

A COMMENTARY OR EXPOSITION  
UPON THE FOLLOWING BOOKS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE:  
**HOSEA, JOEL, AMOS, OBADIAH, JONAH, MICAH,,  
NAHUM, HABAKKUK, ZEPHANIAH, HAGGAI,  
ZECHARIAH, AND MALACHI**

---

**JOHN TRAPP**

Wherein the text is explained some controversies are discussed, sundry cases of conscience are cleared, divers commonplaces are handled, and many remarkable matters hinted that had by former interpreters been pretermitted. In all which diverse other texts of scripture, which occasionally occur, are fully opened, and the whole so intermixed with pertinent histories, as will yied both pleasure and profit to the judicious reader.

## THE PREFACE TO THE READER FOR HOSEA TO MALACHI

"Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Oh, but much more pleasant for the eye of faith to see the Sun of Righteousness, that light of life. Blessed, may we say, are our eyes which see this Sun shine so gloriously from the gospel; and though through glasses, yet such as are, and will be, kept from breaking by that presence of Christ promised his ministers of the gospel to the end of the world, whom he calls the light of the world. Happy art thou, O England, where it hath been daylight these hundred years, and God forbid that we should expose ourselves to that the condemnation, in loving darkness rather than light. If we shorten this our day, certainly it will be our death. An evil generation, therefore, is that whose hellish principles prompt them utterly to extinguish all our burning and shining lamps, by draining out all their oil; and so are those children of the night, whose hellish practices attempt the blowing out of these lights that do discover their deeds of darkness, and because they cannot (no more than beckon the sun from the sky), their breath is spent in cursing them as freely and fiercely as the Ethiopians do the sun for scorching them. If this continue, sad are our fears, lest our sun be not far from setting; and we take up that lamentation with Jeremiah, "Woe unto us, for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out."

Neither are the symptoms of this only in the professed disavowing of the ministry by men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, and who have put away a good conscience, but also in the dark lives of many of those who seem to affect gospel light, and yet walk not honestly as in the day: rejoice in the light, yet walk not as children of the light. Nay, among the best, are not notions prosecuted more than practice? and our light like the moon's, without heat? yea, and whereas the Father of lights hath set up his candlestick among us, that we might do his work, we rather do our own, making ourselves, and not him, our end. The good Lord in mercy make all his to face about towards himself; and to face one another, as the cherubims over the mercy seat.

Reader, our advice to thee is, to do thy duty, though many others neglect theirs: bless God there are so many windows to let in light unto thee, and pray that they may be yet clearer, to give in daily new light (thou knowest we speak not in a fanatic dialect), we mean fresh and fuller discoveries of gospel mysteries; whereunto thou wilt find this author hath made no small contribution, by these annotations upon the small prophets, from before which few have drawn the curtain so far as he: open, therefore, the casement in reading, and much light may be let into thy mind to understand things that have been hid from thine eyes, or seen but dimly.

We need not commend the author, all his works speak him to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, an interpreter one among a thousand: we may say of him, as Cyprian to Cald., *Adeo exercitatus et in Scripturis peritus, ut caute omnia et consulto gerat*, Origen, speaking of the prophets, calls them bees, and their prophecies honey-combs; this expositor God hath made skilful both in hiving and expressing.

This friend of the spouse presents her here with more new borders of gold, enamelled and set out with spangles of silver, wrought upon a precious part of Holy Writ, which he hath beautified with variety of human learning. And lest thy heart should rise against this expression, give us leave to tell thee, that though many in these last, and worst, and woeful days, scoff at the learned languages, and arts, and sciences, as the fox in the Greek epigram disparaged the fair and ripe grapes, because they were out of his reach; yet there is a necessity of them, for the right dividing the word of truth, which is evinced by a man approved; who, between derogating from the all sufficiency of Scripture (which is sacrilege and blasphemy) on the one side, and detracting from the worth of University learning (which is an anabaptistical frenzy) on the other side, lays down the truth in the middle, in this aphorism: Scripture is of itself abundantly sufficient for us, but we are not sufficient for it, without the help of arts and liberal sciences (Dr Featly, Tree of Saving Knowledge); we cannot sufficiently conceive or declare the works of God without natural philosophy, nor law of God without moral, nor his attributes without metaphysics, nor the dimensions of the ark and temple without the mathematics, nor the songs of Zion without music and

poetry; we cannot interpret the text without grammar, analyze it without logic, press and apply it without rhetoric. These it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost to use in the penning of Scriptures, to show their usefulness in their opening; and who can understand or expound prophecies already fulfilled, and to be accomplished, without insight into profane history. As for knowledge in the tongues, he deserves to have his tongue cut out that dares but mutter a word against it: *dulcius ex ipso fonte*, more sweet from the font itself.

There are indeed various cautions and directions, given by the ancient holy fathers, in the use of human learning, which this learned godly writer hath exactly observed; for he hath purged and cleansed it, cut off the bondwoman's hair, pared her nails, and washed her with soap; his chief care being not τεχνολυγειν, but θευλυγειν; as it is not only ορθοτμειν, but also ορθοποδειν. In him (to use the words of that divine poet) doctrine and life, colours and light, combine and mingle. He doth moreover subject and make human learning subservient to Divine. And, finally, useth it moderately, without affectation; and modestly, without ostentation.

If we should now work an emblem of this giver in his gift, brought unto the spouse of Christ, as that reverend, learned, pious Doctor did upon his four preachers, and apply all his images and mottos to this author, they that know him, and have heard him, and seen his constant conversation, would (we presume) justify our judgment; but we forbear, only taking leave (before we take leave of thee) to superadd thus much to our thoughts of this book: that though in his former Commentaries he hath done excellently, yet this excelleth them all; as in other things, so in this especially, that the text is expounded more largely, and large satisfaction given to the reader in the sense of the word, which well becometh a work of this nature. So that here is not only work for the studies of young divines, but the gravest may ask counsel of this Elihu, who is so full of matter, the Spirit of God within him constraining him thus to lay out himself for the good of the Church. Private men also, if they please to take the pains, here may find what will very much both profit and delight. Let us request a concurrence of thine, with ours, and the prayers of many, for this reverend and worthy author, that he may

live long and long a burning and shining light, and be enabled, by the influence of Divine beams, before his eyes be closed, to open the rest of Holy Scripture; which we hope is his purpose, and are sure is the earnest desire and expectation of his fellow brethren; and that his path may be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

His and thine in the service of Christ,

JOHN BRYAN,  
OBADIAH GREW.  
*Coventry, August 29th, 1654.*

# Hosea

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The word of the Lord]** Not "cunningly devised fables," #2Pe 1:16, or human testimonies, that can make but a human faith; but the "word of the ever living God," #1Th 2:13, the "Scripture that cannot be broken," #Joh 10:35, the very heart and soul of God (*cor et anima Dei*), as Gregory calls it.

**That came unto Hosea]** The Lord is said to come to Laban, Abimelech, Balaam, &c. But he never concredited his word to any such profane wretches, as he did to the holy prophets which have "been since the world began"; of whom it is said, as here, "The word of the Lord came to Hosea." His name signifieth a Saviour, #Mt 1:21: a fit name for a minister, whose work is to "save himself and them that hear him," #1Ti 4:16. To save them if he can, #Ob 21; to deliver their souls from going into the pit, #Job 33:24; to pull them, if possible, out of the fire, #Jude 23; to "give them the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin," #Lu 1:77: to give it, I say, not by infusion (for that he cannot do), but by instruction; and that he must endeavour to do, as this prophet did: than whom few ministers ever ran so long a race without cessation, or cespitation, so constantly, so courageously, so unweariably. For he continued prophesying sixty-five years at least, saith Pareus; seventy, saith Oecolampadius; it is very probable fourscore years, saith Mr Burroughes. The Hebrews say ninety years, *quibus multa dixit quae non scripsit*, wherein he uttered much more than he wrote. This we may easily believe: for we have but the short notes or heads of his sermons and larger discourses, which he seems also to have set down for the use of the Church in his extreme old age, whereof they carry a smatch in the shortness of his speech, applied, as much as might be, to the measure of his breath. Hence Jerome fitly called him, *Commaticum et quasi per sententias loquentem*, concise and sententious. *Amputas loquitur sententias et verba ante expectatum cadentia*, as one saith of Sallust; *Multo est verbis quam sensu restrictior atque concisior*, as another saith of Livy: he speaketh much in few; and seems to have more sentences than sayings. The more often you read him the more you may get by him: *et nunquam tamen dimittat te sine siti*; and yet the more you get the more you covet (Lips. de

Thucyd.). Obscure he is (as delivering things briefly), and such as will not be easily acquainted with you but upon further suit: hence that Epiphonema <sup>{a}</sup> in the perclose of his prophecy, "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them?" But this must waken and not weaken our more diligent search, not being content with the first ore that offereth itself to our view, but digging deeper and deeper, till we become owner of the whole treasure, which will sufficiently pay for the pains. Wherefore "search the Scripture," "follow on to know the Lord"; get all the dimensions of knowledge, which (now in the great abundance of the means we have) doth even bow down to us, as trees do that are laden with fruit, so that a child may gather from them.

**The son of Beerij** That is, of a well that hath pure and clear water in it, and that never faileth; living water, as the Scripture calleth it, and not mixed with mud. Ministers should be children of Beerij, of a well digged by the direction of the lawgiver, **#Nu 21:17**, whence people should draw waters with joy, the pure waters of life, the unadulterated milk of God's word; not troubled, brackish, and sourish doctrines, such as the Popish clergy (called therefore "the sea," **#Re 12:12**) do set abroad which rather bring barrenness to their hearers and gnaw their entrails, than quench their thirst or cause fruit. These and all false teachers make God's flock drink that which they have fouled with their feet, **#Eze 34:19**, yea, impoisoned with their hands: as the malicious Jews once cast bags of poison into many wells here, to do mischief, and were therefore banished the country. False doctrine is like a filthy pond, wherein fish die soon and frogs live long: it is like the Dead Sea, or the great falling star, called Wormwood, **#Re 8:10,11**, which made "the third part of the waters become wormwood," so that "many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter" by that son of perdition, who was himself the "gall of bitterness, and bond of perdition." Who this Beerij was it appears not in Scripture. It seems he was a man famous in those days among the Israelites (and is here named *honoris gratia*, for honour's sake to the prophet), as Alexander and Rufus, the sons of Simon the Cyrenian, were men famously known in the Church of the New Testament; and are therefore but named only by Mark. <sup>{#Mr 15:21}</sup> The Jews have a tradition, that whensoever a prophet's father is named, that father was likewise a prophet as well

as the son. And Beerī might be *binominis*, and have some other name of more note: like as Pethuel, the father of the prophet Joel, is thought by some to have been Samuel, and to have been called Pethuel, that is, a persuader of God, because what he asked of God he obtained.

**In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, &c.]** A young prophet he must needs be (especially if he prophesied fourscore years. See the note above). Haply he began as early as did Samuel, Jeremiah, Timothy, Origen, or Cornelius Mus; of whom Sixtus Senensis testifieth, that he was an admirable preacher at twelve years old.

**Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah]** The throne of Judah had some interchanges of good princes: Israel none at all. The same justice therefore that made Israel a scourge to Judah, made Assyria a scorpion to Israel; as is here set forth under the type of Hosea's two last children, Loruhamah and Loammi; whereof in their place, Meanwhile this prophet went through variety of conditions under so many different kings' reigns (as did likewise Athanasius and Latimer), Jeroboam's (especially), the second of that name, and here only named, when six other kings of Israel (in whose time Hosea prophesied) are not once mentioned, but lie wrapt up in the sheet of shame, because wicked idolaters, such as God took no delight in, and hath therefore written them in the earth.

**And in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash]** Not the son of Nebat, that ringleader of the ten tribes' revolt from the house of David; but another, little better, and yet very prosperous and victorious, #2Ki 14:25,28. He reigned also forty-one years, and did great exploits: yet is Hosea sent to contest with him, to declaim against his sin and wickedness, and to proclaim heavy judgments against him and his people. This the prophet did for a long while together with all fidelity and fortitude; when the king was triumphing over his enemies, and the people were not only drunk, but even mad again, by reason of their extraordinary prosperity (*non tantum temulenti erant sed etiam prorsus insani*), as Calvin expresseth it. Now that so young a prophet should so sharply contend with so fierce a people, in the ruff of their pride and jollity; that he should so rouse and ripple up these drunkards of Ephraim



with their crown of pride, **#Isa 28:1**; this shows him to have been of a heroic spirit. Jonah, his contemporary, flinched when sent against Nineveh. "Micah the Morasthite" (another of Hosea's contemporaries) "prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. Yet did not Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all Judah, put him at all to death," &c., **#Jer 26:18,19**. He and Hosea, though they prevailed little with the people they preached to, yet they were better dealt with than the prophet Isaiah (their contemporary too), of whom Jerome tells us, out of the Rabbis, that he was sawn asunder, because he said he had seen the Lord: and, secondly, because he called the great ones of Judah, princes of Sodom, and rulers of Gomorrah, **#Isa 1:10**.

{a} An exclamatory sentence or striking reflection, which sums up or concludes a discourse or a passage in the discourse. (ED)

Ver. 2. **The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea]** Heb. in Hosea: to note, that the Lord was both in his mind and mouth, in his spirit and speech. God spake in him before he spake out to the people. His prophecy must therefore needs be divine and deep. That is the best discourse that is digged out of a man's own breast, that comes *a corde ad cor*, from the heart to the heart. And blessed are the people (saith one) that have such ministers, that shall speak nothing to them but what hath been first spoken by God in them: saying, with David and Paul, "We believe, therefore have we spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak," **#2Co 4:13**; we have experimented what we deliver; we believe and are sure, that God is in us of a truth, and that we preach *cum gratia et privilegio*, with grace and privilege.

**The beginning]** Hence some gather that Hosea was the first prophet: *Hoseas videtur tempore et maiestate aliis prior*, saith Oecolampadius. Certain it is he began before Isaiah (because he prophesied in the days of Jeroboam, who was before Uzziah); whether before Amos or not is not so certain. Eusebius tells us there was no Greek history extant before Hosea's time. {a} Well, therefore, might that ancient priest of Egypt say to Solon, You Grecians are all

boys and babes in matters of antiquity: neither is there one old man among you (Plato in Timaeo). Samuel is counted the first prophet, #Ac 3:24, but Hosea was the first of those that lived in these kings' days, and likely held out longest; {See Trapp on "Ho 1:1"} as did father Latimer, preaching twice every sabbath day, though of a very great age; and rising to his study winter and summer at two o'clock in the morning. Others read the words thus, At the beginning when the Lord spake by Hosea, he said to Hosea himself, "Go, take unto thee," &c. An uncouth precept, and a rough beginning for a young preacher, whose youth might be despised, and whose sharpness might be disgusted. But truth must be spoken, however it be taken; and a preacher should take the same liberty to cry down sin that men take to commit sin, #Isa 58:1. Jerome was called *fulmen Ecclesiasticum*, the Church thunderbolt; and our Mr Perkins applied the word so close to the consciences of his hearers, that he was able to make their hearts fall down and their hairs almost to stand upright (Mr Puller's Holy State). But in old age he was more mild, and delighted much to preach mercy; as did also our prophet Hosea, whose prophecy is comminatory in the fore part, consolatory in the latter part.

**And the Lord said to Hosea]** This is now the third time inculcated for more authority' sake, which the people, so rubbed and menaced, would be apt enough to question. He therefore shows them his commission, and that he hath good ground for what he saith; that they may have no cause to cavil, but reply, as that good Dutch divine did (if God would give them a heart so to do), *Veniat, veniat, verbum Domini, et submittemus ei, sexcenta si nobis essent colla:* Let the word of the Lord come, yea, let it come, and we will submit thereunto, though we had six hundred lives to lose for so doing (Melch. Ad.).

**Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms]** An arrant whore, a stinking strumpet, *scortum obsoletum*, a known and trite harlot; such as were Thais, Lais, Phryne, &c.; yea, and such a one as, after marriage with a former husband at least, went astray after other sweethearts; for so the application of the figure to the subject, #Ho 2:2-5, requireth it to be understood. Whereby it appears (saith Diodati) that all this was done in a vision. Others infer as much from

that phrase in this verse, "The beginning of the word of the Lord in Hosea," that is (saith Polanus), appearing and speaking to him by an inward vision, as it were in an ecstasy. Besides, in the third chapter and three first verses, the prophet is bidden to marry another harlot, to buy her for his own use, and to keep her at his house for a time. Now, *scimus hoc non fuisse completum*, saith Calvin; we know that this was never really done. It follows therefore that this figure was only proposed to the people, that they might perceive, in the looking glass of this allegory, first, their duty towards God; second, their disloyalty; thirdly, their penalty for the same. It is not a historical narration, but a prophetic vision. "Children of fornication, a bastardly brood," such as this "evil and adulterous generation" is; sons of the "rebellious whorish woman, children of transgression, a seed of falsehood," **#Isa 57:4**. The Hebrews call such children brambles, such as Abimelech was, who grew in the hedgerow of a harlot: they call them also *Mamzer*; as ye would say, a strange blot; and *Shatuki*, or silent, because when others are praising their parents, such must hold their peace, and hold down their heads with shame enough, because they are bastards.

**For the land hath committed great whoredoms]** *Fornicando fornicata est, i.e. frequentissime et fiedissime*, most frequently and most filthily. See **#Eze 23:2-4**, throughout. Aholah (that is, Israel) played the harlot when she was mine, **#Eze 23:5**, In her youth they lay with her, **#Eze 23:8**, so that she might say, with that impudent strumpet, Quartilla, in Petronius, that she could never remember herself a virgin: yea, she grew old in her adulteries, **#Eze 23:43**, opened her feet to every passenger, and multiplied her whoredoms, **#Eze 16:25**. *Meretricis scilicet hoc est meretricissimae*. Such a common *prostibulum* prostitute is the whore of Rome, whom her followers call *piam matrem, quae gremium claudat nemini*. a pious matron who excludes no one. Joan of Naples was a saint to her. Idolatry is spiritual whoredom in many respects. It defiles the soul, God's bridal bed. It breaks the marriage knot, and discovenants. It enrageth God, who in this case will take no ransom. It subjecteth men to God's deepest displeasure: it besots them and unmans them: they that make idols are "like unto them, so are all they that trust in them," **#Ps 115:8**.

Lastly, idolatry is seldom without adultery, in a proper sense; as appears in the old heathens, at their feasts of Priapus, Lupercalia, &c., the Canaanites had filled the land from one end to another with their uncleanness, #Ezr 9:11; and in the Papists today, who reckon fornication a venial sin, have their stews allowed them; yea, among the very Indians, who abhor their most loathsome living. And for Rome itself— *tota est iam Roma lupanar*; it is become a great brothel house, and her stench is come up to heaven, as Matthew Paris (one of her sons) long since said.

**Departing from the Lord]** In whom all amiables and admirables are concentred. This did exceedingly aggravate the unkindness.

{a} De Praep. Evang. l. 20, c. ult.

Ver. 3. **So he went]** He said not, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" #Joh 6:60. *Dura mihi praecipit, et paene terret*. He doth not reason but run, dispute but despatch. God must be obeyed, though we see no sense for it.

**And took Gomer]** which signifieth both consummation and consumption, to show that she was *consummata meretrix*, a complete whore, had all the tricks of a whore; and brings her paramours to final consumption, utter extermination.

**The daughter of Diblaim]** Not *quasi de Belaim*, a place so called, as Hugo dreameth: though there was a wilderness of this name, whereto some think the prophet here alludeth, to show the Church's wretched beginning in its own nature: as #So 3:6 Eze 16:7. But Diblaim is by some taken for Gomer's father: by more, for her mother, which is also held to be a harlot, according to that, #Eze 16:44, "As is the mother, so is the daughter." Diblaim signifieth bunches of dried figs, that were the delicacies of those times. Gluttony is the gallery that lechery walketh through. *Sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus*. Concupiscence (as Plato saith) hath the lowest places, and is *alligata ventri*, as one would tie a horse or an ass to the manger. #Jer 5:8 not unfitly compareth sensualists to fed horses, neighing after their neighbours' wives. Saturity breeds security, which is the sure forerunner of destruction. *Est ergo hic gnome*, saith a Lapide, *i.e.* Here we have, then, an elegant sentence, Gomer

is the daughter of Diblaim, that is, rottenness of sensuality: for as the worm that grows in the fruit, devoureth it; so doth grief, the pleasure of sin. This observation we have from the Cabalists.

Ver. 4. **Call his name Jezreel**] For the honourable name of Israel is too good for this people; call them therefore Jezreel, a people devoted to dispersion, and such as I will scatter into the four winds of heaven, as the seedsman scattereth his seed ( עָרַב *spargere* to scatter). Thus Jeconiah is called Coniah (for a judgment upon him): Bethel, Bethaven; Har, Hammischa, the mount Olivet, or of unction, *Har Hammaschith*, the mount of corruption, #2Ki 23:13. And this is not unusual among men; so when they would disgrace a man, to clip or play upon his name: as when they spitefully called Athanasius, Sathanasius; Cyprian, Coprian (as if all his excellent works were but dung); Calvin, Cain, &c. This people, saith God here, are more like Ahab than Jacob. Call them therefore Jezreel (Ahab's court), that is, a den of thieves and murderers, where innocent Naboth cannot be master of the vineyard that he was born to. Micah (who prophesied also much about these times) hath a saying much to the same purpose, #Mic 2:7: "O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the Lord straitened? are these his doings?" *q.d.* Ye that boast of Jacob to be your father, do you tread in his steps? are ye of his spirit, of his practice? was there such vile profaneness found in him as is openly found in you? David describeth the generation of such as "seek God, as seek his face," and then subjoineth, "this is Jacob," these are Israelites indeed, these are Jews inwardly, #Ps 24:6: and all others are degenerate plants, and are the worse for their outward privileges: since "tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil, but of the Jew first, and then also of the Gentile," #Ro 2:9.

**For yet a little while**] And yet this little was a long while, through God's gracious forbearance. As bad as this people were, they should not perish without warning; yea, though the Lord foreknew they would make no good use of it. Φιλει ο Θεος προσημαινειν, saith the heathen historian Herodotus: God loves to forewarn, and premonish. But there is nothing more dangerous and dismal than these still revenges; as when God suddenly brake out in wrath upon Nadab and Abihu, upon Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Pharaoh at the Red Sea, when he would not beware. It is a just both desert and presage of ruin, not

to be warned. See this in Nineveh, spared at first, but after a little while revolting, soundly paid for the new and old faults, #**Na 3:19**. *Non consurget iterum afflictio*, saith the same prophet. {#*Na 1:9*} Affliction shall not rise up the second time: God will not make two doings of it: but when he begins, he will also make an end, #**1Sa 3:12**, that is, as sure as he begins, so sure will he make an end: and though it may be some time ere he begin, yet a little while (for he is slow to wrath and of great kindness), yet assuredly he will "avenge the blood of Jezreel," *i.e.* the executions done by Jehu upon the house of Ahab, as so many murders: see #**1Ki 16:7 2Ki 9:24,31 10:11,17** This God did not presently, but that is nothing. *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi, nedum Deo*. He is slow, but sure, *Et tarditatem supplicii gravitate compensat*, as the heathen (Val. Max.) could say, the longer he holds, the harder he strikes: and visits Jehu's house for past sins, that they made little reckoning of. Sin may sleep a long time, like a sleeping debt, not called for of many years: as Saul's sin in slaying the Gibeonites, not punished till forty years later: as Joab's killing of Abner slept all David's days: as Amalec perished, for their ill usage of Israel, many hundred years after. It is ill angering the Ancient of Days. He that saith. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay it," takes his own time for the doing of it: and who shall prescribe to him? It is dangerous offending him whose displeasure is everlasting. Vapours, that ascend invisibly, come down again in storms and showers. A sinner of a hundred years shall be accursed, and made to possess the sins of his youth. It is not the last sand that exhausts the hour glass, nor the last stroke that fells the oak. Jehu's house is visited, and his progeny extinguished in the fourth generation, for Jehu's offences. God's work must be done truly, that there be no halting, and totally, that there be do halving. But Jehu, as he had not that true heart spoken of by the apostle, #**Heb 10:22**, but was double minded, #**Jas 1:8,4:8** (like that mad Neapolitan that said he had two hearts, one for God, and another for him that would); so he fulfilled not after God, or he followed not God fully, as Caleb did, #**Nu 14:24**; he did not all God's will, as David, #**Ac 13:22**; he served him not with a perfect heart, as Asa, #**2Ch 15:17**. He reformed the State, but not the Church; or if he did something toward it, yet he was not thorough in it. He had a dispensatory conscience: for though he rooted out Baal's worship, yet the golden calves must continue; piety must give place to policy. It was a just

complaint of *Chemnitius, Principes regionem potius quam religionem quaerunt: pauperes panem potius quam Christum*. All men seek their own, but not the things of Jesus Christ, **#Php 2:21**. And yet piety hath ever proved to be the best policy: and the very philosopher in his Politics gives this golden rule: *πρωτον περι θειων επιμελει*, (Arist. Pol. l. 7. c. 8.), first take care of divine things. Jehu seemed at first to be as zealous a reformer as Jehoshaphat: but though his fleece was fair, his liver was rotten. *In parabola ovis capras suas quaerebat*; he was like the eagle which soareth aloft, not for any love of heaven: her eye is, all the while, upon the prey; which by this means she spies sooner, and seizeth upon better. He seems to have been of Machiavel's mind, viz. that virtue itself should not be sought after, but only the appearance: because the credit is a help, the use a cumber. Finally, of Jehu it may be said, as Marcellinus saith of Julian, that by his hypocrisy and double dealing, *Obnubilabat gloriae multiplices cursus*, he stained his many praise worthy practices. Or as Camden saith of King Henry VIII, *Fuerunt quidem in eo rege, confuso quodam temperamento mixta*. There were in that king great virtues, and no less vices mingled, or rather jumbled together. Or lastly, as Fellers Galeazo reporteth of Sforza, Duke of Milan, that he was a very monster, made up and compact of virtue and vice. See more **#Ho 1:5**.

**And I will cause to cease the kingdom]** This happened after 76 years, which God counts and calls here but a little while. A thousand years with him are but as one day. What is our life but a spot of time between two eternities? "It is even a vapour," saith St James, *{#Jas 4:14}* "that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us (and a door now opened) of entering into God's rest, any of us should seem to come short," or to come lag, and late, **#Heb 4:1**, as did Esau, the foolish virgins, those that come a day after the fair, an hour after the feast. Agree with your adversary quickly, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, *Currat paenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia*: Repent a day before death (and that may be this day before the next), make God's judgments present in conceit, ere they come in the event; prevision is the likeliest way of prevention, the surest means of mitigation: whereas coming on the sudden, they find weak minds secure, make them miserable, leave them desperate.

Ver. 5. **I will break the bow of Israel]** Though it may seem to have a back of steel, and though it be drawn by Jehu himself, with his full strength, as once against Jehoram, to the piercing of his heart, **#2Ki 9:24**. He means, God will blast all the power of their ammunition, defeat their likeliest projects and practices, and make the strongest sinew in the arm of flesh to crack. "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder," &c., **#Ps 46:9**. He rendereth the weapons vain, or successful, **#Isa 54:17 Jer 50:9**, as he did when the rats and mice were sent into Sennacherib's army in great abundance, to gnaw and devour their quivers, bow strings, belts, bridles, shields (as Herodotus relates), to show that the shields of the earth belong to the Lord, that the militia of the world is his, that he orders the ammunition, **#Jer 50:25**. And the like was done by this Lord of hosts, or armies, when the wind and weather fought for Theodosius, in that famous battle against the tyrant Maximus, celebrated by Claudian (Aug. de Cir. Dei, 1. 5). As also when the Spanish Armada was defeated and discomfited by the English in 1588. That was very remarkable, and for our purpose apposite, which occurred in the battle between Edward III of England and Philip of France. Philip, enraged with a defeat, resolves presently to revenge it; and hardly had patience to stay in Abbeville one day, while the bridge to pass over his army was being repaired. And with this precipitation and fury, into the field he marcheth, elevated with an assured hope of triumphant victory. But it happened otherwise; for there fell at the instant of the battle a piercing shower of rain, which dissolved their strings, and made their bows useless.

**In the valley of Jezreel]** A city near to Maximinianopolis, saith Jerome. Of the valley wherein this city was situated, see **#Jos 17:16 Jud 6:33**. It was in the tribe of Manasseh, and bordered upon Issachar, **#Jos 19:18**. It was ten miles long, and two miles over; being called also the plain of Galilee, and was fit for a fight, for a pitched battle. Here it was, saith Adrichomius, that Gideon fought the Midianites, **#Jud 6:7**, Saul the Philistines, **#1Sa 31:1-3**, Ahab the Syrians, **#1Ki 20:21,29**. And here Zechariah (the last of Jehu's line) was slain, and with him the kingdom of Israel received such a wound, that it could never rise again. Monarchies have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin. Junius renders it *Propter Vallem Iericho*, I will break the bow of Israel, because of the wall of



Jezebel: that is, saith he, because of the slaughter of Ahab's house there made by Jehu, #2Ki 10:1-8. Jehu's tent in that execution was rewarded as an act of justice, *quoad substantiam operis*, and yet punished as an act of policy, *quoad modum*, for the perverse end. *Finibus non officiis a vitiis discernuntur virtutes*, saith Augustine: By the ends, and not by the works done, are virtues distinguished from vices. Two things make a good Christian, and declare him so, —good actions and good aims. And although a good aim doth not make a bad action good (as in Uzziah), yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, as here in Jehu. There may be then, we see, *malum opus in bona materia*, a work materially good, which yet may never prove so formally and eventually: *sc.* when there is a fail either *quoad fontem*, or *quoad finem*. A thing which I see in the night may shine; and that shining proceed from nothing but rottenness. Blazing comets (though but comets), as long as they keep aloft, shine bright. But when they begin to decline from their pitch, they fall to the earth, and infect the air. So when Illuminates forsake the Lord, and mind only earthly things, being all for self, they lose their light, and go out in a snuff. Jehu's golden calves made an end of him and his, though he made an end of Ahab's house and Baal's worship. His rooting out of Ahab's race was but to settle the crown better upon his own head. Like unto him was our Richard III, who well knowing (saith the historian) it was no policy to play the villain by half, is resolved to leave never a rub to lie in the way, that might hinder the true running of his bowl. Like unto him also (saith Master Calvin upon this text) was our King Henry VIII, who cast off some degree of Popery, so far as would serve his own turn: but there were the six articles in force (that whip with six cords, as that martyr called it) for which many suffered at that time. And whereas (like Sulla) he commanded others, under great penalties, to be no Papists, himself was either Papist or atheist, jeering at some for their old *Mumpsimus*, <sup>{a}</sup> and at others for their new *Sumpsimus*, <sup>{b}</sup> as he profanely called the Reformation: hanging Papists on the one side of the hedge for denying his supremacy, and burning Protestants on the other side thereof for denying transubstantiation, &c. And hence, it may be thought, is that dreadful and dismal ruin that is now (in these our days, and in the fourth generation or succession) befallen the royal family. The house of Jehu fareth the worse for Jehu. Offa, king of East Saxons, lived in the time of Charles the Great, and was a

potent prince. But the many injuries he did, and the murder he committed in his house upon Ethelbert, king of East Angles, coming to him under a public faith, and a suitor to his daughter, were justly revenged upon his posterity, which, after him, declining, in the end lost all. But to return to Jehu: we shall find, **#2Ki 10:30**, that God said, that because Jehu had shed the blood of Ahab in Jezreel, that he would reward him for it: and that his children to the fourth generation should sit upon the throne of Israel, and govern that kingdom. And yet, for miscarriage in the manner, justly plagueth his posterity. As Xerxes crowned his steersman in the morning, and yet hanged him in the afternoon of the same day. And as Mareschal de Thermas, the French general, first knighted a French soldier in Scotland who first mounted a besieged fort (by that means taken), and then hanged him within an hour after, for doing it without order.

{a} One who obstinately adheres to old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that they are wrong; an ignorant and bigoted opponent of reform. CED

{b} A correct expression taking the place of an incorrect but popular one (*mumpsimus*). CED

**Ver. 6. And she conceived again]** To show, in a continued allegory, the weak and woeful state of the ten tribes, when the Assyrian took from them all the land of Gilead and Galilee, together with all the land of Nephthali, and carried them captive, subduing, in a manner, five tribes of Israel: to wit, those without Jordan (who as they had first their inheritance given them, so they were now first carried captives), and the tribes of Zebulon and Nephthali, who were seated in the land of Galilee. And this was the first captivity of Israel: see **#2Ki 15:29 Isa 9:1**.

**And bare a daughter]** This age is compared to a daughter, because from that time forward, after the bow of Israel was so broken, as **#Ho 1:5**, they should be no more able to defend themselves than if they were a commonwealth of women. Their spirits should be so cowed out and emasculated, their backs so bowed down with unsupportable burdens and bondages, that there was scarcely place left of a worse condition, nor hope of a better. Like them were those we read of **#Isa 51:23**, that yielded to such as would but say to them, "Bow down that we may go over you." Or as those in Nahum, **#Na 3:13**, Their "men shall be as women," *Αχηιδες ουκετ Αχαιοι*, {a} timorous and cowardly, like Issachar's ass, **#Ge 49:14** (whose lot

fell in Galilee, #**Jos 19:18**), or those fugitives of Ephraim, #**Jud 12:4**, that therefore bare a brand of dishonour, because they would not rather die bravely than live basely. Of such it may be said, as of harts and stags, they have great horns and strength, but do nothing with them, *quia de est animus*, because their spirits are imbedded: as the Israelites in Egypt were of old by Pharaoh, and as the Grecians are to this day by the Turk.

**Call her name Loruhamah]** When God once calls a people or a person by this name, we may well write upon their doors (if any place be yet left for prayer, any good to be done by it), Lord, have mercy upon them: their condition is deplorable, if not desperate. *Vade frater in cellam et dic, Miserere mei Deus*, Brother, go into thy cell, and say, Lord, have mercy upon me, said Crantzius to Luther, when he began to declaim against the pope, for he looked upon him as an undone man, and yet he was not (Scaltet. Annal.). But those are doubly undone, to whom God shall say, as here to Israel,

**I will no more have mercy]** Heb., I will add no more to show mercy: but my so often abused mercy shall turn into fury. That it is not so yet with this sinful nation, that we are not yet a Loruhamah, an Aceldama, that we are not already as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah, even a place of nettles and salt pits, a perpetual desolation, as another prophet hath it, we may well cry out, O the depth, the fathomless depth of God's dear love to England, #**Isa 1:9 Zep 2:9**. Certain it is that we have hitherto subsisted by a miracle of his mercy, and by a prop of his extraordinary patience. Certain it is that God hath not dealt with England according to his ordinary rule, but according to his prerogative royal. England (if one may so speak with reverence) is a paradox to the Bible. God grant that being lifted up to heaven with Capernaum in the abundance of blessings, she be not brought down to hell by the abuse of them; that God set not that sad impression of Loruhamah (worse than any black Theta) upon her, and make her know the worth of his undervalued favours by the want of them: why should it be said of us as once, *Anglica gens est optima flens, et pessima ridens?* why should we provoke the Lord so long till he shall resolve upon an evil, an only evil, *i.e.* without mixture of mercy, #**Eze 7:5**; till the decree bring forth, #**Zep 2:2**, and God pronounceth that fatal sentence against us that he did once

against the old world, *Fiat iustitia, ruat mundus*, Let justice be done, though the world be thereby undone. "Of all God's attributes he can least abide an abuse in his mercy; God's mercy is precious" (saith one), "and he will not let it run out to waste; he will not be prodigal of it. There is a time wherein God will say, Now I have done, I have even done with this people, mercy hath had her turn, &c. I will not always serve them for a sinning-stock, but will take another course with them: I will take my own and be gone: and woe be unto them when I depart from them." When the sun is eclipsed, all creatures fade and flag here below. "Thou hiddest thy face, Lord, and I was troubled," #Ps 30:7. David could not live but in the light of God's countenance: he begs for mercy everywhere, as for life. Never did poor prisoner at the bar beg harder for a psalm of mercy than he doth, #Ps 51:1, and other places. Neither would common mercies content him, he must have such as are proper and peculiar to God's own people, even the "sure mercies of David." Oh, make sure of mercy, whatever you go without. And the rather, because there are a race of Loruhamahs, a sort of such among men as are excluded from mercy. God is not merciful to any wicked transgressors, #Ps 59:5, that go on in their trespasses, #Ps 68:21, that allow them and wallow in them. That last letter in God's name had need to be well remembered, #Ex 34:7, "He will by no means clear the guilty." And that terrible text should never be forgotten by those that are obstinate in an evil course, and bless themselves when God curseth them, #De 29:19,20. God's mercy goes often times in Scripture bounded by his truth: and as the same fire hath burning heat and cheerful light, so hath God plagues for the obstinate and mercy for the penitent. Surely as he is *Pater miserationum*, the Father of mercies: so he is *Deus ultionum*, the God of vengeance: as he hath *ubera*, blessings, so he hath *verbera*, whip, treasures of punishments for those, especially that kick at his bowels, that despise his longsufferance, that argue from love to liberty, which is the devil's logic. *Cavete a Melampygo*.

**But I will utterly take them away]** *Tollendo tollam*, so Calvin renders it: and further tells us that some render it *comburam*, I will burn them; and indeed war is fitly compared to fire, that cruel element, and to extreme famine, #Isa 9:19,20. The Vulgate Latin translatheth it *obliviscendo obliviscar*, I will utterly forget them, and

that is punishment enough: as when one carried himself insolently toward the state of Rome, a grave senator gave this counsel, Let us forget him, and he will soon remember himself. Woe be to those to whom Christ shall say, "Verily, I know you not," I have utterly forgotten you. Mercer rendereth it, *Levabo, id est, proieciam*, I will lift them up, that I may throw them down again with the greater poise. The LXX hath, "I will set myself against them in battle array." Now "the Lord is a man of war," #Ex 15:3; yea, he is the Lord and Victor of wars, as the Chaldee there paraphraseth. But what meant the Chaldee here to render this text by *parcendo parcam eis*, sparing, I will spare them: is not this point blank against Loruhamah? How much better Tremellius, *ut ullo pacto condonem istis*, that I should any way forgive them. Have I not pardoned them enough already? may I not well by this time be weary of repenting? I will even break off my patience, and forbear to punish no longer: "I have long time holden my peace, I have been still and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman" (who bites in her pain as long as she is able), "I will destroy and devour at once: I will, I will," #Isa 42:14 The ten tribes never returned out of captivity, unless it were some few of them that came up with the other two tribes out of Babylon, #Ezr 2:1, by the appointment of Cyrus, and some others that fled home when Nineveh (where they were held captive) was destroyed; but for the generality of them, whether they abide in China or Tartary, or West Indies, I cannot tell you. Pareus rendereth it, *nam tolerando toleravi eos*, for I have a long while borne with their evil manners. And surely *subito tollitur, qui diu toleratur*, as an ancient saith, God's patience will not always hold.

{a} Hom. II: sic Virg. *Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges.*

Ver. 7. **But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah]** The ark and the mercy seat were never separated. Judah had not utterly cast off God, as Israel had; but worshipped God in the temple (how corruptly soever), therefore they shall have mercy, because they kept the right way of worship. See the Church's plea for mercy to this purpose, #Jer 14:9. Again, Judah was now in a very great strait, having been lately beaten and plundered by Israel, #2Ki 14:12, therefore they shall have mercy. God heard Hagar's affliction and relieved her. "I have seen, I have seen the sufferings of my people in

Egypt, saith God, and am come to ease them," #Ex 3:7. "Because they have called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man looketh after, therefore I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord," #Jer 30:17. He will repent for his people when he seeth their power is gone, #De 32:36, when there is *dignus vindice nodus*, an extremity fit for Divine power to interpose. He knows that mercy is never so seasonable and sweet as when misery weighs down, and nothing but mercy turns the scale; therefore Judah shall have mercy, when Israel shall have none. True it is, that Judah was not at this time much better than Israel, Aholibah than Aholah: they were scarce free from sodomy and many such like foul abominations. But what of that? if God come with a *non obstante*, as #Ps 106:8, "Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake," &c., who shall gainstand him? if he will show mercy for his name's sake, what people is there so wicked whom he may not save? See #Isa 57:17 Eze 20:8,14,22,44. Add hereunto that Israel and Syria were confederate against Judah, and thought to have made but a breakfast of them, #Isa 7:5; but God here promiseth Judah mercy; and lets them know, to their comfort, that there is more mercy for them in heaven than there can be misery in earth or malice in hell against them. True it is, that even after this gracious promise made to Judah, it went very hard with them. See #2Ch 28:6, there 120,000 of them were slain in one battle, and 200,000 of them carried captive: yea, and all this by these Israelites here rejected from that mercy that Judah is promised; besides abundance more misery that befell them by Edomites, #2Ch 28:17, Philistines, #2Ch 28:18, Assyrians, #2Ch 28:20 &c. *Ecclesia haeres Crucis*, saith Luther, The Church, as she is heir of the promises, so is she of the cross: and the promises are always to be understood with condition of the cross. The palsy man in the Gospel, healed by our Saviour, heard, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," and yet he was not presently freed of his disease, till, after a dispute held with the Pharisees (which must needs take up some time) and the case cleared, Jesus said, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," and so show thyself a sound man. But to go on: Judah shall be saved, and not Israel, that envied Judah and maliciously sought their ruin. David looketh upon it as a sweet mercy, that God had spread him a table in the presence, and maugre the malice, of his enemies, #Ps 23:4. And the children of the kingdom (so the Jews are called) shall gnash their

teeth, and be even ready to eat their nails at the reception of the Gentiles, **#Mt 8:11**. This was that which put the men of Nazareth into an anger, and our Saviour into a danger, **#Lu 4:25,29**.

**By the Lord their God]** That is, by the Lord Christ, by Messiah their Prince, by the word of the Lord their God, saith the Chaldee here, that Word essential, **#Joh 1:1**, that true Zaphnath Paaneah (that is, Saviour of the world, as Jerome interprets it), whereof Joseph was but a type. This horn of salvation, or mighty Saviour (able to save them to the uttermost, εἰς τὸ παντελες, that come unto God by him, **#Heb 7:25**), God raised up for these unworthy Jews, and even thrust him upon them, whether they would or no, **#Isa 7:13,14**, that all might appear to be of free grace. Well might God say, "I will have mercy upon the house of Judah": matchless mercy indeed! mercy that rejoiced against judgment. Man's perverseness breaketh not off the course of God's goodness; Judah shall be saved by the Lord their God, who is *Alius* from his Father, but not *Aliud*, a distinct person, not a distinct thing. This angel of God's presence saved them, in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, &c., **#Isa 63:9**, even the angel that had redeemed their father Jacob from all evil, **#Ge 48:16**; and that, soon after this prophecy, destroyed so many thousands in Sennacherib's army, "Not by bow nor by battle," &c., but by his own bare hand immediately and miraculously, **#2Ki 19:35**; where we may see that when Sennacherib (after the example of his father Salmaneser, who had captivated the ten tribes) came up against Judah, having already devoured Jerusalem in his hopes, and thinking to cut them off at a blow, as if they had all had but one neck, they were saved by Jehovah their God: the virgin daughter of Zion knew well the worth and valour of Christ her champion, and that made her so confident, **#Isa 37:22**. She knew whom she had trusted, not with her outward condition only, but with her inward and everlasting, with her precious soul, saying with David, "I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts," **#Ps 119:94**. "I will not trust in my bow, neither shall mine arm save me: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, for thou hast a favour unto me," **#Ps 44:3,5**. {See Trapp on "Zec 4:6"} {See Trapp on "Zec 14:3"} {See Trapp on "Zec 14:5"} That is an excellent passage, **#Ps 21:13**, "Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power."

Ver. 8. **Now when she had weaned Loruhamah]** That is, after that the patience of God had waited and long looked for their conversion; but all in vain, he resolved upon their utter rejection. And first he sent for his love tokens back again: he weans them and takes them off from those "breasts of consolation," **#Isa 66:11**, the holy ordinances, deprived them of those dugs (better than wine, **#So 1:4**) that they had despised, carried them far away from that good land that abounded with milk and honey: the men of the East should be sent in upon them "to eat their fruit and drink their milk," **#Eze 25:4**. "This nation" (saith a divine) "is sick with a spiritual pleurisy: we begin to surfeit on the bread of life, the unadulterated milk of God's word, and to spill it. Now when God seeth his mercies lying under the table, it is just with him to call to the enemy to take away." Say not here, with those in the Gospel threatened with this judgment, "God forbid," **#Lu 20:16**. Think it not a thing impossible that England should be thus visited. The sea is not so calm in summer, but it may be troubled with a storm: the mountain so firm, but may be moved with an earthquake. We have seen as fair suns as ours fall from the midst of heaven, for our instance, *Lege historiam, ne fias historia*. Read history lest you become history! Surely, except we repent and reform a little better than we have done yet, a removal of our candlestick, a total eclipse of our sun, may be as certainly foreseen and foretold, as if visions and letters were sent us from heaven, as once to the seven Churches of Asia, who sinned away their light, &c.

**And bare a son]** Not a daughter, as before, but a son, because under Hosea, the last king of Israel, that kingdom began a little to lift up the head, and to stand it out against the Assyrian. But this was but *extremus nisus regni*, the last sprunting of that dying state. For soon after, Samaria, the chief city, was closely besieged: and although it held out three whole years, with a masculine resolution, yet at length it was sacked, and all the people of the land carried captive, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, &c., as it is said of their confederates the Egyptians, **#Isa 20:4**, and as it shall be done at length to that purple whore of Rome, who shall be stripped naked, broiled, and eaten, **#Re 17:16**. A cold sweat stands already upon her limbs: and, for a presage of her future ruin, it is observed that Rome, since it became Papal, was never besieged



by any but it was taken. As for their late masculine attempts and achievements (if any), it is but as here in the kingdom of Israel, a lightning before death, as the blaze of a candle a little before it goes out, the bulging of a wall that is ready to come down, or as it was said of Carthage a little before it was taken, *Morientium bestiarum violentiores esse morsus*, dying beasts bite cruelly.

Ver. 9. **Call his name Loammi]** *Nomen extremum et deploratum*, saith Pareus, the last and most lamentable name of all, containing a most heavy, but spiritual, and therefore less sensible, punishment, viz. an utter abjection and abdication from the covenant, from grace, from God, from life eternal.

**For ye are not my people]** But, being totally cashiered, and dis-covenanted; "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel, saith the Lord? Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" **#Am 9:7:** *q.d.* True it is, I have brought you up out of Egypt (and therein you greatly glory), but have I not done as much as all this for those profane nations here mentioned? with and among whom, hence forward I shall reckon you, for you are no people of mine, but discarded, and dispeopled. Till the covenant made with Abraham, all nations were suffered to walk in their own ways, **#Ac 14:16**, as fishes pass at liberty through the paths of the seas, **#Ps 8:8**. One person was no more respected than another. But as soon as it was said, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee, the Church became as fish cast into a pond for peculiar use, and was divided from other nations no otherwise than light was from darkness in the first creation, or than Goshen was from Egypt in that wonderful separation. But here God seems to rescind his own act, to cast off the people of his purchase, and utterly to disown them; as once before he also did, when he fathered them upon Moses, saying, "Thy people, which thou hast brought out of Egypt," &c., **#Ex 32:7**. But this (we must know) is no other than *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus, facti non consilii*, not a change of God's will, but only of his works. "For hath God indeed cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people, whom he foreknew," **#Ro 11:1,2**. "Thus saith the Lord God, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they

have done, saith the Lord," **#Jer 31:37**. And albeit (by an angry aposiopesis) he says here, "I will not be your God" (the word "God" is not in the original, *ab irate omittitur*; it is omitted from anger, saith Mercer), yet to show that he is Baal Chemah, One that can rule his wrath, as **#Na 1:2**, he subjoineth here, **#Ho 1:10**,

Ver. 10. **Yet the number of the children of Israel]** *i.e.* of the Israel of God, those Jews inwardly, the circumcision indeed, which "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, putting no confidence in the flesh," **#Php 3:3**, but saying each for himself, as the good Father Bernard did, *Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut sim meus*; All my care is "to be found in Christ" (*sc.* when sought for by the justice of God), "not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith," **#Php 3:9**. Lo, to such Israelites indeed, and of such, it is here promised (the Lord in judgment remembering mercy) that they shall be "the sand of the sea which cannot be measured nor numbered." This was first promised to Abraham; and afterwards confirmed with an oath, **#Ge 22:16**. It began to be fulfilled, when, by the preaching of the apostles, so many of both Jews and Gentiles came in and were converted to the faith of the true Messiah, as St Paul expoundeth this text, **#Ro 9:24,25**, and he had "the mind of Christ." It shall have its full accomplishment when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved, **#Ro 11:26**. Then the Church shall be as the stone that smote the image, it shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. Though the beginning of it be small, yet the latter end of it shall greatly increase, **#Job 8:7**, for all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Christ: "he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," **#Ps 72:8,11,17**. Great is the paucity of God's people for present: but let us, by the help of this promise, get above that stumbling block. Cosmographers tell us that if we divide all the known world into thirty parts, the heathens' part is as nineteen of this thirty; the Mahometans as six, the Christians as five only: and of those five more than the one-half is held by idolatrous Papists. But let not this discourage us; it will be otherwise one day, for the "Scripture cannot be broken." And although God may seem utterly to have abandoned his ancient people the Jews (the ten tribes especially), yet they, as well as the rest, shall be vouchsafed this honour to be called to the participation

of Christ, **#Eze 37:16,19 Jer 3:12,13 Isa 11:12,13 Ob 20 Zec 10:6 Ro 11:26**. If God after so dreadful a threatening come in with his *non obstante* (as he doth likewise, **#Ps 106:8**, and elsewhere) and say, Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be, &c., who shall gainsay him? Their interpretation is too narrow that understand this text of the increase of this people in all their dispersions, until the time of their conversion. And that of Rabbi Ezra is pretty, though not proper; that as the sand keeps the waves of the sea from breaking in and drowning the world, so doth Israel preserve mankind from perishing by the waves of God's wrath. It should have been considered by him and the rest of those refractory Rabbis, that at that general conversion of the Jews (here plainly foretold) there shall be some stubborn spirits that will not even then stoop to Christ; but will be filled with envy, as those cankered Pharisees their forefathers were {#Ac 13:44,45} to see almost the whole city come together to hear Christ; yea, they will be ready to say, as **#Joh 12:19**, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the whole world follows him." Now against these spiritual spirits, the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven, **#Re 21:8 Da 12:2 Isa 65:11-17**.

**And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them]** As if God did now even repent, and would make them a full amends: make them glad according to the time, and in that very place when and where they had seen evil, **#Ps 90:15**. Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in Jerusalem, **#Zec 12:6**. The Jews (it is thought) shall dwell in their own country, **#Jer 3:18 23:8 Eze 37:11,12 Am 9:14,15**; and God have a very glorious Church in the land of Canaan. But that is not all; the Gentiles, who shall be made a spiritual Israel, though in time past they were not a people, yet now are they the people of God; and which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy, **#1Pe 2:10**, yea, such a signal mercy as St John cannot look on without an *Ecce admirantis*; "Behold," saith he, "what manner of love" (*qualem et quantum*, as **#2Pe 3:11**) "the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," **#1Jo 3:1**. Yes, the sons of *the living God* who as he lives, so he gives us all things richly to enjoy; and is therefore to be trusted, **#1Ti 6:17**. And that we should not only be God's people, but his sons (reconciled, but adopted), and not only be so, but be called so, have the name and the note, the credit and the comfort. Well might

the apostle say, that the grace of God herein had abounded even to an overflow, *υπερεπλεονασε*, #1Ti 1:14. Well may Oecolampadius say as he doth upon this very text, *Vide ut maior gratia quam peccatum*, See that greater grace than sin. Behold, how as sin abounded, grace superabounded. Well might Leo say, *Omnia dona excedit hoc donum, &c.*, This is a gift of God, that exceedeth all gifts, that man should call God Father, and God call a man his son; this is a greater dignity than to be called an angel, archangel, cherubim, seraphim, &c. See more of this in my "Righteous Man's Recompense," Part 2, doct. 5. Calvin upon this verse noteth, that there is an emphasis in these words, "It was said," and "It shall be said"; the latter showeth that till the Lord speak peace to his people, and say to their souls that he is their salvation, they cannot have the comfortable assurance of their adoption and acceptation into his favour: #Eph 1:13, "After that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; ye believed and were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Again, if God by his prophets had said to any, "Ye are not my people," &c., he will effect it. God heweth men by his prophets, and slayeth them by the words of his mouth, #Ho 6:5. Elisha hath his sword, as well as Jehu and Hazael, #1Ki 19:17. Ezekiel besiegeth Jerusalem, and overthroweth it. Jeremiah is "set over nations and kingdoms to root out and pull down," &c., #Jer 1:10. St Paul hath "vengeance ready for the disobedient," #2Co 10:6. And what God's ministers do on earth he ratifies in heaven, #Mt 16:19 18:18.

Ver. 11. **Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together]** *i.e.* they shall unite into one body, and one religion, and shall all make one entire kingdom, #Eze 37:22,24. Christ once lifted up, shall draw all things to himself, #Joh 12:32: and wherever this carcass is, there will the spiritual eagles be also, #Mt 24:28. Caiaphas, like another Balaam, prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation: and not for that nation only, but that also he "should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad," #Joh 11:51,52. This is the gathering together here mentioned: Christ shall be one among his people, and his name one, #Zec 14:9. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:9"} They shall serve the Lord with one shoulder, #Zep 3:9. It seems to be a metaphor taken from oxen that are yoked together, and that set their shoulders jointly to the work. Surely, the more the gospel prevaileth, the more peace there will be.

They shall be gathered together in that day. So when Christ shall be preached, and obedience yielded to his government, #Isa 9:7, then shall there be a blessed harmony of hearts: then shall they fly in flocks to the ordinances, as the doves to their windows: then shall they come to the Lord's house upon "horses, and in chariots, and in litters," #Isa 66:20.

**And appoint themselves one head]** The Lord Christ, called David their King, #Ho 3:5. A multitude gathered under this one head, and united to him, is a Church. This head is indeed appointed, and set up over the Church by God, #Ps 2:6 Eph 1:22. But the saints are said to appoint Christ their head, and, indeed, to set the crown upon his head, as #So 3:11, when they choose him and embrace him for their sovereign, when with highest estimations, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours of unfeigned obedience, they set him up in their hearts, and serve him in their lives; giving him the preeminence, and holding all *in capite* in Christ: yea, holding of the head, as the apostle's expression is, #Col 2:19, not of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. That popish buzzard was utterly out, who said that he had found in the dictionaries that Cephas signifieth a head, and that therefore Peter was head of the Church. For neither does Cephas signify a head, but a stone or rock; nor, if it did, would that prove what he allegeth it for. Judah and Israel shall appoint to themselves one head, not more than one. The Church is not *bellua multorum capitum*: neither is there any need of a ministerial head of the Church: indeed, there is a contradiction in the very mention of it (as one well observeth), -a ministerial head! it is absurd to speak it.

**And they shall come up out of the land]** *i.e.* they shall be gathered into the heavenly Jerusalem, saith Oecolampadius; they shall come up from their miserable life, saith Luther: from their earthly affections, saith Jerome. Rather, from Chaldea, or wherever they lie captivated and dispersed, to Jerusalem; there to join in the same way of worship (as once the 12 tribes did before the schism under Jeroboam) with the Christian Church, and so go on the way to the kingdom of heaven.

**For great is the day of Jezreel]** *i.e.* of Christ (saith Jerome), who is God's seed, and shall see his seed, and so prolong his days by a

succession of saints, **#Isa 53:10**, for whom God also will do great things in that day of his power, **#Ps 100:3**, when there shall be a marvellous increase of his Church, which he shall sow with the seed of men and of beasts, revealing his arm (another etymology of the word Jezreel) for the ingathering of his elect, **#Jer 31:37 Eze 36:38**. *Sic, Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus.*

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Say unto your brethren, Ammi]** Besides the public preaching of this gracious promise, **#Ho 1:10**, "There it shall be said unto them," &c., charge is here given that this be the subject of their more private discourse also: and that they that fear the Lord speak often one to another, We that were not a people, are now a people: we that had not obtained mercy, have now obtained mercy. *Iubet per prophetam ne haec vox in ecclesia taceatur* (Mercer). God commands by the prophet that these sweet words, Ammi, Ruhamah, be tossed and spoken of at every friendly meeting; I will not leave you fatherless: in me the fatherless findeth mercy: I will never leave thee, I will not, not, not forsake thee (ουδε, ου μη, **#Heb 13:5**): so many "nots" there are in the original for more assurance. God would have such precious passages as these to be rehearsed (even in the "places of drawing water," **#Jud 5:11**, where the maids met to fetch water, or do other ordinary chars) for mutual encouragement, and for the praise of his name. Oh, the matchless mercy of our God! Oh, the never enough adored depth of his free grace! who would not fear thee, O King of nations! **#Jer 10:7**; who would not be telling of thy goodness in the morning, and of thy faithfulness every night? Read that triumphant **#Ps 114**, and be you ever chanting out (as they of old at their daily employments), *aliquid Davidicum*; so building up one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Think but on these two words in the text, and you cannot want matter. Is it nothing to be in covenant with God, and to be under mercy? Oh, blessed are the people "that have the Lord for their God," saith David, **#Ps 144:15**. "But I obtained mercy," saith Paul, **#1Ti 1:16**, and that was his μεγαλαυχημα, his confident boasting, wherever he came, being a constant preacher of God's free grace: (as was likewise Augustine, which makes him hardly censured by the Semipelagian Papists and Arminians as an enemy to nature, because so high a friend to grace). Neither is he forgetful to tell his

Ephesians and others to whom he writeth, that they were once dead in sins and trespasses, but now "quickened together with Christ," &c. They were foreigners, but now fellow citizens with saints: they were darkness, but now light in the the Lord, and should therefore "walk as children of light," #Eph 5:8, and talk of his praises, who had drawn them out of dreadful darkness into marvellous light. Come, saith David, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul, #Ps 66:16. The Lord hath done great things for us, saith the Church, whereat we are glad, #Ps 126:3. He which is mighty hath done to me great things: and holy is his name, saith the blessed Virgin, #Lu 1:49. Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi, and to your sisters, Ruhamah. Say it, say it, to brethren and to sisters, upon every opportunity, and with the utmost importunity, that it may take impression upon their spirits, and not be as a seal set upon the water, nor as rain falling upon a rock that leaves no sign behind it. The Grecians being delivered out of servitude by Flaminius, the Roman general, rang out Soter, Soter, that is, Saviour, Saviour, with such a courage, that the very birds of the air, astonished thereat, fell to the earth. The people of Israel gave such a loud shout at the return of the ark, that the earth rang again. A drowning man, being pulled out of the water by Alphonsus, king of Aragon, and rescued from so great a death, cried out (as soon as he came again to himself) by way of thankfulness, Aragon, Aragon. Let us cry as loud Ammi, Ruhamah, hitherto God hath helped us, #1Sa 7:12, who were lately (with those Israelites in the wilderness) talking of our graves. Say therefore with the Psalmist, "Because thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living," &c., #Ps 116:8.

Ver. 2. **Plead with your mother, plead]** Here of right begins the second chapter (the former verse being not so fitly separated from the former chapter), and it is nothing else but a commentary upon the first, as Pareus well noteth. For the prophet here proceedeth in accusing the people of disloyalty and ingratitude: whereupon he denounceth a divorce and punishment: and then foretelleth their repentance and return into favour with God under the kingdom of the Messiah. Now the end wherefore both the accusation and the promise is here reiterated, is not so much to confirm what had been before affirmed, as to set forth the means whereby this cast off people was to be at length added unto the Church: viz. partly by

external means (as sharp sermons and sore afflictions), and partly by the internal grace of the Spirit of God, and good affiance of his love sealed up to them, by various spiritual and temporal favours conferred upon them; as so many love tokens. Come we now to the words of this verse; where Oecolampadius begins the chapter: *Plead with our mother, plead* It is *verbum forense*, saith Mercer; an expression borrowed from pleaders at the bar: *q.d.* Be in good earnest with her, rebuke her roundly and openly, according to the nature of her offence: that she may be sound in the faith, and ashamed of her perfidiousness. What though she be your mother, and in that respect to be honoured by you, yet she is a perverse rebellious woman, as Saul once said of his son Jonathan's mother, **#1Sa 20:30** (how truly I inquire not: malice little regards truth, so it may gall or kill), and therefore to be barely and boldly told her own. Besides, we cannot better show our respect to parents than by seeking their souls' health, and by dealing fairly but freely with them therein. Not as Walter Mapes (sometime Archdeacon of Oxford) did by his mother Church of Rome: for relating the gross simony <sup>{a}</sup> of the Pope in confirming the election of Reginald, bastard son of Jocelin, Bishop of Sarum, into the see of Bath, he thus concludes his narration, *Sit tamen Domina materque nostra Roma baculus in aqua fractus: et absit credere quae vidimus:* yet let our lady and mother Rome be as a stick put into the water, which seems to be broken, but is not so: and far be it from us to believe our own eyes against her. Was this charity? or stupidity rather? Charity may be ingenuous, but not servile and blockish. It is not love, but hatred (if Moses may judge), to suffer sin in a dearest friend to pass uncontrolled, **#Le 19:17**. Good Asa deposed his own mother for her idolatry: and our Edward VI would not be drawn by any persuasion of friends or fear of enemies, to indulge his sister, the Lady Mary, to have mass said in her house. The truth is, those Ammis and Ruhamahs that have found mercy from God, they have their hearts so fired up thereby with a holy zeal for him, that they cannot endure to see him dishonoured, but must appear and plead for him against any in the world. Again, as any one is more assured of his own salvation by Christ, the more he thirsteth after the salvation of others; as we see evidently in St Paul, that vessel of mercy. I am persuaded, saith he, or I am sure, that neither life nor death, &c., shall ever separate me from God's love in Christ. And what follows



in the very next words, but this, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also hearing me witness in the Holy Ghost; that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites," &c., **#Ro 8:38,39 9:1-4**. And how effectually and convincingly he pleadeth with them to draw them to Christ and hold them close to him, that golden Epistle to the Hebrews will well witness to the world's end.

**For she is not my wife]** For I have put her away by a bill of divorcement, **#Isa 50:1**, with a *Habe tibi quae tua sunt* (which was the form of divorce among the Romans), Take thine own things and be gone. Now, the Jewish synagogue had nothing she could properly call her own, but sin and misery: when God first took her, she had not a rag to her back, **#Eze 16:10**, nor any kind of comeliness, but what he was pleased to put upon her, **#Eze 16:14**. But she (foolish woman and unwise, **#De 32:6**), trusting in her borrowed beauty, played the harlot, and poured out her fornication on every one that passed by: his it was, **#Eze 16:15**. The synagogue of Rome is such another *meretrix meretricissima quae gremium claudit nemini*, as her own sons say of her, by way of commendation. St John calleth her the whore, the great whore, **#Re 17:1,15**; and further telleth us that she sitteth upon her paramours in a base manner, in an unseemly sort, she sitteth upon their very consciences, and keeps them under by force: whereas Stephen, king of Poland (one of her sons, but not altogether so obsequiuous), was wont to say, that God had required three things to himself, *sc. ex nihilo aliquid facere, scire futura, et dominari velle conscientiiis*, that is, to make something of nothing, to know things to come, and to bear rule over men's consciences. How she forceth men to commit folly with her by the cruel Inquisition; and bow she hireth others for preferments (Luther was offered a cardinalship; Bessarion of Nice was won over to her by such an offer; Thomas Saranzius was of a poor shoemaker's son made bishop, cardinal, and pope, all in one year, and called Nicolas V; the like might be said of Aeneas Sylvius, Canon of Trent, afterwards Pope Pius II), and for a price too, is notoriously known to the Christian world. *Stratagem nunc est Pontificium ditare multos ut pii esse desinant*, saith a good author. It is one of the pope's stratagems to enrich men that he may oblige them to himself, and bring them

into his own vassalage (John Baptist. Gelli. Dialog. 5). In various towns of Germany (as at Augsburg, &c.) there was a known allowance by the year for such Lutherans as would become Papists. Thus this whore of Rome imitateth her in the text: of whom it is elsewhere complained, **#Eze 16:33**, "They give gifts to all whores" (and so buy repentance at too dear a rate, *Nolo tanti paenitentiam emere*, Dem.), but "thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest them that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom: yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldst not be satisfied," **#Eze 16:28**. It was but time therefore that God should cast her off as now no wife of his, but an adulteress of the devil, as she showed herself notably in the Trent Conventicle: where with a whore's forehead that refused to be ashamed, **#Jer 3:3**, she not only established by a law their abominable idolatry, but also set forth that heathenish decree, whereby she equaleth (at least) the Apocrypha to the holy Canon, the vulgar puddle to the Hebrew and Greek fountains, unwritten verities and traditions to the sacred Scriptures: and further addeth, that the Holy Ghost himself is not to be hearkened unto speak he never so plainly and expressly, *nisi accedat meretricis purpuratae effrons interpretatio*, unless she may have the interpreting of his meaning according to her way. O monstrous impudence, deserving a divorce! True it is that God hateth putting away, **#Mal 2:16 Isa 50:1**; he tells these Jews that he had not given their mother a bill of divorcement, *ut solent morosi et crudeles mariti*, as cruel and froward husbands used to do for every light offence. But what he had done this way, he was merely compelled to it; as not able to wink any longer at their flagitious practices. Hear his own words, "Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities you sold yourselves; and for your transgressions is your mother put away." And yet not so far put away either, but that if she repent, she may be received again: and that is no small mercy. See **#Jer 3:1**, "They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord." Lo, God is above law; and his mercy is matchless: he will do for his people what none else in like case would ever he drawn to do: **#Mic 7:18**,

"Who is a God like unto thee?" saith the prophet, by way of admiration. David never came near his concubines more after Absalom had gone in to them; and Ahithophel judged that act would be such an injury, as David would never put up with, and therefore gave that pernicious counsel. But God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts, neither are our ways his ways, of mercy, and multiplied pardons. But "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts," #Isa 55:8,9. We are not to measure things according to our own model; and to have as low thoughts of God and his goodness as those miscreants once had of his power when they demanded, "Can God prepare a table for us in the wilderness? Can he give us water out of the rock?" Surely a finite creature cannot believe the infinite attributes of God thoroughly, without supernatural grace: which therefore must be implored, and every one of us excited not to cast away our confidence which hath so great recompense, so great encouragement: but to say to our mother, and each to other, "Put away your whoredoms," &c., "Cast away all your transgressions," #Eze 18:31. "Ye have done all this wickedness" (saith Samuel to the revolted people of his time), but what of that? "yet turn not aside from following the Lord": for that were to add rebellion to sin, as Herod to all his other hateful practices added that of beheading the Baptist. Do not therefore turn aside from following the Lord, but go home again to him, and he will speak peace. "For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: since it hath pleased the Lord once to make you his people," #1Sa 12:20-22. He chose you for his love: and now loves you for his choice; yea, he cries after you, as once, "Return, you blacksliding children, and I will heal your backsliding." Oh that you would reciprocate and say, "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God," #Jer 3:22.

**Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight]** Not out of my sight (as a Lapidè readeth it, neither according to the original, nor yet his own Vulgate translation), but "out of her sight," or from her face, <sup>{b}</sup> and her adulteries from between her breasts. *Sed quid hoc sibi vult?* saith Calvin here. But what may be the meaning of this? It surely seemeth harsh to say that women play the whores, either with their faces or with their breasts: and yet it is not unknown to the learned what Archesilaus the philosopher said to a

young wanton, that cast lustful looks and lascivious glances upon others: *Nihil interest quibus membris cinaedi sitis, posterioribus an prioribus*: You may be naughty packs more ways than one. And Plutarch tells of a certain orator, that said of an impudent fellow: *Quod in oculis haberet non κορας sed πορνας*, that he had in his eyes not pupils, but punks. {c} And St Peter saith of the heretical sects of his time, that they had eyes full of the adulteress (so runs the original, μεστους μοιχαλιδος), and that could not cease to sin, **#2Pe 2:14**. It is evident enough (saith Calvin) that the prophet in this text alludeth to the manner of harlots painting their faces, decking or laying out their breasts to allure lovers. Filthy dressing and naked breasts (saith another divine), this is whoredom between the breasts. A third calleth naked breasts and wrists, abhorred filth. Jerome saith, If a man or woman adorn or carry themselves so as to provoke others to lust after them, though no evil follow upon it, yet the parties shall suffer eternal damnation; because they offered poison to others, though none would drink it. In Scripture, women taxed for this were notorious wicked persons, and usually whores: as Tamar, Jezebel, those damsels, **#Isa 3:12,16,17** *Dives*, the rich man, **#Luke 16:19:31** *Lupa Romana*, the Roman wolf, **#Re 17:3**. Our Henry VI, when a mask of women were presented unto him, whereof some of them showed their naked breasts, he left the presence, crying, Fie, fie, ladies, in sooth ye are to blame, to bare those parts to the eyes of man that nature appointed modesty to conceal. Frederick the Emperor, seeing some country wenches, near Florence, in dancing to show their naked legs, Eamus, said he, *meretricum hic ludus est non virginum*, Let us go hence, for this is not maids' play, but whores' rather. That younker in the Proverbs was met by a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart, or trussed up about the breasts, with her upper parts naked, like a bedlam. So Levi Ben Gersom, she met him with her naked breasts, yea, with something else naked, {a} which modesty forbids to name, as some construe that text, **#Pr 7:10**. So she caught him and kissed him, **#Ho 2:13**, with strange impudence: and no question but having caught him, her lust grew more flagrant: as by unclean touches of the face and breasts men are more enkindled. Hence that of our Saviour in expounding the seventh commandment, **#Mt 5:30**, "If thy right hand offend thee," *sc.* by dalliance and wanton touches, "cut it off," &c. Hippocrates observeth that there are *venae et viae ab utero ad*

*mamillas*, veins and passages that go from the belly to the breasts; and that is the reason he gives of the temptation to lust that is in the breasts. "Keep thyself pure," saith St Paul to his son Timothy. And again, "The younger women exhort with purity," or chastity. It is not safe to pry into the beauty of young women. *Ut vidi ut perii, &c.* The eyes are those windows of wickedness and loop holes of lust. "Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight." And let not the strange woman "take thee with her eyelids," saith Solomon, **#Pr 6:25**. For prevention hereof, in Chrysostom's time, the women were separated from the men in the church by a wooden wall. And Tertullian saith to the Christian women, *Iudicabunt vos Arabiae feminae ethnicae, &c.*, The heathen women of Arabia shall judge you: for they do not only cover their faces but their heads too; and rather than they will have any part appear naked, they will let the light but into one eye. In Barbary, they say, it is death for any man to see one of the Xeriffe's concubines; and for them too, if when they see a man (though but through a casement) they do not suddenly screech out. Millions of people have died of the wound in the eye. Aholah and Aholibah, that is, Israel and Judah, no sooner saw the Assyrians (those desirable young men), though but portrayed upon the wall, but they doted upon those paramours, and received them into the bed of love, **#Eze 23:16,17**. *Et divaricavit tibias suas, #Eze 16:25*, and multiplied their whoredoms. The very sight of the altar at Damascus set Ahaz agog to have one of the same fashion, **#2Ki 16:10**. And Jeroboam, coming out of Egypt, where the ox was worshipped, brought home two calves with him; and set them up at Dan and Bethel. The Nicodemites and Familists hold it no sin to be present at idol service, and allege a text for it out of Apocryphal Baruch. But Mr Burroughes, a good interpreter, well observeth, that that which is intended specially here, in these words, "Let her put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries," &c., is, that they should not be content merely with change of their hearts, to say, Well, we will acknowledge the Lord to be the true God, and our hearts shall wholly trust in him; but for these external things, what great matter is in them? Oh no, they must abstain from all appearance of evil, from the badges of idolatry, &c. Thus he. Those badges or ensigns of idolatry they usually carried between their breasts (saith another author), to testify that the idol had their hearts; whereas Christ should have been there, **#So 1:13**,

who to show his dear love to his Church appeared to John, girt about the paps with a golden girdle, **#Re 1:13**. {See Trapp on "Re 1:13"} *COR sedes amoris*. The heart is the seat of the affections. Hence God calleth for it; "My son, give me thine heart": and the devil strives for it, **#Lu 22:3 Ac 5:3**. Once he strove about a dead man's body, **#Jude 9**, but his design therein was to have set up an idol for himself in the hearts of the living. His eldest son and successor, the pope, useth the same policy. It was a watch word in Gregory XIII's time, in Queen Elizabeth's days, My son, give me thy heart: dissemble, go to Church, be a Papist in heart, and then do what ye will: take the oath of allegiance, supremacy, anything that shall be put to you, I will absolve you. Do but carry a crucifix between your breasts (that is the place where they wear such idols), and kiss it when you have sworn (as Louis XI of France used to do), and it shall suffice. An oath upon the conscience of a popish idolater is like a collar upon a monkey's neck,—that he will slip on for his master's pleasure and slip off again for his own. Pascenius scoffs King James for the invention of the oath of allegiance. Equivocation the Jesuits have invented, or revived rather, *ad consolationem afflictorum Catholicorum*, for the comfort of afflicted Catholics, as Garnet and Blackwell profess. So impudent is idolatry, such frontless whoredoms appear in their very faces, they openly prostitute themselves; *Imo volunt extare signa foeditatis sum*, saith Calvin, here they hang out their filthy superstitions in the sight of the sun, as Sodom: they set them upon the cliff of the rock, as Jerusalem, **#Eze 24:7,8**, *ut similes sint publicis scortis*, like common whores that solicit lovers, and send to them, as she, **#Eze 23:2-21**. It was a sad complaint God made, **#Ho 7:1** of this prophecy, "When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, then it broke forth as the leprosy in their foreheads": their fornications were not only covert, but overt. Their whoredoms in the face were their worshipping the two golden calves and Baalim (saith Pareus); their "adulteries between their breasts" were their trust in idols, in the arm of flesh, in confederacies, &c., when they would seem nevertheless to trust in God alone: as now the Papists profess to do, and have therefore coined diverse nice distinctions of worship, per se, *et per accidens*, *proprie*, *et impropriae*, and a hundred the like evasions. But there is no hiding of their asses' ears by these subtillies. Dr Reynolds, in his Books *de Idolatria Romana*, hath (among others) proved them rank

idolaters. Weston writes, that his head ached in reading that book; but they all yield it unanswerable: and yet they "repent not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk," #Re 9:20. But, as those that make them are like unto them, so are all those that trust in them, stockish and stupid; given up to the efficacy of error, to believe a lie, yea, and that against common sense, #Isa 44:17, which is no small stumblingblock to both Jews and Mahometans.

