

A Fruitfull

DIALOGUE CONCERNING The end of the World.

Written many yeares agoe, and then published
By
M. W. PERKINS.

Perused and revised.



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1631.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

THOMAS Lord SCROOPE,

Of the Noble Order of the Garter : and of his Majesties
Honourable Councell in the North.



Right Honourable, this little Treatise was the first fruits of the labour of that great and reverend Divine, Master *Perkins*, many yeares agoe set out by himselfe: and now (all his Workes being to be put together) held sit to bee joyned with the rest: for though it were written in his young yeares, yet did these first fruits give assurance of that plentiful harvest of Instruction and Consolation, which the Christian world hath since reaped and received from the hand and mouth of that holy man: and in this very beginning did that blessed Spirit begin to shew it selfe, which afterward was so mighty and powerfull in his tongue and pen. It was first written against covetous hoarding up of Corne (amongst other sinnes) and was published in a yeare of dearth, the fitter therefore to be now againe reprinted, seeing our sinnes have brought upon us a dearth, and (which is more lamentable) a dearth without scarcitie.

Having perused and revised this Treatise, I doe humbly present it to your Lordships reading, and from you to the worlds view: the Honourable conceit your Lordship hath vouchsafed to hold of me and my poore labours, deserve at my hand more service and duty, than yet I can performe to your Lordship, till I can: give me leave thus to ranke your Lordship amongst the Religious and Honourable Patrons of Master *Perkins* his Works. Honour and all true happinesse be multiplied upon your Lordship, from God the Father in Iesus Christ. *Amen. June 4. 1609.*

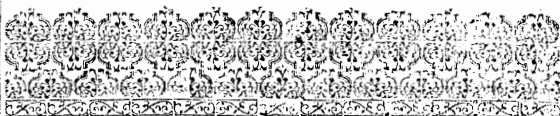
Your good Lordships in Christ to be commanded,

W. Crashaw.

To the Christian Reader.



*T*is not unknowne unto thee (Christian Reader) that Satan is the deadly enemy of mankind, and that he goeth about continually like an hunger-bitten Lion, seeking whom he may deuoure. For this cause he useth infinite sleights and conueyances, hee layeth innumerable gins and snares to entrap men, and to bring them into eternall bondage under him. Of this point, thou maiest haue a plaine view in the people of this Land. Some of them neither regarding Gods providence, nor his judgements which he may send upon them for their sinnes, stand agast at the signes of Heauen, at the conjunctions which ordinarily befall: and at this present, their mindes are greatly occupied with foolish dreames of the yeare next ensuing. Some others (and they per adventure of a better sort) are professors of the Gospell, and yet lye securely, still weltring in their old corruptions, and in very truth, not returning to the Lord. For they thinke they haue donethier duty, and are perswaded they are truly faithfull, if they doe not oppose themselves against the Gospell, but give an outward reverence to it, and to the Ministers of it. As the foolish Virgins contented themselves with their Lamps, never seeking for oile, untill it was too late: so these men content themselves with outward shew, and profession of godlinesse, never regarding to feele the power of it in themselves. Others there are, which no doubt might receive profit by the word which they heare preached, but they cannot abide that the word of God should be applied aright to their consciences. For they themselves never thinke of any thing, but of the promises of the Gospell, and cannot abide the threatnings of the Law. Yea, they like the Ministry of the word when generall doctrine is deliuered: but if the two-edged sword of Gods word pierce into the marrow of their bones, and ransacke the secret affections and lusts of the flesh; then they are forth of order, and become as furious and mad men. Again, some there are, which partly by reason of the tenderness of their owne consciences, partly by their owne ignorance in the word of God, are ever anon disquieted, and troubled with manifold temptations. In all these sorts of men, thou maist easily perceiue, how busie Satan is to deceive and bewitch men, and to keepe them still under his dominion, that his Kingdome may not be diminished. Now, for the preventing of these evils, I haue drawne this little Treatise: Reade it at thy leasure, and accept in good part this my endeavour: I trust by Gods blessing, it shall not bee unprofitable unto thee. W. P.



A Fruitfull DIALOGVE

Betweene the Christian and the VVorldling,
concerning the End of the World.



Christian.

Well overtaken honest man:
how farre travell you this
way?

Worldling.

As farre as *Cambridge*,
God willing.

Christ. What have you a load, I pray you?

World. As good Wheat as ever grew on
Gods earth: I would I had as good a price as I
could with for it.

Christ. Why would you so?

World. Alas, I have great store of Come in
my house at home, and I feare me it will rot
upon the floares before I shall bee able to sell it,
because I cannot get almost any thing for it:
and they which offered me foure markes for a
quarter of wheat, will not at this present give
me foure nobles, and scarce twenty shillings.

Christ. Truly I perceive that you are a hard-
hearted man, void of any compassion to the
poore: you have bene one of those, that have
brought our Country into such misery. And to
you the Prophet *Amos* speaketh after this man-
ner: *Hearke this, O ye that swallow up the poore,*
that yee may make the needy of the land to
faile: saying, When will the new moneth be gone,
that we may sell Corne? and the Sabbath, that
we may set forth wheat, and make the Ephra-
imite, and the Shekell great, and falsifie the
weights by deceit? that we may buy the poore
for shooes: yea, and sell the refuse for wheat? the
Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of thy works. And
even now at this time God hath bene mindfull
of his promise: for he hath frustrated the desires
of all such covetous men as you are, and of his
mercy he hath heard the cries of the poore, and
hath now given us plenty in this land.

World. I marvel why you should speake
against me, and all such as I am, I tel you plainly
never any man spake so much to me as you have
done now. In the parish where I dwell I am ta-
ken for an honest man, I doe no man any hurt: I

use not to goe to the Alehouse and Taverne, as
many naughty men doe: and I have a care to
provide for my selfe and for my family, and I
hope you will not condemne me for doing so.

Christ. Did you never heare so much before?
doubtlesse more is the pity, and now yee shall
heare more, even of me. For all these hearers
up of Come, (among which you are one) are as
bad as the vilest rascals that be in the land. You
say yee doe no man harme: doe you not? and
what good ever did ye? ye stop your eares at
the cry of the poore, and say unto them; Goe
thy way thou stranger, God send thee thou
stranger, meat, drinke, and cloathing, as *Strach*

saith. Yee play the Glutton in the Gospell, yee
doe not shew so much favour unto poore *Lazarus*
crying unto you for reliefe, as the dogs
did which licked his sores. The richer sort of
you, if a man in any need come to beg or buy
something for his sustenance, ye cry out, away
with this begger, goe whip this slave, to the
stocks with this stinking rascall, stand further
off for filling us with thy venemie, thou lousie
wretch. Contrariwise, ye which are of the poor-
er sort, say, God helpe thee poore man, I have
not for thee: I have a great charge, and am a
poore man my selfe: thou wouldest have Come
of me, but thou wilt not goe to the price of it:
thus deare it is now, I cannot bate a farthing of
it; therefore goe thy waies and trouble me not.
And yet forsooth ye doe no man any harme, ye
would be sorry to be charged with any dishonesty.
But in truth yee are murderers, because
many are famished by your hoarding up of
Come: ye are thieves, because ye keep back that
which belongeth to the poore, upon a reasona-
ble price: ye are cursed Idolaters, because you set
your hearts upon your riches and in one word,
ye are very Atheists in the world; yee distrust
Gods providence, yee love him not, ye feare
him not: ye are starke rebels unto God, bowing
the knees of your hearts before the Prince of the
world Satan. You are the rich men of which it
is said, *To be an impossible thing for them to enter*

Luk. 16. 21.

