

A faithfull and plaine
EXPOSITION
V P O N T H E
TWO FIRST VERSES
O F
The second Chapter of ZEPHANIAH.

By that late Reverend Preacher of Gods Word,
M. WILLIAM PERKINS.

Containing a powerfull Exhortation to Repentance : as also
the manner how men in Repentance are
to search themselves.

Preached at Sturbridge Faire, in the field; taken from his mouth :
And afterwards diligently perused; and now published for the common
good, by a Preacher of the word.

PROV. 28. 13.

*Hee that hideth his sinnes, shall not prosper : But hee that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall
find mercie.*



L O N D O N,
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1 6 3 1.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL MY

verie worthy and Christian friend,

Sir WILLIAM GEE, Knight,

One of his Majesties honourable Councell in the North,
Recorder of the Townes of *Beverly* and *Hull*, and one of his Majesties
Iustices of Peace in the East-riding of the Countie of *Torke*, a true friend of
learning, and pietie; and to the vertuous and religious Lady his Wife:
Grace and Peace from God, &c.



Mongst the many reasons (Worshipfull Sir) which have perswaded me that Popery cannot be the true Religion, this is not the least: the insufficiencie of their doctrine of faith and repentance: which two things though they be the chiefe and principall points in Religion, and so necessarie, that he who doth not both know, and practise them aright, can never be saved: yet I dare avouch, that the faith and repentance of the Romish Church, as they are taught by many of the best approved Papists, are no better than such a repentance as an hypocrite and a very reprobate may attaine unto. Indeed, to insist upon repentance onely (they make many faire flourishes) they call it penance, they make it a Sacrament, and say it is a bord that saves a man after shipwracke, and write many great volumes of it, and of *Confession*, and of *Cases of Conscience*, (as you good Sir in your owne reading know better than I) and yet alas, when all is done, it is but a shadow of repentance: and indeed how can they teach aright the doctrine of repentance, which erre so foully in setting downe the justice of God, and the vilenesse of sinne? which two points a man must know, else he will never repent: but Poperie misconceiving the justice of God, teaching it not to be infinite, in as much as it needeth not an infinite satisfaction; and misconceiving the nature of sinne, teaching every sinne not to be damnable, nor to offend Gods infinite justice, erring (I say) in these two, how is it possible they should conceive aright the nature of repentance? by which a man seeing his sinnes, their foulenesse, their punishment, and his owne miserie by them, confesseth them, bewailes them, fearing Gods justice, flieth from it, and craves forgiveness of his mercie, and lastly purposeth, and endeavoureth to leave them all, and to lead a new life. The serious consideration hereof, hath often made me wonder, why many Popish treatises, being in some sort exhortations to repentance, should be so accounted of as they are by some: for though, I confesse, there are some of them, good and wholesome meditations, and many motives to mortification, and good life; yet would I gladly learne of any man but this one thing, how those exhortations can be pithy, or powerfull, sound, or any way sufficient to move a man to repentance, when as, not those bookes, nor all Poperie is able to teach a man sufficiently what true repentance is.

If any man reply; I will therefore learne the doctrine out of the Protestants bookes, and use the Papists for Exhortation onely: I then answer, is it not a more compendious, and convenient, and a lesse scandalous course, to seeke exhortation out of such writers, as doe teach the doctrine aright? Nay, I doubt how it is possible to finde a powerfull exhortation to repentance in any Papist, who erres in the doctrine: the reason is manifest, because Doctrine is the ground of Exhortation: and if the doctrine be unsound, how can the exhortation be any better? Let us therefore leave these muddie puddles,

Consil. in Carechiff.
Colliers in
Enchir.

Corradus. Navar-
rus. Lopez. Sarrus.
Hallas. Grassus.
and many other.

puddles, and set our water at the fountaine: the water of life, at the fountaine of life; I meane the doctrine of faith, and repentance, at the written word of God, and at such mens writings as are grounded thereupon, and agreeable therunto.

Now amongst these many instruments of God, who have laboured with profit in this great point of Religion; namely repentance: drawing their doctrine out of the two Testaments of Gods booke; I may well say (to say no more) that this man of God, Master *perkins*, deserves to have his place: whose labours whilst he lived, and his yet living labours, what they deserve, I had rather others should proclaim, than I once name; who professes my selfe to be one of those many, who may truly say, that by the grace of God, and his good meanes principally, I am that I am. But leaving him in that glorious mansion, which Christ the Lord of the harvest hath prepared for him, and now given him, I returne to my selfe, and doe humbly praise the Lord of heaven, who gave me my time in the Universtie, in those happie dayes, wherein (besides many worthy men of God, whereof some are fallen a sleepe, and some remaine alive unto this day) this holy man did spend himselfe like a Candle, to give light unto others.

The scope of all his godly endeavours, was to teach *Christ Iesus*, and him crucified, and much laboured to move all men to repentance, that as our knowledge hath made Paperie ashamed of their ignorance; so our holy lives might honour our holy profession. And as repentance was one of the principall ends, both of his continuall preaching and writing; so especially and purposely hath he twice dealt in that Argument.

First, in his Treatise of Repentance, published 1592. wherein briefly (as his manner was) but formally, pithily, and feelingly, he layeth downe the doctrine, and the very nature of Repentance: and after the positive doctrine, he toucheth some of the principall controversies and difficulties in that doctrine: but afterwards thinking with himselfe, that he had not seriously and forcibly enough, urged so great and necessarie a lesson as Repentance is; therefore shortly after, being desired and called to the dutie of Preaching, in that great and generall assembly at *Sturbridge Faire*, he thought it a fit time, for this necessarie and generall exhortation to repentance: to the intent, that as we were taught the doctrine of repentance in the former Treatise, so in these Sermons we might be stirred up to the practice of it. And certainly (good Sir) I judge there could not have beene a matter more fit for that assembly, than an Exhortation to Repentance: for as the audience was great and generall, of all sorts, sexes, ages, and callings of men assembled out of many corners of this Kingdome; so is this doctrine generall for all: some doctrines are for Parents, some for children, some for schollers, some for trades-men, some for men, some for women; but repentance is for all: without which, it may be said of all and every one of age, not one excepted; No Repentance, no Salvation.

These Sermons being in my hands, and not delivered to me from hand to hand, but taken with this hand of mine from his owne mouth, were thought worthy for the excellencie, and fit for the generalitie of the matter, to be offered to the publike view.

And now these first fruits of my labours in another mans vineyard, as also all that hereafter doe or may follow, I humbly consecrate to the blessed *Spouse of Christ Iesus*, the holy Church of God on earth, and namely to the Church of England, our beloved Mother, who may rejoyce that she was the Mother of such a sonne, who in few yeares did so much good to the publike cause of Religion, as the wickednesse of many yeares shall not be able to wear out. But first of all, and especially, I present the same unto you (my verie Worshipfull and Christian friends) who (I must needs say) are verie worthy of it in many respects.

1. For the matter it selfe, which is repentance, my selfe being able to testifie, that you are not hearers but doers, ripe in knowledge, and ripe in the practice of repentance: in so much as I dare from the testimonie of my conscience, and in the word of a Minister pronounce of you, that as you have heard and knowne this doctrine of repentance, so blessed are you, for you doe it.

And 2. for him who was the Author hereof (whose mouth spake it from the feeling of his soule, and whose soule is now bound up in the bundle of life) I know, and cannot

Deering, Green-
ham, Rendford,
and many others.

M. Perkins but
fifteen years old
at his death.

in good conference conceale the great delight you have alwaies had in the reading of his bookes, the reverend opinion you had of him living, and how heavily and passionately you tooke his death and departure: therefore to cheare you up in want of him, I send you heare this little Booke, his owne child, begotten in his life time, but borne after his death: observe it well, and you shall finde it not unlike the Father: yea, you shall discern it in the Fathers spirit; and it doubt not but to finde entertainment with them, of whom the Father was so well respected.

And for my selfe, I spare to rehearse what interest you have in me, and all my labours, it is no more than you worthily deserve, and shall have in me for ever: you are the fairest flowers in this garden, which in this place I after others have plucked for the Lord (or rather God by us :) And two principall pearles in that Crowne, which I hope for at the last day from the Lord my God; whose word at my mouth you have received with much reverence, and with such profit, as if I had the like successe of my labours in others, I should then never have cause to say with the Prophet, *I have laboured in vaine, and spent my strength in vaine*, but my judgement is with the Lord, and my worke with my God.

And if I knew you not to be such, as take more delight in doing well, than in hearing of it, I would prove at large what I have spoken of you: yet give me leave to say this, which without open wrong I may not conceale, that beside your rare knowledge, and godly zeale in Religion, and other duties of the first Table to God himselfe, your charity and pity to the needy distressed Christians at home and abroad, your mercifull dealing with them who are in your power, your benevolence to learning, and namely to some in the Univeristy, doe all proclaime to the world those your due praises: which I (well knowing your modesties) doe spare once to name: neither would I have said thus much, were it not for this cold and barren age wherein we live, that so when our preaching cannot move, yet your godly examples might stirre up. Pardon me therefore, I pray you, and thinke it no wrong to you, which is a benefit to Gods Church: but goe forward in the strength of the Lord your God, and hold on in that happy course you have begunne: *be faithful unto the end, the Lord will give you the Crowne of life: faithfull is he which hath promised, who will also doe it*: proceed (good Sir) to honour learning in your selfe and others; and Religion especially, which is the principall learning, and proceed both of you, to praise Religion in your owne persons, and in your family; hold on to shine before your family, and amongst the people where you dwell, in zeale and holinesse: hold on hereby still to shame Popery, to stop your enemies mouths, and to honour that holy Religion which you professe, to gaine comfort of good conscience to your selves, and assurance of eternall reward: and lastly, to encourage mee in those painfull duties which lie upon me: for I openly professe that your religious zeale and love of the truth, with many other good helps, are principall encouragements in my Ministry, and especiall motives unto me, to take the charge of publication of so many workes of this holy man deceased, as may not in better manner bee done by others. But I keepe you too long from this holy Exhortation following; I therefore send you to it, and it to you, and from you to the Church of God: for I dare not make it to be privately yours and mine, wherein the whole Church hath interest as well as we. It was preached in the field, but it is worthy to be admitted into our hearts. I found it in the open field, but upon diligent view finding it to be Gods Come, and a parcell of his holy and immortal seed, therefore I brought it home, as good Come deserves: And as it is Gods Come, so in you, I desire all holy Christians to lay it up in Gods Garners, that is, in their hearts and soules.

And thus committing this little volume to your reading, the matter to your practice, you and yours to the blessed favour of that God whom you serve: and my selfe and my endeavours to your hearty love and holy prayers, I take my leave: From my study,
August. 7. 1605.

Yours in Christ Jesus ever assured,
W. Crashaw.

Phil. 1. 6.
Apoc. 2. 10.
1 Thess. 5. 24.

AN EXHORTATION TO REPENTANCE.

ZEPHANIAH 2. V. 1, 2.

Search your selves, even search you, O Nation, not worthy to be beloved: before the Decree come forth, and you bee as chaffe that passeth on a day.