{a} The act or practice of buying or selling ecclesiastical preferments, benefices, or emoluments; traffic in sacred things. ED

{b} So the Septuag. εκ προσωπου μου.

{c} Lib. περι δυσωπιας. Κορη *puellam et pupillam oculi significat.*

{d} תִּישׁ pro תָּת *quasi nudato pudendo.* And verse 18, *Nerveh dodim inebriabimur uberibus.*

Ver. 3. **Lest I strip her naked]** *Deus ideo minatur ut non puniat.* God therefore threateneth, that he may not proceed to punish. Here he doth not so much direct as threaten, as conditionally terrify, from the pernicious effect or sad issue of their adulteries, a full and final desolation, after an utter deprivation of God's gifts and graces, shadowed under a fourfold metaphor. 1. Of stripping her of all her borrowed beauty, those jewels, and that comeliness that he had put upon her. 2. Of reducing her to her first forlorn condition wherein he found her, #Eze 16:6, viz. in her blood, in her blood, in her blood, as it is there said and set out for greater emphasis. 3. Of laying her waste as a wilderness (by the incursions and hostilities of cruel enemies), or, as in the wilderness (so some read it, by understanding the particle in) that is, as in the wilderness of Arabia, where they were put to great straits when they came out of Egypt. The very first handful God gave them there was bitterness and thirst. It was by Marah that they came to Elim, &c. 4. Of afflicting and punishing her with the most miserable and insufferable kind of death; "I will slay her with thirst," which is worse than to be slain with hunger. All which is foretold, with some hope nevertheless of grace and forgiveness, if she return and seek the Lord; as by the word lest is secretly given to understand:

**Lest I strip her naked]** As a jealous husband snatcheth away with indignation the clothes and ornaments that he had bestowed upon his adulterous wife. The Lord threateneth the wanton women of Zion to make naked their secret parts, **#Isa 3:17**, so that their shame should be seen, **#Isa 47:3**, even all their nakedness, **#Eze 16:37**, to discover their skirts upon their face, as **#Na 3:5**. Thus the great whore of Babylon is threatened with nakedness, **#Re 17:16**. And this we see already performed upon her in part, as Mr Philpot barely told Chadsey in that vehement expression of his, "Before God, you are bare breeched in all your religion": he uttereth it somewhat more grossly. There was a base custom in Rome, that when any woman was taken in adultery, they compelled her (for a punishment) openly and beastly to play the harlot: ringing a bell while the deed was doing, that all the neighbours might be made aware. This the good Emperor Theodosius took away, and made better laws for the punishment of adultery. God, when he threateneth to strip the Jewish synagogue naked, meaneth (saith Mercer) that he will take away *ornamenta regai et sacerdotii*, those ornaments of the kingdom and of the priesthood, leave them, as **#2Ch 15:3**, without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law, *sine lege, sine rege, sine fide*, without law, a king and trust, as the Brazilians are said to be. "The children of Israel" (saith our prophet, **#Ho 3:4**, where he interprets this text) "shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim"; that is, without any form of civil government, and without any exercise of true (yea, or of false) religion. What a comfort was it to good David, in his banishment, and after the slaughter of the priests by Saul (even "fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod," **#1Sa 22:18**), that Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, came down to him to Keilah, with an ephod in his hand, and that thereby he could inquire of God what to do, as he did! **#1Sa 30:7**. And what a grief and misery to Saul, that God had forsaken him in those visible pledges of his favour, and would not be found of him! Hence he lay all open and naked to his enemies, who now might do what they would to him, and none to hinder them. This also was the case and condition of the people, when Aaron (by making the golden calf at their command) had made the people "naked unto their shame among their enemies," **#Ex 22:25**, that is destitute of God's powerful



protection, and deprived of their former privileges. A people, or a person, may sin away their happiness, and forfeit the favours they formerly enjoyed. A hypocrite may lose his gifts and common graces; as that idle and evil servant did his talent; his light may be put out in obscure darkness. See **#Eze 43:11,17**. {See Trapp on "Eze 43:11"}  
{See Trapp on "Eze 43:17"}

**And set her as in the day that she was born]** Not only *nudam tanquam ex matre*, Naked as ever she was born (the Albigenses in France, those old Protestants, were turned out stark naked, both men and women, at the taking of Caracasson, by command of the popish bishop: and so were thousands of good Christians by the bloody rebels in Ireland now of late), but as she was born of the Amorite and Hittite; her navel was not cut, her birth blot was not washed in water, nay, she was cast out into the open field, and no eye pitied her (as the princess did Moses, and as the shepherdess did Romulus and Remus). See all this and more, most elegantly set out, Ezek. xvi., together with what high honour and sumptuous ornaments God did put upon her, **#Ho 2:11,12**. What this people were in the day of their nativity, Joshua telleth them in part, **#Jos 24:2**: "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and served other gods." And I took your father Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, as a brand out of that fire, &c., and gave him Isaac. And I gave unto Isaac Jacob, who, together with his children, went down into Egypt, where they fell to the worshipping of idols, **#Eze 16:26**. And although they were there, held under miserable servitude, yet they continued exceeding wicked and abominable. The fire of their afflictions seemed to harden their hearts as much as the fire of the furnace did the bricks they made. Hence, as they hardened their hearts, God hardened his hand, and had hastened their destruction, had it not been that he had feared the wrath of the enemy: lest their "adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this," **#De 32:27**. The Psalmist was sensible of all this, and therefore saith, "Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt, they remembered not the multitudes of thy mercies, but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea. Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake," **#Ps 106:7,8**. And what was it else but the respect to his own great name and the

remembrance of his holy covenant that moved the Lord to premonish this perverse people of their present danger: and not to suffer his whole wrath to arise against them, and to rush in upon them without a *Ne forte*, "lest I set her as in the day," &c. "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God," #Am 4:12, with entreaties of peace, lest your house be left unto you desolate, #Lu 21:20; lest wrath seize upon you, and that without remedy.

**And make her as a wilderness]** After that I have brought her out of a wilderness, and set her in a land that floweth with milk and honey. God can quickly curse our blessings, and destroy us after that he hath done us good. See this excellency set forth, #Isa 5:5 Jer 17:5,6 Ps 107:34 Zec 7:14, {See Trapp on "Isa 5:5"} {See Trapp on "Jer 17:5"} {see Trapp on "Zec 7:14"} {see Trapp on "Jer 17:6"} {See Trapp on "Zec 7:14"} and take heed lest living in God's good land, but not by God's good laws, we forfeit all into his hands, and he take the forfeiture. For he had rather that wild beasts should devour the good of the land, yea, that satyrs and devils should dance there, than that wicked and stubborn sinners should enjoy it. If Philip of Spain could say he would rather have no subjects than Lutheran subjects; and if the council of Toulouse (out of a like blind zeal for propagating popery) did decree that the very house should be pulled down *in qua fuerit inventus haereticus*, wherein a heretic (as they then called God's true servants) was found; how much more shall the King of heaven, the righteous Judge, root out and pluck up a rabble of rebels that refused to be ruled by him! Idolatry is a land desolating sin, and brings in the devouring sword, #Jud 5:8 Ps 78:, 58,59,62 Jer 22:7-9. *Cavete ab idolis*, Beware of idols, #1Jo 5:21.

**And slay them with thirst]** *Surgit hic oratio, surgit afflictio*. To be slain with thirst is a grievous judgment. Lysimachus parted with his kingdom for a draught of water in a dry land; and made himself of a great king a miserable captive to the king of Getae. Darius, fleeing from his enemies, was glad to drink of a dirty puddle that had carrion lying in it; professing it was the sweetest draught that ever he drank in his life. *Dives* would have given all that ever he was worth for a drop of cold water. The members, enfeebled for want of due moisture, seek to the veins for relief, the veins to the liver, the

liver to the entrails, the entrails to the ventricle, the ventricle to the orifice. But these being not able to impart what they cannot receive, out he cries, "Father Abraham." But hospitable Abraham hath it not for him: fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, is now the portion of his cup: extreme thirst is a piece of hell's pains, and one of the greatest of earth's miseries. A dear servant of God in Queen Mary's days (kept and pined in prison) would fain have drunk his own water: but for want of nourishment could make none. Inward refreshings he had, even those divine consolations of the martyrs: he drank of the river of God's pleasures, **#Ps 36:8**, which cast him into a sweet sleep: at which time one clad all in white seemed to stand before him and to say, Samuel, Samuel, be of good cheer, for after this day thou shalt never be hungry or thirsty more (for soon after this he was buried): and from that time till he should suffer, he felt neither hunger nor thirst (as himself declared), though he were kept by the cruel Bishop of Norwich with two or three morsels of bread every day, and three spoonfuls only of water. Mercer expounds this text of spiritual thirst, the same that was foretold by Amos, **#Am 8:11**, *Ideoque subdit*, **#Ho 2:4**, saith Oecolampadius, and therefore God addeth in the next verse, that he will not have mercy upon her children, but will kill them with death, hurl them to hell, as he threateneth to do Jezebel's children, **#Re 2:23**. Oh, when the poor soul shall be in a wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land, scorched and parched with the sense of sin and fear of wrath; when the terrors of God fall thick upon it, even the envenomed arrows of the Almighty; besides the buffetings of Satan, that hail-shot, hell-shot of fiery darts, **#Eph 6:16**, so called for the dolor and distemper they work (in allusion to the poisoned darts used in war by the Scythians and other nations, the venomous heat whereof is like a fire in the flesh), -when conscience, I say, shall by this means lie burning and boiling, what would it not give for a cup of consolation, yea, for any consolation in Christ as the apostle hath it, **#Php 2:1**, for any Beerlahairoi, to fill the bottle at, yea, for any Enhakkore, any cleft in a jaw bone to revive a thirsty Samson, that must else be slain with thirst, **#Ge 16:14 Jud 15:19**. David never so desired after the water of the well of Bethlehem, as he did after God in a dry and thirsty land, where no water was, **#Ps 63:1**. As the hunted hart (the hind, saith the Septuagint, ελαφος) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth or brayeth my soul after thee. "My soul thirsteth for God,"

&c. "Oh, when shall I come and appear before God? The tears have been my meat," &c., **#Ps 42:1-3**. Hunters say the hart sheds tears (or something like) when hotly pursued and cannot escape. He is a beast thirsty by nature, and whose thirst is much increased when he is hunted. The female especially, in whom the passions are stronger than in males. Christ, that Aijeleth Shachar, that is, the morning hart or stag, as he seemeth to be styled, **#Ps 22:1**, in the title, felt his soul heavy to the death in his bitter agony; and tasted so deep of that dreadful cup, that in a cold winter night he sweat great clots of blood, which, through clothes and all, fell down to the ground. And when this Lamb of God was even a roasting in the fire of his Father's wrath, he cried out, "I thirst." At which time men gave him cold comfort, even vinegar to drink: but God, his Father, most sweetly supported him: so that he might better say than David, "In the multitude of my perplexed thoughts within me, thy comforts have refreshed my soul." But what shall those poor creatures do that are strangers to the promises, and have no water of the well of life to relieve them, when God's wrath is as a fire in their bones, and falleth upon their flesh like molten lead or running bell metal. Then they that have sucked in sin as an ox sucks in water, shall suck the gall of asps and venom of vipers, and have none to pity them. Francis Spira felt this spiritual thirst.

Ver. 4. **And I will not have mercy upon her children]** Lo, here another "and" to those four before; and more dreadful than the rest. Like as that in **#Jer 16:13**, where "I will not show you favour," was worse to them than their captivity in a strange country. Say that God do cast off his people, yet if he say, "they shall be as if I had not cast them off, and will hear them," **#Zec 10:6**, the affliction is nothing so great as when he sends an evil, an only evil without mixture of mercy, as here, **#Eze 7:5**. Oh, this pure wrath, this judgment without mercy, must needs be very heavy: when it is once grown to hatred, there is little hope: **#Ho 9:15**, "All their wickedness is in Gilgal, for there I hated them." God is not of himself *μισανθρωπος*, a hater of mankind, but the contrary, *φιλανθρωπος*, **#Tit 3:4**. But such is the venomous nature of sin, and so contrary is it to God's both holy nature and just law, that he cannot but hate it in whomsoever he finds it: yet with thin difference, that he pities it rather in his saints, and hates it in his enemies: as we hate poison in a toad, but we pity it in a man; because in the one it is their nature, in the other their

disease. And as revenge is the next effect of hatred, wicked men may expect no better dealing from God than a man would afford to his stubborn enemy. Pharaoh had plague upon plague: neither did the Lord leave him till he had dashed the breath out of his body: so true is that of the Psalmist, "With the froward thou wilt wrestle," **#Ps 18:26**, and that of Solomon, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," **#Pr 14:14**. He hath made a match with mischief, he shall have his belly full of it. He would needs have his own way, and had it ("for I would have purged him, but he would not be purged"). Now I will have my way another while: "for thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee," **#Eze 24:13**. So our Saviour to those refractory Jews in the Gospel, "I would have gathered thee as the hen gathereth her chickens," I would, but thou wouldst not: therefore they shall "lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee." And I will not have mercy upon her children. Lo, God is so incensed by a general defection, that he will make havoc and destroy even the mother with the children (which was Jacob's great fear, **#Ge 32:11**), yea, he will dash the mother in pieces upon the children, as Shalman did at Betharbel, **#Ho 10:14**, he will put young and old into the same bag together, as fowlers deal by birds, which yet was forbidden by a law, **#De 22:6**; his eyes shall not spare children, as **#Isa 13:18**. And why?

**For they are the children of whoredoms** They are *mali ex malis*, the bad of the bad, as Jerome interprets it: they love and live in the adulteries of their mother: they take after her, as the birth usually followeth the belly, and as in a syllogism, the conclusion follows the weaker proposition. <sup>{a}</sup> Those Jews in the Gospel boldly boasted to our Saviour that they were not the children of fornication, for they had Abraham to their father, **#Joh 8:33**, nay, God to their Father, **#Joh 8:41**. But he as boldly telleth them, that they are a bastarding brood, yea, a serpentine seed; and that they were of their father the devil, **#Joh 8:44**. And in another place, as serpents, saith he, "ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" If mercy interpose not, as the cold grave must one day hold your bodies, so hot hell your souls. But I will have no mercy upon her children: for they are the children of fornications, *i.e.* they are not only misbegotten and illegitimate (which though no fault of theirs,

yet is their reproach, as hath been said in the notes on the former chapter), but they are children of fornications in an active sense too; they have learned of their mother to fornicate: they are as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever their fathers were, #Ac 7:51; they fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, that wrath may come upon them to the utmost. Children, as they derive from their parents a cursed birth blot, which comes by propagation; so they are very apt to fall into their vices by imitation: and then they sue both their own and their parent's iniquities.

{a} Κακου κορακος κακων ωων. *Qualis mater talis filia. Partus sequitur ventrem.*

Ver. 5. **For their mother hath played the harlot]** Being a "wife of whoredoms," #Ho 1:2 {See Trapp on "Ho 1:2"} therefore I will not have mercy upon her children, but will root out all her increase, #Job 31:12. Either she shall commit whoredom, and not increase, #Ho 4:10; or if she do, it is for mischief she shall bring forth children to the murderer: or at least she shall bequeath them a fearful legacy of sin and punishment, worse than that leprosy that Gehazi left to his posterity, or that Joab left to his, #2Sa 3:29: lameness and gonorrhoea, &c. It is a dangerous thing to keep up the succession of a sin in the world, and to propagate guilt from one generation to another: it is a great provocation. When the wickedness of such is ripe in the field (and they have filled up the measure of their fathers' sins), God will not let it shed to grow again: but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance. Let parents therefore break off their sins and get into God's favour; if for nothing else, yet for their poor children's sake: labouring to mend that by education which they have marred by propagation and evil example. And let children of wicked parents (as they tender their own eternal good) take God's counsel, #Eze 20:18,30: Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations? Oh, walk ye not after the statutes of your fathers: neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. True it is men are wondrous apt to dote upon their fathers' doings, and are hardly drawn off from their vain conversation received by tradition from their ancestors, #1Pe 1:18. *A bore maiori discit arare minor* (Ovid). Prescription is held authority sufficient. *Me ex ea opinione quam a maioribus accepi de cultu deorum nullius unquam movebit oratio*, saith Cicero, No man shall ever dissuade me from that way of divine

worship that my forefathers lived and died in. It is reported of a certain monarch of Morocco, that having read St Paul's Epistles, he liked them so well that he professed that were he then to choose his religion, he would, before any other, embrace Christianity. But every one ought, said he, to die in his own religion: and the leaving of the faith wherein he was born was the only thing that he disliked in that apostle. Thus he. *Sed toto erravit coelo*, Antiquity must have no more authority than what it can maintain. Ἐμοὶ ἀρχαία ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός, Mine antiquity (said Ignatius) is Christ Jesus, who said not to the young man, Do as thy forefathers, but Follow thou me.

**She that conceived them hath done shamefully]** She hath utterly shamed herself and all her friends, husband, children, all. The woman is, or should be, the glory of the man. Solomon's good housewife was she, **#Pr 31:28,29**. Her children rise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying, "Many daughters have done virtuously: but thou excellest them all." Alphonsus, king of Aragon, was once resolved never to commend his wife, lest he should be accounted immodest or uxorious: but afterwards he changed his mind, and was so taken with his wife's virtues and constancy, that he resolved to praise her *quocunque in trivio, cuique obvio, sine modo, et modestia*, in all places and companies. So did Budaeus, Pareus, and others. But a wicked wife (a harlot especially) puts her husband to the blush, and is a great heart-break, as Livia was to Augustus (Eudemus was both her physician and her stallion); his children also proved stark naught: which made him wish that either he had lived a bachelor, or died childless, <sup>{a}</sup> "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a shame to any people," **#Pr 14:34**. It is the snuff that dimmeth their candlestick, the leaven that soureth their passover, the reproach that rendereth them a proverb and a byword, an astonishment and a hissing, a taunt and a talk to other countries, **#De 28:37 Jer 25:9 Eze 5:15** Such was Israel's apostasy and idolatry, their subjecting religion to carnal policy in setting up the two calves and Baalim: when Ephraim spake "there was trembling, and then he exalted himself in Israel: but when he offended in Baal, he died," **#Ho 13:1**. While he kept close to God, who but Ephraim? None dared to quack, but all quaked at the name of Ephraim: he was on high, and much honoured. But when he declined to idolatry, he became

contemptible: and every paltry adversary cast dirt in his face, and crowed over him. So true is that of Solomon, "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools," #Pr 3:35 What a victorious prince was Henry IV of France, till he (for political respects) turned Papist! Till then he was *Bonus Orbi*: the good of the world, but after that *Orbus Boni*, bereft of good, as the wits of the time played upon his name Borbonius, by way of anagram. Once he was (before his revolt) persuaded by Du Plessy to do public penance for having abused the daughter of a certain gentleman in Rochelle, by whom he had a son (Life of Phil. de Mornay). Hereunto he was drawn with some difficulty, being ready to fight a battle: and this was no disgrace to him. But when, by compliance at least, he became an idolater for lucre of a crown and love of life, he became a vile person, as Antiochus is called, #Da 11:21, and was worthily lashed with rods by the pope, in the person of his ambassadors; and butchered by the instigation of those Jesuits whom he basely recalled into France, whence they had been banished, and admitted them into his bosom; making Father Cotton his *confessor et sic probrose se gessit, et rem confusione dignam admisit*, as here. He both shamed and undid himself.

**For she hath said, I will go after my lovers]** *Amasios meos*, My sweethearts, those that have drawn away my heart from my husband. But if that persecutor could say to the martyr, What a devil made thee to meddle with the Scriptures? how much better might it be said to the synagogue, and so to all apostates, What a devil meant you to go a whoring from such a husband who is *totus, totus desiderabilis*, altogether lovely, even the chief of ten thousand, #So 5:16, after dumb idols, and false prophets, who are their brokers (*proxenetae et proci*) and spokesmen? Athenaeus brings in Plato bewailing himself and his own condition, that he was taken so much with a filthy whore. Adultery is a filthiness in the abstract: so is also idolatry: and therefore idols are called by a word that signifieth the very excrements that come out of a man, *{gelulim, #Eze 22:8}* a term too good for those dung hill deities, those abominable idolatries, as St Peter expresseth it, #1Pe 4:3. Mention is made in histories of a certain heathen people that punish adultery with death: and with such a death as is suitable to the sin. For they thrust the adulterer's or adulteress's head into the paunch of a beast where lieth all the



filth and garbage of it, there to be suffocated to death. Sodom and Gomorrah had fire from heaven for their burning lust, and stinking brimstone for their stinking brutishness. They are also thrown out (as St Jude phraseth it) for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, *προκεινται*, **#Jude 7**. And in the like pickle are the beast and the false prophet (those arch-idolaters), for these both are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, **#Re 19:20**. And worthily, since they declared their sin as Sodom, they hid it not, **#Isa 3:9**. And as this housewife in the text, who said, "I will go after my lovers"; she did, of wickedness forethought, upon deliberation, *de industria, ex consilio*, wilfully and of purpose, impudently and without all shame of sin, say, "I will go after." This was shameless indeed: they should rather have gone after her, than she after them. Moses fitly compareth a whore to a salt bitch that is followed after by all the dogs in a town, **#De 23:18**. "Am I a dog's head?" said Abner to Ishbosheth, **#2Sa 3:8**, that is, Am I so given to lust and lasciviousness as dogs are that run after every salt bitch? But this harlot verified that saying in Ezekiel: The contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms: whereas none followed thee to commit whoredoms, thou followest them; and gloriest in thy so doing, as Lot's daughters did in their detestable incest, naming their children, Moab, that is, a birth by my father; and Benammi, that is, begotten by one of my near kindred. These all might have held their tongues with shame enough. But such kind of sinners are singularly impudent, **#Jer 3:3**, infatuated, **#Ho 4:11**, and past feeling, **#Eph 4:19**. And so are idolaters wickedly wilful, and irreclaimable for most part. See **#Jer 44:16,17 2:10 Isa 44:19,20**: "A seduced heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul; nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" How stiff are Papists to this day in defence of their image worship! how severe against such as deface or but disgrace them! Murder is not so heinous a sin.

**That give me my bread and my water, &c.]** What can be more like to the doings of the Papists than this? saith Danaeus. Who knows not what suit they make, and what thanks they return to their he-saints and she-saints, and how they sacrilegiously transfer the glory due to God alone, to the creature. The Lord rightly resolveth the genealogy of grain, wine, and oil into himself, **#Ho 2:22** of this chapter. And

the apostle tells us that it is he that "filleth men's hearts with food and gladness," #Ac 14:17.

——“ *Et cum charissima semper  
Munera sint Author quae preciosa facit.*”

*This should make us lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to God: well content if we may have offam et aquam, bread and water, and the gospel; and vowing with Jacob, #Ge 28:20, that if God will give us bread to eat and raiment to put on, then shall he be our God, and we will honour him with the best of our substance. As for other gods, whether pagan or papagan, say we as that heathen did, Contemno minutulos istos deos modo Iove mihi propitium habeam, I care not for these petty deities: I trust in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy: all things, I say, both ad esum, et ad usum, for back and belly (besides better things), which is all that carnal people care for. There be many (too many) that say (and can skill of no other language), Who will show us any good? #Ps 4:6; who will give us bread, water, wool, oil? &c.; they look no higher, know no heaven but plenty, hell but penury, God but their belly, whereunto they offer sacrifice, with Poliphemus, and care for no more, quam ut ventri bene sit ut lateri, than that their bellies may be filled, their backs fitted. Let them have but plenty of victuals, and the queen of heaven shall be their good lady, #Jer 44:17. Base spirits look only after low things: gain and credit carry them any way. They work for their penny a day; and are like little children, which will not say their prayers unless they may be promised their breakfast. Whereas a true worshipper of God soareth aloft, hath his feet, at least, where other men's heads are, trades for higher commodities, cannot be put off with mean matters. When great gifts were sent to Luther, he refused them with this brave speech, Valde protestatus sum me nolle sic satiari: I deeply protested that I would not be put off by God with these low things (Melch. Adam). The Papists offered to make him a cardinal if he would be quiet. He replied, No, not if I might be pope. They sent Vergerius, the pope's nuncio, {b} to tempt him with preferment, and to tell him of Aeneas Sylvius, who following his own opinions, with much slavery and labour, could get no further preferment than to be Canon of Trent, but being changed to the better, became bishop, cardinal, and,*

finally, Pope Pius II. The same Vergerius also minded him of Bessarion of Nice, who of a poor collier of Trapezond, became a great renowned cardinal, and wanted not much of being pope. But what said Luther to all this? *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor*, I care neither for the favour nor fury of Rome. The bramble thought it a brave business to reign over the trees: not so the vine and fig tree. We read of Pope Silvester, that he gave his soul to the devil for seven years' enjoyment of the popedom; which Luther spurned at. One good cast of God's loving countenance was more to David than a confluence of all outward comforts and contentments. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart," saith he, "more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased," **#Ps 4:7**. Their grain and their wine he calleth it; because it is their portion (poor souls), and they are too well paid of it. Wealth upon any terms is welcome to them, and those are their lovers that will keep them to it, yea, though it be the devil himself: whose language also here they seem to have learned when they say, "My grain and my water," &c. All is their own if you will believe them: like as the devil said to our Saviour, **#Lu 4:6**, "All this wealth is mine, and to whomsoever I will, I give it." But God is the true proprietary, the owner of all: and it is his alone to say *Cui vole, do illa*, **#Da 4:22**. The devil is god of this world, **#2Co 4:4**; but it is but titular only, as a king at chess; or at best, by usurpation only, as Absalom was a king; and as the pope is lord of all the kingdoms of the world, both for temporals and spirituals, to dispose of them at his pleasure. When he makes cardinals, he useth these big swollen words, *Estote confratres nostri, et principes mundi*, Be you brethren to us, and princes of the world. And by such high honours, bishoprics, and benefices, he prevaieth with very many to be wholly at his devotion. One of his poor beneficiaries ingenuously confessed that he and those of his rank preached the gospel for nothing else, *nisi ut nos pascat et vestiatur*, than to get a poor living by it. Let saints say, *Non est mortale quod opto*, We breathe after better things: we have the moon under our feet, **#Re 12:1**, and are above grain, wool, flax. The devil shall not stop our mouths with these palterments. Balaam may run and ride after the wages of wickedness, and get a sword in his guts. Ahab may make a match with mischief, and sell himself to do wickedly; Judas hunt after lying vanities, and hasten to his own place; but Moses was of another spirit, and "refused to be called the

son of Pharaoh's daughter," #**Heb 11:24**. And those worthies that were tempted with offers of profit and preferment, could not be won over, but resisted the devil, and he fled from them, #**Heb 11:37**. The world was crucified to St Paul, and he to the world, he was of too generous a spirit: he was no malleable matter: all was but dung and dog's meat in his account, #**Php 3:8**. Dr Taylor, martyr, was promised not only his pardon, but great promotion; yea, a bishopric: but he would have none of it. Another Dr Taylor, Bishop of Lincoln, was violently thrust out of the parliament house in his robes, in Queen Mary's reign, and deprived. So was Hirmanius, Archbishop of Colen, for certain reformations done by the aid and advice of Martin Bucer. I dare say (said Bishop Bonner to Mr Hawkes, martyr)—that Cranmer would recant if he might have his living: so judging others by himself. But Latimer and Shaxton parted with their bishoprics in King Henry VIII's time, rather than submit to the Six Articles. And John Knox refused a bishopric offered him by King Edward VI, as having *aliquid commune cum Antichristo* (Knox's Life, by Mr Clark): so did Miles Coverdale in Queen Elizabeth's reign, choosing rather to continue a poor schoolmaster. Pliny saith of Cato, that he took as much glory in those dignities and honours that he denied as he did in those that he enjoyed (Plin. Nat. Hist. praef.). He was wont also to say that he had rather men should question why he had no statue or monuments erected to him, than why he had: certainly it is so with the saints; and upon better grounds.

{a} Plin. Tacit. *Utinam aut caelebs vixissem, aut orbis perissem.*

{b} A permanent official representative of the Roman See at a foreign court. (ED)

Ver. 6. **Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns]** *i.e.* with difficulties and distresses. So God had fenced up Job's way that he could not pass, #**Job 19:8**, he had thrown the cross in his way, to stop him in his career. And so he had hedged the Church about, that she could not get out, #**La 3:7**, he had enclosed her ways with hewn stone, and made her paths crooked, #**La 3:9**. A great mercy if well considered, though grievous to the flesh, that loveth not to be cooped or kept within compass. Man is fitly compared to a wild ass's colt used to the wilderness, snuffing up the wind at her pleasure, rude and unruly, untamed and untractable, #**Jer 2:24 Job 11:12**. To be kept by hedges and fences within a pasture, seems to

such no small punishment: neither count they anything liberty but licentiousness; or a merry life, unless they may have the devil their playfellow: but the devil plays at no small games: *capite blanditur; ventre oblectat, cauda ligat*: he plays indiscriminately, he lies in wait for the precious life, as that harlot, **#Pr 6:26**; nothing less will content him. In great wisdom, therefore, and no less mercy to men's souls, doth God restrain, and bind them by afflictions that they may not run wild as they would nor feed upon the devil's commons, which would fatten them indeed, but for the slaughter. This made Job prize affliction as a special favour, **#Job 7:18**. Jeremiah prayeth, "Correct me, O Lord," **#Jer 10:24**; and Luther to like purpose, *Feri Domine, feri clementer*: Strike, Lord, strike, it shall be a mercy. And King Alfred prayed God always to send him some sickness, whereby his body might be tamed, and he the better affectioned to Godward. It is observed by one of our chroniclers, that affliction so held in the Saxon kings in the Danish wars, as having little outlets or leisure for ease and luxury, they were made the more pious, just, and careful in their government: otherwise it had been impossible so to have held out. Sure it is that if God did not hedge us in (as by his hedge of protection, **#Isa 5:5**, so) by his hedge of affliction, as here, no reason would rule us, no cords of kindness would contain us within the bounds of obedience. David himself, before he "was afflicted, I went astray," saith he: but God brought him home again by weeping cross. He once so leapt over the pale, that he broke his bones, and felt the pain of it to his dying day: he brake God's hedge, and a serpent bit him, **#Ec 10:8**; his conscience flew in his face, the guilt whereof is compared by Solomon to the biting of a serpent and sting of an adder, **#Pr 23:32**; "he roared for the disquietness of his heart": but better so, than roar in hell, where is punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succour (help), crying without comfort, mischief without measure, torment without end and past imagination. The prophet Amos likeneth incorrigible persons to horses running upon a rock, where first they break their hoofs, and then their necks, **#Am 6:12**. Another fitly compareth them to that Jesuit in Lancashire, who followed by one that found his glove with a desire to restore it him, but pursued inwardly by a guilty conscience, leaps over a hedge, plunges into a clay pit behind it unseen and unthought of, wherein he was drowned. To prevent their

deserved destruction (if it may be) God telleth them here that he will not only hedge them in but wall up their way.

**And make a wall]** *Macerabo maceriam*, I will wall a wall, and immure her: as jealous husbands do their wives whom they mistrust. And this God speaks by an apostrophe to others, as loathing the thought that ever he should be put to it.

**I will make a wall that she shall not find her paths]** *q.d.* I will hamper her and handle her as she was never handled. By a like passionate apostrophe, #Ge 49:4, old Jacob, speaking of Reuben's incest, "Thou wentest up to thy father's bed: then defiledst thou it": moved with the odiousness of the fact, he breaks off his speech with Reuben, and turning him to the rest, he addeth, "He went up to my couch": *q.d.* Out upon it, I am the worse to think of it. Maginus tells us, that in Lithuania the men are such fools, that they allow their wives to have their stallions, whom they call *Connubii adiutores*, and prize them far above all their acquaintance. And Balthasar Exnerus telleth us of a certain Duke of Oppania, who marrying a Lithuanian lady, and going forth to meet her, when she came first to him, he found in her company one of that rank, a lusty young fellow; whom, when he understood what he was, and wherefore he came, *voluit laniamandum canibus obiecere*, he was once in mind to make dog's meat of him. But understanding that it was the custom of that country, he sent him home again without further hurt. The Lord our God is a jealous God: and be the gods of the heathens good fellows, saith one, yet he will not endure co-rivals; nor share his glory with another. "Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? And why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him," *i.e.* from the Egyptian, thy present patron and protector; "and thy hands upon thy head," which was the gesture of women in great sorrow, #2Sa 13:19: "for the Lord hath rejected thy confidence, and thou shalt not prosper in them," #Jer 2:33,36,37. This people, to have a stake in store, howsoever the dice chanced to turn, sought to join friendship as soon with the Assyrian as with the Egyptian, and so to secure themselves: but it would not do. They followed after these lovers, but could never overtake them. Egypt proved but a broken reed. Assyria, the rod of God's wrath, the staff

in his hand, **#Isa 10:5**, yea, the hedge of his making, hemmed them in by strait sieges, both at Samaria and Jerusalem: till at length the Romans came, and walling them about, till they were forced to yield, took away both their place and their nation, according to that they feared, **#Joh 11:48**, and caused to cease the daily sacrifice, which they would needs till then hold out in opposition to the gospel.

**That she shall not find her paths]** Those highways to hell, wherein she hath hitherto tired herself by trotting after her lovers. Drusius noteth here that a harlot hath her name in the Chaldean tongue from her tracing up and down, אַרְכַּתַּי, delighting to be abroad altogether, to see and to be seen, that she may draw in the silly simple. See **#Pr 7:11,12**. {See Trapp on "Pr 7:11"} {See Trapp on "Pr 7:12"} God is able to strike such people with such blindness as he did the wicked Sodomites at Lot's door, *subito scotomate*, saith Junius, such as tormented their eyes as if they had been pricked with thorns, as the Hebrew moral there signifieth, **#Ge 19:11**. See **#Ps 75:6 Isa 29:19 19:11-13**. The fool knoweth not how to go to the city, **#Ec 10:15**, they are so blinded and baffled many times in their own ways. God loves to make fools of them.

Ver. 7. **And she shall follow after her lovers]** Follow them hot foot, pursue them eagerly and earnestly, as the hunter doth his game, or the pursuivant the party to be arrested; so little was she bettered by her former sufferings. Thus the blind Sodomites continue groping still for the door as if they were ambitious of destruction, which was now even at next door by. And thus Pharaoh, that sturdy rebel, rageth against God, and menaceth Moses with death, then, when that palpable gross darkness was upon him. This was one of those wild bulls in a net that was full of the fury of the Lord, **#Isa 51:20**. He was full of it, and yet lay raging against it, adding impatience to his impenitence, and passive disobedience to his active. Another bull of the same breed was Ahaziah, who sent a third captain after the two former had been consumed with fire from heaven; as if he would despitefully spit in the face of heaven, and wrestle a fall with the Almighty. And a third was that stubborn stigmatic Ahaz, who the more he was distressed the more he trespassed: "This is that king Ahaz," **#2Ch 28:22**. These men lost the fruit of their afflictions; which indeed was a great loss, but that they were not sensible of it

( *Perdidistis fructum afflictionis.* Aug.). Those that belong to God shall have stroke upon stroke, one cross in the neck of another, till they be kindly humbled, and brought home to their first husband. God will strike a parting blow between them and their sweethearts; and make them pollute the idols which they had once perfumed, **#Isa 30:22.**

**She shall follow them, but she shall not overtake them]** *Persequetur, sed non assequetur.* She shall meet with disappointment, but it shall be in mercy: she shall be crossed with a blessing, chastened by the Lord, that she may not be condemned with the world. She shall seek for favour and help from her sweethearts' hands, but all in vain, they shall all forsake her, and shall change their ancient love into mortal hatred, **#Jer 2:36 Eze 36:17.** It is the usual practice of the devil and his instruments to bring men into the briars, and there to leave them to shift as they can: thus the Pharisees dealt by Judas; "What is that to us?" say they; "see thou to that," **#Mt 27:4:** they left him when they had led him to his bane; like as familiars leave their witches, when they have once brought them into fetters. God dealeth not so with any of his, when he is most angry. But as in very faithfulness he afflicts them, that he may be true to their souls; so when they follow hard after him, as David did, they are sure to overtake him, though perhaps not presently; when they seek him, they are sure to find him, so they search for him with all their heart, **#Jer 29:13.** True it is, that God often by the hand of the enemy, as by a pursuivant at arms, fetcheth in bankrupt tenants, that is, his own untoward and backsliding people, and leaveth them in the pursuivant's hand, till they take some course to satisfy for their arrears. But that once done, he will soon set them at liberty, and make them glad, according to the days wherein he had afflicted them, **#Ps 90:15.** Let a poor soul but say, as here,

**I will go and return to my first husband]** That is, to God. I have run away from him by my sins; I will now return again to him by repentance. Let there be but such language in the hearts of God's prodigals, and he will soon relent toward them, meet them on the way, **#Isa 65:24,** fall upon their necks and kiss them, **#Lu 15:20,** he will receive them with all sweetness. *Iam ex hoc loco licet colligere*



*quae sit vera resipiscentia*, saith Calvin here. By this text we may gather what true repentance is: namely, when a sinner not only confesseth himself guilty, and worthy of punishment, but truly displeaseth himself, and seriously returns to God. Here we have those two essential parts of true repentance, *sc.* contrition and conversion; or humiliation and reformation. The former is called in Scripture repentance for sin, the latter, repentance from sin: and the one without the other is to no purpose or profit.

**For then was it better with me than now]** It was so: but how came you to conceive or consider of it in this sort? but by disappointments and afflictions? These are to us as Benhadad's best counsellors, that sent him with a cord about his neck to the merciful king of Israel. The Septuagint render the text thus, For he was good to me then, or he is now. And what wonder? Is there anything to be gotten by departing from Christ, by leaving thy first love, by quenching the Spirit, and making apostasy from former degrees of grace and holiness? Can any son of Jesse do for us as Christ can? or do we think to mend ourselves by running out of God's blessing into the world's warm sun, as Demur did? "O call me not Naomi," said she once, but "call me Marah: for I went out full, and am come home empty," **#Ru 1:20**. So doth a revolted Christian say, when he comes from the act of sinning, when he hath been seeking after his sweethearts: he went with his heart full of peace, and his hand full of plenty; and meeting with a bargain of sinning, thought to eke out his happiness, and make it fuller (as Solomon did), but came home empty; empty of comfort, but laden with crosses. He hath lost his evidences, is excommunicated from the power of the ordinances, is under the terror of a wounded spirit, is buffeted by Satan, is out of hope of ever recovering the radiance of his graces, hath his back burden of afflictions: so that he is forced to confess it to be the greatest madness in the world to buy the sweetest sin at so dear a rate. David found it so. The Shulamite found it so, **#So 5:1,2, &c.** No rest she had at home, nor comfort abroad, till she had recovered her first husband's company; for then it was better with her than now; and yet now, too, upon her hearty repentance, all becomes as well with her as ever it had been before, **#Ho 6:4, &c.** Was it not so likewise with Ephraim, **#Jer 31:19,20,21**, with the prodigal, **#Lu 15:16-19**, with Peter after his shameful backsliding and denial?

Let this then be to all God's relapsed people as a valley of Achor, a door of hope, that they may be re-admitted. Shall Sarah receive Hagar into favour? Joseph his brethren? David his Absalom? Philemon his Onesimus? Shall that man Ahab show mercy to his professed enemies, the Syrians, that had the second time set upon him? And shall not God receive his repenting children? fetch home his banished yea, though they may seem to be as water spilt upon the ground? bring them back into his own bosom, though they have never so far wandered out of the way? He will, he will. Only he expects that they should say, and do, as the Church of Israel here, and as the Church of Ephesus is advised, **#Re 2:4**. First, Remember whence ye are fallen: *sc.* not only from your former feelings and comforts, but also from your former fitness for God's kingdom; that *ius aptitudinale* (as the schools call it) that David himself had parted with for a season, and therefore is called plain David so oft together, and not my servant David, as formerly, **#2Sa 24:12**, &c. Secondly, Repent: Sigh out that of Job, "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shone upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me," **#Job 29:2,3,4**. Oh, it was far better then with me than now. Thus relent, repent, revenge upon your backslidings; spare for no pains, but be extraordinarily humbled: detest yourselves, give God no rest till he return unto his rest. Thirdly, Do your first works with a redoubled diligence for your former negligence; and tie yourselves thereto by solemn covenant. Begin (though at first but faintly) to pray, read, confer, meditate, cease from sin, shun the occasions, recover by degrees as a weak body doth by good diet, moderate exercise, &c.

Ver. 8. **For she did not know**] *i.e.* She would not be known or affected, of this she was willingly ignorant, **#2Pe 3:5**. *Ut liberius peccet libenter ignorat*, as Bernard. Her ignorance was not a mere nescience, or an invincible ignorance, such as she could not help; but it was wilful, affected, acquired: they not only desired not the knowledge of God's ways, but hated it, spurned and scorned at it, shutting the windows lest the light should come in: and being blinded by the god of this world, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them **#2Co 4:4**, lest they should see and say that which nature and Scripture do both teach them, viz. that all

their accommodations and comforts come from me alone. Had this their ignorance been merely negative, yet had they not been wholly excused ( *Tu aedepol, si sapiis quod scis nescies.* Terent.). The apostle noteth, that our Saviour laid down his precious life even for the not-knowings of the people which were such as they could not help, **#Heb 9:7** (ὐπερ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγνοημάτων), but their ignorance being affected, it was a high degree of ingratitude and impudence, and a very great aggravation of their sin: it made it to be sin with an accent, wickedness with a witness. Israel was herein worse than the ox and the ass (that "knows his owner and his master's crib," **#Isa 1:3**), they fell below the stirrup of reason, nay, of sense. Hence God so stomacheth the matter both there and here. *Non semel hoc peccatum carpit*, saith Mercer: he cannot satisfy himself in saying how much it troubled him to be thus unkindly, ungratefully, and unreasonably dealt withal: it runneth in his thoughts, his heart is grieved at it, and he must vent himself. And when he hath told his grief, and aggravated his wrong, yet he hath not done with it: but is upon it again and again; still convincing, upbraiding; charging Israel for their foul and inexcusable unfaithfulness and unthankfulness. *Eandem sententiam quia sancta et necessaria est, repetit*, saith Oecolampadius here; he repeats over the same he had said before, out of the trouble of his spirit, and that they might once lay it to heart and be humbled.

**That I gave her corn and wine and oil, &c.]** A great deal more than she reckons upon, **#Ho 2:5**, and yet pays her rent there to a wrong landlord too. God is well content that we have the benefit and comfort of his creatures, so he may have the praise: this is all the rent he looks for; and this he indents with us for, **#Ps 50:15**; the saints also, knowing his mind, promise it him, and bind themselves to it, as did Jacob, **#Ge 28:20,21**; David, **#Ps 51:15**. For they know that ingratitude forfeits all (as in this text. She would not know, but I will make her know: *ut qui ex copia datorero non senserunt, sentiant ex penuria*, for she shall fast another while, and go naked), like as the merchant's non-payment of customs may prove the utter loss of all his commodities. Hence their first care to see God in all, as Moses often urgeth this people in Deuteronomy, to taste the superabundant sweetness of God in the sweetness of the creatures; to look upon all as swimming towards them in the blood of Christ,

as being a piece of his purchase; and this exceedingly sweeteneth all their comforts. "God give thee the dew of heaven," saith Isaac to his son Jacob, **#Ge 27:28**. Profane Esau, likewise, had the like, but not with a God give thee, neither cared he how he had it, so he had it any way; but it is otherwise with the saints. See but the difference in these two brethren long after this, **#Ge 33:9,11**, Esau, as a mere natural man, contenting himself (like a brute beast made and taken to be destroyed) with a natural use of the creature, cries out, "I have enough, my brother: keep that thou hast to thyself." But mark how Jacob delivers himself in another manner: "Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." See a like difference between the rich fool's *Habes multa*, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years," **#Lu 12:19**, and David's doxology, **#1Ch 29:13,16**, "O Lord our God, all this store cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own." And to the same purpose speaks Eliezer, **#Ge 24:35**, "The Lord hath given my master flocks, herds, silver, gold"; and Job, **#Job 1:21**. The neglect of this observing of God and ascribing all to him is the source of much sin in the world, and the mother of much mischief. **#Jer 2:5**, God chargeth his people that they were gone far from him, and had made his heritage an abomination, **#Ho 2:7**, and why? but because they did not say, "Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt?" &c., **#Ho 2:6**. Were men but sensible of what God doth for them every day and hour, they could not in equity and common ingenuity serve him as they do. He preserveth and provideth for us all; lays us down and takes us up, gives us all things richly to enjoy, commanding the best of his creatures to cater for us, **#Ho 2:21**, and to bring us in the best of the best for our subsistence, **#Ps 8**. Every good gift temporal, and perfect giving spiritual and eternal, cometh from the Father of lights, **#Jas 1:17**, as naturally and as constantly as light doth from the sun, or water from the sea. Let us therefore imitate those lights of heaven and rivers of the earth, do all the good we can with those good things God hath given us, grain, wine, silver, gold, &c., and then reflect back toward, and return all the glory and praise unto the sun of our righteousness and sea of our salvation. The beams of the moon and stars return as far back to glorify the face of the sun which gave them their beauty, as they can possibly. Let us likewise ever send back to God's own glorious self the honour of all his gifts, by a

fruitful improvement of them, and fresh songs of praise. Let the streams of God's daily bounty lead us (as the water course doth, either upward to the spring, or downward to the main ocean) to the source and fountain whence they flow. Let the returns we make be from God, of God, to God; from him as the efficient, of him as the material, and to him as the final cause. David joineth these three together, **#Ps 86:4,5**; and Paul, **#Ro 11:36**. In fine, let us labour to be like the full ears of grain that hang down the head toward the earth, their original. Or if any be so graciously exalted, so freely favoured above his fellows, that his stalk is so stiff that it beareth him up above the rest of his ridge, let him look up to heaven; not in thoughts of pride, but humble vows of thankfulness. Be not as horse and mule, that drink of the brook, but never think of the spring; or as swine, that haunch up the mast, but never look up to the tree; or as the barren earth, that swallows the seed, but returns nothing to the sower.

**Which they have prepared for Baal]** Or, wherewith they have made Baal: lavishing gold out of the bag, and weighing silver in the balance, they hired a goldsmith, and he made it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship, **#Isa 46:6**. This Baal was a special idol of the Zidonians, but first of the Chaldees, who called him Bel; the Carthaginians, Bal, whence those compositions Hannibal, Hasdrubal; as among the Babylonians Belteshazzar, Mehelabel, &c. Varro (though a heathen) inveighs much against idols and images, and saith, that they that first brought them increased error, and took away fear, *errorem auxerunt, metum dempserunt*. Plutarch saith, it is a sacrilege to worship by images, &c. It is thought they came first from Babylon. For Ninus having made an image of his father, Belus (this Baal in the text), all that came to see it were pardoned for all their offences; whence, in time, that image came to be worshipped. A great promoter of this kind of idolatry in Israel was Ahab, in favour of his wife, Jezebel, and to ingratiate with her kindred, **#1Ki 16:31**, and this was the ruin of his house. This Baal was by the Zidonians called Jupiter Thalassius, or their sea Jupiter, and is thought to be their chief god. They had their *Dii minorum gentium*, petty gods (called in Scripture the host of heaven, the queen of heaven, and a little farther in this chapter Baalim); the Greeks called them *Δαιμονες*: which, saith Plato, are certain middle powers or

messengers between God and man, to carry up prayers, and bring down blessings, &c. *Quam autem haec daemonum theologia conveniat cum sanctorum et angelorum cultu apud pseudochristianos, res ipsa loquitur*; saith learned Master Mede. How this doctrine of devils or heathen deities agreeth with saint worship and angel worship among Papists is easy to be discerned. A great stumbling it is to both Jews and Turks, who know it to be contrary to the first commandment, and image worship to the second (Melch. Ad. de Germ. Theol.). Whence the Turks will not endure any images, no, not upon their coins. And Paulus Jovius tells us, when Sultan Solymán had taken Buda, in Hungary, he would not enter into the chief temple of that city, to give praise to Almighty God for the victory, till all the images were first down, and thrust out of the place. We read also of a certain Turkish ambassador who, being demanded why the Turks did not turn Christians? he answered, Because the Christian religion is against sense and reason; for they worship those things that are of less power than themselves, and the works of their own hands: as these in the text, that made them Baal, yea (as if God had hired them to be wicked), they made it of the very gold and silver which he had given them, though for a better purpose. And this was horrible wickedness, hateful ingratitude. This was to sue God with his own money, to fight against him with his own weapons, as David did against Goliath, as Jehu did against Jehoram, and as Benhadad did against Ahab with that life that he had lately given him. I read of a monster who, that very night that his prince pardoned and preferred him, slew him, and reigned in his stead. This was Michael Balbus, and he is and shall be infamous for it to all posterity (Zonarus in Annal.). Ingratitude is a monster in nature. Lycurgus made no law against it, *quod prodigiosa res esset beneficium non rependere*. To render good for evil is divine, good for good is human, evil for evil is brutish; but evil for good is devilish. And yet, alas! how ordinary an evil is this among us, to abuse, to God's great dishonour, our health, wealth, wit, prosperity, plenty, peace, friends, means, day, night, grain, wine, silver, gold, all comforts and creatures, our times, our talents, yea, the Holy Scriptures, the gospel of grace, and our golden opportunities, the offers of mercy, and motions of the Spirit, turning our backs upon those blessed and bleeding embracements, and pursuing our lusts (those idols of our hearts), those Baals, that is,

lords and husbands that have us at their beck and check? But is this fair dealing? Do we thus requite the Lord, foolish and unwise as we are? #De 32:5. Holy Ezra thinks there is so much unthankfulness and disingenuity in such an entertainment of mercy, that heaven and earth would be ashamed of it, #Ezr 9:13. Should we do so? saith he, oh, God forbid us any such wickedness. Others render it, which they have sacrificed, or dedicated to Baal, for idolaters spare for no cost, *dum Deum alienum dotant*, as some render that text, #Ps 16:4, while they give their goods not to the saints (as David) that are on the earth, but to another god. They lavish gold out of the bag: as we read of a certain king of this land, who laid out as much as the whole crown revenues came to in a year upon one costly crucifix: and of another, that left by a will a very great sum of money for the transporting of his heart, to be buried in the Holy Land, as they called it. How profuse Papists are in decking their images and monuments of idolatry, is better known than that it needeth here to be spoken of. Their lady of Loretto, that queen of heaven, as they call her, *stilo veteri*, pillar of antiquity, hath her churches so stuffed with vowed presents and memories, as they are fain to hang their cloisters and churchyards with them.

Ver. 9. **Therefore will I return]** *i.e.* I will alter my course, change my stand, change the way of mine administrations, deal otherwise with them than yet I have done: they shall bear their iniquities, and know my breach of promise, as #Nu 14:34; they shall know the worth of mine abused mercies by the want of them another while. "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early," #Ho 5:15. Finally, I will cut them short of alimony, and hold them to strait allowance; and then I shall be sure to hear them howling upon their beds for grain and wine, #Ho 7:14, as dogs do that are tied up, and cannot come at their meat.

**And take away my corn and my wine]** Those precious fruits of the earth, as St James calleth them, #Jas 5:7, the product of God's great care, from year's end to year's end, #De 11:12, without which the earth could not yield her increase: neither would there be a vein for the silver, a mine for the gold, iron taken out of the earth, or brass molten out of the stone, #Job 28:2. All that we have is his, in true account, and he is the great proprietor who only can say (as he in the

Gospel), "May not I do what I will with mine own?" #Mt 20:15. And what should he sooner and rather do than take away food from his child that mars it? If fulness breed forgetfulness (as the fed hawk forgets his master, and as the full moon gets farthest off from the sun), so men, when they have all things at the full, forget God, and wickedly depart from him, what can he do less than forget them (that so they may remember themselves), and make fat Jeshurun look with lean cheeks, that they may leave kicking, and learn righteousness? #De 32:15 Isa 26:9. Neither doth God do this till greatly provoked, till there is a cause for it, therefore I will return. He may well say, as that Roman emperor did, when he was to pronounce sentence of death, *Non nisi coactus*, I am even compelled to it, there is no other remedy, #2Ch 36:16. As a woman brings not forth but with pain; and as a bee stings not, but provoked: so here, *Ille dolet quoties cogitur esse ferox*, he afflicteth not willingly, nor grieves the children of men, #La 3:33. It is sin that maketh him return, as here; that puts him out of his road of mercy into ways of iudgment, that putteth thunderbolts into his hand, and maketh him "do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act," #Isa 28:21. What can a prince do less than disarm a rebel? what can God do less than take away his own and be gone from such an impudent adulteress, as is here described? should he allowr her with his grain "to make cakes to the queen of heaven," #Jer 7:18, and to pour ou this wine for drink offerings to other gods, that they might provoke him to anger? No: rather than so, he will—

**take away the corn in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof]** He will cut off the meat from their very mouths, #Joe 1:16, and pull their morsel from between their teeth. Just at harvest, when their grain is to be harvested, God will blast it, or otherwise blow upon it; when all their old store is spent, and they reckoned upon a good recruit, they shall be defeated and frustrated. "Therefore hath God watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us," saith Daniel, #Da 9:14. Lo, God watcheth his time when to be even with his enemies: and taketh his fittest opportunity for their greater mischief. They that are wicked overmuch shall die before their time, #Ec 7:17. Not before God's time (for *stat sua cuique dies*, every man's time is set, #Job 7:1, our bounds are prescribed us, and a pillar pitched up by him, who bears up the heavens, which we are



not to trespass), but before their own time that they had propounded and promised to themselves, as that rich fool, **#Lu 12:19**, who talked to himself (as fools use to do), **#Lu 12:17**, saying, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." But we know what became of him that very night; his many years were quickly up, his glass was run when he thought it had been but new turned. God shot at him with an arrow suddenly, **#Ps 64:7**, he fetched off this bird with a bolt while he was gazing at the bow or pruning himself upon a bough. He chopped into the earth before he was aware as one that walketh in the snow chops into a pit. He died, *tempore non suo* (as some render that forecited text in Ecclesiastes), not in his own time, but in God's time; then when it had been better for that fool to have done anything than to have died, because (like Eli's sons) he died in his sins: and, like Jezebel's children, he was killed with death, **#Re 2:23** This made Austin say, that he would not for the gain of a world be an atheist for one half hour: because he knew not but that God might in that time, call him; and then, "what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained when God taketh away his soul?" **#Job 27:8**. He is troubled, when God taketh away "his corn in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof": he is hungry and hardly bestead, and therefore ready "to curse God, and look upward," **#Isa 8:21**, howling against heaven, as the hungry wolf. But first he should consider, that the corn and wine and wool and flax that he hath in keeping is not his, but God's; and that he reserves the propriety of all in his own hand: neither hath any man aught, in reference to him, the monarch of the world, that he can call his own. The rich fool indeed talked much in this manner, **#Lu 12:18**: "I will pull down *my* barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all *my* fruits and *my* goods." All was his own belike: God was not in all this man's thoughts; for if he had, he would soon have known what to have done: *sc.* he would have acknowledged God the author and owner of all (as Moses mindeth men, **#De 8:17,18**), he would also have fed the hungry with his corn, and clothed the naked with his wool and flax, as Tyre converted did with her merchandise, **#Isa 23:18**, he would have said to God, as David did, "All things come of thee, and of thine own we give thee," **#1Ch 29:14**. Bernard reports of Pope Eugenius, that meeting with a poor but honest bishop, he secretly gave him certain jewels wherewith he might present him. If God did not first furnish us out of his treasury we

should have nothing wherewith either to honour him or to help ourselves or others God's poor, I mean, whom Solomon calleth owners of our goods, and maketh us but their stewards, **#Pr 3:27**: withhold not thy goods from the owners thereof. Next, the hunger bitten hypocrite should consider that there is worse hunger yet behind, and a heavy account to be given of the grain, wine, wool, and flax, the creatures that he hath detained in unrighteousness, and spent upon his lusts, **#Jas 4:3**. If the husbandman must be ashamed, and howl because the harvest of the field is perished; if the drunkards must wake, weep, and wail because the new wine is cut off from their mouths, **#Joe 1:5,11**; how shall they much more howl in hell, *ubi nullus unquam cibus est, nulla consolatio*, saith Bernard, where there is no manner of meat, no drop of water to be had for love or money; where they must fast, and find no mercy for ever; where they must hunger and thirst *in aeterno Dei*, as the schools speak, as long as God is God. The sufferings of this world to the wicked is but as the falling of the leaves in comparison of the trees that will fall upon him hereafter, in that eternity of extremities. If here, "In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits, and every hand of the troublesome shall come upon him. When he is about to fill his belly God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating," as it is threatened, **#Job 20:22,23**, what, think we, will their portion be in hell? Meanwhile God will

**recover his wool and his flax]** He will snatch it away (as the word signifieth) in great displeasure, as a man doth his stolen goods out of the hands of a thief; he will rescue them, as Abraham did Lot and the captives from Chedorlaomer, **#Ge 14:16**, as David did his wives, goods, and friends from the Amalekitish rovers, **#1Sa 30:18-20**. The poor creatures, grain, wine, wool, &c., groan heavily under the abuse of graceless persons, **#Ro 8:22**, and God heareth them, as he did the oppressed Israelites in Egypt, "for he is gracious," he hears them, I say, and recovers them; he spoils their possessors of them, as Jacob did Laban of his sheep, as the Israelites did the Egyptians of their jewels: the same word is used there, as here, יתלצה, **#Ge 31:10,16**, and it is a wonderful significant word, saith Mercer. St Paul imitateth it when he saith the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. This God doth when he snateheth away

kingdoms from tyrants, wealth from worldlings, strength from roysters, spiritual common gifts from the proud and secure, **#Zec 11:17**. {See Trapp on "Zec 11:17"} When men abuse mercies, they forfeit their right in them: wicked men have not only a civil title but a right before God to the things that they possess; it is their portion, **#Ps 17:14**. And what Ananias had was his own while he had it, **#Ac 5:4**. And God gave Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as pay for his pains in taking Tyre. True it is, all was forfeited in Adam; but wicked men have yet a right to all they do enjoy in a lawful way, by divine donation, till the day of execution: as when a traitor hath his life given him, for a time at least, he hath meat and drink also given him to maintain his life for that time. God dealeth not as that cruel Duke D'Alva did, who starved some prisoners after that he had given them quarter, saying, Though I promised you your lives, I promised not to find you meat (Hist. of Netherlands). That which wicked men are charged with, and shall be accountable for, is, not their right to use the creatures, but their not right using them. This makes the creature cry in its kind and long for liberty; even as birds do that thrust a long neck out of the cage (so much the apostle's word importeth, **#Ro 8:19**, ἀποκαταδοκία). And God, who heareth the cry of the widow and fatherless, and looseth his prisoners, **#Ps 146:7**, hears and frees the poor creatures groaning under man's abuse.

**Given to cover her nakedness]** This is the end of garments, so called *quasi gardmentes*; they arm and fence our bodies against the injury of wind and weather, against heat of summer, cold of winter; they also cover our nakedness and deformity, those parts especially that are by an antiphrasis called *verenda et pudenda* (here principally perhaps intended), because they ought never to be laid naked, but kept covered, *pudoris gratia*, for common honesty's sake (Vatablus), "that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear," **#Re 3:18**. Nature teacheth to cover our nakedness; therefore also when a man hath committed a sin he blusheth; the blood, as it were, would cover the sin. But nothing will do that, save only the righteousness of Christ, the fleece of that immaculate lamb of God, whom therefore we must put on, **#Ro 13:14**, in all his offices and efficacies. Our first parents indeed were born with the royal robe of original righteousness on their back; but the devil soon stripped them of it, and from that time on they became sore ashamed of their

bodily nakedness (but chiefly of their spiritual), which therefore they sought to hide as they could, their privities especially. Whence some are of the opinion that to look upon the nakedness of another is a sin against nature. The prophet Habakkuk taxeth it in the Chaldees, **#Hab 2:15**, and the Hebrews there say, It was a filthy custom among them, common at their feasts. Clothes are the ensigns of man's sins and the cover of our shame. To be proud of them is as for a thief to be proud of his halter: to brag of them is as for the lepper to brag of a plaster laid to his filthy sore: the fineness of such is their filthiness; their neatness nastiness, as one speaketh.

Ver. 10. **And now will I discover her lewdness]** Or her filthiness, baseness, foolishness, saplessness; perhaps the same with her nakedness, **#Ho 2:9**. {See Trapp on "Ho 2:9"} How shameless the heathen idolaters were, the worshippers of Priapus especially (which Jerome and Isidore say was the same with Baalpeor, and made Maacha, the mother of Asa, guilty of that villany), with their infamous *Nos, pudore pulso, stamus sub Iove coleis apertis, &c.*, is notoriously known; how they ran about naked in their Lupercalia, Bacchanalia, and other beastly solemnities. God threateneth to make her naked here in another manner, to her utter disgrace and ignominy (*Chaldeus reddit ignominiam, ut quam velatam desiderabant, apertam contemnant.* Jerome). He had threatened her before with poverty, now with scorn and contempt: these go seldom asunder; but when self-procured they are very grievous. See **#De 28:15-68**. Fornicators are fools, **#Jer 29:23 Ge 34:7**, Shechem committed folly in Israel, and is therefore called a lad or a child {**#Ge 34:19**, *Neque distulit puer*}, for his witlessness, as being carried not by right reason, but blind affection. So Amnon was for this as one of the fools in Israel, **#2Sa 13:12**, a Nabal, *a Nebulo*, one that falls below the dignity of a man, below the stirrup of reason, flagitious and profligate.

Spiritual fornicators are all this and more. They hunt after lying vanities, and so forsake their own mercies, **#Jon 2:8**, being singularly foolish (as the word here used importeth) and miserable by their own election. The indignity and iniquity of their practice, see **#Jer 2:9-13**. Satan deals by them as he did by Adam when he gave him an apple for Paradise; and set him to the tree of knowledge that he might not taste the tree of life. And like unto them (saith a Lapid here) is every wicked person who by Satan's persuasion

preferreth the creature before the Creator, earth before heaven, the devil before God, hell before heaven, sin before sanctity, evil before good. These are lewd persons of sordid and servile dispositions, *homines ad servitutem parati* (as Tiberius said of the Romans), men of an under-spirit, as those, #1Ch 4:23. Hedge rogues Mr Dyke calleth them.

**In the sight of her lovers]** That her whom they have so desired while she was veiled they may deride when laid open. There can nothing befall a woman more grievous than to be stripped naked, but especially before her sweethearts: #La 1:8, "All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth and turneth backward." It is the paint or the dress many times that makes the lewd woman lovely. Think the same of idolatry: how pompous is it, and theatrical! but God will detect it, and make it ridiculous every day more and more. Erasmus was very instrumental this way, and did prejudice Popery by his witty jeering as much as Luther did by his stomaching and inveighing, saith Capito. Though it cannot be denied but that *pruriginosa istorum hominum scabies asperiori strigili fricanda fuerat*, the scabby hides of those popelings called for a sharper currycomb, as another learned man phraseth it (Amama. Anibarb. Praefat.).

**And none shall deliver her out of my hand]** Not her idols, not her confederates. "An idol is nothing in the world," #1Co 8:4, and all nations set by God are as a drop of a bucket, or dust of a balance: they can no more stand before him than a glass bottle can before a cannon shot. It was bootless, therefore, for this adulteress to hope for help from her lovers when God once took her in hand. He would give her her due, *ipsis spectantibus et stantibus instar stipitum*, while they looked on and stood like so many stocks, not daring to stir for her rescue and relief. See for this, #Re 18:10. {See Trapp on "Re 18:10"}

Ver. 11. **I will also cause her mirth to cease]** Idolaters are frolic and jovial, the greatest mirth mongers, the merry Greeks of the world; set altogether upon the merry pin, they spend their days in pleasure, and suddenly turn into hell, #Job 21:13. Thus it was with these old idolaters. See #Am 6:4. And thus it is with the Papists at this day. They have a proverb among them, *Spiritns Calvinianus est spiritus*

*melancholicus*, A Calvinistic spirit is a melancholy spirit. Turn Protestant once, and you must for ever bid adieu to mirth and jollity, and lead a monkish, melancholy life. In their supplication to King James for a toleration, they used this as an argument for their religion above ours, because more suitable and pleasing to man's nature. It is indeed an alluring, tempting, bewitching religion, **#Re 13:14**. Sir Walter Raleigh knew what he said, That were he to choose a religion for licentious liberty, lasciviousness, and merry making, he would be a Papist. Hence the whole world is said to wonder after the beast, which is said to be like unto a leopard or panther (πανθηρ, *quod omnium animalium amicus sit*. Isidor). Now the panther is admired and followed by most other beasts of the field (and thence hath his name), either for the beauty of his hide, or for the sweetness of his smell. So is the pope for those sensual delights and swinish pleasures he alloweth his followers. *Lupanar utriusque Veneris Roma condidit*, saith Agrippa, concerning Pope Sixtus Quintus. But what should I rake in that dunghill? Such sinful mirth, as it is base born, so it is of short continuance: God will make it to cease, and to go soon out in a vexing snuff. For what reason? There is a snare (or cord) in the sin of the wicked, *sc.* to strangle their joy with, but the righteous sing and are merry, **#Pr 29:6**, yea, they are merry (or right set in their minds, as the apostle's word, εἰθυμει, signifies, **#Jas 5:13**), and therefore they sing, yea, and shall sing for joy of heart, when wicked men shall cry for sorrow of heart, yea, howl again for vexation of spirit, **#Isa 65:14**. Meanwhile their mirth is but the hypocrisy of mirth. It may wet the mouth, but not warm the heart; smooth the brow, but not fill the breast. It is like a little counterfeit complexion; as they repent only in the face, **#Mt 6:16**, so they rejoice only in the face, **#2Co 1:5,12**. Indeed, they revel rather than rejoice, and the end of that mirth is heaviness, **#Pr 14:13**; as lightning is attended with thunder, and as comets end in a pestilent vapour. Let the Lord but turn his hand and take away his grain, &c., destroy vine and fig trees, &c., and this carnal mirth is at an end: their light is put out in obscure darkness, they lie down in sorrow, and are all amort, they are filled with unmedicinable perplexities, and are ready to run mad, **#De 28:34**. Whereas a godly man, as he hath a constant spring of comfort within him, and can be merry without music, so he can stand under the greatest weight of affliction without buckling, as Paul: he can be *mediis tranquillus in undis*, as

Noah: he can confidently say, with Habakkuk, **#Hab 3:17**, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

**Her feast days, her new moons]** Not the matter of their joy only shall be abolished, but the times too; she shall neither have holy days nor good days (as they are called, **#Es 8:17**), to keep and celebrate. Here then the Lord shows how he will uncover this harlot's nakedness, viz. first he will strip her of her spirituals, and next of her temporals, **#Ho 2:12**. Her feast days, new moons, sabbaths, and solemn feasts were but apish imitations of those commanded by God, whose ape Satan will needs be. *Habent et vespse favos; simiae imitantur heroines*: wasps also have honey combs as well as bees; and apes will be doing at men's actions. Satan's synagogue may seem a true Church. The ten revolted tribes kept also divers solemn days, partly commanded by the law (as new moons and sabbaths) and partly instituted by Jeroboam, in honour of their idols, as now among the Papists, in pretended honour of the saints, with feasting, dancing, ringing, roaring of organs, &c. These solemnities, therefore, the Lord here first utterly disowneth, calling them her feast days, her sabbaths, &c., and none of his, because they did *lacte gypsum miscere*, mingle lime with milk, as Irenaeus saith of Plato; *Non mea, tua sunt*, as Martial saith of his epigrams, ill read by another. And secondly, that he will take them away (*sc.* by carrying themselves away captive. See **#Ho 9:4,5**), and so pull off their vizor, wash off their varnish of rites and ceremonies, and lay them open to all in their own colours.

Ver. 12. **And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees]** Not her wine and her figs only, *i.e.* her delicious drinks and deserts (even all her plenty), *sed vineta ipsa et ficeta*, as Rivet observeth: which shows a great deal of anger (for fruit trees were not to be destroyed in an enemies' country), like as he discovered a great deal of fear of the Spanish Inquisitors, that brought one of them his pears (which he had sent for), tree, and all by the roots. It is wisdom to meet God by repentance, lest he stub up root and branch together, lest he "overturn, overturn, overturn, so as it shall be no more," **#Eze 21:27**; lest he cry, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" since it is not for fruit, let it be for the fire, **#Lu 13:7**.