*1 John. 3.
Contra. 29.*

*Math. 19.
1870*

into the Kingdome of Heaven: and except with speed ye repent, ye shall finde it to be so.

Worldl. What meane you thus to raile on us? What doe we but that we may lawfully doe? I pray you for all your skill, is it not lawfull for us to doe with our owne what wee will? and to make as much of it as we can? you tell us (me thinkes) that we cannot bee saved, but I will alwaies put a good faith in God, say you what you will, and I hope to bee saved as well as you.

Christ. It is a pittifull thing to see how the world taketh many things for lawfull, which are flat against the Word of God. As for example: it is thought no fault to raise the market, and to take for a mans owne whatsoeuer he can get, and to sell of any price; but this is reproved in the place of the Prophet *Amos* before alleged, where hee denounceth Gods judgments against them that wait for a time, in which they may make the measure small, and the price great, and take for their corne according to their covetous desires; you say you have a good faith to God-ward, but alas you deceive your selfe with a phantasie: for if you had true faith indeed, you would love God with all your heart; and loving God, you would also love your poore brother in whom Gods Image appeareth: and if you had a love of your brother, you would bee full of pittifull compassion towards him; you would no more sing this song, *May I not take for my owne what I can get?* nay, you would rather doe as the faithfull did in the Primitive Church, who sold their possessions, and tooke money, and divided it to the poore as they had need. And as the Churches of Macedonia did, which being in extreme poverty, yet did send plentifull reliefe to the Church at Jerusalem, farre distant from them. And you would rather see your selfe in misery and poverty, than your poore brother, for whom Christ hath shed his blood: yea, you would be content to fare hardly, and to pinch yourselfe, that you might relieve your neighbours: For (as *Paul* saith) love is bountifull, love seeketh not her owne, love suffereth all things, and endureth them.

Worldl. For mine owne part, I could have bene content to have sold my Corne all the yeare thorow for lesse price, if other would have done so: but other men were so hard, that they would sticke for a penny. These men indeed were they that did raise the Market: I tooke nothing but that which was offered me: and for my part, I hope God will have mee excused.

Christ. The vilest miser, and most covetous Carle that is amongst you, can say so much. And how can you looke for any favor at Gods hands, when by your own confession you have done as others have done, and given consent to their wickednesse? In Sodome and Gomorrah no doubt all were not drunkards and whoremasters; some were civill, and did abstaine from

this filthinesse: yet because they hated not these sinnes, but approved the doers of them, nothing disliking their filthy behaviour, as *Lot* did, whose righteous heart was vexed at their wickednesse, beheld God destroyeth them all alike: and *Paul* maketh him to be a covetous man that favoureth and giveth consent to the doings of a covetous man.

Worldl. How if I should have sold my Corne cheape all this yeare, and no body else, what good would this have done?

Christ. You should have done great good: for in regard of your selfe, you should not have bene guilty of the great oppression of this land, and your doings would have condemned the devillish practises of other men, and it might have pleased God by your example, to have moved other men to deale more charitably in their bargaining: and the Scripture is plaine, that the good works and Christian conversation of any man, *shining as lights before the eyes of the world, make many men to glorifie Gods name.*

Worldl. You say like an honest man: and I am perswaded, if you will speake your conscience, you that have spoken so much against us, cannot but speake something in our behalfe. You see every where what enclosing there is, and you cannot be ignorant, that Gentlemen and Landlords they have large consciences, they make nothing of it to take great fines, and to double and treble their rents; now if the poore tenants shall not be suffered to sell their corne of a dearer price, how shall they be able to live? how shall they pay their fines and their yeerely rents? I tell you plainly, if this may not bee suffered, we shall have beggers enow within this land: yea, even they which are now substantiall men, will shortly come to vile beggery.

Christ. Indeed I doubt not but these rackers of rents, and these inclosers, they are unmercifull men: surely they eat the bread of oppression: and the very stones in the walls, and the beames of their faire buildings cry unto God for vengeance against them: but what then? they deale unjustly with you, they rob you, will you deale therefore unjustly, and rob others? it is very like that God doth use them as meanes to chastise you, to make you know yourselves, to know God, and to depend upon his providence. You must not therefore in any wise use unlawfull meanes to avoid this crosse which God layeth upon you by these wealthy oppressors, but rather you are to beare it with patience, till such time as God shall deliver you: praying to God (if it be his will) to soften the hearts of these hard-hearted men, who regard nothing but their owne pleasure and ease.

Worldl. Yea, wee should doe so indeed: but who are they which doe so? I would faine see you doe so.

Christian. This is the manner of you all. You thinke these bee dreames which I speake of.

Rom. 1. 29, 30.

Math. 5. 16.

Hub. 2. 11.

1 Cor. 13. 4. 5, 6.

Gen. 18. 26.

of, and that no man ever did them : but it is a most infallible truth, that all they who have received the spirit of God, their minds are so enlightened, their hearts and affections are reformed, and brought in order, that they cannot but doe these things : but you are a worldly carnal man, you can shift in the world, and make a bargain for your owne advantage : but as for the will of God in his word, and the performance of it, it seemeth foolishness unto you, you know not the meaning and the reason of it. To let this passe : I marvell why you dare travell abroad from your own house; you seeme to be sicke, and very low brought with sickness, and in my judgement, you hazard your life : you doe not well, you have small care of yourselfe.

World. I am brought low indeed, but (I thanke God) I have no sickness, that I can tell of.

Christ. What is the matter then I pray you, if a man may bee so bold as to enquire of you?

World. As I told you, I have great store of come, and I hoped to have enriched myselfe by it : well, on the sudden, the price of come fell very much ; I tell you, it struck me to the heart, and it made me at my wits end. If I had not beene a strong hearted man, and borne out my griefe, I had not beene here now. For when I saw I should have a great losse, and be almost undone, I had thought to have made away my selfe ; but I hope I shall bear it out now, and because there is no other remedy I am content : truly the world is come to that passe, it will not last alwayes.

Christ. You in your talke doe verifie the saying of S. Paul, *That they that will be rich, do fall into temptations and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which draw men into perdition and destruction. And he addeth, That the desire of money is the root of all evil, which while some listend after, they erred from the faith, and pierced themselves thorow with many sorrowes :* all which you have done.

World. But I am in better case now than I have beene : and I comfort my selfe as well as I can; for I see there is no remedy, and I shall not be alwaies in this misery : for the world will last but a while.

Christ. These are silly comforts indeed : you should rather cut off this vice of covetousnesse, and then you might have found comfort. But how commeth this into your minde, that the world cannot last long?

World. How? why I am sure you know as much as I : they say every where, that the next year eighty eight, Doomes day will be.

Christ. They are flying tales.

World. Nay, I promise you I have some skill, and I have read books of it that are printed, and talke goes, that there be old prophecies of this year found in old stone walls.

Christ. I tell you plainly they are very lies.

A World. It seemeth that you have skill this way; we have yet a good way to go before we come to our journeyes end : I pray you let mee heare your judgement of it. And what doe you say to these verses which every man hath in his mouth;

When after Christs birth there be expired, of hundreds fiftene, yeares eighty eight.

Then comes the time of dangers to be feared, and all mankind with dolours it shall freight. For if the world in this yeare doe not fall, if sea and land then perishe, we decay :

Yes Empires all, and Kingdomes alter shall, and man to ease himselfe shall have no way.

Christ. For my part, I make as little account of these verses, as of *Merlins* drunken prophecies, or the tales of *Robinhood*. They import thus much in effect; that either the end of the world shall be the next yeare; or if the end of the world be not then, yet that there will be great troubles and subversions of Kingdomes in the world. And for the satisfying of your desire, I will shew you my judgement betwene you and me : first, of the end of the world ; secondly, of the troubles which (as men suppose) shall befall us this next yeare.

