

A
CLOUD
OF
Faithfull Witnesses:
LEADING TO
THE
Heavenly Canaan.

OR,
A COMMENTARIE UPON THE
Eleventh Chapter to the Hebrewes, preached in
Cambridge by that godly and judicious Divine,
Mr. W. PERKINS.

Long expected and desired; and therefore published at the
request of his Executors, by WIL. CRASHAW, and
TH. PIERSON, Preachers of Gods Word: who heard
him preach it, and wrote it from his mouth.

PHIL. 3. 17.

Looke on them that so walke, as yee have us for an example.

HEB. 13. 8.

Whose faith follow, considering what hath bene the end of their conversion.



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TO
THE NOBLE AND
VERTVOVS GENTLEMEN,

SIR IOHN SHEAFFIELD, Knight:

AND

MR. OLIVER ST. IOHN:

Sonnes and Heires to the Right Honourable

EDMVND Lord SHEAFFIELD,

Lord President of the North:

And OLIVER Lord ST. IOHN, *Baron of Blethoe:*

Grace and Peace.



He gracious promises of God (Honourable and most worthy Gentlemen) made to the holy Patriarks, touching the Land of Canaan, were singular comfort to the beleieving Israelites, in their bondage of Egypt. And the renewing of the same by the hand of *Moses* (whose words God confirmed by so many miracles) mult needs augment their joy abundantly, although their bonds at that time increased. But the pledge of Gods presence in the cloudie pillar, whereby he led them in the wilderness both night and day, did so farre exceed all the promises for the mat-

ter of consolation, that even *Moses* himselfe desired rather to bee detained from the promised Land, than deprived of the comfort of that his presence in the way: *If thy presence* (saith he) *goe not before us, bid us not depart hence.* Now, these being examples unto us, and evident types of our estate who live under the Gospell, shew apparantly, that howsoever Beleevers be greatly cheered in their spirituall travell, by the gracious promises which God in Christ hath made unto them; yet this their joy is much increased, by the view of those that have gone before them in the way of faith, who are unto them as a *Cloud of witnesses*, or a *cloudie pillar*. For, howsoever the truth of God be the only ground of sound consolation: yet because wee are akin to *Thomas*, and will not beleve unlesse we see and feelee; therefore it is, that by the example of Beleevers (wherein is some sensible evidence of the comfort of Gods truth) wee are farre more cheered, than by the promise it selfe alone.

Here then behold what great cause we have to cast our eyes upon this *Cloud of witnesses*; which the Holy Ghost hath created as a pledge of his presence, and a direction to all those that shall follow their steps in the practice of faith, till the worlds end. Shall *Moses* affect that Cloud so much, which led them only the way to a temporall inheritance: and shall not wee much more bee ravished with delight in this

Cloud

Exod. 33. 15.

1 Cor. 10. 6.

cloud which leads us to the Kingdome of Heaven? In all estates *the just must live by faith*: For, *we walke by faith, and not by sight*. And what is the hope and happinesse of a Christian man, but to receive at last *the salvation of our soules, which is the end of our faith*, and period of this walke. But any faith will not support us herein: some begin in the *Spirit*, who end in the *Flesh*; going out with *Paul* for a while, but at length retorne with *Demas* to the world, neither can they doe otherwise: for, *Apostasie is the Catastrophe of Hypocrisie*. Hee that would deceive in his profession, is usually deceived of his salvation.

Wherefore this shall be our wisdom, to see to our soules, that our faith (as the beloved *Apostle* said of love) *be not in word, and tongue, but in deed, and in truth*. And for our better direction in trying the truth of our faith, wee have here many notable presidents in this *Cloud of witnesses*: consisting of most worthy Belcevers in all ages before Christs incarnation: all which shewed the life of faith by their works; and we in them may see how to put our faith in practice. Now, the rather must we attend hereunto, because in all estates we must practise faith. For, *without faith it is impossible to please God*. And what estate of life can possible befall us, wherein we have not a lively patterne and fore-runner, leading us the way to Heaven, within the compasse of this Cloud? Art thou a *King* or *Magistrate*? Behold *David*, *Hezekias*, and the *Judges*: Art thou a Courtier? Looke on *Moses*: Art thou a martiall man? Behold *Samson*, *David*, *Ishab*. Here is *Enoch*, *Noe*, and the Prophets for Ministers: the Patriarchs for Fathers: *Sara* and the *Shunamite* for mothers: *Isaac* and *Ioseph* for children: Here is *Abel* for Shepherds, and *Rahab* for victuallers: Here are some that lived in honour, in peace, and plentie, some in want, and some in sicknesse: but most of all in persecution; because therein is the greatest triall of faith. So that, which way soever we turne us, if we walke by faith, wee have here some faithfull witness to goe before us. And to cleare their steps the better to our sight, that so we may follow hard towards the marke without wandering, wee have here a notable light in this learned Commentarie; which, we must confesse, is much obscured, for lacke of the refining hand of the godly Author himselfe: but now, seeing that thining light is quenched, use this our Lampe: it is fed with such oyle as we received in the Lords Sanctuary, from that Olive Tree, whence many an one did fill his vessell. And being importuned to expose the same for the common good, we have presumed to place it under the shelter of your Honourable names; beseeching God it may helpe to *guide our feet in the way of peace*.

The religious presidents of your Honourable Parents (Right Noble and hopefull Gentlemen) must perswade you much to be found, and constant in the faith: for declining in religion, brings a staine of honour, and decaye even of temporall portion. But labour you to increase in grace, and trust the Lord with your outward greatnesse. Honour him, and he will honour you: delight in him, and he will give you your hoiy hearts desire; his faithfullnesse will bee your shield, to the griefe of those that envie your happinesse. But, beware of bad example, and evill counsell, which are the hane and poison of younger yeares. Walke with God like *Enoch*; use the world as *Abraham* did; and follow *Moses* in the matters of delight, forsaking them when they become the pleasures of sinne. So shall you *obtaine good report*, and your memories shall be blessed with your Posterities, like these faithfull Witnesses. *Novemb. 10. 1608.*

Yours in the Lord to be commanded,

William Crashaw,

Thomas Pierston.

A
COMMENTARIE
UPON THE ELEVENTH
CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE
to the Hebrewes.

V E R S E I.

*Now Faith is the ground of things which are hoped for: and
the evidence of things not seene.*



Concerning Faith, two points are necessary to be knowne of every Christian; the *doctrine*; and the *practice* of it: the whole *doctrine* of faith (being grounded and gathered out of the word of God) is comprised in the *Creed*, commonly called the *Apostles Creed*: which being already by us expounded, it followeth in order (next after the *doctrine*) to lay downe also the *practice* of faith: for which purpose wee have chosen this 11. chap. to the *Hebrewes*, as being a portion of Scripture, wherein the said practice of faith is most excellently and at large set downe.

This chapter depends on the former thus: We may read in the former chapter, that many Jewes having received the faith, and given their names to Christ, did afterward fall away, therefore towards the end of the Chapter, there is added a notable exhortation tending to persuade the Hebrewes to persevere in faith unto the end, as also to suffer patiently what-ever shall befall them in the profession of it: and to urge the exhortation there are divers reasons, not needfull to be alleged: for they concerne not the present purpose.

Now, in this chapter hee continues the same exhortation: and the whole Chapter (as I take it) is nothing else in substance, but one reason to urge the former exhortation to perseverance in faith; and the reason is drawne from the excellency of faith: for this chapter doth divers wayes set downe what an excellent gift of God faith is: his whole scope therefore is manifest to be nothing else, but to urge them to persevere and continue in that faith, proved at large to bee so excellent a thing: and indeed hee could not bring a better argument to move them to love and hold fast their faith, than by persuading them of the excellency of it. For common reason bids us not onely chuse, but

hold fast that that is excellent.

Out of this coherence wee may learne in a word, that perseverance in faith is a matter not of ordinary necessity, nor of meane excellency, to the urging whereof the author of this Epistle, useth so large and so forcible an exhortation; in so much as, whereas ordinary exhortations occupy the roome of one or some few verses, this is continued through *divers chapters*.

The parts of this whole chapter are two:

1. A generall description of Faith, from the 1. v. to the 4.

2. An illustration or declaration of that description, by a large rehearsal of manifold examples of ancient and worthymen in the old Testament, from the 4. v. to the end. Of these two in order:

The description of Faith consists of three *actions or effects* of faith, set downe in three severall verses:

The first effect in the first verse. *Faith makes things which are not* (but onely are hoped for) after a sort to *subsist*, and to be present with the beleever.

The second is in the 2.v. *Faith makes a beleever approved of God*.

The third in the 3.v. *Faith makes a man understand and beleieve things incredible to sense and reason*.

Of these in order.

Now faith is the ground of things which are hoped for: and the evidence of things which are not seene.

This first ver. contains the first effect in the description of faith, wherein first let us see the true meaning of the words: secondly, what instructions they doe naturally yeeld unto us. For the meaning, we must examine the words severally. *Now faith*]

Faith in the word of God, is specially of three sorts: Historicall, Miraculous, Justifying or saving faith.

1. *Historicall faith* is not onely a knowledge of the Word, but an assent of the heart to the truth of it: and this faith is generall not onely to all men, good and bad, but even to the devils themselves: Jam. 2. 19. Thou beleevest there is one God, thou dost well: the devils also beleeve it, and tremble. Now hee that will beleeve out of the Scripture there is one God, hee will beleeve historicallly any thing in the Scripture.

2. *Miraculous*, or the faith of miracles: which is, An inward perswasion of the heart, wrought by some speciall instinct of the holy Ghost in some man, whereby hee is truly perswaded, that God will use him as his instrument for the working of some miracles: this also is generall, both to elect and reprobate, *Judas* had it with the rest of the Apostles.

3. *Saving* (commonly called *justifying*) *faith*, which is, A speciall perswasion wrought by the holy Ghost in the heart of those that are effectually called, concerning their reconciliation and salvation by Christ.

Of these three sorts of *faith*, the third is principally meant in this place. And although in the description, and over all the chapter, there are some things that agree to other faith than it: yet I say the generall scope in this chapter, is principally of that faith that saves a man. It becomes us therefore to learne carefully the instructions that concerne the practice of this faith, for it is no lesse than saving faith.

Secondly, it is said; This faith is the *ground* or *substance*; for the Word signifieth both. The meaning is: things hoped for, as yet are not, and so have no being nor substance: Now faith that beleeves the promises, and applyeth them, that faith gives to those things which yet are not (after a sort) a substance or subsistence in the heart of the beleever: so that that thing which never had, nor yet hath a being in it selfe, by this faith hath a being in the heart of the beleever; this I take to be the true meaning.

Thirdly, it followeth of what things this faith is the ground or substance: namely, of *things hoped for*, and things not *seene*. And these bee of two sorts: either in regard of the Fathers of the old Testament alone, or of them and us both.

Of the first sort were these two: 1. The incarnation of Christ. 2. The publishing of the Gospell, both to Jew and Gentile in a glorious manner: both these were *hoped for* of them, but we have *seene* them: to them they had a being onely in *faith*, to us a being in themselves.

Now unto the Fathers of the old Testament, their faith gave these two things a being in their hearts and soules, though they came not to passe many hundreth yeares after.

There are other things which we hope for as well as they, which are to come, and not seene in respect of us both; and they be six:

1. *Justification*, standing in the remission of finnes.

2. *Sanctification* in this life.

3. The perfection and accomplishment of our *sanctification* after this life.

4. The *Resurrection* of the body, and reuniting it with the soule.

5. *Glorification* of body and soule.

6. *Life everlasting*, and glory with God in heaven.

The first they saw not with the eye of the body, neither doe we; yet they hoped for them, and so doe we: they had no being in themselves to them, neither have they as yet to us: but this true *saving faith* gave to them, gives to us, and will give to every beleever, whilst the world lasteth, such a certaine assurance of them that they seeme present unto us, and wee seeme presently to enjoy them: wee cannot enjoy any of them fully; but *saving Faith* hath this power to give them all a present being in our hearts, and us such a reall possession of them, as greatly delighteth a Christian soule: in so much as the feeling of the sweetnesse of this glory, though it be to come, overwhelmeth the feeling of a worldly misery, though it be present.

Fourthly, it is added, *And the evidence*

This word signifieth and teacheth us two things concerning faith:

1. *Faith is an evidence*, &c. that is, Faith so convinceth the mind, understanding, and judgement, as that it cannot but must needs, yea, it compelleth it by force of reasons unanswerable to beleeve the promises of God certainly.

2. It is an evidence: that is, whereas life everlasting and all other things hoped for, are invisible, and were never seene of any beleever, since the world beganne: this saving faith hath this power and property, to take that thing in it selfe invisible, and never yet seene, and so lively to represent it to the heart of the beleever, and to the eye of his minde, as that after a sort he presently seeth and enjoyeth that invisible thing, and rejoyleth in that sight, and enjoying of it: and so the judgement is not onely convinced, that such a thing shall come to passe, though it be yet to come; but the mind (as farre as Gods word hath revealed, and as it is able,) conceives of that thing, as being really present to the view of it.

Let one example serve for all: Life everlasting is a thing hoped for: now *Faith*, not only by infallible arguments grounded upon the word and promise of God, convinceth a mans judgement, that it shall come to passe, (in so much as he dare say, that he knoweth certainly, there is life everlasting, as that hee liveth and moveth) but this *Faith* also (as much as Gods word hath revealed, and as farre forth as the minde of man is able to conceive of it,) so representeth this life everlasting to the eye of the soule, as that the soule doth seeme to apprehend and enjoy this life everlasting: yea, and often in such measure, as that hee contenteth the world, and all the present felicitie of it, in comparison of that measure of the joyes

joyes thereof, which *faith* representeth to his soule: and thus faith makes that present which is *absent*: and makes that manifest and visible, which in it selfe is invisible: invisible to the eyes of the body, it makes visible to the eye of the soule; the sight of which eye is both given and continued, and daily sharpened by *saving faith*. And thus faith is a most excellent evidence of things not scene. So then the whole summe of this first effect, is briefly thus much: whereas things to be believed, as perfection of sanctification, resurrection, glorification, &c. are not yet scene, neither can be, in that they are not yet come to passe; yet if a man have grace certainly to *believe* the promises of God, these things shall have a being to his soule: in that both his judgement knoweth assuredly they shall come to passe, and his soule in most lively and joyfull representations, seemeth to enjoy them.

Hitherto of the meaning of the first effect.

Now in the second place, let us see what instructions this first effect thus unfolded doth minister unto us.

First, whereas *faith* gives a substance and being to things that are not, we learne that the fathers in the old Testament that lived before the incarnation of Christ, were truly partakers of the body and blood of Christ.

If any allege that this is strange, considering that Christ had then no body and blood, neither had he any untill the Incarnation; and how then could they receive that which then was not?

I grant it is true, they then had no being, and yet the Fathers received them: but how can this be? I answer, by the wonderfull power of *saving faith*, which makes things that are not in nature, to have in some sort a being and subsistence: and so was Christ (though he was to come) present to the believers of the old time. For, Apoc. 13. 8. *Christ is a Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world*: that is, slaine as well then as now: and that not onely in the counsell and decree of God, whereby hee is borne and slaine in all times and places; not onely in regard of the eternall power, efficacy, and merit of his death; but also even in respect of the heart of the *believer*, whose faith makes that, that is locally *absent*, after a sort truly and really *present*: even so also is Christ a Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world.

See a plaine demonstration hereof in Joh. 8. 56. *Abraham saw me* (saith Christ) *and rejoiced*: How could this be, when as Christ was not borne of a thousand yeares after? *Ans.* This could not be in reason, but it was indeede to *Abrahams faith*: whereby he saw Christ more lively, and more to his joy and consolation, so many hundred yeares after he was, than many which lived in Christs time, and saw him, and heard him, and conversed with him: for they

living with him, yet were as good as absent from him, because they believed not in him: And *Abraham*, though Christ was so far from him, yet by his faith was present with him. Again, 1 Cor. 10. 7. the ancient believing Israelites ate the same spirituall bread, and drinke the same spirituall rocke, and that rocke was Christ: How could they eat and drinke Christ so long before he was? I answer, they did it by reason of that wonderfull power of *faith*, which makes a thing absent present to the believer: by that faith they received Christ, as lively, as effectually, as much to their profit and comfort, as we doe since his coming.

If any man aske, how could their faith apprehend that, that then was not? I answer, by giving them interest and title to it: and so the fathers are said by faith to have received Christ, because their faith gave them right and title in Christ, and in their hearts they felt the efficacy of his death and resurrection, whereby they died to sinne, and were renewed in holiness, as well as we are now by the same efficacy.

Secondly, whereas *faith* makes things absent, present;

Here they are confuted, that teach that the Lords Supper is no Sacrament, unless the body and blood of Christ be either truly turned into the bread and wine, or at least bee in or about the bread; and that so he is locally present, and must locally and substantially be received: and this (say they) is the most comfortable receiving of Christ: for what comfort is it to receive one absent? but these men know not this notable prerogative of true faith, *Faith* gives being to things which are not, and makes things present which are absent: they therefore that will have Christ locally present, they take this noble prerogative from faith: for here is nothing absent, which faith should make present: wee need not goe in this Sacrament to require a corporall presence: it is sufficient if we have true faith; for that makes him present much more comfortably, than it might be his bodily presence would be unto us.

If any man aske how this can be? I answer, The *faith* of the receiver knoweth best; and yet reason can say something in this case: for suppose a man looke earnestly upon a starre; there are many thousand miles betwixt his eye and the starre, yet the starre and his eye are so united together, as that the starre is after a sort present to his eye. So if we regard locall distance, we are as farre from Christ as earth is from heaven: but if we regard the nature of *Faith*, which is to reach it selfe to Christ, where ever he be, in that regard Christ is present: and why should not this be so? for if the bodily eye, so feeble and weak, can reach so far as to a starre, and joyne it to it selfe, and so make it present; why should not much more the piercing eye of the soule reach up to Christ, and make him present to this comfortable feeling of it selfe?

Thirdly, here wee learne how to behave our

themselves in a strange temptation, whereby God useth to exercise his children. The Lord after that he hath received his children into his favour, continueth not alwayes to manifest that favour unto them; but oftentimes puts backe the feeling of it for a time, that afterward, hee may shew it againe in more comfortable manner unto them, and that they may afterward more sensibly feele it, and more earnestly love it, and more carefully labour to keepe it, when they have it.

Now for the time of this eclipse of the favour of God, hee not onely darkeneth his love, but makes them feele also such a measure of his wrath, as that they will often thinke themselves call awayes from the favour of God. *David* and *Job* were often exercised with this temptation, as appeareth by their most lamentable and bitter complaints: yea, *David* doubts not, *Psal. 77. 9.* to challenge the Lord, that hee *hath forgotten to be gracious, and hath shut up his loving kindness in displeasure.* And *Job*, chap. 15. 26. complaineth to the Lord, that hee *writeth bitter things against him, and makes him to possesse the finnes of his youth;* words, as it may be, of men forsaken of God: and indeed so for that time they thought of themselves. If it please the Lord thus to deale with us, so as wee feele nothing else but his wrath wrassling with our consciences, neither can thinke otherwise by present feeling, but that God hath forsaken us; what should we doe in this pittifull case? should we despaire, as reason would bid us? no, but take this course; Call to minde Gods mercifull promises, and his ancient former love; and cast thy selfe upon that love, though thou canst not feele it: when thou hast most cause to despaire, then labour against it: when thou hast no reason to beleve, then beleve with all thy power. For, remember the power and prerogative of thy *faith*: it beleeveth not things that *are*, and manifestly appeare, so much as such things that *are not*, and have no being. So then, when Gods favour seemes to bee lost, and have no being to thee, then is Gods favour a fit object for thy *faith*, which beleeveth those things that *are not*. Let all the devils in hell set themselves against thy poore soule, and if thou holdest fast this *faith*, they cannot all make thee sinke under it: for when the devill *faith*, Thou hast lost Gods favour; by *faith* a man answereth, though Gods favour be lost unto my feeling, yet to my *faith* it is not: My *faith* gives it a being, and so long (say what thou wilt) I will never feare that it is lost. When God puts backe his favour, and fights against thee with his wrath, doe as *Jacob* did, *Gen. 32. 27. 29.* wrastle with God, though thou have but one legge: that is, though thou have but one little sparke of *faith*, fight with that little *faith*, lay hold by it on God, and let him not go until he hath blessed thee, in turning againe unto thee his favourable countenance: and say with *Job*, 13. even in the very heart of

thy temptation, *O Lord, though thou knit my body and flesh of mine, yet will I trust in thee for everlasting life*: yea, and though Gods anger should seeme to encrease, yet for all that take faster hold, and faint not; for *faith* will never faile thee: it will restore Gods love when it seemes lost; it will set it before thine eyes, when it seemes to be hid. For marke well but this one realitie, *faith* will give life everlasting a being, and make it present to thy soule, which indeed yet never had being to thee; how much more can it give a being to Gods favour, and make it present to thy soule, which once had, and indeed hath still a being, and was never lost indeed, but onely to a mans feeling? Thus, true *faith* is able to answer this temptation, whether it come in life, or in the pangs of death.

Fourthly, whereas *faith* is called an *evidence*; hence wee learne, that the nature of *faith* stands not in doubting, but in certainty and assurance. The Romish doubting of the essence of *faith*, is as contrary to true *faith*, as darkness to light: for *faith* is an *evidence of things hoped for*, that is, it convinceth the judgement by unsalable arguments; knowing as certainly the truth of the promises, and for the things hoped for, as that God is God. But Rome will needs joyn *faith* and *doubting*, which indeed fight like fire and water, and can never agree together in every respect, but one will in the end destroy the other.

Object. But it seemeth, doubting is a part, or at least a companion of *faith*, for we doubt as well as beleve: and who is so *faithfull* as doubteth not? *Ans.* We doe so: but what then? wee should not; for God commands us to beleve, and not to doubt: therefore to beleve, because it is commanded of God, is a vertue: and if it be a vertue, then to doubt is a vice; *faith* and *doubting* are both in a good man, but *faith* is a worke of grace and of the Spirit; *doubting* is a worke of the flesh, and a peece of the corruption of the old man.

Fifthly, if *faith* be a substance of things hoped for, much more is it a substance to the *believer*: if it give those things a being which are out of him, much more doth it give a permanent being unto the *believer* himselfe, strengthening him to stand and continue in all assaults. So *Heb. 3. 14. Faith is that, whereby a believer is sustained and upholden*: so that indeed we may fitly say, *faith* is the spirituall substance, and the spirituall strength of a Christian man: and according to the measure of his *faith*, such is the measure of his spirituall strength.

This consideration hath divers comfortable uses, but especially two: 1. When any of us are out of the reach of temptation, so long are wee confident of our owne strength: but when wee are assaulted by the devill, the world, and our owne flesh, then we shall finde, that to resist is an harder matter than we dreamed of: for, as possible as it is for wa-

cer to burne, or fire to put out it selfe: so possible is it for us of our selves to resist sinne, inso-much, as it is a thousand to one, but that a very assault our nature yeelds: Now if it be so hard to rule over one sinne, how shall we doe against that sea of temptations, that overwhelmeth a Christian life? this doctrine teacheth thee how; namely, to stick to thy faith, and it will doe it for thee: for if it be the substance of the things thou hopest for, which yet never were; much more will it yeeld unto thee spirituall strength and substance, to make thee stand in all temptations. When thou art tempted, then call to minde Gods promises, beleve them, that is, apply them to thy selfe, and be resolved that they were made, and shall be performed even to thee: then though thou have no more power of thy selfe, than sicke hath to cease to burne; yet whilst thou doest thus, thou shalt feele thy soule spiritually strengthened against all temptations: and feeling the experience of this, denie them thine owne strength, and magnifie the power that God hath given unto true faith.

Againe, though now we are most of us quiet under our owne vines and figge-trees, yet we know not how soone the hand of the Lord may be upon any of us, i poverty, sicknesse, imprisonment, banishment, losses, famine, or how it pleaseeth him; how shall a poore Christian stand and buckle himselfe to beare these? I answer, true saving faith, resting on the Word of God, and beleiving the promises, not formally, but truly, will put such substantiall spirituall strength into him, as that at first, though he bow under it, yet shall he be able to recover himselfe againe, and buckle himselfe to goe forward in his profession, and shall follow Christ manfully with this his crosse. This wonderfull power hath God given to saving faith, both to resist temptations, and to undergoe all crosses.

And thus much of the first action or effect of faith: the second followeth.

VERSE 2.

For by it our Elders were well reported of.

THis v. containeth the second effect of saving faith: which is, that faith is a means whereby a belever is approved of God. This verse hath speciall relation to the fifth verse: for that that is said here of all the Elders in generall, is there affirmed specially of Enoch: namely, that he was reported of to have pleased God.

Let us first search the true meaning of the words.

Elders That is, all such men as living under the old Testament, beleived in Christ: amongst which (though all be understood) yet some were more excellent in faith and obedience than others, and so more honourable, and of higher estimation with God and men: and of

A them it is specially to be understood.

Now concerning these Elders it is further said that they were well reported of: hereby are meant three things:

1. That God approved, and allowed of them:
2. That God did approve of them, because of their faith in the Messias.

3. That God gave a testimonie, and declared that he approved of them.

For the first, it may be asked, How were they approved of God?

Ans. Christ the sonne of God is he, in whom the Father is well pleased. Now they beleiving in Christ, their sins were laid on him, and made his by imputation: and contrariwise his holinesse, obedience, and satisfaction, were imputed to them, and by the same imputation made theirs: Now that being theirs, God being so well pleased with Christ, could not but also for Christs sake approve of them. If this seeme hard unto any, I make it plaine by this comparison: Look as Jacob a younger brother, puts on Esaus garment, the elder brother, and in it was taken for Esau, and obtained his fathers blessing and patrimonie, which by himselfe he could not have got; even so we are as younger brethren, Christ is our elder brother, we have no right nor title to our fathers blessing, nor to the kingdome of heaven: we must put on the robe of perfect righteousness, which is the garment of Christ, our elder brother: we, standing clothed with it, purchase our fathers favour, and with his favour his blessing, and his blessing is the right and title to everlasting life. And thus by Christ they were approved.

Secondly, for what were they approved? The text saith, *By faith*; not because faith is an action of a sanctified minde, and a good grace of God: for so are humilitie, love, feare of God (all which are graces of the sanctifying spirit, as faith is:) but because it is a worthy instrument in the heart of the belever, which apprehends, and applyeth to the soule that righteousness of Christ, by which he is justified: thus it being the hand and instrument of their justification, by it (it is said) they were approved.

D 3. The text addeth, that God did not only approve of them, but that he testified and made it manifest to all the world that he did so.

And this testimonie } 1. In his Word.
God gave them } 2. In their owne consciences.

The truth of the first is manifest, in that not only in this chapter, but often also in the old Testament, God hath made such honourable mention, and given such honourable titles unto many of these Elders, calling *Abraham the friend of God*, 2 Chron. 20. 7. and *David a man after Gods owne heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 14. and them all, his *anointed and deare chosen children*, Psal. 105. 15. Thus God hath testified of them in his Word.

2. God testified it to their owne consciences,

to that he gave them his spirit, inwardly to assure their consciences that he did accept them in the Messiah to come: and thus these Elders *deceived a multitude* both outward to all the world, and inward in their conscience, that God in Christ approved and loved them: the sinne is plaine, the use hereof manifold.

1. In that it is said these Elders were approved by faith: here we learne what is the old and ancient way, the right and straight way (that hath no by-ways) to life everlasting: namely, this onely, To relie on the mercie of God in Christ for pardon of sinne; this is the way wherein all the ancient Elders walked to heaven; this is the way that God hath opened and made unto his Court: it is the Kings high way, the beaten way, common to every one that knowes how to walke in it; and deceived none that ever went in it; and beside which, there is no other. Seeing then, God hath condescended, and our Elders have trode this way before us, let us follow them; that so we may attaine that kingdome whereto it hath brought them.

If any yet doubt whether this be the way or no: the spirit of God puts it out of doubt, *Blay 20. 21.* First, assuming preceptorily, *This is the way*: Secondly, bidding us therefore walke in the same: *This is the way, walke in it.* Our Elders obeyed this commandment of the spirit: and, walking in this way, found the end of it, everlasting life. If we would attaine the same end of the journey, we must walke the same way.

But the world will say, this is a needlesse exhortation, for we walke this way, we deny our selves, and looke to be approved of God onely by Christ: but it is strange to see how men deceive themselves. Can a man walke in a way, and not leave marks and steps behind him; even so he that walkes in this way, follow him, and you shall see steps of his continuall dying unto sinne, and living unto holinesse, inasmuch that a man that followeth him, and marketh the course of his life in this way, may evidently say, See where he hath cast off, and left behind him this and that sin: see where he hath taken up, and earned with him these and those vertues and graces of God: Marke, here is a print of his faith, here is a print of his hope, here are prints of his love. And may a child of God be followed and traced all the way to heaven, even until he come to his death, which is the gate of heaven? How mightily then are they deceived, which thinke they have walked all their lives in this way, and yet there is not one step to be seene: for assuredly this way is so beaten and troden, that no man ever trode in it since the world began, but he left behinde him manifest and visible steps, that all men that would looke at him, might see, he had gone that way. As therefore we all desire to come to heaven, and as wee profess we walke in the way thither; so let us be as carefull to leave behinde us

our steps; namely, tokens and prints of our faith, our hope, and love: which if we do, then make the excellent use of those steps. 1. They testifie unto all that see them, that we walked the right way to heaven: and secondly, they will serve for marks and directions for them that shall walke in the same way after us. By the 1. we shall leave an honourable testimonie of our selves behinde us: by the 2. we shall move others to magnifie Gods name, to whom our steps have beene marks and directions, helps, and furtherances in the way to heaven.

Secondly, for what were these Elders approved? for their faith: for nothing else. Amongst these Elders *Samson* was wonderfull in strength: *Salomon* in wisdom: *Isaiah* in courage: *Moses* in learning: many of them, in the honour and pompe of the world, in beauty, riches, and other external gifts, and the most of them all in long life; yet not for one or all of these are any of them said to be regarded of God: but it is plainly said, that for their faith God did approve them. Here then learne what is that amongst all things that must make us acceptable unto God: even this, To denie ourselves, and to rest upon the mercie of God in Christ; this will doe it and nothing else. Hast thou strength? so had *Colias* as well as *Samson*: hast thou beaurie? so had *Abalom* as well or more than *David*: hast thou wisdom? so had *Achitophel* (though not like *Salomon*, yet) above ordinarie men: hast thou riches? *Ben* was richer than *Isaac*: hast thou lived long? so did *Came*, and *Ismael* as well as *Isaac*: hast thou many children? so had *Abub* as well as *Isaac*: hast thou learning (the glorie of nature?) so had the *Egyptians* as well as *Moses*; for there *Moses* learned it. All these thou might have, and yet be a *reprob* in the sight of God: so farr from being approved of God, as that hee will not vouchsafe (unlesse it be in his anger) once to regard or looke at thee: hast thou therefore any of those outward gifts? It is not to be contemned, it hath his use; thanke God for it and use it well; and use it so as by it thou may be approved amongst men: but stand not to it before God: for though it be wisdom, or learning, or never so excellent a gift, it cannot purchase the favour and acceptance of God; but true faith is able to please God both in this life and especially at the day of Judgement.

This doctrine first confute the error of some grosse Papists, who hold and write that many *Philosophers* for their good use of the light of Nature, for their deepeuse in learning, and for their civill lives are now Saints in heaven: a most manifest and shamefull untruth, and here as manifestly confuted: for was *Salomon* not accepted for all his wisdom, and shall *Socrates*? was *Alexis* not accepted for all his learning, how then should *Aristotle*? if hee made all of them accepted, and nothing but faith; how is it possible they should be accep-

ted which never heard of faith? nay I say more: If many a man which liveth in the Church, as deepe (it may be) in humane learning as they, and of great knowledge also in the whole doctrine of Religion (which they never knew) and yet could not, nor ever shall be accepted of God, onely for want of this saving faith; How absurd it is to imagine salvation for them, which neither had sparke of faith, nor knowledge of Christ? Let us then hold, that as *there is no name whereby to be saved, but only the name of Christ*: so no manes to be saved by that Christ, but only faith, even that faith, for which these Elders were accepted of God.

Secondly, this excellencie of faith above all other gifts, shewes the vanitie of the world; so carefull and earnest in seeking honour, riches, credit, wisdom, learning, (all which can but make them esteemed and approved to the world) and so careless and negligent in getting true faith, which will both approve a man unto the world, and make him honourable in the eyes of the Lord God.

Thirdly, by this doctrine, the Popish doctrine is justly condemned, which teacheth that a man is justified by his works, and that faith is not the most excellent of Gods graces. Here we are taught other divinity: for, *that for which a man is accepted, by that he is justified*: but for their faith only were they accepted: therefore justification is onely by faith. Again, that which makes a man accepted of God, that must needs be the most excellent thing of all. For God which is goodnesse it selfe, regardeth that that is the best: but God esteemed them onely for their faith: therefore it is the chiefe of all graces of God, in regard of making a man accepted of God.

Fourthly, here is a patterne and president for Gods children, how to bestow and measure out their love and estimation in the world. God loved *Salomon* more for his faith, than for all his glory and wisdom; and esteemed more of *Moses* for his faith, than for all his learning. So deale thou with thy wife, thy childe, thy servant, thy friend, and with all men. Hast thou a wife never so beautifull, loving, honest, and thrifty; never so toward and obedient a child; a most wise and trusty servant; a friend for faithfulness like thine owne soule? these are indeed much to be esteemed; yet thinke not thy selfe in a paradize, when thou hast such: for there is a greater matter behinde, than all these. Looke therefore further: Is thy wife, thy childe, thy servant, thy friend indued with saving faith? that is worth more than all the rest: that is it that makes them beloved of God. Let that therefore make them best beloved of thee: and that which makes them so honourable before God, let that make them most honourable and most esteemed of thee: So in all men, love that in a man best which God loveth; and so thou shalt be sure not to lose thy love. Esteeme of a man, not as the world esteemeth, nor accor-

ding to his strength, beautie, high place, outward gifts: but as God esteemeth him, namely, according to the measure of *saving faith*, which thou see'st in him; for is not that worthy of thy love, which hath purchased the love of the Lord God himselfe?

Fifthly, here is comfort for all such servants of God, as having true faith, yet are in base estimation for worldly respects; some are poore, some in base callings, some deformed in body, some of meane gifts, many in great distresse and miserie all their lives; most of them some way or other contemptible in the world: Yet let not this discomfort any childe of God: but let them consider what it is that makes them *approved of God*: not beautie, strength, riches, wisdom, learning (all these perish in the using) but true faith: if then thou hast that, thou hast more than all the rest. If thou hast all them, they could but make thee esteemed in the world: but having true faith, thou art esteemed of God; and what matter then who esteemes thee, and who not? This crosseth the corrupt censure of the world, who more esteeme a man for his outward gifts and glory of riches or learning, than for saving graces. Let Gods children when they are abased, contemned, mocked, and kept from all place and preferment in the world, let them I say, appeale from their unjust judgment to the judgement of God, and be comforted in this, that though they want all things (without them) that should make them esteemed in the world, yet they have that (within them) for which God will esteeme, approve, and acknowledge them both in this world, and in the world to come. And they have that that will stand by them, when strength and beauty are vanished, when learning, and riches, and honour are all ended with the world.

Thus much of the second doctrine.

3. In that our *Elders by faith obtained a good report*; Here we learne the readiest and surest way to get a good name. A good name is a good gift of God; *Eccle. 7. 1. It is a precious ornament*: it is a thing that all men would have: These Elders had it, and they have laid us down a platforme how to get it, and it is this; 1. Get into favour with God, please him, that is, confesse thy sinnes, bewaile them, get pardon, for the promises of God in Christ before thee, believe them, apply them to thy selfe as thy owne, be perswaded in thy conscience that Christ did all for thee, and that he hath purchased thy acceptation with God.

Thus when thou art assured that God approves of thee, God can easily give thee a comfortable testimonie in thine owne conscience, and he can move the hearts of all men to thinke well, and open their mouthes to speake well of thee; for he hath the hearts of all men in his hand. And therefore those that are in his favour, he can bend the hearts of all men to approve them; yet this must be understood with some cautions:

1. God will not procure his children a good name amongst all men: for then they should be cursed: for, Luk. 6. 26. *Cursed are ye when all men speak well of you*: But the Lord meaneth, that they shall be accepted, and have a good name with the most and with the best. For indeed, a good name (as all other graces of God) cannot be perfect in this life: but they shall have such a good name, as in this world shall continue and increase, and in the world to come be without all blot: for sinne is the disgrace of a man, therefore when sinne is abolished, good name is perfect.

2. God will not procure all his children a good name, nor alwaies: for, a good name is of the same nature with other externall gifts of God: sometime they are good to a man, sometime hurtfull: to some men good, to others hurtfull. Every one therefore that hath true faith, may not absolutely assure himselfe of a good name: but as saith fortiras God shall see it best for his owne glorie, and his good.

3. The good name that God will give his children, stands not so much in outward commendation, and speaking well of a man, as in the inward approbation of the consciences of men. They must therefore be content sometime to be abused, mocked, slandered, and yet notwithstanding they have a good name in the chiefe respect: for their whole mouthes doe abuse and condemne them; their very consciences doe approve them.

Out of all these the point is manifest, that God will procure his children a good name in this world, as farre forth as it is a blessing, and not a curse: and that because they are approved of him, and by faith justified in his sight: for so to be is the onely way to get a good name. For in reason it stands thus; that those who are in estimation, and good name with the Lord himselfe, much more will God make them esteemed, and give them a good name with men like themselves. Hence we learne, first, that the common course of the world to get a good name, is fond, and wicked, and to no purpose: They labour for riches, preferments, honour, wisdom, and learning, by them to get estimation in the world: yea, many abuse these blessings in vaine ostentation, to increase their credit and name with men: and in the meane time saving faith is never remembered, which must procure them a good name with God. This is a wrong course: first, we must labour to be approved of God; and then after the good name with God, followeth the good name in the world. He therefore that labours for favour with men, and neglects the favour of God; he may get a good name, but it shall prove a rotten name in the end, Prov. 10. 7. *The memoriall of the just shall be blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot*. The good name of the wicked is rotten: 1. Because it is lothsome and stinking in the face of God, though it be never so glorious in the world. 2. Because it will not

last the wearing out, but in the end vanisheth and comes to nothing, unlesse (as a rotting thing leaves some corruption behinde it, so) their good name in the end being vanished, leaves infamie behinde it. And this is the name which commonly is gotten in the world, because men first seeke not a good name with God: but that good name which is obtained by faith, will stand and continue all a mans life, and at his death leave behinde it a sweet perfume, and abideth for ever in the world to come.

Secondly, this maintaines the excellencie of our religion against Atheists, and all enemies of it, which esteeme and call it a base and contemptible religion, and of which can follow no credit nor estimation. But see, their malice is here controled: our religion is a most glorious and excellent profession, it is the high way to get true credit and estimation: it makes a man honourable in the sight of God and men: for by it our Elders obtained a good report, which continueth fresh to this day.

In the fourth place, *Were they well reported of for their faith?* therefore their faith was not hid in their hearts, but manifested in their lives: for, the world cannot see nor commend them for their faith, but for the practice of faith. Here it is plaine that men must not be content to keepe their faith close in their hearts, but they must exercise the fruits of it in the world; and then both these together will make a man truly commendable. Thy faith approves thee unto God; but the practice of it is that that honours thee, and thy profession in the world.

Lastly, in that faith was that which approved our Elders unto God; here is a store-house of comforts, for all true professors of this faith.

Art thou poore? thy faith doth make thee rich in God.

Art thou simple and of meane reach? thy faith is true wisdom before God.

Art thou any way deformed? thy faith makes thee beautifull unto God.

Art thou weak, feeble, or sicke? thy faith doth make thee strong in God.

Art thou base in the world, and of no account? thy faith makes thee honourable in the sight of God & his holy Angels. Thus thou art poore, and foolish, and deformed, and sicke, and base in the world, but marke how God hath recompensed thee; he hath given thee faith, whereby thou art rich, and beautiful, and wise, and strong, and honourable in heaven with God: say therefore with David, *the lot is fallen unto thee in a sure ground, and thou hast a goodly heritage*, namely, thy faith which thou wouldest not change for all the glory of the world. Faith is the true riches, the sound strength, the lasting beautie, the true wisdom, the true honour of a Christian man: therefore take thy selfe 10000. times more beholden unto God, than if hee had given thee uncertaine riches, the

crafty (and yet foolish) wilddome, the decaying strength, the vanishing beauty, the transitorie honour of this world.

If thou hast true faith, thou art sure to have enemies: 1. The wicked of the world will never brooke thee, but openly or privily hate and hurt thee. Then the Devil is thy sworn enemy: how canst thou deale with so powerful an enemy, and all his wicked instruments? Here is found comfort: if thou hast faith, thou hast God thy friend: labour therefore for this true faith, and then care not for the Devil, and all his power. Night and day, sleeping and waking, by land and sea thou art safe and secure, the Devil cannot hurt thee, thy faith makes thee accepted of God, and brings thee within the compasse of his protection. The same little sparke of faith, which is in so narrow a compasse as thy heart, is stronger than all the power and malice of Sathan. As for the malice which his instruments, wicked men in this world, shew against thee in mocks and abuses, much lesse care for them: for their nature is to speake evill, and cannot doe otherwise: looke not therefore at them, but looke up into heaven by the eye of thy faith, where *thy faith makes thee beloved and approved of God himselfe*, and honourable in the presence of his holy Angels.

And thus much of the second action or effect of faith, the third followeth.

VERSE 3.

Through faith wee understand that the world was ordained by the Word of God, so that the things which wee see, are not made of things which did appeare.

In this verse is contained the third action or effect of faith, namely this: Faith makes a man to understand things beyond the reach of mans reason. This third effect is set out in these words, by the instance of a notable example; namely, of the Creation of the world; 1. By the Word of God. 2. Of nothing: both which, that we may the better understand, let us consider of the words as they lie in order.

Through faith]

1. By faith in this place (as I take it) is not meant that saving faith, which justifies a man before God; but a generall faith, whereby a man embraceth Christian religion: or whereby a man beleeveth the Word of God in the doctrine of the Law and the Gospell, to be true. My reason is, because a man that never had justifying, and saving faith, and is no member of the catholike Church, nor child of God, may have this gift, To beleieve that God by his Word made the world of nothing. Therefore, I thinke that this is an action of a generall, and

A not of saving faith.

We understand]

That is, whereas there are many things beyond the reach of reason, and therefore by reason cannot be apprehended or understood, yet by vertue of this faith a man is brought to understand them, and to beleieve them to be true.

Now then whereas generall faith brings understanding of many things which reason cannot reach unto; here such as be students in humane learning, and which labour to attaine to the deepeste and perfection of it, are taught, with their travell in humane studies, to have care to joyne faith and knowledge of religion. For there are many things which our understanding by reason cannot conceive, and many truths which Philosophy cannot reach unto; nay, many also which it denies: but faith is able to perswade and demonstrate them all, and it enlightens the minde, and rectifies the judgement, when as Philosophy hath left the mind in darknesse, and the judgement in error. Now, in whom found knowledge in Philosophy, and this faith in religion doe concur together, hee is a man of a most rectified judgement, and of a deepe reach in the greatest matters: but, separate faith from humane knowledge, and hee will stumble at many truths, though he had the wit of all the Philosophers in his owne head: For example, that God should make the world of nothing: that it should have beginning and ending: that God should be eternal, and not the world: that mans soule being created, is immortall: these and many other truths, reason cannot see, and therefore Philosophy will not admit: but joyne faith to it, and then that crooked understanding is rectified and made to beleieve it. It is therefore good counsell, to joyne both these together. Religion hinders not humane learning, as some fondly thinke; but is a furtherance and helpe, or rather the perfection of humane learning, perswading, and proving, and convincing that, which humane learning cannot. And thus we see how faith makes us to understand.

But what doth it make us to understand? the text saith, *That the world was ordained*, &c. Amongst many expositions we may most safely set downe and approve this; God by his Word or commandment hath *ordained*, that is, made in good order; *the ages*, that is, the world, and all in it; and all this he did by his Word, and (which is more strange than that) made them all of nothing. This is a wonderfull thing: reason conceives it not, but disputes against it: Philosophy grants it not, but writes against it: but mark the privilege of this faith, it makes a man beleieve it, and shewes him also how it is.

Now for our better perceiving the excellencie of this power of faith, here are foure points set downe: 1. What was created: *The worlds*.

2. In what manner : *Ordained*. 3. By what means : *By Gods Word*. 4. Of what matter : *Of nothing*. Of these in order.

The first point is, What was made? The text answereth, *The worlds*. The Word signifieth in the originall, *Ages*: and so it is also taken, Heb. 1. 2. God made the worlds or ages by Christ : by this word then he meaneth these two things : First, times and seasons, which are ordinarie creatures of God, as well as other : for amongst other creatures (Gen. 1.) are recorded also times and seasons to be Gods creatures. Secondly, he understandeth the *World* also, and all in it : and so it is truly translated. For with good reason may the word *ages* signifie *the world*, because the world and all in it had their beginning in time, have their continuance in time, and shall have their end in time againe. Time began them, time continues them, and time shall end them : and so the world is every way measured by the compasse of time : and therefore it pleaseth the holy Ghost to terme the world, and all in it, *Ages* or times.

Now whereas it is said, *Ages*, that is, times and seasons were *ordained* of God ; we learne, that if time be a creature or an ordinance of God (created for so great purposes, as to be the measure of all things) to take heed of abusing so excellent an ordinance : if thou hast spent it well, spend it still better. Time is so good a thing, it cannot be spent well enough. But hast thou mis-spent time (that is, abused it) take S. Pauls counsell, Ephes. 5. 16. *Redeeme the time* : that is, seeing what is past cannot be recall'd, then recompence the losse of it, by the well bestowing of time to come. Spend every houre well ; and that thou mayst doe so, bee alwaies either doing good to other, or receiving good from other ; doe either, and time is well spent. And take heed thou bee not of the number of those that often say, they cannot tell how to drive away *time* : and therefore they devise many toyes, and conceits, and vaine pleasures, yea, many wicked and unlawfull delights : and all to shift off (as they say) and deceive the *time*. It is wonderfull to see, that the wicked, whose time of joy is only in this world, should seeke to hasten it, and make it seeme shorter ; yet so it is, the Devill blinding them : but howsoever it is, seeme it shorter or longer, that same one sin of mis-spending their time, shall condemne them, if they had no more : for if *account must be given for every idle word*, a fearefull account remaines to be made for so many idle houres. Let us then be very carefull in the use of this good ordinance of God, and never devise how to passe a way *time* : for there is no man that is a profitable member in the place where he is, that can finde one houre so idle, that he knowes not how to imploy it, either in receiving or doing some good.

Were ordained]

The second point, in this example, is the manner. Did God make a perfect or an imper-

fect world? The text answereth, it was *ordained*. The word signifieth thus much ; God framed the *Ages*, that is, all creatures, visible and invisible, in a most excellent, perfect, and absolute order. As in campe every man keeps his ranke and order, and no man goeth out of his standing appointed him : So every creature hath his due place, and his proper use assigned him of God : so that the workmanship of the world in every creature, and in every respect was absolute : and thus (*ordained*) is as much as perfectly made. And the whole world was as the perfect body of a man, where every member, bone, joynt, veine, and sinew, is in his proper place, and nothing out of square.

Obiect. Was every thing created in his order and due place? Whence then come so many disorders in the world? The Devill hath his kingdome, authoritie, lawes and subjects ; he rules in the wicked. Now can there be any order in Satans kingdome? Againe, whence are so many alterations and subversions of kingdomes ; so many warres, so much effusion of blood? The Gospel is transported from Country to Country : civill dissensions in Cities and private families ; betwixt man and man ; betwixt man and some creatures : betwixt creature and creatures, yea, hatred often unto the death ; yea, often hatred betwixt creatures of the same kinde. All these being so, where then is that excellent order wherein they were created?

I answer : the state of all creatures is changed, from that wherein they were created, by the fall of our first parents. God made no disorder, *He saw every thing that he had made, and loe it was very good* : therefore it was in a most perfect order : For orderly comeliness is a part of the *goodness* of a thing : but disorder is the effect of sin : it entred with sinne, and it is both a companion and a reward of sinne. Had we continued in our innocence, all creatures had continued in their excellent order : but when we had broken the perfect order, that God had appointed us ; immediately all creatures broke that order wherein they were afore both towards us, and one amongst another. Whilst we obeyed God, all creatures obeyed us : but when we shooke off the yoke of obedience unto God, and rebelled against him, then they became disobedient unto us. Whilst we loved God, all creatures loved and revered us : but when we fell to hate the Lord, then began they to hate us, and not before. If therefore thou seest any disobedience and hatred in the creatures towards thee, any disorder and vanitie amongst themselves, thanke thy selfe for it, thou broughtest it into the world with thy sinne.

This being so, we are hence taught, when wee see any disorder in any creature, not to blame the Lord nor the creature, but to turne backe to our selves, to take notice of our owne sinnes and corruptions, and to acknowledge this was not so at the first, but our sinne was the

Gen. 1. 31.

cause

Gen. 3. 15. and 3.
11.

cause of it; and therefore be humbled and ashamed of our selves, that wee should confound that excellent order which God made, and all creatures (but for us) would have kept till this day: but the common practice in contrarie, as I will prove in particulars.

God made mans body pure and holy, and therefore it had no need to bee covered: but with sinne came shame, and thence came it that God gave us apparell to cover that shame that sin had brought upon us: so oft therefore as a man puts on his apparell, he should be humbled and ashamed by it: and thinke thus with himselfe, This was not so at the first; *Adams* body was glorious: whence came this ignominie and shame, which we must cover with apparell? it came from my sin; therefore so often as a man puts it on, so oft should he be quite ashamed of himselfe, which hath brought this shame upon himselfe; so as now he must needs have a cloake to cover his shame. But doe men make this end of their apparell? nay, rather they make it a banner to display their pride and vanity; and so farre are many from being ashamed of it, as that they are contrariwise proud of it. But this is as abominable, and cursed, and senselesse a pride, as if the prisoner should be proud of his bolts and fetters, which are signes of his mildemeanor: for, what is thy apparell (make the best of it) it is but a beautifull cloake of thy filthy shame: then, as bolts and fetters are burdensome, and shamefull, though they be of gold: so is the cloake of thy shame; thy apparell, though it be silke, silver, or gold: for we should not be ashamed onely of ordinarie apparell, or bafe, but even of the most gorgeous; knowing that once we had a glorie of our owne, farre above all the glorie of apparell: and the ignominie that sin hath brought upon us, is greater than this glorie of apparell can take away.

Here I denie not the use of gorgeous apparell, to those to whom it belongs: But I say to the rich men, (who, by their abilitie) to men in authority, who (by their place and calling) may weare costly apparell: yea, and to Princes, who may lawfully weare silke, silver, gold, and the most excellent ornaments of precious stones, or whatsoever: to all them, I say, God hath granted you the use of these; but withall bee not proud of them, for you once had a glorie greater than these, but lost it by sinne. and sinne brought a shame, which these cannot hide. For though thy apparell hide it from the world, yet can it not from God: onely *faith* can cover it from God: therefore glorie in nothing but thy faith, be ashamed of thy apparell: yea, of thy robes and costly ornaments. And know further, that whereas thy body by sinne is become so vile, a meaner cover and baser apparell were fit for it. And therefore know, that whereas God hath given thee use of costly apparell, and precious ornaments, he gives them not to honour thy body, but the place thou art in: and to a-

A done that part of his owne Image, which hee hath set in thee by thy calling. And know lastly, that if thou hadst kept that order, wherein God at thy creation (as the text saith) ordained thee: thy naturall glorie would more have adorned thee and the place thou bearest, than all this accidentall and artificiall glorie can: and therefore glorie not so much for the one, as be ashamed for the losse of the other; and let thy apparell teach thee this lesion.

Thirdly, many men take much delight in some kinde of meat; some in varietie of meats; and some so love their bellie, as they care not how many creatures, or kinde of creatures doe die, for their belly sake: this is to be considered. For I take it a great fault, for men either to be too lavish and carelesse, how many creatures they cause to die, or (though they eat but one kinde) to doe it without all use or further consideration. For, make whence comes this, that man cannot now live, or not so well; but his life must be the death of other creatures, his nourishment and preservation, the destruction of other creatures. At the beginning before sinne was, this was not so: no creature did either serve to cloath or feed *Adam*: but this came with sinne; sinne brought this vanitie upon creatures, to die for the feeding and cloathing of man: and had we stood without sin, no creature should have lost his life to be our meat. I take it therefore the dutie of a man to make great use of his meat in this regard. And

C first, for the meat that he loves best, let him be humbled for his sinne: knowing that if he had not sinned, hee should have had much more sweetnesse in other meat, which notwithstanding should not have cost any creature his life. And secondly, for variety be not too lavish, nor too rororous: consider every dish is the death of a creature of Gods creation: consider againe, whence comes this, that creatures must die to feed thee; not from the creation, creatures were not made to that end: Innocencie would have preserved all creatures to more excellent ends.

Since it was, and thy sinne that destroyes so many creatures for the belly of man: it is a vanitie come upon creatures for mans sinne, that they must die for mans meat. The death therefore of every creature, should be a corrective to a mans heart: when he seeth it, it should touch him to the quicke, and make him say, This creature dieth not for it selfe, but for me; not for it owne fault, but for mine. Miserable sinner that I am, if I had right, I should rather die than it. God made it once for a better end, but my sin hath brought it to this corruption. If this consideration tooke place, men would not eat their ordinarie fare with so little use: nor at extraordinary occasions be so carelesse how much they spend, and how many creatures they cause to die.

But you will say, God hath given us libertie in meats: differences of meats are taken away

in Christ, and God hath given us use of his creatures, not onely for necessitie, but more libertie: life even for greater delight and comfort. I answer, I grant all this and more too, to a man that hath faith. I grant, feasts and banquets are lawfull for some men on some occasions. I take not away any mans libertie in meats: God hath granted it, and man ought not to take it away. I onely wilst that when we eat, wee also would make this use of it: and that we would not too riotously abuse that libertie that God hath given us for diversitie of meats: faith gives leave and libertie to eat; yet faith denies not a man to make a holy use of his eating, for his owne humiliation, but rather commands it.

Fourthly, we see in the world, that creatures not onely die for mans feeding, but one creature feeds on another, and one creature destroyeth another to eat him. The Hawke preyeth on divers kindes of birds: the Fox feedeth on tame birds: the Wolfe on the Lambe: greater beasts devour the lesse: Dogs will eat divers kindes of creatures, if they can come by them. These things are manifest, and some of them be common sports in the world.

Now whence comes this fearefull disorder amongst creatures, that one creature should devour another? came it from the creation? was the world ordained in this state, that one creature should eat up another? the greater feed upon the lesse? no: but sin brought this confusion, our sinne caused this pittifull massacre of all creatures one by another. Let us therefore at these sights be humbled for our sinne, which caused to fearefull a disorder: when thou seest thy Hawk sicke so fiercely and so cruelly murder a silly bird: thy Hound, the Hart, Hare, or Conie; then, as God hath given thee leave in good order, measure, and manner, thus to deale with the creatures, and therefore thou mayst take delight in it: so, withall make this use of it; whence comes this? it was not so from the beginning: When sinne was not in the world, these would all have lodged in one cage and cabbin, and one never have offered to have eaten another: my sinne caused this jare, and this disorder betwix these two creatures. This should humble a man, because of his sinne, and restrain his life from too much libertie, and his affection from too much delight in these kinde of pastimes.

Again, when we see the crueltye of the Fox, the Wolfe, the Beare, toward the sheepe and other creatures; blame not too much the crueltye of the beasts: for this was not in them at their creation; but thy sinne made them thus cruell one against another. Turne then into thy selfe, and be ashamed of it: and blame not too much the crueltye in them, as thine owne sinne which caused it in them.

Again, some creatures are imperfect, some in parts of their body, some in some senses: and some are lothsome and ugly to behold: and

A: some are venomous, and hurtfull to the world. When thou seest it, consider whence is this. They were not thus created: for God *ordained* that is, made all creatures in perfect order: but this comes from thy sinne; enter into thy selfe, and acknowledge this, and be humbled for it, and doe not so much contemne this creature for his imperfection, nor loath him for his deformitie, nor hate him for his venom; as contemne and loath, and hate thine owne sinnes which were the cause of all these.

B: Lastly, some take great delight in faire buildings, and make no use of them but for delight and pleasure: but if they consider well, they have no such cause: it was not so at the creation. *Adam* in his innocencie had a more sumptuous Palace *ordained* for him; namely, the Paradise of heaven and earth: and yet trees were not cut in peeces, nor the earth had her stones rent out of her bowels, for the building of it. Thy sin it was that destroyed this Palace; and sinne hath caused the necessitie of these buildings: How then canst thou glorie in thy buildings; Wilt thou glorie in thy shame? Canst thou be proud of these, when thy sinne bereft thee of a better? as therefore thy house is a comfort, strength, securitie, and delight unto thee: so adde this one use also; let it in this consideration be a cause to humble thee for thy sinne.

C: The disorder that sinne hath brought into the world, might be shewed in more particulars: but these may suffice, being those of whom we have most comon use, and therefore doe most commonly abuse.

To conclude this point, I say unto all men: Doeest thou see what disorder is now in the world, in thy apparell, meat, recreations, buildings? Seest thou the confusion, vanity, corruption of all creatures: the variance, dissension, and hatred of creatures amongst themselves? Canst thou see all this, and either not regard it at all, or take delight in it? This is a cursed and abominable delight. If a rich man should consume all his wealth, or throw it all on heapes, and then desperately set his house on fire, hath he any cause of joy to see this? If he sit still at this, you will say he is senselesse: but if he laugh at it, he is mad: So God created man rich in all blessings, put him into the palace of the world: garnished this house of the world with exceeding beauty: his meat, his apparell, his recreation, his house were all excellent and glorious; he made all other creatures, amongst which there was nothing but concord, love, agreement, uniformity, comeliness, and good order: now man by sinne fell, and by his fall, not onely spent all his riches (that is, defaced the glorie of his owne estate): but also for his house (that is the world) on fire: that is, defaced the beauty of heaven and earth: brought confusion, corruption, vanity, deformity, imperfection, and monstrous disorder on all creatures; set all the world together by the eares,

all creatures; set all the world together by the cares, and one creature at variance and deadly hate with others so that one creature doth fight, reare, wound, destroy, and eat up another. O cursed and damnable sinne of man, that hath so shamefully disordered that heavenly order, wherein God created all things at the beginning! and miserable men are we, which can sit still and see this, and not be moved: but if we rejoyce and delight in it; certainly, then a spirituall madnesse hath bewitched our soules. Let us therefore stir up our selves, and looke about us; and seeing all the world on a fire about us, namely, flaming in contention, hatred, and all disorder; let us for our parts seeke to quench it: which because we cannot, therefore lament and bewaile it: but much more lament and be humbled for our sinne, which kindled this fire of disorder in the world.

Hitherto of the manner of the Creation.

By the Word of God]

The third point is, by what meanes? The text answereth; the world was ordained in that excellent order, *by the Word of God*. By this word is meant, 1. not any *vocal* word, as if the Lord should speake unto the creatures: nor secondly, the *substantiall* word of the Father, the second person; although I confesse that by *him* were made all things. Yet, I take it, it is not so meant in this place: but rather as *Moses* doth, Gen. 1. when he saith, that in the creation *God said*: It is in both places a comparison taken from a Prince, who bids his servants doe this, and they doe it presently. The Lord in this place is like a Prince, he hath his word, whereby he commanded the world to be made. That word, I take it, is his *will*: for Gods willing of any thing, is an effectual commanding of it to be done: yea, it is the doing of it: for his willing of a thing to be, is more than all the commandements of all men in the world. For if he doe but will it, the thing is done what ever it be: whereas all the world may command, and yet it is no neerer. From hence, I take it, this is manifest to be the surest sense for this place; God willed the being of all creatures, and according as he willed, they presently were: and that his will was his word here mentioned.

Here then first make a speciall point, that sets out the glorie of the Creator: he used no labour, no motion, no paines, no servants, no meanes as men doe. He only *spake the word*, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created. Psalm. 148. 5. This shewes how glorious a God he is, and his power how omnipotent it is, who at his owne will and word produced such a glorious frame of heaven and earth, so many thousand sorts and kindes of creatures in their order and due place. *David* most seriously considered of this, when hee made the 104. Psalm, as appeareth if we read it. Wee ought also so deeply to meditate of this his glorious power, manifested in this miraculous creation, as that we (seeing it) may

A acknowledge with the Psalmist, Psalm. 115. 3. *Our God sitteth in heaven, and doth whatsoever he will.*

2. Did the Lord make all things by his word? learne we then for our instruction thus much: Ever when wee see what is Gods will concerning our selves in any great crosse or affliction whatsoever, let us subject our selves to it and beare it, because it comes from so mightie a God, as whom there is no resisting. For see, he that commanded all the world to be, and it presently was so, and nothing could disobey; then if he command any crosse to cease upon thee, wilt thou resist him? nay, rather take *Saint Peters* holy counsell, 1 Pet. 5. 5. *Humble thy self under this so mightie hand of God, that he may exalt thee in due time.* If thou then see his crosse comming towards thee, meet it, receive it with both hands, beare it with both shoulders: if he will humble thee, resist not thou: for when againe he pleaseth to exalt thee, all the Devils in hell are not able to resist him.

It followeth; *So that the things which we see, are not made of things which did appeare.*

The fourth and last point, is the matter whereof the world was made: The text saith. *The things that we see*, that is, all the world were made of things never seene: that is, of a flat nothing, which here is said not to bee seene, or not to appeare; because how can that appeare or be seene, which is not? So the meaning is, when there was nothing in the world, then God made the world to be. This is the strangest thing of all in this fourth effect: For it is not so strange that the world should be made in that excellent order; or that God should make it by his Word; as that he should make it of nothing. Reason denies it, Philosophy disputes against it as absurd, and never will yeeld unto it: but here is the power of faith manifest; for it makes us beleeve and know it is so.

Hence we learne, 1. If hee created the world of nothing, then he can preserve us also by nothing, that is, without meanes, or by weak meanes, or contrarie to meanes; he that did the one, can doe the other, for the same reason is of both. This is a speciall point of our religion, Not to tie Gods providence unto meanes. Men use never to acknowledge it but with meanes; but that is no worke of faith: But we ought not only to see Gods providence, when we see no meanes; but even when other meanes are against us, then to see it, is a point of faith: and that is our dutie, though it be hard. Give men health, wealth, libertie, peace, let them be guarded about with Gods blessings; then they will magnifie the providence of God: but take these away, and lay upon them penurie, sicknesse, or any crosse, then they rage and rail, and distrust, yea blaspheme, and say, No providence, no God. And thus God is beholding to the meanes, for else men would hardly denie him. But this argues the want of faith. For had we that faith in us, where

whereby we beleefe stedfastly, that God made all the world without meanes, that *faith* would also perswade us, that he can preserve us being made, though meanes be wanting, or though they be against us. This we may make use of, whether we be in necessitie, and would be relieved; or in any perill, and would be succoured; or in what extrem tie soever, when meanes doe faile us.

Secondly, if he made all things of nothing, then he is able also, in respect of his promities made in Christ, *To call such things that are not, as though they were*, Rom. 4. 17. As, a man by nature is the child of wrath, and of the Devil: he is able to make him a servant of God, and child of grace.

This may teach us, 1. Not to despaire of any mans salvation, though he seeme almost past all grace: for God can make any thing of nothing, and therefore can put grace into that heart, wherein afore was none.

And 2. this is a comfort to all them which through weaknesse of faith, cannot perswade themselves of their election. For suppose thou be full of wants and imperfections, and hast a rebellious and froward heart: What then? Remember God made thee once a creature, of nothing; he can now againe make thee a new creature of nothing: he created thee without meanes; he can save thee, though never so many meanes doe serve to be against thee.

And thus much of these three effects of faith; and consequently,

Of the first part of this Chapter, containing a description of faith in generall.



ABELS Faith.

VERSE 2.

By faith Abel offered unto God a greater sacrifice than Caine: by which he obtained witnesse that he was righteous; God testifying of his gifts: by which faith he also being dead yet speaketh.



The second part of the Chapter containeth an illustration and proofe of the former description, by a rehearall of the most excellent patternes and ensamples of *faith*, which flourished in the Church of the Old Testament.

A These examples be of two sorts: 1. Such as are set downe severally one by one, from the 4. ver. to the 32. 2. Such as are set downe *joyntly* many together, from thence to the end.

The examples set downe severally are of two sorts: 1. Such as were the natural *Israelites*, and borne members of the Church visible. 2. Such as were not naturally members, but *strangers* from the Church of God, till they were called extraordinarily.

Examples of such as were members of the visible Church, are also of two sorts: 1. Such as lived about the flood: or, 2. after the flood.

First, of such as lived afore, or about the time of the flood, there be three faithfull men, whose faith is here recorded: 1. *Abel*, and 2. *Enoch* before: 3. *Noe*, both before and after. All these three in order.

The excellent and most worthy examples, are all grounded on some place of the old Testament, and are continued from the beginning of the world, almost to Christs incarnation: for he beginneth with *Abel*, which is so neere the beginning, that he was the *second* good man that lived in the world: yea, and the *first* of all that had this true faith, as the onely meanes of his salvation. For, as for *Adam*, he afore his fall had not this faith, neither should it have saved him: but when the first meanes failed him, then came this *faith* as the second and more effectuell meanes of his salvation: but *Abel* was never in possibilitie to be saved by anything, but by this *faith*. And therefore *Abels* faith hath the first place of commendation, and that in this verse.

Abels faith is here commended for three things: 1. In that he offered by it a greater sacrifice than *Caine*. 2. By it hee obtained testimonie with God. 3. By it dead *Abel* yet speaketh.

The first effect of *Abels* faith is thus set downe by the holy Ghost, *By faith Abel offered unto God a greater sacrifice than Caine*.

The ordinarie Exposition of these words, is this; That *Caine* and *Abel* comming to offer, there was no difference in the matter of their sacrifice, but onely in the manner of offering, in that *Abel* offered by faith, and so did not *Caine*.

This exposition though it be good, yet it fits not the scope of this place, nor the fourth of Gen. The right sense therefore seemes to be this; *Abel* having faith, this faith moved him to testifie his thankfull heart to God. This he did by offering unto God the *best* and *costliest* sacrifice that he could: namely, the *first fruits* and *fattest* of his *sheepe*; Whereas unbelieving *Caine*, having no love to testifie unto God, brought onely of the fruit of his ground: not of the best as *Abel* did: but whatsoever came first to hand. This being the true meaning of the whole: let us come to the particular points laid downe in this effect, and they are three:

1. That *Caine* and *Abel* offered, that is, served God.

2. That they offered *Sacrifices*.

3. That *Abel* offered a better than *Caine*.

The first point contains their service in generall: the second, their service in particular: the third, the difference of their service; wherein especially will appeare the excellencie of *Abels* faith.

First, *Abel* and *Caine*, the two first brethren in the world, offered sacrifice to the true God. How learned they this? for they had no Scripture, it was penned many yeares after; namely, by *Moses* first of all. I answer, when their Parents *Adam* and *Eve* had fallen, God gave them (of his infinite goodnesse) a covenant of grace, *that the seed of the woman should break the serpents head*, Genes. 3. 15. wee doubt not but our first parents received this covenant, and beleeveth the promise; and this their faith taught them how to worship the true God aright.

You will say; thus *Adam* and *Eve* learned of God; but how came this to *Caine* and *Abel*? I answer, when they had bene thus instructed of God, *Adam* as a faithfull servant of God, taught the same religion, and delivered the same doctrine to his children: and by it they were taught, what, to whom, and in what manner to offer sacrifice. And thus they did it neither by Scripture, nor revelation, nor their owne invention, but by the instruction of their Parents.

Hence let all Parents learne a lesson of *Adam*, the first Parent that was in the world; namely, to procure the good of their children: he nurtured his children excellently: 1. He provided for them till they came to age. 2. Then he left them not, but appointed them their callings; for one was an husbandman, and the other a shepherd. 3. Not thus onely, but he taught them to worship the true God, both in their callings, and in the practice of religion, and therefore he taught them to offer sacrifice in way of thanksgiving unto God: all this did *Adam*.

So must thou doe with the children which God hath given thee. 1. Provide for them carefully till they be of age, take heed, they miscarrie not any way for want of things needfull. 2. So bring them up, as that they may be apt to live in some godly calling whereby to doe good in his Church; and that calling thou must appoint them, according to the fitnessse of their gifts. *Adam* appointed them not both one calling, but diverse callings, according to the diversitie of their gifts: and thou must see it be a lawfull and honest calling, for so are both these. Then 3. (the greatest matter of all these) teach them religion, and the true manner of fearing and worshipping God; that as by the two first, thy child may live well in this world, so by this he may be made an heire of the kingdome of heaven.

Adam was the first father, and father of us all; let all then follow him in this practice: and if we follow him in one, follow him in both. Divers will be as careful for their bodies and for their callings as *Adam* was, but how few are as careful to teach them religion for the preferment of their soules to life eternal: but parents must have care of both these: else they shall answer for their child at the day of judgement: and though he peris in his owne sinne, yet his bloud will God require at the Fathers hands. For God made him a father in his room, and he discharged not the duty of a father unto their child.

Secondly, in that *Caine* offered as well as *Abel*; hence we learne divers instructions.

1. It is a common opinion, that if a man walke duly and truly in his calling, doing no man harme, but giving everie man his owne, and so doe all his life long, God will receive him, and save his soule: but the truth is this: If men doe thus, it is good and commendable and they must be exhorted to continue: but if they stand upon this for salvation, they cast away their soules. For marke here, *Caine* was a man that walked in an honest calling; and more than that, he tooke paines, and laboured in it (which all men doe not that have honest callings.) And more than all these, when *Abel* offered, he came and worshipped God also; and he did outwardly in such sort, as no man could blame him, but onely God that saw his heart: and for all this, yet he is awicked *Caine*, and that is all that the Word of God gives him, 1. Ioh. 3. 12. Then it is manifest, that to walke in a mans calling justly and uprightly, doing no man harme, will not serve the turne. *Caine* did it, and yet was accursed; we must then goe further than *Caine*, else we shall goe with *Caine* to the place where he is.

Reason not with thy selfe, I worke hard, and follow my calling, I hurt no man: thus could *Caine* reason, and yet but cursed *Caine*. Thou must then beside these, get that that *Caine* did not; Learne in thy conscience to see and feele thy sinne, to be grieved for it, so as thou must say; my sicknesse, my povertrie, my cruellities grieve me, but nothing so much as mine owne finnes, these trouble mee above all, and this griefe swalloweth up all the rest. And there is another thing which I feele above all, not gold, silver, or promotion; but reconciliation with my God, and his favour in Jesus Christ: If thou hast these two, then thou goest beyond *Caine*, then shalt thou stand before God with *Abel*, and be accepted. Remember these two, humiliation for sinne, and desire of reconciliation: these two is the summe of religion. If thou hast these, thou art blessed with *Abel*, if not, cursed with *Caine*, howsoever thou livest in the world. If thou say, *Caine* killed his brother, and so would not I doe for all the world, I will doe no man hurt in bodie nor goods: This will not serve: for it is said, that

God had no respect to *Caine* afore he killed his brother, even when he offered his sacrifice: and therefore this dutie is most necessarie, and there is no shuffling it off.

2. *Caine* offered as well as *Abel*; yea, *Caine* offered afore *Abel*, as it is manifest in Gen. 4. 3. And yet *Abel's* sacrifice was better when it came to the proofe, and was accepted, and not *Caine's* which came first. Hence we learne, that a man may be more forward than many other in many outward duties of religion, and yet not be accepted of God: another may not be so forward to the dutie, and yet when he comes, be better accepted. Whence comes this? what? is forwardnesse in good duties a fault? Nothing lesse: but hence it is, he that outwardly is most forward, may come in hypocritie and without faith; the want whereof makes his forwardnesse nothing worth. Many such have we in our Church: great frequenters of places and exercises of religion; and yet they come but as *Caine* did, or it may be in worse intents. Thy forwardnesse is to be commended, but take this with thee also: Care not so much to be first in the Sermon, or to be there sooner than other, as to goe with true faith, repentance and a heart hunning for grace; if not, possit not in thy forwardnesse. *Caine* offered afore *Abel*, and yet not accepted; and so there may come an *Abel* after thee, and bring faith with him, and be accepted, when thou with thy hypocritical forwardnesse shalt be rejected, as *Caine* was.

Thirdly, did *Caine* offer as well as *Abel*? Hence we learne, that the Church militant is a mixt and compounded companie of men: not of one sort, but true beleivers and hypocrites mingled together: as here in the very infancy of the Church, there was *Caine* worshipping in shew, as well as *Abel* that worshipped in truth. So was it in the infancy, so in her perpetuall growth, and so shall it be in the last age of the Church: the good shall never be quite separated from the bad, untill Christ himselfe doe it at the last judgement. Goats shall alwaies be mingled among the sheepe, till Christ the great Shepherd doe separate them himselfe. Matth. 25. 14. And he that imagineth a perfect separation till then, imagineth a fancie in his braine, and such a Church as cannot be found upon the earth.

This being so, let no man therefore be afraid to joyne himsefse to the visible Church; neither let any that are in it, goe out of it, because the bad are mingled with the good; for so it hath beene alwaies, and ever will be: he then that will goe out of a Church, because there be hypocrites in it, must goe out of the world: for such a Church is not found, but triumphant in heaven.

Fourthly, in that *Caine* and *Abel* offered, hence we learne, that the church of God which truly professeth his name, hath beene ever since the beginning of the world. For this Church was in the household of *Adam*, when there was

no more but it in the world: for sacrifice to God is a figue of the Church: yea, and beside the sacrifice, they had a place appointed where *Adam* and his familie came together to worship God; For, so much *Caine* intimateth, Gen. 4. 14. and 16. *Caine* went out from the presence of the Lord, that is, not onely out of his favour and protection, but from the place of his solemn service, and where he wanted to manifest his speciall presence to his children serving him: and therefore *Caine*, as being excommunicate, complaines (vers. 14.) because he must leave it. Thus the Church hath beene from the beginning, and therefore is truly called Catholike.

The Papists abuse this place notoriously; for whereas the Church hath beene so ancient, they argue therefore it is above the Scripture: yea, and that we could not know it to be Scripture, but by the ancient testimonie of the Church.

We must know the Scripture is two wayes to be considered: first, as it was written and penned by holy men, and so it is later than the Church: for *Moses* was the first pen-man of Scripture: but secondly, as it is the word of God, the substance, sense, and truth thereof is much more ancient than the Church; yea, without the word of God, there can be no Church: For, without faith is no Church (because the church is a companie of beleivers,) and without the word is no faith; therefore no word, no faith; no faith, no Church. So then the Scripture was afore the Church, but penned after.

Thus we see that *Caine* and *Abel* offered. Now secondly, what offered they? sacrifices. Sacrifices were used in the worship of God for two ends: 1. When a sacrifice was offered, especially of beasts, when a man saw the blood of the beasts poured out, he put him in minde of his own sins, and the desert of them, and taught him to say thus: Even as this creature is here slaine, and his blood distills and drops away; so my sins deserve that my blood should be shed, and my soule be drenched in hell for ever. This creature can die but one death, for it sinneth not; but my finnes deserve both the first and second death.

Secondly, sacrifices served to put them in minde of the Messias to come; and the slaying of the beasts shewed them how the Messias should shed his blood, and give his life for the finnes of the people. These are the two principall ends of sacrifices, and for these two ends did *Caine* and *Abel* offer: *Caine* in hypocritie and for fashion sake; *Abel* in truth, conscience, and sinceritie.

As it was in the old sacrifices, so is it in our Sacraments of the new Testament: whereof the sacrifices were all types: in Baptisme, sprinkling of the water serves to shew us how filthily wee are defiled with our owne finnes.

2. It signifies the sprinkling of the blood of Christ

Christ on the heart of a sinner, for his satisfaction from sinne.

2 In the Supper, the breaking of the bread signifies, 1. how we should be broken in humiliation for our sinnes; and the pouring out of the wine, how our blood in this should bee shed, and poured out for our sinnes, if wee had that that we deserve. And secondly, they represent unto us, how the body of Christ was broken, and his blood poured out for our sinnes: which he was content to suffer under the wrath of his Father, for our sakes: so that wee see, both the sacrifices and Sacraments of the old, as also of the new Testament, all aimed at these two ends: to shew us our sinnes, and our misery by sinne; and to foretell or represent our reconciliation by Christ. Which being so, our lesson is this:

We have all received those two Sacraments: the firstence, the second often. Now if they have bene duly received of us, they ought to have this double use unto us: 1. To cause us to make a search of our owne sinnes, and of our misery by sinne; and seeing it, to be cast downe and humbled, considering how corrupt our hearts are, and how wicked our lives. And secondly, when this is so, then to make us seeke for reconciliation with God by faith in Christ, to make us desire it, love it, and pray for it, above all things in the world. *Abel* not onely offered, but offered so, as that it put him in minde of his sinne, and of his redemption, by the death of the *Messias* to come. So wee must not onely outwardly receive the Sacraments; but to receive, as that wee may see and be humbled for our sinne, and seeke to bee reconciled to God in Christ.

Such use also ought wee to make of hearing the word, and not to be content with bare hearing of it, or to get a generall knowledge out of it: but it must give us a speciall sight of our owne estate by sinne: and urge us forward to seeke the favour of God in Christ. Religion stands not in hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments with the congregation, though it bee done never so often, and never so formally: But so to heare and so to receive, as that they may worke in us those two things: and that is the pith and life of religion. And whosoever he be that professeth religion, and sheweth not the fruit of it in these two, that mans profession is in vaine, and it will goe for no payment at the day of judgement.

Thus wee see they offered, and what they offered. It followeth: *A greater sacrifice than Caine.*

The third and last point is the difference of their sacrifices. For although *Caine* offered as well as *Abel* and offered sacrifice as well as *Abel*: yet was there a difference in their sacrifices; for *Abel's* was better than *Caine's*. This is the chiefe point: for this sets downe what was that excellencie of his faith, for which hee is here commended. *Abel* is not commended for offer-

ing by his faith; for to did *Caine* that had no faith: nor for offering sacrifice by his faith: for so did *Caine* that had no faith: but because that by his faith hee offered a better sacrifice than *Caine* could.

The holy Ghost calls *Abel's* a better or greater sacrifice, because *Abel* brought the best and sweetest of his sheepe, and to bestow of the most cost he could; as signifying that he would have bestowed more cost, had he knowne how to have done it: for he that gives as he hath, would give more if hee had it. And hee that doth the best he can in any thing, it is certaine he would doe better if hee could. *Caine* contrariwise brought not the best of his fruits, but either the worst, or whatsoever came first to hand: as thinking that whatsoever hee brought, was good enough: and therefore worthily is *Abel* said to have offered a better sacrifice than *Caine*.

And further, this holy practise of *Abel's* came to be a law written, even one of the commandements of the Ceremoniall law; namely, that the first borne should be offered to God, Exodus. 24. 19. And the first fruit of the corn, Leviticus. 23. 10, &c. And that nothing that was lame, blinde, maimed, or had any blemish, shoud be offered to the Lord, Deut. 15. 21. *Abel* here did even that which these lawes commanded: and these lawes commanded the same that hee did. Thus God vouchsafed to honour his servant *Abel* for his obedient and good heart: even to make his practise the ground and beginning of one of his owne lawes: that to the *Hebrews* in all their generations, might in their daily practises remember this worthy deed of holy *Abel* to his perpetuall honour.

Now for us the truth is, this law binder us not: for it was a ceremony, and is ended in Christ. Yet the equity and use of it reacheth even to us; namely, it teacheth us when we will give any thing unto God, to give the best we have. This is the equity of these lawes ceremoniall, which commanded them to give to the Lord their first borne, and their first fruits, and the fattest of their cattell; and so much of them doe still bide us. Now from this rule wee are taught divers duties:

1 To the *Parent*. Hast thou many children, and wilt thou give some to the Lord: namely, to serve him in the ministry? The practise of the world is to make the eldest a Gentleman, the next a Lawyer, the next a Marchant, the next the youngest, or least regarded, or that in some infirmity in wit, or deformitie in bodie, set him to schoole, let him bee a Minister. But *Abel's* sacrifice controls this prophane course of the world. Learn therefore by him, whensoever of all thy children thou findest first in gifts and graces of body and mind, whom thou lovest best, and most esteemest, hee is fittest for the Lord, and the Lord is most worthy of him: consecrate him to the Lord, for his service in the ministry.

2 To the *young man*. Hee being in the strength and ripeness of wit, senses, memory, capacity, and in the best of his age: he saith, I will take my pleasure now I am fittest for it: I will repent at the end of my dayes, and that is a sinner's time. This is a vile policy of the Devil, to dishonour God, and to cast away their bodies. What a grieffe is it to give the devill his young yeares, the strength of his body and wit, and to bring his withered old age unto God? nay, be sure, God will not accept thy rotten sacrifice of old age, but rather give thee up to the devill, that he may have thee altogether, which hath had the best: then follow rather *Salomons* counsell, *Hecl. 12. 1.* who bids thee *Remember thy Creator in the daies of thy youth*. Remember *Abels* sacrifice, it was of the best. So thou hast no sacrifice but thy selfe to offer: offer then the best: thy young yeares is the best time, give them unto God.

3 To all *Christians*. *Abel* offered the best: it teacheth us all, if wee will professe and serve God, not to doe it by the halfe; or for shew and fashion sake, or negligently, as not caring how. Thus to doe is due to offer the sacrifice of *Conscience*, and that makes the most professors go away with their service unacceptable as *Caimes* was: for God will have all or none, he is worthy to have no partner: he must be served with all the heart, with soule and body, so that a man must consecrate himselfe wholly unto him, 2 *King. 3. 25.* It is the speciall commendation of good King *Joshua*, that hee turned unto the Lord, *wh. shall be borne, and foote, and might*: and for this, he is preferred afore all Kings afore or after him: that *Joshua* could fulfill the law perfectly, as it is required: but it is meant of the endowment of his heart and body, by which hee strive with all his might to serve God as well as hee could: his example is ours.

Wee professe religion, wee must looke that our hearts affect it: we professe a turning from sinne, we must take heed it be not formall, and from the lips, but from the heart. So when wee practise any dutie of religion, whether we pray or heare the Word, or receive the Sacraments, (this is the sacrifice that we can offer) wee must not do them coldly and carelessly, but with zealous affection and resolution from the heart. Otherwise, if we serve God for fashion sake, and our hearts are on the world, and our own lusts, wee offer the sacrifice of cursed *Caime*, and wee with our formall religion shall goe to him. But let us offer the sacrifice of *Abel*: that is, though it be never so little, yet let it be the best wee can, and all wee can, and God will accept us as hee did *Abel*. And thus the Parent should give God his best *childe*: the young man his best yeares: every man his best part, which is his heart. And thus wee follow the steps of holy *Abel*, who offered to God the best sacrifice hee had. This was the fruit of his faith: even so that Parent, that young man, that Professor that hath true faith, will doe so like-

A wife.

Hitherto of the first effect of *Abels* faith: It followeth, *By the which hee obtained witness that hee was righteous.*

This is the second effect of *Abels* faith, whereby it is commended. 1. For the meaning, *By faith* he means saving faith, which makes a man just before God, and no other. For where, as hee had said before, that by faith our *Elders* had obtained a good report. Hee proves that generall, by this example of *Abel*: therefore that saving faith which was meant there, is also meant here.

These words set downe two benefits which *Abel* had by his saving faith: First, hee was just by it. Secondly, God testified that he was so.

For the first; *Abel* faith made him just and righteous, not because his faith was an excellent quality of that vertue in it selfe, as to make him just; but because it was an instrument whereby hee apprehended and applied to himselfe the righteousness of the *Messiah* to come, whereby hee might stand just before God. This was his righteousness, which he had by faith: for hee trusted not to any holiness of his own, though (it is out of question) hee knew hee was the sonne of man who once was perfectly righteous: but the trust and confidence of his heart was in the righteousness of that blessed seed, which God had promised, *should break the serpents head*. This promise hee knowing, beleaved it, applied it to himselfe, and this faith made him righteous.

Here we learne a worthy lesson of Christianity; namely, that the true and the undoubted way to heaven, is a holy and lively faith in *Jesus Christ*: for this faith makes a man righteous, and that righteousness opens him the gate of heaven. To this end (saith the Apostle) *being justified by faith, wee have peace with God*: but by whom? *through our Lord Jesus Christ*.

For the use of this doctrine, wee must renew our former exhortation, which indeed cannot bee too often pressed to the conscience. There is none of us so vile, none so prophane, but wee desire salvation. If wee doe, then wee must tread the beaten way to it. For wee are not borne heires of it: neither can wee comethier by chance: but there is a way that must be taken, and that way is but one: all other are misleading by-ways. Again, that way must be taken in this life; else, it is too late. Now this way is to bee a just and righteous man. With this never man failed: and without this, never man attained to salvation: for, *Nowhere can come into the kingdom of heaven*. Never was man justified there, which was not just before: and that must here bee begun, which in heaven is to be perfected. In this life therefore wee must seeke to bee just. Now, our good workes will not serve to make us just: for they are all unable to endure the triall of Gods justice. And if wee stand to them, and they prove

Rom. 5. 1.

Apoc. 22. 3.

not able to satisfie Gods justice; then, in stead of saving us they will condemne us. Therefore with *Abel*, let us goe out of our selves, denie our selves, and cleave onely to Christs righteousness, in life and death: this is the way that never will deceive us.

But some will say, We walke in this way. I answer, He that walketh in a way, may be traced by his steps: so then, shew your steps of holinesse, of devotion, of charitie, &c. these must shew your faith: leave these steps behind you and then your faith is good. Thus did holy *Abel*: beleeve thou it, acknowledge it, and follow thou after him: and renounce all by-paths which the Papists, or thy owne braine imagineth. Let this one doctrine sinke into thy heart in stead of many, and let not the Devill strake it out. For if thou walke in this way, my soule for thine it will bring thee to heaven: if not, at the last day this doctrin will condemne thee, because it shewed thee this way, and thou wouldst not walke in it.

Secondly, observe: He saith, *Abel was approved* and accepted of God. How proves he that? Because his worke pleased God: as who say, his workes cannot please God, unlesse his person doe: therefore in that his workes doe, thence he concludeth that his person did: it is the reason of the holy Ghost, and therefore infallible.

In the framing of this reason, the holy Ghost teacheth us a great point of our religion: namely, that first a mans person must please God afore his actions can. And after the person, then the actions. This is plaine in these words: for it is said, *he first obtained witness that he was righteous himselfe*, and then *God testified of his gifts*: So likewise more plainly, Gen. 4.4. God had respect first to *Abel*, and then to his offering: So that the truth is manifest, No work pleateth God afore the worker doe. This being so, hath excellent uses:

First, it overthroweth a maine pillar of Romish religion; *Justification by workes*. For how can a man be justified by his workes, when he himselfe must be just afore the workes can be? Unlesse he be just, his workes be wicked: if they be wicked afore his person be just, how can they then justifie him? And if the person be once just, what needs it then to be againe justified by workes? Good workes make not a man good, but a good man makes a worke good: and shall that worke that a man made good, retaine againe and make the man good? 1. That is absurd in reason: And 2. it is needlesse: For the man is good already; else the worke could not have bene good. We may therefore say, workes are rather justified by the person of a man, than his person by the workes; and it is a most vaine thing to looke for Justification from that, which thou thy selfe must first justify: afore it be just: if we had no other reasons against justification by workes but this, this were sufficient.

Secondly, hence we learne, that till a man be called, and his person justified and sanctified, all that ever he doth is sinne. 1. His *common actions*, his eating, drinking, sleeping, walking, talking, are all sinnes. Yea 2. the *works of holiness* and his labour in the same, though never so just, equall and upright. 2. Further, his *virtuities*, namely, the practice of civill vertues, his outward gravitie, meeknesse, forbearance, temperance, quietnesse, uprightness, and all outward conformity, are all sins. Yea, more than all this, his *best actions*, namely, his practising of the parts of Gods worship, or his deeds of charitie, his prayer, his hearing the word, his receiving of the sacraments, his giving of almes; they are all sins unto him, if he have not a believing and penitent heart: yea, such sinnes as shall condemne him, if he had no other. *Obiect*. This should seeme strange divinitie, that the most holy actions, as prayer, &c. should be damnable sins. I answer, they are in themselves holy and good, and as farre forth as God hath commanded them; yet in the doer they are sinnes, because he doth them from a foule and unholy heart: for the same action may be holy in it selfe, and in regard of God the author of it, and yet a sinne in him that is the doer of it. As cleere water, pure in the fountain, is corrupted or poisoned by running thorough a filthie and polluted channell; so are even the best actions, sinnes: as even the preaching of the Word to a Minister, whose heart is not cleansed by faith, and his person accepted of God; it is a sin unto him, and (if he repent not) shall be his condemnation. *Caine* sinned not onely in hating and murdering his brother, in lying and dissembling with God; but *Caine* sinned also even in offering sacrifice. And *Abels* sacrifice had bene a damnable sin, but that his person was justified before God. And the reason of all this is good: for nothing in the worke is able to make an action acceptable to God, but only the acceptation of the person by Christ. This being so, it standes every one in hand to look to our selves; and to labour above all things for faith and repentance: that to our persons may be accepted righteous before God, and thereby our actions accepted also. If it be a miserable thing, that all thy actions, even holy actions should be sinnes, then labour to be justified; for that onely can make thy workes accepted: if not, then though thou labour never so much to be approved in the world, and set never so glorious a shew upon thy workes to the eyes of men, they are all abominable sinnes in the sight of God: and at the day of judgement they shall goe for no better. Preach and teach all thy life long; may give thy life to die for religion: give all thy goods to the poore, deprive thy selfe of all delights: build Churches, Colleges, bridges, high-ways, &c. and there may come a poore shepherd, and for his keeping of his sheepe be accepted, when thou with all this pompe of our-

ward holinesse, maist be rejected. And why thus? only because he had faith, and thou hast none; his person was justified before God, and thine is not. Therefore let this be my counsell, from *Abel*: Labour not so much to worke glorious workes; as that which thou doest, doe it in faith. Faith makes the meanest worke accepted; and want of faith makes the most glorious worke rejected: for so faith the text, *Abel must be accepted, els his sacrifice is not*. Thus we see *Abel* was iust, and God so accounted him. The second point is, That God gave testimonie he was so: In these words,

God giving testimonie.]

What testimonie it was that God gave of *Abel* and his gift, it is not exprest in the word; and to it is not certaine: but it is very likely, that when he and *Cain* offered, God in speciall mercy sent fire from heaven, and burnt up *Abels* sacrifice, but not *Cains*: for so it pleased the Lord often afterward when he would shew that he accepted any man, or his worke, he answered them by fire from heaven. So he burnt up the sacrifice that *Aaron* offered, Levit. 9. 24. So he answered *Salomon*, 2 Chron. 7. 1. And to *Elias*, 2 Kings 18. 28. And so it is likely that he gave this testimonie that he accepted *Abel* and his offering. This was a great prerogative that *Abel* and the Fathers in the old testament had. We have not this, but we have a greater, for we have that that is the substance, and truth, and bodie of this: For we have also the fire of God, that is, his spirit comes downe into our hearts every day, not visibly but spiritually, and burnes up in the heart of a beleever his sinnes and corruptions, and lights the light of true faith, that shall never be put out.

The use hereof is this; As no sacrifice in the old law pleased God, but such as was burnt by fire from heaven, sent downe either then or afore: so our sacrifices of the new Testament (that is, our invocation of Gods name, our sacrifice of praise, our duties of religion, our workes of mercie and love,) never please God, unlesse they proceed from an heart purged by the fire of Gods spirit, that is, from a beleeving and repentant heart: both which are kindled and lighted, and daily continued by that fire of Gods spirit. Therefore it is, that *Paul* faith, 1 Tim. 1. 4. *That love must come out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeined*. The duties of religion, and workes of love comming from this purged heart, asend into the presence of God, as a smoake of most acceptable sacrifices, and are as a sweet perfume in the nostrils of the Lord.

Now, of what did God thus testifie? Of his gift.

It may here be asked at the first: how can *Abel* give a gift to God; hath the Lord need of any thing; and are not all things his? I answer, God is soveraigne Lord of heaven and earth, and all creatures: yethath he so given his creatures unto man to use, as that they become mans

owne, and so he may esteeme and use them: and being mans, a man may in token of his thankfulness returne them againe to God: especially, seeing God accepts them being so offered, as most free gifts.

This sheweth us, first, the wonderfull mercie of God; that whereas we can offer him nothing but his owne, he vouchsafeth to accept a gift offered of his owne, even as though we had of our owne to offer.

2. See here a difference betwixt the sacrifices of the old, and sacraments of the new Testament. In their sacrifices they gave something to God, and therefore they are called gifts: in our sacraments we receive daily grace from God.

3. In that the sacrifices of the old Law are called gifts, we must know that it is typical, and hath excellent significations unto us:

1. It signifieth that the *Messias* should be given of God freely, for the salvation of his elect: and that Christ the *Messias* should willingly give himselfe to be a Redeemer.

2. It signifieth that every man that lookes for salvation by Christ, must give himselfe to God and all that is in him. So *Paul* exhorteth, Rom. 6. 13. *Give your selves unto God, and your members weapons of righteousness*. When we give anything to a man, we make him Lord of it. If we then give our soules and bodies to the Lord, we must give them so, as that they may obey and serve him, and be ruled by him, and serve for his glorie, howsoever he shall use them. We profess religion; and make great shewes; but to give our selves in obedience to God, is the life of religion. But contrary is the course of the world. For, most professors are given up to sin and Sathan: their bodies given to drinking, gaming, uncleannesse, injustice; their soules to envying, hatred, malice, revenge, lust, pride, selfe-love: God hath nothing except it be a sinne: but that will not serve the turne: he will have all, *bodie and soule*; for he made all, and he redeemed all. We goe against equitie: Christ gave his body and soule for us: why should we not give ours againe to him? Again, this gift is not as other gifts; for here all the profit redounds to the giver: the glorie indeed is his, but the gaine and profit is our own. Why then should we withhold our selves from God? it argueth, we know nor feele not, what Christ hath given us: for if we did, if we had ten thousand lives, we would thinke them all too little for him.

And thus much of the first and second effect of *Abels* faith; the third followeth.

By which Abel being dead, yet speaketh.

The 3. effect, whereby *Abels* faith is commended, is laid downe in these words. Concerning the meaning whereof there is some difference, which is briefly to be examined. Somethinke the words should be thus translated, *By which also Abel being dead, is yet spoke of*; making

the meaning to be, that by his faith he obtained a good name to all posteritie: but it seemes this cannot stand, for two causes: First, because that is already affirmed of *Abel* and all the rest, in the second verse, that *through faith they had obtained a good report*: which therefore might seeme needlesse to saie to be repeated againe. Secondly, for that afterwards Christs blood and *Abels* being compared together, it is not said that Christs blood is better spoken of than *Abels*, but that it *spoke better things than Abels did*. Therefore the words are rightly translated.

Now for the true sense of them, it is likely the holy Ghost here hath relation to the stone whence it is taken; where, upon *Cains* murder God saith to him, *The voice of thy brothers blood crieth to me from the earth*: and why crieth it? Namely, for vengeance against so monstrous a murder: and crieth to all men to behold it, and to abhorre the like: and to esteeme for he continueth to speake, to this day. So that the words, in the true and full sense of them, doe import these two points:

1. That *Abel* spake when he was dead.
2. That in a sort *Abel* still speaketh.

For the first: *Abel* spake and cried when he was dead: but how? not with a vocall speech; but the phrase is figurative, and imports thus much, as if the Lord had said to *Caine*: thou hast killed thy brother closely, and it may be hath hid him in the sand, or buried him, and thinkest no man knoweth of it: but thou must know *Caine*. this thy fact is evident to me, as if *Abel* had told me; I know thou killedst him: and if thou wonder how I know, I tell thee his blood told me; for it cried in my eares, and yet it crieth out against thee: for though *Abel* be dead, his blood yet speaketh. As this is true of *Abels*, so of all mens blood: and as of blood, so of all other oppressions, though done by never so great men. Murders, oppressions, and all wrongs done to Gods children, they crie to God against the oppressors, though the poore oppressed men dare scarce name them; they need not, for their blood doth; yea, even their very reares cannot be shed, but *God* taketh them up, and puts them in his bottle, and will know who shed them. This blood crieth against them that shed it, yea, reares crie against them that cause them. This affordeth us a double instruction: First, here it is apparent that God seeth and knoweth the sins of men, though the men be never so mightie, or their sins never so secret. For though men couvey them never so closely, and labour to hide them with all the means that the wit of man can devise: yet the very dead creatures cry out, and doe proclaim the sins and sinners in the eares of God, as fully as the voices of living men, can discover any thing unto men. Privie oppressions, and goods gotten by deepe deceit, lie hid to the world: But the stone out of the wall shall cry, and the beam come out of the timber, till answer it: *Woe be to*

him that buildeth his house with blood: and erecteth a Citie by iniquitie: as though he had said, God knoweth every stone and every peece of timber in their stately houses, which they have gotten by deceit or oppressing of the poore. Privie conspiracies, and plots of treason are laid against Princes and Magistrates; and often in so secret manner, as in mans reason is not possible to be discovered. But God hath many wayes to finde them out, and they never escape his privie search: and therefore the holy Ghost advileth, *Cursed be the King, that in his thought, nor the great ones in his bed-chamber: for the sorrow of the heaven shall carrie thy voice, and that which hath wings shall declare the matter*. So that whatsoever is plotted never so privily, or conspired in the secret cloisters of ungodly men, God knowes it, and hath means enough to disclose it to the world. And in our daily experience God magnifieth himselfe mightily in revealing murders. For, bring the murderers before the dead corps, and usually it bleedeth, or giveth some other testimonie, whereby it speaketh even as *Abels* blood did, *This is the murderer*. Nay more: for *Abels* blood spake to God, but here even to men also.

And of this it is hard to give any reason at all, but the secret and immediate hand of God, thereby shewing himselfe to know all secret sins, and to be able to disclose them by strange means.

The use of this doctrine is, to feare all men from sinning, though they thinke it possible to conceal their sins from the world: for this is one of the strongest and commonest encouragements that men take to live in a sin, if they thinke it likely to be concealed. But here they see how false a ground that is. For if they can conceal it from men, yet can they not from God: and if God know it, then can he reveale it to the world when it pleaseth him.

Again, whereas *Abels* blood cried when he was dead: it teacheth us, that God hath a care of *Abels* both living and dead: for it were nothing to say his blood cried, if God heard not that cry. But it is apparent he heard it, for he reveald it, and punished *Caine* when *Abel* was dead: and could not revenge it himselfe. And this care God had not over *Abel* alone, but over all his children: and as the Psalmist saith, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*: that which is vile & of no regard in the world, is precious with God. Tyrants make havocke of the Church, and kill them up by heaps: but God records up every one, and will not faile to revenge it, when they are dead: For if God have bottles for the reares of his servants: surely much more hath he bottles for their blood.

The use whereof is to teach us in all extremities of danger or distresse, to learne patience: yea, though we be sure to die, yet (as Christ saith) *To possess one soules with patience*: For we have one will heare the cause, and revenge our quarrell when we are gone: So that if we

Plal. 119. 115.

1. Th. 5. 10.

C. 2.

So

be patient we lose nothing: but if we be impatient we get nothing. Let us therefore hold our tongues: for, the ~~wrong~~ *crieth* loud enough to God for revenge, who will heare it as assuredly as he did *Abels*. And thus we see how *Abel* spake then, even after he was dead.

The second point is; *He speaks also yet*; and that three waies:

First, his faith yet speaketh, because it admonisheth all men every where, who either heare or read this storie, to become such as *Abel* was, namely, true worshippers of the true God; for in *Abels* example, it provokes all men to be like him, because it assurcth them of the time regard and reward with God that *Abel* had: and so *Abels* faith is a never-dying Preacher to all ages of the Church.

Here we learne, that the holy Examples of Gods children are reall teaching, and loud preaching to other men.

For there is a double ^{word,} teaching, namely, in ^{or} deed.

It belongs to the *Minister* to teach in word; and to *all men* to teach by their deeds, and good examples: and if the minister teach not thus also, it is the worse both for him and his hearers.

It sufficeth not for him to teach by *vocall Sermons*, that is, by good doctrine; but withall by *reall Sermons*, that is, by good life. His faith, his zeale, his patience, his mercie, and all other his vertues must speake, and crie, and call to other men to be like to him; which if he practise carefully in his life as *Abel* did, then shall his vertues speake for him to posterities when he is dead.

Againe, *Abel* though dead, may be said to *speake*, because howsoever his bodie be dead, yet in soule and spirit he liveth with God in heaven. And thus the word *speakes* may bee understood, because it is here opposed to *death*: by which he being dead, yet speaketh: that is, being dead in bodie, yet liveth in soule; which life with God was obtained unto by his true and saving faith.

Thirdly, he may be said to *speake yet*, as all other Gods Martyrs are said to crie in the Revelation, *from under the altar, How long Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* As this is true of all Martyrs, so especially of *Abel* the first Martyr of all: which words are not spoken, neither by him nor them vocally with utterance of voice: but it is so said, to signifie what fervent desire the servants of God have in heaven, of the full manifestation of Gods glorie in their bodies, and of an utter abolishment of sinne in the whole world: Which their desire, they doubtlesse utter to God in a more excellent manner, than in this world we can utter any thing with our voice: and thus *Abel* *speakes yet*, and shall speake till the worlds end.

Hitherto of the first Example, the example of *Abel*.

The second is of *Henoch* in these words.

By faith Henoch was translated, that he should not see death, neither was he found, for God tooke him away: for before hee was translated, hee was reported of that hee had pleased God, &c.

The second example of faith is taken also out of the old world before the flood; and it is of *Henoch* the seventh from *Adam*: to whom, strange and miraculous things befall by reason of his faith. Let the meaning of the words be first examined.

By faith

That is, by his confidence in the Messias, or his saving faith, he was taken away.

Taken away

This is, from earth to heaven, not by an ordinarie worke, but miraculously; it is evident by the next words.

That he should not see death

That is, that he should not see death, nor any dissolution of soule and bodie: and therefore his taking away was *miraculous*. For to be taken away by death is an ordinarie worke; but to be taken away, and yet not die, that is miraculous and extraordinary: & such was *Henochs*.

So then the substance of these words is thus much; *Henoch* having this grace from God, to beleeved fastly in the *Messias* to come, was likewise honoured with this high prerogative, to be taken into heaven, without tasting of death, and to the end that he might not die. Thus we have the meaning.

Now concerning this translation of *Henoch*, there are two opinions:

Some thinke he was translated in soule only, and not in bodie: and they say he died in the translation, so as his soule was onely taken up into heaven, and his bodie slept in the earth.

D Though this appeares false at the first sight, yet let us see their reasons, and what they can say for themselves.

The first reason is this, No mortall bodie unglorified can enter into heaven: but there is no mention of his glorification: therefore his bodie could not come in heaven.

Answer. It is certaine it was glorified ere it came in heaven. If they reply, it is not mentioned: I answer, it followeth not, that therefore it was not: for every circumstance of every action is not mentioned. For many circumstances of actions must necessarily be supposed, & such an one was this. Againe, the glorification of his bodie is here plainly enough implied where it is said, he was translated, that he should not see

a. Example
Henoch.

Heb. 11.

death. Now if his bodie saw not death, it was made immortall, which is a speciall part of glorification.

Their second reason: Christ was the first that ever entered into heaven both in bodie and soule; and for proof thereof, they bring Saint Paul where he saith, *Christ is the first fruits of them that sleepe.*

Ans. True indeed of them that sleepe, that is, of all that die: for Christ entered into heaven both in bodie and soule first of all them: but *Henoch* never died; as the text here avoucheth: therefore that place hinders not, but *Henoch* might be in heaven in his bodie, before Christs humane flesh ascended thither.

Thirdly, they argue out of Saint *Iohn*: *No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended; the sonne of man which is in heaven.* But, say they, this sonne of man is not *Henoch*, but Christ: therefore none but Christ ascended bodily into heaven.

Ans. That place is not meant of corporall ascending, but of understanding mysticall and heavenly things: no man ascendeth to the full knowledge of heavenly mysteries, but Christ alone, who descended from the bosome of his father.

And thus wee see, this opinion hath no strength of argument to rest upon: but we may safely hold (notwithstanding any thing that can be said against it) that *Henoch* was translated both in bodie and soule. And if any man yet doubt, how he could be taken up in bodie before he was glorified; we are to know, though he died not, yet his body was changed, as those men shall be, *which shall be found alive at the last day.*

The second opinion is, that *Henoch* was taken up in soule and bodie into *Paradise*, (some say, the heavenly, but the most the earthly *Paradise*) and their lives in his mortall and corruptible body, and must afore the last day come againe in his body with *Elias*, and fight against Antichrist: and when by their doctrine they have overcome him, he shall by violence kill them, and so they shall die. Martyrs: And this is the generall received opinion of the most Papists. But it is a mere conceit, and a drame, and there is no ground for it: but good argument against it.

For first, as for the earthly *Paradise*, it was defaced by the flood; nor doe we read that ever man was in it but *Adam*. And some of their owne fables tell us that *Seth* went to the gates of *Paradise*, when his father *Adam* was sicke, to get some Physicke out of *Paradise* for his father, but he could not get in: Nor doe we finde any mention of it afterwards. So that it is likely in all reason, that it was defaced by the universall flood.

And if they meane, he was translated into the heavenly *Paradise*: I answer, *thither can no uncleane thing come*: but a mortall body is uncleane: and themselves say, he was taken away in his mortall body, and in it shall come againe

A and die. Therefore *Henoch* having a mortall and unglorified body, cannot be in the highest heavens; into which nothing can enter which is not glorified and made immortall.

It they alleage *Ecclesiast. 44. 16. Henoch pleased God, and was translated into Paradise, &c.*

I answer: we need not call in question the authoritie of the booke, nor answer that it is not in the Canon of faith. For the text is corrupted wilfully by some that shewed themselves in the *latine* too bold with the text, both there and else-where: for in the *Greeke* original, there is no such matter as *Paradise*, but the words are these; *Enoch pleased God and was translated for an example of repentance to the generations.* And thus we see this opinion is every way erroneous, and hath no shadow of reason in it, nor for it.

Seeing therefore both these opinions are to be refuted, let us in few words set downe the true and Orthodoxall judgement of the Church, out of the Scriptures in the old and new Testament. And it is this; That this holy man, by Gods speciall favour to him, was assumed into heaven both bodie and soule; his soule being perfectly sanctified, and his bodie glorified in the instant of his translation: and there he remaineth in glorie, expecting the generall resurrection, and the full glorification of all Gods elect.

Out of this translation of *Henoch*, we may learne;

C First, that there is a *life everlasting* prepared of God for his children, wherein they shall live for ever both in soule and bodie; for hereof hath God given us most evident testimonies, both here in *Enoch*, and afterward in *Elias*: *Elias* a Jew, *Enoch* none: *Enoch* in the first world, *Elias* in the second: *Enoch* before the flood, *Elias* after: *Enoch* uncircumcised, *Elias* circumcised: *Enoch* married, *Elias* unmarried: and both were assumed into heaven in soule and bodie, and are there to this day, and tarry for us till the end of the world; assuring us that our soules live for ever: and that our bodies, though they die, shall rise againe to life. Here therefore we have a notable ground for that last (but not least) article of our faith, where we profess to beleve *life everlasting*.

D Secondly, in this example we learne, that God is not tied to the order of Nature. The order which God established and set downe concerning all men after *Adams* fall is this, *Dust thou art, & to dust thou shalt returne*. By virtue of this decree, all men are to die, as sure as they once lived; and when that time appointed by God is come, all the world cannot save one man, but accordingly die he must. But here notwithstanding we see, God that tied man to this order, is not tied himselfe. *Enoch* and *Elias* are exempted, they die not, their bodies never turned to dust; such is the power of God over the order of Nature, in all ararall actions.

Thirdly, where the Papists hold, that all the

the Fathers who died before Christ, were in *Limbis*, (a place out of heaven) and came not in heaven till Christ fetcht them thence, and carried them with him at his ascension: Here we learne it is most false and forged. For here we see, *Henoch*, and afterwards *Elias* were in heaven both in bodie and soule, many hundred yeares before Christs Incarnation: whereby (as also by many other evidences that might be brought) it is apparent that *Limbis Patrum* is nothing but a device of that hereticall Church of Rome.

Hitherto hath the holy Ghost avouched the translation of *Henoch*. Now he proveth substantially, that he was taken away.

Neither was he found, for God had taken him away.

And for his proofe, he first layeth downe his ground: then hee thereupon frameth his argument, consisting of severall degrees of demonstration.

The ground is the plaine and evident testimony of the old Testament in Genesis; where the words are these; *Henoch was not found, or not scene, for God rooke him away*. Against this ground, being the very words of the old Testament, no man can take exception. And here in a word, let us all marke the high and soveraigne authoritie of Gods Word, which even the holy Ghost himselfe vouchsafeth to allege for the confirmation of his owne words. It had bene sufficient that the holy Ghost here affirmed *Enoch* to be taken away: but we see hee proves it out of the old Testament; so also did the Apostles, and Christ himselfe all their doctrine.

Let this teach all men to give due reverence to the holy Scriptures: let teachers allege them, let hearers receive them farre above all humane testimonies, seeing the holy Ghost himselfe vouchsafeth to confirme his owne words by the authoritie thereof.

Secondly, having laid this ground, the holy Ghost frames his argument, to prove that *Henoch* was taken away by faith: and it consisteth of many degrees of evidence.

For before he was taken away, he was reported of that he had pleased God.

But without faith it is impossible to please God.

The degrees of the argument are these;

1. God himselfe rooke *Henoch* away.
2. Before he was taken away, he pleased God.
3. But without faith no man can please God.

Therefore *Henoch* by faith was taken away.

The first degree, That *Henoch* was taken away, and was not found any more in this world hath bene sufficiently spoken of already.

The second degree is, that *before he was taken away, he pleased God*: which is not barely affirmed, but it is further added, that he was reported of, or hee rece ved testimony, that he pleased God.

Now, this report or testimonie is taken out of the storie of *Genesis*, where it is affirmed of *Enoch*, that he walked with God: which walking with God is an assured testimonie that he pleased God; for (as the Prophet *Amos* saith) *Can two walke together unlesse they be agreed?* therefore in as much as *Henoch walked with God*, it is proofe sufficient, that, he pleased God: and because he pleased God, therefore God rooke him away. So that here are two distinct points in the second degree; First, that *Henoch* pleased God: Secondly, that there is a report or a testimonie given of him, that he did please God.

In the first let us observe three speciall points of instruction:

First, that *Henoch*, before he was taken away, pleased God: let us learne, that whosoever lookes to have his soule translated into heaven at his death, and both bodie and soule at the resurrection; must before-hand in this life learne to please God: they must seeke to please God, not when the time of translation is come, but before, as here it is said *Henoch* did.

If any man demand, *How shall I please God?* My answer is this: *Adam* pleased God by keeping the Law: but now that is past, that power is lost: we must now please God by direction from the Gospel, namely, by faith in Christ, and true repentance, together with a holy life (which must necessarily accompanie true faith and repentance) thus God is pleased. And this must we not deferre till our death; but doe it in our lives: nor can we looke to be inheritors of the kingdome of glorie as now *Henoch* is, unless before-hand we be in the kingdome of grace, by pleasing God as *Henoch* did. It is impossible to see men nor care for salvation till death, and then they begin to please God: but alas, God will not be so pleased. They begin to hate how to please God, when they have long displeased him, as there is then feare they can never please him: but that man liveth and dieth with comfort, of whom it may be said as here of *Henoch*, before he was taken away he pleased God.

Again, whereas he came not in heaven till he pleased God; this discovers the madness of sinful men, who will looke for heaven and yet will leave no sin, but batter themselves therein. But let all impenitent men here take knowledge that they come not in heaven till they please God: let them therefore cease pleasing themselves, and their corruptions, by living in sin, and learne to please God by an holy life.

And further: In this point marke how nothing brought *Henoch* to heaven, but his pleasing of God. He was rich, for he was one of the greatest on the earth: he was royally descended, for he was the seventh from *Adam* in the blessed line: he was learned, for he had the six first Patriarchs to teach him, six such *Tutors* as never man had; and it is likely hee had a comely, strong, and active bodie. But see, all these brought him not to heaven: no, he pleased God, and was therefore taken away.

Let this teach us not to rest in wealth, beauty, strength, honour, humane learning, nor all these put together, without the feare of God: for some of them may please thy selfe, and some may please other men; but God must be pleased afore thou come in heaven, if thou wert as good as *Henoch*. Therefore unto all thy outward blessings adde this, *To please God by faith and repentance*. Then as thy pleasing of *men* may make thee happy in this world; so thy pleasing of *God* shall translate thee from earth to heaven.

Thus we see, *Henoch before he was translated, pleased God*.

Secondly, as hee pleased God, and else could not have beene translated; so it is added, that he was foreparted of, or there was such a testimony of him. That prooffe or testimony is here concealed; but it is recorded in the storie of *Genesis*, where it is said, *Henoch walked with God*: which as we heard before, was an assured testimonie that God was well pleased with him.

But what is this, *hee walked with God*: how can a man bee said to walke with God? The meaning is, That *Henoch* lived a godly, righteous, and innocent life in this world: for to live in holinesse and righteousness is to *walke with God*. And further, his heart was possessed of two perswasions or resolutions, which were the inducements drawing him to this holy life.

First, that he was alwaies in *Gods presence*, and that God is alwaies readie to dispose of all things to his good.

Again, that God did see, trie, and discern all his words and deeds, yea, his cogitations and thoughts, and the whole course of his life. These were the holy resolutions of *Henoch*, and these made him lead an holy life.

This lesson is worth learning, and this example worthy to be followed of us all: our dutie is with *Henoch*, to walke with God in this life, if we purpose to live with God in heaven: and we walke with God by leading holy and unblameable lives, in holinesse towards God, and righteousness towards man. But if we thinke this hard to doe, we must labour to be resolved on these grounds: First, that God and his providence is ever present with us, to dispose of us alwaies to his glorie, and of all other things to our good.

Secondly, that as we are in Gods presence; so God seeth us, and all our thoughts, words, and works, bargaines, and dealings, and will iudge them all.

When these two perswasions possesse our hearts, it cannot be but we shall live godly, and feare to offend God: for as a childe is dutifull and obedient in his Fathers presence; so when a man is perswaded he is in Gods presence, it cannot but make him dutifull. When a man is perswaded that God seeth him, hee will take heed what he doth; and that God heareth him,

he will temper his tongue; and that God be- holdeth all his dealings in the world, he will take heed how he borroweth, lendeth, buieth, or selleth, and what he doth in all his actions: and the very cause of all carelesse in these and all other duties in the world, is, because men are perswaded *God seeth them not*.

Forge us therefore to this excellent dutie; we have, First, *Gods commandment: Walke before me, and be upright*, saith God to *Abraham*, and in him to all the children of his faith.

Again, we have the examples of Gods children, who are renowned for the obedience of this Commandment; *Henoch* here, after him *Abraham*, and after him *David*, who testifieth of himselfe, *I will walke before God in the land of the living*.

Thirdly, as it is both commanded by precept, and practised by example; so the prooffe of it is most comfortable to all that practise it: for it will make them prosper in all they goe about. For, as he that is alwaies in the Kings presence and companie, cannot but be in his favour, and therefore cannot but succeed well in all his affaires; so he that walke with God, cannot but prosper in whatsoever he sets his heart and hand unto. Blessed *Abraham* found this most true, when he assured his servant whom he sent to provide *Isaac* a wife, in a long and doubtfull, and dangerous journey; *The Lord before whom I walke, shall send his Angel with thee, and prosper thy journey*: and even so may every childe of God say with confidence, *The Lord, before whom I walke, will send his Angel with me, and prosper me in my proceedings*.

Fourthly, this walking with God, is a good meanes to make a man beare the crosse with patience. For if hee bee perswaded that God seeth how wrongfully he is persecuted or oppressed, and that Gods providence is alwaies present, so as no affliction can come unto him, but by his appointment: and againe that his providence disposeth of all things to his good, how can he but receive with patience that portion of afflictions which God shall lay upon him? For as he that walke with the King, who dares offer him wrong? so he that walke with God, what evill can touch him? This is *Iosephs* argument to his brethren, when they were discomfited, and feared he would punish them after their Fathers death: *Fearre not*, (saith he) *for am not I under God?* as though he had said, Doe not I walke in Gods presence? and acknowledge my selfe under his power? and that God, when you thought evill against mee, disposed it to good: where the ground of *Iosephs* reason is, that he walking with God, his afflictions turned to his good.

Lastly, this is a meanes to bring a man to make conscience of all sinne, in thought, word, and deed, and in all his dealings, when he perswades himself to walke in the presence of God. When *Ioseph* was allowed to sin by his mistress, his answer was, *How shall I commit this great*

Gen. 17. 1

Psalm 116. 9.

Gen. 24. 49.

D

wickedness, and so *to anger God*? The bridle that restrained him, was the fear of that God in whose presence he walked. And because hee walked with God, he would not walk with her in her wicked way; and because he kept a holy company with God, therefore hee would not keep her company, nor be allured by her temptations.

So then seeing this way of walking with God, is every way so excellent and so profitable, let us learne it not in judgement and knowledge onely, to be able to talke of it (which is soone learned;) but in confidence and practice (as dutifull children doe before their Parents, in) let us in a heavenly awe and child-like reverence walke before God, labouring for a true perswasion of his presence and providence, to bee alwaies over us, and our whole lives. The want hereof is the cause of all sinne: And if we doe thus walke with God, and so please him, as *Henech* here did, then shall we be sure (though not after the same manner that *Henech* was, yet) in soule first, and afterward in soule and bodie both, to be translated into eternall life. But if we will not walke this way with *Henech* in this life, let us never looke to live in heaven with him; but assure our selves, that as the way of holiness is the way to glorie, so the way of wickednesse is the way to eternall perdition. And thus much of the second degree.

But without faith it is impossible to please God.

These words containe the third degree, or the third part of the reason. And this degree consists of a generall Maxim or Canon of Divinity: and the holy Ghost first layeth it down; and then, because it is one of the weightiest principles in religion, he proveth it substantially in the words following. In the Canon it selfe let us first examine the meaning, and then unfold the manifold use of it.

Without faith]

By faith is meant here the same faith as afore: namely, true saving faith in the *Messias*. And without this saving faith:

It is impossible to please God.