**Whereof she hath said, These are my rewards]** The wages of my wickedness, the hire of my harlotry, **#De 23:18 Eze 16:34**, *pretium meritorium*. Adultery is costly. Whores must have their rewards, they lie in wait for a prey, **#Pr 23:21**, and will soon bring a rich man to beggary, **#Pr 6:26**. Solomon himself was so exhausted by such she sinners (so they call them, *Cruces et crumenimulgas*, suck purses the poet calleth them) that he was forced to oppress his subjects to supply his coffers: which occasioned the loss of ten tribes. Harlots know no other language but that of the horse leech, Give, give; and may fitly be compared to the ravens of Arabia, that fully gorged, have a tunable sweet voice; but empty, they screech horribly.

“ *Corpus, opes, animum, famam, vim, lumina, scortum, Debilitat, perdit, necat, aufert, eripit, orbat.* ”

*Idolatry also is no less costly: witness this harlot's habit, #Ho 2:13, and the purple whore of Rome, with all her trinkets, and those masses of money that she drains out of many parts of Christendom for the support of her state. Otto (one of her mice catchers, muscipulata res, as the story calleth him), sent hither into England by Gregory IX, after three years' raking together of money for pardons, and other palterments, at last departing, he left not so much money in the whole kingdom, as he either carried with him or sent to Rome before him. What will not men part with to purchase heaven? Now they persuaded the poor people (and still they do) that good works (and what so good as to gratify the pope with great sums?) were mercatura regni coelestis, the price to be given for heaven (Bellarm.). Idolaters are all merit mongers: they will have heaven as a purchase; they lay claim to it, as wages for their work. They say, with that wretched monk, Redde mihi aeternam vitam quam debes, Give me eternal life which thou owest me, "Give me the portion that belongeth to me," #Lu 15:12. God forbid, saith another Papist, that we should enjoy heaven as of mere alms to us. On the other side, the godly disclaim their own merits, beg hard for mercy, expect a recompense of reward from him, but all of free grace; accounting all that they can do for God but a little of that much that is due to him, and that they could well betem him: they*



do all righteousness, but rest in none: they know that God's kingdom is *partum et non paratum*; that their reward is the reward of inheritance, and not of acquisition; and that if they could do anything this way, yet would it be mercy in God to "reward every one according to his work," #Ps 62:12.

**And I will make them a forest]** See this more fully set forth #Isa 5:5,6. Such is the hatred God beareth to sin that he makes bloody weals, as it were, upon the backs of the insensible creatures for man's sake. "A fruitful land turneth he into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," #Ps 107:34. Thus he dealt by Sodom, which was once as Egypt, yea, as Eden, but is now a place of nettles and salt pits; by Judea, that once *lumen totius orbis*, the light of the whole world, now laid desolate; as Babylon, where Strabo saith their barley yielded three hundred fold increase, and their palm tree three hundred and sixty several sorts of commodities, as bread, honey, wine, vinegar, &c.; but what devastation befell it by the Medes, see #Isa 13:19, &c. It were easy to instance in the seven Churches of Asia, the Palatinate and other parts of Germany, in Ireland, and now Scotland: and what may England look for? Shall we altogether pass unpunished? Shall we still sit safely under our vines and fig trees, and not be forested, and by those wild beasts of the field devoured? Sure it is, that no beast of the field doth show itself more raging or ravenous than do the wicked, when God suffers, or rather sends, them to break into his vineyard. Witness those breathing devils, the Irish rebels, more cruel than any cannibals. Cursed be their wrath; for it was cruel, transcendently so, extending itself both to the living and the dead. *Ursi non saeviunt in cadavera*: but these bears, #Ps 58:4, boars, #Ps 80:13, lions, leopards, did rage against dead carcasses, and tore them with their teeth. Histories tell us that the first founders of Rome were nourished by a wolf: certain it is that the offspring of that people have the hearts of wolves, being savage and cruel above measure. Their city was first founded in blood, and so was the papacy: for the foundation of that see was laid when Phocas slew his liege lord and emperor, Mauritius, whom he stewed in his own blood. Whence the poet wittily;

“ *Suffocas, Phoca, imperium; stabilisque Papatum.*”

The habit of that harlot is, according to her heart, purple and scarlet; and her diet is the diet of the cannibals. "I saw her drunken with the blood of the saints," #Re 17:6. They are wholly bloody, both in their positions and dispositions, their plots and practices. The pope is said to be a leopard, or panther, with his feet like a bear, and his head like a lion, #Re 13:2. {See Trapp on "Re 13:2"} And of their St Dominic (the father of the Dominicans) it is reported, that when his mother was with child of him she dreamed that she brought forth a wolf, with a firebrand in his mouth: and he proved, accordingly, a brutish man, skilful to destroy, to devour the man more righteous than himself, by his bloody inquisitors, #Eze 21:31 Hab 1:2,3. I pray that God would deliver his turtle from these savage creatures; that he would cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land, #Eze 34:25, that the beasts of the land may no more devour them, #Eze 34:28.

Ver. 13. **And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim]** That is, I will punish the sins committed in those days wherein they went after those multitudes of heathenish gods: 30,000 of them Hesiod reckons up in his days. And Servius upon Virgil tells us, that for fear of offending any of them they used to close up their petitions with *Diique Deaque omnes*, All ye gods and goddesses. Some of the Hebrews by Baalim understand *Dominos domuum*, the lords of the houses: for the planets are said to have their houses. Oecolampadius understands it to be those idols which they worshipped under the name of the stars, called elsewhere the queen of heaven, or the heavenly constellations. Others by Baal conceive to be meant their chief god; called also by them Baal-samen, or the lord of heaven: by Baalim their undergods, *medioxuma numina inter mortales caelicolasque vectores*. This was Plato's Demonology. (See the note above, upon #Ho 2:8 of this chapter.) St Paul is thought to have been well read in Plato's writings (his *αναζωοπυρειν*, #2Ti 1:6, *is verbum Platonicum*), and to have alluded to him in that passage, #1Co 8:5,6: "Though there be that are called gods" (Baalim signifieth lords), "whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ," that is, but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who indeed in regard of his human nature is inferior to the Father, but yet such a Lord by whom are all things, and we by him. The Papists acknowledge but one God, but

they have many Baalims, many lords and mediators, both of intercession and of redemption too. But this is a heathenish opinion, as indeed many of theirs are: whence they are called Gentiles, in opposition to the holy city, the Church, **#Re 11:2**.

**Wherein she burnt incense to them]** Which typified prayer, both in the sweet savour and ascending property; *elationibus fumi*, with pillars of smoke, **#So 3:6**. This should have been done to God alone, He is the proper object of prayer, as being omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent; and besides in covenant with his people: he never said to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain." No: he scorns that, and leaves that to the heathen idols to do, **#Isa 45:18,19**. "Our Rock is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges," **#De 32:31**. He is not like Baal, that, pursuing his enemies, could not hear his friends. Nor like Jupiter of Crete, that was carved without ears, and could not be at leisure to attend small matters, no, nor greater neither, unless it were at certain times when he was pleased to look down through certain chinks in heaven, as Lucian feigneth. He is not as Diana, who, being present at Alexander's birth, could not at the same time preserve her Ephesian temple from the fire. "O thou that hearest prayer" (saith David: that is one of his titles of honour, **#Ps 65:2**), "unto thee shall all flesh come." Whither else should I go? Basil makes prayer a chain tied to God's ear and man's mouth. Jamblichus saith it is *copula qua homines cum Deo coniunguntur*, a tie wherewith men are knit unto God. Damascen saith it is an ascent of the heart to heaven, *αναβασις του νοου*. The Church is said to ascend out of the world by these pillars of incense, **#So 3:6**. And as the angel that appeared to Manoah, by ascending up in the flame of the altar, is said to do wondrously, **#Jud 13:19,20**, so do the saints by their daily devotions coming up (as Cornelius's prayers and alms did) for a memorial before God, **#Ac 10:4**, and being a precious incense, **#Ps 141:2**, far beyond that of Baal priests or chimney chaplains, who were called Chemarims, or black ones, *ab incensione thuris*, from their much offering up of incense, with the smoke whereof they were blacked and sooted, as some hold, **#Zep 1:4**.

**And she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels]** Harlot-like: matrons adorn not themselves so pompously. Whence Cicero

compares the Latin tongue to a grave matron; the Greek to a sumptuous harlot in all her bravery. This draws the senses, and is therefore much in use among adulterers and idolaters: as Papists, for instance, with their excessive gaiety in God's service; their palls, copes, and other mass vestments of as great price, some of them, as Demetrius', king of Macedon, robe was: which none of his successors would wear, *propter invidiosam impendii magnificentiam*, for the richness thereof. God likes no such doings today in his service. The high priest indeed of old was sumptuously attired from head to foot. *Os humerosque Deo similis*, as representing the person of God, that he might dazzle the eyes of the beholders, and breed reverence in them by such an appearance. But now it is far otherwise. *Cor aureum requirit Deus, non vestem*. God looks not for gorgeous array, but gracious hearts: faith and love within, modesty and humility without: these are things of great price in the sight of God, #1Pe 3:4; these beautify the soul better than Isaac's jewels did Rebecca's body. It was therefore excellent counsel that Tertullian gave the young women of his time, and may be useful to us all: *Vestite vos serico pietatis, byssino sanctitatis*. Clothe yourselves, saith he, with the silk of piety, with the satin of sanctity, with the purple of modesty (Lib. de Cult. Femin.), so shall you have God himself to be your suitor: Christ will make love to you, and greatly desire your beauty, #Ps 45:11. "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold," #Ho 2:13. She is like that Spartan woman mentioned by Plutarch, who, when her neighbours were showing their apparel and jewels, she brought out her children, virtuous and well taught, and said, These are my ornaments and jewels.

**And she went after her lovers]** This is oft objected to her as a foul business indeed: this was the sin that disjointed God's soul from her, to the making of her desolate, a land not inhabited, #Jer 6:8. We must take special care that no creature creep into the bridal bed between Christ and the soul: or if any do, complain to him betime, and he will play Phineas's part, as Master Bradford phraseth it.

**And forget me, saith the Lord]** This is reserved to the last, as the foot and root of all the forementioned evils, both of sin and punishment. See the lack of God's holy fear: #Ro 3:18, "There is no

fear of God before their eyes." And thence it is, that their throat is a gaping grave, their mouth full of gall and guile, that destruction and misery are in their ways. Fearlessness and forgetfulness of God go always together, **#Jer 5:22,23**; these that remember him and his presence cannot but bear an awful respect to him. It is a problem in Aristotle, why are men credited more than other creatures. His answer is, οτι Θεους νομιζουσι, μονον, because they believe a deity. Man alone remembereth, and therefore reverenceth God. Those therefore that so forget him, after long experience, especially of his gracious care to protect them and to provide for them, as a husband doth for the wife of his bosom, these are strange creatures, and must look to be visited and reminded of him from whom they have so deeply revolted: for of all things God cannot abide to be forgotten. See **#Isa 17:10 De 8:11**.

Ver. 14. **Therefore, behold, I will allure her]** A strange "therefore." It may very well have "behold" at the heels of it: for the sense is this; because she hath quite forgotten me, and will never be converted of herself, I will prevent her by my mercy, recalling her mildly but mightily by my gospel. *Seducam eam et deducam in desertum*. Such another sweet text as this we have in **#Isa 57:17,18**: "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him." Ways? what ways? his covetousness, frowardness, &c. And it is as if God should say, I see these froward children will lay nothing to heart: frowns will not humble them, blows will not better them. If I do not save them till they seek me they will never be saved: therefore I "will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners: I will create the fruit of the lips peace to him." Oh, the never enough adored depth of God's free grace and superabundant love to his people! This David well understood, and therefore prayed, "Pardon my iniquity; for it is great," **#Ps 25:11**. He knew that God both could and would remit more than he could commit, and that mercy rejoiceth against judgment; while God for his own sake (though not for ours) blotteth out the thick cloud as well as the cloud, enormities as infirmities, **#Isa 44:22**. See his *non-obstante*, **#Ps 106:8**, his resolve, **#Ge 8:21**, and his *mandamus*, **#Ps 14:4**, and then it must needs be done, though no God would do it but himself,

**#Mic 7:18**, though no man could imagine how it should be done,  
**#Isa 55:7,8**.

**I will allure her]** That is, I will effectually persuade her by the preaching of the gospel. Men may speak persuasively, but God only can persuade; they may speak to the ear, but he to the heart: and this he doth to his elect, not only by a moral persuasion, but by an irresistible inward attraction, **#Ac 11:17**, by a merciful violence, by making them willing to follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth. They kiss the Son with a kiss of love and homage, having first been kissed with the kisses of his mouth: whereupon immediately follows, "Draw me, we will run after thee," **#So 1:1,4**. Elisha could do more with a kiss than his man could with a staff in raising the dead child. Christ works upon his people *fortiter*; but yet *suaviter*; powerfully, but yet sweetly, he inclineth their hearts to his testimonies, and not to covetousness, **#Ps 119:36**, and brings them to the obedience of faith, *monendo potius quam minando, docendo quam ducendo*. (*Recte Calvin textum hunc reddit, Inclino eam.*) If he do seduce them (as some render the word here) it is for no hurt, it is but to speak a word in private to them, as one friend may with another: it is but to give them his loves, as he speaks in the Canticles; to show them his glory, as he did Moses; to spread before them his beauty, and so to catch them by guile, as St Paul did the Corinthians, **#2Co 12:16** to steal away their hearts before they are aware, according to that, **#So 6:12**, that they thenceforth may be an Aminadib, a willing people, a free hearted people, **#Ps 110:3**, waiting for the law, **#Isa 42:4**, and walking by the rule, **#Ga 6:16**, &c. Oh, it is a blessed thing to be thus allured, thus inveigled, thus seduced out of the ways of sin and death, into the ways of holiness and happiness, by the doctrine of the gospel, which is the true  $\pi\epsilon\iota\theta\omega$ , the *suadae medulla, qua capiuntur homines, sed bone sue*, the divine rhetoric, wherewith men's minds are taken, but for their greatest good.

**And I will bring her into the wilderness]** Look how I at first allured my people out of Egypt, where they sat by the flesh pots, and enjoyed the pleasures of sin for a season (out of Egypt have I called my son, that I might set him higher than the kings of the earth), and brought them into the wilderness, and there extraordinarily provided

for them (never was prince so served in his greatest pomp), and spake to their hearts, giving them "right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments," **#Ne 9:13**, to their great comfort, **#Ps 19:8**. So will I again do for them, and much more than so, by Christ, in the days of the gospel. Indeed, as the people at their first setting foot upon the promised land met with trouble in the valley of Achor by the sin of Achan, so shall the saints be sure of troubles: but Christ will not leave them comfortless; a door of hope he will open unto them in their deepest distresses. Death shall be unto them, not a trap-door to hell (as it is to the wicked), but an inlet into life eternal, where they shall sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, **#Re 15:3**. Let the saints therefore rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation. Vineyards God will give them here, some grapes at least of the heavenly Canaan beforehand, spiritual benedictions, divine comforts to sustain them, such generous wine as shall make the lips of those that are asleep to speak, **#So 7:9**; yea, to sing, **#Eph 5:18,19**. Lo, such wine of the breasts and such songs of joy shall the saints have for those vines which before he threatened to destroy, **#Ho 2:12**, and that mirth which he would cause to cease, **#Ho 2:11**. Repentance can turn crosses into comforts, and (like the philosopher's stone) make golden afflictions, **#1Pe 1:7**. As it is the fair and happy daughter of an ugly and odious mother, viz. sin, *εχθρου πατρος φιλτατον τεκνον*; so it is the mother of all mercies and benefits: for it is repentance unto life, **#Ac 11:18**, yea, to salvation, and therefore never to be repented of, **#2Co 7:10**. It is that rainbow, which, if God sees shining in our hearts and lives, he will not only not drown us, but do us all good.

**And speak comfortably to her]** Heb. speak to her heart such things as shall cheer her up, and make her heart leap and even dance *levantos*. See **#Isa 60:1 cf. 1Sa 15:35**. Observe that the same word **נחם** *nacham*, signifieth to repent first, and then to comfort. And to this purpose it is that some translate the text thus, "After I have brought her into the wilderness," and so humbled her thoroughly, as I once did her forefathers there, I will speak to her heart: yea, I will take her alone for the purpose, even into a solitary wilderness, where I may more freely impart my mind to her (so some sense it), that having her whole desire, she may come up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved, **#So 8:5**, and so be brought into the bride

house with all solemnity. {Confer #Ge 34:3 Ru 2:13 Jud 19:3. Postquam perduxero eam.

After I will guide her. Tremell. *Benigne alloquar*: Castalio.}

Ver. 15. **I will give her her vineyards from thence]** Or, from thenceforth: either from that time, or from that place. God, as out of his melting heartedness toward her, he thinks she hath suffered double for all her sins, #Isa 40:2 (though she think she hath suffered less than her sins, #Ezr 9:13); so he is ready, upon her repentance, to make her (strait) a plentiful amends. He destroyed her vineyards and damped her mirth, #Ho 2:11,12. Now she shall have all again, with advantage: not her grain only for necessity, but her vineyards also for delight: yea, an honest affluence of both. She shall have real manifestations of his love: and although he take her into the wilderness, yet will he not be unto her a wilderness, or a land of darkness: wherefore then should his people say, "We are lords, we will come no more unto thee?" #Jer 2:31; why should they not rather reason thus with the prodigal: "I will go to my father; for in his house is bread enough." I will return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now. I will repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, &c. Lo, this is the right way of reasoning, *sc.* from mercy to duty, from deliverance to obedience, #Ezr 9:14. "The love of Christ constraineth us," saith Paul: the grace of the gospel teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and to live godly, &c. The kindness of God leadeth to repentance: and if bethought by the mercies of God to present our bodies for a sacrifice to God, how can we do otherwise? #2Co 5:14 Tit 2:14 Ro 2:4 Ro 12:1. If God bring vineyards out of wildernesses, comforts out of crosses, meat out of eaters, honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, that is, mercies out of difficulties, they must needs be very hardhearted that are not melted and mollified thereby, #De 32:13.

**And the valley of Achor for a door of hope]** The valley was near unto Jericho, that city of palm trees, and was fertile, fat, and full of vines, #Isa 65:10, thought to be the same with Engeddi, which is often mentioned in the Canticles. This valley was a kind of door or inlet into the promised land: and here they began first to eat of the fruits of the land, which they had so much longed for, #Jos 5:12, and now hoped for the enjoyment of the whole; whereof that valley was a pledge and earnest. Hereby, then, is covertly promised to God's people deliverance by Christ, together with the firstfruits and



earnest of the Spirit, whereby they shall be brought to an assured hope of the harvest of happiness, of the whole bargain of Christ's benefits. *Spes in humanis incerti nomen boni: spes in divinis nomen est certissimi*; #Heb 11:1, this is hope unfailable, as proceeding from faith unfeigned, which can believe God upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible. It can take a man out of the valley of Achor, that is, of trouble, {see #Jos 7:6} and set him on the everlasting mountains, where, as from Pisgah, he may have a full prospect of heaven; the hope whereof maketh absent joys present, wants plenitudes, and beguiles calamity (as good company doth the way), yea, looks upon it as an inlet to mercy, a promise whereof to apostatizing Israel some make this fat valley of Achor to be, *dotis nomine*, as a dowry; in allusion to the manner of the Jews in their marriages, to give some piece of ground to the spouse as a pledge.

**And she shall sing there]** As rejoicing in hope, #Ro 12:12. *Et res plena gaudio et spes*, as Bernard hath it. "They shall shout for joy, they shall also sing," #Ps 65:13. Some think the prophet here alludeth to that custom of the Jews to sing in the time of their vintage, see #Jud 9:27 Isa 16:10. Others will have it to be an allusion to their marriage songs; that being the time of the rejoicing of a man's heart, #So 3:11, viz. at the recovery of his lost rib. The Septuagint render it, she shall be humbled; and indeed the word signifieth both to be humbled and to sing. Some are humbled, but not humble; low, but not lowly; these must look for more load; but they that mourn in a godly manner are sure to be comforted. God will turn all their sighing into singing; they shall sing aloud upon their beds, which they have soaked in tears, and made to swim again, as David, #Ps 6:6. A reconciled condition is a singing condition. Bernard was so overjoyed at his conversion, that he was almost beside himself. Cyprian telleth his friend, Donatus, that his comforts then were inexpressible. Austin saith the like of himself. The saints cannot but sing at this door of hope, though they be not yet got in at it. See #Ps 138:5, "they shall sing in the ways of the Lord," though they be yet but wayfarers. "God's statutes are their songs even in the house of their pilgrimage," #Ps 119:54, as hoping to sing shortly in the "height of Zion, to flow to the bountifulness of the Lord," #Jer 31:12. "As in the days of her youth, and in the day

when she came up," &c., out of a low country, but a lower condition; being shiftless and succourless (helpless). Then did God put timbrels into their hands and ditties into their mouths. See #Ex 15:20. And so it is here said, he will do again in the time of the gospel. Let our non-singers here take notice, that singing (and that jointly with others) is a gospel ordinance; and for further proof let them read Mr Cotton's excellent treatise upon this subject.

Ver. 16. **And it shall be in that day]** A sweet promise of a thorough reformation, much like that #Zec 13:2. God will turn to his people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one shoulder, #Zep 3:9, for which end he forms their speech for them, and tutors them here how to term him. *Ishi* they must call him, but not *Baali*, my husband, but not my lord: not that there was any hurt in the word, my Baal or Lord; but because it had been abused and given to idols, God would have none of it (so Tyrannus, *fur sophista*); or because it was grown among the better sort a name of contempt: like as for the same reason the word burden is rejected, #Jer 23:36. Or lastly, lest the people, while they spoke of one thing, should think of another; and naming Baal, should be put in mind of an idol. This is Jerome's reason. Some distinguish thus between the two words, that *Ish* is a name of love, *Baal* of fear (Lyra). Others observe that *Ish* signifieth an excellent man, and is therefore made choice of as every way better than *Baal*, or Lord (Oecolamp.). Augustus forbade men to call him Lord; and desired rather that more amiable name of Father of his country. It is wisdom, when we call upon God, to make choice of fit titles, not only such as he in his word hath warranted, but also such as may be suitable to our requests, and helpful to our faith in prayer; such as wherein we may see the thing prayed for coming towards us, as it were. This will notably excite devotion. Instances of it, see #Ps 80:1 Ac 1:24 4:24-30 Note there and in the next verse, that there is no small danger in words and names. What a deal of mischief hath the word Huguenot done in France, and Puritan here. In 1572, Cardinal Allen at Rheims instructed his emissary seducers, sent over hither, to divide the people under the names of Protestant and Puritan: provoking them thereby to real and mutual both hate and contempt. His Rheimists in their annotations on #1Ti 1:20 warn their readers of using the words of heretics (so they call us), though they have no great hurt in them, and hold to their old terms of mass, penance,

priest, &c. They call us innovators, but we may call them so better. The truth is, we may not teach *nova*, new truths nor yet *nove* novelties. Castalion cannot be excused in his *Iana Genius Respublica* for *ecclesia* and other affected novelties. Melancthon's wish was that men would not only teach the same things, but *in iisdem verbis, in iisdem syllabis*, in the same words, yea, in the same syllables; for he that feigneth new words brings in new doctrines (it may be thought), as did Arminius. And yet it is not many years since here, among us, that he that would not be an Arminian was held no better than a practical Puritan. But let us keep our old words (said those veterans), and we shall easily keep our old faith. The devil doth sometimes speak the truth for his own ends. But was Winchester well advised when he made the Lord, and not to say our Lord, to be *symbolum haereticorum*, a note of a heretic. Or Dr Story, whose rule to know a heretic was this, they will say the Lord, and we praise God, and the living God. This was not *Novum nomen*, new name but *Novum crimen*, new fault, Gaius Caesar. Much like that of Pope Paul II, who pronounced them heretics that did not name the name academy either in earnest or in jest; and another pope made it heresy to hold that there were any in direct opposition to.

Ver. 17. **For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth]** So precise she shall be, so circumspect, according to **#Ex 23:13**, that she should spit out of her mouth those dunghill deities with utmost contempt, as David had done before her, **#Ps 16:4**. If bodily filthiness may not be once named among Christians, **#Eph 5:3**, why should spiritual? The primitive Christians would not call their days of the week by the heathenish names of *Dies Martis, Dies Mercurii, &c.* (as Mercurius Trismegist had superstitiously named them), but the first, second, third, &c., day of the week: as not willing to have the names of those idols mentioned among God's people. Mentioned they may be (no doubt), recitative without sin, as Baal is, **#Ro 11:4**, and Castor and Pollux, **#Ac 28:11**, but not *honoris gratia*, for honour' sake, or without some expression of detestation of them; such as was that of Cyril, who, speaking of paganish idolatries, breaks out thus, Βορβορουμεθα ταυτα λεγοντες, we rake a dunghill in a discourse of dunghill gods. What a pathetic speech or rather shriek is that of Almighty God, **#Jer 44:4**, "Oh! do not this abominable thing": do not honour idols in the least. Shall I

bow my knee to yonder jackanapes? said that martyr, pointing to the Rood in Paul's. Should I kiss Baal? as, they did #1Ki 19:18; or so much as kiss my hand in honour to him? as #Job 31:27 were not this to deny the God that is above #Job 31:28. And how can those be excused that have so often in their mouths *Jupiter omnipotens Mehurcule, Mecastor, et caetera magis portenta quam numina*, saith Jerome? and those that think their verses nothing so neat, unless there be often naming, and sometimes invoking too, of Apollo Minerva, Venus, &c.? Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? #Jas 3:11. Those that say they think no hurt in all this are no more excused thereby than he, that said (Ovid),

“*Lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba.*”

Those who thus borrow garnish from the Egyptians may therewith get their botches and boils. Howsoever, they may fear to have Bellarmine himself (who was no precisian) to rise up in judgment against them and condemn them; who would not have Paul called *Divus Paulus*, Divine Paul, but *Beatus*, blessed, because *Divus* and *Diva* were the words of the heathens for their gods and goddesses.

**And they shall no more be remembered]** so without indignation and detestation, without: "What have I to do any more with idols?" "Get you hence," #Ho 14:1 Isa 30:22 *Abite hinc, abite longe*, Away from here, be far gone, as Charles V said of all his worldly pomp and achievements at the last as Amnon thrust Tamar out of doors when he had had his will of her, when he had moiled himself in that filthy guzzle, and sullied his conscience. "She multiplied her whoredoms" (saith the prophet) "in calling to remembrance the days of her youth wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt," #Eze 23:21 Ho 2:8. Not the new scent of meat, but the remembrance of their old flesh pots moved Israel they found sweetness in a lust twice sod, they had still the "broth of those abominable things in their vessels," as the prophet Isaiah hath phrased it, #Isa 65:4. To remember with delight sins past is to recommit them; and herein the deceitful heart is with all care to be looked unto, that when we call to mind former evil practices, though with an intent to be humbled for them, we be not insnared, and

drawn to commit them afresh by being tickled in the thought of them.

Ver. 18. **And in that day will I make my covenant for them with the beasts, &c.**] At the first creation all things were subject to man on this condition that he should be subject to his Maker as his master. *Rebellis autem facta est quia homo numini, creatura homini* (Augustin). But no sooner did man rebel against God but the creature began to rebel against him. Look how a nobleman's servants wilt draw in defence of their lord, and soldiers fight for their general: so here, God is Lord of hosts. "They continue this day according to thine ordinance" (and fight in their courses, **#Jud 5:20**), "for they are all thy servants," **#Ps 119:91**; ready pressed they are to seize a sinner, and to do execution upon him, as a traitor, and rebel to the highest majesty: as the sword that Hector gave Ajax turned into his own bowels, when once he began to abuse it to the hurt of hurtless creatures. Now here God promiseth to abolish that enmity, to make peace, even *pacem omnimodam*, peace, peace, as the prophet Isaiah hath it, **#Isa 26:8**, a multiplied peace, a perfect, sheer, pure peace with God, with themselves, with all creatures; and to restore them in Christ that dominion they once had over the works of his hands, **#Ps 8:6 Heb 2:7**, yea, power over all nations, **#Re 2:26**, with a promise that all shall work together for their good, **#Ro 8:28**, and they shall be fully freed, if not from the smart, yet from the hurt of every creature. Compare **#Eze 34:25 Job 5:23 Isa 11:6,7**, where the prophet seemeth to allude to the carriage of the beasts in Noah's ark, all bloodiness and rapine laid aside. The Jews foolishly argue, from these texts, that Christ is not yet come, because the lion yet rageth, the wolf devoureth, serpents yet sting, and spare not the beast. And some interpreters of ours are of the opinion, that these promises shall be literally fulfilled at the restitution of all things, which they make to be at the time of the call of the Jews. But when I find Nebuchadnezzar and other enemies of the Church to be called lions, leopards, wolves, &c., as **#Jer 5:6**, and elsewhere, I cannot but think that these might be here meant, in part at least, *ponentque ferocia Poeni cords volente Deo* (Virg.); according to Peter's vision, **#Ac 10:10-16**, and that God will so meeken the spirits of his converts, that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain, **#Isa 11:9**. The literal sense is very good, I grant; but yet it is still to be taken (as all such promises are), 1. with exception

of the cross here, 2. with expectation of the full accomplishment hereafter, in the state of perfection.

**And I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth]** These words seem to be opposed to that threat, **#Ho 1:5**, "I will break the bow of Israel," &c. And it is as if he should say, After that I have broken their power, and tamed their pride by the enemies' forces, then I will punish those enemies, and so take order with them, that they shall not hurt my people by any of their hostilities. Lo, peace is a piece of God's covenant; and covenant mercies are very sweet, when all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, **#Ps 25:10**; not mercy only, but truth too, that comes by virtue of a covenant. Mark what God saith to Abraham, **#Ge 17:20,21**; I have blessed Ishmael; twelve princes shall he beget: but my covenant will I establish to Isaac. And in the same chapter, divines observe, that in ten verses thereof God repeateth his covenant which he made with Abraham thirteen times, to note thus much, that that was the mercy indeed that must satisfy Abraham in all his troubles, sorrows, and afflictions: for the covenant of God's peace shall not be removed, no, not "when the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed," **#Isa 54:10**. "The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace," **#Ps 29:11**.

**And will make them to lie down safely]** Being gathered under my wings, they shall repose themselves upon my power and providence, committing themselves to me in well doing. All true and solid security, whether inward or outward; all true peace, whether of country or of conscience, floweth from God's favour. **#Ps 3:3-4:8** Hence the apostle wisheth grace and peace, and the angels sang, "Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth," even the peace of goodwill toward men, the goodwill of him that dwelt in the bush, **#Eph 1:2 Lu 2:14 De 33:16**. "The Lord is with me," saith David, "I will not fear what man can do unto me." I will sleep and wake, and wake and sleep again; for the Lord sustaineth me, **#Ps 4:8**. No wonder I slept so soundly and safely (said King Philip) when Antipater watched me. Abner watched not so well, when David fetched away Saul's spear and pitcher, and was barely told of it. Ishbosheth was slain while he slept. The saints go ever under a double guard, the peace of God within them, and the power of God

without them, and may therefore, *in utramque aurem dormire*, lie down safely, {see #Jer 23:6} call their souls to rest, #Php 4:7 1Pe 1:5 Le 26:5 Ps 116:7.

Ver. 19. **And I will betroth thee unto me for ever]** This, because it could not be easily believed, is thrice repeated. We believe not (whatever men may dream to the contrary) without much ado and many conflicts. When faith goes about to lay hold on Christ, the devil raps her on the fingers, and would beat her off. Hence she is fain to take great pains for it, to work hard for her living. The apostle speaks more than once of the work of faith, *το εργον της πιστεως*, #1Th 1:3 2Th 1:11. And it is no less difficult (say divines) to believe the gospel than to fulfil the law. No man can come unto the Son except the Father draw him, #Joh 6:44. The soul naturally hangs back, and had as lief put off its immortality as put on Christ: the devil also doth his utmost to hinder. The contest was not so great between Michael and him concerning Moses' dead body as it is here between the believer and him concerning Christ's living body. And should not God mightily assist, the business would never be done. Hence faith is called the faith of God's power, #Col 2:12, the faith of his operation; and what an Almighty power God doth therein put forth is elegantly described by the apostle in that sixfold gradation, #Eph 1:19, which shows it to be more than a moral persuasion. Betroth thee, I will, I will, I will, saith God here; and some think the sacred Trinity is hero (though darkly, according to the manner of those times) brought in betrothing the Church in this *trina repetitio*. threefold repetition. And mark, that he doth not say, I will be reconciled unto thee, and receive thee again after thy foul plays with me (for *Reconciliationes fere sunt vulpinae amicitiae inter homines*, Men are seldom reconciled heartily), but I will espouse thee, marry thee unto me, and that for ever. I will null the bill of divorce, love you no less than if you had continued true to me, or were now a pure virgin. *Quis hanc Dei bonitatem digne collaudet?* saith Drusius. Who can sufficiently set forth this goodness of God? When God once pardoneth sin, he will remember it no more; he will not come with back reckonings. Discharges in justification are never repealed or called in again. *Peccata non redeunt* sins are not returned, is a true axiom; and it is no less true that *peccata non minuunt iustificationem*. God can pardon sins of all sizes, and as soon disperse the thick cloud as the cloud, #Isa 44:22. See the

matchlessness of his mercy to a repenting adulteress, #Jer 3:5. What greater love can he show to her than to marry her again, and rejoice over her as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, #Isa 62:5. Yea, to rest in his love, and to joy over her with singing, #Zep 3:17, and to do this for ever (as it is here promised), so that there shall be no more breach of conjugal love and communion for ever between them. *Area amorem illius*, Oh love this love of his, saith Bernard, and reciprocate. And as the wife will keep her bed only for her husband (saith Mr Bradford, martyr), although in other things she is content to have fellowship with others, as to speak, sit, eat, drink, go, &c.; so our consciences (which are Christ's wives) must needs keep the bed, that is, God's sweet promises, alone for ourselves and our husband; there to meet together, to embrace and laugh together, and to be joyful together. If sin, the law, the devil, or anything would creep into the bed, and lie there, then complain to thine husband Christ, and forthwith thou shalt see him play Phineas' part; and again, if Satan should summon us, saith he, to answer for our sins, or debts, in that the wife is no suitable person, but the husband, we may well bid him enter his action against our husband Christ, and he will make him a sufficient answer. Thus Mr Bradford in a certain letter of his unto a friend.

**In righteousness and in judgment, in lovingkindness, &c.]** These are the gems of that ring that Christ bestoweth upon his spouse, saith Mercer. These are those *κειμήλια*, or love tokens, that Christ the bridegroom giveth to his bride the Church, saith Tarnovius. Here he promiseth to perform to her, and to work in her, all those offices and requisites due from married couples in that estate the one to the other. God will both justify her by the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and sanctify her by the Spirit of judgment, that is, of sanctification. {See #Joh 16:10,11 Mt 12:20} {See Trapp on "Mt 12:20"} And because the best have their frailties, and although they be vessels of honour, yet are they but earthen vessels, and have their flaws, their cracks; therefore it is added, "I have betrothed thee unto me in lovingkindness and in mercies," *q.d.* My heart and ways towards you shall be full of gentleness and sweetness, without morosity or hardness. My lovingkindness shall be great, #Ne 9:17, marvellous great, #Ps 31:21, excellent, #Ps 36:7, everlasting, #Isa 54:8, merciful, #Ps 117:2, multitudes of lovingkindnesses, #Isa 63:7; as



for my mercies, or bowels of compassion towards you, they are incomprehensible, as having all the dimensions, #Eph 3:18. "Thy mercy, O God, reacheth unto the heavens," there is the height of it, #Ps 36:5. "Great is thy mercy towards me, and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowermost hell," there is the depth of his mercy, #Ps 86:13. "The earth is full of thy goodness," there is the breadth of it. "All the ends of the earth have seen thy salvation," there is the length of it. O pray to see that blessed sight, #Eph 1:18 3:18, that beholding, as in a glass, this glory of the Lord, shining bright in his attributes, you may be "transformed into the same image, from glory to glory," #2Co 3:18; and as in water face answereth face, as lead answereth the mould, as tallow answereth tallow, indenture, indenture, so may we resemble and express the Lord, our husband, in righteousness, holiness, lovingkindness, tender mercies, and faithfulness, that as the woman is the image and glory of the man, so may we be of Christ. For our encouragement it must be remembered that the covenant that Christ maketh with us is a double covenant, to perform his part as well as ours, to make us such as he requireth us to be in all holy conversation and godliness; for which end, also, we have a duplicate of his law written in our hearts, #Jer 31:33, a law in our mind, answerable to the law of his mouth, #Ro 7:23. In a word, he graciously undertaketh for both parts; therefore is the covenant everlasting, and the fruits of it are sure mercies, compassions that fail not. *In foedere nero nihil potest incidere quo minus sit aeternum, quum non sit ei adiecta conditio*, saith Mercer upon this text; that is, in the new covenant there can nothing happen whereby it should not be everlasting, since there is no condition required on our part. That faith or faithfulness mentioned in the next verse God requireth not as a mutual restipulation of our part (as works were in the old covenant); but here it is rather a declaration of his pleasure what he would have us to do, and whereto he will enable us. It is not a condition, to endanger the covenant; but an assurance, that he will give us strength to keep it.

Ver. 20. **I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness]** Tremellius, Drusius, and Tarnovius render it *in fide*, in faith, and interpret it of *de fide vera et salvifica*, of that true justifying faith whereby we are united to Christ; and for this they urge the next words as an exposition of these. "And they shall know the Lord": alleging some other texts of Scripture wherein saving knowledge is

put for justifying faith, as **#Isa 53:11 Jer 31:33 Joh 17:3**. The Septuagint also render it *ἐπιγνώση*. Now *ἐπιγνώσις* in the New Testament is often used for saving and growing faith, **#Tit 1:1 Col 2:1 3:10**, which indeed is the bond of the spiritual marriage, and is itself nothing else but a fiducial assent presupposing knowledge. For man is a rational creature, faith a prudent thing, comprehending in itself these three acts; 1. Knowledge in the understanding; 2. Assent, or rather consent, in the will; 3. Trust or confidence in the heart; certainty of adherence, if not of evidence. The Papists fasten faith in the will as in the adequate subject, that they may the meanwhile do what they will with the understanding and the heart. To which purpose they exclude all knowledge, and detest trust in Christ's promises, expunging the very name of it everywhere by their *Indices Expurgatorii*. A blind belief, as the Church believes, is as much as they require of their misled and muzzled proselytes. Bellarmine saith that faith may far better be defined by ignorance than by knowledge. But how shall men believe on him of whom they have not heard? Let us leave to the Papists their implicit faith and their blind obedience, and cry after Christ as that poor man did, "Lord, that mine eyes might be opened," and that I may "know the Lord"; yea, "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "These things have I written unto you" (saith St John to those that were no babies or zanies in faith or knowledge) "that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may (yet more) believe in the Son of God," **#1Jo 5:13**. David, though he had proceeded farther in the discovery of divine truths than those before him, **#Ps 119:99**, yet he was still to seek of that which might be known, **#Ps 119:96**. Even as those great discoverers of the newly found lands in America were wont to confess, at their return, that there was still *a plus ultra*, more yet, to be discovered.

Ver. 21. **And it shall come to pass in that day**] In that time of grace and reconciliation, fitly set forth by the name of a day in regard of, 1. Revelation; 2. Adornment; 3. Consolation; 4. Distinction; 5. Speedy preterition.

**I will hear, saith the Lord of hosts**] That is, I that have the command of both the upper and nether springs and forces, sun, moon, stars, &c., **#De 4:9**, those storehouses of God's good treasure

which he openeth to our profit, **#De 28:12**, and therehence makes a scatter of riches upon the earth by their influence. I that stop and unstop those bottles of the sky, the clouds, which there hang and move, though weighty with their own burden; I that make the earth to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and meat to the eater, **#Isa 55:10**, &c.

**I will hear the heavens]** Heb. I will answer, that is, I will so hear as that I will answer; so will not great ones sometimes, or if they do, yet the poor man speaks supplications, but the rich answereth him roughly, **#Pr 18:23**. Solyman II, the grand signor, when many thousands of his poor Christian subjects, to be eased of their heavy taxations, fell down before him and offered to turn Mahometans, rejected their conversion, and doubled their taxations. God hath here a great sort of suppliants (the poets feign that *litae*, or supplications, are always about Jupiter); the heaven, the earth, the grain, &c., and he heareth and speedeth them all. Never any humble petitioner went sad out of his presence. Never said he to the house of Israel, Seek ye me in vain. The heathen idols may do so, but he scorns it. "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give flowers?" **#Jer 14:22**. Surely they cannot, till God have heard and answered them. The genealogy of rain, of grain, and wine is here resolved into Jehovah; and he promiseth to endow his beloved spouse with them as part (though the least part) of her jointure. "All are yours, for you are Christ's," **#1Co 3:23**. In marrying with the heir you have right to all. Here is *omnium rerum ubertas ob Dei semen Christum*, saith Jerome, plenty of all things for Christ's sake, who, wherever he comes, cometh with a cornucopia; a horn of salvation, besides a largess of outward comforts. This was a very necessary doctrine at all times to be taught in the Church, lest, pressed with miseries, men should faint in their minds. Christ knows we have need of these things also, and therefore not only bids us pray, but promiseth to give us our daily bread by a concatenation of causes, by a ladder of providences, which the heathens call destiny, but the saints call it the harmony of the world; a gallant description whereof we have in **#Eze 1**, far different from the Stoics' fate or the doctrine of Plato and Aristotle, and other of the world's wizards, concerning the Divine providence, which they either denied or imbasd.

**And they shall hear the earth]** Which, being chapped and scorched, seemeth to solicit showers and fattening influences by an elegant personification, as if these insensible creatures understood what they did. When men are once in covenant with God all the creatures will be serviceable to them, yea, greedy to do them good, they will even cry for it.

Ver. 22. **And the earth shall hear]** That is, shall bear great store of grain, wine, and oil ( *vinum pendulum, i.e. uvas*). New and fresh oil the word signifies, newly expressed, clear and shining, such as is called golden oil, #Zec 4:12. God's dear children shall have the best of the best, #Isa 55:1-6. Even the kidneys of wheat, or whatsoever dainties the earth can afford them. They shall suck honey out of the rock; or, if it be but water, yet it shall be to them as sweet as honey, because therein they taste and see the Lord's goodness, and they have meat to eat that the world knows not of.

**And they shall hear Jezreel]** That is, they shall answer the pains and prayers of God's people, who are here called Jezreel still (though the Septuagint read it Israel), not to upbraid them with their former wickedness and calamities thereby procured (which yet was the first reason of that name given them, #Ho 1:4), but rather to set forth the riches of his grace imparted to such a graceless people. And in addition to show that nothing could hinder them from partaking of those covenant mercies and that happy communion with God whereto they were now restored. This very name of theirs, once their shame, should now turn to their glory. Of Jezreel, scattered by God (which is one signification of the name), they should become Jezreel, a seed of God (which is another), that they might comfort themselves with the hope of Christ, the promised seed, and know that their posterity should not so degenerate into gentility, but that many of them should embrace Christ and inherit the promises, as did Araunah the Jebusite, who became a famous proselyte, #Zec 9:7, {See Trapp on "Zec 9:7"} and as Jether the Ishmeelite, #1Ch 2:17, was for his faith and religion called an Israelite, #2Sa 17:25, and as Christ calleth himself Jesus of Nazareth, as a title of honour, which was once cast upon him as a reproach.

Ver. 23. **And I will sow her unto me in the earth]** Not in the air, as once, when they were scattered into the four winds of heaven; but in

the earth which the heavens should hear, **#Ho 2:21**, the inhabitants whereof should be multiplied, and become as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered, **#Ho 1:10**, *{See Trapp on "Ho 1:10"}*; and **#Jer 31:27 Eze 36:37**. The preaching of the gospel is a kind of sowing of seed, **#1Pe 1:23**, and this seeding is in the earth, that they may be gathered into heaven, where the mower shall fill his hand, and he that bindeth sheaves his bosom, **#Ps 129:7**. And although God's elect lie here for a time under the clods, yet at length they shall fructify, and many spring from them by whom the name of Christ shall be so propagated. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand," **#Isa 53:10**.

**And I will have mercy upon her]** Her unhappy name, Lorubamah, shall be done away, and the contrary come in place. Lo! this is as it were the epilogue of the sermon, and it is very comfortable. The Sun of righteousness loves not to set in a cloud. "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous, yea, our God is merciful." Be it that he is once righteous, yet he is both gracious and merciful for it, **#Ps 116:5**. The Jews, for their seventy years' captivity in Babylon, had seven seventies of years (set forth by Daniel's weeks) granted for the enjoying of their own country. God's mercies bear the same proportion to his punishments (when he hath to deal with his elect people) which seven, a complete number, hath to a unity. This promise here made the apostle testifieth, **#Ro 9:25**, to be begun to be fulfilled in his time by the conversion of some Jews, and calling of some Gentiles. The full accomplishment thereof we daily expect and pray for.

**And I will say to them]** That is, I will make them so, as when he said to Lazarus, Come forth of the grave, he brought him forth; together with his word there went forth a power.

**And they shall say]** *Dicere nostra est fides et obedientia nostra*, saith Pareus here; we say thus when we believe and obey. There shall be, restored, therefore, between God and his people a most sweet harmony, and an intimate conjunction, such as he had before described to be between himself and all the second causes, for his Church's sake; and truly it is never well with us, indeed, till the

heavens answer the earth till Christ, the Sun of righteousness, so shine into our hearts, that we melt and comply as here, and as **#Zec 13:9**. {See Trapp on "Zec 13:9"}

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, &c.**] This yet is emphatic: and it is as if he had said, Go over the same subject again in shorter discourse, and lay before them the same truths, but in more lively colours, that the obstinate may be left without excuse, and the penitent may not be left without comfort. *Iterun abi*, Go to them once more, and be instant with them, or stand over them, as St Paul saith, **#2Ti 4:2** (επιστηθι), and as St Paul doth, in crying down the Jews' conceit of being justified by the works of the law, and in disgracing the sin of fornication so common at Corinth. Chrysostom at Antioch having preached sundry sermons against swearing, was at length asked when he would preach upon another subject? He answered, when you leave swearing I will leave preaching against swearing. Austin (De Doct. Christian.) would have a preacher so long to pursue and press the same point, until, by the gesture and countenance of the hearers, he perceive that they understand it, and will practise it. This is to whet the word of God upon people (as Moses' phrase is) by going oft over the same thing, as the knife doth the whetstone. {#De 6:7, *Shanan et Shanah repetere sicut in acuendo*} A like type to the former is here first propounded, secondly expounded, that at length it might fasten. A preacher must not desist, though at first he prevail not (as some from this second injunction collect, that this prophet would have done), but he must turn himself into all manner of shapes and fashions both of speech and of spirit to win people to God, with all longsuffering and doctrine, **#2Ti 4:2**. And this the Lord here teacheth Hosea to do by his own example of patience and tolerance, notably set forth in this ensuing type.

**Love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress**] This was a harder task than to take her, **#Ho 1:2**, in hope she would prove honest. But now that she hath played the adulteress and so deserved to be discarded, yet to love her, yea, and that when she is habituated and hardened in her lewd practices (as the Hebrew word signifieth), *Durus est sic sermo*, who can bear it? ( *Non tam actum quam habitum significat. Rivet.*) If none else can, yet God both can and

will, as appeareth by this whole parable, wherein the prophet is commanded to represent God, as in the former type, #Ho 1:4,5 9-11, and by loving that wife which he had taken before, though she had played false with him, to show what was the love of God toward Israel. She forsaketh me, saith he, who give her all the good she either hath or hopeth for, and followeth after those that put bottles of wine to her mouth, she loves those flagons, &c. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, &c.: howbeit I will not relinquish her, but will love her freely as if she had never offended me. O matchless mercy! *O cocnio plena consolationis!* O most comfortable sermon! God so loved the world, the *mundus immundus*, dirty world, that he gave his only begotten Son. This was a *sic* so, without a *sicut*, like, there being nothing in nature that can possibly parallel it. See #Ro 5:8. God loveth apostates, idolaters, adulterers, yet not as such, but as he intendeth and respecteth their conversion to himself; which nothing will sooner effect than the sense of such an undeserved love. I am not ignorant that another sense is set upon these words, as thus; Go, yet love a woman not married, as yet but espoused unto thee, who may hereafter be thy wife, but is for her adultery rejected for a long season: so God loved the Israelites as an adulterous spouse, and therefore for a long while neglected, but yet at length to be taken by him to wife, according to #Ho 2:15,19.

**Beloved of her friend]** *sc.* of some paramour, as #Jer 3:1, "thou hast played the harlot with many lovers." These the Greeks called *εταιρους*, fellow friends; the whore was called *εταιρα*: so they flattered their own vices, putting gilded names on them, as our blades name drunkenness good fellowship, harlots, she sinners, &c. The Septuagint render it a woman that loveth naughty things or naughty packs. But I like the former interpretation better, and it is agreeable to the Chaldee Paraphrast.

**Who look to other gods]** Look and lust, *ut vidi! ut perii!* The mind lodgeth in the eye, and looketh out at that window of wickedness. "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand," &c., #Job 31:26,27, alludeth to the practice of those old idolaters, which was to kiss their idols, if they could reach them, as #1Ki 19:18. (Cicero tells of the image of Hercules *cuius mentum*

*osculis adorantium attritum fuit* who chin he will kiss and rub, and the Papists so kiss their pictures, that hard marble is worn with it, saith Sir Edwin Sands an eyewitness.) But when they could not come at the idol to kiss it, they looked up and kissed their hand, in token of homage; and this was called adoration ( *quasi applicatio manus ad os*). This looking to other gods, imports a turning towards them. See #De 31:18,20, a loving them, a longing after them, and an expectation of some good from them. No wonder, therefore, that such whorish hankerings and honings were offensive to the jealous and just God: "but the unjust knoweth no shame," #Zep 3:5; men are forbidden so much as to lift up their eyes to their idols, #Eze 23:27. And shall I lift up mine eyes unto the hills (saith David, as some read that text), as if from thence came my help? #Ps 121:1. *Absit*. God forbid. Christ's spouse hath a dove's chaste eye, #So 4:1; and he would have her like that Persian lady, who being at Cyrus's wedding, and asked how she liked the bridegroom? How? saith she, I know not. I saw nobody there but my husband.

**And love flagons of wine]** Luxury is the ordinary companion of idolatry, as #Ex 32:6 1Co 10:7 Re 18:13,14. See #Jud 9:27 Am 2:8. *O monachi vestri stomachi, &c.* Oh king of your belly. At Paris and Louvain the best wine is called *vinum theologicum*, the divinity wine; it is also called *vinum cos*, wine of the consul, *i.e. caloris, odoris, saporis optimi*. the best warmth, fragrance and taste. Those clergy locusts lick up all; those abbey lubbers are good for nothing but to devour grain, like vermin; those wine bibbers and flesh mongers (as Solomon calleth them) are no better than the excrements of human society, *gelulim*, belly gods, and fit servants of those dung hill gods, as idols are called, #Hab 2:18,19 cf. Jer 10:3-5. And a scavenger, whose living is to empty privies, is far to be preferred before such a one, as, looking to other gods, and making his gut his god, lives but to fill privies. For a flagon of wine, or a meal's meat, any god may soon have the hearts and the services of such as have (Poliphemus-like) no supreme deity but their belly. Ver. 2. **So I bought her to me.**] God is to be obeyed, though it go never so much against the heart and the hair with us. 'Επου τω Θεω. Follow God, was a heathen but an honest precept (Epictet.). This he that would do, must first deny himself, and say, with that Dutch divine, *Veniat, veniat, verbum Dei, &c.*, Let a word of command



come forth from God, and we will submit thereto, though we had six hundred lives to lose, yea, though we can see no reason for it. Indeed, in human governments, where reason is shut out, there tyranny is thrust in. But where God commandeth, there to ask a reason is presumption; to oppose reason is flat rebellion.

**I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver]** That is, fifteen shekels, or shillings, or thereabouts; no great price it was that he gave for her, whether for hire or dowry; probably it was in order to marrying her, and in reference to that law, **#De 21:11**. Israel was once a precious people, God's peculiar treasure, such as comprehended all his gettings. The Jews have a saying, that those seventy souls that went down with Jacob into Egypt were more worth than all the seventy nations of the earth beside. But now, behold, how cheap they are grown; they are valued all of them at fifteen pieces of silver, a goodly price, **#Zec 11:12 Mt 27:9**. If the tongue of the righteous be as choice silver, yet the heart of the wicked is little worth, **#Pr 10:20**. There (as in the sea) is that leviathan (the king of all the children of pride), and there are creeping things innumerable, crawling lusts, and lawless passions; but for anything of worth, it is not there to be had. Hence, as at the last destruction of Jerusalem, thirty Jews were sold for one penny, so here the whole body of the nation are bought and sold for a small sum. "How weak is thine heart" (how light cheap), saith the Lord God to this light housewife, "seeing thou dost all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman?" **#Eze 16:30**. God and his people reckon of men by their righteousness. He looked down from heaven to see who sought after God, **#Ps 14:3**. As for others, he regards them no more than men do dross, draft, chaff, or such like refuse stuff, **#Ps 119:119 1:4, &c.**, whatever great thoughts they take up of themselves, and however the world rates them. Antiochus Epiphanes, that great king of Syria, is called a vile person, **#Da 11:21**. And the adversary is this wicked Haman, saith Esther: that was his true title, which he perhaps never heard till now.

**And an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley]** God buys not this people (though for never so little) to starve them, but alloweth them alimony, though not so fine a food; barley, and not wheat. See **#Re 6:6**, prisoners' pittance, coarse fare, such as slaves

and beasts are fed with; as she had been like horse and mule, **#Ps 32:9**, and lest she should wax fat and kick, she is held to strait allowance. Whereby is signified the mean and low condition that the ten tribes (and afterwards all the Jews) should be in, till Christ came to marry them to himself. First, they should be valued but at half the price of a slave. Secondly, they should be coarsely fed, as beasts, with barley, or, perhaps, not so well as the Jews' beasts: for among them the mouth of the ox treading out their grain might not be muzzled. But the heathens were wont to put an engine (called *πανσικοπη*) about their servants' necks, and it reached down to their hands, that they might not so much as lick of the wheat meal when they were sifting it. Now they were scattered among the heathen and sold to the nations for nought, **#Ps 44:11,12**. They that were wont to feed delicately were desolate in the streets; they that were brought up in scarlet embraced dunghills, **#La 4:5**, their flagons of wine were turned into tankards of water, and their bellaria, or junkets (so the Septuagint render it, and not flagons) into brown bread, horse bread: that so those whom pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness had undone, hardship and penury might reduce to duty, **#Eze 16:49**. God would seem for a time to have forgotten them, that they might at length remember themselves: he loves to chastise men's insolence with indigence, as he did Hagar's, **#Ge 21:15**, and the prodigal's, **#Lu 15:16**, who for his swinish life was brought to swine's meat, and thereby brought home to his father. It is the way of God to humble those he intendeth good unto, to prepare them for mercy by cutting them short of these outward comforts. Though this be here a threatening, yet there is a promise in it, **#Ho 3:3**, that God will take off the smarting plaister so soon as it hath eaten out the proud flesh. It is in very faithfulness that he afflicteth his people, because he will be true to their souls, and save them. And hence it is that he so diets them, and keeps them short, that he may do them good in the latter end, that he may change their bricks (made in their bondage) into sapphires and agates. See **#Ex 24:10 Isa 54:11**.

Ver. 3. **Thou shalt abide for me many days**] Even till the last days, **#Ho 3:5**, or last year, as Ezekiel hath it, **#Eze 38:8**. Thus they have abode, or sat (as a desolate widow, so the Hebrew hath it), 700 years before Christ, and above 1600 years since, in a most forlorn condition; crying out in their, daily prayers to God, *Veniat regnum tuum, bimherah, beiamenu*, Let thy kingdom come speedily, even in

our days. And again, *Aedifica templum tuum, aedifica, aedifica, cito, cito, cito*; Lord, build, build, build thy Temple quickly, quickly, quickly. But God's time is not yet come; for they are not yet thoroughly humbled. Were they but ripe, he is ready; when help is seasonable, his fingers itch (saith one) to be doing, as the mother's breast aches when it is time the child had suck, #Ex 12:40,41. At midnight were the firstborn slain and Israel sent away, because then exactly the 400 or 430 years of their captivity in Egypt were expired. So #Da 5:30, "In that night was Belshazzar slain"; because then exactly the seventy years were ended. God promiseth to take this Church again to wife, but having found her formerly so fickle and faithless, he would for a long time try her, and keep her unmarried as a probationer: he would lay her (as we do filthy garments) a soaking and a frosting for many hundred years, to try them, "and to purge, and to make white, even to the time of the end, because it is yet for a time appointed," #Da 11:35. And to presume to prescribe to him in this case is to set the sun by our dial. As he never fails his in his own time, so he seldom comes at ours. Here, then, our strength is to sit still, #Isa 30:7, and not to start up, and say, as that impatient prince did, "What should I wait for the Lord any longer?" #2Ki 6:33. Shall Christ lose his right in his wife, because he takes her not by the day set down in our calendar? possibly the calendar of heaven hath a postdate to ours. Sure it is, that we are apt to antedate the promises in regard of the accomplishment, as those, #Jer 8:20, that looked for help that summer at farthest, but were deceived. See the disease and the remedy put together, #Hab 2:2,3, and learn to wait. God will surely bring us to it if we belong to him: and thereby inure us both to patience and continence as here.

**Thou shalt not play the harlot, &c.]** Thou shalt not hasten after another God, and so multiply sorrows upon thyself, #Ps 16:4; as he that hath broke prison gets but more irons to be laid upon him and a stricter watch, #Ps 44:19; the Church, though sore broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, yet she stretched not out her hands to a strange God. She knew that was not the way to get off with comfort. Is it because there is no God in Israel, that thou gaddest to the god of Ekron? #2Ki 1:3 "Should not a people seek unto their God? or the living to the dead?" #Isa 8:19. Should they seek to slip out at a backdoor and to help themselves by

sorry shifts or sinister practices? Is that ever like to do well? or will not such be miserable even by their own election? #Jon 2:8. Wherefore if God defer to help (as he doth usually), hold out faith and patience, wait upon him who even waits to be gracious, for he is a God of judgment, and well knoweth how and when to deal forth his favours, #Isa 30:18 *Cito data cito vilescent*, Manna being lightly come by, was as lightly set by. He therefore suspends us, that he may commend his mercies to us; and when he comes with them, be the better welcome. The longer he holds us in request the more will he do for us at length; and if we abide for him many days we shall be no losers thereby.

**For I also will be for thee]** He will love those that love him, and honour those that honour him, #Pr 8:17 1Sa 2:30. Yea, "if any man love me," saith Christ, "my Father will love him, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," #Joh 14:21-23. "I will gather them" (*sc.* into my bosom out of all nations) "that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burthen. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee," &c., #Zep 3:18-20. God esteems highly those that abide for him in their banishment, that stay for him till he mind marriage with them, that stick to him in affliction, that resolve to reserve themselves for him, so as if they cannot have comfort in God they will have none elsewhere. The Cherethites and the Pelethites that were with David at Gath, and afterwards stuck to him when Absalom was up, they were ever near about him, as his guard, and dear to him as his favourites. God is All in all to those that with the spouse will be his altogether: he will do good to them with his whole heart that seek him with their whole heart, &c., #Jer 29:13.

Ver. 4. **For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, &c.]** They shall be, as it is said of the Brazilians, *Sine rege, sine lege, sine fide*, without a king, without law, without hope, in a woeful confused estate, both for state and Church. This they had brought upon themselves by their idols set up at Dan and Bethel; that is, in the place of judgment, and in the house of God (so Dan and Bethel signify). Bethel was become Bethaven, and the place of judicature (called by Solomon the place of the Holy God, #Ec 8:10), so corrupted, that people were ready to say, as Themistocles once

did, that if there were two ways showed him, the one leading to hell and the other to the tribunal, he would choose that which went to hell and forsake the other. That corruption caused this confusion. The children of Israel shall be without and withont, here are six withouts, that they might be sensible of their abuse of mercies, and see *bona a tergo formosissima*, good things fairest behind, their worth best appearing by their want. The Persian law commanded that at the death of their kings there should be *πενθ ημερων ανομιαν*, a suspension of laws, a lawless liberty, for the length of five days (Stob. Orat. 42), that subjects might know the necessity of government by being bereft of the benefit of it for a time; and the better prize it when they had it. The like custom they have now in Turkey at the death of the Grand Signor, which is no sooner known but every man doth what is good in his own eyes, till his successor be sent for, and set upon his throne. Israel hath neither king nor prince, ruler nor civil magistrates of their own, (the ten tribes, I mean: for Judah hath both prince and priests after the captivity, till the last desolation, since which they have) no form nor face of Church or commonwealth, no, not of a corrupt or depraved Church, meant here by image and teraphim, see **#2Ki 17:10 Jud 17:5**, which much less of such a one as God had prescribed, meant by sacrifices and ephod. Prosper's conceit was that this people were called *Iudaei* Jews because they received *ius Dei*, their law, from God's mouth. And Josephus calleth their commonwealth a theocracy, or government by God. They received their order both for Church and commonwealth from heaven: which no other people ever did in the same manner; and might truly take up that of the prophet, **#Isa 33:22**, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us." But man being in honour is without understanding. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked; then he forsook God which made him, and sacrificed unto devils, not to God, to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up," **#De 32:15,17**. When Ephraim spake and spake right there was trembling, and none dared budge against him: but when he offended in Baal he died, **#Ho 13:1**, then every paltry adversary trampled upon him as a dead man, then every scurrilous poet could insult over him and cry, *Credat Iudaeus Apella, Non ego*; then every common Turk could, by way of execration, say, *Iudaeus sim si fallo*; and in detestation of a thing, I would I might die a Jew then. A dispersed and despised

people they are (none more) under the cope of heaven; partly for their former idolatry, but principally for their rejecting Christ crucified, whom they cannot but in their conscience know to be the Shiloh that should come, since the sceptre is so long since departed from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet, #Ge 49:10. That for their sins, which are many (say the Talmudists), he yet hides himself in the caverns and secret places of the earth, is σοφοφαρμακον, a simple pretence, or rather a subtlety of Satan, to hold them still in blindness till God unseal their eyes; till when things that are never so dear will not be believed.

Ver. 5. **Afterward shall the children of Israel return]** They shall come out of the furnace more refined than ever. "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder; the groves and images shall not stand up," #Isa 27:9. Then indeed hath Jacob the right fruit of his sufferings, when he makes all the stones of the altar as chalkstones, crumbling them to crattle; when he pulls down the groves and images, those Balaam's stumbling blocks that lay in his way to God, and now resolves to return.

**And seek the herd]** From whom they had deeply revolted; to seek his face and favour, to seek his ordinances and true worship, and lastly, to seek to know and do what is well pleasing in his sight. "Their hearts shall rejoice that thus seek the Lord"; and these are true converts indeed, these are those seekers, #Ps 24:6, yea, this is Jacob (as there), Israelites indeed, such as cannot be (wherever they are cast) without God in the world, without Christ, who is here called David by a patronymic *{surname}* (as also elsewhere), not without allusion to the apostasy of the ten tribes from the house of David, and so from the true God; which now also they shall bewail as the root of their sin and ruin, #Jer 30:9 Eze 34:24 1Ki 12:26.

**And David their king]** Called by Daniel, Messiah the Prince, #Da 9:25; and by Peter, Christ the Lord, #Ac 2:36. See #Lu 1:32. Some think he is here called the goodness of God.

**They shall fear the Lord and his goodness]** Which also is his glory, #Ex 33:19. The Hebrew is, they shall fear to the Lord

( *pavebunt ad Dominum*); *trepidabunt*, that is, trembling they shall make haste to him (as frightened doves do to their columbaries, see **#Ho 11:11**); they shall kiss the Son with a kiss of homage, and with reverential fear submit to his kingdom.

## Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **Hear the word of the Lord]** This is the beginning of a new sermon, or judicial act of God against the ten tribes, which are here converted, convinced, sentenced. It begins with an *Oyez*, like that of St Paul, **#Ac 13:16**, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God" (if any such be in so general a defection), "give audience." Ye have heard God's mind before parabolically delivered and in types; now hear it in plain terms, that you may "see and understand and be converted, and I may heal you." Hear, and your souls shall live. Hear him that speaketh from heaven, even that excellent speaker as he is called, **#Da 10:4-9**, that arch-prophet, whom ye are bound to hear, **#De 18:18 Mt 17:5**, upon pain of death, **#Heb 12:25**, the Lord Christ I mean, who speaketh with authority, and is mighty in word and deed, **#Ac 10:36**. He it was whom Isaiah saw upon his throne, and heard speaking, **#Joh 12:41**. And it is a rule in divinity, that where the Old Testament bringeth in God appearing and speaking to the patriarchs, prophets, and people, it is to be understood of the Second Person. "Hear, therefore, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken it," **#Jer 13:15**. "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" **#Am 3:8**. The Lord God hath spoken, who can but hear and fear, humble and tremble?

**Ye children of Israel]** But oh, how altogether unlike your father! Even as unlike as Jehoiakim (that degenerate plant) was to his father, Josiah, that "plant of renown," **#Eze 34:29**. His heart melted when he heard the law, **#2Ch 34:18,19**, but Jehoiakim cut it with a penknife and cast it into the fire, **#Jer 36:23**. These were Israel's children, and named "the house of Jacob," as those in **#Mic 2:7**; but an empty title yields but an empty comfort at last. Is the spirit of the Lord straitened? (saith the prophet there;) were these Jacob's doings? Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? Were you Israelites indeed, I should not thus lose my sweet words upon you; but you would incline your ears and come unto me, **#Isa 55:3**, hear as for life itself: especially since I am sent unto you (as

once Ahijah was to Jeroboam's wife, #1Ki 14:6) with heavy tidings, with such a citation or process from heaven as may well be unto you as Samuel's message was to Eli, that made both his ears to tingle; or as the handwriting was to Balthasar, that made his knees knock together.

**For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land]** The former title (children of Israel) was too good for them: they had disgraced their father's family, and were therefore (Reuben-like) fallen from their dignity. They shall henceforth be called the inhabitants of the land, as the wicked are called, #Re 12:12, in opposition to "the heavens and those that dwell therein," the burgesses of the new Jerusalem. Abraham had seed of two sorts, some were as the dust of the earth, #Ge 13:16, others as the stars of heaven, #Ge 15:5. And all are not Israel that are of Israel, #Ro 9:6. *Multi sacerdotes et pauci sacerdotes*, saith Chrysostom. There are many ministers, and yet but few; many in name, but few in deed, workmen that need not be ashamed; *Nomen inane, crimea immane*. It was cold comfort to *Dives* in flames, that Abraham called him son; or to Judas, that Christ called him friend; or to these rebellious Jews, that God sometimes called them his people, and had rooted out the cursed Canaanites to make room for them, when as they lived in God's good land, but not by God's good laws. For which cause the Lord hath here a controversy with them, a suit at law; and being himself both plaintiff and judge, he is sure to cast them; yea, to cast them out of that good land as evil tenants (*Malae fidei possessores*), that should hold no longer: for, #Ho 4:3, he threateneth to plead against them, *non verbis sed verberibus*, with pestilence and with blood, as #Eze 38:22, to make them say, as #Isa 45:9, "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker," that hath him for his adversary at law; such a one is sure to be undone unless he agree with him quickly, #Mt 5:25, while he is yet in the way with him, and before he be brought to the tribunal. "For even our God is a consuming fire," #Heb 12:29; his tribunal also is of fire, #Eze 1:27, his pleading with sinners "in flames of fire," #2Th 1:7, the trial of men's works shall be by fire, #1Co 3:13, the place of punishment a lake of fire fed with a river of brimstone, #Isa 30:33. O pray, therefore, and prevent, that God enter not into judgment with us: for if so, no man living shall be justified in his sight. God's people may



have and shall be sure to have the devil an adversary at law against them, as St Peter's word, ἀντιδικός, signifies, **#1Pe 5:8**. The accuser of the brethren he is called, which accuseth them before God day and night, **#Re 12:12**. But him they may resist stedfast in the faith, and recover cost and charges of him, as I may so say; for they have Christ to appear for them in heaven, **#Heb 9:24**, as a lawyer for his client, **#1Jo 2:2**, to thwart all the devil's accusations. The Spirit also (as a *paracletus* or advocate) maketh request for them to God in their hearts, and helpeth them to make apologies for themselves, **#2Co 7:11**. Again, "If a man sin against another, the judge shall judge him," saith old Eli to his wicked sons; that is, the umpire may come and take up the controversy and put an end to the quarrel. "But if a man have sinned against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" **#1Sa 2:29**. Who dare be his daysman? no mediation of man can make his peace; no reconciliation can be here hoped for, but by running from God as a Judge, to God as a Father in Christ. Let men, therefore, be wrought upon by the reprehensions of God's faithful ministers, by whom he appealeth and impeacheth them. If they stand out as the old world did against that preacher of righteousness, by whom he went and preached to those spirits now in prison (because they would not take up the matter in time, but futured and fooled away their own salvation), he will break off his patience, and say, as **#Ge 6:3**, "My Spirit shall not always strive with these men, for that they also are flesh," &c., and are therefore the worse, because they ought to be better (*Ideo deteriores quia meliores esse debebant*); therefore they shall fare the worse, because they would be no better. I have hewed them by my prophets, **#Ho 6:5**, but can make no good work of them. Like ill timber, they fall to splinters; and like ill stones, they crumble all to gravel; they are therefore fitter for the highway and chimney corner than for my building. My Spirit shall therefore strive no more with these perverse persons, either by preaching, disputing, convincing, &c., in the mouth of my ministers; or in their own minds and consciences, by inward checks and motions, which they reject, refusing to be reformed, hating to be healed. I will take away my Spirit, and silence my prophets (as he doth **#Ho 4:4**), and resolve upon their utter ruin; since there is no good to be done upon them. See **#Ho 4:17**. {See Trapp on "Ho 4:17"}  
*Curat ergo poenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia, &c.*

**Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land]** Lo, here the charge: and "knowing the judgment of God," you must needs say that "those that commit such things are worthy of death," **#Ro 1:32**. For "if the word spoken by angels" (the law given by angels in the hand of Moses a mediator) "were stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience" (that is, every commission and omission) "received a just recompense of reward," **#Heb 2:2**, how should these miscreants escape, that had left off to do good? and for evil, they did it with both hands earnestly; for the second table of the law, it is articulated against them (for matter of omission or defect) that there was "neither truth nor mercy in the land"; and for the first table, that there was no sound "knowledge of God" there; and, consequently, no care of God, either inward or outward worship: for there can be neither faith, nor repentance, nor due obedience yielded to an unknown God. A Samaritan service there may be ("ye worship ye know not what," **#Joh 4:22**), but not a rational service, **#Ro 12:1**, such as whereof a man can render a reason. Now God will not have a blind sacrifice, **#Mal 1:8 1Ch 28:9**; it is worthless that men are virtuous, unless they join to their virtue knowledge, **#2Pe 1:5**; nor that they offer sacrifice, if they bring the "sacrifice of fools," **#Ec 5:1**. Those must needs be "abominable and disobedient" that are to "every good work reprobate," injudicious, as the word signifies, **#Tit 1:11**; and what marvel though men be "alienated from the life of God" (or a godly life), "through the ignorance that is in them?" **#Eph 4:18**. But let us take the words in order. "There is no truth." Here God declareth against them (as lawyers do against offenders in court), and not for trifles, but first for want of truth or trustiness in word and deed; without which human society is but *funiculus ex arena*, a rope of sand, or *arena sine calce*, sand without lime, it cannot hold together. It was an old complaint of the prophets, that "Truth was fallen in the streets, and faithfulness failed from among the children of men," **#Isa 59:14 Ps 12:1**. When Varus was slain Augustus grieved excessively; and that because *non esset a quo verum audiret*, he had none about him that would tell him the truth of things, and deal plainly with him. *Multis annis iam transactis, nulla fides est in pactis, &c.* Jeremiah bewails it in his treacherous countrymen, that they "bent their tongues like their bows for lies; but they were not valiant for the truth on the earth," **#Jer 9:3**; they were

*mendaciorum loquaeissimi* (as Tertullian phraseth it), loud and lewd liars, and (as Hegesippus saith of Pilate) they were *virī nequam et pravi facientes mendacium*, naughty men, and such as made nothing of a lie. But God's people are said to be "children that will not lie," #**Isa 63:8**, they are φιλαληθεις, lovers of truth, which was the title of honour given to Arrian, the Greek historian; whereas of all other historians Vopiscus testifieth, that there is none *qui non aliquid est mentitus*, that taketh not the liberty to lie more or less. And for slipperiness in contracts and covenants nothing is more common among men; it is counted a peccadillo. But the God of truth, the faithful and true witness, as Christ is called, counteth it not so. See #**Eze 17:15-21 1Ti 4:2 2Ti 3:3**. There are those who take truth here for justice, according to #**Zec 8:16**, and so it suits well with that which followeth.

