and a *short Life* is threatened by Him to the Wicked, therefore it must necessarily follow from these two aforementioned premises, that a good Old Age, and to go the *Grave full of Years*, and full of Graces as well as Years, (as Abraham did) is a great blessing of God as to its own *Nature* and *Substance*, &c.

The 2d Point I have to discourse upon, is the *Accidents* of this *Nature* and *Substance* of Old Age, which are principally two, namely, (1st) The *Quantity*; and (2dly) The *Quality* of it.

First, Concerning the *Quantity* of it, and this is twofold.

1st That which was more *special* and peculiar to the *Antedeluvian Patriarchs*. And,

(2dly) That which is most *General* and *Universal* to all the *Post-diluvian* generation of Mankind ever since Noah's Flood, not only unto this day, but also to the end of the World.

1st As to the *Patriarchs*, They indeed lived very long, and to a very great Old Age, yet they all did die at last; for the God of Nature did ordain, (upon the Fall of Adam) that Nature should decay and

and die at last. NB. Note well, That none of the *Patriarchs* did live out completely a Thousand Years; for that term of Time is reckoned as *one Day*, 2 Pet. 3. 8. and if any of those *Patriarchs* had lived out their Thousand Years, then that Divine Doom upon fallen Mankind, [ *in the Day, thou eatest the forbidden Fruit, thou shalt surely Die,* ] Gen. 2. 17. Now if any one of those had lived beyond a Thousand Years, then Man had not died within the compass of that Mystical Day, &c. The *Patriarchs* indeed had a very large Quantity, and a long Lease of their Lives; and this was for many weighty Reasons, of four several sorts: (1.) *Natural*. (2.) *Civil*. (3.) *Moral*. (4.) *Theological*.

The 1st is *Natural*, because (1.) There was much vertue in those Herbs upon which they constantly made their daily Meals.

(2dly) The *Climate* where they lived had a most temperate Air, and every way most congruous to their Constitutions.

But (3dly) above all, their own Temperance from Surteiting and Drunkenness, for the Old Adage is, [ *Plures pereunt Gula, quam Gladio,* ] more Persons do die by Intemperance, than by the Sword, &c. These Three are the Natural Reasons.

In the (2d) Place, the *Civil Reasons* are,  
(1st) They lived so long both for the better populating of the World. And,

(2dly) For the better spreading of the Church of God, (out of the *White Line*) in the World; they lived thus long to beget Sons and Daughters for this purpose.

Then in the 3d Place, the *Moral Reasons* are,

(1st) For the better institution of all *Arts and Sciences*, &c. And,

(2dly) For the more promoting of their own Experimental knowledge, because they wanted those Books and Libraries which we in our days do enjoy; therefore the Lord lent them such long Leases of *Eight or Nine Hundred Years*, whereby they got the greater stock of Knowledge by such long Experience.

And in the 4th Place, The *Theological Reason* is, For the propagation of the True Religion in the World, (as was hinted above) in the *White Line*, the Posterity of *Seth*, as the *Black Line* was the Off-spring of cursed *Cain*, as is made apparent in the draught of ancient Genealogies which are drawn with a *White* and a *Black Line*, all along to distinguish the *Church* from the *World*.

NB. Note well, (1.) As the longest Day hath the shortest Night, so the longest Life

Life of those Patriarchs had the shortest Death; for the night of Death came upon them at the last; we read of no Agonies they had in their Dying, &c.

NB. Note well, (2.) As the *Microcosm*, or *great World* was drowned (as it were) with a *Droptic*, in *Noah's* deluge, and shall at last be burned (as it were) with a burning Fever; even so the *Microcosm*, or *Man*, who is called [the *little World*.] More of this afterwards.

But 2dly as to the *Quantity* or *Lease* of Man's Life, (since the Patriarchs time) which is now general and universal over all Mankind, we must know, that as the long Lives of those *Patriarchs*, near the beginning of the World (tho' now fallen under sin) doth intimate to us, and give us a guess, how long Man might have lived upon the Earth, (had he not sinned) before he had been translated into Heaven, as *Enoch* was: So that the Age of Man began to be shortened after *Noah's* Flood, and more especially after the *confusion of Tongues* at the building of *Babel*; for *Pelez* (which signifies *Dreissen*, so called because Tongues were divided in that day) and his Son *Regu*, and those born after them, lived not above half the time of those that were born before them, as *Porcius* notes well in his *Medi-*



*dulla Histor. Eccles. pag. 15. NB. Note well,* May not we in our Day call our Sons [ *Peleg* ] as *Heber* did his Son; for in a colour of building up *Sion*, 'tis rather a *Babel*, because of the *Confusion* of *Tongues* amongst us, not understanding one anothers Languages, *Prob Dolor*, this is for Lamentation, &c. Know likewise, that after this diminution of Man's Age at the *Confusion* of *Tongues*, *Moses* comes and mentions a shorter cut of the Lease of Man's Life, as we are told in the *Ninetieth Psalm*, which is called the *Prayer of Moses*, that he made most probably when he saw the Carcases of the People fall so fast in the Wilderness, and committed to Writing for the instruction of those that were left alive, yet were doomed to Death, as *Numb. 14.* at large relateth; and this *Prayer of Moses* is fitly placed next to the *eighty ninth Psalm*, that it might be an illustration of that passage, [ *What Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death? shall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?* ] *Psal. 89. 48.* After this verse, *Moses* reads a Divine Lecture upon Man's Mortality, shewing how *God turns Man to destruction*, *Psal. 90. 3.* that is, God by turning loose upon Man divers Diseases, turns him now soon out of the World.

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And when *Moses* had set forth the misery of Man's Life by many similitudes, as a *Watch*, a *Flood*, a *Sleep*, *Flower*, &c.) which indeed is such a Misery, as cannot sufficiently be set forth by any similitudes, *ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.* He at last comes to determine how short a Lease God gives Man of his Life, saying, [ *the days of our Years, are Threescore Years and Ten,* ] *ver. 10.* that is, as if he had said, Tho' the Fathers lived much longer, yet as wickedness increased in the World, so Mens Days decreased; and now their Lives are daily shortned, and one Generation soon dispatched away after another: All Men have a quick dimission from their appearance upon the Stage of the World, and all this is done, that the World it self may come the sooner to its perpetual period. And tho' some [by reason of a more robust Constitution than others have, and therefore may attain to *four score Years,* ] yet few exceed *seventy*, and fewer attain to it; and such as live longer, do pay interest of Pains, Sorrow and Misery for their enlargement beyond the generality of Mankind, because the Body is then much decayed, and filled with Diseases, &c. And thus *Barzillai* accounted himself a very Aged Man, when he had attained to the age of *four score Years* old.

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2 Sam.

2 Sam. 19. 32. saying of himself [ How long have I to live, can I tast what I eat or drink, &c? and [ *how long have I to live* ] ver. 34. that is, *my Breath is corrupt, or my Spirits are Spent, my Days are extinct, and the Grave is ready for me, as Job speaks of himself, Job 17.1. He was Senex quasi Seminex, half dead, and felt himself pedetentim mori, to die by peace-meal, even sensim sine sensu, insensibly yielding every day somewhat to Death, and therefore he tells David with a most thankful Heart, that it was not adviseable for him to embrace his Royal Offer of a Courtly Life to him, who was now superannuated, and was already (as it were) dead both to Meat and Musick, all such delights of the Sons of Men, Eccles. 2. 8. Those days (saith he) are come upon me wherein I can have no pleasure, Eccles. 12. 2, 3, 4. Therefore 'tis high time now for me, and for all such Aged Ones as I am, to make and pack up our Fardles, and prepare to pass hence into that better Country, which is Heaven, as the Holy Patriarchs did, Heb. 11. 13, 14, 15, 16.) My continuance can be but short here in this World, (saith old Baruchai to David) and therefore I would not now leave my Habitation, (where I now retire and rest me from the Noise of the*

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the World ) but now my whole work is, a firm resolve to make *ready for Death*, and to *lay hold on Eternal Life*, 2 Sam. 19. 35, 36, 37. 1 Tim. 6. 19. And indeed this is the indispensable Duty, not only of such as are Old, but 'tis necessary for all that are Young to do so likewise, because this Quantity, and the length of the Lives of all Persons, in all Ages, is very uncertain; the Proverb saith, as soon goes the Lambs Skin to the Market, as that of the Old Sheep; the *Young may die*, as well as the *Old must die*: And 'tis an old observation, yea and a true one, that there be more of Mankind, which die under Ten Years old, than they which live above Sixty Years. We all *live in Houses of Clay*, and our Foundation is in the Dust, easily crushed as the Moth, with the least touch of Man's Finger; and much sooner are we crushed with the Finger of God, ) Job. 4. 19. If our Cottages of Clay had a Foundation of *Brass* or *Marble*, they might possibly stand some time in the World; but seeing our best Foundation is no better than Dust, call'd *Terra Frigibilis*, which is so easily crumbled asunder in the Hand of a Child: Oh 'tis no less than a Miracle of Mercy, that some of us do subsist so long alive upon the Earth, seeing the Walls of our *Earthly Taber-*

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Taber-

*Tabernacles* (as *Paul* calls the *Body*, 2 Cor 5. 2.) are weak; and the *Foundation* of our Clay-House is far weaker, being but *Dust*, light, flying and unstable *Dust*, which is soon wherried and whirled about with every puff of Wind: Hence *Man* is not only a Clod of Clay, neatly made up by a skilful Potter, as was the first *Man Adam*, [of the *Earth*, *Earthy*,] 1 Cor. 15. 47. and a Lump of *Dust*. *Gen.* 3. 19. but also he is but an *heap of Vanity*, yea at his best estate [Kol-*Adam*, Kol-*Abel*] *omnis Adam est totus Abel*, every *Adam* or *Man*, is wholly *Abel* or *Vanity*, even when he seems to be well underlaid on all sides, and most settled and likeliest to live, *Psal.* 39. 5, 11. And again *Adam Abel's compar est*, *Adam* is *Abel's Mate*: *Man* is like to *Vanity*, and as a *Shadow* that hath no substance in it, or subsistence at all, *Psal.* 144. 4. and he not only *consumes away* like a *Moth*, as *Psal.* 39. 11. as before, with the least touch the *Moth* is crushed; but 'tis said further, [that *Man* is crushed before the *Moth*, *Job* 4. 19. It is not said there, *before the Lion*, (that would be no wonder) but 'tis said [before the *Moth*,] to shew what a poor thing *Man* is, when a *Moth* can crush him, that a *Fly* can choak him, as it did *Pope Alexander*; that

that an Hair in a Mess of Milk may stifle him, as it did great *Marinus* the Roman General, and (as some say) *Pope Adrian* also. Thus *Drusus* (the Emperor, *Claudius's* Son,) was suffocated with a Pear that was cast up and caught by his Mouth in sport only. Thus *Æmilius Lepidus* was destroyed by a light bruise upon his Toe. Many such Stories I might relate, of this Nature; but to be short, let me add only one more, which I can both affirm and confirm upon my own knowledge, that a great Lord of this Land, (who was my Patron, &c.) that was brought to his Death, only by paring a Corn upon his Toe, which did after Gangreen, and struck upwards, whereof at last he died. All these *Instances* (with many more which might be added) do demonstrate the *uncertainty* of our Lives, as there is nothing more certain than our Deaths, (for that is established by the great Statute of Heaven, that all *Men must once die*, Heb. 9. 27.) yet as to the time of it, there is nothing more *uncertain*, especially considering [how *Man* is destroyed from Morning to Evening,] *Job* 4. 20. the Hebrew reading is, he is *beaten to pieces as in a Mortar*, with one Misery upon another, until the very Breath be beaten out of his Body at length;

yea and all this *from Morning to Evening*, that is, not only all the day long, but even all the *life long*; which is here (for its brevity) compared to an Artificial Day, and such as no Man can be sure *he shall have twelve hours to his Day*: For how many are there, whose Sun hath set at High-noon, even in the prime and pride of their Days they have been snatcht away by the Hand of Death; yea, yet higher, how many do we see whose Sun doth set at its very rising; so that they are carried from the Grave of the Womb, to the Womb of the Grave, even from their *Birth* to their *Burial*: And assuredly we all every Hour, as well as every Day, do yield somewhat unto Death, and nearer and nearer do we approach to our latter end; yea and the longest liver of us hath but a short cut from the first Rising of our Sun, to its last Setting, from our Birth to our Burial: The *Psalmist* saith, that [the Sun knoweth the time of its going down,] *Psal. 104. 19.* But this cannot be said of any of the Sons of Men, that they know the time of their going down to the Grave; good *Isaac* knew it not, *Gen. 27. 1, 2.* (except only *Hesekiah*, who by a special dispensation from God, knew it;) much less can we, that are old, know the time of our

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our going down, or the Quantity of our Old Age. The Jewish Rabbins do mention three Steps or Degrees in the measure of Old Age; the first they call [*Senes*,] the second they name [*Annos*] and the third they stile [*Decrepiti*]; and thus they reckon, when a Man comes to be Sixty Years old, such an one they reckon'd to be reached only to the Borders of Old Age, passing along until he stepped on unto Seventy Years of Age, at which Age *David* died, see after: Then *Secondly*, They accounted him among the *Annos*, an Old Man indeed, who lived up from Seventy to Eighty Years of Age; such a Man was got a great way into that far Country of Old Age, even into that Hyperborean cold and frozen Climate, where the Snow of Hoary Hairs lay continually upon his Head undissolved. But *Thirdly*, The highest Step and Degree, is such an one as liveth above Eighty Years old; those they number among *Decrepid* Ones, that then are Superannuated, declining to a Doteage, in whom all the Senses of the Body, yea, and all the Faculties of the Soul begin daily to decay, (as in Old *Barzillai* before-named, according to his own confession unto *David*;) such very Aged Persons are accounted *recondrous Old*, as is the Ex-

pressions

pression in the Old Singing Psalms, *Psal.* 90. 10. for it falls out most commonly, that in this wondrous Old Age, we pay the deep interest of Pains in dolorous Distempers, being the time wherein, (as *Solomon* saith) we can have no Pleasure, *Eccles.* 12. 1, 2, &c. and according to the Old Adage, [his *Pueri Senes*] Old Persons are twice Children; as after their Birth, so before their Death they become meerly *Childish*, which once did occasion my self to say, when I saw a very Old Woman, (one past all other Work) rocking the Cradle, that had a very Young Babe in it, behold, *there is one Child rocking another*; and thereupon I gave her the best advice I could, how it was high time for her to make sure work for a better World. Moreover, beside this Rabinical Animadversion thus Spiritually Improved, we have another more Critical and Christian Calculation of Man's Life, made by one of our English Martyrs, who left behind this curious Criticism, saying, [because the common term of Humane Life, in the ordinary course of Nature, is but *Threescore Years and Ten*, according to *Moses* (that Man of God's) computation, *Psal.* 90. 10. Now if we divide those Seventy Years into four Equal Parts, then must it necessarily fol-

follow, that every Man is three parts Dead, when he doth but arrive at the Age of Fifty Years. This solid Observation doth much sooner mind us of our Mortality, than that before of the Jewish Rabbins; and to the same purpose I myself have (both publickly and privately) taught the like Lesson upon the end of my four Fingers and the Thumb, shewing to the Eyes of those I spake to, how the top of the little Finger represents our Childhood, the top of the next Finger shews our Youth, the top of the longest Finger demonstrates our Middle Age, when we come to our *Apex*, or fulness of Height and Health; then the top of the fore Finger, (which is a little lower than the middle Finger) declares our beginning to decline by little and little; but lastly from the top of the fore Finger to the top of the Thumb there is a great fall, and hence is it that we usually say, such an Aged Person breaks fast in a little time; the Lord help us to learn this Lesson upon our Fingers ends. *NB. Note well*, The God of Nature hath ordained, that Nature in all his created Beings must decay; yet this is the Sovereign Power of the Creator over all his Creatures to determine the Time, measure and Quantity, when the period of Nature shall come to decay, and

and be dissolved. Thus *Job* acknowledges this Divine Rule and Dominion of God over all Mankind, saying, [*his Days are determined, the number of his Months are with God*; thou hast appointed his Bounds that he cannot pass, &c.] *Job* 14. 5, 6. that is, God hath set every Man the Bounds of *his Time*, (whether *shorter*) called here [*his Days*] or longer, [*the number of his Months*]; and whether shorter or longer, they have both their Bounds which they cannot pass, no more than the unruly *Ocean* can pass the Bounds that its *Maker* hath set it, *Job* 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. We should think the same of the Waters of Afflictions that the Lord doth limit them, saying, [*thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud Waves be staid.*] This Sovereign Rule and Dominion of God over Man, in determining his Time upon Earth, is made manifest, in ordering such long Leases of Life to the *Patriarchs*, and such a short Term to the Lives of the following Ages: This is elegantly expressed thus by *Tertullian*, [*Vite Fugera illis, sed nobis tantum Spithamas Deus dedit illi Gigantes fuere, nos vero Pugiones, &c.*] God gave to the *Patriarchs* whole and long Acres of Life, but to us only a Span-breadth thereof; they were

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lofty Gyants, but we are puny Dwarfs; yea, and this Divine Dominion is daily apparent, as the only over-ruling Reason why some, *likely to live long*, do die soon; while others that are more weak with daily Distempers, do live longer than they; as well as it is the Will and Wisdom of God, that we see the Sons and Daughters of Men do die daily in all Ages, in Childhood, Youth, Middle Age, as well as Old Age: And as God hath set Bounds to *Man's Time*, so hath he determined *Man's Task* likewise; thus *John Baptist* had his *Course to fulfil*, *Acts* 13. 25. the word for *Course* in Greek is [*Δρόμος*], from whence the *Dromedary* hath his Name, which is a swift Creature, and will run an hundred miles in a day: Thus the *Baptist*, tho' he lived not long, but was cut off by *Herod*, yet he lived much in a little space; he wrought hard, and made haste in his Work, as not willing to be taken with his Task undone. Thus 'tis said of *David* also in *Acts* 13. 36. that he served out his *Generation*, and then he fell asleep after he had done his *Generation-work* according to the will of God. There is an appointed time to Man upon the Earth, *Job* 7. 1. both for his *Time*, and for his *Task*; and he who bears up the Heavens, prescribes such a *Pillar* before

fore Man, (with this Inscription writ upon it, [*ne plus ultra*] thou shalt *pass no farther*: [*stat sua cuique dies*] said *Virgil* of old, every Man hath his Day set him wherein he must die, his last Day stands, but all the rest of his days to that Day are in a running posture. Some *Lutherans* indeed do teach, that God hath not *determined the period of Men's Days*, but that it is in *Man's power* either to *lengthen* or to *shorten* them: But many *Scriptures* teach the contrary, that God hath set the Bounds of every Man's Life to a very Day (as well as his *Place of Dwelling*, Gen. 49. 13. *Acts* 17. 26.) and tho' those Bounds may be passed, which our Natural Constitution in the ordinary course of Nature *setteth*, yet those Bounds which the Almighty Power and Providence of God *setteth* us, we can never pass: For *Job* useth two *Metaphors*.

(1st) That of an *Hireling*, *Job* 7. 1. and 14. 6. Now we agree with Hirelings to work with us *for a day*, and therefore are they called *Day-labourers*.

The 2d *Metaphor* is, *Tsaba*, warfare, *נחשת*, Sept. *Job* 4. 1. because man's life is exposed to *Pirates*, as before: Now if our life be a warfare, 'tis well known how *Soldiers* have their time of *fighting*, and their time of *resting* according to the Com-

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Commands of their *Captain General*. They must obey his Order for both falling on, and for falling back as he pleaseth, *stat pro Ratione Voluntas*, his Will is a Law to them. And thus every good *Soldier of Jesus Christ*, (as *Timothy* is called, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) must be willing either to *Act* or to *Rest* according to the Commands of the *Captain of our Salvation*, (as *Christ* is called *Heb.* 2. 10.) whether private *Christian* or publick *Minister*, we must all resign up our Wills into his Will, as we read in *Ecclesiastick History* of a famous *Minister*, (called *Martinus*) who being by the Lord seized upon with Sicknels, 'tis recorded how he prayed, [*Decumbens dico, Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sim necessarius, laborem tuum non recuso, &c.*] that is, Lord, serve thy self of me, for thy Service is sweet to me; if thou hast no more Service to command me, then, O Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, &c. This was piously spoken, yet *Old Simeon*, (as we read *Luke* 2. 29, 30.) spake better, saying, [*Lord, now let thou thy Servant depart in peace.*] Now this good Old Man, having laid in his Heart, what he lapt in his Arms, (the most blessed Armful that he ever met with, even the Beautiful Babe of *Bethlehem*) he then sing the [*nunc Dismissas*] so called, even his

his Soul out of his Body, saying, I fear no Sin, I dread no Death, I have lived enough, I have my Life, I have ~~plong'd~~ enough, I have my Love, I have seen enough, I have my Light, I have served enough, I have my satisfaction, I have sorrowed enough, I have my consolation, (even the *consolation of Israel*,) whom I and other Believers have long waited for, ver. 25. even the *Messiah*, that *Menachem* or *Comforter*, mentioned, *Lam.* 1. 16. and yet singing farther, Oh, sweet Babe, let this *Psalme* serve for a *Lullaby* to thee, and for a *Funeral* for me; Oh sleep in my Arms, and let me sleep in thy Peace. All this sweet Song *Simcon* concludes, with the procuring cause of his Sacred Musick, saying, [*for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.*] This was his great satisfaction, that he had accomplished his Service to his Most Honourable Lord and Master, who had employ'd him all his Life in most *Honourable Work*, and who (he was assured) was going to pay him most *Honourable Wages*; seeing he had got his Saviour, *ἐν καρδίᾳ* in his Heart, as well as *ἐν χειρὶ* in his Hand, as 'tis said of the *Blessed Virgin*, who therefore is said to rejoice, Greek *ἠγαλλίασε*, danced a *Gallyard*, and to magnifie the Lord her Saviour, as well as ours, *Luke* 1. 47.

But

But far above those two Instances afore-  
said, to wit, (*Ancient Martinus*, and the  
*good Old Man Simcon*) our *sinless Savi-*  
our faith best of all concerning himself,  
in his last Prayer before his Death, say-  
ing, [*Mine Hour is now come, O Father,*  
*Glorifie thy Son, &c. I have Glorified*  
*thee on Earth, I have finished the Work*  
*thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father,*  
*Glorifie me with thy Self, that is, my*  
*Manhood, with the same Glory which my*  
*Godhead had before the World was made,*  
*John* 17. 1, 4, 5, &c. Our Lord did not  
did not ask his *Wages* before his *Work*  
was done; his Time was now come, and  
he was now Ripe and Ready to be gone  
into his Fathers Kingdom. This holy  
practice of our precious Redeemer is left  
upon Record, on purpose, for our instru-  
ction and comfort, *Rom.* 15. 4: that it  
may be a Pattern to avoid that precipi-  
tancy, which prevailed over those two  
famous *Prophets (men of God)* *Elijah*  
and *Jonah*, who both of them in a strong  
Pang of Passion, desired to Die before  
their Hour of Dying was come; and  
therefore are we told, that these great  
Servants of God were *subject to the like*  
*Passions as we are,* *Acts* 14. 15. *Jam.* 5. 17.  
It is a sinful desire for any who would  
be gone to Heaven, before their Work  
be



be done *on Earth*. We must rather say, [O Father, if thou wilt any further Service for me, I am willing to live longer, *if the Lord be done*, Acts 13. 46.]

Now I am far discoursed upon the first Accident of *Old Age*, (after its *Nature* &c.) the *Quantity* or Measure of it, which we have observed to be *Uncertain* and *Various*, either *long* or *short*, according to the *Statute-law* of the great Lawgiver, the Lord of Lords, &c. [who hath appointed all men once to die, &c.] Heb. 9. 27. even Methusalem, (who was the longest liver, upon Scripture-record, and who came the nearest to be a *Thousand Years Old*, which is reckoned a number of perfection, never attained to by any mere man.) Tho' he lived many Hundred Years, even near to a *Thousand*, and begat *Sons and Daughters*, yet he died at the last; see my first *Volume* of the *History and Mystery* of the *Holy Scriptures* of *Adam* at large.

Now I come to the *Second Accident* of *Old Age*, to wit, the *Quality* or Manner of it, which is either *Good* or *Evil*. Concerning the *first*, now it is a *good Old Age* in its own Nature, and by God's blessing upon it, I have already demonstrated in the foregoing Discourse; and I do design

sign to enlarge much more upon that Point, when I arrive at the *Third Part*, (after its *Nature* and *Accidents*) to declare the *Dues* to, and the *Duties* of *Aged Ones*, whereby *Old Age* may become *good* indeed.

Now as touching the latter of these two, That *Old Age* is an *Evil Age*, that *Senium & Malum convertuntur*: These two are convertible Terms; Solomon the Wise doth sufficiently evince and evidence, in his saying, [Oh, Young Ones, remember your Creator, before Evil Days come, and the Years draw nigh, wherein you shall say, I have no pleasure in them,] Eccles. 12. 1. Wherein he begins to describe,

First, The wearisome evils of *Old Age*, from the latter end of ver. 1. to the last end of ver. 6. Then,

Secondly, Of the evils of Death, ver. 7. both which he brings in as two strong motives, to urge Young ones to be mindful of their Duty.

For, First in the General, All Authors, both those that be *Civil*, as well as those that be *Sacred*, do unanimously concur in this point, That *Old Age* and *Misery* are very seldom found separated. As,

(1.) Plutarch saith, *Senectus ut Africa semper aliquid Novi adportat*, as *Affrica* is never without some Monster, so *Old Age*

Age is never without some Ailment.

(2.) Cato saith, [ *Solet Senectus esse, Deformis, Infirma, Obliviosa, Edulenta, Lucrosa, Indocilis & Molestia,* ] that is, Old Age useth to be Deformed, Feeble, Forgetful, Toothless, Covetous, Unteachable and Unquiet.