Impossible, how? not in regard of the absolute, infinite and indeterminable power of God, which hath no limits, but his owne will: but in regard of that order of the causes and meanes of salvation set downe by God in his Word: which is this;

1. Man by sinne hath displeased God.

2. God must be pleased againe, else a man cannot be saved.

3. He that will please God, must please him in Christ the Mediator, els he cannot: therefore he that will please God, and be saved, must needs believe in Christ. And thus by this order it is impossible. We denie not, but in regard of Gods absolute power, he could save a man without faith; as he can lighten the world without the Sunne. But as (if he keepeth that order of nature, which his owne wisdom hath appointed)

it is impossible to give light to the world without the Sunne: so if he keepeth that order for salvation, which his owne Justice hath appointed) it is impossible to please God without faith in Christ. So then the meaning is laid downe: and now appeares the strength and force of the holy Ghosts argument;

He that will be saved, as come to heaven, must first please God: but without faith it is impossible to please God; Therefore without faith no man can be saved nor come in heaven: And by consequence, therefore *Henech* beinge chosen to heaven, needs be taken away by faith.

Now the use of this Canon, rightly understood, is manifold and of great profit.

First, here we learne that faith is simply and absolutely necessary to salvation, and most necessary of all other gifts and graces of God whatsoever. And though many be required, yet among t all holy graces this is the principally, and more necessary in some respects, than any other. For howsoever hope, and love, and zeale, and many other graces of God are required, to make the state of a Christian compleat; and though they all have their severall commendations in the Word: yet of none of them all is it said in the whole Scripture, as it is here of faith, that without it, it is impossible to please God. And no marvell, for it is the root and ground of all other graces, and gives them their life and being: for therefore doth a man feare God, therefore doth he love God, therefore is he zealous for Gods glorie, because he beleeveeth that God loveth him in Christ the Redeemer.

Now then if faith be thus necessary, then it followeth, that those that live in ignorance, and so have no sound faith, but a foolish presumption, are in a miserable case: for how-ever they may flatter themselves with conceits of their devotions, and good meanings, and good intents; it is faith, with which they must please God, and nothing can without it. It stands them therefore in hand to lay off ignorance and presumption, and labour for a sound and saving faith, and that will bring them to the favour of God.

And againe, as for such as have received grace to believe, seeing faith is of such necessity, and that they having faith must needs have knowledge, they therefore must looke and examine by their knowledge, whether their faith be a sound faith or no: for herein many that have knowledge deceive themselves, and think they have true faith when they have not. Now if any man would know, whether his faith be sound and saving, or no: it is knowne by this: If it purifie the heart: for so faith *S. Peter*, That God by faith did purifie the hearts of the profane and filthy Gentiles. If then thy faith doe not purifie thy heart, and cleanse thy life, and cause thee to abound in good workes, it is no sound nor saving faith, it is but a generall faith: it is but an historical knowledge, and cannot save the soule.

soule: he therefore that upon examination of his heart and life, findeth his *faith* to be such, let him not content himselfe, but tune his generall *faith* into a *living faith*, which in this world will *purge his heart*, and at the last day will *save his soule*. And this must every man the rather doe, because what knowledge, or what other gifts of God to ever any man hath, without *faith* in Christ all are nothing: for it is *faith* that seasoneth them all, and makes both them and the person himselfe to please God.

Secondly, if it be *impossible without faith to please God*, then here we see the fond and foolish hypocrite of the world, who will please God by other meanes; some thinke if they be glorious in the world, either for their wealth, or their wit, or their honour, or their authority, or their learning, they presently bring themselves into a foolish Paradiſe; and because the world makes account of them, and they please themselves, therefore they thinke it certaine they *must needs please God*. But alas, though all the world admire them, and they be never so farre in love with themselves, *He that sits in heaven laugheth them to scorn*. For, not all the pompe and glorie, nor all the millions and mountaines of gold in the world can *please the Lord*, for one of the least of their many thousand sinns, wherewith they have provoked him. Let these men aske *Nebuchadnezzar*, if his pompous pride; or *Achitophel*, if his active head and craftie wit; or *Abulom*, if his golden lockes; or *Isebel*, if her painted face and covetous attire; or *Nabal*, if his flocks of sheepe; or the Philosophers, if their naturall learning; if all of these, or any of these did ever please God: Nay alas, they have all found and felt, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*.

Thirdly, it is the opinion not of the *Turke* alone in his Alcoran, but of many other as ill, that every man shall be saved by his owne religion, if he be devout therein; be he *Turke*, Jew, or *Christian*, *Papist*, or *Protestant*; but this is a ground and rule of *Absurdities*, and appears hereto be most false; for no salvation without pleasing of God, and without *faith it is impossible to please God*: therefore no religion can save a man, but that which teacheth a man rightly to believe in *Christ*, and consequently to please God. But every religion teacheth not to believe in Christ; some not at all, and some not aright; and therefore it is *impossible* for such a religion to save a man. Again, be a man what he can be, unless he be within the covenant of grace, he cannot be saved: but he cannot bee within the covenant, but by *faith*; therefore no man can be saved by any meanes, but by true *faith*: nor in any religion, but that which teacheth true *faith*.

Here therefore not onely *Turkes* and *Jews* are excluded; but this also sheweth many *Papists*, and many *evangelicall* in our Church, how short they come of that religion, which must save their soules. For this is the conceit

A of the most men, that if they doe some good works, which carrie a faire show to the world, as *liberality* to learning, or *charitie* to the poore: straight they thinke they have leave to live as they list, and God is bound to forgive their sinnes, and to give them heaven: and thus they imagine, though they know not what it is to believe in Christ, or to *repent* of their sinnes. One of this religion came to the Prophet *Michea* in his dayes, and asked him this question, (uttering thus plainly which all such men thinke in their hearts,) *What shall I come before the Lord, and bow my selfe before the high God? Shall I come before him with thousands of Rammes, and ten thousand rivers of oyle?* He makes the question, and would faine make answer him selfe: nay, he goeth further, and offers more, *Shall I give my first borne for my transgressions, and the fruit of my bodie for the sin of my soule?* But the Prophet answers him, shewing him his follie, and how little God doth regard such works, without a contrite heart; *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requirith of thee: Surely to do justly, to love mercy, to humble thy selfe, and to walke with thy God.* Marke how that answer fits this example of *Henech*: He pleased God, hee walked with God, and was taken away: So, answereth the Prophet, if thou wouldest please thy God, and come to heaven by his favour; never stand upon those sinnes of *Rammes*, and rivers of oyle, upon thy gay and glorious works; but humble thy selfe, and walke with thy God. No walking with God (saith *Michea*;) no pleasing of God: what is it but all one, as if he had said, *without faith it is impossible to please God*? Here then is no disallowance of good works, but of works without *faith* and true repentance, which though they be never so faire and flourishing, yet it is impossible, that without *faith* they should please God.

Hereby it is also manifest, that all the writers of the *Hebrewes*, and the works of such men as either know no Christ: or knowing him, acknowledge him not their onely Saviour: or acknowledging him, doe not truly believe in him with such a *faith as purgeth the heart*; are nothing else, but as the Fathers called them, *plendida peccata*, gilded and glittering dross, and beautifull deformities. And how-ever this seemes harsh, yet it must needs be true, seeing *without faith it is impossible to please God*.

And here also the vanitie of some *Papist* Writers appeares, who presumptuously make some *Philosophers* Saints: when is they should first have shewed that they believed in Christ; and then we would believe and teach it as willingly as they: but else, if they had had all true learning, and all the morall vertues in the world; this must stand for a truth, *without faith it is impossible to please God*.

Lastly, here wee learne, that the Word of God registred in the holy Scriptures, doth containe in it sufficient direction for all the actions

Mic 6, 7, 8.

and duties of a mans life: for without faith no man can please God. And if no man, then no mans actions can please God which are not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne, Rom. 14. 23.

If therefore mens actions must proceed from faith, then consequently must they have their ground and warrant from the word: for faith and the word are relatives, and the one depends upon the other: no faith, no word to binde: no word, no faith to believe. But all actions that please God, must be done in faith, therefore all actions that please God, have some ground and direction in the Word of God, without which Word of God there can be no faith. And this is true, not onely in holy actions, but even in the common actions of mens lives, and lawfull callings. This is a principle, which we must firmly believe and receive. And beside this argument here, it is also proved by the evident testimonies of the holy Ghost. *S. Paul to Timothy, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable to teach, improve, correct, and instruct in right conscience, that the man of God may be perfecte, and made perfect unto all good works.* How can the sufficiency of Scripture be more sufficiently in words expressed? Again, *Every creature and ordinance of God is good. &c. For it is justified by the Word of God and pr. 7.* Now if the Scripture make a Christian perfect in all good works, how can it be, but it give him sufficient direction for all his works? And if every action be justified by the word, how can that be but the word hath warranty and direction for every action and duty, which may fall out in the course of a Christian life? And upon these grounds we have good reason to be resolved of this truth.

But now if any man aske how this can be, for the Scriptures were written long agoe, and the stories are of particular men, nations, and times, and the Commandments are knowne to be but ten; how then can the Scriptures yield sufficient directions for every mans particular actions? I answer, the Scripture gives directions for all actions two wayes: Either by Rules; or by Examples: Rules are of two sorts General or particular. Particular rules for particular callings are many: for Kings, they must read Gods booke, and not have many wives, nor gather too much silver and gold: They must be wise, and be true; and kiss the sons of God: Christ Iesus, and many other: for Ministers, they must be apt to teach, sober, sober, not young schoolers, and many other: and so consequently the most of the callings that are in the common wealth, have their particular directions in plaine rules.

General rules are first the ten Commandments, which are directions for all sorts of men in all times, what to be done, what not to be done in all actions towards God and men; and besides, in the new Testament there are some few rules, which are general directions for all men in all ages: As, *Whatsoever you would that*

men should doe to you, doe you it the same unto them. Again, *whether you eat or drinke, or whatsoever you doe, doe all to the glory of God.* Again, *Let all things be done to edification, and without offence of thy brother.* Again, *Let all your works be done in love.* Lastly, *let no man seeke his owne (alone,) but every man anothers wealth.* Now there is no action in the world, nor any duty to be done of a Christian man, be he publike or private person, be it publike or private action, be it towards God or man; but if he have not a particular direction, yet it falls within the compass of some of these rules: and by the tenour of some of these, he may frame his works in such manner as shall be pleasing to God, and comfortable to himselfe.

Secondly, besides rules, there are Examples, which are special directions: and they are either of God, or good men. Extraordinary examples of God, namely, such as he did in extraordinary times, or upon extraordinary occasions, they concerne us not; for these he did by the power and prerogative of the Godhead: as bidding of *Abrahams* sacrifice his sonne bidding the *Israelites* spolie the *Egyptians*; and suchlike. But the ordinary works of Gods wisdom in his creatures, of his justities towards sinners, of his mercie towards his children, of his care and providence towards all, are excellent rules of direction for us. Hence wee have these rules; *Be ye holy, for I am holy: Be ye mercifull, as your Father in heaven is mercifull.* Luk. 6. 36.

So for the actions of Christ, who was God and man: the miraculous actions of his power, which argued his Godhead, as his walking upon the water, and suchlike, are no directions for us. Nor againe, his actions and works done as he was Mediatour, as his suffering for our sakes his passion and his merits, these are no directions for us to doe the like: But, as the first give us instruction; so these procure us justification.

But the third sort of his actions done by him as a man, or as a Jew borne, they are both our instruction and imitation, and they are good directions for our actions: as, his obedience, his zeale, his patience, his humilitie, and all other vertues. Concerning all which he faith himselfe to us, *Learn of me, for I am humble and lowly.* And againe, when he had washed his Apostles feet, he bade them *learn of him to love one another:* For, faith he, *I have given you example that you should doe even as I have done to you.* These his examples are rules of direction to all men in the like case.

Now as for the examples of men, as the examples of wicked men are every way to be eschewed, so good mens are to be followed; for whatsoever is written, is written for our learning. Rom. 15. 4. And so for them we are to know, that their examples or actions, contrarie to the word, are therefore to be avoided, because they be contrarie: as *Noahs* drunkennesse, *Lots* incest, *Dauids* adulterie, and many other: his

infirmities, and such like. Such as are directly agreeable with the word of God, are to be embraced and received as direction for our lives, not for their owne sake, but because they are agreeable to the Word. But as for such as are neither commanded nor forbidden; and being done, were neither allowed nor disallowed: these being done by godly men, and such who for their faith were approved of God, as a merit which no exception can be taken in the Word, they be as rules and directions for us in like cases. Now there is no action that can tell out in the life of a Christian man, for which he hath not out of the Scripture either a rule, or a particular, or else some example to follow, which is as good as a rule unto him. And thus we see how the Scripture affords directions for all our actions. In the demonstration whereof, we have stood the longer, because it is a principle of great moment. The use hereof is double. First, we must therefore in all the actions of our lives and callings, take consultation with the word of God, and for our direction therein, we must search for either generall or particular rules, or at least for examples of godly men in like cases. And without the warrant and direction of some of these, we are by no means to enter into any thing, or to doe any worke. If wee doe, then wee cannot cleere our selves from sinne in so doing: for wee sinne, because we please not God in doing that action: we please not God, because we have no faith for the doing of it: we have no faith, because we have no warrant nor ground in the word for it. Therefore what ever a man pretteth to doe without some warrant in the word for his direction, he sinnes in so doing.

Secondly, here Ministers must learne their duty: for if no action can possibly please God that is done without faith, nor can be done in faith without warrant from the Word, then must they bee Gods mouth unto the people, to be able to tell them what is lawfull, what is unlawfull by the word: that is their people may perform their actions in faith, and consequently please God.

Now having laid downe this Rule, because it is a principle of so great moment, the holy Ghost in the next words proceeds to the prooffe of it.

For he that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him. These words are a prooffe of the former rule, and the reason stands thus;

He that cometh to God, must needs believe: But he that pleases God, cometh to God. Therefore he that pleases God, must needs believe: and so, without faith it is impossible to please God.

He that cometh to God

To come to God in the Scriptures, but especially in this example, is to labour to have fellowship with God in Christ: as is manifest in these places more. In the fourth Chapter, we

are bid to *goe to God, and take of grace*: and in the seventh, *God is said to be able perfectly to save them that come unto God by faith*: and in the tenth, wee are called to *draw neere unto our heauenly Father in confidence of faith*. Out of all which places it appeares, that to come to God is to have fellowship with God by Christ. And the reason why that phrase is so often used to the Hebrewes in, for that many of them hading received the protection of Christ, after he forsooke him againe, and fell from his religion, and by renouncing Christ, fell away from him. Therefore he exhorted them to *take heed lest there bee in any of them an evil heart, and unfaithfull to depart from the living God*, Chapter 12. Now, by the contrary, if to renounce Christ be to fall or goe away from God: then we may gather, that to come to God, is to cleave to Christ, and to God by Christ. So then the meaning is, He that will have any fellowship with God in Christ, He must believe.

What must he believe? Two things.

1. *That God is, that he is a rewarder of them that seek him.*

He must first believe that God is;

That is, not so much that there is a God, for that we are taught by the very light of nature: but that this God, whom in Christ he labours to know, and come neere, is the true & only God.

This is a notable point in Christian religion to believe, that God is God indeed: not a fiction, a shadow, or imaginarie God, but God indeed: for it is the scope of the first Commandment, that God gave mankind. If any man object, There is no man that knowes God, but confesseth God to be God: no man was so mad as ever to thinke otherwise:

I answer, to believe that the true God to bee God indeed, is a matter of great difficultie. For though a man by nature thinke there is a God, yet doe we not by nature thinke the true God to be God. Nay, by nature every man is an Atheist, and denieth in his heart the true God to be God. And death impugne the first Commandment above all other. And this may truly and safely be affirmed of all men that ever came of Adam (Christ alone excepted) that by nature they are Atheists; and it may be proved thus.

By nature, though wee know and believe there is a God, yet the corruption of our nature is such, as we frame and faine him to our selves to be such a one as we please: for wee deny in our hearts his power, his presence, and his justice. But to take away these three from him, is to deny the true God to be God indeed.

First, men by nature deny Gods presence: For men would be affirmed to doe many things in the presence of any man, even the basest in the world: which when they are out of mens sights, and yet in Gods presence, they commit carelessly and boldly. I speake not of naturall actions, which are lawfull: & yet in many whereof there is none to great shame, as men naturally refuse to doe them before others: but I

meane *Revelations*, which not for any natural unbelief, but even for their faultlesse and uprightnes, because they are honeste faires, men would feare to distrust any man were prettious. Seeing then men feare not, nor shame not to doe them, though they be in Gods presence; it followeth, that therefore they naturally imagine, *that a God would be a deceiver*: for if they were so perswaded, they would not commit them, though they esteemed God no better than a man.

Secondly, men by nature deny *Gods power*, thus: When a man offends a Magistrate by breaking any law which may deserve death, or some great punishment, he is fore afraid; and all his care is, how hee may escape his punishing hand. But let a man offend God never so much by breaking carelesly all his holy commandments, he neither feares at all, nor trembles at the punishment belonging unto them. How can this be? but that howsoever he grants *there is a God*, yet hee is not perswaded that God hath power to revenge the contempt of his lawes, and therefore hee never feares nor shrinks at the remembrance of him, nor flieth at all from his revenging hand, but ploddeeth on in sinne without feare.

Thirdly, men by nature denieth Gods *justice*: for the justice of God is to winke at sinne in no man, but to condemne and punish it: wherfore hee findes it, by inflicting the curses of the law upon it. But man denieth this justice: for though hee sinned aginst Gods law, and his conscience tell him of it; yet hee perswades himselfe, there is no curse nor punishment due for it, as least that he shall escape it: nay, though hee see never so many before him punished for the same sin, (yet our nature is so blinde and so corrupt) hee thinks for all that, it shall not light on him. And it is lamentable, yet most true, that the God of the ignorant men is a mere *Idol*, a God made all of mercy, and which hath no justice in him at all, and their sins they carelesly lay all on Christ, and say God is mercifull: and in this conceit they care not how ignorantly, how loosely, how prophantly they live; and their hearts never have a reverent and awefull thought of the justice of God.

There are the pitifull imaginations that all men by nature have of God. All these may be proved by evident Scripture: The first, in the Psalm, where David brings in the wicked, saying to themselves, *God be forgotten, hee hides his face from us, he will not regard*. The second, by the blasphemy of *Rabbi*, who uttered with his tongue, that which all mens hearts think by nature, *when God can deliver you out of any bond*. The third *Ely* proves apparently, where hee tells us that the wicked say, *we have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement, though a scourge runn over, and passe through us, it shall not come at us*.

Thus both Scripture and plaine demonstration prove this to be true, That every man by

nature denieth Gods *presence, power, and justice*; and therefore is by nature a *plaine Atheist*, not believing that *God is God indeed*. Now furthermore, there are foure sorts of people that put in practice this *Atheisme*.

First, such as are not ashamed to say openly, *Is there a God, or no?* and dare dispute the question, and at last avouch that *there is none*; but that all matters concerning God and his worship, are nothing but devices of politike men, to keepe simple men in awe, and to make fooles faire; but these themselves are fooles of all fooles, and the devill devised that impious conceit, to keep them in miserable blindness. There have bene such fooles in all ages, yet in old time David saith, *These fooles did but say in their hearts*: but now the fooles of these last and rotten ages are ripe in their folly, and they dare say with their mouths, *There is no God*. These are Monsters in nature, and devils incarnate, worse than the devill himselfe; for hee in judgement never was an *Atheist*. There are to be marked and hated worse than Toads and Adders: and if such a one can be convicted by any lawfull evidence, if ever Heretike or Traytor deserved death, such a one deserves tenne deaths; as being a Traytor to God, to Mankind, and to Nature her selfe. And though these wretches say, *there is no God*, yet make they a *God of themselves*, sacrificing all their affections to their pleasure, and their profit.

The second sort are such, as acknowledge and worship a *God*, but a *false god*. These have bene in all countreyes, and in most ages, as Histories doe shew: some worshipping the Sunne, some the Moone, some starres, some beastes, birds, fishes; some dead Idols of wood, or stone, or metall. And of this sort, and no better, are some in these Churches, where the true God is worshipped: the Apostle saith, *Covetousnesse is Idolatry*; for if a mans heart bee set wholly on riches, then the *wedge of gold is his god*. And to other, whose affections are all on pleasure, *their belly is their god*. Let these men hold in judgement as they can, their practice I am sure proclaimes Atheisme.

The third sort are such as acknowledge and worship the *true God*, but in a *false manner*: and of these there are 3. principal sorts; first, *Turks*: Secondly, *Jewes*; who hold the true God, but deny the Trinity of persons, and the deity of Christ. Thirdly, the true *Papists* holds in word one God, and the Trinity of persons, as we doe: but looke at their doctrine, and if their words have any natural meaning, they deny it: for if the second person be true Christ, then hath hee two natures, Godhead and Manhood: but by their famed *Transubstantiation*, they quite take away the truth of the Manhood. And againe, Christ hath three offices; hee is the true *King, Priest, and Prophet* of his Church: and if hee be not so hee is not Christ: But the Papists doctrine in plaine words, and necessary consequence denieth them all, as hath bene often

Psalm.

proved.

proved unto their shame, and published to the world : and they never yet to this day could or durst answer it : for if they doe they shall loone either heare us againe, or else we will recant it. But till then it appears, that their God is by their doctrine not the true God, but an Idol : for hee that denieth the Same, denieth the Father also, as saith S. Iohn.

The fourth sort of Atheists are such as acknowledge and worship the true God, and worship him in true manner, for the outward worship; but in their lives and deeds deny him. And these are not to bee sought for in *Turkie*, or *Iary*, or *Italy* : for all Churches are full of such Protestant-Atheists. *Italy* may have more Atheists in judgement than we : but these hypocrites and Atheists in life, are here also : those tares wee have amongst our corne. Of these speaks the Apostle, that they profess to know God, but deny him in their works. Let this seeme no wonder, that such men be called Atheists; for the Apostle saith plainly, *Herbar curath not for his family, is worse than an Infidell* : whereby it appears, a man may bee a professor of the Gospell, or a Christian in profession, and an Infidell or Atheist in his practice : and it is certaine, let any man profess what he will, if his life be naught, his religion is a false religion in him.

Now then, to shut up this point with the use thereof : If this be true, that there are so many sorts of Atheists, that almost the world is full, and that wee are all so by nature : then, first let us see how hard a matter it is to believe in God aright; and if no man come to God, but hee that believeth God aright, then we see it is no marvell, though so few come to God. Let us therefore goe to God by earnest prayer, to give us his spirit to worke true faith in our hearts, and to make us of a true beleefe. And secondly, seeing men may bee Christians in profession, and Atheists in practice; let us all look narrowly to our selves, and joine with our profession, *Confesence and obedience* : for else the more we know God, the worse wee are. If may please God after to give us better mindes : but as yet wee are no better than deniers of God : and though we come nere God in profession and in his outward service, yet indeed wee are farre from him, because wee want that true faith, which must profess God, not in judgement alone, but in practice : and that will bring us nere unto God, for he that commeth to God, must believe that God is. And thus much for the first thing to be beleaved, by him that will come to God and please him.

The second is,
And that he is a rewarder of them that seeke him.

It is a notable sentence, and one of the most comfortable in the book of God : and contains the second thing to be beleaved. The parts are naturally two :

1. How a man doth seeke God.

2. How God rewards them that seeke him.
For the first : a man truly seeketh God, by doing foure actions :

First, a man must forsake himselfe, goe out of himselfe, and as it were lose himselfe in his owne judgement, when hee intends to seeke God. If any aske how that may be ? I answer; Thus : A man must labour to see his finnes fully and distinctly, and in sight thereof be cast down in himselfe, as a man is, when hee seeth his debts then let him looke into himselfe, and see if he can finde in himselfe any abilitie to pay those debts, or any means in the world to satisfie Gods justice, and purchase pardon. And if upon due examination hee finde none at all, no not the least, nor any thing in himselfe, but an accusing, and raging conscience : let him then fall out of all love with himselfe, say hate and abhorre himselfe and his owne balenefice : and lastly, let him despaire of his owne salvation in or from himselfe : and thus doing, he forsakes himselfe, denieth himselfe, and even loseth himselfe. And thus necessarily must hee doe to himselfe, that will see his heart to seeke the Lord. For God will be found of none that hope to finde helpe at any hand but his : they therefore that seeke God, but will seeke themselves too, doe justly lose both God and themselves.

Secondly, hee that will seeke God aright (when hee hath lost himselfe) must hunger in his heart and soule, not after wealth and honours, ease, or pleasures : but after the favour and mercy of God in Christ, for the forgiveness of his finnes : and one drop of Christs blood to wash away the guilt and staine of his defiled and sinfull soule, must be dearer to him than all the pomp and glory of tenne worlds. Looke how a hungry soule hungers after meat, and a faintie soule thirsteth after drinke ; so must his soule hunger after Gods mercy, and thirst for Christs blood : and these are necessary : For as a man that undertakes a long journey, must bee provided of meat and drinke ; so hee that undertakes the journey to goe seeke the Lord, must have this provision for the diet of his poore soule, *Gods mercies, and Christs merits* : and hee that seeks, without a soule-hungring after these, may seeke long and finde nothing.

Thirdly, if he will truly seeke God, he must not goe in every path : but take the true and living way, which Christ hath consecrated by his blood : nor take any guide, but trust to Christs spirit alone to bee his guide : nor make many mediators or messengers to God, but make Christ alone to God the Father. Wee must therefore goe to him, and yeeld up our selves to bee taught and guided by him, and leave our suit to be preferred by him : wee must not looke to come to God, by running on pilgrimages to this or that Saints picture, or bones : orto our Lady of *Loretto*. Many have sought God in these, but who ever found him ?

Nay, alas thou maist lodge in her forged Tabernacle at *Loretto* all thy life, and lie in hel for all that when thou art dead, and maist kisse all the Saintes pictures, and bones, and haire, and all their reliques in Spaine and Italy, and all cannot get thee one sight of Gods favourable countenance. Nor againe, must wee looke to come to God by our good workes, though we are to doe them : they are good *markes* in the way, and good *evidences* of a right way ; but they cannot open heaven, and let thee in. And therefore when thou hast done all thou canst, thou must forsake them all in matter of justification and comming to God. Onely thou must goe to God by Christ, and cleave to him alone ; he is the *doore*, the *way*, the *truth*, the *life* : and certainly never man found God, that sought him not in Christ alone. And when Popish devices and distinctions have done all they can, men will bee found liars, and Christ to speake truth, saying, *No man cometh to the Father but by me.*

Lastly, when all these are done, then must thou *seeke* that God is become thy mercifull Father in Christ, and is reconciled unto thee in him ; for there is no feare, but if thou *seeke* God in Christ, thou shalt finde him : and when thou hast done the three former things, thou maist safely, and assuredly believe, that thou hast truly *sought* God. And after all these, if thou have not time and *truly faith*, thou dost not *seeke* God. For as it is *impossible without faith to please* God ; so is it *impossible without faith to finde* God. Thus if a man lose himselfe, long after Gods mercie, take Christ alone for his guide and mediator, and stedfastly beleve his reconciliation with God by Christ, then hee *seekes* God aright : and to this seeking, belongs a reward and blessing. Now then if *this bee to seeke* God, here is some light given to a great question, *Whether the Church of Rome be a true Church*, and their doctrine truly Catholique, or erroneous and failing in fundamental points? For answer ; Can that be a true Church, which doth not bring her children to *seeke* God ? or that Catholike doctrine, which teacheth not her children to *seeke* God the right way ? but sends them into *roops*, by *waies*? Surely if this be to *seeke* God, then search all the Popish doctors, and almost all their writers, and see whether a man be not taught to *seeke* God quite in another walke. Which way of theirs, whether it ordinarily bring the seekers to God or no, we leave to Gods mercifull judgement. But for our selves, as wee see wee have the true and living way, the sure and infallible way, *by Christ to God, by the Sonne to the Father* ; let us receive in the comfort or so rich a mercy, and be thankfull to the Lord for revealing himselfe unto us, and opening unto us the true way to him, and to his glory. And thus much for the first point, now we must *seeke* God.

If secondly, *whether there is a reward of them that seek him* : I answer, God rewards them

that *seeke* him.

First, by offering himselfe graciously to bee found of them that *seeke* him : for hee never hides himselfe, nor turnes away from the soule that *seeketh* him ; but rather turnes to him, and meets him that comes to him : he is that good Father, which saw the prodigall sonne a farre off, and met him, and received him, Luke 16. Yea, rather it is true, that hee is *found of them that sought him not*, than ever *sought* by any that *found* him not. And hereby God much magnifieth his grace and mercy to mankind, in being so assuredly found when men *seeke* him. For in this world it is not so ; *Almen seeke the face of the Prince*, saith *Salomon* : true, but all men finde it not. No : Access to great men is not so easie : they and their favour are so inclosed, that men may long *seeke* before they finde either them or it : but God here is not so inclosed, as hee will not be seene nor spoke to ; hee is found of them that *seeke* him. And as hereby he honoureth himselfe, so he highly rewardeth his servants : for there is no greater contentment to a subject, than to perceive his service pleaseth his Prince, nor greater joy than to finde his gracious favour when they *seeke* it.

Let then this practice of the *great* God of heaven, first of all, teach the *great* Ones of this world to bee willing to be *found* when they are *sought* unto : thereby shall they honour themselves, and cheere up the hearts of their people, who *seeke* unto them. And againe, it may be a rich comfort to the *poore* ones of this earth : who when they see they must long looke, and wait, and pray, and pay, and *seeke* the face and favour of great men, and cannot finde ; may then remember, yet they have a God, who will not shut the doore upon them, will not turne away, will not keepe secret, will not leave them away with a rough answer, or a slowre looke, but hath this honorable and princely grace, *He will be found of them that seek him.*

Secondly, he rewardeth them that *seeke* him by bestowing his love and favour on them : not onely hee, but his favour shall bee found of all that *seeke* him. It is Gods favour that Gods children *seeke*, and his favour they shall be sure to *finde*. This is no small reward unto them : for in this world a man thinks he hath enough, if hee have the Princes favour : and therefore it was the common phrase in old time, *Let mee finde grace or favour in the eyes of my Lord the King*. So speake Gods children unto the Lord. It is not wealth, nor honours wee *seeke* for at Gods hand ; but *let us finde favour in the eyes of the Lord our God* : and so they doe, what ever they *finde* in this world.

Thirdly, he rewardeth them not with his *naked favour*, but with the most gracious testimonies thereof that can be : which are two ; *Forgiveness of their sinnes, and eternall life and glory with himselfe*. This is all a Prince can doe to his subject, who hath offended him ; To forgive him

him the fault, and remit the punishment: and to advance him to honour. This doth the Lord to all that seeke him: hee forgives them the debt they owe him, whereby life, and soule, and all was forfeited to him, and gives them also life everlasting: So plentiful a reward is given them from that God, *and whose wages they are come to receive.*

Fourthly, hee rewardeth them with the beginnings of heaven and happinesse even in this world, *and good confidence and joy in the holy Ghost* the comfort whereof is more, even in the bitterest affliction, than all the pleasures and contentments in the world.

Lastly, with the *apparances of heaven*, and of eternal life: namely, the good blessings of this life, a competent portion whereof God giveth his children in this world, as tokens of his favour, and as rewards of their service, and seeking him.

Now as this place doth aime at all these rewards: so principally and directly the holy Ghost meaneth *eternal life*: as though hee had said, *Hee that cometh to God*, must stedfastly believe that God is able, and most willing to reward all that come to him with a better reward than this world can yeeld, even with eternall life and glory for his ionnes sake.

But then will some object; God rewardeth us, therefore we merit; therefore good workes deserve.

I answer, this place indeed is grossly abused by the Papists for that purpose: but wee are to know, the truth is quite otherwise; for God rewardeth men for two causes: First, for his *promise* sake, and that is for his owne sake, for it was his owne goodnesse that made him promise, and no former debt hee owed to man. Again, hee rewardeth our good workes, not for our merits, (for they are nothing, but of death and curses) but for *Christ* and his merits: for their worthinesse are our good workes rewarded. So then here are two causes of Gods rewarding, and yet mans merits are neither of both: and so the argument is nought, That God rewardeth, therefore we merit: for God doeth it for other causes. Thus these spiders gather poison out of this flower, but let us looke the *honey*: for this notable sentence hath excellent use:

First, if God be a rewarder of them that seeke him, then not of them that seeke him not. Who seeke not God? Wicked and ungodly men seeke him not, but rather seeke to avoid him, and misserve: this sentence therefore is heave against them. For when they heare it, their conscience answereth, but we seeke not God; Therefore we can look for no reward from him. Doest thou seeke the world: then must the world be thy rewarder: Doest thou seeke to please thy selfe: then must thou reward thy selfe. And if thou wilt please the devil by living in sinne, thou must be thy paymaster: alas! pittifull and fearful with these rewards be.

Again, if God reward none but them that seeke him: here appeares the reason why to many Papists die in our religion, and (with us) cleave to *Christs merits alone*, when they come to die; because their conscience then tells them, that by their pilgrimages, reliques, will-worships, and many more of their courtes (ordinarie in Popery) they did never seeke God, but themselves and their owne honour, gaine, and credit; and full well know they that there is no reward due for such service: and therefore by their practice they make it a true saying, that it is good living a Papist, but dying a Protestant.

Secondly, if God be a rewarder of them that seeke him, then wee see it is most true which the Apostle saith; *It is not to want to serve God.* Cor. 15. 58. for God is a rewarder of them that seeke and serve him. Therefore the Acheit and prophane men of this world (who say, *It is to want to serve God; and what profit is there then we have kept his Commandments?*) are here convinced to be lyars against the truth.

Then seeing it is so, let this admonish us all to seeke and serve God, in all truth and sincerity. knowing we serve him who will reward us. Nothing more encourageth a man to serve his Lord and King, than to see that his paines are regarded, and his service rewarded: nor more discourageth a man than the contrary. It therefore God did ever forget any that served him, let us bestow service else-where, and thinke him unworthy to be sought to: but if contrariwise, he never forget, nor deceived, nor disappointed any that served him; then is he most worthy to have the service both of our soules and bodies. David indeed once said; *In mine heart I cleansed my heart, and washed my hands in innocency.* But hee was then in a strong temptation, as himselfe there confesseth: but afterwards when hee went into the sanctuary of God, and teacheth the truth of the matter, hee confesseth hee was deceived. And therefore as in the first verse hee had acknowledged, that *God was good to Israel*, so in the last hee concludeth, that *it is good for him to draw nether unto God*: and so though the temptation was very vehement, yet as faith appeared in the beginning, so it had victory in the end, and testified, that *God is good to all that seeke him.* Another time also (for he was a man of many sorrowes and temptations) being in some great distresse, his corruption so prevailed that he said, *All men are liars: Whatsoever Samuel, or Gad, or Nathan,* and other Prophets have told me of Gods love, and mercie, and of his promises, and providence, and fatherly care; I see it is all talie and nothing so. Now surely if David, or all the Kings in the world can prove this, then God is not worthy to be sought after: but great men thinke they may say any thing, especially when they are moved, as David here was. But when David entered into himselfe, and considered the words he had so presumptuously uttered; upon

better advice he confesseth; and writes it up for all posterities to Gods glory and his owne shame, that it was in passion, *I said in my feare all men are liars*: This hee said in his harts, or in his feare: but upon advice, in the next verse he confesseth Gods benefits were so many and so great to him, as he cannot tell *what to render to the Lord for them*: And in another place he crieth out in admiration; *O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that feare thee, and put their trust in thee, even before the finnes of men!*

Wee see then, that merciful promise of Christ is ever made good, *Seeke and you shall finde*, Matth. 7. 7. None ever sought God, but found: We may seek our own pleasures and live loosely, and bee deceived, and heare that fearefull question, *What profit have ye of these things?* Rom. 6. 21. What reward but shame and sorrow? but if we seeke God aright, we never lose our labour. Let us therefore seeke God, let the hand of our hearts *knocke at Gods mercy gate* in Christ, and we shall not goe away without a reward. The prodigall child fled from his Father, spent all, and lost his favour: but he no sooner said, *I will returne and humble my selfe to my Father*: but he found him, and wan his fathers favour againe. So let us but offer our selves to God, (*God understandeth our thoughts long before*) hee will meet us, and receive us, and give vs a reward.

Thirdly, as God rewardeth them that seeke him, so all that seeke him: None misse him, all find that seek. Great ones have not access, and the poore kept out; but all received as they come: no difference; but the more carefully any seeke, the more welcome are they. Here let Princes and great men learn their duties at God, by whose grace and permission they are what they are.

First, let them thinke it unbecoming their *reuerence*, to let any serve them without a reward: and a shame to their honour, not to let well-deserving subjects finde their favour. Let them not *daine* their hearts by not regarding them, and their paines: but let them encourage them to serve them, by looking at them, by good countenances, and good speeches, and by rewarding every one according to his worth. All great men should esteeme this, as one of the pearles of their Crownes, to have it said of them, *Such none is a rewarder of them that serve him*.

Again, let them learne to dispense their favour, according to reason, and not affection onely. God is indifferent and equall to all that seeke him, so let Princes be: for that is true honour and justice to reward each one as hee deserves. And that hee may finde the best, who doth best, this will make every one strive, who should be first, and forwardest, in all serviceable duties.

Further, this must teach them *not to despise them* that are under them in this world; for

howsoever the state of this world requires that difference of persons, else it cannot stand: it is nothing so with God, nor in the world to come. For there the subject, the servant, the poore man, may challenge his part in Gods favour as well as the best: nay, whosoever *seeketh* the most carefully, shall finde the best reward.

Moreover, here is a comfort to the poore, and the meaner sort of men, who are appointed by God to bee underlings in this world: Seeke they favour here and finde it not? worke they here and doe their duties, and are not rewarded? Let them learne to seek God, who will assuredly both regard what they doe, and abundantly reward it.

Fourthly, seeing God is a rewarder of them that seek him: here is a comfortable encouragement against two great impediments, which hinder many a man from serving God.

First, to seeke God is but a matter of mockerie to prophane men: for let a man set his face to Ierusalem, there are presently Samaritanes, which for that cause will hate and mocke him: Let a man set his heart to seeke God, by hearing the word more carefully, praying to God instructing his family, or keeping the Sabbath more carefully than afore, and forthwith hee is the laughing stocke, and the by-word to prophane men: but loe, here is comfort; The God whom thou seekest will reward thee, and that so richly, that thou wilt thinke thy selfe well recompensed, both for thy service, and their mockes. In this world men care not who thinke or speak evill of them, so the Prince like them: and shall it not encourage us to seeke God, though the world mock us? seeing to doing we please God, and so farre doth please him, as he will highly reward us? Those therefore, that fall from religion for those mockers, it appears they *seeke not to please God, but men*.

Secondly, for a man that is a Magistrate or a Minister, to doe his duty carefully, is the high way to undergoe a burthen of contempt and hatred: inso much as many good men are afraid to be either Magistrates or Ministers: for first, wicked men must needs hate them, because the one is to rebuke, and the other to punish their faults. And againe, even good men are too respectlesse of them that are in these places, and for the most part neither yeeld them that reverence, nor reward, that is due unto them; but oftentimes a man for all his paines and care taken for Church or common-wealth, is recompensed with hatred, envy, grudges, evill words, and slanderous reports. In this case, the comfort is this, that though a man bee in the world neither regarded, nor rewarded, as his desert is, yet the Lord seeth what he doth, and is a plentiful rewarder of all that seeke and serve him: and therefore especially of them, who not onely themselves serve him in his chiefe places of service, but also doe winne many other to seeke and serve God.

Fifthly, if God be a rewarder of them that seek him.

him, then doubtlesse he is a *revenger of them that hate him*: for he that can mightily *reward his followers*, can also mightily be *revenged* of his enemies. These two are the two parts of a *Kings power*, to be able highly to advance his friends, and mightily to punish his enemies: therefore principally this belongs to the *King of Kings*. This sentence therefore is a thunder-bolt of a most fearefull threatening against all impenitent sinners; assuring them, that if they persist to prophane Gods holy name by their carles sinning against him, they shall be sure to finde and feele him a powerfull revenger of them that hate him. Thus he promisseth himselfe, Deut. 32. 40, 41, 42. *I lift up my hand to heaven, and I say, I live for ever. If I whelm my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgement, I will execute vengeance on my enemies, and reward them that hate mee.* Where also note how the same phrase is used: for here the Apostle saith, God is a *rewarder of them that seeke him*: So in Deuter. *A rewarder of them that hate him*. If any object how these two can stand together; for a man had as good hate him, as seeke him, if the *same reward* belong to both: I answer; A reward, but not the same belongs unto them. Theeves and murderers are justly rewarded, when they die for their facts: and the King rewards a good servant, when he advanceth him to honour. They that seeke God are rewarded with mercies and favours above their desert: they that hate God, are rewarded with vengeance and torments, according to their desert: and this shall all wicked men, and enemies of God, be as sure to finde, as ever any that sought God, obtained mercie.

But worldly men will say, we hate not God, we are no *Jewes nor Turkes*, we are christened, and come to the Church, according to the law, as good subjects should doe. I answer; neither doe *Turkes nor Jewes* hate God, if this be all: for they denie not the Godhead, but acknowledge it, and are circumcised, and live more strictly in their devotions than most Christians. Here is therefore more required, or else wee shall make them also good friends with God: But a man may hate God, and be neither *Turk nor Jew*; he may acknowledge Christ and the Trinitie, and yet hate God. For, as Christ saith, *He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth*: So is it here; He that seeketh not, serveth not, and loveth not God, *hateth God*: for there is no man can know God, but must needs either for his mercies love him, or else hate him for his justice against sinne and sinners. Again, Christ bids us, *If you love me keepe my commandments*. If then to keepe Gods commandments be a signe of one that loves God, it is a signe that one loves not God, when he hath no care to keepe them. By which two places, it appears, that whosoever makes not conscience of sinne, is Gods enemy, and that God so reprobates him: therefore let this feare everie man from living

A carelessly in his sinne, and drive him to true repentance: for else let him assure himselfe, God is not so *plentifull a rewarder* of them that seeke him, but he is as *powerfull a revenger* upon those that hate him.

Lastly, if God be a *rewarder of them that seeke him*, wee learne the great difference betwixt Gods service and the *Devils*. The Devils servants are fed with faire words, but get nothing, the Devil is able to give them nothing: but Gods servants (as we see here) are plentifully rewarded. God is a *rewarder* of them that seeke him: but the Devil is a *deceiver* of them that serve him. But will some say, There is none so mad to be the Devils servants. I answer: He that doth any mans worke, is either his servant or his slave: but every finfull wicked man doth the Devils worke: for sinne is the Devils worke; therefore all impenitent sinners are the Devils servants. It is Christs argument to the Jewes: *You are of your Father the Devil, for the works of your Father you will doe: murderers and lies are his works, you live in these sinnes, and doe these works; therefore you are his servants.*

Ioh. 8. 41. 44.

Again, the holy Ghost teacheth us, that *whoever committeth sinne* (and liveth therein without repentance,) *the same is the servant of sinne*. Now sinne is but the *bard* or broker to the Devil: they that are the servants of sinne, sinne preferres them to the Devil, and so they become his servants: therefore whosoever is the servant of *sinne*, is by that means the slave and servant of the Devil also. Which if it be true, it will fall out upon the reckoning, that the Devil hath more servants in the world than God hath: which is so much the more lamentable, inasmuch as he deludeth all his servants, and is not able to reward them, nor to give them any good thing.

Rom. 6. 23.

But will some say, this is nothing so; for contrariwise, who have the honours, pleasures, and wealth of this life, who have hearts ease and the world at will, but such men? I answer: True, it is commonly so; but have they those from Sathan? No, not the least of them all, but all from God: for every man is Gods child by creation, and some by grace to every one of his children he ordaines and gives a *portion*: but to his children by grace a *double portion*; both here, and in heaven. The wicked men, they will not feare nor serve him; therefore they have no part nor portion in heaven, but here they have it: So saith David; there are some men, which are *men of this world*, and have their portion in this life: these mens bellies God filleth with his hidden treasures, they and their children have enough, and leave the rest for their children after them. Where it is manifest, that wicked men have their parts and portions of Gods blessings in this world, and that all their wealth and pleasures are granted them by and from God, as their portion; reserving the principall part of the portion of his children for

Ps. 17. 14.

for a better life. Therefore all the *good things* of this life, which *Diuer received*, and all wicked men doe receive in this life, are not any rewards of *Sathan*, but gifts of *God*: so unworthie a maister is the Devill to serve. Indeed hee will promise his poore slaves any thing, but can performe nothing, but will lie unto them and deceive them. He told *Christ* confidently, when he let him see the glorie and greatnesse of this world, *all this is mine, and I give it to whom I will*: but he was a *liar from the beginning*, and so he is here. He lied to the first *Adam*, and no marvell, that he dare avouch so fond and loud a lie in the presence of the *second Adam*, *Jesus Christ*. He promised the first *Adam* to make him God, and here the *second Adam* to make him King and Lord of all the world, and the glory of it: but he performed both alike, he deceived the first, and so had the second also, if he had trusted him. Nor did ever any trust him, but he deceived him, (I meane even for the base things of this life;) witness all his witches, (his most devoted and prostituted servants of all other) if ever he made any one of them wealthy: all ages are notable to shew one. Whereas, on the other side, there was never man that served God, but had a competent measure of comforts for this life (and some abundance) and yet all that is but the first fruits and beginnings of that *reward*, which is laid up for them in another world. Which being true, is it not a strange and lamentable case, to see men (for all this) debate themselves to this base and slavish service of *Satan*, and to refuse this high and honourable service of *almighty God*? A common servant in this world hath more wit: he, if he can heare of a better service, a Maister who gives better wages, and who better preferres his servants, will leave his old Maister, and make means to get the other. And shall not we be as wise both for soule and bodie, as they for the bodie alone? Shall they leave a man for a man, and shall not we leave the Devill for God?

Let us therefore abandon the base service of *Sathan*, who neither can, nor will reward them that serve him; put away so ill a Maister who hath not so much as meat and drinke to give us (for we have even that from God: but of his owne, he hath nothing to give us, save in this world sorrow, and shame, and an ill conscience; and in the world to come, the torments of hell with himselfe:) and let us all seeke the blessed service of God. If we know not how to attaine it, goe to *Christ* by hearty confession of thy sinnes, and earnest prayer, and he will preferre thee to God his Father: for never was any denied, that with a good and true heart, offered himselfe to Gods service. Then shall we feele and finde what a blessed thing it is to be Gods servant: of whom it was ever true, which the holy Ghost here saith, and is and ever shall be, that *He is an honourable rewarder of them that seek him*.

And thus we have (in some part) the mea-

ning and use of this notable sentence: wherein we have stood the longer, because it is one of the most excellent principles of all *Practicall Devoutie*.

Now put all together, and we shall see how it proves *Henoch to be taken away by faith*; which is the first ground, and the maine matter of all this example, and of these two verses.

God is a rewarder of all his children that seek him by faith: therefore it is *faith by which Gods children please God*: and therefore holy *Henoch* who was *taken up by God from earth to heaven*, both pleased God by *faith*, and by *faith* was taken away.

And thus much for the commendation of *Henochs faith*, and consequently the examples of such, as lived in the first world before the flood.

Now followeth the example of *Noah*, who lived in both worlds, both before and after the flood.



NOAHS Faith.

VERSE 7.

By Faith, *Noah* being warned of God of the things which were as yet not seene, moved with reverence, prepared the *Arke* to the saving of his household: through the which *Arke* he condemned the world, and was made heire of the righteousnesse which is by faith.

IN this verse is contained the third example, and the last in order of those who lived afore the flood, in the first and old world; namely, of the renowned Patriarke *Noah*, the tenth from

3. Example of Noah.

Adam.

Of whom and whose faith, great and glorious things are spoken in this verse; and that in a high and excellent stile, full of majestic, and divine eloquence.

Concerning *Noahs* faith, two points are laid downe; first, the ground of his faith: secondly, the commendation of it.

The ground of his faith, was a speciall revelation

lation from God, in these words; *Noah being warned of God*. The things revealed, whereof God warned him, are laid downe two wayes: first generally, to be *things as yet not seene*; then particularly three in number:

1. Gods *Judgement* upon the sinfull world, that he was purposed to destroy it by water.

2. Gods *mercie* on *Noah*, that he would save him, and his family.

3. That he would save him by an *Arke*, and therefore he must make one: and these be the things whereof *Noah* was warned of God.

His faith is *commended* by three worthy effects or operations in him. I. *It moved in him reverence*, or a reverent regard of the warning sent him from God. II. It made him prepare the *Arke*: of which *Arke* there are set downe two ends: 1. *It saved his household*. 2. *It condemned the world*. III. *It made him heire of the righteousness, which is by faith*.

This, I take it, is the true resolution of these words: and they containe many excellent things concerning his faith.

By faith *Noah being warned of God, of the things which were as yet not seene*;

By faith, that is, by a general and histori: all faith, and also by a true and saving faith in the *Messias* to come; *Noah* being warned of God of the just *Judgement* he purposed to bring upon the world, by an universall flood; and of his *mercifull providence* to him and his family, that he would save them by an *Arke*, (all which things were then to come, and therefore *un-seene*) he believed these forewarnings of God: and therefore, in reverence to this message from God, he prepared the *Arke*, and thereby saved his household, and condemned the wicked world. And to his faith, by all these appearing to bee a true and lively faith, did make him a just and *righteous* man in Gods sight. This is the summe and substance of *Noahs* example: let us speake of the severall parts in order.

The first point is the ground of his faith, *A warning or an answer from God*. For, he being a righteous man in that wicked age, wherein all the world welred in wickednesse, and walking before God in great holinesse, when no man cared for religion, he had this speciall favour from God, that when he purposed to destroy the world for their sinne, he first of all revealed to *righteous Noah* that purpose of his. So that these words have reference to the revelation which *Noah* had from God, in the 6. of Genesis. For this message came not from God by any Prophet (for we know none in those evil dayes, except *Noah* himselfe) but either by the Ministerie of an *Angel*, or else by immediate revelation from God himselfe: and this favour he received from God, not for any cause in the world, but because hee was an holy and righteous man.

From hence, we may learne divers excellent instructions:

First, whereas God maketh choice of *Noah*, to reveale unto him his counsell, and his judgments to come, we learne, that this is a prerogative which God bestoweth on such as feare him: he revealeth his counsels to them in a speciall manner, whether they bee purposes of Judgements upon his enemies, or of mercies unto his Church. Thus dealt he with *Abraham*. Gen. 18. 19. *Shall I (saith God) hide from Abraham the thing that I will doe?* which thing was the destruction of *Sodom*, and her sisters. And so, when the *Sodomites* lived in wanton carelesnesse, and put farre from them the evill day, then *Abraham* knew from God their destruction was at hand. And as in that, so it is generally true in all his great workes: that the Lord God will doe nothing, but he reveales his secrets to his servants the Prophets. Amos 3. 7. Now this is not a prerogative of Prophets alone, or of such as were extraordinary men as *Abraham* was: but the secrets of the Lord are amongst such as feare him, Psal. 25. 14. All that feare the holy name of God, are Gods friends, and of his Counsell: and therefore not *Abraham* only is called the friend of God, Jam. 2. 23. but of all true beleevers, saith Christ, Ioh. 15. 14, 15. *You are my friends, if you doe what I command you: henceforth I call you not servants, but friends: for the servant knoweth not what his Master doth: but all things that I have heard of my Father, have I made knowne unto you*. As if he had said; I will communicate and impart my secrets unto you, as one friend doth unto another, as farre as shall bee fit for you to know. And the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 2. 15. *A faithfull and a holy man discerneth into the deepe Counsels of God*: which are revealed unto them, as much as concerneth their salvations, and sometimes more; as here unto *Noah*, who was fore-warned of God, of things then not seene.

This prerogative of Gods children is to bee understood with some cautions:

First, that this is more proper to Prophets, and holy ministers of God, than to ordinarie Christians.

Secondly, that it was more ordinarie in the old Testament, than now in the dayes of the Gospel. If any object, Then the state of the Church afore Christ, was better than it is now under Christ; I answer: not so: for first, we are recompensed by having the Scriptures perfect, and compleat, which they had not: & by having the substance of their shadowes, and the performance of their promises: in which respects our state is farre more excellent than theirs. And secondly, for this particular, I answer, they indeed had more ordinarie revelation of matters *personall and private*, and not directly touching salvation: but of such things as are general, and doe necessarily concerne salvation; we in the time of the new Testament, have more evident demonstration, and more full revelation, than they had afore Christ. For example: pater-

cular mercies to some faithfull men, or particular judgements on Gods enemies, whether particular men or whole kingdoms, were after revealed to godly men, in those dayes (as here to Noah :) but salvation by the *Messias*, and the manner how the *Messias* should save his Church, is more fully and plainly revealed now, than in those dayes.

Out of which consideration ariseth the third caution; which is, that revelations of Gods will, to be expected now under the Gospell, are ordinarily nothing else, but the true meaning of Scripture, and a discerning of true Scripture from forged, of true Sacraments from supposed, of true doctrine from false, of true Pastors from false prophets. These and such like, as farre forth as they are necessarie to salvation, all true and faithfull beleevers (which out of an humbled heart, by devout prayer doe seeke : at Gods hand) are sure to have revealed unto them from God. But as for other purposes of God, of personall and particular matters, or what shall be his blessings, or what his judgements to these and these men, families, cities, or kingdoms: or when, or how he will change States, or translate Kingdomes; or by what extraordinarie meanes he will have his Gospell propagated, or a declining Church or State upholden; these we are not to expect, nor easily to beleeve any that shall say, such things are revealed unto them. And yet we tie not the Lord in such strait bonds, but that he may sometime extraordinarily reveale his purpose therein, to some of his selected servants: yet provided that that revelation be examined and allowed of the Church. But as for such things as concerne immediately the salvation of our soules, Gods Spirit doth most comfortably reveale them unto us, in our *prayers*, in his *word*, and in his *Sacraments*: of all which, it is most true, that the *secrets of God are amongst them that seare him*.

The use of this doctrine is double; for instruction, and for exhortation. For our instruction, here we learne how to answer the Church of Rome: They aske us, how doe we know true religion from erroneous; or true Scripture, or Sacraments from forged? We answer, first, by it selfe, by sight and sense of the excellencie thereof; as we know gold from brasse, or silver from lead. But what if the brasse or tinne be gilded over? I then answer secondly, wee can know gold from brasse, or silver from tinne by the sound and smell, and hardnesse to endure, and by the operation: so there is a spirituall sound of the Scriptures, in the eares of a Christian, a spirituall comfort and taste in true religion, a spirituall operation (in holy mens hearts) of the true Sacraments. But what if false Prophets come in sheeps cloathing, and by lying wonders, seeme to give the same sound, taste, smell, vertue, and operation unto their forgeries, or at least challenge it, and say, that theirs is true? I answer lastly, then we know

A true Religion, true Scripture, true Sacraments, true Prophets, true Doctrines from false, by a holy and supernaturall revelation from Gods spirit; which by evident and powerfull demonstration, assureth us what is true, and what is false, for the substance of salvation. And this spirit is given to all, that in true humilitie doe seeke it, in holy prayer, and in a holy & frequent use of Gods word and Sacraments; and to none else. And surely if the Papists were as well acquainted with the spirit of God, as they are with their own forged revelations, they would never denie it. By force of this testimonie a Christian man knoweth, as assuredly as that God is God, that the Pope, as now he is, and as he exerciseth his place and power, cannot be the true *Vicar of Christ*; and that Poperie, as it is now established by the Councell of Trent, and taught by the most learned of their side, cannot be the true religion, nor the safest way to heaven. And when question is, what is the meaning of this place, *There is one God, and one Mediatour betwixt God and man, the man Christ Iesus*, if all the world should say the contrarie, a Christian man will know and beleeve there are *no more mediators to God but Christ*: or of that place, that *Christ was offered for our sins once for all*; that there is no sacrifice can purchase us pardon, but his; let Papists colour the matter by unsound distinctions as much as they can; and the same might be shewed in divers other points and places. And if any aske how this can be: I answer; *Noah was warned of God of things not seene*: so Gods children are warned and assured of God, of such things as concerne their salvation, though they be things beyond sense and reason: *Gods secrets are be-long unto them*.

The use of exhortation is, that if God *warns* his children of his will, and reveale his secrets to them, this should move and excite us to become truly and indeed Gods servants: for we serve not a Lord that is strange and austere unto us; that will not give us a good looke, or a faire word: may he is so farre from that, that he calls us to his holy *Counsell*, and makes us know his secrets, and communicates his owne selfe unto us by his blessed Spirit; and by that Spirit revealeth unto us many excellent mysteries of salvation, which the carnall and prophane men of the world never dreame of.

In the second place, let us observe, that *Noah being thus warned of God* in this particular matter (as he had beene formerly warned and taught of salvation by a *Messias* to come) beleeve not only the generall promise of salvation, but also this particular promise of his preservation and deliverance. Out of which his practice, we may learne two things;

First, that *faith* is a supernaturall worke of God in those mens hearts that have it. That it is a *worke of God*, it appeareth in that it alwaies acknowledgeth and beleeveith Gods Word: that it is *supernaturall*, it appeareth in that it

apprehendeth and beleeveth whatsoever Gods Word delivereth, be it never so incredible to reason or sense. But how doth God worke this faith? By his word: for as God is the author and worker of faith, so God hath appointed a means whereby he workes it, and that is his Word: which Word of God is the only ordinary outward means to worke faith. And that Word of Gods two wayes to be considered: either as revealed by God himselfe (as to *Noah* here,) or else being written by God, is either preached by his Ministers, or read by a mans selfe in want of preaching: and these are all one, and are all means ordained of God to worke faith: and that not onely to beginne it where it is wanting, but to augment it where it is begun.

Which being so, it must teach us all, not onely with speciall care and reverence to heare the Word, by whomsoever it is preached; but also to heare it read: yea, to read it our selves with all diligence. So doing, it will worke out, and make perfect in us that holy faith, which will make us blessed in our selves, and accepted of God as it did *Noah* in this place.

Secondly, here we learne what is the whole Object of faith; or what is all that that faith beleeveth; namely, nothing but Gods Word, and all and every Word of God. So that faith hath two objects, differing not in nature, but in degree; principall, and inferior. The principall object of true faith, is the promise of salvation by Christ. The inferior of just thereof are all other particular promises, of safety, deliverance, providence, helpe, assistance, comfort, or what other benefit soever is made either to the whole Church, and so inclusively to any particular man; or which are personally made unto him. For saving faith beleeveth not onely the grand promise of salvation, but all other promises either of spirituall or corporall blessings, which are subordinate to the great promise, and doe depend of it, and are therefore apprehended by the same faith. So *Noah* here had already apprehended the maine promise of salvation by the *Messiah*, and had hid it in his heart: and afterward when this particular promise of his deliverance was made, by the same faith hee laid hold on it also. And it is good reason that faith should doe so: for if it apprehend the greater promise, then no marvell though it take hold of all other inferior promises, which are but dependances upon the principall.

By this that hath bene said, it appeareth, that we are wrongfully charged by them, who say, we teach that saving faith beleeveth onely salvation by Christ, or apprehendeth onely the promise of salvation in Christ: for we say and teach, It apprehendeth also other particular promises, and even the promises of outward and temporall blessings; as appeareth in this example of *Noah*.

Lastly, in that *Noah* a faithfull man, is here warned of God of the dangers ensuing, that so

he may avoid them; we may learne the loving care that God hath over them, who have a care to feare and serve him. Thus dealt he with his children in all ages, for their comfort and preservation, to encourage all men to serve God in truth and uprightnesse, as here *Noah* did: for so doing they may assure themselves of Gods care and providence over them, even then, when his wrath smokes against the sinners of the world: and that furthermore in all exigents and extremities, he will teach them, either from his word, or by the counsell of some others of his children, or else by his owne secret inspiration, what they are to doe, and what course to take, for their safetie and deliverance.

How often shall a Christian man finde in the course of his life, that God put into his minde, to answer thus and thus, or to fore-see this or that; by which his so doing, he escaped some great danger: so that (though not in the same manner as *Noah* was) all faithfull men doe daily finde, that they are warned by God of such things as doe concerne them.

But what were those things whereof *Noah* was warned from God? The text saith, *Of the things that were as yet not seene*.

This hath not relation to the time, when the holy Ghost wrote these words, but when God gave the warning to *Noah*: for then they were not seene, but were to come: for they were not performed for many yeares after, as shall appeare in the particulars.

Particularly they were these three: First, the great and just wrath, which God had conceived against the froward world, for the universal corruption and generall finfullnesse thereof. *Noah* was a Preacher of righteousness to that wicked age; and as S. *Peter* saith, (1. Epist. 2. 11.) the very spirit of Christ preached in him: but they contemned both him, and the spirit by which he spake, and made mocke of him, and all his holy admonitions, and solaced themselves in all their sinfull pleasures, without feare or respect of God or man, pleasing themselves in their owne defiled wayes, and promising to themselves, safetie and securitie. But behold, this *Noah*, whom they esteemed a base and contemptible man, unworthy of their company: to him is revealed how sore their time is, and that they must be cut off in the midst of their joy. Imitate Gods children whom wicked men do thinke and speake of with great contempt, doe know full well the miserable state of such men, and the fearefull dangers hanging over them; when the wicked men themselves are farre from thinking of any such matter.

The second thing, which God revealed to *Noah*, was, that he would save him & his family from perishing by the waters, which he would bring upon the world. His faith was not in vaine: God rewarded it with a singular preservation. Thus dealt he alwaies with his children, delivering Lot out of Sodome, Gen. 19. & Lot out of

A thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are thy works, and thus my soul knoweth right well: My bones are not hid from thee, though I was made in secret place, yet thy eyes did see my substance, when I was without forme, and in thy booke were all my members written, which in continuance were fashioned, though there were none of them before. How deere therefore are thy counsells to me, O God! Thus we see how this holy King, cannot content himselfe with any termes, to expresse his religious and reverent conceit of Gods majestie.

For the third; Gods mercifull workes to his Church and children, have alwayes beene considered of by good men with great reverence: And, *What shall I give unto the Lord, saith David, for all his benefits powred on me?* Ps. 116. 12.

But especially, the *Judgements* of God have beene alwayes entertained of Gods children with much *reverence* and admiration. Blessed *David* saith, *My flesh trembleth for feare of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements*, *Ps. 119. 120.* How would this noble King have trembled & beene afraid, if he had beene a private man? And how glorious is God, and his works of judgements, whereat even Kings themselves doe tremble? And the Prophet *Habacuk* saith, that when hee but heard of Gods judgements to come, *his belly trembled, his lips shooke, portents entred into his bones*, *Habac. c. 3. 6.* And thus *Nabiah* here, hearing of Gods just wrath against the sinfull world, and of his purpose to overthrow all living flesh by water, was moved with great feare and reverence at this mighty worke of God: and from the view of this his great and just judgement, his faith made him arise to a more earnest consideration of the Majestic of God. By al which, it is more than apparent, that true faith (wheresoever it is) worketh a holy feare and reverent estimation of God, and of his works, and of God in and by his works; whereby on the contrarie side, it followeth, that therefore to thinke basely or ordinarily of God, to thinke scornfully of his works, or to deny his power, and his hand, in the great works, either of mercy or judgement done in the world, is an argument of a profane heart, and wanting true faith.

The first effect of his faith is, *It moved in him reverence*, or a reverent fear of that God that spake to him, and of his justice towards sinne and sinners, and of his *mercie* towards him.

1. The ground of this reverence. 2. The occasion, or motives of it.

The ground whence this reverence sprang, was his true and living faith : for the holy Ghost first tells us of *Noah's* faith, and afterwards of this *reverent* fear he had of God, and his great works.

Where we learne, that whoſoever is endued with ſaving faith, is alſo touched with feare and reverence at the conſideration of God, and his glorious works; whether they be works of his power, his wiſdomme, his mercie, or his juſtice, or of all together.

For the first, *David* could not see the works of Gods power in the creation, *Psalm. 8.* But when he looked up and beheld the heavens, the works of Gods hands, the Moon and the stars which he had ordained; he forthwith fell into a reverence and admiration of Gods mercie to man, for whom and whose use he made them all.

For the second; the same David could not enter into consideration of Gods *wisdom*, in the admirable frame of mans bodie; Psalm 139. 17, &c. but he presently falls into a reverence and admiration thereof in most excellent and pious words: *Thou passest farre remembrance of me to my mother womb: I will praise*

The use of this doctrine discovers the profaneness, and the great want of *faith*, that ordinarily is in the world. And that appears by two evidences: the first, is to mens owne consciences; the other, is to the view and sight of all the world.

First, men may see in themselves a profane heart and void of *faith*, by this evidence. For, doth a man in his heart think basely of God, his power, his justice, or his mercies? Doth he either doubt of them? or granting them, doth hee think of them without feare and amazement? Then assuredly his heart is void of true faith, and farre from the life and power of religion. For assuredly, where God is *knowne* and *believed*, there that mans heart (though he be a King)

a King) cannot once thinke of God, without a reverence of his Majestic, and an admiration at his greatnesse, and his owne basenesse: therefore the want of this, argueth a want of true religion and true faith in mens hearts.

Secondly, this profane scilicet discovers it selfe to the world, by want of reverence to Gods workes. Let the Lord send unreasonable weather, or famines, or plagues, or any strange signes in heaven or in earth; forthwith they are but fooles that cry out, Behold the finger of God, the hand of God. No, this is nature, and is produced by naturall causes. Ill weather comes from the fierres; famines from ill weather, and mens covetousnesse; Plagues from famines, or from ill aires, or else by apparant infection from another place. But cannot Nature and naturall means have their place, unlesse they have Gods place? God overthroweth not them, why should they overthrow God? Yet thus it is in the world, and thus God is robbed of his glory: and hee is but a simple fellow, which is moved with reverence at sight of such things, or begins to magnifie Gods power and justice in them. This is too apparant to be denied: for have wee not now as great causes of feare as may bee? Noah heard of water; and wee heare that fire is to destroy the world, and yet where is he that is moved with reverence, as Noah was; and yet Noah could say, The flood shall not bee these 120. yeares: but who can say and prove that this world shall not be destroyed by fire within these 120. yeares? And till the flood came, they had doubtlesse many other plagues, which were forerunners of the generall destruction; all which as they came, moved Noah unto reverence: and so wee in this life, doe see the great workes of Gods judgements, upon men, upon families, upon townes, upon countreyes, and whole kingdomes, and wee see his heavy hand in many sharpe strokes; but who and where are they whose hearts feare God the more, and doe tremble in the consideration of his judgements. Nay alas, amongst many it is but a matter of mockery so to doe. This is not the fault of our religion, but the want of it: for if men truly knew and beleevd in God, they could not thinke nor speake of God, nor looke at his workes, but with feare and reverence. For as our feare of God is, so is our faith: little feare of God, little faith: and no feare at all, no faith at all. Let therefore all men shew their religion by their feare of God, and let every Christian acknowledge God in his workes. England hath bene faulty herein in one point specially. Wee have had great plagues, which have taken away many thousands in short time wherein God hath shewed himselfe mighty against our sinnes: but Gods hand would not be seene nor acknowledged, but onely nature and naturall causes. But let England take heed, that God send not a plague so generall and so grievous, that even the most prophane men, (even the forcerers of Egypt if they were here) do

A acknowledge that it is the finger of God; and so give God that due reverence, which in his ordinary visitation he hath not. Thus wee see the ground whence this reverence in Noah sprang; namely, his faith.

Now let us see the occasions or considerations in Noahs heart, that made him feare. The ground whereupon he feared, was true faith: for else he had not bene capable of any feare or reverence of God: but the occasions which stirred up this feare in him, were some things else.

Now if wee looke to humane reasons, Noah had no cause at all to feare as hee did. For first, the Judgement was farre off, 120. yeares after: and common reason saith, it is folly to feare any thing so farre off; but it is time enough to feare when it is neere at hand. Again, hee was one single man, and the world was full of wise and mighty men; they all heard of it, yet none of them feared; therefore their example might prevaile with him, to keepe him from feare, and to make him secure and carelesse with the rest: for examples are strong, especially when they are so generall.

Thirdly, the strangenes of the judgment threatened, was such as might drive any man in reason from fearing it at all. For first, who would ever beleve, that God would drowne all the world with water? Such a thing never had bene, and therefore how could it bee? And againe, if all should bee drowned, who would thinke that Noah should escape, and none but he?

C These three considerations, being weighed in the ballance of mans reason, would have kept Noah from fearing, or beleeving this word of God. But behold the power of faith: it goeth beyond all humane reach, fixeth it selfe fast on Gods word: and therefore hee not onely beleeveth it, but hath furthermore his heart possessed with a great reverence of Gods Majesty upon this message. And there were three motives stirring him up unto this reverence:

First, the consideration of Gods strange Judgement upon the sinfull world; to see that his wrath was so provoked, that he should bring so unwanted a plague; so strange both for the nature of it; a flood of water to drowne men: whereas generally all men can avoid the violence of that element: and for the measure of it, so great, as it should drowne all the world, and destroy all men.

D Now that which this Judgement of God wrought in Noah, the same effect should Gods Judgements worke in us: namely, they should move us with reverence. For as Christ saith, Our dayes are like Noahs: As it was in the dayes of Noah; so shall the dayes bee before the coming of Christ, (Matthew 24. 37.) These dayes are as wicked, men are as covetous, as cruell, as malicious, as voluptuous, and yet as secure as they then were; as full of sinne, and yet as dead in sinne as they were then. Therefore Noah looked for a flood 120. yeares after: & who can tell whether our world shall last so long a

time or no? at least we may safely say (whatsoever the world doth) there is no man liveth, but within farre lesse time than 120. yeares, is assured to bee overthrowne to hell by a flood of Gods wrath at his death, unless in the meane time hee repent: and yet alas, where is hee that is moved with reverence at the consideration hereof? The wicked man may escape the water of a flood: but hee cannot scape the fire of hell, hee cannot escape death, hee cannot escape the last Judgement. These are to come, yet they are sure: why then doe not men feare as *Noah* did? he feared 120. yeares before it came. Wee can indeed tremble a little at a present Judgement: as when fire breakes out, when waters overflow, when the plague destroyeth, or when famine consumes: but to tremble at a Judgement threatened, though it bee farre off, this is the worke of true faith. This was in *Noah*, and wrought in him a reverence: and so would in us, if it were in us. When men cry fire, fire, we shirre, we run, we tremble: but God crieth in his Word, the fire of hell, the fire of his wrath; and we care not, we shirre not, we leave not our sinnes, wee are not moved with reverence, as *Noah* was: therefore it is more than manifest, that holy faith is wanting in the world, which *Noah* had.

The second motive, stirring up this reverence in him, was the consideration of Gods wonderfull mercy to him and his family, in saving them. This mercy seemed so wonderfull to him, both for that hee knew it was undeserved (knowing himselfe a sinfull man, and therefore not able to merit Gods favour and being privy to himselfe of his owne manifold imperfections) and also unexpected, for he thought not to have beene spared alone in an universall destruction: therefore hee wondered with reverence at so great a mercy. Thus Gods mercies doe not onely win a mans heart to love God, but even to feare him with much reverence: this *David* proveth, *Psal.* 130. 4. *There is mercy with thee, O Lord, that thou must be feared:* as though he had said; Thy great mercies to thy children, O Lord, doe make them conceive a reverent estimation of thee. This made *David* cry out in a holy passion; *How excellent are thy mercies, O Lord!*

And as Gods children wonder at the excellencies of Gods mercies unto them, so also at their owne basenesse and unworthinesse. Thus doth holy *David*, 2 Sam. 7. 18. (who as he was a man of much faith, so was he full of excellent meditations, and reverent speeches of God, (which are the true effects of faith) when God had set him in his Kingdome, he saith, *Who am I, O Lord, and what is my house, that thou hast brought mee hither?* And 1 Chron. 19. 14. *But who am I, faith hee, and what is my people, that we should offer thus unto the Lord?* and doubtlesse even so said *Noah's* blessed soule often unto the Lord, and to it selfe, *who am I, O Lord, and what is my family, that wee should bee chosen out of*

A to many thousands, and be saved when all the world perisheth?

Let us apply this to our Church and State. If any Nation have cause to say thus, it is *England*. God hath delivered us out of the thraldome of spiritual *Egypt*, and led us out: not by a *Moses*, but first by a childe, then by a woman, and given us his Gospell, more fully and freely, and quietly, than any kingdome so great in the world; and still delivereth us from the curied plots of the Pope, and tyrannous invasions of the *Spaniard*, who thought to have marked us in the foreheads with the brand of infamy, and to have done to us as they have done to other nations whom they have conquered: but God from heaven fought for us, and overthrew them in their owne devices: yea, the Lord put his booke in his nostrils, & his bridle in his lips, and carried him back againe with shame and reproach. We are unworthie of such a mercie, if our soules doe not often say unto God: O Lord, what are we, and what is our people, that thou shouldest be so wonderfull in thy mercies unto us?

And particularly this must teach every Christian to be a careful observer of the favours and mercies that God vouchsafeth to his soule and body, to him or his: and the consideration of them must make him daily be moved with reverence, and reverent thoughts of Gods Majesty; and still as the Lord is more and more mercifull unto him, to beare still the more feare and reverence unto him for the same.

C The last motive of this Reverence in *Noah*, was the consideration of Gods power and wisdom, both in the Judgement upon the world, and in the mercy upon him: for first, in the Judgement it was wonderfull, that God would choole so weak an element as water, to destroy and vanquish the huge *Gyants* of those dayes: but therein appeared first Gods power, that by so weak a means can cast downe his enemies: And againe, his wisdom; that as an universall wickednesse had polluted the whole world, so a flood of water should wash the whole world. Secondly, the mercy was also wonderfull, that God should chuse to save *Noah* by so strange a means as an *Arke*, which should swim on the waters. For *Noah* thought, if the Lord will save me, he will either take me up into heaven, (as he did *Enoch* a little before,) or else make mee build a house upon the top of the highest mountaine. But the Lord will save him by no such means, but by an *Arke*: wherein appeared first Gods power that would save him by so weak a means, as might seeme rather to destroy him. For *Noah* must lye and swim in the middest of the waters, and yee be saved from the waters: and the *Arke* must save him; which in all reason, if the tempests had cast it against the hard rockes and mountaines, or upon the strong castles and houses of the mighty gyants, would have beene broken in peeces: and so it had, but that God himselfe was the Master and Pilot in that voyage.

And secondly, Gods *wisdom* shone cleerly in this meane; because God would have him saved not in such sort, as the world might not see it (as it would have bene, if he had been taken up into Heaven, or into the aire;) but would have him saved in an *Arke*; that so all the wicked men, as they were a dying in the water, or expecting death upon the tops of the hills, might see him live and bee saved, to their more torment, and to their greater shame, who would not beleve Gods word, as hee did. For as the wicked in hell are more tormented to see the godly in the joyes of heaven: so doubtlesse were the wicked of *that age*, to see *Noah* saved before their eyes. The view of this power and wisdom of God herein, made *Noah* give great reverence to Gods Majestie.

And no lesse ought it to worke in the hearts of all true hearted Englishmen, and faithfull Christians. For did not the Lord restore and establish the Gospell to our nation, *by a child*, and *by a woman*; and in her time when all other Princes were against her (contrary to the rules of policie?) and did not God in our late deliverance, overthrow our enemies, not so much by the power of man, as by his owne hand? Did not he fight from heaven? *Did not the stars and the winds in their courses fight against that Sissera of Spaine?* Let us therefore with blessed *Noah* stand amazed to see Gods mercies, and with reverence and feare magnifie his great and glorious name.

And thus we have the three motives that moved in *Noah* this Reverence of God: the consideration first of his great *Judgement* on the sinfull world: 2. Of his great *Mercy* in saving him: 3. Of his admirable *power and wisdom* shewed both in the judgement, and in the mercie.

Hitherto of the first effect. It followeth,

Prepared the Arke.

The 2. effect of *Noahs* faith, whereby it is commended, is, that hee upon a commandment received from God (as we heard before) doth *make and build an Arke*, wherein to save himselfe and his family. Concerning this *Arke*, much might bee spoken out of the booke of Gen. But it is not to our purpose: which is no more in this Chapter, but to shew the *obedience and practice of faith*, and therein the excellencie of it. Now the point here to bee spoken of, is not the *matter*, nor the *measure*, nor the *proportion*, nor the *fashion*, nor the *uses* of the *Arke*; all which in the 6. Chapter of Genesis, are fully described: but the action and *obedience* of *Noah* in preparing it, as God bad him: whereof the holy Ghost (in Gen. 6.22.) saith, *Noah did according to all that God had commanded him, even so did he.*

Now in this action of *Noahs* faith, divers points of great moment are to bee considered:

First, why did God bid *Noah* make an *Arke* 120. yeares before the flood, when hee might

have built it in three or four yeares?

The answer is, God did so for divers causes: some respecting the *sinfull world*, as that they might have longer time and more warning to repent; every *stroke* of the *Arke*, during these 120. yeares, being a loud *Sermon* of repentance unto them. Again, that they might bee without excuse, if they amended not: and lastly, that their iniquities might bee full, and their finnes ripe for vengeance. But of all these, wee will not speak, because they concerne not *Noah*, of whose faith wee are onely to speake: let us therefore touch onely those causes which concerne *Noah*. And in regard of him, the Lord did thus, that he might trie his faith and patience, and exercise other graces of holinesse in him. Thus God dealeth with his servants alwayes: hee exerciseth them many and strange wayes in this world. He led the Israelites in the deserts of Arabia *fourty yeares*; whereas a man may travell from *Ramefes* in Egypt, to any part of Canaan, in *fourty dayes*: and this God did to humble them, and try them, and to know what was in their heart, Deut. 8.2.

God promised *Abraham* a sonne, in whom *all the nations of the earth should be blessed*, (Gen. 12.3.) But hee performed it not by 30. yeares after, (Gen. 21.2.) Hee gave *David* the kingdom of Israel, and annointed him by *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 16.13. But hee attained it not of many yeares after; and in the meane time, was persecuted and hunted by *Saul*, as a *beast in a mans bosome*; or as a *Partridge in the mountains*, 1 Sam. 24.15. and 26.20. And thus God exercised him both in that and other his promises: as hee saith, Psal. 40.1. In waiting I waited on the Lord: and Psal. 119.82. Mine eyes faile for waiting for thy promise. O, when wilt thou comfort me? Thus God dealt with them, and thus in some measure hee deales with all his children, to humble and to trie them, and to know what is in their hearts; for that, in these cases, men doe alwayes shew themselves, and their dispositions. When men enjoy all things at their will and wish; who cannot make a faire profession? but where men are long deferred, and kept from that is promised, and they expect, and are so long crosled in their expectations, then they appeare in their owne colours.

And as God dealt with them, so will he one way or other doe with us: if we be his servants, hee will at some time of our life or other, lay some such affliction upon us, as may try us, and our faith, and our patience, and our humility. For if wee be hypocrites, and have no true graces, but only a shew; this will discover it: and if wee have true and sound faith, and patience; this will make them shine like orient pearles in their true and perfect beauty.

Secondly, as God bade *Noah* build an *Arke* so long time before any need of it; so hee did, without denying or gaine-saying. So saith the story (in Genesis,) He did according to all that God commanded him. And thus the holy Ghost

faith here, Hee being warned of God, by faith prepared the *Arke*. Where wee learne, That where true faith is, there followeth true obedience to every Commandement of God : inſomuch as a godly beleeving man no ſooner heareth any dutie to bee commanded of God, but hee thinks his ſoule and conſcience iſteyed to obedience : and this is the nature of true faith. And it is as impoſſible to bee otherwiſe, as it is for fire having ſewell not to burne. Acts 15. 9. *Faith purifieth the heart* ; namely, from careleſſe diſobedience to Gods word : for if from any corruption at all, then from it eſpecially, becauſe it is moſt contrary to the pureneſſe of true faith.

This being ſo, ſheweth us, not any fault in our religion (as the Papiſts ſlander us,) but the want of our religion, and the want of true faith in the world : for there is almoſt no obedience to Gods commandements. For firſt, Turkes and Jewes acknowledge not the Scriptures: and the Papiſts have let aſide Gods commandements, to ſet up their owne. And few Proteſtants have the feeling of the power of true religion, and nothing indeed but a bare profeſſion : but it muſt be a feeling of the power of it, which produceth true obedience. And alas, wee ſee men obey not Gods Commandements. God ſaith, *Swear not by my name vainly : keepe my Sabbath*. Where is there a man of many that feareth to breake theſe ? Alas, there are more mockers of ſuch as would keepe them, than carefull and conſcionable keepers of them. How truly ſaid Chriſt, *When the ſonne of man cometh, ſhall hee finde faith on the earth ?* It is likely therefore, theſe be the dayes, wherein we may wait for the coming of Chriſt: for the general want of obedience, ſheweth the generall want of faith.

But this obedience of *Noah* is better to bee conſidered of: for it was very excellent and extraordinary ; there being many hinderances that might have ſtopped him in the courſe of his obedience, and have perſwaded him never to have gone about the making of the *Arke*.

As firſt, the great quantity of the *Arke* amounting to many thouſand Cubits ; a worke of huge labour, and great charge.

Again, the length of his labour, to laſt 120. yeares. It is a tedious thing, and troubleſome to mans nature, to be ever in doing, and never to have done.

Thirdly, the building of it was a matter of much mockery to the world : for it ſignified ; 1. the deſtroying of the whole world ; 2. the ſaving of ſon and his. Theſe things were raunted at by the worldly wiſe men of that ſinfull age, and he was loudly ſmugled at by many a man, to thinke all the world ſhould periſh ; but much more, if all periſhed, to imagine, that he and his ſhould be delivered.

Laſtly, the building of the *Arke* was a harſh thing to nature, and naturall reaſon, in many reſpects ; for,

First, that all the world ſhould be deſtroyed, ſeemed not poſſible to bee, becauſe it never had bene.

Secondly, it ſeemed not likely that Gods mercy ſhould be ſo wholly ſwallowed up of his juſtice.

Thirdly, they muſt live in the *Arke*, as in a cloſe priſon, without comfort of light or freſh air, and amongſt beaſts of all forts, and that for a long time, he knew not how long. Now reaſon would tell him, he had better die with men than live with beaſts ; and better die a freeman and at liberty, than live a priſoner ; and better die with company, than live alone : And that if God had purpoſed to ſave him, he could have uſed other meanes, and more eaſie, more direct, and more ſafe than this ; that therefore his deliverance was to be doubted of. And laſtly, reaſon would ſay : I may make my ſelfe a gazing and mocking ſtocke to the world for 120. yeares ; and it may bee the Gods purpoſe will be altered, and no flood will come ; or if it come, I goe into the *Arke*, and it chance to breake againſt the mountains, ſo that I periſh with the reſt, than am I worſt of al, who periſh notwithstanding all my labour ; therefore I had better let it alone, and take my venture with the reſt of the world.

Theſe doubtleſſe, and many ſuch naturall conſiderations came into his minde, and ſtood up as ſo many impediments of his faith. But behold the power of true faith, in the heart of a holy man : It overgoeth all doubts, it breaketh through all difficulties, to obey the will and word of God. Yea, it gives a man wings, with which to flye over all carnall objections. Thus wee ſee it here in *Noah*, and afterward ſhall as cleerely ſee it in *Abraham*, and other holy men.

The uſe of this doctrine diſcovereth the weakeneſſe of many mens faith : for if the doctrine of the *Goffel* goe currant with our naturall affections, or ſeeme pleaſurable to our natures, we doe formally obey it: But if it croſſe our affections, or goe beyond our reaſon, or controule our naturall diſpoſitions, then wee ſpurne againſt it, we call it into queſtion, we are offended at it, and deny our obedience. Here wants the faith of *Noah*, which carried him beyond the compaſſe of nature, and reach of reaſon, and made him beleeve and doe that which neither nature could allow, nor reaſon like of, and which would be diſpleaſing to his naturall affections. Let us therefore learne to praſtiſe true faith, by beleeving forthwith what God ſhall ſay unto us, without asking advice, or hearing the objections of fleſh and bloud. God threatened in times paſt the overthrow of the great Monarchies of the *Aſſyrians*, *Caldæans*, *Persians*, *Grecians*, *Romans* : reaſon did make doubts how it could be, but faith beleeved it, and it is done. God in later times threatened the fall of *Abbies*, and diſperſing of *Monks*, for their wickedneſſe. It ſeemed impoſſible to

reason : yet faith in some beleeveth it, and it came to passe.

God now threatneth the ruine of *Babylon*, and the full revelation of *Antichrist*, and the overthrow of the new found Hierarchy of the *Jesuites*, which glitter so in worldly glory, and in outward strength : this seemes hard to bring to passe : but *leepe faith* beleve it, for it is Gods word, and shall be fulfilled in his season. God hath said, that our *bodies* shall rise againe even these bodies which are burned to ashes, or eaten of beasts, or fishes, or turned to dust in the earth. This is a wonder to nature, an amazement to reason : but faith will beleve it, and shall finde it true, for God hath said it.

God faith, Christ is in the Sacrament *truly* and *really* present to the soule of a Christian. Carnall senses deny this, and naturall reason knoweth not how ; but aske with the *Caper-nites*, *How can hee give us his flesh to eat* : But faith beleveeth it, and knoweth how ; though to outward sense it cannot be expressed. And it was a holy & divine speech used by holy *Mary*, who being asked how Christ could bee eaten in the Sacrament, and not with the teeth, answered ; *My faith knoweth how*. God faith, *Wicked men* though they flourish never so, are *miserable* ; and good *men* are *blessed* above all other. Reason and worldly experience say this is false : but *true faith* beleveeth it, and findes it true ; for never did any childe of God desire to change his estate with the mightiest or wealthiest wicked man in the world. God faith, *He that will follow Christ, must deny himselfe*, and his owne desires, and follow Christ in bitterness and affliction. Nature faith, *This is a hard lesson : who can beare it* ? But faith beleves it, yeelds to it, and endeavours the practice of it, because God hath so commanded. Such is the power and excellencie of *true faith*.

Fourthly and lastly, out of this action and obedience of *Noah*, make a speciall lesson. God had revealed to him, that hee would save him and his family, and assured him he should not perish. Yet for all this, he *makes an Arke* : whereupon it followeth, that *Noah*, though he knew God would save him, yet was perswaded hee must use the meanes, or else should not bee saved. Hee might have said to himselfe, God hath said, and bound himselfe by covenant, he will save me ; now if I make not the Arke, yet his Word is his Word, and he will stand to it. His will cannot be altered : though I be false, he will bee true ; though I doe not that I should doe, yet hee will doe what belongs to him : therefore I will spare my labour and cost of making the Arke, especially seeing it is a matter of so much mockery, and so ridiculous to reason. But *Noah* is of another minde : he will not leave Gods word from his meanes, hee dependeth on Gods word for his safety, but not on his *owne word* without the meanes.

Whence welcome, that though a man bee *certaine* of his salvation, yet hee is to use the

A *meanes* of salvation, and that not onely, though hee bee certaine in the *certainety* of faith, but though hee could bee assured from God himselfe by immediate revelation. For if God should say to a man by his name, thou shalt be saved ; It is no more, than here was said to *Noah* for his deliverance. For to him said God, *I will destroy all flesh : but with thee I will make my covenant*, and thou shalt be delivered ; yet for all that, *Noah* judgeth, that if hee use not the meanes, if he *make not an Arke*, hee is to looke for no deliverance : this was *Noah's* divinity.

Contrary both to the divinity and practice of some in this age : who say, *If I shall be saved, I may live as I list* : and though I live as I list, yet if in the end I can say, *Lord have mercy on me*, I am safe enough. But *Noah* would not trust his body on such conditions, though they be so presumptuous as to trust their *soules*. Let such men be assured, God in his decree hath tied the end and the meanes together. Let not therefore *man* separate what God hath joined together : he that doth, let him looke for no more salvation, if hee use not the meanes, than *Noah* would have done for safety, if hee had made no Arke. And thus wee see the second effect of his faith. It followeth ;

To the saving of his household.

Now this second effect of preparing, is further enlarged by a particular enumeration of the ends or purposes, why the Arke was made ; namely, both of Gods Commandment, and his obedience in making it.

1 By it he saved his household.

2 Hereby hee condemned the world.

The first end which both God had in commanding, and *Noah* in making the Arke, was the saving of his household : that is, himselfe, and all that belonged to him ; which were his wife, his three sonnes, and their wives, Gen. 7. 1.

But first of all, it may seeme wonderful, how this Arke should save him and his household in this generall destruction. For it was a great and huge vessel resembling a ship : yet to save unlike, as it is rather called an *Arche*. It must float above the water, it must be laden with a heavey burthen ; and yet without *Anchor* or to stay her, without *moor* to poise her, without *stars* to guide and move her, without *Master* to governe her. For *Noah* was partly an husbandman, and partly a Preacher, and though he had much learning, yet the use of sayling was not then found out : and therefore in all reason this Arke would bee carried on hills and rocks, by the violence of the Tempests, and so sit in perces. Yet, for all this, it saved him, even when heaven and earth seemed to runne together, so vehement was the raine : even then it saved him and his. How came this to passe ? Even because Gods providence and his hand was with it : *He was the Master* and the Steers-man. For as God himselfe shut the doore of the Arke upon him, when he was in, and made it fast after him, that no water might enter (which was impossible

for *Noah* himselfe to have done.) Gen. 7. 16. So doubtlesse the same God that had vouchsafed to be his *Porter*, was also his *keeper*, *unpre-served*, and the *Master* of the Arke during that voyage. And from hence came it to passe, that the Arke saved him, which other wise in reason it could never have done.

Here we learne, first, the speciall and extraordinary presence and providence of God over his children in great distresses and extremities. His providence is over all his workes, for *hee forgets nothing that he hath made*: but the special eye of his providence watcheth over his children, as a master of a family hath an eye over his meanest servant; yea, over his very cattell: but his eye night and day is for his children. And as God overlooketh all his children alwayes, so principally his providence sheweth itselfe, when they are in the deepest dangers, or in the greatest want of naturall helps. When *Daniel was cast into the Lions den*, God was there with him, and *shut their mouthes*, Dan. 6. 22. When the *three children were cast into the fiery furnace*, God was with them and tooke away the natural force from the fire: Dan. 3. 27. When the *Israelites were to passe thorow the sea* or else die, (a hard stiffe) God was with them and made the sea give place to his children, and *stand like two walls on either side them*, Exod. 14. 22. When they were to wander thorow the wide wilderness, thorow so many dangers and discomforts as *Deserts* doe afford, *Christ was with them*, and waited upon them with his continual comfort and assistance, 1 Corin. 10. 4. And so when *Noah* was to go into the Arke, and (being in) must have the *doore shut*, and closed upon him; his case was pitifull. For doe it himselfe hee could not; it both being so bigge that Elephants and Camels must enter in at it; and though hee could have pulled it to, yet being within, hee could never have sufficiently closed it from the water: Nor would any other of that wicked world doe it for him: they did not owe him so much love or service, but rather mock him, and laugh at him: as *first*, for making the Arke; so now for entering in, when he knew not how to have it closed. How should hee doe? himselfe could not, others would not: *God himselfe with his owne hand shut it for him*. And after, when hee was in, and was in danger to be throwne upon the rocks, and to bee split in peeces on the hills, and had no Anchor, no sterne, no Pilot, no Master; God himselfe was with him, and was *all in all unto him*. The eye of his love, and the hand of his power was over him, and so the Arke saved him and his household. Such is the providence of God over his, when they are in the deepest distresses, and most detriments of all worldly comforts.

The use of this doctrine ministreth comfort unto Gods children: who as they are sure of *grace* so they are sure to fall upon them; so are they also of a speciall care of God over them, even in their greatest extremities. And this may

Gods children (who serve him in the true obedience of faith) never assure themselves of that the Lord doth never forget, nor forsake them in any of their troubles: but will bee ever ready with his mercifull hand, to defend them from dangers, to provide for them in necessities, and to comfort them in distresses, when they know not in the world how to doe. *Elisba* had an army of men sent against him, to take him: How should one man escape from a whole army? his man cried, *Alas, Master what shall we doe?* He answered his man, and bade him, *fear not, there were more for him than against him*; that is, more Angels (though they were unseen) for him, than there were men in the army against him. And so when no man would shut the doore for *Noah*, there were Angels enough ready sent from God to doe it for him: and when all wicked men wished he might perish with the Arke he had made, and assured themselves hee would perish, having no such helps as ships require; then the holy Angels, or rather God himselfe, supplied all such wants unto him: and so when themselves perished, they saw him and his household saved by that Arke. And no lesse care hath God over his Church and children to this day. And though he worketh not visible miracles for them, yet they seele and finde that he is oftentimes mighty and wonderful in preserving them, in providing for them, in assisting them, and in comforting them, when else without that providence of his, they know they had miscarried.

Againe, whereas God himselfe vouchsafeth in *Noahs* danger to be the *Master* and *Pilot* of this Arke, that so it may save him and his household; wee learne the ancientie and dignity of the trade of Mariners, Saylor, and Masters of ships. The ancientie: For wee see it is as old as *Noah*, as old as the second world, even 4000. years old. The dignity is great; for God himselfe was both the first author, and the first practitioner of it. The author and first deviser: For *Noah* made not this Arke of his owne head, but (as wee heard before) hee was warned of God to doe it. And hee was the first practitioner, for God himselfe performed all those services unto *Noah* in the Arke: else it had never saved him.

This being so, It is the more grieve to see that worthy calling so abused, and debased as it is; the most of them that practise it being profane, ungodly, and dissolute men. Such men should remember, God made the first ship, and God was the first Master, and the first Mariner, the first Pilot, the first governour of a ship: and they should labour to be like him. This is one of those few callings, which may say, God himselfe was the first deviser and practitioner of it. Al callings cannot say so; why then should they so farre forget whom they succeed? Indeed upon the seas and in distresses, they will make some profession of religion: but let them come ashore; what swearing, what whoring, what drunkenness amongst them? But let them be

King 6. 17. 18.

afraid to be so prophane, which hold the place, which once God himselfe held: or else let them know they are unworthy of so good a calling.

And thus we see the reason, and the meanes how the Arke could *save him and his household*; namely, because God did governe it.

In the next place, observe the *end and use* of the Arke. It was to *save this both in word and deed*. Leane here that Gods servants in common calamities have safety: For God himselfe giveth them security, and provideth deliverance. Thus was it ever. When God proceedeth in judgement against *Hierusalem*, for the iniquities thereof: he *marketh the goodly in their foreheade*; namely, such as mourne and cry for the abominations which are done against God, *Ezech. 9. 4.*

When *Sodome* must be destroyed, *righteous Lot* and his family must be drawne out; nay, the *Angell can do nothing till he be safe*, *Gen. 19. 16. 22.* When the destroying *Angell* went over the land of *Egypt*, and destroyed the first borne in every house of the *Egyptians*; (the *Isaacities* dwelling among them) he *past over* all the *Israelites*, whose doores were sprinkled with the blood of the *Paschall Lambe*, *Exod. 12. 13.* And even so he whose heart and soule is sprinkled with the blood of *Jesus Christ* the *Lambe of God*, no calamity can doe him hurt; nay, when others are smitten he shall be delivered.

The use of this doctrine is to our Church and state. We have by Gods mercie long enjoyed Peace and the Gospell; and both under a gracious government: and with these many other blessings. Yet speake truth, and the sinnes of our times call for a flood, as in *Noahs* time: and sure a flood of tribulation must come one way or other. For this was alwaies the state of Gods Church; now peace, now persecution. Peace abused causeth trouble and calamities. Therefore as we have to long had peace and ease, so assuredly looke for a flood: what it will be or when, knoweth no man; onely hee who will send it, the *righteous and Almighty God*. How then shall we doe, when the flood of tribulation is upon us? There is no way but one. *Believe in Christ Jesus*; settle thy heart in true faith: *repent of thy sins*: get Gods favour and forgiveness: and then when the flood comes, Gods providence shall afford thee (one way or other) an *Arke of safety* and deliverance. Sprinkle thy soule now with *Christs blood* by faith and true repentance: and the destroying *Angell* of Gods wrath, shall *paste over thee and thy household*.

Thirdly, observe the largeness of Gods bounty. Not onely *Noah* shall be saved, but with him his household also. Why the Lord did so, there be divers reasons:

First, for the Propagation and multiplication of the seed after the flood. If any object, *Noah* and his wife might have served for that end: I answer, they were old; for hee was

600. yeares old, when the flood came; and though he lived 350. yeares after the flood, (*Gen. 9. 28.*) yet reade wee not of any children that he had. If any further object, The first world was begun, and multiplied by two alone, *Adam* and *Eve*; and no more way then the old there bee so many for the beginning of the second world? I answer: God did from the beginning, to shew that *all mankind come of one blood*, (*Acts 17. 26.*) and that in regard of blood or birth, there is no difference or quality betwixt man and man: which also was observed even in the second beginning. For, though the world was multiplied by three brethren, *Shem, Cham, and Japheth*; yet choise three were not strangers, but all issues to one man *Noah*: so that as first by *Adam* and *Eve*, so afterwards by *Noah* and his wife came all men in the world.

But in the beginning of the second world, there must needs bee more lines than one: because now the blessed seed was promised, whose life and kindred must needs bee kept distinct from all other until his incarnation. And therefore there was more cause now why the earth should be speedily replenished than at the beginning. For, first the earth had some glory bequeathed it after the first curse; so that it was still a most pleasant and delightful habitation to *Adam* and *Eve*. But now by the sentence in the flood, all her beauty was gone, she was all her glory was overcome, spoiled and defaced: so that it had become a miserable habitation for *Noah* and his wife, if they had beene without company. Secondly, the earth being much defaced, and the vertue of it almost quite perished by the flood, had now more need to bee recovered by the hands and helps of many mens labours. And to this purpose the Scripture saith, *Gen. 9. 19. and 10. 1.* that the earth was divided amongst the three issues of *Noah*. And they lived not all together, but overspread the earth. And lest the beasts, which then were many, should overgrow the world, therefore God would have the world speedily replenished; and to that end *Noah* and his wife had never a servant in the Arke, but onely such as should have children: *their three sons and their wives*. And thus the multiplication of mankind is the first cause, why God saved *Noahs* children.

The second cause: It is likely that as himselfe was a righteous man, so they of his family were more orderly and religious, than others of that wicked Age; for good men make conscience of teaching their families. *Abraham*, *Gen. 18. 18.* And seeing *Noah* is commended for a just and good man, doubtlesse, hee did carefully instruct his household: and therefore it is to be supposed, that all, or the most of them were holy and righteous persons fearing God.

Thirdly, though all of them were not righteous yet they were all of the family of *Abraham* *Noah*: and therefore for this they were

saved; all being his *children*, or his *childrens* wives. For, the righteous man procureth blessings not on himselfe alone, but on all that belong unto him, dwell with him or ere in his company. At *Abrahams* request, had there bin but *Levi*, *his* *sons* *men* *in* *Sodom*, all had beene spared for *their* *sake* (Gen. 18. 32.) When *Joseph* dwelt in *egypt*, all *Pharaohs* *house*, and all in it (though he were a heathen man) were blessed for *Josephs* *sake*; (Gen. 49. 5.) When *Lot* was delivered out of *Sodom*s destruction, the *angels* asked him, *Hast thou any sonnes to thee?* that they might have bene saved for his *sake*, (Gen. 19. 12.) When *Paul* and 276. *soules* with him suffered ship-wracke, and were all in present danger of drowning, God saved *Paul*, and for his sake all the rest: *God gave him the boies of all that were with him in the ship*. Act. 27. 24. And so here *Noahs* children, and their wives, are spared for *Noahs* sake.

Let this encourage all men to serve God in truth and uprightnesse; Being thereby they shall not make themselves alone blessed, but bring downe Gods blessing even on their *children*, and posterities: yea, the very places where, and the people with whom they dwell, shall fare the better for them. And thus we see the causes and reasons, why not *Noah* alone, but even his household were also saved.

In the fourth place, let us observe how the holy Ghost saith, that *Noah* built the Arke; not for the saving of himselfe, but of his household; and it is so said for two causes:

First, to shew that *Noah*, though he were the head and governour, yet was one of the household; for in the word *household*, himselfe is comprehended. Masters and Fathers, though they be governours, yet must thinke themselves members of the household; so will they have more care thereof, when they esteeme themselves members of the bodie, and parts of the whole.

Secondly, to teach us what care *Noah* had for his family; even so great, as he prepared the Arke to save them withall. Here is an Example of a worthy Master of a household; and yet all this was but for a temporal deliverance. Now if he was so careful for their bodily safetie, how much more was he to save them from hell and damnation, which he knew to be an eternall destruction of both soule and bodie. Therefore doubtles, as he was a diligent Preacher of righteousness to that sinfull world; so principally a diligent Preacher, and Prayer, and Catechiser of his owne family; that so he might make them Gods servants, and deliver them from the eternall fire of hell.

Noahs example is to be a patterne to all Parents and Fathers of families, to teach them care not onely for the bodie, and bodily welfare of their families, but chieflly for their soules and spirituall welfare. And if they be bound by all bonds of nature and religion, to provide for the bodies of their children; let reason judge,

A how much more streightly they are tied to looke to their soules. But *S. Paul* saith, *He that provideth not temporall things necessarie for his family, is worse than an Infidell*. 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Then what is he who provideth nothing for their soules? Surely, his case is extremely fearefull. Therefore when thou hast provided meat, apparell, a calling, and marriage, house and livings for thy child; thinke not thou hast done, and so maist turne them off. The world may take them thus: but God will not take them so at thy hands. No, the greater dutie remains behind; thou must provide for their soules, that they may know God, and feare his name. Thou must with *Abraham*, (Gen. 18. 19.) teach thy family, that they may walke in the wayes of God: *I know Abraham*, saith God, that he will doe it. And surely God will know all such as doe so. By doing thus, men shall make their houses Churches of God, as here *Noahs* was: and it would be farre better with our Church and State, if men did so: Ministers in the Church, and Justices in the Country should have much lesse to doe, if Masters of families would doe their duties.

But to goe further; let us see more particularly what this household was, that was thus saved by the Arke.

First, it was a family of *four men* and *four women*: not men or women alone; but both, and consisting of as many women as men. Thus God would have one sex to love another, and one to thinke themselves beholden to the other: the beginning of the first world was by one man and one woman: of the second, by *four men* and *four women*; but alwaies equal. And here also God would teach men not to contemne the other, though the weaker sex: for God saved as many of them from the universall flood, as he did men.

Secondly, how many were they in all? but *eight persons*. Of the whole world no more were saved. A miserable spectacle. See what sinne can doe. It can bring many millions to eight persons in a short time. See what it is to offend God. Let us not then glorie in our multitudes, but glorie in this, that we know and serve God: for otherwile, if our sinnes cry out to him against us, he can easily make us few enough.

Thirdly, what were these *eight persons*? not one servant amongst them all; there were none but *Noah* and his wife, his three sonnes and their wives. It is marvellous, that here were none of *Noahs* servants. Some thinke he had none, and that the simplicitie of those dayes required no attendance, but that each one was servant to himselfe. And they seeme to gather it out of Gen. 7. 1. where God biddeth *Noah*, Enter thou and all thine house into the Arke. And when they entered, they are recounted in the seventh verse, to be none but himselfe, his wife, and his children: therefore say they, in *Noahs* house, there were no servants. But why might not *Noah* have servants, as well as *Abraham* and *Lot* had?

had? doubtlesse he had. But behold a wonderfull matter: *Noahs* owne servants would not beleieve his preaching, but chose rather to live loosely with the world, and perish with it, than to live godly with their *Masters*, and be saved with him. This was and will be true in all ages, that in a wicked age, or in a wicked towne, a *Master* shall not be able to governe his owne servants: but the streame of common wickednesse, and ill examples of other men doth draw them from the obedience of their *Masters*. They can readily allege for themselves, wee will not be used more hardly than other men are; we will not bee tied to our houtes, and bound to so many exercises, wee will doe as others doe. Thus would *Noahs* servants doe, and perished with the world. So hard a thing is it for a good man to have good servants in such times or places where wickednesse reigneth.

And thus we have seene in some sort, How the *Arke* saved *Noah*, and his household, and what this household of his was.

Now besides this end and use of the *Arke*, we are further to know; that whereas this saving of them was but a corporall deliverance from a temporall death, this *Arke* hath also a spirituall use, which we may not omit: for as many of *Noahs* family as were true beleivers, it was a meanes to save them another way, even to save their soules: for it taught the many things.

First, it was an assurance of Gods love unto their soules: for if he were so carefull to save their bodies from the flood, they thereby assured themselves, he would be as good unto their soules, which they knew to be farre more precious and excellent.

Secondly, it shewed them how to be saved. For as they saw no farther, nothing but present death out of the *Arke*: So it taught them, that out of *Geas Church*, and out of Gods favour, no salvation could be expected; and so it taught them to labour to be in Gods favour, and members of his true Church.

Thirdly, they saw they were saved from the flood, by faith and obedience. For first, *Noah* beleaved Gods word, that the flood should come; then he obeyed Gods commandement, and made the *Arke* as he was commanded. And thus he and his, by beleaving and obeying, were saved through the *Arke*: and without these, the *Arke* could not have saved them. This taught them more particularly how to be saved; namely, by beleaving God, and obeying God, and else no salvation. For when they saw their bodies could not be saved without them; it assured them much lesse could their soules be saved without faith and obedience.

Lastly, this deliverance by the *Arke* was a paw unto them from God, assuring them of salvation, if they beleaved in the *Messias*. For, seeing God to fully performed his promise unto them for their bodily deliverance upon their beleaving: they thereby might assure themselves, he would performe his promise of salvation unto

them, upon their faith and true obedience. Moreover it strengthened their faith. For, when ever after any promise of God was made unto them, or any Word of God came unto them, they then remembered Gods mercie and faithfulness unto them in their deliverance by the *Arke*: and therefore beleaved.

Unto these and many other spirituall uses, did the *Arke* serve unto *Noah*, and to his household, as many of them as were beleivers.

But what is this to us? Indeed, the *Arke* served them for a temporall deliverance, it saved their lives; therefore they also had reason to make spirituall use of it: But it saved not us, it served us to no use corporall; therefore how can we make any spirituall use of it?

I answer: though we had no corporall use of the *Arke*, yet there ariseth an excellent spirituall use out of the consideration of it.

The *Arke* of *Noah* and our baptism, are figures correspondent one to the other: that, that *Noahs* *Arke* was to them, Baptisme is to us. Thus teacheth *S. Peter* 1.3.10.21. To the *Arke* of *Noah*, the figure which now saveth us, even Baptisme agreeth. The same that *S. Paul* here ascribeth to the *Arke*, *S. Peter* ascribeth to Baptisme. The *Arke* saved them, Baptisme saveth us. Now the resemblance betwixt these two figures, hath two branches:

First, as it was necessary for them that should be saved in the flood, to be in the *Arke*; and out of the *Arke* no possibilitie to escape: So is it for them that will have their soules saved, to be in Christ, and of his Church; they must be mysticall members of Christ, and visible members of his Church; and out of Christ and his Church, no possibilitie of salvation. That this is true for Christ, *Saint Peter* proveth apparently, *Acts* 4.12. Among men there is no name given under heaven, whereby to be saved, but the name of Iesus Christ; neither is there salvation in any other.

And that this is true, for the Church, hee also proveth, *Acts* 2.47. The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved. See how such as are to be saved must joine themselves to the Church, when they see where it is: and all this is signified and taught in Baptisme. For the outward use of Baptisme makes us members of the visible Church, and the inward and powerful use of Baptisme makes us members of Christ himselfe.

The use and consideration hereof, should make us all more careful to be true members of Christ, and of his Church, by making not only a bare profession of religion; but by seeking to be incorporate into Christ by faith and true repentance: for this must save us when nothing can. As they that were out of the *Arke*, no gold nor silver could buy out their safety, no lands nor living, no houses nor buildings, no hills nor mountaines, nothing in the world, nor the whole world it selfe could save them; but being out of the *Arke*, they all perished.

thed: So if a man be out of *Christ*, and out of his *Church*, no gold nor silver, no honour nor glorie, no wit nor policie, no estimation nor authoritie, no friends nor favour, no wisdom nor learning, no hills of happinesse, nor mountaines of gold can save his soule; but he must perishe in the flood of Gods eternall wrath. For as it proved folly to them that trusted to their high houses, or catcht hold on the hills, if they were out of the *Arke*: so will it prove much greater folly to them that shall trust to any meanes of salvation, if they be out of *Christ*. And contrariwise, as they that were in the *Arke* were sure to be saved, so the waters, winds, and weathers, stormes and tempests all they could; and so that still, the more the waters rose, the *Arke* rose also, & was ever higher than they; and the higher it was carried by the violence of the waters, the safer it was from the danger of hills and rockes: and so in the midst of danger they were out of danger; and were saved in the midst of the water: So he that is once truly in *Christ*, is sure of salvation, nothing can hinder it: floods of calamities may assault him and humble him, but they hurt not his salvation: he is in the *Arke*, he is in *Christ*; may, the gates of hell shall not overthrow him: but thorow all the waves of the devils malice, and thorow all tempests of temptations, the blessed *Arke* of *Christ*s love and merits shall carrie him up, and at last shall convey him to salvation; this is the blessed assistance of all them that are truly baptized into *Christ*. But as for such as out of their prophane-nesse, either care not to be in *Christ*, or contemne *Baptisme*: let them assure themselves, they be out of the *Arke*, and they perish certainly. This is the first part of the resemblance.

The second is this: *Noah*s bodie going into the *Arke*, he seemed them a dead man, going into a grave or tombe to be buried: for he was buried in the *Arke*, and the *Arke* in the waters, and he deprived of the fresh aire and glad some light; yet by Gods appointment, it was the meanes to save *Noah*, which in all reason, seemed to be his grave; and if *Noah* will be saved he must goe into this grave. So they that will escape hell and damnation by *Christ*, the true *Arke* of holinesse, must be buried and mortified in their flesh and fleshly luts; and there is no way to come to life everlasting but this. For thy soule cannot live, whilst thy sins, the old man, that is, thy corruptions doe live; but they must die, and be buried, and then thy soule li- veth: and whilst they live, thy soule is dead, and far from the life of grace, which is in *Christ* *Jesus*. All this is affirmed at large, in Rom. 6. 3, 4. where we may see apparently, that we must by *baptisme* die with *Christ*, and be buried with him, else we cannot be saved by him: our corruptions, our sins, which are the old man must die and be buried; that the new man, that is, the grace and holinesse of *Christ*, may live in us and our soules by it: and he that thus dieth not, never lives; and he that thus is not buried, never

riseth to true life. Thus mortification of sinne is the way to heaven, and death the way to life eternall: and he that is not thus mortified in his corruption, let him never looke to be quickened to grace or glorie.

If this be so, we may then see what a miserable world we now live in, wherein mortification of sinne is a thing unknowne: not a man of many that can tell what it is; may grace is dead, and holinesse is mortified, and I feare buried also: but the old man reignes, corruption lives, and sinne flourisheth. Mortifying of *Christ* by our sinnes is common: but mortifying of sinne is seldom seen. For *Christ* is betrayed, crucified, and killed in a sort by the sinnes of men. What a fearefull change is this? *Christ* should live in us, and wee endeavour to crucifie him againe: sinne should be crucified, but it liveth in us. But if we will have *Christ* to save us, then must we mortifie the body of our sin: For he that will live when he is dead, must die whilst he is alive. And he that will be saved by his *baptisme*, must looke that *baptisme* work this effect in him, To make him die, and be buried with *Christ*, that afterwards he may rise and reigne with *Christ*. And then shall *Baptisme* save us, as the *Arke* saved faithfull *Noah*, and his household. And thus much for the first end and use of the *Arke*: the second followeth.

By the which he condemned the world.]

Here is the second end, why *Noah* prepared the *Arke*; To the condemnation of the world that then was. For, by it (not by his faith, as some would read it) hee condemned that wicked generation, both to a temporall destruction of their bodies, and to an eternall judgement in hell.

In the words, there are two points to be considered. 1. Who are condemned? The world. 2. Whereby? By *Noah*s *Arke*.

For the first, it may be asked, what is meant by the world? St. Peter answereth (2. Epist. 2. 5.) The world of the ungodly: that is, that generation of sinfull men, who lived in the dayes of *Noah*, whom also in the 1. Epist. 3. 20. he calleth disobedient: and their more particular sins are disclosed and recorded by *Moses*. Gen. 6. 45. to be monstrous abuse of holy marriage, unnaturall lusts, cruelties, and oppressions: an utter neglect of Gods service, and Sabbath: and an extreme prophane-nesse, and dissolutenesse in everie kinde. And this corruption was not private or personall: but universall, through all estates, sexes and ages. This world of the ungodly, this whole race of wicked and disobedient men were condemned: but how was that world condemned by *Noah*? Thus: God vouchsafed them 120. yeares to repent in & appointed *Noah* to preach unto them, during that time, to cal them to repentance. But they beleaved not God, nor *Noah*, but continued in their disobedience, and grew in their ungodliness: therefore when that time was expired, God performed his Word spoken by *Noah*, brought the

flood upon them, destroyed them all, and condemned in hell as many of them as died in impenitencie and unbelief. And thus that wicked world was condemned, according as *Noah* in his Ministerie had foretold them.

Here we may learne;

First, what the world of this age is to looke for, unless there be repentance. For, to speake but of our selves in this Nation; Have not wee had the *Gospel* 30. yeares and more? and with peace, and much prosperitie? Have not we had a goodly time given us to repent? What is our dutie, but with reverence to see and acknowledge this goodnesse of God, to take hold of this mercifull opportunitee, this time of grace, and this day of salvation? If we doe not, and make no account of the *Gospel*, what can we looke for, but to be condemned, as that world was? Looke at the meanes and opportunities, which these daies afford; and they be as *golden daies*, as ever were since *Christ*, or as ever can be expected, till his coming againe. But looke at the profanenesse and carnality, and securitie of this age (even over all *Christendome*) and this is the *Iron age*, these be the evill daies; and so evill that nothing can be expected, but a river of brimstone, and a flood of fire to purge it.

The daies of the coming of the Son of Man (which I take to be these daies) shall be like (saith *Christ*, *Matth.* 24. 37.) unto the daies of *Noah*. And surely, in securitie and profanenesse, they are like; and therefore in all reason they must be like in punishment. We must therefore take warning by them, and shake off this securitie which possesseth all mens hearts, and wait for the Lord in watching and prayer, and thinke every day may be the last day of this world; at least the last day of our lives: and let us prepare for it, and live in the expectation of it. Otherwise if our sinfulness grow on a little further; nothing can we looke for, but to be condemned in an universall judgement, as that world was. Let us therefore betake our selves to a more serious serving of God: that the Lord when he cometh, may finde us so doing.

Secondly, in that the whole world that then was, was thus destroyed and condemned, and (as we heard afore) only *Noah* and his household saved; we learne, that it is not good, nor safe to follow the multitude. *Noah* was here a man alone, he held and beleevd against all the world, and yet his judgement and his beleefe was true, and all the worlds false: and (accordingly) he saved when they were all condemned.

It is marvell therefore the Church of *Rome* should so much stand upon numbers and multitudes, for the gracing of their religion: For it ever was, and ever will be a weak argument. If multitudes might ever have beene alleged; then unto *Noah* especially, to whom it might have beene said, Who art thou that pretendst to be wiser than all men? and to know more than all the world? Thou that hast a faith by

thy selfe, and hast no man to heare thee company; thinke not that all *Adams* posterity, all the children of holy *Henoch*, and *Methuselah* were all deceived, but thy selfe alone? Would not these and such like objections have discouraged any man? Yet behold the force of faith, *Noah* had Gods Word for it, and therefore beleeveth against all the world, and is commended to all ages for this faith. It is therefore but a vain flourish of the Papists, to presse us to much with their multitudes, and universality, and consent, and unity, and succession, and continuance. For all this is worth nothing, as long as they first prove not, that that doctrine or opinion which these multitudes hold, hath his ground from Gods Word: till then, all the other is vanity. For it is better with *Noah*, to have Gods plaine Word of his fide, than to beleve otherwise with all the world; which was here deceived and condemned, when *Noah* alone beleevd Gods Word, and was saved.

And thus wee who were condemned: the world. To end this point, one question may not unprofitably be here moved:

Whether was all the world, that is, all the men in that world condemned or no? The words seeme to imply that all but *Noah* were: and yet it may seeme strange, that of so many millions none should repent but he: and if they repented, why were they not saved? I answer: The world of that wicked age was condemned two wayes:

First, with a corporall destruction, and so they were all condemned without exception. No high houses, no hills, no devices of man could save them. For the waters rose 15. cubits above the tops of the highest mountains under heaven, *Gen.* 7. 20. And so though till then, divers of them lived by flying to the hills: yet that being their last refuge, and being thus taken from them, then all flesh perished: *then no man was upon the earth, and every man and every thing that drew the breath of life.* For so saith the *Scripture*, *Gen.* 7. 21, 22. And it is but vaine to imagine, that any of them could be saved upon that *Arke*: for first, it was to be made with a ridge in the top (as is most probably thought) that no man could stand upon it, much lesse make any stay, in that violent tossing by tempests. Again, if they could, yet could they not have lived so long, for want of food; the waters being (almost) a yeare upon the earth. And thus it is most certaine, they all without exception were destroyed with bodily destruction.

But secondly, they were condemned to an eternall destruction in hell; and therefore *S. Peter*, 1. 3. 18. saith, *Their spirits are now in prison, who were disobedient in the daies of Noah.* Now all the question is, whether were they all condemned or no? I answer: For ought that we certainly know out of the *Scripture*, they were all condemned. Yet in the judgement of charitie, we are not so to thinke; and the rather, because there are many probable conjectures, that some of them repented. For howsoever

many of them beleevd not *Noah*, judging that he spake of his owne head: yet it is more than likely, that when they saw it begin to raine extraordinarily; at least, when they saw themselves driven to the tops of the hills, and there looked hourly for death; that then divers of the posteritie of *Enoch* and *Methusalem*, and *Lamech*, were ashamed of their former unbelief, and then turned to God in faith and in repentance. And doubtlesse this is the only or the principall cause, why God brought the flood in *fortie* dayes, which he could have done in foure houres; that so men might have time to repent, Gen. 7.

But it will be said, if any repented, why then were they not saved? I answer; because they repented not in time, when they were called by *Noahs* preaching. Repentance is never too late, to save the soule from hell: but it may be too late to save the bodie from a temporall judgement. And this, I take it, is that that we may safely hold: for it seemes too hard to condemne all the posteritie of *Methusalem*, *Enoch*, *Lamech*, and other holy patriarches (who as the Text saith, *begat sons and daughters*) and to thinke that none of them repented, when they saw the flood come indeed, as *Noah* had said. It cannot bee, but they heard their Fathers preach: and why might not that preaching worke upon their hearts, when the judgement came, though afore it did not? But why then did not God record in the Scripture, neither their repentance, nor salvation, but hath left it so doubtfull.