**Nor mercy]** These two are set together, #**Mic 6:8** (to do justly, and to love mercy), as the sum of the second table. Mouth mercy there was enough, such as was that in St James' days, #**Jas 2:15,16**. "But there is not any one that taketh Zion by the hand," #**Isa 51:18**, that "draweth out his soul to the hungry, and dealeth his bread to such," #**Isa 58:7,10**. Sodom hath fulness of bread, but would part with none to strengthen the hands of the poor and needy, #**Eze 16:49**. Therefore she had "judgment without mercy," that had showed no mercy, #**Jas 2:13**. Whereas Tyre, when once she left heaping and hoarding, and brought forth her merchandise for them that dwell before the Lord to "eat sufficiently," and for "durable clothing," #**Isa 23:18**, is renowned and reckoned among those that came to Christ with their desirable things, as some read that text, #**Hag 2:7**. *Colligent omnes suos thesauros* (so Calvin readeth it), they shall come with strong affections, with large contributions, as those primitive saints did, #**Ac 4:34**. The same Hebrew word, *chasisd*, signifieth both saint and merciful; and it comes of *chesed*, the word here rendered mercy, or bounty. The tender mercies of the Almighty shed forth abundantly upon such, leave a compassionate frame upon their hearts, as in the jailer, #**Ac 16:33**. Their thoughts, steeped in the mercies they have received, are dyed of the same colour as cloth is in the dye fat, #**Col 3:12**. This text, after no mercy, fitly adds,

**Nor knowledge of God in the land]** Heb. "And no knowledge of God": or, "because there is no knowledge of God in the land." Did men but know God savingly, had they but tasted and seen how good the Lord is, they would not be so hide bound, and strait handed to their poor brethren; but "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," #1Ti 6:18. They are the "dark places of the earth" that are "full of the habitations of cruelty," #Ps 74:20. But in the kingdom of Christ they "shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," saith the Lord: and why? "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," #Isa 11:9. St Paul thanks his ignorance for his persecutions and blasphemy, #1Ti 1:13, and resolves the sin of those killers of Christ into their "not knowing of him," #1Co 2:8. Surely as toads and serpents grow in dark and dirty cellars, so doth all sin and wickedness in an ignorant and blind soul. Hence, in this text, after "no knowledge of God in the land," followeth that black bead roll of abominations in the next verse: "By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing," &c. As blind alehouses are sinks and sources of all villany, so are blind hearts.

**In the land]** Though it were a land of light, a very Goshen in comparison to the rest of the world; though in Judah was God known, and his name great in Israel, #Ps 76:1; men may remain grossly ignorant amidst a multitude of means, and "in a land of righteousness deal unjustly": and why? they will not behold the majesty of the Lord, #Isa 26:10. They will not see. They are "willingly ignorant," saith St Peter: *Ut liberius peccent libenter ignorant*, saith Bernard. They "hate the light," saith our Saviour, #Joh 3:20 2Pe 2; it "is unto them as the shadow of death," saith Job, #Job 24:17. Hence they shut the windows, lest it should shine upon them; or if it do, they rebel against it, rush against it, as bats do against torches in the night. That light they have by nature, or otherwise (as a prophet from God), they detain and imprison in unrighteousness, #Ro 1:18. Their knowledge of God, if any, is only apprehensive, and not affective, *cognoscitiva, non vitae directiva*, enlightening, not transforming into the same image, so as to make them children of light: it is notional knowledge, not experimental and practical. Hence such outrages in their lives, such errors and enormities: for,

Ver. 2. **By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing]** Heb. to swear, and lie, and kill, and steal, and commit adultery. To do all this is held, *licitum et solenne*, lawful, or at least pardonable. It is grown to a common practice; and custom of sinning hath taken away sense of sin.

**By swearing]** Heb. by cursing, or swearing with an execration and cursing, which was commonly added to an oath, to confirm it the more, **#De 29:12,21 Ne 10:29**. And, indeed, in every lawful oath God is called to witness, to bless us if we swear right, and to curse us if otherwise. Such an oath is a special part of God's worship, and is oft put for the whole, as here false and frivolous oaths are put for the violation of the whole first table, and set in opposition to the knowledge of God in the land; like as lying is opposed to truth, and killing, stealing, whoring, to mercy or kindness. Before, God had complained of their defects, or omissions; here, of their commissions and flagitious practices. Swearers (but especially false swearers) are traitors to the state, as appeareth here and **#Jer 23:10**; they bring a curse, nay, a large roll of curses (ten yards long, and five yards broad, **#Zec 5:2**), upon their hearts, and shall one day howl in hell. The same word that is here rendered swearing signifieth also to howl or lament, **#Joe 1:8**. Go to now, therefore, ye swearers, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you, **#Jas 5:1,12**. Weep here, where there be wiping handkerchiefs in the hand of Christ: better do so, than yell with devils who have borrowed your mouths, to utter horrid blasphemies. Swearing is "of the devil," saith our Saviour, **#Mt 5:37**, and it brings men to the devil, saith St James, **#Jas 5:12**. They object that they swear nothing but the truth. But that is not always so. Swearing and lying are here set together, as seldom sundered. The marvel, if he that sweareth commonly do not forswear frequently; for he sweareth away all his faith and truth. But, say they swear truth, yet that excuseth not. Truth is but one circumstance of an oath, **#Jer 4:2**. Men, as they must swear in truth, so in righteousness (not rashly, furiously), and in judgment, not in jest. Swear not in jest, lest ye go to hell in earnest. It is the property and duty of a godly man to fear an oath, **#Ec 9:2**, and not to forbear it only. As on the other side, no surer sign of a profane person than common and customary swearing. It were well if such were served as Louis IX of France served a citizen of Paris;

he seared his lips for swearing with a hot iron. And when some said it was too cruel an act, I would to God, said he, that with searing my own lips with a hot iron I could banish out of the realm all abuse of oaths. Those that plead they have gotten a custom to swear, and therefore they must be borne with, shall have the like answer from God that the thief had from the judge. He desired the judge to spare him, for stealing had been his custom from his youth, and now he could not leave it. The judge replied, it was also his custom to give judgment against such malefactors; and therefore he must be condemned.

**And lying]** Fitly linked with swearing. Some gravel or mud ever passeth away with much water; so do some lies with much swearing. How oft do men forget their oaths, and swear again that they have not sworn at all! Should men's excrements come from them as oft, and they not feel it, they would be full sorry, and ashamed thereof. Now swearing and lying defile men much worse than any jakes can do, **#Mr 7:22**, and render them odious to God and good men. Lying is a blushful evil; therefore doth the liar deny his lie, as ashamed to be taken with it, and our ruffians revenge it with a stab. God ranks and reckons it with the most monstrous sins, and shuts it out of heaven, **#Re 21:8**. Aristotle saith, It is in itself evil and wicked, contrary to the order of nature (which hath given words to express mens' minds and meanings), destructive to human society. Pythagoras was wont to say, that in two things we become like unto God: 1. In telling truth; 2. In bestowing benefits. Now, *Mentiri*, is *contra mentem ire*; to lie is to go against reason, to lie is to utter a known untruth with an intention to deceive or hurt. The Cretans of old were infamous for this, **#Tit 1:12**, Κρητες αι ψευσται, the friars of late. 'Twas grown to a proverb among our forefathers, a friar, a liar; 'tis now among us, every liar is, or would be, a thief. Hence, lying and stealing go coupled together here; but between them both stands killing, as ushered in by the former, and oft occasioned by the latter, **#Pr 1:19**.

**And killing]** This follows fitly upon the former; for truth hath always a scratched face. The devil was first a liar, and then a murderer, **#Joh 8:44**. He cannot so well murder without slandering first. The credit of the Church must first be taken away, and then she

is wounded, **#So 5:6**. The people here in England once complained that Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, that noble patriot, was twice murdered: first by detraction, and then by deadly practice. The French have a proverb: Those that have a mind to kill their neighbour's dog make the world believe he was mad first. This is their proverb, and accordingly was their practice in the massacre of Paris. A little before which they gave out, that the Protestants met by night, to plot against the state, and to commit all manner of uncleanness among themselves. This is an old trick of the devil and his instruments, first to slander the Church, and to represent her to the world in the ugliest hue, and then to persecute her, like as of old they used to put the poor Christians in bears' or lions' skins, and then bait them with dogs. Paulus Fagius reports a story of an Egyptian, who said that the Christians were a colluvies of moist, filthy, lecherous people. And for their keeping of the Sabbath; he saith, they had a disease upon them, and were therefore fain to rest every seventh day. The Papists accused the Waldenses (those ancient Protestants) for Manichees; and that they affirmed there were two beginnings of things, God and the devil, &c.; and all because they constantly affirmed that the emperor had no dependence upon the pope. They gave them out also for Arians (and published their croisados against them as enemies to Christ), and all because they denied that a crust was transubstantiated into Christ. To make way for the ruin of England by the gunpowder plot, they broadcast it abroad that the people here looked as black as devils, were grown barbarous, and did eat young children. That we held opinion to worship no God, to serve the times, to prefer profit before right, to pretend the public cause to our private lusts, to cover hatred with flattery, to confirm tyranny by shedding innocent blood, to keep faith no longer than will serve our own turns, &c. (Eudaem. Johannes.) And if the plot had taken effect, they had fathered it upon the Puritans (having proclamations ready framed for the purpose), that under that name they might have sucked the blood and revelled in the ruins of all such here as had but the love or any show of sound religion. The word here used for killing signifies to kill with a murdering weapon, such as David felt in his bones, **#Ps 42:10**, such as Colignius and other the poor Protestants felt in the French massacre: where the queen of Navarre was poisoned, the most part of the peerless nobility in France murdered, together with their

wives and children; and of the common people a hundred thousand in one year, in various parts of the realm. What should I speak of the innocent blood of Ireland, for which God hath already and yet still will make diligent inquisition. If the blood of Abel had so many tongues as drops, **#Ge 4:10**, what then of so many righteous Abels? "Surely I have seen yesterday" (saith God) "the blood of Naboth," **#2Ki 9:26**. Murder ever bleeds fresh in his eye: to him many years, yea, that eternity that is past, is but yesterday. Neither is he wanting to punish it even in this present world. He avengeth the innocent blood that Manasseh shed a long while after his death: he would not pardon it, no, though Manasseh repented of it, **#2Ki 24:4**. The mountains of Gilboa were accursed, for the blood of Saul and Jonathan spilt upon them, **#2Sa 1:21**; and what a deal of do we find in the law made when a man was murdered! **#De 21:1-4**, the valley which the expiatory sacrifice was slain in that case was from thenceforth to be neither eared nor sown: in all to show what a precious esteem God hath of man's life, and what controversy with a land for shedding of blood.

**And stealing]** Those *publici latrones* especially, public thieves that sit in purple robes, and by wrong judgment oppress and rob the poor innocents, are here intended, as Calvin thinks; see **#Isa 23:17,18 33:1**. So are all others that either by force or fraud get into their hands their neighbours' goods; whether, I say, it be by violence or cunning contrivance, the Lord is the avenger of all such, **#1Th 4:6**. So that though haply they lie out of the walk of human justice, and come not under man's cognizance, yet God will find them out, and send his flying roll of curses after them, **#Zec 5:2,3**: "he shall vomit up his sweet morsels" here, **#Job 20:15**, or else digest in hell what he hath devoured on earth; as his "belly hath prepared deceit," **#Job 15:35**, so God will take it out of his guts again; either he shall make restitution of his ill-gotten goods, or for not doing it he shall one day cough in hell, as Father Latimer phraseth it (Serm. before King Edw. VI).

**And committing adultery]** "This is also a heinous crime" (saith holy Job), "yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges," **#Job 31:11**. Heathens have punished it very severely. Of one people we read that they used to put the adulterer's or adulteress's head into the



paunch of a beast where the filth of it lay, and so stifled him. God punished those stinking Edomites with stinking brimstone for their loathsome brutishness; and adjudged adultery to death: because society and purity of posterity could not otherwise continue among men. We read not, in any general commandment of the law, that any should be burnt with fire, but the high priest's daughter for adultery, **#Le 21:9**; yet it seems it was in use before the law, or else Judah was much to blame for sentencing his daughter-in-law Tamar to the fire, **#Ge 38:2,3**. Let us, beware of that sin, for which so peculiar a plague was appointed, and by very heathens executed see **#Jer 29:22,23**. If men be slack to take vengeance on such, yet God will hold on his controversy against them and avenge the quarrel of his covenant (for so wedlock is called, **#Pr 2:17**), either by his own bare hand, or else by the hands of the adulterers themselves. See an instance of both these even in our times. In the year 1583, in London, two citizens committing adultery together on the Lord's day were struck dead with fire from heaven in the very act of uncleanness: their bodies being left dead in the place, half burnt up, sending out a most loathsome savour, for a spectacle of God's controversy against adultery and sabbath breaking. This judgment was so famous and remarkable that Laurentius Bayenlink, a foreign historian, hath thought good to register it to posterity (*Opus Chronologiae Orbis Universi*, Antwerp, 1611, p. 110). Mr Cleaver reports of one that he knew that had committed the act of uncleanness, and in the horror of conscience he hanged himself, but before, when he was about to kill himself, he wrote in a paper, and left it in a place, to this effect: Indeed, saith he, I acknowledge it to be utterly unlawful for a man to kill himself, but I am bound to act the magistrate's part, because the punishment of this sin is death. This act of his was not to be justified, viz. to be his own executioner; but it shows what a controversy God hath with adulterers, and what a deep gash that sin makes in the conscience.

**They break out]** Like wild horses over hedges, or proud waters over the banks. The Septuagint renders it εκκεχρται, they are poured out. And St Jude hath a like expression, speaking of the libertines of his time, **#Ho 4:11**, they run greedily, Gr. εξεχρθησαν: they were poured out, or poured away as water out of a vessel: they ran headlong, or gave themselves over to work all uncleanness with

greediness, to satisfy their lusts, and to oppose with crest and breast whatsoever stands in their way; bearing down all before them. So Sodom and Gomorrah are (in **#Jude 7**) said by unbridled licentiousness to "give themselves over to fornication," in *scortationem effusae* (Beza). And when Lot sought to advise them better, they set up the bristles at him, with

Base busy stranger, comest thou hither thus,  
Controller-like, to prate and preach to us?

Thus these effractories (as the Psalmist somewhere calleth them), these breach makers, break Christ's bands in sunder (as Samson did the seven green withes, **#Jud 16:9**), and cast away his cords from them, **#Ps 2:3**. These unruly Belialists get the bit between their teeth, like headstrong horses; and casting their rider, rise up against him. They, like men (or rather like wild beasts), "transgress the covenant," **#Ho 5:7**, resolving to live as they list, to take their swing in sin: "for who" (say they) "is Lord over us?" **#Ps 12:4**. Tremellius reads that text, *tanquam hominis*, just as man, they transgress it as if it were the covenant of a man: they make no more of breaking the law than as if they had to do with dust and ashes like themselves, and not with the great God that can tame them with the turn of his hand, and with the blast of his mouth blow them into hell. Hath he not threatened to "walk contrary to those that walk contrary to him," to be as cross as they for the hearts of them, and to bring upon them seven times more plagues than before, and seven times and seven to that, till he have got the better of them? for is it fit that he should cast down the bucklers first? I think not. He will be obeyed by these exorbitant, yokeless, lawless persons, either actively or passively. The law was added because of transgression: and is given, saith the apostle, **#1Ti 1:9**, "not to the righteous," for they are *αυτονομοι*, a law to themselves (as the Thracians boasted), but to the lawless and disobedient, who count licentiousness the only liberty, and the service of God the greatest slavery; who think no venison sweet but that which is stolen, nor any mirth but that which a Solomon would say to, Thou mad fool, what doest thou? **#Ec 2:2**. Lo, for such rebels and refractories, for such masterless monsters as send messages after the Lord Christ, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us," for these, I say, was the law made, to hamper them and shackle

them, as fierce and furious creatures; to tame them and tear them with its four iron teeth, 1. Of irritation, #Ro 7:7 2. Of induration, #Isa 6:10

3. Of obligation to condign punishment, #Ge 4:4 4. Of execration, or malediction, #De 28:16,17, &c. Let men take heed, therefore, how they break out against God: let them meddle with their matches, and not contend with him that is mightier than they: it is the wise man's counsel, #Ec 6:10.

**And blood toucheth blood]** *i.e.* there is a continuation, and, as it were, a concatenation of murders, and other horrible villanies, as was at Jerusalem in the murder of Zacharias, the son of Barachias; the blood of the sacrificer was mingled with the blood of the sacrifice, and, as #Lu 13:1, the like occurred. So at Athens, when Sulla took the town, there was ἀνελεης σφαγη, a merciless slaughter; the gutters running with blood. And so at Samaria (which the prophet may here probably intend), when there was such killing of kings (and they fall not alone); Hosea killed his predecessor Pekah, as he had done Pekahiah; Menahem killed Shallum, as Shallum had done Zacharias: so true is that of the poet (Juvenal),

*“ Ad generum Cereris sine crude et sanguine pauci,  
Descendunt Reges, et sicca morte tyranni.”*

*What got most of the first Caesars by their adoption, or designation to the empire, Nisi ut citius interficerentur, but to be killed so much the sooner? All, or most of them, till Constantius, died unnatural deaths, as afterwards, Phocas the traitor killed the good Emperor Mauritius, stewing him in his own broth. Heraclius slew Phocas, putting him to a shameful and tormentful death. Conradinus, King of Germany and Duke of Sweden, was beheaded by Charles, King of Naples and Sicily; and the headsman presently beheaded by another, ne extaret qui iacraret tam generosum sanguinem a se effusum (saith mine author), that there might not be any left to boast that he had spilt so noble blood. Our Richard III, that bloody and deceitful man, is said to have used the instruments of his cruel plots (his cut-throats, I mean) as men do their candles; burn the first out to a suuff, and then, having lighted another, tread that underfoot. Fawkes (that fatal actor of the intended gunpowder tragedy) should have been*

thus rewarded by his brethren in evil had the plot taken effect. It is that famous and never-to-be-forgotten 5th of November, 1651, wherein I write these lines, and therefore, in way of thankfulness to our ever gracious deliverer, I here think good to set down the relation as Mr John Vicars (in his Quintessence of Cruelty, or Poem of the Popish Gunpowder Plot) hath declared it to the world, as he had it from Mr Clement Cotton, the composer of the English Concordance, who also received it from Mr Pickering, of Titsmarsh Grove, in Northamptonshire, and it is thus: This Mr Pickering, being in great esteem with King James, had a horse of special note, on which he used to hunt with the king: this horse was borrowed from him (a little before the blow was to be given) by his brother-in-law, Keyes (one of the conspirators), and conveyed to London, for a bloody purpose, which thus was plotted. Fawkes on the day of the fatal blow was appointed to retire himself to St George's Fields, where this said horse was to attend him to make his escape as soon as the Parliament House was blown up. It was likewise contrived, that the said Mr Pickering (noted for a Puritan) should be that very morning murdered in his bed, and secretly conveyed away: as also that Fawkes himself should have been murdered in St George's Fields, and there so mangled and cut in pieces that it might not be discovered who it was. Whereupon it was to be rumoured abroad that the Puritans had blown up the Parliament House: and the better to make the world believe so, there was Mr Pickering with his horse ready to make an escape, but that God stirred up some, who seeing the heinousness of the fact, and he ready to escape by flight, in detestation of so horrible a deed fell upon him, and killed him, and so had hacked him in pieces. And yet to make it to be more apparent to be so indeed, there was his horse found also, which was of special speed and swiftness, to carry him away: and upon this rumour, a massacre should have gone through the whole kingdom upon the Puritans. But when this plot, thus contrived, was confessed by some of the conspirators, and Fawkes in the Tower was made acquainted with it (who had been borne in hand to be bountifully rewarded for his service in the Catholic cause), when he saw how his ruin was contrived, he also thereupon confessed freely all that he knew touching that horrid and hideous conspiracy, which (before) all the torture of the rack could not force him to. The truth of all this is attested by Mr William Perkins, an eminent Christian and citizen of

London, who had it from the mouth of Mr Clement Cotton: which I could not but here insert, as coming to my mind and pen, on the very day whereon (46 years since) it should have been acted, when myself was but four years of age, and it being the utmost that I can remember; but if ever I forget, let my right hand forget her cunning. Remember, O Lord, these children of Edom, &c., these Romish Edomites, Esauites, Jesuits, who said, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation, O daughter of Babylon," &c., #Ps 137:5,7,8. The Rabbis call the Romists Edomites (they interpret the mount of Esau, Obad. #Ob 21, to be meant of Rome), and well they may, for their blood guiltiness, for which they are hated of God, #Ps 5:6. Who cannot but remember that their sins (as a cart rope) have reached up to heaven, #Re 18:5, there having been a concatenation, or a continued series of them, as the Greek there imports, ηκολουθησαν, and (as some here interpret) "blood touching blood," according to #Isa 1:15, "Your hands are full of blood"; and #Ho 4:4, "The filth of the daughter of Zion, and the blood of Jerusalem." This sense, the Chaldee paraphrase maketh. The Septuagint (with their μισγυουσι, "mingle blood with blood") seem to understand it of incestuous matches and mixtures forbidden, #Le 18:6, and yet avowed by David George and his disciples, and practised in the court of Spain, by papal dispensation.

Ver. 3. **Therefore shall the land mourn**] Here the Lord proceeds to give sentence; and it is dreadful indeed. *Lugebit terra, languebit incola, &c.* You will not mourn, therefore your land shall; the ugly face of your sin shall appear in the miserable desolation of your country. "There is no truth, mercy, or knowledge of God in your land"; which even groans under your burden, its axle spokes being ready to break; therefore it shall be eased of you, by my sore, and great, and strong sword, which shall soon make work among you, and lay all waste. And as God's red horse of war is followed by the black horse of famine, and that black one by the pale horse of pestilence, #Re 6:4,5,8, so shall it be here. As by swearing and lying, &c., you have broke out, so shall my whole wrath break out upon you as a mighty torrent. As blood hath touched blood, so punishment shall follow hard upon sin; for these two are knit together with chains of adamant, saith the poet. "If thou do evil, sin lies at the door," saith God, #Ge 4:7, that is, *supplicium imminer, idque proximum et praesentissimum*, saith Junius there. Evil shall

hunt the wicked man to destroy him: his sin shall find him out as a blood hound, and haunt him as a hell hag. Where iniquity breaks fast calamity will be sure to dine; to sup where it dines, and to lodge where it sups. No sooner had man sinned but the earth was cursed for his sake, **#Ge 3:17,18**. It was never beautiful nor cheerful since. At this day it lies bedridden, and looks to be burnt up shortly with her works, **#2Pe 3:10**. Here it is brought in as a mother in mourning, bewailing the loss of all her children, and refusing to be comforted. And surely though the land be eased of a very heavy burden, as I have said, when purged by God's just judgments of her ungrateful and wicked inhabitants; yet because she lies under the dint of Divine displeasure at such a time, therefore is she rightly said to mourn in this case, and to be in a sad, disconsolate condition, {see #Jer 12:4} she becomes a very Ahil (that is the word here used, see **#Jud 11:33**), a Bochim, a Hadadrimmon, an Irisland; and being desolate, she mourneth unto thee: for she seeth that her convulsions are like to end in a deadly consumption.

**And every one that dwelleth therein shall languish]** Heb. shall wither as a flower, **#Na 1:4**. Or, shall be weakened. Those that now stand upon their tip toes, and face the very heavens, stouting it out with God, shall then be weak as water, withered as a flower, strengthless as a moth eaten cloth, **#Ps 39:11**, low spirited and crest fallen, as the king of Sodom (erst man good enough to look four kings in the face, but a non-suppliant to Abraham, a forlorn foreigner, **#Ge 14:21**). Manasseh, that sturdy rebel, in trouble basely hides his head among the bushes, **#2Ch 33:11**. Caligula in time of thunder ran under beds and benches. Affliction will tame, and take down the proudest spirits: they break in adversity that bore their heads on high in prosperity: they speak out of the ground, and whisper out of the dust, **#Isa 29:4**, that look to be brought into the dust of death, **#Ps 22:15**. It is the pestilence that here seemeth to be threatened (as before sword and famine), and a universal pestilence too; reaching not only to men, but to other creatures made for man's uses, which shows the greatness of the wrath: like as when a king not only executeth the traitor, but also pulleth down his house, confiscateth his goods, and disinheriteth his children, &c. But what have those sheep done? the beasts, birds, and fishes, that they must suffer also? It is but reason they should, since, first, they are part of

men's enjoyments: secondly, they are many times (though harmless in themselves, yet) instruments of men's sin (Pareus); and therefore well doth the Chaldee here paraphrase *Diminutionem patientur propter hominum peccata*, they shall suffer for man's sin: who may therefore well say to them, as Judah did to Tamar, "Thou art more righteous than I"

**With the beasts of the field]** Which shall die by the murrain.

**And the fowls of the air]** Which shall catch the contagion, and fall down dead; as those birds do that attempt to fly over the Dead Sea.

**And the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away]** *Colligentur, conficientur*; they shall be gathered together, as seeking help one of another in a common danger: and yet they shall be destroyed, the very waters being pestilential, as they were here in King Edward III's days; so that the very fowls and fishes had botches upon them. This was a heavier judgment than that which befell the old world; for then the fishes perished not, though the Jewish doctors would persuade us that these also died in the flood; for that the waters thereof were boiling hot.

Ver. 4. **Yet let no man strive nor reprove another]** Let him not lose so much good labour, and spill so many sweet words upon this people; for they are grown uncounsellable, incurable, incorrigible. They have rejected the counsel of God within, or against, themselves, #**Lu 7:30**, *corripiuntur sed non corriguntur*; it is because the Lord intendeth to destroy them, #**1Sa 2:25**, yea, he hath determined it, #**2Ch 25:16**. Hence as dying men lose their hearing and other senses by degrees, so those that are destined to destruction grow stupid and stubborn, and will neither hear good counsel, nor see the things that concern their peace, but spurn at admonition and scorn at reproof.

“ *Tunc etiam docta plus valet arte malum.*”

And therefore God forbids to reprove such, as deplored and desperate; to cast pearls of good counsel before such dogs, who prefer loathsome carrion before sweet odours; yea, rage at them as

tigers do, and fly in the faces of such as present them; or, at best, grunt and go their ways, as swine; leave good counsel where they find it, not putting it in practice. Now, as dogs and swine were counted unclean creatures, and unfit for sacrifice, so are such for admonition. Let a man be never so able and apt to teach, let him be *vir praestans, eximius, insignis*, a gallant man (as the word אָוִשׁ here used sometimes signifieth), and one that can do his work never so well, yet the wisdom of his words shall be despised, #Pr 23:9. Let him strive till his heart aches, *et disputatos arguere*, as St Jude speaketh (ελεγγετε διακρινομενοι, #Jude 22), he shall but strive against the stream, and by reproving a scorner get him a blot, #Pr 9:7. The Pharisees denied our Saviour, and blew their noses at him (εξεμυκτηριζον), #Lu 16:14. Let them alone, therefore, saith our Saviour to his disciples, they be blind leaders of the blind, #Mt 15:14; there is no good to be done of them: therefore "let him that is filthy be filthy still," #Re 22:11, and he that is ignorant let him be ignorant, since he will needs be so, #1Co 14:38. Let him "pine away in his iniquity," #Le 26:38. Let him pine and perish, go on, despair, die, and be damned. My spirit shall no longer strive with him, unless it be by furious rebukes, #Eze 5:15, and by fire, #Am 7:4. Oecolampadius upon this text doubts not to say that the sin of such as reject admonition is the sin against the Holy Ghost: certainly it is worse than all the forementioned, swearing, lying, &c. Blind nature could see and say as much. Hesiod saith that there are three sorts of men: the first and best are those that live so well as not to need reproof (ουτος μεν παναριστος. Hesiod. Oper. et Dier. V 29). The second (and those not bad) are such as do not so well, but can be content to hear of it. The third and worst are they that will neither do as they ought, nor be advised to do better. Plutarch saith those that are troubled with tooth ache will go to the physician; those that have a fever will send for him; but he that is frantic or stark mad will do neither, but reject the remedy and strike at the physician. So doth the scorner. See my commonplace of admonition.

**For this people are as they that strive with the priest]** Though God's officer, and in his stead, #2Co 5:20, though the people's oracle to preserve and present knowledge to them, #Mal 2:7, and though to strive with such be to invert God's order, who hath appointed the people to hear and obey their teacher, and not to



prescribe to them; to follow their guides, and not to run before them, **#Heb 13:7,17 1Ti 1:20 2Ti 1:15 Nu 16:1-3**. From which texts and **#1Co 11:2,3**, a grave divine argueth thus. It is a vile sin to vex our ministers by our obstinace, yea, though they were not able to make so full demonstration; yet when they reprove such and such things out of a spiritual jealousy and fear they corrupt their hearts, they are to be heard; how much more when they come "in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power?" **#1Co 2:4**. And yet how full is the Church and ever hath been of such Vitilitigatores as contend with the best ministers, quarrel at God's word, and take up arms against it! snuffing at it, **#Mal 1:13**, chatting at it, **#Ro 9:19,20**, casting reproaches upon it, **#Jer 20:8,9**, enviously swelling at it, **#Ac 13:45**. The more you touch these toads the more they swell; the more you meddle with these serpents the more they gather poison to spit at you. Go about to cool them with fair words, you shall but add to their heat; as the smith's forge fries when cold water is cast upon it; and as hot water, if stirred, casteth up the more fume. *Vultures unguento irritantur et scaraboni rosa*: vultures cannot endure sweet odours (Plin. Elian.). Tigers, if they hear the sound of a drum, will rage and tear themselves. Ahab cannot abide Micaiah; nor Herod, John Baptist. The people contested with Jeremiah and cursed him, **#Jer 15:10**, though he were *concionator admirabilis*, as Keckerman hath it, an admirable preacher; yet they sought his life, saying, "Prophecy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hands," **#Jer 11:21** (Rhet. Ecclesiast. cap. ult.), yea, they told him, flat and plain, "The word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord we will not hear," **#Jer 44:16**. O lewd losels (as that martyr in like case exclaimed), O faithless hard hearts, O Jezebel's guests, rocked and laid asleep in her bed! O sorrowless sinners and shameless harlots! (Bradford). Ministers are lights, offensive to sore eyes; the salt of the earth, which is bitter to wounds. Among the Athenians, if the comedians (which were their teachers, such as they had) pleased not the people, they were overwhelmed with stones. "Once was I stoned," saith Paul, **#2Co 11:25**. And Jeremiah is said to have met with the like death from his flagitious countrymen in Egypt, among whom he was ever a man of strife, and his service was (in that behalf) like that of Manlius Torquatus among the Romans, who gave it over, saying, Neither can I bear their manners, nor they my government.

Ver. 5. **Therefore shalt thou fall]** How could they do otherwise that were a nation so incorrigibly flagitious, so unthankful for mercies, so impatient of remedies, so incapable of repentance, so obliged, so warned, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked?

**Therefore shalt thou fall in the day]** *Vivens vidensque peribis*, thou shalt stumble at noon day, because there is no knowledge of God in the land; but thou hast loved darkness rather than light, therefore shalt thou have enough of it; thy feet shall stumble upon the dark mountains, **#Jer 13:16**, yea, thou shalt stumble and fall and never rise again, which is threatened expressly to these swearers, **#Am 8:14**, and implied in the Hebrew word here used. Such was Eli's fall off his stool, and Haman's fall before Mordecai the Jew, **#Es 6:13**. Impenitent persons are brats of fathomless perdition, they are ripe for ruin, shall fall into remediless misery, and (though never so insolent and angry against those that deal plainly and faithfully with them, as in the former verse, yet) they shall never want a Hosea to tell them so to their teeth; that those that will not bend may break, that if they will needs fall they may fall with open eyes, and not have cause to say that they were not forewarned. And this shall be done today, *αθημαρ*, that is, very shortly, in this present age (so some interpret it), *aut certe clarissima luce*, saith Mercer, or else in the open light, and in the view of all men, not in huggermugger. Tremellius thinks it is as much as *rebus adhuc integris subito opprimuntur*; Thou shalt be suddenly surprised when thou art in thy flourish, and fearest no changes. What can be more fair and flourishing than the field a day before harvest? than the vineyard a day before the vintage? *certissime citissimeque corruet*. Most certainly, most certainly, fall down. Every wicked man may apply it; wherefore also it is delivered in the second person singular, Thou, even thou: to thee be it spoken.

**And the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night]** The Chaldee hath it, "as in the night, if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him," **#Joh 11:10**. The false prophet cannot lay his hand upon his breast and say, as dying Oecolampadius did, *Hic sat lucis*, Here is store of light. Such are woefully benighted, yet more may look to be, for "their right eye shall be utterly darkened," **#Zec 11:17** (being blind leaders of the

blind), yea, the night shall be upon them, and it shall be dark unto them; the sun shall go down over their heads, #**Mic 3:6**, and when they fall together with those seduced souls into the ditch of destruction, themselves shall fall undermost, #**Mt 15:14**, and receive the deeper damnation, #**Mt 23:14**. If others shall be damned, they must look to be double damned, as *Dives* feared to be, if ever his brethren (by his example) came to that place of torment. Mercer's note here is very good, *Nocte casuros dicit, &c.* He saith they shall fall in the night, as signifying, by an allegory, that when calamity shall lay hold upon these false prophets, they shall also be pricked in their consciences, which shall tell them that *ventris causa*, for their bellies' sake, and other base respects, they have brought upon the seduced people so great mischiefs. This shall be as a dagger at their hearts, and shall fill their consciences with horror and distress.

**And I will destroy thy mother]** *i.e.* the whole synagogue, yea, the whole Church and state, the university of the Israelites; so that their nation and name should perish together. Is it not so with the ten tribes? who can tell at this day where to find them or whence to expect them? whether from China, as some think and allege, #**Isa 49:12**, or from Tartary, as others, who say that Tartar (alias *Tatari*, or *Totari*) comes from *תותר* *Tothar*; a residue or remnant. This is no other than a vain and capricious fancy, saith learned Breerwood. Is it not altogether unlikely that the Lord in this threat might allude to that law, #**De 22:6**, "Thou shalt not take the dam" (Heb. the mother) "with the young"; but I that am above law, saith God, will cut off dam and young together in the nest, I will utterly cut off the whole nation. This was fulfilled #**2Ki 17:5-7**, and our prophet lived to see it, to his great heart-break. O that we could be warned, &c. Let holy mother Church of Rome (as they call her) look to it, with her doctrine of infallibility. These Israelites gloried as much of their mother, and thought (as Dionysius did of his kingdom) that the Church had been tied to their nation with chains of adamant ('*Αδαμαντι δεδεμενην ωετο την αρχην κεκτησθαι*), but their mother is here threatened to be cut off: and of the see of Rome it is long since foretold, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," #**Re 18:2**. It is a question among divines whether the Church can fail? It is answered, that the Catholic invisible Church cannot; but any particular and visible Church may, as this of Israel, and that of Rome, which hath long

since cast off Christ, and the public exercise of true religion; and is become *ex aurea argentea, ex argentea ferrea, ex ferrea terrea: superest iam ut in stercus abeat*, said one of her own sons, an Augustine friar, in 1414, and many others of their own writers say the same, *necessario potius quam libenter*, as wrested from them by the truth, rather than of any itching humour to disgrace their mother by uncovering her nakedness.

Ver. 8. **They eat up the sin of my people**] That is, the sin offerings, as #Ex 29:14. This they might lawfully do, #Le 6:16,18 23,26,29,30 10:17. But they were greedy dogs; and looked every one to his gain from his quarter, #Isa 5:6,11. They winked at the people's sins, and cared not what evils they fell into, so that they would bring in store of fat and good expiatory sacrifices, which made for the priest's advantage. They ate that on earth which they were to digest in hell; they fed upon such diet as bred the worm of conscience, that never dies. Just so the Papists do at this day: they teach the people, though they sin, yet, by giving money for so many masses to be mumbled over by a greasy priest, or by so many indulgences and dirges purchased of the pope's pardon mongers, they shall be delivered, *etiamsi, per impossibile, matrem Dei vitiassent*. although impossible, they may damage the mother of God, I tremble to translate it. Tecelius told them so in Germany; and got huge masses of money for the pope's coffers. The common sort of Papists (for want of better teaching) will say, when we have sinned we must confess: and when we have confessed we must sin again, that we may confess again; and make work for new indulgences and jubilees. But have these "workers of iniquity no knowledge, that eat up God's people as they eat bread?" #Ps 14:4, that drink up the blood of souls, much more worth than the lives that David's men had jeopardized to procure him the water of the well of Bethlehem, which therefore he dared not drink of? This surely is that filthy lucre (αισχροκερδεια) ministers should be free from, #1Pe 5:2. Let all non-residents look to it, that carry only *forcipes et mulctrum*, tongs and a milking pail, those instruments of a foolish shepherd, #Zec 11:15 {See Trapp on "Zec 11:15"} feeding themselves, but starving the flock: a heavy account will they one day make to the arch-shepherd, of their sacrilegious rapacity.

**And they set their hearts on their iniquity]** Heb. they lift up their souls: that is, they not only prick up their ears, as Danaeus expounds it, to listen after sins and sin offerings, but they greedily desire and earnestly look after Such emoluments, such belly timber: being *gulae mancipia*, slaves to their guts, and wholly given up to gormandise. See the same expression, and in this sense, **#Jer 22:27 De 24:15 Eze 24:25**, and compare the practice of Popish priests, who make infinite gain of everything almost, as their ringing of saints' bells, places of burial, selling of licences for marriage and meats, selling of corpses and sepulchres. All things are saleable and soluble at Rome; and the savour of gain sweet, though it comes out of a stinking stew, or Jew's counting house. The priests had a trick by wires to make their images here wag their chaps apace, if some good gift were presented; as, if otherwise, to hang the lip in token of discontent.

Ver. 9. **And there shall be like people like priest]** *i.e.* they shall share alike in punishment, as they have done in sin; neither shall their priesthood protect them, any more than it did Eli's two sons, whose white ephod covered foul sins. A wicked priest is the worst creature upon earth. Who are devils but they that were once angels of light? and who shall have their portion with the devil and his angels but those *dehonestamenta cleri malae monetae ministri*, bad lived ministers. It was grown to a proverb in times of Popery, that the pavement of hell was pitched with soldiers' helmets and shavelings' crowns. Letters also were framed and published as sent from hell; wherein the devil gave the Popish clergy no small thanks, for so many millions of souls as by them were daily sent down to him. The priests might haply hope to be privileged and provided for in a common calamity, for their office sake; as Chrysostom saith that Aaron (though in the same fault with Miriam, **#Nu 12:1**, yet) was not smitten with leprosy as she, for the honour of the priesthood (*δια το της επισουνης αξιωμα*. Chrys.), lest such a foul disease on his person should redound to the disgrace of his office. But I rather think he escaped by his true and timely repentance; whereby he disarmed God's indignation, and redeemed his own sorrow and shame. For God is an impartial judge; neither is there with him respect of persons: priest and people shall all be carried captive one with another (the priests for the people, according to that of **#Isa 6:5**, "I am a man of polluted lips": for what reason? "I live among a

people of polluted lips," and have learned their language; and especially the people for the priests, #Jer 23:10,14,15; from the prophets there goes profaneness quite through the land), so they shall fare the worse one for another; they shall all be involved in the same punishment. Only it shall be more grievous to the priest, by how much higher thoughts he had of himself; looking on the people as his underlings, as they did, #Joh 7:49.

**And I will punish them for their ways]** Heb. visit them. So #Ex 32:34, "In the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them." God hath his visitation days wherein to visit those visitors, the priests; and his articles will be as strict and as critical (saith one) as ever was the Inquisition of Spain or Lambeth. It was therefore good counsel that a martyr gave his wife in a letter, Among all other prisoners visit your own soul, and set all to rights there: for else, what will you do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what will you answer him? #Job 31:14. And that which Tertullian gave Scapula, a pagan persecutor; *Si nobis non parcis, tibi parce: si non tibi, Carthagini:* God will surely make inquisition for our blood: therefore if thou wilt not spare us, yet spare thyself; if not thyself, yet spare thy country, which must be responsible when God comes to visit.

**And reward them for their deed]** Heb. I will make to return your doings. Hence this is well observed, by a good interpreter: Sin passeth away in the act of it with much sweetness; but God will make it return back again in the guilt of it, with much bitterness.

Ver. 10. **For they shall eat and not have enough]** Only they shall be filled with their own ways, #Pr 14:14, but that is but to feed upon the wind with Ephraim, #Ho 12:1, which breedeth nothing but troublesome belching, or a dog-like appetite (as they call it), that cannot be satisfied (*Βουλμια*, *appetitus caninus* desire of a dog). These greedy dogs, the priests, that did eat up the sins of God's people, and thought to have fully gorged themselves therewith, they met with that sore plague of unsatisfiability for the present (a man may as soon fill a chest with wind as soul with wealth ( *Non plus satiatur cor auro quam corpus aura*, Aug.); see #Ec 5:10) {See Trapp on "Ec 5:10"} and for the future they coveted an evil covetousness to themselves, for they got God's curse along with their illgotten goods which will bring them to a morsel of bread they have not only

sucked in the air, but pestilential air, that not only not fills them, but kills them too. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:6"}

**They shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase]** The Chaldee renders it, They shall take wives, but shall not beget sons. *Sol et homo generant hominem*, saith the philosopher; but unless God, the first agent, concur, that cannot be neither. Lo, "Children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward," saith David to his son Solomon, who found it true by experience, **#Ps 127:3**, for by all his wives and concubines (no less than a thousand) he had but one son that we read of and he was none of the wisest; nothing like Edward VI, whom alone Henry VIII left (with his two sisters) to succeed him; though he had so many wives and concubines. Wantonness is a sin commonly punished with warn of posterity: especially when it is accompanied with obstinace in evil courses, as in Ahab who, to cross God's threat of rooting out him and his posterity, took many wives; and so bestirred him, that he begat of them seventy sons, but with evil success; for they were all cut off in one day, **#2Ki 10:7**. Wicked men must not think to carry it against God; and to have their wills *al disputo di Dio*, as that profane pope said; and as that graceless Ahaziah, who sent a third captain, after that the former two had been consumed by fire; as if he would despitefully spit in the face of heaven, and wrestle a fall with the Almighty. Let no man expect to prosper in unlawful practices, to increase by whoredom, as these profane priests sought to do, that they might be full of children (anyhow): and leave the rest of their substance to their babes, **#Ps 17:14**. But fertility is not from the means (right or wrong), but from the author (many a poor man hath a house full of children by one wife; while Solomon hath but one son by many houses full of wives), and Job could tell that whoredom is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all his increase, **#Job 31:12**.

**Because they have left off to take heed to the Lord]** God is not bound to render a reason for his proceedings, yet doth it oft, as here, that he may be justified, and every mouth stopped. Their apostasy is here shown to be the cause of their calamity. There was a time when they took some heed to God and his ways: they kept close to him, and observed his commandments to do them (as the word here

importeth), but now they had left off to be wise, and to do good, (*#Ps 36:3*) until their iniquity was found to be hateful, and themselves altogether filthy, *#Ps 53:3*, wicked doers against the covenant, *#Da 11:30,32*. Apostates cannot choose unto themselves a worse condition, *#2Pe 2:20,22 Mt 12:43,45*, let them look to it. Hath ever any waxed fierce against God and prospered? *#Job 9:4*; even of late my people are risen up against me as an enemy, *#Mic 2:8*, but what will they do in the end thereof?

Ver. 11. **Whoredom and wine and new wine have taken away the heart]** *i.e.* Have robbed my people of themselves, and laid a beast in their room. Any lust allowed and wallowed in will eat out the heart of grace; and, at length, all grace out of the heart. Hence temporizers grow in time so sapless, heatless, and heartless to any good; some unmortified lust or other there is, that, as a worm, lieth grubbing at the root, and makes all to wither; that, like a drone in a hive, proves a great waster; that, as a moth in fine cloth, consumes all; or, as the light of the sun, puts out the light of the fire: so here. But, above all others, sensual sins and fleshly lusts (such as are here instanced, whoredom and drunkenness) do war against the soul, *#1Pe 2:11*, do take away the heart; they besot and infatuate a man, they rob him of his reason, and carry away his affections, &c. Grace is seated in the power of nature. Now these carnal sins disable nature; and so set it in a greater distance from grace. They make men, that formerly seemed to give light as a candle, to become as a snuff in a socket, drowned in the tallow; or as a quagmire, which swallows up the seed sown upon it, and yields no increase. Who are void of the Spirit but such as are sensual? *#Jude 18,19*. And who are they that say unto God, Depart from us, but those that dance to the timbrel and harp, &c., *#Job 21:11*. "They saw God, and did eat and drink," *#Ex 24:11*; that is, say some, though they had seen God, yet they turned again to sensual pleasures: as if it had reference to that eating, and drinking, and rising up to play, upon the dedication of their calf, which was presently after. Aristotle writeth of a parcel of ground in Sicily that sendeth forth such a strong smell of fragrant flowers to all the fields and grounds thereabouts, that no hound can hunt there; the scent is so confounded with the sweet smell of the flowers. Let us see to it that the pleasures of sin take not away all scent (and sense too) of heavenly delights; that the flesh, as a siren, befool not Wisdom's guests, and get them away from her, *#Pr 9:16*; as Aelian



tells of a whore that boasted that she could easily get all Socrates' scholars from him, but he could not recover one again from her. Indeed, none that go unto her return again, saith Solomon, #Pr 2:19, for she gets their hearts from them: as David found, and Solomon complained. David was never his own worthy again, after he had fouled himself with that beastly sin. And Solomon, when he gave himself to wine and women (though his mother had sufficiently warned him, #Pr 31:3,4), he quickly took hold of folly, #Ec 2:3, his sensualities drew out his spirits and dissolved him, and brought him to so low an ebb in grace, that many question his salvation. Bellarmine reckons him among reprobates: but I like not his judgment. Let ministers of all men (this is spoken of the priests chiefly, as some think) see to it that they flee fleshly lusts: that they exhort the younger women with chastity, as St Paul did Timothy: and drink (if any, yet but) a little wine for their health's sake: remembering that the sins of teachers are teachers of sins; and that their evil practices flee far upon those two dangerous wings of example and scandal. Ministers should be no winebibbers or ale stakes, #1Ti 3:3, *ne magis solliciti de mero quam de vero, magis ament mundi delicias quam Christi divitias*, lest being "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," that should befall them that Solomon foretelleth, #Pr 23:33, thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. *Venter aestuans mere spumat in libidinem*, a belly filled with wine foameth out filthiness, saith Jerome. Wine is the milk of Venus, saith Aristotle. *Vina parant animos Veneri*, saith Ovid. Whoredom is usually ushered in by drunkenness: hence they stand so close together in this text.

Ver. 12. **My people ask counsel at their stocks]** That is, at their images, which are here called stocks in contempt, as Hezekiah called the brazen serpent (when it was idolized by the people) Nehushtan, or, a piece of brass; and as Julius Palmer, martyr, called the rood in Paul's a jackanapes; and as the poet, in contempt of his own god Priapus, brings him in saying

“ *Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum.*”

So the prophet cries shame upon the house of Israel for saying to a stock, Thou art my father, and to a stone, Thou hast brought me

forth, **#Jer 2:27 Isa 44:11**. But to such senseless practices men fall many times when they grow sensual; see **#2Th 2:10 Re 17:5**. Spiritual whoredom and bodily go usually together. Rivet tells us here of a nobleman that went out of the church from hearing mass into the very next house, where he kept a whore; and said to the bystanders, *a lupanari ad missam unum tantum esse passum*, that there is but one step from the mass to a whore house.

**And their staff]** That is, saith Kimchi, their false prophets, upon whom they lean, and by whom they are led, as a blind man by his staff. But I rather think it is meant of rhabdomancy, <sup>{a}</sup> a kind of odd way of divining by rods and staves, as Nebuchadnezzar is brought in doing, **#Eze 21:22**, and was common in those eastern parts. Or else hereby are meant the soothsayers' and magicians' rods, as **#Ex 7:12 Heb 11:21**. It is said that Jacob worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff, and thereby lifting up his body to do reverence to God, where the Vulgate text, omitting the preposition, hath committed a manifest error, in saying that Jacob worshipped the top of his rod or staff; as if there had been some picture there engraven. The Hebrew is, towards the bed's heads. And it is certain that Jacob worshipped none but God; and bowed himself either towards the bed's head, or leaning upon his staff, to testify his humility, faith, and hope, which adoration how far it was from the worshipping of images (which the Papists urge from this place), who seeth not?

**For the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err]** That unclean spirit, **#Zec 13:2**, the devil (who is εἰδωλοχαρης, as Synesius saith, a delighter in idols), drives them *satanico impetu*, to commit whoredom, both spiritual and corporal, with strength of affection. Now, if that spirit of error, **#1Jo 4:6**, and of giddiness, **#Isa 19:14**, cause men to err, and carry them with a vehement impetus to idol worship (which indeed is devil worship), what wonder? Men that are that way bent know not of what spirit they are; little think that they are acted and agitated by the devil. O pray with David, **#Ps 143:10**, that that good Spirit of God may lead us into all truth and holiness.

**And they are gone a whoring from under their God]** *i.e.* from under the yoke of his obedience; they are gone out of his precincts,

and therefore also out of his protection; as a whore that forsaketh her husband, and is therefore worthily cast off.

{a} Divination by means of a rod or wand; *spec.* the art of discovering ores, springs of water, etc., in the earth by means of a divining rod. (ED.

**Ver. 13 They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, &c.]** As nearer to heaven; and in an apish imitation of the patriarchs, who, before the tabernacle was set up, sacrificed in high places (as Abraham on Mount Moriah, &c.), that their bodies being mounted, aloof, they might the better lift up their hearts and eyes to heaven, saying, as it were, to all worldly cares and cogitations, as Abraham did to his servants whom he left at the foot of the hill, "Abide you here with the ass," #Ge 22:5. Jerome upon this place hath his note: Israel, saith he, loveth high places, for they have forsaken the high God; and they love the shadow, having left the substance. But what could be more absurd than to think, as they did, that God, who is omnipresent, was nearer to them on hills and high places, and farther off them in valleys. See #Isa 57:7 Eze 6:13. This they had partly also learned of the heathens; from whom nevertheless God had shut them up, as it were, in an island (so their land is called, #Isa 20:6), that having little commerce with them, they might not learn their manners. But our nature is very catching this way; and doth as easily draw and suck idolatry to it as the lode stone doth iron, or turpentine fire.

**Under oaks, and poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good]** So they proceed from one evil to another; for sin is infinite, and when a man is fallen down one round of hell's ladder he knows not where he shall stop, or how he shall step back. These idolaters, as they had their high places in imitation of the patriarchs, so their groves of shady trees consecrated to their idols; to strike reverence into their hearts, as they conceited, and for the greater solemnity. Sin comes commonly clothed with a show of reason, #Ex 1:10. Come, let us deal wisely, say they: yet every oppressor is a fool, #Pr 28:16. It will so blear the understanding that a man shall think he hath reason to be mad, and that there is some sense in sinning. But especially will worship hath a show of wisdom, #Col 2:23, or the reason of wisdom, as the word there signifieth, the very quintessence of it. Hence the Papists write rationals, whole volumes

of reason for their rites and ceremonies in divine service,—the shadow is good, say these, therefore we get under trees. (See Dr Sheldon's Mark of the Beast, serm.) And John Hunt, a blasphemous Papist, in his humble appendix to King James, chap. vi, was not afraid to say, That the God of the Protestants is the most uncivil and evil mannered God of all those who have borne the name of gods upon the earth; yea, worse than Pan, god of the clowns, which can endure no ceremonies nor good manners at all. O tongue worthy to be pulled out, cut in gobbets, and driven down the throat of this hideous blasphemer; for he could not but know the God of the Protestants (as he scornfully termeth him) to be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Did not Rabshakeh rail after this rate upon good Hezekiah, for taking down the high places and altars of God (as he called them), which yet God well approved of? #2Ki 18:22. Mr Burroughes maketh mention of a lady in Paris, who, when she saw the bravery of a procession to a saint, she cried out, Oh, how fine is our religion beyond that of the Huguenots? They have a mean and beggarly religion, but ours is full of solemnity and bravery, &c. The Catholics, in their supplication to King James for a toleration, plead that their religion is ( *inter cratera* ) so pleasing to nature, and so suitable to sense and reason, that it must therefore needs be the right. A proper argument surely; and not all out so convincing as that of Cenalis, Bishop of Auranches, who, writing against the Christian congregation at Paris, and basely slandering their meetings, as if they were to maintain whoredom, will, in conclusion, needfully prove (if he could) the Catholics to be the true Church, because they had bells to call them together; but the Huguenots had claps of harquebuses, or pistolets, for that purpose.

**Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom]** Impune, they shall do it, and for a punishment of your idolatry; and inasmuch as you have prostituted your souls (that is, my spouse) to the devil, your houses shall be whore houses, to your utter disgrace and heart break. Certain it is, that where there is most idolatry there is most adultery; as at Rome, which is nothing else but a great brothel house, and hath fully made good that of the poet;

*“ Roma quod inverso delectaretur amore,  
Nomen ab inverso nomine fecit Amor.”*

Thus God punished the idolatrous Ethnics, by delivering them up to passions of dishonour, or vile affections; to Sodomitical practices, which did abase them below those fourfooted beasts which they adored, #Ro 1:23,24. Some put off all manhood, became dogs, worse than dogs, scalded in their own grease, ἐξεκαυθησαν, #Ro 1:27, and this is there called a meet recompense, ἀντιμισθίαν, such as God here threateneth. Mr Levely (a very learned interpreter) thinketh that when God saith here, Your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your daughters-in-law (for so he renders it) shall commit adultery, he meaneth it not of voluntary whoredom, but of that which is forced, according to that of Amos to Amaziah #Am 7:17, "Therefore thus saith the Lord thy wife shall be a harlot in the city, and thy sons and daughters shall fall by the sword"; that is, thy wife shall be ravished by the enemy. Theodoret also is of the same judgment.

Ver. 14. **I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom]** *q.d.* I will not once foul my fingers with them, or be at pains to correct them but they shall take their swing in sin for me &c. Origen in a certain homily, quoting this Scripture, saith, *Vis indignantis Dei terribilem vocem audire, &c.* (Hom. 8 in Exod. 20): Will you hear the terrible voice of a provoked God; hear it here, I will not punish, &c. You shall be without chastisement, for an argument that you are bastards, and not sons. Never was Jerusalem's condition so desperate as the time when God said unto her, "My fury shall depart from thee, I will be quiet and no more angry," #Eze 16:42. *Feri, Domine, feri*, cried Luther, Strike, Lord, strike, and spare not.

“ *Ferre minora volo, ne graviora feram.*”

There is not a greater plague can befall a man than to prosper in sinful practices. Bernard calleth it *miseriordiam omni indignatione crudeliorem*, a killing courtesy. #Eze 3:20, I will lay a stumbling block before him: that is, saith Vatablus, I will prosper him in all things, and not by affliction restrain him from sin. Job surely counts it for a great favour to sorry man, that God accounts him worth melting, though it be every morning; and trying, though it be every

moment, **#Job 7:17,18**. And Jeremiah calleth for correction as a thing that he could not well be without: "Correct me, O Lord," &c.

**For themselves are separated with whores]** God seemeth to speak this to others by change of person: *Ac si puderet ipsum cum putidis hircis verba facere*, as if he were ashamed to speak any longer to such stinking goats (Rivet). Separates they were, but of the worst sort. They separated themselves with harlots, they got into byways, far from company (especially of those that know them), that they might more freely act filthiness (Auson.). But what could the heathen say, *Turpe quid acturus, Te sine teste time*. Shameful what he will do, fear you without witness. Conscience is a thousand witnesses: and men must not think long to lie hidden; for God will be a "swift witness against the adulterers," **#Mal 3:5**, {See Trapp on "Mal 3:5"} and, it may be, "bring them into all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly," **#Pr 5:14**. {See Trapp on "Pr 5:14"} Some render it, they beget bastards, such as the mule is (which also hath his name *pered*, from this root, *yithparedu*). Or they shall be unfruitful as the mule. Wantonness is commonly punished with want of children. {See Trapp on "Ho 4:10"} Those children that they had took after them, it appeareth here, they were naught by kind, as being an adulterous generation, a seed of evildoers, a race of rebels; and therefore it was no matter how little they multiplied. Let those that have children, and others under their charge, keep home as much as may be; and not be separate from their families (with whores especially), lest their daughters meanwhile commit whoredom (counted but a trick of youth, a sin that that slippery age may easily slip into, and not easily be descried, **#Pr 30:19**), and their spouses commit adultery, by occasion of their lewd absence, and to cry quittance with them at home. Let them also make Nebuchadnezzar's law, that none under their roof say or do aught "against the God of heaven," **#Da 3:29**; and themselves be first in the practice of it, as so many living laws, walking statutes; so may they hope to keep their houses chaste and honest, and provide for the credit and comfort both of themselves and of theirs.

**And they sacrifice with harlots]** Heb. Holy harlots, sacrificing harlots, such as Solomon speaketh of, **#Pr 7:14**, and as those wicked women that lay with Eli's sons at the door of the tabernacle, **#1Sa**

**2:22.** Or as King Edward IV's holy whore, as he used to call her, that came to him out of a nunnery, when he wished to send for her (Speed). His kinsman, Louis XI of France (knowing his disposition), invited him to the court, promising him his choice of beauties there, and *adhibebimus tibi Cardinalem Bourbonium*, then shall Cardinal Bourbon impose penance on you, and absolve you of all your misdoings (Comin.) It is well enough known what foul work the heathens made at their *sacra Eleusinia, Bacchanalia, Lupercalia, Priapdia* (the same with the sacrificing to Baal Peor, as Jerome holds). And to these this text may seem to refer; and this people too have separated themselves to that shame.

**Therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall]** Heb. shall be beaten, as some render it, shall be perplexed, and troubled, so as they know not what to do, or how to help themselves, as Aben Ezra from the Arabic. The Chaldee interprets it *collidetur*, shall be dashed in pieces. Ignorance is much instanced and threatened in this chapter, three or four different times at least. Not because men sin only by ignorance, as the Platonists think, *Omnis peccans est ignorans*; but, 1. To aggravate the hatefulness of this: sin, which men use so to excuse and extenuate; 2. To taunt and abase the rebellious nature of man, who now is set in gross ignorance, and ready to pitch headlong into hell, as the just reward of his aspiring and reaching after forbidden knowledge; 3. Because ignorance (affected especially) is the source of many sins, and a main support of Satan's kingdom. {See Trapp on "Ho 4:1"} {See Trapp on "Ho 4:6"} &c.

Ver. 15. **Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend]** Lest if God lose his glory among them too, he lose it altogether. Judah was grown almost as bad as Israel (in the days of that stigmatic Ahaz especially, #2Ch 28:22); Aholibamah, as Aholibah, #Eze 23:36. But let it not be so, saith the prophet, since not to be warned by the harms of another is a just both presage and desert of ruin. *Alterius igitur perditio tua sit cautio*. Therefore by their destruction, let you be warned. Seest thou another shipwreck? look well to thine own tackling. God will take that from Israel which he will not from Judah; because these had many means and privileges that the other had not; as the temple, priests, ordinances, &c. Now good turns aggravate unkindness; and men's offences are increased by their obligations. Judah was and would be therefore the

worse, because they ought to have been better. And God can better bear with aliens than with his own people, when they offend. The Philistines may cart the ark, but if David do it woe be to Uzzah. You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore (whosoever escape) I will punish you for all iniquities, **#Am 3:2**. The unkindness of your sins is more than all the rest: it grieves God's Spirit, and goes near his heart.

**Come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven]** Alias Bethel, the house of God, so called by Jacob, who there had visions of God, and said, "How fearful is this place! It is even the house of God and gate of heaven." But now it was become the hate of heaven, and gate to destruction, as being abused to idolatry. *Corruptio optimi fit pessima*. Corruption of the best become the worst. Bethel is become Bethaven, the house of iniquity and misery, of sin and of sorrow: for "their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god," **#Ps 16:4**. The word *gnatsabim*, there rendered *sorrows*, signifieth also idols, **#Ps 115:4 106:36**, because they that worship them are sure of sorrows.

**Come not therefore to Gilgal, &c.]** Gilgal was the key of Canaan, situated between Jordan and Jericho, famous for various services there performed to God, as were easy to instance; but now basely abused to idol worship. Hence this charge (and the like in **#Am 5:5**) not to come near it; and the rather because it was a border town, and so more dangerous. "Keep thee far from an evil matter," saith Moses, **#Ex 23:7**; "Come not nigh the doors of the harlot's house," saith Solomon, **#Pr 5:8**. From such stand off, or keep aloof, saith Paul, **#1Ti 6:5**. Shun them as the seaman doth sands and shoals, as the same apostle's word, *στελλεσθαι*, imports, **#1Th 3:6**. A man cannot touch such pitch but he shall be defiled; nor live any while in Mauritania but he shall be discoloured. *Cum fueris Romae, &c.* Let them look to it that so much affect to see Italy, Rome, the pope, the mass &c. But, "What dost thou here, Elijah?" may God well say, as **#1Ki 19:9**. What protection hast thou here, either from infection of sin or infliction of punishment? Saith not the heavenly oracle, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," **#Re 18:4**. Mr Ascham (school master to Queen Elizabeth) was wont to thank God, that he



was but nine days in Italy: wherein he saw in that one city of Venice more liberty to sin than in London he ever heard of in nine years. And is it safe pressing into such pest houses? tampering with such temptations? Tertullian tells of a Christian woman, who being at a play, was possessed of a devil. And when he was asked by those that came to cast him out, how he dared possess one that was a Christian, he answered, I found her in mine own place. Take heed, therefore, ye come not where the devil hath to do. He that doth so, and yet prays, "Lead us not into temptation," may as well thrust his finger into the fire, and then pray that it may not be burnt.

**Nor swear, The Lord liveth]** *i.e.* Swear not by God and Malcham, **#Zep 1:5**, make not a mixture of religions; halt not between two opinions, think not to serve two masters, **#Mt 6:23**. What agreement hath Christ with Belial, or the temple of God with idols? **#2Co 6:15**. Cast away (saith one to a neuter passive, Nicodemus) either thy wings or thy teeth; and loathing this bat-like nature, be what thou art, either a bird or a beast (Dr Hall, Epist. to W. Laud). There were (belike) in Judah, that thought they could both frequent places of idol worship, and serve Jehovah, swearing by his name. God will have none of that; if he be served by men at all he must be served truly, that there be no halting, and totally, that there be no halving, To swear *vere, rite, iuste*, truly, solemnly and justly, as **#Jer 4:1**, is a piece of God's service, and we may well reckon it among our good works. But to swear by idols, or before idols, made to represent the true God (as those bugs at Dan and Bethel, &c.), or by the creature, **#Mt 5:24**, is utterly unlawful. It is a great dishonour to God, and a great dishonour to ourselves also; for we always swear by the greater, **#Heb 6:16**.

Ver. 16. **For Israel slideth back, as a back sliding heifer]** *Iuvenea petulca*, as an unruly heifer, which kicketh against the milk pail, and wriggleth against the yoke. As a mad cow, *δαμαλις παροιστροσα*, so the Septuagint. Mr Dearing told Queen Elizabeth in a sermon, that whereas once she wrote in Woodstock windows, *tanquam ovis*, as a sheep to the slaughter; now she was *tanquam indomita iuvenca*, as an untamed heifer; and might well fear lest God would feed her as a lamb in a large place as here, and feed her with his rod, as **#Mic 7:14**. The Chaldee rendereth, *sicut bos qui saginatur et recalcitrat*, as an ox that waxeth fat and kicketh. But the Hebrew word is

feminine; and in all creatures, the female is observed to be more headlong and headstrong. (Virg. Georg. III):

“ *Scilicet ante omnes furor est insignis equarum.*”

Heifers also are more wild, wanton, and untractable: noting the children of disobedience, those refractory rebels: that, as false jades, will not stand and pull (as countrymen call it), set their shoulders to the yoke, and their sides to the work, but give in and kick against the prick.

**Now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place]** *i.e.* He will keep them short, as a heifer kept in a sheep pasture, where there is nothing for her to bite on, it is so bare. A lamb can live where a heifer cannot; a lamb can pick up the grass of the wilderness, and pick a living out of it. God threateneth these heifers, they shall have henceforth short commons. Thus Gaulther carries it. Mercer will have it thus: I will feed them as a lamb, *i.e.* daintily and plentifully, that being the sooner fatted, they may be fitted for the shambles. Other thus, and I think better, he shall feed them, that is, punish them, *{as #Mic 5:4,6 7:14}* as a lamb, one single helpless lamb, that goes bleating up and down in the wide waste wilderness, having none to tend it, or take care of it: it shall be all alone in a large place. How much better and safer were it to be in God's fold, where (though penned, or pent up in a narrower room, yet) God's lambs are sure to be fed daily and daintily. Whereas those that affect freedom from God's service, and hold themselves at best ease when they have elbow room enough to satisfy their lusts without restraint or control, they shall be fed with God's rod, **#Mic 7:14**, yea, they shall find that he hath two rods, beauty and bands, **#Zec 11:7**, the latter for those that fight the former. Or if he feed them as a lamb in a large place, alone, and at random, they will quickly become a prey to the wolf, and soon have enough of that wild liberty that they so much affected.

Ver. 17. **Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone]** Ephraim, that is, the ten revolted tribes, who are called Ephraim in opposition to Judah: 1. Because that tribe was the greatest of the ten; 2. Jeroboam, the ringleader of that revolt, was of that tribe; 3. They rebelled at Shechem, which was in that tribe, and from thenceforth was joined

or glued to idols, as the fornicator is to his harlot, with whom he becometh one flesh, and from whom there is no dissuading him. Some fetch the metaphor from enchanters; who by their conjuring art have society and fellowship with the devils; so had Ephraim with idols; and like an enchanted person, he could not stir from them, but stood fastened to them as to a stock or stake. The Tyrians, when besieged by Alexander, fearing the departure of their god Apollo from them, laid chains upon his statue, and fastened him to his temple. Ephraim was so fastened to his idols (*terrificulis* so Junius renders this text) that there is no likelihood of his being sundered from them: he had taken fast hold of deceit, **#Jer 8:5**, and would not loose his hold. Let him alone, therefore, saith either God to the prophet (lay out no more words, lose no more labour upon him) or the prophet to Judah; let them even go, have nothing to do with them, though they be your brethren, meddle not with them; let Christ alone, to deal with them at his coming: Maranatha, the Lord cometh. Meanwhile, they lie under a dreadful spiritual judgment, worse than all the plagues of Egypt; even a dead and dedolent disposition, whereunto they are delivered. This is worse than to be delivered to Satan: for so a man may be, and recover out of his snare by repentance, as the incestuous Corinthian did: but when God shall say, Let such a man alone, let him take his course, I have done with him, and let my ministers trouble themselves no more about him, there is thenceforth but an inch between him and hell, which even gapes for him, where he shall rue it among reprobates. Well he may flourish a while, and feel no hurt; as Saul did not of many years after his rejection; and as the Pharisees, after Christ had said of them, "Let them alone, they are blind leaders of the blind," **#Mt 15:14**; but they shall pine and swelter away in their iniquities, **#Le 26:39**, which is the last of those dismal plagues there, threatened; they shall not be purged till God's wrath hath rested upon them, **#Eze 24:13**, so that now they may go and serve every one his idols, since they have such a mind to it, **#Eze 20:39**, and since they have made a match with mischief, they may take their belly full of it. Oh let us fear, lest this should be any of our cases; that God should say, Let him alone, he is resolved of his way, and I of mine; he will have his swing in sin, and I am bent to have my full blow at him. "I am fully persuaded" (saith a reverend man, now with God) "that in these days of grace the Lord is much more quick and peremptory in rejecting

men than heretofore: the time is shorter, neither will he wait so long as he used to do." See for ground of this, #Heb 2:8, God is often quick in the offer of his mercy: Go and preach the gospel, saith Christ (go, and be quick: tell men what to trust to, that, as fools, they may not be *semper victuri*, always conquerers, ever about to be better, but never begin to set seriously to work), "He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned": I shall not longer dally with him. "Destruction cometh, and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none. Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients," #Eze 7:25,26; when men are even dropping into hell, and have a hell beforehand in their consciences, then they will send hastily for the minister, as they did in the sweating sickness here, so long as the ferventness of the plague lasted. Then the ministers were sought for in every corner, you must come to my lord, you must come to my lady, &c. But what if God had said of such a one, Let him alone, as he reprov'd Samuel for mourning for Saul, and as he forbade Jeremiah to pray for the Jews, and his apostles to take care for the Pharisees? Oh how dreadful is that man's condition! and what can a minister say more than what the king of Israel said to the woman that complained to him of the scarcity of Samaria, "If the Lord help thee not, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress?" #2Ki 6:27. If any dram of comfort be applied to a wicked man, the truth of God is falsified, and that minister will be reckoned among the devil's dirt daubers and upholsterers, that daub with untemper'd mortar and sew pillows under men's elbows, #Eze 13:18. Let such alone, therefore, and let God alone to deal with them.

Ver. 18. **Their drink is sour]** That is, they are past grace, and it is now past time a day to do them good: for thou seest how the matter mends with them, even as sour ale mends in summer: and how they even stink above ground, as #Ps 14:2. *Vina probantur odore, colore, sapore, &c.*, but their wine hath neither good colour, smell, nor savour or taste; it is dead and gone, and they are as trees twice dead and rotten, and therefore pulled up by the roots, such as the Latins call *vappae*, worthless fellows, that is, past the best, and now good for nothing: see #Isa 1:22. What life or sweetness can be in apostates? yea, how sour and unsavoury to such are all fleshly

comforts! They use to drink away their terrors, and drive away their melancholy dumps with merry company. But will that hold? what are such plasters better than the devil's drugs, than his whistle, to call men off from better practices? There is a cup in the hands of the Lord, it is full of mixture, but extremely sour; and the very dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them up, #Ps 75:8, though it be eternity to the bottom.

**They have committed whoredom continually]** Here they are taxed for whoredom, as before for drunkenness (so some carry it), and afterwards for covetousness. This is that chariotmen of shame, *flagitiorum trigae*, whereby the prophet persuadeth Judah to shake off Israel, as not fit to be conversed with. He had charged them before with fornication of both sorts; here he showeth how unwearied they were in their wickedness, and in addition how intense, for *fornicando fornicati sunt*, they have done wickedly as they could, they have eked out their idolatries and adulteries, and though wearied and even wasted with the multitude of their wickedness, yet they have not given over, but are unsatisfied, and would sin in perpetuity: as that filthy fornicator who said he would desire no other heaven but to live for ever on earth, and to be carried from one brothel house to another. "She hath wearied herself with lies, and yet her great scum went not forth out of her: therefore shall it be in the fire," #Eze 24:12. Therefore shall graceless wretches be tormented for ever, because they would sin for ever; and therefore suffer all extremity, because they do wickedly with both hands earnestly, #Mic 7:3; woefully wasting the marrow of their time, the flower of their age, the strength of their bodies, the vigour of their spirits, in the pursuit of their lusts, in the froth and filth whereof is bred that worm that never dieth; which is nothing else but the furious reflection of the soul upon its own once wilful folly, and now woeful misery.