THE Prophet in the first Chapter of this Prophecie rebuketh the *Jewes* of three notable crimes, Idolatry, Fraud, and Cruelty. In this second hee exhorts them to Repentance, and withall reproveth some of their speciall finnes. In the three first verses he propoundeth the doctrine of Repentance, and addeth some speciall reasons to move and stirre them up to the practice of it. In propounding the doctrine of Repentance, hee directs it to two sorts of men: First, to the obstinate and impenitent *Jewes*, in the first and second verses. Secondly, to the better sort of them, in the third: So that the summe and substance of these two first verses, is a brieve and summary propounding of the doctrine of Repentance to the obstinate *Jewes*. The words containe in them five severall points, touching the doctrine of Repentance.

First, the duty to be performed, *Search*: Secondly, who must be searched; *your selves*: Thirdly, who must doe it; *the Jewes*: who are further described to be a *nation not worthy to be beloved of God*: these are in the first verse. Fourthly, in the second verse, the time limiting them, when to repent, *before the Decree come forth*; that is, before God hath put in execution the judgements which are already decreed and appointed for them. Fifthly, a forcible reason urging them to doe it, which lieth hid, and is necessarily implied in the fourth point; namely, that there is a *Decree against them*, which wants nothing but execution: which alio shall come unlesse they repent: whereby they shall be fanned: and if they shall bee found to be chaffe, they shall flie away with the wind of Gods justice. Of all these points in order.

For the first, the holy Ghost saith, *Search your*

selves. The words are commonly read thus; *Gather your selves*: which though it be good, for that in repentance a man gathereth himselfe, and all his wits together, which afore were dispersed, and wandered up and downe in vanity: yet I rather allow their translation, who read thus, *Search, or fanne your selves*: but either of them may stand, because the word in the original doth comprehend both significations; yet it seemeth that to search or sift fits the place better, considering the same manner of speech is afterwards continued in the word *chaffe*: so that the meaning of the holy Ghost seemeth to bee this; Search, try, and fanne your selves, lest you be found like chaffe, and so flie away, and be consumed before the justice of God.

Concerning this duty of searching, let us observe, first, that the holy Ghost urging the *Jewes* to repent, useth not the word Repentance, but bids them search themselves: yet meaning, he would have them to repent: giving us to understand, that no man can have true and sound repentance, but he who hath first of all searched and examined himselfe: and this stands with good reason; for no man can repent, who first of all doth not know himselfe, and his owne wretchednesse; but no man can see into himselfe, nor know himselfe, but he that doth diligently search himselfe: so that the beginning of all grace, is for a man to search, and try, and fanne himselfe, that thereby he may know what is in himselfe: that so upon the search, seeing his fearefull and damnable estate, hee may forsake himselfe, and his owne waies, and turne to the Lord. Thus speaketh the holy Ghost in the hearts of holy men; *Let us search and try our waies*: and marke what followeth; *and turne againe to the Lord*: as though there were no turning againe to the Lord, but after a searching of our selves. With this testimonie of the holy

Ohod, agreeeth the testimonie of all holy men-
consciences, who all know, that the first begin-
ninge of their turning unto the Lord, was a sear-
ching of themselves. Let any repentant sinner
aske his conscience, and call to minde his first
calling and conversion, and he will remember
that the first thing in his repentance was this;
that he searched into himselfe, and looked nar-
rowly into his waies, and finding his waies
dangerous, and his case fearefull, did thereupon
resolue to take a new course, and turne to the
Lord for pardon and mercy, and for grace to
enter into more holy, and more comfortable
courses.

The man that passeth upon ridges of Moun-
taines, and sides of hills, or that goeth over a
narrow bridge, or some dangerous and steepe
rocks at midnight, feareth not, because he seeth
no danger: but bring the same man in the mor-
ning, and let him see the narrow bridge hee
went over in the night, under which runnes a
violent streame, and a bottomlesse gulf, and
the dangerous Mountaines and rocks he passed
over, and he will wonder at his own boldnesse,
and shrinke for feare to thinke of it, and will by
no means venture the same way againe: for
now he seeth the height of the mountaines, the
steepnesse of the hills, the cragginnesse of the
rocks, the fearefull downefall, and the furious
violence of the streame underneath, and there-
by seeth the extreme danger, which afore hee
saw not: therefore he wondreth and rejoyceth
that he hath escaped to great a danger; and will
by no means be drawne to goe that way in the
day, which he went most carelesly in the dark-
nesse of the night, but seeketh another way
(though it should be farre about: So a sinner in
his first estate, which is naturall and corrupt (as
we are bred and borne) hath a vail before his
face, so that he seeth nothing: The wrath of God,
and the curse due for sinne, Hell and damnati-
on seeking to devour him, he seeth them not, al-
though (living alwaies in sinne) he walketh in
the very jaws of hell it selfe; and because hee
seeth not this fearefull danger, therefore hee re-
fuseth no sinne at all, but rusheth securely into
all manner of sinne: the night of impenitency,
and the mist of ignorance to blinding his eyes,
that he seeth not the narrow bridge of this life,
from which if he slide, he falls immediatly in-
to the bottomlesse pit of hell.

But when as Gods Spirit hath by the light of
Gods Word opened his eyes, and touched his
heart to consider his estate, then he seeth the
slippery bridge of this narrow life, and how little
a step there is between him and damnation,
then he seeth hell open due for his sins, and him-
selfe in the high way unto it: sinne being the
craggy rocke, and hell the gaping gulf under
it; this life being the narrow bridge, and dam-
nation the streame which runneth under it; then
he wondreth at his miserable estate, admireth
the mercy of God, in keeping him from falling
into the bottome of hell, wondreth at the pre-

sumptuous boldnesse of his corruption, which
to securely plodded on towards destruction; and
being ashamed of himselfe, and these his waies,
he turnes his heart to the God that saved him
from these dangers; and sets himselfe into more
holy waies, and more conformable courses, and
confesseth that ignorance made him bold, and
blindnesse made him so presumptuous; but now
he seeth the danger, and will by no means goe
the same way againe: and thus the searching
and seeing into the foulness of sinne, and the
danger thereof, is the first beginning of repen-
tance, and the first step into grace.

This doctrine teacheth us what faith and re-
pentance is generally in the world. All men say,
they beleeve, and have repented long agoe;
but try it well, and we shall finde in the body
of our Nation, but a lip-faith, and a lip-re-
pentance: for even when they say so, they are
blinde and ignorant of their owne estate, and
know not themselves, but presume of them-
selves, that because they are baptized and live
in the Church, therefore they are in Gods fa-
vour, and in very good estate; when as they ne-
ver yet were reconciled to God: and are so far
from it, that they never yet saw any finnes in
themselves whereof they should repent. As a
man travelling in the night, seeth no danger,
but plods on without feare: So the most part
of our common people, in the night of their ig-
norance, thinke and presume they love and
feare God, and loveth their neighbour; and that
they have ever done so: Nay, it is the common
opinion, that a man may doe so by nature, and
that he is not worthy to live, who doth not love
God with his heart, and beleeve in *Iesus Christ*:
But alas poore simple soules, they never knew
what sin was, never searched nor saw into their
owne hearts with the light of Gods Law: for
if they had, they should have seene such a sea of
corruption, that then they should confesse it to
be the hardest thing in the world, to love God,
and to beleeve in Christ, and to forsake sinne:
it is therefore manifest, that they have not yet
begun to beleeve or repent, nor have entred in-
to the first step of grace, which leadeth to re-
pentance, for that they have not learned this
lesson, which the Prophet teacheth, that is, to
search themselves.

Furthermore, let us in the second place ob-
serve better the signification of the word: it sig-
nifieth to search narrowly, as a man would doe
for a peece of gold, or a precious Jewell, which
is lost in a great house: or as a man may search
for gold in a Mine of the earth, and but very
little gold Oare.

Hence we may learne, that in true Repen-
tance and conversion, we must not search to on-
ly, as to finde the grosse and palpable finnes of
our lives; but so as we may finde those finnes
which the world accounts lesser finnes, and
espy our secret faults and privy corruptions.
Some corruptions seeme more neere a kinne
to our nature, and therein men hope to be ex-
cused,

cusest, when they forsake many other greater finnes: But a true penitent sinner must search for such, so as a good Magistrate searcheth for a lurking Traitor which is conveyed into some close and secret corner, and he must ransacke his heart for such corruptions, as wherein his heart takes special delight, and must thinke that no sinne can be so small, but it is too great to bee spared, and that every sinne great or little, must be searched for, as being all Traitors to Gods Majestie.

But alas, the practice of the world is farre otherwise, great sins are little sins, little finnes are no finnes: Nay, after a little custome, great finnes are also little or nothing: and so at last, men make no bones of grosse and grievous sins, and for the most part, men search for superficially, that they scarce finde any thing to be sinne: such excuses are made, such distinctions are devised, such mitigations, such qualifications, such colours are cast upon all finnes; as now up and downe the world, grosse finnes are called into question whether they be finnes or no: and the great transgressions of the Law are counted small matters, necessary evils or inconveniences, tolerated to avoid other evils; and what is he counted but a curious and precise foole which stands upon them? Ignorance after five and thirty yeares preaching is counted no sinne: blinde devotion in Gods service no sinne: lip-labour in praying, vaine and customeable swearing, mocking of Religion, and the professors thereof, no sinne: prophaning of the Sabbath, contemning of Preachers, abusing of parents, no sinne: pride in apparell, superfluitie in meates, beastly and ordinarily drunkenness, fornication, no finnes: Nay, deccits, colourages, oppressing usury, notorious bribery, and covetousnesse, that mother sin; these are counted no finnes: these beames are made but moats by prophane men; and they are so minced, and carved, or there is some such necessity of them, or some such other flourish or varnish must be cast upon them, as that they are little or none at all. Alas, alas, is not that a simple and silly search where such blocks as these are lie unspied? what are Mole-hills, when such Mountaines are not seene? Moats will be little regarded, where such beames are not discerned: but it is cleare, that therefore there is no true triall, nor diligent search made: for a true convert will search his heart for all, and will spare none: He deales in searching his owne heart, as a good Justice of Peace in searching for Traitors or Seminari-Priests. He seeks not superficially, but most exactly, and leaveth never a corner unsought: and he thinke great finnes to bee infinite, and little finnes great, and judgeth no sinne so small, but that it deserveth the anger of God, and therefore hee wonders at the mercy of God, which throwes us not all down to hell in a moment: and he cryeth out with holy *Jeremy*, 't is the Lords mercy that we are not all consumed. Away then with this superficiall and hypocri-

tical search, where so many sins are spared and not found out. It is Pharisaicall, for even so the Pharisee, when he came into the Temple to reckon with God, and to tell what Traitors hee had found, that is, what sins upon good search he had espied, he returns his precept, all is well, hee hath found never an one, but begins to thank God that he was so good, and so good, and not so ill, and so ill, nor yet like the Publican. The world is full of Pharisies; not only the Popish Church, but even our Church swarms with these superficiall searchers, who cannot (because they will not) finde any sinne to present unto God. Men thinke in the Countrey, a Church-Officer hazards his Oath, if hee present all well, and findeth no fault in his Parish, to present as punishable to the Ordinary: for men thinke it impossible, that there should be none in a whole Parish: then how doth that man hazard his owne soule, who being made overseer and searcher of his heart, findes nothing in it to present to the Lord. For it is not more easie to espy outward and actual transgressions in a whole Parish, than it is to finde heapes of corruptions in a mans heart, if a man will search into the bottome of it with the light of Gods Law. Therefore when the Lord comes and keeps his visitation, what shall become of such a man, but to undergoe the strict and severe search of the Almighty, because he would not search himselfe?