(3.) Horace saith, [ *Multa Senem circumveniunt Incommoda,* ] Many are the Inconveniencies that do encompass Old Persons, &c.

(4.) Seneca saith in his Epistle 58. and that out of his own Experience, [ *How are our last Days the very Dregs and Lees of our Lives,* ] when the clearer part is drawn out and spent, then the worst part does sink down to the bottom.

To add no more of Pagan Authors, save only Epictetus, (5.) calls Old Age, [ *Vita Mors, Cadaver Spirans, & Mobile Cadaver,* ] that is, Old Age is a Living Death, 'tis a Breathing Corps, yea a moving Carcase.

Now hear what Sacred Authors say better than those aforesaid, is too long to quote together in this place, seeing so much hath been shewed hereof already. The Book of our own smarting Experiences speak loud enough to convince us of the Evil of Old Age. How many Bodily Infirmities doth daily attend us that are Aged,

Aged, what Aches of the Bones, what Pains in the Joints, what Convulsions of the Sinews, what Torments of the Bowels; how dolorous are those Diseases of Collick, Stone and Strangury in Old Persons; what Hollow Coughs, Distillations of Rhume, what Debility of Nature introuches daily upon all our Senses of Body, and upon all the Faculties of the Mind, our Appetites to Food, our Digestions of Food both feeble; so that in a word, Old Age is like the Common-Sewer, into which all Diseases do empty themselves; and therefore Old Age may well be called an Evil Age.

Secondly, After this General, more particularly the, The Evils of Old Age may be reduced to Three Heads, to wit, Natural, Moral and Spiritual.

(1st) The Evils that are Natural to it. And (1.) As to the Body, Many Distempers do attend it, as those even now named, and many more beside, whereof Barzillai complained, as before, 2 Sam. 19. 34, 35. All Aged Persons do smartly feel the Burden of it, as that ancient Woman in Plautus, who being wished by her Friends (that were walking along with her) to hasten and amend her pace, smartly answered, that she could not do so, for she carried a great Burden upon her Back;

and when no Burden did (as they said) appear to their Eyes, she replied again, that *Threescore Years* were passed over her Head, and that was her *Burden*. And the same may be said by those, whose Spirits are much spent, and whose Strength is much wasted even at that Age; for then *Age* it self alone is a *Burden*, much more in those that live up even to a *Dotage* and *Uselesness*. This is made more manifest by *Solomon*, Eccles. 12. where he declares the Decays accompanying Old Age; he saith according to our *English Translation*, [then the *Grasshopper* shall be a *Burden*,] ver. 5. but the original word, Hebrew, signifies [the *curvature* or *crookedness* of the *Back*, which in Old Persons stands bent like a *Grasshopper*; and this makes the motions of such as are crooked with Age to be the more burdensome, or the *Phrase* there is *Hyperbolic*, intimating, that every light matter will oppress those with their Burden, who are already become a Burden to themselves: And beside this *Natural Evil* of Old Age, as to the *Body*, there is a *second* as to the *Estate*, many *Losses* and *Crosses* do come upon them; as the loss of some of their nearest and dearest Relations, and such like, complaining as Old *Jacob* did, [who mourned for his lost Son many days, and

*refused*

*refused to be Comforted*,] Gen. 37. 34, 35. and again, [ *Joseph is not*, and *Simcon is not*, and must I lose my dear *Benjamin* too, as he had lost *Rachel*, &c? Gen. 42. 36. Tho' *Jacob's* mourning was only for *supposed losses*, yet he had *real ones* also, as of his beloved *Rachel*, &c. Many more instances may be mentioned, as of *David* mourning for the *real loss* of his Son *Ab-salom*, for whom he made so deep a lamentation, &c. This loss of Relations is the greater *Natural Evil*, because it is against the course of Nature for Parents to bury Children, whereas Children use to bury Parents, for one Generation passeth away, when another cometh; so that a Generation of Children doth (as it were) thrust out of the World a Generation of Parents by Nature's Law. To all this let me add my own exercise with this Evil, who have lived to bury *eight Children* out of *nine*, &c. And yet there is a *third Natural Evil* attending Old Age, as to their respect and reverence from the Younger Sort; alas, how are they as *Lamps despised*, as Old *Job* complains, *Job* 12. 4, 5. and more fully *Job* 19. 15, 16, 17, 18. and 30. 1, to 11, 12, 13. where he sighs out these sad words, saying, [ *Upon my Right Hand rise the Young, they push away my feet*, &c. ] which explaineth what he had said, ver. 1.

that Younger than he was, did not only deride him, and laughed him to scorn, (tho' they were no better than *Shagrag Dog-keepers*, as he calls them, and most miserably poor, *ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.*) Yet these Young Scoundrils dared to kick him with their Feet, or trip up his Heels to lay him along. *Job* was wont to have the chiefest Seats in the Temple, and lowly Salutations in the Market-place: He was now Ancient, and had been Honourable, as he had set forth at large in *Chap. 29.* but here he bewails his Misery, that he cannot have a Room in any Place to stand in, but every paltry Boy is ready to push him down, &c. Thus likewise those Ill-bred and Mistaught Children did petulantly deride that Old Prophet *Elisha*, yelling out those impudent words, [*go up thou Bald-pate, &c.*] *2 Kings 2. 23.* Having nothing worse to upbraid him with, they taunt that Head with their Scorns, which God had crowned with Honour, *Prov. 16. 31.* And the same God who had thus honoured his Servant *Elisha*, doth likewise vindicate this dishonour cast upon him, ordering two She Bears (possibly robb'd of their Whelps) to worry forty and two of those Ill-natur'd Children: As their Childhood did not excuse them, so their Idolatrous Pa-

rents

rents were punished in being writ Childless, for giving them no better Education; see more of this in my *Third Volume* on this same *History*. NB. Note well, Suppose any of us Aged Ones be at any time derided by Younger ones, this may allay our Grief, that God doth not lead us into any untrodden Path, for our Betters have gone before us therein, &c.

The Second and Third Evils, to wit, Moral and Spiritual, which do attend Old Age, may be put together, and briefly improved. As,

(1st) The Moral Evils are, (1.) An over-eagerness in a greedy seeking of Wealth, and yet a niggardly unwillingness to spend what is gotten; no not sometimes to supply the Necessities of Nature, &c.

(2.) A dull, slow and cold pace in all proceedings of Business, yea with a timorous and fearful temper of Mind, and yet fretting and chafing at the same dullness and backwardness that he beholds in others under him.

(3.) The Old Man is of a morose Mind, hard to be pleased himself, and as hard to please others; a froward Spirit is easily displeased, (as we see in Babes at the Breast, &c.) yet are not so easily pleased again.

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(4.) Ano-

(4.) Another *Moral Evil* in the Aged is, to complain of *present Times*, but praising *former Days* of old, which the Old Men of those Days did as much complain of, as *he* doth of *these*: Whereas indeed the fault lieth not in the *Times*, (either present, or former,) but in the *Persons* that *live* in those *Times*, for in every Age, better Hearts and Lives would make better *Times*.

Then (2dly) After these *Moral Vices* do follow *Spiritual Sins*, which are found in Old Age, such as (1.) *Ignorance*, a meer Child for knowledge, no Fool like to an Old Fool; and therefore tho' this *filly Child* be an *hundred Years* old, he is denounced by a Divine Mouth to be *accursed*, *Isai. 65. 20.* Thus the Old Age of that *filly Child Shimei*, (who childishly plaid away his own Life) could not exempt him from Justice; for it was *David's* charge to his Son *Solomon*, [ *let not his Hoary Head go down to the Grave in peace,* ] *1 Kings 2. 6.*

(2.) An *indocible, untractable Frame* attends *Old Age* to learn the great Mysteries of Godliness, as appeared in *Old Nicodemus*, tho' a *Master in Israel*, and could not but have read of a *New Heart*, which God promised to give, &c. in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and in other places of the *Old Testament*; yet how *awkward* was he

he in entertaining the Doctrine of Regeneration, objecting against it; First, [ *How can a Man be born again?* ] And after *Christ* had told him, that the way of the *Spirits* working this work, was *incomprehensible*, &c. yet comes he off again with his ( *How can these things be?* ] *John 3. 4, 10.* This *Old Man*, (nay an *Old Master* in teaching work) understood no more of the Mystery of the New Birth, than a *rude Rustick* can comprehend the profoundest Points of the *Mathematicks*, which be no better than *Gibberish* to him when he hears them: NB. However it is no matter how dull the Scholar is, when *Christ* himself will become the Teacher, as here; for this *Nicodemus*, who had long been a Night-bird, during the Life of *Christ*, did at the last break forth as the Sun from under a Cloud, to manifest his Love to his Lord after his Death, *John 19. 39.*

(3.) To illustrate this farther, *Old Age* is *Self-conceited*, and cannot easily be convinced, through Pride of Spirit rooted in it, he is too wise to learn, therefore was it that *Solomon* preferred [ a *poor and wise Child*, before an *Old and Foolish King*, who abhors to be admonished, ] *Eccles. 4. 13, 14.* for the *Young Child* is apt to learn, and ready to receive Instruction, and will be as careful to follow it; and all this is

is *true Wisdom*: Whereas an *Old and Foolish King* is not only *weak*, but also *wilful*, and his *Pride* is the ground of his *Wilfulness*; as he is *short-sighted* in his *Mind*, so he is *stubborn* and *unconvin- cible* in his *Will*: There have been such *Kings* in the *World*, who in their *Old Age*, have shewed themselves so self-wil- led, and so wedded to their own vain *Opinions*, that they never endured to ask *Advice*, and if any were given them, what they fancied not, they assuredly rejected it; though they sometimes, yea very sel- dom ask *Counsel*, yet never follow any but their *own*, until they ruin themselves and their *People*.

(4.) As the *Three* former brings *Ruine, &c.* to the *Bodies*, not only of *Old and Foolish Kings*, but also of *Old and Foolish Subjects*, who do harden their *Hearts* against all good *Counsel*; yea, and that which is worst of all, these *Three* afore-named, bring destruction to their *Souls* likewise, by their living and dying in that great sin of *Unbelief*, and *final Impenitency*, which their *custom in sin* (taking away all *conscience of sin*) doth at last seal them up in, where the superabounding *Grace of God* doth not interpose to disappoint it. This refracto- ry and untoward, untractable Temper of ab-

abhorring to be taught, hath been a long time observed, universally to accompany *Old Age*; infomuch that this was the first ground of that *Old Greek Adage*, [*νεῖο διδάσκαλος*,] *Senum Doctor*, a Teacher of Old Persons; by which *Phrase* the *Wis- dom* of the *Ancients* used to express any *labour in vain*, like those other *Phrases*, [*Æthiopem lavare*] to wash a *Blackmore white*, which *Phrase* is used in *Scripture*, *Jer.* 13. 23. And to the same purpose is that *Adage* used by *Pagan Authors*, [*Sysiphi saxum volvere*,] a *Poetical Fi- ction*, that this *Sysiphus* was doomed unto as a punishment for his former *Faults*, that he was to roll an heavy *Stone* up the *Hill*, which then did run down again of it self with its own weight; and when it came to the bottom, his work was to roll it up again; yea, and that which was the *Milchief* and *Misery* of this *Man* in this *Work*, it must be his only and con- tinual *Task* for all his time, &c. All these *Adages* do demonstrate the unteachable- ness of *Old Age*, and that if we do not (through the *Grace of God*) remember our *Creator in the days of our Youth*, while that tractable *Temper* continueth with us, but still drive it off until *Old*, then be- come we so slow, so oblivious, and so set- tled upon the *Lees*, &c. infomuch that the

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Ministry of the Word (that they fit under) is *labour in vain* to such, and Christ's Ministers may complain with the Prophet, (as to such as *hate to be reformed*, and are incorrigible,) [ *I have laboured in vain, and I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain,* ] Isai.49.4. NB. Note well, how besotted, and even bewitched are such Persons, to make that the Task of their Old Age, which ought to be the Trade of our whole Life, and to settle their everlasting, and surest making or marring upon so sandy and sinking a Foundation, as *Old Age* is, well called an *Evil Age*, for Reasons aforesaid.

Now the next and *Second Point* to be discoursed upon is, How this *Evil Old Age*, may become a *Good Old Age*, as was *Abrahams*, Gen. 25. 8. and *Isaac's*, Gen. 35. 29. and *Dauids*, 1 Chron. 29. 28. [ *hic labor, hoc opus est,* ] this is an high, and an hard *undertaking*; for the accomplishment whereof, let this be the method. As,

(1st) The [ *ον* ] that it *may be so*, seeing the *Evil Old Age* (which is so in it self, and by decays of Nature,) hath been made a *good Old Age* by the power of Grace, as in those three aforesaid.

(2dly)

(2dly) The [ *αιτιαι* ] the Reasons why it ought to be made so, because our eternal *Weal* or *Woe* hangs upon it. And,

(3dly) The [ *καθολικαι* ] the *means* whereby this marvelous change from Evil to good may be wrought.

*First*, of the 1st, That it may be so, 'tis clear, not only from the many Examples of Holy Men and Women upon Record, in both the *Old* and *New Testament*, who all *lived holily* to a good Old Age, and *died happily* at the last; and the Scripture gives this honourable Character concerning *Mnason*, that he was an *Old Disciple of Christ*, Acts 21. 16. And the *Ancient* and *Honourable* are joined together, Isai. 9. 18. nor could *Hoary Hairs* be a *Crown of Glory*, as *Soloman* saith, Prov. 16. 31. nor could a *Gray Head* be an *Old Man's Beauty*, Prov. 20. 29. if not *found in the way of Righteousness*: A gray headed experienced Christian is called a Father 1 John 2. 13. such, as whose *due*, is the *highest veneration*, Levit. 19. 32. especially such as are described in Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14. Such are of the highest Form in *Christ's School*; for, NB. Note well, a *Christian* hath his degrees of Growth, distinctly described in the Word of God. As,

(1st) We have his *Conception*, Gal.4.19.

(2dly) His *Birth*, 1 Pet. 1. 23.

(3thly)

(3dly) His *Childhood*, 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. 1

(4thly) His *Youth*, or well-grown Age, when he is past the Spoon, 1 John 2. 13.

(5thly) His *full-grown Age*, Ephes. 4. 13. And,

(6thly) His *Old Age*, as 1 John 2. 13. Acts 21. 16, &c. Job 29. 8. and 32. 4, 6, 7. Rom. 16. 5, 7. and 1 Tim. 5. 1, 2. Unto all these Scriptures, shewing how a *Good Old Age* ought to be highly valued and revered, I may add the Testimony of a *Pagan Poet*, who extolls that *Golden Age*, wherein he lived, having only the Light and Law of Nature to conduct them in their Lives; yet thus he writes,

*Credebant hoc grande Nefas & Morte pi-  
andum,*

*Si Juvenis Vetulo, non assurexerit, & si  
Barbato cuicunque Puër, licet esse videret,  
Plura Domi farra, & majores Glandis  
Acervos;*

*Tam venerabile erat præcedere quatuor An-  
nis.*

These are the Verses of *Juvenal* in his 13th Satyr, the sense whereof, in short, is this, That in this *Pagan Poet's* time, all Men looked upon it as a Capital Crime, and counted it punishable by the Judges, if Young People did not rise up, and rever-  
ence

rence such as had Hoary Heads, tho' the Young were rich, & the Aged were poor, &c. which is a clear demonstration, that the Law and Light of Nature did concur, and taught the same Truth with the Law and Light of Scripture, Levit. 19. 32. and the rest afore-named, especially when this Evil Age in it self becomes by Grace a Good Old Age, 'tis to be honoured, &c.

(2dly) The [*Διότι*] why it must be so, the Reasons be these over and above that before-mentioned, namely, that *Old Age* must be a good thing of it self, and in its own Nature and Substance, (altho' it is made an evil thing, in too many, by accident, as before,) because it is a Blessing which the Lord hath both graciously promised, and performed to many of his Servants, &c. And a *short Life* is a Curse, which the same God severely threat-  
neth unto the Wicked; yea, and long Life it self is also a Curse unto all Christ-  
less ones, tho' they live untill they attain to the Age of an Hundred Years, Isai. 65. 20. Moreover, the Reasons that demonstrate this great Truth, [we must be careful and conscientious in making our *Old Age* a Good Age,] are principally Three: The first is, because this doing as it ought to be done, will be a blessed  
Remedy



Remedy against those three woful *maladies* of Old Age, to wit, the *Natural, Moral* and *Spiritual* Evils afore-mentioned; therefore *Solomon* prescribeth, the *Remembrance* of *God* in the *days of Youth*, as a most comfortable *preservative* against all those Evils which commonly Old Age is attended with, and maketh it an unpleasant time. As,

(1st) A Good Old Age is a Sovereign *Antidote* against the *Natural Evils* accompanying it. As,

(1.) Against the *loss* of Bodily strength, then the Grace of Faith, in the Good Old Age, doth put *Strength* in *Weakness*, Health in *Sickness*, and Ease in *Pain*; this comes to pass by the *force of Faith*, Heb. 11. 34. *Joshuah* is one of those that was strengthened in the weakness of Old Age, which he acknowledgeth, saying, [and now behold the Lord hath kept me alive,] Josh. 14. 10, 11. which mercy was the greater, because he out-lived many Thousands of other *Israelites*, whose Carcasses did fall in the Wilderness: Yet then he saith of himself, [I am this day fourscore and five years old, yet so, I am as strong this day as I was in the day that *Moses* sent me (to spie out the Land of Promise, Numb. 13. which was forty five years ago,) as my strength was then (when I will

[I was but forty years old) even so is my strength now (at fourscore and five) for War, both to go out and to come in,] *Viridis & Vegeta Senectus, singulare Donum est*; a fresh and vigorous Ability for Generation-work in Old Age, is a singular Gift of God. This Gift God gave to *Moses*, Deut. 34. 7. and to *Paul* the Aged, (as he calls himself, Phil. v. 9.) whose strength was perfect in weakness; and when he was weak in Nature, then was he strong in Grace, 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10. and thus that seeming Contradiction is reconciled. And this Gift God gave likewise to famous Mr. *Dod*, in our days, who, as he was another *Moses* for meekness, (which is a great *prolonger of Life*;) so he was not unlike him and *Joshuah* in Health and Strength of Body, when he arrived to an extreme Old Age; this was a Mercy which that Good Man most highly valued: So that 'tis said of him, [*Deficere potius quam Desinere Visus est*,] that is, he seemed rather to decay, dissolve and melt away by Inches, than to die by any Agony of Death. 'Tis my frequent and fervent prayer to God, that he would grant us an *easy passage* out of this World, and an *open passage* into the better World; and to die like a Lamb is universally esteemed as a great Gift of God.

An exemption from the Torturing Torments of the Stone, of the Strangury, of the Gripes and of the Gout, &c. is my *Singular Mercy*.

(21) As to the loss of their younger, near and dear Relations, this *Good Old Age* wants not sufficient *Cordials* wherewith to sweeten the Bitterness, and allay the Grief of this great Evil also; as good Old *Abraham* did comfort his own Spirit, saying, [ *let me bury my Dead out of my Sight, &c.* ] when he had lost a pretious Rib out of his Side, in the death of his dear Wife *Sarah*; not only dear to him, but also very dear to God himself: Inasmuch that God gave this Honour unto her, above all other Women in Scripture Record, that the Age of her life is Recorded, and of Her only, &c. *Gen.* 23. 1, 2. Why the length of the Life of any other Woman (save only *Sarah's*) is not Recorded by God's Pen in Scripture, our *Divines* render this Reason, that it was to humble that Sex, which was *first* in bringing Sin and Death into the World, *1 Tim.* 2. 13, 14, 15. and therefore deserved not to have the continuance of their Lives mentioned in Sacred Writ by the unfearchable Will and Wisdom of God. 'Tis said indeed, that *Abraham* mourned for her Death; and she was the first

first also, ( that we read of ) who was mourned for, when she died; as well as the only one of that Sex, whose *term of Life* is related by the *Holy Ghost*; and both these were done, for the greater Honour of this *Lady*, ( as *Sarah*, Hebrew, signifies ) who was a *Type* of the *Gospel-Church*, *Gal.* 4. 22, to 31. and she was the Wife of that greatest of *Patriarchs*, who is called [ the *Father of the Faithful*, ] and whose Bosom is the *Synonymon* with *Mansions of Glory*, *Rom.* 4. 16. *Luke* 16. 22. Yet his mourning for her was moderate, and not as *without Hope*, *1 Thes.* 4. 13. Her Death had not made any such divorce from him, but there still remained a blessed conjunction betwixt them; therefore he calls her [ *his Dead* ] eight several times over in *Gen.* 23. 3, &c. to shew he had not *lost her*, nor lost his interest in her, and that he had only *lent her* to the *Lord*, he had only bid her [ *good night* ] in hope to see her Alive again in the Morning of the Resurrection; she was only slain [ *asleep in Jesus*, ] *1 Thes.* 4. 13, 14. the Union was not dissolved by Death. As this consideration was comfortable to this Good Old *Abraham*, so it was no less a comfort to that Good Prophet *Ezekiel*, when the Lord took from him [ the *Desire of his Eyes*, ] *Ezek.*

24. 16. even that sweet Companion of his Life: And this may likewise be the Comfort of all Godly Couples, and of Friends also, when God is pleased to make a separation one from another; 'tis only for a time, and not for ever: Our present meetings together in this World, are joynd with some short partings asunder; but our Hope in the Lord is, we shall at last meet together again in a better World, so as never to part asunder any more; for then *we shall be with the Lord for ever and for ever*, wherefore *let us comfort one another with these words*, 1 Thes. 4. 17, 18. Oh blessed Hour, Oh thrice happy Union! There is but a Sleep for a Time, for a Night of Death only; as by Sleep the Body is refreshed, so by Death the Body is refined: Let it be our care to cleave close to Christ at the instant of Death, then shall we sleep in Jesus, and he will be our Gain both in Life and Death, Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23. After this Night of Sleep, comes the Day-Break of Eternal Brightness; and after this Union here below, cometh an Everlasting Communion in Heaven above. Those Scripture Comforts should come home to our Hearts; therefore ought we to *comfort one another with them*, by Christian Communication, and then may they

afford

afford us more *strong Consolation* than all the Comforts of Philosophy, (of which Cicero said on his Death-Bed,] *Nescio quo modo imbecillior Medicina quam Morbus est,*] that is, I know not how it comes, that the Medicine is too weak for my Disease.] None can say so of those Scripture Cordials, which the Lord doth ordinarily water with the Dews of his Divine Blessing. The same Cordial did serve to satiate Job likewise in the loss of his Children, looking upon them not as lost, but only lent to the Lord, who had before but lent them unto him, and had called *his own* only home to himself: He still looked on them as his, Dead as well as Living, they were still his, [*his Dead*] (as Abraham's phrase was so oft of his Dead Wife) after they were Dead and Buried. How else could it be said [that God gave to Job twice as much of every thing as he had before, seeing he had but the same number of Children afterwards, that he had before, to wit Seven Sons, and Three Daughters, Job 42. 10, 13. He reckoned there remained still a blessed Union and Conjunction between him and them, which was founded upon his hope of an Happy Resurrection. In a word, learn we to say, our Godly Relations are not lost, they are only gone before us,

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and

and we are hastning after them; they are only removed out of one Room into another, out of the Out-houses and Kitchen of this World, into the Presence-Chamber and Palace of Heaven: They have changed their *Place*, but not their *Company*, as Good Dr. *Preston* said upon his Death-bed. They are only gathered like *Lillies*, Cant. 6. 2. by the *Hand of Christ*, who hath transplanted them into the *Paradise of God*. Our Lord said to the penitent Thief, [ *this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*, ] Luke 23. 43. NB. Oh Matchless Love in our Dear Redeemer, to speak thus lovingly to this poor Penitent, while he was in horrible Torture himself upon the Cross, and paying so unspeakably dear for Man's sin! yet rejected he not this Malefactor's Petition, ver. 42. How much more may we now hope he will hear our Prayers, and answer them with good words and comfortable, Zech. 1. 13. seeing the Debt is now all paid, and the whole work of Redemption is now finished.

3dly Suppose the *Third Natural Evil* do come upon us, to be as *Lamps despised*, and a scorn to Young Scoundrils, &c. (as *Job* complained before) in our Old Age, yet is there a blessed Remedy to this wretched Malady, namely, that pretious Promise, [ *commit thy way unto the*

Lord,

Lord, &c. and he shall bring forth thy Righteousness (in which way thou must still be found) as the Light, and thy Judgments as the Noon-day, ] Psal. 37. 5, 6. that is, we must in the first place mind the Condition of this Promise, to wit, of rolling our selves upon the Lord, (as the Hebrew word signifies) and depend wholly upon him, both for safety and for success in all our undertakings: *Kimchi* reads it, *Volue & exonera*, unload thy self by casting thy Burden upon the Lord, (as *David* explains it, Psal. 55. 22.) that is, ease thy Mind to God by Prayer, and resign up thy All by Faith unto his care and conduct, [ *Trust also in him*, ] this is of the same import with *Commit*, but repeated to take better impression, and to beget more incouragement; then whatsoever we commit to him, he will bring it to pass in the general, ver. 5. Then follows the particular part of this Promise in the Second Place about Slanders, ver. 6. saying, God will so oyl thy good Name, (which is, as pretious Ointment, Eccles. 7. 1. Prov. 15. 30. and 22. 1.) that no defaming Infamy shall stick to it; Dirt will stick upon a Mud-wall, but it cannot do so upon Marble: Suppose we be slandered without Cause, as God tells *Satan* he slandered *Job* without Cause,

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Job

*Job* 2. 3. with 1. 9. and we lie under those *Blacknings* for a time; but consider how the Earth lieth under Darkneſs all the Night long; yet as the Morning by its ſudden ariſing driveth away that Darkneſs, ſo ſhall the Lord clear up our wronged Innocency; and as the *Moon* wadeth from under a Cloud, and from under an *Eclipse*, by the interpoſition of the ſhadow of the Earth betwixt her and the Sun, ſo ſhall we in God's time get over all our Evils of this kind, or of any other, if we *ſtill be found in the way of Righteouſneſs*; God will clear up the innocency of his ſlandered Servants, and bring it to light like the *Sun at Noon-day*; but aſſuredly this will be done at the *day of Judgment* however, if not ſooner; for then there ſhall ſurely be a Reſurrection of *Names*, as well as of *Bodies*, &c. NB. Note well, we muſt often be pondering in our Minds that *great Text* afore-named, *Prov.* 16. 31. which runs thus in the Hebrew, [ *Gnetereth Sephereth Shebai bederek Tſedakah Timetſeh* : ] which in Latine is thus expreſſed, [ *Diadema Glorie Canities, in Via Juſtitie Invenietur* : ] this in Engliſh is read thus, [ *the Flowry Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs*, ] which at large is treated on before. This *great Text*,

*Text*, (I ſay again) all we Aged Ones ought to make the conſtant Rule of our whole Converſations unto the day of our Deaths, and then will come *the Crown of Life*, &c.