I answer: for the very same, for which hee would not record *Adams* nor *Salomons*: all for this cause, that he might teach all men to the worlds end, what a fearefull thing it is to disobey his commandment as *Adam* did: or to defer repentance when they are called by Gods word, as these men did. Therefore to feare us from the like, though afterwards they repented; it pleased God not to record it, but to leave it doubtfull.

This question being thus discussed, yeelds us two strong motives to repentance:

First, for if we repent not betimes, our state then is fearefull and doubtfull, though not desperate; as we see here the salvation even of *Methusalems children* is doubtfull: for they repented not when they were called, but deferred it, till the judgement came. So if we defer our repentance till our deaths, there is great question of our salvation: but let us repent, when we are called by Gods word, and then it is out of question, then there is no doubt of our salvation.

Secondly, if we repent betime, wee shall escape the temporall judgement which God sends upon the world for sinne. If not, but deferre repentance till the judgement come, wee may then by it save our soules, but our bodies shall perish in the universall judgement. If the children of *Enoch* and *Methusalem*, which were neere a kinne unto *Noah*, had repented at

Noahs preaching, they had bene saved with *Noah*: they did not. But when the flood came indeed, then doubtlesse they beleevd with *Noah*; and with themselves in the arke with him: but it was too late, they saved their soules, but were drowned with the rest. So assuredly, when God threatneth any judgement on our church or Nation, they that beleve and repent betime, shall escape it. But they that will live in wantonnesse with the world, and not repent till God begin to strike: if then they doe when the flood is come (though salvation cannot bee denied to repentance whensoever) yet let them assure themselves, they shall beare their part with the world in the punishment, as they did partake with them in their finnes. Let then these two considerations move us all to turne to God by timely repentance: then shall we be sure to escape both the eternall and temporall judgement, and not bee condemned, as here this world of the ungodly was. And thus wee see who were condemned;

The world.]

The second point is, whereby were they condemned? The Text saith only, *by which he condemned*, &c. Whereupon some would understand faith, and read it thus; by which faith he condemned the world. Which though it be true (for the faith of holy men condemnes the unbelieving and misbelieving world,) yet is it not proper in this place, where the Arke is described by the uses of it: which are two, whereof this is one: And (besides the Greeke construction doth well beare it) the judgement of almost all interpreters referres it to the Arke. And further in all reason; that that saved him and his household, condemned the world also: but the Arke is said to have saved them; therefore by it he condemned the world. Neither is this any derogation, but a commendation of faith: for by faith he made that Arke, which Arke condemned the world. Now by the Arke, *Noah* condemned the world two wayes;

1. By his obedience in building it.

2. By his preaching in building it.

For the first, God bad *Noah* build an Arke, so great, and to such an use, as in all reason no man would have done it. Yet *Noah* by the power of his faith beleevd Gods word, and obeyed, and therefore builded the Arke. This faith and obedience of *Noah* to this Commandment of God, condemned the unbelieving and disobedient world, and made them without excuse. So saith Christ; The *Ninevites*, who beleevd at the preaching of *Jonas*, shall rise in judgement against the *Sewes*, and condemne them, because they repented not at *Christs* preaching. And the *Queen of Shebas*, who came so farre to heare *Salomon*, shall condemne them, who then would not heare Christ, Matth. 12.

42. 43.

Even so, *Noahs* obedience shall condemne the. For *Noah* being told of a *miraculous* thing, and beleiving it, and being commanded to

reasonable a thing, as the making of the *Ark*, and obeying such command that wicked world, who would not believe Gods ordinary promises, nor his ordinary and most holy commandments. And as the *Saints* are laid to *condemne a wadded* Cor. 6. 1. by being witness against the *un* approvers of Gods just sentence to the *un*believers and faith condemned that world. And thus we see it is apparant, that the obedience, and godly examples of good men doe *condemne* the world.

The use whereof, is to encourage us all to embrace Christian religion, and not be daunted by the fumes, or other evil behaviours of prophane men, which cannot abide the Gospel: for he that walketh in the way of holiness, and keepeth good confidence in the midst of a wicked generation, his godliness doth not overcome their evil, and convert them, it shall more demonstrate their wickedness, and condemn them. Our Church is full of mockers, and they discourage many from Christ and religion: but let them know, this will be the end of it, their obedience whom they contemne and laugh at, will be their condemnation. And thus *Nash* by his obedience in building the Arke, condemned the world.

Secondly, so did he also by his preaching, as he builded it. For the building of the Arke, was a part of his prophetick ministry.

The Prophets preached two waies; in word, and in action. For beside their *verbal* preaching, and delivering of Gods word, they preached in their *lives and actions*; especially in such actions as were extraordinary. And such was *Nahks* building of the Arke: it was an *actual* preaching; yea, every stroke upon the Arke, was a loud Sermon to the eyes and eares of that wicked world. For by making it, he signified some should bee saved, and the rest drowned: namely, all that would believe and repent, should bee saved in it: and all that would not, should *out* of it be drowned: and because they believed not this, therefore by it he *condemned* them. From this example we may learne:

First, that a man may bee a true and sincere Minister, lawfully called by God & his church, and yet not turne many unto God, nor by his Ministry bring many to repentance. For here *Noah*, a Prophet called immediately, yet in 120. yeares preaching both in word and action, he cannot turne one to faith and repentance. A most fearefull thing, if we well consider it, that both by preaching and making the Arke, hee should not turne one of the sonnes of *Lamech*, *Mesheleah*, or *Hemach*, to beleeve him : but that they should all rather choose to be misse in the generall vanity of that wicked world, than to serve God with *Noah*. This was a most discomfortable thing unto him as could be, yet this hath beene the case and lot of many holy Prophets. *Egn* will *goe and preach unto them*, and yet his doctrine will *harden* the *steele hearts*, and they will *not bee moved*. *Eg* 6. 10. And *Eg* 6.

A *hief* mult *see* and *heede*, and yet: told afore-
hand, *they* would *leave* him *in* *repent*. *Eccl* 5.
4-7. And when *Saint Paul* himselfe preached
unto the *Jewes* at *Rome* *some* *believed* *not*, *Act*.
18. 24. There is nothing will more discourage
a man, and cast down his heart, than to see
that his labours are not only in vaine, but doe
take a contrary effect; that whereas they were
bellowed to have lived them, they are means
of their deeper condemnation. Therefore as
when their labours bring men to God, they
may greatly rejoyce, and account those peo-
ple, as *Saint Paul* did the *Thessalonians*, his
crown, his joy, his glory: So when they doe no
good (as *Noah* here) but that men are more
and worse; this must humble and abate them-
selves, and let them know that power and
virtue is not in them, but God. So *Paul*. *R*. *Paul*
to the ungodly and impenitent among the
Corinthians; *I* feare, faith he, *when I come, my*
God *will* *bring* *me* *amongst* *you*, *and I will* *make*
many *of* *them* *which* *have* *been* *dead* *in* *repent*.
And surely, this or nothing will shake a Mis-
sioner, and minister matter of great bewailing
yea not so, but as still there is matter of true
comfort and contentment, unto all godly and
faithfull Teachers. For whether thy labour bee
the favour of life unto life, or of death unto death,
unto thy hearers; it is to God a sweet favour in
Christ.

Againe, wee may here learne, that those who
are condemned before God, have their con-
demnation by the preaching of the word: *The*
secrets of all the world, saith the Apostle, shall be
judged by Iesus Christ, according to the Gospell,
and here the preaching of *Noah*, and his *allu-*
allpreaching by preparing the Arke *condemns*
the world. Such is the power and might of the
Ministerie of Gods Word, upon all that
resist it.

Which being so, should reach all men when they come to heare Gods Word, to submit themselves to the power of it, to obey it, & become penitent: for otherwise to many Sermons as a man heareth, so many *inditements* are presented to God against him. And if at the last day there were no devils to accuse, these bills of inditements would both accuse and *condemne* him. And this Judgement is begun in this life, as their consciences doe often tell them, and is accomplished at the last day: for there is no daily living with Gods word: if it cannot save, it kills. It is the fire, which if it cannot soften, it hardens. Let then all impenitent men, make conscience to obey Gods word: for if now they repent, it will be even with them, both here and in another world. For as the very same Arke, which saved *Noah* and his household, *condemned* the world: for the same word of God, which beloved and obeyed by godly men, is their salvation: disobeyed, and refused by ungodly men, shall be their condemnation.

And thus much for the two ends, viz. Next prepared the *stroke*; and consequently of the

second effect of *Noah's* faith. It followeth,

And was made heire of the righteousnesse which is by faith.

Here is the third and last effect, whereby the excellency of *Noah's* faith is commended. It made him an heire, and that not of the world: (for so he was besides) but of that that the world could not yield; of *righteousnesse*, and that of the best of all, even of that *righteousnesse*, which is by faith. These words have relation to that testimony, which God gave of *Noah* in Genesis, 6. 9. *Noah was a just and upright man, and walked with God.* Now that which is spoken there more generally, is here particularly opened and unfolded; he was *just* for *righteousness*: how? he was righteous by the *righteousnesse of faith*: so that these words are a Commentary unto the other.

But because that that is here affirmed of *Noah*, is a most glorious thing: his *faith* made him an heire, (that is, made him that was heire of all the earth, a better heire) therefore these words are to be well weighed. For their full opening, three points are to be considered:

1. What is the *righteousnesse* here spoken of.

2. Why it is called the *righteousnesse of faith*, or by faith.

3. How *Noah* was made heire of it by his *faith*.

For the first: That *righteousnesse* by which *Noah* and all holy men, are to stand righteous before God, is not a *righteousnesse* of any nature, but such a one as is appointed of God for that purpose. That wee may know it the more distinctly, wee must examine the severall kindes thereof.

Righteousnesse is of two sorts: *Created, Uncreated.*

Uncreated is that which is in God, and hath no beginning nor ending; no means, nor measure. Of this speaketh the Prophet, Psalm. 119. 137. *Righteous art thou, O Lord.* This cannot make any man righteous; for two reasons:

First, for the Godhead and it are all one: It is in God essentially. As man is one thing, and his *righteousnesse* is another: but God and his *righteousnesse* are all one: and therefore it is as impossible for any man to have this *righteousnesse*, as it is to be God.

Secondly, it is infinite, and mans soule a finite creature, and therefore not capable of any thing that is infinite; and consequently, not of the unmeasurable *righteousnesse* which is in the Godhead. Therefore this wee must leave unto God, as proper to the Deity.

Created righteousness is that which God frameth in the reasonable Creature, *Men and Angels.* Of *Angels* we are not to speake, though theirs and mans differed not much in nature at their creations.

Created righteousness of man is of two sorts, *Legal*, or *Evangelicall*.

Legal righteousness is that which the moral Law prescribeth.

Evangelicall, that which the Gospel hath revealed.

Of *Legal righteousness* I finde there are three sorts spoken of;

1. One that is a *perfect*
2. One that is a *civil*
3. One that is an *inward*

} *righteousnesse.*

Perfect righteousness *Legal* is the perfect fulfilling of the Law in a mans owne selfe. And by this shall no man living bee justified before God: for no man, since the fall of *Adam*, is able perfectly to fulfill the Law. If any can, then shall hee be righteous by it: but none did, nor ever can; therefore no man shall stand righteous by perfect *Legal righteousness* in himselfe. Some will object: But a regenerate man may: for he is restored by grace; therefore though by *Adams* fall a man is disabled, yet by regeneration he is enabled to fulfill the Law perfectly.

I answer: It were so, if they were perfectly sanctified in their regeneration: but they are sanctified but in part, and it is not perfect untill death. *Object.* 1. Thess. 5. 23. *Wee are sanctified throughout, spirit, soule, and body.* If all these, what then remains unsanctified? therefore our sanctification is perfect. I answer: It is perfect in parts, but not in measure nor degree. As a child is a perfect man in all the parts of a man, but not in the quantity of any part: So a child of God is perfectly sanctified in all parts, but not in the measure of any part, untill flesh, and mortality, and corruption have an end.

Secondly, some may object: The virgin *Mary* sinned not. I answer: so teacheth the Church of *Rome*, that she never sinned, that her life was free from sin a Quail, and her conception from sinne originall. But so taught neither the Scripture, nor Gods Church: but contrariwise, it is more than manifest, shee was a sinner. For first, she confesseth her sinne rejected in God her Saviour: but if shee were no sinner, shee stood in need of no Saviour. Again, shee died: but if shee had not sinned, shee should in justice not have died. For death cometh by sinne: and where no sinne is, there death is not due. Thus no man can bee righteous by the perfect *righteousnesse* of the Law, in himselfe.

Secondly, there is a civil *righteousnesse*, and that is, when a man in his outward actions is conformable to the Law, especially to the commandments of the second Table: For example; he is free from the outward actions of murder, adultery, or theevy, and such like: or he can refrain his anger, and overcome his passions that they shall not breake out to open violence to the view of the world; and for the sixth table, he comes to the Church, and professeth religion. All this is a *civil righteousness*, and by this can no man be justified, nor made *righteous*. For first, it is not a perfect, but a most imperfect *righteousnesse*, and therefore cannot justify. It is so imperfect, that it is as good as none at all in Gods sight: for it is but an outward, and con-

fessionall.

strained, and dissembled obedience, and wants the inward and true obedience of the heart and soule.

Secondly, it cannot make a man *righteous*: for wicked men have it which are unrighteous, and cannot be saved. *Itaman* hated *Mordecai* in his heart: yea, his heart boyled in malice against him: yet the story saith; *That nevertheless he refrained himselfe till he came home*; Est. 5. 10. And therefore Christ saith, that *except our righteousness exceede the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, wee cannot enter into the kingdome of heaven*, Mat. 5. 20. Now what was theirs but an outward *civil* righteousness, whereby they kept the Law, onely in outward actions? as appeareth, in that Christ afterward in the same chapter, expounding the Law, doth reduce it to the *inward*, which is to his *full* and proper sense: So then, yet wee have not found that *Righteousnesse*, which may make a man *righteous*.

Thirdly, there is a righteousness, called the *inward righteousness*, of a Christian man, which is this: A man having repented, and his sinnes being forgiven, hee is by the holy Ghost *sanctified inwardly*, in his soule, and all the parts and powers of it. This sanctification is called inward righteousness. Now the Church of *Rome* saith, A man may be justified by this. But it is not so, as appeares by these reasons: First, this righteousness is in this life imperfect; and that is proved by the Apostle, where hee saith *We doe here know but in part*; 1 Corinth. 13. 12. Therefore our understanding is but in part regenerate: and as it, so consequently all other parts or powers of our soule, are but in part regenerate: and in them all, we are partly *spirit*, and partly *flesh*, Galat. 5. 17. Therefore if our sanctification be imperfect, it cannot justify us. Again, this righteousness is mingled with sinne and unrighteousnesse: and from this mixture, comes the combat betwixt the flesh and the Spirit (spoken of, Gal. 5. 17.) *For these two are contrary one to the other*.

If it be mingled with sinne, then it cannot make us *righteous*: no, nor the workes of grace that come from it, though God in mercy reward them. And though as *S. James* saith, *They justify our faith, & make us just before men*, Jam. 2. 21. yet can they not justify us *before Gods justice*; nor at the barre of the last Judgement will they passe for payment. *Saint Paul* saith, 1 Corinth. 4. 4. *I know nothing by my selfe, yet am I not thereby justified*; that is, I have so walked in my calling, since I was an *Apostle* and Minister of the Gospel, as I am not privy nor guilty to my selfe of any negligence therein. If he dare not stand to that, to be justified by it, who dare take hold, when hee refuseth? Any time, no man can doe any perfect good workes, unlesse he be perfectly just: For how can perfection come out of imperfection? But no man can be perfectly just in this sinfull body: as is proved in the first reason; therefore his workes here in

A this life cannot be such, as may make him righteous.

But it may be objected: Though our workes have some defects in them, yet Gods *mercy* accepts them for *righteous* and just; and therefore they may justify us. I answer: As Gods *mercy* accepts them, so must his *Justice* be satisfied also; but they being imperfect, cannot satisfy his *Justice*: for Gods infinite Justice requires perfect satisfaction. But as for our best workes, as they are done by us, weigh them in the balance of Gods justice, and they are so light, as they deserve damnation: yet in Gods *mercy* in Christ, their defects are covered, and they are reputed good workes, and are rewarded: but wee inroach upon Gods *mercy*, and abuse his *Justice*, if therefore we imagine they should deserve Gods mercy, or be able to justify us in his sight. Thus then seeing Legall righteousness faileth us, let us come to Evangelicall.

Evangelicall righteousness is that that is revealed in the Gospel, and should never have been revealed, if that of the Law could have saved us. But when it (not by defect in it, but default in ourselves) could not, then God in mercy afforded us another in the Gospel.

Evangelicall righteousness is that, that is in Christ Jesus; his it is, that must make a man righteous before God: But this Christ was an extraordinary person, consisting of two natures, God-head and Man-hood. And accordingly, hee hath a double Righteousnesse in his holy person:

First, as he is God, hee hath in his nature the righteousness of God, and that is uncreated, and infinite; and therefore incommunicable: and so none is, nor can be righteous by it.

Secondly, there is in Christ a righteousness of his humanity: and this, though it be finite and created, yet is it beyond measure in comparison of the righteousness of man or Angel: So saith *S. Ioh. 3. 34. God giveth not him the Spirit by measure*.

This righteousness of Christ, as man or Mediator, consisteth in two things:

1. In the purity of his nature.
2. In the perfection of his obedience.

The first branch of our Mediators righteousness, is the holiness of his humanity; which was perfectly sanctified in his conception, by the powerfull operation of the God-head: and this was done at the first instant of his conception in the virgins wombe. From this purity of nature proceeded his obedience, which was as perfect, as his nature was pure: and so pure a nature made a plaine way to perfect obedience. And therefore as his conception was free from sinne originall, so was his whole life from the least sinne a *Quall*.

Now the mediators obedience was double; Active, and Passive.

And both these hee performed in his owne person.

His Passive obedience was his passion, or suffering.

stering of whatsoever the Justice of God had inflicted on man for sinne, whether for soule or body.

The *active obedience* of the Mediators person, was his perfect fulfilling of the morall law, in all duties to God or man, in thought, word, or deed; and all this for us in our stead and on our behalfe. And here is *true righteousness*, for where the nature of any person is perfectly pure, and the obedience perfect, the *righteousness* of that person is perfect. And I say all this was done by him for us: hee suffered all that wee should have suffered, and suffered not: hee did that which we should have done, and did not. And this is that *Righteousness*, by which a sinner is made *righteous* before God. For seeing *legal* cannot, it is this that must. And now wee have found that *righteousness*, by which *Noah* and all holy men were made and counted righteous; namely, that that is resident in the holy person of *Iesus Christ* the Mediator.

And yet this is above and beyond all reason, that one should be justified by anothers *righteousness*; and the doctrine, though it be of God, and grounded never so strongly on Gods word, yet hath it enemies, and is mightily oppugned by the Church of Rome. Therefore let us first prove it: and then answer the objections to the contrary. We prove it thus;

First, from plaine Scripture, 1 Corinth. 7. 24. *Hee that knowes sinne, was made sinne for us; that wee might be made the righteousness of God in him.* What can be said plainer? he was made *sin* for us, and wee *righteousness* by him. Therefore as Christ was no sinner in his owne person, but *our finnes* were laid upon him, and so he was made a sinner by *our finnes*; so though wee be not *righteous* in our owne persons, yet having *Christs righteousness* imputed to us, wee are made *righteous* by his *righteousness*.

Again, the *righteousness* that must save us must be the *righteousness* of man and God: as in the forenamed place it is said, that we *might be made the righteousness of God in Christ*. But no mans owne *righteousness* can make him the *righteousness* of God, nor can Gods *righteousness* be the *righteousness* of man: therefore it remaineth, that onely Christ, being both God and man, hath in him that *righteousness*, which may make a man the *righteousness* of God.

Thirdly, the Scripture saith, *Christ is the end of the Law to all that believe*, Rom. 10. 3. The end of the Law: that is, not the taker away, or abrogator of the Law, but the fulfiller of it as the abrogator of the Ceremoniall, so the fulfiller of the morall law. If he fulfilled the Law, for whom was it? not for himselfe. For as the *Messias* was not slain for himselfe, Dan. 9. 26. So hee obeyed not the Law for himselfe. For whom then? For all that believe. Therefore Christ doing it for them, they fulfill the Law in Christ: and so Christ by doing, and they by

believing in him that doeth it, do fulfill the Law. Now if it be not amisse to say, *We are in Christ fulfill the Law*: no more it is to say, *we are made righteous by Christs righteousness*: though it be his, and not ours, but only by faith.

Let us then see (in the second place) what the Church of Rome object against it. They first object thus:

As a man cannot be *wise* by another mans *wisdom*, nor *rich* by another mans riches; nor *strong* by another mans strength: so can he not be *righteous* by another mans *righteousness*.

Answer: The comparison is not alike. For one man hath no propriety in another mans *wisdom*, strength, or riches: but wee have a right and propriety in *Christs righteousness*. Again, the *wisdom* of one man cannot be the *wisdom* of another; because they are two persons, fully and equally distinct: but it is not so betwixt *Christ* and a sinner: for every believer is spiritually, and yet truly and really conjoined to Christ, and they make one mystical body; Christ being the head, and every true believer being a member of that body: and therefore, that which is his *righteousness* may be also truly ours. *His*, because it is in him; and *ours*, because we are knit to him. For by reason of this mystical union betwixt him and us, all blessings of salvation in him, as in the head, are diffused into us, as his members or branches; and yet are as properly still in him, as is the *brain* in the head of a man. And thus, though in sense and reason this cannot be, yet by faith and Gods spirit, the *righteousness* of Christ is made ours.

Secondly, they object. If this be so, then God justifieth wicked men; but God will not doe for it is against the nature of his holiness and Justice. And againe, he that justifieth *wicked men*, is *abominable* to God, Prov. 17. 15. therefore God will not doe so himselfe.

We answer: The ground is good, but the collection is untrue. God will not justify a *wicked man*, that is true: but that therefore a man cannot be justified by *Christs righteousness*, is false. For God doth not justify him that lieth roting in his former finnes, and wallowing in his old corruptions; but him that believeth in Christ, and repenteth of his finnes. And that man in his faith is justified, and in his repentance sanctified, and so he is made a new man: yea, as S. Paul saith, he that is in Christ, is a new creature: 2 Corinth. 5. 17. For as it is in the conversion, God turneth nor saveth no man against his will; but first makes him willing by his owne worke alone, and then converteth and saveth him with his owne free will, working together with Gods grace: So is it in the worke of Justification: God justifieth no wicked man, but makes him first just and righteous in and by Christ, and then accounts him so. But then (will some say) the sinner hath no righteousness, but that of Christ; and that is in faith, and

not in himselfe : therefore hee hath none in his owne person : how then can hee be any thing, but a wicked man (still ?) I answer : that is not true, that is first affirmed. The believing sinner hath more righteousness than that that is in Christ. That which justifieth him, is in Christs person ; but the sinner, when he is justified, is also sanctified, by the mighty worke of Gods grace : and so he is made a holy man, and doth good and holy workes, because he is in Christ, though his sanctification be imperfect. To this end, saith S. Peter, Acts 15. 9. Faith purifieth a mans heart : for it is impossible a man should believe, and so be justified, but hee must also be sanctified in his heart and life. Thus a sinner is justified by Christs righteousness, inherent in Christ himselfe : and sanctified by Christs righteousness, diffused from Christ into the sinner. And therefore his Justification is perfect : because that that justifieth him, is still in Christ : but his sanctification imperfect, because that that sanctifieth us, is in our selves : the one imputed to us, the other infused and inherent.

Again, I answer, that if wee take it in the sense of Scripture, it is true, that God justifieth a wicked man. For S. Paul saith, Rom. 4. 5. To him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness. See, God justifieth the ungodly : but how ? even as we heard before ; nor him that is ungodly after, but afore he be justified : him that by nature, and in himselfe is ungodly, God justifieth by working in him faith and repentance : by which, of an ungodly man hee is made a man justified and sanctified.

Their last objection is : If a sinner be righteous by Christs righteousness, then Christ is a sinner by his sinne : for there is the same reason of both. But Christ is no sinner, but the holy of holiest ; and S. Paul saith, He knew no sinne, 2 Cor. 5. 21. and himselfe for himselfe challengeeth his enemies, Which of you can reprove mee of sinne ? If then our finnes cannot make him a sinner, no more can his righteousness make us righteous.

I answer : Here wee grant all, if they speake the words of the Scripture, in the sense of the Scripture : for Christ was a true and reputed sinner, in the sight of Gods justice, as hee that becomes surety for another is a debter in his roome, or as he that undertakes for a man, bodie for bodie, must answer for him, his owne body for his : so in all reason and justice, Christ though he had no finnes of his owne, yet being our surety, and undertaking for us, and standing in our stead, our finnes are justly accounted his. And as for these places, and many more like, they are all understood of personall finnes : from all which, and the least contagion thereof, hee was perfectly free. And therefore the same place that saith, He knew no finnes, (that is, in and for his owne person, knew not that sinne was,) saith also, that for us and in our stead, hee was made even sinne it selfe, that

A we might bee made the righteouse of God in him. Thus Christ, in himselfe more righteous than all men and Angels, in our stead is a reputed sinner : and by the same reason we (most unrighteous in our selves) are clothed with Christs righteousness, and thereby are reputed righteous. And as Christ, (though no sinner in himselfe) by being a sinner in our stead, and having our finnes imputed unto him, became subject to the wrath of God, and bare it even to death : selfe ; so we, though not righteous of our selves, yet having Christs righteousness imputed unto us, are made thereby partakers of Gods love : and for the worthinesse of that righteousness of his, so made ours, shall be glorified in heaven. And thus now at last wee have found that true, and that onely righteousness, which can make a man as it did Noah, righteous in Gods sight. Now it remains to make use of it.

B First, here we learne how foulely our nature is defiled with sinne, and stained with corruption : the staine whereof cannot be washed away with all the water in the world : no, nor with the blood of all creatures : no, nor covered with the righteousness of all men and Angels, but onely with the righteousness of God. And the Sonne of God also, if he will apply that righteousness unto us, and make it effectually, must become man, and live, and die, and rise againe for us. A marvellous thing is it, and worthy of our often consideration ; that all the Angels and men in the world, cannot make one sinners righteousness ; but that Gods sonne must needs doe it : And that our finnes are so hideous, as that nothing can hide the filthinesse thereof, from the eyes of Gods justice, but onely the glorious mercy seat of Christs righteousness. This may therefore teach us, how to esteeme of our selves, and our owne natures.

C Furthermore : See here the great goodness of God to man. God put perfect legal righteousness in Adams heart in his creation ; he received it for himselfe and us, and lost it for himselfe and us. God in mercy purposing to restore man, thus by himselfe lost and cast away gives him another, and a better righteousness than before. But because he saw man was so ill a keeper of his owne Jewels ; hee trusts not him with it, but sets that righteousness in the person of Jesus Christ, and commits it to him to keepe. Who as hee truly knowes the full value and excellency thereof, and as hee dearly loves us ; so hee will most safely keepe it for us, and cloath us with it in his Fathers presence at the last day. A point of unspeakable comfort to Gods children, to consider that their salvation is not in their owne keeping, where it might againe bee lost ; but in a safe hand, where they shall bee sure to finde and have it, when they have most need of it : and to remember that their righteousness being in Christ, they cannot lose it. For though they sinne, and so lose often the comfort of a good conscience for a time : yet they then lose not their righteousness, which

which is then in Christ; and to consider, that when in this world they sustain losses or injuries, or lose all they have upon earth; that yet their *righteousness* (the riches of their soule) is then in heaven full safe in Christs keeping, and shall never bee lost. This should make us learne to know Christ more and more, and to give him the love and affections of our very hearts, that so we may be able to say with blessed *Paul*, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Lastly, if there be such a *communion* betwixt Christ and a believer, that our finnes are made his, and his righteousness made ours; this may teach us *patience*, and minister us comfort in all *external afflictions*, or *inward temptations*; because it is certaine all our sufferings are *his*, and hee is touched with all the wrongs done to us. When hee was in heaven, hee calls to *Saul*, Acts 9. 4. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* and at the last day, *Matth. 25. 45.* Whatsoever either good, or evil was done to any of his children, hee saith, *was done to himselfe*; and accordingly it shall be rewarded as done to him.

And thus we have taught that true *righteousness*, which justifies a sinner, and made *Noah* righteous; and we see the use of that worthy doctrine. And in this first point we have the longer insisted, because it is one of the fundamentall points of Christian religion.

Hitherto of the first point; namely, what that righteousness is, which is here spoken of.

The second point to be considered in these words is, that this righteousness is that righteousness, which is *by faith*.

It is so called, because *faith* is the proper instrument created in the soule of man by the holy Ghost, to apprehend that righteousness, which is in the person of Christ; nor can it be any wayes else either apprehended or applied; and therefore it is worthily called *that righteousness which is by faith*: that is, which by faith is made a mans owne, or whereunto a man hath title *by his faith*. Here therefore two points offer themselves to our observation:

1. That true *faith* apprehends properly this true righteousness.

2. That *only faith* can do it.

For the first, it is proved by apparant evidences of Scripture: *S. Paul* tells the Galatians (3. 14) *They received the promise of the Spirit by faith.* And *S. Iohn* saith, *that as many as received Christ, to them he gave power to be called the sonnes of God.* And lest any man should thinke that to receive Christ, is not to believe in Christ: he addeth, *even to as many as believe in his name*, *Iohn 1. 12.* and therefore faith is fitly compared to a *hand* that takes hold on a garment, and applyeth it to the body, being naked: or to a beggers hand that takes or receives a Kings almes: so faith in a mans soule takes hold on Christs righteousness, (which is the

mercifull and liberal almes of the King of heaven) and applyeth it to the poore and naked soule of the believer.

If any man aske, how can *faith* apply Christ to the believer? I answer: As a man, being in his corrupt nature, hath nothing to doe with Christ; so contrariwise, when the holy Ghost hath wrought *faith* in his heart by a supernatural operation: then wee are to know, that as faith is the proper instrument to apprehend Christ; so is Christ and his righteousness the proper object for faith to worke upon. For though it apprehend and apply all other promises which God makes to our soules or bodies; yet most properly and principally, and in the first place, it apprehends the promise of salvation, and the righteousness of Christ. Now for the particular manner, how faith doth thus; we are to know, that though it be spirituall and invisible, and not so easily exprest to sense, yet is it done *as properly* by faith, as a garment is by the hand taken and applied to the body, or a plaister to a fore.

If any aske further; But when may a man know, whether his faith have apprehended and applied Christs righteousness to his soule, or no?

I answer: when hee beleaveth particularly, that Christs righteousness is *his* righteousness, and hath reconciled him to God, and shall justify him in Gods presence, then doth faith worke his true and proper worke: for this cannot be done but by faith; and where faith is, this must needs be done.

The second point is, that *faith alone*, and no other vertue, nor spirituall power in mans soule is able to doe this. And this may be proved by comparing it with all the principal vertues of the soule; for amongst all these are none that may come into comparison with faith, but *hope* and *love*: both which, especially love, have their severall and speciall excellencies: yet have neither of them, nor both of them this vertue to apprehend and apply Christs righteousness. This property of love, is to extend it selfe, and with it selfe to carry many passions or affections of the heart, and to place them upon the thing that is loved: yet cannot love be said properly to apprehend Christ: for he must needs be apprehended, before he can be loved. And the proper action of *hope* is to wait and expect for a blessing to come: so hope waits for salvation, but properly apprehends it not. For salvation must first be believed, and then hoped or expected; so faith *seizes*, *Lament. 3. 26.* *It is good both to trust, and to wait for the salvation of the Lord:* to trust, that is, to believe assuredly it will come (there is the action of faith) and to wait till it doe come (that is the action of hope.) Thus wee see the severall natures, and actions of these two worthy vertues. But the proper action of faith is, to apprehend and lay hold on Christ, and his righteousness, and to apply them to a mans owne soule: and

and that being done, then come *Love* and *Hope*, and do their duties: And so, though *love* last longer than *faith* doth, yet *faith* is afore *love*, and makes the way for it.

To conclude this second point: *Faith* is a hand to take hold on Christ and his benefits: *Love* is a hand to give out tokens of faith both to God and man: For (1 Cor. 13. 5.) *Love* *seeketh not her own, but others good*: namely, the good of them that are loved. *Hope* is an eye looking out, and *waiting* for the good things promised. So that, as *faith* is the hand of the sonie; so *love* is the hand, and *Hope* is the eye of faith; *Love* the hand whereby it worketh, and *Hope* the eye whereby it waiteth and looketh for the performance of such things, as *faith* hath apprehended and believed. If the Church of Rome thinke this any wrong to this holy vertue of love, to be the hand of faith; let them know it is not ours, it is the doctrine of the Apostle, where he saith, *Faith worketh by love*. If faith worke by it then surely love is the hand of faith. Thus faith *worketh by love*, waiteth by hope, but *believeth by it selfe*.

And for this cause, the righteousness, that makes us righteous before God, is rather called the righteousness of faith, than of any other Christian vertue, or grace of the spirit. And for the same cause is it, that often in Saint Pauls Epistles, it is called by the same name, as, Philip. 3. 9.

The third and last point concerning *Noahs* faith is, that *Noah was made heire* of this righteousness.

A speciall commendation of his *faith*: It made him *heire* of true and saving righteousness: that is, it gave him a true title unto it, and made him *heire-apparent* of that glorie, which it assureth every one that apprehends it by this true faith: and so he was made as certainly, and as truly partaker of it, as the young Prince is assured of his Crowne and Kingdome at his time; or the *heire* of his Fathers lands.

Here two most worthy doctrines doe offer themselves to our view:

1. The excellencie of *faith*.

2. The excellencie of a *Christian mans estate*.

The excellencie of *faith* appeares thus: It makes an holy man assured and certaine of his salvation by Christ Jesus. The Church of Rome saith it is presumption in any man to thinke so, unless he have an extraordinary revelation: but wee learne from the Scripture, if a man have true faith, that is able to assure him of salvation. For faith makes him an *heire of true righteousness*, and of salvation thereby. Now we know, the *heire* is most sure and certaine of his inheritance; what ever he gets or loseth, he is sure of that. But this righteousness and salvation by it, is his inheritance; therefore hee may bee, and is by faith assured of it. The *Papists* therefore doe wrong unto this doctrine, and derogate from the dignitie of true

faith: But this is their custome, they will extoll any thing, rather than that which the holy Scripture so much extolleth; namely true *faith*. For, if they knew what it is truly to know Christ, and to believe in him by that *faith*, which worketh by love, they would then know, that faith makes a man *heire of happiness*, and therefore most assured of it.

Secondly, here we may see the excellencie of a *Christian mans estate*: hee is not naked, nor destitute of comfort; but is *heire of a glorious inheritance*, by means of his faith; and a Christian mans inheritance, is Christs *righteousness*. Out of which, we learne;

First, that no man by any good works done by or in himselfe, can merit true and justifying righteousness. The Pharisees all *disparage* it; but their conceit is heere overthrowne, by the doctrine of the holy Ghost. For living righteousness is his inheritance: which we know, is alwaies gotten by the Father, and descends from the Father to the Sonne, as a free token of his love. And it were foolish and absurd, to see a Sonne offer to buy his inheritance of his father; it being against the nature of an inheritance to come any other wayes, but by free gift from the Father to the Son: therefore our righteousness that must save us, being as we see here our inheritance: let us resolve of it, we cannot buy nor merit it.

Again, here is sure and solide comfort against all the griefes, and crosses and losses of this world: Gods children must needs have their portion of afflictions in this life. But here is their comfort, they may lose their goods, livings, possessions, their good names, their healths, their lives; but their inheritance standeth sure and firme, and cannot bee lost. Let them therefore here learne, not to grieve out of measure: for a holy man may say thus to himselfe, and that most truly: My father may *remove* on mee for my faults, and *change* mee for my finnes; but I am sure he will not *disinherit* me: for I am *heire by faith of Christs righteousness*, and I may lose many things, but I shall not lose that.

Thirdly, and lastly, here must Gods children learne their duties. They are *heires* to a godly and glorious inheritance; and Christs righteousness is their inheritance, therefore they must learne to set and settle all their affections on this inheritance. For, there is nothing in the world more worthy to be affected, than a *sure inheritance*.

Wee must therefore first labour above all worldly things for this inheritance; namely, to be made partakers of this righteousness. This is that *perle*, which we having found, must *sell* all we have to buy it. And when we have gotten it, we must care to keepe it, and therefore must lay it up in our very hearts and soules; and keeping it, we must rejoyce and delight in it above the world, and all the pleasures of it.

This is the glorious portion which our God

and Father leaveth us 21 his children: what should all the care of our hearts be, but to preserve it? *Noah* had a Vineyard, that came to him from his father by *inheritance*: *Abah* the King would give him money, or a better vineyard for it; but *Noah* would not: Nay (saith he) *God forbid I should sell my Fathers inheritance*, 1 King. 21. 3. &c. If he made such account of an earthly inheritance, what should we of the heavenly? if he of a poore vineyard, what should we of the glorie of heaven? If he denied the King, to sell it for a better, should not we denie the Devil, to leave our part in *Christ* and his righteousness, for the world, or any thing that he can promise us? In all such temptations our answer should be; *God forbid I should sell away my inheritance*, which my God and Father gave mee. Thus did blessed *Tau*, who esteemed the world, and all in it dung and drasse, that he might winne *Christ*, and be made partaker of this righteousness. So must wee (if we will bee worthy of this inheritance) prize and value it above this world, and thinke basely of all the pompe and pleasures of this world, in comparison of it: and rather be content to lose the world, than to leave it.

And lastly, when we have it, and are thus careful to preserve it; where should our content, joy and delight be, but in this our inheritance? So doth the heire: nothing to rejoyceeth him, as to thinke of his inheritance. Here therefore the madness of carnall men is discovered, who rejoyce exceedingly in the honours, profits, and pleasures of this life (as swine in their bellies) and never goe further: But alas, this is not their inheritance, if they looke to have their soules saved. Therefore herein they shew themselves void of all grace, and of all hope of a better world. For if they had, they would rejoyce in it, and not in the vaine and transitorie delights of this world, which perish in the using, and are lest with more torment and vexation, than they were kept with delight. We must learne then to use this world, as though we used it not, 1 Cor. 7. 31. And if the Lord vouchsafe us any portion of pleasures in this world, wee must take it thankfully, as above our inheritance (and must therefore use it lawfully and soberly;) but have our hearts, and the joy of them upon our inheritance, which is in heaven, whereof we are made heires by faith; and wherein we are made heires with this blessed *Noah*, who was made heire of that righteousness, which is of faith.

And thus have we heard the most glorious commendation of *Noahs* faith: and of *Noah* by his faith, and of all the examples before the flood.

Now follow the second sort of Examples, namely, such as lived in the second world, after the flood.

They are all of two sorts: either such as lived afore the giving of the Law, or after.

Afore the giving of the Law, here are many:

A whereof, as of all the other kinds, some are men, some women.

The first of those blessed men after the flood, whose faith is here renowned, is *Abraham* that great Father: of whom, and whose faith, because he was a Father of so many faithful, more is spoken than of any one.



ABRAHAM'S Faith.

VERSE 8.

By faith Abraham, when hee was called, obeyed God, to goe out into a place, which hee should afterward receive for inheritance: and hee went out, not knowing whither hee should goe.



C Concerning holy *Abraham*, here are more examples than one recorded, and his faith is renowned many wayes: more verses are spent of him, than of some five others. And the reason is, because his faith was more excellent than any others that followed him. In which regard, he is called the Father of the faithful, oftentimes in the new Testament, especially in the Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*.

The first example of his faith (and the fourth in order of the whole) is of his leaving his owne native country, and how at Gods commandment he went he knew not whither; onely he knew God called him, and therefore he would goe: wherein appeared a most worthy faith.

Now concerning this his faith and obedience, the Text layeth downe two points:

1. The cause or ground thereof; which was Gods calling: he was called of God.
2. The fruit or effect of his faith; he hearkened and obeyed. And this his obedience is amplified by divers particulars:

1. The matter of it; he went out of his country.
2. The end; to take possession of a country, which hee should not enjoy of a long time.
3. The manner; hee went out, not knowing whither hee should goe.

The first point is the cause or ground of *Abrahams* faith in this action, and is laid downe in the first words:

By faith Abraham, when he was called.

This storie is taken out of Gen. 12. The cause of *Abrahams* faith, is *Gods calling*. Gods calling is an action of God, whereby he appointeth a man to some certaine condition, or state of life, in this world, or after this life. And in this regard, God is compared to a *Generall* in the field, which assigneth every *Souldier* his standing and dutie: so doth God appoint every man his place and dutie in the Church.

Concerning these callings, let us see the *meanes* how he calleth, and the severall *places* whereto he calleth men. For the meanes or manner, God calleth men two wayes: immediately, or by meanes.

Sometime immediately by himselfe and his owne voice: as, the extraordinarie *Prophets* in the old Testament, and the *Apostles* in the new. So faith *S. Paul* of himselfe, he was called to be an *Apostle*, not of men, nor by men, but by *Iesus Christ, and God the Father*, Gal. 1. 1.

Sometime mediately by men directed by himselfe, and furnished, or inabled for that dutie: and so were called the ordinarie *Prophets*, and *Priests* of the old; and the *Evangelists*, *Pastors*, and *Doctors* of the new Testament. The first was extraordinary; this is ordinary: the first is for an unbelieving, or misbelieving people; the second is for an ordinarie and established Church. Now, of these two wayes, God called *Abraham* immediately by himselfe from heaven.

Secondly, for the estates of life whereunto God calleth men, they are three: *Generall*, *Particular*, *Personal*.

Gods *general* calling is, whereby he calleth all men to repentance by the Gospel, and so to life eternal. Of this speaks the Apostle, Rom. 8. 30. *Whom God predestinated, them also he called*: and Rom. 1. 1. *The calling of God is without repentance*. Hereby he calls men in this life to the state of grace, and to the state of glory in heaven; and this is to all.

His *particular* calling is, when he calleth and assigneth men to some particular estate and dutie, in Family, Church, or Commonweale: as when a man is called to be a *Magistrate*, *Minister*, *master of a family*, *lawyer*, *physitian*, &c.

Thirdly, God calleth some men to some private *personal* duty, which he designeth not to others, but to be done by them alone. Such a calling had he assigned him, that would needs be *perfect*: *God seell all that thou hast, &c.*

Now the calling of *Abraham* in this place, is to be referred to this third kinde. For it was a private and personal calling, to leave his country, his kindred, his lands, his possessions, and to goe seeke another: and to be the *Father of the faithful*, and to receive the covenant: and this duty belongs to none, but who shall personally, and by name be called unto it.

Yet all these three callings may concur in one, as here in him. For he was called to be a Christian (for the *general*) and a governour of a great family (for the *particular* calling:) but

that, that is in this place and place, is the extraordinary and *personal* calling, to leave his country. And in it wee are to consider three circumstances: 1. Who was called: 2. When: 3. How he was called.

For the first: *Abraham* was called, the Sonne of *Terah*: but neither his father *Terah*, nor his brother *Nahor* were called, but *Abraham* only.

But it may worthily be demanded, why God should not call his father and his kindred: there can be no other answer but this, that the Apostle giveth, Rom. 9. 17. *God hath mercie on whom he will, and with-holdeth it from whom he will*. He calleth *Isaac*, and refuseth *Ismael*: loveth *Jacob*, and hateth *Esaue*: taketh *Abel*, and leaveth *Cain*: even because he will, and for no cause that wee know. But why then calls he *Abraham*, and not his kindred? Is not this partialitie? I answer, the is tied to none, he might refuse all: therefore the marvell is, that he calls any. But why some and not other, why *Abraham* and not his kindred, no reason can be given: for Gods judgements are wonderful. But as that that is impossible with man, is possible with God: so that there is injustice or partiality with man, is justice with God. And it is extrenicely, and intolerable presumption for us to weigh Gods actions in the balance of our shallow reason.

For the second: But when was *Abraham* called? for the time, there are two circumstances worth the observation: First, *Abraham* was called to this dignity, when he lived in Idumea with his fathers. So faith *Joshua*, 24. 2. *The Lord, your fathers dwelt beyond the river in old time, even Terah the Father of Abraham, and served other gods*. If *Abraham* was called, by God, when he was an idolater, then it was apparant, he had not purchased Gods favour by his workes. Where wee learne, that the whole worke of a mans salvation, is to be ascribed to Gods mercie: who (as the Prophet saith) was found of them that sought him not, Isa. 65. 1. *Abraham* never dreamed of the true God, nor of any new covenant of grace and salvation, when God called him. And so, when *Paul* was going armed with bloudie furie, and his furie armed with commissions and authority against the Saints, then God from heaven called him; and of a persecuter, made him the principall instrument of his glorie, Act. 9. 2. &c. Therefore (to apply this to our selves) if God have vouchsafed us the same grace, and taken us to be his people; and made a covenant of salvation with us, which in former times have beene *sinners of the Gentiles*; we must learne here to see whence this favour is, and therefore to ascribe nothing to our selves, but give all the glory in to God.

And particularly, for every one of us: if God have beene so mercifull to any of us, as when we were *pagans* or *superstitious* with our parents, or kindred, to open our eyes and bring us home to his holy truth: or when we were lost in wickednesse and sensuality with the profane world:

to touch our hearts: and to call us to grace and sanctification: let us often remember and freely acknowledge this his undeserved mercie, and say with the holy Prophet, *Who the belongeth mercy, but unto us open shame.*

Secondly, for the time when *Abraham* was called: It was when he was 75. years of age, or thereabouts, as is manifest in the storie, Gen. 12. 4. therefore we see that God for a long time let him lie in his blindness, and idolatry ere he called him. It is more than likely, that *Abraham* in that meane time lived civilly, and followed learning and other civil courses: and in that time, it is likely he attained to that measure of knowledge in Astronomic, and other learning; for which, he is renowned in old Writers: But this was the first time that he was called to know and serve the true God in his true service.

Here we learne, that though a man persevere in his finnes, for a long time, and passe his best years in vanity without repentance, and thereby be in a grievous and fearefull estate; yet true beleivers, and men penitent, must not therefore judge them *cast-awayes*. For Gods mercie calls a man in his old age, and toucheth the heart when it pleaseth him. Christ in the Parable calls some at the 11. houre, Mat. 20. 6. and so God calleth men to grace in their old age. We must therefore spare these sharpe and unfavourie censures, which some unadvisedly cast upon such men; for charity thinketh not evil, 1 Corin. 13. 5. where it may thinke or suppose any possibilitie of good: but contrariwise pray for them, and hope of their conversions, because we know, that at what time soever a sinner repents of his sinne, God will forgive him.

And yet for all this, men must not presume to live carelesly in their sins, for that is desperately to tempt God: but must follow the holy Counsell of *Salomon*, Eccles. 12. 1. *To remember their Creator in the dayes of their youth*: and to turne unto God, when they have meane, lest God take away the means, and with the means his favour from them. *Abraham* was not called, till he was old; but when he was called, he hearkened and obeyed: So must thou when God calls thee by afflictions, or by his word, then answer and obey as *Abraham* did; or else *Abrahams* calling in his old age, will be little comfort to thee. Thus much for the time.

Thirdly, for the manner of his calling, it is laid downe in the storie of *Genesis*, to be an earnest kinde of Counsell, *Go out*, saith God, *from thy kintred, and from thy Fathers house, unto the land that I will shew thee*: Where it is to be observed, he saith not barely *Go*, or come forth; but hee amplifieth, and urgeth it with many words and circumstances.

If any aske why God did so, when he might have given the commandement in one word? I answer, the reason is, that *Abraham* might have cause more seriously to consider of Gods calling, and to imprint it more deeply in his

A heart; lest at the first burnt hee should have obeyed, and afterward have shrunk backe. For it is doubtlesse, that this calling was harsh to reason, and that *Abraham* found many hindrances, and therefore it were dangerous hee would have started backe after some triall of these difficulties he must passe thorow, if hee had had but a bare call, and commandement to goe. But when God saith to him, *Goe out of thy native Country, let it not stay thee, that thou wast borne there*: nor hinder thee, that thy kintred dwells there: but leave all and come with me: *for sake all, and trust me*, follow me into the land that I will shew thee: I take thee from one, but I will give thee another. When God, I say, useth all these, and it may be, many more like words to *Abraham*, it is apparant he would have him furnished with strength and resolution, to goe thorow with his calling, after hee had once made entrance into it.

Out of which practice of God, we learne this Instruction; that God would have no man enter upon any calling or dutie, with a fearefull and faint heart, nor with a doubtfull minde; but with a strong and settled resolution to goe thorow-slit with it, and not to relent and repent in the midst. And for this end, God would have all men afore they enter, seriously to consider the place or duty they are to undertake; for the Lord had rather a man should refuse at the first, than having entred to looke backe againe; and it is great folly for men, hastily and suddenly, or humorously to cast themselves upon any calling, and then upon triall and experience of the dangers and difficulties thereof, to bee wearie, and wish they had never done it. Men in this world are generally wiser in matters of the world: if a man be to build a house, he will not forth-with set upon building such a house as his humour desireth, but will first of all sit downe and count the cost, and then his owne ability, to see if the one will countervail the other, else he never begins it. So saith Christ, (the wisdom of God) *of the wisdom of this world*: and the like also he saith for warre, that no Prince wil fight with his enemy on unequal termes, but will know himselfe able to sustaine the encounter, Luk. 14. 23, 31.

D So the calling of a Christian, is to professe the Gospel of Christ. As the Magistrates is to defend it, the Ministers to teach it, so all mens to professe it: now it is as impossible to build without cost, or to fight without power of men, as to professe Christ in any calling, either generall or particular, without crosses. Wee must therefore consider first, what our calling and profession will cost: it is sure to cost us a danger of our credits and estimation in the world; it may bee our goods, our liberties; it may bee our lives themselves. Again, what enemies wee have to encounter in this spirituall warfare, the devill, death, hell, sin, corruption, and the crafty malice of wicked men: all these we are sure to meet withall.

Were

were is not then fully for a man to undertake this profession, and not to consider thus much aforehand? the want of this is cause, why some put their hands to the plough, and after shrink away, and make themselves ridiculous to their enemies corporall and spiritual.

And for particular callings, the case even standeth so also. Some men thinke the calling of a *Magistrate*, a place of honour: and therefore ambitiously plot and desire to raise themselves into authoritie; never remembering the *burthen*, and trouble they are sure to finde. Which when they see to bee too heave for their lizzie shoulders to beare with ease, they slowly fall to plaine carelesse, and neglect all doing good in their places, and wish they had never bought honour so deere.

So others thinke the Ministerie nothing, but a place of *ease, exemption, and preferment*. And in these conceits, rush presumptuously and rashly into that holy state, never thinking aforehand of that great *charge of soules* they are to take, nor of that heavy *account* they are to make for them; nor of the hatred, and contempt, and extreme disgraces they are sure to finde, if they doe their duties with conscience. And therefore (when upon experience they finde it so to be) they either fall to carnall courtes with the world, and *neglect their duties*, (that by these two means they may please the world) or else they continue in their duties, with much griefe and vexation, wishing they had chosen rather any calling, than the *Ministerie*: and by either of both, doe expose themselves to shame and much rebuke. Whereas contrariwise, hee that aforehand casts his *account* what it will cost him to be a *Minister*, what he must undertake, what he must lose, what he is sure to finde, is so settled and resolved aforehand, as hee goeth thorow all dangers and contempts, with comfort, courage, and contentment. Let us therefore all learne by this practice of God, when we thinke to enter upon any such dutie, to reason with our selves, as God did with *Abraham*, what wee are to *forfake*, and what wee are to *win withall*. So shall wee not after ward repent us, but goe on with much assurance, as *Abraham* did.

This point I have the more enlarged, because it is of speciall use in Christian life.

Thus much of the *cause of Abraham's faith*, *God's calling*, and all the circumstances therein.

The second point, is the excellencie and commendation thereof, commended by the *first and effect*: It made him *yeeld* to this calling of God. And this obedience of his faith, is spoken of two wayes:

1. It is laid downe generally, *He obeyed God.*
2. It is further commended by divers particular, which we shall see in their places. [*Obeyed God.*]

Here is the obedience of *Abraham's faith*, laid down in one generall word: *He obeyed*; that is, when God called him to leave his Countrey,

kindred, and friends he yeelded against reason, because God bade him. When God said him he would carry him into another land, he *believed* it, and left a certaine for an uncertaine, a possession for an expectation, hee was the power and excellencie of his faith appearing in this obedience. From hence we learne two instructions:

First, seeing *Abraham* is the Father of the faithfull, Rom. 4. 11. and our glorie is to be children of faithfull *Abraham*;

Therefore we must all learne, as good children to follow our Father, in framing our lives according to Gods calling: when God calleth us to any state of life, then to obey; and when not God, but the world or our owne corrupt humours call us, then not to obey. For to obey the first is the obedience of faith; but to obey the second is the obedience of our corruption. Therefore against this practice of holy *Abraham*, two sorts of men doe offend, and thereby shew themselves children unlike their Father *Abraham*.

First, such men as being called by God to some functions or duties, *will not obey*: for examples, wee have too many. To some, God faith, *Leave thy private care*, which is for none but thy selfe: *be a Magistrate*, and undertake the *publike care* of the common-wealth: but they, as though they were born for themselves, will not imploy themselves in publike service.

To some God faith, *Leave thy ease*, and thy care of worldly credit; and undertake the teaching of my people, and care not for the contempt of that calling, so thou maist *save soules*: but their carnall credit is more deare unto them than *Abraham's kinred* is to him; they will not forsake them.

These and all that doe so, may make what shew they will: but they are not children of *Abraham*, seeing they want his faith: and they want his faith, because they faile in his obedience: they must therefore learne to yeeld when God calleth, and not to stand upon such base allegations of worldly matters: when *Abraham* left Countrey and kinred to obey God.

Secondly, such men as respect not Gods calling, but looke what the swinge of their natures or the course of the wicked world carrie them unto, they presently yeeld and obey, not regarding whether it be Gods calling or no. Three sorts of men are most faulty in this kind:

First, such as are content to grow in wealth, either by oppression, as usurie or extortion; or by craft and dissembling, or by any other such indirect course, whereby their brother is hurt; looking onely at game, but not regarding whence it comes.

Secondly, such as live by *drinking, carding*, or by *playes and Enterludes*, thinking any trade lawfull that brings in wealth, or that gets money; never caring whether God allow the calling or no.

Thirdly, such as live in no calling, but spend their time in eating, drinking, sleeping, and sporting, because

because they have livings of their owne, and lands left by their parents.

All these and all such like, doe obey indeed: but whereunto? not unto Gods calling: for else, hee never *will* *draw* them to their courses, but hath often *recalled* them from it: therefore this is the obedience not of *faith*, but of *concupiscence*, and of the world, which is a plaine disobedience unto God. For, as the wisdom of the flesh or the world is foolishness with God, Rom. 8. so obedience to the flesh or the world, is disobedience and rebellion against God.

All such men must know that they are not the children of *Abraham*, because they are not children of *his faith*. Nor can they be heires of his faith, because they practise not his obedience: for Gods calling, and no other rule for our lives, must Christian men admit. When hee *calls*, they must obey: and when hee *calls not*, or allows not a course of gaining, or a trade of life, (though all the world allowed it) we must not follow it: this will honour them and their profession before God. *Abrahams* faith justified him before God, but his obedience justified his faith: Obedience saith *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 13. 22, 23. *is better than sacrifice: but disobedience is as the sinne of witchcraft*. Therefore let all Christians approve their faith by their obedience, hanging on Gods mouth, and attending on Gods calling, for directions of their whole life: and resolve with *David*, Psal. 119. 105. *Thy Word is a lantern to my feet, and a light to my paths*. When *Kings* may not live, but by the sight of Gods calling and Gods Word; it is thankfull presumption, for ordinary men to frame their lives by lights of their owne making.

In the second place our of *Abrahams* obedience, let us marke, By what means obeyed he by faith. Learne here the true nature of true faith: it brings forth true obedience where ever it is: and therefore Christian obedience is called the obedience of faith, Rom. 1. 5. And these two cannot be separated, no more than light from the *sunne*, or heat from *fire*. For as the *sunne* naturally and necessarily gives light, and the *fire* heat; no lesse doth true faith yeeld true obedience, to Gods Commandements. Which being so, it teacheth us, for the use,

First, how our Church and doctrine are slandered: by the *Papists* who please themselves in saying, We looke to be saved by sole faith, and without works. For we teach, that though a man be justified without respect to his works, yet no man was ever justified; whose faith did not bring forth good and holy works: and we teach, that none is heire of *Abrahams* faith, which is not also of his obedience. Therefore God will reward their lying tongue.

Secondly, this teacheth us, that *Abrahams* faith was his *faith* only. Many make profession of *Abrahams* religion, but it seemes they are as farre received as the *pagans* were, Joh. 8. 9. *The Jews would be *Abrahams* children, because*

they were of his flesh: and men now will bee so, because they are of his profession; but both are farre wide, for we must be children of *faith* *full* *Abraham*. But if we will be like him in *faith*, we must be like him in obedience also: when God calls us to any dutie, we must forsake our owne *manners*, and denie our owne *affections*, and crosse our owne *corruptions*, to follow Gods calling, and to doe our duties. So shall we bee true children of *Abraham*, when we are like our Father in his best vertues. Thus we see his obedience layed downe generally.

Particularly, In his Obedience there are laid downe three points:

1. The matter Call which are laid
2. The end } downe directly in the
3. The manner } Text.

For the matter of his obedience, it followeth in these words: *To goe out into a place, &c.*

The particular matter wherein *Abrahams* obedience consisted, was this; At Gods commandement he went out of his owne country into another: for one which he should inherit, he left that which he did inherit.

Here many points of good instruction may be learned:

First, see here the power and strength of true faith: It was a wonderful hard thing for *Abraham* to doe.

For first, he was well stricken in yeares, 75. yeares old. Young men delight to be stirring; but men growne into yeares, doe love to settle themselves as birds in their nests: and it is grievous unto them to thinke of removing, or taking long journeys.

Secondly, he must leave his owne Country, where he was bred, borne, and brought up; which all men generally doe love by nature.

Thirdly, he must leave his goods, and lands, and *strange*, which no doubt were great: for having lived so long in his native Country, and being borne as he was, his estate doubtlesse was very great.

Fourthly, he must leave his acquaintance, with which he had lived all his life yea, his own kindred, and must goe live amongst strangers. These foure considerations were so many hindrances to this obedience; and strong temptations, to make him have looked backward: but such is the power of his faith, he is commanded of God, therefore he obeyeth and goeth on.

The use is, to teach us what a faith we have. For, if we measure all Gods Commandements by our natural affections, our faith is but a shadow and hypocritical: ut if we consult not with flesh & blood, but rest, and rely on Gods word, and give absolute obedience to his commandements, then our faith is such as *Abrahams* was.

In the next place: Some may marvel, why the Lord should command him to leave his country, and lay so heire a commandement upon him, as to leave his Country at *strange*, which seemed unreasonable; and his *kindred*, which was unnatural.

I answer: the reason is, not that God delighteth in *unreasonable* or *unnaturall* courses, or in laying heavy burthens upon his children. But he did it for good and holy ends: as,

First, to prove *Abraham*, and to see what was in him. As a friend is not tried in ordinary, but in *great matters*; so it is knowne, who is Gods friend in matters of difficultie. Hereby, therefore God made the faith and obedience of his servant, to shine more gloriously.

Again, to breake the corruption of his heart: for our wicked *natures* love peace, and ease, and welfare, and hearts desire: but God will crosse those courses, and send us troubles many wayes, that so hee may pull downe the height of our corruptions, and humble us to his owne hand.

The use is to teach us to make true use of our afflictions, and of those many hard crosses that must fall upon us in our course of serving God; namely, to know that they are sent from God, not as a hard-hearted or cruel *Judge*; but as a wife and merciful *Father*, who witheth our good, and who will so bless unto us the hardest and heaviest crosses, that befall us in our lives (if we receive them in patience and faith) that we shall say with *David*, *Psalm 119. 71. It is good for us that we have beene in trouble: for thereby we have learned to know God, and our selves better.*

Thirdly, whereas *Abraham* at Gods commandment *goeth out of his own country* into another we learne, that it is not unlawfull for a Christian man, to *goe out of his owne country, and travell* into another, and there to abide for some, or for a long time: provided, his causes be good and just, as namely, these which follow;

First, if he have a particular commandment of God, as here *Abraham* had.

Secondly, if he have a lawfull calling of the Church or State, whereof hee is a member: as if hee bee sent to a generall Councell: or bee sent as *Ambassador*, either to stay for a time, or to stay there as *Leiger*.

Thirdly, if it be for the safety of his life in a good cause. So *Moses*, *Exod. 2. 14, 15* fled into the Land of *Midian*, and there stayed when *Pharaoh* sought his life: And Christ himselfe fled with his father & mother into *Egypt*; from the fury of *Herod*, *Matth. 1.* The like may bee said for them, that to preserve their liberty, fly from the cruelty of their creditors, who will not take honest and reasonable satisfaction, of a surety for another man; or of a childe for the Fathers debts: But in no case for them, who travell in purpose to defeat their Creditors, or thereby to deliver themselves from payment of their due debts, being able to pay. Of both these wee have example in *David*, and his followers. *David* himselfe was faine to flee from his life from Sauls unjust cruelty, and therefore went and dwelt amongst the *Philistines*, *1 Sam. 27. 1, 2.* and *2 Sam. 2. 2.* there came to *David* such as were in trouble, & in debt, & these were with him

A in his travel, and persecutions. Now doubtlesse had they beene ungodly men (who had not cared how they came into debt, nor how they paid it) *David* would never have bene their Prince; as the Text saith he was.

Fourthly, if it be for the maintenance of pure religion, and keeping a good conscience. This hath Christs warranty, *Matthew 10. 23. When they persecute you in one city, fly into another.* For this cause many of our fore-fathers, in the former age, were faine to flee into *Germany*, *Switzerland*, into *Geneva*. And for those causes divers of other Nations doe repaire to this Nation, and are here entertained.

B Fifthly, if it be for the getting, or increasing of any good learning, and lawfull knowledge, especially divine knowledge for matter of religion. Thus the *Queene of Saba* went out of the inmost parts of *Africa*, to *Jerusalem* in *Asia*, to see and heare *Salomon*: *2 King. 10.* and for that cause, she is highly commended by Christ himselfe, *Matth. 12. 42.* Thus may young men travell for learning of the tongues, especially such as intend thereby to fit themselves for public service, so it be with safety of religion, and security of conscience.

C Sixthly, if it bee for the practice of a mans lawfull calling, as for traffike; and thus *Merchants* may, and doe lawfully travell in all nations, and have their families there resident: provided they lose not their souls to gaine for their bodies: their travell is allowed by Christ in the Parable, where hee saith, *The Kingdome of heaven is like a Merchant man that sought good pearles*, *Matth. 13. 45.*

Seventhy, if it be to receive and possession of any goods or lands, lawfully devided or fallen unto a man in another Nation, as sometime it doth: This seemes to bee allowed by Christ in the Parable, where hee saith, *A certaine Nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himselfe a kingdome, and so to come againe*, *Luke 19. 12.*

In a word; if it be upon any good and sufficient cause, allowable in good reason, & not contrary to any part of Gods word. But as for such as leave their Countie, and travell into other:

D Either upon *levities*, to see strange sights and fashions: Or being *malcontents*, flye from their due punishment: Or being in debt, goe away to deceive their Creditors: Or being *vaine-glourious*, to make themselves knowne: Or being at enmity, to fight combats, or to kill their enemy;

All these and all such like, can have no comfort in their travels: for they send themselves, God lent them not; they are out of Gods protection, because they goe without his warrant. And as many of them as goe away to escape the hand of the *Magistrate*, let them bee assured they shall not escape the hand of God.

In the fourth place, here is a caution for all such as are banished from their owne native Countie, for God and his Church sake. For

here *Abraham* the Prince of Patriarchs, was a banished man, and lived in a *strange Country*: the greater part of all his life. Let such men therefore take patiently what God lieth upon them: for it is not their misery or mishap alone, but hath been common to Gods children in all ages. Again, Christ himselfe pronounceth them blessed, *who suffer persecution for righteousness sake*: for though they bee exiles from their owne kingdome, or tossed up and downe the kingdomes of the earth, yet *there is the kingdome of heaven*, *March. 5. 10.*

Lastly, though this commandment was personally directed to *Abraham*, and concerns not us as it did him: yet it hath his force and use even to us. For, though we are not to goe out of our Country, and leave our livings and habitations: yet we must doe that that is proportionable hereunto. That which is commanded to *Salomons wife*, is to all Christians; *Fearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine eare, for: at thine owne kindred, and thy fathers house: so shall the King take pleasure in thy beauty.* This wife of *Salomon* is the soule of every Christian, the spouse of Christ, the true *Salomon*, who by nature is daughter to heathen Pharaoh, that is, to sinne, corruption, and wrath: but being married to Christ, must *forget her owne kindred and fathers house*, that is, their owne nature and naturall affections, and carnall desires: and then shall Christ our King, and spirituall husband, *take pleasure in us, and reioice to doe us good.* And this is the chiefe travelling of all, and most acceptable to God, when a man goeth out of himselfe, and denieth his owne desires to *seek God*, and to serve *Iesus Christ*.

Thus wee see the matter of his obedience. Now followeth the end.

Which he should after receive for inheritance.

The second particular in his obedience is the end, why hee went out of his owne Country, to inherit another, that is, the *land of Canaan*, called *elic*: where the *Land of Promise*, because God promised it unto him, and to his seed. Now *Abraham* at Gods Commandment, went out of his owne native Country into this place, to inherit it, and to take possession of it.

But it may be objected, Hee inherited it not: yea, furthermore *Stephen* saith, *Acts 7. 4.* *God brought him in, but gave him no inheritance in it, no nor the breadth of a foot.*

I answer though *Abraham* did not inherit it personally himselfe, yet he may be said to inherit it two wayes:

1. *Sacramentally*, or *Mytically*:

2. *In his posterity*.

First, *Sacramentally* thus; the land of *Canaan* is to be understood, not only as a Country of *Asia*, fruitful and fertile, and plentiful of all good things, wherein the onely visible Church was continued till Christs coming. But further, as a Type of the heavenly *Canaan*, where the triumphant Church reigns in glory

with God. And thus *Abraham* did in his owne person take it: for he was translated from this world, after his death, into the glory of heaven. And in that respect, the glory of heaven is rather called the bosome of *Abraham*, *Luke 16.* than of any other the Patriarchs, both for the excellency of his faith, as also for that the promise of inheriting the land of *Canaan*, was first of all (personally) made to him: which because he enjoyed not, hee was recompenced with the fruition of the true *Canaan*.

From hence, wee learne a notable doctrine; That God in performing of his promises, giveth not oftentimes the very particular thing promised, but something equivalent, or proportionable to it, or else better. Thus in the fifth commandment, obedient children are promised by God *long life*, as a reward for honouring their Parents. Now when he takes them away in their best age, as he did *Iosue*, *2 Kin. 2. 2.* to he giveth them *eternall life*; which is not onely proportionable, but farre exceeding the thing promised: So here, he promisseth *Abraham* the land of *Canaan*; but when it comes to the performance, he gives him a better, even the true *Canaan*, the Kingdome of heaven.

The use hereof, is to teach us wisdome for the true discerning of Gods mercifull performance of his promises: for he performeth them not alwayes one way unto his children: sometime hee giveth the particular thing promised, as unto the children of *Israel*, their deliverance out of *Egypt*: unto *Hzekiah*, the restoring of his health, and such like. Sometime hee giveth not it, but something which shall be as good, or better unto his children: as when they are in some great danger, and crave deliverance, or in some necessity, and have promise of supply: God oftentimes delivereth them not, but gives them patience, and feeling of his favour in such sort, as is many degrees more comfortable unto them. And herein God heareth their prayers, and performeth his promise to them, to their full contentation.

Secondly, *Abraham* inherited *Canaan* in his posterity. For though God promised it to himselfe, when hee was 75. yeares old, *Genes. 12. 4.* and to him and to his seed, *Gen. 15. 7.* yet neither hee, nor his immediate seed enjoyed it, but his posterity the *Isaacites* 430. yeares after the promise, as *S. Paul* proveth, *Galar. 3. 17.* And so *Abraham* inherited it in his posterity, which is a part of him; and they inherited it many hundred yeares, even untill the coming of Christ.

As afore we learned, that God in the performance of his promises, giveth not alwayes the thing promised: so here let us learne that he doth not alwayes performe them to the same parties, and yet most truly performeth them. If therefore God doth not to our selves, nor in our times accomplish his promises, or prophecies, we must not be impatient, but wait in patience. For as the Prophet saith, *The vision is yet*

For an appointed time, but at the last it shall speak
and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it: it shall
surely come, and shall not fail. Hab. 2. 3. To
this end David also most divinely saith, Psal.
97. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, and
joy for the upright in heart.* See, light and joy
belongs unto them: but how? It is sown, that
is, it is in hope and expectation, and not always
in fruition. Therefore as the husbandman casts
his seed into the earth, and is content to stay
almost a full year without it, or any profit of
it, and yet is patient all that while, because he is
sure it will come, and bring increase with it: So
must we wait patiently on the Lord, and know
that whatsoever he hath promised, wee or ours
after us, shall be sure to enjoy it. And though
wee doe not, what great matter is it, if our chil-
dren doe? For, we know, that oftentimes the
Father soweth, and dieth ere the harvest, and so
the sonner reapeth. So for Gods great and gra-
cious promises, which are sown unto the Fa-
thers; if themselves doe not, their children are
sure to reap the comfortable harvest of per-
formance. And thus wee see how Abraham in-
herited the land of Canaan, which is called the land
of Promise, because it was so long, and so often
promised to so many great Patriarches.

In the second place, it is to be observed,
when God promised this unto Abraham: even
then when the land of Canaan was possessed
by many mighty Kings: So that it may be here
further doubted, how Abraham could take any
comfort in this promise, seeing it was at that
day held by almost 40. Kings greater and lesse,
as wee may see in Joshua, Chap. 10. 11, 12. and
further, *The people were many, and strong: the
Cities were well walled, and full of huge Gyants,*
Numb. 13. 28, 29. Yet for all this, he not onely
believed, and obeyed; but as God promised, so
he went to it, and took possession, and dyed in
this faith, that God would performe his pro-
mise, and that his posterity should inherit it all,
as afterward indeed they did, even from Mo-
ses to Christ. If it be asked how this could bee:
the answer is, That Abraham knew that God
was King of Kings, and had the world, and
Kingdomes of the world in his hand and dispo-
sition: and therefore assured himselfe, that hee
could bring to passe what he had promised, and
make good his word, notwithstanding all such
impediments to the contrary. And as he bele-
ved, it came to passe; his posterity came to it,
entred as conquerors, upon this gift of God: and
by the power of God, so amazed all these Kings
and their people, as some submitted, as the Gibe-
onites; and they that did not, were all slaine, and
their Countreys conquered, as we may read at
large in the book of Joshua: all the stories where-
of are briefly comprehended by David in few
words, where he saith, *Wee have heard with our
eares, our fathers have told us, how thou O Lord,
drove out the heathen with thy hand, and planted
them in: how thou destroyed the people, and made
them grow,* Psal. 44. 1, 2.

Out of which, wee learne two instructions:

First, that the change of States, and alteration
of Kingdomes or commonwealths, are in Gods
hand: and that he can turne them one way, or
other, as it pleaseth him. To this purpose, saith
David, in the fore-named Psalm, *They inheri-
ted not the land by their owne sword, neither did
their owne arms save them: but thy right hand,
and thy arme, and the light of thy countenance, be-
cause thou didst favour them.*

This must teach us to pray earnestly, in our
daily prayers, for the good estate of this King-
dome, wherein wee live; and of that worthy
Prince and Queene, under whose government
we have bene so long, and so liberally blessed.
For the welfare and prosperity, the certainty
and security of it and her, is not in our policy,
might, munition, ships: nor in the strength of
our navie, nor in the power of our armour, nor
in the chivalry of our people, nor in the wis-
dome of our Councell (though for all these wee
are a people honoured of our friends, and feared
of our enemies): but in the mighty hand of our
God, who (as David saith) *beareth rule over the
kingdomes of the earth, and give them to whom
soever he will,* Dan. 4. 22.

Seeing therefore the King of heaven is the
giver and disposeth, the remover and changer
of Kingdomes of the earth; let us assure our
selves, that the prayers of *Elisba*, are the *Horses
the Chariots of Israel*: 2 Kings 13. 14.

And surely, if *Elisba* for his prayer was ac-
knowledgeed by the King himselfe, to be his fa-
ther; then doubtlesse, the goodly Ministers, and
such other in our Church, as pray daily for the
peace of our Jerusalem, are worthy to be accom-
tented good children of our Church, and worthy
members of our State.

Secondly, here wee learne what is the ruine
of kingdomes, and overthrow of estates: name-
ly, sinne and ungodlinesse. This is most ap-
parent in the present example. For, why did Go-
take this land from the Canaanites, and give it
to Abraham and his seed? The stories of the
old Testament answer, *Nothing but sinne.* In
Deuteronomie, *Moses* chargeth the Israelites,
that they doe not after the abominations of the
heathen Canaanites: For, saith hee, *Because of
their abominable finnes, God did cast them out
before you,* Deut. 18. 9, 12. And why did not
God instantly give it to Abraham (to inherit
after the promise) even because the wickedness
of these Amorites was not then full, Gen. 15. 6.
that is, their finnes were not then ripe. For wee
must know, that though God be the absolute
and Sovereigne Lord of all Kingdomes; and
may dispose them as he will: yet he rather ex-
erciseth his Justice than his Power; and neve-
overturneth any State, but upon cause of their
apparent sinfulness. Nor can the Amorites or
Canaanites plead herein any hard measure: for
the same God dealt afterward in the sam-
Justice with his owne people, giving the King-
dome of *Judah* to the Chaldeans, and *Israel* to

the *Assyrians*: and the cause is laid downe most memorably in the Story; *When the Israelites sinned against the Lord their God, and walked after the fashions of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before them, and did secretly things that were wicked, and made images, and served Idols: and though God warned them by his Prophets, yet would they not obey, but hardened their neckes, and so finally, left all the commandments of God: then the Lord was exceeding wroth with Israel, and cast them also out of his sight.* 2 King. 17. from the seventh verse to the 19. Thus sin is able to overturne kingdomes, be they *Canaanites, Israelites, or whosoever.*

Let this teach us all to looke to our lives, and make conscience of all sin; especially great and capitall, and crying sinnes: for the finnes of a people are *wormes and Cankers*, eating out the life and strength of a common-wealth. And let our State and government learne here to looke to the reformation of our people, especially for great sinnes. For open prophaneesse, or uncleannesse, or oppressions, or injustice, or extortions, or cruelties, and exactions; all these, or any of these sinnes, raigning in a State, are able to overturne the best established Kingdome on the earth, and will at last (doe power and policy what they can) make the land *shew out her inhabitants*: and in that meane time (let the wily wits of men, judge as they list) it will prove true, that the finfull and prophane man is the worst, and the godly and conscienable man the best friend to a State, and best subject in a Kingdome.

Thus much for the second point in *Abraham* obedience; namely, the end of it.

The third and last point is the manner of his obedience: which followeth in these words:

And hee went out, not knowing whether hee went.

The manner of this his leaving his Countrey in mans reason would seeme strange; nay, the world will condemne it for plaine foolishnesse, for a man to leave a certainty, for an uncertainty. But it may here be doubted, how the Apostle can here say, that he knew not whether hee went; seeing these words are not in the story of the old Testament: doth not that practice allow tradition beside Scripture?

I answer first, We refuse no traditions, which are agreeable to the Scripture, and analogy of faith: but such as are agreeable to one of these, wee receive them, though not as Scripture.

Secondly, if the Apostles in the new Testament doe adde any thing in any story, which is not in the old, (as S. Paul doth the names of the Sorcerers of Egypt, *Jannes and Jambres*, 2 Tim. 3. 8.) that circumstance by them so added, is to be holden as Scripture, and no tradition; because they having the same spirit of God, which the writers of the old Testament had, have inserted it into the bodie of

A Scripture: even as the three sentences of the heathen Poets, alleged by Saint Paul (Act. 17. 28. 1 Corinthians 15. 33. Titus 1. 12.) have now a divine truth in them, which they had not before.

But yet will some say, The Apostles had these things from the old Testament by tradition; seeing they were not written.

I answer: Wee may safely grant it, and yet our cause loseth nothing, though it may bee they had thereby inspiration, and not by tradition, that being as likely, or much more than the other.

Thirdly, but for this particular, I answer, that the Apostle had the words, or at least the matter out of the Story in *Genesis*. For thus goe the words; *God said to Abraham. Get out of thy Countrey, &c. into the land that I will shew thee: He named none to him, but told him he would shew him one. So then Abraham went out at Gods appointment; and God knew, but hee knew not whither hee went: hee knew well the land hee left, but hee knew not the land hee should have.*

But it may be againe objected, that this is not true: for it appeares, Gen. 12. 5. That *Abraham with Sarah his wife, and all their substance, departed to goe into the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan they came*: therefore hee knew whither hee went; namely, to that land.

C I answer: It is true, he went out with purpose and assurance, to inherit a Land promised him by God, but not named to him. And whereas it is there said, *Hee went out to goe into the land of Canaan*, that is spoken in respect of the performance when hee was come thither, not of the first promise made him at his departure: or of the time when *Moses* wrote it, nor of the time when God spake it to *Abraham*. And that hee knew not what land God did meane, untill hee came thither, is plaine in the 7. verse, where it is said, *That when Abraham had passed thorow all the Countrey, and was come in to Canaan, then God appeared to him, and said, This Land will I give unto thy seed*: But till then God never named it unto him; and therefore we reade afore, that he believed and obeyed upon the generall promise: but now when God did particularly specifye and shew what land, hee then shewed his thankfulness to God, and did there build an Altar unto the God that had appeared unto him.

D Thus it is cleare, that *Abraham went out, not knowing whither hee went*. Which being so, it appeares that *Abraham* did that which the world would call, plaine foolishnesse. To leave known friends for unknown, certaine living for uncertaine, is a simple course in mans reason: at least (the world will say) he might first have demanded of God, what land that was which hee should have, before hee left that which hee had: but *Abraham* makes no such questions, moves no such doubts: but believeth and o-

byeth, and goeth out of his certaine dwelling (at Gods calling,) though he knew not whereto lodge at night.

This practice of faithfull *Abraham*, hath profitable use;

First, here we learne, that though Gods commandments seeme foolish, and unreasonable, yet wee must obey them. Christ saith, *If a man will ever come in the kingdome of heaven, he must be borne againe.* Joh. 3. 3. *S. Paul* saith, *If any man among you seems to be wise, let him be a fool: that he may be wise.* 1 Cor. 3. 18. Christ saith, *If any man will be my Disciple, hee must deny himselfe and follow me.* Luke 9. 22.

But how can these Commandments be believed or done? how can reason beleve them? how can nature doe them? So disputed the woman of Samaria with Christ, *John* 4. 11. when Christ told her, he would give her of the waters of life; she replied, *Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deepe: whence then hast thou that water of life?* Thus wee object and reason against God with carnal objections, and weigh Gods commandments in the ballance of reason: Thus God and his Commandments are much abused by us. And this is the cause wee heare and read Gods word, and profit not by it, because wee ponder it in our reason, and allow nor follow it no further, than it agreeth with our naturall affections. As a man that will needs stand under a penitence, hath no water falling on him, though it should raine never so precious water from heaven: so when the water of life, out of the Word of God, should drop upon our soules, to comfort our consciences, and to wash away our sinnes; we have our devils out of wit, and distinctions out of reason, as penitences to keepe it from us, that it slides away, and never hath any worke in us. But contrariwise, wee must remember *Abraham the Father of our faith*: and when wee heare Gods Word, wee must with him captivate our reason, and subdue our affections to it; measure them by Gods word, and not by them; and what wee cannot yeeld to in the obedience of reason, wee must obey with the obedience of faith: and so shall Gods Word have a gracious and powerful worke in us.

Secondly, here we must learne, that though wee see no profit come by obeying Gods Commandments, yet wee must obey them. For what profit could *Abraham* see in leaving a certaine living, for an uncertainty? yet hee obeyed and went, upon the bare word of God, building upon it, that *God being his guide*, hee could not go astray. So must we follow God sincerely, and doe his commandments, though no profit seeme can come thereby. But some will say, Shall godly men bee led like blind-fold fooles? shall they refuse all meanes of helpe, by wit and policy? This is the way to make them ridiculous, and *affes* for the wicked world to ride upon.

Answer: let godly men use all their wit.

A and looke with all their eyes, in their actions with men of this world. But in the obedience of Gods commandments, let them doe as *Abraham* did, follow Gods calling though it seeme to be to no end.

In obedience to God, we must doe as *blinde men* doe, who follow their guides, though it be thorow woods and rocks, hills, or dales, or dangerous places, regarding nothing, fearing nothing; onely following and trusting to their guides, who have eyes for them, though they have none for themselves. So must wee follow Gods calling, and yeeld absolute obedience to his commandments, fearing nothing but trusting to the faithfulness of his power, and assuredly beleiving, that he being our blessed guide, we shall not bee misled: thus to doe is true faith.

But alas, how contrary is the practice of the world! Men deale with God, as wee doe with loose chapmen, whom we will not trust without a good pawne. So wee will not obey Gods Commandments, longer than his religion serves our turne: nor will wee trust and follow God without the pawns and profits of pleasure. Nay wee doe worse: most men esteeme of God no better, nor use him any better than they doe theeves in their houses. If a man come into our house, that is given to stealing, wee trust him as long as he is in our fight; but if hee be out of our fight, wee thinke ever hee is stealing: So if men see the meanes of Gods providence, they will take his word, and trust it; but else God must excuse them, they may not trust him further than they see him. And if the Commandments of God, sound to their content, and tend to their profit, they will obey them: but if nor, they will cast them behind their backe; at least, they will make a pause at the matter, and take their owne time. And if Gods wayes seeme pleasant and profitable, they will walk in them: or else they will leave them, and walke in their owne.

C And hence is it, that men in distresses, runne to Wizards, and Wise men: others deale fraudulently, and deceitfully: others worke on the Sabbath day: and thus by indirect and unlawful dealing, they labour to enrich themselves, and to bring their purposes to passe. And why all this? but because Gods commandments doe not sound to their purpose, nor tend to their profit, and therefore they will not obey them.

D If these men had been in *Abrahams* case, they would never have gon out, not knowing whether to goe: but they would have argued the matter with God, and have thought it good wisdom to pause well, afore they leave a certainty for an uncertainty. But contrariwise, *Abraham* thought it foolishnesse to reason with God, and therefore performed absolute obedience: and for this cause, he and his faith are renowned to this day namely, 3000. yeares after him, and shall bee till the world send.

This was the obedience of faith: and this to doe, is to be true subjects to Gods Kingdome. If the King call a man from his owne living, to come to himselfe and to the Court; who will not leavewhat he hath of his owne, and *trust his word*? So who will not leave his own wisdom, and relie on the promise and word of God; and obey his commandements, though there seeme at the first, no profit can comethereby. Thus shall we be sure, both to have sufficient for this world, and shall also be true children of faithfull *Abraham*.

Hitherto of the first example of
Abrahams faith.



VERSE 9.

By Faith hee abode in the land of promise, as in a strange countrey, as one that dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heires with him of the same promise.

Here is the second example of *Abrahams Faith*, and the fifth in order, and is concerning *Abrahams* abiding, or dwelling in that land wherinto God had called him: and this he also did by *faith*. As hee went out of his owne countrey, and came into *Canaan*, by the power and leading of his *faith*, so by the same *faith* hee abode and dwelt in the same land.

The parts are two:

1. The *Action* of *Abrahams faith*, in the 9. ver.
2. The *Reason* of that his so doing, in the 10.

The *Action* in the 9. verse is spoken of two ways:

1. It is laid downe to be his abiding in the land of promise.
2. It is amplified by two circumstances:
 1. The manner how he dwelt there, in two points:

1. As a stranger, or in a strange countrey.

2. As one that dwelt in tents, and not in houses.

2. The persons with whom: with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, Heires with him of the same promise.

The first point in order, is his dwelling in the

land of *Canaan* (called here the land of Promise.)

By faith he abode in the land of Promise.

Canaan is now called the *land of Promise*, because it was promised in the verbe afore-going, as we then heard: so that the meaning is, he *abode in that land*, which was promised him, when he came out of his own countrey. Which countrey *Abraham* knew not by name, when he left his own, nor till he came thither: but then God told him, *This is the land I will give thee and thy seed*, Gen. 12.7. In this land thus promised, *Abraham* dwelt and remained the rest of his life, which was an hundred years.

In this action of *Abraham*, are three particular points:

1. He dwelt in *Canaan*.
2. That *Canaan* was the *land of Promise*.
3. He dwelt there *by faith*.

For the first: Concerning *Abrahams* dwelling in *Canaan*, divers questions may bee moved;

First, how it is true, that he abode or dwelt there? Seeing it is apparant in the Story, hee dwelt in *Egypt*, Gen. 12.10. and in *Gerar*, Gen. 20.1.

I answer: The meaning is not, that he staid there every day of his life; but that he lived and died there, and made it the place of his residence and ordinary habitation, whereunto hee alwayes resorted againe, if any occasion drew him abroad.

And further, he went not into *Egypt*, but upon such speciall cause, as could not otherwise be helped, as upon a famine or such like, Genes. 12.10. then there came a famine in the land: therefore *Abraham* went downe into *Egypt* to sojourn there. Where it appeares: first, that the cause was extraordinary: secondly, that he went not to make any dwelling, but to sojourn there for a time, and then to repaire home againe.

Where we learne, that as a man is not to depart out of that land, where God hath appointed him to dwell, but upon good and sufficient causes: so when those causes cease, which drew him out, hee is not to stay longer from home; but to repaire againe to the place of his ordinary dwelling. God would have a man dwell at home: and it is leuitie, and a token of an unconstant minde, and a running head, for a man to desire to be alwayes abroad.

Birds sicc abroad, but so as they may come to their nests at night: so men should endeavour, as much as may be, to take few occasions of being from their dwellings: and when they needs must, to let it bee for as short a time as may bee. For as it is a signe of a light woman, Prov. 7.1. *Her feet cannot abide in her house*: so is it of an unstaid man, upon every occasion to be carried from home.

Wee must therefore follow holy *Abraham*, who is here commended for abiding or dwelling in the Countrey, which God had given him.

Again, this practice of *Abrahams faith*, condemnes the *wandering beggers* to bee an unfaithfull and ungracious generation. Our Land (by the abuse of our peace and plenty) is full of such. Aske them where they dwell: their answer is, They have *small dwelling*; but looke into the matter, and they have the largest dwelling of all: for they dwell every where, and all abroad; they count it bondage to be tied to one Town, or dwell in one parish, and thinke it freedome and libertie to dwell *every where*. These are Caterpillers of a Common-wealth, and the greatest robbers of the poore that are. Common Theeves steale from rich men: but these steale from the poore; they get that from men, which the true poore should have. No good comes to Church nor Common-wealth by these men, but much hurt to both. For, a finger cutt off from his place, is of no use: so, a man living out of his calling, and out of his place, is of no use in the bodie politique.

Happy will it be with our Church and State, when we have such lawes, and such execution of them, as that this disorder may be reformed, and every man confined to his owne dwelling, and none suffered to live in our Kingdome, who is not of some Parish: for let us be assured, so many wandering beggers, so many blemishes in our government.

Thirdly, *Abrahams dwelling in this Land* (being a fruit of his *faith*) teacheth us, it is no good token, but an ill signe for a man to be uncertaine in his dwelling. It is the fashion of many men, if they travell, they never lodge at one place twice: and for their dwelling, it is not certaine; but now in the North, now in the South: now in this parish, now in that: now in this jurisdiction, now in another: Sometime in the Citty, sometime in the Countrey. Who be these? But either such as be in debt, and purpose to deale ill with their Creditors; or that are malefactors, and hereby labour to avoid the censure of Authoritie: or else they be Papists, which by this means labour to lurke unseen, and to escape the law; as many of them doe, either by skipping out of one Parish, Diocesse, Countrey, or Province into another, and so avoiding the authoritie of all: or else, by lurking in great Cities, and so lying as *Sjourners*, and not as *Parishioners*, unless or unmarked in so great multitudes. Let our authoritie take the more carefull notice of such men, the more craftily they labour to creepe from under it: and let such men know, they discover themselves the more by this practice, to be *unfaithfull* either to God, or Men, or both; seeing that God here commendeth *Abraham* for dwelling or staying in that place, which God had appointed him. And so much for this question.

Again, it may here be demanded: How *Abraham* might lawfully dwell in *Canaan*, seeing it was then Idolatrous. It may seeme, that therefore it is not lawfull for

men to dwell in Popish or Idolatrous Countreies.

Answer: *Abraham* did not so upon any private motion, nor for any worldly cause, but upon speciall warrant and calling from God: otherwise his so doing, had not bene justifiable: therefore that practice of his cannot be a warrant for any to doe the like, without the like cause and calling.

But how could *Abraham* be preserved from the contagion of Idolaters, living amongst them? Answer;

First, God that called him thither, did there preserve him. Again, *Abraham* lived in the Countrey, but conversed not with the people at all, but in some necessary and civil affaires: and by this means escaped the danger of infection.

Where we may learne, that if any man would live in such places, without hurt to their conscience, let them first be sure that they have a calling and warrant from God, to live in those Countreies. Secondly, let them converse with Idolaters warily and sparingly, and so that they preserve themselves from the occasions of evil, as *Abraham* did, who abode in an Idolatrous Countrey; and so, though not without danger, yet without hurt to his religion. Thus we see *Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan*.

Now secondly, this Land is called the *Land of Promise*: that is, the Land formerly promised him by God, when he called him out of his owne Countrey. And it is likely that the Apostle doth not here first of all call it so, but that it was knowne generally among the Patriarks by that name: and that *Abraham* himselfe did first of all so call it; who when he looked upon it, and considered the fruitfullnesse and excellencie of it, did evermore remember and call to minde, *this land is promised to me*; this is mine by promise. And herein he rested and trusted himselfe, though he had not the possession of it.

Here we may see the excellency of true faith: which depends upon the promises of God, though they be unperformed. A Land of promise contents *Abraham*, he leaves the possession to his posteritie. It is hard to finde such faith in the world: It is land in possession which we looke for: a Land of promise cannot content us: but let us labour to practise faith, and to take comfort in the promises of God, and leave the performance to Gods appointed time.

Thirdly, he dwelt in this land by faith. And no marvell: for had it not bene by faith, he would never have dwelt there, where he had not so much as a roome for his Tent to stand in, but he must borrow it; nor to burie his dead, but he must buy it. This was against reason: yet by faith he dwelt there, as afore by faith he left his owne, which was also against reason. Where still the power of faith is magnified to be such, as it will carrie a man over all impediments of obedience, and will give him victory not a

gainst one, but against all objections; and power to performe not one, but many things contrary to carnall wisdom.

We must here learne to examine, whether we have a true and sound *faith* or no. If we have, then we must not doe some one or few actions in *faith*, or die in *faith*, but we must live by *faith*, the whole course of our lives. *We must walke by faith, and not by sight*, saith the Apostle, 2. Corinth. 5. 7. So saith he of himselfe, Galat. 2. 20. *I live by the faith in the Sonne of God*: he saith not, *he hopes to die in that faith*, but *he lives by it*. And in the former place hee saith not, we must set a step or two, but we must *walke by faith*, which argueth a continued action: and therefore it is that Saint Peter saith, Gods children *are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation*, 1. Peter, 1. 5. In which words two things are spoken of *faith*: the first is affirmed; namely, that *faith* preferreth a man to salvation through all hindrances, either of inward temptations, or outward crosses, which the devill or the world can lay in his way. This *preservation* is one of the greatest workes in the world, and therefore it is worthily ascribed to God: the power of God preferreth us, but *through faith*. The second is implied; that therefore we must labour to *keepe that faith* evermore with us, which *must keepe us*, and to cherish and preserve that which *must preserve us to salvation*. David was an excellent practitioner hereof: no man was more tried and tossed than he, yet he ever drew neere unto God, Psal. 73. 28. Indeed sometime hee said, *all men were liars, but that was in his feare*, Psal. 116. 11. And againe, *I am cast out of thy sight, but that was in his love*, Psal. 31. 22. that is, when the force of some passion, or the violence of some temptations did carrie him headlong: but otherwise he ever *lived the life of faith*.

So must we not thinke to live in sensuality, and die in *faith*: but to live by *faith* in all our actions, from one day to another, meditating daily on Gods promises, and beleeving them, and relying on them, and applying the generals to our owne selves, and practising *faith* by making conscience of sinne, and inuring our selves to patience and long-suffering. Thus doing, we shall be children of faithfull *Abraham*, who first *by faith* left his owne Country, and then *by faith* also dwelt still in the land of Canaan. And thus much for the *action of his faith*, *He abode in the Land of Promise*.

Now follow the circumstances of the action, which are two: 1. The *manner* how: 2. The *Persons* with whom.

The manner is laid downe in two points:

1. As a stranger.

2. As one that dwelt in tents.

The first point, for the manner, is laid downe in these words:

As in a strange Country.

The meaning is: he esteemed it a *strange* Country to him, and accounted himselfe a

A stranger in it. Against which it may be objected, that he was familiarly acquainted with *Mamre, Aner, and Ephcol*, three great and mighty men of that Country: that hee and they were confederates together, Gen. 14. 13. therefore it seemes he lived not like a stranger in the Country.

Some answer, that these three were not *Canaanites*, but neere a-kinne to *Abraham*, and had other names; but the Text is plain in that place, that *Mamre was an Amorite*, and the other two were his brethren. Therefore the answer is, that in all likelihood they three were *Proselytes*; and that by *Abraham*s godly persuasions they had renounced Idolatry, and were come to the knowledge of the true God; and that they joyed with *Abraham* in the worship of the true God, and so were his converts: whereupon *Abraham* (as he might lawfully) conversed with them as his familiar friends. And hereof there are two inducements:

First, it is said, Gen. 14. 12. that they *confederates with Abraham*; and it appeared to by their deeds; for they joyed their powers, and assisted him in the warre against the Kings, (Gen. 14. 24.)

Secondly, it is said, Gen. 14. 13. That *Abraham dwelt on the land of Mamre*: hee was his Tenant or Farmour. Now, it is more than likely, *Abraham* would not have so farre beene beholden to them, but that they were true Christians, and of his owne religion.

C Therefore this hinders not, but he might be a stranger notwithstanding, unto the body of the people; and that it is true that *Abraham* saith of himselfe to some of them, Gen. 23. 4. *I am a stranger and a Sojourner amongst you*.

But it may then bee demanded, Why did *Abraham* live amongst them as a stranger, and in that land as a Sojourner?

I answer: the reasons were divers: First, he had title given to that Land, but no possession; he therefore contented himselfe with that that God gave him, and chalenged not any possession all the dayes of his life, but bought or borrowed of *Mamre* the place where hee lived and dwelt, (Gen. 14. 13.) and of the Hittites a place of buriall, Gen. 23. 3, &c.

D This may teach all men not to be too haſtie, in seeking for that, that it may be is their right: let not men prescribe their owne times, nor be their owne carvers, but leave their affaires to Gods disposing, and enter no further than they see God goeth afore them: *Abraham* must be a stranger in his owne land; and thou sometime must be content for a time to be a stranger to that which is thine owne.

Secondly, they were all of them for the most part heathen Idolaters, amongst whom *Abraham* would not converse, but as sparingly as might be. Now if *Abraham* would be a stranger in his owne Country, rather than live familiarly with Idolaters; If he weth how little faith, and lesse conscience they have, who can be content

tent to live in the middelt of Idolaters, where they have nothing to do, and can converse with them in all familiarity, without any scruple of conscience. *Abraham* made himselfe a stranger at home to avoid Idolatry; but they will make themselves at home in a strange Country, to intangle themselves in Idolatry: these men will hardly prove the children of *Abraham*.

These reasons *Abraham* himselfe had in this his so doing.

There is a third, a more spirituall, or myllicall reason; and that reason God had in making *Abraham* live in Canaan as a stranger; namely, to teach all Christian men their duty to the worlds end.

Abraham is the Father of the faithfull, *Rom. 4. 11.* And this is our honour, to be the children of *Abraham*; we must therefore follow our Father in his faith, and in the practice of it: we must live in this world as Pilgrims and Strangers, even in the middelt of all our peace and prosperitie, of all our libertie, riches, lands, and possessions; yea, of all our worldly friends and acquaintance. If it seeme strange how this can be: I answer, the practice of it consists in six actions:

First, we must not bathe our selves in the pleasures of this world. *Pilgrims* take but little delight in their journeyes, because they thinke themselves not at home. This is *S. Peters* argument: *Dearly beloved, as Strangers and pilgrims abstaine from fleshly lusts which fight against the soule, 1 Pet. 2. 11.* For too much delight in fleshly pleasures, smothereth the grace of God in us, and lets looke all sinnes, and gives life unto all corruptions.

Secondly, we must use this world as though we used it not: that is, even the necessary comforts and delights thereof they be the very words of the *Apostle*, *1 Cor. 7. 31.* For so the *Pilgrim*, when hee passeth thorow a strange Countrey, hath not his minde troubled with looking or thinking on the goods and commodities of that Countrey where he is; but using as much thereof, as is necessary for him, all his thoughts are on his owne Countrey. So should we, when we are in our best estates, in our greatest jollitie, in the middt of our wealth and abundance of pleasures, call our minds from them, and have our thoughts even then conversing in heaven, where is the place of our abode. This is likewise the *Apostles* exhortation, *Philip. 3. 20.* *Worldly men make their bellie their god:* that is, drowne themselves in carnall pleasures, so far, as they forget any other God, any other heaven. But we must not doe so: our conversation must be in heaven, from whence we looke for our Saviour *Jesus Christ*.

Thirdly, we must have a serious care and endeavour to please God: for *all the earth is his*, and we are but sojourners in his sight: therefore as the *Pilgrim* is careful to please the Lord of the Countrey, by whose leave he travels thorow it: so must we doe to please the Lord; seeing as

God saith, *Levit. 25. 23.* *The Land is his, and we are but strangers and sojourners with him.*

And hereunto adde a fourth, which is neere a kinne unto it: We must cast all our care on God, seeing that hee is the Lord of the earth, and wee are but Pilgrims and Sojourners. *David* saith, *Psalm. 24. 1.* *The earth is the Lords, and all that therein is. The same David* confesseth, *Psalm. 139. 12.* *Hee is a stranger before God, and a sojourner as all his Father were,* and thereupon desirith God to heare his prayer, *Lord, let me not be ashamed, and let me not keepe silence at his tears:* as though he had said, inasmuch as I sojourn with thee, thou art to heare my complaint. For as a Sojourner cares not looke for a dwelling, but depends on them for all things with whom he sojourns, so must we cast all our care on God: for hee careth for us, he is our Landlord, we are his Farmours and Tenants, we hold the earth from him, by no lease of yeares, but at his will, and it is lent us: let us therefore but have care to please this our Landlord, and care for nothing.

Fifthly, we must give continuall thanks and praise to God for his good blessings we receive in this world: for all are his, and wee are but strangers. Thus did all Gods Saints in old time; *Jacob*, *He was lesse than the least of Gods mercies.* But especially there is one memorable example of *David*, and the Church in his daies, *1 Chron. 29. 13, 14, 15, 16.* When hee had prepared abundantly for the building of the Temple, hee prostrated himselfe before God, and in his owne name and the peoples said thus: *Riches and honour come of thee, therefore our God, wee thank thee, and praisthy glorious name. But whom I, and what is my people, that we should offer unto thee? for all is thine, and of thine owne have we given thee: for we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as all our Fathers were.* Thankfulnes becometh all men, especially strangers. Therefore as *Pilgrims* doe thankfully accept the favours shewed them in a strange Countrey: so must we, all the blessings God gives us in this world, where we are but strangers.

Sixthly and lastly, we must hasten to the kingdom, as a *Pilgrim* doth to his journeyes end, or to his owne Countrey: and till hee can, is alwayes thinking of it, and sighing after it: so must we (who are not dwellers but sojourners in these houses of clay, long after heaven, and as *S. Paul* saith, hee did covet to remove from hence, and to dwell with the Lord). Strangers are not to take such pleasure in forren Countreies, as to forget their owne. So Christians must not be so in love with this world, as to forget to neglect the world to come. If they doe, they are unworthy of it, and shew themselves no strangers, as *Abraham* here was; but men of this world, who have their portion in this life.

In performing these six actions, men shew themselves strangers in this world. And thus must we doe, even in the middt of all worldly

prosperitie, if we looke ever to enjoy the glory of a better: And thus doing, we shall be children of faithfull Abraham, who dwelt in the land of Canaan, *as in a strange Country.*

As one that dwelt in tents.

The second point for the manner, how Abraham dwelt in Canaan, is, that he built himselfe no houses, nor made Orchards or Gardens, but dwelt in tents or tabernacles; which were such houses as now are used in warre, and are yet called by the same name, *Tents*, or Pavilions: whose matter is not wood, nor stone, but cloth, stuffe, or skinnes; and are easily reared and soone taken downe: and when a man departeth, he may carrie his house with him. That Abraham did thus, appears in the Stories written of him. *He came to Beihel, and there pitched his tent,* Gen. 12. 8. and Gen. 13. 18. *he removed his tent:* and 18. 1. God appeared unto him, *as he sate in his tent doore:* and 18. 9. being asked where Sarah was, he answered, *she is within the tent:* and these tents are called *his place*, Genes. 18. 23. and his house, 24. 2. Out of all which places it is plaine, that he dwelt in tents, and that not onely at his first coming, when he had not time to build him a house, but even all the dayes of his life after his coming into the land of Canaan.

But why did Abraham dwell in tents, and not in houses? was it because then there were no houses? not so: For there were cities built even afore the flood, Gen. 4. 17. *Cain* built a Citie: no marvell therefore if there were many after, as *Sodom* and all her sisters. And though it appears not they digged into the earth for naturall stone, yet had they *bricks*, which they made themselves, Genes. 11. 3. and surely the world, which built the huge tower of *Babel*, Gen. 11. would not sticke to build themselves houses. Nor can it be said, that those cities, *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, and the rest were nothing but a multitude of tents together. For we read, Gen. 19. 3. that *Lot dwelling in Sodom, received two Angels into his house:* and the 4. verse, that the *Sodomites came and inuaded his house round about to take them*, thinking they had bene men: and when *Lot* refused to deliver them, that they pressed fire upon the house to have broken up the doore: but all this might have bin spared, if it had bene nothing but a tent, which a child may cut in peeces with a knife. It is manifest then, that there were houses in those dayes. Why then did Abraham build none? was it because hee was poore and could not? Not so: for contrariwise, Gen. 12. 5. *He carried with him from his owne Country, all the substance he possessed.* And what that was, is particularized, Gen. 13. 2. *He was very rich in cattell, in silver, in gold.* His riches were both great and of the best. So then he could, but would not. But why would he not? Was it upon a proud humour, or in a conceited singulartie, because he would not be like other men, but have a singular way of his owne? No: Abraham was none of

those, who allow nothing, but that is done of themselves; and who thinke nothing good, if it be ordinary: for he was an holy man, and famous for his faith. So then none of these were the reasons of this his so doing.

The reasons then why Abraham, and other holy Patriarches, used to dwell in tents, and not to build them houses, were of two sorts, *Civil*, and *Holy*.

The Civil or Politike respect that they had was this;

They holding themselves Gods servants, did depend on his word; and therefore did submit themselves to goe up and downe the world, whithersoever God did call them. Being then to remove every day (they knew not when nor whither) it was therefore both the fittest, and cheapest, to dwell in tents, which were soon pitched up, and soone taken downe. Neither need it seeme strange that they could live for cold, in those poore thin tents all the yeare long: for the country and climate there was alwaies temperate enough for cold: and rather inclining to too much heat.

The holy or religious respect was this: They held themselves but *strangers upon earth*, and therefore would not build themselves cities or houses; as looking or caring to live upon earth: but dwelled in tents, as seeming desirous to remove from the earth to heaven: the sooner the better. And this did the Fathers of the old Testament: not that they thought it unlawfull to build cities, or dwell in houses; but that they might testify their religion, and expectation of another world, in the midst of that profane age wherein they lived; wherein there were almost none, that either regarded, remembered, or acknowledged a world to come.

And this was not the particular, or singular deed of Abraham alone. All holy men in those dayes, lived in tents, Gen. 9. 21. It is cleare that *Noah* dwelt in tents, though then he was King of all the world. And so did *Lot* also as long as he lived with Abraham: Genes. 12. 5. *Lot had sheepe, and cattell, and tents.* And thus they did, because (as the Apostle saith) they had here no enduring citie, but they sought for one to come, Hebr. 13. 14. And they thought, they ever heard that voice sounding in their eares, Micah. 2. 10. *Arise and depart, for this is not your rest.*

Contrariwise, the wicked of the world, because they set their rests in this world, and cared for no other: they began presently to build them houses, nay cities, (as *Cain* did even in the beginning) Gen. 4. 17. And the *Sodomites* had a citie even walled (as is likely), for *Lot* was sitting in the gate of *Sodom*, when the two Angels came to him, Gen. 19. 1, 2. And the *Canaanites* had cities walled exceeding high: (Numb. 13.) But wee finde not, that ever Gods children build them cities, untill they came to have a sealed Church of their owne. But contrariwise, it is worth observing, that God promi-

teach his people, that they shall come and dwell in cities which they have not: namely, which were built by worldly men to their hind. And thus we see the reason why *Abraham* took in tents. Now let us see the use of it.

First, here we learn *frugality*, out of the civil use of their tents: that is, to use the blessing and comforts of this life, as soberly, and sparingly as may be: as to bestow as little cost as may be of our selves, in such things as *perish in the using*: namely, meat, drinke, apparell, and houses. For what is spent herein, is spent only on our selves: and being spent, is gone: therefore the lesse the betterial waies provided there be a discreet care had of our healths, and of the credit of the places we hold: and of our enabling to the duties of our calling. Which being sufficiently provided for, it is a Christian frugality to spare, what further may be spared: and he hath the lesse to answer for, who spendeth the least in superfluities.

Again, here we are taught *contentation* in the state which God hath appointed us, and not to strive too fast to climbe to wealth. These holy men can be content to dwell in tents, and tabernacles, though they might have compassed much more: for they were great and mighty men. *Abraham* had 313. men, able to beare a sword, in his house daily: and with them and a little more help, he overthrew divers Kings, and rescued *Lot*. Gen. 14. 14. He that durst encounter, and did overcome such an hoste: how many inhabitants of the country, could he have beat out of their houses? And how many tenants could hee have put out of their livings? And how much of that country could he have inclosed to himselfe? Surely, even as much and as many as he had pleased. Yet doth he no such thing: but contrariwise, considering himselfe to be but a tenant under God, he is content to let everie man sit quietly by him, and himselfe to dwell in tents, rather than to incroach one foot further than God bade him, though hee had beene able.

This checketh the pride, or covetousnesse, or ambition, or all, of such as *joyne house to house, Land to Land*, Lordshippe unto Lordshippe, Towne to Towne; and care not how many mens houses they pull downe to build one of their owne: nor how many men want land and living, so they have their parkes, and pastures, gardens, and orchards, and all other delights they can devise. These are so farre from *Abraham*'s minde, who desired onely so much land, as his tent might stand on, and might feed his cattell: as they can inclose and make severall to themselves, that which in common should bee the living of many soules. But what can befall such men? but that *Esay* prophesieth unto them, Isa. 5. 8. *Woe bee unto them that joyne house to house, and Land to Land, till there bee no place left for the poore to dwell in.*

Thirdly, in that *Abraham* lived thus, as

ready ever to depart into any other country, when God would call him: I sheweth that true faith doth never leave Gods hand, either in the greatness or length of triall, but submitte it selfe wholly to his will, being resolved and content to suffer all trialls, how great soever, and how many soever God pleasheth to lay upon a man. Reason would have said, I have left one country at Gods Word: if I must leave another, then I shall never know an end, nor have any thing certaine to trust to. But *faith* saith, As I have left one country at Gods calling, so upon his word I will leave twenty more. For God hath as good reason to bid me the second time, as the first: and his love cannot faile me: he may kill me, but can never leave me. Thus spake *Abraham* faith. And not he alone: for *Iob*, though hee rie out of the violence of his temptation, *The arrows of the Almighty are in me, and he revolveth thereof: doth drinke up my spirit, and the terrors of God do fight against me*, Chap. 6. 4. yet when *Satan* comes to play his part, hee then protesteth, that though God *kell him, yet he will trust in him, and he shall be his salvation*, Chap. 13. 15. See *Abraham*'s faith will lead him from country to country: and *Iob* will carrie him thorow life and death. And noble *David* is not behinde for his part: for he will lose his kingdom, if God will have it so: 2 Sam. 15. 26. *If (saith David) God say, I have no delight in thee; loe here I am, let him doe to mee (not what I in my reason could wish, but) what seemeth good in his eyes*. Behold now in these holy men, the practise and obedience of true faith. It prescribes not God the measure how long, or how farre he shall afflict us: but makes a man resigne up himselfe wholly, his causes, his livings, his country, his kingdom, his life and all, to bee at Gods disposing. Hee that can doe thus may have joy in himselfe, as being assuredly one of the children of faithfull *Abraham*.

Fourthly, in that *Abraham* in a strange country will not build him an house, but dwell in tents which daily are removeable; Here may such men learne, as are travellers, or factors, or sojourners in forren countries, not to shunt themselves too hastily into societie and familiaritie with the people of those countries where they sojourne. *Abraham* will not build him a house in a strange country, but will dwell in tents, that so he may the easier remove: even so, let no man fix and fasten himselfe too hastily in a strange country, but live so, as he may easily remove, when hee seeth good cause.

Fifthly, *Abraham* who in his owne country (it is likely) had his house, in a strange country will have none, but will dwell in tents. His practise must teach us, even so, not to build us houses in this world, where we are strangers, but to set our tent here, and to looke for our house in heaven. Literally we are not bound to doe as *Abraham* did, but mystically we must doe it: the

the state of our bodies here, is but a tent or a tabernacle; the state of our soules in heaven, is a *strong house*. Wee must therefore stay with the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2. *We are willing that this earthly tabernacle were destroyed, and desire to be clothed with our house which is from heaven.* Carnall and worldly men build their house in this world: that is, have all their care for their body: but if we follow our father *Abraham*, and esteeme our life, and bodies, but as tabernacles presently to be removed, and build our houses in heaven, then walke wee here in the steps of his faith, after this life shall attaine his reward.

For the ending and knitting up of this point, it may bee asked, How this can bee any such commendation to him, seeing that wicked men have used to dwell in tents?

I answer: never any of them, but in two cases: first in time of warre, where armies lying abroad in the fields, or in the siege of cities, must needs lie in tents; and so doe all men Christian or Heathen to this day: or secondly, such as keepe sheepe did for their cattels sake lie abroad in tents; as it is recorded of *Isaac*, one of *Quins* posteritie, Gen. 4. 20. that he was the father of all them that dwell in tents, and such as have cattell. In which words, observe how their dwelling intents, and having cattell are puttogether: And so the *Arabians*, great keepers of cattell, doe in *Arabia* (being a hot country) to this day. So that it is cleare, the wicked dwelt intents, either for necessitie sake in the war, or else for profit sake with their cattell; but that for no such cause, but for their owne sakes: and because they esteemed themselves *strangers in the world*, it was never found that any ungodly man dwelt in tents all his life: but that it was alwaies a practice of holy and faithfull men, untill they came to have a settled Church and state of their owne.

And thus much for the manner how *Abraham* dwelt in Canaan: 1. as a stranger: 2. dwelling in tents.

Now follow the Persons with whom.

With Isaac and Jacob, heires with him of the same promise.

The second Circumstance is the Persons with whom: they were *Isaac* and *Jacob*: his sonne and his grandchild. But it may first of all be asked, to what clause is this referred, whether to *Abraham* dwelling in Canaan, or to his being there a stranger, or to his dwelling there in tents. The answer is; to them all three: *Hee dwelt there with them*, he was a stranger with them, he dwelt intents with them, and they with him. Now the meaning is not, that they dwelt together with *Abraham* in the same tents, at the same time, (for *Isaac* was not borne till *Abraham* was an hundred yeares old, and *Jacob* was but yong when *Abraham* died:) But that the same promise made to *Abraham*, God renewed after to them, first to *Isaac*, and then to *Jacob* which they also beleevd as *Abraham*

did, and by the power of that faith were content to dwell in tents, as strangers, as he had done before them.

But why doth he name none but *Isaac* and *Jacob*? did no other dwell in tents, and thinke themselves strangers, but they? yes, many others: but these two are named above any other, both for that they were next *Abraham* in time, and in blood, and in faith also: for their faith was so excellent, as God is called the God of these three men, more specially than of any other in the world: but in and under these two, are all other understood, who embracing the same promise, did therefore as strangers dwell in tents.

From hence wee learne divers excellent instructions:

First, see here a notable worke of faith; I meane of true faith in the promises of eternall life: namely, that it conformeth the beleivers one to another, both in the inward disposition of heart, and outward conversation of life. God hath made this promise, *That he so loved the world, that hee gave his only begotten sonne, that whosoever beleeveth in him should not perish, but have life everlasting.* Now as this promise is one, so is the faith that apprehends it; and this faith being one, conformeth all that have it, and makes them like one to another in the obedience of Gods Commandements. This is that that the Holy Ghost saith, Act. 4. 32. *The beleivers were all of one heart, and one soule*: and that not one of them, but the whole multitude of them that beleevd. And *Esay* prophesieth, that in the Kingdome of Christ shall be such uniformitie and peace, as that though men in their natures be as contrary one to another, as *sheepe and wolves, lions and kids, young children and serpents*: yet by grace and faith in Christ, they are changed, and all conformed one to another, so as they shall live, and consent together in the unitie of one obedience: *Esa. 11. 6, 7.*

The Booke of the Psalmes was penned by *David, Asaph, Moses*, and others, and in several ages and states of the Church, and were appointed to be sung then, for the present state of the Church in those dayes. It may therefore be demanded: Why then doe we sing them now in our Churches? The answer is: The Church in all ages consists of a number of beleivers, and the faith is alwayes one, and makes all that apprehend Gods promises to bee alike to one another in grace, in meditations, in dispositions, in affections, in desires, in spirituall wants, in the feeling and use of afflictions, in course and conversation of life, and in performance of duties to God and man: and therefore the same Psalmes, Prayers, and Meditations, are now as fit for the Church in these dayes, and are said and sung with the same use and profit, as to the Church in those dayes when they were first made.

This doctrine hath profitable use:

First, if this bee so, here is confuted the opinion and practice of many; who when they are taught, they ought to doe this or this, after the examples of holy men in times past: They answer, they were great and glorious men: they may not thinke to bee like them; and their examples are too high: they may admire them, but not follow them. For example, when they are exhorted to walke with God, as *Herach* did, Gen. 5. 24. to refuse the world for Christ, as *Moses* did, Exod. 2. 10. to spare our enemy being in our power, as *David* did, 1 Sam. 24. 5, 6, 7. In Magistracy to be able to say, *whose Ox or Ass have I taken, or whom have I done wrong to?* as *Samuel* said, 1 Sam. 12. 3. In the Ministry, to follow the zeale, the patience, and the diligence of the holy Ministers of God in old time; they then answer: that they dare not looke at them, and that they may not thinke to bee like them. But let these men know, that if they have the same faith, they have the same confidence; and that as *Isaac* and *Jacob*, though they had not the same measure of faith, that *Abraham* had, yet having the same faith, were therefore willing to dwell in tents, as hee had done. So, if wee have the same faith that our fathers in times past had; then how-soever wee cannot match them in holiness, and in vertues, yet wee must seriously labour to be like unto them, and must also practise the same vertues, which they did: for if wee bee *heires with them of the same promise*, then must wee bee practisers with them in the same obedience.

Secondly, this checketh a great and common prophaneesse, which now reigneth amongst us. We all professe religion: yet come to the practice of religion, the hearing of the word, receiving the holy Sacrament, or prayer, or abstaining from foule and common finnes; let a man bee in any of these more forward than others, then hee is so prophane, as they sticke not to deride and reproach them. But is this to be *heires of one and the same promise*? Let such men therefore know, that we in this age of the Church, are bound to conforme ourselves to the holy lives of the Fathers of the old Church, or else wee have not the same faith that they had. Therefore our duty is to strive, and by all means we can, to endeavour who should come nearest to their faith, to their zeale, and to their obedience. And if any doe it more than wee doe, wee should rather honour than reproach him.


In the next place, observe here the power of a great mans example, how forcible it is; especially to them of the same kindred. *Abraham* a grand-Patriarch, a man of honour, hee is contented to dwell in tents, like a stranger in that land which was promised him to be his owne. *Isaac* his sonne followeth him, and doth so also. *Jacob* his grand-child comes after, and hee walketh in both their steps. Let this teach all superiours (be they Parents, Magistrates,

A or Ministers) to looke to their wayes: for the higher they be, the more are they followed either in good or evil. Wee see in Courts, what Princes doe, they are imitated; and any faith on they take up or put in practice (hee it never so strange) is followed of all men. And here wee see, if *Abraham* will dwell in no house, but in tents, *Isaac* and *Jacob* will doe so after him.

Thirdly, observe how these three holy men are called *heires of the Promise*: and they are so called in regard of God. Who as hee made the promise to *Abraham*, so he renewed it to them both severally; and withall gave them grace to apprehend it, and to shew the obedience of their faith, as *Abraham* did.

B But it is very notable, that they are not called *heires of the Land*, but of the *Promise*; for they enjoyed not the land, but the promise, and their seed did afterwards enjoy the land it selfe. Wherein appears the excellency of their faith: For they who thus blessedly believed, and thus patiently and constantly obeyed God in all duties of holy obedience, having but bare promises, how excellent and eminent would their faith and obedience have beene, had they beene partakers of the blessings themselves? And here also must wee learne our duties. For in greater matters than the land of Canaan, we enjoy the things, whereas they had but the promises: as namely, the incarnation of the *Messias*, and the calling of the *Gentils*: these two great and grand mercies, were looked for by them, but enjoyed by us; they had the promises, but wee the performance. Therefore if our obedience, and patience, and other vertues, be behind theirs, our condemnation must needs bee so much the deeper.