**Her rulers with shame do love, Give ye]** Her shields (oh shameful!) do love, Give ye; where there is in the original an elegant alliteration that cannot be translated, ובה ובה *Dilixerunt Afferte*, not *Afferre*, as the Vulgate corruptly readeth it. The Doric dialect, the horse leech's language, Give, Give, they are perfectly skilled in: δωροφαγία, gift-greediness, is all their delight: like the ravens of

Arabia, that fullgorged, have a tuneable sweet record, but empty, screech horribly. *Plerique officarii*, saith one: Very many rulers do as Plutarch reporteth of Stratocles and Dromoclites, a couple of corrupt officers, *qui sese mutuo ad messem auream invitare solebant*, who were wont to invite one another to the golden harvest, thereby meaning the court, and the judgment seat (Plutarch in Politic.). These follow the administration of justice as a trade only, with an unquenchable and unconscionable desire for gain: which justifieth the common resemblance of the courts of justice to the bush, whereunto while the sheep do flee for defence in weather, he is sure to lose part of his fleece. Now are these shields? are they not rather sharks? Are they protectors, and not rather pillagers, *latrones publici*, public robbers, as Cato called them? These shields of the earth belong to God, saith David, **#Ps 47:9**, should they not then be like him "Now there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor accepting of persons, nor receiving of gifts," **#2Ch 19:7**, neither by himself nor by his man Elisha, nor by his man's man Gehazi, without distaste. By one period of speech, by one breath of the Lord, are they both forbidden: **#De 16:18,19,20**, "Thou shalt not respect persons, nor receive a gift": For what reason: "A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise," yea, it transforms them into walking idols, that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not: only it leaveth them hands to handle, that the very touching whereof will infect and venom a man, as Pliny writes of the fish Torpedo. Let such, therefore, shake their hands from bribes, **#Isa 33:15**, as Paul shook off the viper: and be so far from saying, Give ye, that he should rather say to those that offer it, "Thy money perish with thee." "He that hateth gifts shall live," **#Pr 15:27**. Jethro's justice of peace should be a man of courage, fearing God, hating covetousness, **#Ex 18:21**; not bound to the peace (as one phraseth it) by a gift in a basket, nor struck dumb by the appearance of angels.

Ver. 19. **The wind hath bound her up in her wings]** The evil spirit (saith Jerome) hurries them towards hell, which is the just hire of the least sin; how much more of these afore mentioned abominations! Take it rather to be spoken of the suddenness, swiftness, and unresistableness of God's judgments, set forth by mighty winds rending the rocks, and tearing up the mountains by the roots, **#Job 38:9**. How then shall wicked men (compared to chaff or "dust of the mountains") stand before the tempest of God's wrath, the thunder of

his power? Well they may applaud and stroke themselves for a time; but the wind shall bind them up in her wings; God shall blow them to destruction, **#Job 4:9**: his executioners have the "wings of a stork," large and long, and "wind in those wings," to note their ready obedience, **#Zec 5:9**. And although, **#Eze 1:26**, God be represented as sitting upon a throne to show his slowness to punish, yet that "throne hath wings and hands under those wings," to show his swiftness and readiness to do seasonable execution upon his enemies.

**And they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices]** Wherein they trusted, but now see themselves disappointed, their idols not able to help them. Then shall they cast their idols of silver and of gold, which they have made each for himself to worship, "to the moles and to the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks," **#Isa 2:20,21**; see also **#Isa 30:22**. If they be not thus ashamed of their former fopperies, they are the more to be pitied, *Illum ego periisse dice cui perit pudor*. He is an undone man that shames not, does not hesitate for his evil practices, that blusheth not, bleedeth not before God for them, lying down in his shame, **#Jer 3:25**, as fully ashamed of his former hopes, **#Ps 119:116**, which now he seeth how far they have abused him.

## Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Hear ye this, ye priests]** For you are not so wise but that ye may "hear and increase learning," **#Pr 1:5 Ho 4:6**; and besides, from you is profaneness gone forth into all the land, **#Jer 23:15**. For you, therefore, in the first place, I have a citation to appear before God's tribunal to hear your sin and your sentence, your crime and your doom. God cited Adam immediately and by himself, **#Ge 3:9**, "Adam, where art thou?" so he did Cain, Laban, Nabal, and others, when he sends for them by death, saying as once to that pope, *Veni miser in iudicium*, Come away, and hear thy sentence. *Centum revolutis annis Deo respondebitis et mihi*. Mediatly he citeth men by the mouth of his ministers; as he did the Council of Constance by his faithful martyr, John Huss, and his word stood: and as he doth here the three estates of the kingdom, priests, people, and princes, by the prophet Hosea. That was very strange and extraordinary, that Mr Knox reporteth in his history of Scotland, of one Sir John Hamilton,

murdered by the king's means; that he appeared to him in a vision with a naked sword drawn, and strikes off both his arms with these words, Take this before thou receive a final payment for all thine impieties: and within twenty-four hours two of the king's sons died. It is, indeed, but part of their punishment that wicked men here receive, seem it never so grievous, when God entereth into judgment with them, as here it is said.

**For judgment is toward you]** That is, I am about to pronounce sentence against you, and to do execution: and therefore hear, hearken, and give ear, the first, second, and third time I admonish you, that ye may know that my citation is serious and peremptory: and that your damnation sleepeth not. Priest and people are set before the house of the king; because theirs was *sedes prima, et vita ima*, a high place but a low life (Salvian). And besides, courtiers and great men, though they be in other cases forward enough to take the places of others, yet in point of punishment they slink back, and are well content that others should go before them. God regards none for his greatness ( *potentes potenter torquebuntur* ), neither spareth he any for his meanness, or because they were borne down either by the laws or lives of their superiors. The people are here placed between the priests and princes, and with them appealed and impeached, to show how frigid and insufficient their excuse is, who plead that they did but as they were taught by their ministers, and as they were commanded by their governors. "Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment," as it is in **#Ho 5:11**. {See Trapp on "Ho 5:11"}

**For judgment is toward you]** Vengeance is in readiness for the disobedient, be he what he will, Caesar or captive, lord or losel, priest or people; every whit as ready in the Lord's hand as in the minister's mouth, **#2Co 10:6**, neither shall multitudes privilege or secure them. Though they be quiet or combined, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down, when he shall pass through, **#Na 1:12**, yea, though they be briers and thorns that set against him in battle (and those never so much strengthened and sharpened), yet God will "go through them, and burn them together," **#Isa 27:4**, he will cut off the spirit of princes, and destroy a whole rabble of rebels that rise up against him.



**Because ye have been a snare on Mizpah]** That God may be justified and every mouth stopped, a reason is here rendered of his most righteous proceedings, and the same recited (after the manner of men) in the preamble to their condemnatory sentences.

**Because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor]** These were two very high hills, much haunted by hunters, and frequented by fowlers, to whom these idolaters (striving to catch people, *ritibus suis velut retibus et laqueis*, with their nets and snares of errors and superstitions) are fitly compared. For they lie in wait for men's souls, and catch many of them either by persuasions or punishments, by allurements or by causing fear, as Julian the apostate did of old, and as the Papists do at this day. That Jeroboam and his counsellors set watchers in these two mountains, to observe who would go from him to Judah to worship, that he might intercept them and punish them, is a plausible opinion, but lacks proof. I know what is alleged, viz. **#1Ki 12:28 Ho 6:8**, according to the Vulgate translation. I confess also that it is not unlikely that such things should be done then (as lately wait was laid by the Papists for such as had a mind to betake themselves to Geneva, Tygur, Basil, &c.) for conscience' sake. It is more probable that upon those high hills idolatry was committed, {#Ho 4:13} {See Trapp on "Ho 4:13"} and thereby people insnared, as birds and wild beasts are in the mountains; and so made slaves to the devil, and even fatted for his tooth. Hence in the next words,

Ver. 2. **And the revolters are profound to make slaughter]** They lay their nets and snares deep, and lie down upon the ground, that they may take the silly birds that dread no danger. He "croucheth and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall into his strong paws," **#Ps 10:10**. He studies the devil's depths, **#Re 2:24**; poisonous and pestilent policies, Machiavellian mysteries of mischief. His head is a forge and fountain of wicked wiles: he hath store and strength of strange traps and trains, frauds and fetches, to draw in and deceive the silly simple. That these seducers were deeply revolted, **#Isa 31:6**, they had deeply corrupted themselves, **#Ho 9:9**, they sinned not common sins; as Korah and his accomplices died not a common death. They made great slaughter of men's souls, and of their bodies too, that refused to yield to them. Craft and cruelty seldom sundered

in seducers: as some write of the asp that he never wanders alone, without his companion with him; and as those birds of prey and desolation, #Isa 34:16, it is said that none of them lack their mate. The devil lendeth them his seven heads to plot, and his ten horns to push and gore, &c.

**Though I have been a rebuker to them all]** Heb. a correction (גורר). Understand it either to be the prophet, that he had dealt plainly with them, and done his utmost to reclaim them, yet they refused to be reformed, hated to be healed; We would have cured Babylon, but she would not be cured: or else of God, that he had both by words and scribes rebuked their superstitions, but nothing had wrought upon them. They "were tormented with the wrath of God, but repented not to give him the glory," #Re 16:9. *Corripimur*, might they say, *sed non corrigimur*; *plectimur*, *sed non flectimur*. See how God complains of this stubbornness, #Jer 6:28-30, and learn to tremble at his rebukes, to profit by his chastisements, lest a worse thing befall us. "The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame," #Zep 3:5. There are those who take the words passively, and render them thus, *Ego vero illis omnibus castigationi sum*, I have been rebuked or corrected by them all. See the like, #La 3:13, and in the Psalms often: I am a reproach to mine enemies: Thou makest us a reproach to all that are round about us, &c. So the prophet here may seem to complain, as Jeremiah did after him, that he was "born a man of contentions, that all the people cursed him," that he was a common byword and but mark: that they sharpened their tongues against him and flew in his face. To preach, saith Luther, is nothing else but to derive the rage of the whole world upon a man's self, *totius orbis furorem in se derivare*. Wisdom (that should be justified of her children, εδικαιωθη) is again judged of her children, as some read those words of our Saviour, #Mt 11:19, *iudicatur vel sententia pronuntiatur*. But I like the active sense better.

Ver. 3. **I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me]** Those that by Ephraim understand the princes, and by Israel the common people, *etiam hoc operae addant, et illud ex Scriptura probent*, saith Tarnovius, let them prove what they say by Scripture, and we will say with them: till then we take them for synonyms ( *Repetitione*

*etiam auget populi rebellionem. Rivet*). A hypocritical nation they were, **#Isa 9:17**, and atheistically they thought, by hiding God from themselves, to hide themselves from God. Hear them else, **#Ho 12:8**, "And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance: in all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin": that were a heinous business that iniquity should be found in them, though they were a people laden with iniquity, **#Isa 1:4**. But I know them through and through, *intus et in cute*, saith God, I am privy to all their plots and policies. And although they are profound to make slaughter (Tyndale reads it, They kill sacrifices on heaps to deceive), yet let not them be deceived, I am not mocked. They must not think to put me off with shows and shadows; to colour and cover their base spirits and vile ends with specious pretences. For I search the hearts, and try the reins: "neither is there any creature" (no, not the creature of the heart, the thoughts and intentions) "that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open" (naked for the outside, γυμνα, and open for the inside; the Greek word, τετραχλισμενα, signifieth dissected, quartered, and as it were cleft through the backbone) "before the eye of him with whom we have to deal," **#Heb 4:13**. Indeed, he is all eye; and every man before God is all window, ολοφθαλμος: so that no man needeth a window in his breast, *pectus clathratum* (as the heathen Momus wished), for God to look in at. "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves," **#Job 34:21,22**. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men," **#Ps 11:4**. The former points out his knowledge, the latter his critical descant. David, **#Ps 139:8**, findeth God not only at his finger ends, but at his tongue's end too, **#Ho 5:4**. His knowledge stays not here in the porch or lobbies, but passeth into the presence, yea, privy chamber, **#Ho 5:2**, yea, my thoughts in potential before I think them. *Deus intimo nostro nobis intimior*. The word is to God a sea of glass, **#Re 4:6**, a clear transparent body: "and his eyes are as a flaming fire," **#Re 1:14**, which needs no outward light, because it seeth *extramittendo* by sending out a ray; so that the "night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to him," **#Ps 139:12**. What wonder therefore though he know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from him? And how should this both humble them (for which cause it is here urged) and caution them for the future, as it

did that holy man, who had written upon the walls and windows of his study these verses,

*“ Ne pecces, Deus ipse videt, bonus Angelus astat,  
Accusat Satanas, et lex, mens conscia culpae.”*

**For now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled]** *In body and soul, rushing into all impiety without restraint; working all uncleanness with greediness, #Eph 4:19, being filled "with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness: full of envy, murder, debate, deceit," &c., #Ro 1:29,30. All these evil things "come from within, and defile a man," #Mr 7:23, worse than any leprosy, worse than the vomit of a dog, or the mire of a swine. It is the pollution of flesh and spirit, #2Co 7:1, it is the putrefication of a dead carcase, the sanies of a plague sore, the devil's excrement, and that which defileth far worse than that which is cast into the draught, #Mr 7:21. It sets defilement upon ourselves, others, the whole land, #Jer 3:1, yea, upon the visible heavens, which must therefore be purged by that last fire. And this was typified by those many Levitical washings and purifications of garments, vessels, persons. "Wash you, therefore, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings," &c., #Isa 1:16. "Wash thy heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem," not thy hands only, as Pilate, though those too, #Jas 4:8 Jer 4:14. "Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," #2Co 7:1. Of the flesh, that is, fleshly lusts and gross evils, as uncleanness, earthly mindedness; or of spirit, that is, those more spiritual lusts that lie more up in the heart of the country, such as are pride, creature confidence, self-deceit, presumption, &c. Out with all these: there is both a stain and a sting in them. Run to the bath of Christ's blood, that blessed fountain, #Zec 13:1, and there wash and be clean. Look not upon God's Jordan with Syrian eyes, as Naaman did. Abanah and Pharpar may wash and scour; but Jordan is for cure. And if God see fit to lay us a frosting to fetch out our filth, yea, or cast into the fire to take away our defilements, let us be contented.*

Ver. 4. **They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God]** Or, their doings will not suffer them. That is, they are so habituated and hardened in sinful practices, that they are not only disenabled to conversion, but evil affected thereunto: they stand across to all good;

to their sinews of iron they have added bows of brass, #Isa 48:4; to their sin they add rebellion, which is as bad as witchcraft, #1Sa 15:23; till at length they lose all passive power also of being converted, and so are transformed, as it were, into so many devils: having by custom contracted a necessity of sinning, they are become incurable; they neither will nor can return to their God; they will not frame their doings to it. The Vulgate hath it, their studies, the Septuagint, their counsels, Castalio, their endeavours, Pagnine, their pains, &c. The original is very elegant and metrical, **הַחִלְלֵנִי וְנָתִי אֶל מַהֲיָה־לֵּאֱלֹהִים בִּישָׁל** I scarce know a like text in all the Scripture, unless it be that in #La 5:16, **וְנֹאֲמָה יְב וְנָל אֲנִיּוֹא**, "Woe to us that we have sinned!" which is so elegant also in the original, that master Wheatly of Banbury (who used to be very plain in his preaching, and not to name a Greek, Latin, or Hebrew word) quoted it once in the Hebrew, as witness learned Master Leigh, who lived some while under his ministry (Master Leigh's Saints' Encouragement, &c. ep. dedic.). But to return to the text: whereas some might possibly conceive or reply, Ephraim is far gone indeed, but he may return. No, never, saith God; for he will not give his mind to it, or show his good will: he is even set, and there is no removing of him; he hath made his conclusion, and is as good as ever he meaneth to be. They are so far from yielding themselves unto the Lord, as #2Ch 30:8, that they stand in full opposition to him, yea, send messages after him, "We will not have this man to rule over us." The Jews were an untoward generation, saith Peter, #Ac 2:40; they, by their obstinate refusal of the gospel, judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, saith Paul, #Ac 13:46: there were unchangeable, unframeable, so knotty, that they were fit for nothing but the fire; so nasty, that they were fit for no place but the dunghill. And why?

**The spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them]** The devil is at inn with them, as Master Bradford said; he even sits abroad upon them, hatching all manner of evil counsels and courses, he worketh effectually in these children of disobedience, #Eph 2:2, as a smith doth in his forge, an artificer in his shop; he acts them and agitates them, making their souls and all the powers thereof nothing else but a shop of sin, their bodies and all the parts thereof tools of sin, their lives and all their actions of both soul and body a trade of sin, a web of wickedness spun out and made up by the hands of the devil and

the flesh, an evil spinner, and a worse weaver. Hence they lie rotting all their lives long in the graves of sin, wrapt up in the winding sheet of hardness of heart (they will not frame their doing to turn to God) and blindness of mind (they have not known the Lord); and as a carcase crawleth with worms, so do these men swarm with those noisome lusts, that are able to poison up an honest heart. How can it be otherwise? the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, as a king in his kingdom; yea, hath filled their hearts from corner to corner, as he had done the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, #Ac 5:3. That unclean spirit besiegeth the purest hearts, and compasseth them about, seeking to devour them, #1Pe 5:8, but they keep him out, "stedfast in the faith," or if he in any way get in, they quickly cast him out again; so that he cannot long rest or roost, much less reign there; for the Spirit of God keepeth them, and that evil one toucheth them not *tactu qualitativo*, with a deadly touch, #1Jo 5:18 (Cajetan); they regard not iniquity in their heart, there is no way of wickedness found in them. Of the spirit of whoredoms. {See Trapp on "Ho 4:11"}

**And they have not known the Lord]** He knows them well enough, #Ho 5:3, and they shall know it, #Jer 16:21, to their cost; but they know not the Lord, *sc.* savingly and effectually, for if they did, they could not be so vile and vicious, so loose and licentious. A man is properly said to know no more of God's mind than he practiseth; like as of our Saviour it is said, that "he knew no sin," that is, he did none, #2Co 5:21; with an intellectual knowledge he knew it (how else could he reprove it), but not with a practical; and as it is said of Eli's two sons, that they "knew not God," because they obeyed him not. Lo, such was the ignorance of this people, affected and acquired; and this is the *peccatorum omnium fons et fomes*, the mother of all mischief and misery, as hath been often set forth in the notes upon the former chapter.

Ver. 5. **And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face]** Pride is the great pockmark of the soul; it will bud, and cannot be hidden, #Eze 7:10. It is the *grandiabolo*, that filthy spirit is gotten into the midst of men, into the very heart of the country as it were. It is the leprosy of the soul that breaks forth in the very forehead, and so testifieth to his face. It proceeds from ignorance of God and his will, of a man's self and his duty; hence that connection of this verse and the former.

They "know not the Lord"; and the "pride of Israel testifieth to his face." The Laodiceans were therefore proud, because ignorant: thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, &c. So those question-sick fantastics in St Paul were "proud, knowing nothing," #1Ti 6:4. "And I would not have you ignorant of this mystery," saith he to the Romans, #Ro 11:25, "lest ye should be puffed up in your own conceits." Humble Agur, though full of heavenly light, yet vilifies and nullifies himself to the utmost, #Pr 30:2, and so exemplifies that proverb of Solomon, "with the lowly is wisdom," #Pr 11:2. And as wisdom maketh the face to shine, and humility rendereth a man lovely, so pride, on the contrary, sitteth in the face, and deformeth it. The proud man flattereth himself in his own lies, till his iniquity be found to he hateful, #Ps 36:2, till his swelling break forth in loathsome ulcers. Thus Miriam's pride testified to her face, and Uzziah's, and Sodom's, #Isa 3:9; the show of their countenance witnessing against them. Pride is a foolish sin, it cannot keep in, it will be aboveboard, and discover itself by lofty looks, big swollen words, proud gait, ridiculous gestures, garish attire, that nest of pride; but especially by stoutness and stubbornness against God and his ways (as here in this text it is to be taken), when men commit sin with a high hand, and, as it were, in despite of God, and on purpose to cross him. Hence it is that God so hateth this sin above other; for whereas all other sins flee from God, pride lets fly at him, nay, flies in his face, saying, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?" Hence he will be a swift witness against such, and a severe judge. Learned Mr Lively reads this text thus: "The excellency of Israel" (that is, God, as #Am 8:7 2Sa 1:19) "will testify to Ephraim's face," give in evidence against them. He will indeed be *index, iudex, vindex* sign, judge and protector to such; for he resisteth the proud, and delighteth to stain their glory, to cast dirt in those faces of theirs, that are so hatched with impudence, as to face the very heavens, and to contest with omnipotence. Hence their fall with a violence, with a vengeance.

**Therefore shall Ephraim and Israel fall in their iniquity]** *Corruet*, they shall fall with a push, with a powder, as we say, and in their iniquity, that is worse than all the rest. "Ye shall die in your sins," saith Christ to those rebellious Jews, #Joh 8:21; that was a great deal worse than to die in prison, to die in a ditch, or in the

world's disfavour. Or, "in their iniquity," that is, for their iniquity, which is indeed the cause of calamities. At the loss of Calais, when a proud Frenchman demanded of an English captain, When will you fetch Calais again? he gravely replied, *Quando peccata vestra nostra graviora*, When your sins shall weigh down ours. If any man ask (saith Tarvonius upon this text), *Unde hodie tanta passim in Germania vastitas? efficit hanc peccatorum atrocitas*. Whence so great desolations in Germany? It is for the grievousness of our iniquity. Why, this was better yet than the result of that consultation held once at Hamburg by some of his Lutheran fellow ministers concerning the cause and cure of Germany's calamities. They concluded (saith Mr Burroughes, vol. i. p. 465, on Hosea, from the mouth of a minister there, who told it him with grief) that it was because their images in churches were not adorned enough, which therefore they would procure done. A sad business! Solomon would have told them that it is a man's pride that brings him low, **#Pr 29:23**. And that "before destruction the heart of a man is haughty," **#Pr 18:12**. And that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," **#Pr 16:18**. If the pride of Israel doth testify to his face, the next news we shall hear of him is, that "Israel and Ephraim are fallen in their iniquity." A bulging wall cannot stand; a swelling sore will shortly break. "This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be terrible unto them; for he will famish all the gods of the earth," &c., **#Zep 2:10,11**; all those *deunculi*, those pretty pictures that men so much dote upon; which should not be suffered, if for nothing else, yet for the distraction they may cause in divine worship. In the council chamber of the Lacedaemonians no picture or image was allowed, lest in consultation of weighty matters their minds thereby might be distracted. Irenaeus reproveth the Gnostics for their pictures of Christ, though made in Pilate's time, after his own proportion. Austin denieth that images can be set up in churches, *sine praesentissimo idololatriam periculo*, without exceeding great danger of idolatry. Epiphanius saith, it is an abomination of desolation to set up pictures in the churches of Christians. Plutarch, a heathen, saith it is sacrilege (Paul. Jovius, lib. iv.). And Solyman, the Great Turk, when he had taken Buda in Hungary, would not enter into the great church there, to give God thanks for the victory, till all the images



were cast out. But this by the way only. Let us take heed by those mistaken Lutherans, whom a deceived heart hath turned aside, that we likewise fall not from our own steadfastness, **#Isa 44:20**.

**Lest Judah also fall with them]** Lest we be wrapped up in the same condemnation, lest we follow Germany in her plagues, as we began apace to do in her sins; for the which we have also already severely smarted. If Judah comply with Israel in false worship, they shall fall with Israel. God is not tied to any people, but can well be without them. The Lord is with you while ye are with him. "If ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you," **#2Ch 15:2**. But will the Lord be certainly found of them that seek him? Yes, if they seek him seriously and seasonably, in a time when he may be found, and before he be utterly departed, **#Ps 32:6 Isa 55:6**. But here was the mistake, and the mischief of it. These apostates went to seek the Lord, and they went with their cost, but they came too late; they had sinned away their God, and wiped off all their comfortables, as Saul had done before them. "The Philistines are upon me," saith he, "and God hath forsaken me: he answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams," **#1Sa 28:15**. It is said, **#1Ch 10:14**, that Saul did not inquire of the Lord, therefore he slew him. He did, and yet he did not, because he sought him not with all his heart; his devotion was feigned and forced. Now it is a rule in civil law, *Ficta pro factis non habentur; nec videtur fieri quod non legitime fit*. Feigned service is lost labour; neither is that done to any purpose that is not orderly done. And this was the case of these sacrificers in the next verse: Sodomites God calleth them, **#Isa 1:10**.

Ver. 6. **They shall go with their flocks, and with their herds]** *Cursitabunt*, they shall cut up and down, from altar to altar, with all their stock, as if they would buy off their sins, redeem their sorrows, with hecatombs, *{a large number of animals for sacrifice}* and store of holocausts; *{whole burnt offerings}* and then be ready to say, as that heathen emperor did, when he was to meet his enemy in the field, *Non sic Deos coluimus, aut sic viximus ut ille nos vinceret* (Antonin. Philosoph.). We have not so served the gods, or lived so, that the enemy should have the better of us. They thought they had merited better at God's hands by their thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil, **#Mic 6:7**, than to fall, as in **#Ho 5:5**, than to be relinquished by him,

as here. Lo, this is the guise of graceless hypocrites: by their outward performances they think to oblige God unto them, and by their good deeds to set off for their bad. Thus Brunheldis (that French Athaliah), after many murders and much mischief wrought by her, 600 AD, built many colleges for priests and monks in Burgundy and Austria, *eo scilicet beneficio maleficia sua expiavit*, saith the French chronicler; thereby thinking to satisfy for all her cruelty. So here in King Stephen's time, there were more abbeyes built than in a hundred years before. So the Papists at this day spend and are spent in their blind devotions; they "lavish money out of the bag," and run up and down from saint to saint with their cost; they pray publicly in public calamities, for forty hours together, by the pope's command, that they may pacify God, and divert his displeasure (*Quarantoras Italico nomine istas preces recant.* Polan. in loc.). For the same cause they make the same man (in their greater cities appointed) to preach every day in Lent without intermission; so as six days in the week he preacheth on the gospel of the days; and on the Saturday, in honour and praise of our Lady, as they call her (Spec. Europ.). Lo, thus they go, as they think, to seek God with their will worship and work done, but they find him as little as they did here, with their flocks, and with their herds. And why? First, they go to seek him; they run, but in a wrong way; and so fulfil that sacred proverb, "He that hasteth with his feet sinneth," **#Pr 19:2**; for the faster he runs the farther he is out. Next, they pretend to seek him, but indeed they seek themselves; they seek him, but it is to be rid of his rod; they do not so much serve him as serve themselves, and their own turns upon him; as those hypocrites in Zachary fasted to themselves; not to get off their sins, but their chains, **#Zec 7:6**. Thirdly, they go with their flocks, &c.; not mine, but theirs, saith God; he will not so much as own them, though they were tendered to him in sacrifice; because brought with a wicked mind, **#Pr 21:27**, as Balak and Balaam did, **#Nu 23:1,2**, and as Cain did, **#Ge 4:5**, to whom therefore God had no respect, because he brought *non personam sed opus personae*, not himself but his sacrifice, as Luther hath it; who also calleth all those Cainists that offer to God the work done, but present not their bodies for a lively sacrifice, **#Ro 12:1**. Hence he rejects their services with infinite disdain, as **#Isa 1:11,12 66:2,3**, though never so numerous and precious, **#Mic 6:7 Ho 8:13**. And to set forth this, as he calleth them here, their flocks, and not

his, so, fourthly, he calleth them flocks and herds, not sacrifices; that was too good a name for them. Thus, #Jer 7:21, in scorn he calleth their sacrifice flesh; such as was ordinary, sold in the meat markets. And thus also, #Ho 9:4, speaking of the meat offering appointed, #Le 2:5, he calleth it, their bread for their souls, or, for their life and livelihood, the bread for their natural sustenance; and saith, it shall not come into his house, he will have none of it. See #Mal 1:7. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:7"}

**But they shall not find him]** *Non erit ipsis domi, non favebit eis*, saith an interpreter here, he will not be at home, not within, to open to them when they knock at his door; it will be as strange to them as ever they were to him, because they bring him not that best sacrifice of a broken heart; and because they come too late when the gate of grace is shut, when the gale of grace is over, when he hath fully resolved upon their ruin, and will not repent.

**When he hath withdrawn himself from them]** Heb, עָלָה hath snatched away himself, hath thrown himself out of their company, as Peter threw himself, *επεβαλων*, out from the rude soldiers into a bycorner, to weep bitterly, #Mr 14:72. *Cum se proripuisset*, so Beza rendereth it. When God is well pleased with his people, they can no sooner cry but he will say, Here I am, #Isa 58:9. And though they offer but small things unto him, as Samuel did a sucking lamb, #1Sa 7:9, they are highly accepted, and graciously answered. "But woe unto them when I depart from them," saith God, #Ho 9:12; yea, woe upon woe when God's soul is once disjointed from them, #Jer 6:8. "An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come," #Eze 7:5,6. And why? Because God was withdrawing from them. Hence all evils came rushing in, as by a sluice. In the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of that prophecy God maketh divers removals. And still, as he goes out, some judgment comes in. First he removeth from the cherubims in the oracle to the threshold, #Eze 9:3, and upon that removal, see what followeth, #Eze 9:5-7, &c. Secondly, he removeth to the cherubims on the right side of the house, #Eze 10:1, and see what follows, #Eze 10:2. Thirdly, to the east gate of the house, and the first entrance into the temple, #Eze 10:19, and then see what succeeds, #Eze 11:8-10. Fourthly, he removed to Mount

Olivet, quite out of the city, #Eze 11:23, and when God was quite gone, then followed the fatal calamity in the ruin thereof. As there is no light in the world but from the sun, no water but from the sea; so no sound comfort or happiness to be had but with and in God. Better have him angry with us than not have him at all with us. The loss of God is a piece of hell: in the suburbs whereof the saints feel themselves when but a while deserted.

Ver. 7. **They have dealt treacherously against the Lord]** They have dealt deceitfully in the covenant, they are a perfidious cursed crew of them; this I see well enough, saith God, though they may think to darken my eyesight with the smoke of their many sacrifices, or to stop my mouth with their great presents. See how he complaineth, as in this prophecy often, so #Jer 3:20, "Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel." Now in such a case a man will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts; he will not be a pander to his own bed unless he be very base indeed, #Pr 6:35. Most certain it is, that God will not endure any such doings; but though he loves his spouse never so well, yet if she plays false with him, and admit any other into the bridal bed, he will forsake his house that has been so dishonest, he will leave his heritage that has been so embased, he will give the dearly beloved of his soul into the hand of her enemies, #Jer 12:7, who shall hate her more than ever they loved her, as Amnon did Tamar, and deal cruelly with her, as #Eze 16 is at large discoursed. The wickedness of this people was the greater, for that they pretended religion {as in #Ho 5:6} to their base beastly practices. Dissembled sanctity is double iniquity. See how heinously God takes it, #Jer 7:9,10. And when others deal treacherously and unworthily with you, see whether you have not done as badly and worse against the Lord, Alphonsus, king of Aragon, in a speech to the pope's ambassador, professed that he did not so much wonder at his courtiers' ingratitude to him (who had raised various of them from mean to great estates) as at his own to God.

**For they have begotten strange children]** Bastards, such as the Jews call Mamzer, as ye would say, *aliena labes*, a strange blot. They call them also brambles, such as was Abimelech, who grew in the hedge row of a harlot, and scratched and drew blood to purpose,

**#Jud 9:14.** That which is here charged upon the Israelites is, that they had not only taken to wife the daughters of a strange god, or begotten bastards of harlots, but they had muzzled up their children in idolatry, and so made them sevenfold worse the children of the devil than before. This was a very great aggravation of their treachery, that they should empoison their posterity and propagate their wickedness from one generation to another; that there should be a line and a succession of it from their loins. None are so ready to drink in false principles and corrupt practices as young ones. Such parents as have a hand in undoing their children, either by ill counsel or example, are *peremptores potius quam parentes*, saith Bernard, rather parricides than parents. They shall give a heavy account to God for their children's misdeeds. Let it therefore be the care of parents, as to keep themselves pure, so to see to their little ones, that they be not corrupted. Satan bears an implacable spite and hatred to them, as the seedplot of heaven; and hath his emissaries abroad to mar them. Such was Protagoras, of whom Plato reporteth, that he gloried of this, that whereas he had lived sixty years in all, forty of them he had spent in corrupting young people (Plato in Menone). Of Julian the apostate it is reported, that being of excellent parts and proof, both in learning and religion, while he was young, he was afterwards corrupted by his two heathenish tutors, Libanius and Jamblichus, through the carelessness of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, who should have seen better to it and that this was a main cause of his apostasy.

**Now shall a month devour them with their portions]** Some read it thus, Now shall the enemy devour them month after month; others put *menses* for *menstrua*, and give this sense. Like as this people make no bones to break their faith with God by spiritual fornication, mingling as it were their seed with strange gods and foreign people; so shall it come to them which happeneth to women worn with adulteries (as Ezekiel speaketh), that their monthly diseases, procured by inordinate lust, shall eat up and consume their bodies. (See Tremel. and Jun. Annot.) For confirmation, they allege (but not so properly) **#Jer 2:24.** I willingly concur with those that by a month understand a little short time. How soon is a month run out And yet what havoc will an enemy make in a month's time! as we have had woeful experience in these late stripping and killing times.

Them and their portions shall one month make an end of. Death heweth its way through a wood of men in a minute of time from the mouth of a murdering piece. "The sword contemneth the rod," #Eze 21:13, as if it should say, What doth this silly rod do here? Let me come; I will quickly make work among them. I will dung the land with their carcasses, &c., with their portions, the lots of their inheritance. Wicked men also have their portions in this life, #Ps 17:14, they live in pleasure on the earth, and are wanton, #Jas 5:5, but their portion is none other but a month may devour it: their pleasure none other but one drop of an evil conscience may damp and dissweeten it. But if God be thy portion, &c.

Ver. 8. **Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah]** *Clangite, clamate*, not with the inverse trumpets of Furius Fulvius, which sounded a retreat when they should have sounded an alarm. But blow ye the cornet; give notice to all the country, that *Hannibal est ad portas*, the enemy is at the very gates, sending a summons, and sounding for a surrender. The desolation of war had been denounced in the former verse; here it is proclaimed, as it were, by sound of trumpet; the prophet acting the part of a herald; and, by a rhetorical hypotyposis, representing the enemies' approach, as if it were already under view; and not foretold, but acted before their eyes. Rhetoric, we see here, is an art sanctified by God's Spirit; and may lawfully be used in handling of God's word. The Scripture is full of it in every part; and happy is that minister that thereby can make himself master of his hearers' affections; as potent in his Divine rhetoric as Pericles or Cicero were in their human. Let him (by our prophet's example) strive to make the things whereof he preacheth to the people as real before their eyes as possibly he can. The power of a ministry consisteth much in this: to set forth sin, Christ, heaven, hell, in such lively colours that the hearer (though unlearned) may be convinced of all, judged of all, and having the secrets of his heart made manifest, he may fall down on his face, worship God, and report that God is in the minister of a truth, #1Co 14:24,25; lo, this is preaching indeed. For as every sound is not music, so neither is every pulpit discourse preaching. *Nihil frigidius est doctore verbis solummode philosophante* (Chrysostom). Ezekiel must lay siege to Jerusalem, portraying it upon a tile, #Eze 4:1. So did Jeremiah and other prophets use signs and similitudes. St Paul's speech and preaching was not indeed with enticing words of man's

wisdom (he did not so paint the window as to keep out the light), but yet in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, close to the conscience, #1Co 2:4.

**Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah]** That is, in the bounds of the kingdom of Judah, Gibeah of Benjamin, Gibeah of Saul.

**And the trumpet in Ramah]** Samuel's country, afterward called Arimathaea, Joseph's country: this is said to be in the borders of Israel. Strong garrisons they were both, and places of great resort: they are now alarmed, and bidden to prepare for the approach of the Assyrian.

**Cry aloud at Bethaven]** Or Bethel, as #Ho 10:15, a city (as it is said of Athens, κατειδωλος, #Ac 17:16) wholly given to idolatry; and therefore more stupid and stubborn than the rest. Here, therefore, the prophet cries louder than ordinary, *classicum canit, sic clamat ut stentora vincere possit*, he sets up his note, that he may the sooner awaken them, and cause them to apprehend their danger, as present and real. Bethaven was the great place of superstition, and now Rome is the nest of Antichrist, "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, a cage of every unclean and hateful bird": therefore the angel crieth mightily with a strong voice, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," *certo, cito, penitus*, surely, suddenly, utterly, #Re 18:2.

**After thee, O Benjamin]** Who art at the back of Bethaven, and farest the worse for her neighbourhood: like as Hamath did for Damascus, #Zec 9:2. {See Trapp on "Zec 9:2"} Some understand *Hostis adest*, the enemy is at thy heels; make away, or stand upon thy guard; for thou art like to be put to it. And this concise kind of warning here given implies a mind moved and disturbed, either with fear or anger.

Ver. 9. **Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke]** *Correptionis, vel Correctionis, ut Pagmnus;* "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity," &c., #Ps 39:11. God hath a day for such sharp rebukes, or ahidings by way of conviction or argument (as the word signifieth), wherein he will be sure to carry it, with a great deal of sound reason and evident demonstration; so that

Ephraim shall have nothing to say, why he should not be desolated; yea, so desolated as to make the beholders amazed thereat, as the Hebrew word importeth ( **הפצל** *Vastari ita ut videntes obstupescant*). God will not now dally with Ephraim, or deal favourably with him as heretofore; he will not shake his rod at him only, but wait it to the very stumps; he shall be utterly destroyed from being a people; the day that now comes is a black day indeed, a day not of instruction, but of destruction, not of correction, but of execution; a very doomsday, wherein God will bring them into the furnace, and there leave them, **#Eze 22:20**. And that none may think this sentence overly severe, or not so sure but that it might be avoided or vacated, see what followeth in the text:

**Among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be]** *i.e.* either, I have forewarned them sufficiently, but they would take no warning, which is both a just presage and desert for their ruin; or else thus: I am now fully resolved upon their ruin, neither is there cause that any man should deceive himself with a vain hope, as if these evils that I foretell should not befall you. Experience, the mistress of fools, shall teach you, that the sentence I now pronounce is precise and peremptory, not conditional, as heretofore, but absolute, and unchangeable; and this I here assure you of by this solemn contestation.

Ver. 10. **The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound]** A wickedness condemned by the law and light both of nature and Scripture, **#De 27:17 19:14 Pr 22:28**. The princes are mentioned, because corruption in a people (as putrefication in a fish) begins at the head. Now the landmark of limit is removed many ways: as, first, *religione*, in religion; when the true is changed into that which is false, as was here in Queen Mary's days, against her promise to the Suffolk men (Tarnon.). Secondly, *in regione*, in the civil state; when one man violently invadeth the right of another (as Ahab did Naboth's vineyard), and no man must question them, because it is *facinus maioris abollae* (Juvenal), the fact of a great one. Thirdly, *in officio*, in a man's office or particular station, when he keeps not within his circle, but takes liberty to transgress, prescribing new worships, as **#2Ki 16:10,11 2Ch 28:23**; taking upon them to teach ministers what to teach them, as **#Mic 2:6**; or themselves invading the ministerial office uncalled thereunto, as did



Jeroboam, #1Ki 12:33 16:3, and Uzziah, #2Ch 26:16, to their cost. This (saith an interpreter) is *grandis culpa, et atrox crimen*, a foul fault, a crimson crime. Let our lay preachers and levellers look to it, unless they covet a curse. #De 27:17, "He that breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him." Fourthly, *in negotio*, in businesses and transactions, in contracts and covenants: he removeth bounds who defrauds and circumventeth another in any matters, #1Th 4:6. These must remember that God is the avenger of all such; and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God, #Heb 10:31. The Papists fall foul upon us as innovators, and removers of the ancient bounds, because we reject their ecclesiastical traditions and unwritten verities (as they call them) commended unto us by the ancients, and embraced by whole nations thr many ages. To whom we answer, that multitude and antiquity are but ciphers in divinity; they must (at least) have no more authority than what they can maintain. Let them boast, with the Gibeonites, of their old shoes, mouldy bread, &c., we hold us to the Scriptures, for our limits and landmarks unmoveable and immutable. And when they shall ask us, as they often do, where was your religion before Luther? we answer, as one once did, In the Bible, where yours never was. Erasmus met with an adversary so silly as to charge him for a remover of the ancient bounds, because he had anew translated the New Testament; a work of singular use to the Church of Christ in those dark times. (Erasm. in Apolog.).

**Therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water]** Which shall overflow the banks to overwhelm those that remove the bounds. Yea, God will pour it upon them by whole pailfuls, or spouts (as they call them at sea). Or if but by vials, {as #Re 16:1, which are vessels of narrow mouths, and pour out slowly, howbeit} they drench deeply, and distil effectually the wrath of God, which wretched sinners shall never be able to avoid or abide. Oh when God shall set himself to set open the cataracts of his wrath as once at Noah's flood, and to come against a sinner with a deluge of destruction, to pour out his indignation upon him, as water hastily, heavily, irresistibly, what will he do, and where will he find refuge? This made David pray so hard, "Let not the waterfloods overflow me; nor the deep swallow me up," #Ps 69:15. It is the privilege of every godly person, that in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh to him, #Ps 32:6. Or if they

come up to his neck, yet they shall not take away his breath: for his head is ever above water. Washed he may be (as Paul was in the shipwreck), drowned he cannot be. Sink he may seem to do once and again to the bottom; but he shall up again with Jonah, if out of the deep he call upon the Lord, who will set him on a rock that is higher than he.

Ver. 11. **Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment]** *Calumniam passus est Ephraim*, so the Vulgate hath it: Ephraim was falsely accused and slandered; he suffered much by malicious accusers, who depraved his good actions, drew him before the judgment seats, and there oppressed him, as **#Jas 2:6**. But the word here used signifieth all manner of injuries and oppressions, whether by vexatious suits, by fraud or by force, virulent tongues or violent hands, wrangling or otherwise wronging a man, to his crushing and utter undoing many times: for a poor man in his house is like a snail in his shell; crush that, and you kill him. Ephraim was crushed in judgment by his countrymen, who would do him no right; but much more by the cruel Assyrians, who soon after this carried him captive, and left him without all remedy of law, without hope of a better condition or place for a worse. And what wonder though men so set against him, when God was pouring out his wrath upon him as water? since all creatures are up in arms against God's rebels. If the cause go against a man, though he have never so much right on his side (for often times *cedit viribus aequum*, might overcomes right), and he be broken in judgment, let him see whether things be right between God and himself; and if broken in judgment, let him be of a broken spirit, and he shall be relieved.

**Because he willingly followed after the commandment]** He was too sequacious and obsequious to Jeroboam and his princes, commanding him to worship the golden calves. *Quoniam voluit, iuvat*, like a tame fool, or at least as a foolish child (so this prophet calleth him), he was soon won over, he came off with little ado. Jeroboam did but hold up his finger, and he had him straight; a mere crass stupidity carried away to those dumb idols even as he was led, **#1Co 12:2**; a Melchite, such a generation of heretics there were in the primitive Church, so called because they followed the examples and decrees of the emperors; resolving to be of the king's religion, whatsoever it were, right or wrong (Nicephorus). The Russians are

such at this day. God and their emperor, they say, know best what is truth or falsehood; and it is their part to obey, not to inquire. But all Christ's sheep are rational; and will try before they trust, look before they leap; the spiritual man judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged by no man, **#1Co 2:15**. Show him a clear text of Scripture for what you would persuade him to, and convince him thereby that it is the mind of God, and you may have what you will of him, **#Jas 2:1**. But for these masters of opinions, such as are *magistri nostri Parisienses*, that obtrude their own placets upon people, and require to be believed upon their bare word without further proof, he abhors them. And for the decrees of princes and rulers, if they cross the Scriptures, he will take leave to disobey them, as the apostles did, **#Ac 4:19**, as the three children in Daniel did, and Daniel himself, **#Da 6:10,11**, and as all the holy confessors and martyrs both ancient and modern did. The Bishop of Norwich asked Roger Coe, martyr, whether he would not obey the king's laws? he answered, Yes, as far as they agree with the law of God I will obey them. Then said the bishop, Whether they agree with the word or not, we are bound to obey them, if the king were an infidel. Coe answered, If Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had done so, Nebuchadnezzar had never confessed the living God. True it is that magistrates must be obeyed; those that are good must be obeyed as God, those that are bad, for God (*δία τον Θεον*, Basil); but then it must be *in licitis*, in things lawful, and warrantable by the word and herein we must not frame excuse. The blessed Virgin, though inconvenient, went four days' journey (so far was it from Nazareth to Bethlehem) to obey Augustus' decree; the challenge was not so peremptory, but the obedience was as exemplary. "Whoso keepeth the commandment," *sc.* of the king, "shall know no evil thing," **#Ec 8:4,5**. And whereas some might reply, Why, then, let us do all the king bids us without sciscitation, without further delay or inquiry; Solomon answers in the next words, "And a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment," that is, he knows both when and how, and how far forth, fitly and lawfully the commands of a king may be despatched, and no farther will he go than he can with a good conscience. The pope writing to Bernard, requiring him to do that which was unlawful, Bernard writes back again this answer, and it was taken; I as a child do not obey, and I obey in disobeying. Antigona in Sophocles saith well, *Magis obtemperandum est Diis, &c.*: We should rather obey

God, with whom we must live ever, than men, with whom we have but a while to sojourn. Lo, blind nature saw so much. {See Trapp on "Ac 4:19"} It may not be forgotten or slipped over, that the word here rendered the commandment signifies Command thou, 𐤆𐤊; because he willingly walked after Command thou; he danced after Jeroboam's pipe, saying to him, as he did once to Julius Caesar,

“ *Iussa sequi tam velle mihi quam posse, necesse est*” (Lucan).

Or as Tiberius answered Justin (though upon a better ground and end), *Si tu volueris, ego sum si tu non vis, ego non sum*; If you will be willing, so will I, if you are not willing neither am I I am only thy clay, and thy wax, *utere me pro rota figulari*, to use me for the potters wheel. Plaut. Or lastly, as Luther at first submitted to the pope in these words (though afterwards, God gave him more courage in his cause), I prostrate myself at your Holiness' feet, with all that I am and have. *Vivifica, occide, voca, revoca, approba, reproba, vocem tuam vocem Christi in te praesidentis et loquentis agnoscam*; that is, Quicken me, kill me, call me, recall me, receive me, reject me; I shall acknowledge your voice as the voice of Christ himself ruling and speaking in you (1518 AD. Epist. ad Leon. Pontific.). Jeroboam is not once named here, nor the word (commandment) set down at large, out of detestation (likely) both of it and him, because it was a wicked commandment; and he no better than a usurper (Kimchi). For although he had it cleared to him that God's will was that he should be king over the ten tribes, yet because it was a will of God's decree, and not of his command, as of a duty done by him, he goes among divines for an intruder and usurper in and for that fact of his. It is obedience when we follow a divine precept; but not ever when we follow a divine instinct.

Ver. 12. **Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth**] Their sin was the greater because they were so willing to it, and so easily drawn to idolatry, as most agreeable to their nature, and making much of their ease; which was Jeroboam's main argument. It may very well be that he threatened punishment to those that disobeyed his commandment: but here they should have stood out, and have bid the worst; choosing affliction rather than sin; which because they did not, therefore they should perish by their own hand and counsels; they shall be moth-eaten, as a garment that breedeth the

moth, and as a tree that breedeth the worm that wasteth it. Not but that God had a special hand in their punishment; and this not permissive only, but active too: "I will be unto Ephraim," &c. For is there evil in a city and he hath not done it? The changes and periods of kingdoms are of him, **#Ps 75:6,7**, that men may know that the heavens do rule, **#Da 4:26**; so are the alterations in men's bodies and estates, as Job setteth it forth, **#Job 4:19 13:28 27:18**. Every one (say some chemists) hath his own balsam within him; his own bane it is sure he hath; his clay cottage is every day ready to drop on his head, **#2Co 5:1**. And for his estate, there are often times secret issues and drains of expense, at the which it runs out, as at a hole in the bottom of the bag, **#Hag 1:6**. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:6"} Howbeit God's holy hand is in all this; "I will be unto Ephraim as a moth," &c., that is, I will waste them *sensim, sine sensu*. Secretly, insensitively, slowly; but surely, and inevitably: this David after Job, acknowledgeth: **#Ps 39:11**, "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth," thou castest him into a *corruptio totius substantive*, as the physicians call the hectic: "Surely every man is vanity. Selah." Yea, he is "altogether vanity"; yea, and that in his best estate, when he is best underlaid, when settled on his best bottom, **#Ho 5:5**; when he is gotten upon his mount with David, and thinks to die in his nest with Job; when he counts upon much good laid up in store for many years, as that rich fool, that reckoned without his host, as we say, **#Ps 30:7 Job 29:18 Lu 12:19**. *Tinea damnum facit, et sonitum non facit*, saith Gregory. The moth maketh no noise, but doth a great deal of harm among clothes. The worm here, rendered rottenness, is *minutissimus vermiculus*, saith Luther here, a very small creature, but doth no small mischief, (*teredo*), for it eats out the heart of the strongest wood, yea, of the strongest oaken planks at sea. See here what a poor creature is man, yea, a whole kingdom, whenas a moth and a little worm may consume them; when they may be crushed before the moth, as Job speaks, **#Job 4:19**; he saith not before the lion, but before the moth. Learn also to take heed of sin, yea, of secret sins, **#2Ki 17:9**, lest we be secretly wasted, our graces cast into a consumption, our comfortables wiped away, our consciences wearied with secret buffets, as being smitten with the rod of God's mouth, **#Isa 11:4**; our estates melted as the fat of lambs before the fire, and our land insensibly wasted, and by degrees desolated; as

Ephraim and Judah were, as the Greek empire was, and as it began to be here with us, in Queen Mary's reign, which was never prosperous after she had abolished the gospel; for beside foreign losses, of Calais, extreme dearths raged, much harm was done by thunder from heaven, and by fire in the royal navy, and all things went to worse, till Queen Elizabeth came in, "a repairer of the breach, a restorer of paths to dwell in," #**Isa 53:12**; according to that glorious epitaph, caused by King James to be inscribed upon her princely monument by him erected.

Ver. 13. **When Ephraim saw his sickness]** *i.e.* felt himself moth-eaten, hard-driven, and at a very great under, as those must needs be whom God setteth against.

**And Judah his wound]** Heb. his ulcer, that needeth crushing to get out the filth, #**Jer 30:13 Ob 7**. Ephraim was sick (God hath made him sick in smiting him, #**Mic 6:13**) and Judah was sore, yet ulcerated, imposthumated, and they were both aware of it; but none otherwise than brute beasts, which, when they are smitten or sick, feel it, and howl out, but have not the reason to think whence the pain comes, what may be the cause and cure of it. Ephraim and Judah make out indeed for help, but they run to wrong remedies and refuges; they turn not to him that smote them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts; therefore is not his anger turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, #**Isa 9:12,13**. If God be angry, no other help can relieve us, no creature comfort us, no combination with King Jareb secure us. In a mine, if a damp come, it is vain to trust to your lights; they will burn blue and dim, and at last vanish: you must make haste to be drawn upward if you would be safe. So must men make to God; fleeing from his anger to his grace. Blood letting is a cure of bleeding, and a burn a cure against a burn; and the running to God is the way to escape him; as to close and get in with him that would strike you doth avoid the blow. In a tempest at sea it is very dangerous to strike the shore; the safest way is to have sea room, and to keep in the main, still, &c. Jareb cannot be a defender (according to the import of his name) if God come against a people or person. Brass and iron can fence a man against a bullet or a sword; but if he were to be cast into a furnace of fire it would help to torment him; if into a pit of water, to sink him. Now our God is a "consuming fire," and his breath a stream of brimstone, #**Isa 30:33**,

as a reverend man maketh the comparison (Dr Reynolds' Sermon before Parliament, July 27, 1642).

**Then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and Judah sent to king Jareb]** Or, to the king of Jareb, or to the king that should plead, and revenge his cause and quarrel. *Ad regem propugnaturum*, saith Junins. Help, O king, said she in the holy history. Kings should be helpers, propugnaters, protectors; sanctuaries of safety to the oppressed, whether subjects or neighbours; such as the late king of Sweden was to the oppressed princes of Germany; and before him, Queen Elizabeth to the Low Countrymen; whose protection when she undertook, the king of Sweden that then was said, that she had taken the crown off her own head, and set it upon the head of fortune. But what a madness was it in Ephraim and Judah to call in the Assyrians to their help, as they did, **#2Ki 16:7 2Ch 28:16,21**; but especially **#2Ki 15:19,20 17:3**. This was to invite the enemy into their kingdom, and to show gold-thirsty Babel where she might have her full draught. Thus Judea was (after the return from Babylon) lost again to the Romans, by their calling Pompey to decide the controversy between the disagreeing brethren. And such an ungainly course was attempted by John, king of England, when, being overlaid in his barons' wars, he sent to the monarch of Morocco for aid, offering to hold his kingdom for him, and to receive the law of Mahomet; but he was rejected with scorn. Afterwards, he passed away his kingdom to the pope, in hope of help; but had so little joy of it, that he was heard to complain, *Postquam me ac men regna (proh dolor) Rom. subieci Ecclesiae, nulla mihi prospera, sod omnia contraria advenerunt*, I never prospered since I subjected myself and my kingdoms to the see of Rome. No more did the Greek Churches, as above hath been mentioned. "By iniquity," saith Solomon, "shall no man be established," **#Pr 12:3**. "Shall they escape by iniquity?" saith David. What! no better means and ways to help themselves by? "In thine anger cast down such a people, O God," **#Ps 56:7**. It is not more a prayer than a prophecy; and it was fulfilled upon this people.

**Yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound]** Kings have their names in Greek from healing (ἰατρός from ἄκος, *medela*, cure); they should be physicians, and binders-up of wounds, as **#Isa**

**3:7.** (See Corn. a Lapide on that text.) But King Jareb proved a physician of no value: instead of healing the wound, he made it wider; instead of helping King Ahaz, "he distressed him," saith the text, **#2Ch 28:20**. The creature was never true to those that trusted to it. Such are sure to be frustrated, **#Jer 14:3**; subjected to God's wrath, **#Ps 78:22**; cursed with a curse, **#Jer 17:5,6**; pointed at as forlorn fools, **#Ps 52:7**.

Ver. 14. **For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion]** I, that is, my Assyrian, the rod of my wrath, will be as a lion, or leopard, a creature swift and fierce above measure. The Vulgate rendereth it a lioness, which, saith Aelian, is *robustissimum et bellicosissimum animal*, a most strong and stout creature; hence Semiramis gloried much when in hunting she had taken not a lion, but a lioness. "What is stronger than a lion?" said those Philistines to Samson, **#Jud 14:18**. See **#2Sa 1:23 Pr 30:30**. The lion (but especially the young lion, that is in his hot blood) fears no other creature, falls upon his prey with great fury, and teareth it; carrieth it away when he hath done in his mouth, or devours it in the place, and fears no rescue. If pursued he altereth not his gait, though he die for it. Some say that he is frightened at the crowing of a cock, or the creaking of wheels. But the Lion of the tribe of Judah cannot be terrified by anything or turned out of his track. And Nebuchadnezzar, his servant, is often compared to a lion, **#Isa 5:29 Jer 41:7 Da 7:4**, as being set to work by God to revenge the quarrel of his covenant upon a perverse and perfidious nation. Hence that often repetition here of the pronoun I

**even I, will tear and go away]** Tear the very core of their heart in sunder, tear them by the teeth of my terrible sword, which shall devour flesh and drink blood; yea, be drenched and drunk in the gall of these ungodly wretches. They have no way to help themselves better than to fall down flat before this Lion (*satis est prostrasse leoni*. Plin. lib. 8, cap. 15), to rend their hearts and not their garments, to break off their sins by repentance, and to be abrupt in the work, lest he tear them to pieces, and there be none to deliver them. If this be not timely and truly done, God will go on in his wrath, and of a moth and little worm become a ramping and a roaring lion. The little cloud, though at first but as a handbreadth, will soon overspread the whole heaven: yea, as one cloud followeth thick upon another, so will one judgment upon another, if the sun of



repentance do not interpose and disperse them. Light afflictions not improved to this purpose will be but as a drop of wrath forerunning the great storm: as a crack forerunning the ruin of the whole building. That is a known text, "If you will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more," and seven times more, and seven to that, **#Le 26:18,28**. Three different times God raiseth his note, and he raiseth it by sevens, and those are discords in music. Such sayings will be heavy songs, and their execution heavy pangs to the wicked.

**Ver. 15. I will go and return to my place]** To my palace of heaven: so the Chaldee rendereth it. will withdraw my majesty, and return into the habitation of my holiness, which is in heaven. I will go from them, that they may come to themselves with the prodigal; I will forget them, that they may remember themselves; I will trouble myself no farther with them (when God comes against sinners he is said to come out of his place, and so to disease himself, **#Isa 26:21** cf. **#La 3:33**), that they may be afflicted and weep and mourn after me, **#Jas 4:9**; I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place, as **#Isa 18:4**. "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation," &c., **#De 32:20**, and they shall see that I will be as froward as they, for the hearts of them, **#Ps 18:26**. "I will gather them in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave them there," **#Eze 22:20**; that they may know the worth of my gracious presence (which they have not prized) by the want of it, and be pricked on thereby to pray, "Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy," &c., **#Ps 90:13,14**. Thus mothers use to leave their children (or at least turn their backs upon them) till they mourn and make moan after them. Thus the lion seems to leave her young ones till they have almost killed themselves with roaring and howling, but at the last gasp she relieves them, whereby they become the more courageous. God also will return to his people when they once turn short again upon themselves, and see their singuiltiness, and seek his favour. This is God's end, **#1Co 11:32**, and the happy effect of affliction sanctified, **#1Ki 8:47**.

**Till they acknowledge their offence]** Heb. till they become guilty, till they plead guilty, and carry themselves accordingly, blushing and bleeding in my presence. Thus St James, be afflicted, or be

miserable, **#Ho 4:9**: ye are so, but see yourselves to be so; tremble and humble at God's feet for mercy; give glory to God, my son, and confess thy sin, **#Jos 7:19**. The viper beaten, casts up her poison. The traitor on the rack confesseth all. He that in affliction acknowledgeth not his offence, and seeketh God's face, is more hard-hearted than a Jew, as is to be seen here and **#Ps 78:34** and **#1Sa 7:6**. In the year of grace 1556, at Weissenstein, in Germany, a Jew, for theft, was in this cruel manner to be executed. He was hanged by the feet with his head downward, between two dogs, which constantly snatched and bit at him. The strangeness of the torment moved Jacob Andreas, a grave divine, to go to behold it. Coming thither, he found the poor wretch as he hung repeating verses out of the Hebrew Psalms, wherein he cried out to God for mercy. Andreas hereupon took occasion to counsel him to trust in Jesus Christ, the true Saviour of mankind (Melch. Adam. in Vit. Jac. Andrea). The Jew, embracing the Christian faith, requested but this one thing, that he might be taken down and baptized, though presently after he were hanged again (but by the neck, as Christian malefactors suffered), which was accordingly granted him. Latimer reports a like story of one in his time, who being executed at Oxford, was cut down, but not quite dead. And means being used to recover him, he came again to himself, and then confessed all his villany, which before he would not be drawn to do. In the Life of Master Perkins also mention is made of a lusty fellow at Cambridge, who being upon the ladder, and frightened with the forethought of hell torments, was called down again by Master Perkins, who prayed with him and for him so effectually, as that the beholders could not but see a blessed change thereby wrought in the prisoner, who took his death with such patience and alacrity, as if he actually saw himself delivered from the hell which he feared before, and heaven opened for the receiving of his soul, to the great rejoicing of the beholders (Master Fuller and Mr Clark, in Mr Perkins' Life). How well might these men say with Themistocles, *Periissem nisi periissem*, I had been undone if I had not been undone. David was brought home by the weeping cross, **#Ps 119:67**. Affliction was a better schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth than Master Ascham. *Nocumenta documenta*, Harmful lesson, said Croesus, when he was in the hands of his enemies, *παθηματα μαθηματα* (Herod. lib. 1).

The Burgundians, well beaten by the Huns, fled to Christ, the God of the Christians, and embraced his religion.

**And seek my face]** Out of a deep sense of their sin-guiltiness. This is the work of faith, as the former of repentance. God was not so gone from his people, nor so far out of their call, but that if they could find a praying heart he would find a pitying heart; if they would acknowledge their offence he would forgive the iniquity of their sin, **#Ps 32:5**. If they would set their faith a work (as she in the Gospel did, of whom it is said, that when Christ would have hid himself it could not be, for a certain woman, whose daughter was diseased, came and fell at his feet, fetched him out of his retiring-room, **#Mr 7:24,25**), he would break the heavens and come down from his place, **#Isa 64:1,2**; he would come leaping over all lets and impediments, those mountains of Bether, or of division, to the relief of his people. {See Trapp on "So 5:1"} &c. Provided that they seek not so much their own ease and ends as his face and favour, the sense of his presence and light of his countenance, the fear of his name, and comforts of his Spirit. Thus David, **#Ps 63:1**, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and barren land." Carnal prayers in time of misery are but such as the dry earth or the hungry raven make. They are the prayers of nature for ease, not of the spirit for grace; such as was that of Pharaoh, when the rack made him roar, the rod flatter: see **#Zec 7:5,6**. {See Trapp on "Zec 7:5"} {See Trapp on "Zec 7:6"}

**In their affliction they will seek me early]** *Manicabunt*. They will morning me, so the original hath it, ορθριουσι, Sept. They will do it, saith God, for I will give them to do it; both to will it and to work it; for otherwise afflictions (God's hammers) do but beat cold iron. Wicked men grow worse for corrections, as water is more cold after a heat, as naughty boys are more stubborn or more stupid after a whipping. These also may cry to God, as prisoners at the bar, or malefactors upon the rack. Yea, seek him early, after a sort, and yet not find him, **#Pr 1:27**; no, though they seek him with their herds and flocks **#Ho 5:6**, because they seek him not early, and earnestly, or diligently, as **#Pr 7:15**; inflamedly, as Baruch, **#Ne 3:20**, and Jabez, **#1Ch 4:10**; accurately and anxiously, as the Church sought her Beloved, **#So 5:1**, as the Virgin Mary sought her lost Son, **#Lu**

**2:43-46.** They seek him not for himself, but for his grain, wine, and oil, **#Ho 7:14**; they seek not him, but his; they seek him not till they have nothing else to seek to. Most justly, therefore, may God reject their suits and regeſt upon them, Depart from me, ye wicked, get ye to the gods whom ye have choſen, **#Jud 10:14**. Juſtly may he ſay to them, as once Jephthah did to his countrymen, Do ye now come to me in your diſtreſs, who in your proſperity ſaid unto me, Depart from us, we will have none of the knowledge of thy ways? Thoſe that will find God muſt ſeek him early: "O, ſatisfy us early with thy mercies," **#Ps 90:14**. They muſt ſeek him early and late too, **#Iſa 26:9**; "always and by all means," as the apoſtle ſpeaketh in another caſe; but eſpecially in affliction, as here; for he looks for it. Our Saviour, being in an agony, prayed more intenſively; ſo did David out of the deep, Jonah out of the whale's belly, the Church when ſhe was in danger; as ſhe thought of loſing God, then ſhe ſet up her note and cried, "Thou art put in the miſt of us, leave us not," **#Jer 14:9**. *Extingui lucem nec patiare tuam*. Thus affliction exciteth devotion in the ſaints; and although they "ſeek the Lord and his ſtrength, ſeek his face evermore," yet eſpecially, in their diſtreſs they cry unto the Lord, and he heareth them, **#Ps 120:1**; in the night of affliction they take the light of a lively faith, and ſeek him early. And that they may not fail to find him, they call in help of others, as here in the next chapter: "Come, and let us return," &c.

## Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **Come, and let us return unto the Lord, &c.**] So ſweetly was God's expectation answered, as likewise it was in David, **#Ps 27:8**. No ſooner could God ſay "Seek ye my face," but his holy heart answered (as it were by an echo), "Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek." Look, what God aimeth at in his adminiſtration to his elect he will have it; he will have out the price of his Son's blood, who gave "himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity," **#Tit 2:14**, "and that he might give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveness of ſins," **#Ac 5:31**. See the proof and practice hereof in theſe Jewish converts, "Come, and let us return to the Lord," &c. See how "in thoſe days, and at that time, the children of Iſrael ſhall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they ſhall go, and ſeek the Lord their God. They ſhall aſk the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, ſaying, Come, and let us join ourſelves to

the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten," **#Jer 50:4,5**. Judah and Israel could not agree at other times; but when they are in a weeping condition then they could; when they passed through the valley of Baca, and made it a Bochim with their penitent tears, even they could go "from strength to strength," or from company to company (one company coming this way, and another that), and not rest until "every one of them in Zion appeareth before God," **#Ps 84:6,7**. This was fulfilled, partly when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion out of Babylon, and those that had sown in tears reaped in joy; those that went forth weeping and bearing precious seed came again with rejoicing and brought their sheaves with them, **#Ps 126:5,6 cf. Jer 29:13**; partly, under their captivity and oppression by the Romans, which was the time in which Christ came and by his apostles converted thousands to the faith, so that multitudes of them were daily added to the Church, **#Ac 2:41,47**. And, lastly, at that long looked for calling of the Jews; when they shall flee to Christ crucified "as the doves unto their windows," **#Isa 60:8**; when they shall "bring their brethren as an offering to the Lord upon horses, in chariots, and in litters": that is, though sick, weakly, and unfit for travel, yet rather in litters than not at all; every one exciting others, and saying, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," &c. Return "unto him, from whom the children of Israel have deeply, revolted," **#Isa 31:6**. Let us not pine away in our transgressions, as these, **#Eze 33:10**, for "yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing," **#Ezr 10:2**. We have "done all this wickedness; yet let us not turn aside from following the Lord"; for this were to add rebellion to sin, **#1Sa 12:20**, this were worse than all the rest.

**Come, let us return unto the Lord]** By our sins we have run from him; by repentance let us return unto him. See for this the note on **#Zec 1:2**. If the wicked have their Come, **#Pr 1:11 Isa 56:12**, should not the saints have theirs? as **#Isa 2:3 Zec 2:6**. Should not Andrew call Philip, and Philip Nathaniel, as one link in a chain doth another, &c. True grace is communicative, charity is no churl; the saints like not to go to heaven alone.

**For he hath torn]** *Rapuit*, not *cepit*, as the Vulgate, by a foul mistake of *cipio* for *rapio* in the Hebrew Lexicons. Here these

converts confess that their affliction neither came "forth of the dust," #Job 5:6, nor without their desert; they acknowledge God to be the lion that tore them, #Ho 5:14, and not without cause; for that they had wickedly departed from him. This is one property of true repentance, still to justify God, and to say, as Mauritius the emperor did (after David) when he saw his wife and children slain by the traitor Phocas, &c., "Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy ways, and just in all thy proceedings," #Ps 119:137. Another property of it is to bring a man to God with some assurance of healing.

**He will heal us]** For he is "Jehovah the physician," #Ex 15:26. Now *omnipotenti medico nullus insanabilis occurrit morbus*, saith Isidore, to an Almighty physician no disease can be incurable. Ephraim went to the Assyrian upon sight of his disease; but he could not heal him, #Ho 5:13. But God both can and will. Here he is compared both to a physician, he will heal; and to a surgeon, he will bind up. That which the poets' fable concerning Telephus' spear is here only verified: *Una eademque manus vulnus opemque ferat*, the same holy hand that tear us must cure us; and the sound persuasion of his readiness to do it for us will soonest of anything bring us into his presence: *Initium poenitentiae est sensus clementiae Dei*. The beginnig of repentance is the feeling of the mercy of God. Judas confesseth his wound, and despaireth of the cure. But Peter is confirmed by the love of Christ to weep bitterly, and believe. A stroke from guilt broke Judas' heart into despair; but a look from Christ broke Peter's heart into tears, There is no mention of Israel's lamenting after the Lord while he was gone; but when he was returned, and settled in Kirjathjearim, then they poured forth water, #1Sa 7:6, then they gather about him and will do anything that he commandeth them. "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith," #Heb 10:22.

“ *Deiecit ut relevet; premit ut solatia praestet,  
Enecat, ut possit vivificare Deus.* ”

Ver. 2. **After two days will he revive us]** Whereas some of those who were called upon to "Come and return unto the Lord," might say with those in #Jer 18:12, "Nay, for there is no hope," God hath mortally wounded us, so that we are already in the jaws of death, "free among the dead," as the Psalmist hath it, #Ps 88:5, free of that

company. The better sort of them, fullest of faith, answer, dead though we be, yet God will revive us; and long though it seem, yet after two days, or such a matter, in a very short time, as soon as ever it shall be convenient, and for our greatest good, "He that shall come" to our comfort, "will come, and will not tarry," #**Heb 10:37**. And for the certainty of it, as sure as the third day followeth the second, so sure shall deliverance come in due season; fear ye not.

**In the third day he will raise me up]** He will, he will, never doubt it. Oh, the rhetoric of God! Oh the certainty of the promises! See the like expressions, #**Isa 26:20 10:25 Hag 2:7 Hab 2:3 Heb 10:37**, and have patience. God's help seems long, because we are short: *Nec quia dura, sed quia molles patimur* (Seneca). We should draw forth hope as a line; and think we hear Christ saying, as he did to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," #**Joh 13:7**.

Ver. 3. **Then shall we know]** Heb. And we shall know, we shall follow on to know, *Sciemus sectabimurque* (Vatablus). We shall experimentally know the Lord if we turn unto him; we shall taste and see that the Lord is good. We shall not only be raised "out of the dust of death," that is, of deep afflictions (wherein we "lay as among the pots"), and "live in his sight," that is, comfortably, #**Ps 22:15 68:13**; but we shall know him, which is life eternal; yea, we shall prosecute knowledge, follow on to know, as unsatisfiable, and not content with any measures already required; yea, we shall proceed therein and make progress, as the morning light doth to the perfect day. Those that turn from their iniquities shall understand God's truth, #**Da 9:13**, shall be of his counsel, #**Ps 25:14**, shall have the mind of Christ, #**1Co 2:16**, the wisdom of God in a mystery, #**1Co 2:7**, such as the great Rabbis of the world can no more understand than the Philistines could Samson's riddle, #**1Co 2:8**, yea, these "pure in heart shall see God," #**Mt 5:8**, see him and live, see him, and eat and drink, being much cheered and refreshed, as those nobles of Israel, #**Ex 24:10,11**. Provided that being once enlightened, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, they be not slothful, but show the same diligence, #**Heb 6:4,11,12**, in the use of means to get more knowledge, till they all "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," #**Eph 4:13**,

or (as the words may be read) of that age wherein Christ filleth all in all, **#Eph 3:19**, so as to be able to comprehend with all saints the several dimensions, and to "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Lo, this is indeed to follow on to know the Lord; when we are still adding to our virtue knowledge, till (with those famous Romans) we be full of goodness, filled brimful with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another, saying, "Come, and let us return to the Lord," &c. "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord," **#Isa 2:5**, walk in that light we have, and we shall have more; for "to him that hath," *sc.* for use and practice, "shall be given," **#Mr 4:25**. He that first begs, and then digs for knowledge, searching for her as for hidden treasure, **#Pr 2:3,4**, he shall be sure of some daily comings in from Christ; he shall understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, **#Ho 6:5**; Christ will say unto him, as once he did to Nathaniel, "Thou shalt see greater things then these," **#Joh 1:50**, even "great and mighty things, which thou knowest not," **#Jer 33:3**.