(2dly) As the *Good Old Age* hath its Comforts againſt theſe *Natural Evils*, ſo it wants not *Cordials* againſt *Moral* and *Spiritual Evils*; (let us put them both together;) for then,

(1.) Our Corruptions now are more mortified than ever they were before: Thus *Paul* the Aged, (as he calls himſelf, *Philem.* ver. 9.) could then ſay of himſelf, [ *I have fought the good fight*, &c. ] 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. He found that *Thorn in the Fleſh*, which he had ſo forely complained of, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. to be now conquered, and his fighting againſt it (he found) was then as good as finiſhed, becauſe in a *Good Old Age*.

(2.) *Grace* is then *fortified*, as well as *Luſt mortified*; *Grace* is now more vigorous, more lively and more powerful than heretofore, while it was clogged and overloaded with many youthful Luſts; but [ *as the Outward Man decays, ſo the Inner Man ought to receive day by day*, ] 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. This is the Godly Man's Motto, as that good old Miniſter *Peter Martyr* ſaid upon his Dying Bed, [ *My Body*

*Body is weak, but my Soul is well; 'tis well for the present, but it will be better hereafter; 'tis well in the Kingdom of Grace, having overcome the Flesh, World and Devil, but it shall be best of all in the Kingdom of Glory: ]* The Inner Man in Old Age ought to be not only more brisk and powerful, but also more fruitful in the fruits of *Righteousness* and *true Holiness*, or Holiness of *Truth*, as it is in Greek, [*ὁσιότης ἀληθείας*,] opposite to *formality*, Ephes. 4. 24. this is God's Promise to the Good Old Man, [*He shall bring forth fruit in his Old Age: He shall be fat and flourishing, being planted in the Courts of his God,*] Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14. that is, he being rooted and grounded in Christ, and living under the droppings of the Sanctuary, shall flourish like the *Palm*, (which is noted to grow very Tall, (always Green, &c, tho' it hath many weights at the Top, and many Snakes at the Bottom, (tho' it be not known to grow in our cold Climate,) and like a *Cedar*, wherewith *Lebanon* flourished, and whereon the *Temple of Solomon* was built; 'tis not said, [*he shall grow like the Grass,*] as it is said, [*the Wicked spring as the Grass,*] Psal. 92. 7. for if that proud Grass grow never so great and lofty, they shall be mowed down with the *Sithe* of God's

God's wrath, seeing there is *one* higher than the highest of them, Eccles. 5. 8. and in things wherein they deal proudly the Lord God is above them, Exod. 18. 11. Now we Aged ones ought to make a serious search, and an earnest enquiry, whether we bring forth *Fruit in our Old Age*, whether we be *fat and flourishing*, especially if we have been long planted in the *House of our God*; 'tis a shame to us, that we should be like the *lean King of Egypt*, which eat up the fat King, and still remain as lean and as ill favoured as heretofore, Gen. 41. 3, 20. 'tis a sad judgment of God, when he gives us meat to the full, yet sends *leanness* into our Souls, Psal. 106. 15. When God sends among *fat ones*, *leanness*, Isai. 10. 16. wo to us, if yet we cry out [*our Leanness, our Leanness,*] Isai. 24. 16. We should all be like *Wine*, which the older it is, the better it is; our Graces, like good Liquor, should run fresh to the bottom, &c. our last works should be our best works, Rev. 2. 19. Tho' our beginning was but small, yet our latter end should greatly increase, Job 8. 7. and we should hold on in the way of *Righteousness*, and grow stronger and stronger, Job 17. 9. *Veteres non veterascent*, tho' we grow old and weak in Nature, yet ought we not only to retain our

our former vigour and verdure of Grace, but also to *grow in Grace*, 2 Pet. 3. 16. from one degree of Grace to another, that is, to the highest degree, *Ephes. 4. 13.* We must grow above our Corruptions, especially our Constitution-sins, the sins of our Nature, our darling sins, our best beloved Lust. Oh God forbid, that *Erasmus* his Character be upon us, which he put upon the *Bribanti* or *Flemmings*, (of whom he saith,) [*Quo magis Senescunt, eo magis Stultescunt,*] the older they grow, the foolisher they become,) Oh, God forbid (I say) that any of us should do so; 'tis the sign of an *Hypocrite*, who takes no deep Root; when planted seemingly in God's Courts, (as the sincere Servants of *Christ* do, and grow into Fruit-bearing in its Season, &c.) whereas the *Hypocrite* is only thrust in like a Stake into the Earth, and never grows. How then ought we all Aged Persons to fear and tremble, that we do not run out our Lives in Hypocrisie, and so die like Fools at the last: And therefore for the undeceiving of our own precious Souls, and for the better settling, and comforting of our own immortal Spirits, concerning our *sincerity* in the sight of God, let us compare Time with Time; can we say in the *witnessings* of the *Holy Ghost*, that time was, when

when the Assaults of *Satan* upon my Soul have been very *violent*, but through Grace, since that time, I have found them *feebler* than heretofore; yea, and through the abundant Grace of my dear Lord strengthening me, these Assaults of *Satan* are become *less daring*, and *more cowardly* in my Old Age: As I hinted before, let me enlarge upon it here; if it be said to the honour of *Young Men*, (in whom youthful passions are very pregnant, rapid, and oft precipitant and prepotterous, &c.) that they had *overcome the Wicked One*, 1 John 2. 13. Oh then what a shame and dishonour it is for us, who are ranked and reckned among *Fathers*, to fall short of the younger and lower Rank, and still remain Slaves to our Lusts, in whom Nature is decayd, and so less grace is required to resist the Tempter, and to bridle in the Temptation. May we not say, that now by the strengthening Love of *Christ* upon us, we can more easily shake off that Viper (the *Old Serpent*) from off our Hearts, as *Paul* the *Aged* did easily shake off that venomous *Viper* from off his *Hands into the Fire*, Acts 28. 3, 4. 5. and that without *receiving any harm thereby*, even so we ought to bless the Lord for that Miracle of Mercy, that no *deadly* *poison* of *Satan* doth now harm us, as our Lord

Lord did promise unto all Believers after his Resurrection, *Mark* 16. 17, 18. Oh that all we Aged Ones could sincerely praise the Lord for this high Favour, that we now find by sweet experience, we can better *resist the Devil* now, so as to make him *flee from us*, *Jam.* 4. 7. We can now *resist him* more *stedfastly in the Faith*, *1 Pet.* 5. 8, 9. than we were able to do in our youthful days; and tho' we be able (through Grace) to say this, yet out of an *Holy Jealousie* over our own Hearts, we must still make a farther enquiry, what is the principal procuring Cause of such an happy and *easy Conquest* over our own *Corruptions*, and *Satan's Temptations*, now in our Old Age, whether we be not more beholden herein unto the *decays* of our own *Natures* in us, than to any *strength* of God's Grace freely given to us, because we may *die to sin* by the deficiency of our natural strength of Body, when *sin doth not die to us*, through those powerful Operations of the *mortifying Spirit of Grace*, *Rom.* 8. 13. but more of this after, &c.

Now come we to the *Second Reason*, why a *Good Old Age* is a great blessing, because the goodness of it, is not only a blessed *Antidote* and *Preservative* against those thre-fold Evils before-named, but also

also it is a blessed *Preparative* for *Death* at the end of our Old Age, and of our Lives. This *preparation for Death* is not only an universal, but also an indispensable Duty, for after *death comes the Judgment*, *Heb.* 9. 27. then is the time of *Reckoning*, which our Lord *Requires* after his *Returning*, (however long or short it be) wherein all Mankind (both the *good* and the *bad Servants*) must [ *Reddere Rationem*, ] or give an exact *account* of their *Stewardship*, whether they have *wasted* or *improved* their *Lord and Master's Goods*, *Matth.* 25. 14, 19. *Luke* 16. 1, 2. and 19. 15, &c. as I shew at large in my *Fourth Volume* of the *History and Mystery* of that *Parable*, pag. 185, 186. Now every Man's *Death-day* is his particular *Dooms-day*, for then the *Spirit returns to God who gave it*, *Eccles.* 12. 7. when the *Body returns to Dust*, of which it was first made, *Gen.* 2. 7. by rotting in the *Grave*, &c. Then the *Soul goeth to God*, not to *dwell with him* (for *there* the *Speech* is made of all Men, both bad and good, but to be *disposed of by him* for his Final Estate; then is the *Soul* (or *Spirit*, as being *there* opposed to the *Body*, ) to receive its Final Doom, either for *Everlasting Weal*, or for *Everlasting Wo*. Therefore to prepare for Death is a most



most *necessary* ( tho' it be a much *neglect- ed* ) *Duty*. Now such as be good in Old Age, their goodness consists in being al- way prepared for it, both *Habitually* and *Actually* ; they learn to *die daily*, 1 Cor. 15. 31. and makes *Death* familiar to them, both at Bed and Board. Their *Con- versation* is in *Heaven*, while their *Com- moration* is here on *Earth*, Phil. 3. 20. They labour and learn to live with *dying- Thoughts*, because they hope at last to die with more *living comforts*. They have *Heaven* (as an happy Harbour of Rest) in the Eyes of their Hope, which serves to season and sweeten all Sorrows and Sufferings to them, as it was with blef- sed *Paul*, who had his Eye fixed upon that *Crown of Glory* which was *laid up for him*, and for all *Believers*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. and therefore he was not at all discour- aged at his *light Afflictions*, which were *but for a moment*, in comparison of that *exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*, ] 2 Cor. 4. 17. where we have a most ele- gant *Antithesis* or opposition, and a dou- ble *Hyperbole*, beyond the reach of our English Translation. As thus, (1.) For *Affliction*, here is *Glory*. (2.) For *light Af- fliction*, here is a *weight of Glory*. And, (3.) For *momentary Affliction*, here is *Eter- nal Glory* ; and the sight of this by an  
Eye

Eye of Faith, put *Paul* upon his [ *Cupio Dissolvi*, ] *I desire to be dissolved*, Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23. [ *Αναλίσσει*, ] there signifies, to *loose off from the shore* of this *Mortal Life*, and to *launch out into the Ocean* of *Immortality*, which he accounted *πολλὸν μᾶλλον κρεῖττον*, that is, far, far better, and best of all. Thus this *preparation for Death* had caused *Old Simeon*, ( before this *Apostle*, ) even to sing his Soul out of his Body, as before. This likewise made that Good Old Man *Job* to say, [ *I would not live always*, ] Job 7. 16. for he hoped to *behold his Redeemer*, &c. Job 19. 25. Thus may we accordingly say, [ *we would not be young always*, ] because we have been so hampered and pester'd with many youthful Lusts, which now through Grace ] a Good Old Age hath weakened. An *Hoary Head that is found in the way of Righteousness*, doth ripen fast, ( like good Fruit upon the Tree of Life in its *Autumn*, ) and becomes day by day more mellow for Death, and hath nothing then to do, but to die, being able (through Mercy) to say with his sweet *Saviour*, *I Father, I have finished my work, which thou gavest me to do in the World*, ] John 17. 5. Oh, how ready was *David*, how willing, and how prepared to die, and to *fall asleep in Jesus*, 1 Thes. 4. 14. when

when he could say, (*his Conscience bearing witness with him in the Holy Ghost, as Rom. 9. 1.*) that he had *served out his Generation,* ) in his whole Generation-work ) *according to the will of God,* Acts 13. 36.

The *Third Reason* why a *Good Old Age* is a most rich Blessing, and Benefit to the Sons and Daughters of Mankind, is, because it doth privilege them with a true Title unto Mansions of Glory, prepared for them in a better World : Such as have continued in ways of Holiness all their Life, and become *faithful unto death,* Rev. 2. 10. they shall assuredly at the last arrive at the Haven of Heaven and Happiness when they die; for God himself hath assured us, (and God Keeps the best and surest Ensuring Office,) that *having our Fruit unto Holiness, then our end shall be Eternal Life,* Rom. 6. 22, 23. for then comes first the *Joy of Harvest,* as when fruitful Fields are *white unto Harvest,* John 4. 35. then comes the Husbandman with his Sithe or Sickle, and cuts down his Corn, binds it up in Bundles, and carries it Home to his Barn, &c. even so, God the great *Husbandman,* (as Christ calls him, John 15. 1.) when he sees his old Servants, (as it were) white unto Harvest with *Hoary Heads,* and fully

ripened

ripened in the way of *Righteousness*; then doth he take them down by the hand of Death, and gathers them Home into his heavenly Garners. Our Lord doth certify this great Truth to us, over and over again, saying, [that *Heaven is surely secured for us,* and we are likewise *safely secured for Heaven* by the *mighty Power of God,* the word there [ *σπουδαίον* ] signifieth we are *kept as with a Guard,* and in a *Garrison,* and that at the last, [ we shall receive the *end of our Faith,* even the *salvation of our Souls,* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5, 9. Infomuch that Death, which is in it self no other than *Nature's Divorce,* the Bodies Prison, the Soul's Banishment, the Arrest of Judgment, the Curse of Sin, and the *King of Terrors,* (as well as the *Terror of Kings,*) Job 18. 14. unto all Mankind in General; yet such a change doth the power of Godliness (both in *Young and Old,* that are *chosen and called,*) make in their Changes from one World to another; that their *Death's* is only their (1.) *Harvest* or Ingatherings into God's Garner, &c. (2.) 'Tis the *Joy of Marriage,* which is called a *Rest* in the House of the Husband, Ruth 3. 1. so *Death is our Rest, A Rest from their Labours,* Rev. 14. 13. they shall Rest,

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(1st)

(1<sup>st</sup>) From their *Labours of Necessity*, their Needs of Nature shall then cease for ever, they shall *Hunger* no more, they shall *Thirst* no more, &c. as they have done while in the Body.

(2<sup>dly</sup>) They shall *Rest* from their *Labours of Infirmary*, they shall never complain of any more Aches and Pains in any one of the parts of the Body, as they have done frequently heretofore in the time of their Mortality.

(3<sup>dly</sup>) From the *Labours of their Callings*, &c. they shall toil no more in the *Sweat* of either their *Brows* or their *Bruins*; &c.

And (4<sup>thly</sup>) Which is above all, they shall *Rest* from their *Labours of Iniquity*, a *Laboribus Peccati*, as well as *Officii*; they shall never sin any more, whereas heretofore, in the time of their sojourning upon Earth, they had this weight upon them, which they could never lay aside, nor cast it off; and *sin* did then easily beset them, so that they could not run the *Race* that was set before them, Heb. 12. 1. Because of the *Leto* of the *Members*, that did continually war against the *Law* of their *Minds*, and oft bringing them into *Captivity*; yea, and as oft making them to cry out, [ *Oh wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me*, &c.

Rom.

Rom. 7. 23, 24. But now *Christ* is come to them, and knock'd off all their *Fetters*, (which formerly clogg'd them, &c.) and setteth them at perfect liberty, *Isai.* 61. 1. and those whom the *Son of God* doth free, they are free indeed, *John.* 8. 36.

(3. *Death*, to those that die in the *Lord*, and in a *Good Old Age* also, is not only the *Christians Harvest*, *Marriage* and *Rest*, as before, but 'tis likewise their *Conquest* over all their *Spiritual Enemies*; so they have also the *Joy of Victory* as well as of *Harvest*, of *Marriage* and of *Rest*. They are become by their *Holy Life* and *Happy Death* more than *Conquerors*, *Rom.* 8. 37. even *Triumphanters in Christ*, *2 Cor.* 2. 14. and so as they have won the *Crown of Glory*, by their overcoming the *Wicked one*, through the strengthening *Love of Christ* upon them, so they shall wear it, as *Kings*, *Rev.* 1. 6. and as *Conquerors*, for evermore. 'Tis said [ the *last Enemy* to be destroyed is *Death*, ] *1 Cor.* 15. 26. Now to all true *Believers*, *Death* is already swallowed up in *Victory*, ver. 55. as *rael* is swallowed up by the *Fire*, and as the *Sorcerers Serpents* were swallowed up by *Moses* his *Serpent*; so that they can say to *Death*, when it comes to them, as *Jacob* said to *Esau*, [ *surely I have seen thy Face*, as

the Face of God] Gen. 33.4, 10. Thus that *Eſau* (*Death*) doth meet a Member of *Chriſt* with *Kiſſing*, rather than with *Killing*, or ſo much as *Frowns*, yea and guards him home to his Father's Houſe, as *Eſau* guarded his Brother *Jacob* Home to *Canaan* after his long abſence from it; [he went before *Jacob* as his *Life-guard*,] ver. 12. Thus after a long *Conflict* by the *Indwellings of Sin* all our Life, comes the *Conqueſt* at the laſt in our *Death*: Alas, we cannot beat *ſin* out of Doors as *Sarah* did the *Bond-woman Hagar*; but this *Fretting Leproſie*, ſin, can never be either *washed* out, or *ſcraped* off from the Walls of our Earthly *Tabernacles*, until the Houſe, that is infected with that *Plague*, be demolished by *Death*, and the *Stones* and *Timber* thereof be altogether taken down: As it was thus in the *Type* under the Law concerning the  *Houſe of Leproſie*, Levit. 14. 43, 44. So it is with our *Houſes of Clay* as the *Antitype*, which can no way be *Amended*, but muſt be *Renewed*; and this is only done in part while we are in the *Kingdom of Grace*: But this cleaning Work is compleatly perfected, when *Death* gives us a diſmiſſion from hence into the *Kingdom of Glory*. The belief of this, made *Old Simeon* ſing his Soul out of his Body, and *Paul* the

the Aged, Phil. v. 9. was not only a *Conqueror*, but ( which was more ) even a *Triumpher in Chriſt*, as before, for he ſang a *Triumphant Song* over *Death* and the *Grave*, ſinging as well as ſaying, [ *Oh Death, where is thy Sing*, and *Oh Grave, where is thy Victory!* ] 1 Cor 15. 55. This is the boldeſt, and the braveſt Challenge, that ever any Mortal Man did ring in the Ears of *Death*, in which words he ( as it were ) out-braved it, calling it *Craven* to its Face, as the Vulgar ſaying is, and bids it do its worſt to him that it could do, like the *Philosopher Anaxarchus*, who with an undaunted Courage told the *Tyrant*, ( who was beating his Body to pieces with a great Iron Peſtle in a large Mortar, made purpoſely for that Barbarous Butchery, ) in the very Act of his Martyrdom, he moſt confidently cryed out to his Tormentor, *Tunde, Tunde Tyranne, Vasculum frangis, ſed Anaxarchum non Lædis,* ] *Beat on, beat on thou Bruitiſh Tyrant*, thou indeed doth break the *Veſſel* of the *Man*, but thou can never hurt *Anaxarchus* the *Man himſelf*. Much more might this bleſſed *Apoſtle* inſult over this greateſt of Tyrants, that univerſal Deſtroyer of Mankind, to wit, *Death* with his *Favelin* in his hand, ſeeing he was ſo able as to render ſuch weighty Reaſons

for his Triumphant Infultation as he saith, [ the Sting of Death is Sin, &c. ver. 56. ] signifying hereby, that our dear Redeemer had been the Death of Death by his Death.

*Mors Mortis, Morti, Mortem quoque  
Morte dedisset.*

The Death of Christ gave Death its Death, 'as it was prophesied of him, [ Oh Death, I will be thy Death, &c. ] *Hos.* 13. 14. thus our Saviour did disarm Death, and took out the Sting from this Venemous Serpent; so that we may now as safely put Death into our Bosoms, ( in a serious Meditation of *dying Daily* ) as some men ( whom I have seen ) have ( with enough of safety ) put into their Bosoms a Snake, whose Sting was before pulled out. If Death do now shoot out any Sting at us, we may thank our selves, for our not being more constantly found in the way of *Righteousness* : If at any time we turn aside to crooked Paths, there will the old crooked Serpent meet us, and he will not only sting us there, but also leave his Sting behind him in us, ( as the Bee doth to those that are stung by it, ) and this may be the procuring Cause of many sad effects, namely, of much smartings, burning pains and sor-

rows,

rows, if that Sting be not timely drawn out by the Grace of true Repentance: The Lord himself preached that Stinging Sermon unto Cain, [ *if thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? but if thou dost evil, then sin lies at thy door; [ that is, like a mighty Mastiff-Dog, which lies sleeping at the Door, and if once awakened, he is there ready to pull out the Throat of the Soul, Gen. 4. 7. And Moses tells the People, ( agreeable to this caution of the great God to Cain, ) [ and surely your sin will find you out, ] Numb. 32. 23. that is, the Guilt of sin will lay you at your heels like a Blood-Hound, and the punishment of it will overtake you, &c. Yet such as do surely find out their sin by an unfeigned Repentance, before their sin thus fearfully find out them, even all such as confess and forsake their sin, shall find mercy, Prov. 28. 13. Then if Death at last put forth any Sting at us, 'tis no more harmful than an enchanted Sting: For those Serpents which the Sorcerers of Egypt raised up by their Charments, *Exod.* 7. 12. they were not really Serpents, but in appearance only, and so their Stings were like themselves, mere Phantoms, which could not really sting any one true Israelite; and as these *Black-Serpents* were swallowed*

lowed up by *Moses* his *real one*, even so *Christ* (who is *Life Essential*) hath *swallowed up Death in Victory*, as before. So that now, (through the *Grace of Christ*) tho' *Death* may buzz about our Ears, like a *Drone-Bee* that hath lost its *Sting*, yet it cannot sting us with any mortal *Sting*, for that is quite lost in the death of *Christ* for all his *Redeemed*; as *Christ* hath taken away, not *sin* it self, but the *Guilt* of *sin*: So nor hath he taken away *Death* it self, but the *Sting* of it. Thus *Augustine* doth phrase this double Purchase of *Christ* for us, both in respect of *Sin*, and in respect of *Death*, saying, [*Christus tollit, & Peccatum, & Mortem nonne sint, sed ne obsint,*] our Lord indeed doth take away both *Sin* and *Death* from us, yet not that they should not *be at all*, but that they should not *be hurtful* to those for whom he died: And 'tis for this glorious Priviledge that the *Apostle Paul* (as one of *Christ's* chief *Heralds*) proclaimeth openly to the World, and that with a world of Solemnity and Triumph, his own Victory over *Death* by his dear Redeemer, 1 Cor. 15. 57. and therefore exhorts us to be *always stedfast and unmoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, well-knowing that our Labour shall not be*

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in vain in the Lord, ver. 58. The same *Apostle* saith with such a firm Faith, (which both took Root downward, and brought forth Fruit upward,) that for him to *live was Christ*, and to *die was gain*; and he *longed to be dissolved*, Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23.

(5thly) 'Tis his *returning Home to his Father's House*, &c. because death to a Good Man is the *day-break* of an *eternal Brightness*; 'tis as the *Vally of Achor*, as a *Door of Hope* into the celestial *Canaan*, Josh. 7. 24, 27. and 15. 7. Hof. 2. 15. even into that *Heavenly Country* unto which the *Holy Patriarchs* so earnestly pressed to enter, Heb. 11. 13, 14, 15. and (as it were) *hastened Home* thither, where their *Father was*, and their *All also*. Hereupon for them to die, was no more but *repaterasse*, (as *Father Bernard* phraseth it) that is, to go *Home again* to their *Father's House*, whither when they come, they are assured of a most hearty, and of a most happy welcome. The *Parable* of the *penitent Prodigal*, and his *compassionate Father's* meeting together at Home with Feasting and exceeding great Joy, Luke 15. 20, 23, 24. doth illustrate this. The *Prodigal only came*, but the *Father ran and fell upon his Neck, and kissed him, and killed the fatted Calf for him*,

him, and put the best Robe upon him, &c. to make him welcome; yet all this was but a dim shadow of that exceeding, excellent and eternal meeting of our Heavenly Father with his dear Children, to whom Christ most lovingly speaketh, [Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the World, Matth. 25. 34.] Oh the infinite Bowels of a Father yearning over his Adopted Sons and Daughters, as if he had thus said, [Where have you been, my dear Darlings, all this time of my long absence from you, and of yours from me, come now, and heartily welcome; come now into my Bosom, which is now wide open to receive you, as the welcomest Guests that ever accosted me; ye shall lie warm in my Bosom to all Eternity, &c. and with Crowns of Glory upon your Heads, ye shall sing Hallelujahs unto the Lord for ever and ever.] NB. Note well, To know this upon a dying Bed, cannot but be a Rich Cordial, to know that death is only *Perta Caeli*, & *Janua Vitæ*, the Postern Gate to the Heavenly City, and the Narrow Door to Everlasting Life; that it is our restoration into a better Paradise, than that was out of which the first Adam was banished at first by his sinning; but this Heavenly Paradise, The

Second

Second Adam purchased for us by his suffering that death doth now (by the purchase of Christ) bring to us both, [Ma-  
trium omnium Ademptionem, & Bonorum omnium Ademptionem,] that is, the removing of all that is evil, and the receiving of all that is good. This consideration brought Paul out of his Strait, (when he had been musing and doubting) and knew not what he should choose, whether Life or Death: at last he breaks forth into this resolve, [Capio Insulam,] I desire to be dissolved, and to return Home to my Father's House, from whom I expect to hear, [Well done thou good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord,] Matth. 24. 21, 23. which is a Joy so big, so great, that it cannot enter into us, [Quicquid Recipitur, recipitur ad Modum Recipientis,] saith the Philosopher, the Vessel receiving must be of Measure congruous to, and capable of the Matter received. Now because our Vessels are not large enough for this Joy to enter into us, therefore is it that we must enter into it, not inwardly, it is such a Joy, as is more in the Lord, Lord and Master, than for me to have; yet such a liberal Lord do we have, as will honour his Servants with such matchless Joy. We serve a most liberal

able Master, who employs us in most Honourable Work, and will at last pay us with most Honourable Wages.