World. I pray you then, what is your judgement of the end of the world? shall it not be this next yeare?

Christ. My judgement is this; that it is not possible for any to find out the time of the end of the world; and if it were possible to appoint that time, yet it were not lawful.

C World. Every body thinketh, that unto learned men it is both possible and lawful; for my part I cannot tell, I would be glad to learne, and untill I heare what you say, I will say as most doe say.

Christ. That we may speake of this point in some order; first, let us consider whether it be possible by any means to set downe the end of the world : and for a ground of all that I shall speake hereafter, this I will propound as a principle, that no man can define or truly conjecture, the houre, the day, the week, the month, the yeare, or the age in which the end of the world shall be.

World. I thinke not so : how can you prove it by any good reason?

Christ. The word of God is the ground of this my assertion. In a vision *Daniel* sleeth one Angel asking another Angel clothed in linnen, when should bee the end of the miseries and troubles of the Church : the answer was, that it would be after a time, two times, and halfe a time. Now marke the words of *Daniel*; *Then I heard us (saith he) but I understood it not : and then I said; O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed til the end of the time.* If *Daniel* could not tell the time, and when an answer was made concerning the end, could not understand it; what meanes can any man living use, to conjecture at the day, or

Dan. ix. 2, 3, 8.

the yeare, or at the hundred yeare in which the world shall end. Again, when the Disciples of our Savior Christ asked him whether he would at his ascension restore the kingdom to Israel, this answer was given them; It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his owne power. Which answer maketh very much for me. For it proveth alio, that the speciall times in which the end of the world shall happen, are unknowne to man and hidden from him: God keepeth them to himselfe. And in the *Apocalyp*, the soules of them that were killed for the word of God, longing for a full deliverance, cry with a lowd voice, How long Lord, holy and true? In the answer which they receive from the Lambe, there is no speciall time mentioned of their deliverance: but it is told them, That after a little season when their fellow-servants and brethren shall be killed as they were, that then they shall see the end. In my judgement these proofes are sufficient to confirme that I said before.

World. For my part I have no skill in the Scriptures as you have; you may soone deceive me. But if this be true which you say, then be like all the prophecies which goe of the end of the world are false.

Christ. All prophecies are not of God, and from his Spirit: many are from the phantasies of wicked men, and from the suggestion of the Devill.

World. I pray you therefore shew mee how I may discern of prophecie, whether it bee from God, or the Devill; and so whether it ought to bee regarded as true, or despised as false.

Christ. I will to my power doe what I can to satisfie your request; and here I will set down certaine notes, by which you, or any man else may discern of any prophecie. First, if the Prophet be insufficient, it is a strong suspicion that he is not of God: but it argueth that his prophecies come from some other cause. The sufficiency or insufficiency of a Prophet may be perceived by these marks:

1. If he maintaine heresies, and doe not embrace the Christian religion.

2. If his judgement be rash and inconstant in other matters.

3. If he be given to some notorious vice, as covetousnesse, or pride; for then it may be suspected, that he seeketh by his prophecies to winne either some gaine, or some glory unto himselfe.

4. If his complexion and the temperature of his body be strange; for then he may be thought to have some disease which hindereth the reasonable part: he may have the weaknesse of the braine, the phrensie, or some such like. And it is certaine that in all such Satan hath great power, and doth trouble them with dreames and visions, and many strong phantasies and terrors of minde.

5. If he despise other mens judgements and

conciels, and stick to his owne opinion. *Paul.* which was rapt up in the third heaven, and saw strange visions, was for all that most humble. 2 Cor. 12. 7.

6. Lastly, if the Prophet be a young man, not an old: if a woman, and not a man: if babbling and talkative, not silent with wisdom: if unruly and disordered, not quiet: suspicion may be gathered, that the prophecie is an illusion of Satan. For in the weaker sort he most prevaileth.

Secondly, if it be against the word of God, or any circumstance of it: and if it reveale that particularly, which the word of God foretelleth in general manner, not laying downe the place, the time, the persons, the manner of doing it, it may be taken for a false prophecie.

Thirdly, if the prophecie be uttered in ambiguous words, or in speeches which are insensible and strange, not understood of them which heare them, and never used in the Scriptures, or of the Church; it is like to be some sleight: for the Spirit of God speaketh plainly; and if it utter things which are not to bee knowne mystically, yet evermore it speaketh like it selfe, as appeareth in the prophecies of the old and new Testament.

Fourthly, if the end of the prophecie be Gods glory, and the profit of Gods Church, it is to be regarded: but if this be the drift of it, to put some men into a foolish feare, to make disquiet in the Church and Common-wealth: if it be a platforme to bring some to promotion, it is not to be regarded. For example, this is a flying prophecie: *Canterbury* was, *London* is, and *Torke* shall be. This prophecie, if men will regard it, tender to strife, contention, and sedition: and it may bee a meanes of wicked attempts, if hereafter time and place doe serve: the devill oftentimes soweth his seed a long time before he can have it growne up.

Fifthly, if it concerne some private men, and some private family, it is to be suspected: for the prophecies which come from Gods Spirit are commonly general, and tend to the profit of the whole Church.

If it be false in any one little point, or in any circumstance, account it of no value. For those prophecies which are of God, are in no jot false: for God is truth it selfe.

By these notes and many other, we may judge of the prophecies of *Merlin*, of the prophecies of those that terme themselves *Eltas*, of Anabaptistall revelations, of dreames, of these flying tales of the second coming of Christ.

World. I know more now than ever I knew in all my life: and I promise you for this I will not beleve all prophecies, which I shall heare, but as well as I can I will trie them out. But in the meane time let me heare your judgement of some speciall prophecies, which concerne Doomes day. What say you to *Elias* prophecie: *Two thousand vaine, two thousand the Law, two thousand Christ: And for our sinnes* which

A. 1. 6. 7.

Apost. 6. 9. 10. 11.

3

In the North they
say Lincoln was.

5

which are many and marvellous, some yeares which are wanting shall not be expired.

Christ. Some men there are, which make great account of this prophetic, but in truth it is not to be regarded. And if we shall examine it by the former notes, it will appeare to be but a foolish prophetic.

First, who is the Author of this prophetic? not *Elias* the *Thishyte*, whose history we read in the old Testament; but a fond Jew of the same name, and the words of the prophetic are found no where but in the Jewish Thalmud.

Secondly, it is against the word of God: From the beginning of the world, to the publishing of the Law, were two thousand yeares, saith *Elias*: two thousand five hundred and thirteene yeares, saith the Scripture. From the giving of the Law, to the passion of our Saviour *Christ*, were two thousand yeares, saith *Elias*: from the giving of the Law to the passion of our Saviour *Christ*, were only one thousand, five hundred, forty two yeares, saith the Scripture. Now seeing two parts of this prophetic are against the Chronologie which is laid downe in the word of God; why should I beleeve that *Elias* saith the truth in the third part which is not yet fulfilled?

Thirdly, this prophetic is a plaine viper, it eateth out the guts of the Jewes Thalmud, and confuteth them for saying, that *Christ* is not yet come; For *Elias* maketh but foure thousand yeares from the beginning of the world, to the death of *Christ*: and now almost six thousand yeares are past since the beginning of the world: so that the Jewes, if they will maintaine their prophetic, they must grant that *Christ* is already come, which they deny.