Our bodies and lives are free from the Spanish Inquisition, (which is one of the last props which Satan hath lent the Pope, wherewith to uphold his declining Kingdom) and the Lord grant we may be ever free from it. But in the meane time, that might put us in minde how to deale with our corrupt hearts, and unmortified affections, even to erect an *Inquisition* over them, to lie in wait for them, to search them narrowly, and to use them roughly: yea, to set our hearts upon the racke of Gods Law, that so it may confesse the secret wickednesse of it; for the Papists doe not thinke us Protestants greater enemies to their superstition, than the inward corruptions of our owne hearts are to our salvation: therefore it may be a godly policy for every man, even to erect an *Inquisition* over his owne heart and conscience, and not to spare his most secret and dearest finnes, and such as are neerest allied to his owne nature: for that is the true search here commanded by the Prophet, and practised by all godly and holy men, when a man purposeth to hide all that are, and to espy even all his finnes: for a godly man is never satisfied in his search, but still, the more he finds, he suspects the more are still behinde, and therefore he continueth searching his owne heart all his life long: Therefore let every professor look to it betwixt God & his conscience, that he dally not with himselfe in this case: for if he doe, then when God comes with his private search, his hypocritie shall be discovered, and his nakednesse shall be laid open in the view

of men and Angels, to his eternall confusion.

Thirdly, *Search* saith the Prophet; but not to content, he forceth it againe, *Even search you*. In thus repeating and urging this exhortation, the holy Ghost gives them and us to understand, that the true searching of a mans heart, and life, is a duty of great moment, and speciall necessity: therefore hee leaves it not after once naming it, but inforceth it the second time, as being no matter of indifferency, but of great necessity: thereby shewing, that it is a principall duty in repentance, even the beginning and foundation of all true grace.

And further, it is a meanes also to prevent Gods judgements: for when men search not themselves, then God sends the fire of afflictions and crosses to try and search them: but when they search themselves, then God spareth to search them by his just judgements.

Now in that this duty of searching is both the beginning of all true grace, and the meanes to stay Gods judgements, and therefore is so pithily, and so forcibly urged by the holy Ghost, it must teach us all a necessary lesson, namely, to make great conscience of searching our selves. First, because God hath so commanded, and we are to make conscience of obedience to every Commandement. Secondly, because thereby we shall receive two so great commodities, as first thereby wee shall lay a sure foundation for the good worke of grace in us: and secondly, shall stay the hand of God, and his judgements from being executed upon us. Let us therefore hearken to this counsell of the holy Ghost, let us take the fan of the Law, and therewith search and winnow our hearts and lives. Our hearts for secret and hidden corruptions: Our lives, for committing of evil and omitting of good. Doe with your hearts as men doe with their Wheat: they will not suffer their Come to lie long in the Chaffe, lest the Chaffe hurt it, but commit it to the fan, that the wind may separate them: So the graces of God in our hearts are pure Come, our sinnes and corruptions are chaffe: looke well, and thou shalt finde in thy selfe much Chaffe, and but little Come: let not then the Chaffe lie too long mingled with the Come, lest it corrupt the Come. Let not thy sinnes lie mingled with the grace of God in thee: if thou doe, they will choake it in the end, and so deprive thee of all grace: therefore rip up thy heart, and looke into thy life, and when thou hast sinned, enter into thy selfe, aske thy conscience what thou hast done, and be not quiet till thou hast found out thy sinne, and the foulness of it; and never thinke that thou knowest any thing in Religion, till thou knowest what is in thine owne heart, and what are thy speciall and privie corruptions; and look into thy owne faults, not with a partiall eye, but with a censorious and a straight judgement: spare sinne in no man, but especially condemne it in thy selfe.

But alas, these times of ours cry out of an

other state, for even *Jeremies* case is ours: We may complaine as he did, *No man repents him of his wickednesse, saying, What have I done?* the same is the case of our people, and the sickness of all Nations, that every man runs on in his sinnes, from sinne to sinne carelessly, even as the badd horse into the battell. But how rare a thing is it to finde a man that daily searcheth himselfe, and examines how he lives, and how the case standeth betwixt God and himselfe; and that when he hath done amisse, entrench into the closet of his heart, and strikes himselfe upon the brest, and disputes the case with himselfe, saying, *What have I done?* Oh what is this that I have done against God, against his Church, and against my owne soule!

The want of this is that which the Prophet complaineth of in that place: not as though it were sufficient thus to doe, in a mans owne conscience: but because it is a good beginning, and a step to further grace. For if a man did seriously thus deale with his conscience after his sinne, his conscience would shape him such an answer, and would tell him so roundly what he had done, that he would take heed how he did the same againe, and looke more narrowly and warily to himselfe all the daies of his life. Seeing therefore it is so necessary a duty, let every one of us endeavour the practice of it, namely, to rip and ransacke our hearts, and to search our waies unto the bottome.

Now for your better instruction, and furtherance in the performance hereof; you must know, that this *Search* is to be made by the Law of God: for nothing else but Gods Law can helpe us, and let us see that which we must search for: for if we search by any other means, we may seeke and search long enough, ere wee find any thing that will be matter of repentance. Aske the Devill, he will tell thee all is well, and that thou art in an excellent estate; and God loves thee, and thou art sure of Heaven: this song the Devill alwaies sings for the most part, till a man comes to die; for then he appeares in his colours; but till then, he labours to sing and lull all men asleepe in the cradle of security. Aske our owne flesh, and our owne hearts and natures, and they will answer and say, that all is well and safe, and that we have believed, and loved, and feared God all our daies. Aske the world, and men in the world; and they will answer, all is well; and they will say further, that thou art a right good fellow, and art worth twenty of those curious fooles, that stick upon points, and stand upon circumstances, as swearing, and drinking, and good fellowship, and gaming, and such other nice and circumstant all points: thus will worldly men answer: for thy prophane course is acceptable to them, because thereby thou approvest the same in them. Nay, goe further, and aske all humane learning in the world, and it cannot tell thee what one sinne is, nor what it is to offend God: so that there remains onely the Law of God, the light where-

of will disclose the darknesse of our hearts, and the justice whereof will reveale the unrighteousnesse and the perversenesse of our natures: therefore to the Law of God must wee first to helpe us in this search.

And yet for our better helpe in this duty, and that there may bee nothing wanting to that soule that seeketh God, therefore we are further to know, that if we will search our selves by the Law profitably, wee must marke three rules, the truth whereof unless we know, acknowledgement, and feelee, wee shall never seee our owne estate, nor profit by this *Search*, but plod on from sinne to sinne, untill wee plunge into Hell.

The first Rule is, that every man that came from *Adam*, sinned in the sinne of *Adam*: thou must therefore know, that his sinne in eating the forbidden fruit, was thy sinne, and thou sindest therein as well as he, (though thou wast then unborne) and that thou art guilty of it before God, and must answer for it to Gods justice, unless Christ doe it for thee. The reason hereof is, because we are his seed and his posterity, we were then in his loines, he was the father of us all; and was not a private man as we are now, but a publike person, the pledge of all mankind, and bare the person of us all at that time: therefore what he did then, hee did it for himselfe, and for us: What Covenant God made with him, was made for himselfe and us: what God promised him, and he to God, hee promised for himselfe, and for us: what he received in his Creation, he received for himselfe and for us; and what he gained or lost by his fall, hee gained and lost for us, as for himselfe. He lost the favour of God, and originall puritie; therefore hee lost it for all his posteritie: guiltinesse, and Gods anger, and corruption of nature which he gained, he got for us all, as well as for himselfe. If we doubt of this point, it is proved by the Apostle: where the holy Ghost saith, *Sin entered by one man, and death by sin, and that sin went over all: and that it went over all them which sinned not in the like transgression with Adam* (that is, even our children) who as they are borne, are borne not onely tainted with originall corruption, but guilty also of *Adams* sinne. This is a most certaine truth, though it seeme strange; for few men thinke of it, that ever they shall answer for *Adams* sinne: and therefore if any object, what reason is there that I answer for another mans sinne? I answer, true, if it had bene *Adams* sin alone, but it was his and thine also: for he was thy father, and stood in thy roome: and thou also since thou wast borne, hast confirmed what hee did. Now therefore though not one of many thinks seriously thereof; namely, that he should stand guilty of a sinne committed more than five thousand yeares before he was borne, yet seeing it is most true, both in Scripture and good reason; let every man subscribe in his conscience to this truth, And let this be thy first

election in this search, that thou standest guilty of *Adams* transgression.

The second rule to bee knowne is, that in every man are all finnes: more plainly, that in every man by nature are the seeds of all finnes, and that not in the world, but in the best natured men: make choise of the best man, and the greatest sinne, and that worst sin is to be found in that best man. If any doubt of this, let him consider what originall sinne is, namely, a corruption of the powers of our soules: and that not of some, or in part, but of all and wholly. This corruption hath two parts: First, a want, not of some, but of all good inclination, a want of all goodnesse. Secondly, a deprivation, and pronenesse, not to some, but to all evil: and not a pronenesse onely, but originall sinne infuseth into every mans heart the seed of all corruption.

Many men stand much upon their good meaning, and upright heart, and brag of a good nature; but they are foully deceived: for take the civillest man upon the earth, and the seeds of all finnes in the world are in him by nature. But to explain this point fully, observe these two clauses:

First, I say not the *practice* of all finnes, but the *seeds*; for all men practise not all sinne: the seeds are in their nature; but the practice is restrained, sometime by education, sometime by good and wholsome Laws; sometime the constitution of mens bodies deny the practice of some finnes; sometime the Country a man dwells in, or calling a man lives in, keeps him from the practice of some finnes: and alwaies a generall and limiting grace of God restraines the natures of all men, from running into many finnes: which hand of God, if God should take away, and leave every man to his nature, wee should see that every man would practise any sin in the world: yea, even the greatest sin that ever we heard to be done in the world. All men which know themselves, know this to be true. And the more a man knowes his owne heart, the more hee seeth that his heart is a den of all wickednesse: and that it is the mercy and grace of God, that he hath not fallen into the mightiest and most monstrous finnes in the world.

Secondly, I say, by nature. For I know by good education, and by grace it is otherwise; grace rectifieth nature, but that is no thanks to nature: for it is as evill and corrupt still, being severed from grace: and therefore nature must be fully abolished, afore man come to heaven. And yet (though all this be true) I say not that sin breaks out in all natures alike, though all natures bee alike corrupt: for the course of nature is restrained in some more than others, by the means aforesaid; but this is the truth, that whereas some are not so angry, some not so wanton, some not so cruell, some not so covetous, some not so ambitious, &c. as others: that comes not from any goodnesse of nature in them, above the other originall, but from

Gods

Gods hand, which tempereth, restraineth, and moderates every mans nature as he seeth good.