C Much more is to be said of *Isaacs* and *Jacobs* faith: but they have severall examples for themselves.

It followeth,
For he looked for a City having a foundation,
whose maker and builder is God.] 

Thus wee see the fast of *Abrahams* faith: now followeth the reason that moved him to live in the land of Canaan, as a stranger, and in tents. And the reason is, because he looked for a City, &c. that is, for everlasting life in heaven. This is the substance of the reason; and then that life everlasting is further described in divers particulars: so that these two things are contained in this verse;

1. Generally the state of the reason, shewing the height and eminency of *Abrahams* faith: hee looked for everlasting life.

2. A particular description of that life eternall.

In the general state of the reason, many worthy points are to be considered:

First, in the very contextion, and framing of the reason, observe how *Abraham* therefore liveth as a stranger, patiently in that country

which was his owne, because *he looked for heaven* after this life. Hence we learne, That hope to winne heaven, worketh patience and contentation in all estates and conditions of life. Thus reasoneth the holy Ghost here; *Abraham* was content to live in no city, but in tents, as a stranger; for he looked for a better city in heaven. So the Disciples, grieved at Christs departure from them, hee strengtheneth them with this consolation, *In my fathers house are glorious mansions, I goe to prepare a place for you*, John 14.2.

The use of this doctrine is necessary for these our daies; wherein are many that will say confidently they looke to bee saved, and hope for heaven: but let any man injury them, or crosse them in the least measure, they breake out into anger and impatience, yea, often into swearing and blaspheming of Gods name. Or if God lay his heavy hand on them or theirs, then instantly they run to wizards, and wise-men, that is, even to the bottome of hell for helpe. These and all such, doe foully deceive themselves: for if they truly hoped for that city which is in heaven, no small crosse in this world could much trouble them: nor any so great, to drive them into that disquietnesse, as by their oaths they should rend heaven and earth; and as it were confound God and all his creatures. Or if they truly perswaded themselves that God would give them heaven at their end; they would bee afraid, and ashamed to run to the devil to remove Gods hand from them: for assuredly that man cares not what God laith on him in this life, who is perswaded that after this life God will give him heaven.

Secondly, this doctrine gives us a worthy direction for comfort under the crosse. For if *Abraham* bore all this patiently, because *he looked for heaven*; then it must teach us, that when God laith any crosse on us, if we would have the bitterness thereof allayed, wee must not looke on it with both our eyes, but with one eye on the crosse, and with the other on the City prepared for us in heaven; where is no crosse, no woe, no sorrow, nor misery: but where *God himselfe will wipe away all teares from our eyes*. There can bee no affliction so bitter but this meditation will mitigate it, and yeeld comfort and contentment in the sharpest pangs thereof.

In the second place, *Abraham* waiting for heaven, when he sojourned on the earth, giveth us an excellent patterne of Christian life. Whilst we are on earth, wee must wait for heaven, and looke, and long after it; there must our joy, and our affections be. So teacheth the Apostle, Col. 3.1. *If ye be risen with Christ, seeke ye the things that are above*. And Phil. 3.20. *Wee must have our conversation in heaven*, though wee live on earth. How this may bee, cannot be better expressed, than by a comparison:

A merchant that is a free-man in London, and there hath wife, children and living; tra-

velleth as a Merchant into Turkie, or Barbary, or Spaine; there he lives, there is his body, but all his thoughts, and desires of his heart, are at home: and all his care there, is to maintaine his good estate at home: and all the hazard of his life and goods, are to preserve and helpe his estate there. So wee in this world, are but *strangers*; but wee are *freemen* in heaven: therefore our thoughts must bee there, and all our cares here should be nothing, but how to procure us sure and good estates in heaven. This if we do seriously intend, and carefully endeavour, then wee are good children of *Abraham* our father; and thus doing, *we have our conversation in heaven*, though wee live on earth. And this wee should doe the rather, because generally the world is full of such men: who (as the same place saith) *doe minde nothing but earthly things*. Now it is an hard thing for a man to be unlike the world, and to resist multitudes, and generall examples: but we must still remember we are *Abrahams* children, and children must labour to be like their father, and not the common multitudes: and it must more move a good childe, what his father alone doth, than what is done by many other.

Thirdly, let us observe, how God promising *Abraham* onely the Land of Canaan, that is, a temporall inheritance; he lookes further, for a City in heaven. This he did out of his faith: for he knowing that Canaan was but a type of heaven, therefore in consideration of the earthly Canaan, he arose to a consideration of the heavenly: and in the promise of the earthly, apprehended the heavenly. This is the true and Christian use of all Gods blessings, given in this life: in them to behold better things laid up in heaven, and shadowed in the other. Men use for their use, spectacles in reading: but they take no pleasure in looking upon them, but at other things, by and thorow them: So should Christians, through all temporall blessings, looke at *spirituall* and eternall, which are promised and shadowed under the *temporal*. Thus doth Christ himselfe teach us, in the very order of the *Lords prayer*: directing us to pray for *temporal* blessings first, in the fourth petition; and then for *eternall*, in the fifth and sixth: as though that the one were introductions and passages to the other. And this made the prophets to ordinarily cover spirituall blessings under temporall, & put temporall deliverances for spirituall, and confusedly oftentimes one for another: because that the holy men of the old Church, did never rest in view of any temporall promise or blessing, but ascended to contemplation of the higher things in them. How pitifull then is the practice of worldly men; who use Gods blessings so, as they daily abuse and pervert them: using meat to glottony, raiment to pride, learning to vaine glory, speech to flattery, wit to deceit, authority to revenge, callings to oppression: whereas they are all given to be helpes in Gods service, and furtherances in religion, and meanes

to helpe us towards heaven. These men looke at Gods gifts, with the eye of reason, and no further; but if they looked at them, with the eye of faith, as *Abraham* did; it would teach them to make a heavenly and spirittuall use of them, as he did.

Lastly, in the generall state of the reason, and of *Abrahams* practice, observe how he having promise of Canaan, waited for heaven. Now no man waiteth for any thing, but that which hee hath hope of; nor hopeth truly and properly, for any thing, but that which hee hath assurance of: for *hope maketh not ashamed*, Rom. 5. 5. Not worldly hope, for that hath deceived no more than ever trusted it: but *hope in God* never deceived man; nor went any way disappointed, that hoped in God. Therefore here it is apparent, that hope of heaven goeth with assurance; and this assurance must be particular to the believer, as the beleefe and faith is.

But the *Papists* say, This is true indeed of *Abraham*; he had not onely hope, but full assurance; but that came by extraordinary revelation: So that this is a rare example, and his particular revelation, is no generall warrant to us.

Wee answer from *S. Paul*, (Rom. 4. 17.) that *Abraham* is the father of the faithfull; and that his faith is a patterne for all Christians to follow: for else, why doth the Apostle so farre extoll, and set forth that faith of his, above 1300. yeares after his death; shall it be onely for his commendation, and not for our imitation also? Therefore every man that will walke in the steps of holy *Abraham*, may come with him to that measure of faith, that he may wait for heaven, with assurance to enjoy it.

Now let us come to the particular description of that heaven, which *Abraham* thus waited for.

A City having a foundation, whose maker and builder is God.

The description hath three parts:

1. It is said to be a *City*.
2. That hath a *foundation*.
3. That *God made and built* it.

For the first:

Abraham by his faith waited for heaven: But for which? For there are three heavens, or differences of heaven in the Scripture.

The first, that wherein we live and breathe, birds flye, and clouds move.

The second, that wherein the starres are.

The third is that, that is above them both, and is invisable; the seat of Gods glory, where God revealeth his Majesty in speciall manner to men and Angels. This heaven *Abraham* waited for. For as for the first, he lived in it: And for the second, he knew it as well as most men: for it is credibly thought, he was a notable Astronomer. So that it was the third heaven, he waited for: which hee knew this world could not give him; and therefore expected it in another.

Now, this heaven which was *Abrahams* hope, is called a *City*.

A *City* properly is a place for the habitation of men, compassed with walls, and distinguished by streets and houses. Now properly heaven (or the estate of holy men in heaven) is not a *City*; but as else, where in the Scripture, it is called a *house*, a *Tabernacle*, a *Temple*, an *inheritance*, a *kingdome*: so is it here called a *city*; namely, for the resemblance it hath therunto, which consisteth specially in these points:

1. A *City* hath many houses, greater, lesse, and for all sorts. So in heaven also, there are many mansions, John 14. 2. places of glory for all men: none need to feare that hee shall not have fulnesse of joy, and perfect happinesse.

2. A *City* is built, and at first was ordained to this end: that many citizens might live together in concord and amitie. So the kingdome of heaven is an heavenly city, where the Saints of God shall live in perfect peace and love, with fulnesse of joy every one in himselfe, and each one in another.

3. The goodnesse or excellency of a *City* consisteth in this; to have good lawes, good Magistrates to execute them, and good people performing subjection and obedience. Therefore the kingdome of heaven is a most perfect *City*, wherein Gods lawes are the onely lawes, and they shall be written in mens hearts: where each one is a sufficient governour of himselfe, and yet all subject to God; and their God unto them all in all.

4. A *City* is a place, where generally are all necessities and comforts for mans life: one part of the country hath this commodity, another that; but in the city are all, either brought into it, or of it felie. So in heaven are all parts of perfection, and all complements of happinesse, to make the state of Gods children there infinitely blessed.

Such a glorious place is the *Citie* that was *Abrahams* hope.

Now for the use hereof.

First, is heaven such a *City*? Here is a notable comfort to the poore and plaine country-man, who lives in the simplicity of the country life, tilling the ground, or keeping cattell; and it may bee, never saw, or (at the least) never tasted of the pleasures and delights of cities: If hee serve God, and keepe a good conscience, here is his happinesse, he shall be citizen in the high and heavenly Jerusalem: that city which was the hope of the holy men of God in all ages.

Secondly, this may teach *Citizens*, in the great, populous, and pompous cities of this world, to labour also to be *Citizens* in heaven; for that is a city also, and the best on earth are but shadowes of it. And it may shame them that are drowned in the pleasure and delicacies of earthly cities, and care not, nor looke after the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.

tem: as it is called, Heb. 12. 22. But alas, it seems they care not for this shame: for where is security, wantonness, profaneness, oppressions so common, as in these great cities? And as in the Apostles times, the country towne *Berens*, was more zealous and religious, than the rich and stately city of *Thessalonica*, Acts 17. 11. so is it generally to this day, especially at such places in the country, where teaching and knowledge is. But let such cities know, that as they have better means and more comforts, and their very nature should put them in mind, and make them in love with heaven; so they shall receive greater damnation.

Lastly, Cities are places of freedom, and all such great places have some notable privileges; therefore men desire to be free in such places as is to be seen in *London*, *Rome*, *Venice*, &c. even the greatest persons will be content to be free of them, and many seeke it, and pay deare for it; or at least, worke a long time for it.

But heaven is the City of cities, the perfection of security and true happiness: therefore let every one, that desires either honour or happiness, labour and strive to be a freeman of heaven, and never rest till hee know he be. And let those that live in cities, when they are admitted freemen (as daily some are,) remember what a blessedness it will be, if they can be admitted freemen of the glorious City which is above; and how little that shall avale them, if they want this, which was the hope and joy of *Abraham*, and all holy men.

To goe further: this City which *Abraham* faith waited for, is described by two points:

1. That it hath a foundation.
2. That the maker and builder was God.

For the first; heavenly Jerusalem hath a foundation, such a one, as no city in this world hath: and by this phrase, the holy Ghost intimates unto us, what bee the properties of heaven; which be two:

1. The state of heaven is unchangeable.
2. Everlasting and eternall.

First, the state of the Elect in heaven, and their glory there, is not subject to corruption, or the least alteration; as appeareth in that notable and lofty description of the heavenly Jerusalem, Apoc. 21. 14. and from the 10. ver. to the 21. *It hath a great wall and high, twelve gates, twelve Angels for porters: and the wall had twelve foundations, of twelve sorts of most excellent precious stones: and the wall is silke mass, and the city pure gold, like crysell.* The state of it is shadowed by precious stones, and gold; to signifie, as well the durableness, as the excellency thereof. And in the 15. Psal. 1. it is called the mountain of Gods holiness: hills are hardly removed, and therefore David saith, that *Mount Zion* cannot be removed, but remaineth for ever, Psalm. 125. 1. Now, if that bee true of *Mount Zion*, in this world; which must needs be taken either literally, for

the state of the visible Church, which cannot be utterly overthrowne: or mystically, for the state of Gods grace, which in this world can not totally & finally be lost; I say, if this Mount Zion standeth fast, and cannot be removed; how much more true is it, of the state of glory in heaven, and of the triumphant Church, and of heavenly Zion; that it is so unchangeable, so durable, so unremoveable, that it cannot be shaken, but standeth fast for ever. And in this respect, well may the Apostle say here, *It hath a foundation*; which the holy Ghost in the Revelation saith, *to have twelve foundations*.

Secondly, the state of the Elect in heaven, is not only sure, but everlasting; that is, without end: Psalm. 37. 18. *The inheritance of holy men is perpetual*: and therefore Saint Peter 1. 14. saith, that the inheritance reserved in heaven for us is *immortal, and not fading away*. It fades not away; there is the unchangeableness: it is immortal; there is the eternity of it. And this is meant, by *having a foundation*: for in this world, so much the longer doth any thing endure, as the foundation is stronger. Therefore seeing the heavenly city hath such a foundation, no marvell though it endure for ever.

Now put these two together, and they shew the perfect excellency of that city, which is both unchangeable and eternall. Where wee learne, the great difference betwixt the state of that world, and this present world wherein wee live in the body. For what is there in this world so excellent, so precious, so costly, so artificial; but is subject both to alteration, and in the end to dissolution? The longest day hath his night; and the longest life endeth in death, after many miseries, and tossings: the longest Empires, and mightiest Monarchies, had their period, after many mutations: the starest and strongest cities, ended in ruine, after many civill broyles, massacres, and other miseries. So that no glory, no strength, no happiness, nothing at all is there in this world, that is either constant or perpetual, but subject to utter dissolution in the end; and in the meane time, to pitifull alterations. So weake a foundation hath this world, and the best things in it. But contrariwise, the glory of heaven hath such a foundation, as it is both unchangeable and eternall.

The consideration of this difference, hath manifold and profitable use: First, wee may see how reasonable the counsell of the Apostle is, 1 Tim. 6. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they bee not high minded, and put not their trust in uncertaine riches, but in the living God.* For what a misery and vanity is it, to trust in that that is uncertaine, and therefore will deceive them? The Apostle tels them what to doe; namely, *Do good, and be rich in good works, and bee ready to distribute, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the times to come, that they may obtaine eternall life*: that is, that they so spend their riches in holiness and charity, that they may in the end

attaine heaven, which is the *City that hath a foundation*: and who would not spend riches which are so *uncertaine*, for heaven, which is so *certaine* a glory?

Secondly, this must teach us to follow the counsell of Christ Iesus, *Matth. 6. 19. 20. Lay not up for your selves treasures on earth, where moth and canker corrupt; and thieves steale: but in heaven, where is neither canker, moth, thiefe, nor any other corruption.* Every man naturally must have his treasure, and that is it wherein he sets his heart; now that is unworthy of a mans heart, which will be lost we know not how soone. But let us make *heaven our treasure*, the glory whereof is both eternall and unchangeable.

Againe, seeing nothing here is certaine, we must learne to seeke sound comfort, where it may be had. Seeke it in this world, and it will faile us; but seeke it in the sincere worship of God, and that will minister such comfort in this life, and such glory in heaven, *as hath a foundation*, and will never faile us.

Further, this must put us in minde of the holy Kings advice; which is, *to remember our Creator in the dayes of your youth*, *Eccles. 12. 1.* Seeing this world is to uncertaine, and our life hath so weake a *foundation*, as wee are not sure to live to come to old age: every man therefore is to heare the conclusion of all; which is, *to feare God, and keepe his commandements*: and this, the sooner the better. For else, for a little foolish and vaine pleasure, transitory, and which *hath no foundation*; we shall venture the losing of that glorious city, *which hath a sure foundation*.

It followeth in the description;
Whose maker and builder is God.]

The second point in the description of this city is, that *God was the maker, builder, or author of it*. These two words are both one, and therefore it is a needlesse labour of some that would distinguish betwixt them: for the meaning is, *God made*, that is, prepared the glory of heaven, and he *built it*; as though he should say, Heavenly Jerusalem is a glorious city: and no marvell though it bee so, for *God made it*. And if you will needs, that being a city, it must be *built*, be it so; for *God is the builder of it*.

This doctrine is evident in the Scriptures, *Psal. 136. 5. God by his wisdom made the Heavens*. And here is another maine difference betwixt this world, and the glory of heaven: The *Cities* of this world were built by man, but Heaven by *God himselfe*. The art and skill of men built the cities of the earth, and sometime the covetousnesse, or other corruption of man, as is manifest in the beginning: for *Cain*, a covetous, cruell, and ambitious man, built the first city in the world: but holy and good men, have not the honour to be *builders of this City*: No, they are *Citizens* of it, but *God only is the author and builder of it*.

No man may doubt hereof, because this third heaven is invisible; for the *Angels* also are invisible, and yet Gods creatures. Besides our Creed teacheth, that *God is Creator of all things visible and invisible*.

If wee doubt why *God made it*, seeing hee made all things for man, and man in this world hath no sight nor use of it. The answer is, *God made it for two ends*:

First, to bee his owne glorious palace, (not wherein hee would confine his being, or his presence, but) wherein he would make his glory most apparent; and wherein his glory should in a sort dwell. In which regards, it is called *his throne*, *Esa. 66*. And in our Lords prayer we say by Christs owne teaching, that *God our father is in heaven*. Therefore as Princes build themselves palaces, to shew their power and puissance, and to magnifie themselves, and to bee fit habitations for their greatnesse; So *God made the third heaven to bee the throne of his glory*.

Secondly, he had also a respect herein to his creatures: for hee made that heaven; therein to reveale his Majesty and glory to his reasonable creatures, *Angels and Men*: and (by shewing them his glory) to glorifie them. For in *Gods presence is the fulnesse of joy*, *Psalme 16. ultim.* And in this sense is it true, that *God made all things for man* (as *man for himselfe*): namely, all things, either for his soule, or body, or both; either for his use in this life, or in the other.

And so the third heaven was made for mans use, not in this life, but in the life to come; for his soule untill the last Judgement; and after that, for both soule and body.

Hence we learne divers institutions:

First, in that the third heaven, which never was seene with the eye of man, is here positively affirmed to bee *made by God*: Wee learne, that therefore it is one of Gods creatures; and not eternall, as some hold, and goe about to prove thus: *God is eternall*; but hee must bee in some place: and heaven is the seat and place of *God*; therefore it is coeternall with *God*. But I answer, from Gods word; that though heaven be the seat, and throne of *Gods glory*, and where hee manifesteth, and magnifieth his glory; yet it is not the place of his *substance and being*, for that is infinite, and incomprehensible: and it is against the Christian faith, to imagine the *God-head* to bee comprehended or contained in any place. *1 King. 8. 27. The heavens, yea, the heavens of heavens cannot comprehend thee, O Lord; how much more unable is this house that I have built?*

Nor is it materiall, that wee know not on what day it was created; or that it is not named amongst the workes of the creation. For the same is true of the *Angels also*: and it pleased Gods wisdom, for speciall causes, to name no creatures particularly in the creation, but *visible*; whereas wee know both from our Creed, and Gods word it selfe, that he is the creator of

all things both visible and invisible. Therefore though we know not what day the third heaven was made; yet is it sufficient, that here is said, *It was made and built by God himselfe.* Whereupon it necessarily followeth, it is a creature, and not eternall with the God-head.

Secondly, here appeares the weaknesse of one of the commonest arguments, used for the defence of the *Ubiquity* and *Consubstantiation*. Christ, say they, is present bodily in the Eucharist, and they prove it thus: Christ is in heaven, and hee is God: but heaven is every where; for God is every where; and where God is, there heaven is: (as where the King is, there the Court is:) Therefore Christ may be in the Sacrament, and yet bee in heaven notwithstanding.

Answer, the ground is false: *Heaven* is not every where; for then it is in *Hell*: which to affirm, is absurdity, confusion, and impiety. Indeed *Gods presence* is every where; and where his presence is, there is his power: as where the Kings presence is, there is also his power and authority; and there may be any seat or court of Justice: and so where he is, the court is. But if you take the Court, for some one of his chiefe houses, then the saying is not true. But contrariwise, as the Kings power is, wheresoever his presence is; and yet hee may have one house more sumptuous, and magnificent than all the rest, which may be called his Court, by an excellency above other: and that Court is not alwayes where the King is, but in some set and certaine place, and not removable.

So Gods power and glory is every where; and yet his most glorious Court, the *third heaven*, is not every where, but in his limited and appointed place, where Gods glory shineth more than in any other place.

Again, if heaven properly taken, be every where, then it is God himselfe: for that that is every where, must needs be deified; and indeed some, to maintaine this opinion, have said little lesse. But if the holy Ghost may moderate this disputation, he plainly tells us here, *That God is the maker and builder of it.* Therefore assuredly it is not God, but one of Gods creatures.

Thirdly and lastly, let us observe the description of heaven, included in these two words, *maker and builder.* God made it, that is, it is one of his creatures; hee made it as well as the rest: and he builded it, that is, (as the Word signifieth) made it with art; or hee bestowed skill and wisdom upon it. For though we may not imagine any substantiall difference betwixt these two words, for matter; yet in signification they differ: and so farre wee are to observe it.

Here then we learne, that the third *Heaven* is like a peece of worke, wherein an excellent workman hath spent his art, and shewed his skill; that is, that the highest heaven is a most glorious place, and surpasseth all other crea-

tures of God in glory and excellencie, so farre as therein shineth the glory, skill, and wisdom of the Creator, more than in any other creature. In which regard, it is no marvell though the holy Ghost say in another place, *That the eye hath not seene, nor the eare heard, nor mans heart conceived, what God hath there prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. 2. 9.* And S. Paul himselfe, though hee had the honour to be taken up into this third heaven, and to see and heare the glory which is there; yet afterwards could not hee expresse the glory he had seene. And this was figured in the Temple of *Jerusalem*, which was the mirrour, and beauty of the world; for the building whereof, God both chose the skilfullest men, and induced them also with extraordinary gifts: namely, *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*. Now, as thereby that Temple was the most excellent peece of worke that ever was in this world, made by man; so the highest heaven (which was mystically prefigured in *Salomons Temple*) is the most excellent of all the workes of God.

The use of this doctrine is not to bee omitted.

First, if that bee so excellent and glorious a place, we must all labour to come thither; for above all things, it seemes worthy to be fought for. People come out of all places of the country, to dwell in great townes, and rich cities; and men labour to bee freemen there, and to have their children free in them: and even the greatest men, will have their houses either in, or neere them; that so, though they will not alwayes dwell in them, yet they may sojourne in them at their pleasures now and then. And why all this? but because, first, they are places beautifull, and many wayes pleasant to the eye. Secondly, full, and frequented with the best company. Thirdly, replenished with abundance of all things needfull for mans life, for necessity, comfort, and delight. Fourthly, they enjoy many privileges and freedoms. And lastly, all this is most true of such cities, where the King keeps his Court.

If this be so, then how is heaven to be sought for? Behold here a goodly city, a city of God, (whereof *London, Paris, Rome, Venice, nay Jerusalem*, are scarce shadowes) the true *Jerusalem*, the joy of the whole earth: nay, the joy of the world, and the glory of all Gods creatures, made immediately with the hand, and built with the skill and cunning of God himselfe. The Princes of the world, and even of Rome it selfe, wondered at the beauty, and were amazed at the magnificence of *Jerusalem* and the Temple, and yet it was but a type and figure hereof. For that had indeed the glory of the world upon her: but the new *Jerusalem* hath the glory of God upon her, *Rev. 21. 4.*

Shall we then seeke to dwell in the cities of this world, and not labour to come to heaven? Are they any way excellent, wherein heaven is not much more to be desired? Are they beautifull,

tiful, and is not it the beautie of the world? Read the 21. chap. of the Reve. and suppose that the beauty of it were but outward, and worldly and sensible to humane capacities: yet is it farre more excellent, than ever any was in this world. And is not there the company of the deitie, of Christs humanity, of the holy Angels, and all good men? And is not there abundance of whatsoever belongeth to perfect happinesse? And is not there freedome from the devill, sinne, and death? And is it not the Court of God, the King of glorie? Then why doe we not sigh and grone, and long to bee free-men of this glorious citie? And though wee cannot come to it, as long as wee live in this world; yet why doe we not strive to come as neere it as may be? In this world, when a man cannot dwell in the heart of a *Citie*, yet he will rather dwell in the *suburbs*, than hee will not be neere it; and being there, hee knowes hee can soone step into the citie. So let us in this life come as neere heaven as we may; let us get into the *suburbs* and dwell there.

The *suburbs of heaven* is Gods true Church on earth, where his Word is freely knowne and preached, and his holy Sacraments administred, and therein God truly served. Let us associate our selves to this Church, and live according to the holy lawes thereof. This is the *suburbs of heaven*; so shall wee be readie to enter into the glorious citie it selfe, when the Lord calls us.

And as this is for *ourselves*; so if we love our *children*, or care for their advancement, let us make them free-men of that citie, whose maker and builder is God: So shall we be sure to have comfort and joy of them here, and with them in heaven. But if we will have them free-men in heaven, we must make them Gods apprentices on earth: they must serve out their time, else they get no freedome. This time, is all their life. Men are deceived that let their children be the *devils slaves* here, and thinke to have them free in heaven: let us then binde our children *prentises to God*, that is, make them his servants here: then assuredly, as in their repentance and regeneration here, they are borne free-men of heaven; so after this life they shall enjoy the freedomes and privileges of that heavenly citie, which was made and built by the wisdome of God.

Lastly, here we see how true it is that David teacheth, Psal. 15. 4. *No vile person can come in heaven*. And no marvell, for if men thus and thus defamed, cannot be free-men in the *Cities* on earth built by men, is it likely that sinners, and profane men, that care not for repentance, and regeneration, (for they bee the vile men) shall be admitted into that citie, whose maker and builder is God? It is the holy citie, no uncleane thing can enter into it, Revel. 21. It is Gods holy mountaine, how shall ungodlinesse ascend thither? Psal. 15. 1. It is the new Jerusalem, how shall the old man, that is sinnefull

A corruption, get into it? We must therefore cast off the old man with his lusts, and be renewed in holinesse: we must become penitent sinners for our lives past, and *new men* for hereafter; or else let us not looke to have any part in heaven.

And good reason, for God is the maker and builder of it: But he is not the maker of sinne; but the Devill, and our selves brought it out: and thinke we the Devils worke shall come in heaven? or that God will build a house for the devils slaves to dwell in? let us not be deceived: But contrariwise, grace and holinesse is Gods worke: so our soules and bodies were the worke of his hands, so our regeneration is much more the worke of his owne power and mercy. That man therefore who can say; God as once he made me a man, so he hath againe made and built me a new man, and a new creature; that man is he, that shall be an inhabitant in that heavenly citie, whose maker and builder is the same God.

In this holy way of faith and repentance did the holy Fathers walke to the citie: as David saith, in the name of them all, *Thou wilt I wait for thee in holinesse*.

And thus doubtlesse did the holy patriarche Abraham, who as hee was the Father of our faith, so was hee also a patterne of repentance and holy life: and in that holinesse he waited for this city that hath a foundation, whose maker and builder is God.

C Hitherto we have heard the holy practice of Abrahams faith, in two examples.

There is much more spoken of the excellencie of his faith: but by the way, the holy Ghost interlaceth a worthy example, even of a womans faith; namely, Sarah his wife. The sixth example in the order of the whole, followeth in the words of the two next verses.



SARAH'S Faith.

VERSE II.

By faith, even Sarah also received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a childe, when shee was past age, because shee judged him faithful which had promised.

NEXT to Abraham, who is called the father of our faith, or of faithfull men, followeth Sarah, who was also mystically the mother of believers.

next to the husband followeth the wife : nay, *Abrahams* faith is commended, both before her, and after her ; and hers inclosed in the midst.

By the way here observe, how God honours holy marriage, and observes the decorum, and dignitie of it : He not onely allowes, or commendeth the faith of *Abel*, who in may be was unmarried ; but as we see, of married men also. And it is worthy our observation, that of all these whom the holy Ghost here records for their faith and holinesse, they were all married, except *Abel* ; of whom, it is not certaine whether hee were or no.

It appeares therefore, that God as he ordaineth holy marriage, so he alwaies honoreth it, both with his grace on earth, and his glorie in heaven : as well, if not better, than any other state of life. They therefore doe spit in the face of God himselfe, who any way disgrace it, and they especially who allow fornication, or adulterie, in any sort of men, rather than it, as some Papists doe. But here we may observe further, how God maintains the dignitie and decorum of it : hee placeth *Abraham* and *Sarah* together, and puts none betwixt them, to shew the inseparable unitie, that is to be betwixt them : so farre, as that even in storie, they are to bee set together : and how heinous their presumption is, that dare any way attempt to separate or part that unitie.

He placeth *Abraham* first, to shew the dignitie and preheminance of the man, whom for her sinne God hath set over her ; not onely for her head, but for her guide and governour : and to teach the man, that he, and his example should be first, and should be a light unto her ; to shame them who come behinde their wives in faith and holinesse. Hee placeth *Abraham* both afore and after her, and her in the midst ; to teach her, that her glorie and honour, every way, is in the vertue and worthinesse of her husband ; her head under God : who is to goe before her, to give her good example : and to come after, to oversee her courses ; and on all sides, to be a shelter and defence unto her.

These things may not unfitly be noted in this contextion : Now let us come to the words, wherein are these points ;

1. Who beleeved : *Euen Sarah.*
2. What shee beleeved : *Gods promise to beare Isaac.*
3. The impediments of that faith : which were two : 1. *Her age.*
2. *Her barrennesse.*
4. The effects of this her faith : which were three,
1. *Thereby she conceived seed.*
2. *Brought forth Isaac.*
3. *Had a great issue and posterity by him.*
5. The ground of her faith : *she judged him faultless which had promised.*

All these are laid down in this v. or the next. The first point is, the person, of whom this

storie is : *Sarah a woman* ; even shee beleeved. We have heard some examples of notable men ; but behold here, a woman chronicled for her faith, and holy obedience, as well as men.

Where we learne, that saving faith, and consequently salvation it selfe, is not proper to one sex, but to both ; man and woman. The woman indeed was the first that brought in sinne ; and being deceived her selfe by the Devill, she deceived man. In which sense the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 2. 14. *The man was not deceived, but the woman ; and shee was in the transgression.* And for that cause, grievous calamities, and much bitternesse, was laid upon that sex, in bearing, and bringing up children, and in subjection. In which regards they might thinke themselves forsaken of God, for their fault. For the preventing whereof, the Apostle here, or rather the holy Ghost by him teacheth us, that true faith and salvation by the *Messias*, belongeth to *Sarah* as well as *Abraham* ; to women, as well as to men. And Saint Peter also most plainly (1 Pet. 3. 7.) teacheth us, that *they are heires together with their husbands, of the grace of life.*

The use whereof, as it discovereth the monstrous and unnatural madnesse of some men, who have called into question the possibility of their salvation ; yea some, whether they have soules or no : so it giveth encouragement to women, to serve that God in zeale and sinceritie, which hath beene so mercifull unto their sin ; and who, though he hath subjected them in bodie unto their husbands, yet hath made their soules partakers with them, of the same hope of immortall life.

Yet withall we may observe, how few the holy Ghost here recordeth ; namely, but one or two women, amongst many men. For so it hath beene in all ages, those that have beene good, were excellent ; but they were few in comparison of men : which, as it is the more commendation to them that are good, so it must stirre up all women professing religion, to labour in the imitation of the faith of their grandmother *Sarah* ; that so they may be some of those few.

But let us enter into further, and more particular consideration, who this *Sarah* was ; especially seeing shee is the onely woman of the Jewes nation, whose faith is here remembered.

Shee was the wife of *Abraham*, the grand Patriarch of the age betwixt the Flood, and the giving of the Law. And of her wee read this storie amongst other, Gen. 18. 13. God by his Angell appearing to her husband and her, made a promise, that within the yeare they should have a sonne : both heard it, and both laughed to heare it : *Abraham* in joy and admiration, and therefore was not reproved : shee in doubtfulness, and a conceit of almost impossibilitie, and was for it sharply reproved of the Angell. Yet behold this *Sarah*, that even

now laughed to hear such a promise, as being a fond conceit, and meete impossible: yet afterward beleeveth, and in so good a measure, as her faith is here registered to all posterities.

In her example, we may learne a good lesson. It was a bad thing in *Sara* to laugh at Gods Word, though it seemed never so high above her conceit: But it was good and commendable, that she correcteth her fault, and testifieth her amendment by beleiving. Wee all follow *Sara*'s fault; but few her repentance. Many in our Church are mockers of our religion, and of the Ministers and professors thereof: and all religion that standeth not with their humours, is no more regarded of them, than toys or de-viſes; and they are counted tooles or hypocrites that thinke otherwiſe. But alas, theſe men know not how vile a ſinne they commit, while they laugh at Gods Word. For if her fault was ſuch, who laughed at that that ſeemed to her almoſt impoſſible, and yet without any profaneneſſe; what ſhall become of them, that out of their carnalitie, and fleſhly profaneneſſe doe make but a ſport at all Gods ordinances, promiſes, and commandements; and at all religion, more than ſerveth their owne turne? Let ſuch men be warned, to ceaſe mocking, and lay aſide reviling of others, and begin ſoberly and ſeriouſly to *beleieve*; eſſe they will find it ſharpe kicking againſt the prick, and dangerous playing with edge-tooles.

Furthermore, *Sara* that laughed in doubting, yet (withall) *beleieves*. This teacheth us, that true *faith* is joynd alwaies with doubting in all Gods children. If any object, that followeth not here: for ſhe ſitt *doubted*, and then *beleeveth*; when the *doubt* ſhe *beleeveth* not, and when ſhe *beleeveth*, the *doubt* is not.

I answer: It is not ſo, but the contrarie, as I will prove. For *Sara* was no Infidell, utterly to denie and gaine ſay Gods Word, when ſhe heard it: but onely finding it in all reaſon impoſſible, ſhe therefore preſently yielded not to it, but laughed at it as a matter paſt ordinarie courſe, yet withall ſhe regarded who ſpoke it; namely *God*, and therefore forthwith judged it poſſible with *God*, though impoſſible in reaſon, and ſo at laſt conſtantly *beleeveth* it, yet ſtill her reaſon gaine ſaying it: ſo that ſhe never doubted to, but that ſhe in ſome part *beleeveth* it. And when ſhe *beleeveth* it moſt ſtedfaſtly, yet ſhe ſomething *doubted* of it: reaſon ſaid it could not be, *faith* ſaid it might be. Therefore, as when reaſon over-ruling, yet ſhe had ſome ſparkes of *faith*: ſo when her *faith* was predominant, there remained ſome reliques of *doubting*: for as reaſon cannot overthrow true *faith*; ſo the beſt *faith* in this world, cannot fully vanquiſh reaſon.

This is the doctrine of Gods Word, Mar. 9. 24. Jeſus bidding the father of the child poſſeſſed to *beleieve*, and then his child ſhould be diſpoſſeſſed: the answered crying with teares, *Lord*

I beleieve, helpe my unbelief: There is faith and unbelief in one ſoule at one time, in one action, upon one object, and what is unbelief, but doubting or worſe?

And Chriſt often reproveth his Diſciples for their doubting; and caſts them, *O ye ſtubble faith*; and yet all know that, that they then had true faith: yea, *S. Peter* himſelfe, moſt famous for his *faith*, is reprov'd in the ſame words, *O thou of little faith, wherefore doubtſt thou*? He had a little faith, therefore ſome faith: a little faith, therefore much doubting: therefore it is apparant, a man may have in his ſoule at once, both faith and doubting: yea, commonly we have a graine of *maſe* ſeeds, or a mite of *faith*, and a mountaine of doubting.

The uſe of this doctrine; Firſt, diſcovereth the nakedneſſe of many profeſſing themſelves Chriſtians, who care not how they live, yet ſay they beleive in Chriſt, and looke to be ſaved by him. Aſke how they know it: they answer, they know no other: Aſke when they began: they ſay they did ever ſo: Aſke if they doubt; they answer they would be aſhamed ſo to doe. But alas, here is nothing but ignorance and preſumption. Our religion can never bee diſgraced by ſuch men: for they have it not, they know it not: for if they did, they would ſhame to answer ſo. Theſe men have no *faith* at all: for, where it is, doubting doth alwaies ſhew it ſelfe. And he that knowes he *beleieves*, knowes alſo he *doubts*: and the more he *beleieves*, the more hee knoweth and ſeclerh his doubting: for where theſe two are, they are alwaies oppoſite, and ſhew their contrary natures: the one is the *ſpirit*, the other is fleſh and corruption. And theſe, ſaith the Apoſtle, doe liſt one againſt another, Galat. 5. 17. He therefore that thinketh he is wholly *ſpirit*, and hath no *fleſh* or corruption in him, is nothing but corruption: and he that imagineth he hath perfect faith, and no doubting, hath no faith at all in him, but carnall preſumption.

Secondly, here is comfort to all ſuch as have *faith* and grace, and yet are daily troubled with temptations: let not ſuch be diſmayed, though they finde in themſelves much doubting and diffidence. For *Sara* *beleeveth*, and yet ſhe doubted; yea, notwithstanding all her doubting, ſhe *beleeveth* ſo excellently, as her faith is here made a patterne to all holy Matrons for ever. He therefore that is even *buffeted by Satan*, with temptations of doubting, let not him be diſmayed, as though he had no faith: but let him be aſſured, his doubting doth not bewray it ſelf, but that *faith* makes the oppoſition; and therefore let him ſtrive with teares and prayers to God, and ſay, *Lord I beleieve, helpe thou my unbelief*.

Thus we ſee the perſon who, *Sara*: but what is the action which ſhe did? It is implied in theſe words,

Throught faith Sara, &c.

Her action is, ſhe *beleeveth*. This verbe of *faith*.

faith, and this action of *believing* is the matter of all this chapter. These holy men and women had other holy virtues: but their *faith* is that alone, which is here commended.

Now particularly for *Sara's faith*, here is one notable thing to be observed; the very same word of God, which she *believed*, and for believing whereof she is here registered, at the same she also laughed: but behold, her *faith* is recorded, her laughing is not: her faith is commended, her fault silenced. In which holy and mercifull practice of God, we learne;

First, that God accepteth *true faith*, though it be attended with many infirmities. As a King is content to give a begger an almes, though he receive it with a hand shaking with the palsy: so, God is well pleased with our faith, though diseased with infirmities, and bestoweth grace on a believing soule, though shaken with many temptations.

In a Word, God accepteth soundnesse of faith, though it be but small, and more looks at (in his mercie) a mans little faith, than his many faults. *He will not breake the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*, Ety 42. 3. When a mans life is broken in heart, and dejected in soule, in sight of his many finnes, and little grace, God will not breake this *bruised reed*, but will comfort and strengthen him. And when any life of grace appeares in a man, (as *flax that smokes*), but will not burne out) God will not *quench* it, but will rather kindle it, and give life unto it.

Let this teach us to take in good part, the holy and honest endeavours of our brethren, though they cannot doe so well as they would, or should. Let us not exact too much, and too hastily upon them, but expect in meeknesse the working of Gods grace: and in the meane time, thinke well of *Sara's faith*, though it be with laughing.

Secondly, here we may learne, that God rather observes and regards good things in his children, than their faults and imperfections: he writes up *Sara's faith*, hee nameth not her laughing. This is from the goodnesse of his nature, being *goodnesse* it selfe, and therefore most easily apprehendeth, and takes notice of the least goodnesse, where-ever he findes it.

Thus should wee deale one with another: what good thing we see in any man, we should observe and commend it: his faults we should not see, but cover and *wype them*. But the course is contrary: the common table-raike of the world, is nothing but of mens faults, and to up upon their imperfections: but if they have never so many good properties, we can bury them all, or passe them over in silence. This argueth the malice and the naughtinesse of our nature; which being evil, doth delight in nothing but evil; and being corrupt, feeds, as doth the filthy horse-slie, on nothing but corruption. But let us remember the practice of God, and learn to conceale faults, and of our tongues to talke

of the good things and vertues in our brethren: So shall we resemble the Lord, who though *Sarah* laughed (not in an holy admiration, but in unbelieve) yet, forasmuch as afterward she *believed*, God hath matched her with the noblest believers, and holiest men that have beene in the world.

Thus much for the first point; the person, and her action, shee *believed*. Now the second is, *what she believed?* included and necessarily implied in the last words of the verse: *she judged him faithfull which had promised.*

The thing shee believed, was the word or promise of God: Particularly his promise that she should beare *Issac* in her old age: of which promise, and the circumstances of it, wee may read, Gen. 18. 13, &c.

Here the only question is, By what faith shee believed this?

And the answer is, by *true saving faith*: and it is proved thus: *Abraham* believed this promise by the faith that justified him, Rom. 4. 10, 11. But *Abraham* and *Sarah* believed it both by one faith: therefore *Sarah* believed that promise by the faith that also justified her. Where we learne, that saving faith apprehendeth not onely the great promise of redemption by Christ, but all other inferiour promises that depend upon it. For here we see *Abraham* and *Sarah* take hold of the promises of a temporall blessing, by the same faith, whereby formerly they had laid hold on the promise of eternall salvation by the *Messias*: so that the object of true faith is,

1. *Principall*: The promise of salvation by Christ.

2. *Secondarie*: All inferiour promises annexed therunto.

The maine promise is: *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Sonne, to the end, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternall life*, Ioh. 3. 16. Now true faith, first of all, directly and plainly fasteneth it selfe on this: but after, and with this, on all other promises that concerne soule or bodie. In the *Lords Prayer*, wee are bid to pray for temporall blessings, health, peace, competence of wealth, and all other, under the name of *daily bread*: and we are bound to believe, that God will give them, if wee aske in *faith*. Neither is this faith constrained, but free and voluntary, and on a good foundation. For being perswaded that God accepteth us in Christ for salvation, wee cannot but withall be perswaded, that God will give us all things else needfull for us.

This wee here note againe, because we are wrongfully charg'd by the Papists, to hold, that faith apprehendeth the promise of salvation alone. But we passe it over, for that we have already spoken something of it.

Now followeth the third point: namely, the impediments of her faith, in these words,

When she was past age.

The promise was to have a child : *She beleev-
ed it.* Now against child-bearing there are
two impediments : 1. *Barrenesse.* 2. *Age.*

If one be *aged*, or past the ordinarie time, it
is hard and unlikely : but if one be *very aged*,
and far past it, it is impossible she should con-
ceive and beare a child : thus it stands in reason.
Besides, though one be not past age, yet if she
be *barren*, (as some by secret reasons in nature
are) it is not to be expected, shee should con-
ceive. Now, both these lay in *Sarahs* way : for
here it is said, *shee was past age* : and another
place (namely, Gen. 16. 1, 2.) *faith, shee was
barren.*

But it may be objected against *Sarahs* age,
that in the old time they had children, till they
were of great age. *Eve* had her sonne *Seth*, at
130. yeares old, Genes. 5. 3. For *Adam* and
Eve must needs be both of one age : and after
that, *Eve* bore many sons and daughters. There-
fore, it may seeme, that *Sarah* was not past age
at ninetie yeares old. But wee are to know,
that they who began to beare at that age, lived
eight or nine hundred yeares : but *Sarah* liv-
ed after the flood, when Ages were brought
downe to 200. and for the most part to 100.
yeares. *Abraham* lived but 175. yeares, and
Sarah but 127. She therefore who lived 127.
yeares, and died an old woman, must needs be
past age of child-bearing at ninetie yeares
old.

And besides her age, she was also barren by
her natural constitution, (as many are and have
beene) and brought *Abraham* no children. Yet
unto this woman comes a word from God, *Sa-
rah shall beare a sonne.* And behold, this same a-
ged and barren woman, doth not object de-
spairately these her two hinderances, (the one
whereof in reason is sufficient against child-
bearing) but beyond all impediments, and a-
bove reason beleeveth it shall be so, resting
and relying onely and wholly on Gods Word
for it.

The use of which notable and faithfull pra-
ctice (so wonderfull in a woman) must teach us
to rest on Gods Word and promise, though we
have no reason so to doe : for example,

When we see our friends, or childrens bodies
cast into the earth to feed worms, burnt by fire,
or eaten by fishes, reason faith, they are gone,
they can never be againe. We have Gods word
and assured promise, *The dead shall rise : with
their bodies shall they rise.* We must therefore be-
leeve it, if we will be of the faith of *Sarah.* God
said to her, *Age and barrenesse shall have a child :*
she beleeveth it. He faith to us, *Dust and rotten-
nesse shall live againe :* say, he hath often said
it : and shall not our faith acknowledge the
voice of our God, and beleeve it as he did ?

But let us come to personall promises, as hers
was (for this is generall :) God hath promised
grace and pardon to every penitent and sweet-
ening soule ; yea, no man is partaker of the sweet-
nes thereof, without the bitterness of many temp-

tations to the contrary, giving him occasion
of doubting, and often even of despairing of
Gods favour. What must a man doe in this case ?
even *beleeve*, though he feele no reason why to
beleeve ; & *hope above hope.* Such was *Abraham*
and *Sarahs* faith. And for us, as they were regis-
tered in the storie of Genes. : so both here, and
also Rom. 4. remembered again, and commended
for it. Now, suppose that thou after thy com-
ming to God by faith and repentance, fall into
temptations of desertion, wherein to thy feel-
ing, Gods heavie hand and wrath hath teazed
on thee, and the Devil layeth thy finnes to thy
charge, and tels thee thou art a damned wretch,
for thou wert ever an hypocrite, and never hadst
faith, and that therefore God is thy enemy : In
this case, wherein in reason or in feeling, there
is not the least hope of salvation ; what must
thou doe, despair ? God forbid. For that is the
downfall into Hell. No, but hope when there is
no hope, keepe faith when there is no feeling.

And to strengthen us herein, remember the
faith of *Iob* (tried and sifted, so as few have bin)
who *though the arrows of the Almighty shooke
in him, and the venome thereof drunke up his spi-
rits,* Job 5. 4. yet even then he *beleeved :* and
would not give over, nor let goe his hold, and
said, *Though thou brag me to dust, yet will I not
forsake thee : no, though thou kill me, yet will I trust
in thee.* So in the furie of temptations, when the
venome of Gods wrath seemes to drinke up our
spirits, then must we *beleeve :* and in the pangs
of death, when God seemes ready to kill us,
then must wee *trust in him.* In such cases is the
life of faith to be shewed : *when reason and feel-
ing say,* God is a terrible Judge, *faith* must say,
he is a mercifull Father.

In our health, and welfare, and feeling of
Gods favour, this exhortation may seeme tedious
: but if we belong to God, if it be not past
alreadie, the time is sure to come, when this
doctrine will be needfull for the best of us all.

Thus we see the excellency of this womans
faith : which is the more commended, by reason
of these two so great hinderances. Now follow
the effects of her faith, which are divers : some
laid downe in this verse, and some in the next.

*Received strength to conceive seed,
And was delivered of a child.*

In these words are two effects :
First, by power of her faith she was enabled
to conceive : which afore she did not, though
there were the same reasons in nature why she
should.

Secondly, she was delivered of a child in her
old age, and that child was *Isaac* : who is there-
fore called the promised seed, and the child of
the promise.

Out of the consideration of these two, wee
may learne divers good instructions : for seeing
they are so nere a-kin in their natures, we will
speake of them both jointly together.

First, here we may see that nothing is so hard
or difficult which God hath promised, but faith

can compass it, and bring it to performance. Christ bade the *blinde see*, the *lame to goe*: he spake, they beleaved, and they were healed. So here God promisseth a *barren old woman a child*, *she beleeveth*, and lo, *she conceiveth and brings forth a sonne*.

The use of this doctrine is for two sorts of people:

First, many in our Church being ignorant; when they are moved to learne religion, answer; Alas, they are simple, or not booke-learned, or they are dull, and heavie witted, or they bee old and weake, and therefore they can learne nothing; or if they doe, they cannot remember it. But here is nothing but vaine excuses: for they want not wit to learne religion, if they have wit to buy and sell, to know a faire day from a foule, good meat from ill, decre from cheape, Winter from Summer. If they have wit to practise the civil actions of the world, they have wit enough to conceive the grounds of religion, and to get to much knowledge as may suffice for a ground of that *faith* which will save their soules; so that they want nothing, but grace and diligence to use the means. To them therefore here is matter of good advice. Let such men learne but one promise of God out of the holy Scripture, as this; *Seek first the Kingdom of Gods, and all things else shall be given unto you*, Matth. 6. 33. or this; *Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. 5. 7. or this; *Hee that commeth unto me, I cast him not away*, Ioh. 6. 37. or but this; *Aske, and ye shall have; seeke, and ye shall finde*, Mat. 7. 7. Let them learne but one of these, and wheate they have learned it, beleve it, and let their soules daily feed on that faith; and they shall see what will follow: even a wonderfull blessing upon that poore beginning. This their faith will so content and please their hearts, that it will urge them forward to get more, and will makethem both desirous, and capable of more knowledge and grace; and will make them even hunger and thirst after knowledge and grace: (whereas, he that knoweth no promise, nor beleeveth it, contents himselfe in ignorance and error.) And this shall every one finde, that will carefully use the means that God appoints, and will begin to learne but one lesson at the first. For as old *barren Sarah*, beleaving Gods promise, *conceives and brings forth*: so old, simple, plaine, dull Countrey-men, *beleaving* but one promise of Gods Word, shall conceive and bring forth daily more and more fruits of knowledge and grace.

Secondly, others who have made better proceedings in religion, doe see their finnes, and doe much bewaile them, but they cannot overcome their corruptions: yea, many there are, to whom their finnes, and inward corruptions are more grievous, and burdensome, then all bodily wants or miseries in the world; yet see they not how to conquer their corruptions: but (alas) are oftentimes foiled by them,

As to their great discomfort.

Let these men know the want of faith is the cause hereof; for that they doe not sufficiently ruminate, & consider the promises of God made in that behalfe, nor use the means God hath appointed; to the use whereof he hath annexed his promises of helpe against sinne. Let them therefore lay Gods Word, and promises unto their consciences, in holy and frequent meditations. Let them carefully use the means God hath appointed, hearing and reading his word, receiving the holy *Communion*, earnest and frequent *Prayer*, craving also the *prayers of others*; and let them sharpen these holy exercises, by *sitting watching*, holy communers with others, *visitations* of others afflicted like themselves, offering revealing their estate to their godly *Pastors*. Let them continue thus doing, and will confidently on the word and promise of God, with the steadfast foot of faith, and they shall see, that old *Sarah* shall have strength to conceive: that is, that their poore soules shall receive strength to tread upon Satan, to conquer their corruptions, and to conceive and bring forth many worthy fruits of holinesse, to their joy and comfort in their latter experience; as *Isaac* was to *Sarah* in her elderage.

The next doctrine wee may here learne is; That whereas *Sarah*, by her faith in Gods promise, conceives and brings forth: therefore children are the immediate blessing of the Lord: for *Sarah* bare *Isaac*, not by any ordinarie strength or power of nature, but through faith she received strength to conceive, &c. Neither is this fo in her onely (wherein there was a miraculous worke of Gods power) but in all. Some are indeed barren by constitution, and these cannot conceive, unless by Gods power as *Sarah* did. But some have no children, who in all naturall reason might conceive. For as God gaveth the Law, and thereby a gift and power to increase and multiply, Gen. 1. 22. so he reserved the execution of it to himselfe, and power to alter or dispense, to adde or diminish as it pleaseth him. Therefore such the Psalmist, *Pla. 127. 3. Lo, children are the inheritance of the Lord, and the fruit of the wombe is his reward*: And speaking of them, *Plam. 128. 4. her faith, Lo, thou shalt bee blessed that feareth the Lord*.

The use is, to teach *Parents* therefore to bring them up as Gods blessings, and not only to give them corporall necessities (for so they doe their beasts) but to nurture them in holy Discipline, by sowing the seeds of religion in their hearts. If this they want, they have nothing, though you leave them Earldomes. And herein is the saying true, *Better unborne thanuntaught*. The Law and power to increase and multiply, is given to beatts in their kinde, all as well as to us, Gen. 1. 22. Therefore unless we doe more than provide for their bodies, we differ little from the; but make the know God, & so we make the fellows with the Angels. If

Parents

Parents did thus, it cannot bee expressed what blessings would come thereby to Church and Common-wealth.

Thirdly and lastly, let us here know and learne, that this holy Matron, *Sarah*, figureth unto us mystically the spirituall Hierusalem, the Church of God. *Allegories* are charily and sparingly to be taught, else much unsound doctrine may cumber mens consciences: but this is found and sure, for it is the Apostles, Gal. 4. 23, &c. By *Agar* and *Sarah* other things are meant: for these two mothers are two Testaments, *Agar*, shee which gendereth unto bondage, *Sarah*, *Hierusalem*, which is free, and from above, shee the mother of us all. Now the resembrance betwixt naturall *Sarah* the wife of *Abraham*, and mysticall *Sarah* the spouse of Christ the Church of God, stands in this; that as shee not by power in herselfe, but by Gods power and faith in his promise bare *Isaac*; so the Church our mother bringeth forth children to God, onely by the power of Gods Word and Spirit. And therefore as *Isaac* is called the child of Promise, and said to be borne by Promise, Gal. 4. 23. so men regenerate and borne to the Church, are said not to be borne of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, Joh. 1. 12. And Saint *James* saith, 1. 18. God of his owne will begat us with the word of truth. Thus the word of God and the will, that is, the Spirit of God, these two together beget children to the Church.

The use is to teach us all to honour the Church as our mother; but to worship God alone, who is the father of our soule. The Church cannot make herselfe our mother, nor us her children, when shee will; but it is God that must speak the word, and then we are made, he must beget us by the power of his Spirit, and ministry of his Word. And further, let us learne here what account wee are to make of Gods holy word, which is the immortall seed of our regeneration, whereby we are made Gods children and heires of immortality.

Thus much of the two first effects of her faith.

The third is laid downe in the next verse: which because it is much stood upon by the holy Ghost, we will put it off till then, being therefore worthy our deeper consideration.

And now followeth in the end of this verse, the fifth and last point, which is, the Ground of her faith:

Because shee judged him faithfull which had promised.

The foundation whereon shee built this her faith, that she should have a sonne, being barren and past age, was not the bare promise of God, so much as the conceit or opinion shee had of him that promised. For promises are not of value, so much by the things promised, though never so great or excellent (for they may promise much, who can performe nothing: or though they can, yet will recall their word in

lighteneth and inconstancy) as by the worthynesse of the partie promising. Wee say in this world, wee had rather have some mens word, than other mens bond: and rather have a little promised of some, than much of others. Now such was the judgement that *Sarah* held of him that promised; namely, God: *shee judged him faithfull which had promised.*

Faithfull: that is, shee judged him able and willing to accomplish what-ever he promised to her. So that the Grounds of our faith in God, and all his promises, must be a sure apprehension and knowledge of these two things in God;

1. His ability to make good what-ever pisseth him in word.

2. His carefulnesse to doe it when hee hath said it.

Some will promise any thing though their abilities stretch not to performe: others are able enough but have no care of their word. But both these are in God; all-sufficient ability and most carefull willingnesse. So *Sarah* judged of God and therefore shee believed against reason; and so must wee doe, if wee will believe Gods word aright. We may reade, and heare, and know Gods word, and have the points therein swimming in our heads: but if we will constantly believe with our hearts his blessed promises, and in our consciences search his threatenings, we must be fully perswaded of these two to be in him.

So are we taught by Christ (the wisdom of God) in the Lords Prayer (asore wee pray for anything) to be resolved of Gods power and will to heare and helpe us. Hee is our Father, therefore carefull and willing: *he is in heaven*, and therefore able to heare us and to give us all things, Mat. 6. 9.

And the same commendation here given to *Sarah*, is also given to *Abraham*, Rom. 4. 21. *Hee doubted not, but believed above hope, &c. being fully assured that he which had promised was also able to doe it.*

The use herof unto us is double:

First, to advise and guide us for our promises; not to be too reckless, as some are, what we promise: but to consider asorehand, and if it be beyond our power, not to speake the word (for Christian mens words must not be vaine): and if we have promised any thing lawfull and in our power, to be carefull to performe it. Thus to doe is to be a faithfull man, and is a good signe of an holy man, and Gods child: provided this be so,

First of all towards God, that we make conscience of performing the great vow wee made in our baptism, and all other serious and holy purposes of our heart made to God. For otherwise, hee that breaks his vow to God carelessly, by living profanely, he may in worldly policie keepe his word, but hee cannot doe it in conscience.

The Church of Rome is fouly faulty in this point,

point, making no conscience of breaking promise and faith with us, or any of our religion; their nakedness herein is discovered in the face of all Christendome: let them that are wise be warned of it. They make great ostentation of their vows, and of their care to performe them above any other religion: but it appears hereby to be vile hypocrisie. For if they were conscientiously, and not politickly and formally carefull of their vows of chastity, poverty, and others made to God, they could not but be likewise carefull of their promises made to men for the one of these is the fountaine and root of the other. But the neglect of the one, sheweth the formality and hypocrisie of the other.

Let all that feare God learne to make conscience of both these in their religion and service of God, and in all their dealings with men in the world: that so the world may judge us faithfull men when we have promised.

Secondly, let us here learne how to helpe and strengthen our weak faith in the great promises of God. Wee have a promise of *salvation, whosoever beleeveth in Christ, shall not perish, but have life everlasting.* Of our resurrection, Dan. 12. 1. *They that sleepe in the dust shall rise againe.* Of our glorification, Phil. 3. 21. *The Lord Jesus shall change our vile bodies, and make them like to his owne glorious body.* Of a new world, 2 Pet. 3. 13. *We looke for new heavens, and a new earth, according to his promise.*

These bee, as S. Peter calls them, *great and precious promises,* 2 Pet. 1. 4. And surely it must be a great and precious faith, that can constantly beleevethese. No better helpes of our faith can there be, than often and seriously to consider of the *mercie* and *power* of him that made them: if he be *millic* and able, what can let the performance of them? let us therefore often say with holy Paul, *Faithfull is he which hath promised, who will also doe it,* 1 Thess. 5. 24. and with Sarah here, *We judge him faithfull which hath promised.*

Now followeth the last effect in the next verse:

v. 12 *And therefore sprang there of one, even of one which was as dead, as many as the starres of the skie in multitude, and as the sands of the sea shore, which are innumerable.*

The third and last effect of *Sarahs* faith, is that by this sonne *Isaac*, whom she conceived, and brought forth by faith, she had a wonderfull great issue, and a posterity almost without number. This effect consists not of it selfe, but depends upon the former. Her faith gave her strength to conceive *Isaac*, though shee were

A barren, and to bring him forth, though shee were old and weak; and so her faith brought him out, by whom shee was made the mother of many millions of men.

The matter of this third effect is the multitude of men, that came of *Abraham* and *Sarah* by *Isaac*.

This posterity or multitude is described by two arguments:

1. By the beginning or root of it;
One that was as dead.
2. The quantity or greatnesse laid downe:
1. Generally, to be a multitude and innumerable.
2. Particularly, by two comparisons:
1. As many as the starres in the skie.
2. As the sands by the sea shore.

B The first point is the root and beginning of this multitude, in these words:

And therefore sprang there of one, even one that was as dead;

One; that is, one woman *Sarah*: or at the most, one couple, *Abraham* and *Sarah*. And this one was no better than dead. Not dead properly and fully: for none are so dead whole soules and bodies are not separate: but, as dead, that is, as good as dead, or halfe dead; meaning that they were altogether unfit for generation of children, the strength of nature being decayed in them; *Abraham* being an hundred, and *Sarah* ninety yeares old. And if this be true of *Abraham*, who was past age; how much more is it of *Sarah*, who was both past age, and was also barren in her beitage.

C Here we are to note and learne many things:

First, *Multitudes came of one.* See here the powerfull, and yet the ordinary works of God, to reare up goodly and huge buildings upon small and weak foundations. So did he in the beginning, and ever since. Indeed, hee made at the first thousands of starres because they must be no more than at the first they were; and millions of Angels intending they shall not multiply; he could also have made millions of men in a moment: he would not, but only one couple, *Adam* and *Eve*. And of them came the infinite race of mankind. When sinne had made an end of that world, hee founded not the second that yet continueth, upon a thousand couples; but by threemen and their wives hee multiplied the whole race of mankind, which since have growne from three to millions of millions. And so here of one old man, and a barren old woman, spring innumerable multitudes.

D This God doth to magnifie his owne power in the eyes of the sons of men: and so he did also in matters heavenly. The number of Christians since Christ, that have growne to millions, began in a poore number at the first. For when Christ himselfe was ascended, the number of knowne beleevvers was but 120. Act. 1. 15.

The consideration hereof should teach us all these duties;

First,

First, not to measure God by our lengths, nor to tie him to our rules; but to esteeme of his power and might, as wee see it deserves : and to entertaine high and honourable thoughts of him and his Majesty, who can reare up so great *works upon so poore foundations.*

Secondly, not to despaire of our selves or our estates, though we thinke our selves never so weake, so poore, so sicke, either in soule or body : but to remember him, that of *one made multitudes* to spring out. Therefore when thou art brought never so low, either in soule or body, by any miseries, either inward or outward ; faint not, but *goe forward in the strength of the Lord thy God.* Particularly : If God have afflicted thee with poverty that thou have nothing to begin withall : or for thy soule ; is thy knowledge in religion small, thy meanes poore, thy feeling of Gods favour but weake ; yet faint not, but lay fast hold on Gods power and promise, use carefully the holy meanes God hath ordained, remembering and relying on him *who made millions grow out of one* : and assure thy selfe, as Job saith, *Though thy beginnings be small, yet thy later ends shall greatly increase.*

Secondly, observe here how old persons are called *halfe dead, or as good as dead* ; and that is true of them many wayes :

First, their yeares and dayes limited them, are as good as gone. For suppose a man should be as sure to live an 100. yeares, as the *sunne* is to run all the day long his course, and at night to goe downe : yet as when the *sunne* is past the height, and drawing downward, we say it goeth fast downe, and the day hasteth away ; so when a man is past his middle age, when the *sunne* of his life is past the noonetide, he declineth daily, and draweth fast away, and the night of his life approacheth, with haste and much horror, unless he prevent it.

Secondly, their strength and vitall powers, by which their life is continued, and their soules and bodies kept together, are so much weakened, that they are almost extinguished : whereby it comes to passe, an old man may feele a manifest defect in all powers of minde and body.

Thirdly, sicknesse or diseases grow upon old age : and as their strength faileth, so the force of diseases is redoubled on them : and looke what diseases have lurked in their bodies which either naturally were bred in them, or accidentally taken, they now shew themselves more sensibly ; and the weaker a man is, the stronger is his sicknesse. In these three respects an old man or woman is *as good as dead.*

The use hereof is profitable ;

First, they must therefore be advised to *prepare themselves for death.* Every man is to prepare, I confesse : then if every man, especially they that bee old. The young man may die, the old man must die ; the youngest cannot live alwayes, the old man cannot live long ; the aged mans grave is as it were made already, and his

one foot is in it. And this is not many conceits alone, but Gods owne judgement, who as we see here, calls an old man *as good as dead* : and that not so much in regard that he is *sure* to die, as that he is *neere* it. Therefore as every man young or old is to make ready, because his time is unknowne, and no man is sure that hee shall live to be old ; and as the Psalmist singeth, *Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity.* Psal. 39. 6. so especially he to whom God hath bene so gracious as to let him see old age, he should thinke of nothing but his end, and prepare every day to die in the Lord. His gray haire, his wrinkled skin, his withered face, his ill stomacke, his weak memory, his crooked body, and the manifest and most sensible alteration and decay of his whole state of mind and body, should hourly all cry in his eares, *I am halfe dead, I will therefore prepare to die in the Lord.*

It is therefore a miserable sight to see that those, who of all men should be most willing to die, are for the most part most desirous to live. And those who should be most ready to die, are generally, most ignorant, most covetous, and their hearts most of all wedded to the earth and earthly things.

Secondly, old persons must here learne S. Pauls lesson ; 2 Cor. 4. 16. That *as the outward man perissheth, so the inward man may be renewed daily.* The outward man is the body, the inward man is the soule and the grace of God in it. They must therefore labour, that as the strength of their bodies decay, so the grace of God in their soules may quicken and revive. But alas, the common practice is contrary. For old men have generally so mispent their youth, and in their old age are partly so backward, partly so unfit to learn religion, that when they come to their death-beds, they are then to bee *Catechised* in the very principles of religion : so that when the body is halfe dead, religion hath no being in them ; and when the body is a dying, religion and grace scarce begin to live in them : such men cast all upon a desperate point. But let them that desire a joyfull departure, thinke of these things aforehand : and as yeares draw on, and so draw life to his end, and the body to the grave ; so let them weane their hearts from the world, and lift them up to God, and so spend their last dayes in getting knowledge, and in serving God ; that when their bodies are weakest and fittest for the earth, their soules may be the holiest and ripest for heaven. To such men shall it never be discomfort to see their bodies halfe dead, when for recompence thereof they finde their soules halfe in heaven. Thus wee see the *root or foundation* of this posterity, how poore and weake it was. Now let us come to the greatness of it.

Theressprung as many in number, &c.]

This one old couple, *Abraham and Sarah*, are made by Gods power the father and mother of many nations : and he and shee, of whom the

world would have pronounced, they should not have left a name upon the earth, have now millions of children that sprang out of them. Here we may learne, that though God worke ordinarily, according to the course of Nature, which himselfe hath established; yet that he is not bound to it, nor will he be bound it, therefore there is no reason it should binde him. Here we may see the power and prerogative of Gods Majesty.

As in the beginning hee made to bee, those things, which were not: so still he calleth *things that are not, as though they were*, Rom. 4. 17. and turneth and altereth the state and nature of his creatures as pleaseth him. Hee can take life from the living man, and leave him dead; he can give life to the dead man, and make him live againe. So hath he dealt for the body, and for the soule hee hath bene no lesse wonderfull.

Saul, of a bloody persecutor, he can make a zealous Preacher, Act. 9. even a glorious instrument, and *a chosen vessel to carry his name unto the Gentiles*, even he who thought to have blotted out the name of Christ, and all that called on that name from under heaven, Act. 9. 14.

Rahab, an harlot, and a common woman, yet by Gods worke so farre altered, that her faith is registred in the 31. vers. amongst the most excellent beleevers that have bene in the world. Let this teach us, when we see our owne finnes, how hideous and monstrous they be, yet not to despair. And when we see other men live in extreme dissoluteness, yet not to judge of them before the time: but even then, with hope and comfort, remember that God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth things that are not as though they were.

And in that hope let us perswade our selves that hee may quicken our dead hearts, and revive us by his grace. And therefore in that hope let us raise up our selves to use all holy meanes of Gods Words, Sacraments, and Prayer: which if we carefully and continually doe, we shall see wonders wrought in us; that as they said of *Paul*, *This man preacheth the faith which afore he destroyed, and therefore glorified God for him*, Gal. 1. 23. so shall men say of us, *This man hates the profane censure that he lived in, and loves the religion that afore he mocked*. Such miracles will the Lord worke in us, if with faith and diligence we use the holy meanes; that so all that see us, shall *Glorifie God for us*.

Thus we see generally how great the issue and posterity of *Sarah* was.

But it is more particularly enlarged by two comparisons:

As many as the starres in the skie, or the sands by the sea shore, which are innumerable.

His comparisons are two: One taken from the heavens, *as many as the starres in the skie*: The other from the earth, *as the sands in the*

sea. And these two are used by the holy Ghost, being things of incredible number, to expresse the multitude of the Israelites that came all from *Sarah*.

Not but that other things also are of as great number; as the drops of water, dust of the earth, and haire of mens heads, &c. but these two are most common and proverbiall phrases, whereby to expresse a multitude. And againe, the *starres of the skie* are rather named than any other, because God in the beginning pleased to use it to *Abraham*, when hee had never a child, Gen. 15. 8. God carried *Abraham* forth in the night, and bade him count the *starres* if he could, and said, *so shalt thy seed be*. And *Moses* after wards with the same comparison, Deut. 10.

22. *Our Fathers went downe into Egypt seventy persons, and now the Lord hath made us as the starres of the skie in multitude.*

Now because all men are not *Astronomers*, as *Abraham* and *Moses* were, and that ignorant men might say, they can perceive no such matter in the *starres*: Therefore hee useth another comparison, which every Countreyman may discern how innumerable they be; namely, the *sands of the sea shore*. And lest any should say, I dwell in the mid-land Countrey and never saw the sea land, and am ignorant and so cannot judge of the *starres*, therefore to put him out of doubt, the holy Ghost assures him in the end of the verse, that they are both *innumerable*; that is, not in themselves, or to God; but in regard of man and mans skill unable to be counted.

Concerning these two comparisons, let us observe the manner or the phrase of speech in them used:

For the first, we are to know, that the speech is not proper, but *figurative*. For properly, they were not as many as the *starres*, or as the *sands*: neither are the *starres* or *sands* *innumerable*: but it is a figure called by the Rhetoricians *excessus*, which is an excess of fineness of speech, or an excessive elegance. And as it is ordinarie in all Writers, and even in common speech: so it is not refused by the holy Ghost, but used both here, and in the two fornamed places: and the like also of the same nature (but in other phrases) in other places; as S. Joh. 21. 5. *I suppose*, saith he, *if all the sayings and doings of Christ were written, the world could not containe the bookes that would be written*. Meaning, they would bee exceeding many, and more than would be needfull for salvation. And *Deut. 9. 1*. *Moses* saith, *That the Cities of the Canaanites were great, and walled up to heaven*. Meaning that they were very high, and so high as was possible for City walls to be, and as was impossible to have been scaled in all mens reasons, had not God fought for them.

These and such like are common in the Scripture: and seeing wee allow that liberty to all Writers, and to our selves in common speech; no reason to deny it to the Scripture, which

was written for all mens and standing, and therefore in such places as are small and ordinary with all men.

And the like liberty is here taken also in another figure, *as many as the sands by the shore of the sea*: the word properly significeth and foundeth, *the lip of the Sea*. Now the Sea hath no lip, but it is a speech taken or borrowed from man or beast who have lips, and the *sea shore* resembleth a *lip*. For looke what a *lip* is to them, the *shores* are to the *Sea*: as the two lips doe inclose the mouth, so the two shores on both sides doe inclose the *Sea*, which lieth as in a mouth betwixt them. From hence wee may learne profitable instructions:

First, that therefore *Rhetorike* is a warrantable, good and lawfull Art; and it ariseth thus; That which the holy Ghost practiseth, must needs bee not onely not evil, but good and warrantable. But the holy Ghost useth and practiseth *Rhetorike*, here and in many other places else of the Scripture: Therefore it is a good and lawfull Art. The *proposition* is undoubted, the *assumption* is cleare both by these places, and almost the whole body of the Scripture: many of *S. Pauls Epistles*, many of Christs owne Sermons, *S. Johns Gospell*, many of the *Prophets*, especially *Isaiah*, have as much and as elegant *Rhetorike* in them, as any writers in the world: and beside all other vertue and divine power in them, doe even for figures and ornaments of Art, match any *Orators* that have written in the *Greeke* or *Latine*. Nor would it bee any hard taske to undertake to prove and illustrate every approved rule of *Rhetorike*, out of some part of Scripture. Now if it be lawfull to practise the rules of *Rhetorike*, then it is lawfull also to collect those rules together, to pen them, and to make an Art of them. They therefore that holding the contrary, doe say, or teach, or write, it is unlawfull, goe against the streame and common practice of the Scripture, and rules of common reason.

Secondly, here it is apparant, that in preaching Gods Word it is lawfull and warrantable for a *Minister* to use *Rhetorike* and eloquence. And the reason is good: for that which the holy Ghost useth in *penning* of the Scripture, the same may Gods Ministers use also in *preaching* the same. They therefore that deny that libertie to Ministers, are too rough and rugged; and pull out of the hand of the Ministers one of his weapons, and out of the wings of the Scripture one of her feathers.

Yet we must know, that all, or any kinde of eloquence is not permitted to a Christian Minister; For Saint *Paul* saith, *1 Cor. 2. 13. Wee speake the words of God, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spirituall things with spirituall things*: So that there is a holy, a sanctified, a *spirituall eloquence*, an eloquence fit for spirituall things, and that eloquence must be used, As the *Israelites* might marry the *Media-*

nite women, whom they had taken in war, but not till *they had purified them*, *Numb. 31. 18, 19.* And more plainly and particularly, *Deut. 21. 11, 12, 13.* *Moses* explaineth what that purifying is: *And thou shalt bring her home into thine house, and she shall shave her head, and pare her niles, and put off the garment she was taken in, and then thou must marry her*: So, humane eloquence must be brought home to divinitie, and be pared and shaved with spirituall wildome, and then may lawfully and profitably be used.

For our more speciall direction herein, these cautions may be observed:

First, the more *naturall* it is, and the lesse affected, the more *commendable* is it in the doer, and more *profitable* to the hearer.

Secondly, it must be grave, sober, and modest; remembering the height and holiness of the place a man stands in, and of the worke he doth. Therefore it must not consist in telling strange tales, or using such gestures or words, manner or matter as may move *laughing* and smiling in the Auditors. There may bee wit in such doing; but it can hardly be the sanctified and spirituall eloquence, which Saint *Paul* there speakes of.

Thirdly, it must be such as may be an helpe, and not an hinderance to the understanding of Gods Word: for it is a *Damocell* to Divinitie, but not her *Mistresse*. Gods Word therefore must not bow and bend to her; much lesse be wrung and wretted to her, but she to Gods Word.

It must in a word be such, as may most lively, purely, plainly, and significantly expresse the meaning of Gods Word. Therefore a man must endeavour that all his speech bee in one language, at least, in such as his hearers understand: for else if he speake the body of his speech in one, and pece out the members in other, which the people understand not; hee may indeed in his owne spirit *speake mysteries*, but to the hearer he *speakeeth parables*. And to his owne understanding, he may preach well, but the hearer is not edified: as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 14. 2, 17.* Therefore let not eloquence be an hinderance to the understanding of the hearers, which God hath ordained to be an helpe and furtherance. And with these or such like qualifications, eloquence may be used with good warrant and much profit. And for cautions or qualifications herein, hardly can any man set downe better rules than every mans conscience will unto himselfe.

Thirdly, in as much as the holy Ghost here and elsewhere useth so much *Rhetorike*, Divines may learne where the fountaine of Christian eloquence is; namely, in the Scriptures of the old and new Testament. Which being compiled by the wisdom of God, wee are to assure our selves they containe in them true wisdom of all sorts. *Precepts* of *Rhetorike*, I confesse, are to be learned out of other bookes,

which purposely doe teach them; but the practice of those rules in examples, can be no where better than in *Moses*, the Prophets, and the Evangelists. And this must needs follow upon that, that hath already bene granted. For if we yeeld, that *Rhetoricke* is good and lawfull, and practised in the Scripture; then it must needs follow, that it is there practised in the best manner: For shall the *Divinity* there taught be the fountaine? the *History* there reported the truest? the conclusions of *Philosophy*, *Astronomy*, *Geometry*, *Arithmeticke*, *Cosmography*, and *Physicke*, there delivered, the truest? the *Musicke* there practised, the exactest? the *Logicke* there practised, the sharpest? the *Lawes* there enacted, the justest? and shall not the *Rhetoricke*, there practised, be the purest? Surely, if *Moses* had writen a booke of his owne, as hee was a meere man, and as hee was *Moses*, brought up in *Egypt*: or *Paul* writ a booke, as hee was a *Pharisee*, and Doctor of the Law; they would have bene full of all excellent learning: for *Paul* was brought up at the foot of *Gamaliel*, Act. 22. 3. And *Moses* was exceedingly learned in all the learning of the Egyptians, and mighty in word and deed, Act. 7. 22.

Shall they then be the Secretaries of the most high God, the fountaine of wisdom, and learning; and shall not their bookes be filled with the most excellent learning in all kindes? Doubtlesse, who ever searchoeth it, shall finde it to be so.

Seeing therefore Eloquence is lawfull, and that Preachers may lawfully use it; let them also know, where to have it: let them study Gods bookes, and there they shall finde not onely Divinity, but knowledge and learning of all sorts, and that most exquisite: and as excellent patternes and presidents of Eloquence, as are to be found in any Authors in the world. And let them, if they would preach with spirituall power and eloquence; looke how *Moses*, the Prophets, our Saviour *Christ*, and his Apostles preached: for to follow them is the true way.

Thus we see the manner here used by the holy Ghost, in these two comparisons, to describe the greatnesse of this her posterity.

Now the matter in them contained is, that here is the performance of one of the greatest promises made to *Abraham*. The promise is, Gen. 22. 17. *I will surely blesse thee, and greatly multiply thy seed, as the starrs in the heaven, and as the sands by the sea shore.* There is the promise; and behold here the performance, in the very time words, and that most true and effectually: For, at the time when the holy Ghost wrote these words, the *Israelites* were multiplied to many millions; yea, to a number past number.

So that here we learne, *God is true* in all his promises, let they never be great or wonderfull: if he speake the word, if the promise passe him, it is true: Heaven and earth shall rather passe a-

way, than any one peece of his promise shall faile.

The use is to teach us, first, to beleve God when he promitteth, what-ever it be; for, he is worthe to be beleved, who never failed to performe what he promised. He promised these Millions to *Abraham*, when hee had but one childe; nay, when he had never a one: Gen. 15. 8. and *Abraham* beleved. Such a faith was excellent indeed, and deserves eternall commendation (as here it hath.) Let us be children of this faithfull *Abraham*, and the rather, seeing we see the performance which hee saw not. We thinke it a disgrace, if we be not beleved; especially, if we doe use to keepe our word: Let us then know thereby, what dishonour it is to the Lord not to beleve him, which never failed in the performance to any creature.

Secondly, we must here learne of God to be true and faithfull in our words and promises. God spake plainly, and deceived not *Abraham*: and after at the time performed it; so must we deale plainly and simply in our words and bargaines, and thinke that to deceive and overreach by crafty words and double meanings, and equivocal phrases are not becoming Christianity. And we must make conscience of a lie, elsie we are like the devill and not God. Also a Christian man must take heed what, how, and to whom he promitteth: but having promised, he must performe, though it be losse or harme to himselfe: if it be not wrong to God, or to the Church or State. Wrong to himselfe must not hinder him from performance. Christian mens words must not be vaine, they should be as good as bonds, though I know it is lawfull, and very convenient in regard of mortality, to take such kinde of assurances.

Lastly, *Abraham* had the promise his seed should be so, Gen. 15. 8. and here wee see it is so, but he himselfe saw it not: so that *Abraham* had the promise, and we the performance. So *Adam* had the promise of the Messias, but wee see it performed: the Patriarks and Prophets, the promise of the calling of the Gentiles, but wee see it performed.

See here the glory of the Church under the New Testament above the Old. This must teach us to be so much better than they, as God is better to us than he was to them: and to excell them in faith, and all other vertues of holinesse; or elsie their faith and their holy obedience shall turne to our greater condemnation, which have had so farre greater cause to beleve and obey God, and so farre better meanes than they. Which if it be so: then alas, what will become of them who come behind them, nay, have no care to follow them in their faith, nor holinesse, nor any duties of holy obedience.

Thus much for the example of this holy womans faith, and of the commendation thereof.

Now before he come to any more particular

examples of faith, the holy Ghost gives a general commendation of the faith of all those joyfully which are spoken of already.



VERSE 13.

All these died in faith, and received not the promises, but saw them as farre off, and beleevved them: and received them thankfully, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.



hitherto the holy Ghost hath particularly commended the faith of divers holy beleevvers. Now from this verse to the 17. he doth generally commend the faith of *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob* together; yet not so much their constancy, as the duration and constancy of their faith. Particularly the points are two:

1. Is laid downe their constancy and continuance; *All these died in faith.*
2. That constancy is set forth by foure effects:
 1. *They received not the promises, but saw them as farre off.*
 2. *They beleevved them.*
 3. *Received them thankfully.*
 4. *Professed themselves strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

The first point touching their beleevvers is; that as they began, so they held on: as they lived, so they died in faith.

All these died in faith.

The truth of the matter in the words, may bee referred to all afore-going, saving *Enoch* who *died not*; yet he continued also constant in his faith, and in that faith was taken up: but as for *Abel and Noah*, they *died in faith*. Yet I take it, that principally and directly, the holy Ghost intended no more than these foure I named: and my reason is, because the particular effects in this verse, and the points where this their constancie is amplified in the three verses following, doe all agree, especially: with these foure; and not so properly with *Abel or Noah*: so that I take, he meaneth by *all these*, all these men that lived in the second world since the flood. All these *died in faith*; that is, in assurance that the promises made unto them

should be performed in Gods good time.

These promises were principally these two:

1. *Salvation* by the Medias.
2. The *possession* of the Land of Canaan.

In this faith they died; that is, they held it (thorow all assaults and temptations to the contrary) even to the last gaspe, and died therein.

In this their practice is commended unto us a most worthy lesson of Christianity: namely, that we must so live that we may die in faith. Many say they live in faith: and it is well if they doe so: but the maine point is, to *die in faith*. There is none so ill, but howsoever he lives, yet he would die well: If he would *die well*, he must *die in faith*. For miserable is the death that is without faith. And herein faith and hope differ from other graces of God: *Love, joy, zeale, justice, and all other graces* are imperfect here, and are perfected in heaven: but *faith and hope* are perfected at our deaths; they are not in the other world, for there is nothing then to bee *beleevved nor hoped* for, seeing we then doe enjoy all things: but as they are begun in our life, at our regeneration, so they bee made perfect when we die; and they shine most gloriously in the last and greatest combat of all, which is at the houre of death. So that the death of a Christian, which is the gate to glory, is to *die in faith*.

Besides, as life leaves us, so death findes us; and as death leaves us, so the last judgement findes us: and as it leaves us, so we continue for ever and ever without recoverie of alteration.

Now to *die in faith*, is to die in an assured estate of glory and happinesse; which is that that every man desireth: therefore, as wee all desire it, so let us *die in faith*, and we shall attaine unto it.

Saint Paul tells us, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *Death* is a terrible serpent, for hee hath a poisoned sting: Now when we die, we are to encounter with this hideous and fearefull serpent. Hee is fearefull every way, but especially for his sting: that *sting is our sin*: and this sting is not taken away, nor the force of it quenched, but by true faith, which *quencheth all the fiery darts of the devill*, Eph. 6. 16. If therefore we would be able to encounter with this great enemy, (in the conquering of whom stands our happinesse; and by whomt we be conquered is our eternall misery) wee must then so arme our selves with faith, that we may *die in faith*; for he that dieth in faith, that faith of his kills his finnes, and conquers death: but hee that dieth without faith, death and sinne seaze on him, and his finnes live for ever, and his misery by them.

Now, if we would die in faith, we must live in faith; else it is not to be expected: For, so these holy Patriarchs lived long in this faith, where-in they died. For their holy lives shewed plainly, that they lived in that faith which the Apo-

(the faith) doth *purifie our hearts*, Act. 15. 9. Now if we would live in true faith, the means to attaine it, set downe by Gods Word, are these :

First, we must labour to get knowledge of the fundamentall points of Religion ; of God, of the Creation, the Fall, the immortallitie of the Soule, the two Covenants, of Works by the Law, of Grace by the Mediator; and such other substantiall points touching God, his Word, Sacraments, Law, Gospel, Prayer, good Works, &c. as the Scriptures, and the Creeds, and Catechismes out of the Scripture, doe yeeld unto us. Herein the case of the common people of all nations is miserable. In Popery their Clergy is so fat and full, *they will not* ; in our Churches the Ministry (a great part of it) so poore and ill provided for, *they cannot teach*. Betwixt both, the people of the world doe *perish for lacke of knowledge*; for how can they but perish *that doe not in faith*? How can they die so that live not in faith? And how can they ever have faith that have no knowledge, seeing knowledge is the foundation of faith? Therefore it needs the *helpe* of those that may, and the *prayers* of all, that our Church may have *Teachers*, and our people *Catechisers*: for without learning the Catechisme, it is impossible to learne Religion.

Secondly, when wee have got knowledge, and so laid the foundation; then must we learne the *promise of God for salvation*, and wee must *hide them in our hearts*, as the Jewels of life, of salvation. We must beleeve them to bee true and effectuell to all that will take hold of them; and we our selves must therefore take hold of them, and apply them to our soules.

Thirdly, after both these, we must *conferme* our selves thoroughout (heart, and life) unto the holy *lawes of God*: we must leave all bad waies and ungodly courses, though they be never so deare unto us, or so common in the world; and must make conscience of all sinne, and endeavour to doe all duties to God and man.

The first of these is the *ground* of faith: the second is *faith* it selfe: the last the *fruit* and effect of it, and an assured testimony of it to God, to his Church, and to a mans owne conscience. And to doe these three things is to walke in the old and holy way, consecrated by Christs blood, and troden in by all the holy Fathers: and Popery, nor any other religion can appoint to save, so sure, nor so direct a way. Thus lived *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob*, and after this course they *died in faith*, and now live in glorie: and so shall we with them, if we will live in faith as they did; but else we may long looke for Heaven before wee come there. Indeed God can make a man that lived not in faith, die in faith; but the matter is not what he can do, but what is his ordinary course; and that is this: *They that live in faith die in faith*. Therefore let us take the ordinary course, and repent, and tunc betimes, and live the life of

A faith; and leave the late repentance to them that thinke it but a sport to venture a soule: that course may speed; but this course is sure to speed: he that lives in sinne, *may hope* to die in faith; but he that lives in faith, *is sure* to die in faith, and to live in glory for ever.

Secondly, observe how it is said, *All these* died in faith: not some, but all. *Abraham* the father, and the root, and with him the wife, the child, and the grand-child: behold *a true noble blood*, a holy kindred, a blessed generation: worthy is *Abraham* of all the honour he hath, who was the root of such a noble and blessed brood. And worthy are *Isaac and Jacob* of so good a father, who stained not their blood by forsaking their faith: but held it as they received it, *and lived and died in it*. Let this teach us first, if we be fathers, to shine before our children in a holy religion, true faith, and good life; and it is great hope that our wives and children will follow us in the same.

Secondly, if we be sonnes, to looke which of our forefathers and ancestors embraced the most holy Religion; and to chuse, and live and die in their faith. Most of our young Papists can say no more for their religion but this; my father, and grand-father were of that religion. But they must looke all to their fore-fathers: *Isaac and Jacob* would not bee of their great grand-fathers (*Nahors* or *Terahs*) religion, but of their father *Abraham*: and *Abraham* himselfe would not be of his father *Terahs*, or his grand-father *Nahors* religion; but he went up a great deale higher, to his forefathers to the tenth generation *Noah*, and *Shem*, and embraced their religion. So that wee see, it is nothing to say, I am of my fathers, or grand-fathers religion; unless first I prove that theirs was of God: and then hee is a noble Christian man, which knowing that, will not forsake it, but will live and die in it.

Thirdly, see here *true honour and gentry* is to live and die in the true faith and holy religion of our Ancestors; here is the fountaine of honour, to do as the did. *Abraham* perceives hee is wrong, and erred with his fathers; he therefore leaves his fathers and grand-fathers religion, and goeth up higher, and takes a better. *Isaac* his sonne makes himselfe heire, not of his land alone, but of his fathers religion also: *Jacob* the grand-child follows both, and dieth in faith with them. Behold here *Jacob*, a *true gentleman in blood*, his holiness and religion is in the third descent: Let us all learne to adorne our gentility and nobility with these ensignes of true honour.

And let all them that shame to staine their blood by treasons, or misdemeanours; shame also, to let their fore-fathers religion, holiness, or vertues faile in them: but let them all to live in them, that with *Jacob* they may *die in their fathers faith*.

Lastly, observe how it is said, they *died in faith*: they afore lived in it; but now their pain-

ciall commendation is, *they died in it.*

Let us learne here to hold on in a good course when wee have entred into it: for constancy and continuance is the true commendation: he that *dieth in faith*, is he that receives the crowne. To this end, let us stirre up our selves with the Apostles exhortation, Gal. 6. 9. *Let us not be weary of well-doing, for in due time we shall reape if we faint not.*

And further, let this teach us all to chuse that faith to live in (with these holy Patriarchs) that we may boldly die in. It is a true observation, that *Poperie is a good religion to live in, but ours to die in.* The Papiists usurpe this saying, and turne it the contrary way; but they have as much right to it, as the these to the true mans purpose. The liberty, the pardons, dispensations, sanctuarie, the pompe and outward glory of their Church; and their fasting and outward austerities, being soule and feined hypocrites, and indeed open licentiousnesse: these and many things more, may allure any naturall man in the world, to live in their religion; but when they come to die, then they all know, and some confesse, it is surest and safest to die in our religion. Let us therefore cherefully and comfortably live in that religion and faith wherein we may so boldly die, that even our adversaries confesse it to be safest.

Now follow the foure effects and fruits of their faith:

The first is this: that

*They received not the promises, but saw them
afarre off.*

By *Promises* we understand, first, the promises of the Land of *Canaan*. Secondly, the spiritual promises of the Kingdome of Christ. These they did not receive; that is, fully; though in part they did: for true faith doth alwaies receive, apprehend, and apply unto it selfe truly, though not fully, the thing promised. God said, he would give them the Land of *Canaan*: but they did not fully enjoy and possesse it. So likewise the *Messias* was promised unto them, but they never saw his coming in the flesh, and yet they beleaved Gods promise, and died in that faith.

Where wee may see the invincible force of their faith that cleaved fast unto the promise of God, even unto death; though they never enjoyed the things promised in this life: which plainly condemnes our age of unbelieve, for we have more accomplished unto us than ever they had. *Abraham* never saw Christ, but *afarre off*; yet wee have him exhibited in the flesh: we see and know he lived and died, rose againe, and ascended, and now makes continuall intercession for us: and we have the true Sacraments, which shall last for ever pledges of him, and of life everlasting by him. And for temporal promises, we have farre more accomplished unto us than ever we had. But though we goe before *Abraham* in the fruition of Gods

A promises, yet we come farre behind him in *believe*; for faith worketh by love and love is scene in true obedience: but generally, this is too true, men make no conscience of *obedience*: which sheweth undoubtedly, that there is little sound faith among us. And it may bee feared that these notable men, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, shall stand in judgement against us to our further condemnation; for they never received the accomplishment of Gods promises, and yet they beleaved: but we doe see the same fulfilled and exhibited unto us, and yet we will not believe.

*But saw them afarre
off.]*

B Here is the property of their faith, and the power of it: the promises were *afarre off*, and yet they saw them. The phrase here used is borrowed from *Marriners*; who being farre on the Sea, cannot descry townes and coasts *afarre off*, but onely by helpe of some tower or high place, which their eye will sooner discern, although it bee *afarre off*: And so *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob*, being long before the day of Christs incarnation, could not otherwise see Christ, but *afarre off*, by the eye of faith in the promises of the *Messias*: for this is the property of faith, to make a thing absent to be present, after a sort: *Faith being the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not scene.*

C Here wee may leave a difference betwene the Church in the old Testament, and in the new. Wee in the new Testament have greater measure of knowledge, more lively discerning of the *Messias*, and a clearer light of understanding in the myserie of our salvation by Christ, than the Church had under the old Testament: howsoever they excelled in faith, yet in the knowledge and discerning of Christ they were inferior unto us. And therefore the Lord made this promise to the time of the Gospel long before; that then the earth shall be full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters that cover the Sea. And Saint Paul proves this performed, when he affirmeth of the Church of the new Testament, 2 Corinth. 3. 18. *But all we as in a mirror behold the glory of the Lord with open face.* And Christ, Job. 6. 45. *They shall see all things of God.*

D If this be true, that knowledge should so abound in the time of the Gospel; then all ignorant persons of this latter age of the world must know, that they have much to answer for at the last day of judgement: for God in the new Testament hath made his Church to abound in knowledge, so that their ignorance (for which they thinke God will hold them excused) shall bee a bill of indictment against them at the last day, to their further condemnation: because the light of the Gospel is so cleerely and plentifully revealed in these daies, that whereas the most excellent Patriarchs of all, could then but see Christ *afarre off*, the most

most simple may now see him neere unto them.

Againe, where is more knowledge, there should be more obedience: therefore it concerneth all those that professe themselves to bee Christians, and submit themselves to heare and learne the word of God taught unto them; not to content themselves with bare knowledge, though it be never so much: But withall, to bring forth the fruits of obedience in their lives and conversations. For though *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, in regard of faith did goe farre before us; yet seeing we have more knowledge than they had in the *Messias*, we must labour to become like unto them in the obedience of our lives: their faith was stronger than ours: but our obedience should be greater than theirs, because we have more cause to beleve than they. *S. Paul* faith, *We all be held as in a mirrour, the glory of the Lord with open face.* And the end thereof is this, that we may be transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord. So that the more knowledge we have, the more sanctification we ought to have, and the more hatred of sin, and more obedience to Gods commandments. But the more is the pitee, the case goeth farre otherwise with the World: for even many amongus that are no Students by profession, have great and commendable knowledge in religion. But where is the fruit hereof in holy obedience to the Lawes of God? God by calling hath made us a pleasant vine: but the sowre Grapes of sinne are our ordinarie fruit, they be the grapes of gall (as *Moses* saith.) For Atheisme, blasphemy, contempt of Gods word and worship, with open profaning of Gods Sabbath, doe every where abound; to omit the heinous crimes against the second Table, as oppression, adulterie, and blood touching blood: for all which we may justly feare, that the Lord will either remove his Candlestick from us, and so of a Church and people of God make us no Church; or else sweepe us away by some fearefull judgement, as with the besome of destruction, because we with-hold the truth in *unrighteousness*, Rom. 1. 18. For better it were not to have knowne the way of righteousness, than to turne from the holy commandment given unto us: let us therefore joyne with our knowledge obedience, that so wee may shew forth our faith in doing our duties of pietie unto God, and of brotherly love and Christianitie unto our brethren. Thus much of the first fruit of their faith.

The second fruit of their faith is noted in these words; *And beleevd them.* Where by *beleeving*, we must understand not so much the act of faith, for that was noted before, as the growth and increase of their faith: for the word imports a confirmation of their hearts, and a resolution in assurance of the promises made unto them: which is not unuall in Scripture; for *Paul* prayeth for the Churches who had

A true knowledge, faith, and love, that they might increase and abound therein more and more, Ephes. 3. 16, 17. Phil. 1. 9, 10. Colos. 1. 9, 11.

Here then wee may observe in the example of these Patriarchs, that it is the duty and propriety of every true beleever, to goe forward and increase in faith, till he come to a full perswasion and assurance in Gods promises. All the gifts of God (and therefore faith) are the Lords talents, and every true beleever is the Lords servant, called to occupy therewith. Now God, having put his talents into any mans hand, doth require the increase thereof, as the Parable shewes, Luk. 19. 13. And this *Paul* teacheth: for praying for the Ephesians that they may goe on, and be strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man, Ephes. 3. 16. hee signifieth, that hee that doth truly beleve in Christ must goe on from grace to grace, till he be a tall man in Christ: as a childe groweth from yeare to yeare till hee come to be a strong man. The nature of faith is like unto fire, which will not goe out so long as wood or other fuel is put unto it, but will take hold thereof, and grow unto a greater flame; and so will faith grow up to a full perswasion in all those that conscientiously apply themselves to the Word and Prayer.

But goes the case thus with us in the matter of faith? Nay verily, generally it is farre otherwise: for many among us have no regard of faith at all, but think they may live as they lust, their good meaning will serve the turne: others and those not a few, are so farre from going forward in faith, that they are every day worke and worse, and still goe backward more and more. A third sort we have that will heare the Word and receive the Sacraments: but yet their growing in grace is very slender, they stand as a stay, and profit little.

Now howsoever it may be thought but a small fault, not to profit in religion; yet undoubtedly it is a fearefull judgement of God, when the hearers of the Word in any Congregation are daily taught, and doe not profit thereby; and therefore the holy Ghost noteth those women to be laden with sinne, which are ever learning, and yet never are able to come to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim. 3. 7. If a childe lately borne, like not well nor grow, when it hath good keeping: the common saying is, that it is a Changeling. So if a man heare the Word of God, and doe not increase in knowledge, faith and obedience, we may most truly say of him, that he is a spiritual Changeling, and therefore that we may avoid this fearefull judgement of God, wee must labour for faith; and having gotten faith, increase therein, and in other graces of God, till we come to be strong men in Christ.

It is here said, that those Patriarchs increased in faith: But it may be demanded, how and by what means they did attaine hereto?

As for

Ans. In the booke of Genesis, we may finde three waies whereby they were confirmed in the faith, and did grow up in grace. The first meanes was from God himselfe; for, when he had made his covenant with *Abraham*, mercifully renewing the same during his life, as occasion served sundry times, he stayed not there, suffering it to die with *Abraham*: but when *Abraham* was dead, God renewed his covenant with *Isaac* and *Rebecca*, and with *Jacob* also after them. Now the tongue of man cannot utter what a wonderfull furtherance it was unto their faith, to have the Lord himselfe to renew his gracious promises unto them. The second meanes of *increasing their faith*, was their holy converting one with another: for the manner of the *Patriarchs* was to teach and instruct their children, and to nurture them up in the true worship and feare of God, by which meanes they did not onely implant Gods promises in the hearts of their children; but were themselves confirmed in the same: for hee that teacheth another from a feeling heart, greatly strengtheneth his owne soule. Now God himselfe doth testifie this thing of *Abraham*, saying, *I know him that he will command his sons, and his household after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord, to doe righteously and judgement.* Now look what *Abraham* herein did to *Isaac*, that no doubt did *Isaac* unto *Jacob*. The third meanes to increase their faith was, from each one to himselfe: for they gave themselves oftentimes in their owne persons to muse and meditate upon the promises of God: so it is said of *Isaac*, that he went out to pray or meditate in the field towards evening; and we may perswade our selves it was concerning this and other promises of God, and the accomplishment thereof. And we need not to doubt but that *Abraham* and *Jacob* did the like.

These are the meanes by which these godly Patriarchs were strengthened in their faith. All which must be marked of us diligently, and put in practice: for the cause why wee heare the word often, and yet profit little by it, is chiefly this: because the meanes by which men should grow up in faith, are so slenderly used among us. For the first meanes, which is on Gods behalfe to man; is through his great and unspeakable mercy, plentifully afforded in many parts of the Land, in the holy Ministerie of the Gospel: wherein Gods gracious promises of mercie are opened and applied to mens hearts, and his judgement against sinne sharply denounced, to drive men to lay hold on Gods mercie in Christ. But if we regard the second meanes; which is mutual instruction of father to childe, of master to servant, and of one neighbour to another; together with mutual conference about that we are taught; Or else if we regard the third meanes, which is private meditation upon Gods word and promises taught unto us; (which meditation is to a Christian soule like the chewing of the cudde unto a beast, for

A as the chewing of the cudde turns that which was eaten into true feeding; so doth holy meditation make Gods words and promises spirituall refreishing, by digesting them in the heart:) If, I say, we take a view of these two latter, we shall finde them seldom used of very many or not at all. Blessed bee God, we need not to doubt, but these become who use them; meanes with care and reverence: but alas, these some are very few. And because this duty is so slackly performed, hence it is, that though the covenant of mercy in Christ bee oft repeated, yet men reape little profit by it. So that we must learne to follow this notable practice of these godly Patriarchs, and looke what meanes they used for the increase of their faith, the same also must we use, and that diligently; so shall we grow and increase and wax strong in faith, as they did.

The third fruit of their faith is this,
And received them thankfully.

As moniavit, the word in the originall doth signifie to *salute*; and that not only by speech, but any way else, as by embracing, &c. and therefore in this place it is not unfitly translated,

And received them thankfully: that is, they tooke them kindly at Gods hands.

This is a notable fruit of faith, whereby they are commended: that seeing the promises of God **C** *as farre off*, did take them most kindly at Gods hands. But here wee must consider how they tooke them kindly; namely, by doing two things: First, by an action of their heart. Secondly, by an action of their life. The action of their heart was this; that howsoever the promise was not accomplished in their daies, yet they were wonderfully glad thereof: for our Saviour Christ said to the Jewes, *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.* It did *Abrahams* heart good to see Christ *as farre off*; and so we may safely thinke of *Sarah*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and their hearts were also ravished with joy, to heare the wonderfull promise of God concerning the *Messias*; and to thinke of the most joyfull performance which they knew should follow in due time.

D Secondly, they tooke this promise kindly by the practice of their life; for when they came to any strange place (as wee often reade in the storie) there they built up altars, and offered sacrifice unto God, and called on his Name. All which they did, to testifie their inward joy, and thankfull acceptance of Gods promises in Christ; and of the promised land, though neither were accomplished in their daies.

Now as touching our selves, the same maine promises of God, that were made to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, hath the Lord made and continued unto us: nay, wee have the same already accomplished: and wee see the same

Ioh. 8. 17.

*Gen. 12. 8. & 28. 9
& 33. 10.*

Gen. 8. 12.

Gen. 24. 63.

verified more evidently and plainly than any of A the Patriarchs did. Which being true, our duty is to take the same much more thankfully and kindly at Gods hands, than they did or could doe; because wee have more light and knowledge in the promises of God than ever the Patriarchs had.

But we have just cause to bewaile the daies and times wherein we now live: for whereas we should take the promises of God most joyfully and kindly; the case is farre otherwise. For generally, it may be said of our nation and people, that in regard of the mercies and promises of God wee are an unkinde people. And that this is true (for the most part) in all of us, if we will but a little examine the matter, we shall finde it too apparent by many evidences: for first, let any of us be brought to a place where wee may behold some vaine Enterlude, or a Show: a man would not thinke how wonderfully we are ravished there withall, so as wee could finde in our hearts to spend whole daies in beholding them. But let us be brought to heare the Gospel of Christ, his holy Word preached and taught; as it was unto *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, (wherein they much joyced) and there we sit heavy and drowfie, so as the word seemes loathsome unto us, and one houre is so tedious as wee hardly hold it out without sleeping: and if it passe the houre a little, O how impatiently our natures take it! All which shew plainly, that we have no such joy to heare of Christ and his mercifull promises, as these godly Patriarchs had: so that we are both hard-hearted and unkinde, and altogether insensible of so great favours and mercies of our God towards us.

Secondly, consider mens behaviour in Gods worship: It is evident, that the greatest part of people worship God but in formall shew, for fashion sake. These godly Patriarchs, *Abraham, &c.* built altars in every place where they came, and offered sacrifice unto God, to signifie their kindnesse and willing heart towards God for his promises. But now men worship God formally, not in way of thankfulness; but either because the Law compels them to it, or else because it is a custome and order which must be kept. For prooffe thereof take some one of the common sort, and aske him why hee cometh into the Congregation? he will say he cometh to doe as other men doe; but what they do he knoweth not; nor what he himselfe should doe he cannot tell, nor careth much to know. Others also come to worship God: but aske them how they doe it, they will say, by saying over the ten Commandements, the Lords Prayer, and the Beleeefe. But, if the word be either preached, or read, they regard it not, thinking all Gods worship stands in the repeating of those three things. Which sheweth that they worship God but for fashion sake, and with little more than a plaine lip-labour.

Another sort there are, which come nere to God with their lips, but their hearts are farre from him; for though their bodies be present in the Congregation, yet their hearts are wandering about their worldly business, or the works of sinne; so that we may truly say, God is not worshipped with faith in the heart. And therefore we are unkinde people, and quite degenerate from the faith of our fore-fathers, the holy Patriarchs, who received Gods promises so kindly and thankfully.

Thirdly, wee have the Word of God daily preached and taught unto us: but how many be there that make conscience of obeying the same in their lives and callings? Men doe come and heare, and should learne: but when they come home, they do flat contrary to that which is taught. Now there can bee no greater unthankfulness nor unkindnesse towards God than this, that men should heare and not obey, for disobedience is as the sin of witchcrafts: nay, the Lord himselfe saith, that he that maketh no conscience of obedience in his life, is in his actions of Gods worship no more acceptable unto God, than a murderer is *when he kills a man*.

Wherefore, seeing obedience is so rare to be found among us, and disobedience aboundeth every where, it is a plaine argument that wee take not the promises of God kindly, nor thankfully at his hands: for if we did, we would at least endeavour our selves to doe what God commands in his Law, and desisteth in his Gospel, and so bee thankfull unto God for his mercies, shewing forth our thankfulness by our obedience. So that it standeth us in hand, every man to looke unto himselfe for his owne part, seeing God hath given us his Gospel, the means of our salvation, that therefore we receive and embrace the same, lest God doe either take the same from us, or us from it: for we may be sure that the one of these two will follow, if we doe daily heare and make no conscience to obey. And thus much of the third fruit of the Patriarchs faith.

The fourth fruit of their faith followeth; And confessed that they were strangers and Pilgrims on the earth.

Herein we are to consider divers points: First, the Text saith, *They confessed*; that is, they professed openly what they were, and what their religion was; and that not only amongst themselves, but before the face of Gods enemies, and heathen men. Gen. 27. 4. *Abraham* told the people of the land of Canaan, that hee was a stranger and a sojournner among them. And when *Jacob* came before *Pharaoh*, he confessed, that both his daies, and the daies of his Fathers, were daies of pilgrimage: Gen. 47. 9. Now affirming to openly that they were strangers in those Countries, they intimated a plaine deniall and dislike of the religion and idolatry of those heathen Countries, and proclaimed themselves to be of another religion: so that this

1 Sam. 15. 23.

Ilay 66. 3.

is true which is here said of them, that they made confession and profession of their estate and their faith, and that to the enemies of God.

Hence we learne that we are not to be ashamed of that holy profession of *Christian religion* to which we are called. Our calling is to profess the Gospell and religion of Christ; now to many it is a reproach and ignominie; but we must learne this speciall lesson by the example of these men, that howsoever the world judge of Christ and his religion, yet we having entred into this holy profession, and being called hereunto, must never bee ashamed of it; much lesse deny or forsake the same. In the Primitive Church it was a contemptible thing, both among the Jewes and Grecians to be a Christian: to the one, the Gospell was a stumbling-block, to the other a laughing-stocke, 1 Cor. 1. 23. And yet *Paul* professed openly, *that hee was not ashamed of that holy Gospell*, Rom. 1. 16. And so it ought to bee with us, wee profess Christs religion, and therefore we must not be ashamed of it. Some there be that know but little, and yet have a good minde to religion; but when they do see some doe nothing else but make a *mucke* and a jest of religion, they are thereby daunted and held backe from the open profession, and embracing of it.

But if we looke to be saved by faith, as these men were, we must learne by their example, not to be ashamed of the profession of Christianity, whereto wee are called: but must follow this notable example of *Abraham* and the Patriarchs, who were not ashamed, nor afraid to testify their profession among the Heathen, whensoever any occasion was offered; for *whoever is ashamed of Christ in this world, Christ will be ashamed of him at the last Judgement, before his Father in the world to come*, Luke 9. 26.

To goe further: These Patriarchs professe two things: 1. That they were *strangers*. 2. That they were *Pilgrims*. A *stranger* is one that hath his abode not in his owne, but in a strange Countrey, though he travell not.

And a *Pilgrim* is one that is going thorow a foreign Countrey to his owne home. *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* were strangers, because they dwelt as strangers in Tents, not in their owne Countreies where they were borne; but in that strange Countrey whither God had called them; and they were Pilgrims, because they were alwayes ready to goe whithersoever God would call them: and in all places whithersoever they were, still they waited on God, and sought to him for the kingdome of heaven.

Now this was not proper to these Patriarchs, but is also common to all Christians, that looke to be saved by the same faith: for *David*, long after them, confesseth unto God, Psalm. 39. 12. that hee is a *Stranger*, and a *Pilgrim*, or *sojourner with him, as all his Fathers were*. And even

we also must follow their faith in the practice of this profession: dwelling here on the earth, we must testify and profess ourselves to be both *strangers and Pilgrims*.

But how (will some say) shall we be answerable to this profession? *Ans.* For the practice hereof, we must doe these three things: 1. We must *use this world and the things thereof, as though we used them not*, 1 Cor. 7. 31. The temporal blessings we here enjoy, we must so use, as though they were not ours; but as strangers doe, onely for the present occasion: but wee must not set our hearts thereon. And the rather to perswade us hereunto, let us consider the practice of these godly Patriarchs. They had the promise of the land of Canaan distinctly and absolutely; so as no man in the world hath more right to any thing that he possesseth than they had to this land; yet when they came into it, they enjoyed it, and all things therein as strangers; and possessed nothing, but did even buy ground to bury their dead in. And so must we use the things that wee have in this world; for our houses, wee must so use them as *Strangers* do an Inne: and for our goods, we must use them as *Pilgrims* doe other mens goods, where they stay for a night: wee must so use them allwaies, as being ready and willing to leave them the next morning, or at any time when God shall call us away.

Secondly, wee must cast off all things in this world, that may any whit hinder us in our journey to the kingdome of heaven; like unto good travellers, who will carry nothing with them in the way, but that which may further them to their journeyes end; and if any thing hinder them in the way, they will cast it from them, and rather lose it than be hindered from their home. But what is that which is burthensome unto us in this our journey to heaven? This *S. Paul* sheweth, when he saith, 2 Tim. 2. 6. that certaine simple *women are laden with sinne*. Behold, sin is that that ladeth us; and the Author to the Hebrewes calleth sinne, *the thing that hangerth on so fast, and presseth us downe*, Heb. 12. 1. Therefore if we will be good travellers and pilgrims toward the kingdome of heaven, we must take heed of sinne: for that will hold us downe; that wee cannot get one step forward, but will draw us backward, unto hell: for the way is *strait that leadeth unto life, and the gate narrow, and few there be that can enter into it*, Math. 7. 13. Hee that would come hither, must come with an humble and pure heart: for the gate will not suffer any car to be laden with sinne, to enter therein. The proud man, whose heart is puffed up with pride: and the covetous man, whose heart is enlarged with a desire of gaine; The ambitious man, who is with childe with worldly poyne and sinne: and the luxurious and voluptuous man, who feedeth and fattereth himselfe with earthly and carnall pleasures; all these are growne too bigge to enter into this strait gate. But

the meeke in spirit, who lead an humble and innocent life, these shall tread in this path, although it be narrow; and enter in at this doore, though it be strait. And therefore wee must cast off every sinne, by the practice of true repentance; and to make our selves fit pilgrims for the way to heaven.

Thirdly, wee must learne contentation of heart in every estate of life, which God shall send upon us: wee must be contented as well in sicknesse, as in health; in poverty, as in plenty; in trouble, as in peace; and in good report, and ill report; and in all estates of life and death. A Pilgrim in his way taketh all things patiently that befall him; and if he be injured any way, he puts it up quietly, without seeking revenge or making complaint, till he come home; where he knows he shall have audience and redresse. Even so must wee behaue our selves in this our pilgrimage to heaven: in hope of that redresse and rest we shall have, we must beare all things patiently that befall us in this life, which is the way: and doing these three things, wee shall become *good pilgrims and strangers in this world*.

Here two questions offer themselves to be considered: First, if every man both in profession and practice, must shew himselfe to be a *pilgrim and stranger* in this world. Whether then is it not a good state of life for a man to contemne the world and all things in it, and to betake himselfe to perpetuall beggery and voluntary poverty? *Ans.* The world in Scripture is taken divers wayes: first, for the corruptions and *sinnes* in the world; and these must be contemned by all means possible: yea, that is the best religion which teacheth best how to contemne these; and he the best man who most forsakes them in what calling soever he lives.

Secondly, for *temporall blessings*, as money, lands, wealth, sustenance, and such like outward things as concerne the necessary or convenient maintenance of this naturall life. And in this sense the world is not to be contemned, for in themselves these earthly things are the good gifts of God, which no man can simply contemne, without injury to Gods disposing hand and providence, who hath ordained them for naturall life.

The Papists esteeme it an Angelicall state of perfection, approaching nere to the state of glory, when a man forsaketh all, and betakes himselfe to voluntary poverty, as begging Friars doe: But indeed it is a meere device of mans braine, and hath no warrant in Gods Word, which decreeth thus: that hee that will not labour (in some lawfull calling) shall not eat. *Object.* But here they will say, that our Saviour Christ speaking to the young rich man, bade him *go and sell all that he had, and give to the poore; and he should have treasure in heaven*, Mar. 10. *Ans.* That commandment was not ordinary but speciall, belonging to that young man: It was a commandment of triall given to him one-

ly, as this was to *Abraham*, when God said, *Abraham kill thy sonne*, Gen. 22. 2. And the reason of that commandment was peculiar to him; namely, to shew him his corruption, and to discover his hypocritic. Again, howsoever the young man was commanded to *sell all*, yet hee is not commanded to *give all*; but onely thus, *Sell all, and give to the poore*. 2. *Object.* Again, they object that Christ himselfe was a beggar, and his Disciples also, and had nothing of their owne, but went up and downe in the world as beggars; and lived of that which others ministred unto them. *Ans.* This is a meere forgery and cannot be proved out of the word of God. The bag which *Judas* carried doth proveth the contrary: for hee was (as it were) the steward in Christs family, who looked to their provision, and to their contribution to the poore: as may be seene, Joh. 13. 27, 28, 29. Yea, Christs Disciples, though they left the present use of their houses and places; yet they gave not over their title and possession in them; for Christ went to *Peters* house, where he healed his wives mother, Matth. 8. 14. And after the time of Christs passion, *Peter* and the other *Disciples* returned to their ships againe, and became fishers for a time. For Christ (Joh. 11.) after his resurrection, appeared to them while they were fishing.

2. *Quest.* Whether may a man lawfully seek to be rich, seeing we must profess our selves to be *pilgrims and strangers* in this life? *Ans.* Riches are taken two wayes: 1. for things sufficient. 2. for abundance. For the first, by things sufficient, I meane things necessary and meet for a mans estate to maintaine him and his family; and thus a man may seeke to be rich: for so we are taught to pray in the fourth petition, Give us this day our daily bread, that is, things meet and needfull for the day. From whence I reason thus: That which we may lawfully aske at Gods hand, we may lawfully seeke for: But we may lawfully aske of God all things necessary to this life; Therefore we may lawfully use the means to attaine unto them. And this *Agurs* prayer sheweth also, Give me not poverty, nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me. Where wee see, it is requisite a man should labour for things necessary to this life. Now, because mans corrupt nature is so gripple, that he would not be contented with the whole world though it were all his; therefore we must learne this rule of contentation for worldly things: namely, to follow the counsell of wise and godly men, who are neither covetous nor riotous, but rest contented with that which is sufficient. As for the wearing of apparell, we have no speciall rule nor precept in Gods word; and therefore our direction must be the example and fashion of the most grave and godly in that calling of which we are: whose president must be our direction in all cases, whereof we have no precept nor rule in Gods word.

But if riches be taken in the second sense, for

Prov. 30. 9.

Abu.

abundance, above that which is competent and sufficient; then it is not lawfull for a man to *seek* to be rich: for prooffe hereof, we have the plaine testimony of the word of God; *Paul* teach, *Tim.* 6. 8. 9. *When we have food and raiment, we must therewith be contented: for they that will be rich fall into temptation and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts which drawe men in perdition and destruction.* Where the Apostle doth not simply condemne a rich estate, but rather the desire to be rich, that is, a desire to have more than is necessary for the maintaining of a man's estate. Yet this is the common sin of the world, men are so covetous that they will not be contented with that which is enough, but still toile and moile for more, till they have gotten so much under their hands as would honestly and sufficiently maintaine ten men of their estate and calling. But all such are condemned by the testimony of the holy Ghost, in the place aforesaid.

Quest. What if God give abundance to a man by lawfull meanes; what must such a man doe? *Ans.* When God sendeth riches in abundance to any man, he must thinke himselfe to be appointed of God as a steward over them, for the good disposing of them to the glory of God, and the good of his Church; alwayes remembering this rule of the Prophet *David*, *Psal.* 62. 10. *If riches increase, set not thy heart upon them.* Hee faith not, *If riches increase, refuse them; but set not thy heart on them: and thus much of these Questions.*

Now this practice of the *Patriarchs* is as necessary for us in these dayes as ever it was; for the cause why wee profit little after much hearing of Gods word, is this; we have not behaved our selves like *Pilgrims and strangers* in this world, but the *cares of the things of this life have choked it up.* *Matth.* 13. 12. that it could take no ground nor root in our hearts: when we have heard the Word we remember it not, because our hearts and the affections thereof are set on the pleasures and commodities of the world. We therefore must shake off this filthy sinne, and learne to behave our selves like *Pilgrims and strangers*, not intangling our selves with the things of this life, but *using them as though we used them not*, so as they be no hinderance to the growth of Gods graces in us.

For they that say such things; declare plainly that they seeke a Countrey.

In the former verse was set downe the constancy of *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob*, in the faith. Now in the 14. 15. and 16. verses, the holy Ghost proceedeth to amplifie and enlarge the commendation of their perseverance in the faith: for the scope of all these verses is to prove, that all these particularly were constant in the faith unto the end. The prooffe is made by one substantiall reason; the summe whereof is this: *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob sought for their Countrey which was hea-*

ven, and therefore they were constant in the true faith.

But some may thinke that this reason is not substantiall, for men may seeke for heaven, that never had true saving faith. As, *Salomon* desired that his end might be like the end of the righteous, *Numb.* 23. 10. wherewith no doubt hee desired the state of the righteous after this life.

I answer, that this desire of *Salomon* was not grounded upon any constant perswasion, nor fixed resolution, but upon some sudden motion. Secondly, though hee desired to die the death of the righteous, yet he would not have the life of the righteous: he had no delight to walk in the way to come to that end which they walked in; without which no man ordinarily can come to it.

Yet further some will say, *Many shall seeke* (as our Saviour Christ faith) *to enter in at the strait gate of the kingdom of heaven, and shall not be able,* *Luke* 13. 24. Therefore to seeke for heaven is no sufficient argument of true faith.

Answer. True indeed, many shall seeke to come to heaven, and shall not be able to enter: because they seeke when the doore of mercy is shut, and when the day of grace is past: for there is a time of grace wherein the Lord will be found. Now if men seeke him not in this time, though they seeke him never so long after, yet they shall not find him. But the seeking of these *Patriarchs* was a sound and constant seeking, and so a notable fruit of their true faith. For 1. they sought an heavenly Countrey: 2. they sought it in due time; not for a brunt, but thorow the whole course of their lives: 3. they went the right way; denying themselves and their estate in this life, as being strangers upon earth; and they were willing to forsake all things in this world to attaine heaven, esteeming it as their true dwelling place, and their eternal rest.