**His going forth is prepared as the morning]** That is, as sure as the morning followeth the night, and shineth more and more unto the perfect day, so sure shall God appear for our comfort, and shall dispel the night of our calamity. Mourning lasteth but till morning, **#Ps 30:5**; and as before the morning light is the thickest darkness, so before deliverance our afflictions are usually increased upon us. God appeareth on the sudden and beyond expectation (as out of a cloud, or as out of an engine, *εκ της μηχανης*), and shows himself then usually when things are at their worst. Hence that of Job, *Post tenebras spero lucern*; After the darkness I look for the light, and that of the Church in Micah, "Though I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me," **#Mic 7:8**. Vatablus applieth this text to the coming of Christ, that Day Star from on high, that Sun of righteousness, to whom all the prophets point God's people, when they would comfort them indeed (*orientur Christus ut aurora quae adventu suo depellit tenebras*); arise Christ so that dawn with its arrival dispells the darkness, for he is the consolation of Israel, the desire of all nations, for whom their souls waited more than they that watch for the morning wait for the morning, **#Ps 130:6**. But because God's going forth is opposed to his departure, when he retired to his place, **#Ho 5:10**, therefore, his



settled going forth here, is by most interpreted of his manifestations of his mercy to his poor prisoners of hope, those disconsolate captives, whom he not only brought back from Babylon, but also shineth into some of their hearts, by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**And he shall come unto us as the rain]** As the showers of blessing, **#Eze 34:26**, rain of liberalities, **#Ps 68:9**, rain of righteousness, **#Ho 10:12**. *Cito exaudi me, Domine; complue me*, saith Austin upon those words of David, my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land. Hear me quickly, O Lord, rain righteousness upon my dry soul, fill me with the fruits of thy Spirit; whose work it is to illuminate and sanctify, as it is the Father's to heal, **#Ho 6:1**, and the Son's to revive, and raise us together with himself, the firstfruits of them that sleep, **#Ho 6:2**.

**As the latter and former rain unto the earth]** *sc.* in perfection of gifts and graces, by degrees wrought in our hearts; or, in seasonable and suitable comforts, as rain in seedtime, softening the ground; and a little before harvest, to plump and fill up the grain in the ear.

Ver. 4. **O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee, &c.]** See how soon the prophet changeth his note. Hitherto he had set forth their repentance in sense of mercy; now all of a sudden he upbraideth and threateneth them for their incorrigibleness and inconstancy. Ministers must turn themselves, as it were, into all shapes and fashions, both of speech and spirit, to win people to God. Aaron's bells must be wisely rung, saith one. Sometimes the treble of mercy sounds well, at other times the tenor of judgment, or counter tenor of reproof, sounds better; and it often happens that the means of exhortation soundeth best of all. It is his wisdom to observe circumstances, and know how to curse as well as bless, chide as well as comfort, and speak war to a rebel as well as peace to a friend. And herein indeed lieth the wisdom and faithfulness of a teacher. Then, and only then, shall he prove himself sincere and impartial, when he holds this course. "What shall I do unto thee?" It is as if God should say, I have done my utmost, as **#Isa 5:5 Mic 5:3**, and now am I at a stand, and can scarce tell what to do more. See the like expostulatory complaints, **#Jer 2:30,31 Ho 5:3 Am 4:6 Isa 26:10 Mt 11:16,17,18 23:37**. I would, but thou wouldst not. As the

loving hen is always caring for her chickens, and calling them about her, that she may gather and guard them from the mischief of all vermin; but they will needs be straggling, and so perish; so if God's people will not hearken to his voice, if Israel will none of him, what can he do less than give them up to their own hearts' lusts, **#Ps 81:12**, yea, give them up to the devil, to be further hardened to their just destruction, saying, that which will die, let it die? All that God can do is, as here, to mourn for their obstinacy and fool-hardiness in rejecting his grace, as he wept over Jerusalem, **#Lu 19:42**. We should also do the like, crying out with Isaiah, "My leanness, my leanness!" and with Jeremiah, "My bowels, my bowels!" and with Paul, I have "great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart," for my perverse countrymen, **#Isa 24:16 Jer 4:19 Ro 9:2**. Peter calleth them an untoward generation, **#Ac 2:40**; such crooked pieces that there was no working upon them. A cunning carver can cut the similitude of any creature, yet not on a crooked or rotten stick. Where lieth the fault? surely in the crookedness of the stick, and not in the carver's cunning: so is it here. When men wrestle with God, as **#De 32:5**, shift him off, as the apostle's word, *παρατηρησθε*, signifieth, **#Heb 12:25**, take up the bucklers against the sword of his Spirit, lest it should prick them at heart, as **#Ac 2:37**, and let out the life blood of their lusts, that they might live; what can the Lord do in this case more than pity their unhappiness, and punish them for their stubbornness, as the judge pitieth a malefactor, as he is a man, but yet condemneth him as a thief or murderer? Tell me not here, that God could have done more for Ephraim and Judah than he did; and they might have said in answer to God's question here, as that leper in the gospel did, Why? "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean," **#Mt 8:2**. Hence it is God by his absolute power can make iron swim, rocks stream forth water, stones to yield children to Abraham; he can do whatsoever he pleaseth; save without means, &c. But it is his actual power that men must look to. And so he (having tied the end and means together) cannot (say divines), because he will not, bring men to the end, without their using those means which tend unto the end; for that is the ordinary course which he hath decreed to use, and which he will not alter, but upon special occasion, as our Saviour noteth in the cure of Naaman, and in the feeding of the widow of Sarepta, **#Lu 4:26,27**.

**For your goodness is as the morning cloud, &c.]** This people hearing God say, What shall I do unto you? might possibly reply, Why? what should you do but rain down righteousness upon us, and load us with loving-kindness? for we are good all over, we have returned and done right in thy sight, as it is said of those hypocrites, **#Jer 34:15,16**, and as Peter saith of some apostates in his time, that they were clean escaped from them who live in error; and (for matter of practice) they had also escaped the pollutions of the world; knew the way of righteousness, and seemed very forward in it; were as the fore-horses in a team, ringleaders of good exercises, &c.; who yet afterwards fell off to the world, turned from the holy commandments, and returned with the dog to their vomit, and with the washed sow to her wallowing again in the mire. And this is that which the Lord here upbraideth this people with (and so stops their mouths), viz., that their goodness or mercifulness, their piety toward God and charity toward men, was nothing else but a morning cloud, **#Jude 12**, a waterless cloud, as Jude hath it, a mere flaunt, or flash, an outside only, an empty sound, a vain pretence. It was also as the morning dew, which is soon dried up by the sunbeams. In a word, they were both false and fickle, unsteady and unstable, constant only in their inconstancy. Hence this pathetic complaint of them; God knew not where to have them, and therefore not what to do with them. These were never right with God, because not stedfast in his covenant, **#Ps 78:36,37**; they are unstable as water, therefore they shall not excel, **#Ge 49:4**; they never were a willing people in the day of Christ's power, **#Ps 110:3**, his power was never put forth upon them, to subdue their wills to God's will. They never yet attained to that spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind, **#2Ti 1:7**. Inconstancy comes from weakness. "The strength of Israel repenteth not," **#1Sa 15:29**.

Ver. 5. **Therefore have I hewed them by my prophets]** Therefore? wherefore? because there is so little stability and solidity in them; because they are so off and on, so light and false-hearted; therefore I have spared for no pains (though all to small purpose), but have sharply rebuked them that they might be sound in the faith, **#Re 2:16** yea, I have fought against them with the sword of my mouth, and slain them by powerful convictions of conscience; so that they are self-condemned, and the judgments are written as it were with a beam of the sun, they are so clear to themselves and others. This is

the coherence, and the reason of the illative particle "therefore." It is the sad complaint of a late reverend writer, when we have spent all our wind on our people their hearts will be still apt to be carried away with every wind of doctrine. They are won, saith another, with an apple, and lost with a nut; no man knows where to find them in one mind for a month's time; such a generation of moon calves never appeared in the world before. Our giddy hearers (saith a third), after all our pains taken with them, have no mould but what the next teacher casteth them into; being blown, like glasses, into this or that shape at the pleasure of his breath.

**I have hewed them by the prophets]** Who are here compared to masons or stone hewers, #2Ki 12:12 1Ch 22:2 Job 19:24 Isa 51:1; to carpenters, #1Ki 5:15 Pr 9:1 Isa 5:2; to day labourers, who dig pits and cisterns, #De 6:11 8:9 2Ch 26:10 Ne 9:25 Jer 2:13. A minister's life is no idle man's occupation; they meet with many rough stones, knotty pieces, hard quarries, tough work. Some are stones crumbling all to crattle as soon as we begin to hammer them, and as timber falling to splinters when we fall to the hewing of them; and other such sons of Belial there are that a man cannot speak to them, #1Sa 25:17; they are "thorns that cannot be taken with hands, but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and with the staff of a spear." These shall be thrust away as thorns, and utterly burnt with fire, #2Sa 23:6,7. And for the better sort, those lively stones, #1Pe 2:5, and smoother pieces that are to be set into God's building, being made by his grace more malleable and tractable, there must be a great deal of pains taken with them, that they may be as the polished corners of the temple; they must be humbled and hammered, #Jer 23:29, pared and planed here in the mount; for there may neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron be heard in the heavenly house, for which they are fitting, #1Ki 6:7. And herein we are "labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building," #1Co 3:9. In which laborious kind of life, "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may be saved," saith Paul, #2Ti 2:10. And I dare be bold to say, saith Luther, that faithful ministers do labour and sweat more in a day than husbandmen do in a month. And for mine own part, saith he, *si mihi esset integram vocationem deserere*, if it were lawful for me to leave my calling, I could with less pains and more pleasure dig and

do day work than labour as I now do in the work of the ministry. Pareus thinks that the next words,

**I have killed them with the words of my mouth]** are spoken by God of the prophets: *q.d.* I have set them so heavy a task and put them so hard to it, that it hath been the death of them; such crabbed and rugged spirits they have met with, such stubborn and tough timber, that had long lain soaking in the waters of wickedness; these tools of mine are even worn out with working. But though this be a pious interpretation, and not altogether improbable, because of the change of person here, viz. them for you; yet because such a change is ordinary in Scripture and emphatic also, namely, when God seemeth deeply displeased with any one, and therefore leaveth talking to him, and turns himself suddenly to another, {see #Ho 4:14 5:8,4} I conceive it may very well be so in this place. *Occidi istos*, I have slain these refractories and rebels with the words of my mouth (*sic enim contemptim loquimur*), I have beaten so hard upon their consciences, that they have had no joy of their lives. I have marked them out for destruction, by threatening it, as **#Jer 18:7,8**, and **#Ho 1:10**. Elisha hath his sword as well as Jehu and Hazael, **#1Ki 19:17**; and when Elisha unsheatheth and brandisheth his sword, it is a fair warning that the sword of Jehu and Hazael are at hand. See **#Eze 11:13**, "And it came to pass that when I prophesied Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah, died." So did Ananias and Sapphira, **#Ac 5:5,10**. So do many despisers today, though it appear not by them. A man may have his bane about him, though he fall not down dead in the place. If any man harm Christ's two witnesses, fire (though not felt) "proceedeth out of their mouths, and devoureth their enemies," **#Re 11:5**.

**And thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth]** *i.e.* I have clearly denounced them, and will as openly execute them in the sight of this sun. "The righteous shall see it and shall say, Lo, this is the man," &c., **#Ps 52:6,7 119:137**. Thou, by thine hypocrisy and external services, as **#Ho 6:6**, hast cast a mist before men's eyes, that they cannot think thee to be so near a judgment: but I will dispel that mist, and make my works a comment upon my word; and having sent unto thee a powerful ministry, but to no purpose, I will

make thee, who wouldst not hear the word, "to hear the rod, and who hath appointed it," #Mic 7:9.

Ver. 6. **For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice]** That is, rather than sacrifice: I prefer the marrow and pith of the second table before the ceremony and surface of the first.

**I desired mercy]** Heb. יתעפה I desired it with singular delight and complacency. *Aurea certe sententia*, saith Rivet. This is a golden sentence, twice quoted by Christ himself, #Mt 9:13 12:7, which noteth the eminence of it. And with it agreeth that answer of the scribe so much approved of by our Saviour, #Mr 12:38, "To love thy neighbour as thyself is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." And that of the author to the Hebrews, "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," #Heb 13:16; a great deal better pleased than with all the outward services and sacrifices of the law, which yet were commanded by God, but not to be rested in. These be famous sentences indeed; such as a man would fetch upon his knees from Rome or Jerusalem, as a reverend man saith of certain brave sayings of Luther, which he had recited (Mr Sam. Clark, Life of Luther). Mercy is here put for all the duties of charity; as the knowledge of God is for those other of piety, whereof it is the rise and foundation. Mercy is set first *non ut potior sed ut notior*; not as better, but as better known, and more noticed. They are set together, because they must not be sundered in our practice. Obedience must be universal, extending to the compass of the whole law. A man must not be *funambulus virtutum*, as Tertullian speaks, going in a narrow track of obedience, pinking and choosing what he will do and what not; following God in such duties as will suit with him and no farther. He must follow after God as Caleb, #Nu 14:14, have respect to all God's commandments, and do all his wills, as David, #Ac 13:22, walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, as Zacharias and Elizabeth, #Lu 1:6. These partial and perverse Jews walked in all the ordinances, but they cared not for the commandments; they were altogether for the ceremonial law, but neglected the moral. Or if they did anything that way, it was but the outward act of a commandment, which men may naturally perform. Thus Ahab humbled himself: and some think that Urijah which Isaiah calleth the faithful witness, {#Isa 8:2} the same with him that

brought in the altar of Damascus, #2Ki 16:10, yet reputed a faithful man of his word. A hypocrite may show mercy, but not love mercy, #Mic 6:8, and know God, but not effectively, practically, according to that of St John, "Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," #1Jo 2:28. This is that obedience which is better than sacrifice, #1Sa 15:22 Jer 7:21; and no wonder, *quia per victimas, aliena caro, per obedientiam voluntas propria mactatur*; saith one; in sacrifices the flesh of another, but in obedience our own wills are offered up: and this the very heathen, by the dim rush light of nature, saw to be better. Hold thou it the fairest sacrifice and best service to keep thyself pure and upright, saith Isocrates. O Nicocles, θυμα καλλιστον και θεραπεια μεγαστη. Isoc. And, Ovid. Epist.,

“ *Non bove mactato caelestia numina gaudent.*

*Sed, quae praestanda est et sine teste fides.”*

Ver. 7. **But they like men]** Heb. like Adam, that archrebel, that old παραβατης, after the similitude of whose transgressions these men had sinned, #Ro 5:14, and so deserved in like sort to be punished, by being cast out of their country, as he was out of paradise. Thus some sense it; as if the prophet would here reduce these covenant breakers to that first transgressor Adam, in whom they all were; as the whole country is in a parliament man, and as Levi was in Abraham's loins, and paid tithes in him, #Heb 7:9. Others take Adam for an appellative, and give a reason for it out of the text, because it is *Keadam*, and not *Kahadam*, with ה emphatic. And of these some again read it thus, *Illi tanquam hominis transgressi sunt foedus*, they transgressed the covenant, as if it had been a man's covenant ( *perinde ae foedus alicuius hominis infimi et infirmi*, Polan.); they made no more of breaking it than as if they had had to do with dust and ashes like themselves, with their fellow creatures, and not with the great God: and might therefore deal by their covenants, as monkeys do by their collars, which they fit on for their master's pleasure, and slip off again for their own. Others read it, as we do; "They like men have transgressed," &c., sorry men, fickle and false hearted men, such as David pointed at when he said, "All men are liars," #Ps 116:11, and Paul, #1Co 3:3. Are ye not carnal, and walk as men, that is, as profane men, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel? Singular things are expected from God's peculiar, #Mt 5:47, as to be eminent in good works, #Tit 3:14, to

get above others, as Saul was above the people by head and shoulders; to get to the very top of godliness, as the apostle's phrase importeth, ἀκριβως παρα το εις ακρον βαειν, #Eph 5:15, to keep God's covenant as the apple of the eye, as Solomon saith, #Pr 7:2, that little man in the eye, Ishon, that cannot be touched but he will be distempered. This the world counts preciseness, and makes nothing of transgressing, of leaping over the hedge of any commandments, so they may shun a piece of foul way. Lo, this is the manner of most men, yea, of all men by nature; they make no bones about transgressing the law, of changing the ordinance, of breaking the everlasting covenant, #Isa 24:5. And this when they do, they work *de suo et secundum hominem*; for *Homo est inversus Decalogus*, the natural man stands across to the law of God, to the whole Decalogue; the two tables whereof are called the tables of the covenant, #De 9:9,11. Neither is this any excusing or extenuation of their sin, that they do but their kind, they do it as men. It is an aggravation rather, *q.d.* they not only transgress my covenant, but they do it naturally, and out of the vileness of their proper inclinations; like as the devil, when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh *de suo*, of his own, #Joh 8:44, he can do no otherwise. It is as impossible for those that are carnal and walk as men to keep covenant with God as for a toad to spit cordials. If at any time they make an overture of doing it, if they make an essay, it is but as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that goeth away, as #Ho 6:5, with which this verse applies; #Ho 6:6 coming in between as it were by a parenthesis.

**There have they dealt treacherously against me]** There? where? in the very point of the covenant, which by their sacrifices and burnt offerings they so solemnly professed and engaged to observe; lo, therein have they prevaricated, and then at the same time have they falsified, as the same word is used, #Ps 14:5. I have been near in their mouth, but far from their reins, #Jer 12:2. In words they profess to know me, but in works they deny me, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate, #Tit 1:16. Or there, that is (as the Chaldee paraphrast senseth it), in that good land which I have given them, even in Gilead, as in the next words. They live in my good land, but not by my good laws; yea, "they have filled it" (as the cursed Canaanites did before them, #Ezr 9:11)



"from one end to another with their uncleanness," which therefore longs for a vomit to cast them out; there have they dealt treacherously, as the adulteress doth, who forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. The sins of such as break covenant with God are sins of a double dye; they are wickedness with a witness, because "they do wickedly against the covenant," #Da 11:32 Pr 2:17; these treacherous dealers deal treacherously, yea, these treacherous dealers deal very treacherously, #Isa 24:16. And this they have done against me, who have stooped so low as to strike a covenant with them, and such a covenant, #2Sa 23:5, and have never failed or falsified. See #De 29:24,25.

Ver. 8. **Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity**] Another *πονηροπολις*; such a city there was in Greece, and so called by King Philip, for the naughtiness of the inhabitants. This Gilead was one of those ten cities of refuge beyond Jordan, given to the priests for a possession, #Jos 21:38, &c., and probably the chief city, which therefore bare the name of the whole country, as Athens was called the Greece of Greece (Ἑλλάς Ἑλλάδος). The inhabitants thereof (though Levites) were the worst of men, workers of iniquity, such as did wickedly with both hands, earnestly wearying themselves in the devil's drudgery; and then sitting down to rest them in the chair of pestilence. There is not a worse creature upon earth, or so fit for hell, as a profane priest, a debauched minister, #Mt 5:13. *Corruptio optimi pessima*, as the sweetest wine makes the sourest vinegar, as the finest flesh is resolved into the vilest earth, and as the whitest ivory burnt becomes the blackest coal. Who would have looked for so much wickedness at Gilead, at Shiloh, at Anathoth, at Jerusalem, where the priests and scribes bare sway, and did *dominari in suggestis*? And yet that once faithful city was "become a harlot; it was full of judgment, righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers," #Isa 1:21. In our Saviour's time it was *prophetarum macellum*, the slaughter house of the saints, as now Rome is, and once London was in bloody Bonner's days: whom a certain good woman once told in a letter, that he was deservedly called the common cut-throat and general slaughter slave to all the bishops of England. At his death he boasted (as Stokesley had done before him) how many heretics he had burned: seven hundred saints in four or five years' time those bloody and deceitful men sent to heaven in

fiery chariots. There are none so cruel to the lives of men as wicked clergy.

**Gilead was polluted with blood]** Not only with the blood of souls (by their default drowned in perdition and destruction, #Eze 33:7 3:18), but of bodies too, destroyed by their hands or means. The priests of these times may seem, by what is said of them in the next verse, to have been men of their hands, the sworn swordmen of the devil, such as was Timotheus Herulus, Bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 467. Pope Innocent, who threw Peter's keys into the river Tiber, and took up Paul's sword, as he called it, and that Philip, Bishop of Beauvieu, in France, taken in a skirmish by our Richard I, who sent his armour to the pope with these words engraved on it, *Vide num filii tui tunica sit, vel non*, See whether this be the coat of thy son, or of a son of Mars. These, and their like in their several generations, were *non Pastores sed Impostores, non Doctores sed Seduciores, non Episcopi sed Aposcopi*, not ministers but imposters, not teachers but seducers, not bishops but apostates, as an ancient hath it; and indeed, the Church hath ever been so pestered with lewd and lazy ministers (those *dehonestamenta Cleri*) that Chrysostom thought there were scarcely any of that order in his time that could be saved; Jerome saith that the paucity of such as were good had made them very precious; and Campian cries out, not altogether without cause (malice may be a good informer though an ill judge), *Ministris eorum nihil vilius*, There is nothing vile to their ministers. Now this is here instanced as an odious transgression of the covenant, when such as made such a show of sacrifice to God should exercise so little mercy to men; when such as should be teachers were turned tyrants and blood suckers.

Ver. 9. **And as troops of robbers wait for a man]** This verse hath much of the former in it, saith an interpreter. The sum of it is, saith Wigandus, to show, that all the forementioned wickednesses were committed, *instinctu doctorum*, by the instinct of their priests, who were now turned Tories or moss troopers. Jerome asked his Jewish doctor the meaning of this text, and received this answer: that at the time of the Passover and the Pentecost the people used to come to Jerusalem; and as they were going in their journey, these priests would stand in the way and slay them. Others think that these corrupt priests took into their city of refuge divers thieves and

murderers; who not having whereupon otherwise to subsist, turned highwaymen (as they call them), and returning again into the city, divided the spoil with the priests, who had their share: and are therefore called companions of robbers, and are said to murder in the way by consent, or with one shoulder, or as Simeon and Levi did at Shechem, *q.d. Sichemice*, craftily and cruelly (for so many ways these words are rendered), and all this they did with malice forethought, of prepensed mischief (*ex destinata malitia et inito consilio*), called here committing lewdness. Even as they thought in their hearts so they acted, saith King David. They executed the counsel of the wicked, saith the Chaldee paraphrast. They machinated mischief, and then practised what they had plotted with a deliberate will, and as it were with a high hand. Look now upon the Popish monks, saith Tarnovius, and compare them with these priests whom Hosea reproveth, *non tam ovum ovo simile*. And Luther saith, that they had a proverb in Germany, that there was nothing so bad which the monks could think of but they would dare to do it. *Faciunt quicquid cogitant.* 079 &&& Ministers-Immoral

“ *Non audet Stygius Pluto tentare quod audet*

*Effrenis Monachus,*”—

Ver. 10. **I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel]** Now a very den of thieves, as **#Ho 6:9**, a pantheon of all sorts of idols, a chamber of imagery, an Egyptian temple, gay and goodly without, but within an ox or calf, with "women weeping for Tammuz," **#Eze 8:12,14**, that is, for Osiris, king of Egypt, whose image (under the shape of an ox) his wife, Isis, had advanced to be idolatrously there adored. This kind of abomination Jeroboam had learned in Egypt (whither he fled from Solomon, his master), and brought into the house of Israel. And whereas those idolaters said, "The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth," **#Eze 8:12**; "I have seen it," saith God, and been sore troubled at it, and even frightened; so as a man is *quando horripilatur*; when his hairs stand on end; as when the devil appeareth to him like a hairy satyr. See **#Le 17:7**. {See Trapp on "Le 17:7"} Certain it is that God hateth sin (but especially idolatry, that abominable thing, as he calleth it, **#Jer 44:4**) worse than he hateth the devil himself; for he hateth the devil for sin's sake, and not sin for the devil's sake. Idolatry must needs be so much the more odious to him, because therein the devil sets up himself in the place of God;

and requires men (as once he did Christ himself) to fall down and worship him. See #De 32:17 1Co 10:20 Re 9:20. So he dealeth by the poor Indians of this day, compelling them to worship him with bodily worship, and tormenting them, if they do not, worse (if worse may be) than the cruel Spaniards; who suppose they show the wretches favour, when they do not, for their pleasure, whip them with cords, and day by day drop their naked bodies with burning bacon. The Hebrew word here used hath some letters more than ordinary in it, to increase the signification, and to show what a very horrible thing idolatry is (הִירֵרְעֵשׁ). *{Hebrew Text Note}* It is *spurca pollutio*, as #Jer 23:14, and worse. See #Jer 2:11,12 18:13, and know that God doth not use to aggravate things beyond truth, as men do, witness Nebuchadnezzar, #Da 3:14, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?" Or is it of set purpose? *Num de industria?* so Buxtorf rendereth it. Is it for the nonce, to provoke me? Or *Nunquid desolatio?* so Arias Montanus; as if he should say, What! you to oppose the command of a king? If this be suffered, what desolation must needs follow! But this is not God's way; he lays no more words upon a thing than the matter amounteth to. If he call idolatry filth, fornication, abomination, a horrible thing, such as a man would start or stand aghast at, we may be sure it is so. The Septuagint here render it φρικωδη, things to be trembled at, or shrieked at. In Barbary it is death for the Xeriff's wife, when she seeth a man, though but through a casement, not suddenly to shriek out. God is a jealous God, and allows not his to look toward an idol. If they do he will soon see it, and visit for it. "I have seen," &c.

**There is the whoredom of Ephraim]** Thus God looketh upon it as filthiness and nastiness which the people beheld as fineness and neatness. And the same do all (that have the mind of God, and senses exercised to discern between good and evil) judge of all the Popish pomp and palterment, wherewith they bewitch the deluded common people, as the serpent Scytale doth the fleeing passenger, whom when she cannot overtake, yet with her beautiful colours she doth so astonish and amaze him, that he hath no power to pass away till stung to death.

Ver. 11. **Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee]** This is a very difficult text, and much vexed by interpreters. *Et hic nisi Lyra lyrasset, nos omnes delirassemus.* Lyra sets this sense upon the text,

and I accord him: Though thou, Judah, art also to be carried captive; yet God hath set, or provided for thee, a harvest in thine own land, when I shall have returned the captivity of my people, viz. under the conduct of Zorobabel, by the decree of Cyrus. Here, then, is a promise of a joyful harvest to Judah, who is not to be punished with like severity as Israel, #Ho 1:7, and for the change of person, when I returned, for he shall have returned. See #Isa 29:19 Jer 31:23 Zep 3:20 Ps 14:7. *Simul Iudae captivitas et reditus praedicitur significanter admodum*, saith Jerome here; both the captivity and return of Judah is here very significantly foretold. It is a very good note that one giveth here, *sc.* that God in his chastisement ever showeth himself mindful of his covenant; after a long barrenness, he setteth for his people a plentiful harvest, and turneth again their captivity, after that for a time he hath tried them. His mercy also and faithfulness herein appeareth, that be mingleth promises with threatenings; and while he utterly destroyeth the kingdom of the ten tribes, he preserveth the commonwealth of Judah, wherein the Messiah was to come, and whereof there was not (by the ancient prophecies) to be a dissolution, till Shiloh came. Hence it is that promises of the restoration of Judah are ever intermingled, lest any should doubt the manifestation of the Messiah in the fulness of time.

## Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **When I would have healed Israel, &c.**] Whereas Israel, hearing of a happy harvest promised to Judah, #Ho 6:11, and themselves excluded, might complain of hard dealing; God shows them here, that *crudelem medicum intemperans aeger facit*, the fault was merely in themselves. God came with his healing medicines to have cured them, but they hated to be healed, and, like madmen, railed and raged against the physician, spilt the portions, would have none of those slobber-sauces, <sup>{a}</sup> as they accounted them; yea, as if on purpose to cross God,

**then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness (malitia multiplex) of Samaria]** Of so perverse a spirit were they; and therefore (in Solomen's judgment, #Pr 12:8) worthy to have been despised and let alone to perish in their corruptions. In Hippocrates' time the physicians were bound by oath to leave such under their wounds to perish by them as were unruly, and would not

be ordered. "We would have healed Babylon," (saith the Church), "but she would not be healed; forsake her therefore," saith God, **#Jer 51:9**. "Let them alone," saith Christ, **#Mt 15:14**. That which will die, let it die: a fearful sentence. Let them swelter and pine away in their iniquities, **#Le 26:39**. In their filthiness is lewdness, their disease is complicated, it is the leprosy in the head, it breaketh forth in their forehead, and my people love to have it so; but "what will they do in the end thereof?" **#Jer 5:31**. Ephraim here discovereth a headstrong wilfulness that was uncounsellable, incurable. He runs away after conviction, with a bit between his teeth, as it were; he runs, I say, upon the rock, **#Am 6:12**, where he first breaketh his hoofs, and then his neck. Some grow desperately sinful, like those Italian senators, that despairing of their lives (when upon submission they had been promised their lives, yet), being conscious of their villany, made a curious banquet; and at the end thereof every man drank up his glass of poison: and killed himself. So men, feeling such horrible hard hearts, and privy to such notorious sins they cast away souls and all for lust; and perish woefully, because they lived desperately, and so securely. It is a fearful sign of reprobation when God's means and medicines do men no good, but hurt rather; when medicine, which should remove the disease, doth co-operate with it, then death comes with the more pain and speed. The stronger the conviction of sin is the deeper will be the wrath against it, if it be not by repentance avoided.

**For they commit falsehood]** They do not the truth, **#1Jo 1:6**, but deal falsely, **#Jer 6:13**, every one of them, from the prophet even to the priest; they work a deceitful work, **#Pr 11:18**, their bellies prepare deceit, **#Job 15:35**, they have an art in lying, in stitching one lie to another, as the word signifieth, **#Ps 119:69**, *Assuunt mendacium mendacio*. Idolatry is a real lie, as she in the Book of Martyrs answered the doctor, that asked her, Dost thou believe that the body of Christ is in the sacrament of the altar really and substantially? I believe, said she, that so to hold is a real lie, and a substantial lie. These idolaters having played false with God, and treacherously dealt with him, what wonder though they lie, deceive, rob, spoil, both within doors and without, in private negotiations and public transactions? but especially forge lies against those that withstood their superstitious vanities, and prey upon their goods, as

**#Heb 10:34.** *Sublata pietate tollitur fides*, is a truth irrefutable. Take away piety, and fidelity is gone; as we see in that unrighteous judge, **#Lu 18:2**, and as Abraham concluded of the men of Gerar, **#Ge 20:11**, and lastly, as Constantinus Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, experimented in his own councillors and courtiers; whence that famous maxim of his, recorded by Eusebius: He cannot be faithful to me who is unfaithful to God; religion being the ground of all true fidelity and loyalty.

{a} A compound or concoction of a messy, repulsive, or nauseous character, used esp. for medicinal purposes. ⒺD

Ver. 2. **And they consider not in their hearts]** Heb. They say not in their hearts; that is, they set not down themselves with this consideration, they commune not with their consciences upon this most needful, but much neglected matter. A good man's work lieth much within doors; he loves to be dealing with himself, and working good and wholesome considerations upon his own affections. He is never less alone than when he is alone; for still he hath God and himself to talk to.

**That I remember all their wickedness]** *i.e.* Record and register them, as in a book, with a pen of iron and point of a diamond, **#Jer 17:1**; that I seal them up in a bag, **#Job 14:17**, as the clerk of assizes seals up indictments, and at the assizes brings his bag, and produceth them. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?" **#De 32:34**. So little reason is there that wicked men should please themselves in hope of impunity. And yet they do, **#Ps 94:7**, they strive to persuade themselves that the Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob remember: they hide God from themselves, and then think they have hid themselves from him. Herein they are alike foolish as the ostrich, a bird as big as a camel, and taller than a man (Plin. lib. x., cap. 1). When this bustard {a} would hide herself she thrusts her head into a thicket, as conceiving that nobody seeth her because she seeth nobody, and so becomes a prey to the hunter. *Caveatur carnalis securitas*. Let us walk evermore in the sense of God's presence, unless we had rather be carnally secured than soundly comforted.

**Now their own doings have beset them about]** Their studied wickedness, *studia eorum* (Tigurin), their contrived iniquities, so Luther expounds the word doings; for wicked men are great students, and break many a night's sleep in pernicious ploddings, **#Pr 4:16**. But as the blackbird is taken by birdlime made of his own excrements, so is the wicked beset by his own devices; as by so many sergents set on by God. Some think (and not without probable reason) that the prophet in this phrase of besetting them about alludeth to the future siege of Samaria; wherein these sinners against their own souls were so straitly beset by the enemy, that they could not flee or stir without danger. And this he saith shall befall them. Now, that is, shortly, and sooner than they think for. Indeed, how should it be otherwise, whereas their doings

**are before my face]** *E regione et velut adversa ac detestata*, Together and in full view, as a continual eye sore to me, **#Ps 59:5 90:8**; so that though I could or would forget them, yet they will not suffer me to do so; such is their impudence, and importunace for vengeance. Lyra makes it a metaphor, from a thief taken in the act, with his back burden of stolen goods, and, as it were, beset with them, and so brought before the judge. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked," saith Solomon, **#Pr 5:22**. For how can he escape the multitude of his sins within him, and the variety of God's heavy judgments without him?

{a} A genus of birds (*Otis*) presenting affinities both to the *Cursores* and the *Grallatores* or waders; remarkable for their great size and running powers. The great bustard (*Otis tarda*) is the largest European bird, and was formerly common in England, though now extinct, or found only as a rare visitant. (ED)

**Ver. 3. They make the king glad with their wickedness]** A sad commentary surely of king and people, exhilarating themselves and each other in wickedness. Their kings were well paid of their people's compliances with their unlawful edicts; and the people no less well pleased to gratify and flatter their kings, as the Romans did Tiberius and other tyrants, who therefore said of them, that they were *servum pecus*, servile souls, *et homines ad servitutem parati*, men-made slaves. Tyrants care not how wicked their subjects are; for then they know they will swallow down any command, though never so impious, without scrupling or conscience-making. They like to have such about them as will down with anything, digest iron



for a need, with the ostrich; and say, as that wretched man said (when one complained he could not do such a thing for his conscience), "I am master of my conscience, I can do anything for all that." Thus Balaam resolved to curse, whatever came of it; he went not aside as at other times, neither built he any more altars, but set his face towards the wilderness, as fully bent to do it, and nothing should hinder him now, #Nu 24:1,2 cf. Lu 9:51. He also gave wicked counsel to King Balak (and so made him glad at parting, though before he had angered him) to lay a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, viz. to set fair women to tempt them to corporal and spiritual fornication, that God might see sin flagrant in Jacob, some transgression in Israel, and so fall foul upon them with his plagues, #Nu 23:21. Parasites propound to kings *suavia potius quam sana consilia*, pleasing, but pestilent counsel; they also act for them, and under them, as Doeg did for Saul, and so gratify them, letify them, as here, make them glad; but it proves to be no better than *risus Sardonius*, such a mirth as brings bitterness in the end. Woe to such mirthmongers and mirth makers, for if they shall do thus wickedly, they shall be consumed, both they and their king, #1Sa 12:25.

**And the princes with their lies]** With calumnies and false accusations, wherewith they load God's innocent servants, and that against their own consciences. Thus Doeg dealt by David, the priests and prophets by Jeremiah, the Persian courtiers by Daniel and his companions, Amaziah by Amos, Haman by the whole nation of the Jews, Tertullus by Paul, the heathen idolaters by the primitive Christians, which caused those many apologies made for them by Tertullian, Athenagoras, and others. If a ruler hearken to lies (and that is a common fault among them, as David tells Saul, #1Sa 24:9) all his servants will be wicked, #Pr 29:12; he shall have his Aiones and Negones that will say as he says, and fit his humour to a hair; he shall have plenty of such as will slander the saints and cast an odium upon the conscientious. I once saw (saith Melancthon) an old coin, on the one side whereof was Zopyrus, on the other Zoilus; he adds, *fuit imago aulae, comitantur calumniae bene merentes*, It was a picture of princes' courts, where are store of such as, by flattery, daub white upon black, and, by calumny, sprinkle black upon white.

Ver. 4. **They are all adulterers]** ἐξεκαυσθησαν, *adulterio caleseunt, so Paguine*, scalded in their base lusts, as those in **#Ro 1:27**, all (for the most part) were such; but especially the courtiers and clawback informers, as **#Ho 7:3**, God, in his just judgment, giving them up to those vile affections or passions of dishonour, and punishing their impieties with impurities, as he did also in those heathens, **#Ro 1:23**.

**As an oven heated by the baker]** An apt similitude setting forth the intense heat of filthy lust (better marry than burn, **#1Co 7:9**), and of long continuance as the heat of an oven; yea, of Nebuchadnezzar's oven, yea, of hell itself, whence it was enkindled, and where it shall be perpetually punished. The holy angels at the last day will be most active against such, to bring them to condign punishment: **#2Pe 2:10**, "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness." Note the word chiefly, and consider the example of the Sodomites, and God most severe against them, **#Heb 13:4**. How much they have lived deliciously, and drenched themselves in fleshly delights, so much torments and sorrow shall they have proportionably, **#Re 18:7**. As their hearts have been as a hot oven or furnace, so they shall be bound up in bundles, and cast into a furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, **#Mt 13:42**.

Ver. 5. **In the day of our king]** Our good king, on whom they so much doted, that they forgot God and his sincerer service. *Quaecunque a regibus dicuntur aut fiunt, Gallis mirifice solet placere*. It is reported of the French by their own chronicles, that they are wonderfully well pleased with whatsoever is said or done by their king (Epit. Hist. Gallor. 134); so that they affect to speak like him, to be arrayed like him, and to imitate him in everything. Their song is, *Mihi placet quicquid Regi placet*. But is not this to idolize the creature? and have not many (otherwise well minded men) among us been by this means miscarried to their cost in our late combustions? This day of their king was either his birthday (so Pagnine rendereth it here, *die natalis eius*), or his coronation day (so the Chaldee paraphrast carrieth it), which also is the birthday of a king as he is king, **#1Sa 13:1**, unless haply he have the happiness to be crowned (not in his cradle only, as Europus, king of Macedon, and the late King James were, but) in his mother's womb, as Misdaetus, king of Persia, was, the crown being set upon his

mother's great belly before he was born. Now in this solemn day of the king (when they should have been better busied), the princes have made him sick, or the princes were sick, they drank themselves sick, drowning their bodies and souls (as Richard III did his brother Clarence) in a butt of Malmsey. How many importunate and impudent drinkers are there, that by drinking other men's health destroy their own! See Master Prinne's Health's-sickness, and accord him that said,

“ *Una salus sanis, nullam potare salutem,  
Non est in pota vera salute salus.* ”

*But what beastly bedlams, or rather incarnate devils, were those three drunkards mentioned by Jo. Manlius in his Common Places, who drank so long till one of them fell down stark dead; and yet the other two, nothing terrified with such a dreadful example of divine vengeance, went on to drink, and poured the dead man's part into him as he lay by them? Oh horrible! Drunkenness is a detestable vice in any, but especially in men of place and power; #Pr 31:4. Woe be to those drunken vice-gods (as I may in the worst sense best call them), woe to the very crown of their pride, in drinking down many, #Isa 28:1, as Mark Antony wrote, or rather spued out, a book concerning his own abilities to bear strong drink! Darius also boasted of the same faculty in his very epitaph: a poor praise. Drunkenness in a king is a capital sin, and makes the land reel; witness Belshazzar carousing in the bowels of the sanctuary to the honour of Shar, his drunken god; Alexander the Great drinking himself to death, and killing forty-one more with excessive drinking, to get that crown of one hundred and eighty pounds weight, which he had provided for him that drank most (hence those feast days were called σακεαι ημεραι, they were like the Roman Saturnalia); Bonosus the emperor; that beastly drunkard, called therefore a tankard, ( *Hic pendet Amphora* ); and Tiberius, surnamed Biberius, for his tippling; like as Erasmus, called *Eccius Ieccius*, for the same cause: and well he might; for as he lived a shameful drunkard, so being nonplust at Ratisbon by Melancthon in a public disputation, and drinking more than was fit that night at the Bishop of Mundina's lodgings (who had among the best Italian wines), he fell into a fever, whereof he died. Drunkenness is a flattering evil, a sweet poison, a*

cunning Circe, that besots the soul, destroys the body, *dolores gignit in capite, in stomacho, in tote corpore acerrimos*, grievous diseases and dolours in the head, stomach, whole man. At the last "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," #Pr 23:32. The drunkard saith, as the vine in Jotham's parable, *Non possum relinquere vinum meum*, Take away my liquor, you take away my life. But it proves to him in the issue like that wine mentioned by Moses, #De 32:33: their wine is the poison of dragons, and cruel venom of asps, which makes the spirits warm, and the body sick to death.

**With bottles of wine]** Or, with heat through wine, as #Isa 5:11, and so Jarchi expoundeth it. The same word signifieth the poison of a serpent, #Ps 58:4, which inflameth and killeth: confer #Pr 23:32, and think of that cup of fire and brimstone, #Ps 11:6, to be one day turned down the wide gullets of intemperate drinkers; which will be much worse to them than was that ladle full of boiling lead, which the Turkish bashaw caused to be poured down the throat of a drunken wretch, without giving him any respite for the recovery of his lost wits.

**He stretched out his hand with scorers]** He, that is, the king, forgetting his kingly dignity, authority, and gravity (for there is a decorum, το πρεπον, to be observed in every calling, but by great ones especially), stretched out his hand, as a companion and comrade, as a hail-fellow-well-met (as they say), prostituting his regal authority to every scoundrel that would pledge him; or at least, giving them his hand to kiss, which Job saith God will not do, #Job 8:20.

**With scorers]** Those worst of men, #Ps 1:1, those pests, ακολαστοι λοιμοι, as the Septuagint here render it, those incorrigible persons, as they translate the word, #Pr 20:1, where also it is fitly said, that wine is a mocker, because it maketh men mockers. Hence that of David, "with hypocritical mockers at feasts they gnashed upon me with their teeth," #Ps 35:16. And that holy jealousy of Job for his children, lest (while they were feasting and merry-making) they should curse God, or mock at men. *Tales enim evadunt qui strenue helluantur* (Tarnov.). It is ordinary with such as are full-

gorged with good cheer, and throughly heated with wine, to set their mouths against heaven, and to license their tongues to walk through the earth, #Ps 73:9; they have a flout to fling, and a fool's bolt to shoot at their betters by many degrees; yea, though they be kings that do it (as here), they stretch out their hands with scorners, and jeer at the power and profession of godliness; they are no better than base fellows, as great Antiochus is called, #Da 11:21, and as Kimchi upon this text noteth from his Father, that those that at the beginning of the feast or comotation were here called princes, are afterwards, when they fell to quaffling and flouting, called (in contempt) scoffers and scorners. Polanus and others, by stretching out the hand, understand, *ad aequales haustus potare, &c.*, a drinking share and share alike with every base companion, till drunk; they became despicable. *Nempe ubi, neque mens, neque pes suum facit officium.* The Greeks, when they meet at feasts or banquets, drink small draughts at first, which by degrees they increase, till they come to the height of intemperance. Hence Graecari, and as merry as a Greek. How much better those Spartans, of whom the poet,

“ *Quinetiam Spartaē mos est laudabilis ille,  
Ut bibat arbitrio pocula quisque suo?* ”

*How much better the Persians in Esther's time, #Es 1:8, "the drinking was according to the law, none did compel," &c. And what a drunken beast was Domitius, the father of Nero, who slew Liberius, an honest Roman, because he refused to take up his cups, as he commanded him! (Sueton.). The Carthaginians made a law, that none of their magistrates during their office should drink any wine. Romulus being invited to a feast, would not drink much, quia postridie negotium haberet, because he had public business to despatch on the morrow. Ahasuerus, drinking more freely on the first day of the feast, became so frolic, that in his mirth he forgot what was convenient; and guided by his passions, sent for Vashti, #Es 1:5,10.*

Ver. 6. **For they have made ready their hearts like an oven]** As an oven red-hot is ready to bake whatsoever is cast into it, so are wicked men's hearts, heated from hell, prepared for any evil purpose or practice that the devil shall suggest ( *ad male cogitandum, Pagnin., ad pessima facinora, Tigur.*); but especially to lie in wait

for blood, and to hunt every man his brother with a net, #Mic 7:2. David complains of some that lay in wait for his soul, #Ps 59:8, that Satanically hated him, #Ps 38:20 7:13 109:4,6,20,29; that sought his soul to destroy it; not his life only, but his soul too; as that monster of Milan did, that made his adversary first forswear Christ in hope of life, and then, stabbing him to the heart, said, Now go thy ways soul and body to the devil; and as the Papists dealt by John Huss and Jerome of Prague, to whom they denied a confessor, which he required, after the manner of those times, to fit him for heaven; and for John Huss, after they had burnt him, how despitefully did they beat his heart (which was left untouched by the fire) with their staves! Besides that the bishops, when they put the triple crown of paper (painted with ugly devils on it) on his head, they said, Now we commit thy soul to the devil. Did not these men's hearts burn like an oven with hellish rage and cruelty?

**Their baker sleepeth all the night]** *Concoquens illa, scilicet corda*, so Vatabius. He that concocteth or worketh their hearts, that is, the devil, as some interpret it, or evil concupiscence, as others; *tota nocte protrahitur furor eorum*, so the Chaldee; their rage is deferred, or drawn out to the length all night long, till in the morning, *i.e.* at a convenient season, it break out and bestir itself. A metaphor from a baker, who casting fire into the oven with good store of lasting fuel, lets it burn all night and sleeps securely; as knowing that he shall find it thoroughly hot in the morning. Those scornors in the former verse, by being overly familiar with their drunken king, came not only to fight him for his base behaviours, but also to conspire against him, and to plot his death; wherein their heart is the oven, ambition the fire, treason the flame of that fire, Satan, that old manslayer, the baker; who, though he make as if he slept all night, yet by the morning he hath set his agents, the traitors, to work (either by secret treacheries or open seditions) to do as in the next verse, and as is to be seen, #2Ki 15:10,14,25,30.

Ver. 7. **They are all hot as an oven]** That none might post it off to others, all are accused of this mad desire to do mischief; as all the Sodomites, full and whole, young and old, came clattering about Lot's house, #Ge 19:4. (*Dedit haec contagio labem, Et dabit in plures.* Juven. Sat. 2.)

**And have devoured their judges; all their kings are fallen, &c.]** sc. being slain with the sword of those that succeeded them in the throne, as may be read, **#2Ki 15:8,9**, &c., and as it was in the Roman state, where all or most of the Caesars, till Constantine, died unnatural deaths. Neither was it much better here in England during the difference between the two houses of York and Lancaster; wherein were slain fourscore princes of royal blood, and twice as many natives of England as were lost in the two conquests of France. This is the fruit of sin: **#Pr 28:2**, "For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof"; either many at once (as once here in the heptarchy), or many ejecting and succeeding one another, to the great calamity and utter undoing of the people by their new lords, new laws.

**There is none among them that calleth unto me]** Though in so great a confusion, and under so heavy calamities: a strange stupor, that there should be none to set to his shoulder to shore up the falling state. None there were (to speak of) in a considerable number of praying people to stand in the gap, and to divert the Divine displeasure. Their sins cried loud for vengeance, their blood guiltiness especially. But had there been but a few voices more of praying saints, their prayers had haply outcried them. A few birds of song are shriller than many crocitating birds of prey; stir up yourselves, therefore, ye that are God's remembrancers, to take hold of him, and give him no rest. Lie night and day at the gate of his grace, knocking thereat by the hand of faith, and praying for the peace of our Jerusalem. If England's fears were greater, thy prayers might preserve it, **#Jer 5:1**; as, if our hopes were greater, thy sin and security aright undo it, **#Ec 9:18**.

Ver. 8. **Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people]** viz. in confederacies, marriages, manners, superstitions. They were conformed to those nations from whom God had separated them with a wonderful separation, **#Ex 33:16**, and put them up by themselves from all the world in the promised land, as it were in an island, **#Isa 20:6**. And this they had done not once, but often, as the conjugation importeth; and that wilfully, without any necessity; yea and that constantly and of custom, or desperate obstinace (Heb. ללבתי he will mingle himself). so that there was little difference to be discerned between Ephraim, the professed people of God: and

profane heathens. Hence that, **#Am 9:7**. "Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord." Hence Saul is called Cush, or an Ethiopian, for his black and ill conditions, Psal. vii., title, as the Chaldee interpreteth it. Cast we may be upon bad company, but we must not mingle with them. The rivers of Peru, after they have run into the main sea, yea, some write twenty or thirty miles, they keep themselves unmixed with the salt water; so that a very great way within the sea men may take up as fresh water as if they were near the land. At Belgrad, in Hungary, where the Danube and Sava (two great rivers) meet, their waters mingle no more than water and oil (Abbat's Geog.); not that either float above other: but join unmixed: so that near the middle of the river I have gone in a boat (saith mine author, Sir Henry Blount), and tasted of the Danube as clear and pure as a well; then putting mine hand not an inch farther, I have taken of the Sava as troubled as a street-channel, tasting the gravel in my teeth. Thus they run 60 miles together, and for a day's journey I have been an eyewitness of it. To come nearer home, the river Dee, in Merionethshire, running through Pemblemere, remains entire, and mingleth not her streams with the water of the lake. Let not Ephraim mix himself among the people, but cry with David, "Gather not my soul with sinners," **#Ps 26:9**, and **#Ho 7:5**, "I have hated the congregation of evildoers, and will not sit with the wicked,"

**Ephraim is a cake not turned]** And so but half-baked, or dough-baked; *neque crudus, neque coctus*, neither hot nor cold, as Laodicea, **#Re 3:15**, halting between two, as **#1Ki 18:21**. Mongrels, as those **#2Ki 17:33 Zep 1:5**. Barnacles, that are neither fish nor flesh; Amphibians, that will conform to the world, and yet seem to be for the Lord. But he likes no such retainers, no such holy day servants; he requireth to be served truly, that there be no halting; and totally, that there be no halving; he cannot away with dough baked duties. Men must be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," they must be "zealous of good works," if they look to be accepted, **#Ro 12:11 Tit 2:14**. The "effectual fervent prayer," or the thorough wrought prayer, "of a righteous man availeth much," **#Jas 5:16**, *ενεργουμενη*. A cake that is half baked, half burnt pleaseth not the palate; no more do customary, formal, bedulling performances please the Lord. It is Gualther's note upon this text; As a cake, saith he, that is raw on the



one side and scorched on the other is cast away; so hypocrites that are hot in their superstitions, but cold in their devotions, are rejected of God;

“ *Introrsum turpes, speciosi pelle decora.*”

I know the words are otherwise interpreted by Luther, Mercer, Polanus, and others, with reference to the following words, thus: that Ephraim’s adversaries, even those strangers with whom he hath mixed himself, shall be so greedy to devour him, that they shall not stay till he be baked on both sides, but shall eat him raw. But I like the former better.

Ver. 9. **Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not]** Strange stupidity, such as was that of Samson, who had lost his hair, and therewith his strength, and wist not at it. These strangers were the kings of Syria, but especially of Assyria. See #**2Ki 13:7 14:25-27 15:19,20,29,30 17:6**. Salmanasar, as a deep gulf, swallowed them up whole. Now that they should not know how these strangers had devoured their strength, that is, their wealth and warlike power, this was very strange. The Chaldee paraphrast helps us to the meaning of it; *Non novit formidare a facie mea*. He knew it not, that is, he knew not how to fear before me, to tremble at my judgments, and to flee to my mercies; this he knew not, that is, he cared not to do, as the old world "knew not till the flood came," though fairly forewarned, #**Mt 24:39**, and as the Greeks would not know that the Turks had invaded their empire till they were got into the very bowels of it. So was it with Ephraim. A spirit of pride and of slumber had so surprised and seized him, that he took no knowledge of the enemies and evils that were upon him. Thus the spiritual sleeper stirs not, with Saul, though the waterpot and spear be taken from his bolster. Like the foolish hen, which loseth her chickens one by one by the devouring kite; when one, or two, or three, are snatched away, she still continues to pick up what lies before her. It is our wisest way to observe and improve God’s dealings with us, to be sensible of his strokes, and to return to him that smote us, and can as soon heal us, if we come to him for cure, #**Le 26:40**.

**Yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him]** Heb. sprinkled, *sparci, non spissi*. He began but to decline and decay, as a man doth when he grows toward fifty. And as gray hairs come the sooner through cares and grief (histories tell us of a young man, who being for some capital offence condemned to die, grew gray in one night's space, and was therefore pitied and spared), and are forerunners and forewarners of death. So the many and grievous miseries inflicted upon this people foreshowed their utter destruction to be even at next door by. And this the rather, because they knew it not (as before), but (as it is said of the Flemings) that the older they grow the foolisher they are, *Quo magis senescunt eo magis stultescunt* (Erasm. Apoph.). Cleanthes was wont sometimes to chide himself; Ariston wondering thereat, asked him, whom chidest thou? Cleanthes laughed and answered, I chide an old fellow, *qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*, who hath gray hairs indeed, but lacks understanding and prudence worthy of them. It was Chrysippus (I think) that offered to the world that sore distribution and choice, *Aut mentem, nut restim comparandam*, Either get wit worthy of your years, or go out of the world by a halter. That of Eleazer is very remarkable, who would not do anything which might seem to be evil, because he would not spot his white head. Gray hairs should be a strong argument to move men to live blamelessly (because "old age is a crown, when found in the way of righteousness," as it is said of Abraham, that he went to his grave with a "good gray head," #Pr 16:31 Ge 25:8); and gray hairs in a state, that is, lesser and lighter judgments, should make men prepare to meet and prevent God; because, as in a house, *stillicidia praecedunt ruinam*, and as in a man gray hairs foreshow death, so do these desolation, if course be not timely taken.

Ver. 10. **And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face]** Sept. the ignominy, or impudence of Israel: *q.d.* They think to brave it out in a stout and stomachful way. Low they are, but not lowly; humbled, but not humble. God thrust him downward, as it were with a thump on the back; but he stood stouting it out with him; and so discovered a great deal of arrogance and folly. *Plectimur*; may such say, *nec tamen flectimur; Corripimur sed non corrigimur* (Salvian.). We have been stricken, but not sick; beaten, but not sensible, &c.; the drunkards' ditty, #Pr 23:35. When for all this, for all that God can do to tame them, and turn them again, they will on in their wicked

ways, and not "accept the punishment of their iniquities"; not confess and forsake their sins, that they have mercy; not seek him, that is, come unto him by faith, #**Heb 11:6**, and subject themselves unto him by true obedience, #**2Ch 7:14**, this is such a piece of pride as testifieth to men's faces, that they deserve to be destroyed; this is wickedness with a witness; this is *fastus adeo enormis atque notorius*, saith Pareus, such horrible and notorious insolence, as is not to be endured. God complains of Israel for this with a sigh, Ah sinful nation, &c., and resolves upon revenge, #**Ho 7:12**. {See Trapp on "Ho 5:5"} of turning to God. See #**Zec 1:3**, and of seeking God, see #**Ho 5:15**.

Ver. 11. **Ephraim also is like a silly dove**] That may be drawn any way for want of wit (so the word פִּתְוִי signifieth), easily persuaded, enticed, deceived. The Septuagint render it *αυους*, *insensata*, witless, or wanting a heart, as the next words explain it; the heart being put for the understanding, as #**Jer 5:21**, and often in the Proverbs, #**Pr 6:32 11:12 10:13**. Lo, such a thing is Ephraim; and yet he holds himself wondrous wise, in calling to Egypt, and going to Assyria for help. Which was as wisely done as if sheep should commit themselves to the wolf for safeguard. The Egyptians were their ancient oppressors; the Assyrians should be shortly their executioners. Between these two, as between two millstones, they had been, and were to be ground to powder, as it were; and yet to these they were ready to run for refuge. This was indeed to be like a silly dove, which flies from the claws of the hawk into the net of the fowler, who will soon make a breakfast of them; or that waits till the fowler be gone, that she may fall upon the bait, never fearing the snare that is laid for her. See #**2Ki 17:4**. A serpent's eye in a dove's head is a singular ornament. "Be ye wise as serpents, innocent as doves," #**Mt 10:16**. The serpent, when charmed, stoppeth his ears, by applying one to the earth, and covering the other with his tail. The dove is too credulous and persuasible, *dulce canente fistula*. She is also dull, and defends not her young ones, as other creatures do. She will sit quiet in her columbary, and see her nest destroyed, her young ones taken away and killed before her eyes, and never offer to rescue or revenge; which the hen and other fowls seem in some sort to do. Lo, such was Ephraim's stupidity. The Philistines were upon him, the enemies spoiled and made a prey of him, yet he knew it not, as it is #**Ho 7:9**; he was not affected with it, nor driven

to God by it; but either sat still, as the spoiled dove doth in her nest, or upon her dove cot, delighted in the beauty of her feathers, priding herself in the clapping of her wings; or else ran a wrong way for refuge; flew to king Jareb, to human helps, to carnal confederates, which never were true to those that trusted them. See **#Ho 5:13**. *{See Trapp on "Ho 5:13"}* where you shall see that from the Assyrian they had *pro praesidio ludibrium* as likewise those Christians had that called in the Turk or the like to help them. True it is that religion without policy is too simple to be safe; but it is no less true that policy without religion is too subtle to be good. As the dove without the serpent is easily caught; so the serpent without the dove stings deadly. Let that be held and remembered, that there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord, **#Pr 21:30**, and that he takes it very ill when we decline him, and knock at the creature's door for help, **#Jer 2:13**, shifting and sharking in every bycorner for comfort. This is the devil's policy, to draw men from God, the Rock of ages (as Joshua did the men of Ai out of their city, **#Jos 8:5**, and as Bristow counselleth his fellows, the pope's janissaries, to draw the Lutherans out of their stronghold of the Scriptures, into the open field of councils and fathers), that he may do what he will with them, and destroy them. For he knows, that be our hopes never so high, our helps from the creature never so likely, yet if God deny his concurrence and influence, the arm of flesh (as Jeroboam's) shrinks up presently; and the strongest sinew of it cracks, and becomes useless.

Ver. 12. **When they go**] Yea, flee (as the dove doth very swiftly, pleasing herself in the clapping of her wings and cutting of the air); they cannot flee so high but I shall easily reach them, **#Ob 3,4**, for in the thing wherein they deal proudly I am above them, **#Ex 18:11**. I can overtop them, melt their waxen wings, and bring them down with a vengeance. "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." And again, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain," **#1Co 3:19,20**. So saith the apostle out of the Psalmist; but with this difference: the Psalmist saith, the "thoughts of men," **#Ps 94:11**; the apostle, the "thoughts of the wise," meaning the world's wizards, the choicest and most picked men, the greatest politicians, the most nimble and Mercurial wits: *quorum praecordia ex meliore luto finxit Titan*. These God will take, saith Paul; he will "lay hold upon them, as they are running away" (so the word significh), "as

brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed," #2Pe 2:12; or as "fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in a snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them," #Ec 9:12, δρασσομενος, *Fugientes in cursu deprehendit manuque iniecta captat* (Eras. Annot.).

**I will spread my net upon them]** As a skilful fowler. By net understand captivity, and other miseries, compared to a net, #Eze 12:13 17:20 19:8 La 1:13 Ps 9:16; wherein being once caught, the more they struggle the faster they stick; the more they seek to extricate themselves, the more they are entangled; snares are round about them, and sudden fear surpriseth them, #Job 22:10; the steps of their strength shall be straitened, and their own counsels shall bring them down, #Job 18:7.

**I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven]** Though they may think themselves *extra iactum*, out of gunshot, I will cause them to descend, as the Hebrew word signifieth; and though lifted up to heaven, as Capernaum, and nested in the clouds; yea, among the stars, as Edom, #Ob 4, yet shall they be brought down to the nethermost hell. God will meet with them in their strays, casting his net over them; or bring them down with his bow, while (with the foolish bird) they are gazing at the bolt: he hath ways enough to hamper such as go out of his way; to be for a trap and for a snare unto them, #Isa 8:14, to shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly shall they be wounded, #Ps 64:7. "How are they brought into desolation in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terror," #Ps 73:19.

**I will chastise them as their congregation hath heard]** Or, I will bind them (as a bird is bound in a net that she cannot stir forth), and, by binding, nurture them; as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, by tawing and tearing them with thorns and briars of the wilderness; παιδευσω αυτους, Sept.; *ligabo eos*, Kimchi. #Jud 8:16. "The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when God bindeth them," #Job 36:13. God expects men should cry *peccavi*, I have sinned, when they are bound as Paul was, to be beaten with rods; and not be silent in darkness, #1Sa 2:9, or, not make moan when he hath them under hand. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it."

Ye must now do so, that would not hear the word sounding in your congregations.

**I will chastise them as their congregation hath heard]** *Crebro et clare*, I have plainly and plentifully told them my mind, and foretold them by my prophets what would be the issue of their evil practices. *Sed surdo fabulam*, They would not hear Moses and the prophets. See **#2Ki 17:13 2Ch 24:18,19**. They thought that my words were but wind, and that all my threats were but *in terrorem*, to frighten them a little, and not in good earnest, **#Jer 5:13**. Therefore they shall find that "the just Lord is in the midst of them, he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame," **#Zep 3:5**, feareth no colours, trembleth not at God's word, though it come never so close to his conscience, though it even dash him in the mouth as it were, and make him spit blood. See **#Jer 7:13**.

Ver. 13. **Woe unto them! for they have fled from me]** As Cain (the devil's patriarch) did when he went out from the presence of the Lord, in his father's family, into the land of Nod, **#Ge 4:16**, being himself a "have not," that is, a runaway, **#Ho 7:12**, of the same root that is here made use of in the text (Nadedu). Now as that land took name of Cain, and his woeful state therein, so is every land and place a Nod to apostates; and St Jude throws a woe after them, "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain," **#Jude 11**, that is, they have wickedly departed from God and his blessing, and gotten into the world's warm sun; yea, they not only go from God, but flee from him in hurried haste, as from an enemy; a metaphor from birds flying amain: **#Pr 27:8**, "As a bird that wandereth from her nest" (where God took order for her security, **#De 22:6,7**), "so is a man that wandereth from his place" (how much more from his God, that infinite good!), exposed to misery and mischief, to ruth and ruin. Woe to such, yea, double woe: Woe and alas: destruction to such, and devastation, as the word signifieth, **שׁוּר**. Perdition and destruction, as the apostle phraseth it, **#1Ti 6:9**, whereby is meant torments without end, and past imagination; remediless misery, mischief without measure. This truth must be told, however it be taken, that wicked men may not perish without warning. Toothless truths and silken words would better please people, who are most of them sick of a *Noli me tangere*, and cry out against these fierce

preachers, that come with their Woe unto them, Destruction unto them, &c. This is the way, say they, to drive men into utter despair. We answer, first, if it should be so, yet that is not the proper effect of the word so dispensed; but to abate the pleasure that reprobates take in sin, and to restrain them from outrage; that they despair, it proceeds merely from their own corruption and guiltiness. They reply, that it comes rather from the severity of the teachers, who set themselves to preach damnation, and utter terrible things. Secondly, therefore, we answer, that the mad world (ever beside itself in point of salvation) is herein very much mistaken. Let them give us an instance of any one that was ever driven to despair by the sincere preaching of the word: and yet for one bitter word given by us, the prophets gave ten. This whole Prophecy of Hosea is much more comminatory then consolatory. God himself comes here with Woe unto them, Destruction to them. Indeed by this pathetic exclamation he declareth his affection toward them whom he threateneth; and how little delight he takes either in their destruction or in such denunciation thereof; and so must God's ministers, &c.

**Because they have transgressed against me]** This is a new degree of their apostasy from God. Wicked men and deceivers grow worse and worse, and add rebellion to sin. As a stone will fall down to come to its centre, though it break itself in twenty pieces; so will apostates, till they come to their own place with Judas; they cease not till they become altogether filthy, **#Ps 53:3**, as the dog at his vomit, or the sow in her slough, **#2Pe 2:22**. It fareth with such as in that case, **#Le 13:18-20**; if a man had a boil healed, and it afterwards broke out, it proved the plague of leprosy.

**Though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me]** All was done against God, whence the word "me" is so often inculcated in this and the next verse. God is, as it were, a sufferer in all the sins of the sons of men; and this is no small aggravation of the evil of sin, that it strikes at God's face, lifts at his throne, makes to his dishonour. "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, and wearied me with thine iniquities," **#Isa 43:23**. And to show this to be so, it was, that the offender was confined to the city of refuge during the high priest's life, as being the chief god on earth. Good David was very sensible of this, and much humbled, when he said,

"Against thee, thee only have I sinned," #Ps 51:4. The trespass was against Uriah, but the transgression against God, so gracious a God; and there lay the pinch of his grief; viz. the unkindness that was in his sin. Therefore also Moses, in his swan song, sets on this humbling consideration, #De 32:6, "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father?" and wilt thou kick against his naked bowels? hast nowhere else to hit him but there? Again, "Is not he thy Redeemer," that hath bought thee, and brought thee out of the iron furnace, where thou labouredst in the very fire, and wast wearied out with unsufferable servitude? More, "hath he not made thee," and dost thou rebel against thy Maker, thy Master? Or, "hath he not made thee," that is, exalted thee? in which sense he is said to have made Moses and Aaron, #1Sa 12:6, that is, to have advanced them to that honour in his Church; and so we say, such a one is made for ever. Lastly, "hath he not established thee," that thou mightest abide in his grace, and remain unmoveable? and dost thou yet "evil requite him?" &c. To render good for evil is divine; good for good is human; evil for evil is brutish; but evil for good is devilish. See how grievously God taketh it here. "Though I have redeemed them," viz. out of the hands of their enemies in general (see an ample proof hereof, #Neh 9:1:5 and the whole Book of Judges throughout), and in special, as a late particular mercy to Ephraim; I have delivered and prospered them in their wars, under Jeroboam, the son of Joash, #2Ki 14:27, and therefore they should have given me their good word at least, and spoken good of my name; yet "they have spoken lies against me," ascribing the glory of their deliverances to their idols, or arrogating it to themselves, or fathering their false worship upon me as the author, or at least, abettor thereof, by my present prospering of them. See #Jer 7:10.

Ver. 14. **And they have not cried unto me with their heart]** Hitherto hath been said what they had done; now what they had not done. Omissions are sins as well as commissions. Not serving of God, not sacrificing, is condemned, #Mal 3:18 Ec 9:2. Not robbing only, but the not relieving of the poor, was the rich man's ruin, #Lu 16:19. Omission of diet breeds diseases, and makes work for hell, or for the physician of our souls. It is the character of a graceless man, that he calleth not upon God; and we have too many of that profane Earl of Westmoreland's mind, who said, that he needed not to pray at all, for he had tenants enough to pray for him. Some wicked pray



(so as it is; indeed they cant, or charm, rather than pray; #Isa 26:16, they poured forth a charm, שִׁחַל when thy chastening was upon them), but they pray not with their heart. Their hearts are exercised with covetousness, #2Pe 2:14, and inhabited by the devil, #Ac 5:3. Simon Magus' heart was not right with the Lord, #Ac 8:21. How could it be, when it was "in the gall of bitterness, and bond of perdition," #Ac 8:23, as every unregenerate heart is? Hence though God be near in their mouths, yet he is far from their reins, #Jer 12:2; and though they honour him a little with their lips, yet their heart is far from him, #Mt 15:8. A little artificial breath they can give God; and that is all. The breath that comes from life is warm (as that from the body), whereas artificial breath is cold, as that from bellows. The deeper and hollower the belly of the lute or viol the more pleasant is the sound; the fleeter, the more grating and harsh in our ears. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet as that which comes from the depth of the breast. #Eph 6:6, Do the will of God "from the heart": serve God "in the spirit," #Ro 1:9. Lift up hands and hearts to God in the heavens, #La 3:41. Lip labour is but lost labour, yea, it is sin, #Pr 15:8. Displeasing service is double dishonour; as dissembled sanctity is double iniquity. These men cried *vociferabantur, voce stentorea sonum edebant*. They did set up their note, yea, they howled upon their beds, whereupon they had cast themselves, being sick, not of wantonness, as once Ahab was, but of want: which made them howl as dogs do when tied up from their meat and hunger bitten; but were no more regarded than a dog that howleth, or than the cuckoo in June. For what reason? They howled indeed to some tune (as they say), the Hebrew word hath a letter more than ordinary, to note as much (Jejelilu). {Hebrew Text Note} It was the heathen fashion to cry hideously to their gods; as also the Indians do to this day. So did these, because kept short, and held to strait allowance. It is said of the ravens of Arabia, that when they are hungry they screech horribly. And a parrot, when he is beaten, utters a hoarse and harsh voice. "The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day," #Am 8:3; their sacrifices as the cutting off a dog's neck, which is not done without much howling and yelling, #Isa 66:3.

**They assemble themselves]** *sc.* to make public supplication in their idol temples; called beds before (as some conceive), because as corporal fornication is committed in beds, so is spiritual in those

places of superstition. Here therefore they met; not *ad ruminandum* (as the Vulgate Latin), to feed as beasts, nor to cut and lance themselves as Baal's priests did (as the Septuagint, κατετεμνοντο), and the heathens in great afflictions, #De 14:1. But to howl for wheat, for provender, for daily allowance of food, as now the Papists do in their *sacra Ambarvalia*; and as of old the Pagans did in extreme famine, or other public calamity: *Inops Senatus auxilii humani ad Deos populum et vota convertit: omnia delubra implent* (Liv. lib. 3). But as the grasshopper hops not much above the earth, and as vapours exhaled and drawn up by the sun do soon fall down again; so do drossy and earthy hearts in prayers, they seldom rise above grain and wine in their desires. *Si ventri bene, si lateri*, as Epicurus in Horace. If the belly may be filled, the back fitted, their own turns served, it is enough to them, whose belly is their god, and who mind earthly things only. Which when they have once got, then they rebel against me, they consume it upon their lust, #Jas 4:2, and so fight against God with his own weapons, as Jehu did against Jehoram with his own men; they abuse their store to his dishonour; like grain fed cattle, they kick against their master; or as the young mule, that when she hath sucked her fill, kicks her dam; or as the wild ass, that snuffs up the wind, and cannot be taken. Or, secondly, they rebel after they have assembled themselves, and made a show of no small devotion; when once the duty is over they go to their old courses again, and undo all their prayers, as #Jer 5:3, as if, now they had prayed, they had purchased a license to live as they wish. Whereas duties should mightily engage us against sin, and deliverances command obedience.