And if God did not thus moderate and restrain the natures of men, but suffer them to breake out to the full: there would then be no order, but all confusion in the world; therefore (as especially for his Churches quietnesse, so also for the preservation of publike peace, and the upholding of societie in the world betwene man and man, the Lord holds a hand over every mans nature, and keeps every one in a certaine compasse limited by the wisdome of his power; which restraining hand of his, if the Lord should take away, all societies and common-wealths would be turned upside downe, because every man by the universall corruption of his nature, would breake out into every sin. I end this point with appealing to the testimony of the consciences of all men, and especially of the best and holiest men, of whom I would aske this question, whether they finde not in their natures an inclination, even to the foulest sinne in the world, if shame, or feare, or elsie the grace of God restrained them not; so that the best men doe know well enough, what a doe they have with their corrupt natures, to keep them within the compasse of Obedience.

Nay, I yet adde further, the nature of men, and of all men is so corrupt since *Adam*, that even the seed of the sinne against the holy Ghost, and a pronenesse to it, is in the nature of every man (though not one man amongst many thousands doe commit that sin) for seeing in that sinne, there is a heape or scia of all sinnes gathered together, he therefore that hath in his nature the seed of all sinnes, hath also the seed of it. And againe, seeing all evil tends to a perfection, as well as grace doth; what reason therefore is there, but we may safely thinke that the Devill would hale every one to that height of sinne, if it were not that the powerfull hand of God did prevent him; who will neither suffer wicked men, nor the Devill himselfe to bee so wicked as they could and would be.

The use of this second Rule is notable. For in this searching of our selves, it sheweth us what we are, without all colours or deceit, and fully discovers the ugliness of our natures; and it may teach us all how to think & esteeme of our selves, when we heare of *Cains* unnatural murder, *Pharaohs* unnatural cruelty, the *Sodomites* unnatural lusts, *Achithophels* devilish policy, *Senacharibs* horrible blasphemy, *Judas* monstrous treason, *Julians* fearefull Apostasie. When we heare of the fearefull murders, treasons, perjuries, sinnes against nature, blasphemies, Apostasies, witchcrafts, and other the horrible sinnes of the world; let us then returne into our selves, and looke homewards, even into our owne hearts, and confesse every one, that these should have bene even thy sins also, if Gods grace had not prevented thee.

This will humble thee, and make thee thinke

vilely and basely of thy selfe, and so consequently bring thee to repentance and true amendment: and the very reason why men repent not, nor amend their waies, is because they are Pharisees by nature, & thinke highly of themselves, and of their owne natures, and their naturall inclinations: this will be a harsh and a strange Doctrine in them; Oh they have excellent natures, and they cannot endure such and such sinnes, and they thinke God, they are not as ill as others: but let all such men know, they must cease magnifying nature, and learne to magnifie Gods grace. Let them know that nature in them, is in the Root as much corrupt, as in the worst man in the world, and every mans heart is a bottomlesse fountaine of all sinne; therefore praise not thy nature, but Gods grace and mercy in giving thee so good a nature; or rather so well restraining or rectifying thy nature; and stay not there, but desire of the Lord, that as he hath given thee a better tempered nature than to other men; so also he would bestow on thee his speciall and saving grace: and as he hath kept thee from the fearefull sinnes of others, (thou being as ill naturally as they) so he would also lead thee into the way of salvation, which elsie the best nature in the world can never attaine unto.

The third rule to be knowne and practised by him, who will truly search himselfe, is, that every man borne of *Adam*, is by nature the childe of wrath, and Gods enemy: this is true of all without exception; high and low, rich or poore, noble or simple, borne in the visible Church or without. And further, by being enemy of God, he is therefore borne subject to hell, to damnation, and to all other curses; so that look as a Traitor convicted stands thereby in his Princes high displeasure, and is sure of death, without a special pardon; so stands every man when he is borne, convicted of high treason against God, in his high disfavour; and is in danger of Hell, which is the fulfilling of the wrath of God. Thus *David* confesseth of himselfe; *I was borne in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.* If sinne, then in Gods wrath, and under the danger of damnation. If any aske, how, or why this is so: I answer, the truth, as also the equity of this third rule depends on the two former: for, because every man is borne guilty of *Adams* great sinne, and also tainted originally with all corruption, and a pronenesse of all sinne; therefore it followeth in equity and justice, that every man is borne under the wrath and curse of God. This point is a plaine and evident truth: yet men in the world thinke not so, and it is the cause why men repent not of their sinnes: for most men thinke that by nature they are in Gods favour, and therefore they need not so sue for it in humiliation and repentance; but onely live civilly, and doe no open wrong, and all is well: whereas (alas) there is no condemned Traitor, more out of his Princes favour, nor

more

more sure of death without a passion, than all we are out of Gods favour, and sure of damnation, unless we procure Gods favour againe, by faith and repentance.

For the better opening of this third rule, and the manifesting of the truth; let us know further that the curse of God, under which we are all borne, is threefold:

The first is a bondage under Satan: It is a certaine truth, that every man as he is borne of his parents, and till he repent, is a slave of Satan; man or woman, high or low, Satan is his Lord and Master. He sits as Judge in his heart; and in this sense Satan is the King of the Nations, and god of the world. Men will in words curse Satan, and nor name him without defiance, and spit at him; and yet (alas) hee is in their hearts; they spit him out of their mouths, but hee is lower, they should also spit him out of their hearts; and that is true defiance indeed: for alas, he lodgeth in thy heart, and there he maketh his throne, and reignes untill the Spirit of regeneration disposesse him: and till then, no servant is so subject to his master, no slave to his Lord, as is the heart of man by nature unto Satan, the prince of darkness. Nay, our bondage is more fearefull than the slavery of any poore Christian, in the Spaniards, or in the Turkes Gallies: for their bodies are but in bondage, and at command, and under punishment, but our best part, our heart, our conscience, our soule it selfe is captivated unto him, and under his command, who is the King of cruelty and confusion, and Lord of hell, whose commandments are injustice, whose service is sinne, and whose hire is damnation.

The second part of the Curse, is the *first death*, or the death of the bodie: that is, a separation of the soule and body asunder for a time, namely, till the last judgement. This death is duly and justly the punishment of any one, for the least sinne: therefore how due and just a punishment upon that horrible heape of sinfulness, which is in every mans nature? and it is a most terrible curse: For it is the very gate of hell, and the downfall of damnation unto all men, but such as by faith and repentance doe get their death sanctified by the death of Christ; unto such men indeed it is no curse, but a gracious and glorious blessing, for it is altered by Christ his death. But unto all men by nature, and which repent not, it is the heavy curse of Gods wrath, and the very downfall into the gulfes of Hell.

The third part of the curse, under which every man is borne, is the *second death*, the death of soule and body; which is the eternall want of Gods presence, and the accomplishment of his wrath: and an apprehension and feeling of that wrath, seazing on body, soule, and conscience. The first curse was a spirituall death, the death of the soule, The second a temporary death, the death of the body. The third is an eternall death, a death both of soule and

body together, and for ever. This eternall death is the curse of all curses, the misery of all miseries, and torment of all torments; and I shew it thus. Often when thy tooth akeeth, and sometime when thy head akeeth, or in the paine of the stone or chollicke, thou wouldest give all that thou hast in the world to be eased of that paine. Nay, in the extremity of some fits, many will wish themselves even out of the world. Now if the paine of one tooth can so farre discomper minde and body, that it cannot be releevd with all the pleasures of this life; O then, what a torment shall that be! when not one kinde of paine, but the whole violl of Gods wrath shall be powred, not on one member, but on the whole soule, body, and conscience; and that not for a time, under hope of better; but eternally without hope of releefe: and that not in this world, where there are comforts, helps, and remedies; but in that ugly and darksome place of torments: and that not amongst living men, which might mitigate thy paine, or else become thee, and bewaile it with thee; but with the Devils and damned spirits, which will now laugh at thy destruction, and solace themselves in thy misery, and will rejoyce, as thou didst serve them in earth, so now in hell to be thy tormentors. It may be therefore (by the way) good warning and wisdom to us all, when we feeble the extremity of some bodily paine, to consider with our selves and say; Oh then, what shall be my misery and torment if I repent not; when not one member, but soule, body, and conscience, shall be racked and tormented in the feeling and apprehension of the anger of the Lord of hosts.

In these three points stands that curse and wrath of God, under which a man is borne. And these doe answer to the three degrees of sinne, which are in us: for as the two first Rules taught us, there is in every man by nature, till he repent, a threefold guiltinesse. First, a guiltinesse of *Adams* sinne. Secondly, the taint of originall and universall corruption. Thirdly, a pollution by many outrageous actual sinnes. In the first of these, every man is equally guilty. In the second every one is equally corrupt. But in the third, every one keeps that compassse, within which the Lord will keepe them, by his limiting power.

Now as in our guiltinesse of *Adams* sinne, sinne hath his beginning; in originall sinne, his continuance: in actual sinne his perfection: so answerable hereunto, the wrath of God (which alwaies standeth opposite to sinne) is begun in leaving us by nature to the slavery of Satan, is continued by death, and accomplished in damnation.

And now these three Rules, I commend to the carefull and Christian consideration of you all: certifying you from God, that as you can never be saved, unless you repent; nor repent, unless you search your selves (as here the Prophet biddeth;) so that you can never search

your selves aright, till you be perswaded, and resolved of these three rules, and of the truth of them all, even in your heart and consciences: namely, First, that thou art guilty of *Adams sinne*. Secondly, that thou art prone by nature to all evil in the world. Thirdly, that for these thou art subject to the wrath of God, and to all the curses of his wrath: but when thou art in heart and conscience resolved that these are true, then thou art a scholar for this lesson of the Prophet, *Search thy selfe*. For when thou goest thus prepared unto this Search, and esteeme of thy selfe, as these three Rules have described thee: then if thou search into thy selfe, thou wilt finde thy selfe and thy estate to bee such, as will cause thee to repent, returne, and take a new course: therefore what the Prophet said to those Jewes, I say unto you also, my brethren of this Realme of England, who are here now gathered together out of many countries and quarters of this Realme; yea, in the name of the same God, I cry unto you, *Search, O search your selves*: and thinke it not a matter indifferent to doe, or not to doe it: but know it, that God commands you, as ever you will come to salvation; *Search your selves*. And the rather because by these three rules, you see how much chaffe of corruption is in your nature, and what need therefore it hath to be searched into, and fanned by Repentance. Be well assured thou man, whatsoever thou art, there is so much chaffe in thee, that if thou search not, and sinne it not out, thou wilt prove nothing but chaffe at the last day, and so bee blowne away with the wind of Gods justice into hell. Take hold therefore of this exhortation, and deferre it not.

Thou wilt not suffer thy Wheat to lie too long in the chaffe, for feare of hurting it; Is it then safe to suffer the chaffe of thy vices and corruptions to lie cankering and rotting in thy heart? Be sure that that little portion of grace which thou attainest unto, by living in the Church, and under the Ministry of the Word of God, will be putrified and cleane corrupted with the chaffe of thy finnes: therefore againe and againe, I exhort you to make conscience of this duty: Search into your selves, fan out this chaffe, this presumption of ours, and high esteeming of our owne nature, and conceits of Gods favour before we have it; that so this chaffe being blowne away, the Lord may then bestow upon us foundnesse of grace, and the foundation of all goodnesse, which is a holy and humbled heart.