Unto all this aforesaid, let me add the Christian's Charter, as another precious Cordial unto a dying Saint, namely, the large Inventory which the blessed Apostle distinctly describeth, that belongeth to every true Believer, saying, [*all things are yours, whether the World, (and so you lose nothing when you leave the World) or Life, or Death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's,*] 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. that is, the World is theirs, tho' not in possession; yet by way of Reduction, ye shall have Food and Raiment convenient for you, Prov. 30. 8. Heb. 13. 5. and ye shall have the best things of a better World, in a way of Reversion, seeing you are Christ's and Christ is God's. And 'tis no trifling part of this Inventory neither, that Death is theirs; for that is of great value with God himself, as 'tis said, [*precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints,*] Psal. 116. 15. Nor is the Title, the Term and the Tenure that the Christian holds this part of his Character and Inventory by, but (as the Apostle there observeth)

eth) the fullest, the longest, and the surest of all others. For,

(1.) The Title is the fullest, as 'tis both by Purchase, and by Conquest. Also,

(2.) The Term is the lastingest, as it includes both time present, and to come; not only Possession, but Reversion too. And,

(3.) The Tenure is the safest, as it is the highest; 'tis a Tenure in Capite, entailed for greater security upon the Crown; therefore is this Famous Clause added, *all are yours, (safe enough)* because you are Christ's, and Christ is God's, &c.



## CHAP. VII.

### *Means for making Old Age, to become a Good Age.*

NOW I come to the *Third Particular*, after,

(1<sup>st</sup>) The [*וְהוֹנֵן*] that Old Age may be a Good Age. And after,

(2<sup>dly</sup>) The [*לָמָּה*] Or Reasons why it must be so, &c. Then,

(3<sup>dly</sup>) The [*כִּי*] Or the Means and Manner how this Age which is Evil, in, and of it self, may be made a Good Age. In order hereunto, we must,

First, Consider the *Dues*, which by a Divine Appointment ought to be *duly paid* unto Old Age. And,

Secondly, We must consider the *Duties*, which likewise by a Divine Appointment ought to be *duly practised* in our Old Age. NB. Note well, The former of these two hath its Dependency upon the latter of them; for if those *Duties* prescribed by God's Precept, be not *duly practi-*

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practised in our Old Age, then those *Dues* (of Honour and Reverence) which are propounded also by God's Promise, can never be *duly paid* to our Old Age; but the contrary, even Scorn and Contempt.

First, Of the first of these, namely, the *Dues* that are the Due Homage and Divine Debt which God commands all Mankind to pay unto Old Age. As,

(1.) In *Levit. 19. 32.* (which hath been spoken to before,) where God's Charge runs in this Sense, [*Do thou Honour the Face of the Old Man, if thou fearest God, who will surely punish thee, if thou dost it not.*] And,

(2.) God took it heinously at the Hands of the King of *Babylon*, saying to him, [*Upon the Ancients hast thou very heavily laid thy Yoke; and shewed them no Mercy,*] *Isai. 47. 6.*

(3.) God did reckon it as a great and grievous Crime to have the Aged and Ancient Ones despised by the Younger Sort, and therefore he threatens this as a punishment to the stubborn *Jews*, [*that the Child shall behave himself proudly against the Ancient,*] *Isai. 3. 5.* Such sins as are threatened for punishments, are usually great sins; and had not the sawcy Carriage of Children towards the Aged, (especially towards their own Aged Parents,) been

been a notorious injury unto Old Persons; it would never have been threatned as a *Curse* and *Punishment*. If it were a great *wrong*, it was also a great *sin*; and if it were a great *sin*, it must expect a great *Plague* and *Punishment*. Many more *Scriptures* might here be added, with a short descant upon them; but to be short, this brief following Reference shall suffice.

As, (4) *Prov.* 20. 29.

(5.) *Lam.* 5. 12.

(6.) *Job* 29. 8. and 32. 4, 6, 7. And,

(7.) *Rom.* 16. 3.

(Lastly,) 1 *Tim.* 5. 1, 2. All which *Scriptures* do plainly hold forth, what *Respect* and *Reverence* ought to be given, and is commanded by the great God to be given unto Aged Persons, even in those Purest times of the *Old* and *New Testaments*, and how can we learn to write after a more perfect Pattern, and a more infallible Copy. Yea, and upon a brief search of the *Ancient Fathers* of the Church, soon after those pure *Scripture-times*, I do find this grave and solid Testimony concerning this very Point of the Honour of Old Age, in *Clemens Alexandrinus* his Book, called *Pædagogus*, written in the Year of our Lord, 194: who in his *Third Book* of that before-named Title, speaks thus, [ *Non est malum Senem videri, cum hoc*

*quod*

*quod sis, celare non possis: Quo ergo magis Homo festinat ad finem, tanto est vere Venerabilior, ut qui Deum solum habeat se Seniore, nam ille quoque est Æternus Senex, qui est iis que sunt Antiquior. Antiquum Dierum illum vocavit Prophetæ.* ] That is in *English* thus, [ It is no evil to seem Old, seeing such as be so, cannot conceal it with any Paintings, (as the same Father, a little before this, saith, such painters of themselves cannot put off Old Age, as the Serpent doth his Slough, &c.) For by how much the more a Man hastneth unto his end, by so much the more he becometh Venerable, and the more to be Honoured, as one who hath God alone to be more Ancient than he, who is likewise Eternally Old; and the Prophet *Daniel* calls him the Ancient of Days. ] And the same Father adds, [ *Senum Corona è multa experientia, &c.* ] That the Crown of Old Men, is much Prudence and Experience, &c. To omit the other Fathers, for avoiding prolixity, let me only add two more Testimonies to this great Truth.

The First is, That Critick Philosopher, who saith, [ *Cognata sunt, ætas & ætas.* ] The former word signifies Old Age, and the latter, Honour; so these two are of near a Kin in the Greek Language; and agree-

agreeable hereunto is the Hebrew reading, *Isai. 9. 15.* where the *Ancient* and the *Honourable* are joined together.

\* The *Second Testimony* is that of the great Historian *Livy*, in his 26th Book speaking of an Army, how the Younger Bands gave place to the Elder, (useth these words, [ *Vix ut verisimile est*,

*rentum quoque hoc seculo vilis, levisque apud Liberos Auctoritas*, ] that is, the Report of former purer golden Times when the Younger had such a Veneration for the Elder, seems almost incredible for now we see this present Age is of another Mettal than Gold, wherein we hold the disrespect that is commonly shewed, not only to Old Men, but also to Old Parents, (whose Authority over their Children is oft vile and contemptible, &c.) yea slighting them most when they should respect them most much unlike to young *Joseph*, who revered his Old Father *Jacob* in his Old Age, and made the last Seventeen Years of his Life, the best and most comfortable part of his whole Time, that he lived in the World. Nor is this all,

wit, disrespect to Old Parents, &c. but there is likewise a disrespect to Old Masters, who are thought by Young Novices

ording to the vulgar saying) the Old are sure that those Young Ones are so, &c.

Thus it appeareth, that we now live in that last Iron Age, even in the very Dregs of Time, and we must expect, [ *ultima Senescentis Mundi deliria*, ] the last and the worst dotages of a decrepid, and of a dying World, &c.

The *Second Part* is, the Duties which are to be done by all of us, in our Old Age, that we may not be deprived of that Double Crown of Glory, both of that in the Kingdom of Grace here, and of that in the Kingdom of Glory hereafter; being those two Crowns are the proper Dues of a Good Old Age, by a Divine promise, wherein the great God hath made himself a Debtor unto all godly Aged Ones: And if any of us be not such, we shall not only lose the former of these Crowns, to wit, that of *Respect* and *Reverence*, but be despised for our Dotage, &c. Let no Man take that Crown, Rev. 3. 11. this Life; but that which is worst of all, we shall lose likewise the latter, and the better Crown in the Life to come. Therefore to prevent this double loss, many Duties are to be done.

The *First Duty* is, We must examine our States, and Standings Godward, &c. whether we be still in the State of Na-

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ture, and yet not broken off from the *Wild Olive*, or we be in the *State of Grace*, and now *engrafted* into that blessed and bleeding *Vine* the *Lord Jesus*, Rom. 11. 17. The great *Apostle* doth earnestly press us to the right doing of this *first Duty*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. where he useth a double Expressions, [*πειραζετε* and *δοκιμαζεσθε*,] that is, *Try your selves*, and *Prove your selves*; know ye not that *Christ is in you*, except ye be *Reprobates*. Wherein he alludeth both unto *Goldsmiths*, and unto *Lapidaries*, who have their *Lydius Lapis*, or *Touch-stone*, where by they discover *true Gold* from that which is *Copper* or *Counterfeit*, and *Natural Diamonds* from *Artificial Bristol-stones*. And those double Terms of Art are to stir us up, that we may redouble our diligence in that most *needful* (yet much *neglected*) *Duty of Self-examination*, for tho' the *decisive* and final Trial of our *Eternal Estate* doth immediately and solely appertain to God, in the Court of Heaven, yet the *Disquisitive*, and *Soul-Comforting* part doth belong to our selves in the Court of our own Consciences. And therefore as an Omission, or an Error here is most easie, so it is of most dangerous consequence in filling our Spirits full of doubts and fears, what shall

become of our Souls, when our Bodies drop down into the Grave. Hereupon the Divine Precept is doubled, both in this Apostles Charge, and in that of the Prophets also, [*Excute vos, iterumque excute*,] as Tremellius renders the words, Zeph. 2. 1.

The *Second Duty* is, That we should make good proof of our Graces, especially of that Foundation-grace of *Repentance unto Life*, as it is called Acts 11. 18. (*granted unto us Gentiles*,) for where right *Repentance towards God* is given, 'tis always accompanied with *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 20. 21. This Grace of *Repentance* is so exceeding necessary, that both our Lord himself, and his Forerunner, *John the Baptist*, began their Ministry with this indispensable Doctrine, [*Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*,] Matth. 3. 2. and 4. 17. and Mark 1. 15. Join *Repent and Believe* both together. Now seeing the *Tree is known by its Fruit*, whether it be good or bad, Matth. 12. 33. Luke 6. 44. If we be no better than *Bramble-Bushes*, no *Grapes of Grace* can grow upon us; but if we be *Trees of Righteousness* of the Lord's planting and watering, as Isai. 61. 3. then shall we bring forth *Fruits meet for Repentance*, Matth.

3. 8. Now the true Notion and Nature of this Grace of *Repentance* is, our *turning* from *Darkness* to *Light*, Acts 26. 18. and our returning from the *fallen Estate* by the *first Adam* into a renewed Estate by the *Second Adam*: As we are all *Metaphorical Trees*. Aristotle calls Man *Arbor inversa*, a Tree turned upward, making the Head as Root, and the Arms and Legs the Branches of this Tree, &c. Bernard calls Man [*Inversus Decalogus*,] as quite contrary to God's Law, therefore must he be turned up-side down, as the Picture of the Horse, and then right, &c. We have our *Standing Time* in our Life, and we must have our *Falling Time* at our *Death*; the *Ax* whereof is laid to the Root of us in those manifold Distempers which attend Old Age, as if God were taking his Aim where to cut us up, and how to hew us down, Matth. 3. 10. Now as all Trees, be they strong *Oakes*, or lofty *Cedars*, must have their time of falling; so all Mankind, be they of never so robust a Constitution, and be they of never so high, either of *State* or of *Stature*, must have a time of dying, Heb. 9. 27. and as Trees, what way they mostly *lean*, that way they usually fall, whether it be *Southward* or *Northward*, Eccles. 11. 3. So we ought to examine our selves, which way

way our *Wills* and *Affections* do lean, whether *Southward* towards the *Sun* of *Righteousness*, Mal. 4. 2. As 'tis recorded of *Abraham*, (who *walked with God*) [that his *Journyings* were still towards the *South*,] towards the *Sun*, Gen. 12. 9. So all the Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, should hang *Heavenward*, and should lean *Southward*; then may there be good grounds of a *lively Hope*, that when we die, we shall fall upon the *Right-hand* of *Christ*, among the *fruitful Sheep*, and shall hear those comfortable words, [Come, ye blessed of my Father, &c.] Matth. 25. 33, 34. But if on the other hand we do not find, that we have with *David*, [considered our former evil ways, and turned our Feet (our Affections) towards God's Testimonies,] Psal. 119. 59. If yet we are not returned to God by *Repentance*, but are still journeying toward the *North*, towards that cold Country, where there is *weeping and wailing* and gnashing of Teeth for cold, (tho' it be a *fiery Furnace* for heat,) Matth. 13. 42, 50. If we lean *Northward*, and hang *Hellward*, we shall surely fall upon the *Left Hand* of the *Judge* among the *flinking Goats*, and receive that sad Sentence, [Depart ye Cursed, &c.] Matth. 25. 41. As the Tree, where it falls,

*North-*

Northward or Southward, there it lies, *Eccles.* 11. 3. even so where we fall at our Deaths, whether Northward, upon the Left Hand of our Judge; or Southward, upon the Right Hand of our Redeemer, there we shall lie until the Resurrection-day; for *after Death comes the Day of Judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. Then all both good and bad shall rise again, &c.

The Third Duty of us Aged Ones is, Not to dally or delay that weighty Work of making our Peace with God, according to that Divine Counsel, [*Acquaint now thy self with God, and be at Peace with him, and thereby good shall come unto thee,*] Job 22. 21. This great Duty must be now done, we have been asleep, or Strangers to God long enough, *Ephes.* 2. 12. and 4. 18. 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. There be Times of Grace, while the Word of the Gospel is preached to us; and there be Seasons of Grace, when the Spirit of God goeth along with God's Word, and *convinceth of sin*, &c. John 16. 8. Now such a season is the most beautiful part of time, and [*how can we escape if we neglect so great salvation!*] Heb. 2. 3. This is a quenching the Spirit, 1 *Thes.* 5. 19. Opportunities are Headlong, and once lost and

and past, may never be recovered. Therefore doth God in Scripture so earnestly press upon this [*νῦν*], this Now or Time present, because so many persons are [*Semper Victuri,*] as *Seneca* saith, they promise to themselves, that they shall yet live a little longer, saying, [*in Space will come Grace;*] so they trifle out their Time, and puts off the making of their Peace with God for the future, and future their Duty so long, until at last they fool away their own Salvation; whereas delays are dangerous, *qui non est bodie, cras minus aptus erit*, he that is not fit to day, will be less fit to morrow; as the hinder Wheels of a Coach do pursue the former Wheels thereof all the day long, and tho' they be much larger than the other, and but at a very small distance (of a yard or two) from them, yet they never overtake them: Even so it is in this case, one delay (of making our Peace with God) doth beget another from day to day, and the latter Promise of Repenting pursues the former from time to time, but never overtakes it; [*Post est Occasio Calva,* Time hath no Lock behind its Head for us to take hold of, whereby the hinder and the former part thereof may be made to meet together:

gether : And know, God will not always serve Men for a Sinning-stock from time to time ; and as Dr. Preston well observeth, that in these *Times of Grace*, the Lord is more *quick* and *Peremptory* in rejecting of such as dally with the Tenders of Peace: God's time of tendering it, is shorter now, he will not wait so long, as he was wont to do, he will not suffer us to neglect it twice ; but if once past, it will never dawn again. 'Tis true, [ *the long-suffering of God is Salvation,* ] Rom. 2. 4. and 2 Pet. 3. 15. but [ *lessa patientia fit furor,* ] if we presume to abuse God's Patience, then it turns into Fury, and we are but *treasuring up to our selves wrath, against the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. and therefore we ought to catch at present Opportunities ; as *Mil-lers* and *Mariners* do catch at present *Gales*, and make use of them when they come ; and as *Watermen* take the opportunity of the *Tide*, all well-knowing, that neither *Wind*, nor *Tide*, nor *Time* will stay no Man's Leisure or Pleasure ; they all are in *God's fist*, Prov. 30. 4. ( who hath alone the Royalty of these his Creatures, ) and not in the power of *Man* : We ought therefore to catch at the *Season of Grace*, as we hear the *Echo* doth at the *Voice*, loudly spoken in

Places

Places of Reverberation, even in the very nick of Time. Thus we find *David* did, [ *no sooner had he heard God speaking,* ] [ *seek ye my Face,* ] but immediately *his Heart* ( being inspired by the Spirit to a gracious compliance, ) did ( as it were ) *echo* back again, [ *thy Face, Lord, will I seek,* ] Psal. 27. 8. And the like *Echo*, or quick Answer we find in the *Church* to her *Lord*, who no sooner had said to her [ *Return, ye back-sliding Children,* and *I will heal your backslidings* ; She presently Answers, [ *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God,* ] Jer. 3. 22. The *Church* was thus moved to yield her ready Obedience unto her *Lord's Command*, because [ *the power of the Lord was present to heal her,* ] as *Luke* 5. 17. And indeed every godly person hath, as it were, the *duplicate* and *counter-part* of *God's Law* written in his Heart, and is willingly cast into the Mold of his Word, as Rom. 6. 17. may be read, to wit, [ *ye have obeyed from the heart,* that Form, ( *Type or Mold* ) *of Doctrine into which ye were cast.* ] The Doctrine of the Gospel is the *Mold*, and the Hearts of Hearers is the *Metal*, which when sufficiently melted in the Furnace, being purged from the Dross, &c. is then poured into the Mold, and willingly recei-

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veth that *Form* and *Figure* of that *Type* or *Vessel* that it is cast into, taking *Impression* from it in one part as well as another, and receives its *Form* in the whole. Oh that it may be so with us, to *acquaint now our selves with God*, while he calls us, and be at *peace with him*: This is done, if we return to God speedily by *Repentance* from whom we have so shamefully *revolted*, and against whom we have so notoriously *rebelled*; our Lord calleth loudly upon us, duly and daily, [*To day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts,*] Psal. 95. 7, 8. Heb. 3. 7, 8. as in the *day of Provocation*. It must be *done to day*, while the *Gales of Grace* continue blowing and breathing; 'tis the Cry of that unclean Bird, the Crow, [*Cras, Cras,*] that is, to *Morrow*, to *Morrow* will be soon enough. If we harden our own Hearts by *Unbelief*, as our *choice* to day, God may lay *Hardness of Heart* upon us, as our *Judgment* to *morrow*; so that neither *Ministry*, nor *Misery*, nor *Miracle*, nor *Mercy* may possibly *Mollifie* them.

But on the other hand, if the Lord move our Hearts, to make such a *quick Eccho*, and gracious Answer to God's Call and Command, as *Samuel* did by the *In-struction* of Good Old *Eli*, [*Speak, Lord,*  
for

for thy *Servant* now heareth,] 1 Sam. 3. 9, 10. and as *Saul* said, [*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*] Acts 9. 6. This is a blessed evidence, that God hath [*bo- red our Ears,*] and we shall say then, [*Lo, we come to do thy will, O God, and we delight in doing it,*] Psal. 40. 6, 7, 8. *Christ's people are willing in the day of Christ's power*, Psal. 110. 3. they then will *make haste and not delay*, Psal. 119. 59, 60. yea, it should be our *Meat* and *Drink* to do *God's Will*, as it was to our Lord, Joh. 4. 34. Now if we can but find any promptness in our Wills and Affections to turn our Hearts from sin, and return to God *without delays*, we shall then be at *peace with him*, and be with us, yea, and *thereby good shall come unto us*, Job. 22. 21. *we shall be happy*, and it shall be well with us, Psal. 128. 2. We shall have a *Cornucopia*, even a *confluence* of all manner of contentments and comforts, even good *Temporal*, good *Spiritual* and good *Eter- nal*; then *Peace will be within our Walls*, and *Prosperity within our Tabernacles*, Psal. 122. 7. To conclude this Point, if we, who are *Aged*, have delayed hither- to to make our *peace with God*, we have burnt *Day-light* too much already, 'tis high time to use expedition. The put- ting off of this day, and the next, and  
half



half a day, cost the *Levite* very dear, *Judg.* 19, 7, 8, &c. As that *Old Man* courted and cozened that *Levite*, so *Satan* cozens us when we have a mind to look towards Heaven; our Foe, saying to us, [ *be content*, I pray you, &c. what haste, hereafter is soon enough, &c. ] but we must be peremptory, *for the Evening hasteth on us apace*, &c. and God forbid we should go *to Bed* (the Grave) at last, without saving Light, when the *night of Death* cometh on us.

The *Fourth Duty* of all Aged Ones is, seriously to consider the many wearisome Evils, which *Old Age* is now about to bring upon us; whereof *Solomon* giveth a particular description of, after he had stiled *Old Age* an *Evil Age* in the general, *Eccles.* 12. 1. Then he proceedeth to describe more distinctly what those *decays* of Nature in Old Persons be, which make their days so evil and unpleasant, *ver.* 2, to 7. and these be of three sorts of *Infirmities*.

*First*, Some such as do befall the *former part* of *Old Age*, while as yet we are able to go abroad, *ver.* 2. to the former part of *ver.* 5.

*Secondly*, Other *Decays* that attend our *Decrepid Old Age*, when Death is very near approaching to us, and our selves are draw-

drawing fast toward it, in the latter part of *ver.* 5; with *ver.* 6, 7.

*Thirdly* and *Lastly*, He describes *Death* at self, *ver.* 7. All this distinct description doth the *wisest of Men* leave upon Divine Record, that it might the more awaken us to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, *Phil.* 2. 12. *to make our Calling and Election sure*, *2 Pet.* 1. 10. That we all may with all expedition make sure work for a better World, before we go hence to be seen no more.

Now the *Decays* of *Old Age*, in its *former part*, whilst as yet we are able to walk abroad; be,

(1st) The *Darkness* of all the Lights that are about us, whether they be *Natural*, as of the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, &c. or *Artificial Lights*, such as *Candles*, *Torches*, &c. This *Darkness* cometh not from any *Decay* of those Lights, but from the *Dimness* of our own Sight; hence cometh our need of *Spectacles*, &c. It implies also, that all the *comforts* and *contentments* which we formerly enjoyed in our Younger Years, are now turned into *Discomforts*, into *Diseases*, *Aches* and *Pains*, which darken greater and lesser *Comforts*. We then see through a *Glass Darkly*, as the *Apostle* saith in another case, *1 Cor.* 13. 12. The defuncti-

on of Rheum, which trickleth down the Cheeks, (I here speak my own experience) doth continually distil it self out of the Head, and as it were [the returning of the Clouds after the Rain,] *ver. 2.* as it falls out in our *April* weather, no sooner is one Shower unburdened, but another is Brewed, much more in the Winter of Old Age: And thus likewise [Deep calleth upon Deep, at the noise of the Water-spouts,] *Psal. 42. 7.* that is, one Affliction comes upon the Neck of another without intermission, like the Billows of the Sea, that come rolling and tumbling one after another; yea, and like *Job's* Messengers, that hastened with their evil Tidings to him, so as that they were even ready to tread upon the Heels one of another. Thus it falls out more especially where *Old Age* is the Successor, and a wild wanton Youth hath been its Predecessor, from whence many a violent Storm hath been long battering and beating upon this House of Clay: So that if the Saddle be set upon the right Horse, we ought to blame the *Vanity* (if not *Villany*) of our Youth, for all the Sorrows and Infirmities, yea sufferings in our Old Age.

The (2d) Decay that *Solomon* saith attendeth Old Age, of the first Rank or Degree

Degree is, *ver. 3.* that the Keepers of the House shall Tremble, to wit, the Arms and Hands which are our defence for the Head and whole Body, (called an House oft in Scripture,) from any harm impending upon us, for maintaining our Lives, which are therefore called the Lives of our Hands, *Isai. 57. 10.* because our Lives are upheld by the labour of our Hands; but alas how little labour can the trembling Hands of Old Age (which oft brings *Palfios*, and other weaknesses) accomplish. Thus the Preacher doth Draw to the Life the very Picture of Old Age, and most elegantly continueth, and carries on this Mystical Allegory, adding here the

(3d) Decay, [The Strong Men shall bow themselves,] that is, the Legs and Thighs shall then begin to bend and buckle in the Knees, crippling and crinkling under us; so that they sometimes be unable to bear the burden of the Body; insomuch that one of the five Characters of Old Persons is, to have a Leg in their Hand, to support their feeble and tottering Tabernacles (the Body) therewith; they stand in need of a Staff or Crutch: Hence *Hesiod* calls them *relmadas*, which signifies [Three Legg'd:] And *Virgil's* Phrase is, *Genua Labant*, the Knees do languish, &c. And,

*Membra levant Baculis Tardique Senilibus Annis.*

Slow-paced Seniors stay up their Sides with Staves in their Hands.