World. You speake too sore against this prophetic: some learned men doe say, that it is agreeable to the word of God. For in the fourth of *Esdra*s, whereas *Esdra*s demandeth of *Vriat* the Angell, whether the time past be greater than the time to come? the Angell doth answer by two similitudes, and doth shew unto him a burning furnace, and afterward a watery cloud, and saith, Marke whether the fire doe overcome the smoke, and the showre the drops, or otherwayes. To whom *Esdra*s saith; I see Lord, that a very great smoke doth passe away: I see also a very great showre to come powring downe; but afterward I perceive the flame to overcome the smoke, and the drops the showre. Then saith the Angell, now judge of the continuance of the world. Even as the first smoke vanquisheth the fire, and the drops the showre; so the yeares of the time past shall exceed the time which is to come. But now according to the computation of yeares, it is evident, that *Esdra*s lived about the third thousand and five hundred yeare after the worlds creation, and a while after *Cyrus* death: from which time about two thousand yeares are consumed. Wherefore we doe see, that this prophetic doth marvellously agree with that of *Elias*, and the

end of the world to be nigh at hand.

Christ. I perceive that you have read some bookes of this matter: but doubtlesse your reason is of no force; for that booke is not canonically, and the place which you alleage may be otherwise answered. For the Angell by his similitudes doth not so much compare the time past with the time to come, as the estate and infidelity of the time past, with the estate and infidelity of the time to come. For as the smoke vanquisheth the fire, and the drops the showre, so shall (saith the Angell to *Esdra*s) the wickednesse of the time to come be increased more than thou hast seen now, or hast heard in times past. And this is that which the Angell principally meaneth in his answer to *Esdra*s.

World. Let us goe on further in this point. What say you to the prophetic of the Poet *Orpheus*? I cannot say his words, but the meaning is this, That in the sixth age, or sixth thousand yeare God shall destroy the world.

Christ. You say true, I remember such a thing indeed, alleaged by the ancient Philosopher *Plato*. But if the prophetic of *Elias* is not to be regarded (as in truth it is not) who is so mad as to give any heed to the saying of a fabling Poet? But leave your prophecies, let us heare what you can say else? for it seemeth that you have read some bookes of the second coming of *Christ*.

World. I remember such a reason as this, drawne from the creation. God was six dayes in making the heaven and the earth, and he rested the seventh day: now every day is a thousand yeares, as *Saint Peter* saith: therefore about six thousand yeares the end of the world shall be.

Christ. You doe abuse the place of Scripture which is in *Saint Peter*: for his meaning is this, that the greatest time, and the smallest, differ not in respect of God, to whom all times are present. And if your reason were good, I will make another as good forth of the same place against you, after this manner: *Saint Peter* which saith, that one day is a thousand yeares, saith also in the same place, that a thousand yeares are but as one day. Out of which words I frame my reason thus: A thousand yeares are but as one day; the world shall last six thousand yeares, as you say, therefore the world shall last but six dayes. Moreover your owne reason may be retorted against you, thus; You thinke that the end shall be of all things, this next year 88. But as God was six dayes in creating the world, and hee did not rest in the sixth day, but in the seventh: so in like manner (if the six dayes of the creation resemble the six thousand yeares of the continuance of the world, as you suppose) the end of the world cannot be before the sixth thousand yeare be expired: as the rest was not before the sixth day of the creation was expired. And so neither you nor any other have any cause to feare the yeare next ensuing.

The very Popish Church doe hold it not Canonically.

1 Pet. 3. 8.

World. You are too subtil for me! have not been at the University as you have been, though I travell that way now. But because you are so friendly in talke; will be bold with you a little more yet. Are not these times in which we live, called the last houre, and the last times? I know you will grant it: for the Scripture saith, that our Saviour Christ was once offered in the end of the world; and S. Peter saith, that Christ was made manifest in the last times; and if then were the last times when our Saviour did suffer, the end of the world must be looked for every houre.

Christ. You must understand, that the whole time of the continuance of the world, is divided into the old time, which continueth from the beginning of the world, unto the coming of Christ: and into the latter dayes, or last houre, which is the whole space of time from the coming of Christ, unto the end of the world: as may appeare in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. So then your reason proveth nothing. For these may be the latter dayes still, and the last houre, and the world may for all that continue an hundred yeares, or two hundred yeares longer, for any thing we know. Is not the coming of our Saviour Christ compared to the coming of a theefe, for this cause; That as no man is able truly to conjecture the coming of a theefe, before he beginne to breake into the house; so no man can truly conjecture the coming of Christ, before he see him in the clouds, and then he may certainly determine, that the end of the world is present.

World. All the signes of the coming of Christ are past; Oh, what earthquakes have there beene? what famine? what wars and hurlyburlys among men? what signes in the Sunne and Moone? what flashing in the ayre? what blazing starres? surely, surely, the world cannot last long: there is some cause that so many men so long agoe have spoken of these times, and specially of the next yeare. I see you doo not feare, but I promise you I am afraid.

Christ. Some men there be, that thinke that all the signes of the coming of our Saviour Christ are past. And what if they be past, as you say, what then? must of necessity the end immediately follow them? what should hinder, that the coming of Christ should not be two or three hundred yeares after the signes which signifie his coming? you have nothing to shew but your owne imaginations. But now if the signes of Christs coming be not all past, what will you say then? assuredly very godly and learned men are of this minde.

World. I pray you shew me how all the signes are not yet fulfilled, which goe before the end of the world.

Christ. According to that measure of knowledge which God hath given me, I will doe my endeavour to shew this point unto you. The signes of the coming of Christ are of two

sorts; for either they goe with the coming of Christ, or before it. Of the first sort speaketh our Saviour Christ in the Gospell of S. Luke, saying; *Then there will be signes in the Sun and Moone, and in the starres, and upon the earth trouble among the nations, with perplexitie: the Sea and the waters shall roare:* all these signes shall be fulfilled at the very coming of Christ, *When as the heavens shall passe away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the workes that are therein shall be burnt up.* The other sort of signes that goe before our Saviours coming are very many.

1. The first signe is the preaching of the Gospell, as Christ saith: and this Gospell of the kingdome shall be preached throughout the whole world, for a witnesse to all nations, and then shall the end come: and this signe is every day more and more accomplished.

2. The second is, the spreading abroad of errors, heresies, and schismes: as S. Paul saith, *That in the last dayes some shall depart from the faith, and give heed unto spirits of errors, and doctrines of devils:* and our Saviour Christ saith, *That many false Prophets shall come, and if it were possible, even to deceive the elect:* We and our ancestors have seene this signe fulfilled.

3. The third is a general security of men in every calling, and in every place. Which now is evident. When was there ever more Atheisme? more contempt of Gods holy Ministry? more shamelesse hypocrisie, than is in these times in which we now live?

4. The fourth signe is the Apostasie, and the revealing of Antichrist, which now is knowne of all men to be the Pope, and his Church; and they themselves, if they were not past shame, would grant, that the second beast coming forth of the earth, having the lambs hornes, but the dragons mouth, they (I say) would grant, that this beast should be the Pope their Father.

5. The fifth signe, is the afflictions and miseries of the world by earthquakes, warres, pestilence, famine, and such like.

6. The sixth signe, is the conversion of the Jewes unto that religion which now they hate, as appeareth in the 11. to the Romans: and this signe which goeth immediately before the coming of Christ to judgement, is not yet fulfilled for any thing I can tell. These only be the chiefe signes, of which Gods word maketh any mention: Of these, some are present, some are to come: so that for any thing I can tell, there is no cause why we should thinke that the end of the world should be the next yeare.

World. I cannot tell whether all the signes of the coming of Christ be past or not; but sure I am, that wonderfull things are come to passe in these dayes; and the world is come to that passe for naughtinesse, that it cannot last long.