Ver. 15. **Though I have bound and strengthened their arms]** *Quum ego erudivi*, so Pagnine, Polanus, and others; when I taught them, or chastened them, as #Ho 7:12, "and strengthened their arms"; there is no *and* in the original; it is an asyndeton; to show that God had done both for them, together and at once: he had acted the part both of an instructor and of a surgeon (like as, #Re 3:18, he takes upon him the person both of a rich merchant and a skilful physician); he had done all that could be done to do them good; teaching their hands to war and their fingers to fight, #Ps 144:1, binding up their broken arms, {see #Eze 30:24} and strengthening their feeble sinews, their hands that hung down, #Heb 12:12. After I have scourged them I have re-established them; but what thanks for my

labour? what Minerval or pay for my pains? The world's wages; such as Hercules paid the schoolmaster Linus, whom he knocked on the head, *Hoc ictu ceu didactro accepto Linus mortuus est* (Buchol.); or as Agricola's scholars in Germany killed their master with their penknives; or as physicians and surgeons are many times paid by their penurious patients, of whom the poet wittily,

“ *Tres medicus facies habet, unam, quando rogatur;  
Angelicam, mox est cum iuvat, ipse Deus.  
Ast ubi curato poscit sun munera morbo,  
Horridus apparet terribisque Satan.* ”

***Yet do they imagine mischief against me]*** *All goes against God.* *{See Trapp on "Ho 7:13"}*; Here they "imagine mischief" against him, as before they "spake lies against him," #**Ho 7:13**, and acted rebellion against him, #**Ho 7:14**. Thus they spake and did evil things as they could, #**Jer 3:5**; and the reason of all was, they imagined mischief, *cogitabant quasi coagitabant*, they were men of wicked devices, #**Pr 12:2**, wholly made up of sinful projects and purposes; they plotted and ploughed mischief, and that against God himself (which is horrible); David thought much that his enemies should machinate mischief against him, though but dust and ashes; and threateneth them sore for so doing, #**Ps 62:3**, "How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence": he meaneth, ye shall be surely and suddenly ruined. What then will become of those Zamzummims that imagine mischief against the Lord? and such a Lord as hath bound and strengthened their arms, that had been broken by the enemies, and sought their good every way, *puniendo, muniendo, malis et bonis afficiendo, &c.* If they had slipped into some small offence against him, of infirmity and at unawares, it had been nothing so grievous; but to busy their brains, and bend their wits and studies *scientes, volentes, et deliberate consilio*, to plot and practise mischief, or (as the Septuagint render it) *τα πονηρα*, mischiefs against God, (for every transgression and disobedience is contrary to his most pure nature and sacred law, and shall therefore "receive a just recompense of reward," #**Heb 2:2**), so gracious a God, this is detestable ingratitude. This is as if those in the Gospel should have railed against Christ for raising them from the dead; it is

like the matchless mischievousness of that monster Michael Balbus, who that night that his prince pardoned and released him got out and slew him (Zonaras in Annul.). *Omne peccatum est deicidium*, for although wicked men cannot reach God, yet they reach at him; shooting up their darts against heaven (as the Thracians did once in a storm), and saying in effect as Caligula did to his Jupiter,  $\eta \mu \alpha \nu \alpha \epsilon \rho \eta \epsilon \gamma \omega \sigma \epsilon$ ! either kill me or I will kill thee (Herodot. Homer).

Ver. 16. **They return, but not to the most High]** *Gnal* for *Gnelion* by contraction; as *Jah* for Jehovah; so afterwards, **#Ho 11:7 2Sa 23:1**. Return they do, or seem to do at least (for it is their hypocrisy that is here described), but not to the most High: to whom then? to idols, or human helps, or anything rather, and sooner, than to God. Jehu went far in the work of reformation, and made a great flaunt at first, as if he would have done as much that way as ever Josiah did; but he and his people came not up to the height, turned not to the most High God, honoured him not as a just and jealous God, that can endure no corrivals. They gave the half turn, but "returned not with all their hearts," **#Joe 2:12**; they turned from west to north, but not from west to east, to the full counterpoint, setting their faces toward God, and having their backs towards their sins. They had haply a kind of velleity, some short winded wishes and wamblings, as I may so say, but it boiled not up to the full height of a resolution for God; they made believe they would cast away their transgressions, but it was as the mother makes her child believe that she will cast him to the puttock or into the water; when she holds him fast enough, and means him no hurt at all. These faint essays of returning are not worthy of the most High; he delighteth not to be dallied with, but requireth the best of the best; and that we serve him like himself, that is, after a godly sort, or worthy of God,  $\alpha \xi \iota \omega \varsigma \tau \omicron \upsilon \Theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon$ , as St John phraseth it, **#3Jo 6**. Thus if we do, we shall be drawn up to him, and have cause to rejoice in our sublimity,  $\epsilon \nu \tau \omega \upsilon \psi \epsilon \iota$ , or in that we are exalted, **#Jas 1:9**. For indeed the most High stoopeth to the true convert (who considering his distance, repents and abhors himself in dust and ashes, **#Job 42:6**), he dwelleth in the highest heavens and lowest hearts, **#Isa 57:17**.

**They are like a deceitful bow]** A rotten bow (though otherwise fair) when an arrow is drawn to the head breaks and deceives the archer. Or thus, when a man shoots with a deceitful bow, though he level his

eye and his arrow directly to the mark, and thinks with himself to hit it; yet indeed the arrow, by reason of his deceitful bow, goes the exact opposite way; yea, and sometimes comes upon the archer himself: likewise these false Israelites dealt with God. Their hearts were as the bow, their purposes and promises to return as arrows; the mark they aimed at, conversion; to the which they, in their afflictions, looked with so accurate and intent an eye, as though they would repent indeed; but their hearts deceived them as being unsound; hence they started aside like a deceitful bow, #Ps 78:57, and the arrows of their fair promises and pretences vanished in the air as smoke. Some take the words in another sense, as if punishment and disappointment were here threatened; but I best like the former. Let us look to the secret warpings of our hearts, and, seeing we are God's bow, #Zec 9:13, let us not be deceitful.

**Their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue]** And the people with them; for princes fall not alone, as we have seen in our late wars, wherein lords and losels fell together, not a few at Newbury fight especially. Κοινος ενυαλιος, "the sword devoureth one as well as the other," #2Sa 11:25. God hangs up the heads of the people as it were in gibbets, #Nu 25:4, their greatness cannot bear them out, nor their lifeguards defend them, for the detestation of their tongue (so some read this text), for the hatred that God beareth to them for their blasphemies and great swelling words of vanity, uttered against him, his people, and his ordinances. "With our tongue, say they, we will prevail, our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" Lo, this and worse is the rage of their tongue; as his that said he would not leave one Lutheran in his dominions; another, that he would ride his horse up to the saddle in the blood of the Lutherans; a third, that he would send them all to dine with the devil. God will cut off the spirit of such outrageous princes. "They shall fall by the sword, they shall be a portion for foxes," #Ps 63:10, and a derision to the Egyptians.

**This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt]** Their confederates in whom they trusted, and upon whose help bearing themselves overly bold, they had spoken loftily, setting their mouths against heaven, and their tongues walked through the earth, #Ps 73:9; lo, these should not only fail them, but jeer them; not only not

succour them, but scorn them; as the monarch of Morocco did our King John, that sent to him for help in the Barons' wars. He grew into such dislike of our king (saith the story) that ever after he abhorred the mention of him. Neither met he with better entertainment from the pope, to whom he basely submitted and surrendered his kingdom. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes; for, *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*, they that trust in the Lord shall never be ashamed.

## Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **Set the trumpet to thy mouth]** Heb. The trumpet to thy palate. A hasty expression, an abrupt and imperfect speech, common with such as are moved with passions, of anger, grief, or fear, as **#Ho 5:8**, "after thee, O Benjamin." God, though not subject to such perturbations, **#Jas 1:17**, yet here aud elsewhere utters himself in this sort; to set forth the nearness of the people's danger by the enemies' approach; and the necessity of their return to him by true repentance, for the diversion of his displeasure. "Break off thy sins by righteousness," saith the prophet to Nebuchadnezzar; be abrupt in the work, cut the cart ropes of vanity, if "it may be a lengthening of the tranquillity," **#Da 4:27**. Take the bark from the tree, and the sap can never find the way to the boughs; get sin remitted, and punishment shall be removed. In this sermon of the prophet (which is much sharper than the former, and may seem to be one of the last, because God is so absolute in threatening, as if he meant to be resolute in punishing) there is (as one saith) *peccatorum et poenarum συναθροισμος*, a heaping together of sins and of punishments of many sorts; and the prophet commanded to give sudden warning of the enemy at hand, which is elegantly set forth by a military hypotyposis, or lively representation; as if it were now doing. "The trumpet to thy mouth," that is, set up thy note, and proclaim with a loud and clear voice, as **#Isa 58:1**, cry in the throat (so the Chaldee hath it here), spare not, that none may say he was not warned; "lift up thy voice like a trumpet," that all may hear and fear, **#Am 3:6**, as people use to do when an alarm is sounded, or the bells are rung backward. See **#Ho 5:8**. There they had been before alarmed, here reminded in brief; for the prophet is, as it were, *monosyllabus*, as one in haste; he uttereth *amputatas sententias et*

*verba ante expectatum cadentia*, as Seneca somewhere hath it, broken sentences, concise but pithy periods.

**He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord]** He, that is, the Assyrian; not Nebuchadnezzar, though the like is said of him, **#Eze 17:3,7**; much less the Romans (as Lyra interpreteth this text of the last destruction of Jerusalem, because the eagle was their ensign); but Pul, Tiglathpileser, and Shalmaneser, who came against the ten tribes as an eagle, to waste, spoil, and carry captive speedily, impetuously, irresistibly; as **#2Ki 15:19,29 17:3 18:19 La 4:19**. The eagle is the strongest and swiftest of birds, and feareth no obstacle, either from other fowl, or wind, or thunderbolt, as Pliny affirmeth (Plin. lib. x. 3). Nebuchadnezzar is not only compared to an eagle (as before is noted), but to a lion with eagle's wings, **#Da 7:4**, that is, with invincible armies, that march with incredible swiftness. And all this was long since forethreatened, **#De 28:49**, "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth"; to which text the prophet here seemeth to allude; as indeed all the prophets do but comment upon Moses, and draw out that arras, which was folded together by him before.

**Against the house of the Lord]** That is, the house of Israel, called God's house, **#Nu 12:7 Heb 3:5**, and God's land, **#Ho 9:3,15**, and their commonwealth is by Josephus called a theocracy. And although they were now become apostates, yet they gloried no less than before to be of the stock of Abraham, and of the family of faith; like as the Turks call themselves at this day Mussulmans, that is, the true and right believers; especially after they are circumcised, which is not done till they be past ten years of age; following the example of Ishmael, whom they imitate and honour as their progenitor; alleging that Abraham loved him, and not Isaac, and that it was Ishmael whom Abraham would have sacrificed.

**Because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed]** Sin is the mother of misery; and the great makebate between God and his creature. It moves him when we ask bread and fish to feed us, {as #Ho 8:2} to answer us with a stone to bruise us, or a serpent to bite us. The sin of this people was the more heinous, because they were covenanters, and confederate with God. It was his covenant

that was in their flesh, **#Ge 17:13**, and he had betrothed them to himself, and trusted them with his oracles, "but they like men transgressed the covenant, and dealt treacherously against him," **#Ho 6:7**, {See Trapp on "Ho 6:7"} they performed not the "stipulation of a good conscience toward God," **#1Pe 3:21**.

**They trespassed against his law]** As if it had not been holy, and just, and good, precious, perfect, and profitable; grounded upon so much good reason, that if God had not commanded it, yet it had been best for us to have practised it. **#Isa 48:17**, "I am the Lord that teacheth thee to profit, &c. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!" &c. *q.d.* It is for thy profit, and not for mine own, that I have given thee a law to live by. But they have trespassed, or prevaricated; and this out of pride and malice, as the word signifieth; and as before he had oft convinced them of many particulars, and more will do, therefore are they justly punished.

**Ver. 2. Israel shall cry unto me]** It is their course and custom to do so; they will needs do it, though I take no delight in it. Hypocrisy is impudent, as **#Ho 5:6 Jer 3:4,5**. No, nay, but it will despise God with seeming honour; and present him with a ludicrous devotion. Israel, though revolted and degenerated into Jezreel, **#Ho 1:4**, shall cry, yea, cry aloud, *vociferabuntur*; cry till they are hoarse, as criers do; and unto me, but not with their heart, **#Ho 7:14**. It is but clamor *sine fide fatuus*, an empty ring, that God regards not. For, "not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord," &c., **#Mt 7:21**. Many lean upon the Lord and say, "Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come unto us," **#Mic 3:11**, who yet shall hear, *Discedite, Avaunt*, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not. Woe then to all profligate professors, carnal gospellers; their prayers shall not profit them, neither shall they be a button the better for their loud cries to the most High, **#Pr 1:28**, and odious fawnings.

**My God, we know thee]** When their hearts are far from him. Of such pretenders to him and his truth it is that the apostle speaketh, **#Tit 1:16**, "They profess that they know God" (which yet God denies, **#Ho 4:1 5:4**), "but in works they deny him; being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate." To come and call God Father, the guide of our youth, and then to fall to sin, this is to do as evil as we can; we cannot easily do worse, **#Jer**



**3:4,5.** To cry, "The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord," and then to "steal, murder, and commit adultery,." &c., this is painted hypocrisy, **#Jer 7:4,9.** When men shall take sanctuary, and think to save themselves from danger by a form of godliness (as the Jews fable that Og, king of Bashan, escaped in the flood by riding astride upon the Ark) when they are perfect strangers to the power of it, this is to hasten and heap up wrath, **#Job 36:13.** Religion, as it is the best armour, so the worst cloak; and will serve hypocrites as the disguise Ahab put on, and perished. Castalio maketh this last clause to be the speech of the blessed Trinity, We know thee, O Israel: *q.d.* Though thou colloque and cry, My God; yet we know thine hypocrisy and the naughtiness of thy heart. But the former sense is better, though the placing of the word Israel in the end of the verse seem to favour this; for thus it runs in the Hebrew, "To me they shall cry, My God, we know thee, Israel."

Ver. 3. **Israel hath cast off the thing that is good]** Heb. the good: as, first, the good God, who is good, original, universal, all-sufficient, and satisfactory, proportionable and fitting to our soul. He both is good and doeth good, **#Ps 119:68,** and that both naturally, abundantly, freely, and constantly. "Good thou art, O Lord, and ready to forgive," saith David, **#Ps 86:5.** And, the good Lord be merciful, saith Hezekiah in his prayer for the people, **#2Ch 30:9,18.** To speak properly, there is none good but God, saith our Saviour, **#Mt 19:17,** but Israel cast him, or rather kicked him, off (*procul a se reiecit*), as the word signifieth. So do all gross hypocrites; they are rank atheists, practical atheists, though professional Christians. Secondly, they reject Christ as a sovereign, though they could be content to have him as a Saviour; they send messages after him, saying, We will not have this man to rule ever us; they will not submit to the laws of his kingdom, nor receive him in all his offices and efficacies; they are Christless creatures, as without God, so without Christ in the world. Thirdly, hypocrites reject the good Spirit of God (as David calleth him, **#Ps 143:10**), the fruit whereof is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, **#Eph 5:9.** When God striveth with them by his good Spirit, {as #Ne 9:20} they, by yielding to Satan's suggestions, grieve that Holy Spirit, and by grieving resist him, and by resisting quench him, and by quenching maliciously oppose him, and offer despite unto him; and so cast themselves into the punishing hands of the living God, **#Heb 10:29,31.** Lastly, they

cast off the good word and true worship of God; those "right judgments, true laws, good statutes and commandments," #Ne 9:13; they put the promises from them, and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, #Ac 13:46; they hate instruction, and cast God's words behind them, #Ps 50:17. In a word, "he hath left off to be wise, and to do good: he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil," #Ps 36:3,4. The words may be read thus, The good (God) hath rejected Israel; the enemy, shall pursue him according to that in the Psalm, "God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him," #Ps 71:11. Sure it is that the Lord is with us while we are with him; and if we seek him he will be found of us. But if we forsake him he will forsake us. And if he forsake us woe be to us, #Ho 9:12, we are in danger to be caught up by every paltry enemy, as young lapwings are to be snatched up by every buzzard. If Israel cast away the thing that is good, #2Ch 15:2, what marvel if evil hunt him to overthrow him, #Ps 140:11, and if he find himself in all evil in the midst of the congregation and the assembly, #Pr 5:14. Hence Cain's fear, when cast out by God; and Saul's complaint, that the Philistines were upon him, and God had forsaken him.

Ver. 4. **They have set up kings, but not by me, &c.]** The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it, "They have reigned themselves"; like as St Paul telleth the haughty Corinthians, who, carried aloft by their waxen wings, domineered and despised others, "ye have reigned as kings without us," &c., #1Co 4:8. But our reading is according to the original; and so they are charged with a double defection; the one civil, from the house of David, "they have set up kings," &c.; the other ecclesiastical, from the sincere service of God, "they had made them idols." For the first, it was not their fault to set up kings; but to do it without God, without his license and approbation. They took counsel, but not of God; they covered with a covering, but not of his spirit, that they might add sin to sin, #Isa 30:1. They went headlong to work, in setting up Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. For although the things were done by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, as was likewise Christ's crucifixion, #Ac 2:23, {see #1Ki 11:31 12:15,24} yet because the people were led by their own pride and ambition to choose a new king, without either asking God's consent or eyeing his decree, they did it rashly and seditiously; neither aimed they at anything else, but at the easing

of their burdens, and drawing to themselves the wealth of the kingdom. As for Jeroboam, it is before noted, that although he had it cleared to him, that God's will was he should be king over the ten tribes, yet because it was a will of God's decree, not of his command, as of a duty to be done by him; and because he did not as David, who when he had the promise of the kingdom (yea, was anointed king) yet invaded not the kingdom, but waited till he was lawfully exalted thereunto by God; therefore passeth he for a usurper. And the people are here worthily reprehended, since whatsoever is not of faith is sin; and it is obedience when men obey a divine precept; but not ever when they follow a divine instinct.

**They have made princes, &c.]** Some render it, They have removed princes (as if in the word *Hasiru Sin* were put for *Samech*, R. Sal. Jerki.), they have taken liberty to make and unmake princes at their pleasure; as the Roman army did emperors; and as that potent Earl of Warwick, in Henry VI's time, who is said to have carried a king in his pocket. But because the former reading is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrase, and the sense is agreeable to what went before, neither read we of any kings of Israel deposed by the people, we retain it as the better.

**Of their silver and their gold have they made them idols]** Of the guts and garbage of the earth had they made them *terrícola*, fray-bugs (or spectres), or molestations ( *Gnatsabim*): *terrorem enim et tristitiara duntaxat afferunt suis cultoribus*, for they cause terror and heaviness only to those that worship them (Polan.). "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god," #Ps 16:4. The Greek Churches, for instance, so set upon image worship, and therefore now subjected to the Turkish tyranny; a type whereof were these ten tribes carried captive by the Assyrian, without any return. Idols are called griefs, or sorrows, saith Peter Martyr, because they torment the mind and trouble the conscience; neither can they quiet or pacify it; so that idolaters must needs be always in doubt and despair, as Papists are, whose whole religion is a doctrine of desperation. Their penances and pilgrimages to such or such an idol might still their consciences for a while; but this was a truce rather than a peace; a palliate cure, which would not hold long; a corrupting of the serjeant, but not compounding with the creditor.

**That they may be cut off]** Not their silver and gold, the matter of their idols, as some sense it; but the whole nation, princes and people together. Idolatry is a God-provoking and a land-desolating sin, as in this prophecy. Often it is not so much the enemies' sword as the sin of idolatry that destroyeth cities and kingdoms, through the justice and jealousy of Almighty God.

Ver. 5. **Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off]** That is, it can do thee no stead, nor deliver thee from the destroyer. "Be not afraid of such idols" (saith Jeremiah), "for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good," **#Jer 10:5**, they can neither hurt nor help; for an idol is nothing in the world, **#1Co 8:4**, nothing but a mere fiction; it hath no godhead or power divine in itself, as the following words show, "that there is none other God but one." How then can help be reasonably expected from it? Israel had cast off the thing that is good for calf worship, **#Ho 8:3**, therefore is he worthily cast off by his calf, called here Samaria's calf, or calves, because that was the chief city, the palace of the king, and is therefore put for the whole province; and their idols called a calf, by way of contempt, as the brazen serpent is called Nehushtan, or a piece of brass, when once it was idolized. See how Rabshakeh insults over those heathen deities, **#2Ki 18:33-35**, and blasphemously applieth it to the God of Israel, who never casteth off his faithful servants; but is with them in trouble, to deliver them, and honour them, **#Ps 91:15**. Surely "the Lord will not cast off his faithful people, neither will he forsake his inheritance," **#Ps 94:14**. "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man," **#Job 8:20**. "But though he cause grief, yet he will have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies," **#La 3:32**. Some read it thus, "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath been carried away into a far country," namely, into Assyria; as the idols of the nations which were overcome were carried away captive in triumph by the conquerors. See **#Ho 10:6**.

**Mine anger is kindled against them]** God is said to be angry against idolaters, because he doth that which an angry man useth to do, viz. 1. chide, 2. fight: see the second commandment in the sanction of it, and tremble at God's displeasure, which when once kindled, and comes into his face, or nostrils (as here), it burneth to the lowest hell, consumeth the earth with her increase, and sets on

fire the foundations of the mountains, #De 32:22. It is ill angering him that is the Ancient of days, and a consuming fire. The Jews use to say to this day, that there is no punishment befalleth them in which there is not an ounce of Aaron's golden calf.

**How long will it be ere they attain to innocency?**] *Quousque non poterunt innocentiam?* a forcible ellipsis; as if God were so vexed, that he could not fully utter himself, nor at all speak to Samaria as he had begun, but turns his discourse to others, saying, How long will they not be cleansed? or, not abide innocence? By which powerful expression three things are intimated. First, that these Israelites were refractory and desperate; not only unclean, but enemies to innocence, such as could not abide it: they were inveterate and incurable, their diseases ingrained, and not easily stirred by any potion. Secondly, that God is most patient, who though he thinks over a long period of time that men continue in their evil courses, and therefore cries, *Quousque*, How long? &c., and, when will it once be? yet bears with their evil manners, and inviteth them to better. Thirdly, that he will at length break off his patience, and proceed to punishment, since there is no other remedy, #2Ch 34:16 Pr 29:1.

“ *Compenset longas ut gravitate moras.*”

Ver. 6. **For from Israel was it also**] There is an emphasis in "also," and it is as if the prophet should say, This calf of Samaria is no less from Israel, and came out of his shop or device, than that of old set up by them in the wilderness. Israel then brought a calf out of Egypt, Jeroboam brought two; and Israel hath received them, and are much taken with them; so that they cannot attain to innocence (as it is in the former verse), so far they are engaged and so fast joined to idols, that they cannot get off; there is so much of self in it; it was the bairn of their own brain; and hence so overly admired, so clasped and hugged, with the ape, &c.; or rather, as Cleopatra hugged her vipers that sucked her blood, and took away her life, so did they their own inventions, though fairly warned of the danger, #Ho 8:3-5. Lo, this was Israel that acted thus madly. Israel that was wont to laugh at or pity other nations for their idolomany, for worshipping the works of their own hands, for going a whoring after their own inventions, for changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like

corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, #Ro 1:23; as in Lapland, the people worship that all day for a god whatsoever they see first in the morning, Now that a calf worship should be found in Israel, and not only so, but found out by Israel; who was herein worse than Egypt; for that the Egyptians worshipped a living ox of God's making; but Israel, a dead calf of their own making; such sots they were grown, and so thwart to the very principles of reason.

**The workman made it]** Who confessedly is no God:

**therefore it is not God]** for no man can give that divinity to another which himself hath not. Nay, it is certain that God himself by his infinite power cannot make anything to be a God to us. He cannot do this, I say; like as he cannot lie, he cannot die, he cannot deny himself, &c., so he cannot raise a created excellence to that height as to be a God to us. How vile, then, is the voluptuary, that maketh his belly his god! the mammonist, that maketh his gold his god! the ambitionist, that maketh his honour his god! How abominable the mass monger, that maketh his god and eateth him when he hath done! This made Averroes, the Mahometan, cry out; *Quoniam Christiani Deum suum mauducant, sit anima mea cum Philosophis*, that is, Forasmuch as Christians do eat their God, let my soul be rather with the souls of the philosophers. Those Pseudo Christians, the Papists, stick not to call the consecrated host their God and Lord; and Harding (that sottish apostate, for he was once a zealous preacher against Popery, and wished that he had a voice as loud as the bells of Oseney, to cry it down, Artic. 21), in his disputation against Jewel, is not ashamed to defend it. And yet we all know that that host or sacrament, as they call it, of the altar is the work of the baker, therefore it is no God, neither Lord nor God (whatsoever our Lord God the pope say to the contrary). Which yet further appeareth, in that (as the calf of Samaria here) it may be broken in pieces, or to shivers (which word of ours seemeth to come from the Hebrew *shebharim* here used), yea, ground to powder, as was the molten calf in the wilderness, whereto the prophet may well here allude. Is not their bready god broken by the priest into three bits? Is it not chewed with his teeth? May it not be gnawed by mice, become meat for worms, &c.? *Murescit, putrescit, et corrumpitur*; all which

things the Papists themselves confess may befall their god, which is therefore no god, or *nomine tantum et non numine deus*, a nominal god only ( *in cautelis Missae*) in the sureties of the Mass. And the like we may say of images and relics (such as is at Genoa, the tail of that ass whereon Christ rode into Jerusalem); these and other monuments of idolatry may, nay, they ought to be broken, burnt, and utterly abolished, **#Ex 34:13 De 7:5 Eze 20:7**; as (blessed be God) they are lately among us, by our worthies in parliament; to whom, perhaps, for that and the like good services, we attributed but too much, we even idolized them; and the king of Sweden (that bright northern star) a little before his decease, being in discourse with Dr Fabricius, his chaplain, he told him that he thought God would ere long take him away, because the people did so overvalue and deify him (Mr Clark in his Life).

Ver. 7. **For they have sown the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind]** To sow the wind is to labour in vain, as **#Ec 5:16**, to labour for the wind, and **#Pr 11:29**, to possess the wind, to feed on the wind, **#Ho 12:1**, and to be eaten up of the wind, **#Jer 22:22**. The Greeks express the same by hunting after and husbanding the wind, *ανεμους γεωργειν*. The wind, we know, maketh a mighty bustle, as if it were some great business, solid and stable; but presently it blows over, and comes to nothing. Or if it get, as seed, into the bosom of the earth, either it breeds an earthquake, or at least ariseth in a whirlwind, which blows dust into the eyes, and once at least buried a considerable army in the Libyan sands. Solomon saith, "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity," **#Pr 22:8**. But our prophet here saith more. He that soweth the wind of iniquity shall reap the terrible tempest of inconceivable misery. By the "blast of God he shall perish, and by the breath of his nostrils he shall be consumed," **#Job 4:8,9**. As the beginnings of idolatry, hypocrisy, vain glory, carnal policy, &c., are empty and unhappy (it is but the sowing of blasted grain, as the Septuagint here hath it, seed corrupted by the wind, *ανεμοφθορα*), so the end thereof is very sad and dismal. The word here rendered the whirlwind hath a syllable in it more than ordinary (Suphathah), to note (saith Tremellius) the fearfulness of the divine vengeance that will befall the forementioned; and especially at death, when they are entering upon eternity. Oh what a dreadful shriek gives the guilty soul at death, to see itself launching into an infinite ocean of scalding lead, and must swim naked in it for ever;

not having the least cold blast of that wind it sowed all its life long to cool it; but rather to add to its torment! Then will God speak to such, as once he did to Job out of a whirlwind, but after another manner; Go to now, ye formalists, false worshippers, triflers, troublers of Israel; ye that have been mere mutes and ciphers, nullities in the world, superfluities in the earth, or worse than all this; go to now, I say, weep and howl for the miseries that are come upon you. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter," #Jas 5:5. But now an end is come, is come; an evil, an only evil, without mixture of mercy, sorrow without succour (help), mischief without measure, torments without hope of ever either mending or ending, are the portion of your cup; the dregs of that cup of mine must you now drink off, that hath eternity to the bottom. Oh lamentable! Oh did but men forethink what would be the end of sin, they dare not but be innocent. Oh let that terrible tempest at death be timely thought on and prevented: #Job 27:20,21, &c., "Terrors take hold of him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place. For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand," &c.

**It hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal]** *Nihil habet fertilitatis firmitatisque*, as Ruffinus expoundeth it. It hath no firmness or fruitfulness; the wind of wickedness that thou hast sown, the blasted grain that thou hast committed to the earth, will yield thee nothing but loss and disappointment. A blade there may be, but not a stalk; or if a stalk, yet not a bud; or if a bud, yet it shall be nipped in the bud, it shall yield no meal, but only dust and chaff; or if it come to the meal, yet strangers shall swallow it up, so that you shall be never the better for it; but after that ye have sown the wind of iniquity, ye shall reap the wirlwind of misery, *maledictionem omnimodam*, curses of all kinds, which God hath hanged at the heels of your idolatry, a pernicious evil (whatever those superstitious she-sinners bragged to the contrary, #Jer 44:17). Or if they flourish for a season, and have hopes of a large crop; yet God will curse their blessings, and frustrate their fair hopes, #Ps 37:2, as he dealt by that rich wretch mentioned by Mr Burroughes in his comment on the second chapter of this prophecy. I had certain information, said he,



from a reverend minister, that in his own town there was a worldling who had a large crop of grain. A good honest neighbour of his walking by his grain said, Neighbour, you have a very fine crop of grain, if God bless it. Yes, said he, I will have a good grain, speaking contemptuously. And before he could come to get it into the barn, it was blasted, that the grain of the whole crop was not worth sixpence.

Ver. 8. **Israel is swallowed up**] Not their meal only, as **#Ho 8:7**, but themselves also are devoured by those workers of iniquity, that eat up God's people as they eat bread, **#Ps 14:4**. Persecutors are men-eaters, more cruel than those American cannibals, that devour men piecemeal; they make but a breakfast of God's people, as Sennacherib meant to do of Jerusalem, and the powder-papists of England. "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. But blessed be God, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth," **#Ps 124:2,3,6**. Let us keep us out of the claws and clutches of that old manslayer, who night and day walketh about (in a circular motion) that he may take us at advantage, seeking whom he may swallow down his wide gullet, **#1Pe 5:8**, καταπιη, which he hath even made red with the blood of souls; and is therefore happily called the great red dragon, **#Re 12:3**, that hath seven heads to plot, and ten horns to push men into the sin of idolatry, and thereby into hell. So long as Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the firstfruits of his increase, all that devoured him found that they offended; for evil came upon them, **#Jer 2:3**, they could no more digest him than the whale did Jonah; a cup of trembling or of poison he was to all the people round about, **#Zec 12:2**: see the note there. But "when he offended in Baal he died"; when he "chose new gods, then was war in the gates," **#Jud 5:8**; when they made leagues with idolaters, then were they even swallowed up by them; as were likewise the Greek and Latin Churches by the Eastern and Western Antichrist, those crooked Leviathans, those dragons in the sea, as the Egyptian and Assyrian are called, **#Isa 27:1**.

**Now shall they be among the Gentiles**] Whose favour and friendship they have basely sought, and dearly bought. It was threatened in the former chapter, **#Ho 7:16**, that "they should be a

derision in the land of Egypt." {See Trapp on "Ho 7:16"} To have Egyptians deride us, and that for sin, is a heavy judgment. So here, to be disdained and vilified by such, as an old broken vessel, fit for none but unclean uses.

**As a vessel wherein is no pleasure]** No delight or complacence; *vas despectum, reieculum, abiectum*, a vessel that is for the carrying up and down of excrements: so shall Israel be employed by Gentiles in base and contemptible offices, as they were by the Babylonians, **#Jer 51:34**; yea, Jehoiakim himself (though a king) was no better used, **#Jer 22:18**, and Moab, that haughty nation, **#Jer 48:38**. In which sense, "Moab shall be my washpot," saith David, **#Ps 60:8**, that is, brought into most abject slavery, as your scullions or scavengers; they shall "lie among the pots," **#Ps 68:13**, not only to make pots for the king of Babylon's use (as those servile souls, the base brood of their degenerated forefathers, **#1Ch 4:23**), but also to hold pots, or empty pots and vessels of dishonour, *matulam praeberere*, that they might know a difference between God's service (which is all clean and fair work, fit for a vessel of honour, an elect vessel, elect and precious, sanctified and fit for the master's use, **#2Ti 2:21**) and the service of their enemies, base and beastly; such as is beneath the excellence of an ingenuous man, such as the Turks at this day put the Jews to, and the Spaniards the poor Indians.

**Ver. 9. For they are gone up to Assyria, a wild ass alone by himself]** This was that that most moved the Lord to denounce and determine hard and heavy things against Israel, they had suspicious thoughts of God, as if he either could not or would not do for them, and help them out, as the Assyrian (though an enemy) would. This prank of theirs God uttereth here with as great indignation and dislike as old Jacob did his son Reuben's incest, when he said, "He went up to my couch." The Lord is as jealous of his glory as any man can be of his wife; neither will he give it to another, **#Isa 42:8**; he admits not of any co-rival in heaven or earth, as Potiphar's wife was his own peculiar. Now God is no way more glorified by us than when we put our trust in his love and faithfulness, and expect from him safety here, and salvation hereafter. For in so doing, we set him up for our king, **#Jud 9:15**, and put the royal crown upon his head, **#So 3:11**. As in doing otherwise we turn his glory into shame, "loving vanity, seeking after leasing," **#Ps 4:2**. Hence that angry

expostulation, **#Jer 2:36**, "Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?" How dost thou think to mend thyself by running to the creature, as if there were no God in Israel? "thou also shall be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria: yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head" (after the manner of mourners, **#2Sa 13:19**), "for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them."

**A wild ass alone by himself]** Foolish and fierce above measure, untameable and untractable; loving to be alone, and so becomes a prey to the lion, as saith Siracides, chap. 13. ver. 21. Pliny speaketh much of the wild ass and his properties; and interpreters on this text bring many reasons why Israel is compared to him. Israel is as stupid and as mad as the wild ass, saith Lyra. He is all for himself, saith Junius; he casteth off God's yoke, saith Tremellius; he is a contemptible creature, saith Kimchi; he walks where he lists, as masterless, saith the Chaldee; he seeketh water in the wilderness, but hardly findeth it, so doth Israel help of the cruel enemies, and hath it not, saith Oecolampadius; he taketh a great deal of pains for his belly, saith Mercer; he cannot be tamed and made serviceable, saith Gesner; he is left alone by God to be carried captive by the Assyrian, saith Ribera. The Scripture describeth the nature of this creature in many places, **#Ge 16:12 Job 6:5 11:12 24:5 39:5,8 Ps 104:11 Isa 32:14 Jer 2:24 14:6 Da 5:21**.

**Ephraim hath hired lovers]** This is the second similitude, taken from a most libidinous harlot. See the like baseness in Judah, **#Eze 16:33**. They were so mad upon their idols and creature confidences, that they were at no small charge for them; they lavished money out of the bag, **#Isa 6:6**, and laid on, as if they should never see an end of their wealth. They sent great gifts and sums of money to the Assyrians and Egyptians, and leaned upon them as their champions; they hired loves, as the Hebrew here hath it. But love, as it cannot well be counterfeited (a man may paint fire, but he cannot paint heat), so it cannot at all be hired or purchased. Those that go about it shall find loathing for love, and be scorned of those mercenaries which are seldom either satisfied, or sure.

Ver. 10. **Yea, though they have hired among the nations]** The uncircumcised; strangers to the promises, and aliens from the

commonwealth of Israel, that they should so far distrust God and debase themselves as to seek help of such; this went near to the heart of God, and was very grievous. They brought up an evil report upon God's housekeeping, charged him with unfaithfulness to his people, whom he now seemed to leave in the lurch, to shift for themselves in their straits; and hardened his enemies in their wicked but yet more prosperous condition. *Felix scelus virtus vocatur* Pleasant wickedness is called virtue. (Cic. de Divin., lib. ii.). How would these heathens hug themselves in the conceit that Israel should do thus, who was God's portion, #De 32:9, the dearly beloved of his soul, #Jer 12:7, of whom it was anciently sung, and commonly said among the heathen, "The Lord hath done great things for them," #Ps 126:2. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help; and who is the sword of thine excellence! and thine enemies shall he found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places," #De 33:29. Whosoever was free of the city of Rome might not accept any freedom in another city; for they were counted a dishonour to Rome. And will not God take it in ill part from his covenanters, to seek or make after correspondence with his enemies, and safety by them? The help of the wicked are at the best perfidious, and at length pernicious to the Church: *Ecclesiae sunt tandem perniciose et semper perfidiosae*.

**Now will I gather them]** This the Chaldee and the Vulgate make to be a promise of bringing back their captivity; when indeed it is a commination of carrying them into captivity.

**I will gather them]** That is, either the enemies against Israel or else Israel for the enemies; *ut eos acervatim perdam*, that I may lay them heaps upon heaps, and gather them, as dead corpses slain in battle are gathered together for burial. Or, I will gather them, to the end that I may disperse them.

**And they shall sorrow a little]** And but a little now,

**for the burden of the king of princes]** For the taxes and tributes exacted from them by the king of Assyria (whose nobles were princes, #2Ki 18:24 Isa 10:5-7 2Ki 15:19,29). But all this is but a little; it is but the beginning of sorrows; it is but small drops

forerunning the great storm; or as a crack forerunning the fall of the house. They shall sorrow much more hereafter, when carried captive, and made a scorn to the scum of the people: see **#De 32:42**. Some read the whole verse, "Yea, because they have hired among the nations, now will I gather them together (for they have begun a little): because of the burden of the king of princes." And they thus paraphrase it: Well may they bribe and hire, but this will be the end: the Israelites themselves shall fall by heaps; the nations whom they hire shall come so tumbling in upon them (as Isaiah told Ahaz, **#Isa 8:9**). Do you not see it prettily well begun already? Look upon the late example that is yet now fresh and bleeding before your eyes; so you will the better believe my threatening in that which is to come; I mean, the sacking and carrying away of the tribes beyond Jordan, by Pul and Tiglathpileser. If you ask me the reason why God should be so angry with you? it is because you are so foolish, or so wicked rather, to send presents and tributes to the king of Ashur (who in the pride and vanity of his heart nameth himself the king of princes, the mighty and most potent king) with the pilling, polling, and burdening of your subjects.

Ver. 11. **Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin**] Because he hath multiplied altars against God's express command, **#Le 17:3-9 De 12:5-7 Jos 22:22,23 Jer 11:13**; and that, to sin; as if it were on purpose to cross and provoke the Lord to anger by their superstitions and will worship, and to despise him with seeming honours (for displeasing service is double dishonour), therefore he shall have enough of it ere I have done with it. He shall be given up to a reprobate sense; that going on from one sin to another, he may fill up his measure, till wrath come upon him to the utmost.

*“ Per quod quis peccat, per idem punitur et ipse.”*

Idolatry is sin with an accent, wickedness with a witness, **#1Ki 15:30,34 16:2 12:30 13:34**, and shall be punished accordingly; for so the Chaldee paraphraseth here; Because they have multiplied their altars for sin, the altars of their idols shall be their ruin. There is one Hebrew word for sin and punishment: sin hails hell at the very heels of it, as one saith wittily. Polanus upon this text hath these three profitable observations. First, that as in the Old Testament one only altar was set up by God's command in the tabernacle and

temple, so also in the New Testament we have no other altar but Christ, **#Heb 13:10**. (Iren. lib. 4, contra Haeres, cap. 34.) Secondly, as the Israelites sinned in multiplying altars, so do the Papists most grievously, in that, not content with Christ and his satisfactory sacrifice alone, they set up other altars, and bring in other expiatory sacrifices. Thirdly, as the Israelites made many altars to sin, though they pretended good intention and devotion, so the Papists at this day multiply altars (even hundreds in some one church in Rome). to sin, though they falsely pretend their good retention therein, and the preservation and augmentation of God's service.

Ver. 12. **I have written to him the great things of my law]** *magnalia legis*; great things of the law, there are also *minutula legis*, small things of the law, **#Mt 5:22**; both must be looked to: for though the civilian say of his law, *De minutis non curat lex*, The law takes no notice of small faults; yet it holds not true of the law of God, which is spiritual, and must be kept as the apple of the eye, **#Pr 7:2**, and observed in every point and part, nay, in every punctilio and particle thereof. But to come to the words; Ephraim could not plead ignorance of God's mind, for their many altars and superstitions, *Deus enim iure quaerat et queratur*; for God might very well say and complain, as **#Pr 22:20**, "Have not I written for thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge?" and in the verse next before, "I have made known (my mind) this day to thee, even to thee." So here, "I have written," *sc.* by my penmen and secretaries, "to him" chiefly, and for his better direction in my service, that he might walk therein by rule, and not at random, {see #De 4:8 Ps 147:19} "the great things," or excellent documents (the multiplicity or multiformity, saith the Chaldee) "of my law," or of my wise doctrine; **#Pr 13:14**, which taketh in the gospel too, that law of Christ, **#Ga 6:2**.

**But they were counted as a strange thing]** As not pertaining to them, as that wherein they were little or nothing concerned, as the narration of foreign affairs. Whereas men should read and regard the Holy Scriptures as they do the statutes of the land; holding themselves as much concerned and intended as any other; threatening themselves in every threat, binding themselves in every precept, blessing themselves in every promise, mingling the whole word with faith in their hearts, and resolving upon the obedience of

faith; as knowing that these are *verba vivenda non legenda*, words to be lived, not read only; and that they should indwell in us familiarly, and yet richly, **#Col 3:16**, and we should be as inwardly acquainted with them as any man is with his sister, or nearest allies, **#Pr 7:4**. All this the rather; First, because God is the author of the Holy Scriptures, both matter and words are his, **#2Pe 1:21**; "he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began," **#Lu 1:70**; and he guided their hands in writing the Bible. How dare Papists then say that they wrote it *iniussi* without command from God. Secondly, because God hath written his law for us, for our behoof and benefit, **#Ro 4:23 15:4**. The Scripture is God's Epistle to us, saith Gregory. It "is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths," saith David, **#Ps 119:105**. Not a light that I see at a distance, a great way off; but a light held to my feet, that I may see my way in this land of Chabul, this dirty and dark world; and not lift up one foot, till I discover and find sure footing for another, as those, **#Ps 34:6**. Thirdly, because he hath written for us the *honorabilia legis*, honourable and precious things, such as a man would fetch from China or the uttermost part of the habitable world upon his bare feet, rather than be without. David prefers it before gold and silver, **#Ps 19:11**; Solomon, before pearls and rubies, **#Pr 3:15**; Moses, before all the learning of other nations, **#De 4:6**. The Scripture is the soul's food, saith Athanasius; the soul's medicine, saith Chrysostom; the invariable rule of truth, saith Irenaeus. It is, saith another, the aphorisms *{short pithy statements or maxims}* of Christ, the library of the Holy Ghost, the divine pandects, *{compendium in fifty books of Roman civil law made by the order of Justinian in the 6th century, complete body of laws}* the wisdom of the cross, the cubit of the sanctuary, the firmament of faith, the touchstone of error, &c. What reason then had Darbshire (Bishop Bonner's kinsman and chaplain) to say to Mr Hawkes the martyr, that he was too curious; for he would have nothing but his little pretty God's book? And is it not sufficient for my salvation? said Hawkes. Yes, said he, but not for your instruction. God send me the salvation (said Hawkes) and you the instruction. That the Scripture is full and sufficient for both instruction and salvation, see **#2Ti 3:16,17**, and my treatise called the True Treasure. *Has igitur nocturna versato manu, versate diurna*, **#Ps 1:2**. Let there not, by infrequency or disuse, grow an alienation or strangeness between us and the Holy Scriptures; but be ready in them, and have them, as

Saul had his pitcher and spear at his bolster; as David had his chosen stones at hand in his scrip. Luther wishes all his own books burnt; because I fear, saith he, they hinder men from reading the Bible, that book of books; in comparison whereof all the books in the world are but waste paper. After which, I tremble, saith he, to think of the former age, wherein many divines spent so much time in reading Aristotle and Averroes, and so little in reading the Book of God. Melancthon saith that he heard some preach upon texts taken out of Aristotle's Ethics. Carolostadius was eight years doctor when he began to read the Scriptures; and yet at the taking of his degree had been pronounced *sufficientissimus* most adequate (Joh. Manlius). Another doctor of divinity, being asked whether he had read the decalogue, *negitabat se huiusmodi librum in Bibliotheca sua habuisse unquam*; he denied that he had ever had, or heard of any book so called (Amama in Antibar. praef.); such a perfect stranger was he to the great things of God's law. And if the learned doctors be thus bare and ignorant, what may we think of the poor misled and muzzled multitude, that lie fast locked up in the pope's dark dungeon, and are flatly forbidden to meddle with the Scriptures, lest they should be infected with heresy, or possessed with a devil, as some (say they) have been by that means?

Ver. 13. **They sacrifice flesh in the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it]** *q.d.* They would seem not to have rejected the great things of my law, not to be such strangers thereunto; since they were much in sacrificing according to the law. But their hypocrisy is most hateful: in that first, they offer (with Cain) *non personam, sed opus personae*, as Luther saith; not themselves, but their bare sacrifices, **#Isa 66:3**, which is but as a brainless head and soulless body; it is but flesh, as it is here called in contempt and scorn. See the like, **#Jer 7:21 Ho 9:4**. And think the same of all external services, *si careant anima sua, id est recta in Deum fide, et erecta in illum mente*, if not performed in faith and obedience. Secondly, they pretended to serve God, when indeed they only served their own bellies, as those, **#Ro 16:18**, sought their own ends, **#Php 2:21**, catered for the flesh, **#Ro 13:14**, *insigne donum quo afficior* (as Luther paraphraseth the text) *carnem offertis quam vos ipsi voratis, i.e.* A goodly gift it is that you give me, viz. the flesh of your peace offerings which yourselves may feast with; and you therefore multiply sacrifices, that you may gorge yourselves with good cheer.



Now one egg is not more like to another than these old fleshmongers were to the Popish flesh flies at this day. It was an honest complaint of one of them: We, saith he, handle the Scripture, *tantum utnos pascat et vestiati*, only that it may feed us and clothe us. And it is evident to all the world that their masses, pilgrimages, festivals, vowed presents and memorials, &c., are only to pamper their paunches; which made them so angry with Erasmus and Luther for meddling.

**But the Lord accepteth them not]** How should he, pray, when there was nothing but flesh, nothing but self in them. See the like, **#Jer 4:10 Am 5:22 Isa 1:10**, where God telleth them that their sacrifices were grievous and offensive to all his several senses, nay, to his very soul too. "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord," **#Pr 15:8**, yea, though he bring it with never so good an intent, **#Pr 21:27**; how much more if he bring *ex rapina holocaustum*, a sacrifice of what he hath got by rapine and robbery! and so the Chaldee carrieth the sense of the former words; the sacrifices of mine offerings, *quae collecta sunt ex iniuria*, saith he, which were gathered and gotten by wrong dealing: how then should the Lord accept them?

**Now will he remember their iniquity]** Even while they are sacrificing, let them not think to blind his eyes with the smoke of their offerings, to stop his mouth with their rich gifts and donaries; to bribe him into a connivance; to expiate and set off their sins with their sacrifices; for God will remember them, and punish them. Yea, now will he do it, in the time of their holy duties; he will come upon them then in his wrath, as Pilate came upon the Galileans, and mingled their blood with their sacrifices, **#Lu 13:2**. Sure it is that sin (brought into God's holy presence) petitions against the sinner, as Esther did against Haman at the banquet of wine, **#Es 7:6**; picks out the time of prayer and other duties to accuse and call for vengeance. Take we heed, lest while we are confessing our sins (which yet we close with, and will not forsake) and judging ourselves worthy to be destroyed, God say not, Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee, thou graceless person, that hast so much impudence as to bring thy Cozbi into my presence, {#Nu 25:18} then, when all the people (as on a fastday) are weeping before the door of the tabernacle. God will

be sanctified of all that draw nigh unto him; one way or other he will be sanctified, either in them, or on them, **#Le 10:3**. Of such he saith, as Solomon once did of Adonijah, "If he show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of his head fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die," **#1Ki 1:52**. If any defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, **#1Co 3:17**.

**They shall return to Egypt]** They had a mind to run thither for refuge; they sent also to So, king of Egypt, for that purpose, **#2Ki 17:4**. Instead of making their peace with God, they betook themselves to base shifts, and sought help of the creature. This is the guise of graceless men when distressed. But they shall soon have enough of Egypt, **#Ho 9:8,6**. Their strength (or their Egypt) had been to have sat still, in expectation of help from heaven, **#Isa 30:7**, and to have considered that the last and greatest curse denounced against their disobedience was, "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt," &c., **#De 28:68**.

Ver. 14. **For Israel hath forgotten his maker]** Not more his factor than his benefactor, as, **#1Sa 12:6**, the Lord made Moses and Aaron, *i.e.* he advanced them to that honour in his Church. So our Saviour is said to have made twelve, when he ordained them to the apostleship, **#Mr 3:14**. And the apostle saith of Israel, that God exalted the people, when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, **#Ac 13:17**, *sc.* to the privilege of his peculiar people, the possession of the promised land, the custody of his oracles and services, &c., besides the many benefits and deliverances wrought for them. All which they are said to have forgotten: 1. Because they laid them not to heart, see **#Isa 57:11**, they saw not God in them; 2. Because their lives were not answerable; they walked not worthy of such a God; but said (in effect), "We are delivered to do all these abominations," **#Jer 7:10**. God challengeth remembrance, and well he may, **#Ec 12:1**, for he hath created us for his glory, **#Isa 43:7**, he hath formed us, yea, he hath made us (as it followeth there, and all that we might remember him): the word (made) is used for a degree of grace after creation. Those that are his workmanship, his artificial facture (ποίημα), created in Christ Jesus (who is the beginning of this creation of God, **#Re 3:14**) unto good works, **#Eph 2:10**, if ever they should forget God (which is the character of a wicked man, **#Ps 50:22**); if they should forsake God that made them, and lightly

esteem the Rock of their salvation, **#De 32:15**, as Solomon did the Lord that had appeared unto him twice; if they should not prefer him above their chief joy, or make him ascend above the head of their joy (as the Hebrew hath it, **#Ps 137:6**), and set him over all, as Pharaoh did Joseph (causing sun, moon, and stars to do obeisance to him), I mean, all their natural, moral, temporal, and spiritual abilities to be subject and serviceable to him; he would have an unanswerable action against them, and both heaven and earth would have cause to blush at their disingenuity and unthankfulness. Let it ever be remembered, that of all things God cannot abide to be forgotten.

**And buildeth temples]** To God, no doubt; and yet, because they worshipped him not in his own way they are said to have forgotten him: so do Papists in all their structures, vowed presents, and memories (as they call them). In King Stephen's time here, notwithstanding all the miseries of war, there were more Abbeys built than in a hundred years before. But who required those things at their hands? *Christus opera nostra non tam actibus quam finibus pensat* (Zanchius). Now the end why those temples and monasteries were built appears in stories to be *pro remissione et redemptione peccatorum, pro remedio et liberatione animae: pro amore coelestis patriae: in honorem gloriosae Virginis, in eleemosynam animae, &c.*, for remission of sins, redemption of souls, honour of the Virgin Mary, and other superstitious ends and uses.

**And Judah hath multiplied fenced cities]** As thinking thereby to fence themselves against God's wrath, to mott themselves up against his fire that had burnt up the ten tribes, and threatened them. Strong cities and munitions may be lawfully built; but then their foundations must not be laid upon fireworks. If sin be at the bottom (as the voice from heaven is said to have told Phocas), though they build as high as heaven it will not do. Babylon's thick walls and large provisions could not secure her from the enemy; Samaria held out for two or three years, but was surprised at last by the Assyrian; so was Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and then by the Romans, **#Isa 22:8-10**. Great fault is found with this people, for their warlike preparations with neglects of God, **#Ho 8:11**, and of deep and downright humiliation, **#Ho 8:12-14**. The name of the Lord is the

strongest tower, **#Pr 18:10**. But cursed is he that maketh flesh his arm, that trusteth in men, though never so great; or means, though never so likely, **#Jer 17:5**, those were never true to those that trusted them. The Jebusites were beaten out of their fort, though they presumed it impregnable. The men of Shechem were burned out, **#Jud 9:49**: so shall Judah be; for,

**I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof]** The enemy did this, but not without the Lord; who cannot brook it that men should trust in palaces and strongholds; and as Luther well observeth, in this whole chapter is fully set forth whence it is that strong palaces and flourishing kingdoms come to nought; it is because men believe not in God, but trust to their own strength, **#De 28:52**; they fortify themselves against an enemy, but do not pacify God's displeasure; who is himself a devouring fire, and can quickly quash all our forces, and confute our confidences.

## **Chapter 9**

Ver. 1. **Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people]** Not as good people, for they have reason to rejoice, and are called to it in both Testaments; joy is the just man's portion, but thou art naught all over, thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, who will shortly meet thee as a bear robbed of her whelps, or as the jealous husband doth his adulteress. Again, not as other bad people, for they may revel (rejoice indeed they cannot) and be merry, after a sort; rejoice they may in the face, as the apostle phraseth it, and from the teeth outward; some kind of frothy and flashy mirth they may have (and let them make them merry with it, it is all they are like to have), but so mayest not thou; because thou hast had warning sufficient, and hast known thy Master's will, but not done it; yea, thou hast done that abominable thing that other nations never yet did, **#Jer 2:11,12**, thou hast changed thy God for those that are no gods; thou hast forsaken the fountain, and run to the cistern, &c.; which is such a prodigious wickedness, as the very heavens are astonished at, and are horribly afraid, yea, desolate; mourning, and, as it were, melting at this horrid act. Shall the heavens mourn, and wilt thou rejoice? yea, fetch a frisk, or dance a galliard for joy, as the word signifies (גלי, in Graec. γαλλίαν, to dance a galliard): what if other nations do so, when they have got the better of their enemies, or gathered in

their harvest, #Isa 9:4, or otherwise have all things go well with them? yet revolted Israel had no such cause, unless they were upon better terms with God. Say that this were the time when Joash beat Benhadad thrice over, and recovered the cities of Israel, #2Ki 13:15-19; or say it was at the time when he took Amaziah, and brought all the spoil of Jerusalem to Samaria, #2Ki 14:13; or else when Pekah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, and carried captive two hundred thousand, with much spoil: these were times of great mirth and jollity, it is confessed, #2Ch 28:6-8. "But are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God" (as the prophet Oded there bespeaks them), and should not those sins be bewailed? Besides, are they not your brethren whom you have slaughtered and captivated? and can you have any joy of such a conquest, of civil wars that are— *nullos habitura triumphos*, about to have no victory, that are such a misery as all words (however wide) want compass to express? Hear what the prophet Amos (who was Hosea's contemporary) saith to this, "Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought" (so he calleth their victories, present prosperity, pomp, and pride), "which say, have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? Behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel," that shall tame you, and take you a link lower (as they say), so that "your laughter shall be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness," #Jas 4:9. There is ever a snare (or a cord) in the sin of the wicked, viz. to strangle their joy with; "but the righteous sing and rejoice," #Pr 29:6.

**For thou hast gone a whoring from thy God]** That is a foul business, and may well dampen thy joy. Sins are the snuffs that dim our candlestick, the leaven that soureth our passovers, the sanies of a plague sore that threateneth our very life. And whereas the sins of others are but rebellions against God, the sins of his professed people are treacheries; they go a whoring from their God, *desuper Deo suo, vel omisso Deo suo*, from under their God, or laying aside their God; casting him, as it were, into a bycorner. Hence those pathetic complaints in Jeremiah, #Jer 18:13, "Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing": filthiness in a stew is nothing so odious as filthiness in a virgin. And again, #Jer 32:30, "The children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil from their

youth." God takes evil so heinously from them, as if they had never done him any good service all their days; or as if they were the only sinners upon earth; they were so much worse, because they ought to have been better than other nations. Now God expects our sorrows should be proportionable to our sins; Rejoice not, therefore, but (by a *liptote*) weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you.

**Thou hast loved a reward (or a harlot's hire, *mercedem meretriciam*) upon every threshingfloor]** *i.e.* Thou hast prostituted thyself to a loose idolatry; like to a common whore that goeth a whoring up and down the threshingfloors. Hence Boaz' fear lest it should be rumoured that Ruth had lain at his feet, and that a woman came into the floor, #**Ru 3:14**. Or else he meaneth (saith Diodati) some particular kind of idolatry used in the time of harvest and threshing: as if they would have acknowledged their increase to come by their idols' goodness. Such was that of the Metapontines, of whom Strabo tells the story, that when they had had a good harvest, and were grown rich thereby, they dedicated to Apollo at Delphi χρυσου Θερος, a harvest of gold. **See Trapp on "Ho 2:1" &c Ver. 2. The floor and the winepress shall not feed them]** *Culpam poena premit comes*, Punishment attendeth sin at the heels. They had abused their plenty, and ascribed it to their idols; therefore shall they be cut short either in their store, as #**Hab 3:6,10 2:16**, or in their strength, as #**Ho 4:10 8:7**. {see #**Ho 2:8,9**, with the notes} One way or other their hopes shall be frustrated, the creature shall lie to them, and not answer their expectation.

**The new wine shall fail in her]** *Mustum mentietur ei*: see the like phrase, #**Hab 3:17 Isa 58:11 Job 41:6**: they shall come to the grain floors and winepresses, as men come to a lottery with heads full of hopes; but depart disappointed, with their hearts full of blanks. As they have lied to God (idolatry is nothing else but a large lie), and dealt deceitfully with him in the covenant, so shall all things lie to them, and not answer their hopes. Look how a certain prince paid a false traitor, who for a sum of money had betrayed his country to him, in false coin; so shall it fare with such as falsify with God; he will blast their hopes, and curse their blessings, cut them short in the height of their expectancies, strike them in the things that their

hearts are most set upon, the new wine shall lie to them, and so set them a howling, #**Joe 1:5**.

Ver. 3. **They shall not dwell in the Lord's land]** Because they would not live by the Lord's laws, they shall therefore be turned out of his house (so this land was called, #**Ho 9:8**) as rebellious children, that are a disturbance and a disgrace to their father's family; they shall hold no longer as tenants of him, the chief landlord, because so backward to send a lamb (as rent or a homage penny) to the ruler of the land, #**Isa 16:1**; they were tenants at will, and held upon condition of obedience, #**Le 18:28**, it was divided among them by lot; Joshua divided it among them, and left none to himself. The people gave him a portion, and he was content with it; though it were but a mean one in the barren mountains, as Jerome noteth. He had the promise that God would never leave him nor forsake him; and he well knew that if he trusted in the Lord, and did good, he should "dwell in the land and be verily fed," #**Ps 37:3**. He and Caleb were of another spirit, and fulfilled after God; therefore they only of all that generation entered the promised land, the Lord's land; which because Moses might not do, it was a great grief to him. These idolaters here are threatened to be cashiered and cast out of this good land, and to have their pleasant land laid desolate, to be spewed out, as the Canaanites had been before them, #**Le 18:28**, and so consequently to be deprived of God's favour, help, and protection; and altogether disprivileged, yea, disinherited. This was a heavy judgment to them, and must be a warning to us, that yet live in the bosom of the Church, and under the joyful sound; that we forfeit not our present enjoyments, that we sin not away our precious privileges, as the seven Churches and others have done. *Alterius perditio tua sit cautio*. We stand upon our good behaviour, as they did; see #**De 30:19,20**.

**But Ephraim shall return to Egypt]** Which they ought to have been sensible of as a punishment long since threatened, #**De 28:68**, {see #**Ho 8:13**, See Trapp on "**Ho 8:13**"}; though now, of their own accord, they returned to it, for fear of the Assyrian (whom by their false dealing they had justly incensed), yet that should not shelter them, but God's hand would find them out, and fetch them thence into captivity. Often they had been warned not to go down to Egypt for help; and they must needs be hard bestead that fled thither. True it is, that the

Egyptians are renowned in histories for a thankful people (Diod. Sic. l. 2), and the Israelites are charged not to abhor an Egyptian, because they were once strangers in his land, and had tasted of his courtesies, **#De 23:7**. But in addition, they could not but know how hardly the Egyptians had dealt with their forefathers, and bow treacherously also with them; and that they ought not, *de iure*, concerning the law, to have returned thither upon any terms. *Sed Deus quem destruit dementat*, Bug God, who he destroyed, makes mad, and although here they were resolved for Egypt, yet, **#Ho 11:5**, God resolveth otherwise; and *voluntas Dei necessitas rei*, his will shall stand when all is done.

**And they shall eat unclean things in Assyria]** Things forbidden by the law, as swine's flesh, &c.; they shall be forced to eat or starve; they must not look for liberty of conscience in Assyria, nor have that favour to make a difference of meat as Daniel had, **#Da 1:8**, but as Ezekiel baked his barley cakes with man's dung, even so, said the Lord, shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the heathen whither I will drive them. So haughty they were grown, that their father's house could not hold them; therefore they shall be glad of husks with hogs (as that prodigal), they shall eat as the heathens, since they would needs act as the heathens. They thought it was hard with them in their own land, when the floors and the winepress would not feed them, **#Ho 9:2**; but now it is far worse, when, forced by hard hunger, they are glad of any meat, be it clean or unclean; neither have they any more mind to be so merry with other nations, as **#Ho 9:1**, or cause so to be; their stomachs craving, and themselves (with Drusus in Tacitus) ready to eat the stuffings of their bed; or (with the Jews in the last siege of Jerusalem) not only to feed upon dogs, rats, cats, &c., but the leather of their shoes, belts, shields, bridles, yea, ox dung was a precious dish unto them, and the shreadings of pot herbs cast out and trodden underfoot (Pontanus. Hegeppus).

Ver. 4. **They shall not offer wine offerings unto the Lord]** *Non libabunt, multo minus litabunt*, they shall not have wherewith to offer sacrifice, when they are in their banishment, **#Ho 3:4**, much less to serve God with cheerfulness, to exhilarate his heart with their wine offerings, **#Jud 9:13**, to cheer up themselves with the wine and olive offerings, **#Nu 15:5**, which were symbols and signs of the



merit and spirit of Christ (for the ceremonial law was their gospel, it was Christ in figure), and the deprivation of them threatened the deprivation of grace and glory. Now, therefore, since such a sad condition and such sinking of spirits abode upon this people, what reason had they to rejoice with joy as others.

**Neither shall they be pleasing, to him]** Heb. they shall not be sweet or mingled; for as sweet and sour maketh the best sauce, so the mixture of things of divers qualities maketh the sweetest confections, and most pleasing to the palate; but so shall not be these men's wine offerings to God, if any they should present; but sour and savourless. He is now resolved to take another course with them, to glorify himself in their calamity, and to give unto them another while the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath, **#Re 16:19**, that is, to delight as much in their misery as a man would do in drinking of a bowl of generous wine.

**Their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners]** *i.e.* as funeral feasts (whereof read **#Jer 16:7,8 Eze 24:17**), made *ad levandum luctum* (αρτος πενθους νεκροδειπνον), eaten in heaviness by those that were polluted by the dead, and therefore altogether unfit for sacrifice; since God loveth a cheerful service, and will not have any of his come off heavily. See **#Le 10:19 De 13:7 26:14 Mal 2:13**, where those unkind husbands are blamed for causing their wives, when they should have been cheerful in God's service, to cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and with crying out, so that he regarded not the offering any more. So Ezra, **#Ezr 9:5**, that holy man, though till then he sat astonished at the sins of the people, yet he arose from his heaviness at the evening sacrifice; for he knew that even sorrow for sin might be a sinful sorrow, if unseasonable and sullen; for it sours a man's spirit, and makes his services unacceptable to God.

**For their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the Lord]** Their bread, that is, their meat offering or other sacrifices {#Mal 1:7} {See Trapp on "Mal 1:7"} for their soul, that is, for themselves (soul is oft put for the whole person), shall not come, rightly and in due manner, unto divine acceptation, "into the house of the Lord": it should not have come into the temple while it stood, and the

Levitical service was performed in an orderly way; how much less shall it be accepted now in a strange land, being the bread of mourners. Others by the "bread for their souls" understand their natural and necessary sustenance. He speaks, say they, of that meatoffering, #Le 2:5, appointed for a spiritual use, yet called here the bread for their life or livelihood, because God esteemed it none other than common meat. Tarnovius by the house of the Lord here understandeth the Church, as #Ho 8:1 9:5 2Ti 2:20. The door of this house, saith he, is Christ, #Joh 10:9, the doorkeeper the Holy Spirit, *ibid.* #Joh 10:3, the foundation and corner stone Christ, #Eph 2:20, the wall is God, #Zec 2:5, the stewards the ministers, those of the household the saints, #1Co 4:1 Eph 2:19.

Ver. 5. **What will ye do in the solemn day, &c.]** *q.d.* How will ye do to laugh and leap then, as ye do now? #Ho 9:1. How will you be able to support yourselves, to keep your hearts from dying within you, when you call to mind and consider your former solemnities and festivities, which now (alas!) in your captivity you are utterly deprived of? There was a time when you went with the multitude to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day, #Ps 42:4, with dancing, eating, drinking, and joy, #De 16:14,15 Jud 21:19,20. But now the scene is altered; your singing is turned into sighing, your mirth into mourning, your joy into heaviness; and you must needs hold yourselves so much the more miserable, that you have been happy. The epicures indeed held that a man might be cheerful against the most exquisite torments: 1. In consideration of his honesty and integrity; 2. In consideration of those pleasures and delights that formerly he had enjoyed; and now cheered himself up with the remembrance of them (*Ex praeteritarum voluptatum recordatione*. Cic. de Finib. 1. 2. Senec. de Benef. 1. 4, c. 22.). This last is a very slight and sorry comfort indeed. The former hath much in it; for a good man keeps every day holy day, said Diogenes; and can be merry without music, saith another philosopher. He hath a merry heart, or good conscience, which is a continual feast; and is bound to "rejoice evermore," #1Th 5:16, and to keep the feast in all countries, #1Co 5:8, the calendar of his whole life is crowned with continual festivals (*εορταζόμεν*); and he is the happiest man, and may be the merriest, if he but understand his own happiness. But this, alas! was not the case of these woeful caitiffs and captives. They had sinned away all their comforts; and

with the sad remembrance of their former enjoyments, and with the sense of their present sevitude, they had little mind to keep holy day. Hence this passionate exclamation, "What will ye do," &c.? God had threatened before, **#Ho 2:11**, to take away their feast days, new moons, sabbaths, and solemnities; but they heeded him not, *tanquam monstra marina Dei verba surda aura praeterierunt*; therefore now God fulfilleth what he had forethreatened, and calleth, as in a solemn day, his terrors round about them, **#La 2:22**. What they were wont to do in their solemn days and festivals may be seen, **#Nu 10:10**; what we do, or should do, at least, upon our Lord's Day sabbaths (the delight of every good soul) we need not be told. Let us take heed, lest by profane violation or careless observing that holy rest, with all its solemnities, we deprive not ourselves (as these Israelites did) of such a precious privilege. God gave us a good warning, in that the first blow given the German Churches was upon the sabbath day; which is there so ill sanctified, that if it should be named according to their deserving of it, *Daemoniacus potius quam Dominicus*, the Devil is greater than God, saith Alsted, it should be called not the Lord's day, but the priest's day rather. It is very remarkable, that upon that day was Prague lost, and with it all opportunity of hearing, singing, public praying, communicating, on that high and honourable day, **#Isa 58:13**.

Ver. 6. **For, lo, they are gone because of destruction**] They are gone either into Egypt for refuge, or into the state of the dead, they are gone out of the world (*abierunt, i.e. obierunt*). They shall perish by destruction, so some render it. When God had said in the former verse, "What will ye do," they should have fallen down before him and said, "What wilt thou have us to do, Lord?" we know not what at all to do, but our eyes are toward thee. This had been right, and thus they might have disarmed God's indignation; but they had other carnal shifts, and thought they could tell well enough what to do, and whither to go; whereupon they were so fully bent, that the prophet here reports them gone already. "For, lo, they are gone," and got to Egypt; as various of them did doubtless during the siege, and after the sack of Samaria, when they were forced to shift for themselves as they could: but did they so "escape by iniquity. In thine anger cast down the people, O God," saith David; and it is not more a prayer than a prophecy, **#Ps 56:7**, and this people had the proof of it.

**Egypt shall gather them]** Either for punishment or for burial, as **#Eze 29:5 Jer 8:2**, so that they fled but out of the smoke into the fire; and in running from death they ran to it; as the historian saith of those poor Scots at Musselborough Field, who, running for their lives, so strained themselves in their race, that they fell down breathless and dead.

**Memphis shall bury them]** Lest they should please themselves with vain hopes of return to their country, he shows that that shall never be; but they shall lay their bones in a strange land. Memphis (anciently called Noph, **#Isa 19:13**, or (as some will), No, **#Na 3:8**, at this day Grand Cairo, famous for the pyramids and the kings' sepulchres), Memphis, I say, a principal city of Egypt, shall be a Kibrothhattaavah to you, a place of sepulchres; especially then when Nebuchadnezzar, sent by God (who giveth him Egypt as his pay for his pains at Tyre), shall come and smite that land, and deliver such as are for death to death, and such as are for the sword to the sword, **#Jer 43:11**.

**The pleasant places for themselves, nettles shall possess them]** Heb. shall possess them as their inheritance; so that the Israelites nor their heirs shall ever repossess these pleasant places for their silver, *i.e.* where they either laid up their silver (their repositories or countinghouses), or where they laid out their silver, either in costly buildings and sumptuous furniture, or else in idols and statues placed therein, to their no small charge and delight. These shall be ruined and overrun with nettles, thorns, and thistles, a token of horrible desolation, **#Isa 32:13 34:13**. Note hence, that as God spareth a place for a few good men found therein (as he would have done Sodom, which is now a place of nettles and salt pits, **#Zep 2:9**), so a fruitful land bringeth he into barrenness (or saltness), for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, **#Ps 106:34,35**; witness Judaea, that land of desire, **#Jer 22:27**, that garden of Eden, **#Joe 2:3**, that glorious land, **#Da 11:16**, yea, glory of all lands, **#Eze 20:15**, now woefully waste and desolate; so is Grecia, formerly so famous for arms and arts; so are some parts of Germany, and so may England soon be (without the greater mercy of God, by a miracle of whose mercy, and by a prop of whose extraordinary patience, we

have hitherto subsisted), I say, England, whose valleys now are like Eden, whose hills are as Lebanon, whose springs are as Pisgah, whose rivers are as Jordan, whose walls is the ocean, and whose defence is the Lord Jehovah.

Ver. 7. **The days of visitation are come]** A visitation that is like to prove a vexation; for every transgression and disobedience, that is, omission and commission, shall receive a just recompense of reward from the God of recompenses (so he is called, **#Jer 51:56**), whose eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men, **#Ps 11:4**; the former points out his knowledge, the latter his judgment, or his critical descant in his visitation or inquisition, the days whereof are set, *Stat sua cuique dies*, and Israel's days are come, are come, it is repeated for more assurance, as "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," *certo, cito, penitus*; and as **#Eze 7:5-7**, the prophet tells them, "The end is come, is come, is come"; and so some ten or twelve times, that he might beat it into them, and awaken them out of the snare of the devil. The wicked's happiness will take its end surely and swiftly; but it is hard persuading them so; and the Jews, as they were ever noted for obstinate and overweening, so to this day they are light, aerial, and Satanical, apt to work themselves into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage. But they shall know it to be so as I have said, by woeful experience, that mistress of fools.

**Israel shall know it]** *sc.* To his sorrow, he shall pay for his learning, buy his wit, open his eyes (as the mole doth) when death is upon him, *oculos incipit aperire moriendo* (Plin.); roar and look upward, **#Isa 8:21**, as the hog doth when the knife is at his throat. O Lord (saith the same prophet, **#Isa 26:11**), "when thy hand is lifted up" (and thy hand is a mighty hand, **#Jas 4:10**, it falls heavy), "they will not see," they wink wilfully, or seek straws to put out their eyes with, as Bernard hath it, *Festucam quaerunt unde oculos sibi eruant*; "but they shall see," will they nill they, "and be ashamed" of their former oscitancy, or rather obstinacy, when that hand of God, which was lifted up in threatening, shall fall down in punishing, and the "fire of thine enemies shall devour them"; how much more at that last and great visitation, that terrible day of retribution, when they shall answer for all, with the flames about their ears. *Tunc sentient magno suo malo*, then shall they feel, to their eternal woe, the truth of all the threatenings, which till then they heard, and read,

as a man doth an almanac prognostications of wind or foul weather, which he thinks may come to pass, and it may be not; and give nothing so much credit to them as the prior of St Bartholomew's, in London, did to an idle and addle-headed {a} astrologer, when he went and built him a house at Harrowon-the-hill to secure himself from a supposed flood that that astrologer foretold.