The (4th) Decay in this Allegory and Allusion is, [the Grinders shall cease, because they are few,] that is, the Teeth shall then be unable to chew any Meat, because they are either loose or lost with Age; for as Teeth come not with us into the World when we are born, so they commonly leave us in Old Age, before we leave the World when we die. And this is another of the five Characters of Old Persons, that they wear their Teeth at their Girdle, to wit, the Knife that is stuck there, to be drawn at the Table out of its Sheath, for shredding their Meat very small with it, and make Food fit for manducation; because Meat must be well masticated, (before it be transmitted into the Stomach) for a more mature Digestion: And Teeth are as hard as Stones; therefore are they fitly compared to Millstones for their Grinding-work, as they are called Grinders here. Hereupon Juvenal wittily alludeth,

*Frangendes misero Gingiva Panis Inermi.*  
which

which is in English, 'Tis a misery to Old People, that they must break their Bread with Toothless Gums.

The (5th) Decay is, [when those that look out at the Windows are darkened,] that is, the Eyes grown dim or blind as they did in Old Isaac, Gen. 27. 1, &c. who could not discern a difference betwixt his two Sons, Esau and Jacob, &c. and as they did also in Old Jacob, [whose Eyes were dim for Age,] Gen. 48. 10, &c. Where good Joseph thought that his Father Jacob had made such a mistake of Ephraim for Manasseh, as his Grandfather Isaac had done before, through his dimness of Eyes, in his blessing Jacob, the Younger, for Esau, the Elder, &c. This dimness of Sight is assuredly a very heavy affliction, ver. 3. which is a degree of Darknes, higher than that which is mentioned in ver. 2. when our very Spectacles are become helpless to us. But 'tis the greatest Affliction to such as have had their Eyes full of Adultery, 2 Pet. 2. 14. because in that case our sin is writ upon our Punishment; and our own guilty Consciences do put a Sting into that Darknes upon our Windows of Wantonness and Wickedness. This must needs be a Prick and a Thorn to torment Blind Eyes.

The Sixth Evil of Old Age is, [and the Doors shall be shut in the Streets, when the sound of the Grinding is low,] ver. 4. which some interpret the Ears, that then grow dull of Hearing, and at last Deaf; because Hearing is caused by two Bones, placed within the inside of the Ear; whereof the one stands still, and the other moveth like the nether and upper Grindstones of a Mill: And as the Ear was a Door, by which Death first entred into the World, when our first Parents gave a listning Ear, more to the Old Liar, than to the God of Truth. So the Lord hath appointed it as a suitable *Antidote*, that the Ear should be a Door to let in Life and Salvation now, as it had done Death and Damnation before; for God saith in the Old Testament, [incline your Ear to me, hear, and your Soul shall live, &c.] Isai. 55. 3. And he saith in the New Testament, [that Faith cometh by Hearing, &c. Rom. 10. 17.] But alas, the Deaf cannot hear the word, the Door is shut, yea, the Young as well as Old, while in the state of Sin, all are possessed with a Deaf Devil, until Christ come and cry Ephphatha, that is, be opened, Mark. 7. 34. and straightway his Ears were opened, ver. 35.

But

But others do understand those Metaphorical Doors in Eccles. 12. 4. to be the Lips of Man's Mouth, because of David's expression in his Prayer, [Lord, keep the Door of my Lips, &c.] Psal. 141. 3. These Doors, the Lips, are said to be shut without, because the sound of the Grinding is low, that is, (say they) the Lips are shut close together, when for want of Teeth to grind their Food with, the Meat is rolled and chavelled up and down the Mouth; and if the Lips be not kept close shut, the Meat, in tumbling to and fro, would drop out of the Mouth.

There is yet a Third Interpretation of this Allusion (which I cannot omit) of those words, [The Doors shall be shut in the Streets,] that is, these Aged Ones shall keep home, avoiding the company and society of Mankind, such as Feastings and Merry Meetings, [when the sound of the Grinding is low,] that is, when neither his Teeth, nor his Stomach and Appetite can any longer serve him for much feeding or feasting, as in Old Barzillai, 2 Sam. 19. 35.

The (7th) Decay in Old Age is, [and he shall rise at the Voice of the Bird,] that is, the least noise of a Swallow that nests in the Chimney top, &c. or any little Bird will waken Old Persons, especially

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cially the *crowing* of the *Cock*, which is not caused by any quickness in their Hearing, (that then is *dull*, as before,) but from the *dryness* of their *Brains*, which causeth badness of sleeping, from coldness of Blood, and deficiency of Moisture; therefore is it said, [the *Old Man rises up at the least Noise*,] because being awakened, and weary with lying along, and unable to turn his Body in his Bed, he must *rise* to change his posture, for his ease, &c.

The (8th) *Evil* of *Old Age* is, [all the *Daughters of Musick shall be brought low*], that is, they shall neither have any *Voices* wherewith to sing of themselves, nor take any delight to hear others (that have *Voices*) to sing, ver. 4. for as their Instruments of Speaking, (which make *Musick*) do fail, so their Instruments of Hearing, (for receiving *Musick*) do fail also. *Homer* observeth, that *Old People* cannot themselves sing, [Propter *Raucam Vocem*,] for their unpleasant Voice, which is no better than Creaking and Screaming. And *Juvenal* expresseth it thus, [*nam quæ Cantante Voluptas*,] what pleasure can the *Old* find, either in singing themselves, or in hearing others sing? as they themselves cannot sing Tuneably with distinction of Sounds, so they can take

take no delight in hearing the *Melodious Notes* of other Singers, as *Old Barzillai* did acknowledge to *King David*, (who was that *sweet Singer of Israel*,) 2 Sam. 19. 35. As their dulness of Hearing disables them from discerning the *Melody*; so the lowness of their Spirits makes them melancholick, inasmuch that they cannot affect *Musick*: And this is very remarkable here, that *Old Men*, whose Hearing is so quick, as to be awakened with any little Noise of a Bird, &c. yet the exquisiteness of the sense of Hearing (to delight in the sound of *Musick*) is quite gone from them.

The (9th) *Evil* of *Old Age*, [they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fear shall be in the way,] ver. 5. that is, they shall be very fearful to walk upon high places, where there may be any danger of falling; and they being very timorous themselves, will shrink and tremble, yea cry out, when they behold *Young Ones* over bold and venturous, &c. As they are themselves afraid of climbing up aloft, because of the stiffness of their Joints, and the unweildiness of their Bodies. So they dare not stand in any high place, because a *Vertigo*, a giddiness or swimming of the Brain doth soon seize upon them, Their *Heads* are as weak as their

their *Hamms*, they can neither climb up, because they are short winded ; and when they are got up, they dare not look down for fear of falling, &c. Yea, they are afraid of every Hillock, or little Stone standing up in their way, for fear of stumbling on it, because of the unlimb-ness of their Limbs. They fear to be cast down by careless People, riding or running, and carrying Burdens to and fro, &c.

The (10th) *Evil of Old Age* is, [ *the Almond Tree* then flourisheth, ] that is, when their *Heads grow Gray and Hoary*, which is of it self a *Crown of Glory*, ( a flourishing Ornament ) if found in the way of *Righteousness*, Prov. 16. 31. But it is an undeniable evidence of the decay of our Radical Moisture, which should duly nourish the Hairs, both of our Heads and Beards. The *Almond Tree* is the first that flourisheth, Jer. 1. 11, 12. The Prophet there saw this as a sign of Gods hastning the execution of his Judgments against a sinful Nation; for this *Tree Blossometh before any other Tree*. *Natural Philosophy* tells us, that the *Almond Tree* doth Blossom in January, while it is yet Winter, and its Fruit is ripe in March, when 'tis but early Spring, &c. and therefore it hath its Name from its early appearance both of Buds, Blossoms and

and Fruit ; but here it is made a Resemblance of an *Hoary Head*, yet with this difference,

(1st) The *Almond* flourisheth in the Spring, but the *Hoary Head* in the Winter of our Old Age.

(2dly) That *Tree* hath all its white Blossoming Flowers before the Fruit, but we have our white Hairs after our Fruit-bearing to God in our Generation-work. Notwithstanding this double Disparity, there is this one Congruity that runs parallel betwixt them, namely, that the *Hoary Head* found in the way of *Righteousness*, is the flourishing Crown of the Old Man, in the Spring of a better World, unto which he is hastening with white Snow, or Church-yard Flowers upon his Head. This makes up another of the five Characters afore-mentioned, that *Old Age* hath White Sugar in its Hair, as it is Gray-headed, &c.

The (11th) *Evil of Old Age* is, [ *then the Grasshopper or Locust shall be a Burden*, ] that is, the Old Man cannot bear the least Weight or Burden, no not the Weight or Burden of a *Locust* or *Grasshopper*, because he is already become a Burden to himself, by manifold Distempers upon him, as Gout, Phthisick, &c. But another learned Expofitor in-

interprets this Clause, neither by the *noise* of the *Locust*, (for that is intimated before, *ver.* 4. in the *Voice of the Bird*,) nor by its *weight*, Hyperbolically spoken, to signifie that the lightest Burden is a Load to Old People; but most fitly, (as he saith) it is meant of the *slowness* of the Aged's digestion: For tho' the *Locust* be a *clean* and wholesom Food, *Levit.* 11. 22. and much used in those Hot Countries, especially by the poorer sort of People, *Matth.* 3. 4. yet even this *Light Meat* proves heavy and burdensome to the *Old Man's Stomach*.

The (12th) *Evil of Old Age* is, that [*then Desire shall fail,*] that is, not only Appetite either to Meat or to Drink, (as was in *Barzillai* afore-named, but also all vehement and strong Affections to the common Pleasures of this Life, (called the *Delights of the Sons of Men*, *Ecclef.* 2. 8.) such as are the *Lusts* of the *Flesh*, the *Lusts* of the *Eye*, and the *Pride of Life*, all these shall be taken away, &c. Hence famous *Tully* reckons this as one great Benefit by Old Age, [*quod Hominem a libidinis aestu, velut a quodam Tyranno liberabit,*] that it sets a Man free from the Fire and Flagrancy of Lust, as from a great Tyrant. And this also implied in that *Etymology* of [*πρεσβυτης,*] (which

(which signifies an *Elder*,) derived from [*τις,*] *ignis*, and [*σβέω,*] *extinguo*, to wit, the *Quenching of Fire*.

Thus far go the *First sort* of *Evils*, attending the former part of Old Age, while we are yet able to walk abroad, now follow the *Second Sort* that do accompany our *Decrepit Age*, which are the symptoms and forerunners of approaching Death; and then it is that we are said to have *one Foot in the Grave*. There is yet one of the *Five Characters* behind, to be now mentioned, namely, the *Old Man* hath also an *Almanack* in his Bones, (as well as *Eyes*) (or Spectacles in his Pocket,) a *Leg* (or Staff) in his Hand, *Sugar* or *Snow* in his *Hoary Head*, and *Teeth* or *Knife* at his Girdle.) Now this *Almanack* is, the many Aches and Pains all over his Body, which makes him *Weather-wise*, and wiser than his *Almanack*, and can better prognosticate that *ill weather* is near at hand, when he begins to feel many pungent pricking Pains, infesting the Humours of several parts of his Body; the like Prognosticks (as the *Lord Bacon*, in his *Natural History*, telleth us) are found in some certain *Weather-wise* Fowls, which against stormy Seasons will make most doleful Ditties, and sad Outcries: and the Reason hereof, (as

that learned *Nobleman* rendreth it ) is, because then the purified Air penetrates into the Quills of their Feathers, which puts them to much Anguish, and causeth them to cry out after; an hiddious manner. Thus it is with us, in our *Decrepid Age*, such Cramps and Convulsions do come upon us, as do foretel the *Storm* of *Death* is drawing nigh, and that we are going *apace to our long home*, Eccles. 12. 5. And therefore the *Moral* of the *Apologue* is very weighty, and well worthy of serious consideration. The *Story* in the *Fable* runs thus, [ There was a Man, who made this Bargain with *Death*, not to come for taking away his Life, and sending him away into another World, until he had due notice and warning hereof before hand. *Death* agrees, and the Bargain was struck up between them both. After this the Man liveth a long time, yet not altogether without some *Ailments* and *Illments*; all standing memorials of Mortality : At the last *Death* comes in good earnest, as *God's Sergeant* to Arrest him, and to carry him to the Prison of the Grave. Nay (saith the *Man to Death* ) Hold now thy Hand, for I must bind thee to thy Bargain, wherein thou bound thy self to give me timely notice, and due warning of thy coming. To this

*Death*

*Death* smartly replied, [ *Oh Man*, how many Harbingers hast thou had concerning my coming, in those sundry Distempers of *Tooth-ach*, *Head-ach*, and such like; all which were my Forerunners, but thou minded them not; ] therefore [ *Thou Fool*, at this Time thy Soul shall be required of thee, ] as *Luke* 12. 20. whereupon *Death* cast his fatal *Javeling* at him, struck him down dead, and hurried him away to his place in another World. The *Moral* of this *Mytical Fable* is this, That even all the Infirmities of the First Sort, namely, not only the *Five Characters* of *Old Age* fore-mentioned, with all the other *Decays* of Nature, which the Eldest Son of Wisdom, *Solomon*, recordeth, Eccles. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. they are all Summons sent from Heaven to us, that we may be making ready for our departure from this Earth: But more especially those of this latter Sort, which do more immediately introduce *Death* it self. The two First whereof be *external*, in the last of part ver. 5. As,

(1st) *Man* is just a going to his long Home, Gnal Beth Gnalamo, *Hebrew*, the House of his Age, the Grave, where he shall rest until the Day of his Resurrection, *Job* 14. 12. Now the Sentence of *Death* is seen by many indicant Signs, to be



writ upon him, as 2 Cor. 1. 9. and he lies sighing out those sad words of *Job*, [ *My Spirit is spent, my Days are extinct, the Graves are ready for me,* ] *Job* 17. 1.

(2dly) The Mourners go about the Streets, that is, his Friends and Neighbours run to see him die, and to close up his Eyes, making many mournful Moans and Lamentations over him; to provoke others to lament with them, *Amos* 5. 16. and *Jer.* 22. 18. This is one of the *dues of the Dead*, so it be done aright. The Four following Decays are Internal, ver. 6. in the very Act of Dying, namely, the dissolution, and perishing of those principal parts, wherein the life and strength of Nature do inwardly consist. As,

(1st) Or [ *ever the Silver Cord be loosed,* ] that is, the Marrow of the Back-Bone, which runneth from the Brain through the Neck, to the bottom of the Back through twenty four Joints, and takes in therewith all the Sinews of the other parts of the Body, and which are the Ligaments of all the Members. Now as this Marrow is of a Silver Colour, and is therefore called [ *a Silver Cord;* ] so as it is a Cord that ties all the whole Body together: Now when this Cord comes to loosened, the Back bendeth, Motion becometh slow, and Feeling daily faileth, &c.

(2dly)

(2dly) [ *Or the Golden Bowl be broken,* ] that is, the Heart, (as some sense it) which is the *primum Vivens*, & *ultimum Moriens*, the first that Lives, and the last that Dies; therefore is it called the Fort-Royal of Life: Or the Pericardium about the Heart; which the Soldier pierced with his Spear in our Saviour's side, from whence there came forth Blood and Water, *John* 19. 34. and 1 *John* 5. 6. But others do interpret it to be rather the Head or Skull, called the Brain-pan, for the Brains are contained within the Meninges thereof; and the Pia mater covereth them like a Swathing Cloth, or the inner Kind of a Tree, as in a Cup or Bowl; and a wound in this is ever mortal. Now the Hebrew word here, being the same with *Golgotha*, which signifies a Skull, 2 *Kings* 9. 35. *Matth.* 27. 33. and *Judg.* 9. 53.) all this make the latter Interpretation the more probable; for when Death comes with his Javelin or Dart to wound the Brain-pan, or Skull, (which is round like a Cup or Bowl, and is called here *Golden*, because of its colour,) then the Sutures or Seams of the Skull are parted asunder; from whence it comes to pass, that the Chaps of Dying Persons do fall, and the Almonds of their Ears are stopped, &c. Oh what cause have we

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to

break forth into David's words, saying, [ *We are wonderfully framed,* ] Psal. 139. 14. If the pretious Office of this *Golden Bowl* for preserving the Brain, &c. be well considered.

(3dly) [ *Or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain,* ] that is, either the *Veins* at the *Liver*, (as some say) which is the Shop of Sanguification or Blood-making; those *Veins* carry Blood from the *Liver* into all parts of the Body by way of Circulation, &c. Or as others understand it, the *Arteries* which carry Spirits from the Heart, and conveys Nourishment, Sense and Motion from one part to another, &c. There is yet a Third Sense put upon this *Pitcher*, that is, the *Bladder* is broken at the Spring of Water or Urin, &c. Now as when either the *Veins* at the *Liver*, especially the *Vena Cava*, & *Vena Porta*, (as the *Anatomists* name them,) or the *Arteries* at the Heart, do come once to lose their drawing, and distributing Office and Vertue, then the Body doth immediately decay, &c. even so, when the Muscle at the Neck of the *Bladder* comes to be broken, and loseth its Retentive Faculty, then the Water (or Urin) doth run insensibly from a Dying Person without stay.

(4thly) [ *Or the Wheel is broken at the Cistern,* ] that is, according to the Sentiments

ments of some Expositors, the *Head* which draweth all the Operations of Life from the Heart; and hence it is, that when any dreadful *Fright* is apprehended by our Heads, and suddenly doth surprize us, we presently are struck with a *Paleness*, because all the Blood in our Faces doth run back to the Heart, as to the *Fountain* of Life, &c. But others are of opinion, [that by this *Wheel broken at the Cistern* ] must be meant, the *Lungs broken* off from their double Office; and Motion of *Inspiration*, and *Respiration*; and this Breaking or Obstruction is caused by *Phlegm* from the *Stomach*, which is as a *Cistern* from all parts of the Body, &c. The *Lungs* are as a *Wheel*, transmitting the Air in and out, by a Motion up and down, like to that of a pair of Bellows, which Men learnt to make from the posture and operations of *Mens Lungs* that were of God's making; and thus indeed Man learns all other Artifices from God, the great Artificer: *God instructs the Husbandman*, Isai. 28. 26. and all others also: Now tho' there be no open Passage betwixt the *Stomach* and the *Lungs*, and (therefore there is no ordinary purging of the *Lungs*, but upwards, by spitting and coughing;) yet when the *Stomach* is overcharged with *Phlegm*, the former distil-

leth the latter into the Lungs, and thereby stoppeth them in their Motion. This may be exemplified thus, when a Man or Beast is dead, there seemeth no way of entrance for *Water* into the Bladder, no not so much as for any Air; for if we blow the Bladder full of Wind, none of it will issue out; and yet while Life lasteth in the Body, both *Water* and *Sand* doth pass through little Veins (called *Valvulas*) into the Bladder; even so by some such like secret passages, doth the Cistern of the Stomach convey *Phlegm* into the Lungs, yea sometimes to the very stifling of them; and upon this stoppage of the Lungs with *Phlegm* so, that the *Wheel* cannot turn the Air (or breath) up and down, and in and out to the Nostrils: Then from this obstruction of the Lobes, (whereof the Lungs do consist) so that their Motion, like a pair of broken Bellows, is broken off; then followeth the *Rutling in the Throat*, which is the common *Herauld*, proclaiming that *Death* is at Hand, &c. NB. Note well, How *Solomon* (the Eldest Son of Wisdom) hath left upon Record in *Ecclesj. 12.* a most sublime Lecture of *Anatomy*, as well as of *Divinity*, in his Dissection of the infirm Body of Old Age, which he sweetly setteth forth by a continued *Allegory*.

*legory* [ *Ubi quot Lumina, imo Flumina Orationis,* ] that is, containing so many Lights, yea and Floods of Eloquence; and all this *Solomon* did, not so much to demonstrate his own excellent Skill, and unparallel'd Prudence, but more especially and principally to instruct, yea and to provoke all Mankind to become wise unto Salvation, and to remember our Creator early, before any of these Evils of Old Age come upon us, &c.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old,  
against the Evils of Old Age, the  
Fear of Death, and the Terror of the  
Day of Judgment.*

**T**HIS *Eight Chapter* consists as well of Comforts (as of Counsel) against the *Evils of Old Age*, against the *Fear of Death*, and against the *Terror of the Day of Judgment*.

First, The *Comforts* against the *Evils of Old Age*: 'Tis a *Time desired* by all, (who are they that would not live long, &c?) but 'tis welcomed by few, because of the *Burden* of Distempers that it brings along with it, &c. If God bleſs us to live up to Old Age, we ought not to complain of it, for 'tis a *bleſſing* we muſt bleſs God for, [*Length of days is from the Right Hand, Riches and Honour from the Left*, Prov. 3. 16. And God promiſed

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miſed to his *Jeruſalem* after its Reſtoration, [that there ſhould be *Old Men and Old Women in the Streets of it, with Staves in their Hands*,] Zech. 8. 4. yea and it was God's *Curſe* upon the Houſe of *Ely*, [that not any that were Old ſhould be found in it,] 1 Sam. 2. 32. Therefore if God do ſtill preſerve the rotten Thread of our Lives, and draw it out to laſt ſo long, and yet the Clue have a little more Yarn upon the Botton; Oh how thankfully ought we to welcome this Gueſt of Gods own ſending, and not to complain of it as our great Burden, but entertain it chearfully with God-praiſing hearts! 'Tis true, tho' *Old Age* be a rich Bleſſing of God in it ſelf, (as is largely demonſtrated before) and yet is called an *Evil Age*, for Reaſons afore-named. Notwithſtanding, *God hath not left it comfortleſs*, as 'tis ſaid, John 14. 18. But the Spirit (who is the Comforter, hath left upon Scripture-Record ſo many *Cordials*, as are truly *Sovereign* againſt all the *Evils* that attend it; inſomuch as *Old Age* may be an *eaſie Age*, a calm and quiet Harbour, if *Youth* hath done it no diſſervice in filling its bones with the ſins of *Youth* before-hand; and if Intemperance (which is like the Thief in the Candle, waſting

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360 *Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old,*  
 it away) hath not weakned its Head or  
 Feet, &c. In this case *Old Age* hath  
 cause to complain of the *evil* of the  
*Man*, and not the *Man* to murmur at  
 the *Evils of Old Age*. Thus *Old Job*  
 oft complains of the Misery of his  
*Old Age*, saying, [ *Lord, thou changeest*  
*our Countenances, and sendest us away,* ]  
*Job* 14. 20. and many myriads of *such*  
*Sighs*, (too long to relate) do ever and  
 anon issue out of his Mouth. And he  
 himself tells us, the ground of all his  
 grief was, [ *that God made him to pos-*  
*sess the sins of his Youth* ] *Job* 13. 26.  
 therefore (says he) *thou writest bitter*  
*things against me*, &c. Thus likewise  
*Old David* complained, [ *I am become*  
*like a Bottle in the Smoak,* ] *Psal.*  
 119. 83. and much more in many other  
*Psalms*, &c. which drove him to groan  
 out that Petition, [ *Lord, remember not*  
*against me the Transgressions of my*  
*Youth*, for *thy tender Mercies have been*  
*of old*, &c. *Psal.* 25. 6, 7. Both those  
*Instances* were Holy Persons, who after  
 those and many more such Complaints,  
 were (both of them) comforted by the  
 God of all Comforts, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. and  
 had their *Old Age* marvelously sweet-  
 ned to them, and had their best Wine

at

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 at the last. both those Good Men had  
 remembred their Creator in the days of  
 their Youth, *Eccles.* 12. 1. and tho'  
 their Youth-Time had been a very rough  
 Voyage through a surging stormy Sea,  
 yet their last Years were their best  
 Years, as it was to Good Old *Jacob*,  
 who after a long Life of manifold  
 Miseries, did enjoy seventeen Years  
 of sweet Tranquility and Comfort, &c.  
 But alas, this Mercy can never be ex-  
 pected by those who never had God,  
 neither in their Heads, *Psal.* 10. 4.  
 nor in their Hearts, *Psal.* 14. 1. nor  
 in their Words, *Psal.* 12. 4. no nor  
 in their Works, *Tit.* 1. 16. and such  
 as drive a Thorough-Trade all their Lives  
 in Weaving the Web of Wickedness,  
 having been twice dipped in the De-  
 vils Dye-Tub, (as the Greek word  
 [ *Δίβαρον*, ] for Scarlet Sins, doth fig-  
 tie,) namely, in the Wool of their  
 Youth, and in the Web of their Elder  
 Years; those can never expect any  
 comfort in Old Age. *Pliny* tells us,  
 [ *Serpens, Serpentem devorans, fit Dra-*  
*co,* ] as that Serpent, which common-  
 ly devourerh other Serpents, becomes  
 to be a Dragon at last: So a long  
 swallower of many Sins, becomes at  
 the

302 *Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old,*  
 the length a most Monstrous Sinner, &c. that Old and true saying, [that if Persons prove not *Fair* at twenty, *Strong* at thirty, *Wise* at forty, *Rich* at fifty, and *Religious* at sixty Years of Age, such will never prove either *Fair*, or *Strong*, or *Wise*, or *Wealthy*, or *Holy Ones* all the days of their Lives.] This ancient *Adage* holds a most apt congruity with that saying of Solomon, [*such as seek me early, shall find me,*] Prov. 8. 17. Whereas the *Habitual Sinner*, (to whom God hath given the *Space* of Repentance many times, but never the *Grace* of it, Rev. 2. 21, 23.) leads the Life of sin: *Thoughts* beget *Delight*, *Delight* begets *Consent*, *Consent* begets *Action*, *Action* begets *Custom*, and lastly, *Custom* begets *Necessity*; so that he brings himself under a Law of an unavoidable Sinning against his maker, and as David tells Saul, [*wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, as naturally as Water from the Fountain,*] 1 Sam. 24. 13. Satan is not satisfied to have Men *Sinners* only, but he will have them also to abound in sin, and to be like the *Crocodile* (that grows while it lives,) in growing greater