Christ.

Heb. 9.26.
1 Pet. 1.

Heb. 9.26.

Rev. 16.15.

Luk. 21.25.

2 Tim. 3.10.

Matth. 24.14.

1 Tim. 4.1, 2.

Luk. 17.26, 27.
28, 29, 30.

2 Thess. 2. 5, 8.

Rom. 11.26.

Christ. That is your old song, but if the world be naught, it is the worse by your that are so covetous: and if you thinke that the end of the world will bee shortly, even the next yeare, what a mad man are you to be so covetous? will you heape up riches which you know you shall never enjoy? And will you heape up treasure for many yeares, when the world is not to continue one?

World. Well, well, my covetousnesse is an eye-sore to you, you are always harping upon it: take no care, it shall never hurt you: you shall answer for your selfe, you shall not answer for me; if you will not talke quietly with me in good neighbour-hood, I will hold my tongue.

Christ. I must needs admonish you of this vice which reigneth in you. What if you should see a man cast into a water, swimming, and readie to be drowned; would you not with all speed seeke to save his life? and were it not a wicked part in him to be angry with you for your good will?

World. Yes.

Christ. Your case is the very same: You are plunged over head and eares in this sinne of covetousnesse: it presseth downe your soule to the bottom of hell, and by it you are in fearefull danger of eternal death; it pittie me to see you in this case, I would with all my heart doe any thing to bring you forth of danger. Yet for all my good will, thus I am rewarded.

World. It is but your minde that I am in such danger of hell fire. I would be sorry, if I had not a good heart to God-ward, and I serve him truly morning and evening, as well as God will give me grace. And if I were so bad a fellow as you would make mee, good Lord! what a miserable case is the world in? For I doe nothing but that which every body doth. I pray you heartily, let us goe on in our former talke.

Christ. Well, goe too, I will follow your humour, say what you can.

World. You reject all prophecies of the end of the world, and all other conjectures you account them as frivolous, and not to be regarded: yet the Astronomers are men that are gaily learned, and can tell many things, which the world knoweth not: I thinke you dare say nothing against them.

Christ. Astronomers that take upon them to prognosticate of things to come, are babblers, and there is no need to bee given to their sayings. There is many of them in this land, that make a living by telling of fortunes, and things that are lost and stollen: but in truth they are very thieves, and the good statutes that are made against coziners, might better be urged against them, than many others.

World. Methinks you are very rash, before ever I tell you what they say, you inveigh bitterly against them: they write, that about eighty eight, the end of the world shall be, or at the least great subversions of Kingdomes, warres, confusions, &c.

Christ. In a word, they are all liars and deceivers; they are not able truly to conjecture these things, and I will shew it you plainly. The Egyptians and Chaldeans of all other men, were most given to the studie of the stars, and never any were so skilfull in that matter as they: Yet for all that, the Lord by the Prophet Esay, layeth this in their teeth, that for all their skill, yet they were not able to foretell their own destruction, which was at hand. *Where are now* (saith the Prophet) *thy wise men, that they may tell thee, or may know what the Lord of hosts hath determined against Egypt?* And unto Babylon he saith; *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels; let now the Astrologers, the starr-gazers, and prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee: behold, they shall be as stubble: the fire shall burne them, they shall not deliver their owne lives from the power of the flame: there shall be no coales to warme at, nor light to sit by: thus are they with whom thou hast wearied thy selfe, even thy Merchants that have bene with thee from thy youth: every one shall wander to his owne quarter: none shall save thee.*

World. The Prophet in these places speaketh against the unskilfull, not against the art of Astronomie.

Christ. Yea, if you marke and consider the places well, you shall find they are against the art it selfe, and against the most wise and skilfull in all Egypt and Chaldea: the spirit of God here confuteth their arrogancie, and threatneth revengement on them, for that they professe to fore-shew those things which God hath hid in his secret counsell, and cannot be perceived by the starrs.

World. Doe you thinke, that God would make the heavens, and the starrs in them for no end? no doubt, God hath made them for some great use.

Christ. The beautifull frame of the heavens, was created for mans use and profit. As to be signes of the ordinary and naturall course of all things in the world; as of the time of sowing, of reaping, of planting, lopping, &c. Again, they have this use, to distinguish and to make the seasons of winter, summer, spring, harvest: they make day and night, and the naturall course of yeares is by them: In a word, they are made even as an hen to foster and cheifly the creatures here below: and therefore doe give heat, and cause raine and moisture in the seasons of the yeare. As the Prophet David saith, Nothing is hid from the heat of the Sunne. And the Prophet Hosea saith: And in that day, I will heare (saith the Lord,) I will heare the heavens, and they shall heare the earth, and the earth shall heare the come, and the wine, and the oyle, and they shall heare Israel. Now God did not make the starrs to be means of foretelling things to come, and that men should learne of them good and evil successe.

Esa. 47. 12, 13, 14

Gen. 2. 4.

Psa. 19. 6.

Hos. 2. 17, 18.

celle: they that referre the starres to this end abuse the starres, and breake the third commandement, by taking Gods name in vaine. And therefore God threatneth them by his Prophet *Ezay*, that make signes of things to come in the heavens; and saith, *I destroy the tokens of the Southsayers, and make them that conjecture, fooles, and turne the wisemen backward, and make their knowledge foolishnesse.* And to thinke, that by the starres and their course, a man may conjecture the end of the world, is foolishnesse, or rather madnesse. For either the starres must be the causes of the end of the world, or be signes. Causes they cannot be; for this is a property in nature, that every thing laboureth to preserve it selfe; and therefore it is not like, that by the heavens shall be caused the end of the world: for then they should be causes of their owne ruine. And againe, the course of the starres cannot be a token or signe of the end. *Dionysius Areopagita*, when hee saw the Sunne to be eclipsed at the full Moone, being sore afraid, said, *That either the end of the world was then, or that the God of nature did suffer.* And no marvell; for the extraordinary eclipse of the Sunne was a signe of some strange wonder: but that the naturall and ordinary course of the starres in the heavens, should signifie strange and extraordinary things, (such as are subversions of kingdoms, and the end of the world) that by no reason can be shewed. And yet this is that which Astronomers maintaine, and take as granted. Againe, the power, and vertue, and the operation of the starres is unknowne to man: and if it were knowne, yet by the starres no man could gather what was to come: which I will shew you by this similitude. Suppose twenty egges of twentie divers birds set under one hen, let her sit on them all, and communicate her heat unto them all; can you, or any other, by knowing the properties of the hen, and by feeling of her heat, tell mee of every egge what chickens shee will hatch? whether crows, or partridges, or what other fowle: and can you tell by the same meanes when the hen shall die?

World. I tell you, my wife hatches many chickens in the yeare, but this passeth all my skill, and her too.

Christ. Very well. The heavens are as a hen, fostering and cherishing these earthly things under them: and you cannot by the vertues of the starres, if you knew them never so well, you cannot (I say) conjecture either the event of things upon earth, or the dissolution of the world: except you could therewithall know the secret purpose of God, and the particular causes of every particular thing.

World. You shew me your minde plainly, and me thinks it should be true you say: but every where there is great talke of Conjunctions of planets, and you would wonder to see, how simple men (such as I am) listen after such

things: and some men have beene ready to fill away all their goods, for feare of conjunctions. I pray you is there no such things? and if there be such things, what are they?