Salvation is such a building, as the foundation thereof had need to be sure and strong: Ignorance, blindness, and presumption, are not sufficient foundations for such a building: therefore as no man will build a strong house upon any eath, but will first search it, lest it prove sandy, and so overthrow all: so a wise Christian will not build his salvation upon fancies and conceits, and naturall presumption; but will

A Search, and looke into his heart: and finding these to be sandy and rotten, and therefore too weak for the foundation of so glorious a building, will refuse them all, and labour to furnish his heart with such sound grace, as whereupon he may trust to weighty a worke, as the salvation of his soule. Again, if thou wilt stand in the day of triall, then search thy heart betimes, and discern betwixt chaffe and wheat: thou shalt see that chaffe flyeth away before the wind; but the good come endure the sinne, and the fury of the wind: so in the day of triall, temptation, sickness, or open persecution, the chaffe of naturall presumption, and outward formality in religion will flie away; and it must be the penitent, humbled, and believing heart, which must then abide it out, and endure the sinne of temptations and persecutions.

And to conclude: Let not the Devil deceive thee, in making thee imagine or hope to please God, and yet to let thy corruptions lie unscene, and thy finnes unsearched out, lest thereby thou marre all; for thou wilt not to lay up wheat in thy garner, untill it bee purged from the chaffe; so thinke not to store up any saving knowledge, or any other grace of God in thy heart, untill the chaffe of vanity be first blowne away, that so the holy graces of God may be laid up in the garner of thy soule. And therefore questionlesse (to speake one word to touch our common professors in the very sore of their soules,) all knowledge that is stored up in these impure and unsearched hearts, is even as wheat laid up in the chaffe, which is a thousand to one sure to be eaten up by the chaffe, so that when the winnowing time of trialls and persecutions comes, I feare that such men will (for all their knowledge) shrinke aside, and betray the truth; their knowledge then proving no better than chaffe, because it was laid up in an unholy heart. If therefore thou wouldst stand and endure, when Popery, or persecution, or temptations come, if thou wouldst abide the fury of the sinne of temptations; now then exercise thy heart with the sinne of Gods Law, search and ransacke it, purge out the chaffe of corruption, and store up knowledge in an holy heart and a good conscience, and that will abide the violence of all temptations; yea, when God suffers the Devil to doe with us as he did with *Peter*, to winnow us like wheat, to sift and try us as he did *Iob*, with the furious wind of all his malice; the knowledge will prove Wheat that will abide the wind, and gold that will abide the fire: thus glorious it will be in the end, if wee follow this holy Prophets counsell, and search our hearts.

And thus much for the first point (namely) this duty of searching here commanded, in which wee have stayed the longer, because it is the foundation of all the rest: and this being well laid, the whole building will goe up the faster.

Now we come to the second generall point here

here laid down: that is, whom we must search? the Prophet answereth, *your selves*; not other men, but your selves. This search is urged and enforced by the Prophet, must not be of other mens hearts and lives, but of our owne: our owne are our charge, and not other mens; and therein is the saying true, which else is most false, *Every man for himselfe*: for as every soule must be layed by it selfe, so must it beleve, repent, and search it selfe.

The duty therefore here commanded, is for every man that would have his soule to bee saved, to search it, and reforme it, and leave others to be searched by themselves. Here the holy Ghost meets with the common corruption of this world (and that is) that men are Eagle-eyed, to see into the lives of other men, but to looke into their owne hearts and lives, they are blinder than Moles: they can see moats in other mens lives, but discern not beames in their owne; whereby it comes to passe, that they stumble and fall foully: for the eyes of most men are set upon others, and not upon themselves: and thereupon it is, that an evill man seeing other men, and not himselfe, thinks best of himselfe, and worst of other men; but contrariwise, a good man seeing himselfe, and not other men, thinks worst of himselfe, and better of other men: an evill man lookes outward, and judgeth other men; but a good man lookes homeward and judgeth himselfe: and in judging, condemnes himselfe, farre above other men: and that because by searching into his owne heart and waies, hee knowes that by himselfe, which he knowes not by any man in the world besides.

So then, we must search, not other men, but our selves: our owne hearts and our owne lives are our charge and burthen: the lives of other men concerne us not, being private men, further than either to follow them being good, or take heed of them being evill: but to search, or to bee inquisitive into them, is no duty commanded us, but rather a foule and a base vice forbidden of God. Indeed Magistrates in their people, Pastors in their congregations, and householders in their families are to search: but they can search only for criminall causes, or open actuall finnes: but this searching must be of our hearts, which no man can search, but our selves only. Few men have a calling to enquire into other mens lives, but every man hath a calling to search into himselfe: but (alas) men doe farre otherwise, they suffer themselves to rot in their owne finnes, and erect an Inquisition over other mens lives: and it is to bee seene in daily experience, that those men who are the great searchers and priors into other men, are the neglecters and forgetters of themselves. And contrariwise, they who doe narrowly search themselves, and their owne wayes, and looke into the corners of their owne hearts, doe finde so much worke to doe with themselves, that they little busie themselves with

other men. And thus much may suffice for that point.

It followeth; *O nation not worthy to be beloved.*

The third point: *Who must search?* The Jewes who are here termed a Nation, not worthy to be beloved: and yet for all that, they are bid to search themselves, that so upon their Repentance they might be beloved. Where wee may see the unspeakable love of God, and his wonderfull mercy, offering grace unto such men as are altogether unworthy of it. Gods children are by nature like other men, and God findes nothing in them, why to respect them above others: but even of his owne mercy makes them worthy, who of themselves are not: therefore how worthy is that God, to have all the love of our hearts, who loved us when we were not worthy to be beloved.

But let us examine more particularly, why God doth call the Jewes a Nation not worthy to be beloved: I answer, God had blessed them above other Nations: He gave them his Covenant of grace, and thereby made them his people, and committed to their trust his holy Word and Oracles; but he dealt not so with other nations, neither had the Heathen knowledge of his lawes. Besides all this, they had a better land than others about them, it flowed with Milke and Honey (that is, with all commodities, and delights) and though their Country was but little, yet themselves so populous and so powerful, that whilst they pleased God, no enemy durst set upon them.

Thus for foule and body, they were every way a Nation blessed of God, a people beloved of God above all others. Now how did this people (thus beloved of their God) requite this his love, which they had no more deserved than any other Nation? Certainly, as they deserved it not afore they had it: so they required it not when they had it; but requited this love of God with sinne, with rebellion, and with disobedience. They tempted him, they provoked him: to wrath, they presumed of his mercy, and proved a most stubbornne and stiff-necked people, a froward generation. *Moses* partly saw this in his owne experience, and better discerned it in the Spirit of Prophecie: and therefore wondring at this their wickednesse, he cried out; *Doe you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? thus, that is, with sinne and disobedience, which is the only meane to displease the Lord, and to provoke him to wrath: for this cause, they are worthily called a foolish and unkinde people by Moses, and here by the Prophet, A Nation not worthy to be beloved: namely, for their unthankfulnesse and unkindnesse; which was such, as they not only were backe and careless in performance of such duties as God required, but even multiplied their finnes, and committed those foule rebellions which his soule hated.*

And among many, the Prophet here in this Chapter,

Chapter, noteth three of their great finnes; for which they were a Nation not worthy to be beloved, *Covetousnesse, Cruelty, and Deceit*: all which were the more heinous and intolerable, because they were the finnes of their Princes, their Rulers, and their Priests, who should have beene lights and examples to the rest.

Now though every sinne in it selfe, is of that ill desert, as it is able to cast us out of Gods favour, and deprive us of his love; yet behold, here God complains, not upon a little cause, but for wonderfull and exceeding unthankfulness and unkindnesse in them, who of all other should have loved the Lord.

As a man cares not for hard usage from him, whom he esteemes not; but a little unkindnesse doth greatly grieve a man, from him who is loved and respected: so it is with the Lord our God; he loved not the Gentiles, as he did the Jewes, neither was he so bountifull unto them: and therefore (as we may see) though they lived alwaies in ignorance, and continued alwaies in disobedience, yet the Text saith, the time of that ignorance God regarded not: but when as the Jewes his owne people, whom he chose out of all people, and bestowed his love upon them, and made his Covenant of grace with them, when they became unkind, unthankfull, forgetfull, subborne, and rebellious; that caused the Lord even to complaine of the indignitie, and to cry out by *Moses, Doe you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?* And here by the Prophet, *O Nation not worthy to be beloved*: and therefore there is no man, but if he be asked what he thinks of this Nation of the Jewes; he will answer, that they are a most vile and wicked people, a froward generation, and that they are worthy to taste deeply of all Gods plagues, who so farre abused his love and mercy.

But what, doth this belong to them alone? and is *Israel* only a Nation not worthy to be beloved? Nay, I may cry out with as good cause, O England, a Nation not worthy to be beloved. For God hath beene as good a God to us, as he was to the *is*; and we have beene as unkinde a people to him, as they were to him. But that I may be free from discrediting our Nation, and from defiling my owne nest, let us prove both these points, and lay them open to the view of the world.

1. First therefore, the same mercies and far greater, have beene powred and heaped upon us: he hath called us out of the darknesse: First of Heathenisme, and then of Popery: his covenant of grace and salvation, he hath confirmed with us, his treasures of his Word and Sacraments hee hath imparted unto us, his holy Word never better preached, and the mysteries thereof never more plainly opened since the time of the Apostles: and as we have Religion, so we have it under a religious Prince, whereby it comes to passe, that these blessings of salva-

on wee enjoy not in secret, or by stealth, but we have it countenanced by authority: so that Religion is not barely allowed, but even as it were thrust upon men. Besides all this, we have a land also that floweth with milke and hony, it is plentifull in all good things; we have liberty and peace under a peaceable Prince: and the companions of peace, prosperitie, plentie, health, wealth, come, wooll, gold, silver, abundance of all things that may please the heart of man: thus hath God deserved the love of England.

2. But now England, how hast thou requited this kindnesse of the Lord? certainly, even with a great measure of unkindnesse: that is, with more and greater finnes than ever *Israel* did: so that if *Moses* spake true of them, then may our *Moses* much more truly cry out against England: Doeft thou thus requite the Lord thou foolish people? And if this Prophet said thus of *Israel* for three finnes, then may it be said of England for three hundred finnes (O England) a Nation not worthy to be beloved: for thou hast multiplied thy transgressions, above theirs of *Israel*, even as though thou hadst resolved with thy selfe, the more Gods kindnes is heaped on thee, the more to multiply thy finnes against him. For thou England, as thou hast required the Lord with finnes; so not with a few finnes, or small finnes, or finnes which hardly could have beene prevented: for that had beene a matter of some excuse, or not of so great complaint. But thy finnes are many, and grievous, and capitall. And which is worst of all, wilfull and affected, even as though God had deserved evill of us, and that therefore we ought maliciously to requite him.

If any man make doubt of this, and therefore thinke I speake too hardly of our Church; I will then deale plainly and particularly, and rip up the sores of our Nation, that so they may be healed to the bottome.