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 ter and grosser Sinners to the end of their Lives; Alas, this is but the *laying* of a bad (and not a good) *foundation for the time to come*: As we are commanded to *lay up a better store* against *Old Age and Death*, and to *lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 6. 19. NB. Note well, Our Lord tells Peter what *Miseries* he should *meet withal* when he came to be Old, John 21. 18. He had the manner of his Death foretold him, that he should *glorifie* God by Martyrdom, ver. 19. and observe what an holy Improvement he made of this Precaution; he had made his Solemn Appeal to an All-knowing Lord, saying, [*thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee,*] ver. 17. and to testify his Love to his Lord in feeding his Lambs, he wrote those two famous *Epistles General* to the Churches of Christ; and in the latter of them he saith, [*I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance, &c.* Yea, I think it meet, while I am in this *Tabernacle*, to stir you up, &c. knowing that shortly I must put off this *Tabernacle*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me,] 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. He knew that

364 *Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old*,  
 that his Tent or Tabernacle must  
 soon be taken down, his *Earthly House*,  
 (as *Paul*, who was a *Tent-maker*, calls  
 the *Body* a Tent, 2 Cor. 5. 1. So  
 both these two great Apostles did tru-  
 ly and duly endeavour to *magnifie*,  
 and to *glorifie Christ*, both in Life and  
 at Death, *John* 21. 19. and *Phil.*  
 1. 20. Thus both *Peter* the Elder,  
 and *Paul* the Aged (as they stile  
 themselves, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. and *Phil.*  
 ver. 9.) were well in-laid and fortified  
 before-hand, to undergo the Evils that  
 attended *them both* in their Old Age, &c.  
 May we but get Hearts to *own God*  
 while we are Young, then God will  
 not forget us, but *own us* when Old;  
 and as *our days are*, so *shall our strength*  
*be*, *Deut.* 33. 25. Now more particu-  
 larly, the *Comforts* against the Evils  
 of *Old Age* are,

*First*, That *then* the *Law of our*  
*Members* cannot so easily lead us into  
 captivity unto sin, *Rom.* 7. 23. as for-  
 merly in the Heat and Vanity of our  
 Youth. Indeed the *Witty Fable* runs  
 thus, [*Cupid* (that Pagan God of  
 Love,) and *Mors*, that is, *Death* hap-  
 pened to meet together, and to lodge  
 all

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 all Night, (both of them in one and  
 the same Inn,) but in the Morning  
 they chanced to mistake each others  
*Quivers* filled with *Darts*. Hereupon  
*Cupid* (after this) shot the *frozen*  
*Darts of Death* at many Young Peo-  
 ple in their briskest time of their Lo-  
 ving and Lusting, whereby many *Young*  
*Gallants and Tempting Ladies* were  
 brought unto an untimely Death, &c.  
 But on the contrary, *Mors* did shoot  
 the *Fiery Darts of Cupid*, at the *Aged*  
*Persons*, who in the Course of Na-  
 ture were hastening to the Grave; and  
 hereby arose that wantonness of Old  
 People for Marriage, &c. by which  
 means it may be said (as to *Second*  
*Causes*) some have shortned their own  
 Lives, &c. Tho' the *Moral* of this  
*Fable* hold true in some singular In-  
 stances, yet for the General, 'tis an  
 undeniable truth, that *Old Age* may  
 comfort it self with this blest free-  
 dom from *Youthful Lusts*; *Aged Peo-*  
*ple* cannot be so *Eye-sick*, nor so *Heart-*  
*sick* of Lustful Desires, as the *Young*  
 are, but are then arrived into a more  
 quiet Harbour from the furious Tempests  
 of *Carnal Concupiscence*

*Secondly.*, The *Aged* may comfort themselves with their long experience in the World, for *experimental Knowledge* doth far exceed, and excel that which is merely *Notional*; and upon this account 'tis truly said, [*Tho' Young Men think Old Men Fools*, yet the *Old* are *sure*, that the *Young* are *Fools*, for want of experience:] For as Experience is called the *Mistress of Fools*, so it truly is the *Mother of Prudence*. It was a *Prophane Saying* of a *Pagan Poet*, that *Prudence was above Destiny*; but a *Christian* may safely say, that next to *Divine Providence*, *Humane Prudence* may challenge the highest place in the management of *Humane Matters*; and that *Old Age* hath the chiefest interest in that *Prudence*. Young *Elihu* did acknowledge *this* for a great Truth, saying [*multitude of Years should teach Wisdom*,] Job 32. 7. And *Musicians* do experience, that *Old Lutes make a sweeter Sound than New Ones*. The not knowing of this Truth was both the *Folly* and the *Ruine* of that *Foolish King Rehoboam*, [who choos'd to follow the Counsel of his *Green-heads* that

Ch.8. *against the Evils of Old Age*, 365  
that stood before him, rather than of those *Grave Senators* who had stood before his wiser Father,] 1 Kings 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. As *Young Men* are properly for *Action*, so *Old Men* are principally for *Advice*; and therefore the *Roman Senate* consisted of *Senators*, (so called for their Age) which became so famous in the World, that it occasioned that saying, [*Romani Sedendo Vincunt*,] as if the *Advice* of their *sitting Senate* did contribute more to all their *Glorious Conquests*, than all the brave *Actions* of their *Fighting Soldiers*; and thus the *Heads of Cities*, &c. are hence called *Aldermen*, &c.

*Thirdly*, The *Aged* may comfort their own Hearts with this Consideration likewise, that they have so long weathered the point under the conduct of their *Gracious God*, through such a broad and tempestuous Sea of a most troublesome Life. Oh, happy are those that can say, [*many have been my Troubles*, but the Lord hath delivered me out of them all,] Psal. 34. 19. and *God's Angel* hath redeemed us from all our Evils, in



in our whole Lives hitherto,] *Gen.* 48. 16. and that the *Pillar of Divine Providence* hath hitherto been our Guide in the Wilderness of this lower World, (as the *Cloudy Pillar* did guide *Israel* in that wayless, Waterless Wilderness, in their many motions and mutations,) and we have walked all along as Helpless Children, in the Hands of our Heavenly Father, whom we have sometimes followed (as it were) *blindfold*, like *Abraham the Father of the Faithful*, [who went out, not knowing whither he went,] *Heb.* 11. 8. who tho' he knew not whither he went, yet he well knew with whom he went, for he was ever as a Child in his Father's Hand. Happy are such as can say, [Lord, thou hast been our King of old,] *Psal.* 74. 12. and [we have been Young, but now are Old, yet never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed, tho' begging Bread,] *Psal.* 37. 25. and [we will Remember the days of Old, &c.] *Psal.* 143. 5. and [this God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our Guide even unto Death,] *Psal.* 48. 14.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The Aged may comfort themselves, that now they are approaching near the end of their troublesome Voyage, through a dangerous Sea, both of manifold Tribulations, and of many Temptations also; yea, and nigh to the end of their Toilsom Travel, and Wandrings in the Wilderness of this lower World, and now drawing nigh toward their Harbour and Haven of Eternal Happiness in Heaven. The end of all Motion is Rest, and the nearer we come to our Centre, the more active and hastening we ought to be, that we may contradict that uncharitable Proverb, [*Juvenis in Sanctis, Senibus Satanizat in Annis*,] that is, Young Saints sometimes prove no better than Old Devils; whereas such as are Saints while they are Young, ought to become Angels when they come to be Old; for [the Path of the Just is like a Shining Light, that shineth more and more to a perfect day,] *Prov.* 4. 18. *Plutarch* affirms concerning the Laborious Bee, that it never degenerates into an idle Drone: And *Augustin's* Character of a true Christian is, [*Semel Electus, Semper Dilectus*,] once Elected, and ever Beloved; B b this

370 *Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old,*  
 this therefore makes our *Election sure*,  
 2 Pet. 1. 10. As we draw daily nearer  
 our best Home, then to *hunger after*  
*it, and hasten toward it* so much the  
 more, &c.

*Fifthly*, The *Old Disciples of Christ*  
 may comfort themselves with this con-  
 sideration, that the Lord loveth his  
*Mnasons*, Acts 21. 16. even when they  
 are past their work; forasmuch as they  
 have taken heed to *fulfill their Mini-*  
*stery they received in the Lord*, Col.  
 4. 17. Hitherto to the best of their  
*Abilities*, their *Consciences bearing Wit-*  
*ness* hereto in the *Holy Ghost*, Rom. 9. 1.  
 2 Cor. 1. 12. Acts 23. 1. and 24. 16.  
 they are still *beloved of God*, for what  
 work they have already wrought *for*  
*his Glory*, and for the good of many  
 Saints; the reflection of this cannot  
 but conduce much to the Comfort of  
 their own Souls: Tho' now they be  
 like Travellers that ride upon Tired  
 Horses, they can proceed no farther  
 in publick Generation-work, yet they  
 can say with *Paul the Aged*, Philem. ver. 9.  
 [ *to will, is present with us, but how*  
*to perform, we find not,* ] Rom. 7. 18.  
 And now their only work is to Ripen  
 fast.

fast, and to become fully Mellow to  
 be gathered home, &c. NB. Note well,  
 The Lord's tender loving-kindness to  
 the godly *Levites* under the Law, [ in  
 giving them leave, when Old, to re-  
 tire from that Laborious Service of his  
 Sanctuary, ] Numb. 8. 23, 24, 25. yet  
 were they as *Judges*, &c. all which  
 may comfort us under the Gospel, &c.  
 Still God commands, [ *let the Younger*  
*submit to the Elder*, ] 1 Pet. 5. 5. and as  
 David was kind to Young *Chimham*, for  
 Old *Barzillai's* sake, 2 Sam. 19. 38.  
 So the Lord is kind to the Off-spring  
 of his Old Servants, who are Children  
 of many Prayers, &c. Thus, tho' they  
 be laid aside, as Old Almanacks, useles  
 by Men, they are not so by their lo-  
 ving God, &c.

*Secondly*, The *Cordials and Comforts*  
 that the Lord hath left us upon Re-  
 cord against the *Fear of Death*. If we  
 would get good Gold, we must go to  
*Ophir*; good Balm, we must go to  
*Gilead*, &c. So if we would get good  
 Comfort, we must go to the *God of*  
*all True Comfort*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. and to  
 the *Book of God*, which consists of those  
*full Breasts of Consolation* which we  
 B b 2 are

372 *Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old,*  
 are commanded to *suck and be satisfied* against all our Fears, &c. *Isai.*  
 66. 11. *Job* calls *Death* the *King of Terrors*, chap. 18. 14. and so it is indeed a *Terror to Kings too*; the *Philosopher* calls [*τῶν φοβεράν φοβερότατον*] the most formidable of *Formidables*, and *Nature* in the best doth find it frightful enough; yet our Lord saith, [ *I will not leave you Comfortless*, ] *John* 14. 18.

The *First Comfort* against the *Fear of Death*, and that our Lord hath left us for our *Relief*, is *1 Cor.* 15. 55. that *Christ* hath *unstinged* that *Serpent*, and that now his *Redeemed* may triumph over it. *Moses* first *fled from the Serpent*; but being better informed, he *took it by the Tail*, and then it became an *Useful Rod* in his *Hand*, *Exod.* 4. 3, 4. Thus *Israel* at first *fled from Goliath*, as affrighted with the sight of such a *Monster of Mankind*, but so soon as they understood that *David* had slain him, and laid him along without his *Head* upon the *ground*, then did they run as fast to him to *trample upon him*, &c. as they had before run away from him sore affrighted,

Ch.7. *against the Fear of Death.* 373  
 ed, *1 Sam.* 17. 24, 52. So could we but believe that *Christ*, our *Lord David* had *swallowed up Death in Victory*, (as we are assured, *Isai.* 25. 8. and that *Christ's Death* is the *Death of Death*, *Hos.* 13. 14.) then might we sing a *Triumphant Song* (with the *Apostle*) over both *Death* and the *Grave*, &c.

A *Second Breast of Comfort* against the *Fear of Death* is, that precious *Promise of God*, [ *Thou shalt not be afraid, when Destruction or Death cometh*, ] *Job* 5. 21. and thus *God* said to *Old Jacob*, [ *fear not to go down to Egypt, for I will be with thee, and I will bring thee back again*, &c. ] *Gen.* 46. 3, 4. Accordingly our *Saviour* saith to his *sanctified ones*, *Isai.* 13. 3. [ *Fear not to go down among the Dead*, (which is a going the way of all the *Earth*, *Josh.* 23. 14.) for I will go down with thee, and I will assuredly also bring thee back again, as one of my *Children* of the *Resurrection*, *Luke* 20. 36. ] as if he had said [ *I will bring you without failure from the Jaws of Death to the Joys of Heaven*, as surely as *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* brought all the *Captive Jews* out of the *Captivity of*

B b 3      *Baby.*

374 *Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old, Babylon*; and we must consider for our Comfort, that Death seizeth upon the *Body* only, which we derive from the *First Adam*, as *Joseph's Mistress* seized only upon *Joseph's Garment*, his Person escaped; so the precious *Soul* is returned to God that gave it, Eccles. 12. 7.

A *Third Breast of Consolation* for Saints to suck against the Fear of Death is, [the *Righteous bath Hope in his Death*,] Prov. 14. 32. Death to a Believer is as the *Vally of Achor*, Josh. 7. 24, 27. *Israel's* entrance into the Land of Promise, a *Door of Hope*, Hos. 2. 15. into the *Heavenly Canaan*, there to sing *Hallelujah's* to the Lord for ever. Death indeed to *Sinners* is but a *Trap-door* that drops them down into Hell, Psal. 9. 17. When that *Grim-Sergeant* Arrests them, (by God's Permission and Commission,) in the *Devil's Name*, and hurls them into an Infinite Ocean of Hell-fire, Oh what Dreadful Skreaks doth that Guilty Soul give when it is hurried away and hurled into *Everlasting Burnings*, Isai. 33. 14. and to swim naked as in Scalding Lead and Liquor for evermore  
Bu

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But blessed be God 'tis better with the *Saints*, whose Debts are all paid by their Dear Redeemer, they are not afraid of the *Arrest of Death*, but looks upon it as God's Officer, sent to give them possession of a *Mansion of Glory*, and therefore their *Hearts* are not troubled when their Lord sends for them to be ever with him in *Heavenly Happiness*, John 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. and 16. 7. and 1 Thes. 4. 17. 18. Oh, how willing was Old *Jacob* to go down into *Egypt*, when it was only to see his younger Son *Joseph*, whom he had not seen for many years, &c. How much more willing, yea desirous ought we to be to go up to Heaven, a far better place than *Egypt*) there to see our Elder Brother *Jesus Christ*! How glad were those *Three Wise Men* of the East to take a long Journey, when it was only to see the *Babe of Bethlehem*, *Christ* in the *Cradle*, &c! Now if we can but say as those *Wise Men* said, [We have seen his Star, &c. Matth. 2. 2, 11.] how much more ought we to long for this Journey, &c. that we may behold our Lord *Christ* advanced upon the *Throne* of his *Glory*, and to behold his Face in *Righteousness*, Psal. 17. 15, &c.

B b 4

which

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 which is a *Beatifical Vision*; a Sight  
 far exceeding those Three, [*Romam in*  
*Flore, Paulum in Ore, & Christum in*  
*Carne,*] which Father *Augustin* so ear-  
 nestly wished to see, namely, *Rome* in  
 its *Glory*, *Paul* in the *Pulpit*, and  
*Christ* in the *Flesh*. Alas, all those  
 Sights are infinitely below the behold-  
 ing him in his *Glory*, 1 John 3. 2.  
 It was a good Prayer of the same  
*Augustin*, saying, [*Lord, can no Man*  
*see thy Face, and live? O then let me*  
*die, that I may see it, &c.*]

A *Fourth Cordial* against the *Fear of*  
*Death* is, [*Better is the day of our*  
*Death, than the day of our Birth,*] Eccles.  
 7. 12. 'Tis better every way: For,

(1.) Our *Birth* begins our *Miseries*,  
 but our *Death* ends them; *if we die*  
*in the Lord*, we are blessed, Rev. 14. 13.  
 Whereas *Man born of a Woman, is born*  
*to trouble, &c.* Job 14. 1. Yea misera-  
 ble so soon as warm in the Womb at  
 Conception, Psal. 51. 5. *Birth* is our  
 entrance into this lower *present Evil*  
*World*, Gal. 1. 4. but *Death* in *Christ*  
 is our entrance into the best and blessed  
 World.

(2.) We

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(2.) We come crying into this  
 World, &c. but some *Saints* have gone  
 singing and triumphing out of it into a  
 better World, hoping that their *Death*  
 was but the Day-break of *Eternal Bright-*  
*ness, &c.*

A *Fifth Cordial* is, that *Death cannot*  
*separate us from the Love of God*, Rom.  
 8. 28. 'Tis so far from destroying the  
 Union, that it is called a *sleeping in*  
*Jesus*, 1 Thes. 4. 14. And as by *sleep*  
 the frame of the *Body* is *refreshed*, so  
 by *Death* the Union of the *Soul* is *re-*  
*fined*. Now when we are wearied with  
 our days Labour, we are not afraid to  
 go take our rest: When *Lazarus* died,  
 our Lord said, [*our Friend Lazarus*  
*sleepeth,*] John 11. 11. and he said the  
 same of *fairus's Daughter*, Matth. 9. 24.  
 and this is the frequent Phrase in Scri-  
 pture, to call *Death* a *Sleep*, Job 7. 21.  
 2 Sam. 7. 12. 1 Cor. 11. 30. Now as  
*Sleep* doth not separate Friends but on-  
 ly for a time, betwixt [*good Night*]  
 and [*good Morrow,*] so no more doth  
*Death*, which is but a bidding [*good*  
*Night,*] for after *sleeping* in the Grave,  
 (as in a Bed, Isai. 57. 2.) the *Morning*  
*comes to rise again.*

The

The Sixth Cordial is, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 3, to 9. [ *We know,* ] 'tis not, *we think*, or *we hope only*; this is the true Triumph of our Trusting in Christ, our leaning upon the Lord, Isai. 50. 10. [ *that when our Clayie Cottages moulder down, we have a Mansion of Glory to go to.* ] While we abide in those tottering Tabernacles, [ *we groan earnestly, being Burdened,* ] ver. 2. 4. that is, both with Sin and Misery, whereof we have here our Back-burdens, Now who would not but be disburdened, and be at Ease and Rest; in the Grave the Weary find Rest, Job 3. 17. but the Rest that is found in Christ, Matth. 11. 28, 29, 30. is for the Soul as well as Body, &c. Rev. 14. 13. and who would not be willing to put off Rotten Rags, and to put on Royal Robes, &c. Many more Cordials might be mentioned; as,

(7thly) For me (saith Paul) to die, is Gain, Phil. 1. 21. because Death to a good Man brings freedom from all Evil, and a fruition of all Good: And hereupon he

(8thly)

(8thly) He desired to be dissolved, &c. ver. 23. The Greek word [ *Ἀναλῦσαι* ] signifies, to launch forth, to loose off from the Shore of Life, and to launch out into the Ocean of Immortality and Glory; this was all his Song, he longed to be with Christ, ever after he had been wrapt up to the Third Heaven.

(9thly) Yea, and Old Simeon thought it best of all (with Paul) to die, when he sang that sweet Song, [ *Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace, &c.* Luke 2. 29. as is largely spoke to before; adding only this here, he only saw the Lord's Christ in weakness, with an Eye of Sense; but we see him in Glory, with an Eye of Faith, therefore may better depart, not in Peace only, but also in Joy and Comfort.

(10thly) How courageous was that Proto-Martyr, Stephen, against the Terrors of a most Terrible Death, after he had seen the Heavens opened, and Christ standing at the Right Hand of God, Acts 7. 56. The like Prospect we have offered to our Faith, which is the Key that opens Heaven, and may we but fix our Spiritual

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ritual Eyes upon that Glorious Object,  
this would wonderfully enable us to  
lay down our Mortal Bodies in peace,  
and send up our Immortal Souls into  
the Hands of him that bought it, cry-  
ing, [Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.]

(Lastly) But thanks be to God, who  
giveth us the Victory, through our Lord  
Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15. 57. with 55, 56.

Thirdly, The Cordials against Terrors  
of the Day of Judgment, which surely  
follows Death, Heb. 9. 27. and which is  
called a Terrible and Dreadful Day, ve-  
ry often in Scripture; as that Day  
shall burn like an Oven, Mal. 4. 1. the  
Sun turned into Darknes, and Moon  
into Blood, Acts 2. 20. and Elements  
shall melt with fervent Heat, &c. 2 Pet.  
3. 10. and the Lord will come in fla-  
ming Fire, &c. 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. and with  
Fire and Sword will God plead with all  
Flesh, &c. Isai. 66. 15, 16. see likewise  
Joel 2. 31. Matth. 25. 31, 32. Rev. 1.  
7, &c. Now if a Crack of Thunder,  
and a Flash of Lightning, at the break-  
ing of a single sorry Cloud, do so af-  
fright us, how much more when the  
whole Heavens break, and drop down  
like

Ch. 8. *against Terror of Judgment.* 381  
like Scalding Bell-Mettal about our  
Ears, &c.

Yet, Note well, (1st) There is Com-  
fort for the Chosen Ones, they shall be  
caught up in the Clouds to meet the Lord  
in the Air, and so shall ever be with  
the Lord, and therefore comfort your  
selves, &c. 1 Thes. 4, 16, 17, 18.

(2dly) As Death leaves us, so the Day  
of Judgment will find us; as the Tree  
falleth towards the South, or towards  
the North, there it lieth, Eccles. 11. 3.  
Even so (as is before observed) if we  
fall by Death upon the Right Hand of  
Christ, among his pretious Sheep, then  
are we called upon to lift up our Heads,  
for the Day of our Redemption is come;  
Luke 21. 28. Ephes. 4. 30. that way the  
Tree leans, that way it falls; Oh, that  
while we live we may lean to Christ.

(3dly) The due Observation of the  
main end of Life, is to be useful to the  
end of our Lives; we should be ever  
ready, Matth. 24. 44. May we but be-  
come good Stewards, then blessed is that  
Servant, whom his Master shall find so  
doing, ver. 46.

(4thly) Tho' we be conscious to our  
selves, that our Obedience has been ex-  
ceeding narrow to God's Commandments,  
which

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 which are exceeding broad, Psal. 119. 96. yet may we rejoice with Trembling, Phil. 2. 11. because our Judge is our Advocate, who became sin for us, &c. that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 John 2. 1, 2.

(5thly) May we but upon good grounds be persuaded, that [we are justified by Faith, then have we peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord,] Rom. 5. 1. this is known, if we be sanctified by the Spirit, 2 Thes. 2. 13. For this latter doth evidence the former; and having got God's Seal and Earnest, which he never gives to a Reprobate, then fear not, Gen. 15. 1.

(6thly) Be sure to have the Line of Scarlet Thread bound to our Windows, as Rahab had, Josh. 2. 18. this was the saving Colour, a Red Cord: Thus Israel's Door-posts must be Red with Blood when the destroying Angel passed over Egypt, Rahab made haste and delayed not, as Psal. 119. 60. So soon as she dismissed the Spies, long before Jericho fell, &c. Oh, could we get this Scarlet Line, the Blood of Christ fixed upon our Hearts; this Sign saved Rahab, and made her famous, Heb. 11. 31. and Jam. 2. 25. then our Joshua will save us, and say to us also,

Ch. 8. *against Terror of judgment.* 383  
 also, [Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit, &c.] Matth. 25. 34. In the mean time we Aged Ones must be ever praying, [Lord cast me not off in my Old Age, and forsake me not when strength fails me, Psal. 71. 9.

*Laus Ei Soli tribuatur omnes,  
 Cujus Assiatu Labor extat omnis,  
 Fructus ut Vitæ reserantur omnes;  
 ———orbis in Oras.*

F I N I S





Christopher Ness *(aetatis suae 56:1678)*  
Minister of the Gospel in Fleet Street  
London.

Divine Legacy,  
Bequeathed unto all  
**MANKIND.**  
OF ALL  
Ranks, Ages and Sexes:

Directing  
How we may live Holily in the Fear  
of God, and how we may die hap-  
pily in the Favour of God; both  
which Duties are of Universal Con-  
cern.

The Rules here are, how to be *Truly*  
*Valourous* in warring a good War-  
fare, and in fighting the the good  
Fight of Faith while we Live, and to  
be *Blessedly Victorious* when we Die.

By Christopher Ness, Minister of the  
Gospel in London.

*Exitus Acta probat, & Finis Coronat*  
*Opus*, saith the Philosopher.

*Our Last Works should be our Best*  
*Works*, saith our Lord, Rev. 2.19.