Christ. Indeed, Astronomers have written of strange conjunctions; and among others, one *Cyprianus Leovinius*, a Bohemian; and because you are to come on me in this point, I will repeat some of his words. In the yeare of our Lord (saith he) 1583. in the month of May, there shall happen a great conjunction of planets in the last end of *Pisces*; after which straightwayes in the yeare 84. shall ensue a wonderfull mixture of all the planets in *Taurus*, about the end of March, and beginning of April. And which is more, a little after that shall be seene an eclipse of the Sunne, in the twenty degree of *Taurus*, about the head of *Algo*; a most cruell and hurtfull fixed star, governed by *Venus*, which shall be linked to five planets in *Aries*, tending toward the twelfth degree. Here we must watch (saith he:) and I think it meet that all earthly cogitations be cast off, lest we be destroyed being unready: for this great conjunction is of all the last which shall happen in the end of the watery Trigon: and the watery Trigon shall have an end, and be turned into the fiery Trigon. Neither shall there be any more in the space of 800. yeares; the end of the watery Trigon shall be nigh. But because about the end of the watery Trigon this Monarchie did begin, it is likely, that the same also in the end of the same Trigon shall have an end: sith the Sonne of God himselfe, Iesus Christ our Lord, even in the end of the watery Trigon, took upon him the nature of man. For six yeares before his most glorious nativity, the very same conjunction in the end of *Pisces*, and in the beginning of *Aries* happened. Neither came the like since that time, but when *Charles* the great held his Empire, which was in the yeare of our Lord, seven hundred eighty nine: and now the second time such a strange and great conjunction shall come, which undoubtedly doth foresew the other coming of the Sonne of God and man, in majestic of his glory: at which time we must tender an account of our life and conversation.

World. I remember that I have read these words in an English booke, of the second coming of Christ, and I would desire your judgement of them. It seemeth, that the man which writ these words, was deeply learned in Astro-nomie.

Christ. You shall heare as much as I am able to tell you, and I can say somewhat, because I have laboured in these matters. First therefore know thus much, that this *Leovinius* doth not truly account the motions of the starres, but is farre deceived, as by the most exact tables of *Erasmus*, *Reinholdus*, and *Stadius* may appeare. And whereas he saith, that in the yeare of our Lord 1583. in the month of May, there shall happen

happen a great conjunction of the superiour planets in the end of Pisces : in truth there is no such thing. For *Jupiter* and *Saturne* are almost three degrees asunder, when they are both in the end of *Pisces* in May : but in Aprill, the month going before, they are in conjunction : and what strange thing can this be, which hath happened so often since the beginning ? To wit, every 120. years, once in the same Trigon (as they say.) As for that he saith, that in the year 1584. there shall be a mixture of all the planets in *Taurus*, about the end of March, there is no such thing : but in the beginning of Aprill, *Saturne* and *Mars* are in conjunction, and then *Jupiter* is about twelve degrees distant from them : other mixture of planets to be regarded, I see none. *Messiah* maketh the greatest conjunction of planets to be, when the three superiour planets are joyned all together in *Aries*, which shall not be either in the year 83. or 84. But be it, that there had been then such strange conjunctions of the planets, as *Leuiticus* speaketh of, what then ? what should follow ? forsooth the end of the world. And why should this be, considering that all these conjunctions are naturall, and come of the naturall and ordinary motions of the heavens ? and there have beene since the beginning of the world, 270. conjunctions of the superiour planets, *Mars*, *Jupiter*, and *Saturne* : heretofore they have portended no such dangers, as the effects declare : but there is no remedy, now they must needs signifie ruines of kingdomes, and the end of the world : *Leuiticus* will have it so : for he speaketh very confidently, as from an Oracle : No doubt (saith he) this great and strange conjunction doth fore-shew the other coming of the Sonne of God and man, in majesty of his glory. But no doubt, God will destroy the signes, and confound the phantasies of these men, as hitherto : all ages hath bene seene. *Albumazar*, he prophesied, that in the year of our Lord 1460. an end shall be made of Christian religion : and yet even then the Gospell beganne most of all to flourish. And a Jew prophesied, that in the year 1364. *Messias* should come, who should deliver the rest of his owne nation out of servitude under the Christians : how true this is, let they themselves judge.

World. You are too sore an enemy unto Astronomers, you are now neare the Universitie, if you were there, you durst not say so much : he is a wise man indeed that is never deceived : and these men, though they are deceived sometime, yet they often tell the very truth.

Christ. That is nothing : for it is no marvell, if a man unskillfull in shooting, often hit the marke, if he continue in shooting. But I would have these propheticall Astronomers shew a reason, why the great conjunction of planets forshew the end of the world : belike they will say, that they know it to be so : if they know it, then their knowledge commeth either by ex-

perience, or without any experience : If they say that they know it without experience, then truly they deceive us, for all good knowledge in humane learning is builded upon experience. If they know it by experience, then they must needs have observed this, that the destruction of the world hath followed such conjunctions : if they have seene this, then they were either in the world, or forth of the world : If they were in the world, how did they escape when the world was destroyed ? If they were forth of the world, where stood they ? But I will here cease to speake of Astronomers, leaving to them their vanities, till such time as it shall please God to make them acknowledge them, and loath them, as the Ephesians did : who being given, not unto wicked and devillish arts, but unto such vaine and frivolous conceits as these of the Astronomers are ; after that they were wonne to the religion of Christ, brought their errious bookes, and openly burned them. And I would have you that are an ignorant man, to remember the saying of the Prophet *Jeremie*, *Be not afraid of the signes of heaven, though the heathen be afraid of such : for the customes of the people are vaine.*

World. I have heard you hitherto, shewing, that no man by any probable conjecture can tell the speciall time of the end of the world : now shew me, that it is not lawfull for any to search out the end of the world.

Christ. Indeed I thinke it is not lawfull to be curious to search out the time, in which the end shall be : it is a thing in which Christians are not to meddle. For it is the will of God, that this should not be knowne : therefore who-soever searcheth this time, doth against the wil of God : to this purpose it is said in the Acts, *It is not for you to know the times and seasons.* Moreover, God hath kept the knowledge of this secret unto himselfe : and neither the Angels, nor Christ as he is man, knowes this time : wherefore it shall be pride and vanity in man, to occupy himselfe in searching it out. Lastly, the Apostles, and *Daniel* the Prophet, when they were curious, and desired to know the end, and asked this question, *When shall these times be ?* they had the repulke, and never received any answer : which declareth, that none ought curiously to enquire of that time.

World. But why is it not the will of God that this time should be knowne ?

Christ. The same cause that moved God to conceale from us the houre of death, the same also made him hide from us the houre and time of his coming : to wit, that we might alwaies watch and pray, and have our loynes girt round about us, and our lamps in our hands burning, as though we every houre did wait for the coming of Christ. And this is the reason why our Saviour Christ useth. For after he had shewed the uncertainty of the time of his coming, and yet that his coming was most certaine, and very sudden : hee addeth an exhortation,

living.

Math. 24. 41.

saying; *Watch therefore, because ye know not when the Son of man will come.* And indeed because the time is unknowne, it stirreth us up to perpetuall watchfulnesse. The master of a familie, if hee knew the houre in which the theefe would come, he would watch onely the same houre: but because hee knoweth that he will come, and is uncertaine of the houre in which he will come, therefore he watcheth the whole night throughout.

World. I thanke you (sir) heartily, for that you have shewed me your opinion so willingly and so courteously, of the end of the world: but yet I would make bold with you a little more in this matter. I often come among my neighbours, and now and then we talke of these matters, and every man will have his owne saying, and peradventure we are all deceived. You say it is neither possible, nor lawfull to search the coming of Christ by any meanes: how then may a man frame his talke wisely, and speake the truth in these matters?