Now more particularly, the holy Ghost divideth this reason into two parts, and handleth the same severally: 1. hee proveth that they sought a Countrey in this verse; and 2. that this Countrey which they sought was heavenly in selfe, verse 15, 16. For the first part, that they sought a Countrey, is thus proved:

They which say they are Pilgrims and strangers, they shew plainly that they seeke a Countrey:

But *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* said of themselves, that they were *Pilgrims and Strangers:*

Therefore they shew plainly that they seeke a Countrey.

The first part of this reason is evident in it selfe: for he that faith hee is a *Pilgrim and a stranger in any place*, sheweth plainly that he is faith of his owne Countrey, and therefore seeketh one. The second part of the reason is allumed from their contention, in the end of the



former verse; and confessed, that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth: from whence the conclusion is laid downe in this 14. verse, that therefore these Patriarchs sought for a country.

In this reason observe, first, that the Author of this Epistle had diligently read the Historie of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, penned by Moses in the booke of Genesis: and in reading had observed that which they particularly consisted of themselves in many places of that booke; namely, that they were Pilgrims and strangers: yea, also he gathered from their confession this most heavenly meditation, that therefore they were not in their owne country, but sought another. These three things then the author of this Epistle used about the holy Scriptures: Reading, meditation, and observation.

Whence we learne, that all Gods Ministers, and those which prepare themselves to the *work* of the Ministry, are diligently to reade and study the holy Scriptures, and to meditate therein. No doubt, the author of this Epistle was an Apostle, and had most notable gifts by vertue of his calling, and yet hee bestowed paines in viewing the particular words of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, recorded by Moses in the booke of Genesis. Daniel also was an extraordinary Prophet, yet (as we may read) Daniel 9. 2. hee studied with admirable diligence the prophecies of Jeremy and Ezekiel. And Timothy, though he were a Disciple (Act. 16. 1.) and welllearned, yet Paul charged him to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine, 1 Tim. 4. 13. And Ezekiel is commanded to eat the *role*, and to fill his belly with it, Ezekiel 3. And S. Iohn likewise is commanded to eat up the little booke, Revel. 10. 9, 10. which thing hee did: all which strongly enforce the former duty, shewing that Gods servant in the Ministry, must as it were, eat up Gods booke; that in judgement and understanding, he may digest as farre as is possible the deepe things of God, and the hardest places of the Scripture: here must hee lay his foundation, and hither have recourse from all other writings whatsoever in any matter of doubt.

This direction is most necessarie for the Schooles of the Prophets, and for all Gods Ministers: and yet notwithstanding, the contrary practice beareth sway in the world. For in the Popish Universities most of their Divines apply themselves to study the bookes of certaine Schoole-men, and the Expositors or Commenters thereupon. These are applied day and night though they bee both many and large, and full of needlesse quiddities; and oftentimes they be also publicly expounded, whereas in the meane time the Bible lieth neglected, or little regarded: wherein we may see the notable worke of the Devil, and his malice toward the Church of God; for the Schooles of the Prophets are

the fountaines of learning. Now when as Satan by this meanes doth steale away from them the study of the Bible, and in stead thereof soileth in corrupt humane writings; hereby he poysons the fountaines, to the danger of infecting the whole Church. And as this is common in the places of Popery; so likewise some fault is this way committed among us that be Protestants; for many in their private studies take little paines in the booke of God, but apply themselves wholly to the writings of men; as Councels, Fathers, Schoole-men, and other Expositors; and in the handling of the Scripture, they glory more to prove a point of doctrine by multiplicity of humane testimonies, than by the written Word. But the truth is, thus to doe is to preferre the handmaid before the Mistresse: and as for the opening and expounding of Scripture by other Writers, it is no such point of deepe learning: a man of ordinary capacity and diligence, may easily deliver what others have done before him. But to open the Scripture soundly and purely, as it ought to be, is of another nature than these men take it: and hereto the sound study of the Text it selfe will prove the best helpe, as they will confesse who have tried most of all. And though the best mens workes bee but base stuffe to the pure word of God, yet the writings of holy men must not be contemned; but must be read and regarded in their place, for our furnishing and enabling to the study of the Scriptures, for the helping of our knowledge and judgement in the word of God: they that hold or practise the contrary, know not what helpe they bee, and what light they yeeld to many darke places of Scripture: But still above and beyond, before and after all, the Word of God must be eaten up of us, and studied with all diligence.

Secondly, in that the author of this Epistle noteth their particular sentence, and by consequence gathereth this meditation out of it, that they sought a Country: Hereby all men are taught to exercise themselves in hearing and reading all the places of the Bible, even the Histories of men therein, and out of the words to gather godly meditations. So Paul writeth to the Colossians, Let the word of God dwell plentifully in you, Col. 3. 16. The Prophet David also noteth it for the propertie of a good man to meditate in the Law of God day and night: And the practice of the blessed virgin Mary is registred as an example for us to follow: that she kept all the sayings of Christ in her hart. But pittie it is to see how reading the Word of God is laid aside; for it is so little practised, that men now adayes will not bee at charge to buy a Bible: for bookes of Statutes, men will not onely have them in their houses, but at their fingers ends; but Bible they have none: and if they have, it lieth on the dustie or table, and they read it not; and if sometimes they read, yet they never meditate thereon, as we

are taught in this place.

Further, whereas the holy Ghost reasoneth thus upon these examples; *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were strangers and Pilgrims, therefore they sought a Country*: Herein he teacheth us this special point, to wit; that a doctrine, though it bee not exprest in plaine words in the Bible; yet being gathered thence by right and just consequence, is no lesse to be beleaved and received, than that which is plainly exprest: and therefore they are faire to blame which mislike these termes in 'Divinity, person, nature, sacrament, consubstantiall, trinity, &c.' because they are not exprest in the Word. But they may with good confidence and much profit be retained; because, though not literally, yet in sense and meaning they are contained in the Scripture, and may by just consequence be gathered thence. And we deny not transubstantiation, because the Word is not in the Scripture; but because the matter is not there: nor can by necessary consequence be derived from it, but rather the contrary.

Again, many refuse these doctrines, the proceeding of the holy Ghost from the Sonne; and the baptizing of children, because they are not exprest in the Scripture. But hence wee answer, that though they bee not expressly set downe in so many words, yet by just consequence they may bee soundly gathered out of Scripture, and therefore are true doctrines, no lesse to be beleaved, than that which is plainly exprest. And thus much of the first part of the reason.

And if they had bene mindefull of their country, whence they came, they had leisure to have returned.

But now they desire a better, that is, an heavenly: Wherefore God is not ashamed of them to be called their God. For hee hath prepared for them a City.

Here the holy Ghost proveth the second part of the former argument, by two reasons: the first is contained in the 15. verse, and the beginning of the 16. It is taken from the distinction of Countries, and may bee framed thus;

They either sought an earthly Country, or an heavenly Country:

But not an earthly: *Therefore they sought an heavenly Country.* The first part of this reason is cleare of it selfe. The second part is in the 15. verse: from whence followeth the conclusion in the beginning of the 16. verse.

To come to the first part in these words: *And if they had bene mindefull of the Country, &c.* That is, if they had regarded, or thought upon Mesopotamia, or Chalde, from whence they came, and where they were borne; with any desire to have enjoyed the profits or pleasure thereof; they had leisure enough to have returned backe thither, by reason of the length of their dayes which they lived, in the land whither God called them.

A Here observe two points: First, that they are not mindefull of, as the word imports; they remember not the Country from whence they came: but when God gave them commandment to depart thence, and not to returne to Mesopotamia againe; after this commandment given, they came forth, and did forget their owne country.

Whence we learne, that howsoever usually Forgetfulness be a vice; yet some kinde of forgetfulness is a notable vertue: namely, to forget the things that displease God, and which he would not have us to thinke upon. Psal. 45. 9. the Church is commanded to forget her owne people, and her fathers house: that is, her owne will and desires; she must never thinke thereof (nor of any other thing whereby God is displeased) unless it be with dislike.

This condemneth the practise of many aged persons, in these dayes, who delight themselves among the younger sort, to tell of their bad practises of their youth; in wantonnesse, contentions, and breaking Gods commandments: But in so doing they sinne grievously; for a man must not remember his sinnes, but with dislike and detestation; being grieved with them, and angry with himselfe for them; or else to teach others how to avoid them.

C And as this kinde of forgetfulness is a good vertue, so there is also a veruious and good remembrance: namely, to be mindefull of that which may please God: as of Gods iudgements, to be humbled thereby: and of his Mercies, to be thankfull unto Almighty God for them: and of his Commandments, to become obedient to his will. These things therefore wee ought to imprint by diligence in our memories.

Secondly, here observe, God calleth them out of their owne country, and biddeth them live in the land of Canaan as strangers and pilgrims; and so they doe, abiding there without any purpose to returne; nay, they are not mindefull of their former home.

Hence wee are taught to be constant in that calling whereunto God hath called us. It is a fearefull sinne for a man to goe backe from that calling, in which God hath placed him.

D When the Israelites abode not patiently and constantly with God in the wilderness, but desired to shake off the calling of God, and to turne to Egypt, there to sit by the flesh-pots againe; they had Gods hand upon them grievously: as we may read at large, Psal. 78. Lest wife for looking backe when there was commanded to the contrary, was fearfully and strangely punished, being turned into a pillar of salt, Gen. 19. 26. And our Saviour Christ saith, Luk. 9. 62. *No man can putteth his hand to the Lords plough, and looketh backe againe, is apt to the kingdome of God.* As though he had said, He that starteth from the plough, is not fit for the field: no more is he that shitteth from his calling, fit for Gods service.

To apply this to our selves: God hath called us to profess Christian religion, whence we are called *Protestants*; We therefore must profess the same constantly and hold it fast, without wavering or doubting; (even without being minded of that spiritual Egypt of darknesse and superstition, whence we are delivered) much more, without turning to any other; this being the *true religion*, which is grounded on Gods word.

Again, in this our calling of Christianity, wee have vowed unto God for ourselves, to renounce the flesh, the world, and the devill. Now, this being our calling; as we have promised, and undertaken: so we must obey it in our lives, fighting manfully every day against the world, the flesh, and the devill. For, if wee profess religion in word, and doe not obey it in deed; we make our selves unfit for the kingdom of heaven. But alas, man are like to the *Swine* that returneth to the puddle, though he be washed never so cleane: and to the *Dogge* that returneth to his vomit; for most men doe but serve the flesh, and the world, and the lusts thereof; therein is their joy, and their hearts ease: take away these things from them, and take away their lives: so farre are they from seeking the kingdom of heaven as these Patriarchs did.

This much for the first part of the reason. Now followeth the second part, which is this; *But they sought not a place in earth; and therefore the conclusion followeth, That they desire a Country, which is heaven*: in these words,

But now they desire a better.

But some will say, the Patriarchs were dead many hundred years before this was written: How then can they be now said, to *desire a Country*? *Answer*. The Author of this Epistle here observeth, and followeth the manner of them that write Histories; who speake of things past long agoe, as though they were now present.

Now it is said, they *desire a better Country*: These Patriarchs had laid before them two countries, the Land of Canaan, and the kingdom of Heaven; and of these two, they might chuse whether they would, to be their portion and inheritance, upon which they would bestow their hearts: Now, they esteemed heaven (though it was to come) better than Canaan, though present; and therefore made choyce of heaven, and longed for it.

Where we learne, that as we must be thankful to God, for all his blessings; so among them all, wee should chuse the best. This *David* doth: for being put to chuse, whether he had rather live in life-guard, and in solace, with the wicked and ungodly, than in base estate, and in great danger neere to Gods Sanctuary: He saith, *Psalm. 84. 10. Hee had rather bee a doore-keeper in the house of his God, than to dwell in the Tabernacles of wickedness*. And

Salomons is highly commended by the holy Ghost, 1 King. 3. 10, 11. for chusing a *wisdom* understanding heart, before riches and honours. *Moses* also (as we shall see afterward) had his choyce, whether he would live gloriously, and at ease, in *Pharaohs* Court; or with the Church of God in adversity; now *Moses* having the gift of discerning, *refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter, and chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God*: but we see by the pleasures of *sin* for a season. Which holy examples doe all teach us; that when God setteth before us diversions of his blessings, wee in spirituall wisdom, must make choyce of the best. On the contrary, *Esaus* had this choyce set before him; his brothers *red broth*, and his *birth-right*: but he chose the worst, and therefore in the new Testament, the holy Ghost noteth him with this mark, to be *profane Esau* for his labour. And the Gaderens also are branded with a note of infamy to all ages, for chusing their *bees* before *Christ*, and his salvation. And the like choyce is set before us every day: for God of his mercy, in the preaching of the Word, for his part, doth set forth unto us *Christ Iesus* crucified: and in him remission of sinnes, and salvation: Now, on the other side, commeth the devill, and setteth before us all sorts of vaine pleasures and delights; shewing to every man those sinnes to which he is given; and with them all the profits or pleasures that usually accompany such sinnes. Now, most men having this choyce set before them, doe leave the true and substantiall blessings of God, and come to Satans painted Pageants, and there make choyce of sinne, with those base companions that doe attend her. This is too apparant to be denied: for howsoever the word of God be preached unto us, and wee doe heare the same, yet we preferre the vanities and pleasures of the sinfull world, before *Christ crucified*: making no account of him, nor of our owne salvation by him, in comparison of the present profits and pleasures of sinne. But we must pray to God to give us spirituall wisdom, and the gift of discerning, that now when God sets before us things so farre differing, wee may have grace to discern betweene them: and withall, to preferre and make choyce of the best, and to refuse the worst. But as for them that are so mad in their choyce, that they now preferre sin before the blessings of God in *Christ*, they shall see the day, when they would with themselves to be *Dogges*, *Toades*, or *Serpents*, rather than men and women: and yet (though they would be glad of that exchange of state) they shall never compasse it, but shall remaine woefull men and women for evermore, because that once they made so profane a choyce: when the path of life was set before them, they chose the way of death rather than of life; and therefore when they would desire death, they shall not have it, but shall live a life more bitter for ever, than any death in the greatest pangs.

Thus wee see in generall their choice was of
the better. Particularly the Text addeth,

This is an heavenly.

In which words is laid downe the last
and chiefe point in this reason, to wit, that the Pa-
triarchs desired a better Countrey than the land
of *Canaan*, and that was an *heavenly Countrey*,
even Heaven it selfe; the people whereof is
principally intended in this place.

Now whereas the Patriarchs, being our
fore-fathers in faith, and patternes whom wee
must follow, *did desire Heaven*: by their ex-
ample everie one of us is taught the same dutie,
to aime at another and a better *Countrey*, than
that in which we live, even at the Kingdome of
Heaven: and not to thinke that this world is
the countrey wee are borne for. This better
Countrey we must all seeking for, whatsoever we
be, high and low, yonge and old, learned and
unlearned, if wee will follow these godly Pa-
triarchs. And this wee must doe not at death
only, seeking this world all our life long, for
that is to despise Heaven: but even in the time
of our youth, and strength of our dayes, must
wee set our hearts on Heaven: endeavouring so
to use this world, and the things thereof, that
when wee *die* wee may come to Heaven, that
better *Countrey*, which we desired, and sought
for in our lives.

And to perswade us hereunto, consider the
reasons following: First, worldly wisdom
teacheth this: If a man dwell on his owne land,
and in his owne house, he is carelesse: But if in
another mans house, whereof he hath no lease,
but contrariwise is certaine to bee put out, hee
knoweth not when: this man in time will pro-
vide himselfe of another, that so he may remove
into it, and not be destitute: and if it be within
his power, hee will provide a better, that so he
may not remove for the worse. Behold, while
we live in this world, our bodies are tents and
tabernacles wherein our soules doe dwell for
a time: and besides, this time is uncertaine;
for there is no man that can say certainly, hee
shall live to the next houre. Therefore, we must
everie one of us, provide for himselfe a dwell-
ling place in Heaven, where we may abide for
ever in all blessednesse.

Again, consider the state of all sorts of men
in the world; for sime, Atheisme, and profane-
nesse abound everie where, the blaspheming of
Gods holy name, and the breaking of his Sab-
bath: besides daily sinne against the second Ta-
ble: Now all these cry continually for venge-
ance, and for Gods judgements to bee inflicted
upon us, and we know not how God will deale
with us for our finnes; whether hee will take
from us our goods, and good name, our health,
friends, or life it selfe; and therefore it standeth
us in hand, to provide for our selves a resting
place, wherein we may abide for ever, after this
fraile life full of miserie is ended.

Thirdly, if we shall not doe this, marke what
followeth: this, and no other, is our estate; By

name, we are the children of wrath, and of the
Devill: and by our manifold finnes, wee have
made our case faire worle: Now, what is due
unto us, for this corruption, and for the trans-
gressions? Surely, not Heaven, but another
place; even the contrarie, the place of eternall
woe and destruction, the bottomlesse pit of
Hell. Now, if this bee our due by nature, then
let not sime, nor Satan deceive us; per-
suading us, that we may come to Heaven, and still
continue in the state of our corrupt nature; but
let us labor by all means to cleave this place,
which is due unto us by nature; that through
the gift of faith in Christ, we may come to the
heavenly Citie, which these godly Patriarchs
so seriously sought for. But if wee remaine in
our finnes, and so *die*, we are sure to goe to the
place of destruction, and there to *dwelle* in
woe and torments, with the Devill and his An-
gels for evermore: so that it stands us in hand,
to use all good means to come to Heaven; or
else our case will be most miserable of all crea-
tures; for, perdition and destruction will bee
our portion world without end.

This must awake and stirre up our dead and
drowlie hearts, that are so belotted with sime,
that though we heare, yet we neither learne, nor
practise. In worldly things; we can take care
and paines: but if we will doe anything for our
owne everlasting good; let us labour by all
means to come to Heaven; for if wee misse of
that Citie, it had beene good for us, wee had
never beene borne: of that wee had beene the
 vilest creatures in the world, rather than men.
For, when the unreasonable creatures die, there
is an end of all their miserie; but if we die, and
not be prepared for that place, our death will
bee unto us the beginning of all woe and mi-
serie.

*Wherefore God is not ashamed of them
to bee called their God, for hee hath
prepared for them a Citie.*

In these words is laid downe a second rea-
son, whereby is proved that these Patriarchs
died in faith, seeking their countrey in Heaven.
The reason is drawn from the testimony of
God himselfe, recorded by *Moses* in the booke
of Exodus, where God saith, He is the God of
their fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and
Jacob, Exod. 3. 6. 1.

The Exposition. Wherefore that is, that this
might appeare and be evident, that these Pa-
triarchs died in the faith, and sought this countrey
of Heaven, God was content to vouchsafe and
grant unto them this favour, to bee called their
God.

Was not ashamed: To be, or not to be asha-
med of one, properly belongs to men; and it
cannot be ascribed properly of God, that hee is
ashamed: *blestnesse* (as the word signifieth); but
the meaning is, that God vouchsafed unto them
this favour, and shewed them this honour and
dignitie. *Quest.* What was this honour and dig-
nitie which hee shewed unto them? *Answer.* To
be

be called their God. By which is meant thus much, that God accepteth them in his mercy, to be such, with whom he would make his covenant of salvation, and not with them alone, but with their seed after them. Secondly, that he chose them to make the covenant in their names for all the rest. Thirdly, he vouchsafed them a speciall and extraordinary favour, even that himselfe would beare their names, and they should beare his; making his glorious name renowned to the worlds end, by this title, *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. Hereupon the reason is framed thus; God would not be called in speciall manner the God of unfaithfull men, but rather would bestow such a speciall favour upon Believers; but that favour did God vouchsafe to these three Patriarchs; therefore doubtlesse they lived and died in that holy faith.

In that it is said, *God was not ashamed to be called their God*; Here first we learne, that God doth not vouchsafe his mercy equally to all men, but some men have more prerogative in his favours and mercies than others. *Kings* make choyce among all their subjects, of some men, whom they will preferre to be of their counsell or guard, and to whom they will give speciall countenance, and dispense their favours more liberally than to all: Even so God among all *Abrahams* kintred maketh choice of these three persons, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to bestow on them such speciall honour, as he vouchsafed not to any of their fore-fathers afore them, nor posterity after them. No marvell therefore though he bestow not his speciall mercy upon all, seeing hee dispenseth not his inferiour favours unto all alike. And yet for all this, hee is no acceptor of persons: for hee onely is properly said to be an acceptor of persons, that preferreth one before another, in regard of some quality in the person: but God vouchsafed this honour unto these three, onely of mere mercy and good will, and not for any thing he respected in them.

This confuteth the conceit and error of many men, breached abroad in this age, that God doth equally love all men as they are men, and hath chosen all men to salvation, as they are men, and hath rejected none: for (say they) it standeth with equity and good reason that the Creator should love all his creatures equally; and this opinion they would build upon the generall promise made to *Abraham*: because that in him God said *all the nations of the earth should be blessed*, Gen. 22. 18. But we must understand that (All) is not alwayes taken generally, but sometime indefinitely for many: and so *Paul* speaking of this covenant of grace in Christ, saith, *The Lord made Abraham a father of many nations*, Romans 4. 17. where repeating the covenant recorded by *Moses*, hee putteth many for all. Again, grant that *Abraham* were the father of all nations, and that in him *All the kindreds of the earth were bles-*

A sed: Yet it followeth not, that therefore God should love *all men* equally and alike: for hee may love the *faithfull* of all nations, and yet not love *all men* in all nations: for, in his bountifull mercy in Christ, hee preferreth some before others. And this answer seemes the better, because we may have some reason to thinke, that God will save of every nation some, but no ground to imagine he will save all of any nation; much lesse all of every nation.

2 Here wee may see, *That God honoureth those his servants that honour him*, as hee saith to *Elie* the Priest, 1 Sam. 2. 30. Which is a point to be marked diligently; for this God is the glorious king of heaven and earth: yet he abaseth himselfe, and is content to be named by his creature, advancing them by abasing himselfe to be called their God, *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. Where we may apparently see, rather than God will not have them honoured that honour him, hee will abase himselfe, that they thereby may be honoured.

Hence we may learne many things: First, that all that professe religion truly, must inure themselves to *goe through good report and ill report*, and in all estates to be content, for Gods honours sake, as *Paul* saith; *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content: I can be abased, and I can abound; everywhere in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; to abound and to have want*. Thus spake that holy man of God: and so must we all endeavour to say, and accordingly to practise. And the reason is good, because if a man honour God, howsoever he be contemned, or not regarded in the world, yet God will honour him, and esteeme highly of him: that will prove the way to all true honour, as it hath done, even in this world to all that tried it.

Secondly, hence we learne which is the true way to get round honour amongst men; namely, to honour God. Good estimation in the world is not to be contemned, for the Lord commandeth all inferiours to honour their superiours, whereby hee also bindeth every man to preserve his owne dignitie. Now God honoureth them that honour him: therefore the surest way to get true honour amongst men is this: Let a man first lay his foundation well, and begin with God, and let all the affections of his heart and thoughts on this, To honour God. *Quest.* How may a man honour God? *Ans.* By forsaking the rebellious waies of sinne and ungodlinesse, and walking in the way of righteousness thorow the course of his life. This doth God take to be an honour unto his high Majestie. And when a man doth thus unfainedly, then God will honour him, even among men, so farre forth as shall be for his good: for God hath all mens hearts in his hand, and will makethem to honour those that honour him: so *S. Paul* saith, *If any mans therefore purge himselfe from these, hee shall bee a vessell unto honour*: not onely in glorie eternall after death,

PHIL. 11.

2 TIMOTH. 2.

but

but also in grace and favour with Gods Church. This confute the opinion, and condemneth the practice of many, who would faine have good report in the world, and bee spoken well of by all men: but what cometh I pray you take they to come by this good name? They doe not begin with God, and lay their foundation by honouring him; but they strive to please men, whether bee by doing well or ill they care not, their only care is to please all; for that is their rule and end, all must bee pleased; and because most men are ill, they rather chuse oftentimes to doe ill than they will not please the greater sort. But hee that beginneth to get honour by pleasing men, beginneth at a wrong end; for by the testimony of the holy Ghost in this place, the way to get sound approbation before men, is first to begin with God, and to honour him.

Thirdly, if God will honour them that honour him, then by the contrary, consider what a miserable case many a man is in: *For those that despise Gods God will dishonour them: imagine;* as we may see at large and very plainly in the example of *Eli* and his two sonnes: for *them that honour me* (saith the Lord unto him) *I will honour, and they that despise mee shall be despised.* 1 Sam. 2. 30. And in Zachary we may reade, *that the man that by blasphemy, theft, or perjury, dishonoureth God, the blessing curse of the Lord shall enter into his house, and remaine in the midst thereof, and consume it with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof:* Zach. 5. 4. And because *Eli* did more honour his children than God, 1 Sam. 2. 31. therefore the Lord threatneth the destruction of him and his family: and according as the Lord had threatned to it came to passe. For when the Israelites fought with the Philistines, chap. 4. 11. his two sonnes were slaine, and heate the hearing of the newes fell downe and brake his necke.

Now if this be so, what shall we say of our owne nation and people, amongst whom it is as common to dishonour God, as ever it was amongst the Papists or Pagans; partly by light using of his holy titles, and taking his name in vaine: and partly by swearing, and open blasphemy; and sometime even by abominable perjury. Nay, it is many mens rule, that they may sweare, lye, and forswear for advantage. These finnes are some of them rise in all sorts of people, and hardly shall you talke with a man that doth not by vaine oaths dishonour God: yea, it is so common, that children, so soon as they can crawle or lise out a word; the first thing they can speake is to curse, or sweare, and take Gods name in vaine, whereby God is dishonoured every way: so as it is a wonder that the earth doth not open, and swallow up many men quick, for their swearing and blasphemy. And whereas Gods judgements are oftentimes inflicted upon vs in many places of the land; wee may persuade our selves, that among other finnes it is for

our blasphemy and taking Gods Name in vaine. And if it be not speedily redressed, it is to bee feared lest God will raine downe his judgements upon us, and in his wrath sweep us all away; and take away the father with the childe, the good with the bad, because there is no reformation of so vile, and yet so needlesse a sinne.

To be called their God.]

Observe here further, that *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, could all of them say, *God is my God.* Now that which these worthy Patriarchs could say of themselves, wee must every one of us in our owne persons labour for; for their example is and must bee a rule for us to follow. We therefore must labour for this assurance, by Gods grace to say as the holy Patriarchs did say, *The true Iehovah is my God:* and of this I am resolved, and undoubtably assured in mine owne conscience.

Quest. How shall we be able to say unfeignedly, *God is my God?* *Ans.* By becoming his servants and people in deed and truth; for to him who is one of Gods people, God is alwaies his God. But how shall we become Gods true servants? *Ans.* By setting our hearts upon the true God, and giving them wholly unto him and to his service; and restraining our selves from all occasions of sinne, because sinne displeaseth him. *Quest.* But how shall a man set his heart wholly on God? *Ans.* This hee doth when he loveth him above all, and feareth him above all, and above all things is zealous for Gods glory; when he hath full confidence in Gods word and promises, and is more grieved for displeasing God, than for all things in the world besides. Or more plainly thus; then a man doth set his heart on God, when his heart is so affected, that when God commands, hee is alwaies ready to obey: So the Lord saith, *Hosea 2. 22. I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.* And in the Psalmes the Lord saith, *Psalm 77. 8. Seek ye my face:* then the holy mans heart as an Echo giveth answer, *I seek thy face, O God.* And such an one is the heart of him that is indeed the servant and childe of God, and one of Gods people.

For he hath prepared for them a city.]

These words are a reason of the former, proving that God was not ashamed to bee called their God, because he prepared a citie for them. And indeed, this shewes evidently, that God was greatly delighted with them, rather than ashamed of them: for had hee beene ashamed of them, hee would have shut them out of his presence. Herein therefore he declared his love and favour, that by preparing this city, hee procured that they should live in his sight for evermore.

Hence wee learne, that hee which hath God for his God, hath all things with him, according to the common proverbe, *Have God, and have all.* And on the contrary, *Lacke God, and*

lacke,

lacks all. And therefore David saith, Psal. 145. *15. Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.* Other things which here might be added have beene handled before.



ABRAHAMS Faith.

VERSE 17.

By faith Abraham offered up Isaac when he was tempted, and hee that had received the promises offered his onely begotten sonne.

18 To whom it was said, in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

19 For hee considered that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead: from whence hee received him also after a sort.

IN the former verses wee heard the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob commended jointly together. Now the holy Ghost returneth to the commendation of their faith severally. And first, he begins with *Abrahams* faith, whereof he had formerly propounded two works or actions: First, his going out of his owne country. Secondly, his abode in a strange Land. Now here followeth the third, which is the most notable worke of all, wherein his faith shines most gloriously; and his example herein is unmatchable. The particular points herein are these: First, the worke of his faith is plainly laid downe *in his offering up of Isaac*. Secondly, the same worke of faith is notably commended by three speciall arguments; to wit, first, by three great impediments that might have hindered the worke of faith: as we shall see in their place, v. 17, 18. Secondly, by his victory over these impediments, v. 19. Thirdly, by the issue of this temptation, and his work of faith therein, in the end of the 19. verse.

For the first. The fact of *Abrahams* faith here commended is this: *That he offered up Isaac his sonne*. It may first of all bee demanded, How *Abraham* could offer up his sonne *by faith*, considering it is against the law of Nature, and the Law of God, for a man to kill his owne sonne: which *Abraham* must doe, if he did offer him up in sacrifice unto God. For answer hereunto, we need goe no further than the Story, Gen. 22.

where wee may see, hee had a ground for his faith: for though the generall commandment be, *Thou shalt not kill*, yet he had a speciall commandment, *Abraham, kill thy son*: and by vertue of that, he did it: and did it in and by faith. But if that be so, then thereupon riseth another and a greater doubt: namely, How can these two commandments stand together, one being contrary to the other? *Ans.* Here a speciall point is to bee observed: namely, that whenever two Commandments are so joyned, that a man cannot practise both, but doing the one, the other is broken; then one of them must give place to the other: For howsoever all Gods Commandments binde the conscience, yet some binde it more, some lesse, because some are greater, and some lesse than others. Whence this rule may be set downe; that when two Commandments of God crosse one another, then a man must preferre the greater. As for example, this is Gods Commandment, *Honour God*, commanded in the first Table. Again, the fifth Commandment saith, *Honour Parents and Magistrates*. Now if Parents or Magistrates command any thing, the doing whereof would dishonour God, being contrary to the first Table; then the fifth Commandment giveth place unto the first: and a man must rather disobey Magistrates and Parents, than dishonour God: for the maine duties of the first take place before the maine duties of the second. And therefore Christ saith, *If any man come to mee, and hate not his father and mother, wife & children, brethren and sisters, yea, and his owne life also, he cannot be my Disciple*; meaning, that if father or mother, wife or children, would draw us from God, we must hate them rather than disobey God. Again, a commandment *ceremoniall*, and a commandment of *love and mercy* concur together, and it to falleth out that they should be both kept and cannot: in this case therefore the ceremoniall Law of the first Table, must give place to the law of Charitie and Love in the second Table: because the ceremonies are the inferiour duties of the first, but charitie and mercie the principall duties of the second Table. For example: the Lord injoyneth us in the fourth Commandment to rest on the Sabbath day. Now it fallis out that our neighbours house is on fire upon the Sabbath day: whether then may I labour with my neighbour that day to save his house? *Ans.* I may; for the strict observation of rest on the Sabbath day is a ceremony: but the quenching of fire in my neighbours house is a worke of mercy, and a maine duty of the second Table, and therefore must take place before a ceremoniall duty of the first Table.

Thirdly, God hath given us ten Commandments, concerning all ordinary duties both of pietie and mercie: yet if God give us a particular and speciall Commandment contrary to any of the ten, that must stand, and the ordinary commandments must give place.

and yeeld unto it: as for example, the second commandment forbiddeth any man to *make any graven Image*; yet *Moses* by a speciall commandment made a brazen Serpent in the wilderness to bee a figure of Christ: So the sixth commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*; is an ordinarie Commandment; and bindeth the conscience of every man to obey the same; yet God comes with a speciall Commandment to *Abraham*, and saith, *Abraham; kill thy sonne*: and therefore the ordinarie commandment of the second Table giveth place for the time. And so all the Commandments, *Thou shalt doe thus and thus*, unless God command otherwise: for God is an absolute Lord, and so above his owne Lawes, hee is not bound unto them, but may dispense with them, and with us for the keeping of them at his will and pleasure: And thus was *Abraham* warranted to sacrifice his sonne; namely, by virtue of a speciall and personall commandment to himselfe alone.

But if *Abraham* had not had this particular commandment, the sacrificing of *Isaac* had beene unlawfull and abominable; for the killing of a man is a heinous sinne: much more is the killing of a mans owne sonne without a speciall commandment; for that is against nature: and therefore the Lord by *Ieremie* doth severely condemne the Jewes for burning their sons and daughters in sacrifice, Jer. 7. 31. without any warrant from him; though it may bee they would pretend their imitation of *Abraham* in the sacrificing of *Isaac*: yea, and to shew his detestation of that fact, hee changeth the name of the place, calling it the *valley of slaughter*, v. 32. and in the new Testament it is used to signifie hell, Mat. 5. 29, 30. And because this sinne is so odious, it is rather to be thought that *Iephre* did not kill his daughter in sacrifice to the Lord, (as somethinke he did) especially being a man commended for his faith by the holy Ghost: but thereof we shall speake when we come to his example, ver. 32.

Thus we see *Abraham* had ground for this fact to doe it by faith, even Gods speciall command. But here it will be said, that *Abraham* did not offer up his sonne indeed; for though he had bound him, and laid him on the Altar, yet when hee lifted up the knife to have killed him, the Angel staied his hand, and suffered him not, Gen. 22. 11, 12. How then can it bee true which is here said, that he offered him up? for the writer of the story must make true reports; but it seemes the writer hereof is deceived in the very principall point, affirming *Isaac* was offered, when in truth he was not. *Ans.* God is the Author and inditer of this storie, and in Gods sight and estimation hee was offered, though not in the worlds: and therefore it is so said in regard of Gods acceptance; because *Abrahams* purpose was to have done it; and if he had not beene staied, he had done it.

Where we note a point of speciall comfort,

A to wit, that God in his children and servants doth accept the will for the deed: so *Paul* saith, 1 Cor. 8. 12. *If there be a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*: speaking of their relieving of the poore, he telleth them; that God regardeth not so much a mans worke, as the heart wherewith he doth the worke. And therefore the poore widow in the Gospell, Luke 21. 3, is laiid by our Saviour Christ, to have cast more into the treasury (though it were but two mites) than many rich men that cast in great abundance: more in heart, not in substance.

This serveth to stay the heart of many a man that is found bruised in conscience; for seeing his weake obedience, and the greatnesse of his sinnes past, hee begins to call his election into question: now what must a man doe in this case? *Ans.* Surely he must goe on forward in obedience, and endeavour himselfe to continue therein: and then though he faile many times through infirmity, yet for his endeavour, God will accept of him, and be pleased with the same.

This doctrine is very comfortable to a distressed conscience; but yet it must not make any man bold to sinne: for many abuse this doctrine, and say, that though they live in sinne, yet God will accept them, for they love God in their heart. But they deceive themselves: for this mercifull dealing of God in accepting the will for the deed, is onely towards those that endeavour themselves sincerely to leave their sinnes, to beleve in God, and to walke in obedience; but such as flatter themselves lying in their sinnes, God will not be mercifull unto them, Deut. 29. 19, 20.

Here further it may well bee demanded; How *Abraham* could take *Isaac* and bind him, and lay him on the Altar to have offered him: for though the common opinion bee, that he was but 12. yeares old, yet the more received opinion of the best Writers is, that *Isaac* was 25. or 27. yeares old. How then could *Abraham* being an old man of more than 120. yeares, be able to binde *Isaac* being a young and lusty man, and lay him on the Altar to kill him? For though *Abraham* had a commandment to kill *Isaac*, yet we finde not that God commanded *Isaac* to suffer himselfe to be killed; now Nature moves every one to seeke to save his owne life, and to resist such as would kill us. How then was *Isaac* brought to yeeld thus far to his Father?

For answer hereunto, we are to know, that *Abraham* was no ordinary man, but a Prophet, and that an excellent and extraordinary Prophet: so God himselfe testifieth of him to *Abimelech*; *Hee is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee*: yea, he was esteemed and revered as a Prophet, and an honourable man, even of the Heathen. The *Hittites* tell him, *Thou art a Prince of God amongst us*, Gen. 23. 6.

Now being a man of so high place, and so great regard even in the world; doubtlesse

he was of much more authoritie in his owne house. It is therefore very likely that hee tells *Isaac* his sonne, that he had a speciall commandement from God to kill him in sacrifice. Now *Isaac* being an holy man, and well brought up, hearing this, is contented to bee sacrificed, and obeyes his Father herein.

This I speake not as certaine, but as most probable; and it is the judgement of the best learned, who have good experience in the Scripture.

This circumstance well observed, serves greatly for the commendation of them both: of *Abraham* the father, that had so religiously brought up his onely sonne, that was most deare unto him, that hee would not resist the will of God revealed unto him, though it cost him his life. Oh that Parents would follow *Abraham* in so doing to their children; then would it goe well with the Church of God. Again, *Isaac's* behaviour is here admirable, that hee would not resist his weake and aged father, but suffered him to binde him, and to lay him on the Altar; yielding himselfe unto death when his father told him, My sonne, God will have it so.

This example must be a patterne of obedience, not onely for children towards their parents; but for us all towards Gods Ministers, when they shall tell us what God would have us doe: wee must submit our selves and yeeld, though it turne to our bodily paine and griefe; for *Isaac* yeelds, though it were to the losse of his life. But alas, who will follow *Isaac*? For let the Minister speake against our carnall pleasure and unlawfull gain; let him crosse our humour and affections, then wee refuse to heare and will not obey. Nay, if the Minister of God, as the Lords Priest, come with the sacrificing knife of Gods word to the throat of our sinne, to kill the same in us, that so wee may be pure and acceptable sacrifices unto God; doe we not resist him, and say in our hearts, We will none of this doctrine? Or, if hee like a Prophet of God, come and offer to binde our consciences with the cords of obedience, and to lay our affections on the altar of the Law; then we resist, and are either too young, or too old; too rich, or too learned; or too great to bee taught and bound to obedience. But let us know, that if wee will bee true *Isaacs*, even the sonnes of faith and obedience, and the true heires of *Abraham's* faith, (as we would beate the world in hand) then as hee did submit himselfe to bee bound of his father, so must we yeeld our selves to the Ministers of God, to bee bound by his Word: and suffer the same Word to bee in us, the two edged sword of the Spirit, to cut downe sinne and corruption in us, and to make us new creatures; that so both in body and soule wee may become pure and acceptable sacrifices unto our God. Thus much of the fact it selfe, wherein *Abraham's* faith is set forth.

Now follows the arguments or reasons

A whereby the same worke of faith is commended unto us: The first argument is taken from the great impediments which might hinder his faith; and they are in number three: First, that he was brought to this worke, not by ordinary command, but by an extraordinary course in temptation: *Being tempted*. Secondly, that he was to offer his owne child: yea, *his only begotten sonne*. Thirdly, that hee *who had received the promises*, must offer him and kill him, *in whom the promise was made*.

For the first impediment. In the ordinary translation it is read thus, *When hee was tried*: But that is not so fit, being rather an explication of the meaning, than a translation of the word. For the very word signifieth *to be tempted*: and the meaning is, when hee was tried. I would therefore rather reade it thus, *when hee was tempted*: or *being tempted*, as the word signifies.

In the handling hereof, first wee will intreat of the nature of this temptation, and then come to the circumstances belonging to the same.

Temptation (as it is here used, may bee thus described;) *It is an action of God, whereby hee proveth, and makes experience of the loyalty and obedience of his servants*. First, (I say) it is an action of God: This is plaine by the testimony of *Moses* in Gen. 22. 1. where (if wee reade the history) we shall finde, that *God did prove Abraham*. Object. But against this it may be objected, that *Saint James* saith, *Jan. 1. 13. God tempteth no man*: and therefore no temptation is the action of God? *Answer*. That place in *James* is thus to be understood; *God tempteth no man*: that is, God doth not stirre up, or move any mans heart to sinne. Yet further it will be said, That temptation is an action of Satan: for so in the Gospel we may reade (*Mat. 4. 3.*) that he is called the tempter? *Answer*. Some temptations are the actions of God, and some the actions of Satan: God tempteth, and Satan tempteth: but there is great difference in their temptations: first, in the manner: for Satan tempteth a man to sinne against the will of God, and to doe some evill; God tempteth a man to doe something, which shall be onely against his owne affections or his reason. Secondly, God tempteth for the good of his servants: but Satan tempteth for the destruction both of their bodies and soules.

Again I say, *Whereby he maketh triall*, &c. Here some will say, God knowes every mans heart, and what is in them, and what they will doe long before; and therefore hee needeth not to make triall of any man? *Answer*. God makes triall of his servants, not because hee is ignorant of that which is in their heart; for he understandeth *their thoughts long before*: but because hee will have their obedience made knowne; partly to themselves, and partly to the world: so that he makes triall of his servants, not for himselfe, but for our sakes.

Now further, God tempteth men three waies;

ways: until by his judgments and calamities in this world; so the Lord saith to the Israelites, *Deut. 8. 2. Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God lead thee this forty years in the wilderness, for to humble thee, for to prove, and to know what was in thy heart.* That journey might have been gone in *forties* dayes, but God did lead them in it *fortie* years, to prove and trie by this unwonted calamitie, whether they would obey him or not. So likewise, God suffered *fals* Prophets, and *Dreamers of* *dreams* to come among the people, for this end, *To prove them, and to know whether they loved the Lord their God, with all their heart, and with all their soule.* *Deut. 13. 3.* Now this first kinde of temptations, by outward Judgements, is most grievous, when the Lord layeth his owne hand upon his servants so heavily, as they shall thinke themselves to be quite forsaken. In this temptation was *David*, as we may read at large *Psalme the 6. and Psalme 38. and Job* being afflicted, not only outwardly in bodie, but inwardly in minde, cryeth out, that the *arrowes of the Almighty were in him.* *Job 6. 4.* and through the whole chapter hee bewaileth his grievous estate by reason of this temptation.

Secondly, God tempteth his servants by withdrawing his graces from them, and by forsaking them in part; and this temptation is as grievous as the former: herewith was good King *Hezekias* tempted, for as we may reade, God left him to a sinne of vaine-glory, and the end was *to trie him, and to prove all that was in his heart.* *2 Chron. 32. 31.*

Thirdly, God tempteth his servants by giving unto them some strange and extraordinarie commandment: As in the Gospell, when the *young man* came to our Saviour Christ, and asked him what good thing hee might doe to have eternall life? *Matth. 19. 16.* Christ biddeth him, *Go and sell all that he had, and give to the poore.* This commandment had this use, to be a commandment of triall unto the *young man*, whereby God would prove what was in his heart, that the same might bee made manifest both to himselfe, and unto others. And under this kinde we must comprehend this temptation of *Abraham*: for when God said, *Abraham, offer up thy sonne in sacrifice*; it was not a commandment requiring actually obedience, (for God meant not that *Abraham* should kill his sonne) but only of triall, to see what he would doe. And these are Gods temptations, whereby hee proveth his servants.

Yet further, the temptations of God whereby hee tempteth his children have two ends. 1. They serve to disclofe and make evident the graces of God, that be hidden in the hearts of his servants: so *S. James* saith, *My brethren, count it exceeding great joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* *Jam. 1. 2.* The reason followeth: *Knowing that the triall of your faith bringeth forth patience,* *ver. 3.*

Whereunto for those of old temptation led downe, *To manifest the gift of patience wrought in the heart.* And *S. James* saith to the Church of God, *That they were to be asse through manifold temptations, that the trial of their faith being much more precious than gold, that perisheth (though it be tried with fire) might be found unto their praise, and honour, and glory, in the appearing of the Lord Jesus,* *1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.* Where temptations have this use, to make manifest the soundnesse of mens faith in God, as the fire doth prove the gold to be good and precious. So in this place, The temptation of *Abraham* serveth for this end, to make manifest his notable faith and obedience unto God, with a reverent feare of his Majestie, as the Lord himselfe testifieth, saying, *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing for my sake thou hast not spared thy only sonne.* *Gen. 22. 12.* Meaning this: Now I have made thy faith, and love, and feare of me so manifest, that all the world may see it, and speake of it.

Secondly, Gods temptations serve to manifest hidden sinnes and corruptions, partly to a mans owne selfe, and partly to the world. And for this end God tempted *Hezekias*. For being recovered of his sicknesse, after that the King of *Assur* his great enemy was vanquished, especially when the Embassadors of the King of *Babel* came to inquire of the wonders which were done in the Land; God left him that he might see his sinnes, and the corruptions of his nature, as pride, and vaine-glory, where-with he was puffed up at the coming of the Embassadors to him. And thus he, who little thought that pride and vaine-glory could have taken such hold on him, perceiving how his heart was lift up in him, was doubtlesse much humbled at the sight of his so great corruption: for when the Prophet came unto him, hee submitted himselfe to the word of reproofe, *Esa. 39. 18.*

First, whereas *Abraham* the servant of God was tempted, that is, was proved and tried by God himselfe; Here we are taught, that if we perswade our selves to be the servants of God, as *Abraham* was, then we must looke to have temptations at Gods owne hand: for his example is a patterne for us: and therefore in him we must see that which we must looke to have; for it could not be needfull for *Abraham*, but it may be also needfull unto us. In regard whereof *Saint Peter* commeth it a thing necessary, that men should fall into *severall temptations*, that the trial of their faith might be unto their praise. So that in this life we must looke for triall: and the more glorious our faith is, and the more like to our father *Abraham*, the more trialls shall we undergoe.

Again, seeing we must be tried, therefore every one of us must labour for soundnesse of grace in our hearts; as of faith, repentance, hope, and of the love of God, (though they bee but little in measure:) for we must come to triall,

and it must appeare, whether we be hot or cold. Now if we have not foundation of grace in us, in the time of triall, then looke, as the droffe conbureth in the fire, when as gold commeth out more cleare; so shall hypocritie, formalitie, and all temporizing profusion, come to nothing, in the midst of temptation; when found grace, and a good conscience shall passe thoroughly, and thine more pure and perfect after than before.

Thirdly, considering wee are to looke for *trials and temptations* from God: therefore we must be careful to remember, and practise that counsell of Christ to his Disciples, before his passion: *Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation*, Matth. 26. 41. And because they were careless in practising this duty, therefore they fell into temptation: especially Peter fell most grievously, by denying his master. We must perswade our selves, that the same commandment is given to us: for God will prove us by temptations, to make manifest the corruptions that be in our hearts: we therefore considering our owne estate, we must pray for Gods assisting and strengthening grace, that when temptations shall come, we may be found found and stedfast in the triall.

Thus much of the nature of *Abrahams* temptation; now follow the *circumstances* to be considered therein: And first, of the *time* when *Abraham* was tempted. Hereof we may reade, Gen. 22. 1. *After these things, saith Moses, God did prove Abraham.* The words will admit a double reference. But this I take to be most proper and fit for that place, to wit; that after God had made most excellent promises unto *Abraham*, and given him most wonderfull blessings and privileges, that *then he tempted him*.

Hence we learne this notable lesson: That those people in Gods Church, which receive from God more graces than others, must looke for more temptations. This we shall see to be true in *Christ Iesus* the head of the Church: for when he was baptised, and had received the holy Ghost, Matth. 3. in the forme of a Dove, and had this voice of God the Father pronounced upon him, that *he was his well-beloved Sonne in whom he was well pleased*: then presently followeth this, that *he was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil*: Matth. 4. 1. being full of the holy Ghost, as *Saint Luke* saith: So likewise when God had testified of *Job*, that he was an *upright and just man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil*, Job 1. 8. then Satan tooke occasion thereby to tempt him: as in all the whole course of that booke we may plainly see, wherein are set downe most wonderfull temptations and trialls whereby he was proved. So *Jacob* must *wrestle with the Angel*, Genes. 32. 24. 28. and by the power of God, overcome God himselfe. This was a notable prerogative, to prevaile with the Lord; but yet he must *prevaile with his sale*, (v. 31.) and at the same time, and ever after draw

one of his legges after him, even to his dying day. *Saint Paul* was *rapt up into the third heaven, into Paradise, and heard words which cannot be spoken; yea, which are impossible for man to utter*: yet *lest he should be exalted out of measure, through abundance of revelations, there was given unto him a pricke in the flipe, the messenger of Satan to buffet him*: 2 Cor. 12. 7. God will honour him with revelations, but yet Satan shall have leave to buffet and beat him as it were blucke and blew. In all which wee may see, to whom God vouchsafeth a greater measure of grace, to them he appointeth singular trialls and temptations above other men. And the reason is: First, because Gods graces doe better appeare in temptations than out of them: as gold is best tried in the fire, and thereby proved most pure and perfect: Secondly, temptations serve to abate the fervour of God, and to bring him downe in his owne conceit, that he be not proud of those things that are in him, or puffed up with conceit that there is more in him, than indeed there is. This we saw in *Pauls* example; *He was buffeted of Satan, lest he should be exalted with abundance of Revelations.* We may see a type hereof in worldly affaires: The best Ship that floateth on the Sea, when it carrieth in it most precious Jewels, is ballaced with gravell or sand, to make it sink into the water, and so saile more surely, lest floating too high, it should be unstable: even so doeth the Lord with his servants, when he hath given them a good measure of his graces, then doth hee also lay temptations upon them, to humble them, lest they should be puffed up in themselves.

The second circumstance to be considered in this temptation, is the *greatness* thereof. It was the greatest that ever was, for ought we reade of; That God *should command him to kill his owne sonne*. For if God had told *Abraham*, that his *sonne Isaac* must have died, it would have bene very grievous and sorrowfull newes unto him: and yet more grievous, if he had told him that he should have died a bloody death. But yet this was most grievous of all, that *Abraham* himselfe with his owne hand should sacrifice his owne sonne; nay, his *only sonne*; and that which is more, he must kill his only childe, in whom the promise was made, that in *him* should his seed be called: this must needs be a great wound unto his heart; and yet to augment his griefe, he must not doe it presently, nor where he would, but goe three dayes journey in the wilderness. During which time Satan subtly wrought mightily upon his naturall affections to dissuade him from obedience: which could not chuse but be farre more grievous unto his soule.

Out of the grievousness of this temptation we may learne this lesson: that God in tempting a man, doth sometimes proceed thus faire. Not onely to crosse his finnes and corrupti-

mons, but even to bring him to nothing, in regard of humane reason and naturall affections. For this Commandement (*Abraham kill thy sonne*) might have made *Abraham* (if he had consulted with flesh and blood) even distracted in himselfe, and without reason, not knowing which way to turne himselfe. And accordingly, let all Gods children, especially such as have the greatest graces, looke for such temptations, as shall lay their humane reason flat upon the ground, and bring them to this point, even utterly to denie themselves.

The third circumstance in this temptation, is this; What *Abraham* did, when he was tempted? the Text telleth us, that *by faith he offered up Isaac, being tempted*.

Abraham being thus tempted, whether he would obey Gods Commandement, or not; obeyes God in offering up his sonne, and yet layes hold upon Gods promise made in him. For we must know, that *Abraham* had a promise of blessing, in *Isaac*; and being now commanded to kill *Isaac*, he did not now cast off his hope, and desperately thinke it could not be performed, if this Commandement were obeyed; but by the great power of faith, he both obeyes the Commandement, and yet still beleeves the promise: For so saith the Text, *By faith he offered up Isaac*: Therefore in the very action of killing *Isaac*, he beleeved the promise, that *Isaac* should live. And this was the excellencie of *Abrahams* faith. For if God should with his owne voice bid a man kill his sonne, it may be some would be found, that would doe it; but to doe it, and still to beleeve a contrary promise made before, betokeneth the vertue of an admirable faith.

In this circumstance we may learne a good instruction; to wit, in all temptations that befall us, still to hold fast the promises of God. Though in the Devils purpose, they tend to the loosening of our hold; and in all common reason, we have good cause to let them goe: yet for all that, wee must never let goe, but still hold the promise fast, and rather let goe all reason in the world, than Gods promise. And this is not only true faith, but even the excellencie of faith. For example: Gods promise is (John 3.16.) *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Sonne into the world, that whosoever beleeved in him, should not perishe, but have everlasting life*. Now when we are in the extremitie of all temptations, we must still hold fast this promise, and venture our soules upon the truth of it. This was *Abrahams* practice; for in this temptation, Gods meaning was to trie *Abraham*, and to see what he would doe: Now *Abraham*, he holds fast the promise, and yet obeyes God; though all the reason in the earth, cannot tell how that promise, and that commandement could stand together. But this was *Abrahams* faith, though I know not, nor reason knoweth not; yet God knoweth: and therefore, seeing I have his commandement, I will

A obey it; and seeing I have his word and promise, I will beleeve that also, and never forsake it. And even thus must we strive to doe in all temptations whatsoever; yea, even in those that come from Satan, which are full of malice and all violence. In our heart and conscience we must still hold and beleeve the promise of God: and this is ever the surest and safest way to get the victory over Satan, to hold, That Gods promise shall be performed, though we know not how, but rather see the contrary. And though in humane reasoning, it be a note of ignorance, and want of skill, to stickleayes to the conclusion and question; yet in spirituall temptations and trialls, this is found divinitie, Always to hold Gods promise, and to stickle fast to that conclusion: and not to follow Satan in his arguments, neither suffer him by any meanes to drive us from it.

Further, in that this fact of offering up *Isaac*, was onely *Abrahams* triall; we may observe, that it did not make him just before God, but onely served to prove his faith, and to declare him to be *Just*. And therefore, whereas *Script James 2.21. That Abraham was justified through workes, when hee offered his sonne Isaac upon the Altar*. His meaning is, that *Abraham* did manifest himselfe to be just before God, by offering up his sonne; and not, that by this fact *Abraham* of a sinner was made just; or, of a righteous man, was made more just: For indeed, good workes doe not make a man just, but onely doe prove and declare him to be just.

C Thirdly, God gave *Abraham* this commandement; *Abraham kill thy sonne*: but yet he concealeth from him, what was his purpose and intent herein; for God meant not that *Abraham* should kill his sonne indeed, but onely to trie what he would doe; whether he would still beleeve and obey him, or not. Where we see, that God, who is truth it selfe, reveales to *Abraham* his will; but not his whole will: whence ariseth this question:

D Whether it be lawfull for a man, according to this example of God, when he tels a thing to another, to conceale his meaning, in whole, or in part? For answer herunto, we must know, there are two extremities, both which must be avoided in this case: 1. That a man must alwayes expresse all that is in his minde. 2. That in some cases a man may speake one thing, and thinke another, speaking contrary to his meaning. But this latter is no way lawfull, and the other is not alwayes necessary. We therefore must hold a meane betweene both; to wit, that in some cases a man may conceale his whole meaning, saying nothing, though he be examined: namely, when the concealing thereof, doth directly stand with the glory of God, and the good of his brother.

Thus godly Martyrs have done; for being examined before tyrants, where and with whom they worshipped God; they have chosen rather

to die, than to disclose their brethren : and this concealing of their mindes was lawfull, because it touched immediately the glory of God, and the good of his Church.

Secondly, a man may conceale part of his minde : but that must be also with these two caveats : First, that it serve for Gods glory : Secondly, that it bee for the good of Gods Church.

Thus did *Ionas* conceale the condition of mercie from the Ninivites, when he preached destruction unto them, saying ; within fortie dayes and Ninive shall be destroyed : though it is evident by the event, that it was Gods will they should be spared, if they did repent. But that condition God would have concealed, because, it would not have bene for the good of the Ninivites to have knowne it ; sith the concealing of it caused them more speedily, and earnestly to repent.

But out of these cases, a man (being called to speake) must declare the whole truth, or else he sinnes greatly against Gods commandement, forsaking the propertie of the godly, *Psal.* 15.2.

And thus much of the first impediment of *Abrahams* faith.

The second impediment to *Abrahams* faith, is contained in these words :

*Offered his onely begotten
sonne.*

We know that the love of Parents descends to every childe naturally, but especially to the onely begotten ; upon whom (being but one) all that is bestowed, which, when there are many, is divided among them. And therefore in all reason, this might greatly hinder *Abrahams* obedience, That God should command him to offer his sonne, yea, his onely begotten sonne : But yet by faith he overcommeth this temptation, breaks through this impediment, and offers up his *onely sonne*.

Where we note, that true *faith* will make a man overcome his owne nature. Love is the strongest affection in the heart, especially from the father to the childe, even his onely childe ; And a man would thinke it impossible to overcome this love in the parent, unless it were by death ; there being no cause to the contrarie in the childe. But yet behold, *Abraham* by faith subdued this speciall love which he bare to his onely childe : God himselfe testified of *Abraham*, that his love to *Isaac* was great, *Genes.* 22.2. and yet by faith he overcommeth this his love.

This point is carefully to be marked, as declaring the great power of true saving faith ; for, if faith can overcome created and sanctified nature, then undoubtedly the power thereof, will enable man to overcome the corruptions of his nature, and the temptations of the world : for it is an harder thing to overcome our nature which we have by creation, than to subdue the corruption thereof, which comes in by trans-

gression. And hence such excellent things are spoken of faith : it is called the *victorie that overcommeth the world*, 1 *John* 5.4. And God is said by *faith* to *purifie the heart* : *faith strengtheneth the heart* : *Acts* 15.9. And *through faith we are kept by the power of God unto salvation*. 1 *Peter* 1.5.

Is this the power of faith to overcome nature, and the corruption thereof ? then howsoever religion be received, and faith professed generally among us, yet undoubtedly there is little true faith in the world : for even among the professors thereof, how many be there that subdue the sinnes of their lives, and suppress the workes of their wicked nature ? surely very few. Now where corruption beareth sway, and sin reigneth, there found faith cannot be : for if faith were found in men, it would *purifie their hearts*, and cleanse the corruptions thereof, and bring forth obedience in life.

Secondly, this power of true faith in mans heart must teach us, not to content our selves with a generall faith and knowledge in religion, but to goe further, and to get a sound faith that may *purifie the heart*, at least in some true measure, for saving faith will cleanse a man in every part of soule and body, and strengthen his soule in temptations.

Quest. Here it may be asked, how it can be truly said, that *Isaac* was *Abrahams* onely begotten sonne, seeing *Ismael* was also his sonne, and was borne before *Isaac*, as is evident, *Gen.* 16 ? I answer, two ways : first, that *Ismael* by Gods appointment was put out of *Abrahams* house, for it was the expresse commandement of God, *to put forth the bond-woman and her sonne*, (*Genes.* 21.10.) and so was made no childe of *Abraham*. Secondly, *Ismael* was his childe indeed, yet not by *Sarah*, but by *Agar* a bond-woman ; and so was (as I may say) base borne, whereupon he is reputed for no sonne ; but *Isaac* is his onely begotten lawfully : which may be an *Item* to beware of the bed defiled, seeing such off-spring is so debased with the Lord.

Now followeth the third impediment of *Abrahams* faith ; which is also a notable circumstance whereby the same faith is commended : and it is taken from the person of *Abraham*, in these words, *who had received the promises*.

The meaning of the words. Who] This must be referred to the person of *Abraham* of whom the holy Ghost here speaketh *Received the promise*.] That is, by faith ; for when God made his promises unto *Abraham*, he did not onely heare them ; but (which is the principall point of all) he beleaved them, and applied the same effectually unto his owne soule ; so much doth the word [*received*] import. Now it is said that he received (not one promise) but the *promises* plurally ; for these causes : first, because God having made one maine promise unto him touching Christ, did repeate and renew the

same divers times. Secondly, because God had made divers particular promises unto him; as first, *that he would be his God, and the God of his seed:* Genes. 17. 7. Secondly, *that he would give him a child in his old age:* Genes. 17. 19. Thirdly, *that unto him and his seed, he would give the Land of Canaan for ever:* Genes. 17. 15. Fourthly, *that in Isaac he would bless all the Nations of the earth:* Gen. 22. 12.

And because the receiving of Gods promises in generall could seeme no great impediment to *Abrahams* worke of faith; therefore the holy Ghost annexeth his receiving of a particular promise in *Isaac* in the 18. verse, *To whom it was said, in Isaac shall thy seed be called.* Which might seeme impossible to stand with the doing of this worke in sacrificing his sonne; and therefore the consideration of it in *Abraham*, must needs bee a great impediment to him in this worke: for hee goes about to kill *Isaac* (in obedience to Gods command) in whose life hee beleeveth to receive the blessings promised of God.

Here then observe a most wonderfull impediment to *Abrahams* faith, which above all might have hindered him from obeying God: for, how could he chiefe but reason thus with himselfe? God hath made unto me many gracious promises, and that which is more, he hath said, *That in my sonne Isaac the same must be accomplished:* and in him all the Nations of the earth must be blessed: Now then, if I shall kill and sacrifice my sonne, how shall these promises be accomplished? And reason in this case would say, I see no way, but that the promise is gone, and all hope lost. But what doth *Abraham* in this case? for all this, he doth sacrifice his sonne, and that by faith; still beleieving and holding assuredly, that though *Isaac* were sacrificed and slaine, yet in him should all the Nations of the earth be blessed.

Here then we note this speciall point, wherein the faith of *Abraham* doth notably appeare; That when *Abrahams* case, in respect of enjoying the promise of God, might seeme desperate, and void of all hope and comfort, then he beleeveth: for when *Isaac* was dead, in all reason he could have no hope of the accomplishing of Gods promises unto him, because they were made to him in *Isaac*: *Isaac* was the man in whom all the Nations of the earth should be blessed; and yet when all hope is past in mans reason, then good *Abraham* set his heart to beleve.

This practice of *Abraham* must be a patterne for us to observe and follow, all our lives long, in the matter of our salvation: if it fall out that we shall doubt of our salvation, and feele many things in us that would carrie us to despair; when we are in this case, and feele no comfort, then let us call to minde *Abrahams* practice, who beleeveth Gods promise, when the foundation thereof is taken away: even so let us doe at the same instant, when the promise of God

seemes to be frustrate, and we have no hope of the accomplishment thereof, then we must cast our soules upon it. For we must not onely beleve, when we feele comfort in our conscience concerning Gods mercies; but even then when God seemes to stand against us, and when we feele in our soules the very gall of hell, then (I say) we must beleve.

In *Pauls* dangerous voyage towards Rome, when he was in the Ship with the Mariners and Centurion, there arose a great tempest, and neither Sunne nor Starres appeared for many dayes: so that as the Text saith, *All hope that they should bee saved was taken away:* Acts 27. 20. Now what faith *Paul* in this extremitie of danger? Now I exhort you to be of good courage: for there shall bee no lesse of any mans life, save of the Ship onely, (Verse 22.) and so perswaded them to take bread. Even so, when our case falls out to be this; that either by reason of sinne and of the temptation of Satan, or else by reason of some outward calamities and troubles, we feele our soule (as it were) overwhelmed with sorrow, and even entering into destruction, and can neither see (as it were) light of Sunne or Starres; then we must set before us Gods promises, and labour to beleve the same. So *David* being in great affliction, and grievous temptation, saith thus of himselfe, Psal. 77. 2, 7, 8, 9, 10. *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord, my sore ranne in the night, and ceased not, my soule refused comfort.* Yet at the very same instant he prayed, *When his spirit was full of anguish;* and though hee seemed (as it were) to despaire, (when he said, *Will the Lord absent himselfe for ever? and will he shew no more favour? Is his mercie cleane gone? Doth his promise faile for evermore? And hath God forgotten to be mercifull, &c?*) yet he checks himselfe, and saith, *This is my death and my weakness.* Even so, everie true member of Gods Church, in the extremities of all temptations, and in the time of desperation, is bound to beleve the promises of God; and indeed, that is the fittest time for faith to shew it selfe in: for faith (as we have before heard) is the ground of things hoped for, and the subsisting of things which are not seene.

Now further it is said, *Abraham received Gods promises;* that is, he applied them to his owne soule and conscience, and beleved them, and made them his owne by faith. This is a notable point, and worthy the marking: God made his promises to *Abraham*: now *Abraham* he doth not onely heare, and learne the promises; but applies them to himselfe, and by faith makes them his owne. And thus ought we to doe with all the gracious promises made in Christ. But the manner of our dayes is farre otherwise; for when the mercifull promises of God are laid downe unto us in the ministerie of the Word, we are content to heare, and (it may be) to learne, and know the same: But where is the man to be found, that will apply

them to his owne confidence, and by faith make them his owne? Men commonly are like unto way-faring men, or travellers on the Sea, that passe by many goodly faire buildings, rich Townes, and Islands; which, when they behold, they admire, and wonder at: and so goe their way, without making purchase of any of them. And thus deale the most men with Gods mercifull promises. In the multitude of the Word, God layes open unto them his rich mercies, and bountifull promises in Christ; and men approve thereof, and like them well: whereupon, many doe willingly apply themselves to know the same, but for all this, they will not receive them by faith, and so apply them to their owne soules.

But we must take a better course: and when we heare of the promises of God made unto us in Christ, we must not content our selves with a bare knowledge of them, but labour to beleve them, and apply them unto our selves, to our soules, and consciences: and so by faith make them our owne. As it is said of *Abraham*, and in him, of all the faithfull; *The blessing of Abraham came on the Gentiles, through Iesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the spirit, through faith*, Galat. 3.14.

Further observe, the holy Ghost setteth downe that particular promise which God made to *Abraham*, in his sonne *Isaac*: *To whom it was said, in Isaac shall thy seed be called*, Genes. 21.12. Rom. 9.7. In which places it is said, that *in Isaac should his seed bee called*. The meaning whereof is plaine, and thus much in effect: *Ismael shall not be thy sonne and heire, but Isaac is the childe which shall be thy heire; he it is, in whom I will accomplish the promises of life and salvation made to thee*.

From the words thus explained, first wee must observe *Pauls* collection gathered from Gods dealing with those two persons (Rom. 9.7.) namely, that God before all worlds hath chosen some men to salvation in his eternall counsell, to manifest the glory of his grace; and hath refused and rejected others, leaving them unto themselves, to shew forth his justice upon them.

This doctrine is gathered out of this place, after this manner: Such as is Gods practice and dealing towards men, in time; such was his eternall counsell and decree, (for as God before all time determined to deale with men, so in time hee dealeth with them.) Now Gods practice and dealing with *Isaac* and *Ismael* is this; *Ismael* is vouchsafed to bee made partaker of temporall blessings; but yet he is cut off from the spirituall Covenant of grace, and *Isaac* is the man that must receive the Covenant, and by vertue thereof be made partaker of life everlasting. And so accordingly it is with others; God hath decreed to chuse some men to salvation, and these are admitted into the Covenant: others he hath decreed to reject, and they are cut off from the Covenant, and from life ever-

lasting. These two persons, *Isaac* and *Ismael*, are Types of these two sorts of people whom God doth elect, and reject: *Isaac* representeth those that are chosen to salvation, who become the true members of Gods Church; and *Ismael* is a Type of those that are rejected. Now in regard of this different dealing of God with mankind, chusing some, and refusing others, we must all put in practice *Saint Peters* lesson with feare and trembling being very careful, and giving all diligence to make our election sure, 2 Peter 1.10. for all be not elected to salvation, but some are rejected; all bee not *Isaacs*, but some are *Ismaelites*. If all were elected and chosen to salvation, then no man needed to care for it; but seeing some are rejected, and never vouchsafed to come within the covenant indeed, therefore it standeth us greatly in hand to take the good counsell of the Apostle, and to give all diligence to make our election sure.

Secondly, whereas it is said, *Not in Ismael, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called*: We may note the state of Gods Church in this world, in regard of the different sorts of men that live therein. For *Abrahams* family was Gods Church in those dayes, and therein were both *Isaac* and *Ismael*; though both his children, yet farre differing in estate before God. *Ismael* indeed was borne in the Church, and there brought up, taught, and circumcised; but yet he was without the Covenant in Gods sight: Now *Isaac* was not onely borne, and brought up in the Church, and circumcised, but also received into the Covenant; and herein differed farre from *Ismael*: for, he is the sonne of *Abraham* in whom God will continue the Covenant of grace unto life everlasting, to his posteritie. And so it is with Gods Church at this day, in it there be two sorts of men; one, which are baptized and brought up in the Church, heare the Word, and receive the Sacraments; but yet are not saved, because they have not the promise of the Covenant effectually rooted in their hearts. The other sort are they, which being baptized in the Church, heare the Word effectually, and receive the Lords Supper worthily to their salvation; because God doth establish his Covenant in their hearts. This difference is plaine in Scripture, in the parables of the draw-net, (Matth. 13.) of the Sower, and of the tares: as also by Christs behaviour at the last judgement, (Matth. 25. 32.) severing the sheepe from the goats, both which live together in the Church. And by *Saint Pauls*, who speaking of those which are borne and brought up in the Church, saith; that some are *children of the flesh*, and some *children of the promise*, Rom. 9.8.

This being so, that every one which lives in the Church is not of the Church; that is, is not a true member of the Church, and the true childe of *Abraham*; it must make us all careful, to use all holy means, whereby we may be fully assured that the Covenant of grace be-

longs unto us; for, it is not enough for us to dwell in the Church, to heare the Word, and to receive the Sacraments, (for so did *Ismael*, and yet never was saved) unlesse therewithall we have the Covenant of grace belonging unto us, and the assurance thereof sealed in our consciences, by Gods holy Spirit.

Again, consider who spake these words; *But in Isaac shall thy seed be called*: We shall finde in Gen. 22.12. it was God himselfe. *Let it not* (saith God unto *Abraham*) *be grievous in thy sight for the child, and for the bond-woman: in all that Sarah shall say unto thee, heare her voice; which was, to cast out the bond-woman and her sonne Ismael. For* (saith God) *in Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

Here observe a notable practice of *Abraham*, as a good direction how wee ought to judge of all those that live in the Church, submitting themselves outwardly to the ministerie and regiment thereof. *Abraham* here hath two sonnes, *Isaac*, and *Ismael*; hee circumciseth them both, and instructs them both (for *hee taught all his household* to know God, and to feare, and obey him, Gen. 18.19.) he judgeth them both to be in one state, in regard of Gods Covenant; though they were not: but that difference is made by God. *Abraham* doth not on his owne head, and by his owne will, put *Ismael* out of the Church, which was in his family; but God bids him put him out, and then he put him out, and not before: till such time he kept him in, and held him to be within the Covenant, as well as *Isaac* was. Even so must we deale towards those that live in the Church: secret judgement must be left to God; and (till God manifest the contrary) in the judgement of charitie, we must hold them all elect. This is the practice of Saint *Paul* in all his Epistles: writing to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. 1.2.) hee calls them *all sanctified*: and to the Galatians, (Gala. 1.2.) he calls them *all elect*: speaking so in the judgement of charitie, although he knew that among them there were many profane and wicked men; and though he reprove many great errours and heinous finnes among them.

And thus much of the first argument whereby *Abrahams* faith is commended unto us; namely, the great impediments which might hinder the same.

Now followeth the second argument or reason, whereby his faith is commended; to wit, *Abrahams* victory over these impediments, or the means whereby hee overcame them, and induced himselfe to obey God, in these words:

VERSE 19.

For he considered, or reasoned, that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.

HERE is the true cause that made *Abraham* to offer his sonne, and yet beleeve the promise, *that in him his seed should be called.* We

A may perswade our selves that *Abraham* had rather have died himselfe (if it might have stood with the will of God) than to have sacrificed his sonne. How then doth he induce himselfe to offer him up? *Answe.* By this which is here set downe: *he reasoned that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.*

Here are divers points to be considered of us: First observe, the Text saith not, that *Abraham* murmured, or reasoned against God: but reasoned with himselfe, that God was able to raise up his sonne againe: and thereby induced himselfe to sacrifice his sonne unto God.

Hece we learne, that when God layes upon us any hard commandement, we must not plead the case with God, or murmur against him: but with all quietnesse and meeknesse obey. This is a notable grace of God commended unto us by God himselfe: *In rest and quietnesse* (saith God, *Isay 30.15.*) *shall be your strength: in quietnesse and confidence shall yee be saved.* Many thinke it impossible to endure or doe some things, which God imposeth on his children: But our spirituall strength stands in these two, in *silence*, or *rest*, and in *quietnesse*: by these we shall be enabled. When *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the sonnes of *Aaron*, offered strange fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded, *There went out a fire from the Lord, and devoured them; so they died before the Lord.* Now when *Aaron* their father asked *Moses* a cause hereof, *Moses* said, *It was that which the Lord spake, hee would be glorified in all that came neere him; which when Aaron heard, the Text saith, He held his peace, and said not a word: so David behaved himselfe in the case of distress; I held my peace, and said nothing, because thou Lord diddest it.* And this is a speciall point for us to learne and practise; we must not grudge or repine at Gods hard Commandements, nor plead the case with him, but in all quietnesse and silence obey God in all that he saith unto us.

Again, whereas it is said, that *Abraham* reasoned, that God was able, &c. Here we learne, that it is a necessarie thing for a man that beleeves, to have good knowledge in Gods word: that when a temptation comes against his faith, by knowledge and reasoning out of Gods word, he may be able to put backe the same; for, all our reasoning in matters of faith, must be grounded on the Word: so doth *Abraham* in this place, against this strong temptation, reason out of Gods Word to stay himselfe: so that knowledge in the Word of God, is necessarie to him that beleeves. And therefore that Doctrine of the Church of Rome is erroneous, and here condemned, which saith; that if a man become devout, and beleeves as the Church beleeve, (though he know not what the Church beleeve) yet this faith will save him: but this is a meere device of their owne, and hath no ground in the word of God: for (as we see here) knowledge in the word is necessary for him that hath

hath true saving faith.

But what is *Abrahams* argument, whereby he moves himselfe to obey God? Surely this: *Hereasend that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead.* One part of his reason he takes for granted, which here he conceales: for this promise was made unto him, *In Isaac shall thy seed be called.* Now this he takes for granted, *that God will never change his promise.* From whence he reasoneth thus: *God is able to raise up Isaac my sonne from the dead to life againe;* and therefore I will sacrifice my sonne according to his commandement: for this I know certainly, that *in Isaac shall my seed be called,* seeing God hath promised that, as well as he commandeth this other.

In this example, we see a meanes set downe unto us to induce us to obey God in all hard and difficult cases imposed by God: which is a point to be considered carefully of every one of us. For say that any of us shall be so touched in conscience for our sinnes, that we even despaire of our owne salvation: what must we doe in this case? we must take *Abrahams* course, and dispute with our selves for our selves, and we must draw our arguments from the *promise* of God, and from the *power* of God: we must joine the promise and power of God together. As for example: thus we must say; *God hath made this promise,* this I have heard, and I doe beleieve it, *that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Sonne, that whosoever beleeveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* This is Gods promise, and it shall never be changed. Now therefore howsoever my case be heave and desolate, yet God is able to comfort me, and to bring my soule out of hell, and from this case of desperation; therefore though he kill me, I will trust in him, and I will use all holy meanes whereby I may overcome this hard and grievous temptation. So, if it shall please God to call us to suffer any thing for the name of Christ, and his holy profession; flesh and blood we know is weake, and Nature will make this objection, *that life is sweet:* what course therefore shall we take? we must doe as *Abraham* here doth; unto the certainty of Gods promise we must adjoyne his power, and reason thus; *God hath made this promise,* that he will be with them that suffer any thing for his owne name sake, and I know that he is able to deliver me: and though he will not, yet he can make me able to beare it; therefore I will patiently suffer and abide whatsoever his holy hand shall lay upon me. Thirdly, is a man so troubled with some sinne, that he cannot get out nor overcome it? Then also let him let before him this fact of *Abraham*; and unfeignedly endeavour to doe hereafter. For that which is past, let him labour to beleieve this promise of God, *At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sinne, he will put all his wickedness out of his remembrance.* And for the time to come (being first resolved, that God can enable him to leave his

sinnes) let him strive by good meanes to leave his sinne, avoiding the occasions of it, and praying against it; and this will be as a cable-rope to draw him out of the pit of sinne. This course we must take, and this doe, in every hard case that shall befall us.

And thus much of the meanes whereby *Abraham* induced himselfe to obey God.

The third and last reason whereby *Abrahams* faith is commended unto us, is the issue and event thereof, in these words:

From whence he received him also after a sort.

From whence; that is, from death. *After a sort,* or (as it may be read) *in some shew.* This is said, because *Isaac* in the thought and purpose of *Abraham*, was but a dead man: for *Abraham* was fully resolved with himselfe upon Gods command, to have sacrificed him; yea, he had gone so farre, as to put the sacrificing knife unto his sonnes throat, and had slaine him indeed, had not the Angell of God stayed his hand: and therefore when the Angell said, *Lay not thy hand upon the child, neither doe any thing to him,* even then did *Abraham* in some shew receive *Isaac* from death.

Here we learne divers points: 1. That whosoever shall rest on Gods providence, and good pleasure, even in cases of extremite, when he shall be out of all hope with himselfe, shall at the last have a good issue. This we see to be true by *Abrahams* example in this place. As we said before, he himselfe (no doubt) had rather have died tenne thousand times, than to have *Isaac* slaine, in whom the promise was made: but yet, beleieving Gods promise, that that should never change, he sets himselfe on Gods good pleasure and providence, and goes on in obedience; and so in the end received a blessed issue. This is very clearly set downe unto us in the Historie recorded by *Moses*. For when *Abraham* had gone three dayes journey in the wilderness, and had built an Altar, then *Isaac* said unto *Abraham*, Gen. 22.7. *Father, here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lambe for the burnt offering?* Then *Abraham* said, *My sonne, God will provide him a lambe for a burnt offering,* verse 8. And thus yielding himselfe to Gods good pleasure and providence, he received his sonne againe; as a dead child restored to life. So, when we are in cases of extremite, when all goes against us, and when we can see no hope of any good issue or end, and all good meanes seeme to faile us; if we can then cast our selves on Gods providence, and rowle our selves upon God; we shall have comfort in the end, and a good issue out of all. We deale of us in word acknowledge Gods providence: but when we come to the pinch, that we fall into cases of extremite: then we use unlawfull meanes, and doe not with *Abraham* cast our selves upon God, but seeke helpe of the devil, and wicked men. But all such persons must looke for a cursed issue. They therefore, that fear the Lord,

being put to any plunge, or extremitie, must cast themselves upon God wholly, and wait for his good time & pleasure: and then will the issue be both joyous and comfortable unto their soules.

Here some circumstances of this fact are to be considered out of the larger storie. The first is this: What did God unto *Abraham* at this time, when he was about to kill his son? *Ans.* God now gave him a commandment, to *slay his hand, and not to slay his son*: by vertue whereof, *Abraham* stayes his hand. God before commanded him to goe *three dayes journey in the wilderness, and there to sacrifice his sonne*: Here upon *Abraham* goes; but now being come to the place, having bound his sonne, and being readie to cut his throat; God bids him *slay his hand*: and then also *Abraham* obeyeth God, and doth not kill his sonne. Here we see *Abraham* is at Gods command, and as we say, at his becke: Hee doth not follow his owne will and pleasure, but when God calls, hee is wonderfull pliable to doe Gods command, whatsoever it be, one way or other.

This practice of *Abraham* must be a looking-glasse for us, wherein to see, what manner of persons we ought to be. Look what God commands us to doe, that we must doe; and what he forbids us, that we must not doe. But this is a rare thing to be found in these dayes: our practice generally is contrarie; for in our lives we follow our owne humours and affections, never regarding what God doth either will or nill. But if we will be *Abrahams* children, we must follow *Abrahams* practice in this place; For the *sonnes of Abraham* will doe the *workes of Abraham*, *Joh. 8.39*. Good servants will come and goe, doe and undoe, at their Lords pleasure: and forget themselves to obey their Masters: And so must it be with us, if we call God our good Lord and Master.

The second circumstance to be considered, is the time when *Abraham* received his son from death; to wit, at the verie same time when his knife was at his sonnes throat, and he himselfe readie to offer him up for a sacrifice unto the Lord: at the same instant God spake unto him by his Angell from Heaven, and said, *Abraham* *slay thy hand*, *Gen. 22.10*. This circumstance is worth the marking: for God lets him alone three whole dayes in great perplexitie; and *Abraham* goes forward, according to Gods command, even to lay his knife to his sons throat.

Here then we see, what is the Lords dealing with his servants; He lets them alone for a long season in temptation and pitifull distresse: and at the length, when it comes even to the extremitie, and when the knife is (as it were) at the throat; then hee shewes himselfe, and brings comfort unto them.

The Spouse (in the Canticles) which is the Church of God, or a true Christian soule, whether you will (for it is true both in the generall and particular) *Cant. 3.2,3*. *Shee seeks Christ* *every where in the streets and open places, but she*

findes him not; then she goes to the watchmen (which are Gods ministers) *and there enquires after him whom her soule loveth*; and they cannot tell her where she might finde him: so that now all hope of finding him might seeme to be past: but when she was a little from them, then she found him, and Christ comes to her when she was most in feare not to have found him at all.

The people of *Israel*, were many yeares in bondage in *Egypt*: and when the time came that *Moses* was sent of God to fetch them thence, and to be their guide and deliverer, when he had brought them out, and carried them to the red Sea, then came *Pharaoh* with a huge armie after them to destroy them, *Exod. 14.25*. Before they had beene in great affliction and bondage: but now they were quite past all hope of recoverie; for they had before them the red Sea, and on each side of them great hills and mountaines, and behinde them the huge hoast of *Pharaoh*; and therefore they cried out unto *Moses*; who then by Gods commandement did divide the red Sea, and made it drie land, and delivered them through the midst of the red Sea: but as for their enemies, *Pharaoh* and all his hoast, the Lord drowned them in the midst thereof.

So for our selves, when God shall exercise any of us in cases of extremitie, we must looke to be so dealt withall at Gods hand; He will let us alone for a time, and never helpe us till the pinch: and therefore, we must wait for his good pleasure with patience; for this he will doe to trie us to the full, and to make manifest the graces of God wrought in us.

The third circumstance to be considered, is this: *In what manner did Abraham receive his sonne from the dead*. This we may read of, *Gen. 22.13*. He must take a *Ram* that was caught behinde him in a bush, and offer him in stead of *Isaac*: so *Isaac* is saved, and the *Ram* is sacrificed and slaine.

Now whereas *Abraham* offered *Isaac* in sacrifice to God, and yet *Isaac* liveth, and the *Ram* is slaine in his stead: Hence some gather this use, and we may profitably consider of the same; to wit, that the sacrifices which we offer unto God, now under the Gospel, must bee living sacrifices: for *Isaac* he was offered in sacrifice to God, and yet belived and died not, but the *Ram* is slaine for him. So must we offer our selves in sacrifice unto God, not dead in sinne, but living unto God in righteoulnesse and true holiness. And thus shall wee offer up our selves living sacrifices unto God, when as we consecrate our selves unto Gods service, and obey him in our lives and callings. And looke as under the Law, the burnt offerings were burnt all to smoake and ashes; so must we in our lives, wholly and altogether, give our selves unto God, and renouncing our selves, be nothing to the world, but wholly dedicated to God. Neither must we come unto him in our finnes: for sinne makes our sacrifice dead, lame, halt, and blinde, which God doth abhor; but we must bring our selves

living

Math. 9.9.

Luke 6.46.

living sacrifices unto God (as *Paul* saith, *Rom. 12.1.*) *I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you give up your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service of God.*

Hence also some gather, that this sacrificing of *Isaac* was a signe and type of Christs sacrifice upon the Crosse. For as *Isaac* was sacrificed and lived, so did Christ; though he died, yet rose againe, and now liveth for ever: but because it hath no ground in this place, though it be true which is hid of both, therefore I will not stand to urge the same.

And thus much of this third reason, whereby *Abrahams* faith is commended, with the circumstances thereof: and consequently of all the examples of holy *Abrahams* faith.

ISAACS FAITH.

VERSE 20.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

IN the three former verses, the holy Ghost hath particularly commended the faith of *Abraham*: Now in this verse, he proceeds to set downe unto us the faith of *Isaac* particularly also. Wherein we are to marke these foure points: First, a blessing wherewith *Isaac* blessed *Jacob* and *Esau*: Secondly, the cause of this blessing, that is, his faith: Thirdly, the parties blessed, which are *Jacob* and *Esau*: Fourthly, the nature and matter of this blessing in the end of the verse; *Concerning things to come.* Of these in order.

First, for the blessing. That we may know the nature and qualitie of it, we must search out the kindes of blessings how many they be.

In Gods Word we finde three kindes of blessings; first, whereby *God* bl. *steth man*. Now *God* blesteth man, by giving unto him gifts and benefits either temporall or spirituall: and so he blessed all his creatures in the beginning, but especially man.

The second kinde of blessing is that, whereby man blesteth *God*: and this man doth by praying *God*, and giving thanks unto him, who is the Author of all blessings. So *Paul* saith, *Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, which hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ*: *Ephes. 1.3.* beginning his Epistle, with this kinde of blessing, that is, by praising *God*. And so *Zacharie* after the birth of his sonne, and the receiving of his sight, he sings unto *God* this song of praise, *Blessed be the Lord of Israel*, *Luke 1.68.* that is, praise and thanksgiving be unto the Lord, &c.

The third kinde of blessing is that, whereby one man doth blese another: and under this kinde we must understand *Isaacs* blessing in this place.

Now further, this kinde of blessing whereby one man blesteth another, is either private or publicke. A private blessing is that, whereby one private man whatsoever he be in his place, prayes to *God* for a blessing upon another. And this is common to all men: for every man may blese another, that is, pray to *God* for a blessing upon another; but especially it belongeth to Parents thus to blese their children, by praying to *God* for a blessing upon them. And therefore the Commandement goes thus, *Honour thy father and thy mother, that they may prolong thy dayes in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*, *Exod. 20.12.* Now Parents prolong their childrens dayes by blessing them; that is, by teaching and instructing them in religion, and by praying unto *God* for a blessing upon them, that he would blese them. Secondly, there is a publicke kinde of blessing, which is done by the minister of *God*, in the name of *God*. And after this sort *Melchisedech* blessed *Abraham*, as he returned from the slaughter of the Kings, *Hebr. 7.1.* and without all contradiction, (saith the Author of this Epistle) *the lesse is blessed of the greater*, verse 7. Further, these publicke kinde of blessings are of two sorts; either ordinary or extraordinary. An ordinary kinde of publicke blessing is that, which is pronounced and uttered out of Gods word by an ordinary minister, upon the people. Example of this we have in the ordinary Priests in the old Testament; whose dutie was in the service of *God*, to blese the people before their departing. And the forme of blessing which they should use, is prescribed unto them by *Moses*, after this manner from the Lord: *Thus shall ye blese the children of Israel, and say unto them: The Lord blesse thee, and keepe thee, the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be mercifull unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* Where we see the manner of the Priest was to blese the people, not in his owne name, but in the name of *God*, stretching out his hand over the heads of the people.

This kinde of blessing was then ordinary, and yet some way figurative; signifying unto them the blessings which Christ Jesus the Mediator, *God* and man, should not onely pronounce, but even give unto the Church in the new Testament: which our Saviour accordingly performed to his Disciples at his Ascension. For the *Storie* saith; When he was risen againe, he led them to *Bethania*, (where he ascended) and lift up his hands and blessed them. And *S. Paul* declareth this blessing of Christ more at large, saying, *Ephes. 4.8, 11, 12.* *Christ ascended on high, and lead captivite captivite, and gave gifts unto men: some to be Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastours and teachers; for the gathering together of the Saints, for the worke of the ministration, and for the edification of the body of Christ.* Where we see, that our Saviour Christ did not onely pronounce a blessing upon his Church, but was also the Author thereof from *God* his Father. And as the

Numb. 6.23.

Priests

Priests in the old Testament, had an ordinarie kinde of blessing the people : so the Ministers of God in the new Testament, they have the same in substance; for the Ministers may bless their people two wayes : First, by praying unto God for them : Secondly, by pronouncing a blessing upon them, according to Gods holy Word. A forme of this blessing we have from the Apostle *S. Paul*, who blessed the *Corinthians* after this sort; *The grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion (or fellowship) of the holy Ghost be with you all.*

Secondly, an extraordinary kinde of blessing is, when an extraordinary Prophet, or servant of God, doth sit downe and pronounce a blessing unto any, and foretelleth their estate from God. Thus did *Nath* bless his two sonnes, *Shem* and *Japheth*, Gen. 9. 25, 26, 27. and pronounced a curse upon wicked *Canaan*. This he did, not as an ordinary father, but as an extraordinary Prophet, not onely praying for a blessing upon his two sonnes, but also foretelling them what should be their condition or estate afterward. So in this place, whereas *Isaac* blesteth *Jacob* and *Esau*, it is no private blessing, but a publike; and yet indeed, not an ordinary publike blessing, but extraordinary, by telling unto *Jacob* and *Esau* before-hand, what should be their particular estates and conditions, and what blessings they should have from God, both in this life, and in the life to come. For we must not here conceive of *Isaac*, as an ordinary Father, but as an holy Patriarch and Prophet of the Lord, and an extraordinary man; foreseeing and foretelling by the spirit of Prophecie, the particular estate of his two sonnes; and also what particular blessings they and their posteritie should receive from God.

The meaning then of these words, *Isaac* blesteth *Jacob* and *Esau*, is this; that *Isaac* being a Prophet, an extraordinary man, and a famous Patriarch, did by the spirit of prophecie foresee and set downe, and tell before-hand, what should be the particular estate of his two sons, *Jacob* and *Esau*; and as he did foretell it, so likewise he prayed unto God that the same might come to passe; as it did afterward. And thus much for the meaning.

Now though this were an extraordinary kinde of blessing, which *Isaac* used; yet from hence, we may all of us learne an ordinary dutie; for looke as *Isaac* blessed his two sonnes, so we by his example must learne to abstaine from all wicked species; as cursing and banning, and exercise our tongues in blessing, not making them the instruments of sinne, to curse and revile, as many doe: for *vengeance is mine, saith the Lord*. He must curse, that hath absolute power and authoritie to inflict the same, when he will. But we are not absolute Lords over any man, nor any creature; and therefore we must remember Saint *Peters* lesson, 1 Peter 2. 9. *We must not render evil for evil, nor rebuke for rebuke; But contrariwise bless;* and here readeth a reason, *Knowing*

that we are thereunto called, to be heirs of blessing. Farre bee it from us therefore, to open our mouths to curse either men or any of Gods creatures: and indeed vile and abominable is the practise of many, who exercise their tongues in cursing and banning, not onely men, but also other creatures of God. But let such as these God, both learne and practise the contrary.

The second point to be considered, is the cause of this blessing; to wit, *Isaac* saith; *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau.*

Here first we are to consider, how *Isaac* saith blessed *Jacob* and *Esau*? surely thus: He did most notably gather together all the promises of God made to him, and to his two children, which were specially three: First, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed.* Secondly, God had promised, that *he and his seed should possess the land of Canaan*. Thirdly, that his two children should be two mightie Nations, and that *the elder should serve the younger.*

Now *Isaac* doth not consider these blessings a-part one from another, but hath them all in memorie; and on them all (receiving them by a lively faith) he builds his blessings; for by faith in these promises, he did certainly foresee what should be the future estate of his two sonnes, and accordingly doth he pronounce particular blessings upon them both.

But it may be thought, that *Isaac* did not bless his sonnes by faith; for if we read the Historie in Genesis, we shall see, that he blessed them by error, and was deceived therein: for he was purposed to have blessed *Esau* onely with the speciall blessing, when as he gave the same to *Jacob* unwittingly; how then could he do this by faith? For the answering of this, we must consider two things: First, it is true indeed, that *Isaac* was blinded overmuch with a fond affection, toward *Esau*, and loved him otherwise than he ought, and therefore was purposed to have blessed *Esau* with the speciall blessing. This was a fault in *Isaac*: but yet it takes not away *Isaacs* faith, nor makes it to be no faith; But it sheweth that *Isaacs* faith was weak, and joyued with some infinitie in forgetting Gods particular promises. Secondly, howsoever at the first *Isaac* erred in his purpose for the blessing of his children, yet afterward he corrected himselfe for it. For as we may read in the Historie, after he had indeed blessed *Jacob*, supposing it had bene *Esau*, when *Esau* came for his blessing with his Venison, the Text saith, That *Isaac was stricken with an unrevellous great feare*, and said, *I have blessed him, and therefore he shall be blessed*: correcting his fault in his former purpose; yea, and though *Esau* sought it with teares, yet he could not move *Isaac* to repent himselfe of blessing *Jacob*. Hebr. 12. 17. wherefore it is undoubtedly true, that he gave these blessings unto his children by faith.

Now from this that *Isaac* blessed his children by faith, we learne many instructions: The first concerneth Parents; that howsoever they can-

as *Isaac* did, like Prophets and Patriarchs, pronounce blessings upon their children, and foretell what shalbe their particular estate afterward: yet if Parents would as farre as they may, follow the practice of *Isaac*, they should bring great comfort and consolation to their owne soules, both in this life and in the life to come.

Isaac set before his eyes all the promises that God had made both concerning him and his finnes, and by faith in these promises, is moved to bless his children; so if Parents would have true comfort in their children, they must search through the whole booke of God, and see what promises God hath made unto the godly and to their seed: and withall, they must by faith apply unto their owne soules, all those gracious promises, endeavouring also to make their children to know the same, and to walke worthy thereof: and then as their obedience shall increase, so will their joy increase, not onely in God, but mutually one in another. This will stay their hearts in all assaults, yea, even in death it selfe.

Secondly, whereas *Isaac* blessed his children by faith: here we may take just occasion to speake of such wicked persons as are commonly called blessers; who are too much esteemed of, by many at this day, and their wicked practices counted blessings, and good meanes of helpe, when as indeed they are most vile and wretched creatures. This may bee thought a hard censure, because they are taken for cunning men and women, and for good people, following *Isaacs* example in blessing mens children and cattell: they are thought to doe no harme at all, but much good by helping strange mischances that befall men in their bodies, children, or goods. Thus would some excuse and defend these Wizzards and blissers, who are the wretched limbs of the Devill: but let us know, that if they will bless aright, it must be by faith. Now what faith have they? hath God made any promise to them, that by their meanes he will helpe those that come to seeke helpe at them for their children and cattell? nay verily, there is no such matter: God never made promise to any such; nay, he hath flatly forbidden, not onely such practices as they use, but also for men to *seeke* to any such persons: and therefore they cannot bless mens children and cattell by faith. But they say, they doe these things by faith: yet it is by faith in the Devill, and in his promises. For this is certaine, that as God hath his Lawes and Sacraments for those that enter covenant with him; so on the contrary the Devill hath words, spellis, and charmes, as his Lawes and rites, wherein he exerciseth his slaves: and by a Satanicall faith in the devils word and promise, doe these Wizzards and with-women bless mens goods and children. This is true by the common confession of many of them, so omit all other prooffe. And therefore we must hold them for the limbs of the devill, and his wicked instruments to draw men from God; and so in no case goe to them for

helpe: for in so doing, we *for sake the living Lord* and his helpe, and seeke for helpe at the Devill; than which what can be more odious? But say we receive some outward helpe by their meanes: yet marke the issue; the Lord hath said, *Levit. 20. 6. If any turne after such as worke with spirits, and after sooth-sayers to goe a whoring after them, then will I set my face against that person, and will cut him off from among his people.* Therefore unlesse we feare not the curie of God, we must be warned hereby, not to seeke for helpe at their hands. For they are grace lesse people, who have no feare of God before their eyes: but they set themselves against God and his Word. And indeed these common blessers which seeme to doe no hurt, but to bless mens children and cattell, are more dangerous than notorious witches, who can only hurt mens bodies and goods, when God permits; whereas these blessers ensnare the soule, and draw whole Townes and Countries to the approbation and partaking of their wickednesse.

The third point to be considered is, the parties blessed, that is, *Jacob* and *Esaú*. Here marke first the order which the holy Ghost useth: he setteth *Jacob* in the first place, and yet *Esaú* was the elder brother: what is the reason of this?

Ans. We must know, that the Scripture useth a three-fold order in the naming of persons:

1. The order of *Nature*, as when the first borne is put first. And thus *David*s finnes are numbred according to their age; first *Amnon*, then *Daniel*, the third *Abshalom*, &c.

2. The order of *dignitie*, when as those are put in the first place, not which are the eldest, but which are the best, and most in Gods favour. This order the holy Ghost uses in naming *Noah*s finnes, *Genl. 7. 31.* saying, *Noah* begat *Shem*, *Ham*, & *Japheth*; when as *Japheth* was the eldest, and by order of nature should have beene put first: yet with *Shem* God continued the covenant.

3. The order of *Historie*, when as one that is first, or chiefe in dignitie, is placed last, because his historie begins in the last place. So our Saviour Christ is mentioned last in the Genealogie made by *S. Matthew*, because his history began in the last place, though in dignitie he were the first and principall. To apply this to our purpose: The order which the holy Ghost here useth, is not the order of *Historie*, nor of *nature*, but of *dignitie*; because *Jacob* was chiefe in favour of God, therefore the holy Ghost putteth him in the first place.

Here then we see in this order of dignitie, that the first blessing (of life everlasting) belongs to *Jacob*: *Esaú* must have his blessing, but in the second place.

Here observe these two things: First, *Jacob* is received into Gods Covenant, and *Esaú* put by, *Jacob* gets the principall blessing, and *Esaú* loseth it: but what? are these things so for *Jacob*s desert, or for the default of *Esaú*? Nay verily: the good pleasure of God is the chiefe cause hereof: for as touching the blessing;

if we reade the history, we shall see, that *Eſau* at his fathers commandement, went and hunted, and tooke paines, and got his Fathers veniſon, and told him nothing but truth. But *Jacob* never went to hunt, but gets a Kid dressed, and comes to his father with it, and while he talks with his father doth foully gloſe and lie: ſo that in all reason it might ſeeme, that *Eſau* deſerved the better bleſſing: yet God will have it otherwiſe, and the principall bleſſing belongs to *Jacob*. Wherein wee may note, that Gods ſpeciall love to a man, whereby he receives him into his covenant, is not grounded on mans behaviour, but on his owne good will and pleaſure.

Secondly, in that *Jacob* here had the principall bleſſing: wee learne that the counſell of God doth overrule the will of man. For Father *Iſaac* had purpoſed to have bleſſed *Eſau* with the chiefeſt bleſſing: but yet Gods counſell was contrary, and the ſame overrules *Iſaacs* will. For though *Iſaac* had cauſe to ſuſpect that it was not *Eſau*, both becauſe hee came ſo ſoone, as alſo for that the voyce was apparant not to be *Eſaus*, but *Jacobs* voyce; yet Gods counſell overruled his will: and when hee came to handle his ſonnes hands, he could not diſcerne betwene a Kids ſkinne, and the ſkinne of a man: what's the cauſe hereof? Surely it was Gods will and counſell, that *Jacob* ſhould have the chiefeſt bleſſing: and therefore hee overrules *Iſaacs* will, and blindes his ſenſes, and makes him to bleſſe *Jacob* with the chiefeſt bleſſing.

The conſideration hereof is profitable unto us: for it is a received opinion with many at this day, that God did purpoſe to ſave all men. Now when queſtion is made, Why then are not all men ſaved? They anſwer, becauſe men will not though God will. But this opinion is erroneous: For, it makes mans will to overrule Gods counſell: as if they ſhould ſay, God willet it not, becauſe men will it not: or elſe (which is worſe) God willet it, but it cometh not to paſſe, becauſe men will not doe it. But Gods will and counſell is the higheſt and chiefeſt cauſe of all: and looke whatſoever hee willet, that bringeth he to paſſe: and becauſe all men are not ſaved, therefore wee may ſafely thinke and ſay, that God did never decre to ſave all men.

Now further, more particularly of *Jacobs* bleſſing: firſt, it may be asked, How could *Jacob* be bleſſed, ſeeing hee came diſſemblyng and lying to his father?

Anſw. Wee muſt know, that howſoever *Jacob* ſought the bleſſing by fraud, yet hee might be bleſſed: for he failed not, neither did amiſſe in ſeeking for the bleſſing, but onely in the manner of ſeeking it: it was his duty to ſeek it, though not after that manner which hee did: he ſhould rather have ſtaid that leaſure and time, wherein God had cauſed *Iſaac* to bleſſe him, without his ſinne in ſeeking it.

Secondly, conſider the manner how *Jacob* receives his fathers bleſſing; namely, in his elder brother *Eſaus* garment.

Here wee may ſee a notable reſemblance of Gods manner of bleſſing us: When wee looke for a bleſſing at Gods hand, we muſt not come in our owne garments, in the rotten ragges of our owne righteouſneſſe; but wee muſt put on Chriffs garment, the long white robe of his righteouſneſſe. And ſo coming unto God, as *Iſaac* ſaid of the favour of *Eſaus* garments, which *Jacob* had put on, (Gen. 27. 27, 28.) Behold, the ſmell of my ſonne is as the ſmell of a field; God giveth thee therefore of the dew of Heaven, and the fatneſſe of the earth, and plenty of wheat and wine: So will God ſay unto us, that the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, which we have put on by faith, is a ſweet ſmelling ſavour in his noſtrils, Eph. 5. 2. Now ſeeing all the bleſſings we enjoy, come to us in Chriſt, and our acceptance with God, is in his righteouſneſſe; wee therefore muſt labour to put on Chriſt every day, by becoming new creatures: wee muſt ſeek to reſemble him in knowledge, righteouſneſſe, and holineſſe: ſo ſhall our assurance of Gods bleſſings increaſe upon us more and more.

Laſtly, marke that howſoever *Jacob* was bleſſed otherwiſe than *Iſaac* had purpoſed; yet after the bleſſing is pronounced, it muſt needs ſtand; for ſo when *Eſau* came, *Iſaac* ſaid unto him, I have bleſſed *Jacob*; therefore hee ſhall bee bleſſed: Gen. 27. 33. Even ſo, the Miniſters of Gods word, in the aſſembly of the Church, who have power to pronounce Gods bleſſings upon the people; howſoever they be but weak men, and may bee deceived, being ſubject to error, as other men are: yet when they pronounce Gods bleſſing upon their congregation in the miniſterie of the word; if they doe it in ſincerity of heart, and uprightneſſe of conſcience, that bleſſing ſhall ſtand. And ſo on the contrary, looke whom they curſe, for juſt cauſe out of Gods Word, their curſe ſhall ſtand.

Further, as *Iſaac* bleſſed, but knew not whom; ſo the Miniſters of God in the diſpenſation of the word, they muſt bleſſe Gods people, though they know not who they are particularly, that doe receive it.

Thus much of *Iſaacs* bleſſing *Jacob*. Now I come to his bleſſing of *Eſau*: for hee alſo was bleſſed, as the text ſaith; yet in the ſecond place though he were the elder brother. *Queſt.* How could *Eſau* bee bleſſed at all, ſeeing *Iſaac* had but one bleſſing? *Anſw.* *Eſau* was onely bleſſed with temporall bleſſings, and not with ſpirituall. *Object.* But ſome will ſay, *Eſau* was a bad man, and wicked; now it is ſaid, that to the impure, all things are impure: how then could the beſtowing of temporall things bee bleſſings to him? *Anſw.* Temporall things beſtowed on the wicked are bleſſings, and no bleſſings: they are bleſſings in regard of God

that gives them ; but they are no blessings, in regard of men that receive them and use them amisse.

Quest. How came it to passe, that *Eſau* being the elder brother, loſeth his birth-right, and blessing both ; how came it to be *Iacob*?

Ans. The cause was his prophaneſſe, as we may ſee and read in the next chapter, where it is ſaid, *Heb. 12. 16.* that he ſold his birth-right for a portion of *munt*, even for a meſſe of red broth ; and being ſo prophane, as to contemne to high an honour, he muſt be content to have his blessing in the ſecond place. And hence wee may obſerve a good inſtruction.

There is many a young man in theſe our dayes baptized, as *Eſau* was circumciſed, and living in the Church, as he did in *Iſaacs* houſe ; who, during the prime of his youth, is given to nothing but to his pleaſure ; that is as good to him as *Iacobs* red broth was to *Eſau* : take this pleaſure from him, and take away his life : here-in is all his joy, and he delighteth in nothing to much, as to ſpend his time in hunting, hawking, dicing, gaming, wantonneſſe, and drinking. Now know for certaine, this is a right *Eſau* ; and yet many ſuch have wee among us, who thinke of themſelves, that they are the jolly fellows, and they onely carry the brave mind ; but as for *Iacob*, and ſuch as make conſcience of their wayes and word ; thoſe alas are ſilly fellows. Now what is to bee ſaid or thought of theſe ? Surely theſe, if they doe not (and in that time) looke to their eſtates, and to themſelves, it will coſt them their lives, even the life of their ſoules. *Eſau* loſt his birth-right by his prophanenſſe : and ſo will theſe men doe if they continue in this eſtate ; they will blot their names out of the booke of life, and root themſelves quite out of the kingdome of Heaven. Therefore let all young men whatſoever they bee, high and low, take heed how they live in ſinne, and goe on in their wickedneſſe, for if they take *Eſaus* courſe, and continue in prophaneſſe, doubtleſſe they will have *Eſaus* end. How wonderfully doth Satan bewitch them, that while they goe on in ſinne, they ſhould thinke ſo highly of themſelves, and ſo baſely of thoſe that make conſcience of their wayes ? Wherefore in the feare of God let ſuch betime redreſſe their wayes and courſes ; leſt when Gods curſe is upon them, they crie too late for mercie. And thus much of the parties bleſſed.

The fourth point to be conſidered, is the nature or matter of this bleſſing, in the end of the verſe ;

Concerning things to come.

The meaning of theſe words is this : That old *Iſaac* their father did pronounce bleſſings upon his ſonnes, not onely for the time preſent, but for the time to come ; in bleſſings temporall and ſpiritual, (as we may reade, *Gen. 27. 28, 29.*) where hee giveth to them both the *ſunneſſe of the land*, and *plenty of wheat and wine* : and e-

ſpecially to Iacob, that he ſhould be Lord over his brethren. But ſome will ſay, it may ſeeme to prove otherwiſe ; for while *Iacob* lived, hee was alwayes humble and ſubject to *Eſau* : and when hee came to his owne cuntry from among the *Aramites*, as he met with *Eſau* : he ſent preſents to him : and when he ſaw him, he went before, and bowed himſelfe to the ground 7 times : untill he came neere to his brother. *Ans.* That prophecie of *Iacob* and *Eſau*, that the elder ſhould ſerve the younger, muſt not be reſtrained to the perſons of *Iacob* and *Eſau*, but referred to their poſterity ; eſpecially in the dayes of *David* and *Salomon* : for then were the *Edomites* who came of *Eſau*, in ſubjection to the *Iſraelites*, the poſterity of old *Iſrael*. Whereupon *David* (ſpeaking as a King, ſaith, *Pſal. 60. 8.* *Maab ſhall be my waſh-pot, over Edom will I caſt my ſhoe* : meaning thereby, that hee would bring the poſterity of *Eſau* into a baſe and low eſtate of ſubjection unto him ; according as wee may ſee verified, *2 Sam. 8. 14.*

But ſome will ſay, that *Iſaac* when he bleſſed *Eſau*, pronounced that he ſhould have a fertile ſoile, and the ſunneſſe of the earth ſhould be his dwelling place, *Gen. 27. 39.* whereas in *Malachi* the Lord ſaith, *Mal. 1. 3.* he hated *Eſau*. And a token thereof was this, that he had made his mountains waſt, and his herirage a wilderneſſe for dragons : meaning that hee ſhould dwell in a barren Land. How can theſe two agree ? *Ans.* Firſt, we may ſay thus : That the land of *Edom* was a fertile land ; but yet in reſpect of the land of *Canaan*, but a barren and waſte land. Secondly, *Iſaac* ſpeakes here of *Idumen*, as it was in his time ; not as it was afterward : for it might be fertile in *Iſaacs* time, and yet after become barren : for God will curſe a Land, by turning fruitfullneſſe into barrenneſſe, for the wickedneſſe of them that dwell therein, *Pſal. 107. 34.*

And thus much for the example of *Iſaacs* faith. Now follow the examples of the faith of *Iacob*.



IACOBS FAITH.

VERSE 21.

By faith Facob when hee was dying, bleſſed both the ſons of Joſeph, and worſhipped on the the end of his ſtaffe.

IN theſe words, the holy Ghoſt laies downe the notable and worthy example of *Iacobs* faith : which is here commended by two actions. Firſt, his bleſſing of the two ſonnes of *Joſeph* : Secondly, his adoring or worſhipping of God. In the firſt action conſider theſe points :

1. The

1. The blessing it selfe: 2. The circumstances belonging to the same; As 1. *The time when Jacob blessed them, that is, when he was dying*: secondly, by what means hee did bless them, namely, by faith: thirdly, the parties blessed *Ephraim and Manasse*. Of these in order.

First, for the blessing: Of this kind of blessing wee intreated in the former verse, in the example of *Isaacs* faith; and therefore need not now repeat the same. Onely this wee must remember, that this blessing of *Jacob* is not the common or ordinary blessing of a father, but the extraordinary blessing of an holy Patriarch and Prophet of God. The blessing it selfe stands in three things: *Jacob* makes the sonnes of *Joseph* his owne sons, adopting them and taking them into his family. And this is the meaning of those words in *Genesis*, where *Jacob* saith as he is blessing them, *Let my name be named upon them, as the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac*; *Gen. 48. 16.* that is, they shall be received into my family, and be my children, called after my name.

2. Hee gives them two portions in the Land of Canaan: for *Jacob* was made an instrument of God, by way of prophetic to distinguish and divide the Land of Canaan among his children.

3. He doth as a Prophet, by the spirit of prophetic, foretell the condition and estate of *Ephraim* and *Manasse* in their posterity; to wit, that they should be great nations, and of them should come two great people; in these three things doth *Jacob's* blessing consist.

Out of this blessing of *Jacob*, we learne two things: first, that God alloweth this liberty to a master of a family, to adopt and chuse for the upholding of his house, a child or children, in the want of issue from his owne body. For here old *Jacob* for the continuance of his posterity, and the enlarging of the Church of God; adopteth his sonnes sonnes into his owne family, to be his owne sonnes: And this he doth by faith. And therefore a Lord and Master in his family may doe the like: but yet with this caveat; hee must ever take heed that in this adopting hee doe not unjustly hinder his owne issue or kindred.

Again, whereas *Jacob* blesteth these two sonnes of *Joseph*, by fore-telling the particular estate of their posterity, for their portion in the Land of Canaan; here we learne, that in many things God doth vouchsafe to reveale his will and counsell in a speciall manner unto them that be his children: As in this place he revealeth unto *Jacob* the particular estate of the two sonnes of *Joseph*. In like manner, when God was to destroy the Sodomites: *Shall I hide (saith the Lord) from Abraham that thing which I doe, seeing that Abraham shall be indeed a mighty Nation? for I know him that hee will command his sonnes and his household after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord.* And the Prophet *Amos* saith, (*chap. 3. 7.*) *Surely the Lord will*

doe nothing, but he revealeth his secrets to his servants the Prophets. So saith our Saviour Christ to his Disciples, *I am your friends*; and hee giveth a reason, *because (saith hee) I have revealed unto you all that I have heard of my Father*, *John 15. 15.* So that those which are (in Christ) the friends of God, they shall in a particular and speciall manner know those things which God will not reveale unto others. And looke as this is here verified to *Jacob* in a speciall manner, so it is true generally in all Gods servants and children; he revealeth some particular things unto them, more than he doth unto others. For besides that generall knowledge which they have in his word, he reveales particularly unto them the knowledge of their owne election, of their justification, sanctification, and glorification to come: though not by way of prophetic, yet by the working of his spirit in the ministry and meditation of his word. And thus much of the blessing. Now follow the circumstances:

The first circumstance to be considered, is the time when *Jacob* blessed the two sonnes of *Joseph*; noted in these words, when he was dying, that is, being ready to dye, not in the act of dying.

In this circumstance we may learne two speciall duties: one for masters or families; the other for the Ministers of Gods word: for here *Jacob* beares the portion not onely of a Father, but of a Prophet. First, masters of families are here taught to set in order their houses and families whereof they have charge, before they die: for *Jacob* having a great charge, and many children, calls for the sonnes of *Joseph*, *Ephraim* and *Manasse*, before his death, and makes them his owne, to perfect his family.

Quest. How (with some aske) must a man set his house in order when he dies. *Answer.* By doing two things after *Jacob's* example: for first, hee disposeth of his temporall things, and distributeth his temporall inheritance in the Land of Canaan. Secondly, hee gives them charge of some duties concerning himselfe, and some others, especially concerning religion and Gods worship, and then he dies: and it is said, *When he had made an end of giving charge unto his sons, he plucked up his feet unto his bed, and gave up the Ghost.* *Gen. 49. 33.* So like unto Masters of families, they must set their houses in order by the like two duties: 1. By a due disposing of their temporall goods and possessions: and 2. by giving exhortation and charge unto their children and family, concerning the worship of God, and the practice of true Religion. This (as wee may also reade *1 Kings 2.*) was the practice of good King *David*: when he was about to die, and as he saith, *to goe the way of all flesh*, hee calls for *Salomon* his sonne, and makes him King in his stead, and gives him a most notable charge concerning Gods worship, Verse 3. reade the place, it is worth the marking. So the Prophet saith,

when he comes to *Hezekiah* from the Lord, he aims at these two : and bids him *let his house in order, for hee must die and not live* : *Ilay 38.1.* and so ought every master of a family, after their example, both learne and practise these two duties.

Secondly, Gods Ministers must hence learne their duty: for *Iacob* was a notable Minister and Prophet in Gods Church, which was then in his family. *Iacob* hee blessed the *sonnes of Ioseph*, that hee might receive them into his family, and into the covenant; that so hee might continue and preserve the Church of God after his death : for looke as *Isaac* his father did call him into the covenant, and blessed him, so dealeth hee with the two *sonnes of Ioseph*. And accordingly every Minister of God, in his place ought to have speciall care to convey and derive true religion, and the Gospell of Christ from hand to hand, so much as they can while they live; that so after their death it may be published and maintained. In the new Testament wee have a worthy Commandement for this purpose; *S. Paul* having instructed and taught *Timothy* in the wayes of godlinesse and religion, chargeth him, that what things hee had heard and learned of him, the same he should deliver to faithfull men, which should be able to teach others also : that so Gods Gospell and religion going on from hand to hand, and from perion to perion, might increase from time to time. *S. Peters* practice herein, was notable, *2 PET. 1. 15.* *I will endeavour therefore alwayes, that ye may be able to have remembrance of the things of God after my departure* : having professed before, that while he lived he would stirre them up by putting them in remembrance, *vers. 13.* And in like sort, all Gods faithfull Ministers must doe their whole endeavour before they die, that the Gospell may be preached when they are gone.

2. *Circumstance.* By what meanes did *Iacob* blesse the two *sonnes of Ioseph*. *Answer.* By faith in the promises of God; so the Text saith, *By faith Iacob blessed the two sonnes of Ioseph.* And if we consider the matter well; wee shall see it was a notable faith: for he was now a poore pilgrime in *Egypt*, and yet by faith gives them portions in the land of *Canaan*.

Quest. Why (will some say) did he not keepe himselfe in the land of *Canaan*.

Answer. *Iacob* indeed dwelt there for a time, but yet as a sojourner, having no more liberties than hee bought for himselfe; no not so much as water for his camels, or a place to bury the dead : and besides, hee was driven out of this his owne Land by famine, and was faine to flie into *Egypt* for food and sustenance; and there to live as a poore pilgrim and stranger, forth of his owne country: and yet for all this extremity (as though hee had beene some mighty potentate of the world, or some Emperour) he makes his will, and bequeathes unto his children the land of *Canaan*, allotting to every one his part

and portion; which must needs be a worke of a notable faith, wonderfully apprehending and applying the promise of God.

In his example we are taught a notable duty in the matter of our salvation; when as any of us (by reason of the rigorous temptation of sin and Satan, and by their assaults) shall seeme to our selves to bee (as it were) thrust out of our inheritance in the heavenly *Canaan*, what must we doe? We must not despaire; but even then set before our eyes, and call to remembrance the promises of God made unto us in Christ, concerning life everlasting; and thereon we must rest and stay our selves. Then let temptations assault us, and drive us whether they can : still we must hold fast the promise with both hands of faith; and above hope, by faith appoint and designe unto our selves, a part and portion in the kingdom of heaven. And so doing, we shall be true *Israelites*, and true followers of this faithfull Patriarch; who by faith (beyond all likelihood) allots the Land of *Canaan* to his posteritie.

3. *Circumstance.* The parties whom he blessed; namely, the two *sonnes of Ioseph*, *Manasses* and *Ephraim*. Hercof wee may reade at large, *Gen. 48. 8, 9, &c.* where among many things, observe this one : *Ioseph* brings his two *sonnes Manasses* and *Ephraim*, unto *Iacob* his father, that he might blesse them as he lay on his bed. Now *Iosephs* minde was, that *Manasses* (the elder) should have the chiefest blessing; and therefore he set *Manasses* at *Iacobs* right hand, and *Ephraim* (the younger) at his left : But *Iacob* being to blesse them, layes his hands a-crosse, putting his right hand on *Ephraims* head, and the left on the head of *Manasses* : whereby, hee gave the birth right (which was a principall prerogative, unto *Ephraim*, contrary to *Iosephs* desire. Unto *Manasses* hee gave a blessing also, but farre inferior to *Ephraims*. Now here we may not think, that *Iacob* did this upon any fond affection, (as parents oftentimes doe, because they love one childe better than another) but hee did it after a speciall manner : by the direction and instinct of Gods spirit, which so appointed it. For, when *Iacob* blessed them, hee knew not (of his owne knowledge, by the benefit of his senses,) which was *Ephraim*, and which *Manasses*. Again, looke as *Iacob* gave the blessing at this time, the principall unto *Ephraim*, and the lesser to *Manasses*; so afterward they came to passe. For (as we may read) the tribe of *Ephraim* was farre more populous, and more glorious than the tribe of *Manasses*. And therefore, in the bookes of the Prophets (*Hos. 4. 16.* and *5. 9.* and *6. 4, &c.*) wee shall finde, that the name of *Ephraim* is given to all the ten tribes: and they are called by that name because it was the most noble tribe of all, and the most valiant, and (as it were) the shelter of all the rest. Yea further, of this tribe came (1 *Chron. 7. 27.* *Iehoshaphat*, that noble captain: and (1 *King. 11. 26.*) *Ieroboam*, and many other

mighty Kings of Israel.