The common finnes of England, whereby the Lord is requited, are these: First, ignorance of Gods will and worship. (I speake not of that compelled ignorance in many corners of our Land, which is to be pittied because they want the meanes) but wilfull and affected ignorance. Men are ignorant even because they will be ignorant. Meanes of knowledge were never so plentifull, and yet never more grosse ignorance; is not he wilfully blinde, who will not open his eyes in the light? and can there be any darknesse at noone day, but it must be wilfull? But our Nation is darke and blinde in the Sun-shine of the Gospell, and grossely ignorant when the Gospell beates their eares, and light shines round about them: so as if they closed not their eyes, and stopped not their eares, they could not but both heare and see. Who would looke for ignorance after thirty five yeares preaching? and yet many are as ignorant, as if they had beene borne and brought up under Poperie: so that our people are as evil as those

in the dayes of Christ, of whom the holy Ghost saith: *Light is come into the world, but men love darkness more than light.* So knowledge is come into England, but many English men love ignorance better than knowledge. Alas, how many thousands have we in our Church, who know no more in religion, than they heare in common talke of all men; and which is worse, they thinke it sufficient also; and which is worst of all, whereas they might have more, they will not, but care not for it.

2. The second maine sinne of England, is *Contempt of Christian Religion.* Religion hath bene among us this five and thirtie yeares; but the more it is published, the more it is contemned, and reproched of many; in so much, as there is not the simplest fellow in a Countrey towne, who although he know not one point of religion, yet he can mocke, and some such as are more religious than himselfe is: this is one of the moths of England, that eats up religion: this is grievous in whomsoever, but most intolerable in two sorts of men. First, in them who are altogether ignorant, that they should mocke they know not what. A pitifull thing to heare one, who himselfe cannot give the meaning of one petition in the Lords Prayer, to upbraid other men, because they are so forward. But it is the worst of all, when men of knowledge, and such as live civilly, and would be counted good Christians, and indeed of the better sort, cannot abide to see others goe a little before them: but if they doe, presently they are hypocrites and dissemblers. Thus not prophaneesse, nor wickednesse, but even Religion it selfe is a by-word, a mocking stocke; and matter of reproach; so that in England at this day, the man or woman that begins to profess religion, and to serve God, must resolve with himselfe to sustaine mockes and injuries, even as though he lived among the enemies of Religion, and not among professors; and as Religion increaseth and spreadeth it selfe, so doth the number of these mockers. O what a cursed sinne is this! To contemne the greatest favour that God can give us, that is, his holy Religion: for which we should rather praise him all the dayes of our lives. All that God can give a man in this World, is his Gospel; what then can God give to be regarded, when his Gospel is contemned?

This sinne was never amongst the Jewes; they indeed regarded it not so as it deserved, but who did ever make a mocke and some of it but England? O England, how canst thou answer this? God sends thee the most precious Jewell, that he can send to a Nation; and thou scornest it, and then that bring it, and them that receive it: even as though it were no blessing, but a curse: so that as Christ saith to the Jewes, *for which of my good works doe you stone me?* So may the Lord say to England, I have given thee a fruitfull land, a blessed Prince, gold and silver, peace and libertie, plenty, and prosperi-

tie: for which of these O England! dost thou contemne my Religion? The least of these deserve love, but England hath a better than all these; that is, his Gospel, and Word of salvation: and yet, that also is contemned (as being nothing worthy) and those which confesse it, and those that bring it, and consequently God himselfe that gave it. If England had no more finnes but this, this deserves that it should be said of us, that we are a *Nation unworthy to be beloved* above all Nations: for some Nations would have Religion, that they might love it, but they cannot have it: some have it and love it not: but in no Nation is it made a mocking-stocke, but in England. And where are those men but in England, who (like the dog in the manger) will neither entertaine religion themselves, nor suffer them that would? let us in time take heed of this sinne, as a sinne that crieth to God, to revenge so vile a dishonour done to his Majestie: neither is there any sinne that more certainly fore-shewes, and more forcibly hastens the removing of the Gospel from us. For high time it is to leave loving, where love procures disdain: And to stay giving, where gifts are scorned.

Carie home this lesson to your great townes and Cities where you dwell; for in these populous places are these great mockers; for where God hath his professors, the Devil hath his mockers; and repent becomes of this sinne: for hold on in mocking, and be sure that God (who will not be mocked) will remove his Gospel from you; but if you leave this sinne, and entertaine the Gospel (as it worthily deserves) then be sure of it, God will continue his Gospel to you and your posteritie after you, in the face of all your enemies round about you.

3. The third common sinne of England, is *Blasphemy*, many wayes; but especially in vaine swearing, false swearing, and cursing, and the abuse of all the names and titles of the Lord God. This sinne is general, even over the whole land, especially in Faires, and Markets, where men for a little gaine, will not care to call the Lord of Hosts to be witness to a lie, and the God of truth to testify an untruth.

And which is worst of all, Gods holy name is used in vaine oathes, and ordinarie talke, when men have no cause to swear at all: so that it is most lamentable to see and observe, that the name of any man of Honour, or Worship, is used more reverently, and less abused than that fearefull and glorious name, *the Lord our God.*

4. The fourth generall and great sinne is, *Profanation of the Sabbath.* A common sin every where; and yet so great a sinne, that where it reignes, in that Countrey, Congregation, family, man or woman, there is no face of God, nor any true grace in them: for the keeping of the Sabbath, is the maintaining, increasing, and publishing of religion.

5. The fifth sinne of our Nation, is *unjust dealing in bargaining betwixt man and man.* How

There were then
present to sell
the church
Crier and townes
of the Land.

hand is it to finde an honest, simple, plaine-dealing man : and that even in such great assemblies as this is, I feare present experience will testifie : you are now many thousands gathered together, some to buy, some to sell, some to exchange : Remember that I have told you, an honest hearted, and plaine dealing man is hard to finde : therefore labour to approve your selves sincere hearted men : remember the counsell of the holy Ghost : *Let no man oppress nor defraud his brother in bargaining : for the Lord is the avenger of all such things.* These finnes are generall, and universall as a canker : and so are the finnes of the 6. 7. and 8. Commandements, (though they be not altogether so common as these be) *Murders, Adulteries, Vsuries, Briberies, Envyings, Concoages*, they are a burthen under which our earth groanes ; and they cry against us to heaven ; so that upon as good, or much better cause may be laid to us, as to the Jewes, *O Nations not worthy to be beloved.*

Looke at the outward face of our Church, at the signes of Gods love, which are amongst us, and at Gods dealing with us ; and behold, we are a most beautifull Church, a glorious Nation, a Nation to be admired and wondrous at : but looke at the lives of our ordinarie professors, looke at our finnes, and at our requiting of Gods love ; and we are a people of *Sodom*, as full of iniquities as they were, whose finnes are so many, so ripe, and so ripe, that at the last they will even bring downe fire and brimstone, or some other strange judgement upon us, if repentance doe not prevent it, or the cries and prayers of holy men stay not Gods hand. So then let us all here assembled, grant and confesse, that wee are a Nation, so farr from being worthy to be beloved, as that wee are most worthy to be hated, and to have all the wrath of God powred upon us.

Now then, are we so, and shall we continue so still ? Nay, that is worse, and most wretched of all ; then let every one of us learne this dutie ; enter into our selves, search out hearts and lives, that they may lay open to our owne sight, to the confusion of us in our selves, that in God by repentance we may be raised up.

Our finnes lie open before the face of God, and stinke in his presence, and cry for vengeance : and before the face of Gods Angels, who bewaile them ; and before the face of the Devill, who joyceeth in our confusions : and shall they lie hid onely to our selves ? Now then, if we would have them hid from God, and stop the cry that they make against us, and keepe them from Satan, who accuseth us for them ; we must so search our selves, that they may lie open to our owne hearts : Remember thou thy finnes, and God will forget them : lay them open before thy owne face, and God will hide them from his : Write them up for thy owne selfe, and God will blot them out of his remembrance : but if contrarywise thou hidest them, then assure thy selfe, the more thou hidest, and buryest them, the

more open doe they lie in the face of God : and then what will followe, but that they will all be disclosed at the last day, to thy eternal confusion. Therefore againe and againe, I exhort you in the name of God, Search your selves, finde out your finnes, confesse them to God freely, and ingenuously ; confesse their desert to be Hell and Damnation, humble your hearts to God, crye and call for pardon as for life and death, purpose and promise to leave them, begin a new course of life, beleve stedfastly, and doubt not of pardon and forgiveness in the blood of Christ, continue in that faith and that new course of life : So may England prevent Gods judgements, and quench that great action of unknowenness, which God hath against them, and become a *Nation as worthy* (upon their faith and repentance) in Christ to be beloved, as for their peace and prosperitie, they have bene of all Nations of the earth admired.

Hitherto of the third generall point.

4. The fourth generall point in this exhortation, is the time limited them when they should search : *Before the Decree come forth, &c.* As though the Prophet should say, Israel repent, before God execute his judgements on thee. For behold the gracious dealing of God ; Man sinneeth, his finnes deserve plagues, but God presently plagueth not, but defers it, he puts a time betwixt the sinne and the punishment (ordinarily) : this he doth to shew his mercie unto mankind, because he would not destroy them, if they would amend. Therefore after the sinne he finites not presently, but puts off his punishment, that in the meane time man may repent. Here the Prophet compares the Lord to a mother : for as she conceives the fruit in her wombe, and beares it a long time, ere she bring it out, so the Lord after a mans finnes, or a peoples finnes, conceives, that is, ordaines and decreeth a judgement for it, but he keeps it up, and all that while he beares it ; But as the when her time is come, doth travaile and bring forth : so when the time that God hath appointed is come, and still sinne is not repented of, then his justice travels to be delivered of that judgement, which Mercie hath kept up so long a time. Thus the old World had an hundred and twentie yeares given them for time of repentance ; all that while God was in conceiving ; at last when their finnes were ripe, and no hope of amendment, then God travelled, and brought forth a fearefull birth, namely, the universall flood, to wash away, and take revenge upon the universall iniquities of those times. So many hundred yeares hee gave unto the Jewes, long he was in conceiving their destruction, and oftentimes he had it at the bringing forth, as in the captivitie of Babylon, and under *Antiochus* ; yet his mercie stayed it, and still he travelled longer, tells them here by the Prophet, and yet the decree is not come forth, (though it bee conceived) : but at last when

Israel would not repent, but grew worse and worse, (as in Christ his time) when he could containe no longer, but travelled indeed, though with griefe, yet hee hath brought forth: and what? a most fearefull birth, even an utter desolation of that Kingdome and Countrey, of their Citie, and Temple, and a dispersion of their Nation over all the world: but as a woman at last is delivered with danger and difficultie, with paine and sorrow; so the Lord long conceives, but at last brings forth his judgements: yet it is with griefe and unwillingnesse, and he is loth (as it were) and much grieved, to execute his most just judgements on those, who have professed his name: he often touched the Jewes a little, and as being unwilling to smite them, he drew backe his hand againe: but at last when their finnes did so increase, and were so strong, that they even did wring out by violence his plagues from him; then with much bewailing of their great miserie (as we may see in Christ weeping for them) he executed his judgements on them. But as they are long a coming: so when they come forth, they are the heavier; as a childie, the more fullnesse of time it hath, is the greater, the livelier, and the stronger; so Gods judgements, the longer God deferreth them, and is in conceiving them, the heavier are they when they come: that is manifest in the Jewes, once his owne people; for he hath destroyed their land with an irrecoverable destruction, and smitten their posteritie with a blindness of minde to this houre, so that to this day, when the old Testament is read, the vaile is over their eyes, that they cannot see the light of Christ Jesus, but plod on in fearefull and palpable blindness.