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J. Robinson, at the Golden Lion in St. Paul's  
Church-yard. 1700.

longer stride thereby, so did David here, who upon second thoughts, (ever better than the first) recoiling and reflecting upon himself, saying, [ *this is my Infirmary* ], and Oh how he bebeasts himself for so *stumbling*! ver. 22. so *foolish was I*, and *Ignorant*, and even *as a Beast before thee, my God*, ] the Hebrew word for *Beast* is *Behemoth*; which is the plural feminine Hebrew, signifying a Big-bellied Beast, full of Young Ones, (which is a clear resemblance of *Original Sin* in us, the Mother of all Actual Sins,) and the same word [ *Behemoth* ] the Lord useth in his Humbling Speech to *Job*, Job 40. 15, to 24. whereby is expressed, that Monster of Beasts, the Beast of Beasts, the *Elephant*. By this (and by other Speeches of the same tendency) God so humbled *Job*, as to make him [ *abhor himself*, and to *repent in Dust and Ashes*, ] Job 42. 5. Thus likewise that Holy Man *Agur*, who vilifies, yea nullifies himself to the utmost, saying, [ *surely I am more brutish than any Man*; and I have not the understanding of a Man, &c. ] Prov. 30. 2, 3. Here was true *Humility*, which is derived *ab Humo*, signifying the *Ground*, because this Grace lays us flat on the ground; thus these godly persons (and many more upon Scripture-record) did indeed stumble in the way

way of *Righteousness*, yea and some of them very *fouly*, yet none of them did so stumble, as to fall finally from that blessed way; they all did recover themselves by Repentance, they all did return to this way of *Righteousness*; and they all did persevere therein to their dying day: So their *Gray Hairs* became a *Crown of Glory* to them, being all found in the way of *Righteousness*, Note well, we must all be found in that way, when both Old Age and Death also come to find us. Old Father *Chrysostom* said, [ *Canities tunc Venerabilis est, quando ea gerit quæ canitum decent*, to wit, then is Old Age most worthily Venerable, then is Hoariness of Hairs most truly Honourable, when only such Deeds are done by it, that doth well become it both in the sight of God and Men: We Old Ones ought to make it our exercise which the blessed Apostle made his, saying, [ ἐν τῷ ἄσκησιν ] *Herein do, I do recreate my self*, (as the word signifies) to keep a Conscience void of offence, both toward God and toward Man, ] Acts 24. 16. Oh that we could make this same our Exercise, yea even our Recreation both Night and Day; using our utmost Diligence, Skill, Will and Affections, disciplining and inuring our selves herein, and thereby we shall neither be ashamed

ashamed to live, nor affraid to die. We must live (as that Apostle did) in all good Conscience, Acts 23. 1. Good, both with the goodness of Integrity, and with the goodness of Tranquility; we must keep our Consciences clear and clean, better offend all the World, yea all the *Witches* in the World, than offend our own Consciences; for Conscience is God's Spie, and 'tis Man's Overseer; as it is God's Deputy-Judge, so it is Man's Domestick Chaplain, bearing witness of all our Doings and desirings; and accordingly excusing or accusing, absolving or condemning; yea comforting or tormenting us. And [if our own *Hearts* (or Consciences) do condemn us, God is greater than our *Hearts*, and will condemn us much more,] 1 John. 3. 20. Whereas on the contrary, when Hoary Hairs are not found in the way of Righteousness, that Hoariness is so far from being Honourable; that 'tis rather *Mucor* than *Canities*, a nasty Mouldiness, and not a venerable Hoariness. 'Tis sad with such, that the older they grow, they wax worse and worse, 2 Tim. 3. 13. and do no better than stink above ground, being Dead while they Live, 1 Tim. 5. 6. What can be more odious than an old Lascivious Goat, than an old Fornicator, having Eyes full

full of Adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, 2 Pet. 2. 14, &c. Gray Hairs and Green Thoughts make an abominable agreement, such are Heteroclites in declining Nature, and Monsters of Mankind in the World; in whom it is so far gone with them, and Lust hath such an unlimited power over them, that neither strength of Grace, as Gen. 39. 9. in Young Joseph, strong Grace kept him from that great wickedness and sin against his God: nor decays of Nature can restrain them from their Youthful Extravagancy, as Gen. 18. 12. Sarah said, (after I am old, shall I lust,) old and cold is our English Proverb. It was the aggravation of Solomon's sin that he was in his Old Age so easily drawn away from God and godliness by his idolatrous Wives, 1 Kings 11. 4. Oh how ridiculous it is to behold a sinner, a Child of *Fourscore* or an hundred years old! yet such shameful sights as these are denounced *accursed*, Isa. 65. 20. But if we indeed be the true Sons and Daughters of Abraham, we ought to do what he did, of whom it is said, that he went to his Grave in a good Old Age, or as the Hebrew hath it, with a good Gray Head, Gen. 25. 8. We must imitate him in this herein, even all we that are Old, that we may be Good as well as Old, that we may

both Live and and Die in a good Old Age as he did ; for unless we walk in Abraham's steps in this World while we live we can never expect to lodge in Abraham's Bosom when we die. *Abraham died an Old Man and full of Tears*, Gen. 25. 8. He was as fully satisfied to leave the World, as men are wont to be willing to rise from the Table, when satisfied to the full with Food : And thus *Job* said, *would not live always*, Job 7: 16. but more of this after. It was the saying of *Augustus Caesar*, (that Great Emperor, in whose Reign our Lord *Jesus* was born) *Audite me Senem vos Juvenes, quem juvenem multi Senes audierunt*, be pleased Oh ye Young Men, to hearken diligently unto me, who am now Old, whom many Old Men did hear attentively when I was but Young. *David* saith, *I have been Young, and now am Old; come ye Children hearken to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord*, Psal. 34. 11. and 37. 25. Accordingly, I say in all humbleness of Soul, Oh that all People (both Young and Old) may lend an hearing Ear to me who am now very Old, whom all Persons of all Ages did savingly hearken to when I was Young; so that the Lord by his Grace made me a Spiritual Father to many Souls both Young and Old, Male

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and Female, Rich and Poor, yea Bond and Free, *All these are one in Jesus Christ*, Col. 3. 11. whom I have begotten in the Gospel, (as the Apostle doth phrase it,) 1 Cor. 4. 15. who all rise up and call me their *Spiritual Father in Christ*; amongst whom there is one remarkable Passage I cannot but record, which indeed is worthy to be kept in everlasting remembrance, namely, While I was Minister at *Cottingham* near *Hull*, that Ministerial Charge being resigned over to me by Famous Dr. *Winter*, when he went over into *Ireland* to be the Provost of the College at *Dublin*,) there it pleased the Lord so to bless my Ministry, as to honour me with the Conversion of many Souls, both in that place, and in other places round about. But above all, there was one *Thomas Raspin*, an Old Man, and one of the most substantial Men in that great Town, who (through grace) had most evidently and most eminently a new work of Conversion wrought upon his heart in his Old Age, and when Gray Hairs were upon him, which indeed made him a most lively Servant of *Christ* to his dying day, bringing forth fresh Fruit in his Old Age, &c. Psal. 92. 14. whose Funeral Sermon I then preached, wherein I observed what a rare work of God this was to be

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effectually called in our Old Age; for beside *Abraham* in the Old Testament, and *Nicodemus* in the New Testament, who were both called home from Idolatry, and from Ignorance, when they were Old Men: And very few more such Instances can be found out upon Record in either Testament. Now seeing this signal and singular Favour of God was vouchsafed to such a worthless Worm as me, about fifty years ago, when I had been but about seven years employed in the work of the Ministry; if the Lord was then pleased to cause Old Persons so savingly to hearken unto my Ministerial Voice, while I was so Young, how much more may I hope now, that all Persons of all Ages will give their most diligent Attention unto that most weighty Advice, (for I cordially profess to speak no otherwise than as an *Oracle of God*, unto all Aged ones, which cannot prove unseasonable to any that are Young; because, if the Lord delight in them to lengthen out their Lives, (and not cut them off for their wickedness in the midst of their days, *Psal. 55. 23.*) they must come to be Aged also: And therefore let all lend an hearing Ear unto that grave Counsel which I (an Old Servant of Christ) doth declare at this time to you in the Name of the Lord. We are

are told how *Moses* was fourscore Years Old when God sent him with God's Message to *Pharaoh*, *Exod. 7. 7.* to shew, that the words of an Old Messenger of God ought to take a deep impression upon the Hearts of all Hearers, in case they be not Case-hardened as *Pharaoh* was, over and over again, both by himself, and by God, and likewise by the Devil. But I hope this is not the Case of any of you, (as *Heb. 6. 9.*) tho' I mention the Case of *Pharaoh*. Now I who am very near Fourscore may likewise say, [ *I am persuaded better things of you, tho' I thus speak.* ] 'Twas *Zuinglius* his practice, when he had been inveighing against Vice, to come off with these soft words, [ *Probe Vir, hoc nihil ad te,* ] this is nothing to thee, Oh thou Honest Man. So my present prospect through Grace is, that I may prevail with many, either to hasten into, or to keep close in the way of Righteousness, if in it already; how forcible are right words, *Job 6. 25.* especially to prepared Hearts, more especially when multitude of Days and Years doth teach Wisdom? *Job 32. 7.* I have made a long discourse in discovering the many Characters of the true Conquerors through the Love of Christ. Now seeing every Conqueror doth win a Crown, which hath this In-

scription upon it, [*Vincenti Dabo, to him that overcometh, will I give it, Rev. 2. 7, 10, 26. and 3. 5, 21. and 21. 7.* but my present Task is to shew some Instances of such Conquerors, to wit, such Aged Ones as are found in the way of Righteousness, the Crown of Life, the Crown of Glory shall be assuredly set and seated upon their Hoary Heads. After the general Discourse upon this Subject aforesaid, that all us Aged Persons may come both to win and wear this blessed Crown, I shall speak more particularly upon that Theme of *Old Age*, concerning its *Nature* and its *Accidents*, and concerning those *Duties* which ought to attend it, whereby it may be made (like *Abraham's* aforesaid) a *good Old Age*, &c. 'Tis said to the honour of *Young Men*, that they had overcome the *Wicked One*, 1 *John* 2. 13. The youthful Passions be most rapid in them, then 'tis a shame for us Aged ones to fall short of these, &c.

First of the 1st of these, namely, its *Nature*, *Old Age* is, without all controversy, a real Blessing of God, in, and of it self, otherwise God would never have made it the matter of this exceeding great and precious Promise, which he was pleased to annex to the Fifth Commandment, [*Honour thy Father and Mo-*  
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that thy days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,] *Exod.* 20. 12. *Matth.* 15. 4. *Ephes.* 6. 2, 3. This Duty of Children to obey their Parents in the Lord, the Apostle calls it a *Right Duty*, *Ephes.* 6. 1. and commends it moreover as a Duty, not only good before Men, but acceptable also unto God, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. This Fifth Commandment is called the *First Commandment with Promise*, *Ephes.* 6. 2. that is, the First Affirmative Commandment, or the First in the Second Table, or the First of all the Ten, with such a Special Promise of Long Life in the Land of the Living, [*that thou maist live long,*] *Ephes.* 6. 3. As good Children do help to lengthen their Parents days, (so *Joseph* did *Jacob's*, &c.) So God for encouraging them in their Duty, doth promise to lengthen their Days; and if at any time God take this Long Lease from them here, he grants them a *Freehold-Estate* of a greater Value hereafter. If God do deny to give them the *Silver* of a Temporal Life in this lower World, he will be sure to pay them most plentifully with the *Gold* of an Eternal Life in the upper and better World; whereas on the contrary, such as are stubborn and undutiful Children, as they shorten their Parents  
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Lives, and bring down their Gray Hairs with sorrow to their Graves: So God often doth shorten the Lives of such wicked Children, and cuts them off in the midst of their Days, as God did to wicked *Abimelech*, of whom it is said, that *the Lord rendred upon him the Evil which he had done unto his Father Gideon*, Judg. 9. 56. Yea, and *Solomon* saith, [the Eve that mocketh at his Father, (as cursed *Cham* did at *Noah*) and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Vally shall pick out that mocking Eye,] *Prov.* 30. 17. God takes notice of the offending Member, and appoints this Punishment for it, and a sad one too; if this be understood of the Infernal Ravens, those Black Devils of Hell, those are cursed with a witness, whom the Holy Ghost thus curseth with such emphatical expressions, and in such exquisite Terms: Those Ravens of the Vally are said to be most ravenous, and the first thing they do to a Carcase, is to pick out the Eyes, as *Horace* saith,

*Effossos Oculos Voret Atro Guttare Corvum.*

And our Saviour adds to the saying of *Solomon*, [He that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the Death,] *Matth.* 15. 4. All this does make it manifest, that

that as a short Life is a Curse, so a long Life is a Blessing; otherwise as on the one hand *Godliness* would never have left to it by the Lord, so many precious Promises, as these, (to name but a few of the many) beside the afore-named.

(1.) God promiseth to his people (1.) [That he will fulfil the number of their days,] *Exod.* 23. 26. that is, they shall dye full of days as *Abraham*, *Gen.* 25. 8. as *Isaac*, *Gen.* 35. 29. and as *David* did, *1 Chron.* 29. 28. They all did fall like full-ripe Apples into the hands of God the right Owner, and the great Gatherer of them.

(2.) That [He will take away Sicknes from them,] *Deut.* 7. 15. that is, he will bestow the great blessing of Health upon them, which is the best of Temporal Blessings; for a sickly Life is a lifeless Life, and no better than a lingring Death: *Non est Vivere, sed Valere, Vita*, saith *Marial*, Health is the Reward of Piety, *Prov.* 3. 8.

(3.) That [they shall be blessed in the City, and blessed in the Country, blessed every where,] *Deut.* 28. 2, 3, &c. mercy and goodness follows them all the days of their Lives, as *David* saith of himself, *Psal.* 23. 6. as before he had said, [he asked Life of thee, and thou gavest it him,

him, even length of Days, &c. Psal. 21. 4. and he describing the State of a godly Man in Psal. 91. he reckons up the mighty Power of God in preserving his Person from manifold Calamities, so far as it consists with God's Glory, and the godly Man's good; yea tho' he die of the Plague, (for the best are not exempted from common Calamities) yet shall he be saved from the plague of the Plague, and with *long Life will I satisfy him*, Psal. 91. 16.

(4.) Another Divine Promise is, [*cleave unto the Lord, for He is thy Life, and the length of thy Days.*] Deut. 30. 20. Agreeable unto this is, that Godly Wisdom shall add both length of Days and a long Life, and Peace unto such as are blest with it, Prov. 3. 2. and thus God told wise Solomon, [*seeing thou hast not asked long Life, &c. but Wisdom of me, yet if thou wilt keep my Commands, I will add length of Days to thee,*] 1 King. 3. 11, 14. Many more Promises of a long Life might be added, but to avoid prolixity this shall suffice, adding only that length of Days is a transcendent privilege, and desirable in general by all Mankind. This was David's Doctrine, which he proclaimeth with a challenge to the whole World, crying (as it were) with sound of Trumpet, [*What Man is he that*

*desireth*

*desireth Life, and loveth many days that he may see Good,*] Psal. 34. 12. Augustine brings all sorts of Mortal Men and Women, who all unanimously answered to David's Question, saying with much eagerness, every one for themselves, [*Ego & Ego,*] *I would, and I would, &c.* All Persons do desire a long Life, many happy Days, and a comfortable Enjoyment of all: But alas how few there be, that take right Courses to obtain the true Happiness according to that wholesom Counsel which David doth prescribe for the compassing of it, ver. 13, 14, 15, &c. Again, 2dly. What a blessing is *long Life*, may be farther demonstrated by the many direful Threatnings which the Lord hath denounced against wickedness, (as before his pretious Promises to Godliness, &c.) that the Wicked shall not live out half his days, Psal. 55. 24. and in many more Scriptures too long here to relate, all shewing that a short Life is a curse, &c. yet know that in some cases it is a blessing, as to those who are *taken away from the evil to come*, 1 King. 14. 13. and Isai. 57. 1. Just as when a Fire breaks forth in an House, then Men carry forth their Jewels, but God conveys his Cabinet into a better World, their Souls enter into Rest and pass to Heaven.

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The Conclusion of this 1st Point then is this, That seeing a *long Life* is promised by the Lord to the Godly, and a *short Life* is threatned by Him to the Wicked, therefore it must necessarily follow from these two aforementioned premises, that a good Old Age, and to go the Grave full of Years, and full of Graces as well as Years, (as Abraham did) is a great blessing of God as to its own Nature and Substance, &c.

The 2d Point I have to discourse upon, is the Accidents of this Nature and Substance of Old Age, which are principally two, namely, (1st) The Quantity; and (2dly) The Quality of it.

First, Concerning the Quantity of it, and this is twofold.

1st That which was more special and peculiar to the Antediluvian Patriarchs, And,

(2dly) That which is most General and Universal to all the Post-diluvian generation of Mankind ever since Noah's Flood, not only unto this day, but also to the end of the World.

1st As to the Patriarchs, They indeed lived very long, and to a very great Old Age, yet they all did die at last; for the God of Nature did ordain, (upon the Fall of Adam) that Nature should decay and

and die at last. NB. Note well, That none of the Patriarchs did live out completely a Thousand Years; for that term of Time is reckoned as one Day, 2 Pet. 3. 8. and if any of those Patriarchs had lived out their Thousand Years, then that Divine Doom upon fallen Mankind, [in the Day, thou eatest the forbidden Fruit, thou shalt surely Die,] Gen. 2. 17. Now if any one of those had lived beyond a Thousand Years, then Man had not died within the compass of that Mystical Day, &c. The Patriarchs indeed had a very large Quantity, and a long Lease of their Lives; and this was for many weighty Reasons, of four several sorts: (1.) Natural. (2.) Civil. (3.) Moral. (4.) Theological.

The 1st is Natural, because (1.) There was much vertue in those Herbs upon which they constantly made their daily Meals.

(2dly) The Climate where they lived had a most temperate Air, and every way most congruous to their Constitutions.

But (3dly) above all, their own Temperance from Surfeiting and Drunkenness, for the Old Adage is, [Plures perunt Gula, quam Gladio,] more Persons do die by Intemperance, than by the Sword, &c. These Three are the Natural Reasons.

In the (2d) Place, the *Civil Reasons* are,

(1st) They lived so long both for the better populating of the World. And,

(2dly) For the better spreading of the Church of God, (out of the *White Line*) in the World; they lived thus long to beget Sons and Daughters for this purpose.

Then in the 3d Place, the *Moral Reasons* are,

(1st) For the better institution of all *Arts and Sciences*, &c. And,

(2dly) For the more promoting of their own Experimental knowledge, because they wanted those Books and Libraries which we in our days do enjoy; therefore the Lord lent them such long Leases of *Eight or Nine Hundred Years*, whereby they got the greater stock of Knowledge by such long Experience.

And in the 4th Place, The *Theological Reason* is, For the propagation of the True Religion in the World, (as was hinted above) in the *White Line*, the Posterity of *Seth*, as the *Black Line* was the Off-spring of cursed *Cain*, as is made apparent in the draught of ancient Genealogies which are drawn with a *White* and a *Black Line*, all along to distinguish the Church from the World.

NB. Note well, (1.) As the longest Day hath the shortest Night, so the longest Life

Life of those Patriarchs had the shortest Death; for the night of Death came upon them at the last; we read of no Agonies they had in their Dying, &c.

NB. Note well, (2.) As the *Microcosm*, or *great World* was drown'd (as it were) with a Dropsie, in *Noah's* deluge, and shall at last be burned (as it were) with a burning Fever; even so the *Microcosm*, or *Man*, who is called [the *little World*.] More of this afterwards.

But 2dly as to the *Quantity* or Lease of Man's Life, (since the Patriarchs time) which is now general and universal over all Mankind, we must know, that as the long Lives of those *Patriarchs*, near the beginning of the World (tho' now fallen under sin) doth intimate to us, and give us a guess, how long Man might have lived upon the Earth, (had he not sinned) before he had been translated into Heaven, as *Enoch* was: So that the Age of Man began to be shortned after *Noah's* Flood, and more especially after the *confusion of Tongues* at the building of *Babel*; for *Peleg* (which signifies *Division*, so called because Tongues were divided in that day) and his Son *Regu*, and those born after them, lived not above half the time of those that were born before them, as *Pareus* notes well in his *Medulla*

*dulla Histor. Eccles. pag. 15.* NB. Note well, May not we in our Day call our Sons [*Peleg*] as *Heber* did his Son; for in a colour of building up *Sion*, 'tis rather a *Babel*, because of the Confusion of Tongues amongst us, not understanding one anothers Languages, *Prob Dolor*, this is for Lamentation, &c. Know likewise, that after this diminution of Man's Age at the Confusion of Tongues, *Moses* comes and mentions a shorter cut of the Lease of Man's Life; as we are told in the Ninetieth Psalm, which is called the Prayer of *Moses*, that he made most probably when he saw the Carcasses of the People fall so fast in the Wilderness, and committed to Writing for the instruction of those that were left alive; yet were doomed to Death, as *Numb. 14.* at large relateth; and this Prayer of *Moses* is fitly placed next to the eighty ninth Psalm, that it might be an illustration of that passage, [*What Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death? shall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?*] *Psal. 89. 48:* After this verse, *Moses* reads a Divine Lecture upon Man's Mortality, shewing how *God turns Man to destruction*, *Psal. 90. 3:* that is, God by turning loose upon Man divers Diseases, turns him now soon out of the World.

And

And when *Moses* had set forth the misery of Man's Life by many similitudes, as a Watch, a Flood, a Sleep, Flower, &c.) which indeed is such a Misery, as cannot sufficiently be set forth by any similitudes, *ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.* He at last comes to determine how short a Lease God gives Man of his Life, saying, [*the days of our Years, are Threescore Years and Ten,*] *ver. 10.* that is, as if he had said, Tho' the Fathers lived much longer, yet as wickedness increased in the World, so Mens Days decreased; and now their Lives are daily shortened, and one Generation soon dispatched away after another: All Men have a quick dimission from their appearance upon the Stage of the World, and all this is done, that the World it self may come the sooner to its perpetual period. And tho' some [by reason of a more robust Constitution than others have, and therefore may attain to *four score Years,*] yet few exceed *seventy*, and fewer attain to it; and such as live longer, do pay interest of Pains, Sorrow and Misery for their enlargement beyond the generality of Mankind, because the Body is then much decayed, and filled with Diseases, &c. And thus *Barzillai* accounted himself a very Aged Man, when he had attained to the age of *four score Years* old,

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2 Sam. 19. 32. saying of himself [ How long have I to live, can I tast what I eat or drink, &c ? and [ *how long have I to live* ] ver. 34. that is, *my Breath is corrupt, or my Spirits are Spent, my Days are extinct, and the Grave is ready for me, as Job speaks of himself, Job 17. 1. He was Senex quasi Seminex, half dead, and felt himself pedetentim mori, to die by peacemeal, even sensim sine sensu, insensibly yielding every day somewhat to Death, and therefore he tells David with a most thankful Heart, that it was not adviseable for him to embrace his Royal Offer of a Courtly Life to him, who was now superannuated, and was already (as it were) dead both to Meat and Musick, all such delights of the Sons of Men, Eccles. 2. 8. Those days (saith he) are come upon me wherein I can have no pleasure, Eccles. 12. 2, 3, 4. Therefore 'tis high time now for me, and for all such Aged Ones as I am, to make and pack up our Fardles, and prepare to pass hence into that better Country, which is Heaven, (as the Holy Patriarchs did, Heb. 11. 13, 14, 15, 16.) My continuance can be but short here in this World, (saith old Barzillai to David) and therefore I would not now leave my Habitation, (where I may retire and rest me from the Noise of the*

the World ) but now my whole work is, a firm resolve to make ready for Death, and to lay hold on Eternal Life, 2 Sam. 19. 35, 36, 37. 1 Tim. 6. 19. And indeed this is the indispenfable Duty, not only of such as are Old, but 'tis necessary for all that are Young to do so likewise, because this Quantity, and the length of the Lives of all Persons, in all Ages, is very uncertain; the Proverb saith, as soon goes the Lambs Skin to the Market, as that of the Old Sheep; the Young may die, as well as the Old must die: And 'tis an old observation, yea and a true one, that there be more of Mankind, which die under Ten Years old, than they which live above Sixty Years. We all live in Houses of Clay, and our Foundation is in the Dust, easily crushed as the Moth, with the least touch of Man's Finger; and much sooner are we crushed with the Finger of God, ) Job. 4. 19. If our Cottages of Clay had a Foundation of Brass or Marble, they might possibly stand some time in the World; but seeing our best Foundation is no better than Dust, call'd Terra Frigilis, which is so easily crumbled asunder in the Hand of a Child: Oh 'tis no less than a Miracle of Mercy, that some of us do subsist so long alive upon the Earth, seeing the Walls of our Earthly