Where wee may learne, that God is the dispenser of honours and dignities in this world hee giveth those to whom hee will, to some more, and to some lesse, as pleaseth him: yea, sometime hee raiseth up men of base and low degree, to great dignity; as *David* saith, *Psalm 113. 7. Hee raiseth the meek out of the dust, and lifteth the poore out of the dung.* Now whence comes this? Is it their hearing, their great strength, their beauty, or wonderfull skill, and knowledge, the cause of their preferment? or the wealth of their parents, or any thing in them? No surely: if we speake of the first cause, wee see in this example, that the preferment of *Ephraim* above *Manasses*, was for no cause in *Ephraim*; for what was in *Ephraim* that was not in *Manasses*, when *Jacob* blessed them? Surely, nothing: for hee was but a childe as the other was, and a younger childe also; but hee was preferred by reason of Gods good wil towards him. And so it is with all those that are advanced to preferment in this world. Wherefore, seeing honour and dignity cometh not from themselves, or any thing in them: therefore they must not ascribe it to their owne wit, learning, strength, or friends; but wholly to the gift of God, as the first cause: and so must labour to use it to the honour of him that onely gives it, of his good pleasure; else they sacrifice to their owne net: *Hab. 1. 16.*

Quest. Why doth the holy Ghost in this place put *Josephs* name downe, who was not blessed, and conceale the names of the two children that were blessed? *Answer.* If wee read the History in Genesis, wee shall see the reason hereof. For, when *Joseph* heard that his Father *Jacob* was sick: though hee was a mighty Prince and a noble Potentate among the Egyptians, and his Father but a poore Pilgrime: yet hee comes to his sicke Father before his death, and brings his two sonnes with him, to have his father to blisse them before he died: and therefore the holy Ghost here nameth *Joseph*, to shew unto us what respect hee had of his Fathers blessing: hee made more account thereof, and did more esteeme it, that so hee might have his sonnes within the covenant, than of all the Kingdomes in the world: and therefore hee brings them both to his Father to be blessed, a little before his death.

Now looke what minde and affection *Joseph* beares, the same should bee in every one of us. Whatsoever our estate be, whether honourable, or base and meane; wee must with *Joseph* esteeme more of Gods covenant, and to bee members of Gods Church, than of all the honour in the world besides; and we must esteeme our place and preferments that we have, or our children may have, to bee nothing in comparison of the blessing of God, and his favour. Yea, wee must chuse with *Joseph* rather to leave our honours and dignities for a time, or (if it were) for ever, than to lose the blessing of Gods

A grace: and blessed shall those Fathers be with *Joseph*, who had rather have their children blessed of God, than advanced in the world. The second action of *Jacobs* faith is in these words, *And worshipped on the end of his staffe:* and it is a notable worke for the commendation of his faith. But before wee come unto it, there are certaine questions which may profitably be considered: as first, for the translation; how the words should be read. The papists read them thus; and adored the top of his rod: that is, (say they) the top of *Josephs* Scepter who came to visit him. From whence they would gather and ground their abominable Idolatry, in the Adoration of creatures, and namely, of holy things, as Crucifix, Reliques, Images, as also of God at and before such holy things. But wee must know that their translation is false and erroneous, and cannot be justified, howsoever they may bring some mens witness and testimony for the same. For in reading it thus, *and adored the top of his rod*; they leave out a substantiall word of the Text, to wit, this word *upon*; whereby they corrupt the Text, and deprave the meaning of the holy Ghost.

Againe, their observation and collection hence is most abominable: for to worship an Image or other holy thing, or God himselfe in or at the same, is flatly forbidden in the second Commandement, *Thou shalt not make to thyselfe any graven Image, &c. Thou shalt not bow downe to them.*

C But our translation in this place is true and right, according to the words of the Text, and the meaning of the holy Ghost, *that he worshipped upon the end of his staffe.*

Yet further there may be a question moved about the words: for if wee read the History in Genesis, it is there said, that *Jacob* worshipped towards the end or top of his bed, *Genes. 47. 31.*

Now, there is a great difference betwene these two, *To worship on the top of his staffe: and on the top of his bed.*

How therefore can they stand together? *Ans.* They may stand well together, and bee both true: for when *Jacob* was about to give up the Ghost, and was ready to dye, hee raised up himselfe upon the pillow towards the beds head, and thereon rested his body. Now because his body was weake and feeble, he staid himselfe also upon his staffe: and thus comparing the places together, wee see there is no repugnancy in them. Againe, this wee must know, that the same sentence of Scripture may bee diversly read in divers places of Scripture, without any impeachment to the truth, certainty, or perfection of Scripture: for when the holy Ghost speaketh the same thing often, yet in different termes (as in this place) the diversity of words doth enlarge or open the sense and meaning, but no way corrupt or deprave the same. And thus much for the words.

Now to come to the fact it selfe: in *Jacobs* worship.

worship, three circumstances are to be considered: 1. The occasion: 2. The time: 3. The manner of it.

The occasion of *Jacob's* worship here spoken of (as we may read, Gen. 47.) was this: when the time drew neere that *Jacob* must die, he called for his sonne *Joseph*, and charged him deeply, That he should not bury him in *Egypt* when he was dead, but that he should carry him thence, and bury him in the buriall of his fathers; *Joseph* consents unto his fathers request; and yet *Jacob* for certainty makes him to sweare that he shall do so, and *Joseph* swears unto him. Now upon this issue that *Jacob* had with *Joseph*, the Text saith, that *Israel* worshipped towards the beds head: that is, he praised God, and gave thanks unto him for this benefit that he should be buried with his Fathers, *Abraham* and *Isaac*. And yet this benefit did not so much concerne himselfe as his children: for the carrying of his bones thither, was to be a token and pledge, and a certaine assurance unto them, That the land of *Canaan* should be theirs, and that God would bring them thither againe.

In this circumstance, observe a notable duty belonging unto fathers and Masters of families: they must in their life time have care of their posterity, and use all meanes to helpe them, and benefit them in their faith; not only while they are alive, but also after they are dead, after the example of this holy Patriarch: and when they have obtained this benefit for them, they must be glad in their hearts and reioice, and thereupon take occasion to praise the Lord, as *Jacob* did in this place.

2. Circumstance. The manner how hee worshipped: Which is set downe in these words, on the end of his staffe. This circumstance is worth the marking: for good *Jacob*, by reason of the weaknesse of his body and old age, was not able to come forth of his bed, and kneele down or prostrate himselfe; but raiseth himselfe up upon his pillow towards his beds head: and by reason of feeblenesse, being not yet able to sit upright, he doth leane and beare himselfe upon his staffe.

Here wee learne, that wee must not onely worship God with our soules and hearts, but with our bodies also: for God hath created both, and therefore will be worshipped in both, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Old *Jacob* might have excused himselfe, that by reason of the weaknesse of his body, hee was not able to adore God with any bodily reverence: but yet wee see he leanes upon his staffe; and so, making supply to his bodily weaknesse, adoreth God with his body.

Quest. In what kinde of gesture then must we worship God with our bodies?

Answer. The word of God doth not prescribe any, by way of limitation. For sometimes our Saviour Christ prayed kneeling, Luk. 22. 41. sometimes groveling, Matth. 26. 59. sometimes standing, John 11. 41. as also did the Apostles.

A And the Scripture approveth the Publican, who stood as farre off and prayed, Luke 18. 13. *Eliu* also, 1 King. 18. 42. is said to pray with his head betweene his legs; so that we have no certaine forme prescribed us: onely this, we must use that gesture which may best set forth and declare our humble heart, and holy affection unto God.

Here then is confuted an opinion of those, which thinke that a man may worship God with his heart, and yet worship images with his body; that hee may be present at Idolatrous worship, yet keepe his heart unto God. But *Jacob's* behaviour, in this place, doth both confute and condemne them: for hee thought his body as due to God, as his soule; and therefore worshipped God with both.

3. Circumstance: The time when hee worshipped God thus; namely, when hee was dying, even then he worshipped God. In this circumstance we may note divers things:

First, here behold the bad practice of the world; for many men when they are dying, now-a-days, are so farre from following *Jacob's* example in worshipping and praising God; that then they are faine to call for men to teach them how they should worship God: having spent the former part of their life carelesly, in regard of their soules; following worldly profits and pleasures, never thinking of their duty to God till they die. But what a fearefull course is this, that men should thus brutishly goe on from day to day, not knowing how to worship God; Well, all such as love their owne soules, and would be like to godly *Jacob*; or (as our Saviour Christ said to *Nathaniel*) would be true *Israelites*: John 1. 47. the naturall sonnes of old *Israel* indeed: they must have care so to live in this world, that they may worship God when they die: and therefore they must not deferre, but learne betime the knowledge and feare of God; that when death comes, they may be able to shew forth, and practise the same. It is a lamentable thing, to consider how the devill bewitcheth mens hearts, so as they live in the world, as though they should never goe out of it; never caring for religion till the day of death come upon them, and then it is too late to learne. But this is to follow *Esau* and not *Jacob*; who is therefore condemned by the holy Ghost.

2. Againe, in this that *Jacob* worshipped God at his death, wee learne this; that as men live, so they die, for the most part: *Jacob* was brought up in Gods worship, and therein lived all his life long; and looke as he lived, so he died: for when hee died, hee worshipped God, resting his body on the end of his staffe. This same truth is verified now, and shall bee forever; let a man worship God through the course of his life, and when hee dieth he shall be able to worship and praise God. On the other side (take notice of it) he that lives in covetousnesse, in prophaneesse, in fornication, and wantonnesse,

ness, for the most part so dies: Come to a covetous man at his death, and talke with him, and you shall finde nothing in him ordinarily, but raving, and talking about his bargaines, his bills, and indentures, and other worldly things. And so we may say of other lewd livers: looke what minde they had while they were living, and that shall you finde most in their mouthes while they are dying: which shewes plainly, that as men live, so they die.

But some will say, that oftentimes the godly man raves and speakes lewdly, and (it may be) profanely before his death. *Ans.* It is true indeed: the best man is not freed from any kinde of bodily sicknesse, but is subject to them, as well as the wicked; as to burning fevers, and such like: by the violence and rage of which diseases, they are often driven to rave, to speake fondly, and sometimes lewdly; yea (it may be) profanely. But what is that to the purpose? for though a godly man (for the time of his fit) cannot expresse the grace of his heart, but rather corruption of his nature; yet when hee hath recovered himselfe, hee is forre for the same, and is then readie and willing to praise God with all his heart. So that if we would die well, as *Jacob* did, praising God, then let us lead our lives as he did; namely by faith, and the direction of his word and promises: Then come death when it will, and how it will: we may indeed bee sore assaulted by sicknesse and temptation, but yet wee shall never be overcome: for God is faithfull that hath promised an issue to his children in temptation, 1 Cor. 10. ver. 13.

Lastly, *whereas Jacob worshipped God at his death*; Here we learne, that *sound zeale will never decay*. Many men have zeale indeed, but it comes only from the strength and soundnesse of their bodily constitution: and looke, as strength decayes, so doth that kinde of zeale. But sound zeale will not decay and weaken with the body: but (as *David* faith of the righteous, Psal. 92. 13, 15.) will flourish like a palm tree, and grow like a Cedar in Libanon, it shall still bring forth fruit in a many age, and flourish. This wee see was true in *Jacob*; for though hee were old and feeble with sicknesse, yet hee shewed forth sound zeale in his heart, at the houre of his death. Even so will it be with us that professe religion: if zeale be found in our hearts, it will shew it selfe: and the older wee are, the more fruits of grace wee shall bring forth: and then shew forth more true zeale, than in younger yeares. For though bodily strength decay, yet sound zeale will never decay: but when strength faileth, then will zeale flourish (if it be found) like to the palm tree, which will bud and sprout, though the roots of it be cut off. Wherefore, if we would shew forth zeale in ourage, we must get soundnesse of it in our youth: for that will put forth it selfe in the time of death. And thus much of *Jacob*'s example.



IOSEPH'S Faith.

VERSE 22.

By faith, Joseph when hee died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandement of his bones.



VE have heard in the former verses the severall examples of the faith of the three Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. Now in this verse the holy Ghost setteth downe the example of *Joseph*'s faith. The words in this verse are plaine and easie, and need no exposition: They are a plaine and briefe summe of the end of the 50. Chapter of *Genesis*. Let us therefore come to the points of doctrine, and instructions which are to be learned and gathered forth of the words.

First, note in generall, the great resemblance of this example with the former: of *Joseph* a godly sonne, with *Jacob* a godly father: for both of them shew forth their faith when they die. For it is said of both, *By faith when he died*: So that in ground and circumstance of time, they both agree.

Herein we may observe: first, that the good examples of *Superiours* (whether they be civil or Ecclesiasticall) are of great force to bring other men on, and to make them forward in the duties of religion: their zeale (as *Paul* faith to the Corinthians in this case of *Almes*) provoketh many. *Jacob* the father, a worthy Prophet and Patriarch, and giving an holy and blessed example unto *Joseph* and his children, doth shew forth at his death most notable behaviour: wherein he worthily expresth the truth of his faith. Now his example works with *Joseph*, and hee in his death behaves himselfe in the same manner that his godly father did before him: and therefore *Superiours* must looke to all their sayings and doings carefully, that they may be worthy examples to their *Inferiours*, to draw them on in religion, and in the feare of God.

Secondly, hence inferiours also must learne to follow the godly, holy, & religious examples of their governours and superiours (whether they be civil or Ecclesiasticall:) as we may see in this place, *Joseph* doth imitate the godly example of his father *Jacob*. Hereof Saint *Paul* giveth strait charge unto the *Philippians*, saying, *Brethren, bee followers of mee, and looke on*

them which walke so, as *hee* have us for an example, Phil. 3. 17. And in the next Chapter, exhorting them to honest conversation, hee bids them *doe these things which they had heard, received, and scene in him*. But are these duties practised among us? see the elder sort teachers of good things to the younger? and do the younger follow their elders in well-doing? nay verily: but such are our times, too many among us, both those who give, and those which follow good examples, are as *signes and mon-ders*: as the Prophet speaketh; they are made a *roach*, and a by-word among men, and are foully disgraced by odious termes, Esay 8. 18. But this indeed is a practice of *Ismael*, that mocked *Isaac*, Gen. 21. ver. 9. And we againe, must undoubtedly know, that unless it be reformed, that hand of God which hath bene stretched out against us in many fearefull judgments will not be pulled backe, but stretched out still, till it bring us to destruction: for God will not suffer his ordinance to be contemned, and his holy ones to be abused; he looketh for better fruits at our hands, and therefore wee must learne of these godly Patriarchs, both to give and to follow good examples.

In the example of *Ioseph*, more particularly we are to observe two points: 1. *Iosephs* faith: 2. The actions of his faith whereby it is com-mended.

For the first: it is sayd, *that by faith Ioseph when hee died, &c.* *Ioseph* for ought wee finde in Scripture, had not such meanes to come by faith, as his Ancestors had before him. For the three Patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*, had otherwhiles the appearance of God unto them, otherwhiles his holy Angels brought them messages from God, and sometime they had his will revealed unto them by dreams and visions; all which were notable helps and meanes both to beginne and to increate faith in them: but *Ioseph* wanted all these meanes, or at least many of them. For reade his whole Historie, and you shall not finde, that either Angel appeared unto him, or else that God by dreames and visions spake unto him: and no marvell; for he lived out of the visible Church where Gods presence was, in superstitious and Idolatrous *Egypt*: and yet for all this, hee is here matched in the matter of faith, with the three worthy Patriarchs.

It is then a good question; how *Ioseph* should come by this faith?

Answer. We must know this, that though hee had not the like extraordinary meanes with the Patriarchs; yet he wanted not all meanes: for in his younger dayes, hee was trained up in his Father *Jacobs* family, & by him was instructed in the wayes of God, and in the practice of religion; and in his latter dayes also, he had the benefit of his Fathers company and instructions in *Egypt*. Now *Iacob* was not an ordinary Father, but a notable Patriarch and an holy Prophet; in whose family God had placed his

visible Church in those dayes, wherein *Iacob* was the Lords Prophet and Minister. Now *Ioseph*, both in his young age, and also after his Father came to *Egypt*, did heare and learne of him the wayes of God: and by that meanes came to that excellent faith, for which he is so commended here and matched with his Fathers the holy Patriarchs.

Here we learne, that the preaching of Gods Word by his Ministers (though extraordinary meanes, as revelations and visions, be wanting) is sufficient to bring a man to faith; yea, to such a faith as the three Patriarchs had. Indeed in the Ministerie of the Word, he which speaketh unto us, is but a man as others are; but yet the Word which he delivereth is not his owne, but the mightie Word of God: and looke what is truly pronounced by him unto us out of Gods word, the same is as certainly sealed unto us by his Spirit, as if God himselfe from heaven should extraordinarily reveale the same. And howsoever in former times men had visions and dreames, and Angels from God himselfe to reveale his will unto them: yet this Ministerie of Gods Word in the new Testament, is as sufficient a meanes of the beginning and increasing of true faith, as that was then.

This plainly confuteth all those that neglect or contemne the Ministerie and preaching of the Word, and looke for extraordinarie revelations, and for visions and dreames, for the be-getting and increase of faith and grace in their hearts. But our Saviour Christ doth notably checke all such in the Parable of the rich man, by the words of *Abraham* to *Dives*; saying of *Dives* brethren, that they had *Moses* and the Prophets; if they will not heare them, neither will they beleieve though one should come from the dead againe; (verie. 31.) insinuating, that if a man will not beleieve by the preaching of the Word, there is nothing in the world will make him to beleieve; neither revelations, nor visions, no nor the words of them that rise againe from the dead.

Secondly, the consideration of the sufficiencie of Gods ordinance in the holy Ministry, to beget and to increase true faith, must stirre us up to all care and diligence, not onely to heare the Word of God preached unto us, but to profit by it both in knowledge and obedience: and thus much for the first point.

The second point to be handled, is the commendation of *Iosephs* faith by two actions thereof: to wit, 1. His mention of the departure of the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*: 2. His commandement concerning his bones. Of both which we will speake briefly, because the speciall points herein were handled in the former verie.

For the first, *Ioseph* when hee died made mention of the departing of the children of *Israel*, that is, out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*.

Here we may observe a most notable worke of faith: it makes a man to keepe in memorie the

the mercifull promifes which God hath made unto him. This is it which commendeth *Joseph's* faith for a lively faith, That being about to die, he remembreth this mercifull promise of God, made to his fore-fathers touching their posterity; to wit, that after they had continued as servants in a strange Land 400. years, they should then have a good issue and a happy deliverance, and be brought into the Land of Canaan, Genes. 15. 13. This is a notable worke of faith, as may appear by two notable effects herof in the life of a Christian. For first, by this remembrance of Gods mercifull promises, the servant of God in all times, and in all distresses and extremities doth find comfort unto his soule. This brings to his memorie the wonderfull goodness and mercie of God, by which he is comforted. When *David* was in a most desperate case, so as he cried out by reason of affliction and temptation, *Will the Lord absent himselfe for ever, and will hee shew no more favour? Is his mercie cleane gone? doth his mercie fayle for evermore?* Psalm. 77. with such like most fearefull speeches. How then did hee comfort himselfe in this distresse? *Ansiv.* Surely, by remembering the workes of the Lord, and his wonders of old, and by meditating on all his workes, and gracious acts which he had done for him. So likewise in another place, in great anguish of spirit, he saith to his soule, *Why art thou cast downe my soule, and why art thou disquieted within me?* Psalm. 43. 5. Yet in the next words hee thus stayes himselfe; *Wait on God, for I will yet give thanks unto him: he is my present helpe, and my God.* How came *David* to say so in this distresse? *Ansiv.* By means of faith, which doth revive and refresh the death of man, by bringing to his remembrance the mercifull promises of God.

Saint *Paul* pressed with corruption, cryed out: *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the bodie of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Yet in the next words he saith, *I thanke my God thorow Iesus Christ our Lord: then I my selfe in my minde serve the Law of God, &c.* How come the latter words to follow on the former? *Ans.* In the first words indeed, hee is cast downe with the view and sight of his naturall corruption, which drew him headlong into sinne: but yet the latter words are a remembrance of the mercifull deliverance from sinne, which God had wrought in him by *Christ*: and therefore hee breaketh out in this saying, *I thanke my God thorow Iesus Christ, &c.*

Secondly, the remembrance of Gods promises serveth to bee a meane to keepe a man from sinne: for mans nature is as readie and prone to sinne, as fire is to burne when fiewell is put to it. But when by faith hee calls to minde Gods mercifull promises, especially those which are made unto him in *Christ*; then hee reasoneth and striveth against temptation, and layes the Word as a shield unto his soule, to keepe out the stie darts of *Sathan*: yea, hee

A applies the same word to his owne soule, as a corraive unto corruption: whereupon it is said, that *faith purifieth the heart*, Act. 15. 9. How? namely, beside the applying of *Christs* blood, it brings to memorie Gods mercifull promises in *Christ*; which stayes a man from committing such things, as would pollute and defile the heart. And therefore is *faith* said to be our victorie over the world, 1 Joh. 5. 4. because by applying to our soules Gods promises in *Christ*, we doe not only contemne the world, in regard of *Christ*; but also stand against the assaults thereof: so that it is a most notable and excellent worke of faith.

Lastly, observe the circumstance of time, when *Joseph* made remembrance of their departing. The text saith, *When hee was dying*. Hereof we have spoken in the former verie; yet this one thing may here againe be well remembered: *Joseph* calls to minde the promises of God at his death, which concerne the temporall deliverance of his people: and we by his example, when we are dying, must learne to call to remembrance the gracious promises which God hath made unto us in *Christ*, touching our eternall deliverance from the spirituall bondage of the Devill. Oh! great will be the fruit hereof, not onely for inward comfort to our owne soules, and joy to such as love us: but also we shall hereby give a worthy evidence to the world, that we have bene found in the faith: wherein wee shall leave a good precedent to those that follow us.

C The second fact of *Joseph's* faith is this: *He gave commandement concerning his bones.* The meaning thereof is this: that *Joseph* lying on his death-bed, gave a solemne charge to his brethren, to have speciall care how and where they buried him: that his bones might not be lost, but so preserved while they stayed in *Egypt*, that at their departure they might bee carried into the Land of Canaan, and there buried in the sepulchre of his Fathers. The causes why *Joseph* gave this commandement were these: 1. Hereby to testifie unto his brethren and posterity, that howsoever he lived a long time in the pompe and glorie of *Egypt*, yet his heart was never set thereon: but hee had greater delight, and more esteemed to be counted a true member of the Church of God, than to be a noble Prince in the land of *Egypt*. For if he had loved and liked the pompe of *Egypt*, he would have had his sepulchre among them; but giving commandement to the contrary, it sheweth plainly, that his heart was never set on that glorie and pompe in which hee lived.

D By whose example we are taught, that in using the world, and the things thereof, we must not set our hearts on them; but as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 7. 31. *Use them as though we used them not*: still have our affections set on heaven, which is our spirituall Canaan.

2. Hereby *Joseph* would testifie unto his brethren, what he esteemed his chiefe happinesse: namely,

namely, that in faith and hope hee was joyued unto his fathers, and ancestors, that beleevd in God; and that he was of their religion, and looked for a resurrection & another life as they did. And this he would have knowne, not only to his brethren and posteritie, but to the Egyptians also, among whom he lived.

3. *Ioseph* hereby intended principally, to confirme the faith of his brethren and posterity in Gods promise, for enjoying and possessing the Land of Canaan after his death: and this was a notable way to strengthen their faith. For when they should see or remember his corps, it was unto them as a lively sermon, to shew them plainly, that howsoever they lived for a while in bondage in Egypt: yet the day should shortly come, wherein they should be set at libertie, and brought (as free-men) into the Land of Canaan. And undoubtedly, *Ioseph* would therefore have his bones kept among them, that they might be a pledge unto them of their deliverance.

Yea note further, the storie faith, (Gen. 50. 15.) that *Ioseph* did not only charge his brethren generally; but binds them by an oath to carry his bones: hereby shewing, that it was a matter of great weight which he did injoyne them; even a signe and pledge of the truth of Gods promise in their deliverance. Whence we learne, that it is a matter of great moment, for every Christian, both carefully and reverently to use the Sacraments, which God hath given us pledges of his covenant of grace, made with us in Christ. For shall *Ioseph* cause his brethren and posteritie to sweare concerning his bones, that so they might more reverently regard that pledge and signe of their outward deliverance? And shall not we with reverence and good conscience, both esteeme and use those holy pledges of our eternall deliverance by Christ Jesus?

The Papists from this place would justifie their practice, in reserving and honouring the Reliques of Saints. Now by Reliques, they meane the parts of the bodies of Saints departed; as the head of *Iohn Baptist*, the armes or bones of this or that Saint, the milke of the virgin *Mary*, and also the parts of the crosse whereon Christ suffered, with such like. *Answe.* First, let us know, that their Reliques are nothing else but forged devices of their owne, and no true Reliques of Saints; as by one instance may appeare. For the parts and parcels of wood, kept in Europe, which they say are parts of the crosse whereon Christ died, are so many, that if they were all gathered together, they would load a ship: which shewes plainly, that herein they use notorious forgery, for it was no greater than a man may beare. And the like is their belevion in such sort. Secondly, the keeping of *Iosephs* bones, was for a good end and purpose; namely, to testifie his owne faith, and to confirm them, in beleiving Gods promise for their deliverance out of that bondage of Egypt:

but their Reliques serve rather to extinguish faith in Christ, than to confirme it: for they nourish men in fond devices, and soule superstitions, and not in the truth of Gods promises. Thirdly, we doe not read in all the Bible, that *Iosephs* bones were ever worshipped; and therefore from this place they have no ground whereon to build their superstitious worshipping of Reliques. And thus much of the example of *Iosephs* faith.



MOSES Parents Faith.

VERSE 23.

By faith, Moses when he was borne, was hid three moneths of his Parents, because they saw he was a proper child: neither feared they the Kings commandement.



IN this verse the holy Ghost proceedeth further, and setteth downe unto us a notable and worthy example of the faith of *Moses Parents*. If we would see the historie at large, we must reade the

2. Chapter of Exodus; of which these words are an abridgement, or brieve Epitome. Now here the faith of *Moses Parents* is commended unto us by two notable actions: 1. The hiding of *Moses* their childe when he was borne: 2. Their courage and boldnesse in that action; in not fearing the Kings commandement. Of their hiding of him, we will first intreat generally, and then come to the circumstance thereof. In generall, Their hiding of the childe was this: They kept him close, and unknowne to the Egyptians for three moneths space; because the King had given commandement and charge to all his people, that they should drown every man-child borne among the Hebrewes, Exod. 1. 22. In this action of their faith, we may observe some speciall points:

First, *Moses* was to be a worthy Prophet, and Captaine or guide unto the people of Israel: and therefore howsoever other men-children were drowned upon the cruell command of *Pharaoh*, yet the Lord provides for him so soone as he is borne, that he shall be hid, and so preserved from the tyranny & rage of *Pharaoh*.

Whence we learne, that God in the midst of all persecution, doth evermore preserve the seed of his Church. There be two estates of Gods Church in the world: the first is quiet and peaceable, when the Gospel is profess-

likely professed, taught, and received without hostile opposition, as by Gods great mercie it is in our Church at this day. The second is an hid-den estate, when as it cannot shew it selfe visible, but the open profession of the Gospell is suppressed by the rage of the enemy the Devil, and by wicked and cruell men that be his instruments. Thus God suffered his Church sometimes to be shadowed, and in these times many of his deare children to be flame and put to death for the sinnes of his Church, yet so, as that alwayes he preserves the seed of his Church. When Esay had shewed the Jewes the fearefull desolation of their Land; that the Cities should be wasted without inhabitant, and their houses without man; yet then hee saith, *There shall bee a tenth in it, and the holy seed shall bee the substance or underprope thereof,* vers. 11. God doth not deal with his Church, as he doth with the enemies thereof: hee but lopps of the branches in his Church, when as hee stockes up the root of his enemies, Ilay chapter 27. verses 7, 8. When hee visited *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, hee destroyed them utterly out of the earth; but the Lord doth ever keepe fast the seed of his Church, that when the storme of persecution is blowne over, his Church may spring and flourish afterward.

Here some may say, Seeing God purposed to make *Moses* such a worthy mā over his people, why did he not by some wonderful, powerfull, and mighty manner, preserve him against the rage of *Pharaoh*? *Answe.* God indeed was able to have sent a legion of Angels for his preservation, or to have done it after some strange visible manner; but yet he would not: for we must know and remember, that it is Gods pleasure to shew his power in weakne meanes. Hee can preserve every servant of his from all kinde of injury: but he will not alwaies doe so. When Christ himselfe our Saviour, was in his infancie persecuted by *Herod*, God his Father was then able to have preserved him in Judea, and to have overthrowne his persecutor by many legions of Angels; yet he would not, but only with the poore helpe of *Ioseph* and *Mary*, with the ordinarie weakne meanes of flight; and all this he did, that he might be glorified in the weaknesse of his servants; for when all meanes faile, then doth hee magnifie his power and providence in preserving those that trust in him. And thus much of this Action in generall.

The circumstances to be considered in the hiding of *Moses*, are foure: 1. The time when he was hid: the Text saith, *When hee was borne.* *Moses* (as we said) must be afterward a notable servant, and a worthy instrument of God, whereby hee would worke the deliverance of his people, out of the bondage of Egypt: and yet we see, he is faine to be hid so soone as hee is borne.

Hence we learne, that those that be the servants of God, & are in special favour with him,

A must looke for trouble and affliction in this life, from the cradle to the grave, from the day of their birth, to the houre of their death; *Moses* is in danger of his life by *Pharaoh*, to soone as hee is borne. And so was our Saviour Christ by *Herod*, when he was but a babe: whereupon his Parents fled with him into Egypt for his safetie. And answerable to their infancie was the rest of their life; full of danger, full of trouble: And as it was with them, so is it with others; 2 Tim. 3. 12. *He that will live godly must suffer persecution: and he that will be Christs disciple, must take up his crosse every day, and follow him.* Luk. 6. 23.

This is a point which all of us must marke; we must not looke to have ease and joy on earth; It is enough for us to enjoy that after this life. If Christ himselfe carrie his crosse out of the gate, we then with his disciples *must take up our crosse and follow him every day.*

The 2. circumstance to be considered is this; How long was *Moses* hid? namely, *three moneths.* *Quest.* Why was he hid no longer? *Ans.* Because they could not; for it is likely, there was search for him, and therefore they made a basket of reeds, and damped it with slime and pitch, and laid the childe therein, and put it among the bulrushes by the rivers brinke.

Thus did the Parents adventure the childes life, for the saving of their owne: wherein we may see a great want & weaknes in their faith: for they kept their childe a while by faith; but afterward committed him to the dangers of the waters, of wilde beasts, and fowles of the aire. So that it is plaine their faith was weakne, and mingled with feare, and with some doubting. For in keeping the childe three moneths, they shew forth lively faith: but when as they expose him to danger for their owne safetie, herein they bewray some want of love, and weaknesse of faith: and yet wee see they are here commended for their faith. Which sheweth plainly, that if a man have true and sound faith, though it be but weakne, yet God in mercy will take knowledge of it, and commend it, passing by the weaknesse of it; yea, and unto that faith will give the promises of life everlasting made in Christ.

The third circumstance to be considered is this; Who it was that kept *Moses* three moneths. In Exodus it is said, that his Mother kept him: but here it is said, *His Parents kept him:* where the holy Ghost includes his Father also. How can both things be true? *Answe.* We must know, that the Mother was the chiefe doer in this worke; and the Father, though he was not a doer, yet he gave his consent. Now we must remember, that consent is a kinde of doing, whether it be in good things or in evill: for when *Saul* did but keepe the persecutors cloaths that stoned *Stephen* (Act. 7. 58.) whereby hee signified his consent: thereupon hee comforted himselfe to bee guilty of his death, Act. 13. ver. 20.

Exod. 2.

Exod. 2, 3.

Lastly, observe the Cause, or rather the Occasion that moved the Parents to save their child. It was a notable comeliness and beauty, which did appeare in the bodie of the child, when he was borne. This moved them to reason thus with themselves: Surely God hath given such beauty and comeliness unto this child, that it is very likely he will use him hereafter, to be some notable instrument of some great worke: we therefore will keepe him alive. This point must be marked of us: for beside their natural affection, this also was a motive to make the Parents save the child.

Hence we may learne, that those whom God will imploy above others in some speciall service for his owne glory, are usually endowed with some speciall gift above others; yea, many times with outward grace and comeliness in the body. For this beautie in Moses bodie, moved his Parents to seeke to save his life; they perswade themselves that God had not imprinted that in him for nought. Saul (we know) was made King over Israel: and it is noted, that the Lord had given him a goodly stature; for he was *higher than any of the people from the shoulders upward.* And so David had a good countenance, and a comely visage: for the Lord purposed to make him King over Israel. Now as hee did excell his bretheren in beautie and comeliness, so he was to bee farre above them in this speciall service of God, in governing his people.

Hence we learne, first, that comeliness and beautie is a gift of God: Secondly, that those which excell others in these gifts of nature, must looke also that answerably they excell them in holiness, and zeale in the service of God, and doing good unto men, as Moses and David did. But alas, wretched is the practice of these times: for commonly those which have comeliness and beautie above others, doe use it as a bait and occasion unto all sinne and naughtiness; as to whoredome and lasciviousnes, that thereby they may more fully satisfie their owne wretched and Saranickall lusts: but this must carefully be looked unto, of all such as have the gifts of nature in more excellent manner than others. For if they use them, or rather abuse them to be meanes of sinne, and to set forth the pride and vanitie of their hearts they have much to answer for unto God, at the dreadfull day of judgement. Hath God given thee beautie and comeliness: and doest thou use it as a bait to inflame others for the satisfying of thy lust? then looke unto it thou evil servant, for thou doest not hide but consume thy Masters talent, employing it to his dishonour; therefore it shall be taken from thee: and instead thereof, thou shalt have ugliness and deformity, and so in soule and body be tumbled unto hell with unclean spirits. And thus much of the first action of their faith, with the circumstances thereof.

The second action, whereby the faith of

A Moses Parents is commended unto us, is this; *They did not feare the Kings commandement.* These words must not bee understood absolutely and simply, but with limitation. For many places of Scripture are spoken simply, which must bee understood with respect; as when it is said, *Matth. 11. 18. John came neither eating nor drinking, that is not, eating nothing at all, but eating little: and Christ saith, Matth. 10. 34. He came not to bring peace, but the sword:* that is, (as Luke expounds it, Luk. 12. 51.) *rather debates than peace.* And so in this place, *Moses Parents feared not the Kings commandement;* that is, they did not feare it overmuch, or wholly, or onely, or so much as others did in this like case.

B Here then first wee may learne, how farre forth we must obey superiors and magistrates: wee must obey them not simply, but in the Lord, Ephes. 6. 1. that is, in all their lawfull commands; but when they command things evil & unlawfull, then we must stay our selves, lest obeying them we rebell against God. For this we have sufficient warrant in this place, as also in the Apostles; who being commanded (Act. 4. 18, 19.) that in *no wise they should speake or teach in the name of Iesus:* answered, *Whether it bee right in the sight of God, to obey you rather than God, judge ye.* And the *miraculous of Egypt* are commended by the holy Ghost, Exod. 1. 17. for saving the young children alive against the Kings commandement. And the three men of the Jewes, *Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego,* are rewarded with all posteritie, for disobeying the commandement of *Nebuchadnezzar,* (Dan. 3. 16, 17.) of worshipping the golden Image. By which examples, wee may see plainly, that our obedience to men, must be in the Lord only. Neither is our refusing to doe their unlawfull commands, any disobedience indeed: because the fifth commandement in this case ceaseth to binde, and gives place to the commandments of the first table, which are greater, as we shewed before, ver. 17.

C Secondly, see here this godly boldnesse, in not overmuch fearing the Kings commandement, is made a worke of faith: whence wee learne, that true faith in the promises of God, doth serve to moderate a mans affections. There is no man, but if he be left to himselfe, hee will goe too farre in the sway of his affections: experience sheweth that many through anger and joy, have lost their lives; some for feare have forsaken religion, and sorrow hath cost many a man his life: yea, any affection, if it be not moderated and stayed, will bereave a man of his senses, and make him a beast, and no man.

D But behold the use and power of true faith: It serveth to mitigate a mans affections: so as if a man be angry, it shall be with moderation: and so we may lay of feare, joy, hatred, or any other affection: faith will allwaie and stay the rage thereof. For undoubtedly, *Moses Pa-*

rents might have been overwhelmed with feare of *Pharaohs* tyranny and cruelty, but that God gave them faith, which did moderate this feare. There is none of us, but if wee looke well into our selves, wee shall see that we are excessive in many affections, sometime in feare, sometime in anger, sometime in sorrow, and such like. Now would we know how to bridle these strong passions? Then get true faith: it is the means whereby a man may moderate and stay the rage of his affection, so as they shall not breake out in extremity. Is a man angry? Why, if hee have faith, he will bridle his anger. Is he sorrowfull? yet it is in measure: and so for the rest, faith will rule them all, and yet extinguishe none. Which should greatly provoke us to labour for true faith, seeing it is of such use and power in the stay of our affections.



v. 24. *By faith, Moses when hee was come to age, refused to bee called the Sonne of Pharaohs daughter.*

25. *And chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sinne for a season.*

26. *Esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: For he had respect unto the recompence of reward.*

Here the holy Ghost comes to the commendation of *Moses* faith, and in these three verses propounds a most notable example hereof.

By *Moses* faith, in this place, wee must understand saving faith; which is nothing else, but a gift of God, whereby *Moses* received the promise of God touching salvation by the *Messias*, and of the promised land, made to *Abraham* and to his seed after him, and applyed the same unto himselfe particularly.

Now in the first entrance of this example, the holy Ghost setteth downe a wonderfull thing of *Moses*; namely, that *Moses* had faith; and by it did this great worke. This (I say) is strange, because hee was brought

up by *Pharaohs* daughter in the Court of *Pharaoh*, where was no knowledge of the true God, and indeed nothing but Idolatry, wantonnesse, and prophaneesse. And yet here it is testified of him, by the Spirit of God which cannot lie, that he had faith; which is a wonderfull thing. And the like is recorded of others in the word of God: As in *Abahs* Court, (who was a King that had sold himselfe to worke wickednesse) yet the Spirit of God testified, that even there was good *Obadiah* a man that feared God greatly. And *Herod* was a most deadly enemy to Christ: and yet *Joanna* the wife of *Chuza* *Herods* friend, ministered of her goods unto Christ. And *Paul* faith, *The Saints which are of Caesars household salute you*: Where by *Caesars* house, is meant the Court of *Nero*, who was a most bloody man, and a wicked persecuter; and yet in his house were the professors of Christs Gospell. By these examples we learne, that Christ hath his children and servants in the middle among his enemies: for these three Courts, of *Pharaoh*, *Herod*, and *Nero*, may be called a kinde of hell; and yet there were some of Gods servants in them all. Which sheweth us cleerely the truth of Gods Word, which faith of Christ, that hee reigneth in the middle among his enemies. Howsoever they rage, and seek to blot out his name, and root out his kingdome, yet maugre their throats, he will rule in the middle of their kingdomes, and there have those which truly serve him and feare his name. Revel. 2. 13. God had his Church in *Pergamus* where Satans throne was.

Againe, this fact of *Moses* serves to checke many a man in this age, that is brought up in the Church of God, and under godly Parents and governours, and yet is a hater and mocker of the religion of Christ. Surely *Moses* in the day of Judgement shall stand up against all such, and condemne them. For he had faith, though he were brought up in a most prophane place: and they are voyd of faith, yea, enemies unto it, though they live in the bosome of the Church.

But let us come to the strange fact which *Moses* did, for which his faith is to be commended. The Text faith of him first of all. *That when hee was come to age, hee refused to be called the sonne of Pharaohs daughter.* How *Moses* became her sonne, we may read at large, *Exod.* 2. where it is said, that the having found *Moses* in the basket, preserved him alive, and brought him up as her owne childe, purposing to make him her owne sonne and heire. But this honour of hers hee would not accept; this hee refused by faith, and this is that notable and famous act, for which his faith is here commended unto us.

But some will say, This fact of *Moses* may seeme rather worthy of blame than praise, as being a practice of great rudenesse and ingratitude: for shee preserved his life from

death, and brought him up as her owne child, and vouchsafed him this speciall favour, to make him her heire; and therefore *Moses* should not thus have contemned her favour. *Ans.* Indeed it had beene *Moses* part to have shewed himselfe thankfull, in accepting this favour at her hands, and also enjoying the same, if hee might have done it with the feare of God, and keeping a good conscience. But that hee could not doe: for if hee had dwelled still with her, and beene her sonne and heire, hee should have beene undutifull unto God. Now this is a rule to bee remembered and practised alwaies; that in duties of like nature, the Commandements of the second table doe binde us no further than our obedience thereto may stand with obedience unto the Commandements of the first table; and when these two cannot stand together, then wee are freed from obedience unto the second table; as from performing honour and thankfulness unto men, when wee cannot therewithall performe obdience and service unto God. And this was *Moses* case; because hee could not both serve God, and continue his thankfulness to *Pharaohs* daughter, (for in staying with her, hee should have made shipwrack of true religion) therefore hee forsaketh her favour and honour; and for this cause is here commended unto us. The like did our Saviour Christ: for when the people would have made him King, he refused it, and fled from among them. *Jo. 6. 15.* because it would not stand with that calling, for which hee was sanctified and sent into the world: therefore *Moses* fact was commendable, and doth greatly set forth unto us his holy faith.

In this fact of *Moses* thus generally considered, observe a notable fruit of true faith: It maketh a man esteeme more of the state of adoption to bee the childe of God, than to bee the childe or heire of an earthly Prince. This is plaine in *Moses* in this place. And the like wee may see in *David*: for though he were a King, yet he set all his royalty and majesty at naught, in regard of Gods blessing of Adoption; and therefore he saith, *The Lord* (not the kingdome of Israel) *is my portion*. And againe, when hee was kept from the Lords Tabernacle, and the company of Gods Saints, through persecution; he saith, *The Sparrowes and the Swallows were more happy than hee*, *Psal. 84.* because they had nests where they might keepe their young, and sit and sing; but hee could not come neere the Lords altar. And yet more fully to expresse the earnestnesse of his affection this way; he saith, hee had rather bee a man of base office, even a doore-keeper in the house of God, than a man of renowne in the tents of wickednesse. But howsoever, these men were of one minde herein, yet come to our age, and seeke in Towne, Countrey and people, and wee shall see this fruit of faith is rare to bee found: for generally (though I will not say all) the most of those that are borne of good parentage, as the

sonnes of Knights or Squires, and especially of Nobles, are so bewitched with the pride of their earthly Parentage, that they have scarce a thought after Adoption in Christ. Gods heavenly graces will take no place in their hearts, but they utterly contemne all other estates of life in regard of their owne. And this is the common sinne of the whole world: for at earthly preferments men will stand amazed; but seldome shall you finde a man that is ravished with joy in this, that hee is the childe of God, as *Moses* was. But this practice must be a president for us to follow: we must learne to have more joy in being the sonnes of God, than to be heires of any worldly kingdomes; and to take more delight in the grace of Adoption through Jesus Christ, than in the sonne-ship of any earthly Prince.

It is a great prerogative to be heire to a King or Emperour, but yet to bee the childe of God goes farre beyond it, even above comparison. For the sonne of the greatest Potentate may bee the childe of wrath: but the childe of God by grace, hath Christ Jesus to bee his eldest brother, with whom he is fellow heire in heaven; hee hath the holy Ghost also for his comforter, and the kingdome of heaven for his everlasting inheritance. And therefore wee must learne of *Moses*, from the bottom of our hearts, to preferre this one thing, To bee the childe of God, before all earthly things, either pleasures, riches, or any other prerogatives whatsoever.

Now more particularly in this fact of *Moses* note two circumstances: 1. The manner how: 2. The time when hee refused to be called the sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter.

For the first; his refusal was not in word, but in deed: for if wee reade the whole History of *Moses*, wee shall not finde, that either hee spake to *Pharaoh* or to his daughter, or to any other to this effect, that hee would not be her heire, nor called her sonne: but wee finde that hee did it indeed: for when hee came to age, hee left the Court ostentiments, and went to visit his brethren, to comfort them, to defend them, and to take part with them. And hence wee must learne, not so much to give our selves to know, and to talke of matters of religion, as to doe and practise the same both before God and men. This did *Moses*. It is the common fault of our age, that wee can bee content to heare the doctrine of religion taught unto us; yea, many will learne it, and often speake thereof: but few there bee that make conscience to doe the things they heare and speake of. But let us learne of *Moses* to purtholde things in practice which wee learne and professe, and in silence doe them: for the fewer words the better, unlesse our deeds bee answerable. If any of us were to walke upon the top of some high mountaine, wee would leave off talking, and looke unto our steps for feare of falling. Behold, when wee enter the profession of Christianity,

itianity, wee are set upon an high mountaine : for the way of life is *an high* : and Christiani-
 ty is the *high calling of God*. We therefore must be
 wise, as *Salomon* saith, Prov. 15. 24. and looke
 well to our conversation, having a strait watch
 over all our wayes thorow the whole course
 of our lives, even to the end of our daies, and not
 stand so much on speaking and talking, as on
 doing: *for the doer of this work, shall be blessed in his*
deed, Jam. 1. 25. This is the thing we must looke
 unto, as the onely ornament of our profession,
 declaring that we have the power of godlinesse
 but if deeds be wanting, our religion is vaine,
 we are like the *Figtree* which Christ curseth, *ba-*
ring leaves and no fruit.

The 2. circumstance to be considered, is the
 time when he refused this honour, namely, *when*
he came to be a man of yeares and discretion. A
 man in common reason would judge thus of
Moses fact : *Moses* hath rare fortune offered
 him, he might have bene sonne and heire to a
 Prince : Surely this is a rash fact of his, and
 voyd of consideration, to refuse it ; undoubted-
 ly hee farre over-shot himselfe herein, either
 through rashnesse or ignorance. But to prevent
 such carnall surmises, the Spirit of God sets
 downe this circumstance of time ; saying, that
 hee did not refuse it in his youth : but when hee
 was come to age, that is *in perfect yeares of dis-*
cretion. and by reason thereof must needs have
 consideration and judgement to know what
 he did then did he refuse this honour, to be *Pha-*
raohs daughters sonne and heire. In the seventh
 of the *Aets*, we shal see that he was *fourty yeares*
old when he did this. And therefore this is true
 which is here said, that *when he was come to age*
 and it ainednesse, then he refused this honour : for
 fourty yeares is a time, not onely of ripenesse
 for strength, but of staiednesse in judgement
 and discretion.

Out of this circumstance wee learne two
 points : 1. That it is a common fault of young
 yeares, to be subject to inconsideration and
 rashnesse : for *Moses* did not refuse the honour
 of *Pharaohs* daughter, when he was young, lest
 it should seeme to bee a point of rashnesse : but
 when he was come to age, (as the text saith) : insi-
 nuating, that if hee had done it when hee was
 young, it might have bene esteemed but a rash
 part, and done in some hasty passion of youth.
 Every age of man hath his faults : and this is the
 fault of youth, to be heady and rash in their as-
 sents, for want of consideration and experi-
 ence. And therefore all young persons must
 have care of themselves in youth, and watch
 the more against them, because they are so in-
 cidental to their yeares. Now the way to avoid
 them, is to follow Christs example, Luke 2. 52.
 to labour to grow, as in yeares, so in wisdom
 and grace : and to obey the counsell of *Paul* to
Timothy, 2 Tim. 2. 22. to flee the lusts of youth,
 following after justice, faith, charity, and peace,
 with all that call upon the name of the Lord with
 a pure heart.

Secondly, this circumstance of time, noting
Moses deliberate staiednesse in this fact, doth
 plainly advertise us, what is or should be, the
 vertue of old age, and the ornament of yeares ;
 namely, *staiednesse and discretion* : whereby I
 mean, not onely that naturall temper of affec-
 tion, which old age bringeth with it ; but such
 religious discretion, whereby men of yeares doe
 all things in faith, so as their workes may be ac-
 ceptable and pleasing unto God. For when a
 man is grown in yeares, and hath had experi-
 ence and observation in the Church of God, he
 must not onely have a generall knowledge and
 wisdom, but a particular wisdom ; whereby
 he may do in faith, whatsoever he takes in hand
 and therein please God. But alas, this may bee
 spoken of old men in these dayes, that in regard
 of this wisdom they are very babes : a thing
 greatly disgracefull to their condition : For
Paul bids the *Corinthians*, 1 Corinth. 14. 20.
 that they should not be children in understanding,
 but of ripe age : yea, and he forbids the *Ephesi-*
ans, Eph. 4. 14. to be children still, wavering and
 carried about with every wind of doctrine. Where-
 by we may see, that aged persons doe quite de-
 generate from that they ought to be, when they
 are babes in knowledge, void of spirituall wis-
 dom. Indeed wee must grant that our aged
 persons are worldly wise ; and hee must have
 a cunning head, and (as wee say) rise early,
 that herein goes beyond them : But bring them
 to the booke of God, and to give a reason of
 their actions, that they are done in faith ; here-
 in, they are meeke babes, and ignorant : neither
 can they tell what it is to doea thing in faith,
 so as it may be acceptable to God. Herein, ma-
 ny that are young in yeares, doe quite outstrip
 them. What would we thinke or say of a child
 that being set to a good schoole, should still be
 in the lowest forme, though hee had long con-
 tinued at it : Surely we should judge him either
 exceeding negligent, or destitute of ordinary
 capacity.

Behold the Church of God is the schoole of
 Christ : and if a man have lived long therein, (as
 twenty, or fourty yeares) and yet be no wiser in
 religion, than a young childe ; is it not a shame
 unto him ? and shall wee not condemn him of
 great negligence ? Wherefore, let all aged per-
 sons here learne their duty ; which is, to grow
 to ripenesse in spirituall wisdom, that so their
 age may be to them a crowne of glory, being found
 in the way of righteousnesse, Prou. 16. 31.

VERSE 25.

And chooseth rather to suffer adversities with the
 people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sinne
 for a season.

The meaning of these words is this : *Moses*
 saith with himselfe, that if he should yeeld
 to become heire to *Pharaohs* daughter, he must
 live with her and please her in all things, and so

altogether leave Gods Church, and people, and Gods holy religion which thing to doe, he abhorred in his heart; and withall, he must leave and lose the eternall blessednesse of Gods children, for the honours and sinfull pleasures of the Court, which were but momentary. These things considered, hee chuseth rather to bee in affliction and misery with the people of God, than upon these conditions, to live in *Pharaohs* Court, and to become his daughters sonne and heire.

And because this may seeme a strange choice the holy Ghost doth afterward render a reason hereof, which is this: Because *Moses* liked rather to enjoy the prerogatives of Gods Church (though it were in misery) than to enjoy any honour in a wicked Court, such as indeed *Pharaohs* was.

In this verse therefore, wee are to note a second fruit of *Moses* faith; to wit, that he preferred the fellowship and communion of Gods Saints, before all other societies in the world. The same also was *Pauls* practice, Phil. 16. 7. *All my delight (saith he) is in the Saints that dwell on earth.*

This fruit of *Moses* faith, doth discover unto us a grievous fault which reigneth in this age; to wit, the neglect and contempt of the communion and society of Saints. There is a society and fellowship that is loved and magnified among us: but what manner of societie is that? surely of such as give themselves to drinking, jelling, scoffing, riot, mirth, gaming. This is the common and generall good-fellowship: through which, God is greatly dishonoured. For most men set their delight therein, and are never merry but in such company, wherein indeed they delight themselves in their sensuality. True it is, men plead that this good fellowship is a vertue. But then was *Moses* ferre overseene: for in *Pharaohs* court he might have had all kinde of such good fellowship and company: yet hee likes it not, but rather chuseth affliction and misery with the people of God, then to enjoy such fellowship in *Pharaohs* Court. And as for the goodnesse of it, it is neither to esteemed, nor called by any, but by them that call good evil, and evil good. Wee see, *Moses* a man of wisdom and learning, Act. 7. 23. no childe, but a man of 81. yeares old, hates and abhorres this good fellowship, as the worst citate in the world: rather chusing the society of a miserable and persecuted Church, than the best of that fellowship which a Kings Court could yeeld. Let us therefore learne more wisdom out of his practice. Some say, this good fellowship is harmlesse; and such men, who thus merely passe their times, doe no such hurt as many others doe. But I answer, men are bound to doe good. Againe, to mispend time, wealth, and yet, are not these evil and harmful, both in themselves, and in the example? And which is worst of all, it is no fellowship with God, nor any part of the communion of Saints,

but rather a fellowship with Satan; therefore, let all that will, like true Christians, have true comfort in that article of their Creed, the communion of Saints, esteeme the fellowship of good and holy men above all other. For by this communion with Gods Saints, a man reaps great profit, when as the other brings to a man the ruine both of his body and soule. By the society of the godly, we are first made partaker of their gifts and holy graces; and secondly, of their prayers, and the blessings of God upon them; which things, if there were no other, might move us to embrace this blessed societie before all other. And yet further, by being of this societie, a man avoids many of Gods judgments: If there had beene ten righteous men in *Sodom*, they had all beene spared from destruction. Wherein wee may see, that they that cleave to such as feare the Lord in deed, never receive harme, but rather much good: for, for the elects sake it is, that the world yet standeth: and if they were gathered, heaven and earth would goe together; but for the calling of the Elect, the hand of God is yet staid. Why then should not *Moses* example be our rule, Above all worldly pleasure to rejoyce in the society of Gods Saints.

Thus much in generall: Now in the particular words, are many notable points of doctrine, which we will touch in their order. And chuse rather, &c. Mark here a rare and strange choice as ever we shall reade of. There are two things propounded to *Moses*: The first is, honour and preferment in *Pharaohs* Court; to be sonne and heire to *Pharaohs* daughter: wherwith he might have enjoyed all earthly pleasures and delights. The second is, the miserable afflicted condition of Gods Church and people.

And of these two, *Moses* must needs chuse the one: well, what chuseth he? Surely he refuseth the prerogatives and dignity, that he might have had in *Pharaohs* Court, and makes choice of the misery and affliction of Gods people in adversity; that to hee may enjoy the priviledges of Gods Church. A wonderful choice: for which his faith is here commended, and he renowned to all posterity. The same choice hath God set before all men in all ages. In former times God set before *Esau* two things: A wife of red brooth, and his birth-right: but prophane *Esau* chuseth the worter; hee forgoes his birth-right, so he may have the brooth. But far worst did the *Gadarens*: there was set before them Christ Jesus the Lord of life, and their hogs, and cattell: Now they preferre their hogs before Christ; A most miserable and senselesse choice. And is it not as ill with us? There is set before us on the one side heaven, and on the other side hell; but men for the most part chuse hell, and forsake heaven. Civil worldly men whose delight is all in riches, they prefer earth before heaven; the service of sinne, which is the greatest slavery, before the service of God, which is perfect freedome, and glorious liber-

Phil. 1. 19.

ty of the Saints in light : and thus doe all men without Gods speciall grace. Whereupon *Paul* prays in his Epistles for the Churches, that God would give unto them the spirit of wisdom, that they may be able to judge betweene things that differ. And this wisdom we must labour for, that when these different things are set before us, we may make a wise choice: otherwise, we shew our selves to be like brut beasts without understanding, and do quite overturne our owne salvation. In the Ministry of the word we have life and death, good and evil set before us, as *Moses* said to the people, *Deut. 30. 15, 19.* Let us therefore endeavour our selves to chuse life, by embracing and obeying the word of God: and so shall we follow both his precept and practice.

To suffer adversity with the people of God.]

Here wee may observe what is the ordinary state and condition of Gods Church and people in this world: namely, to be in affliction and under the crosse. Hence *Paul* saith, *1 Th. 3. 4.* we must come to be went through manifold afflictions, *Acts 14. 22.* For Lord knoweth what is best for his servants and children : and therefore hee hath set downe this for a ground, that all that will see godly in Christ Iesus, must suffer persecution *2 Tim. 3. 12.*

Thus the Lord dealeth with his children for speciall causes : for first, all crosses, as losse of goods, friends, liberty, or good name, they are meanes to stir up and awake Gods people out of the slumbering fit of sinne; for the godly are many times overtaken this way. The wise virgins sleepe, as well as the foolish : Now afflictions rouse them out of the sleepe of security. See this in *Iosephs* brethren; who went on a long time without any remorse, for selling their brother : But when they were staied in Egypt, then they are rouzed up, and can say, *Gen. 42. 21.* This trouble is come upon us for selling our brother.

Secondly, afflictions serve to humble Gods children, *Levit. 26. 41.* So the Church of God speaketh, *I will beare the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* *Micha. 7. 9.*

Thirdly, they serve to weane the people of God, and to drive them from the love of this world : for if men might alwayes live in ease, they would make their heaven upon earth; which may not bee. And herein God dealeth with his children like a Nurse; when shee will weane her child, shee layes some bitter thing upon the paps head, to make the child to loath the pap; so the Lord, to draw our hearts from the world, and to caule us to love and seeke after Heaven and heavenly things, hee makes us to taste of the bitterness of affliction in this world. Fourthly, affliction serves to make Gods children to goe out of themselves to seeke sincerely unto God, and to relye only upon him, which in prosperity they will not do. This *Paul* confesseth of himselfe and others, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* For because

wee should not trust in our selves, but in God, *2 Corinth. 1. 9.* So good King *Iehosaphat*, when hee was compassed of his enemies, He cried to the Lord, and said; Lord we know not what to doe, but our eyes are toward thee : *2 Chron. 20. 12.* Yea, the rebellious Jewes are hereby driven to seeke the Lord, whom in prosperity they forsooke : as wee may see at large, *Psalm. 107. 6, 12, 13, 19.*

Lastly, afflictions serve to make manifest the graces of God in his children. The Lord (saith *J. 8.*) knoweth my way and trieth mee, *Iob 23. 10.* *Deut. 8. 2.* Remember all the way (saith *Moses* to the Israelites) which the Lord thy God led thee this fourty years, for to prove thee and to know what was in thine heart. Hence *James* calleth temptations, the trial of faith, *Jam. 1. 2, 3.* and *Paul* makes patience the fruit of tribulation, *Rom. 5. 3.* For looke as the flowers in the spring time, cause the buds to appeare : so doe afflictions make manifest Gods graces in his children. Patience, hope, and other vertues, he close in the heart, in the day of peace : but when tribulation comes, then they break forth and shew themselves.

Hence wee learne that it is not alwayes a token of Gods wrath, To suffer affliction. If any man or people be laden with crosse, it is no argument, that therefore they are not the children of God : for as *Peter* saith, Judgement beginneth at Gods house, *1 Peter 4. 17.* and any crosse upon a people, family, or particular persons, if it bring forth the fruit of grace in them, is a true signe, they belong to God. Yea, when men wander from God by an evill way, these afflictions are meanes to call them home to God : *Psalm. 119. 67.* Before I was afflicted, I went astray. And they that forsake their sin, and returne to God in the time of affliction, are certainly Gods people : for the wicked man fretteth and murmureth against God when a crosse cometh, and hee cannot abide it. But the godly man is humbled thereby, and it makes him more obedient in all duties unto God.

This we should consider for by an outward profession, we beare the world in hand, that we are Gods children, and therefore wee come to heare Gods word, and to learne how to be-have our selves as becometh his children. But if wee would bee knowne to be Gods children indeed, then when any of Gods judgements doe befall us, wee must make this use of them; namely, labour thereby to be humbled for our finnes, and to forsake our finnes, and to make conscience of all bad wayes for ever afterward; and then wee shew our selves to be Gods children indeed : but if under the crosse, or after the crosse, we be as dissolute as ever wee were, and still follow our old finnes, then wee cannot be judged to be Gods people and children, but rather a wicked and stubborn generation, which the more they are corrected, the worse they are; like a stubbie, the more it is beaten, the harder it is. Let us therefore by the

use of Gods judgements, shew our selves to be Gods children : so shall wee say with David with much joy and comfort. *It is good for us that we have beene in trouble.* Psal. 119. 71.

Thus wee see *Moses* choice : now come wee to the thing here refused, *To enjoy the pleasures of sinne for a season.* By pleasures of sinne, we must understand the riches and dignity that *Moses* might have had in *Pharaohs* Court and Kingdom. Which are called the pleasures of sinne, not because they were so in themselves ; for so they were the good gifts of God but because *Moses* could not enjoy them in *Pharaohs* Court, without living in sin ; for hee must have refused the society of Gods Church and people, and so have beene a stranger from the covenant which God made with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and with their seed after them, if hee would have beene sonne to *Pharaohs* daughter.

Here then the holy Ghost setteth downe two notable reasons, which induced *Moses* to refuse these honours and dignities : First, because they were the pleasures of sinne ; And secondly, because he should enjoy them but for a season.

The first reason affordeth unto us many notable points worthy our consideration : 1. Here wee learne, that riches, honour, and dignity severed from true religion, are nothing but the pleasures and profits of sinne. This was *Moses* judgement, as the holy Ghost here testifieth : and it is the plaine truth of God, as *Salomon* after lamenable experience dispueth, and proveth at large : concluding of riches, honour, pleasures, and all earthly things separated from the feare of God, they are nothing else but meer vanity and vexation of spirit. And *Paul* saith, *To the impure all things are impure*; his meat, drink, and apparell, which in themselves are otherwise the good gifts of God.

The consideration hereof is of great use : for first, it lets us see what is the state of these men which lay aside religion and good conscience, and betake themselves wholly to the world, to get riches and preferment : most men are of this disposition, and such indeed are onely counted wise. For let there be speech tending to a mans commendation, usually this is the first matter of his praise, that hee is a substantiall wealthy man ; and one that looks well to himselfe : as though riches, or honour were a mans chiefe happiness. But howsoever the world judgeth of these men ; yet hereby we may see and know that their case is miserable. For without religion and the feare of God, their riches and honours are but the pleasures and profits of sinne, and therefore the more they heape up riches after this sort, not regarding Christ, nor his Gospel ; the more they heape up to themselves the treasures of sinne, and consequently the greater condemnation : for worldly treasures severed from religion, are but the Mammon of iniquity, which causeth damnation. Hence Christ said

unto his Disciples (upon occasion of the young rich man) that it was as easie for a great Camel to goe thorow the eye of a needle, as for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; that is, such a rich man as sets his heart to get riches and honour, not regarding the religion of Christ. Whence also in another place hee pronounceth this fearefull sentence against them : *Woe bee to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation* : Luke 6. 24. They therefore that lay aside religion and give themselves wholly to seeke gaine and honour, are before God most wretched and miserable; and the longer they continue in this course, the more miserable they are ; for the more sinne they heape up, and so the deeper shall be their condemnation. Wherefore if any of us have beene thus minded heretofore, let us now leave this course, as most dangerous to our soules : for what will it profit a man to gaine the whole world, if hee lose his soule ?

2. Hence we must all learne, especially they that have any measure of wealth more or lesse, to joine with the use of our riches the feare of God, and the practice of true religion : for sever theie asunder, and riches are nothing else but sinful pleasures. It is a good conscience which rectifieth the owner in the right use of his honour and treasures : but without that, he pollutes the blessings of God which he enjoys, and they being polluted shall turne to his greater woe. A man would have thought that *King Belshazzar* had been an happy man, when hee kept his royall feast, and drake wine in golden bowles, before a thousand Princes that were under him, and before his Concubines : but the end of all that his jollity may shew us the nature of such prosperity. For so soone as he saw the fingers of a mans hand, writing upon the wall, hee became quite confounded in himselfe : his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him ; so that the joints of his loines were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other : What comfort had hee now from all his riches and pleasures ? So *Drusus*, while he lived, might seeme for his wealth and riches to be happy : yet all this did him little good ; for hee had but his pleasure for his life time. Luke 16.

25. and after this life, his soule went downe to hell. A worldly man would judge the rich man in the Gospell, a most happy man, that said to his soule, by reason of his great abundance of outward wealth. Luk. 12. 19. *Soule, soule, thou hast much goods laid up for many yeeres, live at ease, eat, drinke, and take thy fill* : yet because herewith hee wanted religion, a good conscience, and the feare of God, this sentence was denounced against him ; *Oh soule, this night will they fetch away thy soule : then whose shall these things be ?* Wherefore unless wee will wilfully cast away our owne soules, let us sanctifie our interest in all earthly blessings, by a sincere endeavour in all things, to shew forth the feare of God, with the keeping of faith and a good conscience.

Mat. 19. 24.

Dan. 5. 23.

science: and let us begin with this, as Christ saith, *First seeke Gods Kingdome, and his righteousness*, Mat. 6. 33. Let us hereby seeke to have our hearts acceptable unto God; and then all things shall be cleane unto us.

Thirdly, are riches and honour, being severed from true religion, but the pleasures of sinne? then undoubtedly all recreations, all sports and pastimes, severed from religion and a good conscience, are much more the pleasures of sin. This *Salomon* knew well: for speaking of such mirth, hee calls laughter *madnesse*; and to joy (he saith) *what is it that thou doest?* Eccl. 2. 2. Oh then how manifold be the sins of all sorts of men? for who almost doth not neglect religious duties for matters of sport and pleasure? Wherefore if we desire joy indeed in any worldly things, let us first lay the foundation in our owne hearts, by getting and keeping true faith and a good conscience.

Secondly, whereas *Moses* refuseth dignity and honour onely for this, Because they would be unto him the *pleasures of sinne*; here we are taught in what manner and order we ought to enjoy worldly riches and honour. *Moses* practice here must be our direction; we must enjoy them and use them with thankfulness to God, so farre forth as they will further us in the course of religion and true godlinesse. But if the case stand thus, that wee cannot enjoy them both together, then we must follow *Moses* example; chuse religion and a good conscience, and let honour and preferment goe. This is *Moses* practice: and we may resolve our selves, that if he might have enjoyed them together, he would have refused neither; but because he could not have them both, therefore he preferreth the religion of Christ with a good conscience before the honour and wealth of *Ægypt*.

Thirdly, note this, *Moses* doth not onely refuse the riches and pleasures of *Ægypt*, when they would become unto him the pleasures of sinne; but rather than he will enjoy them, hee is content to suffer great miserie and adversitie with Gods people. Where, behold a singular vertue in *Moses*: He judgeth it to be the greatest miserie, to live in sinne; and therefore hee chuseth rather to suffer any adversitie and reproach in this world, than live and be in sinne: because thereby, he should displease God, his most loving father in Christ. A most notable vertue in this servant of God: and the like minde beare all those that have the same graces of saving faith, and true repentance that *Moses* had. Saint *Paul* esteemed the temptations unto sinne, which *Sathan* suggested into his minde, to be as *beatings and buffetings*, and as *pricks and thornes in his flesh*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. And *David* saith, Psal. 119. 136. *His eyes gush out rivers of waters, because men breake Gods Commandements*. Was *David* thus grieved for other mens finnes? Oh! then what a griefe did hee suffer, when he himselfe brake Gods Comman-

dements, and thereby displeased God?

Now looke how these servants of God were affected, so must every one of us, that profess the faith and religion of Christ, labour to be affected towards sinne; we must judge it the greatest miserie and torment in the world, to doe any thing that shall displease God. But alas, come to our dayes, and the case is farre otherwise; for to most men, it is meat and drinke unto them to commit sinne: so farre are they from counting it a miserie. Yea, if a man be ordinarily addicted to some speciall sinne, you then may as soone take away his life, as bereave him of his sinne: he will adventure the issue of heaven for ever, for the pleasure of sinne for a time. But all such, are farre unlike these holy servants of God; for they counted it the greatest crosse and miserie that could be, to doe any thing that displeased God, and did checke and breake the peace of good conscience. And if we looke to enjoy the like peace and comfort with them, we must strive against our owne corrupt disposition, and labour to finde sinne to be our greatest sorrow. Worldly miseries may affect us: but in respect of sorrow for sinne, all worldly griefe should be light unto us. Indeed, we are other wise minded naturally; but herein wee must shew the power and truth of grace, that to displease God by any sinne is our greatest griefe.

The second reason, that moved *Moses* to refuse the honours and pleasures of *Pharaons* Court, was because hee should have enjoyed them but for a time: for the time of his naturall life, was the longest that possibly he could have enjoyed them. And the same reason must move every one of us to use this world, and all things herein, (even all temporall benefits) as though we used them not: being always willing and ready to leave them whensoever God shall call. This same reason doth *Paul* render when hee perswades the Corinthians to the same duty, 1 Cor. 7. 31. *Use this world* (he saith) *as though you used it not; for the fashion of this world goeth away*. As if hee should say, All things in the world last but for a time; and if a man would never so faine, he could but enjoy them to the end of his life: and therefore use them as though you used them not. But pittie it is to see, how farre men are from the practice of this dutie; for they set their whole heart upon the world: and to get riches is their delight, and their god. This ought not so to be, God hath not laid downe these precepts and examples in vaine: undoubtedly, if they draw us not to the like practice, they shall rise up in judgement against us at the last day. And thus much of *Moses* choice, and refusal.

VERSE 26.

Esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches, than the treasures of Ægypt; for he had respect to the recompence of reward.

Moses

Moses (as we have heard) refused the honour and wealth of Egypt, and chose to live in affliction with Gods people. Now, because this might seeme to be a strange choice, and a naturall man would soone condemne him of follie for his labour: therefore here the holy Ghost layes downe a reason that moves *Moses* thus to doe: to wit, *Moses* chose rather to suffer affliction with Gods people, than to enjoy the pleasures and honour of Egypt: because he was perswaded, that *reproach for Christ his sake, was greater riches than all the wealth in Egypt.* So that hee refused not absolutely riches, honour, and other comforts: but chose the best riches and honour, and left the worse upon a sound judgement betweene things that differ.

Hereby wee may observe in generall, how needfull a thing it is for every Christian, to have sound knowledge and understanding in the Word of God. For, hee that would walke uprightly, and approved of God, must bee able to judge between things that differ: not only between good and evil, but between good and good, which is the better: and so of evils which is the worse. Which no man can do, but he that hath a sound and right judgement in the Word of God: for therein is attained the spirit of discerning. Many there be that by the course of their lives chuse hell, and refuse heaven: which undoubtedly comes from their ignorance in the Word. But ignorance will excuse none. He that will come to heaven, must bee able to discern good from evil: and accordingly, to chuse the good, and to refuse that which is evil; which without divine, and supernaturall knowledge no man can doe. And therefore all ignorant persons, and all such as are blinded through the deceitfulness of sinne, must shake off their securitie, and get sound knowledge in Scripture, with a good conscience: that when things which doe differ are set before them, they may with *Moses* chuse the better.

But let us come to *Moses* judgement more particularly. He esteems the rebuke of Christ, &c. that is, he was finely resolved, that reproach and contempt for Christ his sake, was greater riches unto him, than the treasures of a whole kingdome. But some will say, This is a very strange judgement: can it possibly be true and good? *Ans.* Yes undoubtedly, it is most sound judgement, and worthy eternall remembrance of every one of us; that to suffer reproach for Christ his sake, is greater riches than all world wealth. The truth hereof is proved by many reasons out of Gods Word: 1. God hath made a promise of blessednes to those which suffer for Christs sake, *Blessed are you* (saith Christ) *when men revile you, and speake all manner of evil sayings against you for my names sake, &c.* And *S. Peter* saith, *If ye be rayled upon for my names sake, blessed are ye.* And lett any should doubt how this can bee, Christ shewes wherein this blessednesse consists, saying; *Hee*

A *that for sakes his house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my names sake; shall receive an hundred fold more, and shall inherit eternall life.* A most worthy promise, assuring us that no man loseth by suffering for Christs sake; for he shall be rewarded an hundred fold over. In stead of earthly friends, and worldly comforts, he shall have the love and favour of God shed abroad in his heart, which will be an over-flowing fountaine of comfort for soule and body for ever, farre more worth than the wealth and treasures of all the kingdomes in the world. A small springing fountaine (we know) is better to an house, than an hundred cisterns full; because of continuall supply from the springing fountaine, when the cisterns will be spent. Behold the love of God in Christ, with other spirituall graces, shall be in all that suffer for the name of Christ, as living streams flowing unto life eternall; when as the cisterns of all worldly pleasures and treasures, shall be spent and dried up. 2. By suffering affliction for Christs sake, we are made conformable unto him in his humilitie; that so wee may bee made like unto him after this life in glory. So *Paul* saith, *our light affliction* *cometh unto us as an eternall weight of glorie.* 2 Cor. 4. 17. And againe, it is a true saying, *If wee be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.* 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. This assurance can no worldly riches give: and therefore we may boldly say, that the suffering or reproach for Christ his sake is greater riches than the treasures of a whole kingdome. 3. To suffer for Christ his sake, is a token of Gods speciall love: and therefore *Saint Paul* bids the Philippians, *Not to feare their adversaries: where is a token of salvation unto them, and that of God; because it is given to you* (saith he) *for Christ; that you should not only believe, but suffer for his sake.* Wherefore if suffering for Christ have a promise of blessednesse; if it make us conformable unto Christ, and bee a signe of Gods speciall love; then it is to bee esteemed above the riches and honours of the whole world.

Are afflictions of Christ to be esteemed above the treasures of a kingdome? then we must all learne to rejoyce in the troubles and wrongs which we suffer for Christs sake. So did the Apostles, *Act. 5. 41.* *They departed from the Conncell, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer affliction for his name.* And *Saint Paul* brags thereof greatly, saying, *I beare in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus,* Gal. 6. 17. And looke, as these servants of God rejoyced in their sufferings for Christ; so likewise must we labour for the same heart and affections in the like case: for who would not rejoyce to be made partaker and possessor of the treasures of a kingdome? Well, the rebuke of Christ is greater riches than the treasures of a kingdome.

This lesson is of great use: for howsoever many

many among us come to heare Gods Word, yet there be many also that scoffe and mocke at religion, and at the Gospel of Christ, and the professors thereof; whereby the most are hindred in profession; and many daunted, and quite driven backe. But wee must here learne, not to be discouraged by these mocks. Indeed wee must take heed, wee give them no just occasion to mocke us; and then if we be scoffed at, we shall never be hurt by it: nay (though that be farre from their intent) yet in mocking us, they doe us great honour. For the Word of God that cannot lie, is this, that to suffer affliction for Christs sake, is greater honour and riches, than the treasures of a Kingdome. And if *Moses* judgement be good, which God himselfe doth here commend, then we are happy and blessed, in enduring these mocks and scoffes for Christ.

Secondly, wee must here learne instruction for the time to come: Wee have a long time, through the great goodness of God, enjoyed peace and wealth, with the Gospell of Christ; but undoubtedly, these dayes of peace will have an end, they cannot last alwayes, Gods people must passe thorow the fire furnace of affliction. Well, when this is come upon us, how shall we be able to beare it? Surely, wee must now learne to be of this opinion that *Moses* was of; we must judge it to be the greatest honour and riches that can be, to suffer affliction for Christs sake; and this will be the ground of all constancie, courage, and Christian boldnesse in the day of triall. For he that is of this minde, will never feare affliction, nor reproach for Christs sake: nay, he will be so farre from fearing it, that he will rejoyce and triumph therein.

Further, whereas it is said, *Esteeming the rebuke of Christ*; here marke, the rebuke of Gods Church & people is called the rebuke of Christ. The people of God in Egypt were laden with reproaches and rebukes; and behold, Christ accounts it his rebuke, and the holy Ghost so calls it. Where learne this, That Christ esteemeth the reproach and affliction of his Church, as his owne affliction. When *Saul* went to persecute the brethren at Damascus, Act. 9. 2, 4. Christ Jesus calls to him from heaven, saying; *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou mee? Saul* went to persecute the Christians, and yet our Saviour Christ taketh it unto himselfe. And after his conversion he saith, 2 Cor. 4. 10. Every way wee beare about in our bodies, the dying of the Lord Jesus. And againe, *Let no man put me to businesse: for I beare in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*, Gal. 6. 17. This is a point of speciall use.

First, hence we learne, that Christ hath a speciall care of his Church and children, in that he judgeth their afflictions to be his owne afflictions; and therefore hee can no more forget, or leave off to helpe them in distresse, than denie himselfe.

Secondly, here is a speciall comfort for Gods children that be in affliction: their afflictions are not their owne alone, but Christs also; he

is their partner, and fellow sufferer. This may seeme strange, but is most true: Christ puts (as it were) his shoulders under our afflictions, and takes them to himselfe, as though they were his owne, than which what can be more comfortable? for though thou thy selfe cannot beare it, yet trust undoubtedly, that Christ whoe carest with thee, will give thee strength to undertake it unto victorie.

Thirdly, if the afflictions of a Christian, be the afflictions of Christ; then it is a fearful thing for any man to mocke or reproach his brother, in regard of his profession and religion, for *mocking is persecution*, Gal. 4. 29. with Gen. 2. 9. And that reproach which is cast upon a Christian, is cast upon Christ; and Christ takes it as done unto himselfe: the persecutor wounds Christ Jesus thorow the sides of a poore Christian; which is a fearful thing. For in so doing, hee sets himselfe against the Lord Jesus, hee kicks against the prickles; and if he so continue, hee must needs looke for some fearful end: for *who hath ever bene fierce against the Lord, and hath prospered?* Job 9. 4. Wherefore if any of us be guiltie of any sinne in this kinde, let us repent: for unless we turne, our condemnation will be remediless.

Again, the afflictions of the Israelites are here said to be their sufferings for Christ; where note, that though Christ his coming were then as farre off, yet the Israelites then knew of Christ: for else they could not suffer for him.

This confute these which hold, that every man may be saved by his owne religion, whatsoever it bee, if hee live civilly and uprightly therein. Their reason is taken from the Jewes, who (they say) had only the knowledge of outward ceremonies, and so were saved. But this opinion is here disproved: for the Jewes knew Christ, and professed him, or else they would never suffer for him; and therefore they were saved by him, and not by their obedience to outward ceremonies. And thus much of the reason, which moved *Moses* to make such a choice as hee did.

Now in the end of the verse is added a reason, why *Moses* was of this strange judgement, to thinke the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: namely, because he had respect to the recompence of reward. This is, he often set his eye to behold, and his heart to consider how God had made a promise of life everlasting after this life, unto all those that obeyed him, and trusted in him after this life: for the enjoying whereof, he preferred that estate wherein hee might live in the feare of God, though it were a state of reproach, before all other whatsoever. Where we see, what it is will bring a man to endure affliction, with the feare of God, better than the treasures and pleasures of an earthly kingdome: namely, as wee set the bodily eye to behold the glory; so wee must lift up the eye of the minde

by faith, to behold the recompence of reward; that is, the state of glorie in heaven prepared for Gods children. Thus did the Christian Hebrewes in the Primitive Church, *Hebr. 10. 37. They suffered with joy the spoiling of their goods: a very hard thing, but yet most true, for it is the Word of God. And the reason is rendered, They knew in themselves how that they had in heaven a better and more enduring substance. And our Saviour Christ endured the Crosse, and despised the shame, for the joy that was set before him, Heb. 12. 1.* that is, in consideration of that joy in glory, whereto he should be advanced himselfe, and bring all his members. This we must make use of: for if we will live godly in Christ Jesus, we must suffer affliction. This flesh and blood will not yeeld unto: and therefore, to perswade us to suffer with joy, we must with *Moses* have respect to the recompence of reward. We must say thus to our soules, The day will come wherein we shall have life everlasting in the Kingdome of heaven, if we now serve and fear him: Shall we not then for his sake be content to suffer a short affliction, seeing the greatest of them are not worthy of the glory that shall be revealed? *Rom. 8. 18.*

Quest. But why doth the holy Ghost call everlasting life a reward? *Ans.* It is not so called because *Moses* did procure it, and deserve it at Gods hand by the dignity of his workes in suffering; for sure no man can merit any thing at Gods hands. The case is plaine: for Christ as he is man (consider his manhood a-part from his God-head) could not merit any thing at Gods hands: for he that would merit of God by any worke, must doe three things: 1. Hee must doe the worke of himselfe, and by himselfe: for if he doe it by another, the other meriteth, and must have the reward and praise of the worke. Secondly, he must doe it of mere good will, and not of dutie: for that which is of dutie cannot merit, because a man is bound to doe it. 3. The worke done to merit, must be of that price & dignity, that it may be proportionable to life everlasting, which is the reward. Now, though Christ as he is man, be above all men and all Angels in grace and dignity; yet consider his manhood apart from his Godhead, and he could not doe a worke with these 3. properties: For first, the workes done of the manhood were not done of it selfe, but from that fullnesse of the spirit wherewith hee was endued. Secondly, Christ as man is a creature: and so considered, his workes are of duty to the Creator, and so cannot merit. Thirdly, Christs workes, as a man simply considered, are finite, and so could not merit infinite glory.

Quest. How then did Christ merit at Gods hands? *Ans.* Partly by means of Gods promises made in the Law, which was this, *Do this and thou shalt live:* but properly and chiefly, because hee was not a mere man onely, but (withall) true and very God: for because his obedience both in his life and death (though

A performed in his manhood) was the obedience of him that was God and man, even from the infinite excellencie of the person whole it is, it becomes meritorious. In his manhood he obeyed the Law, and suffered for our finnes: but the dignitie thereof came from the Godhead: for he that did these workes for us, was both God and man.

Now, if Christ considered as man only cannot merit; then much lesse can any other man merit at Gods hands. And therefore *Moses*, though he were a worthy man, yet because he was but a man, and a finfull man also, he could not by any worke deserve life everlasting at Gods hands.

But life everlasting is called a reward in the B Scripture, because it is the free gift of God, promised by God to his children in Christ; for this end, to allure and draw them on in obedience. And it must not seeme strange that we say a reward is a free gift: for so it may be, as we shall see by comparing two places of Scripture together; to wit, *Matth. 5. 44.* with *Luk. 6. 32.* For whereas *Matthew* saith, *If you love them that love you, what reward have you? Saint Luke* repeating the same thing, saith, *What thanks have you, (or as the word signifies) what favour or free gift have you?* Secondly, there may be another cause rendered, why life everlasting is called a reward; to wit, not in regard of the worke done, but in regard of the worker considered in Christ: for Christs merit makes life everlasting to be a reward. Now, every true believer that endeavour to doe the will of God, is in Christ; and so Christs righteousness with the merit thereof, is his, so farre forth as serves to make his person acceptable to God. Whereupon he hath a promise of reward made unto him upon his obedience; yet not for his worke, but for the worke of Christs obedience in whom he is: And so must these words here be understood:

1. The consideration of this reward of life eternall given through Christ, to those that suffer for his sake, may make us joyfull and patient in our afflictions for righteousness sake. A naturall man will endure much for a good recompence in the end. Now Christ saith, *Great D is your reward.* And therefore let us rejoyce in suffering for Christ; holding fast our confidence, which hath so great recompence of reward.

Secondly, is life everlasting a recompence, that is, a giving of a reward? Then here is condemned the desperate practice of many a one, who spend their whole life in a greedie pursuit after the profits and pleasures of the world; as it were running themselves out of breath in the way to hell, without all regard of their soules till death come; thinking, that if at the last gaspe they can crye God mercie, and commend their soules to God, all is well. But all such persons for the most part deceive their owne soules, not considering that life everlasting is given as a reward. Now, we know

Matth. 5. 44.
Luk. 10. 35.

know that no reward is given to any man, till the worke be done which he is set about; hee must come worke in the Vineyard some part of the day, that would have his penny at night: as for those that neither stirre hand nor foot to doe the worke, what reward can they looke for? And yet this is the state of carnall liver, they addict themselves wholly to earthly things. But if wee looke for any reward at the day of death, wee must labour in the works of godlinesse all the dayes of our life; for therefore were we redeemed, Luk. 1. 74, 75.

In the whole booke of God, wee finde but one man that lived wickedly, and repented at his end: that is, the theefe upon the Crosse. Which shewes that it is a most rare thing for a man to have the reward of life everlasting after this life, that labours not in the works of godlinesse in this life.

Thirdly, the consideration of this reward, must stirre up all Gods children unto all diligence in the duties of godlinesse, and that with cheerefulness, through the whole course of their lives. When we shall die, we will looke earnestly for this reward; and therefore while we live, we must diligently doe the works that God commandeth: and then when death comes, we may assure our selves that God will give us this reward; not because we did deserve it by our works, but because he hath promised it in Christ, upon our endeavour in obedience and true repentance. And thus much for the reason of *Moses* choice.

VERSE 27.

By faith hee forsooke Egypt, and feared not the fiercenesse of the King. For he was courageous, as hee that saw him that is invisible.

IN this verse the Spirit of God proceedeth to another example of *Moses* faith: and hereto also in the verse following, hee addeth a third. Now he is thus large in the commendation of his faith for this end; to perswade the *Hebrewes*, to whom this Epistle is sent, that they were not to looke for any Justification by the works of the Law: and his reason is, because if any man could be justified by the works of the Law, it must be *Moses*, who gave the Law to the people from the Lord, and did excell in obedience to both Tables, and therefore is a renowned Prophet unto all posteritie in speciall favour with God, Numb. 12. 7, 8. But *Moses* could not be justified by the works of the Law; for here the holy Ghost proveth, that *Moses* was justified and saved by faith. The thing that commendeth *Moses*, and makes him stand before God, is not his works, but his faith: and therefore the conclusion is; that as *Moses* was not justified by his works, but by faith; no more

A must they stand upon their workes to be justified thereby, but labour for such faith as *Moses* had. Now, this faith of *Moses* is a true saving faith, founded on these two promises of God: 1. On this great and maine promise made to *Abraham*, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: 2. On another particular promise rising from the generall, made unto him when he was called to fetch the Israelites out of bondage; which was this: *I will bee with thee, and guide thee*. And in this place, *Moses* is said to have faith, not onely because hee beleaved that *God would be his God*, as hee was the God of all *Abrahams* seed; but because he beleaved particularly, that *God would be his God, and defend and bee with him in the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt*.

Exod. 3. 12.

B To come particularly to this fact. By faith *Moses* forsooke *Egypt*. *Moses* departed from *Egypt* twice, First, when he had slaine the *Egyptian*, and fled from *Pharaoh* unto *Midian*, and there kept *Israhels* sheepe. Secondly, fortie yeares after, when he lead the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt* into the land of *Canaan*; and here some make it a question, whether of these departures is meant in this place. Answer. It is most like, that this place is to be understood of his second departure, rather than of the first: And the reason is taken out of *Exodus*, chap. 14. 15. where we finde that the first time, he fled for feare: for so soone as he heard that his slaughter of the *Egyptian* was knowne to *Pharaoh*, he fled in such feare, as that he durst not returne againe of fortie yeares. Now these words are not to be understood of such a flight: for here it is said, *He departed, not fearing the Kings wrath or fiercenesse*.

C Here some will say, This is no commendation: for malefactors and rebels doe flie their Country? Answer. They flie indeed, yet not in faith, but in feare. *Moses* fled in faith; and hereby his faith is commended, that he fled not fearing the King: but malefactors flie for feare of punishment. *Moses* departed with courage and boldnesse, and therefore fled not as a malefactor: for he feared not the King, as appeareth plainly in the Historie: for though *Pharaoh* had said unto him, *Exod. 10. 28. Get thee gone, see thou see my face no more: for when thou comest in my sight, thou shalt die*: yet *Moses* went once more, namely, the tenth time, and told him of the tenth plague, and said, That *Pharaohs* servants should come downe unto him, and fall downe and pray him to get him out, with the people and their cattell. And when the Israelites murmured against him at the red sea, when *Pharaoh* was at their heeles, and they had no way to flie, *Moses* encourageth the people, saying, *Fear not, stand still, and behold the salvation of the Lord which he will shew you this day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seene this day, shall ye never see againe*, *Exod. 14. 13*. Whereby it notably appears, that *Moses* departed in faith without feare of *Pharaoh*.

Exod. 11. 8.

But

But some will say ; For a man to come into another mans Kingdome, and to carie away his Subjects without the Kings consent, is a fact of rebellion and sedition ; and therefore worthie no commendation, but rather shame & punishment. And this did *Moses* : hee comes from Midian, and caries away the Jewes which had bene a long time *Pharaohs* Subjects ; and for whose service he might plead possession, and a long prescription : therefore it seemes to bee no fact of faith. *Ans.* Indeed if *Moses* had done this on his owne head, he might worthily have bene thus censured. But when he came to *Egypt*, he had a calling immediately from God to do as he did ; and for the confirmation hereof, he had Gods promise of assistance, in working strange miracles : and when he carried the people out of *Egypt*, he did it by commandement from a King that was higher than *Pharaoh*. Neither yet did *Moses* carrie them away as a private man, for he was a publike person, an high Magistrate, and no stranger, but one of themselves : yea, he was a King, as may appeare in Gods word for *Deut.* 33. 5. he is plainly called a King ; and *Genes.* 36. 31. it is said, *There were so many Kings in Edom, before there reigned any King over the children of Israel.* Now, the last of those Kings reigned at that time when *Moses* went with the Israelites out of *Egypt* : so that *Moses* was their King, and had the authoritie and government of a King over them from the Lord : and therefore it was no fact of rebellion in him, but a worke that did greatly commend his faith, being grounded upon Gods Commandement and promise.

Thus we see how we must conceive of *Moses* fact. Now wee come to some particular points to be considered therein :

How came it to passe that *Moses* now had this courage to depart from *Pharaoh*, notwithstanding his commandement ; whereas 40. yeares before, being called to shew himselfe unto the brethren, as one whom they were to respect as their deliverer, *Act.* 7. 23, 25. he fled immediately out of *Egypt* upon the notice of one fact of defence in behalfe of the Israelites ? why did hee not shew as much courage when he slew the *Egyptian*, as at his second departure ? *Ans.* The cause of his courage at this latter time was this : God now renewed his commission, and confirmed his former calling. For when he was first called, he did his dutie, and revenged their wrongs : but yet being in danger, and his calling being as yet but a secret instinct, hee was fearefull, and fled. But now when God called him the second time and confirmed the same calling, both by promise and commandement, and power to worke miracles, then fearefull *Moses* becomes courageous and bold.

Here then observe, that there is a difference of Gods graces ; there is a first grace, and a second grace. The first is that which God gives, to any man for any calling : the second is that which God addes to the first, for the confir-

ming thereof. And the first is not effectually without the second ; As here wee see, *Moses* first calling was not effectually with him, till the second came. And so Gods first grace is not effectually till the second come ; by which the former is confirmed, strengthened, and increased. And the second is confirmed by the third : and so we must goe on from grace to grace, if we will be bold and courageous in any duty, either of our generall or particular calling. This must be well considered ; for that any man stands in grace, or increaseth therein, either respecting his particular calling, or his Christian conversation, it comes from this, that God addes a second grace unto the first. And therefore whosoever is enabled for any dutie, hath great cause to praise God : for whether we continue in grace, or increase therein, it cometh from the goodness of God, who addeth grace to grace : which if he should not doe, we should fall away, and not be able to goe forward in the feare of God, and the duties of our calling : for the first grace would not suffice to strengthen us against temptation. And therefore howsoever God hath strengthened us for the time past, yet still wee must pray to God to deliver us from evil : which plainly imports, that our standing is from his daily supply of new grace.

2. Point. When went *Moses* out of *Egypt* ? The time is directly set downe, *Exod.* 12. 41. *Even the selfe same day when the promise of God was expired : for when the 400. and thirty yeares were expired, they went all the host of the Lord out of Egypt :* neither before nor after, but the very same day. Indeed *Moses* was chosen to be their Captaine 40. yeares before, and sent unto them by God : and *S. Stephen* saith, *He thought they would have understood so much.* But then they would not take him for their guide. Yet now 40. yeares after, when Gods determinate time of 430. yeares was expired, he comes againe unto them, to carrie them out of *Egypt* ; and then they acknowledge him and follow him out, according to Gods commission.

Hence wee learne, first, that no creature can alter the rule of Gods providence. Fourtie yeares before, *Moses* would have delivered the people ; but hee must stay till the time of the Lords promise was accomplished, and then he caries them away. Secondly, this must teach us, not onely to beleieve, that God both can and will keepe his promises ; but also by faith to wait for the time, wherein he will accomplish the same unto us. *Moses* is faine to wait forty yeares for the fulfilling of Gods promise. When *Daniel* understood how long the Israelites must be in captivity, he would not pray for the shortning of that time : but when he knew that the time of their returne drew neere, then hee prayed unto the Lord most earnestly, waiting for the accomplishment of Gods promise in their deliverance. And *David* thus waited on God for deliverance in all his troubles. And their examples must wee follow, for the fruition

Dn. 9.

Ps. 121.

tion of all Gods blessings.

3. *Point.* In what manner doth *Moses* depart? The text saith, he went out, not *fearing the Kings commandment*: so that his departure was with courage. Whence wee learne sundry instructions: First, here is a notable president for the framing of our lives, which must bee a rule unto us. We must walke diligently in our callings, as *Moses* did; and though crosses doe meet us, so that *Pharaoh* fall out with us; if Kings become our enemies, yet we must not lay aside the duties of our callings; but after *Moses* example, go on therein with courage. *Moses without fearing the Kings wrath, went and led the people away.* And so must every one of us do; although dangers come, we must not feare, but stand fast in our profession, and goe on in the duties of our callings: *Eccles. 10. 4. If the spirit of him that ruleth rise up against thee, leave not thy place.*

Secondly, hence we learne, that Magistrates which are to governe the people, ought to bee men of courage, in performing the duties of their calling. When too heavy a burthen lay on *Moses*, in judging all the congregation himselfe: *Iethro* his father in law bids him provide among all the people men of courage, fearing God, to be Rulers, *Exod. 18. 13, 21.* Now their courage must not be a proud haughtinesse, or an indiscreet cruelty, but a godly boldnesse, which may enable them to the duties of their calling, without feare of man. To this end, the Lord put of his Spirit upon the *seventy*, which were to rule with *Moses*, *Num. 11. 17.* Now the Spirit of God, is not the spirit of feare, but of power, and of love, and of a sound minde, *2 Tim. 1. 7.* Which shewes, that in a Magistrate must be courage to call, and (if need be) to compell others to the duties of their callings, how great soever they bee. And it is a matter of great weight and moment in Gods Church: for the Minister may teach and speake as much as hee will, or can; yet unlesse with the sword of the Spirit, there be joyned the temporall sword of the Magistrate to reforme mens lives, and to keepe them from open sinne against the law of God, and to urgeth them to the duties which the Minister teacheth: surely, their teaching and preaching will be to small effect.

Lastly, *Moses* went with courage out of *Egypt*. This departure of his was a signe of our spirituall departing out of the Kingdome of darknesse: for so *Paul* applieth it, *1 Cor. 10.* And therefore after *Moses* example, wee must with courage come every day more and more out of the kingdome of darknesse, marching forward with courageous faith and heavenly boldnesse toward; our blessed Canaan, the glory of heaven: we must not leave this to the last breath, and then thinke to have heaven gates ready open for us; but we must enter into Gods Kingdome in this life. Lookoe as *Moses* by his faith did depart boldly out of *Egypt*, so must wee in heart, by faith depart out of the king-

A dome of sinne. This we shall doe, when we are meane to establish the kingdome of Christ Jesus in our hearts, and doe forsake the workes of sinne and darknesse. For looke where there is no departing from sinne, there is no faith: and therefore let us shew our selves to have true faith, by departing more and more boldly and joyfully out of the kingdome of sinne and Satan; that so it may appeare we love the light and hate darknesse. And in this journey, let us not feare any contrary commandment, nor the furious wrath of spirituall *Pharaoh* the devill, nor all the gates of hell: for Christ Jesus is our guide.

B Because a man might thinke at the first, that it was a rash and desperate part in *Moses*, thus boldly to take away the Israelites, not regarding *Pharaohs* commandment; therefore in the latter part of the verse, the holy Ghost setteth downe a reason, that moved *Moses* to doe so, in these words: *For he endured, or was courageous*; that is, he tooke heart to himselfe. Why so? *Because he saw God that is invisible.* That is, he cast the eye of faith upon God, who had promised the evidence of his power and presence in their deliverance. So that it was the worke of *Moses* faith, laying hold on the promise of Gods presence and protection from the rage of *Pharaoh*, that made him thus confident and bold.

C Hence wee learne, that the true valour and manhood that was in *Moses*, and is in all Gods children, like unto him, is a gift of grace. Among many gifts of the Spirit, powred upon our Saviour Christ, the spirit of strength or courage, *1 Cor. 12. 11. 2.* And *Iethro* counsell to *Moses* is notable this way; he bids him provide for Governours, men of courage, fearing God, *Exod. 18. 21.* insinuating, that true courage is alwayes joyned with the feare of God, and is a fruit of grace. But some will say, that many heathen men, who never knew the true God, nor what the gifts of the Spirit meant, had that courage. *Ans.* True it is, they had courage indeed; but it was nothing but a carnall boldnesse (not worthy the name courage; being onely a shadow of true fortitude) arising from ambition, pride, and other fleshly humours; whereas *Moses* his courage sprang from the grace of faith, in the mercifull promises of God made unto him concerning his deliverance and safety. And indeed, howsoever wicked men have a notable shew of divers vertues, yet in the triall they prove but shadowes; for true valour and other vertues doe alwayes accompany regeneration.

As he that saw him that is invisible;

Here is the cause that made *Moses* thus courageous: and this will make any man bold, if he can be perswaded in his confidence of Gods speciall presence with him, and providence and protection over him.

Herethen observe a singular fruit of faith: it makes God, who is indeed invisible, to bee

after a sort visible unto us. *Moses* by faith saw him that was invisible: for by faith he was persuaded of Gods providence, and speciall protection in the delivery of his people, though *Pharaoh* should rage never so much. So *Henoch* is said to have walked with God, because he saw him by the eye of faith, in all his affaires. And when *Ioseph* was allured to sinne with his Mistresse, what stayed him? surely the feare of God, whom he saw by faith: *How can I doe this great wickednesse* (saith *Ioseph*) *and so sinne against God?* As if he should say; I am alwayes where God is present; how then shall I doe so wickedly, and God see it? and the same is the state of all true believers; their faith makes the invisible God to be after a sort visible unto them: so as a faithfull man may say, God is present with me, and protecteth me. Whereby we may see, what little faith is in the world: for few can truly say they see God; which faith inableth a man to doe. Yea, most men care so little to see God, that hee is farre from their very thoughts. Many have made meanes to see the devill; but where is he that labours for such a measure of faith, that hee may see the invisible God? If wicked men run to Conjurers to see the devill, whom they shall once see to their sorrow, let us labour for faith in the Word and Sacraments, and this faith will make us so to endure in all tribulation, as though wee saw God.

Furthermore, seeing *Moses* by faith endured as he that saw God: we learne, that the seeing of God by faith, takes away feare; and gives spirituall boldnesse. This is a point of speciall use: for naturally men are fearful: some cannot endure the darke, nor solitary places, for feare of the devill: yea, the shaking of a leafe, or the crawling of a worme doth terrifie others. Now howsoever some mens constitutions may helpe forward this feare, yet many times it doth come from an accusing conscience, as a fruit of sinne. And the way to remove it, is here to bee learned: namely, to doe as *Moses* did that is, labour to bee resolved of Gods presence with us, and providence over us: and this will arme us, against all satanicall and foolish feare. For if God be on our side, who can be against us to doe us harme? Again, the Souldier by his place and calling ought to be a man of courage; for else the state of his life, and the thought of his enemies will much affright him. Now how may he become courageous? They use to found the drumme and trumpet for this end: and it must bee granted they are good incitements and provocations unto battell: but when it comes to the point of danger, they cannot give heart. Others use against the battell to fill themselves with wine, and to make themselves valiant by strong drinke. This indeed may make them senselesse, and so desperate. But the true way is, to become Christian souldiers, knowing and fearing God; and with their bodily armour to bring also the shield of faith: whereby their

A hearts may bee assured, that God hath called them to that fight; and that hee is present with them to cover their heads in the day of battell. This will make them to take heart and courage to themselves, and to become truly valorous, though by nature they bee weake and timorous.

Thirdly, who knowes whether God will bring us to this triall: either to lay downe our lives, or forsake his truth: for he may justly take from us these golden dayes of peace, for our ingratitude. Now, if such times come upon us, what shall we do? Shall we deny the faith of Christ? God forbid. But how shall we stand out in such triall? Surely, we must follow *Moses*, and labour to see him that is invisible, by faith. This will make us courageous, and without feare in Gods cause: remembering this also, that among those which are reckoned to goe downe to hell, the fearefull man is one. Revel. 21.8. who dares not stand to the truth of God, but for feare of men denies it. Let us therefore now begin to settle our hearts in the assurance of Gods providence and protection: that so when triall comes, wee may be bold in the cause of God.

Him that is invisible That is God, who is a most simple essence, voyd of all composition, or corporall substance; for *God is a Spirit*, Joh. 4.24. and therefore invisible, and not subject to mans senses. But some will say, God is said to have head, heart, hands, and feet, with other parts of mans body: and therefore he is visible. *Ans.* The holy Ghost so speaketh in Scripture of God, by way of resemblance of him unto man, that we might the better thereby conceive of his works: for therefore are the parts of mans body ascribed unto God in Scripture, that we might know he doth such works by his divine power, as man doth by the parts of his body. Man sheweth his strength and valour in his arme; and by resemblance unto man, God is said to have an Arme, to note out his power and valiant acts. And so God is said to have eyes, because wee should conceive that by his infinit wisdome he seeth all things more clearly, than man doth any thing at noone day, with his bodily eyes. And so of the rest.

But *Moses* is said, to talke with God face to face, and to see his backe-parts, Exod. 33. 11. 23. *Answer.* This imports not, that hee saw the substance of God; but onely that God did after a familiar manner reveale himselfe unto him, and in some resemblance shew him his glory, so farre forth as *Moses* was able to behold it: for the Text is plaine, *My face cannot bee seene. There shall no man see me and live*: vers. 20.

Here we learne, that when we pray to God, wee must not conceive of him by any forme or image in our mindes; for so we make an idoll of God. *Quest.* What then must we do? for how (will some say) can I pray to him, and not thinke of him? *Ans.* When we thinke of God, or pray unto him, wee must conceive of him

in our mindes, as hee hath revealed himselfe in Scripture; that is, by his workes, and by his properties: we must thinke in our mindes of an *eternall essence*, most holy, wise, &c. *who made all things, and governes them by his mighty power.* For every image to resemble God by, either to the minde, or to the eye, is a plaine lie; making him visible, who is invisible: as saith the Prophet Hab. 2. 18. *The image, what profiteth it, for it is a teacher of lies?* Which flatly overthroweth the opinion and practice of the Romish Church, who resemble the true God, even God the Father, and the holy Trinity, in images: what els doe they herein, but make a lie of God?

But the Papists say, they devise no image to resemble God in, but onely such whereby hee hath shewed himselfe, as the Scriptures testifies: as the *Father*, like an *old man*; the *Sonne*, as he was incarnate; and the holy Ghost, like a *dove*, *Matth. 3. 16.* *Ans.* We must not conceive of those formes, of an *old man*, or of a *dove*, to have beene ever any image of the Father, or of the holy Ghost: but onely signes and pledges for a time, whereby those persons did then manifest their presence. Now, there being an expresse commandement against all representation of God by images, not excepting those very shapcs, whereby it pleased God for a time to signifie his presence; it must needs be idolatrous presumption to make any image of God, or of the Trinity. And indeed God being invisible (as the text saith) it is impossible to make any true image or resemblance of him.

Verse 18.

By faith hee ordained the Passeeover, and the effusion of blood: lest hee that destroyed the first borne, should touch them.

IN the former verses, the author of this Epistle hath shewed unto us the notable faith of *Moses* by two worthy acts: 1. His refusing to be called the sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter. 2. His departing out of *Egypt*. Now here in this verse he commends his faith unto us by a third action; which is, the ordination, or celebrating of the Passeeover. This verse is the summe of the 12. Chap. of *Exodus*: the effect whereof is this: After that God had sent nine severall plagues upon the land of *Egypt*, which were occasions to harden *Pharaohs* heart: at last he sends *Moses* to certifye *Pharaoh*, that unless hee would let the people goe, hee would send a tenth plague, which should bee more grievous to them, than all the former: even the slaughter of all the first borne in *Egypt*, both of man and beast. Yet *Pharaohs* heart was not softened, nei-

ther did he let the people goe. Therefore *Moses* departed from him, and (according to Gods commandement) assembles the Elders of *Israell* together, and cauteh them to kill every man a lambe of a yeare old, and to eat it rost with fire; and to take the blood, and sprinkle it upon the doore-checkes, and upon the posts of their houses, for a signe unto them, that the Angell of the Lord (seeing the blood sprinkled upon their doores) should passe over them, and touch none of their first borne, neither man nor beast. This is the summe and meaning of that history. Now let us come to the consideration of this fact more particularly: and first, to the meaning of the words of this verse, because there is some difficulty in them.

B *Through faith he ordained the Passeeover.*

The Passeeover here named, may be thus described; *It is one of the Sacraments of the old Testament, serving for a signe to the people of Israell, both of their temporal deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, and from the slaughter of the first borne; and also of their spirituall deliverance from everlasting death, by the sacrifice of Christ Iesus the immaculate Lambe of God.*

Touching this description: first, I call it one of the Sacraments of the old Testament: because they had beside this, *Circumcision*, another ordinary Sacrament. Next I say, It served for a signe to the people of *Israell*, to shew that it was properly a Sacrament unto them. For it is of the nature of a Sacrament, to signifie and seal up some blessing of God to his people: now that the Passeeover did so, is plaine, where the Lord calls it a signe or token of deliverance unto them. But some will say, this Passeeover was a sacrifice: for so it is called, *This is the sacrifice of the Lords Passeeover.* And, *Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, &c.* *Ans.* It is called a sacrifice, because it was killed, also the blood thereof was sprinkled, and some part of it, as the *fat*, with the two kidnies were burnt in sacrifice to the Lord. For when *Iosias* kept that famous Passeeover with all the people, the Priests that slew the Passeeover, and sprinkled the blood thereof, did first take away that which was to be consumed with fire, and then gave to the people according to the divisions of their families, as *Moses* appointed. Now in regard of these properties of a sacrifice which were in the Passeeover, it is truly called a sacrifice. And yet more properly it was a Sacrament, because it was a visible figure of speciall blessings from the Lord.

But what did this Sacrament of the Passeeover signifie? *Ans.* It did signifie a double deliverance: one temporall, as well from the destroying Angell, as also from the bondage of *Egypt*: The other Spirituall: from the curse of the Law, and from the wrath of God. The first is plaine, where the Lord saith, *The blood being sprinkled upon the doore-posts, shall be a token for you that I will passe over you.* And ver. 17. *Te*

Exod. 12. 27.
Exod. 23. 18.

Levit. 2. 4.

1 Chron. 23. 13.

Exod. 12. 13.

shall keepe the feast of unleavened bread: for that same day will I bring your Armies out of the land of Egypt. And touching the second, that it was a signe of a more heavenly deliverance from the bondage of sin and Satan, *Paul* telleth us plainly, when as he saith, *Christ our Paschever is sacrificed for us*: giving us to understand, that the Paschall Lambe in the old Testament, was undoubtedly a true signe of the true Paschall Lambe Christ Jesus: to which purpose *Iohn Baptiste* saith, *Behold the Lambe of God that taketh away the sinnes of the world*: *Iohn. 1. 29.* Where he calleth *Christ the Lambe of God*, making there an opposition betwene him and the Paschall Lambe of *Moses*, which may he called the Paschall Lambe of men; for herein also they differ. The Paschall Lamb was separated by men, though by Gods appointment; but Christ the true Lambe of God, was set apart before all worlds by God the Father. And thus we see briefly what this *Paschever* is. It followeth,

Ordained the Paschever. The word translated, *ordained*, signifieth, *Hee made, or, did celebrate*: for the better understanding whereof, we must have recourse to the Evangelists. *Matthew* setteth downe Christs speech to his Disciples about the Paschever, which hee kept with them a little before his passion, thus: *My time is come, I will make my Paschever at shine house.* Now *S. Luke*, repeating the same Story, mentioneth, first the *killing*, and then the eating of it: by which two words he explaneth what Christ meant by making (which here is translated *ordaining*) the Paschever; to wit, first, the killing and preparing of the Paschall Lambe, and then the eating of it as the Lords Sacrament. But this is a strange kinde of speech (will some say) how can the Paschever be killed or eaten? seeing properly the Paschever is nothing else, but the act of the Angell passing over the houses of the Israelites, when hee smote the first borne in every house of the Egyptians.

Ans. The phrase is improper: yet it must not seeme strange, because it is usuall in Scripture, intreating of the Sacraments, sometime to give the name of the signe to the thing signified: as *1 Cor. 5. 7.* Christ is called our Paschever; and on the other side, to give the name of the thing signified to the signe: as in this place, *he ordained the Paschever*; that is, the Paschall Lamb, which was a signe of the Angels passing over their houses. So, *This is my body*, that is, a signe of my body. *The rocke was Christ.* The reason of these figurative speeches, whereby one thing is put for another, is the Sacramentall union of the signe with the thing signified: which yet is not naturall according to place, either by change of the signe into the thing signified, or by including the thing signified in the signe, or fastning it upon it; but *respectively* and analogical, by reason of that agreement and proportion which is betwene the signe and the thing signified: which stands in this, that looke when

A the outward signe is presented to the outward senses, at the very same time the thing signified is thereby, as by certaine visible words, presented to the minde. And indeed looke what conjunction is betwene words, and the things spoken of, in the minde of the understanding hearer; the same is betwene Sacramentall signes, and the things signified, in the minde of a discerning receiver. But when words of sense are spoken to the eare, the understanding minde doth therewith apprehend the thing spoken of. And even to the mind of the discerning receiver doth inwardly apprehend the thing signified; and apply it to his soule, when the Sacramentall signe is presented to the outward sense. And this conjunction ariseth not from the nature either of the signe, or the thing signified; but from the institution of the Lord. The meaning then of the holy Ghost here is this, That *Moses* by faith did ordaine and appoint the killing and eating of the Paschall Lambe, which was the signe of the passing over of the Lords Angell, when the first borne in Egypt were slaine.

It followeth: *And effusion of blood*; that is, the sprinkling of the blood of the Paschall Lambe; which was a notable rite and ceremony used in this first Paschever, after this manner; The blood of every Lambe was put into a bason, and sprinkled with a bunch of Hyssope upon the doore-posts of every mans house among the Jewes. Now this rite did not continue alway, but was peculiar and proper to this first Paschever kept in Egypt at the institution thereof, being then practised (but not after) in regard of that speciall deliverance then at hand, whereof it was an assurance: for it signified unto them, that the Angell of the Lord, comming to destroy the first borne of Egypt, and seeing that blood so sprinkled, should passe over their houses, and touch none of their first borne, of man nor beast. This end of the sprinkling of this blood, is here likewise set downe in these words; *Left hee that destroyed the first borne, should touch them.* Hee: that is, the Angell of the Lord, who was sent to destroy the first borne throughout all Egypt both of man and beast, save onely of those who had their doore-posts sprinkled with blood. And thus much for the meaning of the words.

D First, observe what the holy Ghost saith of this fact of *Moses*, in ordaining the Paschever: namely, that *he did it by faith.* Hence we learne, that the Sacraments of the new Testament must be celebrated in faith: for herein we are to seeke to be acceptable to God as *Moses* was. The Lords Supper in the new Testament succeedeth the Paschever in the old: for, that was a signe to the Jewes, that Jesus Christ the immaculate Lambe of God, should afterward be sacrificed for their sinnes; and this is to us a signe of Christ already sacrificed. Now looke as that was ordained and received under the Law, so must this be administered and received under the Gospell. But in the old Testament *Moses* cele-

celebrates the Pasſeover through faith, and en-joynes the Iſraelites ſo to doe; therefore accordingly muſt wee by faith celebrate and receive the Lords Supper under the Goſpell. *Cains* ſacrifice was fruitleſſe to him, and odious to God, becauſe hee offered not *in faith*; and no leſſe were all other faithleſſe ſacrifices: even ſo every Sacrament and ſpiritual ſacrifice received or offered in time of the Goſpell, is unprofitable to man, and unacceptable unto God, if it be not received in faith. In every Sacrament we receive ſomething from God, as in every ſacrifice wee give ſomething to God. In the Lords Supper, as the Miniſter gives the bread and wine into the hand of the receiver, ſo the Lord God gives his ſonne unto their hearts. Now if faith bee wanting, Chriſt crucified is not received: for, faith is the hand of the ſoule, without which, there is no receiving of Chriſt and his benefits; but contrariwiſe, an heavy and fearefull ſinne, heaping up Gods wrath againſt us. Hereby we learne, how ſinckly ſorts of people ſinne moſt grievouſly againſt God: for many come to receive the Lords Supper, who are altogether ignorant in the nature and uſe thereof, not knowing what the Sacrament meaneth; and yet becauſe it is a cuſtome in the Church, they will receive at leaſt once a yeare, though they know nothing therein as they ought. Now ſuch perſons muſt know they ought to *come in faith*; which they cannot doe becauſe they want knowledge; and therefore in receiving it ſo, they commit a grievous ſinne, and ſo indanger their owne ſoules, becauſe they receive it unworthily. And this is not the fault of young ones only; but of many, whole yeates might ſhame them for their ignorance, if they were not paſt all feeling of ſpiritual wants. A ſecond ſort there are who receive the Lords Supper, and ſay they will doe ſo, becauſe they have faith. But theſe are like the former: for their faith is nothing but *honeſt dealing among men*; thinking that if they bring that to the Lords Supper, though they have no more, yet all is well. The greateſt ſort are of this kinde, taking *fidelity* for true faith: and it is a plaine point of Popery, ſo common, as almoſt in every place men doe embrace it. But theſe deceive themſelves; for another kinde of faith is required of thoſe that receive the Lords Supper worthily; namely, ſuch a *faith* whereby wee doe not onely beleve the remiſſion of finnes in Chriſts blood; but alſo are aſſured, that the bread and wine received worthily, are ſignes and ſeales of the ſame bleſſing exhibited unto us by Chriſt. He that comes onely in a good-meaning, deceives himſelfe, and receives to his condemnation. And yet alas, many even of the ancient ſort, have no other faith, but their good meaning.

A third ſort there are, who yet goe farther; and knowing the vanity of this opinion, that a mans fidelity in his dealing with men ſhould be his faith to commend him unto God; they hold and know, that true faith is to beleve

their owne ſalvation in the blood of Chriſt; and theſe are to be commended in reſpect of the former. But herein they fail; that coming to receive, they bring not with them a lively faith: for it is not onely required in a communicant, that he profeſſe the faith of Chriſt aright; but a worthy receiver muſt looke to his owne heart, that his faith therein bee a living faith, ſuch as worketh by love, and ſhewes it ſelfe by obedience. Now herein, many that have good knowledge doe grievouſly offend, That howſoever they make a ſhew of faith, in an orderly and religious carriage of themſelves on the Communion day: yet when that time is a little paſt, they returne to their former finnes againe, never elſe having any care (nay, not ſo much as making any ſhew) of laying away their ſins, ſave onely at the receiving of the Lords Supper. And thus doe too many of thoſe who make a faire profeſſion. Theſe men bring faith in profeſſion, but yet their faith is dead; for, if it were a lively faith, it would purifie their hearts, and cauſe a change in them from evil to good, and from good to better, every day more and more. But bleſſed bee God, by whoſe mercy it comes to paſſe, that there are ſome in his Church, who come with ſuch a faith, and thereby communicate acceptably to God, and fruitfully to themſelves. Yet wee muſt conſaſſe they are but few in compariſon: But as for all the other three ſorts of people, they ſinne grievouſly, becauſe they bring not the hand of a lively faith, to receive thoſe things which their God offereth unto them. Wee therefore in this example are admoniſhed to celebrate and receive the Lords Supper in ſuch ſort, as *Moses* did: namely, in faith; and that not in an idle or dead, but in a lively faith; which may both before and after the receiving of this Sacrament, bring forth good fruits to the reforming of our lives, in continuall obedience of Gods glory, and our owne comfort and ſalvation in Chriſt.

2. Obſerve further: *Moses ordained and made the Paſſeover*. Wee may not thinke, that *Moses* killed all the Lambes that were to bee ſlaine at this Paſſeover: but in his owne family he killed his owne lambe, and joyneyed the people from God, to doe the like in theirs. The like phraſe is often uſed in the Scripture: *Joſuah 5. 3. Joſuah* is ſaid to *circumciſe the ſonnes of Iſrael*: which was almoſt a thing impoſſible for one man to doe: But the meaning thereof is this: that *Joſuah* joyneyed and procured that all the people ſhould bee circumciſed, and ſaw it done. And ſo wee muſt underſtand this place.

Now in this, that *Moses* did in this manner celebrate this Paſſeover, wee are taught this leſſon; that *Governours* and *ſuperiours* in their place, muſt procure, that thoſe which bee under their government, doe keepe the commandments of God; and eſpecially thoſe, which concerne Gods worſhip. It is the commande-

ment of the Lord by *Moses*, that the King should have the Law written; that he may learne to feare his God, and keepe all the words of his Law written, to doe them. Now, how shall the King doe all the words of the Law? seeing there be many commandements that doe not concerne him, nor his place, but his subjects, and other particular men of their callings. Surely thus: He must doe those in his owne person, that concerne him in his place, and then see that his subjects and servants doe likewise such duties both towards God and man, as concerne them in their places. This is a speciall point concerning all Magistrates and Superiours whatsoever: and therefore *Paul* saith, Rom. 13. 4. *The Magistrate beareth not the sword for naught, but for the wealth of Gods people*: that is, for their good, not in body onely, but principally for the good of their *soules*. And therefore every Governour, either of towne or kingdom, and every Master of a family, within the compasse of his calling, is to see that those which are under him keepe Gods commandements: especially, those that concerne Gods worship. When a Magistrate shall doe this, then the praise and honour of the whole is given to him; as heretofore the killing of the Paschever is ascribed to *Moses*, because hee saw that the people did it. So on the contrary, if the Magistrate bee negligent in his duty, hee becomes the greatest sinner of all: for then the finnes that are committed through his default, are ascribed to him. *Nehemiah* reproving the *Rulers*, saith, *that they brake the Lords Sabbath*, Nehem. 13. 15. when as not onely they, but the people also brake them: yet there hee chargeth the sinne of the people upon them, because it came through their negligence. As if any sinne bee committed in a familie, through the defect of the Governour of the familie; it is not onely the sinne of the particular partie, but the Governours sinne. And so, when any man finnes in breaking the Sabbath, it is not onely the sinne of that particular man, but of the Governours to whom he is subject. And therefore Governours must see that Gods commandements be kept of those that be under their government. But here some may object (as indeed some abuse the place to this end) that it comes no man may be barred from the Lords Supper: for the like reason is in the Lords Supper, that was in the Paschever: but *Moses* kept the Paschever himselfe, and commanded all the people of Israel so to doe: therefore no man is to be put from Gods table. *Ans.* It is true indeed, that in Egypt at the celebration of the first Paschever, *Moses* kept it himselfe, and commanded every Master of a familie among the Israelites to doe the same: and the reason hereof was, because at the first institution the Paschever was both a signe and a meanes of a temporall deliverance, besides the spiritual: and therefore there was great reason then, why all the Israelites should eat the Paschever,

and none be put backe, because all of them were to escape the temporall punishment, which God was to inflict upon the Egyptians. But afterward the Lord made a Law, that if any were but legally uncleane, hee might not eat the Paschever, but must stay till the next moneth, and then come, and onely the cleane must eat thereof: so that the Lord himselfe did inhibit some from that Sacrament: whereby it is plaine, that the celebration of the Paschever is so farre from giving warrant to this confusion, and carelesse admitting of all to the communion, that rather it proveth that there must be a distinction made, and a separation of the unworthy from the Lords Table. Those which are fitly prepared are to be received, but notorious offenders, who are morally and spiritually uncleane, are to be put backe, till by repentance they have testified their worthinesse.