Christ. It is a good question you demand, and I will bee careful to make you an answer. Therefore, when you speake with any man of the end of the world, frame your talke after this manner.

1. That the end of the world is most certaine.

2. That the time of the end of the world is uncertaine to man; and that he must not be curious in this matter.

3. That God would have this time to be unknowne, that men might live in the feare of his name, and not deferre their repentance.

4. That every man must long to see this day, in which an end shall be made of sin and wickednesse.

5. That God may come sooner to judgement than we are aware of, or the world doth imagine; as the parable of the wicked servant sheweth.

6. That if God seeme to defer his coming, it is, that by his long suffering he might bring us to repentance.

7. That though God will not end the world, yet hee may every moment cut off the life of man. If you shall speake of any of these points, you cannot speake amisse.

World. Surely my memory is naught, and now you doe me pleasure, in that you tell me your whole minde so briefly and plainly. I pray you let me make bold to couffer with you of the other part of the Prophecie: which is, that if the end of the world be not this next yeare, yet there shall bee great troubles and subversions of kingdomes. If I knew your opinion of this, I would cease to trouble you.

Christ. Not to make long discourses, my opinion is this: *that there must be great troubles in the world, but there are not to be looked for more in the yeare 88. than any other yeare.* And this I will briefly declare unto you, and then we will end this matter.

World. Shew me first of all, that there shall be many troubles in the world; for I would very faine know that.

Christ. Doubtlesse, the reasons of this thing are most evident. First, Gods word threatneth plagues and punishments to the disobedient, and the transgressors of his commandements. If (saith *Moses*) thou wilt not obey the voice of the Lord thy God, to keepe and doe all his commandements which I command thee this day, then all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the towne, and cursed in the field, &c. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, trouble, and shame in all that which thou setteth thy hand to doe, untill thou be destroyed & perish quickly, &c.

And the Lord shall make the pestilence to cleave unto thee, untill hee hath consumed thee forth of the land, whither thou goest to possess it: the Lord shall finite thee with a consumption, and with the fever, & with a burning ague, and with fervent heat, and with the sword, and with blasting and mildew. The heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee, iron: the Lord shall give thee for the raine of thy land, dust and ashes; even from heaven shall it come upon thee, till thou be destroyed. And the Lord shall cause thee to fall before thine enemies, &c. Also *Amos* the Prophet speaketh thus: *Behold the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful nation, and I will destroy it cleane out of the earth: never thelesse I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,* saith the Lord. And in the third chapter he speaketh of the house of Israel, thus: *They know not to doe right* (saith the Lord) *they stirre up violence and robbery in their palaces: therefore thus saith the Lord God, An adversary shall come even round about the Countrey, and shall bring downe the strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoyled.* And the Prophet *Isaiah*, pronounceth a fearful curse against Israel for her sinnes; *Behold,* (saith he) *the Lord maketh the earth empty, and he maketh it waste: he turneth it upside downe, and scattereth abroad, &c.*

Well, to the purpose: these are the times in which even through all nations saine and wickednesse most aboundeth. These last times are compared to the dayes, of *Noah*, and of *Lot*, in which there was nothing, but eating, and drinking, and marrying, and building, and a generall security possesseth all mens hearts. And *Paul* speaketh of these dayes thus: *Thus know also, that in the last dayes there shall come perilous times: for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, cursed speakers; disobedient to Parents, unthankfull, unboly, without naturall affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, intemperate, fierce, despisers of them that are good, traitors, headie, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a shew of godlinesse, but having denied the power thereof.* Wherefore, seeing God threatneth his curse to the disobedient, and wee know, that

Donat. 2. 16, 17.

Amos 9. 9.

Amos 3. 6.

Isa. 24. 1, 8, 9.

2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

now the whole world is given to disobey God in outrageous manner, and Atheisme never more abounded : who cannot be a Prophet, and make his conclusion of these times, that there must needs be plagues and punishments in the world, and great troubles ? for God is not changeable : but as he threateth plagues to the disobedient, so his immutable justice will require the same.

2. Secondly, because these are the last times, and Satan seeth, that he hath but a short time to continue, therefore he beliveth himselfe, his desire is to bring confusions, and to make havocke of all : it is a death to him to see Gods kingdom to be advanced, the preaching of his word to have free passage, his name to be glorified in the congregation of his Saints, the clouds of ignorance to be dispelled, and men that have long late in darknesse, and in the shadow of death, now to walke in the true light, and to warme themselves at the comfortable sunshine of his Gospell. He doth even as tenants doe with their farnes ; when their leases draw neare an end, then they use to rack all things to the uttermost, to make mony of every thing, and to scrape unto themselves by hooke and by crooke whatsoever they can, that afterward they may have wherewith to maintaine themselves. Even so fareth it with the devill ; this is the last houre, therefore now he will play reaks every where, he rustleth it apace, as though hee were wood ; he stirreth seditions, conspiracies, tumults, warres, and by all meanes with violence he laboureth to overlarge his owne kingdom.

3. Thirdly, the Church of God hath alwayes beene subject to the crosse, and none must marvelle if it be : how can the world love them that hate it, and have little acquaintance with it, and are on the earth as pilgrimes, waiting every day for happy passage through the troublesome sea of this life, to their owne home, even to the heavenly city of Ierusalem ? And how can the Prince of the world, Satan, love the faithfull, that hatech God ? and how can he shew favour to the members, that bitterly detesteth the head Christ Iesus ? And surely, it is the blessed will of God, that his children shall wele and languish under afflictions, that they may learn to despise the world, to know themselves, to love God, to seeke unto him, and to set their affections, not on things on earth, but on the things that are above. He letteth the worldlings have their hearts ease, he letteth them feed themselves with the pleasures of this world, and fat themselves as oxen against the day of slaughter, With his own children he dealeth after another manner. He taketh them as it were by the heeles, he slingeth them into a sea of melting glasse, there he lets them for a time to seeth & boile, and in great perplexity to shift for themselves : at length he draggeth them to the shore, and giveth them ease of their former miseries. And all this is for this end, to fau-

litte and purifie them, and to cleanse them of the filthy dross of sin, and to make them with joy of heart to praise and magnifie his name, for which end they came into this world. And experience teacheth, that as there is a perpetuall entercourse betwene day and night, so there is in the Church of God, not any perpetuall quietnesse, but trouble and quietnesse, affliction and ease doe continually succede one another. So that it is verified of the Church : *Though sorrow come in the evening, yet joy shall bee in morning.* In the beginning, the Church was in *Adams* family ; and albeit for a time they had prosperity, yet through the malice of *Satan* *Abel* was slaine, *Adams* only childe which feared God.