This Doctrine hath speciall use to this our Church, to teach us to looke to our selves betimes, and trie our owne wayes, and turne to the Lord; for we cannot tell how farr off his judgements are: in reason they must needs be neerer, they have bene so long deferred, and so justly deserved of us. Certainly, God hath long bene in conceiving judgements and plagues for the finnes of England, and often hath Gods hand bene upon us, by warre, famine, pestilence, inundations; and yet it hath bene puld backe againe; and his sword hath bene put up into his sheath, and God hath stayed his birth even in the verie travell, and we have escaped, even as a man, whose necke hath bene upon the blocke, and the Axe holden up to strike: so then yet the day is not come, yet we have time: happie we that ever we saw this day, if now we have grace to repent, and *search our hearts*; for then we shall stay this judgement decreed, that it shall never come forth against us; but if we deferre to repent, and put off from day to day, and lie rotting still in our finnes; then know and be assured, that as the decree is established, so it must needs come forth: and then when judgement is come forth, and the stroke stricken, repentance is too late: therefore

what he said to the Jewes, I say unto us, *Search thy selfe, O England*, a Nation not worthy to be beloved, *before the decree come forth*, which is already past against thee. Thus much for the fourth point.

5. Now followeth the last point: the reason of all. *Why should we search our selves?* The reason is included in the fourth point: *For there is a decree come forth against thee*. And though the execution be deferred, and though God be unwilling to take it out, yet without repentance, it is most certaine, it shall come forth, and be executed at the last. In one word, this is the reason. Repent, or else certainly God will take vengeance. But (will many heart say) is this true? Or rather, these bee but words to feare men, and to keepe them in awe. I answer, for the proofe and experience herof, never goe further than this place, and please example wee have in hand: the Prophet bids them *Search, Search, and Repent*: else as certainly as there was a judgement conceived, so certainly it should bee executed upon them: they would not heare, nor search, nor repent; but what followed: let all men judge whether God is not true of his word to them or no; yea, alas, who seeth not that God hath travelled indeed, and hath brought forth a fearefull judgement on them, and hath made them for these thousand yeares and a halfe, the gazing-stocke, the by-word, and the amazement of all the world.

Thus was it threated to the Jewes, and thus it is performed: and certainly thus hath it bene threated, and this shall it be performed to thee, *O England*, except thou prevent the judgements that are coming; *O happy England*, that I may say to thee, it is yet but coming. For as for the miserable Jewes, upon them (alas) it is come already: to those poore soules it can be said no more, *Repent before the decree come forth*, for it is now past: but thou art happy, for thy day is not yet come: yet I may say to thee, *Repent before the decree come forth*: and *O happy England*, that thou mayest heare this word (*Repent*) sounding in thine eares. Therefore my beloved brethren, who are here assembled out (almost) of every corner of this kingdome, heare my words, and carrie them home with you into all Countreies. God is the same God still, as just, and as jealous, as ever he was; our finnes are as ill, nay, much viler than the Jewes were; how can it be then, but that must fall to us that fell to them; therefore the zeale of Gods glorie, and my desire of your salvation makes me, that I dare not flatter, but tell you the truth: that is, that out of all question, if we search not our selves and repent, there is a generall judgement in preparing for us: certainly the *Decree is out*, and what can stop the execution of it, but *Repentance*; God hath long spared, and he hath bene long in travelling, therefore (though nothing can be said in way of prophesie) I am in my conscience

perswaded to feare, and that out of infallible grounds of the word of God, that a plague and a judgement, and that most fearefull, hangs over England: and that it is already pronounced upon this Nation, and shall be as certainly executed, without a visible reformation: and because I may seeme to speake somewhat at large, give me leave to give you the reasons inducing me hereunto.

1. First, the Gospell hath beene preached these five and thirtie yeares: and is daily more and more, so that the light thereof did never shine more gloriously, since the Primitive Church: yet for all this, there is a generall ignorance, generall of all people, generall of all points, yea, as though there were no preaching at all: yea, when Poperie was newly banished, there was more knowledge in many, then is now in the body of our Nation: and the more it is preached, the more ignorant are many, the more blinde, and the more hardened (even as a stithie the more it is beaten upon, the harder it is,) so they, the more they heare the Gospell, the lesse they esteeme it, and the more they contemne it: and the more God calls, the deafer they are; and the more they are commanded, the more they disobey. We preachers may cry till our lungs sic out, or be spent within us, and men are moved no more than stones. O alas, what is this, or what can this be, but a fearefull signe of destruction? Will any man endure alwayes to be mocked? then how long hath God beene mocked? Will any man endure to stand knocking continually? If then God hath stood knocking at our hearts five and thirtie yeares, is it not now time to be gone, unless we open presently?

But if we will know what this argueth, to contemne the Gospell, and not to repent when the word is so abundantly preached: reade the storie of *Elis* his wicked sonnes. He spake unto them, and gave them godly counsell, but they *hearkened not unto the voyce of their Father*. But will some say, that is no great matter, not to heare their father is a common thing: but marke what followeth: *They would not heare their Father, because the Lord would destroy them*: a fearefull thing. Even so it is with a Nation or people: are they taught, and are they worse and worse? take heed: if *Elies* sonnes obey not, it is because God will destroy them.

If therefore *Elis*, and many *Elies* have spoken to England, and England heares not, England obeyes not, England repents not: take heed the Lord in heaven say not. *England will not heare the voyce of the Prophet, because I will destroy it*. Let no man say, we take upon us to prophesie; we only give warning, and shew the danger by example of the like.

2. My second reason is this. One judgement executed, and not working repentance, is alwayes a forerunner of another: that Rule is certaine, and an evident truth, and needs no proving. Now we have beene visited with Famines,

Earth-quakes, Pestilence, Inundations, Thunder and lightnings in winter, and most strange and unseasonable weather: but alas, all these have taken no effect: where is the humiliation, repentance, and reformation which they have wrought? therefore it must needs be, there remains behind a greater judgement. Men may be so mad to thinke these be ordinary things, and to come by course of Nature, and ordinary causes: but certainly they are the shaking of the Rod, and fore-runners of a greater judgement, unless Repentance cut off their course. For looke as one cloud followeth another, till the Sunne consume them; so one judgement hastens after another, and repentance only is the Sunne, which must dispell them.

3. Thirdly, it stands with the justice of God, according as he hath revealed it in the Scripture, especially in Deut. 28. out of the whole Chapter, it must needs be gathered as a Rule; *I will curse that people that breake my lawes*: now we may not deny, but this land of ours, is for abundance of sinne, a people of *Sodom*: all kinds of sinnes, in all estates of men, rage and reigne every day more and more; therefore I conclude, that unless we repent, and so dissolve this cloud of judgement, that hangs over our heads; it cannot be but a most fearefull tempest is to come at the last, and when it is come, it will be too late to wish they had done it. Therefore in the bowells of Christ Iesus, let this be to entreat and to exhort you all, to search and looke into your selves, that so repenting and changing your wayes, you may get the sword againe into his sheath, which is already drawne out, but yet hath not stricken home; and may quench the wrath which is already kindled, but yet burnes not out as it will doe, if by repentance wee quench it not: and doe this everie one, as you tender the salvation of your owne soules, and the continuance of the Gospell to this glorious Nation, and the peace and prosperous state of this Church and Common-wealth. For let men make what causes they will, it is certainly sinfulnesse that overturneth kingdomes, and changeth states, as all these kingdomes and states have felt, who have continued finally to contemne the Gospell.

D It followeth; *And you be as chaffe that passeth on a day.*

The Prophet proceedeth, and describeth more plainly the manner and state of that plague, which God will send upon them; the meaning was partly opened before, to be in effect thus much: Search your selves, lest God take his fame and trie you, because you would not trie your selves, and finding you upon the triall, not found wheat, but light chaffe, blow you to hell with the wind of his wrath. The *Metaphor* which the Prophet useth is this; he compares the Lord to a husbandman, great and rich, the whole world is his cornefield; severall nations, (as this of ours for one) are his heaps of come: but these heaps of come be full of chaffe, that

that is, these particular Churches, are full of hypocrites; now a wise husbandman letteth come and chaffe lie together no longer, than till the wind doth blow, and then he appoints his fanning time to sever his come from his chaffe, and to blow away his chaffe, and lay up his come: so God, the great and wise husbandman, will not let the chaffe lie for ever amongst the Wheat, he hath therefore appointed his fanning times, when to blow the chaffe into hell, and to gather his Wheat into heavenly garners.

Now Gods winnowing times are two; the one is at the last day, after this life, and that is Gods great winnowing day of all his come, (that is, of all men) when the bad shall be severed from the good for ever, never to be mingled againe with them, but by the strong and powerfull fanne of I is last and finall judgement to be blowne into hell: the wind of whose wrath, at that day, shall be stronger to blow them all away, than all the wind in the world to blow away one handful of light chaffe.

2. Gods other fanning time, is in this world, and that is also double. The one is, when the word is preached: *The preaching of the word is one of Gods finnes*: For when the Gospel is preached to a Nation or Congregation, it fannes them, and tries them, and purgeth them, and so severs them, that a man may see a manifest difference of the chaffe and the wheat, that is, of the godly man and the wicked man: this preaching of the Gospel, doth *Iohn the Baptist* expressly call a fanne: where the holy Ghost pursueth this whole *Metaphor* most plainly; speaking of Christ, he saith, *Whose fanne is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner, but the chaffe he will burne with fire unquenchable*. The wind of this fanne of the Word preached is so strong, as that it severs the chaffe from the Wheat, that is, good professors from hypocrites in the visible Church, and blowes so strongly upon the wicked, that it brings them to the beginning of hell even in this world, for it so worketh upon the conscience, as if it cannot convert them, it strikes them with feare, terrour, and torment, either in life or at death, which torment of conscience is the very flashes of hell fire.

But when this first fanne of the Word will not serve to bring men to repentance, (for the Word preached doth not confound a man actually, but onely pronounce the sentence, and thereby strike the conscience) then God hath another fanne, and that is the *fanne of his judgement*: and that fanning or winnowing time is, when he executes his vengeance and his judgements on a Nation: this is his latter fanne, when the first will not prevaile, this is his powerfull and strong fanne driven about by the wind of his wrath: this fanne went over the old World, and swept them all away, and went over the Nation of the Jewes, and we see they are no more.

1. These three finnes of God, make a three-

fold separation of the chaffe from the Wheat, that is, of the wicked from the Elect; with the fanne of his word, which is powerfull, he severs them in affection and disposition, and makes a distinction of them, so as generally the Wheat is knowne to be Wheat, and chaffe discerned to be chaffe, by the preaching of the word: but though the tares be knowne to be tares, yet both grow together, so that the word onely severs them in affection, and sets severall notes of distinction upon them both.

2. But then the second fanne of his judgements is more violent: for thereby he severeth them alunder in soule, gathering the soules of the godly as his Wheat into the heavens, and blowing the soules of the wicked into hell: but yet the bodies of them both lie together, as partakers of the same judgement, so subject to the same corruption, and are lodged in the same grave of the earth, and death hath like dominion over them all.