3. Let us consider the signification of the Paschever. For the Paschal Lamb was a signe of Christ the true Lamb of God, shadowing our divers things worthy our observation: as first the Lamb, for the Paschever was to be a Lamb of a year old, without spot or blemish, which signified unto us, that Christ was that immaculate Lamb of God and without spot, as *Peter* calleth him, 1 Pet. 1. 19. Secondly, the Paschal Lamb when he was killed and eaten, had no bone of it broken: so was it commanded, Exod. 12. 46. and Numb. 6. 12. signifying, that Christ when hee was crucified, should not have a bone of him broken, as *Saint Iohn* applieth the former Texts, Joh. 19. 36. Thirdly, the Paschal Lamb must be eaten with sower herbs, Exod. 12. 8. signifying that no man can feele any sweetness in the blood of Christ, till hee have his heart full of bitterness for his finnes; and with *Hanna* be fore vexed and troubled in minde, so as he can purr out his soule before the Lord, 1 Sam. 1. 15. The want of this is the cause why so many doe heare Gods word, and receive the Sacraments, and yet reape no benefit by them. Fourthly, before the Paschal Lamb was eaten, all leaven must be removed out of their houses. This had a notable signification: which wee need not to ghesse at, seeing the holy Ghost hath set it downe; namely, that we must remove all old leaven of corrupt doctrine (Matt. 16. 12.) out of our hearts: and the leaven of sinne and wickednesse, out of our lives, if we professe communion with Christ. This is a point worth our marking: for unlesse we doe so, wee shall have no benefit by the sacrifice of Christ: for if we will live in this old leaven, we must never looke to receive Christ into our hearts. Lastly, every person received the Paschever in haste, with shoes on their feet, with staves in their hands, and their clothes girt up, Exod. 12. 11. yet this wee must understand onely of the first Paschever in Egypt: for Christ did eat it sitting. Now this ceremony used in the first Paschever, signified thus much; that if we looke to have benefit by Christ,

1 Cor. 7.

1 Joh. 13. 14.

Christ, we must be of this minde to be alwaies ready to leave this world, and bee prepared to goe when and whither God shall call us. Wee must not have our hearts glued to earthly things, but alwaies ready to receive Gods command, and to goe at his call. These be the significations of the Passeever: which we must remember to make good use of in the course of our lives. And thus much of the first branch of this act of *Moses* faith, in *ordaining the Passeever*.

The second branch of this worke is this; *And the effusion of blood*: that is, the sprinkling of the blood of the Lambe upon the posts of their houses, and upon the doore cheeks; which was a token to the Israelites, that the destroying Angell should not strike the first borne of the Israelites either man or beast. In mans reason this may seeme to bee a weake and simple meanes; yet God ordaines it to preserve all the first borne among the Israelites. And thus the Lord useth to deale, that his people, through the weakness of the meanes, might bee brought to acknowledge God to be their protector and defender. When the Israelites were stung with the serpents, a man would have thought it had beene the best way for their curing, to have given them cunning Surgeons; but the Lord ordaines onely a dead Serpent of braffe which they must looke up unto, and bee cured. A weake meanes it was, and yet the Lord useth it; because he would have them to give all the glory unto him, and not to ascribe the same either to themselves or to the meanes.

Further, this *sprinkling of the blood* upon the doore cheeks, and the posts of their houses, had a notable signification: namely, of the *sprinkling of the blood of Christ* upon the doores of our hearts: to which *Peter* alludeth, 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Through the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Iesus Christ.* And *David*, when he saith, *Sprinkle me with Hyssope, and I shall be cleane*: *David* knew well that the blood of beasts could not take away sinne, and therefore no doubt by his saving faith, hee had an eye to the blood of the *Messias* under legall termes. Whence we are taught this lesson: that as the Israelites with their bodily hands did sprinkle the blood of the *Paschall Lamb* upon their doore cheeks, and the posts of their houses: so by the hand of *faith*, every one of us must sprinkle the blood of *Christ* upon our owne hearts: which wee shall then doe when wee doe not onely in generall beleeve that *Christ* is a Saviour and Redeemer, but particularly that he is a Redeemer unto us; and that the merits of his death, and the benefit of his blood are ours.

Object. But some will say, If this be so, then all is well, for I doe beleeve this. *Ans.* Herein very many deceive themselves, thinking that they have faith, when indeed they have none. For looke unto their waies, and see into their hearts by their lives; and it will easily appeare,

that they have nothing in them but ignorance, security, and presumption in sinne. Now such men are deceivers of their owne soules; for after this sprinkling followeth sanctification, and rising from dead workes to newnesse of life: so that they that live in sinne, and yet say they have faith, deceive themselves. For if a mans heart bee sprinkled with the blood of *Christ* through faith, it will change his life and conscience, and make him a new creature; for *Christ*s blood is a cleansing and purifying blood, inasmuch as where it is truly sprinkled, it certainly cleanseth: Heb. 9. 14. And thus much of this ceremony of *sprinkling*.

Now followeth the end of both these actions in these words, *Left he that destroyed the first borne should touch them*. Let us examine the words in order; First, by the *destroyer* is meant the Angell of God, (as we may see in the Story, Exod. 12. 29.) who at midnight smore all the first borne of *Egypt* both of man and beast. Where by the way we may take a view of the wonderfull power and strength of Gods Angels, and also of their admirable swiftnesse and readinesse in doing the will of God, that in one night, even at midnight, one of them could passe thorow the land of *Egypt*, and kill all the first borne of man and beast, in every place of the *Egyptians*. The like wee may see in the destruction of *Senacharibs* host, by one Angell in one night.

The first borne: that is, both of men and beasts. So it is in the Story, Exod. 12. 29. But being so, it may not unly be demanded, How this *Passe-over* could bee a Sacrament when as even the beasts of the Israelites had benefit by it; for they were spared by reason of this *sprinkling of the blood of the Paschall Lamb*. *Ans.* That hindreth not why it should not be a Sacrament. For we must consider this *Passe-over* two waies: First, as a meanes of temporall deliverance, and so the beasts had benefit by it. Secondly, as a signe and seale of our spirituall deliverance from hell by the sacrifice of the Lambe of God, *Iesus Christ*, which is the thing signified; and so it is a Sacrament for mans salvation: and thus the beasts had no benefit by it. The water that flowed from the rocke in the wilderness was a Sacrament, and the beasts dranke of the water, but yet they did not partake of the Lords Sacrament: for we must consider that water two waies; first, as a meanes to quench thirst, and consequently as an outward benefit to preserve the life of the creature, and so the beasts had a benefit by it: but consider it as a signe and seale of the water of life, and so their beasts had no benefit by it, but onely the beleeving people.

D It followeth; *Should touch them*. Here is the very use and end of both the former actions; *That the Angell might not hurt them*, but passe by the Israelites houses. Here consider a notable point concerning *Christ* the true *Passe-over*:

over: namely, that they which have their hearts sprinkled with his blood, shall bee preserved from everlasting damnation; and not onely so, but hereby they shall have deliverance from all temporall judgements in this life, so farre forth as they are curles and hurtfull unto them. So wee may reade before the destruction came to the citie of the Jewes, the *Angel* of God went thorow the citie *with a writers inkborne, to set a marke upon those that did mourne and cry for their sinnes.* And *David* saith, *the righteous man standeth upon a rocke, so as the floods of many waters shall not come neere him.* This is a point of great use: and the consideration hereof should move all persons that have been careless in religion, now to become carefull and desirous to have their hearts washed in the blood of *Christ*: and those also which have any care, must have double care hereof; for they have freedom and security both in temporall and eternall judgements.

Obiect. But many of Gods deare children are taken away in common judgements. *Ans.* True: but yet they are never hurt thereby; but the judgement and affliction is sanctified unto them, because they have their hearts sprinkled with the blood of *Christ*. And as for those whom God knoweth it good for, they are delivered in generall judgements; and preserved for his glory, and use of the Church.

But how did the *Angell* destroy the first borne in *Egypt*, both of man and beasts? *Ans.* By taking from them their temporall lives, by destroying or killing their bodies. That is the sense and plaine meaning of the holy Ghost: and to this signification answereth the word in the original. Now some doe abuse this place, and such like, for the overthrowing of the ancient censure of the Church in *excommunication*: for (say they) the practice of *S. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 5. is the principall ground of *excommunication*: where *Paul* bids that the incestuous man bee given to *Satan* for the destruction of the flesh. Now they that deny *excommunication*, would have that place to be interpreted by this, because the same word is there used: and therefore (say they) *Pauls* words must be understood, of destroying the incestuous mans body, and taking away his temporall life. This interpretation doth quite overthrow *excommunication*: for if nothing else be there understood, but onely the tormenting of the body, then *excommunication* is not thence proved. But the truth is, that the censure which the *Apostle* urgeth there, cannot be understood of the punishment of the bodie; which I prove thus. In that place *Saint Paul* opposeth the flesh and the spirit. Now usually, when he maketh this opposition, *Flesh* signifieth the corruption of the whole man; and the *spirit* signifieth the grace of God in the man: so that his plaine meaning is this, *Let him be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh*; that is, for the destruction of his naturall corruption, and of the body of sinne.

Further, where it is said, *the first borne*; wee must understand it of the first borne among the *Egyptians*, both of man and beast. And whereas he saith, *should touch them*; hee meaneth the *Israelites*, who were not touched in this destruction.

Hence we learne two points further: First, the first borne of *Egypt* are destroyed, both of man and beast. This is remarkable: for the *Egyptians* in former times destroyed the *Israelites* children, and especially their first borne; for they slew all the Males, lest they should increase in their land: and now it comes to passe, that their children, even the principall of them, their first borne are slain for the *Israelites* sakes; and when they are preserved. Where we may observe a most righteous, and yet an usuall kinde of judgement with God. He doth often punish the wicked in their kind, with their own sinnes: This is true even in the best, so far forth as they are sinfull. The same injurie which *David* did to *Friah*, was done unto him by his owne sonne, even by his sonne *Abshalem*, 2 *Sam.* 10. 10. 11. and 16. 22. And this our Saviour *Christ* teacheth us, saying, (*Matth.* 7. 1.) *Judge not, that ye be not judged.* Wee finde this true likewise by experience: that they that give themselves to back-biting, railing, and slander, by the just judgement of God, have for the most part the same done unto themselves by others; so that men are often punished in their owne sinnes. For God hath his storehouse full of judgements, and hee can punish men what way he will. But he oft observeth this order, to punish men by their owne sinnes, and to catch the wicked in their owne devices.

This must be a motive to make us to looke unto our selves, and to have care against all sinnes of the second Table: for looke wherinto thou takest thy pleasure to: Gods dishonour, therein thou shalt feelee and see Gods judgements upon thee, to thy correction and confusion, *Psal.* 109. 17. *As he loved cursing, so shall it come unto him: and as he loved not blessing, so shall it be farre from him.* This *Adonibezek* felt and confessed when his thumbs were cut off, *Judg.* 1. 6, 7. *As I have done, so God hath rewarded me.*

Lastly, in that the destroyer killeth the first borne of *Egypt*, make a strange kinde of Gods judgements. King *Pharaoh* and his people sin, because they will not let the *Israelites* goe; but the punishment of their sinne is laid upon their children and cattell. The like we reade of 2 *Sam.* 12. 14. when *David* had committed those grievous sinnes of adultery and murder, a part of his punishment was the death of his child. When he numbered the people, the plague light on them, 2 *Sam.* 24. Now wee must not too curiously prie into the reason of Gods judgements: for he is not bound to give account of his actions; and yet in reason we may see the equitie thereof. For, wee must consider of kingdomes and Societies, and of townes and families,

families, as of bodies; every society is a body, and the particular persons therein are members of that body. Now looke, as it is in the naturall bodie, so it is in the body ciuill or politike: Oftentimes in the naturall body, when the stomacke is sicke, the head aketh; the braine is wounded, and the heart aketh; the foot is hurt, and the head aketh; and the offence of the tongue may be punished with stripes upon the backe: Even so it is in ciuill societies, the Prince sinneth, and the people are punished; or the people sinne, and the Prince is punished. This is no iniustice with God: for tith Prince and people make but one body, and so Parents and children; God may justly lay upon any member the temporall punishment of sinne committed by another. And thus much of this example, and of the faith of *Moses* alone.



The ISRAELITES Faith.

VERSE 29.

*By faith they passed thorow
the red Sea, as by dry land:
which when the Egyptians
had assayed to doe, they were
drowned.*



hitherto wee have heard the faith of *Moses* alone highly commended in two examples. Now followeth a commendation of his faith with others; so that here is a new example of faith; to wit, of the Israelites together with *Moses*. For *Moses* is here to be considered not onely as one of them, but as a principall agent in this worke of faith. And here their faith is commended unto us by a wonderfull strange action which they did, through the power and goodnesse of God; namely, by their passing thorow the red sea: not by passing over it, for that might have bene by Art; but thorow it: which is above Nature and Art, and merely miraculous. This fact of theirs is largely set downe, *Exod. 14*. And that it might appeare to bee every way wonderfull, as it is indeed, the Author of this Epistle commends it by two circumstances: which notably set forth unto us the strangenesse hereof: First, by their manner, how they passed

thorow; namely, as by dry land. Secondly, by the time when; namely then, when the Egyptians following them were drowned. Here first we will speake of the fact it selfe, and then of the circumstances.

The fact is set downe in the first words; *By faith they passed thorow the red Sea*. The words are plaine of themselves, and offer unto us sundry points worthy our obseruation: And first, it may be asked who they were that here passed thorow by faith? The answer is, the Israelites. But some will say, we read in the History that when the people came to the red Sea they were wonderfully afraid, and murmured against *Moses*, saying, *That it had bene better for them to have lived in the bondage of Egypt, than to come into the Desert and there die*. Now how can they murmur impatiently and fearefully, and yet passe thorow by faith? *Ans.* At the first indeed they murmured, when they saw the danger they were in, having the huge army of *Pharaoh* following them, and the red Sea before them, and hills and mountaines on each side. But howsoever they murmured at the first, yet when *Moses* spake words of comfort unto them in the name of the Lord, bidding them not to be afraid, &c. and when hee held up his rod and entred into the red Sea before them, then they followed him by faith: and hereupon the holy Ghost gives unto them the title of true beleeuers.

Here we may learne, that true faith in Gods children is mingled with unbeliefe. The Israelites faith was true faith, but yet it was very imperfect and weake: for if it had bene perfect and sound faith, they would neuer have murmured, nor have bene impatient and fearefull. But looke as it is in nature, so it is in grace. In nature we cannot passe from one contrary to another, but by the mixture of the contraries: as in light and darknesse, the one doth not follow the other immediatly; but first, there is a mixture of them both in the dawning of the day, and closing of the night: and so it is in other contraries, even in those which concerne the soule; unbeliefe is a sinne, faith is a vertue and grace contrary to it. Now unbeliefe cannot be expelled by faith, before there be a mixture of them both, and so when faith prevayleth, unbeliefe decayeth: neither can faith bee ever perfect, because it is ever mingled more or lesse with unbeliefe.

This plainly overthrowes the opinion of the Church of Rome, who say, that after a man is regenerate and beleeveth, there is nothing in him that God can hate. For they imagine that he is soundly sanctified, that there is nothing in him which may properly bee called a sinne: but here wee see their doctrine is false, seeing faith and unbeliefe are alwaies mingled together.

Secondly, as it falls out with faith, so it is with the rest of Gods graces: looke as faith is not perfect, but mixed with unbeliefe; so are

Exod. 14. 27. 17.

all other graces of God whatſoever. The feare of God is not perfect in a man, nor the love of God: for the feare of God is mingled with the feare of men: and the feare of God for his mercy, is mingled with the feare of God for his judgements. And hereby many are deceived; for when they feare God for his puniſhments, they thinke themſelves to bee moſt miſerable and void of grace, but they deceive themſelves. For there is no man upon the earth that feareth God onely for his mercies, and doth not feare God alſo for his puniſhments in part: for Gods graces in this life are ever mingled with their contraries. And therefore to imagine that a man may feare God for his mercies onely, and not for judgements alſo, is to conceive of ſuch a man as none is, nor can be in this life; for the beſt feare that is in any man living, is a mixt feare.

Further, when *Moses* had ſpoken words of comfort unto them, the unbelieving and fearefull Iſraelites, doe ſtifle up their hearts to-beleeve. So we accordingly muſt labour and ſtrive againſt that in-bred unbeleeve which is in us: for every man hath innumerable finnes in him that reſiſt faith; and if they be not checked and ſuppreſſed, they will maſter his faith; but hee that would have faith to continue and laſt, muſt ſtrive againſt naturall unbeleeve, as the Iſraelites doe in this place; and as the man in the Goſpell, Mark. 9. 24. when hee faith to Chriſt, *Lord, I beleeve, helpe my unbeleeve*, knowing that his unbeleeve did ſuppreſſe his faith. And ſo did the Diſciples of our Saviour Chriſt, when they prayed, *Lord increaſe our faith*, Luk. 17. 5. And *David* being oppreſſed with deadneſſe of heart, ſtirres up his faith, ſaying, *Why art thou caſt downe, my ſoule, &c? wait on God*, Pſal. 42. 11. For he that hath faith, is troubled with unbeleeve; and the more it troubles him, the leſſe he beleeve, unleſſe he ſtrive againſt it manfully.

2 *Queſt.* But how many of the Iſraelites beleeved and went over by faith? *Anſ.* Not all: for *Paul* ſaith, *With many of them God was not well pleaſed, for they were overthrowne in the wilderneſſe*: 1 Cor. 10. 5. Which ſhewes, that all that paſſed over had not true faith; for ſome beleeved: and by the force of their faith, all went over ſafely.

Hence we note this (which hath beene often taught us) that an ungodly man receiveth many temporall benefits by the ſocietie of Gods people which beleeve: as here the *unbelieving Iſraelites* had this benefit, to goe thorow the red Sea ſafely, by reaſon of thoſe that beleeved. And in the former example, the brute beaſts were freed from killing by the Angell, becauſe they belonged to the hoſt of the Lords people. Now ſhall a brute beaſt have benefit by being with Gods people, and ſhall not a man much more? Yes undoubtedly: for ſo we may reaſe, that for *Pauls* ſake all the Mariners and Souldiers that were in the Ship, were

ſaved from drowning, Acts 27. 24. This point muſt perſwade every one of us to make choiſe of the godly for our ſocietie and company, with whom wee live and converſe, for by them wee doe reape many benefits, and freedome alſo from many heavy judgements.

The third point iſt this: *When did the Iſraelites beleeve?* This circumſtance is worthe marking: They beleeved when they paſſed thorow the red Sea: for they beleeved not onely in generall, that God was their God, as hee had promiſed to their fathers; but they beleeved that God would be with them. And give them life in the middle of the red Sea. A notable point. They beleeved (as it were) in the middle of their graves, (for ſo might the red Sea be well called) that God would give them life everlaſting, and preſerve them ſafely thorow the Sea, and from their enemies.

In their example we are taught the ſame dutie, to doe as they here did. The childe of God in this life hath innumerable cauſes of deſperation: and ſometimes his owne conſcience will take part with Satan, in charging the ſoule to bee in ſtate of damnation. In this heavy caſe what muſt he done? Surely at this time, when a man is a caſt-away in himſelfe, he muſt even then beleeve: being in hell (as it were) hee muſt beleeve that God will bring him to Heaven. It is nothing for a man to beleeve in proſperity and peace: but in time of deſperation to beleeve, that is a moſt worthy faith: and indeed, then is the right time for a man to ſhew his faith, when there is in himſelfe no cauſe of beleeving. *Object.* But when a man is in this caſe, he cannot beleeve. *Anſw.* Indeed to beleeve then is a wonderfull hard thing, and a miracle of miracles. But yet this is the property of true faith ſo to doe; and if there bee but one dram of true faith in the heart that deſpaires, howſoever it may for a time lie hid as dead; yet at length it will make him to hope, and waite for mercie and life at the hands of Almighty God. And therefore, if it ſhall pleaſe God at any time to lay a torment upon our conſciences, ſo as we ſhall ſtrive with the wrath of God, thinking that he hath caſt us away; yet for all that, then we muſt beleeve Gods promiſes, and ſet before us his mercies, and therewith reſtreſſe us. And if this faith were not, the childe of God many times were in a moſt miſerable caſe: the Lord therefore hath moſt mercifully provided to helpe him by the grace of faith. When a man is paſt all hope of life, he muſt then beleeve and hope for life, as the Iſraelites did in the red Sea for preſervation. And undoubtedly this is a moſt comfortable ſigne of grace, if a man in the horror of conſcience can ſhew forth the leaſt ſparke of true faith.

Fourthly, note the effect and iſſue of this faith, *They paſſed thorow the red Sea*. We ſay uſually that water and fire bee unmercifull creatures: and

and therefore the naturall man feares them both: but the *Iſraelites ſaith* makes them not to feare the water; but it makes them bold, even to paſſe thorow the Sea. The like we may ſee for fire in the three children, Dan. 3. 16, 23. who were not afraid of the hot burning Oven, but were as bold in it as out of it. Ravenous and wilde beaſts are terrible unto men, but ſaith makes a man not to feare them: and therefore *Daniel* feares not the Lions, though hee were throwne into their den to be devoured, Dan. 6. 22. Great is the fruit and force of faith: it takes from a man the feare of thoſe creatures which by nature are moſt terrible. And here we ſee a cauſe why the holy Martyrs of God died moſt cheerfully. A man would thinke it ſtrange, that one ſhould goe into the fire rejoycing, as many of them did: but the reaſon is, Becauſe they had faith in their hearts, which taketh away the feare of the moſt fearefull creatures.

But if it be ſo (may ſome ſay) that the *Iſraelites* by *faith went thorow the red Sea*, not fearing the water: why may not wee that beleeve now doe the ſame? for we have the ſame faith that they had. *Anſ.* We have indeed the ſame faith, and yet we cannot paſſe thorow waters as they did. For their faith reſted on two promiſes: firſt, on this made to *Abraham*, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy ſeed*: ſecondly, on a particular promiſe made to *Moses*. For when hee commanded him to goe thorow the red Sea, withall he made a promiſe to keepe and preſerve them: and this they beleeved, and ſo went thorow. Now howſoever wee have juſtifying faith, having the ſame generall promiſe; yet wee have not the like particular promiſe. That if we paſſe thorow the red Sea, God will be with us and ſave us. And therefore, if any man ſhall adventure to doe ſo, let him looke for nothing but death; for it is not an action of faith, but of *preſumption*. And therefore *Peter* ſunk when he would needs walke unto Chriſt upon the Sea, having no ſuch hold upon Gods ſpeciall promiſe as here they had; and the *Aegyptians* following preſumptuouſly were all drowned. Wherefore let us here be warned, not to attempt to doe extraordinary workes without Gods ſpeciall warrant: for a particular faith requires a particular promiſe beſides the generall promiſe of God in Chriſt.

Further, let us here obſerve a wonderful worke of Gods mercy and power. When theſe ſervants of God were brought into extremities of danger, ſo as they were in a deſperate caſe for their temporall life; yet then the Lord finds a way of deliverance. And indeed, if a man conſider aright of it, hee muſt needs acknowledge that theſe *Iſraelites* were in a pitfull caſe; for they had the red ſea before them, and mountains on each ſide, and themſelves hindered from flight by their bag and baggage, and with their children, and the huge hoſt of *Pharaoh* behind them; ſo as to mans reaſon there

was nothing but preſent death to be looked for; yet the Lord in mercy to ſave them, makes a way where there was no way, and openeth them a gap to life, when naturall reaſon could lay before them nothing but violent death. Which ſhewes the wonderful mercy of God to his owne people and ſervants. And the like thing we may reade of *David*, when he abode in the wilderneſſe of *Maon*: for there *Saul* followed him, and he and his men compaſſed *David* and his men round about, 1 Sam. 27. 26, 27. Now what hope of deliverance was there for *David*? *Anſ.* Surely this only: *David* was the ſervant of God; and the Lord preſerved him, that he might rule his people: after *Sauls* death; and therefore he eſcapeth, though wonderfully: for a meſſenger comes to *Saul*, and bids him haſte, for the Philiftines invaded the land: and ſo *Saul* returned from purſuing *David*, and went againſt the Philiftines.

Hence we learne this generall rule; that in the extremities of all danger, God hath meanes to preſerve and ſave his owne children and people. Which muſt teach us to commend our caſe to God, and to reſt on him in all dangers: for when our caſe is deſperate in our ſight, then are wee fitteſt for Gods helpe. Let us therefore in ſuch caſes learne to preſt our faith; and then eſpecially to caſt our ſelves upon God. This *Iſeophar* did moſt notably: for being affaulted with the huge armies of the Moabites, Ammonites, &c. he prayed unto the Lord moſt fervently, ſaying, 2 Chron. 20. 12. *Lord, there is no ſtrength in us, we know not what to doe, but our eyes are towards thee*: and thus doing, was preſerved: for God will in no extremities whatſoever forſake them: that truſt in him.

The red ſea. In many places of the old Teſtament, it is called the ſea of *ruſhes*; *Plaine* 106. 7, 9. or the ſea of *ſedges*, Jer. 49. 21. It is a corner of the Arabian ſea, that parteth *Egypt* and *Arabia*. Thoſe which have ſene it in travell, ſay, it hath no other colour than all other ſeas have; Why then is it called *ibered ſea*? *Anſ.* To omit many ſuppoſed cauſes hereof, there be two eſpecially, for which it is ſo called. Firſt, becauſe of the red ſand: for both the bottome of the ſea, and the ſhore, are full of redder ſand than ordinarily is elſewhere. Secondly, Some thinke it is called the red ſea, by reaſon of the ſedges and bull-ruſhes which grow much at the ſea ſide, and be of a red colour: which by reflection, may make the ſame colour appeare on the water. But this need not to trouble any man: for the holy Ghoſt uſeth the ſame name which commonly the men of that country gave it. And thus much of their fact, that they by faith paſſed thorow the red ſea. Now we come to the two circumſtances, whereby it is commended.

The firſt circumſtance is the manner of their going thorow the red ſea: they went thorow *as on dry land*. This muſt not be conceived to

be by helpe of Bridge or Ship, nor by meanes which men use, as swimming, sailing, or wading; but their passage was miraculous: for the waters stood like walls on both sides of them. And the channell of the sea was as a *pavement or dry land*, Exod. 14. 22. which notably setteth forth the strangenesse of this fact, shewing that it was a wonderfull worke of God. And this also confuteth certaine enemies of the Scripture, who have cavilled at all the miracles which are recorded therein: accounting of *Moses* but as a Magician and Sorcerer, and of the miracles which he did, as of illusions: and for this miracle they make no account of it; for say they, *Moses* being a great Scholler, and a wise man, knew the time of the rise and fall of the waters, and knew the foords and shallow places: therefore he tooke his time, and found a place so shallow, that when the tide was past, the lands were bare and dry, (as the Marishes in England are) and then he led the host of Israel thorow. But *Pharaoh* and his host following them were drowned, because they went thorow at the flowing of the Sea. *Ans.* Whereas they say that this their passage was no miracle, here wee see it is overthrowne by this circumstance of the manner of their passing over: for the bottome of the Sea was a pavement, and as ground on which no waters fall. Now in most places of the Sea, where the waters ebbe and flow, the ground is never fully dry, but watery and full of moist places.

Again, the waters passed not away as at an ebbe; but *stood as walls on each side of the host of Israel, both on the right hand and on the left*: both which shew plainly there was no vantage taken by the ebbing and flowing of the water, (as ungodly Atheists doe cavill, deriding Gods workes to their owne destruction) but a mighty and miraculous worke of God, first making the waters stand like two walls, and then making the earth under it firme and dry, contrary to nature in them both.

The second circumstance is concerning the time when he passed thorow; even then when the *Egyptians assaying to doe the same were drowned*. Marke the words, for the thing is strange: The *Egyptians* come armed after the *Israelites* with a huge great army. Now the *Israelites* they take into the Sea, and the *Egyptians* seeing them, stand not still upon the banke, but adventure after them, not by Ship, but the same way that the *Israelites* tooke before them; but yet without any warrant or commandement from God: so great was their malice against them; and yet a man would have thought they durst never have adventured into the Sea after them, especially as they did.

Here by this fact of *Pharaoh* and his men, we learne, that when God forsakes a man, and leaves him to himselfe, he doth nothing elsie but run headlong to his owne destruction. *God* (as *Moses* saith) *raised up Pharaoh to shew his power upon him*: and now it pleaseth God to leave

him to himselfe, and see perfectly the *Israelites* to his owne destruction. And this is the cause and state of all those that are forsaken of God. The consideration whereof must teach us a speciall claue to be uled of us in our prayers: wee must ever remember to pray for this, That God would never wholly forsake us nor cast us off. This condition is more fearefull than the state and condition of any creature in the world besides: for when God forsakes a man, all that he doth, is hastening himselfe to his owne destruction. *David* knew this well, and therefore he prays, *Oh keepe my heart unto thee, that I may feare thy name*, Psal. 86. 11. And againe, he prayeth that the Lord would not forsake him over-long, 119. 8. as if he should say, If it bee thy pleasure to try mee by leaving me to my selfe: yet O Lord, let it be but for a while, forsake me not over-long. This is the scope of the sixth Petition, *Lead us not into temptation*: where we are taught to pray, that God would not forsake us or leave us to our selves, or to the power of Satan; but that he would be with us, and shew his power in our weaknesse continually. And this may enforce us unto this Petition: for the consideration, That men forsaken of God, doe nothing but worke their owne destruction, is many times a cause of great trouble of minde. For some desiring to see such as hang or drowne themselves, by beholding of them get this conceit in their heads, that God will likewise forsake them as he hath done these whom they behold; and so shall they make away themselves: whence followeth great trouble and anguish of soule for a long time. Now how must a man or woman in this case helpe themselves? *Ans.* The best way is by prayer to crave at Gods hands; that he would ever bee with them, and never wholly forsake them. And further, this must bee remembered withall, that God will never forsake any of his servants before they first forsake him: and therefore they that can say truly and unfeignedly that they desire to serve God, and to be his servants, and seeke his blessing by prayer, they may stand fast on this ground, That God will never forsake them till they first forsake him. And therefore *Azariah* the Prophet saith notably to King *Asa*, 2 Chron. 15. 2. *The Lord will bee with you while you be with him; and if ye seeke him, he will be found of you: but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you*. And *James* saith, *Draw neere to God, and he will draw neere to you*, Jam. 4. 8. It was never heard that God did ever forsake any that did seeke him. And if the causes were knowne why men make away themselves, it would prove (generally) to bee thus, because they first by some fearefull sinnes have forsaken God; and then hee in his justice forsakes them. And therefore they that are troubled with this temptation, must pray earnestly that they may stick fast unto God by faith and holinesse: and so will hee never forsake them.

Secondly, in this circumstance, that the Egyptians following the Israelites were drowned, we have a notable pattern of the state and condition of all persecutors of Gods Church. In Pharaoh and his host we may see their end, which is usually destruction: that is their reward for persecuting Gods Church. Caine slayes Abel that notable servant of God; but his reward was this, hee was cast forth of Gods Church, Gen. 4.11.12. and stricken in Gods just judgement, with finall desperation. Saul persecuted David: but his end was to kill himselfe with his owne sword, 1 Sam. 30.4. And Isebel, she persecutes the Prophets and children of God; but her end was this, the dogges did eat her flesh. The whole stocke of the Herods were great enemies to Christ, but their name was soone rooted out: and Herod called Agrippa, that slew James, and persecuted Peter, was eaten up of worms. Many great Emperours in the Primitive Church were persecutors; but they died desperately. And Inlax, for one, once a Christian, died blaspheming Christ; and casting his blood up towards heaven, cryed, Thou hast overcome, O Galilean, thou hast overcome. And to come nere these times; what reward from God the persecutors of the Church have had, we may reade in the booke of Acts and monuments, which was penned for that purpose. And to come to these our dayes, the whole band of those that call themselves Leaguers, in France, Italie, Spaine, &c. like the Tabernacles of Edom and the Ismaelites, Moab and the Agarims, &c. Psal. 83.5,6. they vow the destruction and persecution of Gods Church: but yet Gods Church stands; and he so contrives the matter, that they draw sword against themselves, and slay and poyson one another. Herein doth God graciously make good his promise to his Church, that the weapons made against her shall not prosper. And Zachariah 12.7. there is a prophetic of the Church in the new Testament: the Lord saith, He will make Ierusalem (that is, his Church) an heauie stone: for all people that lift it up shall be some, though all the people of the earth be gathered against it: where the Prophet fetcht downe notably, what shall be the condition of those that persecute Gods Church: the more they persecute her, the more they shall have Gods hand against them to confound them. Daniel 2.34. There is mention made of a stone hewne out of a rocke without hands, which smote the image upon the feet, which were of iron and clay, and brake them to peeces. By that stone is meant the kingdome of Christ, which shall dash in peeces the kingdomes of the earth, which set themselves against Christ and his kingdome. For Christ must reigne till he have put all his enemies under his feet: so that destruction is the end of the enemies of Gods Church. For the hand of the Lord shall be knowne among his servants, and his indignation against his enemies, May 14.14. And thus much of the second circumstance.

A Now in this whole fact of the Israelites passing through the red Sea, towards the land of Canaan, there is a notable thing signified; namely, Baptisme. So Paul saith, The Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the Sea, 1 Cor. 10.2. Yet we must remember, it was not ordinarie Baptisme, but extraordinary; never administered before, and never shall be so againe, for ought we know. The minister of this Baptisme, was Moses; an extraordinary minister, as the Baptisme was extraordinary. The outward signe was the red sea; or rather the water of the red Sea. The departing of the children of Israel out of Egypt through the red Sea, signifieth the departing of the children of God out of the Kingdome of darkenesse, from the power of sinne and Satan. And the drowning of Pharaoh with all his host in the red Sea, signified the subduing of the power of all spirituall enemies, with the pardon and death of sinne; which stands partly in the abolishing of sinne, and partly in newnesse of life. And to this alludeth the Prophet Micah, saying, He will subdue our iniquities, and cast all their sinnes into the bottom of the Sea, Mic. 7.19. As if he should say, looke as God subdued Pharaoh, and all his host, in the bottom of the Sea; so will he cast, and put away the sinnes of his people.

From this we learne two points: First, that the Baptisme of infants hath warrant in Gods Word, howsoever some men be of a contrarie opinion: for here we see all the Israelites were baptized in the Sea; and among them no doubt were many children. If it be said, this baptisme was extraordinary, and is no ground for ours. Answ. True, it was extraordinary for the manner; but yet herein, the matter and substance, and the thing signified is ordinarie, and the end all one with ours: and therefore the baptizing of infants in the red Sea, is some warrant for the baptisme of infants in the Church now a dayes.

Secondly, here wee may learne another instruction. As the Israelites went through the red Sea (as through a grave) to the promised land of Canaan; so we must know, that the way to the spirituall Canaan, even the kingdome of heaven, is by dying unto sinne. This is a speciall point to be considered of every one of vs: we profess our selves to be Christians, we heare Gods word, and receiue the Sacraments, which are the outward badges of Christians, and we perswade our selves of life everlasting after death: well, if we would have that to be the end of our journey, then wee must take the Lords plaine way in this life; which is to die unto all our sinnes. So it is said, They which are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof: where this dute is enjoyned to every Christian; hee must crucifie the lusts and affections of the flesh, and not live in sinne. For a man cannot walke in sinne, and so runne the broad way to hell, and yet wait for the kingdome of heaven; these two will not stand together:

together: and therefore, if wee would walke worthily the calling of Christianitie, we must have care that all our finnes, whether they be of heart or life, little or great, new or old, may be mortified and abolished. Many will for a time become civill, and seeme to be religious, especially when they are to receive the Lords Supper: but when that time of the Sacrament is past, then they returne to their old custome in sinning againe: whereby it appears, that their change was but in shew, to blinde the eyes of men. And doe wee not each Sabbath profite our selves good Christians, and seeme to glorie in it, by keeping this day with such solemnitie? But alas! as soone as that day is past, many (and some even this day) run into all ryot. This is not Christianitie; this is not the way to heaven: but if ever we thinke to come to Canaan, we must kill and burie our finnes, we must die unto them; or else we shall never come to the end of Christianitie; namely, eternall life. And thus much of this circumstance, and also of the example it selfe.



IOSEPHS Faith.

VERSE 30.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell downe, after they were compassed about seven daies.

From the beginning of this Chapter, to this 30. verse, we have heard two sorts of examples of faith: the first, of belevers from the beginning of the world to the flood. The second, of such as were from the time of the flood, to the giving of the Law in Mount Sina: and of both these, we have hitherto intreated. Now here, and so forward to the end of this Chapter, is set downe a third order of examples of faith; namely, of such as lived from the time of the giving of the Law, to the time of the reigne of the Maccabees.

This 30. verse contains the first example of this ranke; namely, the example of *Iosephs* faith, and of those that went with him into Canaan. And their faith is commended unto us by a notable fact of theirs; *the causing to fall the walls of Jericho*: the Historie whereof we may reade at large, *John. 6.* The summe of it is this; Whereas the Iraelites came unto Canaan, and could not enter into the land, by reason of the strength of Jericho, by which they trust needs passe, nor could win it by reason of the huge walls of Jericho; the Lord promisseth to deliver Jericho into their hands: onely the people must doe this;

A they must *compass about the walls seven daies*, and carrie the *Ark* of the Lord with them, sounding with Rammes hornes, and shout, and so the walls should fall downe. Now the Lord having made this promise unto them; the Iraelites, and specially *Iosephs*, obey his commandement, and beleve his promise: and thus doing, *By faith the walls of Jericho fell downe, after they were compassed about seven daies.* Indeed the power of God was the principall cause of this ruine of the walls; but yet because upon their beleiving, God shewed this power, therefore is the downe-fall of them ascribed unto their faith.

Here are many notable points to be learned. First, whereas the Text saith, *By faith the walls of Jericho fell downe*; we may observe the wonderfull power of true faith. *Iosephs* and the Iraelites beleved Gods promises, that he would over-torne the walls of Jericho: and as they beleved, so it came to passe. So our Saviour Christ saith, *Matth. 17. 20.* *If a man had but as much faith as a graine of Mustard-seed, he shall say unto the mountaine, remove hence, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto him*: signifying, that by the power of true faith, such things as are impossible unto mans reason, shall bee brought to passe, if God have promised them: as we see in this place, the mightie walls of Jericho fall downe by faith, which to mans reason is impossible. So, the Lord promisseth to *Abraham*, *That he should*

C *be the Father of many Nations*: yea, that all the Nations of the earth should bee blessed in him. This was strange; but *Abraham* beleved it: and as hee beleved, so it came to passe: for many Nations descended from him: and after the time of Christs ascension, when all the Nations of the World were called to the light of the Gospel, they were blessed in Christ, the promised Seed of *Abraham*: and therefore is he called the *Father of the faithfull* in all Nations. And to come unto our selves: To miserable men it may seeme a strange thing, that the power of the Devill, and the strength of the flesh, should bee overcome in us; yet let a man beleve this promise of God; *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Sonne, that who so beleved in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life*, *John 3. 16.* I say, let him beleve this effectually, and he shall finde by faith the kingdom of sinne and Satan, in his heart and conscience, weakened everie day more and more. And therefore Saint *Iohn* saith not without cause, *This is the victorie that over-comeeth the World, even our faith*, *1 John 5. 4.*

Secondly, here observe, that among the causes of the change and overthrow of Townes, Cities, and Kingdomes, this is one; namely, *faith in Gods promises*. Many men have written of the change of Kingdomes, and doe give divers reasons thereof: But most of them omit the principall, and that is *faith*; by virtue whereof many

Gen. 12. 8. & 13. 18.

times Kingdomes and Townes are brought to ruine and overthrow. God promised to *Abraham* and to his seed, that he would give them the land of *Canaan* for their inheritance: now, they beleeverd this promise; and here we see it comes to passe as they beleeverd; *Jericho by faith is overturned*, and the rest of their Cities, and the people of *Canaan* dispossessed. So that we see, faith in Gods promises, is a meane to Gods people, to overturne Cities and Kingdomes, that are enemies to Christ and to his Gospel. God hath made a promise unto his Church, that the *whore of Babylon*, Revelation 18.2. that is, the Kingdome of Antichrist shall flourish for a while, but after it shall be destroyed; yea, such a ruine shall come unto it, that the *Kings of the earth, and all great men and Merchants shall bewaile the destruction thereof*. Now this promise being received by faith, and beleeverd of Gods Church, shall undoubtedly come to passe. It is in some part verified already, (for we see, some Kingdomes and people have renounced the cursed Doctrine and tyrannie of Rome; and many Christian Princes have already shaken off the Popes yoke;) yea, and this promise shall come to passe daily more and more. Let all the Kings of that sort doe what they can, and let the people set themselves never so much against Gods Church, yet *Babylon shall downe*: for God hath promised so to his Church, and his Church beleeveth the same; and therefore by their faith it shall be brought to passe, in despite of the Devill.

Thirdly, here we learne, that when any Citie, Towne, or Kingdome, is to make warre either in defence of themselves, or in lawfull assault upon their enemies; a speciall meane for good successe herein, is true faith. Christian policie is a commendable thing in this case: but if policie be severed from faith, it is nothing. Faith in Gods promises of protection and assistance, doth farre surpass all worldly wisdom. And therefore good King *Iehosaphat*, when he was to fight against the huge Armies of the Moabites, and Ammonites, gives this counsell to his people, 2 Chron. 20.20. *Put your trust in the Lord your God, and yee shall be assured: Beleeve his Prophets, and ye shall prosper*: giving a most notable instruction, and shewing that the best helpe for our defence, is faith in God, whereby we rest upon his Word and promise, that he will helpe us: yet this taketh not away the use of meanes, but it gives the blessing and efficacy unto them. *Faith* we know, is called a *shield*, among the spirituall armour of God, whereby a man awards the blowes of Satan: and though that be the principall vertue of it, yet is it also a notable shield to defend men, even against their outward visible enemies, and a most strong engine against them, to worke their overthrow. Hence *David* saith, *Hee will not be afraid for ten thousand of the people, that should keepe him round about*. They therefore that would defend themselves against their enemies

(yea, and overcome them in lawfull assault) must embrace and obey true religion; and with Christian policie, joyne faith in Gods promises: for by faith we make God our Captaine, and through him we shall doe valiantly, and beat downe our enemies on every side.

Lastly, here we may learne, what a vaine thing it is to trust in outward worldly meanes. *The walls of Jericho* were both strong and high, and hard it had bene to have overthrowne them by ordinary meanes: but yet we see, it proved but a vaine thing to trust unto them, as the men of *Jericho* did: for they found but little reliefe and defence in them: for the Lord lays them flat to the ground; and so the people of Israel went straight forward and tooke the Citie. So likewise it is a vaine thing to trust to mans strength, or in the strength of an horse, or in the number of men, or in riches, or in gifts of wisdom and learning, or in any other outward meanes whatsoever: the reason is, because God can overcome them with the least breath of his mouth.

This must admonish us, that howsoever we use ordinary meanes of our preservation and helpe, yet ever we must cast our whole care on God, and put all our confidence in him for helpe and safetie: for without him all other outward meanes are nothing but vaine helps; *For vaine is the helpe of man*. And thus much for the fact it selfe.

Further, this fact is set out unto us by two circumstances; to wit, by the *meanes* which they used, and by the *time* which they observed for this exploit. For the first, when they come to *Jericho*, this strong Citie, which they must needs subdue, (for else they could not this way enter and possesse the Land) they doe not goe about to overthrow the Citie by undermining, battering or scaling the walls; but according to Gods appointment, they goe one by one in order round about the Citie walls day by day for one weekespace: and on the seventh day, they compass it seven times; during all which time they kept great silence, save onely that seven Priests sounded upon seven Trumpets of Rammes-hornes before the Arke, till *Iosaphat* bade them flourish. Now in common reason, a man would judge this rather to be some childish sport, than a meane to sling downe these great walls. Nay, consider it well, and it may seeme a course tending rather to overthrow themselves, than the walls of *Jericho*: for they marched not in battell-ray, as though they would pitch a field against the people of *Jericho*, or lay siege to their Citie; but they went in length one before another, so as they might compass the Citie about. Now if the men of *Jericho* should have come forth, and made assault upon them, in all likelihood the *Israelites* had bene overthrowne; so weak were the meanes. And yet the Lord for weightie causes, prescribes this course unto them: to wit, first, hereby to trie the faith

1 John 6.22.

Ephes. 6.16.

Psalm 34.

of his people, whether they will believe his promises or no, when they are enjoined to use weak and feeble means, and in mans reason foolish.

Secondly, to make manifest in the weaknesse and insufficiency of the means, his owne all-sufficient power and wisdom, for the furtherance of his glory: for *though weaknesse is Gods power made perfect*, 2 Cor. 12.9. Hence our Saviour Christ, when he was to cure the man that was borne blinde, *tempers clay of spittle, and layes it to his eyes*, John 9.6. A means in common reason, rather fit to make a man blinde, than to recover his sight: and yet Christ useth it for the furtherance of Gods glory, in the manifestation of his divine power, whereby the people might know he was able in himselfe, to doe whatsoever he would.

Now looke what cometh the Lord here takes for the battering of the walls of Jericho, the like he useth in overthrowing the kingdome of the Devill, the spiritual Jericho; especially in the new Testament. For after Christs ascension, when he intended to destroy the kingdome of darknesse, under which all the Nations sate, he sets apart a few fisher-men, simple persons, wanting worldly wit and policie, neither did he put a sword of flesh into their hands, but the Word of God into their mouths: and thus sent them to dispossesse the Devill out of all the World, and to batter downe the kingdome of darknesse by their preaching. And now in these latter dayes, wherein the Antichristian kingdome of the Pope had spread it selfe thorow all places almost, God useth the same weak means to overthrow it. For he set apart a silly Monke, and indues him with gifts to preach the truth: by which means, the kingdome of Antichrist received a greater wound, than if tenne Princes had set themselves against it. And strange it is to see, how God over-tumeth all the stratagems devised against his Church, and how he vanquisheth the power of sinne, by the weak means of the Gospel preached, and by the prayers of the Church; than which, to the World nothing seemes more feeble or foolish.

The consideration hereof, is of speciall use: for it may be we shall see Kings and people of great power and number, to make revolt from the Gospel of Christ, and to fall to Antichrist, embracing Popery: hereat indeed, wee must be grieved, but yet withall, here is good cause of comfort unto us: for we must know, that Satans kingdome must be battered downe, not so much by the power of Kings, as by the breath of Gods mouth: not so much by the sword of flesh, as by the sword of the spirit. So it is said, that *the man of sinne, even Antichrist must be abolished*: not by the power of Princes; yea, let all the Princes and Potentates in the World doe their best for him, yet his kingdome must downe in Gods good time: *for God will consume him with the breath of his mouth, and abolish him by the brightnesse of his coming*, 2 Thel. 2.8. that is,

by the preaching of the Word, in the mouths of his Ministers, who are men void of all worldly power and policie.

Yet further, observe the means. *They walke about the walls of Jericho seven dayes together*. If men should attempt the like enterprize at this day, in all likelihood it would cost them their lives; for now there are devised such instruments of warre, I meane great Ordnance, and field-peeces, that will kill at a faine off: and undoubtedly, if there had beene such instruments of warre in this Citie, the Israelites could not so safely have compassed the walls so many dayes together. Whereby it appears more than probable, that in those dayes there were no gunnes knowne; so not amongst the heathen, which at this day are so ripe amongst Christians. Whence may be gathered, that these latter dayes are perillous times; for now mens heads are set to devise more hurtfull means against the life of man, than ever the savage heathen knew. For beside the invention of gunnes, which put downe all evidence of prowesse and valour scene in ancient warres; our age exceeds in contriving such strange kindes of poysons, as were never knowne in former times. For men have now devised poyson of that sort, that will kill a man, not presently, but a weeke, or a moneth, or a quarter of a yeare after; as appears by the confession of those, that have given themselves to studie and practise such hurtfull devices. And it is worth the marking, that the principall inventors and practicers of such hurtfull inventions have bene of the Romish religion.

The second circumstance to be observed, is the Time of this exploit. It was not on any of the six dayes, but on the seventh; and that after they had that day compassed the Citie about seven times: then when the Priests blew the Trumpets, and all the people shouted as *Isaiah* bade them, the walls of Jericho fell downe; for this was the time which God had appointed for this exploit. The reason why God appointed seven dayes, and seven times compassing on the seventh day, is not revealed unto us in the word of God: and therefore we may not curiously prie into it, nor yet (as some doe) hence gather, that seven is a perfect number. But from the consideration of the very time wherein the walls fell downe, we may learne this; that if we would have God to accomplish his promises unto us, wee must wait for that time and season which he hath appointed: we must not thinke that God will accomplish them when we appoint. But we must believe Gods promise, and also wait his good leasure, and then will it come to passe. The Israelites compassed about Jericho one day, and the walls never sturre; yea, they doe six dayes together, and six times more on the seventh day, and yet they stand fast: The reason is; Because Gods appointed time was not yet come. But on the seventh day, when they had compassed them about the seventh time,

time all the people gave up the shout, and then they fell downe; because that was the particular set time, wherein God would accomplish his promise.

Further, whereas they *compassse about the walls seven dayes together*; it must needs be, that they went about them on the Sabbath day, for that was one of the seven. Now here a doubt ariseth: for this was a servile worke upon the Sabbath, contrarie to Gods commandement; which injoyneeth to strict a rest upon the Sabbath day, that they might not kindle a fire thereon: how then could they lawfully compassse the Citie on the Sabbath day? *Ans.* All Gods Commandements in the morall Law, must be understood with this exception; *Thou shalt doe thus and thus, unlesse I the Lord command thee otherwise*: for God is an absolute Lord, and so above the Law; and therefore may lawfully command that which the Law forbiddeth. In the second commandement he saith, *Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any graven Image, &c.* and yet *Moses* by Gods speciall appointment set up a *brazen Serpent*, which was a figure of Christ. Upon such a speciall command, *Abraham* lawfully offers to kill *Isaac*; the *Israelites* at their departure spoile and rob the *Egyptians*: and *Ishab* with the people, here compassse the walls of *Jericho* on the Sabbath day.



RAHABS Faith.

VERSE 31.

By faith Rahab the harlot perished not, with them which obeyed not, when shee had received the Spies peaceably.



IN this verse the holy Ghost proceeds further, in declaring the power of faith; and for this end, commendeth unto us the Faith of *Rahab*. The words containe the summe and abridgement of the second and sixth chapters of *Iosuah*: the meaning of them is plaine.

The points herein to be considered, are three: 1. The person believing; to wit, *Rahab*. 2. The reward of her faith given by *Iosuah*: *She perished not, but was preserved in the destruction of Jericho*. 3. The testimonie of her faith, so called by *S. James* 2.25. and set downe in the end of this verse, *When shee had received the Spies peaceably*.

A For the person: *Rahab* was a woman of Canaan, dwelling in *Jericho*; as we may reade, *Iosuah* 2. there she lived and had her abode: she was no *Israelite*, but a forrenner in regard of her birth, and a Stranger from Gods Church. How then comes it to passe, that she is commended for her faith, and here put into the Catalogue of these renowned beleivers? Why are not the rest of the Canaanites preferred to this honour as well as she? *Ans.* We must know this, that from the beginning of the World to the time of Christs ascension, the Church of God was small; sometime shut up in some few families, as from the flood, to the giving of the Law; and after limited to a small Kingdome and people in the Land of Canaan, where the Lords people dwelt. During which time, all other Nations and people of the world, besides this little companie, were no people of God, but strangers from the Covenant of promise, and (as *Paul* saith) *Without God in the world*. And howsoever Gods Church was thus shut up, as it were in a corner; yet now and then it pleased God to reach out his mercifull hand to some of the heathen, calling them into his Church, and receiving them into his Covenant: and they are called in the new Testament, *Proselytes*. In *Abrahams* family, his bond-men and servants were circumcised, and made members of the Church of God. And in *Moses* dayes, *Iethro* *Moses* father in law, a Priest of Midian, obtained this at Gods hands, to be joynted unto Gods Church: and so was *Ruth* the Moabite, *Ruth* 1.16. and *Naaman* the Assyrian, 2 Kings 5.17. and as some thinke *Nebuchadonozor*, *Daniel* 4.3. but that is not so certaine. And so was the *Emmich* of *Ethiopia*, *Candace* the Queene of *Ethiopia* chiefe governour, *Acts* 8.27. Now as God in mercie dealt with these, so did he in like mercie call *Rahab* the harlot above all the people of *Jericho*: for they trusted to their strong walls, and therefore died: but *Rahab* beleaved, that the God of *Israel* was the true God, and so had mercie shewed unto her. Now after the time of Christs ascension, God dealt more bountifully with the world: for he sent the light of his Gospel into all Nations: and (as the Scripture saith) *their sound went shorow all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world*, *Rom.* 10.18.

The consideration of this limited estate of the Church of God for so long a time, serves to discover unto us the error of those, that maintaine and hold *narrowesall* of all and every man to the estate of grace and salvation: but if that were so, then in former ages the Gentiles would have beleaved; whereas we see, that before the ascension of Christ, the Church of God was but a small remnant, among the people of the Jewes onely: and not one of ten thousand beleaved among the Gentiles. Now if all men had beene effectually called, then all would have received the promise of the Gospel: but

Ephes. 2.12.

Genes. 17.17.

Ezech. 16.11.12.

many Nations in former ages never heard of Christ: and therefore there was never in all ages a generall effectuall calling of all men.

Object. Paul saith, God reconciled the world unto himselfe by Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and if that be so, then he called all men effectually. *Ans.* We must understand the Apostles according to his meaning: for Rom. 11. 15; hee expounds himselfe, and shewes what he meanes by the world; saying, That the saving away of the Jewes, is the reconciling of the world: which cannot be understood of men in all the ages, but in the last age of the world after Christs ascension, wherein God offered to all the World life everlasting by Christ.

Further, *Rahab* is here noted by a notorious vice, she is called an *harlot*; whereby she was infamous among the men of Jericho. Certainie of the Jewes which are enemies to the new Testament, say, That the Author of this Epistle, and S. James doe great wrong unto *Rahab* for calling her an *harlot*; for (say they) in *Iosuah* she is called but a *Taverner* or *Hofestse*.

Ans. We must know that the word which is used in *Iosuah*, signifieth two things; a *Taverner*, and an *harlot*. Now take the word properly, as it is generally used in the old Testament, and then most commonly it is put for an *harlot*. And therefore in the new Testament, *Rahab* hath no wrong done her by this title. For it is the thing that *Iosuah* intended, to shew what an one she had bene: and therefore in speaking of her to the spies, he bids them goe into *That harlots house*, *Iosuah* 6. 22. using such an Article as implies, that she had bene infamous and notorious in that kind. And yet we must not thinke that she plaid the *harlot*, after she had received grace to beleeve, but long before: for *faith purifieth the heart*; neither will it suffer any sinne to raigne therein. She is called an *harlot* therefore, in regard of her life past; for which she was infamous among the men of Jericho, before her calling to the faith.

Quest. How could she beleeve, being a *harlot* in former times? for it is said, That neither fornicators, nor adulterers, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Ans.* That is true according to the Law: but the Gospel gives this exception, *unlesse they repent*. And so all legall threatnings to be understood in the word of God.

In this circumstance of the person, and in the qualitie of her sinne, we may note the endless mercie of God towards sinners; for hee hath vouchsafed to call most notorious and grievous sinners to the state of salvation: as *Isay* saith, *The Lord is surie ready to forgive*, *Iay* 55. 7. yea, *with the Lord is plentiful redemption*, *Psalm* 130. 7. This appeares, by vouchsafing mercie to *Rahab* a notable *harlot*: and as he dealeth with *Rahab* here, so hath he shewed like mercie to other notorious sinners. King *Manasse* had sold himselfe to *Idolatry* and *Wickedness*, and had shed innocent blood exceeding much, and caused In-

dith to shine, 2 Kings 21. 6. 16. for which he was led captive: yet when he humbled himselfe and prayed, God was mercifull to him, 2 Chron. 33. 12. And Paul saith of himselfe; *When hee was a blasphemer and a persecutor, and an oppressor, he was received to mercie, though he were the head of all sinners; thus Christ might first shew on him all long suffering, unto the example of them, which shall in time to come beleeve in him unto everlasting life*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16.

The consideration of this exceeding mercie of God toward sinners, is of great use. First, it ameth a poore soule against despair, whereinto the Devill would draw it upon the view of the multitude and greatness of his sinnes: for many reason thus; My sinnes are so heinous, so many, and so vile, that I dare not come to God, neither can I be perswaded of the pardon of them. But behold here the endless mercie of God, in forgiving sinnes to them that repent though they be like crimson and scarlet, and never so many. This must comfort the wounded soule; and encourage all touched hearts, to repent, and to sue to the Lord for mercie and pardon.

Secondly, it must move every one of us now to begin to repent, if we have not repented heretofore: and if we have begun, to doe it more earnestly; for God is most mercifull, and with him is plentiful redemption. Yet we must beware that wee take not occasion hereby to live in sinne, because God is mercifull: for this is to turne the grace of God into wantonness; which S. *Iude* makes a brand of the ungodly, and a signe of the reprobate, who (as the Apostles there saith) are appointed to condemnation: yea, that is a despising of the bountifullness of God, which should lead them to repentance: and hereby they heape up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, Rom. 2. 4, 5. Let us therefore remember this counsell of Paul, *Shall we sinne that grace may abound? God forbid*. We must all, but especially young men take heed of this counse: for if we blesse our selves in our heart, and say we shall have peace, though we live in sinne, God will not be mercifull unto us, but his wrath shall sinne out against us.

Further note, that howsoever she was a sinner, and a most infamous *harlot*: yet when she repents, God doth honour and grace her with the title of a beleever; and that among those most renowned beleevers that ever lived before Christ: even to bee one of that cloud of witnesses, in whom faith is commended to the Church for ever. Hence also it is, that S. *Matthew* reckons her in the *Genealogie of Christ*, to be one of his predecessors: when as *Amasaiah*, *Achar*, &c. such like, who (for ought we know) did never repent, are not once named. Herein we may see Gods wonderfull mercie in honouring sinners, if they doe repent. The consideration whereof must move us, not onely to learne the doctrine of Repentance, and to have it in our mouths, but to labour that it may be settled in our hearts;

144.

Deut. 29. 19, 20.

Heb. 12. 1.

Matth. 23.

that we may shew forth the power thereof in our lives. All of us desire honour and reputation among men. Well, if we would be honoured indeed, we must repent, and then God himself will honour us; neither have our finnes made us so infamous, as by our repentance God shall make us honourable.

Further, concerning the partie: How could *Rahab* come by faith? seeing she lived out of the Church, where the word was never preached unto her.

Ans. If we read the Story, we shall finde that she came to beleefe, by a report of Gods marvellous acts: for when the Lord delivered the *Israelites* out of *Egypt* through the red sea, and drowned *Pharaoh* the egiptian with all his host; and they went further, he delivered the Kings of the Nations into their hands: as *Og* the King of *Bashan*, with the Kings of the *Amorites* and *Amalekites*.

Now, the report herof came to the people of *Iericho*; whereupon they were stricken with a wonderfull great feare. And howsoever the men of *Iericho* made no other use of it, but to amne and prepare themselves to resist and beat backe the *Israelites*, yet this report wrought further with *Rahab*; and therefore she came to the spies, whom she had received, and hid upon the rooffe of her house, and there confessed the God of *Israel* to be the true God, in heaven above, and in the earth beneath.

Here wee may note, that when ordinarie meanes faile, for the beginning and increafe of faith; as the Word preached, and the Sacraments, then God can worke faith extraordinarily, even by reports, and rumors. For thus *Rahab*, and many of the heathen came to beleefe. We say of the Church of *Rome*, that it is no true Church, and that their religion cannot save a man: Hereupon many that labour that way, reply and say: Will you therefore condemne all your forefathers, that lived and died in time of Popery? We answer, no; we dare not give such censure upon them: but rather judge charitably of them: yea, we have great hope that many of them were saved. For though they wanted preaching and reading, yet God might worke faith in them extraordinarily, and bleffe even good reports and speeches unto them, with the reading of other godly bookes, besides Gods word, which some of them had. We need not then give so hard a censure of them: because God is not tied to ordinarie meanes, but can save extraordinarily, when meanes faile.

Further, concerning *Rahabs* faith, it may be demanded whether it was weak or strong? because before she had done this fact of faith, her whole abode was among the heathen. *Ans.* We must know, that there is in the childe of God a certaine seed, or beginning, or preparation to a true and lively faith; which our Saviour Christ in the Scriptures, doth honour with the title of a true and lively faith: as when a man knowes no more but this, that *Christ Iesus* is

A the true *Messias*, having such a true and confidence to profit and increase in the true knowledge of the Gospel, and to joyne and live therewith, in his life and calling. Examples herof, we have many in Gods word: As of the *Ruler* came to Christ, and besought him to *goe downe and heale his sonne*, *John 4. 46, 50, 51.* *Iesus* but said unto him, *Go thy way, thy sonne liveth; and the Ruler believed the word that Iesus spake unto him, and his sonne lived.* Now, inquiring of the houre, and finding it to be the same when *Iesus* said, *Thy sonne liveth*; the Text saith, *He believed and all his household.* Now what was this mans faith? Surely, hee only acknowledged, that Christ was the true *Messias*; and withall, resigned himselfe and his family to be instructed further therein. And though they knew nothing particularly, of the meanes whereby Christ should be a Saviour: yet for this willingness in embracing Christ, and readinesse to be taught the holy Ghost faith, they did beleefe. So in the same Chapter verse 29. the woman of *Samaria* (being convicted in her conscience, of the things that Christ told her) runnes to the towne, and saith: *Come see a man that hath told me all things that ever I did: Is not he the Christ?* Then the Text saith, *Many of the Samaritans believed, because of the saying of the woman.* Now what faith had these *Samaritans*? Surely, they did only acknowledge him to be the true *Messias*, and were willing to be further instructed in his doctrine; which they testified, by going to heare him in their owne persons. So likewise, Christ gives a notable testimonie to the confession of the *Apostles* faith, (*Matth. 16. 17, 18.*) in the person of *Peter*, saying: *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rocke (that is, upon this your faith, which thou confessed) will I build my Church;* and yet the *Apostles* were ignorant of some maine points of the Gospel. For a little after, when Christ tells them of his going to *Jerusalem*, and of his passion, for the redemption of them, and all the chiefe, *Peter* perswades him to the contrary, saying: *Master, shewe thy selfe, these things shall not be unto thee.* Whereby it appears, that *Peter* did not know how Christ should be a Saviour: neither did the *Apostles* particularly know Christ his resurrection, till he was risen againe: yea, at the very time of his ascension, they knew not the nature of Christs Kingdom; and therefore they asked him, *Lord, wilt thou now restore the kingdom to Israel?* (*Acts 1. 6.*) dreaming still of a temporall kingdom: for which Christ rebuked them. And notwithstanding all these wants, Christ saith, they had true faith; yea, such faith as the gates of hell should never prevaile against. This then is a most comfortable truth, That if a man (in the want of meanes of further knowledge) doe hold Christ *Iesus* to be the true *Messias*, and yeeld himselfe willing to learne the doctrine of the Gospel, and (withall) joyne obedience to his knowledge, the Lord is willing for a time, to accept of this as of true faith.

Now to apply this to *Rahab's* faith: Her faith was but a weake faith, or rather the seed and beginning of a lively faith afterward. For as we may read, all that she knew was this, that the God of Israel was the onely true God, and that he would certainly deliver the Land of Canaan into the Israelites hands. This was a notable persuasion wrought by a report; and accordingly she joynea her selfe to Gods people, and resignes her selfe to obey the God of Israel: but whether she knew the particular doctrine of salvation by Christ, it is not here set downe, and it is very like, that as yet she was altogether ignorant of it. For here are all things set downe, that tend to her commendation. So that her faith was very weake, and onely the seed of a lively faith; and yet here the holy Ghost doth commend her for her faith, amongst the most renowned beleevers that ever were.

Hence we may learne many good instructions: First, that God makes much account of a little grace: if he see in a man but the seeds of grace, he doth highly esteeme thereof. When the young man came to Christ, and asked him *what he should doe to be saved*; Christ tells him *he must keepe the commandments*: the young man answers, that he *had kept them from his youth*: at which answer it is said, *Christ looked upon him, and loved him*. Thus he did for the shew of Grace, which appeared in his answer: much more then will he like of that which is true grace indeed. So, likewise Christ reasoning with the Scribe, concerning the first and great Commandment, and perceiving that he had answered discretely, hee said unto him; *Thou art not furre from the kingdom of God*, Marke 12.34. shewing hereby how deeply hee tenders the sparkes and seeds of true grace: nay, he makes much of a very shew of grace: which if it be so, then if God have given to any of us but one sparke of true grace, how ought we to tender it, and cherish it, and to rejoyce therein with all thankfulness to God for it? yea, we must seeke to increase the same; for according to our grace is our acceptance and respect with God in Christ.

Secondly, whereas *Rahab's* weake faith is thus commended, here is comfort for all those that are willing to learne Gods Word, and to obey the same. Many are willing to learne: but they are so wonderfully troubled with dulnesse and want of memorie, that they cannot learne; and hereupon they grow to doubt much of their estate towards God. But these men must comfort themselves: for though they have but little knowledge, yet if they have care to increase in knowledge, and make conscience of obedience to so much as they know, God will account of them as of true beleevers: and in truth such are to be commended above those which have much knowledge, and so seeme to have much faith, and yet shew forth no obedience answerable to their knowledge; for they have a shew of godlinesse, but want

A the power of it.

Thirdly, this confutech our ignorant boasters, who say they have as much knowledge as any man needs to have; for they know, that a man must *love God above all*; and that *Christ Iesus is the Saviour of the world*; and this (say they) is enough; and hereupon they take up their rest for matters of religion, and seeke to goe no further. But these men know nothing at all: for if they would add to this which they know, though it be but little, a care to increase in knowledge, and with their knowledge joyne obedience, then it were something. But whilst they have no care neither to get more knowledge, nor to shew forth obedience to that they know, they doe hereby shew plainly, that there is no drop of saving knowledge, nor true faith in their hearts.

Fourthly, seeing God commends the seeds of true faith, for true faith indeed; This must encourage all men to use all good meanes to come by true faith and repentance. For though as yet thou hast but little knowledge, and therefore but little faith and repentance: yet if thou joyne hereto an endeavour to get more knowledge, and have also a care to practise that which thou knowest; then will the Lord increase thy knowledge and thy small faith, till thou have sufficient, and in the meane time accept of thee as a true beleever. And thus much for the measure of *Rahab's* faith.

The second point to be considered, is the reward which *Rahab* received at the hands of *Iosuah* and the *Israelites* for her faith; *She perished not with them that obeyed not*: that is, she with her family was preserved alive, when as *Iosuah* destroyed all that lived in *Iericho*, young and old, man, woman and childe.

But some will say; The *Israelites* were the people of God, a religious people: now it may seeme to be a cruell part to destroy all; for what had the young infants done? *Answer*. In mans reason it may seeme so indeed: yet it could not be a cruell part, because they did no more than that which God commanded them. For it was Gods ordinance, that the Canaanites should be rooted out, and that the *Israelites* should shew no compassion on them, Deuter. 7.2. Besides, even in reason the *Israelites* had some cause to deale thus: for God gave this charge to the *Israelites*, that when they came to any Citie or people: First, they must offer peace, and if they answered peaceably, then they must be saved, and become their tributaries and servants: Deuter. 20.10. but if they would not make peace, then they must put them to the edge of the sword, (vers. 17.) man, woman, and childe, being inhabitants of Canaan, or neere adjoyning. And thus no doubt *Iosuah* dealt when he came to *Iericho*: first, he offered peace, if they would become their tributaries: but they trusted to their strong walls, and would not yeeld to become their servants; for which cause hee put them all to the edge of the sword: and there-

fore it was no cruelty, because it was Gods commandment; for Gods will is the rule of justice.

But was not this partiall dealing, to spare *Rahab* with her family, who were inhabitants of Jericho as well as the rest? *Ans.* There were two causes why she should escape: First, because she yielded her selfe to the people of *Israel*, and joynd her selfe unto them, and was content to become one of their religion; and therefore the commandment of putting all to death, did not take hold of her. Secondly, *Rahab* obtained this of the Spies, and bound them to it by an oath, that when they came to destroy Jericho, they should spare her and her family: and therefore also did she escape.

In this preservation of *Rahab*, wee may learne sundry points: first, whereas she is saved alive, because of the oath of the Spies, wee see what speciall care every one ought to have for the doing of these lawfull things whatsoever they are, whereto hee binde himselfe by an oath. *Ishuah* knowing this bond of the Spies to *Rahab* (as wee may reade) gives speciall charge for her preservation. Hence *David* saith, if a man binde himselfe with an oath, he must keepe it, though it be to his owne binderance, *Psalm* 154. Every single promise binde a mans conscience, if it be lawfull: but when an oath is adjoynd, then there is a double bond. And therefore the Author to the Hebrewes saith, that God to make knowne the stablesse of his counsell promised, bound himselfe with an oath: that by two immutable things (to wit, Gods promise, and oath) we might have strong consolation: so that an oath binde a man double to the performing of his promise. And that this conscience is to be made of a lawfull oath, appeareth thus; If a man make a lawfull oath, and yet be induced to doe it by fraud; he must performe it, and not faile: as appeareth by *Ishuahs* fact to the Gibeonites, *Ioshua* 9. 19. For when they came to the Jewes craftily, as though they had bene men of a farre country, and had brought them to sweare that they would not hurt them: though the host of *Israel* murmured at it, when they came to their Cities; and though they might have reasoned thus, that they got it of them by fraud, and therefore they would not keepe it: yet, this is the answer of *Ioshuah* and the Princes unto the people, That they had sworn unto them, by the Lord God of *Israel*, and therefore they might not touch them. And when King *Saul*, in zeale to *Israhel*, had broken this oath of *Ishuah*, and the Princes, by destroying the Gibeonites, 2 *Sam.* 21. there came a plague upon the Land, for three yeares space; and was not stayed, till seven of *Sauls* sonnes were hanged for *Sauls* fact. So that the breach of an oath is a most dangerous thing: and therefore, he that hath bound himselfe thereby, must have great care to keepe it.

Yet here some cases may bee propounded,

A worthy our consideration. For fifth, what if a man have taken an oath to doe an unlawfull thing, must he then keepe his oath? *Ans.* If his conscience tell him out of Gods Word that the thing is not lawfull, then he must not keepe it; for an oath may not be the bond of iniquitie: the keeping of it is a doubling of the sinne. *David* in his anger, had sworn to slay *Nabal*, and all the men of his family, for denying refection to his servants, 1 *Sam.* 25. 22. This was a rash oath; and therefore afterward, when hee was prevented by *Abigail* good counsell, he blesther God for it, and breakes his oath with h he had made, verse 32.

Quest. 2. What if a man take an oath, and yet afterward in conscience doubts of the lawfulness of that which he had sworn to doe: what must be done in this case? *Ans.* So long as he doubteth, he must deferre the performance of it. For he that doth a thing doubtfully, condemne himselfe in the thing he doth, because he doth it not of faith: and whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne, *Rom.* 14. 22.

Quest. 3. What if a man be urged by feare to take an oath, must he afterward keepe it? As for example; a man is taken of thieves: now wanting money, they charge him on paine of death, to fetch them money, and they binde him hereto by an oath: what must be done in this case, considering there must such great care be had in keeping of an oath? *Ans.* So long as the thing which he is bound by oath to doe, respecteth his private damage onely, he must keepe his oath; yet so as he declare his case to the Magistrate, because their counsell is against the common good; now the Magistrate hearing of it, is according to equitie, to provide for his defence, and for the safetie of his goods.

A second point to be considered in *Rahabs* preservation, is this: *Rahab* escaped a common danger (but not without all meanes) onely staying her selfe on the bare promise of the Spies: but as she beleved in the true God, so she used meanes, whereby she might be sure of her preservation; and that is this; Shee binde the Spies by an oath to save her life, and to spare her household: also shee keeps within, and ties the cord of red threed in her window, according to the mutuall covenant. Thus she useth meanes for her temporal lificetie: and so have other of Gods children done in like case. When King *Hezekiah* (2 *Kings* 20. 6.) was sicke, hee was certified by the Prophet from God, that hee should live (if hee were) fifteen yeares longer; yet he neglected not the meanes whereby he should be healed, and live; for he applied drie figges to his bile, and vsed food, and raiment for his bodily life, during the whole space of those fifteen yeares. So the Apostle *Saint Paul*, in his voyage by Sea to Rome, was afflicted by a vision, that none of them that were with him should perishe, but all come safe to Land: and yet notwithstanding, when as the *Centurion* would have gone out, he telle the *Centurion*, that

Ioshua 9. 18, 22.

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unless those stayed in the ship (that so they might be ordinary meanes) they could not bee safe. Now as it saith temporally for the saving of the body; so it is in the spiritual case, for the salvation of the soule: men must use meanes to come by grace, and so to salvation. But many in this regard be great enemies to their owne soules; they say, God is mercifull, and Christ is a Saviour, and I hope he will save me; yet they will not use the meanes to come to salvation. But if we would be saved, then with our inward faith, we must joyn the observation of the outward ordinary meanes whereby God useth to save mens soules; as namely, the hearing of Gods word, calling upon God by prayer, and the receiving of the Sacraments: that thereby our sinfull lives may bee amended, and our faith strengthened. This must be remembered of us; for they that contemne or neglect the meanes, despite the grace and mercie of God offered therein: and therefore *Paul* saith of the Jewes, when they put the Gospel from them, that they did judge themselves unworthy eternall life, Acts 13.46. It followeth;

With them that disobeyed: That is, with the people of Jericho. *Quest.* How did they disobey? *Ans.* Thus: When *Ishuah* and the people came unto them, and offered them peace, if so be they would become their tributaries and servants, the inhabitants of Jericho would not yeeld unto them, but set themselves against the people of Israel, and so against God, in that they would not undertake that estate which God offered unto them: and therefore they are here esteemed disobedient.

Hence we learne, that if it shall please God at any time, to put us out of these temporary benefits which we enjoy in goods and possessions; we must be contented with Gods will and providence, and seeke to obey God therein. The inhabitants of Jericho pay dearly for their disobedience in this case: God sets the Israelites as Lords over them: and because they will not yeeld to become their servants, they die for it. *Dauids* practice was commendable in this case: for when hee was put out of his owne Kingdom, by his owne sonne, he murmured not, but said thus; *If I shall finde favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me againe: but if he say thus, I have no delight in thee: behold, here I am, let him doe to me as seemeth good in his eyes,* 2 Samuel 15.25,26. In other countries, we see Cities and Townes spoiled and sacked; what must the people doe? *Ans.* They must submit themselves to the Lords pleasure; knowing that hee permiteth it, who may doe what hee will. And so, if it shall please God to bring us into the like case; as to suffer our enemies to have dominion over us, and to dispossesse us of our places: we must submit our selves to Gods good pleasure, when we see no helpe by lawfull meanes: we must not murmur or rebell; for that is but to disobey, as the people of Jericho did: and so shall we be destroyed

as they were. And thus much for the second point.

The third thing to be considered in this example, is the testimonie of her faith, in receiving the Spies peaceably. This was a notable worke of faith, as *Saint James* noteth, James 2.23. and the more commendable, because she received them into her house, and entertained them; yea, she preserved them in danger of her owne life; for she did it contrary to the pleasure of the State under which she lived. But against this may be objected, first, that she lied in this fact: for when the King of Jerichos messengers came to search for the Spies, whom she had hid in the top of her house, she said to the messengers, *they were gone another way.* Now, how can it be a good worke, which was done with lying; especially to our Superiour, who hath power to aske us, and to whom we are double bound to speake the truth? *Ans.* We must know that the worke was good which shee did; and a worke of mercie, to preserve Gods people, although shee failed in the manner of doing it: she received them by faith, though shee shewed distrust, in lying for their safetie. It was a notable worke of *Rebecca*, Genesis 27. to cause her sonne *Jacob* to get his fathers blessing, for so God had determined, and yet she failed in the manner.

Quest. But how could this worke be good, being faultie in the manner of doing it? *Ans.* It might: for *Rebeccas* person stood righteous before God in Christ. Now the worker being acceptable unto God, the worke must needs be good also; and though the worker failed in the circumstances, yet the evill of the worke, was covered in the obedience of Christ: and so the goodnesse of it was approved, and the fault thereof covered.

The use of this doctrine is two-fold: first, it shewes that the workes of Gods children, are partly good, and partly bad; even the best workes they doe are imperfect. Secondly, this shewes the true meaning of *S. James*, when he saith, that *Rahab was justified by her workes*: hereby he meanes, that by her workes she declared her selfe to be just. For that she was not justified by her workes appeareth plaine; because the worke which shee did, was faultie in the manner, and not perfectly good: and therefore could not be answerable to the perfect justice of God.

But some will say further, that this concealing of the Spies, and lying to the Kings messengers, was a worke of treacherie against her owne countrey; and therefore was a notorious fault, and so no worke of faith? *Ans.* Treacherie indeed, is a great villany, as one man can practise against another; and therefore ought to be abhorred and detested of all men: but yet we must know, that *Rahab* in this place is no Traytor. For shee had a plaine Certificat in her conscience, that the Land of Canaan, and the Citie Jericho were given by the Lord to the people of Israel, and that they were the right

Lords thereof, and should enjoy them : so that he hid the Spies, not in treachery, but in faith.

Thus we see her fact. The duties which we learne hence are these: First, it is said that this harlot *Rahab*, being by calling an Hostesse and a Victualer, received the Spies peaceably. Hence, Inne-keepers are taught their duty. First, if they will shew themselves faithfull, they must have speciall regard and respect unto such guests of theirs, as be the servants of God, and feare him. This was the worke of *Rahab's* faith towards the Spies of Gods people. *David* makes this the propertie of every godly man, *That in his eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that feare the Lord*, *Psalm 115. 4.* And therefore, if Inne-keepers will shew themselves godly, they must so doe. And to encourage each one hereto, our Saviour Christ maketh this notable promise, *Mat. 10. 41. He that receiveth a Prophet, in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward: and he that receiveth a just man, in the name of a just man, shall receive a just mans reward.* And, *If any will give to one of these little ones to drinke, a cup of cold water onely, in the name of a just spie: Verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.*

Also *Strangers* are here taught, that in seeking places for their abode, they must make choice to be with those that feare the Lord: so God directes these Spies to doe. And when Christ sent his disciples to preach, he bade them, *Mat. 10. 11. when they entred into a Citie, To inquire who is worthy in that Citie, and there to abide till they departed.* But alas, these duties are little performed; especially the first. For *Inne-keepers* and such as entertaine strangers, doe make most of those that give themselves to riot and good-fellowship: they are best welcome that spend most in garrings, drinking, and lasciviousnesse. These might learne otherwise of *Rahab*, who did better though she had bene an harlot.

Thirdly, *Inne-keepers* must here learne, that when a man comes unto their house, (if he be no malefactor) they must give him protection. Thus *Rahab* doth here to the Spies of the Israelites, even with the danger of her owne life. The like also we may reade of *Lor*: for when two Angels in the likeness of men came into his house, and the men of Sodom would have had them out; *Lor* besought them to let them alone, *Gen. 19. 8.* and his reason is, *because they came under the shadow of his roofe.*

Again, hence we may learne another generall dutie; to wit, that a Christian man in the time of persecution and danger, is not to discover his fellow-brethren, or to detect them; but must rather in danger his owne life by concealing them for their preservation. This was practised by good *Obadiah*: when *Iesabel* killed the Lords Prophets, he hid them by fifties in a Cave; which if it had bene knowne, would have cost him his life. And so did the Apostles and brethren in the Primitive Church; when the Jewes would have slaine *Paul* in *Damascus*, the brethren tooke him

by night, and let him downe through the wall in a basket to save his life, *Act. 9. 25.* And since those times, in the Historie of the Church under the Gospel, we may finde, that when the Christians were urged by persecuters to reveale their brethren, they rather chose to lay downe their owne lives, than to betray their brethren into their enemies hands. And this is true love indeed, such as the holy Ghost commendeth, *When a man will give his life for his brother*, *1 John 3. 16.*

Lastly, whereas *Rahab* received the Spies peaceably, we note that it is a speciall fruit of faith, to be peaceable and kind. The holy Ghost, repeating the fruits of the spirit, names *peace and meekenesse among them*. Now this peace is, when a man is kinde and peaceable to all, but especially to those that be of the household of faith. And undoubtedly it is a fruit of faith, which the Prophet *Isay* foretold should be under the Gospel, *Isay 11. 3.* that then the Wolves should dwell with the Lambes, and the Leopard lie with the Kid: signifying, that howsoever men by nature were as savage as Wolves, yet being converted to the kingdom of Christ, they should become gentle as Lambes, being kinde and peaceable one to another. This peaceablenesse is especially to be shewed in the place and calling where a man lives: for there did *Rahab* shew forth hers, when the Spies came unto her. And where this is truly in outward action, there is faith in the heart: it is a good token that a man is at peace with God, when he lives peaceably with men. Which bring-
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ing so, we must learne, not to give place to our hea-
vy affections, but must rather bridle rage of malice and anger, and endeavour to live peaceable with all, especially with those that be members of Gods Church. And thus much of this example.



The IVDGES Faith.

VERSE 32.

*And what shall I say more?
For the time would be too short
for me to tell of Gedeon, of Ba-
rac, and of Sampson, and of
Jephthie: Also of David, and
Samuel, and of the Prophets.
Which through faith subdued
kingdomes, wrought righteous-
nesse, &c.*

HERETO, the Author of this Epistle hath set downe unto us examples of faith, more at large. But from this verse to the end

end of this Chapter, he heapes up briefly together many examples of faith, one upon another. The reason whereof is; First, because the number of true beleevers, which are mentioned in Scripture, is very great, and therefore he could not here stand to set them downe in order one by one. Secondly, by handling all the examples at large, which the Author propoundeth in this short Epistle, he should have seemed to have restrained the name and title of faith to a very few; for all that are here named and commended for their faith, are but few, in comparison of all that truly beleived in the old Testament. And therefore he heapes up the rest together, to intimate that the number of beleevers, was more than he could record. And this he doth, by a Rhetoricall preterition or passing over, called in Schooles *Paralepsis*; whereby matters are briefly dispatched and passed over, with the very naming onely.

What shall I say more? That is, as if he had said, I have propounded divers worthy examples of faith: and besides these, there are also many more; but the time of writing an Epistle, will not suffer mee to handle them all at large.

First, in this particular quick dispatch of beleevers by our Apostle, we may observe a difference betweene the infinite understanding of God, and the created understanding that is in mans minde. Man indeed understands the things that are revealed to him of God; but yet in a manner and order, farre different from that which is in God: for man cannot conceive in his minde all the things he knowes, at once, by one act of his understanding; but must have distinct time to conceive of them, one by one distinctly. For looke as hee utters them distinctly, one by one (as we see in this place,) so likewise doth hee apprehend them in conceit, and understanding. But with God it is not so; for God at once, by one act of understanding, without distinction of time, doth conceive of all things at once, both past, present, and to come: and so could utter and expresse them, if any creature were able in conceit so to comprehend them.

Secondly, whereas the holy Ghost saith, *The time would be too short, &c.* he gives us to understand, that the number of beleevers is verie great, and that a long time would not serve to repeat them, or to write of them. This directeth us unto a good answer to a question, which much troubleth our common people; to wit; How great is the number of them that shall be saved; whether it is greater than the number of them that shall be damned? *Ans.* We must consider the number of the Elect two wayes: first, in comparison of them that shall be condemned: secondly, in themselves. If we compare the Elect with the reprobate, the number of the Elect is but a small number: for in most ages, the Church of God hath bene but an handfull, to the rest of the world. And in the

Church this likewise is true, *Many are called, but few chosen*, in respect of them that are called. But yet consider the *Elect*, as they are in themselves, and they are a huge great number; yea, innumerable, as Saint *John* saith, speaking of the Elect among the Gentiles, besides the chosen Jewes: for all that doe truly beleve, shall be saved. Now beleevers are innumerable: This the Author of this Epistle would insinuate unto us by his phrase of speech, *What shall I say more, &c?*

In handling these examples, we must observe the order here used by the holy Ghost: for in this 32. verse he sets downe the names of the persons that beleve, all joyntly together, rehearsing them one by one: and in the 33, 34, 35. verses, he layes downe briefly the fruits of all their faith; in number tenne most notable actions, serving all and every one of them, most worthily to commend their faith. In handling of them, we will follow the order observed by the holy Ghost: and first speake of the persons; then of their actions.

The foure first are these: *Gedcon, Barac, Samson, and Iephth*: these foure were *Judges* in *Israel*: the fifth is *David*, who was both a *Prophet* and a *King*: the sixth is *Sammuel*, both a *Judge* and a *Prophet*: lastly, the *Prophets* generally; by whom wee must understand especially these three, *Elias, Eliseus, and Daniel*.

In speaking of these persons here commended unto us; first, we will intreat of them generally, and then in particular. In general, let us first observe the order which the holy Ghost here useth in naming them. *Gedcon* for time was after *Barac*; and yet here he is first named: so *Samson* was after *Iephth*, and yet here he is put before him. This the holy Ghost would never doe, without some speciall cause. We therefore must know, that the Scripture useth a two-fold order in reckoning up of persons: to wit, the *order of time*: when as hee that lived first, is first named: and the order of *dignitie*; when the most worthy and excellent is named first, though he were later in time. Now the Scripture accounteth best of them that did excell in faith, and in the fruits thereof: so in this place whereas *Gedcon* is set before *Barac*, and *Samson* before *Iephth*; the holy Ghost observes not the order of time, but the order of dignitie, according to the excellencie of their faith: naming them in the first place, that were most famous for this grace of faith, and did exceed the other in the fruits thereof.

Here we learne this speciall point: That the more men excell in faith, and other graces of God, the more God will honour them: for looke who most honour God, shall be most honoured of him: but the more a man excels in grace, the more he honours God. And for this cause is *Gedcon* preferred before *Barac*, and *Samson* before *Iephth*; because they were more plentifull in the fruits of faith. This must

more, not only to seeke to have faith, but to labour every day more and more for the increase of faith, and of obedience: for the more a man abounds in grace before God, the more wil God honour him, both here and in heaven. And thus much for the order wherein they are propounded.

Secondly, let us consider what manner of persons these were, *Gedon, Barac*, and the rest: They were extraordinary men, in their time, raised up by God, for the special good of his Church, and the common wealth of the Jewes, that they might helpe and defend them in distresse. And therefore, as their calling was extraordinary: so God indued them with extraordinary gifts of *wisdom, strength, zeale*, and *authority* for which they are here renowned in this Catalogue of most worthy beleeviers.

In their example we may observe this point: That whom God doth raise up extraordinarily, for some special good in his Church, them hee endues with extraordinary gifts to discharge that calling: and withall, hee gives them the spirit of grace, with a true and lively faith. This (besides the instance we have in hand) appears plainly in Christs Apostles; they were called by Christ to preach the Gospel to all the world, and to plant his Church universally; and thereupon (howsoever they were simple men before) were furnished with extraordinary gifts of wisdom, zeale, and knowledge, and with this excellent grace of saving faith, which did sanctifie their other gifts; for howsoever *Inda* was numbred among them, having bene a Disciple; yet he never came to the execution of the Apostleship, but went astray from that ministration, *Act. 1. 25*. And in these latter dayes, when God restored his Gospell to light, out of the darke mist of Popery; he raised up extraordinary men whom hee endued with wisdom, zeale, and judgement: which gifts also he sealed up in them by a lively faith, which they testified by their piety and godlinesse in life and conversation. And this course he observeth usually, in all those whom hee raiseth up extraordinarily for the good of his Church.

This wee must observe, to acquaint us with a speciall difference, betweene those whom God raised up extraordinarily for special good, and all arch-heretikes and traytors that set up themselves, without of God. For many such wretches have excelled in wisdom, in worldly policy, in zeale and authority: whereupon they have pretended and perswaded many, that they were called of God. But hereby especially they are to be discovered, that they are void of this rare gift of true saving faith: for looke at their lives, and ordinarily for impietie they have bene and are arch-devils. So that though they wanted not a authority, or outward zeale and wisdom: yet they wanted faith, which should purifie their hearts; or else they would never have lived in such notorious sinnes, as they were discovered to doe. And this is the tri-

A all which our Saviour Christ direct us unto: saying, *Ye shall know them by their fruits*, *Mat. 7. 16*. Let them therefore present what knowledge, what zeale, or authority: never they will if the fruits of faith appeare not in their lives: by obedience, they are not called of God, for the special good of his Church.

Thus much of these men in generall: now wee come to intreat of them severally, as they are propounded in the Text.

THe first person here commended unto us, is *Gedon*: the History of whose acts is laid downe at large, *Judg. 6*. In his example note one point especially, to acquaint us with the manner which God useth in begetting and increasing true faith in the hearts of his children. If wee reade the story wee shall see, that the Lord in the likenesse of an *Angel*, called *Gedon*, once, twice, yea, thrice to bee a Judge to his people. But *Gedon* greatly doubts of his calling; and therefore desires a signe of the Lord: which God gave him: *For the sacrifice which he offered, was burned up with fire from heaven*: yet still he doubted, and was in a greater feare than before, even of death it selfe: but being confirmed by the Angel, and set a worke, he brake downe the Altar of *Baal*, and built one to the true God, and thereon offered sacrifice as God commanded, though with some feare. And when the *Midianites* and *Amalekites* came armed against *Israel*, he is stirred up by the spirit of God for their defence: but yet still he doubted of his calling, and therefore againe asked a signe at Gods hands, and had it; and after that asked another, which God also granted. Now having all these one in the necke of another, at length hee knowes his calling, and so goes in faith, and defends *Israel*: so that he got the assurance of his calling, by sundry particular signes and confirmations of his faith. And although he doubted greatly at the first; yet after he beleeveth, not only that hee should bee a Judge and deliverer of Gods people out of the hands of their enemies; but this principally, that God was his God, and would give him everlasting life.

Here then we have a notable prescient of the manner of Gods working true and sound faith in the hearts of his children. They receive not this grace at once, but by degrees; God worketh it in them by little and little. When a man is first called of God, hee hath much doubting and feare; but then God leads sundry helpes to weaken this feare and doubting: and as they decrease, so is faith increased. No man beleeveth soundly at the first, but weakly; even as hee growes in yeares, so he must grow in faith: and the increase of our faith is by continuance in the means, and by the experience of Gods love and favour. And indeed the more faith increaseth, the more we use the means to grow therein, and the more wee delight in the means; and at length, after long experience of

Gods mercy, wee shall have wrought in our hearts this gift of true and lively faith, which shall bee able to prevaile against all feare and doubting. And thus much for the person of *Godou*.

The second person commended unto us, is *Rahab*; of whom we may reade, *Judg. 4* His story is large and plaine enough; and therefore we will not stand upon it.

The third person is *Sampson*; of whom wee may also reade, *Judg. 13. 14.* &c. Now touching *Sampson*, this question may well be asked, How hee can be justly commended for his faith, seeing it may seeme hee killed himselfe? *Ans.* *Sampson* did not kill himselfe: for hee was called extraordinarily to be a Judge over *Israel*, for their defence and delivery out of the hands of the *Philistines*. Now when the Princes of the *Philistines* were gathered together, being his enemies, and the enemies of God and his people, he cast the house downe upon their heads to kill them therein, because (being blinde) hee could not pursue them in battell. And therefore having them by Gods providence in his hands, he destroyed them as his killing was: albeit, hee lost his life in the same action.

Againe, *Sampson* in pulling downe the house purposed not directly and wilfully to kill himselfe, but to adventure his owne life, by taking just revenge upon his enemies, and the enemies of God: and therefore as Gods servant, he prayed first unto God: and so did no more than the Soultier in the field ought to doe; who bearing a loving minde towards his Country, is content to adventure his owne life for the destruction of his enemies, in the defence of his Country; and is resolved, that if he die in that defence, hee dieth in his lawfull place and calling, and dieth Gods servant, yea, Gods champion. This did *Sampson*, and therefore may justly be commended for his faith: neither is this fact of his any disgrace, but rather a notable commendation of his faith, and an evidence of great zeale for Gods glory, and of singular love to his people.

The fourth person commended here is *Iephthah*, of whom we may read, *Judg. 11*. *Iephthah* was the bafe son of Gilead, borne of an harlot. To be bafe borne is noted in Scripture as a matter of reproach: and therefore the Lord forbad a bafard to enter into the Congregation of the Lord: to beare any office unto the tenth generation, *Deut. 23. 3*. So ignominious is this kinde of birth, by the judgement of Gods spirit, unto that party on whom it falls. For this sinne of fornication doth not onely hurt the persons committing it, but even stains the children bafe borne, unto the tenth generation. Yet howsoever *Iephthah* was bafe borne, and so suffered for it great reproach: hee was yet, hee is commended unto us for his faith, among the most worthy beleevers that ever were. Indeed, beside *Iephthah*, wee shall not finde the like example in Scripture. Yet in

Iephthah wee may see, that howsoever it bee a reproachfull thing, to bee borne of fornication, yet that doth not hinder, but the party so borne, may come to true faith, and so to the favour of God, and to life everlasting. Such persons as are bafe borne, upon view of that reproach, which the Scripture fastneth upon them, might take occasion to thinke miserably of themselves; even that God hath rejected them: but this example serves to shew, that it hindereth not, but that they may come into the favour of God, and by faith get honour of God, to counterwaile that discredit, which they have by their bafe birth.

Further, whereas wee commonly say, that such as are bafe borne are wicked persons; here we see the contrary in *Iephthah*: and therefore, we must not for this cause condemne any for wicked or ungodly. Indeed, the Lord hath branded this estate with reproach, that men should shun the sinne of fornication the more.

Againe, whereas *Iephthah* is here commended for his faith; wee may probably gather, that their opinion is not true, who hold that *Iephthah* sacrificed and killed his owne daughter. For being commended here for his faith, certaine it is, he had knowledge in Gods will and word: and therefore, we must not thinke, but that he knew, God would never accept of such a vow; by the performance whereof hee should commit wilfull and most unnaturall murder. This his faith shewes, that it was not his intent to kill the first person that met him out of his house; for by the light of nature hee might know, that God would never accept thereof: and therefore it is not like he so made his vow; for this faith and such a vow cannot stand together.

But some will say, the Text is plaine, *Judg. 11. 31*. that he vowed to offer for a burnt offering, the thing that came out of the doores of his house to meet him when he came home. *Ans.* It is so indeed in some translations: *It shall be the Lords, (And) I will offer it, &c.* But the words in the original, may as well be translated thus: *It shall be the Lords, (or) I will offer it, &c.* And this latter translation is more sutable to the circumstances of the place, for this was *Iephthahs* meaning, that whatsoever met him first, he would dedicate it to God; and if it were a thing that might be sacrificed, then his purpose was to offer it unto the Lord in sacrifice.

Quest. But if he did not kill her, why did he then so lament for her? *Ans.* Because, by his vow, he was to dedicate her unto God; and so she was to live a Nazarite all her life long: which must needs be a very bitter thing to him who had no childe but her; it being so great a reproach, and in some sort a curse in thole daies to want issue. I speake not here, how well or ill *Iephthah* did in making her a Nazarite: But this may no way be admitted, That beleeving and godly *Iephthah* should advicely kill his owne daughter. Undoubtedly, he could not thinke,

that God would be pleased, with such an abominable sacrifice. Thus much for these persons : the rest I passe over, because this story is plaine and large in Scripture.



The Faith of the Judges and David.

VERSE 33, 34, 35.

*Which through faith sub-
dued Kingdomes, wrought
righteousnesse, obtained the pro-
mises, stopped the mouthes of
Lions.*

*Quenched the violence of
fire, escaped the edge of the
sword, of weak were made
strong, waxed valiant in bat-
tell, turned to flight the Ar-
mies of the Aliants.*

*The women received their
dead raised to life.*



IN these words, the Apostle propounds unto us tenne fe-
verall fruits of faith : the
nine first whereof, are the
particular actions of the
parties spoken of in the for-
mer verſe : and they are here
related for the commendation of their faith.
The first is, *Subduing of kingdomes* ; which
ſerves chiefly for the commendation of the
faith of the ſoure Judges there named, and of
David. For as wee may read in the bookes of
Judges, and of *Sammuel*, all theſe *ſubdued King-
domes* ; as the *Canaanites*, Judg. 4. the *Midi-
anites*, Judg. 6. the *Philiftines*, Judg. 15. and
16. 2 Sam. 8. 1. the *Ammonites*, Judg. 11.
Moabites, and *Amorites*, 2 Sam. 8. 2. 6. Now
how did they overcome and ſubdue them? The
text ſaith, *by faith* ; which wee muſt not thus
underſtand, as though onely by the very act
of faith they ſubdued kingdomes. But the mean-
ing of the holy Ghoſt is, that they beleev-
ed the promiſes which God made unto them, of
ſubduing theſe kingdomes into their hand ; and
according to their faith, God accompliſhed his

A promiſes unto them : and ſo they ſubdued king-
domes by faith.

In this worke of faith, wee may learne two
things : firſt, that it is lawfull for Chriſtians in
the new Teſtament to make warre ; for that
which may be done in faith, is lawfull for Gods
ſervants : but warre may be made in faith : for
theſe ſervants of God ſubdue kingdomes in
warre, and that by faith : and therefore it is
lawfull for Chriſtians, upon juſt cauſe to make
warre. The *Anabaptiſts* of Germany ſay, It
is not lawfull for a Chriſtian under the Goſpell
to carry a weapon, or to make warre : But this
one place of Scripture (if there were no more) is
alone ſufficient to prove the lawfullneſſe of
warre under the Goſpel, if it be uſed according
to Gods will and word. When the *ſouldiers*
came to *Iohn Baptiſt*, and asked him, *What they
ſhould doe* ? he bids them not leave off their call-
ing : but ſaith, *Doe violence to no man, neither
neceſſary ſuſtaine, and bee content with your wa-
ges*, Luke 3. 14. And our Saviour Chriſt repor-
teth of a *Centurion*, (which was Captaine of a
Band) when he came to have his ſonne healed ;
that *hee had not found ſuch faith in Iſrael*. And
hee was not a Centurion, onely afore hee be-
leeved ; but even afterward, when Chriſt com-
mended his faith : yet did hee not diſlike his call-
ing. The like may bee ſaid of *Chariſmus*, Acts
10. All which, ſhew plainly, that upon
juſt cauſes Chriſtians may lawfully make
warre.

C *Object. 1.* But to defend their opinion, they
object ſome places of Scripture ; as Matthew 5.
39. *Reſiſt not evil*, ſaith Chriſt : therefore (ſay
they) a man may not weare a weapon, nor uſe a
ſword ; leſt thoſe make him to reſiſt, and ſo to
breake this Commandement of Chriſt, *doe not
revenge*. That place muſt bee underſtood of private re-
venge : and ſo it maketh nothing againſt law-
full warre. For what though a private man may
not revenge himſelfe, nor make warre ; yet that
hindereth not, but that a Magiſtrate who bears
the ſword, may lawfully uſe it. Again, it is
frivolous to imagine, that reſiſting is onely by
a weapon ; for the chief reſiſtance that God
reſpecteth, is in the heart and affection. And a
private man may reſiſt : that is, breake this com-
mandement, by unlawfull uſe thereof, though he
carry no weapons : and the publick perſon
breake it not, though it make warre.

D *Object. 2.* Secondly, they object the pro-
phcey of *Iſay*, who ſpeaking of the kingdom
of Chriſt, under the Goſpell, ſaith ; That then
they ſhall turne their ſwords into ſhears, and
their ſpeares into mattocks : therefore (ſay they)
there muſt be no warre under the Goſpell. *Anſw.*
That Prophecy ſignifies, that in Chriſts king-
dome, there muſt bee great love and peace,
and wonderfull concord among all the true
ſervants of God. But here they take advan-
tage, and ſay : If ſo be ſo, what neede we
take any warre ? *Reſponſe.* We muſt know, that as
there be two kinds of Kingdomes, a ſpiritual

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kingdome, and a politike; so there bee two kinds of peace, spirituall, and politike. *Spiritual peace* is inward, in the Church: and politike peace is outward, in the common-wealth. Spirituall peace is begun and preserved by spirituall meanes of grace in the Ministry of the Church; but warre is an ordinary meanes for the establishing and preserving of politike peace.

Secondly, hence wee learne, that Gods people may make warre, not onely by way of defence; but also, in assault upon their enemies, and that according to Gods word. For here it is said, that *Gideon, Sampson, David*, and the rest by *fiat subdued Kingdomes*, making warre against them by way of assault, and not in defence onely. Indeed, speciall care ought to bee had, that offensive warre, in assaulting an enemy, bee made upon just and good grounds: one speciall ground or cause is here implied in this worke of faith; to wit, the recovery of just right in matters of importance: for the Kingdomes of Canaan were given to the Israelites by God himselfe, and for the recovery of them, they made warre by way of assault. So when *Lot* was taken captive by *Kedar-Isomer*, and the Kings of the Nations, *Abraham, Lots* kinsman, gathers his servants together, and pursues the Kings, and overtaking them, destroyed them for the recovery of *Lot* and his goods. Other respects there bee, for which offensive warre in assault may bee made: but because they are not here mentioned, I will not propound them.

The second fruit of their faith is this; they wrought *righteousnesse*: that is, some of these men in their places wherein God had set them, gave to every man his owne. This working of *righteousnesse* consists in two things; First, in giving rewards to such as deserved them. Secondly, in inflicting due punishment according to mens deserts. In both these, the men before named did all excell; but especially two of them, *David* and *Sammuel*. For *David*, it is a wonder to see how *righteous* he was: for when he was annointed King in *Sauls* stead, and *Saul* rejected, how did he behave himselfe towards *Saul*? Did he seeke *Sauls* blood? No: but when *Saul* hunted him, as the hunter doth the *Partridge*, *David* even then gave himselfe to studie and practise *righteousnesse*: yea, when *Saul* was fallen into his hands, both in the *Cave*, and asleepe in the *campe*, 1 Sam. 24. 5, 6, &c. and 26. 7, 8. hee would not touch him, nor suffer others to doe him hurt, because hee was the Lords annointed: yea, so righteous was *David* towards *Saul*, that his heart smote him for cutting off but the lap of his coat. Therefore *David* is here commended especially, for this effect of faith, the working of *righteousnesse*.

To apply this unto our times: If this bee a fruit of faith thus to work *righteousnesse*, then what may be said of the Church of Rome, and of the Popish sort among us? They pretend the

ancient faith, and none must bee so good believers and Catholikes as they: But how doe they shew this their faith? Is it by the practice of *righteousnesse*? Doe they give to every one his due? Nay verily: but they let themselves to worke the ruine of Kingdomes, that joine not with them in religion. This witnesseth their manifold and devilish plots against our state from time to time. This did not *David*, no not against *Saul*, though hee were rejected of God, and also most unjustly sought his death. But they have many times sought the death of the Lords annointed over us: whereby they declare their state to all the world, that they have no sparke of true faith at all: for true faith will make a man practise *righteousnesse* and innocency. And therefore wee may judge of them, and all their adherents that be of this minde to allow such practices, that they have none other but the faith of devils: which is to beleieve the word of God to bee true. This the Devils doe with trembling. And as their faith is devilish, so are the fruits thereof; namely treachery and falshood, such as the devill most approves. But wee must learne that true faith is especially commended by these fruits: The study and practice of innocencie, and the maintaining of peace in Christian estates: for true faith, and treachery, and contention, wil no more stand together, than light and darknesse.

Secondly, *Sammuel* also wrought *righteousnesse*; as appears by his protestation before all Israel, when hee gave up his office of government over them unto *Saul*: 1 Sam. 12. 3. Behold (saith he) here am I: beare record of me before the Lord, and before his annointed: whose oxen have I taken? or whose Asses have I taken? or whom have I done wrong to? or whom have I hurt? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blinde mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it.

Now, as these two, *Sammuel* and *David* were famous, for this fruit of faith in working *righteousnesse*: so likewise were the Judges and Prophets before-named, in their places careful of this vertue: and did practise the same, partly in rewarding the good, and partly in punishing the wicked.

But some will say; To worke *righteousnesse*, cannot be a worke of faith: for the very Heathen, which never heard of Christ, by the light of nature have done justice, and are highly commended by Heathen Writers for the same. Now, that which the Heathen can doe by the light of Nature, is not thus to bee extolled as a fruit of faith? *Answe.* True it is, the Heathen have done many workes of justice: but we must wisely consider, that every just worke is not a fruit of faith, unless it be done by a righteous person in obedience to God, and for his glory. But in all these, the Heathen failed in their workes. For, though the things they did were good in themselves: yet seeing the Heathen were corrupt trees, remaining in the fennell flate of corrupt nature, their workes must needs be evil.

rupt fruit ; as coming from them. For an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. The heart is the fountaine of every action: Now their hearts were corrupt, being destitute of faith which purifieth the heart : and therefore their workes must needs bee sinfull. Again, they did not their workes in obedience : for they were guided onely by the light of Nature, and knew not God aright, nor his Commandements. And lastly, they propounded not the glory of God, as the end of their workes, but the praise of men, their owne profit, or some such end. But these worthy persons doe not onely such things as were just in themselves, but they doe them in faith, in obedience, and for Gods glory, and so please God.

Now, seeing these renowned Princes and Judges, have their faith commended unto us by their practising of righteousness ; wee must learne to follow them within the compasse of our calling, doing justice and righteousness in such things as concerne us. There bee many reasons set down in Gods word to perswade us herunto. As first, for this end hath God caused the Gospell to be published. Tit. 2. 12. *The showing grace of God hath appeared : but to what end ? To teach us, that we should deny ungodliness, and live soberly and righteously* : that is, that wee might *doe justice*. Unless therefore wee worke righteousness, wee make the Gospell a vaine word unto us. Secondly, wee desire to be counted just before God and men ; and it would grieve us, if wee should bee otherwise thought of : but if we would be just indeed both before God and man, then wee must worke righteousness : for (as S. John saith) *He that doth righteousness is righteous*. Thirdly, there is no man set over a family, but hee either doth, or ought to endeavour to bring a blessing upon his family. But this he cannot doe, unless hee worke righteousness, and doe justice : for Salomon saith, *Hee that walketh in his integrity, is just, and blessed shall his children be after him*. Lastly, we doe all of us desire to escape hell ; well then wee must remember to practise righteousness : for the Apostle saith, *no unrighteous man, that is, none practising unrighteousness, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*. So that within the compasse of our calling, we must all endeavour to doe justice.

Here some will aske : how shall I doe justice and worke righteousness ? Answer. For doing of it, wee must remember to practise these rules that follow : 1. That which is both the Word of God, and the rule of Nature ; *We must doe to all men, as we would they should doe unto us* : this is the Law and the Prophets (saith our Saviour Christ.) Now, the square for all our actions, must bee the Word of God : and Gods Word gives this direction ; doe thou to thy neighbor as thou in thy reason and conscience thinkest hee should doe to thee, if thou wert in his case, and he in thine.

The 2. rule, is that which Paul teacheth us, saying, *Give unto every man that which is their duty* : tribute to whom tribute belongeth, &c. that which Gods word, and our conscience, and the wholesome lawes of the realme binde us unto, that we must give unto every man.

The third rule is this : *Every man within the compasse of his calling, must not onely intend and labour for his owne good, but for the common good in that Church and common wealth wherein hee liveth*. The blinde world out of their carnall mindes have learned this for a rule, *Every man for himselfe, and God for us all* : and this is many a mans practice, hee will labour diligently in his calling, but all is for himselfe. But hee that propoundeth onely this end in his calling, to benefit himselfe alone, dealeth unjustly, both towards the Church and common wealth in which hee liveth, who ought to have a part of his care with himselfe.

The 4. rule is taught us also by S. Paul : *Defraud or oppress no man in any matter*. This rule concerneth our manner of dealing in common affaires. In all our trafficke and bargaines, as we would benefit our selves, so wee must seeke to benefit those with whom we deale. This rule is very necessary to be learned : for this is the common practice of men in their trafficke. To use all meanes whereby they may defraud others ; so that they get unto themselves, they care not how it come. But in the feare of God, let us remember, that the practice of justice (to which we are all bound) standeth in this ; that wee defraud or oppress no man in any thing. And thus much of this second fruit of their faith.

The third fruit and effect of these mens faith, is this : *They obtained the promise*. By promises wee must not understand the maine promise, concerning the Messias coming ; for that they obtained not as yet (as it appeares v. 39.) *They received not that promise* ; for Christ was not incarnate in their time. But by Promises are here meant certaine speciall and particular promises, made unto them alone, and not common to all : so that the meaning of these words is this : *They obtained the benefit and accomplishment of those particular promises that God made unto them*. This effect is specially to be understood of Caleb, and David : for Caleb entred into the Land of Canaan, and there enjoyed his possession, according to Gods promise made unto him, Josh. 14. So David had a particular promise made unto him, that hee should bee King over Israel ; this hee long waited for, and resting herein he was not onely appointed King, but in due time actually made King over all Israel.

Whereas these worthy men, by faith obtained these promises : Hereby we may be directed, to see the true cause, why after so long preaching of the Word, and after receiving of the Sacraments, men cease to little profit ; especially, considering that God hath made a promise

of grace and salvation, by meanes of his Word and Sacraments. Hence therefore we must learne that the word of God preached, and the Sacraments received, are unprofitable, not because God altereth his will, having promised his blessing in these meanes; for herein the will of God is unchangeable; but the cause is, the great measure of unbelief, in those which heare and receive. They therefore profit not, because they receive them without faith. For howsoever men say they have faith; yet the works of their lives, and their estate in sinne, after long hearing, shew plainly, they have none at all. Take a vessell that is close stopped, and cast it into a river, or into the sea; yet it receives no water, because it hath no place of entrance: Even so, bring a man that wants faith, to the Word and Sacraments, wherein God hath promised the fullness of his grace; yet he receives none, because his heart is closed up through unbelief. This is it which makes the hart like a stopped vessell, which hath no entrance for Gods grace. We therefore in the feare of God, must labour to have our hearts purged of this unbelief and lip-faith; and to be endued with true living faith; whereby we may profitably heare the Word, and receive the Sacraments, and so enjoy Gods most excellent promises in Christ. Men may lie, and be deceived; but God is truth it selfe, and cannot lie: and therefore, as he hath made his promise of life to beleevers, and to no other: so will he assuredly accomplish the same to them, and to no other. Wherefore if we love our soules, and desire life, let us get into our hearts the grace of faith. And thus much of the third effect of their faith.

The fourth and fifth effects, which I will handle together, are these: *Stopped the mouths of Lions. Quenched the violence of the fire.* For the fourth: Whereas some of these persons are said to have stopped the mouths of Lions, it is to be understood of *Daniel*; as appeareth in the sixth Chapter of that Booke. For *Daniel* (through the malice of others that incensed the Kings wrath against him) was cast into the den of hunger-bit Lions. But *Daniel* even then beleeved in the Lord, and put all his trust in God, and for this cause, *The Lord by his Angell stopped the mouths of the Lions* and (as it were) scaled up their pawes, that they could not hurt him.

The fifth effect, in *quenching of the violence of the fire*, must be understood of *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, the companions of *Daniel*: which three (as we may reade, Dan. 3.) refused to worship the golden Image, which *Nebuchadnezzar* had set up. For which cause, they were cast into an hot burning Oven; but they put their trust in God, and cleave fast unto him in obedience, even to the hazard of their lives.

Whereupon, the Lord by his omnipotent power, did most miraculously preserve them, by slaying the rage of the fire contrary to the intent thereof, that it had no power over their

bodies; nay, it did not burne the haire of their heads, nor caule their garments to smell. And therefore they are said, to have *quenched the violence of it*, because it had no power over them, though it burned most fiercely; but was to them, as though it had beene quite put out and quenched.

Now, joine these two effects together, and they afford us good instructions: First, here wee learne how to behave our selves in time of danger, and at the point of death. Even as these foure men did, so must wee from the bottome of our hearts forsake our selves, and put all our trust in Christ. This did *Daniel*, when hee was in the *Lions den*; and this did the 3. *Children*, in the hot fire furnace. And this hath beene always the ancient practice of Gods children in all ages; At the very point of death, and in the extremity of all danger, they rested themselves wholly upon the mercifull promises of the true God. The time will come upon us all, wherein wee shall bee called to the practice of this durie: for wee must all passe the doore of death, and once lie in the pang thereof. Now, what shall wee doe when we lie halfe dead, gasping and panting for breath, able to speake to no man, nor to heare any speaking unto us, when all comfort of the world faile us? Surely, we must then, at that very instant, labour to leave ourselves and this world, and yeild up our selves by faith into the hands of God, and cleave fast unto Christs passion, from the bottome of our hearts, and hee will surely deliver us from the danger; stopping the mouth of Satan that roaring Lion, and quenching the fire of hell, that it shall not touch us.

But some will say, if this beall we must doe, then all is well: for this I can soone doe when time serves, and therefore I will take no care till then? *Answer.* Beware of spirituall guile: for it will bee found a most hard matter, for a man to relye and cast himselfe wholly upon Christ, in the houre and pang of death. For then above all times, is the devill busie against us: then will the conscience stirre, if ever; and the body being tormented, the soule must needs be wonderfull heavy. This wee may see by the state of our Saviour Christ, in his agony and passion; and therefore wee must not reckon lightly of this durie.

Quest. But if it bee so hard a thing, how could *Daniel* and the three children doe it? *Ans.* They were prepared for it: for they rested upon God in the time of peace: and so were enabled to relie upon him in time of perill. Even so, if wee would beleeve in God when wee die, and then shew forth our faith, wee must while wee live put our trust in him, and shew it by obedience: for rare it is to finde a man that lives in unbelief, to shew forth faith at his end. And therefore while wee have health, strength, and peace, we must labour to beleeve, and then shall we finde the comfort of it in time of perill, and of death.

Secondly, from these two effects of faith, we observe further, that Gods divine providence doth firmly rule and governe the whole world. Ordinarily God govermes the world by secondarie causes, setting one creature over another, and ordaining one to doe this thing, and another that, and accordingly they worke: but we must not thinke that God is bound to any of these means, but is most free to use them, or not to use them. Ordinarily hee executeth this or that punishment by this or that creature, and so by meanes conveyes his blessings: but yet he can worke without them, as here we see. For, he preserves his creatures against the ordinarie meanes; as *Daniel* from the Lions, whose nature is to devoure: and against the nature of fire, hee saved *the three children* in the fire. So that God worketh by meanes, but yet freely; because he can worke at his pleasure, either without or against meanes: and his powerfull hand, saying against meanes, shewes his ruling and disposing providence over all things.

Thirdly, by these effects of their faith we learne, that Gods goodnesse and mercie towards believers, is farre greater, and more unspeakable than ever hee promised, or they could expect. This point is carefully to be considered of us all; for it is of singular and extraordinary use, especially in time of perill and trouble: and yet wee see it is the plaine truth of God; and therefore *Paul* gives thanks and praise unto God, *Who is able to doe for us exceeding abundantly above all that wee aske or thinke.* *Daniel* put his trust in the Lord, when he was in the Lions den: and what doth he obtaine for his labour? the Lord never promised to stop the Lions mouthes, neither did *Daniel* ever presume upon that deliverance; and yet the Lord saved him. And so the three children though they made no account of their lives, because God had not promised to keepe them from burning, yet they come out in safety. For, God in mercie so quenched the heat of the fire unto them, that though it burnt to death those that cast them in; yet did it not so much as burn their garments, or the hair of their heads, to cause the same to smell. And the like is his goodnesse towards all his servants. *David* saith, *The Lord prevented him with liberall blessings*, that is, when *David* never asked such blessings at Gods hands, even then did the Lord bestow his liberall blessings upon him: as namely this, when *David* was following his *Fathers sheepe*, and walking in his calling, hee never dreamed of any Kingdom: yet thence the Lord tooke him to be King over his people *Israel*. So the *Israelites* having beene 70. yeeres in captivity, never thought of returne; and yet then were they delivered: and their deliverance was so strange and miraculous, that they were like them that arose, *Psalm. 126. 1.* When *Peter* was cast into prison by *Herod*, and committed to foure quarters of Souldiers to be

kept, the Angell of the Lord came and awoke him as hee slept, and led him out of prison, past the watches, and thorow the iron gate, and then left him. Now, this deliverance was so strange unto him, that he knew not whether it was true, but thought he had scene a vision. From hence it is that God hath made this gracious promise unto his Church, to answer before they call, and to beare while they speake, *Isay 65. 24.* So endlessse is his mercie, and his goodnesse so unspeakable towards his servants, that if they cleave unto him unfeinably, they shall finde his bounty farre surpassing all that they could aske or thinke.

The consideration hereof serves to stirre up every one of us in our places, to cleave unfeinably unto the true God, with all our heart: by faith, in due reverence and obedience. If a servant were to chuse his Master, and among an hundred should heare of one, that besides his wages, would give unto his servants, gifts which they would not thinke of; this servant would forsake all the rest to come unto this one. Behold, the Lord our God is the bountifull master: who doth not onely keepe covenant with his servants, in a full accomplishment of his promises; but is exceeding gracious, preventing them with liberall blessings, above all that they can wish for themselves: wherefore let us forsake all our bad Masters, the world, the flesh, and the devill, in the service of sinne; and resigne our selves with full purpose of heart, to serve this our good God, to the end of our dayes. There is no man living, that can have such true joy in heart, as Gods servants have; for God shewes more kindnesse unto them, than they can aske or thinke of. And take this for truth also; there bee none that thus give themselves to serve God faithfully with all their hearts, but before they die they shall finde this to be true, that God is a most mercifull God, and his goodnesse endlessse towards them above their desires.