B Before the flood, when Giants were upon the earth, what misery was the Church in ? how was religion prophaned ? what corruption of manners was there, when the sonnes of God married with the daughters of them that came of wicked *Cain* ? though the Lord preserved *Noe* and his family, yet pitifull is it, to see the dangers in which they were after this : *Abrahams* family, how was it now at rest, now in trouble ? he being oppressed with famine, was faine to goe downe into *Egypt*, and there he was in danger of his life, when he deceived the King, saying of *Sarah*, she was his sister. But afterward being very poore, he was made rich, and the land of *Canaan* was promised him, and he got victory of five Kings. The propagation of Gods Church was to be preserved in *Isaac*. And see now to what a straight it is brought ; *Isaac* is bound and laid upon the Altar, *Abrahams* stretcheth forth his hand, and taketh the knife to kill his only sonne ; where is now the Messias ? where is the promised seed ? a man would have thought, that God would here have made an end of his Church ; but this was to shew what shall be the estate of the Church, that though in miseries to mans judgement it may seeme to be destroyed, yet God will preserve it & governe it for ever. This entercourse of quietnesse and afflictions may be seene in *Jacob*, in the children of *Israel* being in *Egypt*, in the wilderness, and in the land of *Canaan*. But to let passe other times, this thing is apparent, when the *Israelites* were governed by Judges and Kings : The *Israelites* for the space of eight yeares were in bondage under *Chusim* King of *Aram* : by *Othniel* afterward they were restored to their liberty, for the space of forty yeares. Again, after this eighteenth yeares together they were in bondage under *Eglon* King of *Moab*, and were given to filthy Idolatry : after his decease, *Ehud* gave them rest for 80. yeares together. And so unto the time of *Samuel*, they were otherwhiles in peace, and otherwhiles in trouble : so it might be shewed through all histories, even till this day. And therefore no doubt, the Churches of God at this time, if they enjoy peace, yet are they continually to looke for troubles, and afflictions,

Psalm 124.

Judg. 1. 8.
Judg. 3. 12.

afflictions and calamities in this world.

And as all Churches must put this in their accounts, that they cannot bee free from the Crosse: so, above all other must this our church of England. We have had long peace under our gracious Deborah, and no doubt in Gods good time we must drinke of the cup of afflictions: the Prophet *Amos* saith, Will a Lion roare in the forest when he hath no prey? or will a Lions whelp cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing? And againe, will the fowler take up the snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all? or shall a trumpet be blowne in the city, and the people not be afraid? Manifest and great are the dangers which our Prince hath escaped, many assaults have bene made against our country. It hath bene in great perill by enemies at home, and enemies abroad: a lingering famine hath a long time afflicted us. What are all these things, and many more, but the roaring of the Lion forth of the forest? and the sounding of the Trumpet? these things are no doubt forerunners of greater judgements, and except we in England with speed repent, the roaring of the Lion will not be in vaine: assuredly the Lion will have his prey. And thus much shall suffice to declare this point, that in these dayes we must looke for manifold afflictions in every country and kingdom.

World. It is well said of you, I con you thanke; I promise you, I thinke a man cannot speake a truer word than this that you have said: for the world is every where so bad, that scarce there can be any quietnesse or good fellowship among men. Well, I am satisfied for this matter, but one thing I will aske you, doe you thinke that there is no more danger to be feared the next year, than any other year?

Christ. As I said, so I now say againe; that afflictions, hurly-burles, subversions of kingdoms, are no more to be feared this next year, than any other year.

World. What reason moveth you to say so?

Christ. This moveth me to thinke so, because I can finde no cause of the troubles of this year, more than of any other year.

World. Nay there you are deceived, the strange conjunctions of planets will shew their operation this next year: and though you will not grant that they are signes of the end of the world; yet you will confesse that they are the causes of plague, pestilence, famine, warres, subversions of kingdoms, and such like: and by this meanes will men have prophesied before of this year.

Christ. Your speech is full of impietie. For to divine of things to come, belongeth to God alone, and none must be so bold as to challenge this to himselfe; as the Prophet *Esaie* sheweth. Stand to your cause (saith the Lord) bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of *Isaac*, let them bring them forth, and let them tell us what is to come: let them shew the former

A things what they be, that we may confide in them, and know the latter end of them: either declare us things to come. Altho it is a wicked part to attribute wars and alterations of kingdoms to the starres, which only belongeth to God. And *Daniel* saith; God he chargeth times and seasons: he taketh away kings, he setteth up kings, &c. And to make warres and peace, is not from any conjunctions of the starres, except the ruling of mans heart may come from the starres, which nevertheless is proper to God; as *Salomon* saith, The heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord, as the rivers of waters, and he turneth it whither he will: it pleaseth him. Furthermore, betwene the heavens and things below, there is a great sympathy and consent, and the starres oftentimes make tempests, while winds, drought, continuall raine, and so they may be causes of some diseases, of scarcity, and of plenty: but we must account them onely as instruments, which God useth to bring to passe his counsell; and this not alwayes, but onely at sometimes: For example, when *David* was bidden to chuse of three divers things which he would suffer, he chose the plague; now there is not any man (I thinke) that will attribute this plague to the starres, And the famine which was in Iudea in the daies of *Elia*, and the want of raine, was not from any constellations. Nay, rather all these things befall us by reason of our finnes, and our wickednesse

B is the chiefe cause that provoketh God to powre these punishments upon us, as that blessed martyr *Master Hosper* sheweth, whose words I will recite. The prognostications (saith he) of these blinde Prophets, are good to be borne in a mans bosome, to know the day of the moneth. The rest of their practices is not worth an haw: as *Moses* teacheth, Deut. 28. Levit. 26. and Malach. 2. whereas yee may see all these evils, and many more than the Astronomers speake of, come unto us for sinne, and the transgression of Gods commandments. It is neither Sunne nor Moone, neither *Jupiter* nor *Mars*, that is the occasion or matter of wealth or woe, plenty or scarcity, war or peace. Neither is pestilence caused by the putrifaction of the aire, (as *Galen* writeth); but contempt of Gods commandments is the cause, as thou mayest read in the places before alleaged. The ayre, the water, nor the earth have any poison in themselves to hurt their Lord and master man: but first man poisoneth himselfe with sinne, and then God useth these elements, ordained for the life of man, to be the occasion of his death. Reade the places, and know, that good health is numbered among the blessings of God, and appertaineth to those that feare and keepe Gods commandments, and not to those that be destined to live long by the favor and aspects of planets. And the evil of what kinde soever it be, is the malediction of God against sin. The Physicians say, that the chiefe remedie against the pestilence, is to flie from

Dan. 2. 21.

Prov. 11. 3.

2 Sam. 24. 13.

Hosper upon the 3. Gen.

the place where the ayre is corrupt : Gods law
 faith, sic whither thou wilt, the Lord shal make
 the pestilence cleave and associate thee, till it
 consume thee from the world. Againc, in the
 same Chapter, the diseafe or sicknesse shall bee
 faithfull, that is to say, sticke fast to thee, use
 what medicines thou wilt. *Galen* faith, that the
 chiefe remedy to preserve from pestilence, is
 to purge the body from superfluous humors,
 to have a free and a liberall winde, and to a-
 void the abundance of meat and drinke. God
 faith, nothing preserveth, but the keeping of
 his commandements. If we offend, the best re-
 medie is repentance and amendment of life.
 It maketh no force how corrupt the ayre be, so
 the conscience of man be cleane from sinne.
 Though there die a thousand on the one side of
 thee, and ten thousand on the other side, thou
 shalt be safe, *Psal. 91. &c.* And now to make an
 end, I hope I have satisfied your minde, con-
 cerning the yeare next ensuing 88. though I

A know, I am not able to satisfie the lear-
 ned, neither was it ever my purpose or my
 thought.

World. Yea, Sir, you have indeed : I thanke
 you for it : I hope I shall be the better for your
 talke as long as I live : I warrant you I shall
 remember you when you thinke little on mee.
 And because you are now come to Cambridge,
 if you will, I will bestow the courtesie of the
 Towne on you, even withall my heart.

Christ. I thanke you heartily : but the best
 courtesie you can shew to me is this, to releev
 the poore, wherein you have beene faulty.

World. Alas man! what should we doe? the
 world is hard : but I shall not forget you : your
 sayings will make me doe more than ever I had
 thought to have done. Well, Sir, if it doe not
 please you to take the courtesie of the Town at
 my hands, I will take my leave of you.

Christ. The Lord be with you, and withall
 them that feare his name. Amen.

FINIS.