3. But afterwards at the last day, at Gods great harvest, and great winnowing time, he then with the wind of his power severs them alunder in soule and body: Wheat from the chaffe, Sheepe from the Goats: and separateth them, never to be mingled againe for ever and ever: and then with the wind of his wrath he blowes the chaffe into fire unquenchable, and with his loving favour gathereth his Wheat into the everlasting and glorious garners of heaven.

So then, the first severeth them in affection. The second, in soule for a time. The third, actually in soule and body for ever and ever.

Now of these three winnowing times, the hoie Ghost speaketh here properly of the second: namely, the *fanne of Gods judgement*: so that the meaning of the *Metaphor* is this: search your selves and repent betimes, lest God come upon you with some fearefull Judgements, because you have so long contemned the *fan of the word*; and finding you too light to abide the trial, so take you away in the judgement and cast you into hell: for as sure as the fan of the word hath made difference of you, which are chaffe, and which are Wheat, so sure shall the fanne of his judgements blow away the chaffe to hell and damnation. Thus much for the meaning.

Now for the use, for us in England, the case stands thus: Our Church doubtlesse is Gods come field, and we are the come-heap of God: and those Brownists and Sectaries are blind and besotted, who cannot see that the Church of England is a goodly heape of Gods come: but withall we must confesse, we are full of chaffe; that is, of prophane and wicked Hypocrites, whose hearts and mindes abound in finnes and rebellions: and many of our best professors are also too full of chaffe, that is, of corruption, and doe give themselves too much libertie in many finnes; but alas, the pure Wheat, how thin is it scattered? how hard to finde a man, at least a family, which dedicate themselves to the

Lord, in holy and sincere obedience, and labour to make confidence of all times: now therefore seeing we are Gods corn-field, and we have some pure Wheat amongst much chaffe, therefore God will winnow us to finde out the come: if he have but one come of Wheat in a handfull of chaffe, but one good man of many, he will thrise all the heape for those few comes, he will not care to blow all the chaffe to hell, to finde out those few comes of Wheat, to lay them up in heaven: so that out of all question, England being so full of chaffe, must looke to be winnowed.

Now for the first fanne of his word, it hath bene used in this Land these five and thirtie yeares, and charas powerfully and as plentifully as any where in the world, and yet (alas) many are more God-lesse, more ignorant, more prophane than ever they were, yea, wickednesse groweth, and the chaffe increaseth above the Wheat; be sure therefore, that God will bring his second time upon us, because we will not suffer the first, the milde and gentle fanne of his word to trie and search us: therefore hee will bring the *fearfull fanne of his iudgements*, and with it, he will blow soule and body into hell, with these our finnes and corruptions, which we would not suffer the fanne of Gods word to blow from us. The first hath so long blowne in vaine, that the second must needs come upon us, and is hath already begun to blow; three or foure blais have blowne over us, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, fire, water, wind, these have

In the plague at London, there died foure hundred thousand in 1603, there died 300, in a week

to blowne some of us, that they have taken away a great number of us. For us that remaine, this only remaines, that we suffer when our selves by grace, to be able to stand against the next blais; for come it will, and when it comes, no wealth nor worldly thing can enable us to endure it, only faith and repentance, and the grace of God will stand at that day. Now therefore, in that so fearefull a fanning abidieth us; seeing it is so neere (as appeareth by the blais already past over us, which are nothing but the forerunners of a greater tempest): what should be our care (except we care not to be blowne body and soule into hell) but to labour to escape this fearefull fanne of Gods wrath: or at least, if it come upon us, that it may not blow us to hell, but lift us up to heaven. If thy heart be touched to aske how this may be: I answer thee, onely to follow the Prophets advice in this place, by *searching and trying our selves*. The way to escape Gods wrath, is to trie thy selfe: and to escape Gods iudgement, to be iudge to thine owne soule; and in the way to escape the fearefull fanne of God, is to faine thine owne heart by the Law of God. For whomsoever the first fanne (that is, the word of God) doth worke upon, such men are never blowne away with the fanne of Gods iudgements. O then, entertaine the Word of God into thy heart, submitt thy soule unto it, let it pierce, and trie, and sanctifie thy heart, and lay before thee thy wretched

estate by thy finnes: and when thou feelst thy nakednesse and miserie, confesse it, beweele in the humbled for it, crye and call for mercie and forgiveness; pray against thy speciall finnes, strive to purge them out, as the poison of thy soule, crave grace from God against thy finnes; and if thou feelst any finnes more welcome to thy nature, more deere unto thee, and which more prevaile against thee, than others doe, pray against these finnes, and strive against them above all: and endeavour, that by the fanne of Gods word, they may be blowne away from thee. When thou hast done this, then make what will come of it; when thou hast fanned thy selfe, and wilt not fanne thee that when the fanne of his iudgement comes, and blowes so strongly upon the wicked, then the Lord finding thee already fanned, and cleansed by his word, will spare thee, and his iudgement shall either blow over thee, and passe by thee untouched (as over *Lor* in the destruction of Sodom) or else shall fanne out all thy corruptions, and blow thee up to heaven, to be laid up as pure Wheat in the heavenly garner and mansions of glory, which Christ ascended to prepare for thee.

Now then amongst these many busineses, with which this world doth cumber every one of us (all which shall perish with the world it selfe) let us, good brethren, spare some time for this great businesse. *Maria* may be cumbered about many things, but this is *one thing which is necessary*; therefore whatsoever is done, let this not be undone. Once a day put thy selfe and thy life under the fanne of Gods Law, trieth thy selfe what thou art, and thy life, how thou livest. Once a day keepe a Count in thy conscience, call thy thoughts, thy words, and deeds to their triall: let the ten Commandments passe upon them, and thy finnes and corruptions which thou findest to be chaffe, blow them away by repentance; so shalt thou remaine pure and cleane Wheat, fit for the house and Church of God in this world, and for his kingdom in heaven. But if we will not doe this, then alas, what will follow? my heart giveth utterance: but I must, unless I should be a false Prophet: And therefore I will. Our long peace, plente, and ease have bred great finnes, so great, that they reach to heaven, and provoke Gods Majestie to his face, and so strong, that they will violently draw downe iudgements from God upon us: which when they come, they will be so powerfull and so violent, that they will blow us away like chaffe, and bring this kingdom to some miserable ruine. O therefore how happy are we, if we can entertaine this doctrine, and practise it: for in so doing, we shall prevent Gods iudgements, we shall continue the Gospel in this Land, and preserve this glorious Nation from being destroyed or dispeopled, by some fearefull iudgement.

Beloved, you come hither to this place, purposefully to buy and sell, and thereby to better your estates in this world: how happy then are you,

At Southbridge
P. 1. c.

you, if besides the good markets you make for your bodies and estates, you learne also how to make your selves abide the trial of Gods judgements, and how to be made pure come, fit to replenish the garners of heaven, and how to continue Gods favour and the Gospel to this Nation. If thou goe away with this lesson, thou hast a Jewell more worth, than if thou shouldst goe home possessed of all the great riches of this Faire: you call this and such like times, *Faire times*: but if thou learne this lesson right, then thou mayest say, that this was the fairest day indeed, that ever shone upon thee, since thou wast borne. This precious Jewell which I have spoken of all this while, I here offer unto thee. Every one brings higher some-thing to be sold, this is the merchandize that I bring, and set to sale unto you: what ever commoditie any of you bring, it is from some quarter of this land, but all is from the earth: but this that I bring it is from heaven, and all the earth cannot yeeld it: and as it is from heaven, so it is of a heavenly vertue, and will worke that which all the wealth in this faire is not able to doe: therefore cast not to buy the basest and let passe the best of all; and never allege that it is above thy compass, and being a Jewell is too deare and costly for thee; for I offer it freely unto you, and to every one of you: I pronounce unto you from the Lord, that here this blessed doctrine is offered unto you all in his name *freely, and that you may buy it without monie*. Happy is that day, when thou comming so farre to buy things for thy body, and paying so deare for them, dost meet with so precious a Jewell, the vertue whereof will save thy soule, and payest nothing for it. Thou mayest hereafter rejoyce and say; I went to buy and sell, and to helpe my body: but I have also learned to save my soule. I went thither to helpe to maintaine my owne estate: but I have learned to helpe to maintaine England in prosperitie: for assuredly, if we would all of us learne this lesson, and practise it, we might assure our selves of the glorious prosperitie of England, to continue from generation to generation: whereas alas, if we continue and goe forward in our sinnes and impenitencie, it is greatly to be feared, that neither the Gospel, nor this peace, will reach to our posteritie. Therefore now to make an end; I once againe, and lastly commend this doctrine to you all, and every one of you, (for this merchandize that I bring is of that nature, that though some take it, yet there is also enough for every one) and I commend it unto you, even from the mouth of God himselfe: thinke of it I charge thee, as ever thou lookest to appeare before the face of Christ Jesus the great Judge, at the last day; and if thou wouldest escape the rigor of that judgement, enter now into judgement with thy selfe, and

A search thy selfe: if thou now wilt not receive this doctrine, then shall it at the last day be a bill of Enditement against thee: for if it save thee not, it shall condemne thee; thinke of it therefore seriously, as a matter that concernes thy soule and body; yea, and thy posteritie, and this whole Realme, all which shall sinne for it, if we repent not. And if the body of our people, and those whose hearts are wedded to the world, will not entertaine this doctrine, then I turne unto you that feare the Lord, and to you I direct my last warning: Search, O search, and trie your hearts and lives, renew and revive your faith and repentance, that if judgement doe come and blow upon this Nation, and drive the Gospel from it, and it to hell; that yet you may have a testimonie to your consciences, that you did not pull downe this generall calamitie, but for your parts laboured to have prevented it, by your earnest prayers and heartie repentance: that so the posteritie ensuing may not curse you, but speake reverently of you, and praise God for you, and wish that all had done as you did; for then they had enjoyed this goodly land, and all Gods blessings with it, as we their forefathers did afore them: and so shall our names not rot, but flourish amongst the posteritie to come, which shall be partakers of the desolation: And when we have renewed our repentance, let us then every one of us deale with the Lord by earnest prayer for this Church and Nation, that the Lord would shew his mercie upon it, and continue unto it this peace and the Gospel: it is nothing with the Lord to doe it, his powerfull hand is not shorred, he can continue our peace, when the Papiests looke for hurli-burlies; he can continue the Gospel, when they hope to sit up their Idolatrie againe: let us therefore plee the Lord with our prayers, and with *Moses* set our selves in the breach, and pray for the ignorance of the multitude, and bewaile their sinnes, who bewaile not their owne. So did *Nathaniel*, *Daniel*, and *Iob*, in their ages, and prayed for the people in generall calamities: let us all be *Noahs*, *Daniels*, and *Iobs* in our generations: If we doe thus, then when judgements come, we shall either turne them away from our Nation, or at the least, we shall deliver our owne soules.

D Let us now turne to the Lord in prayer, and because it cannot be hoped, but that this our generall sinfulness must needs end with some heavie judgement; let us desire the Lord still to spare us, and give us time and leisure to repent: that so we entering into our selves, and searching our hearts, and turning to the Lord; he may turne away his imminent judgements: and that when his wrath doth burne out indeed, we may then be counted worthy in Christ, to escape those things which must needs come upon the world. *Amen.*

Ezech. 14. 17.