Secondly, the endlessse mercie of God must move us all to repent us of our sins, and to trust in him for the pardon of them, be they never so many or heinous: for they can never reach to the multitude of his mercies. Though they be in number like the sand of the sea, they must not dismay us from comming unto him: but considering that his goodnesse is endlessse, and his mercie is over all his workes, wee must come unto him for the pardon of our finnes. For God is mercifull to performe his promise; yea, and beyond his promise to doe for us more than we can thinke of. Many misse about this mercie of God by presuming to erre on to go on in sinne: but such deceive themselves: *For God will not be mercifull unto them.* *Deut. 29. 20.* It is the penitent person that shall finde mercie.

The sixth effect of their faith is in these words, *Escaped the edge of the sword.* The most literal original, are thus: *They escaped the mouth of the sword*: which is the Hebrew phrase in the old

Testament, and here followed by the Pen-
man of this Epistle: and before, where he call-
eth the Word of God *a two mouthed sword*,
Heb. 4.12. hereby meaning (as it is translated)
a two edged sword. This effect must bee under-
stood of two worthy Prophets, *Eliar* and *Eliz-
euz*: for *Eliar*, we may reade, that when hee
had slaine *Baal* the Priest, (1 King. 19.1.) *Jezebel*
the Queene threatned to kill him: which hee
hearing, fled into the wilderness, and thence was
led to Mount *Horeb*, & there escaped by means
of his faith. And for *Elizeus*, we may reade,
that when he disclosed the King of *Syria* his
counsell to the King of *Israel*, (2 King. 6.) hee
was compassed about in *Dolban*, the city where
he lay, with a huge host of *Assyrians*; but
praying to the Lord, the Lord smote the host
with blindness, and so the Prophet led them in
safetie to *Samaria*. So then, the meaning of this
effect is, that when these servants of God were
in distresse and danger of death, they denyed
themselves, and their owne helpe, and by faith
relied upon God unfainedly, from the bottome
of their hearts; and so found deliverance with
God, from the perill of death.

First, here we learne, that God provides for
the safetie and deliverance of his servants, in
the extremity of perill and danger, when both
might and multitude are against them. This
point wee have touched in divers examples be-
fore, and therefore doe here onely name it.

Secondly, in that these men in the extremity
of danger beleaved, and so *escaped the edge of
the sword*; we learne, that when we are in grea-
test danger, so as we see no way to escape; even
then we must put our trust in the true God, and
he will save us. This wee must doe, not onely
for the safety of our body; but more especially,
for the salvation of our soule. Put the case a
man were in despair of his salvation, and that
he sees legions of devils compassing him about
to take him away: what must this man doe in
this case? *Answer*. Looke what *Eliar* and *Elizeus*
did, the same thing must he doe; he must not
lie dead in desperation, yielding thereto: but
at the very same time, when such terrors op-
presse him, he must by faith lift up his heart to
God, and put his trust and confidence in him
through Christ. And if hee can this doe, hee
may assure himselfe, that he shall certainly es-
cape these fearefull terrors of conscience, and
the torments of hell, as *Eliar* and *Elizeus* did
the edge of the sword: for let a man put his
whole trust in God, & whatsoever his troubles
bee, God will deliver him. *Great are the trou-
bles of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him
out of them all*. Psal. 34.19. Indeed we must not
limit God, for time, or manner of deliverance:
but wait on God by faith, accounting his
grace sufficient, till deliverance come. And thus
much of the sixth effect.

The seventh effect of their faith is this:
Of which were made strong. Or thus: *Of which
were restored to health*. This must bee under-

stood of *Hezekiah*, a worthy King of *Juda*,
who (as wee may reade, 2 Kings 20.) being
fore sicke even unto death, was restored to
health, and obtained of God the lengthning of
his daies, for the space of fiftene yeares. Which
wonderfull recovery he obtained by means of
his faith, which he shewed in time of his sick-
nesse, by a prayer he made unto God; the sub-
stance whereof stood in these two things: First,
being very sicke, hee prayed for the pardon of
his finnes. This appeareth by his thanksgiving
upon his recovery, *Isay* 38.17. where he con-
fesseth, that *God had cast all his finnes behinde
his backe*. Now, looke for what he gave thanks,
that (no doubt) he had before begged of God
in prayer. Secondly, he made request unto God
for prolonging of his daies, for some reasons
which did concerne himselfe: and this hee also
prayed for in faith. Now, the reasons moving
him to pray for longer life, were these: First, he
had then no issue to succeed him in his King-
dome; and therefore he prayed for life, to be-
get a childe, which might sit upon his throne
after him. And the ground of this prayer was
this: God had made a particular promise unto
David and *Salomon*, 1 Kings 8.25. *That they
should not want issue after them to sit upon the
Throne of Israel*, so that their children took heed
to their way, to walke before the Lord, as *David*
did. Now King *Hezekiah*, knowing this pro-
mise, had regard hereunto: and building him-
selfe hereon, his confidence bearing him wir-
nesse, that he had walked before the Lord up-
rightly, he prays for issue to succeed him: and
for that cause, he desires strength of bodie,
and length of daies. This appeareth notably by his
prayer, 2 King. 20. *Lord*, (saith he) *I beseech
thee now remember how I have walked before
thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*. The
summe of his prayer is this: All the Kings suc-
ceeding *David* and *Salomon*, which walke in
Gods Commandements, shall have issue to sit
on their thrones after them. Now, from hence
he prays thus: *Oh Lord, I have walked before
thee, in truth and sincerity of heart: and hereupon
the conclusion followes, grant me issue to sit up-
on my throne after me; and therefore life and
health to accomplish the same*.

Secondly, hee prayed that he might live to
glorifie God, in that worthy calling, whereunto
God had placed him over his people. This ap-
peareth likewise, by his thanksgiving unto the
Lord, upon his recovery: where he saith, *Isa.*
38.20. *The Lord was ready to slay me: there-
fore wee will sing my song all the daies of our life
in the house of the Lord*. Thus by his worthy
prayer, hee shewed forth his faith notably: by
vertue whereof, being sicke unto death, hee
obtained of the Lord, the prolonging of his
daies, for the space of fiftene yeares. And so we
see, to whom this seventh effect of faith is to
be referred.

Here wee are taught a speciall Justice, for the
recovery of our health, in the time of sickness.

to wit, before we use the ordinarie meanes of Physicke, we must (according to this example) first put our faith in practice, by humbling our selves for our sinnes past, confessing them truly unto God, and praying for pardon from a resolute purpose of heart to lead a new life: and also by intreating health of God, and his good blessing upon the meanes which we shall use for our recoverie. Thus have other of Gods servants done, beside *Hezekiah*. When *David* was grievously sicke, the principall thing hee did, was this practice of faith; in humbling his soule before God for his sinnes, and intreating earnestly the pardon of them, as wee may see, Psalm. 6. and 38. This is the principall thing, which in those Psalmes is propounded of *David*. And so the Apostle counsels, Jam. 5. 14, 15. *Is any man sicke among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church: and what must they doe? Surely, first pray for him; and then (as the custome was in those dayes) anoint him with oyle in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sicke, and the Lord shall raise him up againe: and if he have committed any sin, it shall be forgiven him.* And here we must be admonished, to beware of the bad practices of the world in this case: the most men in their sickness, first seeke to the Physicians; and if that faile them, they send for the Minister. This was King *Asa* his practice, for which he is branded to all posteritie, that being diseased in his feet, he sought unto Physicians, and not unto the Lord, 2 Chron. 16. 12. though otherwise hee had good things in him, 1 King. 15. 14. And many doe farre worse, who seeke to Witches and Inchanters, when they or theirs are in distresse; but this is to forsake God, and to seeke helpe of the Devill, like to King *Abaziah*, who sent to *Baalzebub* the god of *Ephraim*, to know of his recoverie, when hee was sicke upon a fall, 2 King. 1. 2. This should be farre from all Gods children, for as *Abaziah* his sickness became deadly, through his sending to *Baalzebub*; so undoubtedly, many diseases become inturtable, by the bad and preposterous dealing of the Patient, who either useth unlawfull meanes, or lawfull meanes disorderly, or trusteth therein. Wee therefore in this case must, remember our dutie in the practice of faith, as *Hezekiah* did.

The eighth fruit of faith is this; *Waxed valiant in battell.* This effect may well bee understood of all the Judges before named, and of all the good Kings in Juda & Israel. But yet there be two especially, to whom we may more peculiarly referre it: to wit, *Samson* and *David*. For *Samson*, he by meanes of faith, came to be so mighty, Judg. 13. 15. that with the jaw-bone of an asse, he slew a thousand Philistines. And for *David*, he likewise was so encouraged by faith, that with the same sling, wherewith hee kept his fathers sheepe (which was but a slender weapon for warre) he encountered with *Goliath* that huge Philistine, and hit him with a stone in the

forehead, and slew him. Both these facts were the fruits of their faith, which made them bold to encounter with these mighty enemies.

In this effect of their faith, first, we may observe, that true fortitude and manhood, right valour and courage, comes from true faith. It must bee granted, that many heathen men had great strength and courage, but indeed it was but a shadow of true valour; for right valour comes from a believing heart. And therefore it is said, that these Judges and Princes of Israel, *waxed strong in battell by faith.*

Secondly, doth true faith make men valiant in battell? Then should the preaching of the word be set up and maintained, as well in the Campe, and Garrison, and among Souldiers on the seas; as in Cities and Townes of peace. For the preaching of the word is the meanes of this faith, which gives valour in battell, to them that fight in a good cause.

Hence it was, that the Lord enjoined by *Moses*, that when the people of Israel went out to battell, the Priests should come forth, and encourage the people, that their hearts might not faint, nor feare, nor dread their enemies; because of the powerfull presence of God fighting for them. The Papists object this (by way of reproach) against *Zuinglius*, who was one of the restorers of the Gospell: That hee died in the field among Souldiers: but this indeed is no reproach, but rather a matter of great commendation unto him: in that, for the increase of faith and knowledge, in them that were weak Christians about him, he was content to hazard his owne life. And thus much of the eighth effect.

The ninth effect of faith, for which these worthy men are commended is this; *They were able to fight the Armies of the Aliens.* This may be understood of the most of the Judges, and of the good Kings of Judah and Israel. But I will make choice, especially of *Joab*, *Gideon*, and *Iehoshaphat*: for *Gideon*, one of the Judges, with three hundred Souldiers Judg. 6. 7. altogether unweaponed, onely with light pebbles in their hands, put to flight a mighty huge Army of the *Midianites*. And *Iehoshaphat* a godly King, being assaulted with a mighty and great Armie of the *Mosabes*, *Ammonites*, and men of Mount *Seir*, knew that by force of armes he could not withstand them; and therefore by faith makes a worthy prayer unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him, and set his enemies one against another, and so did he put them to flight, which hee could never have done by any strength of his owne.

Here wee may learn how Kingdomes and people may become able to put to flight their enemies. The best way is, to put in practice their faith in God; by humbling themselves truly for their sinnes past, with unfeigned confession of them unto God, praying withall earnestly for the pardon of them; and for Gods ayd, assistance, and power against their

Deut. 18. 2. 5.

cre.

enemies. The power of this meanes is evident in Scripture: and therefore when *Elisha* was taken up, *Elisha* cried, *My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*: 2 King. 2. 12. giving him this notable commendation, that he was as good to Israel, by meanes of his faith, as all their chariots and horsemen. *Quest.* How could that possibly be true? *Ans.* If we reade the storie, wee shall finde it to be most true, that by his prayers which he made in faith, hee did as much or more than all the strength of the land could doe. And so it shall be with all Christian Kings and people: if they can shew forth their faith, by prayer unto God, they shall doe wonderfull much hereby, in subduing their enemies.

To apply this to our selves: Wee have had many and dangerous assaults from popish enemies, both domestickall and forren, who have of long time, and no doubt still doe purpose our overthrow. Now, how shall we be able to withstand their might, and to escape their malice? True it is, Christian policie, and warlike provision must be used: yet our stay and rest must not be thereon; but we must stirre up our faith, both Magistrate and Subjects, Prince and People; and first of all humble our selves for our finnes, and shew forth our repentance, by new obedience in time to come; and then pray for a blessing upon the outward meanes which shall be used. This is the right practice of faith, in the case of danger by our enemies; which we shall finde, if we exercise it unfainedly, to be a surer meanes of safetie and victorie against our enemies, than all worldly munition and policie. For hereby we shall have the Lord for our protection, & his blessing upon the outward means, giving strength and good successe thereunto; when as, omitting this dutie, the Lord will not be with us, and then we shall finde that vaine is the strength or wit of man. Let us not therefore betray our selves wilfully into our enemies hand; but by this practice of faith, enable our selves against all our enemies whatsoever: otherwise we may justly feare to be delivered into their hands, for a prey unto their teeth. And therefore if we love our owne safetie, and the welfare of our Land, let us practise this dutie: *For the prayer of faith availeth much with God, if he be fervent*; and therefore the Lord saith to *Moses*, when he fell downe before him, to turne backe the wrath that was broken in upon the people, *Let me alone*: as though *Moses* had held, or bound the Lords hand by his prayer, that he could not smite his people. And thus much for the ninth fruit of faith.



The faith of the widow,
and the *Shunamite*.

VERSE 35.

The women received their dead raised to life,



His is the tenth and last fruit of their faith, which must be under stood of these two women especially; the widow of *Zarephath*, and the *Shunamite*.

The widow of *Zarephath*, giving entertainment to *Elijah* in the great famine, had this blessing vouchsafed unto her for her faith, that her dead sonne was restored to life by the Prophet: And the *Shunamite* that provided lodging for the Prophet *Elisha*, had her only sonne restored to life from death by the Prophet through faith. Now here we must observe, that these two women did not onely beleve in the true God; but more particularly, that God would use these his servants, as meanes to restore to life their two children that were dead: as appears by this, that both of them made meanes to the Prophet, for the reviving of their children; which they did by faith.

But some will say, This last effect of faith, may seeme to crosse the Scripture elsewhere: which saith, that *Christ is the first fruits of them that sleepe*. How then could these that were before Christs incarnation, be restored from death to life? *Answer.* Saint *Pauls* meaning is this, that

Christ is the first of all those that rose from death to life, to die no more, but to live for ever. So indeed Christ is the first fruits of them that sleepe: for he rose to live for ever. As for these two, and some other, mentioned both in the old Testament and in the new, that were raised from death to life, they rose not from the sleepe of death, to live for ever, but to die againe.

In this tenth fruit of faith, all Parents may learne their dutie towards their children, in the case of sicknesse, or such like. They must follow the example of these two godly women, and labour especially to shew forth their faith in such duties as God requirith in such a case: to wit, they must humble themselves for their owne sins, and for the sins of their children and family: praying earnestly to God for the pardon of them: for God may visit the iniquitie of the Parents upon the children in bodily judgments: and intreating the Lord to restore them to health and liberty: and withall, they must use the ordinarie lawfull meanes of recovery in physicke and such like, praying to God for a blessing thereupon.

This is their dutie; but (alas!) the manner and practice of many Parents, is farre otherwise: for whereas they should first seek unto the Lord, and come to his Prophet they either runne first to the ordinarie meanes of Physicke: or being worse disposed, seekke helpe of wizards and blessings by their charms and sorceries.

ries forsaking God; and running to the Devill. Indeed, the use of lawfull meanes is not to bee discommended simply; but this preposterous course is blame-worthy, and deprives many of Gods blessing in the meanes. That they seeke helpe of Phynicke, before they have sought to the Lord in this holy practice of faith.

Quest. But how can the Parents faith benefit the childe? *Ans.* It cannot procure unto it eternall life: for every one must be saved by his owne faith in Christ. And yet the child receives many a good blessing at Gods hand, by meanes of the Parents faith; as namely, the benefit of the covenant of grace in the scales thereof; besides the fruition of many temporall blessings, as life it selfe in this place.

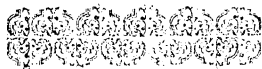
The consideration hereof, must move all Parents, above all things to labour for true faith: for by the practice hereof, they shall be able to bring the greatest blessing upon themselves and their children, and upon the lawfull meanes which they shall use for their good. Say the Lord shall lay his hand upon children and servants in a family, what must parents and masters doe? Surely, the best way for helpe is the practice of faith, in true humiliation for sinne, and prayer to God for mercie, and for a blessing upon the meanes which they shall use. In all societies this is true, that by the faith of the governours, many curses are removed, and many blessings procured. God sends his judgements among us daily, and we know not when other moe shall befall us: but for removall and preventing of them, wee must give our selves to true humiliation and prayer; and so shall we finde the Lords mercie towards us, as these two women did.

And thus much of this tenth fruit of faith; and of them all severally.

Now from them all joyntly together, observe this speciall point; *That faith is such a grace of God, as doth bring downe from heaven upon every beleever, all Gods blessings that are needfull for him.* Who is he that desires not to bee made partaker of Gods blessings needfull for him, both in soule and bodie? Well; the only way and meanes hereto, is to get a true and lively faith, and to put the same in practice, in all such duties as God shall require at our hands. The worthy men before named, obtained all the former most wonderfull blessings, by meanes of their faith: *By it they escaped the edge of the sword, they quenched the violence of the fire, waxed mightie in battell, &c.* as we have heard.

Now if faith bee such a notable grace of God, then above all things in this world, let us labour for it. Wee must not content our selves with lip-faith, and so presume upon Gods mercies; but we must labour for a true and a lively faith in Christ, which may purifie our hearts, and bring forth fruit in our lives. Here are strong motives to perswade us hereunto: for what doe we desire? riches, honour, or favour,

and grace in the world? would we have health, and strength? nay, the favour of God, which is all in all? then looke to get true faith: for in the practice thereof, thou shalt obtaine of God, all needfull blessings, both temporall and spirituall. Many toyle themselves exceedingly, by worldly meanes to get temporall blessings, as health, wealth, honour, &c. and yet never attaine thereto, because they seeke them not by faith. I confesse, naturall men get many good things: but to them they are no blessings; because they want faith, both in getting and keeping of them: for they lay all religion aside, and toyle themselves wholly in worldly means. This course the childe of God must beware of. Say that a Prince bids one of his servants goe to his Treasure, and there enrich himselfe with Jewels, with gold and silver, and with whatsoever he lacketh: what will this man doe? Surely, first he will call for the keyes, whereby hee may unlocke the doores and chests; for else he can get nothing. Behold, in the Ministerie of his Word, God shewes us his full Treasure, wherein we may enrich our selves, with all his blessings: Now, wee must not with the foole runne without the key, but labour first for true faith; which is that key, whereby Gods heavenly treasures are opened unto us: and we must be sure that we have a found key; that is, a true and sound faith, which may strongly turne about the locks of Gods Treasure. For this is most certaine, he that doth unfeignedly beleve, shall never want anything, either in bodie or soule, that is good for him to have. Every one will say, he beleeves; but the truth is, that true faith is rare: for mens hearts are not purified, nor their lives changed; but they remaine as sinfull as ever they were, which causeth Gods judgements to be so rife among us. Wherefore as we desire our owne good both in soule and bodie; so let us labour for true faith, and shew forth the power of it in our lives. And thus much of these Judges and Prophets, and of the fruits of their faith.



Beleevvers under the Macchabees.

VERS. 35.

*Others also were racked,
and would not bee delivered,
that they might receive a better resurrection.*

IN these words, the author of this Epistle proceeds to the fourth order of Examples of faith, contained in this Chapter; wherein (as in the former lastly handled) he proceeds briefly, heaping up in few words, many worthy examples of faith, concealing the names of the parties, and onely setting downe those things for which their faith is commended unto us. And this fourth and last order of examples, comprehendeth such beleevers as lived under the regement of the *Maccabees*, and afterward to the coming of Christ. For of beleevers in former times, it cannot be understood, because there is a manifest distinction put betwene these beleevers, and the former Judges, Kings, and Prophets; in these words, *Others also*: whereby it is plaine, that here hee propounds examples of beleevers different from those which hee mentioned before. And it is also plaine, that these beleevers lived before the coming of Christ. For howsoever the Christians in the Primitive Church, were racked, scourged, and tormented after this sort; yet of them this place cannot be understood, because they enjoyed the *promise of the Messiah*: but these here mentioned, enjoyed *not that promise in their dayes*, but waited for it by faith, and therein died, ver. 39. And indeed, in the time of the *Maccabees*, the Church of the Jewes was wonderfully persecuted by *Antiochus*, about two hundred yeares before Christ, as we may see, 2 Macch. 4. and 6. Chapters.

Q. Where had the Author of this Epistle this large narration of these strange persecutions, seeing they are not registered in the books of the old Testament?

Ans. Wee may judge, that he gathered it out of the Stories and Records of men: which (howsoever they be not now extant) yet in his dayes in the Primitive Church, were extant, knowne, and approved. Neither must this seeme strange unto us: for the spirit of God, in the old Testament speaking of men, hath oftentimes reference and relation therein to humane writings; as this phrase, (*These of the acts of such and such, are they not written in the books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Iudah and Israel?*) so often used in the books of Kings and Chronicles, doth evidently declare.

Now those *books of the Chronicles* were not parcels of holy Scripture, but civil, or Ecclesiasticall Stories, like to our books of Martyrs and Chronicles. 2 Tim. 3. 8. *S. Paul* faith, *Limes and Lambres resisted Moses*. Now, in the booke of Exodus, we shall not finde the Sorcerers that withstood *Moses* once named. And *S. Iude* maketh mention of a *prophete of Enoch*, ver. 14. which in all the old Testament is not recorded: and it is like that *Moses* was the first penne-man of holy Scripture. Whence then had these Apostles these things? **Ans.** No doubt the holy Ghost might reveale such things unto them, though they had beene unknowne in chiefe times: but it is more proba-

A ble, that the Apostles had them out of some Jewish writers, or records then extant, and approved among the Jewes. So *Paul* preaching to the Athenians, allegeth the saying of *Aristus* an Athenian Poet: *For we are his generation*. And to the Corinthians, hee propoundeth a sentence of *Menander*; *Evill words corrupt good manners*; 1 Cor. 15. And to *Titus*, he allegeth *Epimenides*, a Cretian Poet; *The Cretians are unwary liars, evill beasts, slow bellies*, Tit. 1. 12.

Now whereas the spirit of God taketh these sentences out of the writings of men, we may learne, that to reade the writings of men is not unlawfull, but a thing of good use to the servants of God. But whereas some would hence prove, that their authority may be alleaged ordinarily at every mans pleasure in the publike ministerie, it hath no ground in these places. For first, the Apostles were so guided by the holy Ghost in their publike Ministerie, that they could not erre; but no Ministers at this day have such a privilege. Secondly, the Apostles alleaging or recording the sayings of men in their Sermons or writings, did thereby sanctifie them, and make them to become a part of holy Scripture. This no ordinarie Minister can doe; but let him alleage a humane testimonie tenne thousand times, yet still it remaineth humane, and is not Gods Word. Thirdly, they that would warrant their practice, in alleaging humane testimonies in their sermons by the Apostles, ought to follow the Apostles in their manner of allegations. Now the Apostles were so sparing herein, that in many books we shall not finde one: for there are onely three in all the new Testament. Again, the Apostles did it without any ostentation: for the names of the Authors are concealed whence they tooke their testimonies.

And lastly, the Apostles did it upon weightie cause and just occasion: to wit, when they were perswaded in conscience, that those testimonies would convince the consciences of their hearers in those things for which they alleaged them. Now how farre many differ from the Apostles in their allegations, let the world judge.

D Yet before wee come to speake of these examples of faith in particular, there are fundrie generall points to bee handled. In the three former verses, the spirit of God hath set downe the prosperous successe of beleevers through faith: but here he comes to acquaint us with a different estate of other beleevers under grievous persecutions and torments, even to most cruell and bitter kinds of death.

From this which the Apostle here observeth, we may take a view of the state of Gods Church and people here in this world. For God vouchsafeth peace, and prosperous successe to some, as a iust reward of faith and obedience; but others must want the comfort of

outward peace and welfare, and undergoe most grievous trials and persecutions. Look as there is a continual interchange between day and night, and the one doth constantly follow the other, so as it is one while day, and another while night: so is it with the Church of God, and with true beleivers in this world: sometime they have peace and prosperity; and this continueth not alway: but another while they are in trouble, misery, and persecution.

To make this point more plaine, because it is of some importance; we may behold the truth of it, in the Church of God from the beginning. *Adams* family was Gods Church, and therein was first notable peace: but when God accepted *Abels* sacrifice, and refused *Cains*, then persecution began, and *Cain* slew his brother *Abel*. *Abraham* is called the Father of the faithfull, and his family in those dayes was the true Church of God; wherein we may notably see this changeable estate; for God calls him out of Charran, to dwell in the land of Canaan, *Exod. 12.1.10*. But within a while, the famine was so great in the Land, that hee was faine to goe downe into *Egypt* to sojourn there. And there the Lord blessed him exceedingly, and enriched him so greatly, that he became a mighty Prince, able to encounter with the Kings of those nations in battell, after his returne to Canaan, *Exod. 14.*

The Israelites, Gods chosen people, were 400. yeares in bondage in *Egypt*; but at the appointed time God gave them a glorious deliverance: and yet they were tried in the wilderness 40. yeares; after which time they were planted safely in the fruitful Land of Canaan, a Land that flowed with milke and hony. And there also, the Church of God was in this case: sometime in prosperity, and otherwhiles in adversity, for when it was ruled by Judges (as in that booke appears) for ten, twenty, thirty, or forty yeares together, the Israelites for their finnes, were in subjection and bondage to the nations round about them: as the *Movites*, the *Philistims*, the *Ammonites*, &c. Yet then, when they cried to God, hee sent them some mighty Judges to deliver them, for so long time againe. This was the interchangeable estate of the Church, all the time of the *Judges*. And afterward, when it was governed by Kings, it was in the same case: for one while God gave them good Kings, who would advance religion, and maintaine and cherish the Priests and Prophets of God; and for their time the Church prospered. But otherwhiles, for their finnes, God would send them wicked Princes: which persecuted the Prophets, and the godly in the land. This is plaine in the bookes of the Kings and Chronicles. After the reigne of good King *Iosias* came the captivity into Babylon, and 70. yeares expired, the Lord by King *Cyrus* returned them againe. After their returne they were one while in peace, and another while in distresse: as we may see in the bookes of *Ezra* and *Ne-*

hemiah: but above all other, that persecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, was the most notorious, which was foretold by *Daniel* in his prophesie, *Dan. 11.26*. and is recorded in the bookes of the *Maccabees*.

To come to the time of the Gospell: The Primitive Church, after the ascension of Christ, in the first 300. yeares, suffered ten most bloody and grievous persecutions: betwixt each of which, shee had some times of peace, and (as it were) respite to breathe in. And after the tenth persecution ended, the Lord raised up the good Emperour *Constantine*, who brought peace and welfare unto the Church. But soone after him, the heresie of *Arian*, raised up by the devil, brought as grievous persecutions on the Church, as ever the Pagans did; being a most blasphemous heresie, denying the eternall deity of Christ, and of the holy Ghost: and it prevailed in the Church for 90. yeares. Not long after the suppression of that heresie, began the idolatry and tyranny of *Antichrist* to prevaile in the Church, for many hundred yeares. And now, about some fourescore yeares agoe, the Lord in mercy raised up worthy instruments, by whose meanes hee delivered his Church from that idolatry and blindness: yet so, as still the Church hath felt the bloody hand of *Antichrist* in grievous persecutions. All which, thewes this to be most true: that the outward state of Gods Church is interchangeable, having one while peace, and another while grievous persecution.

To apply this to ourselves: God hath planted his Church among us in this land, and for many yeares together, hath blessed us with prosperity and peace: which in great mercy hee hath given us, as a reward of the faith of his servants which are among us: and during this time, we have had great freedom and liberty in Gods holy ministry, for the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments. But we must know, that the state of Gods Church, for peace and trouble, is interchangeable, as day and night, for light and darkness. Wherefore wee must be advertised to looke unto our selves: for our estate in peace must not last alwayes; these golden dayes will have an end, and troubles and afflictions will undoubtedly come. Indeed God onely knoweth, what kind of afflictions shall befall, and the particular time thereof: but that they shall come in the time appointed of God, wee may resolve our selves by the reasons following:

First, the tenour of the Law is this: that the curse doth follow the transgression: so that when any man, or family, or people, live in the breach of Gods commandments, they must looke for Gods judgements to be poured upon them. Now we may too truly affirme that this our nation and people abound with grievous sinne in all estates. For in the civill state, (to omit the manifold practices of oppression) where is justice without bribery? or bargain-

ning, without fraud and deceit? And in the ministry (beside many abuses) where is that care which ought to be for the building of Gods Church? And for the body of our people (beside grosse ignorance, and superstition) what fearefull blasphemie, whoredome, swearing, and Sabbath-breaking, doth every where abound? beside fearefull Atheisme, which is a mother of abominations: whether we respect naturall Atheisme, whereby many deny God by their works; or learned Atheisme in some, who dispute against the truth of God, revealed in his Word. All these, and many other sinnes among us, cry loud for Gods judgements upon us; even for that fearefull judgement, the removal of Gods kingdome in the Gospell of peace.

Secondly, consider what manner of persons of place, and note, both in Church and Commonwealth, God takes from us by death, even in their best time: are they not such as excelled among us, for great wisdom and learning, and for true piety and good conscience? now howsoever this may seeme but a small thing in the eyes of many; yet undoubtedly, it is a forerunner of Gods judgements: for the *righteous perish, and no man considereth it in heart; and mercifull men are taken away, and no man understandeth that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* Isa. 57. 1.

Thirdly, God hath let his fearefull judgements among us, and about us, waite and sword in our neighbour nations; which also hath beene oft shaken at us: also famine and pestilence throw out our owne land, by intercourse and long continuance, Levit. 26. Now this is the truth of God, that *when God sends his judgements upon a people, if they do not repent, one judgement is but the forerunner of another more grievous and terrible than the former.* But little or no repentance appears among us; nay rather, we fall away more and more, and so stand still in danger of more fearefull judgements.

Lastly, it is usuall with God thus to deale with his owne servants: as hee doth sometime reward their faith and obedience with peace; so otherwhiles he will try their faith by affliction. Thus he dealt with his servant *Iob*, though there were none for piety like him in his time, thorough all the world. Now God hath his servants among us, for the triall of whose faith we may persuade our selves some tribulation shal come upon us: *For all that will live godly in Christ Iesus shall suffer tribulation.* 2 Tim. 3. 12.

This being so, that our peace shall be turned into trouble, (as by the former reasons, which directly fasten themselves upon our Church and State, may evidently appeare) let us then here learne our duty.

First, we must cast with our selves, what may be the worst that can befall us, when triall and persecution shall come. This is the counsell of our Saviour Christ to those that would follow him constantly as good Disciples: they must, as

A *good builders*, consider of the cost, before they lay the foundation; and like *good warriors*, consider of their strength, before they goe out into the field, lest they leave off, and turne backe, like fooles and cowards, Luk. 14. 28, &c. Wee by Gods mercie doe now profess the true religion of Christ, with hope to be saved thereby: therefore wee must cast with our selves, what our religion may cost us, and see before-hand, what is the worst thing that may befall us, for our profession of Christ and his Gospell. If we have not done this in the beginning of our profession, we must now doe it: for better late than never: lest going on securely, without this account making, wee shamefully forsake Christ when triall comes.

B In former times, the constant profession of Christ, hath cost men losse of friends, losse of goods, and liberty: yea, the losse of their hearts blood: and the same case may befall us. Wherefore, we must cast with our selves, and see whether we be willing to suffer the losse of goods, and friends: yea, the losse of our lives, for the defence of Christs true religion.

Again, as this estate of the Church must move us to make this account, for resolution in suffering; so it must reach us to labour for those saving graces of Gods Spirit, which may inable us to stand fast in all temptations, troubles, and persecutions. Wee must not content ourselves with blazing lamps, as the five foolish virgins did: but get the oyle of grace into the vessels of our hearts. Knowledge in the Word is a commendable thing: but not sufficient to make us stand in the day of triall. Wee therefore must labour for true saving graces; especially for this, to have our hearts rooted and grounded in the love of God, through faith: whereby wee are assured, that God is our father in Christ, and Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and the holy Ghost our comforter and sanctifier. This assurance of faith will stablish our hearts in all estates: come life, come death, wee need not feare; for nothing shall bee able to separate us from this love of God in Christ Jesus.

And thus much of the coherence of this verse with the former. Now to the words.

D *Others also were racked, &c.* Here the holy Ghost begins to propound the fruits of faith, for which this last ranke of beleivers are commended unto us. And they are not such famous exploits as the former, but *nine* severall kinds of sufferings: unto all which, we must remember to apply this clause *by faith*, from the 33. verse: as thus, *Through faith, they endured racking, mocking, and so for all the rest.*

Out of these effects in generall, wee may learne two things; First, a singular fruit of faith, for which it is here so highly commended in this last ranke of examples: to wit, that by it the childe of God is enabled to beare whatsoever the Lord shall lay upon him. The torments wherewith mans body may be afflicted, are many

many and terrible; and yet, be they never so many, nor so terrible, true saving faith will make the child of God to beare them all for the honour of Christ.

The effects of faith before set downe, were many and singular: but undoubtedly, this strength of patience, which it giveth under the greatest torments for Christs sake, is one of the principall.

This, *Paul* doth notably testifie in his profession, (Rom. 8: 38, 39.) *I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.* Oh singular power of faith! which so firmly unites the beleever unto Christ, that no torments in the world, no not all the power of Satan and his angels, can separate them asunder.

Quest. How doth faith worke this indissoluble power in cleaving unto Christ? *A.* After this manner: It is the property of faith, to perswade the conscience of Gods love and favour in Christ; and upon this perswasion, the heart becommes to love God againe. Now by this love doth faith worke, and make a man able to beare all torments that can be inflicted for religions sake: for, *Love suffereth all things,* 1 Cor. 13. 7. even that love wherewith one man loveth another: how much more then shall this love wherewith wee love God in Christ, make us to suffer any thing for his names sake? Hence it is that love is said to be strong in death: and the coles thereof are fire coles, and a vehement flame: yea, much water cannot quench love, neither can the floods drowne it; that is, grievous persecutions and torments cannot extinguish the flame. Nay, such is the power of love to God when it is fervent, that it makes a man so zealous of Gods glory, that if there were no other way to glorifie God, than by sufferings; the child of God would rather yeeld himselfe to endure the torments of the damned, than suffer God to lose his glory. This we may see in *Paul*, Rom. 9. 2. *I would wish my selfe (saith he) to be separate from Christ for my brethren that are my kinsmen, according to the flesh:* that is, the Israelites; meaning for the advancement of Gods glory in their calling and salvation. Such zeale we may see in *Moses*: for thinking that God should lose his glory, if the Israelites were destroyed, hee prays the Lord to pardon their sinne: But if thou wilt not, then (saith he) raise me out of the booke which thou hast written.

This being the fruit of faith, To make a man able and willing to suffer any thing for Christs sake; we must hereby be moved to labour for true faith: for tribulation may come; nay, some affliction will come on every child of God more or lesse. Now without faith wee shall never be able to glorifie God under the crosse. *The Just must live by faith* in this estate, Heb. 10. 38.

as here they endure racking, burning, heaving alunder, &c. and all by faith.

Secondly, out of all these sufferings here endured by faith, note the mind and disposition of ungodly men towards Gods Church and people: they are most bitterly and bloodily bent against them: for here they put in execution upon Gods children, whatsoever cruelty the devill could suggest in their hearts. And this hath beene their disposition and behaviour, not onely before Christs incarnation, but also ever since: as may appeare by the manifold strange tortures, devised against Christians in the Primitive Church; and both then and since inflicted upon them. Behold it in the Church of Rome, especially in their late Inquisition: whereby, beside the cruell racking of the conscience by unjust inquiries, they put the Protestants to most cruell torments.

The consideration of this cruell disposition in the wicked, against the godly, is of speciall use. First, it proves unto us, that the religion which by Gods mercy we professe, contained in the bookes of the old and new Testament, is no politike device of man, but the sacred ordinance of the everlasting God. For, if it were the invention of man, it would fit their humour, and accord with their nature, that generally it would be loved and embraced, and not one of an hundred would mislike it. But we see it is generally detested; *This selfe is every where spoken against*, Act. 28. 22. naturall men reject it, and persecute it, and the professors of it unto the death. This they doe, because true religion is contrary to their nature, as light is to darkness; and condemnes those wayes and courses which they best like of. This reason shall justifie true religion, to be Gods own ordinance, even to the conscience of the worldly Atheist: his devillish malice against it, proves Gods divine truth to be in it.

Secondly, doe the wicked hate the godly, because of their religion and profession? then on the contrary, we must learne to love religion, because it is religion; and the professors of it, for their professions sake. This is Christs instruction, *to love a Disciple because hee is a Disciple*, Mat. 10. Indeed we must love all men: but especially those that embrace the Gospell of Christ, and be of the household of faith: for all such are brethren having one Father, which is God; and brethren ought to love one another. But alas, this lesson is not learned: for the world generally is given to mocking, and scoffing; and the matter of their mocking is religion, and the professors thereof. This ought not to be so: for howsoever men may faile both in knowledge and practice, yet the professors of religion should not to be despised. This abuse is growne to such an height, that many retaine the diligent hearing of the Word preached, lest they should be mocked. But let these mockers know, that herein they shake hands with the devill, and with the persecutors

of Gods Church: for *mocking is a kind of persecution*. Young Christians should not bee so deale with; but rather encouraged, for the advancement of the Kingdome of Christ. Thus deale our Saviour Christ with those that gave any testimony of the sparks of grace: when the *young man said, he had from his youth kept Gods commandments*, the Text saith, *Iesus beheld him, and loved him*, Mark. 10. 21. and hearing a Scribe answer discretely, hee said unto him, *Thou art not farre from the kingdome of God*, Mark. 12. 34. Now wee must be followers of Christ, and walke in love, judging and speaking the best of all professors, accounting none for hypocrites, till God make their hypocrisie knowne. It is a note of a Christian to love a man, because he loves religion: on the contrary, to hate a man, because he is a Christian, is a note of a persecutor, and an enemy to Christ. And thus much in generall.

Now wee come in particular to the severall kindes of suffering, which these beleivers endured by faith: the first whereof, is *racking*: in these words, *others also were racked*: or, as some translate it, *And others were beaten with clubbes*. For the word in the originall will beare either translation: and both of them fidly agree to this kinde of suffering. For in these times, the enemies of Gods Church, used to set the bodies of them that were to be tormented upon racks and engines; whereon they stretched out every joyn, and then did beat the whole body thus racked with clubs, till the party were starke dead. An example of this kinde of suffering, wee have in *Eleezer a Jew*, 1 Mac. 6. who under *Antiochus* was first racked, and then beaten on every part of his body, unto the death; because hee refused to eat swines flesh.

But some will say, This cannot be any commendation of faith, to be racked and beaten to death: for malefactors and traytors are so used. *Answe.* To prevent this objection, the holy Ghost addeth these words; *and would not be delivered*: or, *would not accept deliverance*: to shew that this suffering was a notable commendation of true faith. The meaning of the words is this; That whereas some Jewes in the old Testament, were condemned to death for their religion by persecutors: and yet had life and liberty offered unto them, if they would recant and forsake their religion: This proffer of life they refused, *and would not be delivered*, upon such a condition.

In this example of faith, wee are taught to hold fast true religion, and to preferre the enjoying of it, before all the pleasures and commodities in the world; yea, before life it selfe. This point, *Paul* urgeth in sundry exhortations, saying, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest hee fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. forbidding us to preserve our outward peace, by communication with Idolaters. And againe, *Stand fast in the faith*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. Yea, this

is one maine point that *Paul* urgeth to *1 Timothy* in both his Epistles; *to keepe faith and a good conscience*. And our Saviour Christ in one of his parables, Mat. 13. 44. compares the kingdome of heaven, to a *treasure hid in the field*: *which, when a man findeth, he hideth it, and goes home and sells all he hath, to buy the field*. Whereby hee would teach us, that every ones duty, who would enjoy the Kingdome of heaven, is this: In regard of it, to forgoe and forsake all things else, esteeming them to bee drosse and dung, as *Paul* did, Philip. 3. 8. What though a man had all the riches and pleasures of the world, and all things else for this life, that his heart could wish? yet, if hee wast religion, and a good conscience, all he hath is nothing: for so hee wants the love and favour of God, and shall lose his soule; for the ranfome whereof, all the world can doe nothing. Wherefore, we must hereby be admonished, to have more care to get and maintaine true religion, and a good conscience, than anything in the world besides.

Now, because nature will judge it a part of rashnesse, to refuse life when it is offered: therefore, to prevent this conceit, against these beleivers, the holy Ghost sets downe a notable reason of this their fact: to wit, *They refused deliverance, That they might receive a better resurrection*. Many interpreters understand these words, of the resurrection at the day of judgement simply, as though the holy Ghost had said, These Martyrs therefore refused to be delivered from death; because they looked to receive, at the day of judgement, a greater measure of glory; even for this, that in obedience to God, for the maintenance of true Religion, they were content to lay downe their lives. This (no doubt) is the truth of God, that the more we humble our selves, in suffering for the Name of Christ in this life, the greater shall our glory bee at the generall resurrection; for *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, causeth unto us a farre more excellent and eternall weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. And yet (as I take it) that is not the meaning of these words; but their resurrection at the last day, is here termed *better*, than the temporall deliverance offered unto them. For, being in torments on the racke, they were but dead men; and when life was offered unto them, it was (as it were) a kinde of resurrection, and in regard of the enemies of the Church, a good resurrection: but for that they would not lose the comfort of resurrection to life, at the last day.

Here then are two resurrections compared together. The first is a deliverance from temporall death; the second is a rising to life everlasting at the day of Judgement. Now, of these two, the latter is the better; and that in the judgement of Gods servants and Martyrs. So then, the true meaning of these words, is this: These servants of God refused deliverance from temporall tortures and punishments:

ments; because their care and desire was, that their bodies might rise againe to life everlasting, at the day of judgement: which rising againe to life at that day, they judged farre better, than to rise to a temporall life, for a while in this world.

This reason, well observed, may teach us these two speciall duties: First, to bee careful above all things, for alliance in our consciences (as these servants of God had) that our bodies shall rise againe to life everlasting at the last day. True it is, we make this confession with our mouths, among the articles of our faith; but we must labour to be settled and resolved effectually in our hearts, that these our bodies (bee they never so miserably tormented here) shall one day rise to life and glory, by Jesus Christ. All the true Martyrs of Christ knew and were resolved of this: and this it was, that made them so confident in their sufferings. And if we can attaine unto it, we shall finde great use herof, both in life and death. For our lives, this will move us to embrace true religion from our hearts, and in all things to endeavour to keep a good conscience. This *Paul* testifieth, *Act. 24. 15, 16.* for having made profession of his hope in the resurrection, both of just and unjust, he saith, *And herein I endeavour my selfe to have alwayes a cleare conscience, both towards God, and towards men.* And for death, this perswasion also is of great use: for it will notably stay the heart, against the naturall feare of death. It is a wonder to see how terrible the thoughts of death are to many a one. Now this feare ariseth hence, that they are not in heart resolved of their resurrection to life and glory at the last day: for if they were, they would endeavour themselves with patience and with comfort, to undergoe the pangs thereof, though never so terrible.

Secondly, hence wee in it learn to lead this temporall life, that when we are dead, our bodies may rise againe to life eternall. These Martyrs are a noble president herein unto us: for they are so resolute to hold that course of life, which hath the hope of glory, that they will rather lose temporall life, than leave that course. And indeed this duty is so necessary, that unlesse we order well this temporall life, we can never have hope to rise to glory. *Quest.* How should we lead this temporall life, that we may rise to glory after death? *Ans.* This *S. Iohn* teacheth us, *Rev. 20. 6.* *Blessed and holy is he that hath his part in the first resurrection: for of such the second death hath no power.* Wee must therefore labour earnestly to have our part herein. The first resurrection is spiritual, wrought in the soule by the holy Ghost, causing him that is by nature dead in sin, to rise to new life of life: whereof whosoever is true partaker, shall undoubtedly rise to glory. For they *but are quickened in Christ from the death of sin, are made to rise to glory in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* *Ephel. 2. 5, 6.* *Nat-*

A turall death may sever soule and body for a time: but it can never hinder the fruition of eternall life. Wherefore as wee desire this life which is eternall when wee are dead, so let us frame our naturall lives to die unto him while wee are alive.

Verse 76. *And others have beene tried by mockings and scourgings, yea were ever by bonds and imprisonment.* The second kinde of suffering wherewith the servants of God were then tried is mocking. Touching the which wee may observe divers points: First, whence it came. No doubt it came from ungodly persons, that were enemies to Gods Church and true Religion; for here it is made a part of the trial of Gods Church by the enemies thereof.

B Here then behold the state of mockers and scoffers at the servants of God: they are here accounted wicked wretches, and enemies to God and to his truth. So *Saint Jude*, speaking of certaine false Prophets which were crept into the Church, calls them *ungodly men*, *Jude 4.* which hee proves afterward by their blacke mouths in evil speaking, *ver. 8. 10.* And *Ismael* is accounted a persecutor by the holy Ghost, for *mocking Isaac*, *Gal. 4. 29.* And *David* reckoning up the degrees of sinners, makes the chaire of the scornfull the third and highest, *Psal. 1. 1.* All these places shew the heinousnesse of this sinne: and therefore if any of us, young or old, high or low, have beene overtaken with it heretofore, let us now repent and leave it: for it is odious in Gods sight. Thou that art a scoffer shalt flatter thy selfe, and thinke all is well, let the matter prove how it can, words are but wind. But know thy case is fearefull; for as yet thou wantest the feare of God, and art an enemy to Christ and his Religion, and one day thou shalt bee judged, not only for thy wicked deeds, but for all thy cruel speaking, *Jude v. 15.*

C Secondly, whereas these servants of God were tried by mockings, it shewes that Gods Church in this world is subject to this affliction. It is not a thing newly begun in this age of ours, but hath alwayes beene in Gods Church from the beginning. *Gen. 21. 9.* *Ismael mocked Isaac*; and *Isay* brings in Christ complaining thus: *Isay 8. 18.* *Behold, I and my children whom the Lord hath given me, are as signes and wonders in Israel.* And *Jeremy* saith, *I am in derision daily: every one mocketh me.* *Jer. 20. 7.* Yea, our Saviour Christ upon the Crosse, when hee was working the blessed worke of mans redemption, was even then mocked by the spitefull Jewes, *Mat. 27. 41.* And *Paul* was mocked of the Athenians for preaching Christ and the resurrection, *Act. 17. 18.*

D Now if this have beene the estate of Christ our head, and of his most worthy Prophets and Apostles, to be mocked and scorned; then must no child of God at this day thinke to escape: for if they have done this to the greene tree, what will they do to the dry? Wherefore



if wee belong to Christ, wee must prepare: A
for it, and arme our selves with patience to
undergoe this triall. *The Disciple is not above
his Master, nor the servant above the Lord.
If they have called the Master of the house Beel-
zebub, how much more them of the house?* Matt.
10. 24, 25.

Thirdly, whereas these servants of God
were tried by mockings, and did endure the
same, by faith; here we learne how to behave
our selves, when wee are subject to mocking
and derision, especially for religions sake. We
must not returne mocke for mocke, and taunt
for taunt; but with meeknesse of heart learne
to beare the same. When Christ was upon the
crosse, the Jewes most shamefully mocked
him: yet even then did Christ pray for them.
And the same was *Dauids* behaviour, as wee
reade notably, *Psalme 38. 12, 13, 14. When his
enemies spake evil of him, what did he? Did he
raile on them againe? No; He was as a deafe
man, and heard not: and as a dumbe man which
openeth not his mouth: even as a man that be-
reth not; and in whose mouth are no reproches.*
This was a rare thing in *David*, that he could
thus bridle his affections in the case of reproach:
but reade the 35. ver. and we shall see the cause:
*He trusted in the Lord his God: also he con-
sidered the hand of God in their reproaches,* as
2 Sam. 16. 10. and these things made him si-
lent. This example wee must looke upon, and
learne hereby with patience to possesse our
soules under reproach.

The third kinde of suffering is *Scourging*.
They were not onely mocked for Religion, but
also whipped and scourged. The fourth is *bonds
and imprisonment*. The fifth is *stoning*, ver. 27.
They were stoned. The sixth is this, *They were
burned asunder*. These were all worthy fruits of
faith, being endured for Religions sake: but
the particular points that might here be ob-
served have beene handled before, and therefore
I passe them over.

The seventh kinde of suffering is this: they
were *tempted*. These words, by the change of a
letter in the original may be read thus, *They
were burned*. And thus doe so translate it;
thinking that they that writ or copied out
this Epistle at the first, did put one letter for
another. Their reason is, because examples of
grievous punishments are mentioned both be-
fore and after this: and therefore they thinke
this should bee *burning*, which is a sore and
grievous death. But wee may safely and truly
reade the words thus, *They were tempted*: con-
ceiving hereby that they were inticed and allu-
red by faire promises of life to forsake their
Religion. So the same word is used by Saint
James, saying, *Every man is tempted, when he
is drawne away by his owne concupiscence, and
is enticed*. James 1. 14. If any aske why this
triall in *tempting* should bee placed among
such cruell torments? I answer, because it
is as great a triall as any can bee. For it is as

dangerous a temptation to overthrow religion
on and a good conscience, as any punishment
in the world. This appears plainly in Christs
temptations by the Devil: for in those three,
Satan bewrayes his malice and craft against
Christ and his Church most notably. Now Sa-
tan, not prevailing with the two first, makes
his third and last assault from the glory and
dignity of the world: for shewing unto Christ
*all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of
them*, hee saith, *All these will I give thee, if
thou wilt fall downe and worship me*. Matt. 4.
9. Indeed Christs holy heart would not yeeld
unto it: but that it was a grievous temptation,
appears by Christs answer. For in the former
temptations, hee onely disputed with Satan
out of Scripture: But when this temptation
comes, Christ bids him (as it were in passion)
avoyd Satan: signifying thereby not onely his
abhorring of that same, but also the danger of
that assault by the world. And indeed these
temptations on the right hand (as wee may call
them) will most dangerously creepe into the
heart, and cause shipwracke of faith and a good
conscience. All *Dauids* troubles and persecu-
tions could not bring him to so grievous finnes,
as did a little ease and rest. A huge great Almie
cannot so soone give entrance to an enemy in-
to a City, as riches and faire promises: neither
can bodily torments so soone prevail against
a good conscience, as will worldly pleasures and
faire promises. In regard whereof, wee must
take heed that wee bee not deceived by the
world: for the view of the glory and pompe
thereof, will sooner steale from a man both re-
ligion and a good conscience, than any perse-
cution possibly can doe. And indeed, who do
so oft change their religion when trials come, as
they that have the world at will?

The eighth example of suffering is this, *They
were slain with the sword*. There can be nothing
finer of this, which hath not beene spoken
in the former examples; and therefore I omit
it.

The ninth and last example of suffering is
this; *They wandered up and down in short robes,
and goat-skins, being destitute of food, and com-
ment*: That is, being either banished, or con-
strained by flight to leave their lives, they wan-
dered up and down in bafe attire, and were de-
stitute of ordinary food and comfort; and so in
great affliction and torment.

Here wee see these servants of God were
driven from their owne Country, friends and
families, by persecution. Whence wee observe,
that in time of persecution, a Christian man
may lawfully fly for his safety, if he be not hin-
dered by the bond of private or publike calling.
For these servants of God, here commended
for their faith, did die when they were perse-
cuted; and that by faith: therefore the action is
lawfull, as I might prove at large, but that
I have spoken of it heretofore. When our Sa-
viour Christ knew that the Pharisees heard of
the



the multitude of Disciples which he made, John. 4. 1. 2. *beleft Iudea*, where they had greatest jurisdiction, *and came into Galilee* for his safety. The Prophets in the old Testament did flie: as *Elias* from *Iezabel*, 1 King. 19. 2. And so did the Apostles in the new, and that by Christs direction, Matth. 10. 23.

Object. 1. But some will say, Persecution is the hand of God, and therefore no man may flie from it: for so he should seeme to flie from God himselfe. *Ans.* Wee must consider persecution two waies: first, as it is the hand of God; secondly, as it is the worke of the wicked enemies of Gods Church. For them God useth sometimes as instruments, in laying his hand upon his Church, either for chastisement or for trial. Now a Christian being persecuted for the truth, and having liberty to flie, cannot bee said to flie from Gods hand, unless hee went away contrarie to Gods command, as *Ionas* did being sent to *Ninive*: and beside, hee knowes that is impossible. But his intent is to flie from the wrath of his enemies to save his life for the further good of Gods Church. Again, the reason is not good, To say persecution is the hand of God, therefore a man may not flie from it? For so might a man conclude, that none ought to flie from sicknesse, or from warre: both which a man may doe with a safe conscience, not being hindred by some speciall calling.

Object. 2. But every one is bound to testifie his faith and religion before his enemies: and therefore may not flie in persecution. *Ans.* True indeed: a Christian man must so testifie his faith, if he be called thereto of God: but if God give him liberty and opportunity to flie, then he will not have him at that time to iustifie his religion by that meanes.

Object. 2. But if it be lawfull to flie, how then comes it to passe that some of Gods children, when they might have fled, would not: but have stood to iustifie their profession unto death? *Ans.* We must iudge reverently of them, and thinke they did it by some speciall instinct and motion of Gods Spirit; as appeareth by their patience and constancy in their greatest torments. Examples hereof wee have in our English Acts and Monuments, in men worthy of notable commendations for their constancy and zeale for the truth of the Gospell.

Quest. If flight in persecution may be an action of faith; Whether may not the Minister of Gods Word flie in persecution?

Ans. There be some cases wherein the Minister may lawfully flie: First, when that particular Church and congregation over which he is placed, is disperfed by the enemies; so as he hath no hope to gather and call them backe againe: then (no doubt) he may flie, till his congregation be gathered againe. Secondly, If the persecutors doe specially aime at the Ministers life, then with the consent of his flocke, hee may goe apart for his owne safety for a time.

A So it was with *Paul*: when the Ephesians were in an uprore about their *Demetrius*, *Paul* in zeale would have craved to be among them; but the Disciples suffred him not, Act. 19. 32. This they did for *Pauls* safety, and the good of the Church; for they knew those Idolaters would have bene most fierce against *Paul*. And so ought every particular Church to have speciall care of the life of the Minister. Other causes there be in which he may flie: but I will not stand to recite all, because there bee so many circumstances which may alter the case, as well respecting his enemies as himselfe and his people: making that unlawfull at one time, and to some persons, which to other or at another time may be lawfull.

B Secondly, whereas it is said, *Thes. fronts of God wander up and downe*: wee doe learne that a man may lawfully goe from place to place, and travell from country to country; if so be he goes in faith, as these men did. Again, their going was to keepe faith and a good conscience: and for the same end may a man lawfully travell from place to place. But when men goe not in faith, nor yet for this end, the better to keepe a good conscience: there undoubtedly their travell is noe lawfull.

By this then wee have just cause to reprove the bad course of many wanderers among us: as first, of our common beggers, whose whole life is nothing else but a wandering from place to place; though not in faith nor for conscience sake: but they finde a sweetnesse in their idle kinde of life; and therefore they wander, because they would not worke. Now this their course (having no other ground, but love of idleness, and contempt of paines in a lawfull calling) cannot but be greatly displeasing unto God: who injoynes that every man should *make in him lawfull calling, and eat his owne bread*. This they doe not, and therefore the curse of God pursueth them: for generally they are given up to most horrible finnes of injustice and uncleanness: they walke inordinately: for they range not themselves into any families, but live liker brute beasts than men: they are not members of any particular congregation, but excommunicate themselves from all Churches; and so live as though there were no God, no Christ, nor true Religion. And herein wee may see Gods hand more heavy upon them, that they take all their delight in that course of wandering, which in it owne nature is a curse and a punishment.

D Secondly, wee may here also justly reprove the course of some others among us, who will needs be travellers: not for Religion sake, (for that were commendable, if they had such need) nor yet by vertue of their calling, (which were lawfull) but only for this end, to see fashions and strange countries: and they refuse not from such places as *Rome*, *Spain*, *Scythia*, &c. that cruell Inquisition will hardly suffer any to passe with safety of a good conscience. But

shall wee thinke that this their travell is commendable? No surely: for the end of lawfull travell is the preservation of faith and a good conscience, or the bond of some lawfull calling. Now these men travelling upon no such grounds, but only upon pleasure; how shall we thinke they will stand to the truth, when they thrust themselves into such needlesse danger and triall? The crazed consciences of many at their returne shew sufficiently the badnesse of that course.

Further, note the state of these belevers for their attire; it was of *sheep-skins, and goats-skins*. The like may bee observed in other famous Prophets and servants of God: *Elijah* wore a garment of haire, and thereby was knowne, 2 King. 1. 8. And so did *John Baptist*, Matth. 3. 4. Yea, the false Prophets went so arrayed, that they might the rather bee respected of the people, Zach. 3. 4. And our Saviour Christ saith, *The false Prophets shall come in sheeps cleathing, like the true Prophets*; when as indeed they are *ravening Wolves*. Now the true Prophets of God went thus basely attired, that not onely by word and doctrine, but also in life and conversation, they might preach repentance unto the people. And indeed, every Minister of the Gospell ought to be a light unto his people both in life and doctrine: and he that preacheth well, and doth not live according to his doctrine, builds with the one hand and pulls downe with the other. Now whereas these servants of God went up and downe in such base attire as sheepe skinnies and goats skinnies: it was for poverties sake, being deprived of friends, goods, house and lands: and so destitute of provision for better attire.

In their example wee may note that Gods servants and children may bee brought to extreme povertie and necessitie; so as they shall want ordinarie food and raiment, and bee faine to cover themselves with beasts skins. This was the poore state and condition of godly *Lazarus*. Yea, Christ Jesus, for our sakes did undergoe a meane estate: for *hee had not place whereon to lay his head*: and at his death hee had not so much ground of his owne as might serve for a buriall place; but was laid in *Iosephs* tombe, which is a great comfort to any childe of God in like distresse. For why should any bee dismayed with that estate which Christ Jesus and his dearest servants have undergone for his example.

Here some may aske how this can stand with that saying of *David*, *I have beene young, and am old: yet I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread*, Psalm. 73. 25.

Ans. *Dauids* saying may bee taken two waies: first, as his owne observation in his time. For hee saith not, *The righteous is never forsaken*; but that *he never saw it*: and indeed it is a rare thing to see the righteous forsaken.

Secondly, (which I take to be *Dauids* meaning) the righteous man is never forsaken, and his seed two. For if God lay temporall chastisement on any of his servants, suffering them to want, yet hee forsaketh not his seed after him; but reneweth his meicy towards them, if they walke in obedience before him: hee may make triall of godly Parents by want, but their godly children shall surely be blessed: so that this hindereth not, but that the godly may bee in want.

Further, whereas they are said to goe up and downe in *Sheeps-skinnes and Goats-skinnes*, wee must understand that they did it by faith. From whence we learne, that when all temporall blessings faile, then the childe of God must by faith lay hold upon Gods gracious promises of life eternall, and stay himselfe thereon.

This point must bee remembred carefully: for say we should want all kind of temporall benefits, must we thereupon despaire, and thinke that God hath forsaken us? God forbid: nay, when all meanes faile, and the whole world is against us, yet then we must lay hold upon the promise of life eternall in Christ, and thereupon rest our soules. Thus did these belevers in this place. And this faith did *Iob* notably testifie, when God had taken from him children, goods, health, yea, and all that he had, yet then he said, Job 13. 15. *Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him*. And so must we endeavour to doe, if that case befall us: for when all worldly helps and comforts faile us, this promise of life in Christ, will bee a sweet and safe refuge for our soule.

Being *desstitute, afflicted, and tormented* Here the Apostle amplifieth their misery in their wandring estate, by three degrees of crosses, which did accompany the same: First, they were *desstitute* of temporall blessings: secondly, they were *afflicted* both in body and mind: thirdly, *tormented*; that is, evil intreated. These are added for a speciall cause to shew that these servants of God were laden with afflictions: they were *bansished* and driven to extreme poverty; they were *deprived* of all their goods, and of all society of men: they were *afflicted* in body and in minde, and evill intreated of all men: no man would doe them good, but all men did them wrong; whereby we see that even waves of misery overwhelmed them on every side.

Hence we learne that Gods servants may be overwhelmed with manifold calamities at the same instant, being pressed downe with crosses in goods, in body, minde, friends, and every way. This was *Jobs* case, a most worthy servant of God; he was afflicted in body, in friends, goods and children, and (which was greatest of all) he wastled in conscience with the wrath of God; Job 13. 16. *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possesse the iniquities of my youth*. And the like hath beene the case

state of many of Gods children: 1. Psal. 88. 3. 7. *My soule is filled with evils: thou hast vexed me with all thy waves, &c.*

Quest. How can this stand with the truth of Gods Word, wherein are promises of all manner of blessings both temporall and spirituall to those that feare him: Deut. 28. 1, 2, &c. *If thou obey the voice of the Lord thy God, all these blessings shall come upon thee and overtake thee: blessings in the city and in the field: in the fruit of thy body, and of thy ground and cattell.* Psal. 34. 10. *They that seeke the Lord shall lacke nothing that is good.* For Godsinsse hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. And therefore David compareth the godly man to the tree that is planted by the waters side, which bringeth forth much fruit, and is greene and well liking, Psal. 1. 3. How then comes this to passe that Gods owne servants should bee thus oppressed and laden not with one calamity or two, but with sundry and grievous afflictions at the same time? **Ans.** True it is the Scripture is full of gracious promises of temporall blessings unto Gods children: but they are conditionall, and must be understood with an exception, to this effect; *Gods children shall have such and such blessings, unless it please God by afflictions to make triall of his graces in them, or to chastise them for some sinne:* so that the exception of the crosse for the triall of grace, or chastisement for sinne, must be applied to all promises of temporall blessings. And hence it comes to passe, that the most worthy and renowned servants of God for their faith, are said to bee afflicted and in misery. For his promises of temporall blessings are not absolute but conditionall. *All things are theirs* (as Paul saith) 1 Cor. 3. 21. and they shall have honour, wealth, favour, &c. unless it please God to prove their faith, or to chastise their sinnes by crosses and afflictions.

Q. How can Gods servants be able to beare so many and grievous crosses at once, seeing it is hard for a man to beare one crosse patiently? The answer is here laid downe, to wit, *by faith;* for many and grievous were the miseries that lay on these servants of God: and yet by believing the promise of life in the *Messias*, they were enabled to beare them all. This is a sovereign remedy against immoderate griefe in the greatest distresse: and undoubtedly the floods of affliction shall never overwhelm him, that hath his heart assured by faith of the mercy of God towards him by Jesus Christ. This made David say, *He would not feare evil, though hee should walke thorow the valley of the shadow of death.* Psal. 23. 4. and Paul speaking of tribulation, anguish, famine, persecution, yea, and death it selfe, saith, *In all these we are more than conquerours through him that hath loved us,* Rom. 8. 37. And from this faith it was, that hee was able to endure all estates, *to bee hungry, to want, &c.* Phil. 4. 12, 13.

If this be true, that Gods children may bee

A afflicted with manifold calamities at once, then the opinion of naturall and ungodly men is false, who judge him and thinke him to be wicked and ungodly, whom God ladeth with manifold calamities. This was the judgement of *Iobs three friends*, and the ground of all their disputation against him; that because God had laid so many crosses upon him, therefore hee was but an hypocrite. And this is the rash judgement of naturall men in our daies, especially upon those that make profession of religion: when Gods hand of triall or correction lies upon them, they presently censure them for hypocrites: but this is a wretched opinion; for Gods dearest children may bee pressed downe with manifold calamities.

B Secondly, seeing faith in Christ will support the soule under manifold crosses; bee they never so grievous; we must labour in the feare of God, to have our hearts rooted and grounded in this faith; and when afflictions come, wee must strive to shew forth the fruit and power of it, by bearing them patiently.

And thus much of the severall branches of affliction, in this last example of believers.



VERSE 38.

C *Whom the world was not worthy of: they wandered in the wilderness, and mountaines, and dens, and caves of the earth.*



IN these words the Holy Ghost doth answer to a secret objection or surmise, which a natural man might conceive against the believers spoken of before. For it being said, *That they wandered up and downe:* some man might thinke thus; no marvell thought they wandered up and downe: for it may bee they were not worthy to live in the world. This the holy Ghost doth flatly deny, and voucheth the cleare contrary of them; to wit, *that they wandered up and downe by faith;* and the Lord caused them so to doe, *because the world was not worthy of them,* they were too good to live in the world.

In this answer to this surmise, wee may observe what is the opinion of naturall men concerning the children of God; to wit, that they are not worthy to live in the world, but the earth wherein they tread is too good for them. This hath bene, is, and will bee the worlds estimation of Gods children: *Matth. 24. 9. Ye shall*

shall bee hated of all nations for my Names sake. *A* Joh. 16. 2. They shall excommunicate you; yea, they shall kill you; that whosoever killeth you, shall thinke hee doth good service. Act. 22. 22. Away (say the Jewes of Paul) with such a fellow from the cawth: it is not meet that hee should live. And hence he saith of himselfe and the other Apostles, 1 Cor. 4. 13. They were made the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things.

In the time of the persecuting Emperours in the Primitive Church, when any common calamitie befell the people or State: as famine, dearth, pestilence, or such like, they straight-way imputed it to the Christians, saying, That they and their wicked religion were the cause thereof. And though we have religion maintained among us, yet the poore servants of God finde the like welcome in the world: for thus the wicked censure them every where, That they are dissembling hypocrites, and none so bad and vile persons as they are. Now if any man aske, how comes it to passe that the world should slander them so, and thinke so vilely of them. *Ans.* First, because they be taken out of the world, in regard of state and condition in grace. Joh. 15. 19. therefore the world hateth them; Joh. 15. 19. Secondly, the world knowes them not; 1 Joh. 2. 1. and therefore speaks evill of them, Jude 10. Thirdly, the wicked measure others by themselves, and therefore despise the godly that joyne not with them, 1 Peter 4. 3. Lastly, there is a secret enmity betweene the seed of the wicked and the seed of the Church: (1 John 3. 12.) the wicked are of that evill one, the Devil; and therefore must needs hate the godly who are borne of God. So that when wee shall see or heare, that ungodly persons shall in any such sort abuse the children of God; we must not marvell nor bee troubled at it, for it is no new thing, it hath bene from the beginning: but wee must pray that God would open their eyes that they may turne from their sinnes to repentance; and then (no doubt) they will change their conceits, and alter their behaviour towards them: as Paul did, Galatians 1. 13, 15. Acts 9. 1, 26.

To come to the words more particularly: the Holy Ghost saith, *The world was not worthy of them*: that is, the company of ungodly livers, without Christ, and void of grace, were not worthy the societie of these holy ones; and for this cause did the Lord take them from among them.

Here note a singular fruit of true faith: it brings a man to that estate, and gives him that excellency, that hee is more worth than the whole world. I mean by the whole world, the estate of all those that live in the world out of Christ. If then a man would have true and stable dignity, let him labour for true faith: for faith hath this privilege, to advance a beleever to true honour and excellency. And there-

fore our Saviour saith, *As many as receive him by faith, to them he gave power or prerogative to be the sonnes of God.* Wee take it for a great prerogative to bee the childe of an earthly Prince, and so it is: but to bee the sonne of God (who is King of Kings) is a preeminence and dignity above all dignities; and no tongue can expresse the excellency thereof. For what more can a man desire, than to be lieve of glory in life everlasting? and yet true faith bringeth this to a beleever. It is an excellent dignitie to be matched with Angels; and no Prince in the world, by all humane wit or power can attaine unto it: but yet the childe of God can, being joynted to God by faith in Christ; whereby (in some sort) he is above the Angels themselves: for our nature in Christ is advanced above the nature of Angels.

Honours and dignities in politike or civill Estates, are the good gifts of God, and his owne ordinances, whereby men are in higher places, and in account one above another: but yet all the dignity, honour, and pompe of the world, severed from that dignitie which faith bringeth to the beleever is nothing worth. Indeed, if worldly preeminence be joynted with faith, it is a great and excellent prerogative; for faith makes it acceptable unto God: but sever faith from worldly dignities, and what are they but vanity of vanities? which will turne to the greater condemnation of him that enjoyeth them. If a man have favour in the Court, and yet want the Kings favour, it is nothing: and such are all temporall dignities without Gods favour; for at his indignation they vanish away. Now his favour without faith can no man have; for *He that cometh unto God must beleeve, ver. 6.*

Here all those that are in place above others, either by birth or speciall calling, must learne above all things to labour for the dignity of faith. When we have such things wherein wee delight, wee desire continuance of them. Behold, the dignitie of faith is everlasting; and besides it sanctifies all civill dignities, and makes the owner of them glorious and acceptable both before God and man; when as otherwise, without faith, they are nothing: and they that have them can doe nothing but abuse them.

Again, the holy Ghost saith, *The world was not worthy of these men*, for another cause; and that is this; Every Christian man by his faith brings many blessings among those parties, and to that place where hee lived: now the world deserves no such blessings, and therefore is unworthy of the persons by whom they come.

Quest. How doe Christians bring blessings to places where they live? *Ans.* First, by their presence: for as God said to Abraham the Father of the faithfull, *Thou shalt bee a blessing.* Gen. 12. 3. so is it with all beleivers. Laban confessed: *that he perceived that the Lord had blessed*

bleſſed him for *Jacobs ſake*, Genel. 30. 27. And *Potiphar ſaw that Joſeph was a bleſſing in his houſe*: for the Lord made all that hee did to proſper, Genel. 39. 2, 3. While Lot was in Sodom, the Angel could not deſtroy it, Gen. 19. 22. And if there had beene ten believers in Sodom, the Lord would have ſpared all for tens ſake, Gen. 18. 32. Now bringing good things, and keeping backe Gods judgements by their preſence, they are thereby bleſſings. Secondly, they are bleſſings by their prayers. *Abraham prayed for Abimelech*, Genel. 20. 17, 18. and God healed him and his familie of barrenneſſe. At *Moſes* prayer Gods judgements were taken from Egypt, Exod. 7. 12, 13, 30. and his wrath appealed towards his people, Exod. 32. 11, 14. And ſome thinke that *Stephens* prayer at his death for his perſecuters, was one meanes for mercy unto *Saul*, that then conſented to his death, Acts 7. 60. & 8. 1. Thirdly, they bring bleſſings upon a place by their example: for when men ſhall ſee godly perſons walking before them in the feare of God, and making conſcience of all manner of ſinne, it is a ſpeciall meanes to cauſe others to turne from their wicked waies to newneſſe of life. And therefore *Peter* exhorts the Chriſtians to have their converſation honeſt among the Gentiles; that they which ſpeake evil of them, as of evil doers, might by their good workes which they ſhall ſee, glorifie God in the day of their viſitation, 1 Pet. 2. 12. And hee bids godly wives ſo walke, that their husbands may be won without the Word, by beholding their pure converſation which is with feare, 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2. And *Paul* bids the Philippians to walke blameleſſe in the middle of a wicked and crooked nation, as lights in the middle of the world, Phil. 2. 15. that thoſe which were to bee converted by their good converſation might bee won to the truth. God ſent a flood upon the world for the grievouſneſſe of mans ſinnes: Now why doth hee not ſtill ſend more floods? are not men now as wicked as they were then? Yes undoubtedly, man for his part deſerves it now as well as they did then: and therefore our Saviour Chriſt ſaith, As it was in the daies of *Noah*, ſo ſhall it be in the daies of the ſonne of man; ſo that every day we deſerve a new flood; but yet the Lord ſtatieth the execution of his judgements for a time, that his Elect may be gathered and converted. And ſo ſoone as that is done, heaven and earth ſhall goe together, and God will not ſtay one moment for all the world beſides. So that every nation and people in the world have be- neſſit by Gods children, becauſe for their ſakes doth the Lord ſtay his wrath and deſerre his judgements, even the great judgement of fire, wherewith the world ſhall be conſumed at the laſt day. Theſe things the world ſhould take notice of, as well to move them to repentance of their ſinnes, whereby they are made unworthy the preſence of a godly man, as alſo to perſwade them to better behaviour and carriage

A towards the godly, by whom they are ſo many waies bleſſed.

The holy Ghoſt addeth, that *wandered in wilderneſſes, and mountaines, and dens, and caves of the earth*. Theſe were deſolate places, and not inhabited; and yet for the wickedneſſe of the world, God will have theſe believers here to wander. We muſt not thinke that they betooke themſelves voluntarily to this ſolitarie life, but only upon neceſſitie, being conſtrained by perſecution to flye into the wilderneſſe for the ſaving of their lives, and the keeping of a good conſcience.

This ſerves to deſcry unto us the blinde error of many ages afore us, wherein it hath beene thought; and is by Papists at this day, to bee a ſtate of perfection, to live a Monke or Hermite out of all ſocieties in ſome deſart place, and there to ſpend their whole life in contemplation onely, and that voluntarily: and they magnifie this eſtate ſo much, that hereby they thinke to merit eternall life at the hands of God. But theſe believers did neither voluntarily, nor with opinion of merit, betake themſelves to this ſolitarie life, but on neceſſitie. And indeed this kinde of life hath no warrant in Gods word: for every Chriſtian is a member of two Kingdomes; of Chriſts Kingdome of grace, and of that particular ſtate where hee dwelleth: and by reaſon hereof, hath a twofold calling; a temporall and a ſpiritual calling. In both of which hee muſt walke diligently ſo long as hee can, doing the duties both of a child of God, and of a member of that commonwealth where he liveth. Now when a man goeth voluntarily to leade a ſolitary life, he forſaketh his temporall calling altogether, and performs the other but negligently; for he withdraws himſelfe from many duties of piety, whereby the people might be furthered to Godward; which none can doe with a good conſcience.

Further, obſerve the places where they are conſtrained to wander, to wit, in *Wilderneſſes, Caves, and Dens*; places where wilde beaſts have abode and recourſe: and yet here they live, when as men will not ſuffer them to live among them. Where note, that many times more mercy may bee found among wilde and ſavage beaſts, than with ſome men; ſo mercileſſe are the wicked when God forſakes them, and leaves them to themſelves. The *Lions* intreat *Daniel* better than *Darius* Courtiers and ſervants doe, Dan. 6. And *Lazarus* finds more kindeſſe with the dogs at *Dives* gates than with him and all his family beſides, Luke 16. 21. The conſideration whereof muſt teach us to nip ſinne in the head at the beginning, and not to ſuffer it to grow: for if it get a head and raigne in us, it will make us worſe than brut or ſavage beaſts, and cruell as the Devill himſelfe: as wee may ſee in the worlds uſage of theſe believers.

Thus we ſee the ſtate of true believers under

der many and grievous miseries, which we must well observe, to arme our selves against the times of adversities which God may send upon us. We must not judge it a cursed estate to bee under the Crosse: for here we see, the faith of his servants is commended for suffering *many* severall kinds of miseries. If we shall thinke that these were but a few; wee must know that in them the holy Ghost setteth downe the state of his Church unto the end; for these things were written for ensamples unto us. And therefore if calamities come, and such miseries befall us as doe drive us toward distrust, as though God had forsaken us, we must remember that God did not forsake these his children in their calamities, and therefore also will not forsake us. And thus much for this last example.



VERSE 19.

And these all through faith obtained good report, and received not the promise.



The holy Ghost having set down at large a worthy and notable Catalogue of examples of faith in sundry belevers, that lived from the beginning of the world to the time of the *Macchabees*, doth now for a further commendation of their faith, rehearse the same things that before hee had said in the 2. and 12. verses of this chapter. In saying, that by faith *they all received good report*, his meaning is, that they did beleve in the true *Messias*, and looked for salvation in him alone; whereupon they were approved of God himselfe, who gave testimony hereof, partly by his Word, and partly by his Spirit in their consciences, and partly by his Church: by all which they were commended and assured to be Gods servants. And yet notwithstanding this good report, *they received not the promise*: that is, the promise of Christs incarnation in their daies. They received Christ truly by faith, and so saw his day; but his actual incarnation in the flesh they lived not to see.

Whereas it is said, That by faith *they obtained testimony*; Here first observe, that there is no thing in man that makes him acceptable to God, but faith only. God regards no mans person; he accepts not of a man because hee is a King, or because he is wise, or rich, or strong, &c. but if a man beleve, then the Lord is ready to give testimony of him, that hee likes well of him. In regard whereof we must all labour diligently above all other things to get true faith in Christ, that so we may have approba-

tion at Gods hands; without which there is no salvation to be hoped for.

Secondly, here also learne the right way to get testimonie, approbation, and credit with men; a thing whereof many are exceeding glad; and which the childe of God must not contemne. Now the way is this: Hee must first labour, to get approbation at Gods hands; which indeed he cannot doe any other way, save onely by a true and lively faith, as wee have heard before. Now the Lord approving of him, hee hath the hearts of all men in his hands, inclining them whether he will: and if it stand with his glory, he will cause them to like, and to speake well of him that doth beleve.

Many indeed get great applause in the world, which little regard true faith; but in the end, this their glory and applause will bee their shame: for *They that honour me will I honour, saith the Lord, but he that despiseth me shall be despised*, 1 Sam. 2. 30.

Lastly, whereas the holy Ghost saith, That all these worthy men *obtained testimony of God, and yet received not the promise*. We are hereby taught, that we which now live in the Church, are much more bound in conscience to beleve, than they which lived in the old Testament. For wee have received the promise of Christs incarnation: They received it not, and yet beleaved. Wherefore in the feare of God let us labour for true faith. But some will say, What should we heare so much of faith? we do all beleve. *Answe.* Indeed we say so without our mouthes; but it is a rare thing to finde true and sound faith in the heart: for grosse and palpable ignorance abounds every where, and yet men will needs be good belevers, which is a thing impossible; for how should faith bee without knowledge? And as men are ignorant, so they have no care to learne nor to get knowledge, that so they might come by true faith. Their hearts are wholly taken up with the world for matters of profit and delight; that they can spare no time to seeke for this precious gift of faith. Again, many have knowledge, with whom true faith is rare: for faith purifies the heart, it is joyned with a good conscience, and shewes it selfe by obedience through love. Now (to leave the heart to God) where almost is the man that walks answerable to his knowledge? May we not truly say of many, that as the Word cometh in at the one eare, it goeth out at the other? And among those which learne and beare away something, there is little care to practise it in life.

But wee must know, that if wee would bee approved of God, wee must beleve. Now so long as we remaine ignorant; or els having knowledge doe not joyne practise therewith, in obedience from a good conscience, undoubtedly we have no sparke of true faith in us. We may make a shew of faith, and so beare the world in hand we beleve: but certainly this will prove a very dead faith; and in the end,

and finishing of all, appeare to be nothing, but bare lip-faith, and meere presumption. Now, to conclude this point, we must know, that unlesse we get true faith, as these beleivers had, (which we must shew by good fruits, as they did) even they shall rise up in judgement against us to condemn us at the last day. For they beleived, though they had not the ground of faith so laid before them as we have. Wherefore let them that want knowledge, labour for it; and they which have it, let them joyne obedience with their knowledge, that the faith of their hearts may be seene by the fruits of their lives: for true faith cannot be hid, but will breake out in good works



VERSE 40.

*God providing a better thing
for us, that they without us
should not be made perfect.*

BECAUSE some man might much marvell that such men as received testimony of God for their faith, should not yet receive the promise; therefore here the holy Ghost renders a reason thereof: the good pleasure of God, appointing that Christ should be incarnate at such a time, as was most convenient for the perfect consummation of the whole Church, consisting of Gentiles, as well as Jewes. For though these ancient beleivers were in time long before; yet God provided Christs incarnation so fitly for us, that they without us should not have perfect consummation in glorie.

The Exposition. God providing a better thing for us. The word in the originall, translated *providing*, signifieth properly *foreseeing*; wherein is likewise included Gods decree and ordination. Now, this wee must know: that it is a peculiar prerogative belonging to the true God alone, to bee able to foresee things to come: and that many thousand yeares before: no creature of himselfe can doe it. And yet it is true, that this property to foresee, is ascribed unto God, not properly, but in regard of our capacity: for if wee speake of God properly, God cannot bee said to foresee any thing: because all things bee present to him, whether past or to come.

This prescience or foreknowledge in God, puts a difference betweene the true God and all creatures: for the true God foresees all things that are to come; so can no creature doe. Indeed, some creatures foresee and foretell some things: yet herein they come short of the

A divine property: for God foresees all things: by himselfe, without signes and outward meanes. But creatures onely foresee some things not of themselves, but by meanes of signes and outward causes, or by revelation from God: otherwise no creature can foresee things to come.

Now as wee said before, this *foresee* in God includes his decree and ordination: for therefore did these things to come to passe because God ordained them. Whereby wee see that Gods prescience or foreknowledge is not idle, but operative and joyined with his will: for Matth. 10. 29, 30. *An haire cannot fall from our head: nor a sparrow light upon the ground without his will.* As all things intime come to passe, so God before all worlds *willed*, that is, decreed and appointed them. And under this large extent of Gods will or decree, wee must include the sinfull actions of men; for God doth not barely foresee them, but decree the being of them, and so will them after a sort, though not to be done by himselfe, yet by others. When *Indas* betrayed Christ, and *Pilate* with the wicked Jewes condemned and reviled him, they sinned grievously; and yet herein they did nothing but that which Gods hand and counsell had determined before to be done.

This point well considered confutes their opinion who indeed enlarge Gods prescience or foreknowledge over all things good and evil; but yet exclude sinne from without the compasse of his decree and ordination. **C** But here wee see Gods foresight includes his decree; and nothing comes to passe simply without his will: howsoever many things bee done against his revealed will; yet without his absolute will can nothing come to passe: *He worketh all things according to the counsell of his owne will*: doing himselfe those things that be good, and willingly permitting evil to bee done by others for good ends.

But what did God here provide and foresee for us? *Ans.* A better thing: that is, God in his eternall counsell provided a better estate for his Church in the new Testament than he did for beleivers in the old.

Hence wee learne, that as God hath his generall providence, whereby hee governeth all things: so also he hath his speciall and particular providence, whereby in all things he provides and brings to passe that which is best for his Church. For in the old Testament God provided that for his Church which was meet for it: But considering that the Church in the new Testament (in some respects) was to have a better estate than the Church in the old Testament had; therefore hee provides for a better estate. And looke, as in his eternall wisdom he foreseeth what is best for all estates and times; so in his providence doth hee accomplish and effect the same.

For us] That is, for the Church in the new Testament: where note, that Gods Church, and

the state thereof in the new Testament, is better than it was in the old, before the coming of Christ. The holy Ghost here speaks this plainly, and therefore we need no further proof thereof.

Quest. How should it bee better with the Church now, than it was then? *Ans.* True it is, that God gave the covenant of grace in the beginning, to our first Parents in Paradise: the summe whereof was this; *The seed of the woman shall breake the Serpents head.* And this covenant did God renew and revive unto his Church, from time to time, in all ages, unto this day. Both circumcision and the Paschever were seales of this covenant, as well as our Sacraments bee; so that in substance they differ not: the free gift of grace in Christ, belonged to them as well as unto us. The believing Jewes in their Sacraments, did eat the same spirituall meat, and drinke the same spirituall drinke with us, (as the Apostle witnesseth, 1 Cor. 10. 3.) and believers then, obtained the same eternall life, that wee doe now by faith. And yet if wee regard the manner of administering the covenant of grace in Gods Church, unto the people of God; herein doth the Church of the new Testament farre surpass the Church of God in the old; and indeed herein consists the preheminance of the Church under the Gospell; which stands in five things especially.

First, in the old Testament, spirituall and heavenly were propounded unto the Church, under temporall and earthly blessings. This is plaine by Gods dealing with the Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*: for the Lord promised unto them the temporall blessings of the Land of *Canaan*; under which he signified the gifts of life everlasting, in the kingdome of heaven. But in the new Testament life everlasting is plainly promised to the believer, without any such type or figure.

Secondly, in the old Testament Christ was shadowed and signified unto them in ceremonies, rites, and types, which were in number many, and in signification some of them darke and obscure: but now these types and ceremonies are abolished, the shadow is gone, and the substance comes; and in stead of darke signes and figures, we have two most plaine and sensible Sacraments. More plainly, the covenant of grace in the old Testament, was sealed by the blood of Lambes, as signes of the blood of Christ; but now to his Church in the new Testament, Christ himselfe hath sealed his Testament by his owne blood.

Thirdly, in the old Testament all the knowledge they had was in the Law; and their understanding in the Gospell was obscure and very slender: but in the new Testament, not onely the Law is made manifest, but also the supernaturall knowledge of the Gospell.

Fourthly, the Law was onely committed and published to onenation and people: but the

Gospell is spread and preached to all the world

And lastly, the Church in the old Testament beleeveth in Christ to come; but now the Church beleeveth in Christ, which is already come and exhibited: in all which respects, the Church in the new Testament doth exceed the Church of the old.

Now, where the Text saith, *God provided a better thing for us*, we must not understand it of all these prerogatives, but onely of the fifth and last, touching the actuall exhibiting of Christ in the flesh; as Christ also imports, Luk. 10. 23, 24. *Blessed are the eyes which see that ye see: for I tell you, many Prophets and Kings have desired to see those things ye see, and have not seene them*: which things we must understand of the incarnation of Christ. And that this is such a prerogative to the new Testament, appeareth by old *Simeon*, who when hee had seene Christ in the Temple, as it was promised him, sang unto God this song, Luk. 2. 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seene thy salvation*: as if he should say, I have now Lord lived long enough, let me now depart in peace, seeing now I have seene thy Christ my Saviour, (where we see he makes it a matter of full contentment unto his soule) which the beleeveth under the law saw not.

Hence we must learne our duty: for if our state bee now better than the state of the old Testament was, and if we enjoy privileges denied to Gods ancient servants before and under the Law; then undoubtedly wee ought to strive to goe before them in grace and obedience; for every mans accounts shall bee according to his receipts. Hee that receives five talents, must make account to returne moe, than he that receives two: where God is more abundant in his mercie, there he looks for answerable thankfulness and obedience. We goe beyond the ancient Church in five things: and therefore we must stirre up our hearts to be answerable in grace and obedience going beyond them. But if for all this, we come short of them in these things, then surely our case is fearefull, and our punishment shall be greater: for they that had lesse prerogative, shall be witnesses against us, if they goe beyond us in obedience.

That they without us might not be made perfect: that is, might not be fully glorified. Here is the reason why Christ was not exhibited in their dayes. Indeed all true beleeveth before Christ, were justified, and sanctified, and in soule received to glory before us; yet perfected in soule and body both, they must not bee before us; but we must all be perfected together. Now his will herein he bringeth thus to passe: All must bee perfected in Christ: But hee will not have Christ to come and suffer, till the fulnesse of time came, in these last dayes. Heb. 1. 2. (as the Apostle speaketh,) that the beleeveth living in these daies, might have time of being in the Church to be called, justified,

and

and sanctified; and so they might be glorified with them that lived before. For put the case that Christ had suffered in the dayes of *Abraham*, or *David*, or thereabout; then the end of the world must needs have come the sooner: for so it was foretold, that Christ should come in the latter ages of the world, 1 Pet. 1.20. Now if the world had beene sooner cut off, then had there not beene time of birth and calling, for all the elect that now live and shall live: therefore for their sakes was Christs coming deferred, till the fulnesse of time. And this I take to be the meaning of the words.

Now, in that the holy Ghost here saith, *The members of Christ in the new Testament must be perfected, with all the ancient beleevers in the old*; we must herby be admonished, to conforme our selves unto these ancient Fathers, in the participation of grace, and practice of obedience in this life. For how can wee looke to be

A glorified with them after this life, if here we be not like them in grace. Christ tels his followers, that *many should come from the East, and from the West, to dwell with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdome of heaven*. Mat. 8.11, 12. (because they were followers of these Patriarchs in the faith) *when as the children of the Kingdome*, that is, many Jewes by birth, borne in the Church, *should be cast into utter darkness*. Now, if Christ deny to glorifie the children and posterity of these ancient beleevers, because they did not follow them in grace and in obedience: how can wee which are by nature sinners of the Gentiles, looke to bee glorified with them, unless in grace and obedience we conforme our selves unto them? Thus much for these examples of faith: now something must be added out of the next chapter; because there the holy Ghost makes use of all these worthy examples.



A COMMENTARIE V P O N P A R T O F T H E T W E L F T H C H A P T E R T O t h e H E B R E W V E S .

V E R S E 1 .

Wherefore, let us also, seeing wee are compassed with so great a cloud of Witnesses, cast away every thing that presseth downe, and that sinne that hangeth so fast on: let us runne with patience the race that is set before us.



IN these words, the holy Ghost propoundeth a worthy exhortation to the Christians of the new Testament; that they should labour to be constant in the profession of the faith: that is, in holding, embracing, and beleeving true Christian religion. And his reason is framed thus; *The Saints of God in the old Testament, were constant in the faith: and therefore you must likewise be constant in the faith, that live in the new Testament*. The first part of the reason is laid downe in all the examples of the former chapter. The conclusion or sequell is contained in this first verse. Wherein wee may observe two points: an exhortation unto constancy in true religion; and the way or meanes to attaine

thereunto. The exhortation is inferred upon the former examples; which are all here applied as preidents and directions unto us, for constancy and perseverance in the faith; in these words, *Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses: that is, seeing Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and all the rest of the holy Fathers, who are a cloud of witnesses unto us, (that is, lights and leaders before us) were constant in true religion (whether wee respect their faith in Gods promises, or obedience to his commandements) therefore we also must be constant in the faith*. The way or meanes hereunto, stands in three duties, in the words following; *Let us cast away, &c.*

For the exhortation: First, in generall, the very inferring of it from the former examples, teacheth us this speciall duty; That every one in Gods Church must apply unto himselfe those

instructions, that are laid downe, either generally in doctrine, or particularly in example. And therefore the holy Ghost here saith not, Let the *Galatians*, or the *Corinthians* (which were two renowned Churches) be constant in the faith; but, *Let us*, that is, *you Hebrewes*, with my selfe be constant in the faith, following the example of your ancient Fathers. It is said of the ancient Jewes, *that many of them heard Gods word; but it was not profitable unto them, because it was not mingled with faith in them.* What is it to mingle the Word with faith? Is it not only to receive it by faith, believing it to be true; but also by the same hand of faith, to apply it to a mans owne soule, to his heart and life. And undoubtedly, Gods word thus applied to a mans particular person, hath in it great power and fruit; whether wee regard information of judgement, or reformation of life. But it is an hard thing to doe, and rare to find a man that doth sincerely apply unto himselfe, either generall doctrines, or particular examples. We are all prone to shift it from our selves, and lay it upon others, saying: *This is a good Iem, or a good lesson for such an one, and such an one, if he were here, or if hee would marke it.* In the meane while, what benefit reape we to our own soules? for the Word not applied to our selves, doth us no good: it is like Physicke not taken, or food not eaten. And hence it comes to passe, that though we heare much, yet wee profit little by the ministry of Gods word. We must therefore learne to follow *Maries* example, *who pondered Christs words, and laid them up in her owne heart.* When an exhortation is given, we must not possit it off, and lay it upon other mens shoulders; but apply it to our selves, and lay it to our owne hearts, saying, *This instruction is forme.* Hereby (no doubt) we should feele greater blessings upon the preaching of the Word, than yet we doe. And to move us hereunto, let us consider, that Satan our utter enemy (who seekes nothing but our destruction) is most busie to hinder this application of the Word, either by the Minister, or by a mans owne confidence. As for example: when the Minister (by occasion out of Gods word) shall confute, either error in judgement, or misdemeanour in life; then, men that heare, and are guilty thereof, should say, *This is mine error, or my fault, now I am confuted, or reprovved.* And God (no doubt) if men would thus doe, would make it effectually unto them at the length. But in stead of this applying to our selves (either through our owne corruption, or Satans suggestions, or both,) wee shift it from our selves, and say, Now he reproves such an one, and such an one; and speakes against such and such: and indeed, Satan (by his good will) would never have aman to apply the Word rightly to himselfe. Therefore, seeing Satan is so busie, and this is his deceit to make a man shift off an exhortation or reprove from himselfe, and to lay it on others: we must be as carefull to apply it

A to our selves, and to lay it to our owne conscience; and then (no doubt) we shall find it to be a word of power, able to reforme both the misdemeanour of our lives, and the errors of our minde.

Now to the reason more particularly. *Wee must be constant in the faith,* because wee are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. Here the ancient Fathers of the old Testament, which in the former chapter were commended unto us for their faith, are compared to a cloud, and then to a cloud compassing us. Lastly, to a cloud of witnesses.

They are compared to a cloud (as I take it) by allusion to the cloud which directed and led the Israelites in the wilderness: for when they came from Egypt, and were forty yeares in the Desart of Arabia; all that while they were directed by a pillar of cloud by day, *Exod. 13. 21.* Now, looke as that cloud guided the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, to the Land of Canaan: so doth this company of famous believers, direct all the true members of Gods Church in the new Testament, the right way from the kingdome of darknesse, to the spirituall Canaan the Kingdome of heaven. And this is the true cause why these worthy believers, are compared to a cloud.

Marke further, they are called a cloud: but what a cloud! namely, compassing us. A compassing cloud they are called, by reason of the great company of the believers: so as which way so ever a man turnes him, he shall see believers on every side: and they are said to compass us, because they gave us direction in the course of Christianity, as the cloud did the Israelites in the wilderness.

Now whereas the whole company of believers is called a cloud compassing us: here is answered a common objection of temporizers, which argue thus against religion: There are so many kinds of religion now a dayes, that no man can tell which to be of: and therefore it is good to be of no religion, till wee be certified which is the true religion. This small reason is here answered; for howsoever in some things, there be variety of opinions in Gods Church, yet for the substance of religion all agree in one. For the company of believers in this world, resembles a cloud that goes before us, shewing us the right way which we are to walke in, to the Kingdome of heaven. Secondly, in that these ancient believers are called a cloud compassing us, we are taught, that as the Israelites did follow the cloud in the wilderness from the Land of Egypt to Canaan; so must we follow the examples of these ancient believing Fathers and Prophets, to the Kingdome of heaven. It is a strange thing to see how the Israelites followed that cloud. They never went till it went before them; and when it stood still, they stood still also, though it were 2. yeares together; and when it began to move, they moved with it. So in the same manner must wee let be-

fore our eyes for a patterne of life, the worthy examples of beleevers in the old Testament: *for whatsoeuer was written, was written for our learning.* Wee must therefore be followers of them in faith, obedience, and other graces of God: and so shall wee be directed to life everlasting, in the spirituall Canaan the kingdome of heaven. And yet wee must not follow them absolutely. For all of them had their infirmities, and some of them had their grievous faults, whereby they are tainted, and their commendation somewhat blemished: but we must follow them in the practice of faith, and other graces of God. The cloud that guided the Israelites had two parts; a light part, and a darke. The Egyptians, who were enemies to Gods people, had not the light part before them, but the darke part: and so following that, they rushed into the red sea, and were drowned; when as the Israelites following the light part, went thorow in safety: Even so these beleevers had in them two things: their *sinnes*, which be their darke part, which if wee follow, wee cast our soules into great danger and destruction: and faith with other graces of God, which are their light part, which wee must follow as our light: which if we doe carefully, it will bring us safely to the kingdome of heaven. So *Paul* bids the Corinthians, *be followers of him*, not absolutely in every thing, but *as he follows Christ*: and so must we follow the Fathers, as they went on in faith in Christ.

Further, they are a *cloud of witnesses*: that is, a huge multitude of witnesses. And they are so called, first, because by their owne bloud they confirmed the faith which they professed: Secondly, because they did all confirme the doctrine of true religion, whereof they were *witnesses*, partly by speeches, and partly by actions in life and conversation. And so is every member of Christ a witness: as the Lord often calls the beleeving Israelites, *his witnesses*. *Quest.* How came this to passe, that these beleevers should be Gods *witnesses*? *Ans.* Surely, because they testified the truth and excellencie of Gods holy religion, both in word and action, in life and conversation.

Now, seeing these in the old Testament were Christs witnesses; First, hereby all ignorant persons must be stirred up to be careful to get faith, and to leane true religion. If any thing will move a man to become religious, this will: for out of all the world, God will chuse faithfull men to be his witnesses, to testify his religion unto others. If a man were persuaded that some worthy mighty Prince would vouchsafe to call him to beare witness of the truth on his side, he would be wonderfully glad thereof, and take it for a great Honour to him. How much more then ought wee to labour for knowledge, faith, and obedience in true religion, that wee may become witnesses unto the Lord our God? if it be a dignity to be witness to an earthly Prince; oh then what a

A great prerogative is this, for a silly fustill man, to become a witness to the truth of the everliving God, who is King of Kings, and whose word needs no confirmation? This must make us all to labour for knowledge, and for faith, and for the power of religion: but if we will remaine still in our ignorance, and never labour for knowledge, then shall these servants of God that beleeved in the old Testament, stand up and witness against us at the day of judgement: for they had not such means as we have, and yet they became most faithfull witnesses.

Secondly, this must teach us to be careful; that as in word we professe Christ, so in deed we may confesse him, expressing the power of his grace in us. For by this true confession of Christ, we are made his witnesses: but when we confesse Christ in word onely, and yet in life and practice deny him, then we are unfaithfull witnesses: for we say and unlay. In an earthly court, if a man should one while say one thing, and another while another thing, he would not be accepted for a witness, but rather be excepted against, as altogether unworthy; and so would prove a discredit to his friends cause, and a shame to himselfe: so it is with us in Christs cause; if we professe in word, and deny in deed, wee discredit Christ and his profession, and shame our selves for ever. And therefore we must be careful not onely in word and judgement, but in life and conversation; to make a true and constant confession of Christ and of his truth.

C And thus much for this exhortation. Now followeth the second point to be observed in this verse; namely, the *manner* how Gods Church and people may put in practice this worthy exhortation of the holy Ghost, To bee constant in the faith. And this consists in three duties: 1. They must *cast away that which presseth downe*: 2. They must call away that *sinne that hangeth so fast on us*; or, *sinne which so readily doth compass us about*: 3. They must *runne the race that is set before them, with patience*. Whosoever in Gods Church either Jew or Gentile, can performe these three things, shall bee able no doubt to follow the counsell of the holy Ghost, and continue constant in the faith unto the end. Of these three in order.

D The first thing then to be done, is this; *We must cast away that which presseth downe*: or thus, *Cast away the weight, or burthen*, (for so much the word in the original signifieth) even that burthen which so presseth downe the poore Christian, that he cannot goe on forward in the course of godlinesse and Christianity. By *burthen* or *weight* here we must understand five things: First, the love of temporall life: secondly, Care for earthly things: thirdly, Riches and temporall wealth: fourthly, Worldly honour and preferments: fifthly, Worldly delights and pleasures. All these are things which lie heavy on mans soule, as weighty burthens which presse it downe, especially then when the

Rom. 12. 1

Exod. 14. 20.

Th. 4. 9, 10, 12.

oule should lift up it selfe to seeke heavenly things. So in the parable of the Sower, *riches, pleasures, and cares* for the things of this life, are called *thornes which choke the word of God in a mans heart*, and make it unfruitfull. And *surfeiting and drunkenness* are said to beethings which *oppress the heart and make it heavy*. And easie it were to shew by many testimonies, that all these five things doe presse downe the heart; especially then, when it should be lifted up in the seeking of heavenly things.

Now in this, that these five things are weighty burdens, we may learne; first, what is the cause that in these our daies every where the Gospell of Christ being published, preached, and expounded, takes so little place in mens hearts; whether wee regard knowledge and understanding, or affection and obedience. For Gods Word is a Word of power, mightie in operation: how comes it to passe then that the ground is barren where it is cast? why makes it not men learned and religious? *Ans.* Surely in every place where the Word of God is preached, especially among us, these five things possesse the hearts of men, and exercise all the thoughts of the minde, and affections of the heart. From whence it cometh to passe, that after long preaching there is little fruit or profit, either for knowledge or obedience: for where the heart is pressed downe with the weight of these earthly things, there the Word of God can take no place, nor bring forth fruit. And this is generally true among us; though we heare Gods word from yeare to yeare, and thereby might increase in knowledge and obedience, if we would; yet in many there is little shew of either: and the cause is in these worldly cares, which take place in our hearts. For this is a most certaine truth, that so long as our hearts are addicted to the greedy seeking after these earthly things; honours, pleasures, &c. so long will the ground of our hearts be barren. The good seed of Gods word may bee sowne therein; but little fruit shall come thereof, save briars and weeds, which will increase our damnation.

Againe, whereas the love of temporall life, and care of earthly things, &c. are *soe burdens pressing downe* a mans heart from heaven to earth, and making it heavy and sad, and dead in regard of all spirituall exercises and concernations: hereby we are taught, oftentimes to give ourselues to elevate and lift up our mindes and hearts to God, partly by meditation in his Word, partly by invocation on his Name, and partly by thanksgiving. And to doe these things the better, we must remember to set apart some speciall time every day, for this speciall worke: so as wee may say with David, *Psal. 25. 1. Lord, I lift up my heart unto thee.* David was well acquainted with this exercise, and so was Daniel: for both of them used this, as wee may read, *Psal. 55. 17. Evening and morning* (saith David) *and at noone will I pray, and make a*

noyse. And David used to pray unto God *three times a day*: wherein he would heartily and unfeignedly call upon God, with thanksgiving. And great reason we should doe so; for we live in the world, wherein are innumerable weighty things, which presse downe our hearts from looking up to heaven: and therefore we must often practise our selves in holy meditation and prayer unto God, that so wee may lift up our soules unto God, from the things of this world. To use a fit comparison: Wee know that those who keepe clocks, if they would have the clocke still going, must once or twice a day winde up the plummetts which cause the wheeles to goe about; because they are still drawing downward: Even so, if our hearts have plummetts of lead, which are worldly cares and desires, to presse them downe from seeking up to heaven; we must doe with our hearts, as the clock-keeper doth with his plummetts, winde them up unto God every day: and for this end, must set apart some particular time to doe the same, in holy duties. Why doth God command the seventh day to be sanctified, and set apart, from all bodily exercises, and worldly cares? undoubtedly it is for this end; to cause men to elevate their hearts from all worldly things, to seeke the things above: else, if the minde should be alwayes pressed downe with worldly cares, it could never attaine to heavens joyes. He that hath not conscience on the Lords day, to lift up his heart to heaven, by prayer, and hearing Gods word, with meditation thereon; cannot possibly have any soundnesse in religion, nor his heart firmly seled on heavenly things.

Thirdly, whereas the holy Ghost saith, that the Hebrewes must cast away the *weights that presse downe*; Here wee are taught, in what manner, and how farre forth wee must use the things of this life; as *riches, honours, and lawfull pleasures*; yea, and all *temporall blessings* whatsoever: namely, so farre forth as they will further us in the course of religion, and in the exercises of godlinesse and vertue; and no further. But (finding by experience, that these temporal things be a burden unto us, pressing us downe, and making us unfit for spirituall exercises) wee must leave them, and abstaine from them. This is that moderation which wee must use in temporall things: for the maine end that every man must propound to himselfe in all things, is this; *That God may be glorified.* Now that a man may glorifie God, it is necessary that he should walke in the wayes of godlinesse and of true religion. Therefore looke as riches and worldly commodities may further us in Christian religion and godlinesse: so farre forth must wee use them, and therein give glory to God, but when they hinder us therein, then we must leave them, and cast them off. The Mariner that is upon the sea in a great tempest, seeing his ship too sore laden, will cast out any of his commodities: first, that that is the heaviest, and at last

(if need be) the most precious Jewels that be in his ship before he will see it lost: Even so must we doe in the sea of this world, when we see riches, honours, and lawfull pleasures, to make us unite and untoward for the exercises of piety and religion; then away with them, wee must cast them off, how deare soever they be unto us. And thus much for the first duty.

The second duty that we must performe for constancy in religion is this, We must *cast away the sinne that hangeth so fast on*: or as the words will better beare, *We must cast away the sinne, that is so fit, or so ready to compass us about every way*. By sinne here we must not understand *all* sinne, the practising of ungodlinesse in life and conversation: but *original sinne*, which is the corruption of nature, in which men are conceived and borne. Now this original sinne is said to be ready to compass us about, because (as Paul saith of himselfe) *when a man would doe good, it causeth evil to be present with him: so as that good thing which hee would doe, that he doth not: but the evil that he would not doe, that doth be*. And it is said, *to compass us about*; because whatsoever in heart a man doth desire or affect, or purpose to doe, this original sinne doth corrupt and defile the same unto him: and whatsoever in action a man would bring to passe, it doth likewise pollute it. By reason whereof it comes to passe, that we may truly say, that all the thoughts, affections, wills, and purposes, yea, and every action of Gods children, are all mixed and stained with the corruption of this sinne. So that this hinders Gods deare servants and children, that they cannot goe on in the course of godlinesse and Christianity as they would; but either they fall in their journey many times: or if they stand, yet they doe often stagger, and goe very faintly and haltingly forward.

From this that the holy Ghost saith, *Original sinne compasseth the beleever about*, wee are to observe and learne sundry points: First, this serveth notably to confute some errors maintained and upheld by the Church of Rome; for they say, that after a man is regenerate by Gods Spirit, there is nothing in him that God can justly hate: and they doe curse all that hold the contrary. Now to rarifie this their doctrine, that original sinne, after regeneration, is not sinne properly; They say, that after regeneration it is no more sinne than Tinder is fire; which in it selfe is no fire, but very apt and fit upon the least occasion to be set on fire. But this opinion is here overthrowne by this that the holy Ghost saith, That the beleieving Hebrewes, that is, Gods Church, *must cast away his sinne*. Where it is plaine, that after regeneration, whereby a man receiveth the Spirit of sanctification and adoption, he hath sinne in him; for this sinne is most apt and ready to hinder him in the course of Christianity and godlinesse. Now if sinne were not properly sinne, it must lose it owne nature and qualitie; and if it had

lost it proper qualitie, it would not bee so ready to hinder a man in the course of godlinesse, both in thought, words, and deeds. So that here it is manifest and plaine, that in a regenerate man there is sinne properly: And howsoever he be free from the guilt and punishment of sinne, yet the corruption remaineth still in him, though greatly weakened through sanctification.

Again, here observe, that the opinion of many men concerning this sanctification is erroneous: for some there bee who have thought that a man might be perfectly sanctified in this life, and have original sinne quite abolished. But this is most true: for this Church of the Hebrewes had as worthy men in it for godlinesse and sanctification, as any are in these daies; yea and the Author of this Epistle was (no doubt) a man that had received a great measure of sanctifying grace; yet including himselfe among them, he exhorts the Hebrewes thus; *Let us cast off the burthen, and sinne that is so ready to compass us about*. What? had the Apostle and these Christians sinne in them? Yes, or else the holy Ghost would never bid them cast it off: for it were a vaine thing to bid them cast off that which they had not. Therefore they were not perfectly sanctified, as indeed no man ever was or shall be in this life, Christ onely excepted. Wee must not marvell at this, that no man is perfect in this life: nay, we must rather marvell at this, that God hath given to any of us any drop of sound grace, being such miserable wretched sinners as we are.

The Lord himselfe hath given many reasons why men should not be perfect in this life. As first: If a man were perfectly sanctified in this life, then were hee perfectly just and righteous in himselfe before God, and so should be saved: yet not by free grace and mercy alone in Christ; and thus should Christ not bee a whole and alone Saviour, but onely a means to convey into a man that saving grace whereby a man should be saved. But Christ is our whole and onely rightconnesse whereby wee are justified and saved; and this may our corruption teach us which still remains in us, not quite mortified till the houre of death. Secondly, whatsoever grace wee receive of God, it comes by means of faith which God worketh in us. And looke how it stands with us in regard of faith, so it is with us for all other graces. But faith in the best beleever is imperfect in this life, and mixed with much doubting; and therefore all other gifts and graces which come by faith, as rightconnesse, repentance, and sanctification, are also imperfect in this life.

From this, that sanctification in this life is imperfect, we learne (for the overthrowing of another error of the Church of Rome) that no man can stand at Gods tribunal seat, justified by inherent justice or rightconnesse. For at which we call Sanctification, the Papists call the *Justification of a sinner*; making two parts of justification:

cation: the first, whereby a sinner of an evil man is made good, by the pardon of his finnes, and the infusion of inward righteousness, standing in hope and charity especially: And the second, whereby of a good man one is made better and more just: and thisthey say may proceed from the merit of a mans owne works of grace; and hereby they hold a man stands righteous before God. But looke how it stands with grace in us in this life, so likewise shall it stand with the same graces at the last day: if they bee imperfect now, and so not able to iustifie us before God, they shall also be found imperfect then to that purpose and effect: But now they are imperfect, as hath beene shewed, and therefore cannot then stand for our righteousness; unlesse we will imagine that God will then accept of an imperfect justice. Wherefore their doctrine is erroneous, and a doctrine of all terror and desperation: for who dare adventure the salvation of his soule upon his owne righteousness? We deny not, but that God accepteth of our sanctification; yet not as the matter of our justification unto life: that onely is the obedience and righteousness of Iesus Christ accepted of God for us, and made ours by faith; for that alone is answerable to the rigour of the Law.

Thirdly, this also sheweth the error of those who hold that concupiscence or originall sinne is not a quality, but an *essence or substance living and subsisting by it selfe*. For here, we see a plaine difference betweene a mans body and soule, and *originall sinne that compasseth them*; else the holy Ghost would not bid us to cast off this sinne: for that which is of the substance of man, cannot by man be cast off. And to make this more plaine, we must know, that in man descending from *Adam* there bee three things: First, the substance of his soule and body. Secondly, the powers and faculties in them both. Thirdly, the corruption or bad disposition in those powers and faculties whereby a man is uncomfortable to the will of his Creator, and prone to that which is evil. And this third thing is it which is here spoken of, different from mans substance and faculties; and so is not a substance in man, or mans nature corrupted, but an ill disposition therein. Fourthly, hence also we learne what a regenerate man doth most feele in himselfe; namely, *originall sinne, the corruption of his nature*: for that hangs on fast, and hinders him in the practice of all good duties. This *Paul* knew well, and therefore confesseth, that he saw another Law in his members rebelling against the Law of his minde, and leading him captive unto the law of sinne which was in his members, *Rom. 7. 23*. This causeth him to leave undone the good which he would have done; and to doe the evil which he would not doe, *v. 19*. And *David* felt the same thing when hee said, *I will ranne the way of thy commandements when thou shalt enlarge my heart*. Why doth *David* speake of the enlarging of his heart?

A Surely hee felt in himselfe this originall sinne: which did streighten his good affections, so as he could not put them forth so much as hee would towards the Law of God. And when he saith, *Psal. 51. 12. Stablish me, O Lord, by thy free spirit*; he would give us to understand, that by originall corruption hee was restrained of his Christian libertie, and hindered in all good affections, holy actions, and heavenly meditations: which causeth him to pray for libertie and freedome by the Spirit. So that it is plaine, the servant of God feesles this corruption clogging and hindring him from all good duties.

This serves to admonish all secure persons, which never felt sinne to bee a clog or burthen unto them, of their fearefull and dangerous estate. For to every childe of God originall corruption is a grievous burthen. Now conferre with a naturall man, and aske him what imperfections and wants hee feesles in himselfe: his answer is, hee was never hindered by any corruption in all his life, he never felt doubting or want of love, either to God or to his brethren: he feesles no pride of heart, no hypocrisie nor vaine glory, &c. If wee take these men upon their words, they are Angels among men: but indeed they are blinde and ignorant, and wonderfully deceived by Satan: for all Gods servants in this life doe continually bewaile the corruption of their nature, crying out against originall sinne, *that it hinders them in doing the good things which they would doe; and causeth them to doe that evil which they would not*. These men therefore that are never troubled with corruption, but (to their owne thinking) have grace at will, are in a fearefull case, their mindes are still blinded, and their hearts hardened; they are dead in sinne, abiding in darkness unto this houre. And if they goe thus on to death, they shall finde that sinne will unvizard himselfe, and then they shall know what sinne meanes, and finde the terror, and feele the burthen of it, when it is too late; like the foolish virgins that knew what the want of oile meant, when the doores were shut.

Secondly, this shewes unto us what is the state and condition of the childe of God in this life; He is not here a Saint feeling no corruption, perfectly sanctified and freed from all sinne: but such an one as feesles the burthen of corruption, hindring him in his Christian course, under which hee sighs and groanes, labouring by all good means to bee disburdened and to cast it off. It is indeed a matter of great comfort for a man to feeles Gods graces in himselfe; as faith, love, repentance, sanctification, and such like; but no child of God can alwaies or alone feeles the comfort of grace; most commonly hee shall bee troubled with sinne, if he be Gods childe. Now if feeling it, he dislike himselfe, and strive to be eased of it; this is a sure argument of his happy estate.

Fifthly, this commandment to cast away sinne

fiene that preffeth downe, teacheth every childe of God to labour earnestly for the government and direction of Gods Spirit; for we have within us originall corruption, that like an armed man belets us about, and hindereth us in every good thing we take in hand. Wee must therefore pray unto God daily that hee would guide us by his good Spirit: for by reason of the corruption of our nature, and the deceitfulness of sinne we shall utterly faile, unless Gods Spirit governe us, both in the thoughts of our hearts, in the words of our mouths, and the actions of our lives. This David knew well, and therefore prayeth to the Lord for his good Spirit, to leade him into the Land of righteousness, Psalme 143. 10.

Lastly, seeing wee have this corruption of nature in us, wee must keepe our hearts with all diligence, and set watch and ward about them. So Salomon saith, Counter guard thy heart, my sonne, Proverbs 4. 23. Why doth Salomon give this commandement? Surely for speciall cause: for every man while hee lives on earth, is compassed about with his owne corrupt nature; which like a home-borne traitor seeks to deliver the heart into the possession of Satan, and so to defraud God of his right. Again, the heart is mans treasure, from whence comes all actions good and bad: now if it bee well kept and guarded, the Lord will dwell in thy heart, and thence will proceed the issues of life: but if it bee left open for corruption to enter and take place, then is it made an habitation for the Devill.

If a city were besieged about by bloody enemies, the inhabitants thereof would set watch and ward in every place to keepe out the enemy; so wee having originall sinne, as a fierce enemy compassing us about, for to worke our destruction some way or other, must labour to have our hearts guarded with a watch of grace; that our corruption may not let in Satan there to dwell or to have any abode.

But (will some say) how shall we get a watch that may thus keepe our hearts?

Ans. Wee must labour that the Word of God may dwell plentifully in our hearts; and there, as the Scepter of Christ, to be held up by the grace of faith, ruling our wills and affections, and bringing into subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ. In such an heart Christ dwells, who is stronger than Satan: and here can neither corruption set open the doore to Satan, nor Satan enter; but all things are in safety. Also the actions that proceed hence shall be the issues of life, being holy and pleasing unto God.

And thus much of the second point.

The third duty to be performed for our continuance in the faith, is this: *We must run with patience the race that is set before us.* In these words the holy Ghost borroweth a comparison from the games of men that did runne a race: and thus we may conceive it; The race

A that the holy Ghost propounds unto runne, is the race of *Christian religion*: the parties that must runne in this race are all *Christians*, men or women, high or low; not one accepted the price and crowne for which wee runne is *everlasting glory*: the Judge of the runners is the *Lord himselfe*, who hath appointed this race unto every Christian in this life; who also will give the reward to every one that runneth well.

In this comparison wee may observe many good instructions: First, in that *Christian religion* is compared to a race; Wee are taught that every one that professeth religion must goe forward therein, growing in knowledge, faith, pietie, and in every grace of God. Next that runs a bodily race, must neither stand still nor goe backward (for then hee shall never get the price) but still goe forward to the race end: So must every Christian goe forward in grace, following hard towards the marke, for the price of the high calling of God. If we care not for eternall life, then wee may take our ease, and let grace alone, but if we tender our owne salvation, we must goe on in the graces of religion, as a runner doth goe forward in his race. This being well observed, would rouse up our drowsie Christians that make no progresse in religion.

Secondly, this resemblance of Christianitie to a race, teacheth us all to strive to goe one before another in knowledge, faith, and holy obedience: thus runners doe the same a bodily race. Also in the world the manner of men is, to labour and strive to goe one before another in riches, preferment, in fine apparell, and in bodily delights; now shall men strive to be first in these transitory things, and shall we neglect our duty about these spirituall graces? wherein the more we excell, the more acceptable we are to God, and shall be more glorious in the world to come.

Thirdly, seeing Christianitie is a race, wee must remember to bee constant therein till we come to the end of our faith; even the salvation of our soules. It hath becom the manner of our people to turne in religion with the State and time; and yet to this day many thousands come to our assemblies that would turne to Popery, if that abomination should bee set up againe: for (say they) It was a merry world when that religion was up. But this is not the property of good runners: If wee would have the crowne of life, we must hold true Religion constantly unto the death.

Lastly, like good runners wee must minde our way, and have our hearts set upon the end of our race, which is everlasting life. Each ordinary traveller is very inquisitive of his way, and all his care is to give the neerer way he can to his journey end. Behold, wee are travellers, and our journey is to Heaven; wee must therefore endeavour to goe the straightest way we can, to come to life everlasting: which must we make delays in this way, but which helps

to further us herein; for the matter is of great importance whereabout we goe.

Here some will say, We like this well; but true Religion hath alwaies many enemies and few hearty friends: besides, if a man runne this way, he must runne alone, and suffer many crosses and reproches. *Ans.* This is most true: and therefore the holy Ghost addeth, That we must runne this race with *patience*: We must not be discouraged because of these crosses and afflictions; but labour with patience to beare that part of afflictions, what-ever it bee, that shall light upon us in our journey. This is Christs counsell to his Disciples, Luke 21. 19. *Possesse your soules in patience*: as if hee should say, If you would save your soules, you must labour to beare all crosses that fall on you with patience. In the parable, Luk. 8. 15. *They that receive*

the seed in good ground, are they which with an honest and good heart heare the word and keepe it, and bring forth fruit. But how? *with patience.* Everyone that heares Gods Word, and makes conscience thereof, will have enemies to scoffe and mocke, and to afflict him; which the devill sets a worke to hinder the growth of the Word in his heart: but must hee therefore cease to bring forth fruit? no, he must bring forth fruit *with patience.* And so must we doe in the race of true religion: for crosses, afflictions, and mockings will come; but these stormes must not turne us backe: nay, the more they beat upon us, the more must we arme our selves with patience, by which we shall be able to beare them all. And thus much for this third duty; as also of the exhortation unto constancy in the faith, after the example of all these godly Fathers.

FINIS.