*Tabernacles* (as *Paul* calls the *Body*, 2 Cor 5. 2.) are weak, and the *Foundation* of our Clay-House is far weaker, being but *Dust*, light, flying and unstable *Dust*, which is soon wherried and whirled about with every puff of Wind: Hence *Man* is not only a Clod of Clay, neatly made up by a skilful Potter, as was the first *Man Adam*, [of the *Earth*, *Earthy*,] 1 Cor. 15. 47. and a Lump of *Dust*, Gen. 3. 19. but also he is but an *heap of Vanity*, yea at his best estate [Kol-*Adam*, Kol-*Abel*] *omnis Adam est totus Abel*, every *Adam* or *Man*, is wholly *Abel* or *Vanity*, even when he seems to be well underlaid on all sides, and most settled and likeliest to live, *Psal.* 39. 5, 11. And again *Adam Abel's compar est*, *Adam* is *Abel's Mate*: *Man* is like to *Vanity*, and as a *Shadow* that hath no substance in it, or subsistence at all, *Psal.* 144. 4. and he not only *consumes away* like a *Moth*, as *Psal.* 39. 11. as before, with the least touch the *Moth* is crushed; but 'tis said further, [that *Man* is crushed before the *Moth*, Job 4. 19. It is not said there, before the *Lion*, (that would be no wonder) but 'tis said [before the *Moth*,] to shew what a poor thing *Man* is, when a *Moth* can crush him, that a *Fly* can choak him, as it did *Pope Alexander*; that

that an Hair in a Mess of Milk may stifle him, as it did great *Marinus* the Roman General, and (as some say) *Pope Adrian* also. Thus *Drusus* (the Emperor, *Claudius's* Son,) was suffocated with a Pear that was cast up and caught by his Mouth in sport only. Thus *Æmilius Lepidus* was destroyed by a light bruise upon his Toe. Many such Stories I might relate, of this Nature; but to be short, let me add only one more, which I can both affirm and confirm upon my own knowledge, that a great Lord of this Land, (who was my Patron, &c.) that was brought to his Death, only by paring a Corn upon his Toe, which did after Gangreen, and struck upwards, whereof at last he died. All these *Instances* (with many more which might be added) do demonstrate the *uncertainty* of our Lives, as there is nothing more certain than our Deaths, (for that is established by the great Statute of Heaven, that all *Men must once die*, Heb. 9. 27.) yet as to the time of it, there is nothing more *uncertain*, especially considering [how *Man* is destroyed from Morning to Evening,] Job 4. 20. the Hebrew reading is, he is *beaten to pieces as in a Mortar*, with one Misery upon another, until the very Breath be beaten out of his Body at length;

yea and all this *from Morning to Evening*; that is, not only all the day long, but even all the *life long*; which is here (for its brevity) compared to an Artificial Day, and such as no Man can be sure *he shall have twelve hours to his Day*: For how many are there, whose Sun hath set at High-noon, even in the prime and pride of their Days they have been snatched away, by the Hand of Death; yea, yet higher, how many do we see whose Sun doth set at its very rising; so that they are carried from the Grave of the Womb, to the Womb of the Grave, even from their *Birth* to their *Burial*: And assuredly we all every Hour, as well as every Day, do yield somewhat unto Death, and nearer and nearer do we approach to our latter end; yea and the longest liver of us hath but a short cut from the first Rising of our Sun, to its last Setting; from our Birth to our Burial: The *Psalmist* saith, that [the *Sun knoweth the time of its going down*,] *Psalm*. 104. 19. But this cannot be said of any of the Sons of Men, that they know the time of their going down to the Grave; good *Isaac* knew it not, *Gen.* 27. 1, 2. (except only *Hezekiah*, who by a special dispensation from God, knew it;) much less can we, that are old, know the time of our

our going down, or the Quantity of our Old Age. The Jewish Rabbins do mention three Steps or Degrees in the measure of Old Age; the first they call [*Senes*,] the second they name [*Annos*] and the third they stile [*Decrepid*]; and thus they reckon, when a Man comes to be Sixty Years old, such an one they reckon'd to be reached only to the Borders of Old Age, passing along until he stepped on unto Seventy Years of Age, at which Age *David* died, see after: Then *Secondly*, They accounted him among the *Annos*, an Old Man indeed, who lived up from Seventy to Eighty Years of Age; such a Man was got a great way into that far Country of Old Age, even into that Hyperborean cold and frozen Climate, where the Snow of Hoary Hairs lay continually upon his Head undissolved. But *Thirdly*, The highest Step and Degree, is such an one as liveth above Eighty Years old; those they number among *Decrepid* Ones, that then are Superannuated, declining to a Doteage, in whom all the Senses of the Body, yea, and all the Faculties of the Soul begin daily to decay, (as in Old *Barzillai* before-named, according to his own confession unto *David*;) such very Aged Persons are accounted *wondrous Old*, as is the Expression

pression in the Old Singing Psalms, *Psal.* 90. 10. for it falls out most commonly, that in this wondrous Old Age, we pay the deep interest of Pains in dolorous Distempers, being the time wherein, (as *Solomon* saith) *we can have no Pleasure*, *Ecclef.* 12. 1, 2, &c. and according to the Old Adage, [ *his Pueri Senes* ] Old Persons are twice Children; as after their Birth, so before their Death they become merely *Childish*, which once did occasion my self to say, when I saw a very Old Woman, (one past all other Work) rocking the Cradle, that had a very Young Babe in it, behold, *there is one Child rocking another*; and thereupon I gave her the best advice I could, how it was high time for her to make sure work for a better World. Moreover, beside this Rabbinical Animadversion thus Spiritually Improved, we have another more Critical and Christian Calculation of Man's Life, made by one of our English *Martyrs*, who left behind this curious Criticism, saying, [because the common term of Humane Life, in the ordinary course of Nature, is but *Threescore Years and Ten*, according to *Moses* (that Man of God's) computation, *Psal.* 90. 10. Now if we divide those Seventy Years into four Equal Parts, then must it necessarily fol-

follow, that every Man is three parts Dead, when he doth but arrive at the Age of Fifty Years. This solid Observation doth much sooner mind us of our Mortality, than that before of the Jewish *Rabbins*; and to the same purpose I my self have (both publickly and privately) taught the like Lesson upon the end of my four Fingers and the Thumb, shewing to the Eyes of those I spake to, how the top of the little Finger represents our Childhood, the top of the next Finger shews our Youth, the top of the longest Finger demonstrates our Middle Age, when we come to our *Acme*, or fulness of Height and Health; then the top of the fore Finger, (which is a little lower than the middle Finger) declares our beginning to decline by little and little; but lastly from the top of the fore Finger to the top of the Thumb there is a great fall, and hence is it that we usually say, such an Aged Person breaks fast in a little time; the Lord help us to learn this Lesson upon our Fingers ends. *NB. Note well*, The God of Nature hath ordained, that Nature in all his created Beings must decay; yet this is the Sovereign Power of the Creator over all his Creatures to determine the Time, measure and Quantity, when the period of Nature shall come to decay, and

and be dissolved. Thus *Job* acknowledges this Divine Rule and Dominion of God over all Mankind, saying, [*his Days are determined, the number of his Months are with God*; thou hast appointed his Bounds that he cannot pass, &c.] *Job* 14. 5, 6. that is, God hath set every Man the Bounds of *his Time*, (whether *shorter*) called here [*his Days*] or longer, [*the number of his Months*;] and whether shorter or longer, they have both their Bounds which they cannot pass, no more than the unruly *Ocean* can pass the Bounds that its *Maker* hath set it, *Job* 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. We should think the same of the Waters of Afflictions that the Lord doth limit them, saying, [*thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud Waves be staid.*] This Sovereign Rule and Dominion of God over Man, in determining his Time upon Earth, is made manifest, in ordering such long Leases of Life to the *Patriarchs*, and such a short Term to the Lives of the following Ages: This is elegantly expressed thus by *Tertullian*, [*Vitæ Fugacitas illis, sed nobis tantum Spithamas Deus dedit illi Gigantes fuere, nos vero Pugiones, &c.*] God gave to the *Patriarchs* whole and long Acres of Life, but to us only a Span-breadth thereof; they were

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lofty Gyants, but we are puny Dwarfs; yea, and this Divine Dominion is daily apparent, as the only over-ruling Reason why some, *likely to live long*, do die soon; while others that are more weak with daily Distempers, do live longer than they; as well as it is the Will and Wisdom of God, that we see the Sons and Daughters of Men do die daily in all Ages, in Childhood, Youth, Middle Age, as well as Old Age: And as God hath set Bounds to *Man's Time*, so hath he determined *Man's Task* likewise; thus *John Baptist* had his *Course to fulfil*, *Acts* 13. 25. the word for *Course* in Greek is [*Δεσμός*], from whence the *Dromedary* hath his Name, which is a swift Creature, and will run an hundred miles in a day: Thus the *Baptist*, tho' he lived not long, but was cut off by *Herod*, yet he lived much in a little space; he wrought hard, and made haste in his Work, as not willing to be taken with his Task undone. Thus 'tis said of *David* also in *Acts* 13. 36. that he served out his *Generation*, and then he fell asleep after he had done his *Generation-work* according to the will of God. There is an appointed time to Man upon the Earth, *Job* 7. 1. both for his *Time*, and for his *Task*; and he who bears up the Heavens, prescribes such a *Pillar* before



fore Man, (with this Inscription writ upon it, [*ne plus ultra*] thou shalt *pass no farther*: [*stat sua cuique dies*] said *Virgil* of old, every Man hath his Day set him wherein he must die, his last Day stands, but all the rest of his days to that Day are in a running posture. Some *Lutherans* indeed do teach, that God hath not *determined the period of Men's Days*, but that it is in *Man's power* either to *lengthen* or to *shorten* them: But many *Scriptures* teach the contrary, that God hath set the Bounds of every Man's Life to a very Day (as well as his *Place of Dwelling*, Gen. 49. 13. *Acts* 17. 26.) and tho' those Bounds may be passed, which our Natural Constitution in the ordinary course of Nature *setteth*, yet those Bounds which the Almighty Power and Providence of God *setteth* us, we can never pass: For *Job* useth two *Metaphors*.

(1st) That of an *Hireling*, *Job* 7. 1. and 14. 6. Now we agree with Hirelings to work with us *for a day*, and therefore are they called *Day-labourers*.

The 2d *Metaphor* is, *Tsaba*,, warfare, *μετ' ἐπὶ μάχῃ*, Sept. *Job* 4. 1. because man's life is exposed to *Pirates*; as before: Now if our life be a *warfare*, 'tis well known how *Soldiers* have their time of *fighting*, and their time of *resting* according to the Com-

Commands of their *Captain General*. They must obey his Order for both falling on, and for falling back as he pleaseth, *stat pro Ratione Voluntas*, his Will is a Law to them. And thus every good *Soldier of Jesus Christ*, (as *Timothy* is called, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) must be willing either to *Act* or to *Rest* according to the Commands of the *Captain of our Salvation*, (as *Christ* is called *Heb.* 2. 10.) whether private *Christian* or publick *Minister*, we must all resign up our Wills into his Will, as we read in *Ecclesiastick History* of a famous *Minister*, (called *Martinus*) who being by the Lord seized upon with Sicknes, 'tis recorded how he prayed, [*Decumbens dico, Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius, laborem tuum non recuso, &c.*] that is, Lord, serve thy self of me, for thy Service is sweet to me; if thou hast no more Service to command me, then, O Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, &c. This was piously spoken, yet *Old Simeon*, (as we read *Luke* 2. 29, 30.) spake better, saying, [*Lord, now let thou thy Servant depart in peace.*] Now this good Old Man, having laid in his Heart, what he lapt in his Arms, (the most blessed Armful that he ever met with, even the Beautiful Babe of *Bethlehem*) he then sung the [*nunc Dimittas*] so called, even his

his Soul out of his Body, saying, I fear no Sin, I dread no Death, I have lived enough, I have my Life, I have long'd enough, I have my Love, I have seen enough, I have my Light, I have served enough, I have my satisfaction, I have sorrowed enough, I have my consolation, (even the consolation of Israel,) whom I and other Believers have long waited for, ver. 25. even the *Messiah*, that *Menachem* or *Comforter*, mentioned, *Lam.* 1. 16, and yet singing farther, Oh, sweet Babe, let this *Psalm* serve for a *Lullaby* to thee, and for a *Funeral* for me; Oh sleep in my Arms, and let me sleep in thy Peace. All this sweet Song *Simeon* concludes, with the procuring cause of his Sacred Musick, saying, [*for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.*] This was his great satisfaction, that he had accomplished his Service to his Most Honourable Lord and Master, who had employ'd him all his Life in most Honourable Work, and who (he was assured) was going to pay him most Honourable Wages; seeing he had got his Saviour, *ἐν χερσίν* in his Heart, as well as *ἐν χερσίν* in his Hand, as 'tis said of the *Blessed Virgin*, who therefore is said to rejoice, Greek *ἡγαλλίασε*, danced a Gallyard, and to magnifie the Lord her Saviour, as well as ours, *Luke* 1. 47.

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But far above those two Instances afore-said, to wit, (*Ancient Martinus*, and the good Old Man *Simeon*) our sinless Saviour's faith best of all concerning himself, in his last Prayer before his Death, saying, [*Mine Hour is now come, O Father, Glorifie thy Son, &c.* I have Glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, Glorifie me with thy Self, that is, my Manhood, with the same Glory which my Godhead had before the World was made, *John* 17. 1, 4, 5, &c. Our Lord did not did not ask his Wages before his Work was done; his Time was now come; and he was now Ripe and Ready to be gone into his Fathers Kingdom. This holy practice of our precious Redeemer is left upon Record, on purpose, for our instruction and comfort, *Rom.* 15. 4. that it may be a Pattern to avoid that precipitancy, which prevailed over those two famous Prophets (*men of God*) *Elijah* and *Jonah*, who both of them in a strong Pang of Passion, desired to Die before their Hour of Dying was come; and therefore are we told, that these great Servants of God were subject to the like Passions as we are, *Acts* 14. 15. *Jam.* 5. 17. It is a sinful desire for any who would be gone to Heaven, before their Work be

be done *on Earth* ; we must rather say, [ *O Father*, if thou hast any further Service for me to do, I am willing to live longer, &c. *the Will of the Lord be done*, Acts 21. 14.

Having thus far discoursed upon the first *Accident* of *Old Age*, (after its *Nature*) namely, the *Quantity* or Measure of it, which we have observed to be *Uncertain* and *Various*, either *long* or *short*, according to the *Statute-law* of the great *Law-giver*, the *Lord of Lords*, &c. [who hath appointed all men once to die, &c.] Heb. 9. 27. even *Methusalem*, (who was the longest liver, upon Scripture-record, and who came the nearest to be a *Thousand Years Old*, which is reckoned a number of perfection, never attained to by any mere man.) Tho' he lived many *Hundred Years*, even near to a *Thousand*, and begat *Sons and Daughters*, yet he died at the last; see my first *Volume* of the *History and Mystery* of the *Holy Scriptures* of *Him* at large.

Now I come to the *Second Accident* of *Old Age*, to wit, the *Quality* or Manner of it, which is either *Good* or *Evil*. Concerning the *first*, How it is a *good Old Age* in its own *Nature*, and by God's blessing upon it, I have already demonstrated in the foregoing Discourse; and I do de-

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sign to enlarge much more upon that Point, when I arrive at the *Third Part*, (after its *Nature* and *Accidents*) to declare the *Dues* to, and the *Duties* of *Aged Ones*, whereby *Old Age* may become *good* indeed.

Now as touching the latter of these two, That *Old Age* is an *Evil Age*, that *Senium & Malum convertuntur*: These two are convertible Terms; *Solomon* the *Wise* doth sufficiently evince and evidence, in his saying, [ *Oh, Young Ones, remember your Creator, before Evil Days come, and the Years draw nigh, wherein you shall say, I have no pleasure in them,* ] Eccles. 12. 1. Wherein he begins to describe,

First, The wearisom evils of *Old Age*, from the latter end of *ver. 1.* to the last end of *ver. 6.* Then,

Secondly, Of the evils of *Death*, *ver. 7.* both which he brings in as two strong motives, to urge Young ones to be mindful of their Duty.

For, First in the General, All Authors, both those that be *Civil*, as well as those that be *Sacred*, do unanimously concur in this point, That *Old Age* and *Misery* are very seldom found separated. As,

(1.) *Plutarch* saith, *Senectus ut Africa semper aliquid Novi adportat*, as *Africa* is never without some Monster, so *Old Age*

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Age is never without some Ailment.

(2.) Cato saith, [ *Solet Senectus esse, Deformis, Infirma, Obliviosa, Edulenta, Lucrosa, Indocilis & Molestia,* ] that is, Old Age useth to be Deformed, Feeble, Forgetful, Toothless, Covetous, Unteachable and Unquiet.

(3.) Horace saith, [ *Multa Senem circumveniunt Incommoda,* ] Many are the Inconveniencies that do encompass Old Persons, &c.

(4.) Seneca saith in his Epistle 58. and that out of his own Experience, [ *How are our last Days the very Dregs and Lees of our Lives,* ] when the clearer part is drawn out and spent, then the worst part does sink down to the bottom.

To add no more of Pagan Authors, save only Epictetus, (5.) calls Old Age, [ *Vita Mors, Cadaver Spirans, & Mobile Cadaver,* ] that is, Old Age is a Living Death, 'tis a Breathing Corps, yea a moving Carcase.

Now hear what Sacred Authors say better than those aforesaid, is too long to quote together in this place, seeing so much hath been shewed hereof already. The Book of our own smarting Experiences speak loud enough to convince us of the Evil of Old Age. How many Bodily Infirmities doth daily attend us that are Aged,

Aged, what Aches of the Bones, what Pains in the Joints, what Convulsions of the Sinews, what Torments of the Bowels; how dolorous are those Diseases of Collick, Stone and Strangury in Old Persons; what Hollow Coughs, Distillations of Rhume, what Debility of Nature inroads daily upon all our Senses of Body, and upon all the Faculties of the Mind, our Appetites to Food, our Digestions of Food both feeble; so that in a word, Old Age is like the Common-Sewer, into which all Diseases do empty themselves; and therefore Old Age may well be called an Evil Age.

Secondly, After this General, more particularly the, The Evils of Old Age may be reduced to Three Heads, to wit, Natural, Moral and Spiritual.

(1st) The Evils that are Natural to it: And (1.) As to the Body, Many Distempers do attend it, as those even now named; and many more beside, whereof Barzillai complained, as before, 2 Sam. 19. 34, 35. All Aged Persons do smartly feel the Burden of it, as that ancient Woman in Plautus, who being wished by her Friends (that were walking along with her) to hasten and amend her pace, smartly answered, that she could not do so, for she carried a great Burden upon her Back;

and when no Burden did (as they said) appear to their Eyes, she replied again, that *Threescore Years* were passed over her Head, and that was her *Burden*. And the same may be said by those, whose Spirits are much spent, and whose Strength is much wasted even at that Age; for then Age it self alone is a *Burden*, much more in those that live up even to a *Doteage* and *Uselesness*. This is made more manifest by *Solomon*, Eccle. 12. where he declares the Decays accompanying Old Age; he saith according to our *English Translation*, [then the *Grashopper* shall be a *Burden*,] ver. 5. but the original word, Hebrew, signifies [the *curvature* or *crookedness* of the *Back*, which in Old Persons stands bent like a *Grashopper*; and this makes the motions of such as are crooked with Age to be the more burdensome, or the *Phrase* there is *Hyperbolical*, intimating, that every light matter will oppress those with their Burden, who are already become a Burden to themselves: And beside this *Natural Evil* of Old Age, as to the *Body*, there is a *second* as to the *Estate*, many *Losses* and *Crosses* do come upon them; as the loss of some of their nearest and dearest Relations, and such like, complaining as Old *Jacob* did, [who mourned for his *lost Son* many days, and refused

*refused to be Comforted*,] Gen. 37. 34, 35. and again, [ *Joseph is not*, and *Simeon is not*, and must I lose my dear *Benjamin* too, as he had lost *Rachel*, &c? Gen. 42. 36. Tho' *Jacob's* mourning was only for *supposed losses*, yet he had *real ones* also, as of his beloved *Rachel*, &c. Many more instances may be mentioned, as of *David* mourning for the *real loss* of his Son *Ab-salom*, for whom he made so deep a lamentation, &c. This loss of Relations is the greater *Natural Evil*, because it is against the course of Nature for Parents to bury Children, whereas Children use to bury Parents, for one Generation passeth away, when another cometh; so that a Generation of Children doth (as it were) thrust out of the World a Generation of Parents by Natures Law. To all this let me add my own exercise with this Evil, who have lived to bury *eight Children* out of *nine*, &c. And yet there is a *third Natural Evil* attending *Old Age*, as to their respect and reverence from the Younger Sort; alas, how are they as *Lamps despised*, as Old *Job* complains, *Job* 12. 4, 5. and more fully *Job* 19. 15, 16, 17, 18. and 30. 1, to 11, 12, 13. where he sighs out these sad words, saying, [ *Upon my Right Hand rise the Young, they push away my Feet*, &c. ] which explaineth what he had said, ver. 1.

that *Younger* than he was, did not only deride him, and laughed him to scorn, (tho' they were no better than *Shagrag Dog-keepers*, as he calls them, and most miserably poor, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.) Yet these *Young Scoundrils* dared to kick him with their Feet, or trip up his Heels to lay him along. *Job* was wont to have the chiefeſt Seats in the *Temple*, and lowly Salutations in the *Market-place*: He was now *Ancient*, and had been *Honourable*, as he had ſet forth at large in *Chap.* 29. but here he bewails his Miſery, that he cannot have a Room in any Place to ſtand in, but every *paltry Boy* is ready to push him down, &c. Thus likewise thoſe Ill-bred and Miſtaught Children did petulantly deride that Old Prophet *Eliſha*, yelling out thoſe impudent words, [*go up thou Bald-pate*, &c.] 2 Kings 2. 23. Having nothing worſe to upbraid him with, they taunt that Head with their Scorns, which God had crowned with Honour, *Prov.* 16. 31. And the ſame God who had thus honoured his Servant *Eliſha*, doth likewise vindicate this diſhonour caſt upon him, ordering *two She Bears* (poſſibly robb'd of their Whelps) to worry *forty and two* of thoſe Ill-natur'd Children: As their Childhood did not excuſe them, ſo their Idolatrous Pa-

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rents were puniſhed in being writ Childleſs, for giving them no better Education; ſee more of this in my *Third Volume* on this ſame *History*. NB. Note well, Suppose any of us *Aged Ones* be at any time derided by *Younger ones*, this may allay our Grief, that God doth not lead us into any untrodden Path, for our *Betters* have gone before us therein, &c.

The *Second* and *Third Evils*, to wit, *Moral* and *Spiritual*, which do attend *Old Age*, may be put together, and briefly improved. As,

(1st) The *Moral Evils* are, (1.) An *over-eagerness* in a greedy ſeeking of Wealth, and yet a niggardly unwillingneſs to ſpend what is gotten; no not ſometimes to ſupply the Neceſſities of Nature, &c.

(2.) A *dull*, ſlow and cold pace in all proceedings of Buſineſs, yea with a timorous and fearful temper of Mind, and yet fretting and chafing at the ſame dullneſs and backwardneſs that he beholds in others under him.

(3.) The *Old Man* is of a *morose* Mind, hard to be pleaſed himſelf, and as hard to pleaſe others; a froward Spirit is eaſily diſpleaſed, (as we ſee in Babes at the Breſt, &c.) yet are not ſo eaſily pleaſed again.

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(4.) Another *Moral Evil* in the Aged is, to complain of *present Times*, but praising *former Days* of old, which the Old Men of those Days did as much complain of, as *he* doth of *these*: Whereas indeed the fault lieth not in the *Times*, (either present, or former,) but in the *Persons* that *liveth* in those *Times*, for in every Age, better Hearts and Lives would make better Times.

Then (2dly) After these *Moral Vices* do follow *Spiritual Sins*, which are found in Old Age, such as (1.) *Ignorance*, a meer Child for knowledge, no Fool like to an Old Fool; and therefore tho' this *filly Child* be an *hundred Years* old, he is denounced by a Divine Mouth to be *accursed*, *Isai. 65. 20.* Thus the Old Age of that *filly Child Shimei*, (who childishly plaid away his own Life) could not exempt him from Justice; for it was *David's* charge to his Son *Solomon*, [ *let not his Hoary Head go down to the Grave in peace,* ] *1 Kings 2. 6.*

(2.) An *indocible, untractable Frame* attends Old Age to learn the great Mysteries of Godliness, as appeared in Old *Nicodemus*, tho' a *Master in Israel*, and could not but have read of a *New Heart*, which God promised to give, &c. in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and in other places of the *Old Testament*; yet how *awkward* was he

he in entertaining the Doctrine of Regeneration, objecting against it; First, [ *How can a Man be born again?* ] And after *Christ* had told him, that the way of the *Spirits working* this work, was *incomprehensible*, &c. yet comes he off again with his ( *How can these things be?* ] *John 3. 4, 10.* This *Old Man*, (nay an *Old Master* in teaching work) understood no more of the Mystery of the New Birth, than a *rude Rustick* can comprehend the profoundest Points of the *Mathematicks*, which be no better than *Gibberish* to him when he hears them: NB. However it is no matter how dull the Scholar is, when *Christ* himself will become the Teacher, as here; for this *Nicodemus*, who had long been a Night-bird, during the Life of *Christ*, did at the last break forth as the Sun from under a Cloud, to manifest his Love to his Lord after his Death, *John 19. 39.*

(3.) To illustrate this farther, *Old Age* is *Self-conceited*, and cannot easily be convinced, through Pride of Spirit rooted in it, he is too wise to learn, therefore was it that *Solomon* preferred [ a *poor and wise Child*, before an *Old and Foolish King*, who abhors to be admonished, ] *Eccles. 4. 13, 14.* for the *Young Child* is apt to learn, and ready to receive Instruction, and will be as careful to follow it; and all this is

is *true Wisdom*: Whereas an *Old and Foolish King* is not only *weak*, but also *wilful*, and his *Pride* is the ground of his *Wilfulness*; as he is short-sighted in his *Mind*, so he is stubborn and unconvincible in his *Will*: There have been such *Kings* in the *World*, who in their *Old Age*, have shewed themselves so self-willed, and so wedded to their own vain *Opinions*, that they never endured to ask *Advice*, and if any were given them, what they fancied not, they assuredly rejected it; though they sometimes, yea very seldom ask *Counsel*, yet never follow any but their *own*, until they ruin themselves and their *People*.

(4.) As the *Three* former brings *Ruine, &c.* to the *Bodies*, not only of *Old and Foolish Kings*, but also of *Old and Foolish Subjects*, who do harden their *Hearts* against all good *Counsel*; yea, and that which is worst of all, these *Three* afore-named, bring destruction to their *Souls* likewise, by their living and dying in that great sin of *Unbelief*, and *final Impenitency*, which their *custom in sin* (taking away all *conscience of sin*) doth at last seal them up in, where the superabounding *Grace of God* doth not interpose to disappoint it. This refractory and untoward, untractable Temper of ab-

abhorring to be taught, hath been a long time observed, universally to accompany *Old Age*; insomuch that this was the first ground of that *Old Greek Adage*, [*νεστο διδασκαλος*,] *Senum Doctor*, a Teacher of *Old Persons*; by which *Phrase* the *Wisdom* of the *Ancients* used to express any *labour in vain*, like those other *Phrases*, [*Æthiopem lavare*] to wash a *Blackmore white*, which *Phrase* is used in *Scripture*, *Jer. 13. 23*. And to the same purpose is that *Adage* used by *Pagan Authors*, [*Sysiphi saxum volvere*,] a *Poetical Fiction*, that this *Sisyphus* was doomed unto as a punishment for his former *Faults*, that he was to roll an heavy *Stone* up the *Hill*, which then did run down again of it self with its own weight; and when it came to the bottom, his work was to roll it up again; yea, and that which was the *Mischief* and *Misery* of this *Man* in this *Work*, it must be his only and continual *Task* for all his time, &c. All these *Adages* do demonstrate the unteachableness of *Old Age*, and that if we do not (through the *Grace of God*) remember our *Creator in the days of our Youth*, while that tractable *Temper* continueth with us, but still drive it off until *Old*, then become we so slow, so oblivious, and so settled upon the *Lees*, &c. insomuch that the

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