**The prophet is a fool, &c.]** φανλος, a naughty man: the Hebrew word here is evil, and signifieth a rash and unadvised fellow, that is headstrong and headlong; such were their false prophets that promised peace when war was at their gates, and made all fair weather before them when the tempest of God's wrath was even bursting out upon them; such a tempest as should never be blown over. These should now appear to be fools, or rather impostors, that had brought the credulous people into a fool's paradise.

**The spiritual man is mad]** Heb. the man of the spirit, or *ventosus*, the windy man, that uttereth vain and empty conceits, *humani cerebelli Minervas*, the brats of his own brain, light, airy nothings, the disease of this age, full of flashes and figments, idle speculations of "men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth." These pretend altogether to the spirit, and would be thought the only spiritual men; as the Swenkfeldians (whom, for their ill favour, Luther called Stenckfeldians), who bewitched many with those glorious words (which were ever in their mouths) of illumination, revelation, the inward and spiritual man, &c., and entitled themselves the confessors of the glory of Christ. So the enthusiasts and Anabaptists, what boast make they of the spirit; professing that they will deliver nothing but what they have immediately revealed to them from heaven. Munzer (their ringleader) wrote a base book against Luther (which he dedicateth to King Jesus), wherein *Lutherum flagellat quod euthusiasorum spiritu careat et nil nisi carnalia sapiat*, he falls foul upon Luther, as wanting the spirit of revelation, and one that savoureth nothing but carnal things. All his followers look upon Luther as more pestiferous than the pope; and for Calvin they say (and I have heard it), that it had been happy for the Church if he had never been born. It was their practice of old (as Leo Judae observed in his epistle before Bullinger's book against the Catabaptists), and is still, to discourage and disparage Christ's faithful ministers all

they can, as carnal, and not relishing the things of the spirit; the right offspring they are of those ancient heretics called Messalanii (the same with the Euchites and Enthusiasts), who, in A.D. 371, professed to be wholly made up of the spirit, gave themselves much to sleep, and called their dreams and wild phantasies prophecies and revelations.

**For the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred]** Heb. the great Satanic hatred that thou hast borne against God and thy neighbour, but especially God's faithful prophets, whom thou heartily hatedst for their plain dealing; as Ahab did Micaiah, because he never spoke good to him. It is very probable that Micaiah was that disguised prophet who brought Ahab the fearful message of displeasure and death, for dismissing Benhadad; for the which he was ever since fasted in prison, deep in disgrace. Lo, this is the world's wages. Truth breeds hatred, great hatred, as the text hath it, devilish hatred, and this is through the multitude of men's iniquities, the overflow of sins, which wretched men hold so dear to themselves, that they cannot but rage against those that disclaim against them, and proclaim hell fire against their hateful practices; they cannot stand still to have their eyes picked out, how should they? say. Now, for such, what wonder is it if God in justice give them up to the efficacy of error that they may believe a lie, since they would not receive the love of the truth? **#2Th 2:11**, *ut infatuati seducantur, et seducti iudicentur* (Augustin in loc.), that being infatuated they may be seduced, and being seduced, perish? what wonder also if he deliver them up, as to "strong delusions," so to "vile affections," and abominable actions, that they may receive in themselves that recompense of their error that is meet, **#Ro 1:27**. What marvel, if men that will not endure sound doctrine be left to seducers? if those that have itching ears meet with clawing preachers? if such as turn away their ears from the truth, be turned to fables and fopperies? **#2Ti 4:3,4**. It is for the multitude of men's iniquities, and especially for their great hatred to the truth, that the Church is so pestered with impostors, {#2Pe 2:1,2} who bring in "damnable heresies," even denying the Lord that bought them. Do not our modern seducers so among us, when (among other portentous opinions held by them) they stick not to affirm, that Christ is a carnal or fleshly thing; that those that are grown

Christians may go to God immediately without a Christ; that Christ did not rise again, &c. Others contemn him by the notion of the man dying at Jerusalem—Oh horrible! (Dr Homes' Character of the Present Times, 200.) There was a time when the popes were so notoriously naughty as to speak thus basely of Christ; to deny, or at least to doubt the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, &c.; and then a poor popeling cried out, that the sins of that synagogue were so great, as that it deserved not to be ruled by any other than reprobates. Certain it is, that God plagues contempt of the truth (that great gospel sin) with an inundation of errors and enormities.

{a} Applied contemptuously to one whose intellect seems muddled. (ED)

Ver. 8. **The watchman of Ephraim was with my God]** *i.e.* The false prophets above mentioned pretend themselves to be with God, and for him speak, look, and act as if they came out of God's bosom, or were so many angels newly dropped from heaven; take upon them glorious titles to that purpose, as watchmen, prophets, spiritual men, he. These titles proved snares to many that inquired not narrowly into them; and especially because they preached *placencia*, pleasing things, soothed men up in their sins, sewed pillows under their elbows, daubed with untempered mortar, &c. Hence silly people lent both their ears to them (as birds do to the lure or whistle of the fowler), and were soon insnared.

**The prophet is as a snare of a fowler, &c.]** Seducers have their pithanology, their art to persuade before they teach, as the Valentinians had; they are cunning, and insinuate, as Zanchy testifieth of Laelius Socinus, that by propounding questions he sought to insnare him, *semper interrogans quasi cuperet doceri*, labouring to drop into him certain dangerous principles of the Samosatenian heresy. This sly trick they have learned of that old manslayer, the devil, who by these emissaries of his catcheth simple people, as the fowler doth the bird, by casting baits; or as the fisher, by one fish catcheth another, that he may feed upon both.

**And hatred in the house of his God]** Satanic hatred (as in the former verse), which these wicked watchmen do stir up against the true prophets, and faithful servants of God. Diodati carrieth it thus,



These wicked watchmen are the chief occasion of God's hatred, and of the rejection of his people, who are as it were his family. Luther, Wigandus, and others set this sense upon the whole verse (taking the former part to be spoken of the good watchmen). These ancient watchmen of Ephraim were joined with my God, and wholly for him; but those to this day are a snare, &c., and if there be any yet left of the former stock, they have left off to do good, and are become hateful, as **#Ps 36:2,3**, their iniquity is found to be hateful. There are that render the words by way of exclamation thus, *O rem odiosam et abominandam in domo Dei!* Oh, hideous and hateful! oh, how hath the devil bestirred him, to stir up such seducers, to do so much mischief among God's people! There are those who interpret these two verses, not of false prophets, but of the true, who were looked upon as fools and madmen by the mad world; ever beside itself in point of salvation, &c. It is not for nought that Rivet saith, *Hi duo versus saris sunt iutricati*, These two verses are very intricate. And of this eighth verse Luther saith, that the brevity thereof hath caused obscurity. Drusius also saith, *Locus iste difficilior est quam vulgus existimat*, This text is harder than most men imagine.

Ver. 9. **They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah]** The people are as bad as possible, shamelessly, lawlessly wicked; nothing better then those sons of Belial, the men of Gibeah, that were sunk to sin's bottom; totally transformed into sin's image, extremely flagitious, so that a worse people could hardly be found upon the face of the earth, **#Jud 19:12-30**. As it was given in answer to a godly man who desired to know of God, why Phocas was set up for emperor? because there could not be a worse man found, and that the sins of Christians required it. Lipsius maketh mention of one Tubulus (about Cicero's time) who was so desperately wicked, *ut eius nomen non hominis sed vitii esse videretur*, that his name seemed to be the name not of a man, but of wickedness itself. Lo, such were these men of Gibeah, **#Jud 19:22-25**, nothing behind Sodomites in sin; as Samaria now was nothing behind them, and is therefore fitly coupled with her sister Sodom, **#Eze 16:46**. The reason of all which is here given, their wicked watchmen; according to that, **#Isa 3:12**, *qui te ducunt, seducunt*, "they which lead thee cause thee to err"; and again, **#Isa 9:16**, "the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed." It is

thought that the Gibeah here mentioned, and to which this verse relateth, was the same which, #Jos 21:17, is called Gebah; which was a city given to the priests, who being lords and owners of the town, were probably the ringleaders of the rest in that matchless villany; and so were of the number of those worst of sinners, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," #Ro 1:32.

**Now will he remember their iniquities, and visit their sins]** Now that they had filled up the measure of their fathers' sins, #Mt 23:32, nay, sought to out sin them, *et puduit non esse impudentes* it was not disgusting to be shameful, (as Austin saith somewhere), God would forbear them no longer. Let this be noted, by such as being told of their vile and vicious practices, plead that they do but as their forefathers did. Certainly if the times be as ill as they were heretofore, they are even for that cause much the worse; and God will the sooner remember and visit, pay wicked men for the new and the old. See #Ho 8:13.

Ver. 10. **I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness]** Where anything is good and sweet, because in a barren and solitary place. Hence they are said to have sucked honey out of the rock, #De 32:13, that is, water as sweet as honey, because in such necessity. The vine and fig tree are of so great account, as that Jotham in his parable brings in the trees, offering the sovereign power to them, #Jud 9:10,12. To these two noble and useful trees, and to their most seasonable and comfortable fruit, doth the Lord here compare Israel; to grapes in the wilderness, and to the firstripe figs, *quae delicatis in summo sunt pretio*, which are counted great dainties. #Mic 7:1. Our Saviour came with great desire to the fig tree, #Mt 21:19, his soul desired the firstripe fruits; and though they had not been full ripe, he could have been glad of them, even of the firstfruits of the fig tree, at her first time, as it is here, *in primordio eius*, of those untimely fruits which the fig tree casteth when shaken of a mighty wind, #Re 6:13. By this expression, then, is set forth God's dear and free love to Israel, when he found him in a desert land, in the waste howling wilderness: he compassed him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye, #De 32:10. All this and more he did for them, *ex mero motu*, out of pure and unexcited love, according

to his own heart, according to the good pleasure of his will, he loved them because he loved them, #De 7:7,8 10:15, in the wilderness especially, where they grieved him forty years together, and tempted him ten times, #Nu 14:22. But God had said of Israel, "He is my son, even my firstborn," #Ex 4:22, and so, "higher than the kings of the earth," #Ps 89:27. He had chosen him for his love, and now loved him for his choice. This son of his he called out of Egypt, to keep a feast to the Lord in the wilderness, #Ex 5:1, that is, to serve him, #Ex 4:23, to serve him acceptably, #Heb 12:28, to set up his pure worship according to his own prescription in the mount, #Ex 25:40. This was altogether as delightful to God as grapes in the wilderness are to a wearied, parched traveller. And this the rather, because it was the kindness of their youth, the love of their espousals, which was as the firstripe of the figs, in the first time, at the first bearing; for the fig tree bears twice a year; and the Egyptian fig tree seven times a year, saith Solinus, *Uno anno septies fructus sufficit*. Now the firstripe fruits are ladies' food, we say, or longing meat. God's soul doth even long after the firstripe fruits, #Mic 7:1, as we prize even nettle buds when they bud out first. If the vine do but flourish, the pomegranates bud, the tender grapes appear, #So 6:11 7:12; he will pour his spirit upon the seed, and his blessing upon the buds, #Isa 44:3. He liketh not those *arbores autumnales*, #Jude 12, autumn trees, that bud at latter end of harvest; he made choice of the almond tree, #Jer 1:11, because it blossometh first. So he calleth for firstfruits of the trees, and of the earth, in the sheaf, in the threshingfloor, in the dough, in the loaves; yea, for ears of corn dried by the fire, and wheat beaten out of the green ears, #Le 2:14, to signify how pleasant unto him is the primrose of our age.

**But they went to Baalpeor]** See #Nu 25:3. {See Trapp on "Nu 25:3"} Heb. they went in to him, which *obscoenum quid et turpe denotat*, as #Ge 16:2; so #Ps 106:28, "They joined themselves also to Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead," that is, sacrifices offered to the infernal gods, or to Pluto, the devil (whom the Phoenicians called Moth, or Death), in the behalf of the dead.

**And separated themselves]** Heb. Nazarited themselves, *ad religiose colendum*: they became votaries,

**to that shame]** *i.e.* to that shameful and abominable idol, that blushful Priapus, *qui referebat viri pudendi speciem* (Tarnov.): and whose worshippers are brought in, saying, *Nos, pudore pulse, stamus sub Iove, coleis apertis*. Βορβορουμεθα ταυτα λεγοντες, we rake a dunghill (as Cyril speaks in like case) in discoursing of such dunghill deities. Isidore interpreteth Baalpeor *simulachrum ignominiae*, an image of ignominy: and most sure it is that idolaters, left off their idols in deepest dangers, shall be ashamed of their expectation of help from them, **#Jer 3:19 11:13**.

**And their abominations were according as they loved]** Or, according as they listed, so some interpret it: or, according as they loved the Moabitish women more or less, so they worshipped their idols: Solomon did the same. Or, they became as detestable as their very idols, which they loved and worshipped. Or, I abominate them as much now as ever I loved them before; and how much that was he had showed in the beginning of the verse. Now there is nothing that goeth more to God's heart than the loss of his love upon an unthankful people. He had healed their backslidings in Egypt (where they had worshipped idols, **#Eze 16:26**), he had loved them freely and immensely. Now therefore that they should so slight such a love, to go after such a shame, and so to undo themselves for ever; this was monstrous ingratitude, this was an insufferable injury.

**Ver. 11. As for Ephraim, their glory shall flee away as a bird]** Heb. Ephraim, by a nominative absolute. Or, O Ephraim, as with a sigh, or a shriek, for grief and horror of their ensuing calamity, *exilium, excidium, et exitium*. "The Lord afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men," **#La 3:33**. It goes as much against the heart with him as against the hair with us; witness this pathetic expression. See also **#Ho 11:8**. Their glory, that is, their God, as in the next verse. Or, their children, as in the next words. They worshipped Baalpeor for fruitfulness; but it shall not do: for either they shall be punished with barrenness, or else with a *luctuosa foecunditas* (as Jerome saith of Loeta, who buried many children), a doleful fruitfulness.

**Their glory shall flee away as a bird]** Suddenly, swiftly, irrecoverably, shall their numerous posterity, which they looked upon as themselves multiplied and eternalized, be cut off, be

snatched away by the hand of death; so that, Rachel-like, they shall refuse to be comforted, because her children were not: or as Cratisiclea, in Plutarch, who, seeing her dear children slain before her, and herself ready to be served in like sort, uttered only this word, *Quo pueri, estis profecti?* Poor children, what is become of you?

**From the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception]** In all these states shall the curse follow them close: either they shall not conceive, or die in the womb, or be stifled in the birth; they shall all prove Ichabods. It is God that gives strength to conceive, as he did to Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth, &c. It is he that formeth us in the womb, and that by the book, **#Ps 139:15,16**, and preserveth us there, **#Job 10:8**, when neither we can shift for ourselves, nor our parents provide for us. It is he that taketh us thence, **#Ps 22:9,10**, as a nurse or midwife doth the newborn babe. It is he that keepeth us in the cradle, and in childhood, when we are subject to a thousand deaths and dangers; for *puerilitas est periculorum pelagus*; it is a just wonder that any child attains to maturity. But if wicked men's children do so, a soft they do (for "they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes," **#Ps 17:14**), yet it follows,

Ver. 12. **Though they bring up children, yet will I bereave them]** "If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread," **#Job 27:14**. This was fulfilled in Ahab's seventy sons, beheaded together, **#2Ki 10:6,7**, in whom he had vainly promised himself the establishment of his house, which God had threatened to root out: in Jehu and his posterity after the fourth generation: those Romans that went out against the enemy at the *Porta scelerata* wicked gate, (as it was thereupon called) and never returned again; and that Eckius Raschachius, a German captain, at the siege of Buda, A.D. 1541, whose son, a valiant young gentleman, being got out of the army without his father's knowledge, bare himself so gallantly in fight against the enemy, in the sight of his father and the army, that he was highly commended of all men, and especially of his father, that knew him not at all. Yet before he could clear himself he was compassed in by the enemy, and valiantly fighting, slain. Raschachius, exceedingly moved with the death of so brave a man, ignorant how near he touched himself,

turning about to the other captains said, This worthy gentleman, whatsoever he be, is worthy of eternal commendation, and to be most honourably buried by the whole army. As the rest of the captains were with like compassion approving his speech, the dead body of the unfortunate son rescued, was presented to the most miserable father; which caused all them that were there present to shed tears. But such a sudden and inward grief surprised the aged father, and struck so to his heart, that after he had stood a while speechless, with his eyes set in his head, he suddenly fell down dead.

**Yea, woe also to them when I depart from them]** This is indeed worse than all the rest; this is that only evil spoken of by Ezekiel: hell itself is nothing else but a separation from God's presence, with the ill consequents thereof; and the tears of hell are not sufficient to bewail the loss of that beautiful vision. How miserable was Cain when cast off by God! Saul, when forsaken of him! David, when deserted, though but for a few months! Job, for a few years, Suidas saith seven! While God was graciously with him, and prospered him, he was Jobab (that same mentioned **#Ge 36:34**, as some think), but when under sense of God's absence, contracted into Job. See the like, **#Ge 17:5 Ru 1:20**. His desertion was far more comfortable than David's; it was probational only, but David's penal, for chastisement of some way of wickedness. O lay we hold upon God (as the spouse doth upon her Beloved), and cry, as the prophet did, "Lord, leave us not," **#Jer 14:9**. If he seem to be about, and his back be turned, cry aloud after him, as the blind man in the Gospel did, till Jesus stood: set up thy note, as Micah did after his lost idols, **#Jud 18:24**. Ye have taken away my gods, saith he, and what have I more? as if he should have said, I esteem all that you have left me as nothing, now that my gods are gone. Jerusalem, the joy of the whole earth, pleased not Absalom, unless he might see David's face. God was no sooner gone from Miriam but the leprosy appeared in her face. But of this before.

**Ver. 13. Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place]** And therefore pleaseth himself as not forsaken of God. But he may be angry enough with those that yet outwardly prosper; as he was with the old world buried in security; with Sodom, who had fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness; with the land of Shinar (where

Babel was built, #Ge 11:2-4), fruitful beyond credulity, as Herodotus and Pliny testify; with Tyre, a maritime and magnificent city, planted in a pleasant place, in the very heart of the sea; as Venice is at this day, *media insuperabilis unda*, environed with her embracing Neptune, to whom (as the ceremony of her throwing a ring into the sea implies) she marrieth herself with yearly nuptials, and hath for her motto, *Nec fluctu nec flatu movetur*; Nor winds nor waves can stir her. Of the pomp, pride, and populousness of Tyre read #Eze 26:1-28:19. Lo, such a one was Ephraim, when ripe for ruin, near to an utter downfall. What can be more fair and flourishing than a grainfield or vineyard a little before the harvest, the vintage? Physicians say that the uttermost degree of bodily health is next unto sickness. Glass, or other metals, cast into the fire, shine most when ready to melt and run. This was Tyre's case, this was Ephraim's, pleasantly planted, but marked out for destruction; as a carpenter cometh to a wood, and with his axe marketh out the fairest trees for felling. Ephraim is the worse because he seeth Tyre yet prosper. But God will take that from heathen Tyre that he will not take from Ephraim; and the sunshine of prosperity doth but ripen the sins of them both for divine vengeance.

**They shall bring forth children to the murderers]** As to God's executioners; and so show themselves not parents, but parricides; because they betray their children (as Babel did by her idolatry, #Ps 137:8 Isa 13:8) into the hands of the enemy. Wherein they are more cruel than that false schoolmaster in Italy (mentioned by Livy and Florus), that brought forth his scholars, the flower of the nobility and gentry there, to Hannibal; who, if he had not been more merciful than otherwise, they had all been murdered. But what shall we say of such wretched parents, as bring forth children to that old manslayer, the devil? and how shall such undone children curse their careless parents in hell, throughout all eternity! If the Lord also could say of those poor children that were sacrificed to Moloch (the Chaldee paraphrase understands this text of those children), "Thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them" (namely, for the images of the foresaid idols), #Eze 16:21, what will he say, or rather, what will he not say, to those bloody parents, that carry their children with them, to Satan's slaughter house?

Ver. 14. **Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give?**] This question implieth abundance of affection in the prophet, praying for this forlorn people devoted to destruction. It is the property of gracious spirits to be more sensible of, and more deeply affected with, the calamities that are coming upon the wicked, than those wicked ones themselves are; as Daniel was for Nebuchadnezzar, whose dream he had interpreted, **#Da 4:19**, and as Habakkuk was for the Chaldeans, whose destruction he had afore prophesied, **#Hab 3:16**. Hosea likewise (out of great commiseration of Ephraim's direful and dreadful condition) sets himself to pray for them; though himself seems set at a stand, and in a manner nonplussed, that he cannot well tell what to ask for them. God once made a fair offer to a foul sinner, even to Ahaz, that sturdy stigmatic, **#Isa 7:11**, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said" (churlishly enough), "I will not ask, neither will I try the Lord," **#Ho 9:12**, he would none of God's kindness, which yet the Lord there heapeth upon him, **#Ho 9:14**, that where sin abounded grace might superabound. Had our prophet had but half such an offer, or any the least such encouragement, oh how gladly would he have embraced it, how hastily would he have caught at it, as those Syrians did at Ahab's kind words, **#1Ki 20:33**? But he, considering the severity and certainty of God's judgments denounced against them, **#Ho 9:12,13**, and being much amazed thereat, sets himself to intercede and make request for his deplored countrymen; as Samuel did for Saul, rejected by God, **#1Sa 16:1**, as Paul did for the obdurate Jews, **#Ro 11:3**. And because he saw that he could not obtain of the impartial judge of the world to let go such an impenitent people altogether unpunished, he begs for them, that of two evils they may suffer the least; and rather bring forth no children at all, or children that may die as soon as born (this had been threatened **#Ho 9:11,12**), than "bring forth children to the murderer": it being the greatest misery that can befall a tender hearted parent, to see his dear children butchered before his eyes, as Zedekiah and Mauricius, the emperor, did; and before them both the king of Edom, whose eldest son was by the king of Moab sacrificed upon the wall, in his father's sight, **#2Ki 3:27 Am 2:1**. Thus Rabbi Kimchi giveth the sense of this text: Give, Lord, what thou wilt give? viz. that they may suffer in the womb, or at least in their infancy, that which they should otherwise suffer by the enemies'



sword. Confer #Jer 20:18 Lu 23:28 Ec 4:2 Job 3:10,11. The prophet knew well that God is never so bitterly bent against a people or person, but that something he will yield to faithful and fervent prayer, #Mt 24:20.

“ *Flectitur iratus voce rogante Deus.*”

Ver. 15. **All their wickedness is in Gilgal]** We have had the prophet's prayer: follows now the Lord's answer in this and the following verse, where we have the former threats repeated, to show that God was unchangeably resolved upon their ruin; and that, first, for their idolatry, secondly, for their other vile practices, thirdly, for the apostasy of their princes: all this here. Their idolatry was the worse, because committed at Gilgal, where God had done much for their forefathers; {See Trapp on "Ho 4:15"} The quality of the place adds much to the greatness of the sin, "In the land of uprightness they will deal unjustly," #Isa 26:10, "the faithful city is become a harlot," #Isa 1:21 5:7, he looked for judgment, but behold a scab. The devil desireth to set himself up in such places as have been formerly eminent for God's sincere service, as Gilgal once was, #1Sa 10:8 11:15; for the ark of the covenant was there, which these idolaters had not. So in the holy land (as they still call it), which is possessed by Mahometans and Papists: so Wittenberg, where Luther first began to reform, is now deformed by divers errors and heresies, as Polanus observeth. Wilkinson against the Familists reports the like of Colchester in Essex.

**For there I hated them]** Angry I was with them before, and grieved for their other misdoings; but their idolatry hath enraged me with a holy hatred of them, and that there, where I showed greatest love to their forefathers. God thinks the worse of such places wherein idolaters rest and roost; like as he thinks the better of the towns and houses where his faithful servants inhabit, as #Isa 49:16, their walls are ever before him.

**For the wickedness of their doings, I will drive them out]** Revenge and expulsion is the next effect of hatred. There is a great deal of other wicked doings where idolatry (that wickedness with a witness, as it is herd styled) is set up. Surely of this abominable thing we may well say, as St James doth of discord, "Where envying

and strife is, there is confusion and every evll work," #Jas 3:16. But God will not endure such doings in his house: David would not in his, #Ps 101:7. Solomon entertained Jeroboam into his house and service, because he saw the young man was suitable for the work, #1Ki 11:28, but he proved a mischief to and against his house. Many today scruple not to entertain and harbour such as are serviceable, though otherwise their religion be either a Popish puppet and calf worship, or a flat irreligion. These have little of God in them.

**I will drive them out of mine house, saith he, I will love them no more]** A fearful sentence, like that #Jer 16:13, I will show them no favour: this was worse to them than their captivity there threatened. Ephraim had a great deal of outward peace and prosperity, but love they had none; because none of those graces that flow from election and accompany salvation. These are God's love tokens, that all must court. But oh! take heed (saith one) if thou addest any more to thy wickednesses, lest that this dreadful sentence be pronounced in heaven against thee, I will love thee no more, Heb. I will add no more to love thee.

**All their princes are revoltors]** *Col sarehem sorerim*, an elegance past the capability of translation. The princes were all rebellious and refractory, uncounsellable, unpersuadable (*απειθουντες*, as the Seventy render it), like that king of Scotland that would seldom ask counsel, but never follow any; so wedded he was to his own will. (Dan. Hist. of Eng. fol. 207). *Elati superbia volebant superiores esse verbo*, saith Luther upon this text. Jeroboam-like they would stretch out their hand against a prophet, #1Ki 13:4, that should cry against their altars, and deal plainly with them, as Hosea here doth; testifying to their faces that they were all apostates, and made Israel sin. Princes should be the lord keepers of both tables of the law; as it was written upon the sword of Charles the Great (*Decem praeceptorum custos Caxolus*); but when they are naught, as here, the people take after them. *Principis vita censura est et cynosura*.

Ver. 16. **Ephraim is smitten]** As a tree that hath received a deadly wound, or that hath the bark pulled off it, so that the sap cannot find the way to the branches; or that is blasted, as the fig tree in the Gospel was by Christ's curse; and as a vine smitten by great

hailstones, and beaten down to the ground. "The Lord shall smite Israel," saith another prophet, "as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel," &c., #1Ki 14:15, root and branch in one day.

**The root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit]** "The root of the righteous shall not be moved," #Pr 12:3. "The root of the matter is found in me," saith Job, #Job 19:28. "The holy seed shall be the substance thereof," #Isa 6:13; "as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them." The Duke of Florence gave for his ensign a great tree with many spreading boughs, one of them being cut off with this pogy, *Uno avulso non deficit alter Aureus* (Virg.). But it is otherwise with the ungodly; as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, #Da 4:14, nay, worse; for not so much as a stump of their roots is left in the earth, but they are written in the earth, #Jer 17:13, written childless, #Jer 22:30, their root is dried up, the parents shall perish; they shall bear no fruit, beget no children, which are the fruit of the womb, #De 28:11,18 Lu 1:42. Doeg's doom shall befall them, #Ps 52:5, "God shall destroy thee for ever; he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah."

**Yea, though they bring forth]** As Ahab did seventy sons, after that God had threatened his utter extirpation, following the work of generation so much the rather; {See Trapp on "Ho 9:13"}

**Yet I will slay]** For it is God that lets in and sets on the enemy; it is he that killeth and maketh alive, #1Sa 2:6.

**Even the beloved fruit of their womb]** Heb. their desires, or their desirable ones, their dearest children, called by Cicero also his *desideria*, *Valete, mea desideria, valete* (Cic.). The Latins seem to have their *filius*, a son, from φιλος, beloved: there is an ocean of love in a father's heart; though the more he loveth the less he is loved sometimes (as David by Absalom), and is sure, if he belong to God, to be crossed in his earthly idol. Children are certain cares, but uncertain comforts; they may prove as Augustus' three children did, whom he called his three ulcers or cancers, *Tres vomicas tria carcinomata* (Sueton.).

Ver. 17. **My God will cast them away]** My God, not their God, for they are castaways and apostates; see the like, **#1Jo 5:17**, and learn to stick to God the closer when others start from him; and to secure our own interest in a general defection, by siding with God, and subscribing, as here the prophet doth, to his perfect righteousness in the rejection and destruction of reprobates.

**Will cast them away]** With disdain and detestation, as vile and execrable. He will do it, saith the prophet here, not without a great deal of grief, as finding that God was fully resolved, and would not alter. The eternity of Israel will not lie, nor repent, **#1Sa 15:29**; for he is not a man, that he should repent, saith Samuel to Saul, that castaway; and it is very dreadful; as indeed it is for any wicked men to have such as have interest in God to declare against them; since "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," **#Ps 25:14**, and their sentence is not to be slighted. God's messengers especially, out of their acquaintance with their Master's proceedings, can foresee and foretell a punishment.

**Because they did not hearken unto him]** *Haec notabilis est sententia*, This is a notable sentence, saith Luther upon the text; and worthy to be written upon all our walls and windows. Death came into the world by the ear, so must life; for it is, Hear, and your souls shall live; and they that will not hear the instruction of life are doomed to destruction, as were Eli's sons, **#1Sa 2:25**, and Amaziab, **#2Ch 25:16**. A heavy ear is a singular judgment, **#Isa 6:10**, an uncircumcised ear a forerunner of ruin, **#Jer 6:10,11**. Oh pray God to pull off that filthy foreskin, and to give us a hearing ear (that way to wisdom), an understanding heart, such as Solomon begged, **#1Ki 3:9**. Pray that he would bore our ears, as **#Ps 40:6**, and make the bore big enough, that we may not only hear, but hearken; listen as for life. "Hear and give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken it," **#Jer 13:15**: when God hath spoken once let us hear it twice, as David did, **#Ps 62:11**; he preached over the sermon again to himself at home. We must do with the word's directions, as we do with oil to a stiff joint; rub and chafe them on our hearts by deep and frequent meditation and prayer; lest else we hear with these in the text,

**Because they did not hearken unto him, they shall be wanderers among the nations]** Heb. *Nodedim*: Cain's curse shall befall them. "A fugitive and a vagabond shall I be upon the earth," #Ge 4:12; but could not wander so wide as to miss hell, nor flee so far as from his own evil conscience. Lo, this is the case of these wandering Jews, a dejected and despised nation, exiled out of the world by a common consent of all people, till God turn again their captivity as the streams in the south, till he gather the outcasts of Israel.

## Chapter 10

Ver. 1. **Israel is an empty vine]** Heb. an emptying vine, קקוב losing her fruit, and so deceiving the owner. How can Israel but be empty of all good, of all fruits of the Spirit, when he will not hearken unto God, nor dwell under the droppings of a powerful ministry? when he is cast off by God, #Ho 9:17, who fills his people with the fruits of righteousness, #Php 1:11: and is not a wilderness a land of darkness unto them? #Jer 2:31, when his root is dried up, and all his juice and strength runs out into leaves, so that is *frondosa vitis* (as the Vulgate renders it), a leafy vine; such as are our profligate professors, and carnal gospellers, and such as was St James's solifidian, that empty fellow, as he calleth him, κερε, #Jas 2:20, when, lastly, the Holy Spirit (those two golden pipes, #Zec 4:12) empties not into his candlestick the golden oils of all precious graces, as from two blessed olive branches. The vine and the olive, two of the best fruit trees, grow best together, saith Melancthon. If Israel's heart be divided from God, as #Ho 10:2, and hath not his fruit found in him, as #Ho 14:8, what marvel if he prove {as #Na 2:10} empty and void and waste; and though {as #Na 2:2} the Lord turn away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel; for the emptiers have emptied them out, and married their vine branches?

**He beareth fruit to himself]** As he beareth fruit in and from himself (like the ivy, which, though it clasp about the oak, and sometimes kills it, yet brings forth all its berries, by virtue of its own root) so he beareth fruit for himself, or to himself. Profit, pleasure, and preferment is his Trinity; and corrupt self is all these in unity. He fasteth to himself, as those hypocrites, #Zec 7:5; he prays, hears, confers, giveth alms, &c., out of sinful self-love. In all that he doth, *sibi soli velificatur*; he seeks his own ends only; as the eagle, when

he flieth highest, hath his eye on his prey. *In parabola ovis capras suas quaerit;* in the parabol of the sheep, he sought for his own sheep; like the fish in the Gospel, either he is dumb, or hath nothing but silver in his mouth, he is a notorious self-seeker, he bears fruit to himself, he sacrificeth to himself, as Sejanus did. As Prometheus is fabled to have stolen fire from Jupiter, so the false Israelite would defraud God of heaven, if he could tell how. Spira confessed that he used prayer only as a bridge to bring him to heaven; and therefore he despaired of acceptance, as well he might: for how should God relish such sorry hedge-fruits? how should he say of such clusters of Gomorrah, "Destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it?" #**Isa 65:8**. The good soul, as she bears all her fruit in Christ, #**Joh 15:2**, so she keeps all her fruit for him, #**So 5:13**, and cries out, *Propter te, Domine, propter te*. On account of you, Lord, on account of you. As all his springs are in her, so all she has and is, is for him; and if she had more and better, she could think it worthy of him. Hence it is, that when he comes into his garden (upon her invitation), #**So 4:16**, to eat his pleasant fruits, he gathereth his myrrh with his spice, he eateth his honey with his honeycomb, as it were, crust and crumb together, #**So 5:1**. He takes in good part the better and worse performed services; he passeth by failings in the manner, where the heart is upright for the main: wicked men present also some kind of fruit (as the oak bears some kind of apples and acorns, but they are not man's meat; swine indeed will hunch them up; so the devil likes well enough of these self-fruits), but they make not to God's palate. *Delicata res est Spiritus Dei* The Spirit of God is a charming person. (Tertull.), our oaken apples will not down with him. Self must be strained out, and God set up, that ye may be called "Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he alone may be glorified," #**Isa 61:3**; "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God," #**Php 1:11**.

**According to the multitude of his fruit, he hath increased the altars]** *Iuxta ubertatem, exuberant simulachris*, saith the Vulgate elegantly; but yet short of the original, where there is a dainty alliteration, and a double polyptoton. {a} For the sense: the prophet, as he had accused Israel of emptiness and selfishness, so he doth here of unthankfulness, in abusing God's plenty to the promoting of

idolatry; as if God had hired them to be wicked. See the like before, **#Ho 2:8**. {See Trapp on "Ho 2:8"} and consider how far against the ingenuity of a Christian it is to be least for God when he hath most from him; when his own turn is served, then to turn his back from the author of all his good; to do as the moon, that getteth farthest off the sun when she is fullest of his light.

**According to the goodness of his land]** Idolaters desire to be in the place where there are good lands, fruitful fields; that they may lavish upon their images; that they may so beautify, or (as the Hebrew word here is) bonify their images, as Jezebel did her head with tires and brave dresses, **#2Ki 9:30**. "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god," or that endow another god, and give gifts to him, as that text may be rendered, **#Ps 16:4**. What excessive cost the superstitious Papists bestow upon their idols, or images (which are one and the same, as we see here), and especially upon their Lady of Loretto, the Jesuit Tursellinus hath set forth to the world. And why they so much desire and endeavour to recover England (praying for it, as is to be seen written on the gates of their colleges, *Iesu, Iesu, converte Angliam: fiat, fiat* Jesus, Jesus, convert the English, let it happen, let it happen) the reason is evident; it is a good land, and would easily yield them good images, stately altars, &c. England was wont to be called the pope's ass, and his *puteus inexhaustus*, unexhausted well, his pit of treasure, that could never be drawn dry: he was wont to say, that he could never want money so long as he could hold a pen in his fingers to write to England. He received here hence yearly above nine tons of gold. Now, according to what they received they expended upon their images. What a shame it is, then, for true worshippers, that there is no proportion between their increases for God and their increases from God, that those that are rich in this world are not rich in good works; that they lay not by for pious and charitable uses, according as God hath blessed them, **#1Co 16:2**, but that they should be the richer the harder; as children that have their mouths full, and both hands full, yet will part with none, but spill it rather. It is observed of men that grow very fat, that they have so much the less blood. And so the fatter many men are in their estates the less blood, life, and spirits they have for God.

{a} A rhetorical figure consisting in the repetition of a word in different cases or inflexions in the same sentence. (ED)

Ver. 2. **Their heart is divided**] *sc.* from God; whose soul therefore is justly disjointed from them, **#Jer 6:8**. They professed to worship the true God, and yet they transferred the honour due to him alone upon dumb idols; they halted between two, and would needs serve two lords; but God would have none of that. "Be the gods of the heathen good fellows," saith one, "the true God is a jealous God, and will not part stakes with another." The double-minded man is not for his service; for he will be served truly, that there be no halting; and, totally, that there be no halving. Good therefore and worthy of all acceptation is the counsel of St James to such, **#Jas 4:8**, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded," or ye cloven-hearted, διυνοχοι. Out with the corruption that cleaveth to your hearts; and then there will be a constance and evenness in your minds, mouths, and manners; which is absolutely necessary to such as draw nigh to God in holy duties, and the contrary abominable, **#Isa 29:13**.

**Now shall they be found faulty**] Sinners against their own souls, procurers of their own ruth and ruin. And this they shall so clearly be convinced of (as *afflictio dat intellectum*, smart makes wit), that they shall cry out, with Joseph's brethren, We are verily guilty, **#Ge 42:21**, and conscience awakened, shall answer as Reuben in the next verse, "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin" (O do not this abominable thing): "and ye would not hear?" Did not the prophets foretell you what would be the fruit of your idolatries? did they not even slit up your hearts with the sacrificing knife of God's word (sharper than any two-edged sword), and lay all your evil thoughts naked and open, or dissected, quartered, and cleft in the backbone (as the apostle's word, τετραχηλισμενα, signifieth, **#Heb 4:13**), but ye would not then be convinced of all, and falling down upon your face, worship God, as **#1Co 14:24,25**? Now you are found faulty, or guilty, and cry *peccavi*; I have sinned, or now you are, that is, shortly ye shall be, wasted and desolated, as some render it; or now shall they die (*interibunt*, so the Vulgate), shall they perish; how should they do otherwise whose heart, that seat of life, is cut in twain; and whom the jealous and just God will cut in twain (διχοτομησει), tearing their souls from their bodies by death, Satan's



slaughter man, and appointing them their portion with hypocrites, #Mt 24:51.

**He shall break down their altars]** He, that is, God, my God, #Ho 9:17, for this chapter is a continuation of that (though Gualter makes it the beginning of Hosea's seventh sermon). He, that excelleth he, that Aph-hu, #2Ki 2:14. Even he, proved by five reasons to be one of God's attributes, by Mr Weemiss in his exposition of the moral law, Part I p. 162. *Vide sis.* Others render it thus: It shall break down their altars, *Ipsum cor.* It, that is, their heart (which indeed is the next antecedent), and happy had it been for them if their heart, divided from their wickedness, had been active in breakng down their altars in the prophet Isaiah's sense, #Isa 27:9, as a fruit of their true repentance: "By this therefore," that is, by their affliction sanctified, "shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit" (and good fruit too) "to take away his sin; when" (in testimony of his sound repentance and self-abhorrency for former idolatry) "he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up." But it appears not anywhere that Israel was so well affected, though grievously afflicted; that his divided heart prompted him to any such holy practice. Rather it brought ruin upon him to the decolling of his altars and spoiling of his images (which he so doted on and delighted in), and so might well say to him, as Apollodorus the tyrant's heart did, who dreamed one night that he was flayed by the Scythians, and boiled in a caldron; and that his heart spake to him out of the kettle; It is I that have drawn thee to all this: thou mayest thank me for all, Ἐγὼ σοὶ τούτων αἰτία..

Ver. 4. **They have spoken words]** Bubbles of words, great swelling words, {as #2Pe 2:18}; thereby thinking to bear down and outface the prophets, and the godly party. They speak violent words (as the Chaldee hath it), robust words, as if they would yet carry it (though their king could not help them) by confederacies and covenants confirmed with oaths; holding that rule of the Priscillianists for gospel (as they say),

“*Iura, periura: secretum prodere noli.*”

and that maxim of Machiavel, that religion itself (in contracts and covenants) should not be cared for; but only the appearance, because the credit is a help, the use a cumber; but all these are but words, saith the prophet, and those but wind; they shall do them no good, because without God.

“ *Quid nisus? risus; conamina? inania, vana:  
Conventus? ventus; foedera? verba mera.* ”

**Swearing falsely in making a covenant]** *A foul business, whether it be understood of covenant with God (whereof before) or with the Assyrian, with whom they broke, to ingratiate with "So, king of Egypt," #2Ki 17:4. How God plagueth perjurers, &c., covenant breakers, see #Zec 5:3 Mal 3:5. {See Trapp on "Zec 5:3} He will {See Trapp on "mal 3:5} appoint the sword to avenge the quarrel of his covenant, #Le 26:25, as he did upon Jerusalem, not leaving there one stone upon another; upon those seven golden candlesticks, long since broken in pieces for their breach of covenant; upon Bohemia, that seat of the first open and authorized Reformation whatever will yet become of England.*

**Thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field]** Heb. of my field, where I have ploughed and made long furrows, fitted for good seed, wherein I "looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry," #Isa 5:7. This root of bitterness, these stalks of hemlock (that venomous weed, full of deadly poison), is bad anywhere, but worst of all when found in God's field, noted for a habitation of justice and mountain of holiness, #Jer 31:23. Where should a man look for justice, but where holiness is professed? since *primo praecepto reliquorum omnium observantia praecipitur*, the second table of the law is included in the first; yea, the keeping of all the ten is enjoined in the first commandment? Of Rome it was anciently said, that all the neighbouring cities were the better for her example of singular care to do justice. It should be so said of the city of God; where when judgment is turned into wormwood, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock, as #Am 6:12, well, it may grow till it be ripe in the field, but God will not suffer it to shed, to grow again, but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance.

Ver. 5. **The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear]** *sc.* When God shall break the necks of their altars, and spoil their images, as **#Ho 10:2**. They feared not God, by their own confession, **#Ho 10:3**, therefore they are full of base fears, whereof the true fear of God would have freed them, **#Mt 10:28**. He that feareth God needeth not fear any other thing, or person, **#Ps 112:7**; but can say with David, "My feet," that is, mine affections, "stand in an even place," that is, in an equal tenor; *Impavidum ferient ruinae*. "I shall rest in the day of trouble, when he cometh up against the people" (saith holy Habakkuk, **#Hab 3:16**). I shall rejoice in the God of my salvation; when those that fear not God shall be at their wits' end; yea, they shall be mad for the sight of their eyes that they shall see, **#De 28:34**.

**Because of the calves of Bethaven]** Calves in the feminine gender, she-calves, by way of contempt and derision, as Jerome noteth; as **#Isa 3:12**, "women rule over them." The Jews at this day look upon women as a lower creation, and do not allow them to enter into the synagogue. As among the Turks they never go to church, neither is there any reckoning made of their religion. The heathens had the like conceits and expressions: *O Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges* -Αχηιδες ουκ ετ Αχαιοι, &c. (Virg. Aeneid. 9. Hom. II 8). We cannot speak overbasely of idols; the Scripture calleth them excrements, nothings, &c. Luther wonders that Jeroboam, knowing how ill the people had sped with their golden calf in the wilderness, should yet dare to set up two at Dan and Bethel (both here called Bethaven, or houses of iniquity); and a man might as well wonder that, having as great a miracle wrought before him in the drying up of his hand, as St Paul at his conversion, yet was he no whit wrought upon. But if God strike not the stroke, if the Spirit set not in with the means, all is to no purpose. Who would think that men should ever be so void of reason as to trust in that which cannot save itself from the enemies' hands? as these calves of Bethaven, and as the Papists' breaden god, brought into the field by the rebels of Norfolk in King Edward VI's days; neither was there lacking masses, crosses, banners, candlesticks, with holy bread, and holy water plenty, to defend them from devils and all adversary power; which, in the end, neither could help their friends nor save themselves from the hands of their enemies; but again both the consecrated god, and all the trumpery about him, was taken in a cart, and there lay all in the dust; leaving

to them a notable lesson of bitter experience, saith Mr Fox, who relateth it.

**For the people thereof]** *i.e.* of the calf, to whom they had dedicated themselves; as the Moabites are called the people of Chemosh, #Nu 21:29, and Turks Mahometans. "For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever," #Mic 4:5.

**Do mourn over it]** As those women wept for Tammuz, #Eze 8:14, that is, for Osiris, king of Egypt, whose image they had adored, as those, #Re 18:15, wailed over that old whore, when they saw her a broiling; as idolatrous Micah cried after his gods, #Jud 18:24, and as the people of the East Indies, in the isle Ceylon, having an ape's tooth which they had consecrated gotten from them, mourned, and offered an incredible mass of treasure to recover it. Should not men then mourn after the sincere service of God, and hold it dear to their souls?

**And the priests thereof that rejoiced in it]** Heb. the Chemarims, or chimney chaplains, that were all black and sooty with the smoke of the sacrifices, and were therefore called Chemarim, or Camilli, as affecting a black habit, *sanctimoniae ergo*; therefore sacred, or having black brand marks upon their bodies, in honour of their idols, whereof these haply were the *Hierophantae*, or masters of the ceremonies, and made a great gain thereof the ground of their joy; for it is κερδος because κερ ηδει, gain so called, because it delights the heart.

**For the glory thereof]** *i.e.* of the calf, the beauty and bravery of its worship, all is now utterly gone.

Ver. 6. **It shall be also carried unto Assyria, &c.]** As no small part of the spoil, shall this Deafter be carried captive; being so far unable to save others, that he cannot save himself.

**For a present to king Jareb]** See #Ho 3:1-3, *in signum omnimodae victoriae*; so Aeneas (Aeneid. 1),

“ *Ilium in Italiam portat, victosque penates,*”

though in another sense; yet they must needs be poor despicable deities that fall into the enemies' hands, see **#Isa 46:2**. The ark indeed fell into the Philistines' hands; but the ark was not God's, but only a sign of his presence, which God suffered so to be taken for a punishment to his people, and for a plague to his enemies, whom he "smote in the hinder parts, and so put them to a perpetual reproach," **#Ps 78:66**.

**Ephraim shall receive shame]** Because they hoped and harped upon better things, **#Job 6:20**. O pray, with David, that our hopes be not disappointed; that they make us not ashamed, as Paul speaketh, **#Ro 5:5**; that they prove not as the spider's web, curiously framed, but to catch flies only; or as the child's hope, who catcheth at the shadow on the wall which he thinks he holds fast, or at the butterfly, which if he catch, he hath no such great catch of.

**And Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsels]** Of their impolitic plots and practices, in dividing themselves from David's house, and setting up unwarranted worships, calling in foreign helps, &c. Their own counsels have cast them down, **#Job 18:7**, because they were acted by false principles, and aimed at their own corrupt ends. They took counsel, but not of God; and covered with a covering, but not of his Spirit, that they might add sin to sin, **#Isa 30:1**. They made not the word the man of their counsel, as David did, **#Ps 119:24**, neither prayed they as he, **#Ps 73:24**, Guide me, Lord, with thy counsel, and so bring me to glory. In a word, they perished by their own counsels, **#Ho 11:6**, whereby they provoked God, and so were brought low by their iniquity, **#Ps 106:48**, and then they were ashamed of their own counsel, they saw themselves befooled by their carnal reason, and by that which they call reason of state, which indeed is treason, unless it be seasoned with justice and religion.

Ver. 7. **As for Samaria, her king is cut off, as the foam upon the waters]** An apt simile (whereof this prophet is full). Her king (not her idols, as some sense it), though gotten into Samaria, a strong city, so well victualled and fortified as to hold out a siege of three years' continuance, yet shall be cut off, or silenced, as **#Ho 4:7**, "as the foam upon the waters," *bullae evanida*, more weak than water,

whereof it ariseth, and whereby it is wherried away, and cannot resist; or, as a bubble blown up by every small wind, and as easily blown out again; it no sooner appears but it disappears. Lo, such are the greatest kings and kingdoms, when God taketh them in their wickedness. "He cuts off the spirit of princes," #Ps 76:12, he slips them off (so the Hebrew is) as one would slip off a flower between one's fingers; or as one would slip off a bunch of grapes. The kingdoms of the earth are like "foam upon the waters": 1. For their seeming brightness; 2. For their great eminence; 3. For their instability and inability to resist; 4. For their sudden fall and disappearance. The Turkish empire (which hath swallowed up so many glorious empires and renowned kingdoms) laboureth with nothing more than the weightiness of itself; and shall shortly be cut off as foam, and live no otherwise than by fame, as others now do; though for the present it be no whit inferior in greatness and strength to the greatest monarchies that ever yet were upon the face of the earth; the Roman empire only excepted.

Ver. 8. **The high places also of Aven, &c.**] Sept. the altars, *ab Alto dicta* ( אֲלֹתָי whence Βομῶν). Of Aven, for Bethaven (whereof before), a place so hateful now, that God loathes at large to mention it; he even cuts off the head of it, as he had threatened to do by the altars, #Ho 10:2. So Jeconiah degenerating is Coniah, &c.

**The sin of Israel]** That damning sin of idolatry here committed, that wickedness with a witness, which makes God abhor places as well as persons, and turns them into sin as it were. "What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem," #Mic 1:5.

**Shall be destroyed]** Thus, man's sin brings destruction upon the creatures. It is as poison in a glass, that causeth the glass to be broken, and cast upon the dunghill. The vessels that held the sin offering, if made of earth, they were to be broken; if of brass, or other metals, to be purged with fire; as one day the earth and visible heavens also shall be for the defilement that man's sin hath set upon them.

**The thorn and the thistle shall come upon their altars]** There shall be *nil nisi solitudo in terris, aegritudo in animis, &c.* {See Trapp on "Ho 9:6"}

**They shall say to the mountains, Cover us]** This they shall say out of the sense and terror of God's just judgments driving them to desperation.— *tellus prius ima dehiseat, &c.* Aristides commendeth Themistocles for this, that he never was so perplexed by any evil occurrence as to wish that the earth would swallow him up quick, or to pronounce the dead happy. Rivet well observeth here that Judea, as it was full of hills and rocks, so they were wont to dig themselves therein caves and dens, wherein to hide in time of danger. To these David often repaired, and so secured himself from Saul. And to these he alludeth when he calleth God his rock, #Ps 18:2, and the rock of his refuge, #Ps 94:22. And of these places of security Josephus writeth, describing the form of them (Antiq. 1. 14, cap. 26; B. J. i. 26). Now when they were in those holes of the hills, and were distressed by the enemy there, what wonder though they said to the mountains, Fall upon us, cover us, bury us alive, crush us to pieces, grind us to powder, rather than that we fall into the bloody fingers of these merciless monsters, who will put us haply to a lingering death, kill us piece meal, as Tiberius did those, he was angry with (Sueton.); and as the cannibals of America, when they take a prisoner, feed upon him alive, and by degrees, to the unutterable aggravation of his horror and torment. Our Saviour foretold his disciples, that at the last destruction of Jerusalem men should cry out to the mountains on this manner; and so shall the antichristian rout also do one day, #Re 6:16. They that would not worship the Lamb shall find him a lion; those that would not cast away their transgressions, but faced the heavens, shall run into the rocks to hide them; those that would not aspire to eternity shall despair of mercy; those that would not lift up their eyes to the everlasting mountains, from whence comes help, shall now in vain tire the deaf mountains, with Hide us, help us. Now what can the mountains do more than give an echo to such Help us; for they need help also; the wrath of God is upon the creature.

Ver. 9. **O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah]** Or, *prae diebus*, worse than in the days of Gibeah. What those days were, see #Ho 9:9 Jud 19:15: when they were is not so certain; but

probably before the time of the Judges, and soon after Joshua's death; for Jebus, or Jerusalem, was not yet taken, #**Jud 19:11,12** cf. **Ho 1:1**, and Phineas was yet alive and ministered before the Lord, #**Jud 20:28**, and was one of those elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, which he did for Israel, #**Jud 2:7**, so that these days of Gibeah were very ancient; and Israel's sin the worse, because from those days; and yet more, because above or beyond those days. God made use of your forefathers to punish that great sin; and yet you continue to be more vile and vicious than they were, that were so punished by your forefathers; neither are ye at all warned by their harms: which is just both presage and desert of your downfall. *Alterius perditio tua sit cautio. Exemplo alterius qui sapit, ille sapit.*

**There they stood]** Who stood? either the men of Gibeah stood stoutly to it, and slew in two battles 40,000; or, "there stood the men of Israel, and their battle did not overtake the children of iniquity"; not so overtake them at first, but that they were twice beaten by them; all which, notwithstanding, they stood it out, and prevailed at last; but so shall not you, since it is in my desire and decree, #**Ho 10:10**, to order it otherwise, and utterly to destroy you at once. *Non surget hic afflictio.* This pain will not arise.

Ver. 10. **It is in my desire that I should chastise them]** That is, I am unchangeably resolved, and fully bent upon it, to carry them captive and enslave them to their enemies, #**Na 1:9**, wherein they shall find that they have to do with God, and not with man; and that it is I that bind them, though I make use of the Assyrians to that purpose. Luther renders it, *Valde cupide eos castigabo*, exceeding desirously will I chastise them. O the venomous nature of sin, that maketh the merciful God to desire and to delight in men's miseries; to take comfort in their punishments, #**Eze 5:13,15**, to laugh at their destruction, Prov. i. And although he bear long with men's evil manners, ετροποφορησεν, #**Ac 13:18**, yet he beareth them as a burden whereof he desireth to be eased, #**Isa 1:24**, as a servitude whereof he desireth to be freed, #**Isa 43:24**, as a pain not inferior to that of a travailing woman; and albeit he bite in his pains, as it were, for a time, yet hear him what he saith, #**Isa 42:14**, "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once."



**And the people shall be gathered against them]** God can bring in his armies at his pleasure; for all creatures are at his beck and check. If he do but look out at the windows of heaven, and cry, "Who is on my side? who?" all creatures in heaven and earth will presently present their service; he never need want a weapon to chastise his rebels. If he but stamp with his foot (as that proud Roman, Gnaeus Pompey, said) he can have men enough. How ready are the Assyrians here to be the rod in his hand!

**When they shall bind themselves in their two furrows]** *i.e.* I will bring their enemies upon them, and they shall yoke them like oxen that are yoked to plough; yea, they shall bring them into such servitude that they shall make them do double work, plough in their two furrows, be they never so weary of doing one. The enemies shall not be moved to pity the poor Israelites, when tired with hard labour; but shall make them plough like beasts, giving them no rest till they have even wearied and worn them out. This is Polanus's interpretation; who farther admonisheth us, as often as we behold or think upon the yoking of oxen for the plough, that we likewise think of the miserable condition of such poor Christians as are slaves to Turks, and Tartars, and other enemies, who bind them indeed in their two furrows. It is not so long since here among us divers of God's dear servants were driven from Ciceter and other places (taken by the enemy) naked and barefoot, (as the Egyptians were by the Assyrians, #**Isa 20:4**), through thick and thin, to Oxford jail, &c., where, by the cruelty of their keepers, many of them lost their precious lives, to the incredible grief of their dear relations. Neither can I here pass by Tilly's cruelty at Magdeburg, in Germany; where, after 20,000 persons at least put to the sword, and the town burned down, his soldiers committed all manner of ravages, all the country over; ladies, gentlewomen, and others, like beasts, they yoked and coupled together, leading them into the woods to ravish them; and such as resisted they stripped naked, whipped them, cropped their ears, and so sent them home again (Mr Clark in the Life of the King of Sweden). The Irish cruelties unnameable might here be instanced. *O quam durum, O quam tristem serviunt illi servitutum!* Oh how harsh to serve sorrow to slaves. See Mr Clark's relation. The words may be read, "They shall bind them together."

Ver. 11. **And Ephraim is as a heifer that is taught]** *sc.* With the ox goad, which hath its name from teaching (Malmad), **#Jud 3:31**, because therewith oxen are taught to plough, saith R. David. Ephraim was a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, **#Jer 31:18**, but God brought her to it and taught her, though at first a backsliding heifer, **#Ho 4:16**, *{See Trapp on "Ho 4:16"}* taught her, as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, with briers and thorns of the wilderness, so that they paid dear for their learning, **#Jud 8:16**. But Ephraim, though taught it, loveth not ploughing work, because hard and hungry. She loveth rather

**to tread out the corn]** where she may dance and frisk in the soft straw without either yoke or muzzle, **#De 25:4**. As we thresh, so it was their manner to tread out their hard grain with the feet of beasts, or by them to draw wagons over it and so get it out of the husk. Now this was fair and free work, and Ephraim delighted in it; the rather, because she might feed all the while at pleasure; whereas those heifers that ploughed wrought hard all day, and in all weathers, without any refreshment. It is an ill sign, when men must pick and choose their work; this they will do for God, but not that. A dispensatory conscience is a naughty conscience; neither doth he God's will, but his own, that doth no more, or no other, than himself will. Such holy day servants, such retainers, God careth not for. Every one can swim in a warm bath; and every bird will sing in a summer's day. Judas will bear the cross, so he may bear the bag. And those carnal Capernaïtes follow Christ while he feeds them; as children will say their prayers so they may have their breakfast. But Abraham will forsake all to follow God, though he knew not whither; yea, though God seemed to go cross ways; as when he promised him a land flowing with milk and honey, and yet as soon as he came there he found famine. **#Ge 12:1,10**; so when he promised him seed as the stars, yet kept him without child for twenty years after; and after that he must kill him too, **#Ge 22:2**. So Job will trust in a killing God; Jonah calls upon him out of the deep; David keeps his statutes, when God had in some degree forsaken him, **#Ps 119:8**, and "behaved himself wisely in a perfect way," though God was not yet come unto him, **#Ps 101:2**. This is the trial of a Christian, to do difficult duties upon little or no encouragement; to wrestle, as Jacob did, in the night, and alone, and when God was

leaving him, and upon one leg. This is workman-like. The staff rings were to continue upon the ark; the Kohathite's shoulders felt wherefore; and so long God "helped them to carry it," #1Ch 15:26; but when they once fell to carting it for their own ease, as the Philistines had done, #1Sa 6:7,8, God made a dismal breach upon them, #2Sa 6:6-8, and David was very sensible of it, when he came up the second time to fetch the ark, #1Ch 15:12,18.

**But I passed over upon her fair neck]** God will make her both bear and draw, though she were grown delicate and tender, with long prosperity; her good and fair and fat neck, not galled or brawned with the yoke, which now she made dainty of; yet he would bring her to it; though he were by her untractableness forced to sit upon her neck, and make her more towardly to the yoke, as the manner of ploughmen was in that case.

**I will make Ephraim to ride]** Or, as the Vulgate hath it, I will ride him and rule him, though he kick and lay about him never so much; though he champ upon the bridle and stamp with his feet, &c. I will master him, and make him more serviceable, or, at least, less insolent. See this fulfilled, #Jer 31:18,19, where Ephraim is brought in, seeing his need of mercy in the sense of misery.

**Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods]** Judah doth the worst of the work, and suffers more hardship in the ways of my worship, and is held under by Israel, as appeareth in #2Ki 10:16-21. Jacob, that is, the ten tribes, did only break the clods, or harrow, which is the lighter work; and should therefore have been done with more delight; but they love to take their ease, and only follow after their pleasure and profit; and though taught to plough, yet like it not, because laborious; no, though they have Judah for an example of better.

Ver. 12. **Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy]** Righteousness is a sure seed, a precious grain, which those that sow (and every action of our life is a sowing) shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, and bring their sheaves with them, #Ps 126:6. Only they must not look to sow and reap all in one day; as one saith of the Hyperborean people far north, that they sow shortly after the sunrising with them, and reap before the sunset; that is, because the

whole half year is one continual day with them. The Church is God's husbandry, Heresbach. *de re Rust.* #1Co 3:9; the seed is the Word of God, #Lu 8:11. Ministers are God's husbandmen, harvestmen, #Mt 9:37,38; the plough, #Lu 9:62, plough staff, #Lu 13:8, axe, #Mt 3:10, are the law's threatenings; the fruit causing rain are the promises of the Gospel, #Isa 55:10,11; faith, that works by love, are the fruits; the last day, the harvest, #Mt 13:39,41. Then at utmost, those that sow bountifully (or, in blessings, Επ ευλογιας, as the Greek hath it) shall reap bountifully, #2Co 9:6. He that soweth seemeth to cast away his seed; but if he sow *in locis irriguis* {#Ec 11:1 Eze 34:26} upon fat and fertile places, he knows he shall receive his own with usury. In some parts of Egypt, where the river Nile overfloweth, they do but throw in their seed, and they have four rich harvests in less than four months. Oh sow bountifully the seeds of piety and charity into God's blessed bosom; and then be sure to reap plentiful mercy, in thy greatest necessity; reap in the month of mercy. (as the original here hath it), that is, according to the measure of Divine mercy, {see #Le 27:16 Ex 16:16} proportionably to the infiniteness of God's mercy. Now the Scripture hath three notable words to express the fulness of God's mercy in Christ to those that sow in righteousness: #Eph 2:7, the abundant riches of his grace, that are cast in over and above; #Ro 5:20, the grace of God hath been more than exceeding; there is a second υπερ: #1Ti 1:14, the grace of God was exceeding abundant. It had an abundance before: yea, but here is a super abundance; here is good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over shall God give into men's bosoms: like as when a poor man asked Mr Fox for an alms, he (finding him religious) gave him his horse; or as Alexander gave one (that craved some small courtesy of him) a whole city. And when the poor man said, it was too much for him to receive; yea, but not for me to give, said he, *Non quaero quid te accipere deceat, sed quid me dare* (Sen. de Benef.). So God giveth liberally and like himself, #Jas 1:5. He doth not shift off his suitors, as once a great prince did a bold begging philosopher. He asked a groat of him, and the king told him, it was too little for a king to give. He requested the king then to give him a talent; the king replied, it was too much for a beggar to crave, ου Βασιλικον δομα ου κυνικον λημμα. Certain it is, that God in his spiritual blessings and mercies to us is wont to regard not so much what is fit for his to ask or expect, as what standeth with his

goodness and greatness to bestow. If Israel had a hundredfold increase of his seed, **#Ge 26:12**, those that sow to themselves in righteousness, by doing and suffering God's will, shall have much more; even a hundredfold here, and eternal life hereafter, **#Mt 19:29**; so great a gain is godliness; so sure a gain is righteousness: who would not then turn spiritual seedsman?

**Break up your fallow ground]** *sc.* of your hearts, that ye sow not among the thorns, **#Jer 4:3**. The breaking up of sinful hearts is a singular means to prevent the breaking down of a sinful nation. Hence the prophet, though almost out of hope of any good to be done upon his desperate countrymen, resolves to try one more exhortation to them; and as in the morning he had sown his seed, so in the evening he withholdeth not his hand, **#Ec 11:6**, for who can tell whether it may not prosper? and whether in the midst of threats they might not suffer a word of exhortation, and whether it might not leave some impression, being delivered in few words? **#Heb 13:22**. Sow (therefore saith he) to yourselves in righteousness, &c., but first "break up your fallow ground." *Innovate vobis novale*. Repent, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds; in spirit and speech, in mind and manners, in constitution and conversation, in the purpose of your hearts, and practice of your lives. Old things are past, let all things become new; turn up the turf, stock up and stab up the roots and weeds; get into Christ, and become a new creature, **#2Co 5:17**. Till this be done men are in an undone condition, though they should spend their whole time in gathering up pearls and jewels.

**For it is time to seek the Lord]** High time, since your souls lie upon it. Ploughmen, we know, are careful to take their time; so are all others, wise enough in their generation. The wayfaring man travelleth while it is light; the seafaring man takes his opportunity of wind and tide; the smith smites while the iron is hot; the lawyer takes his term-time <sup>{a}</sup> to entertain clients, despatch suits. The men of Issachar were in great account with David, because they had understanding of the time, to know what Israel ought to do, **#1Ch 12:32** so are they with God that regard and use the seasons of grace; that "seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near," **#Isa 55:6**; that put in the plough, set upon the practice of

repentance, after a shower, when the heart is best affected; after God by his Word and Spirit hath taught (so some render the text) or rained righteousness upon them. Rain comes from heaven; so doth every good and perfect giving. Rain pours down plentifully, **#Ps 68:9**, thou didst send a plentiful rain on thine inheritance; so do the showers of righteousness on good hearts. Not a drop of rain falls in vain, or in a wrong place, but by a Divine decree, **#Job 28:26**; so here. Seek it in time, and we shall not fail of it. Only we must not set God a time when to come, but wait upon him, who waiteth to be gracious. Elijah sent seven times ere the rain came. Seek till God comes; limit not the Holy One of Israel. As he seldom comes at our time, so he never fails in his own. Hold out, therefore, faith and patience; for behold he cometh on the clouds, on the wings of the wind, and his reward is with him. "To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward," **#Pr 11:18**.

{a} The period during which the law courts are in session; CED

Ver. 13. **Ye have plowed wickedness**] The former exhortation was even spilt upon them; for they went on to plot and plough wickedness; they had their necks in the devil's yoke, and promoted his kingdom with sides and shoulders; they let out the strength of their spirits for the furtherance of sin, and were at no small pains to go to hell, as being the devil's hinds and horses to draw his plough, **#Pr 21:4**. "Even as I have seen," saith Eliphaz, "they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same," **#Job 4:8**. Ye have reaped iniquity, saith our prophet, that is *dignum factis praemium*, the reward of your wickedness. And her iniquity is opposed to mercy in the former verse, as wickedness also is to righteousness; or wickedness may be taken for their apostasy, idolatry, and creature confidence; and iniquity for the rest of their enormities, proceeding from those former; for these wicked ones are never out of action. *Arant, serunt, errant, scelera*, they plough, sow, and harrow mischief (Plaut. Capt. Act. 3. sc. 5); so that would they but take the like pains for heaven that they do for hell, they could not lightly miss it.

**Ye have eaten the fruit of lies**] That is, ye have been deceived by your false prophets and state politicians; whose fetch it is to formalize and enervate the power of truth, till at length they have

left you a heartless and sapless religion. Ye have fed hungerly upon the murdering morsels of sin; and that is the reason that there is so much ill blood among you. Your bread is that *panis mendacii* bread of falsehood, Solomon speaks of **#Pr 20:17**, full of grit and gravel, made up with sawdust (as they served the martyrs) and mixed with lime, as the treacherous Greeks dealt by the Western Christians, marching towards the Holy Land.

**Because thou didst trust in thy way]** In thy calf worship. Way is often put for religion; and every action men do is a step either to heaven or to hell: he that walketh uprightly walketh safely. These idolaters were very confident of their way; so are our Papists, and other heretics; as David George, that pestilent Libertine, was fully persuaded that the whole world would submit to him. And Campian, Coster, and other zealous Papists tell us to our heads that our religion is error, ourselves heretics, our end destruction; that one heaven cannot hold us hereafter, one Church now, &c. Thus "the way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth to counsel" (as no confident fool will) "is wise," **#Pr 12:15**.

**And in the multitude of their mighty men]** This made them ready to boast, as that young king of Hungary did, that though the sky should fall down upon them, yet they were men enough, and strong enough, with their pikes to bear it up. These Ephraimites liked their way of false worship the better because backed by a strong army. That way the mighty men go, that shall be trodden; this is a secret bias, a strong poise upon the spirits of most men. **#Re 13:4**, when power and authority was put into Antichrist's hands, the whole world wondered after him. But cursed be that man that maketh flesh his arm, **#Jer 17:5**. I will not trust in my bow, my sword shall not save me, saith David. "There is no king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength," **#Ps 33:16**. See **#Ps 146:3-5**.

Ver. 14. **Therefore shall a tumult arise among the people, &c.]** Even among those mighty men, wherein ye trusted, shall there be seditious tumults, that shall soon bring all into a miserable confusion. Intestine commotions may undo a people, as a man may die of an inward bleeding. (Virg. Aeneid. lib. 1),

“ *Ac veluti in magno populo cum saepe coorta est*

*Seditio, saevitque animis ignobile vulgus.*”

*When the multitude is in a rage they are like to a tiled house that is on fire (saith one), there is no coming near the house, the tiles do so fly about your face; so it is in tumults, there is no coming near to talk to them, to convince them; but they are ready to fly presently upon you. In Ket's sedition, Dr Parker, in his sermon before the rebels, near Norwich, touched them for their misliving so near that they went near to touch him for his life. The rude rage of the rebels was such, that some, being disabled almost to hold up their weapons, would strive what they could to strike their enemies; others being thrust through the body with a spear, would run themselves farther, to reach those that deadly wounded them. Yea, boys were observed to be so desperately resolved, as to pull arrows out of their own flesh, and deliver them to be shot again by the archers on their side. There are none so insolent and cruel as the vilest of the people, when they are got together in a head. What havoc made the seditious in Jerusalem a little before the last destruction of it! the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Italy! Wat Tyler and his accomplices here! That rebel, held up by the many headed multitude, dared to say, that all the laws of England should come out of his mouth. The Hebrew word ( זַרְחָה ) here used signifieth an inundation, or multitude of waters, which overran their banks with violence and roaring. The people are a most dangerous and heady water; when once it is out; it is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food, #Pr 28:3. The Septuagint render it, Destruction. Sal. Jarchi saith, it signifieth the voice of those that cry, Fugite, Fugite, Away, Away, the enemy is at hand, &c. Some say, to the same purpose, that it signifieth clamorem meticulosorum, the crying of those that are scared, as when there is luctus ubique paver, et plurima morti imago. See #Am 2:2 Zep 1:15.*

**And all thy fortresses shall be spoiled]** Yea, though they be munitions of rocks. "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine own heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord," #Jer 49:16. And again, "All thy strongholds shall be



like fig trees with the firstripe figs; if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater, who shall devour them at a bite,"  
#Na 3:12.

**As Shalman spoiled Betharbel]** Shalman signifieth peaceable (saith an interpreter), a man of a calm spirit; but he answered not his name; for he exercised greatest cruelty. There is not a more troublesome sea than that which is called *Mare pacificum*, Pacific Ocean. There is often *aliud in titulo, aliud in pyxide* Different in name from practice. Absalom signifieth the Father's peace; but he proved otherwise than was hoped.

“ *Fallitur augurio spes bona saepe suo.*”

But this Shalman is by the best interpreters thought to be Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, in this prophet's time. Shalman is *vex truncata*, a name cut off to the halves; a thing very ordinary in all the learned languages, as were easy to instance. See #Isa 15:2. Bamoth for Bamoth-Baal, #Jos 13:17. Chamath for Chamath-Dor. Hesiod puts Bpt for Bπtαποι, Ennius hath *Fabric* for *Fabricius*. This Shalmaneser (or, as Luther will have it, some other great warrior called Shalman, not elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, but not unknown to the ten tribes) did cruel execution, it seems, upon Betharbel, a city beyond Jordan, #Apc 1Ma 9:2, like as Tamerlane (for a terror to the Greek empire, much whereof he afterwards subdued) did at Sebastia; where he made a merciless slaughter of all sexes and sizes; whereby he held the whole East in such awe, as that he was commonly called *The wrath of God*, and *terror of the world*. There are those who think this Arbel to be the same as that Arbela, where Alexander defeated Darius, and won the Persian monarchy. They make it a city or country of Assyria, beneath Arpad, and hinted at by Rabshakeh, #2Ki 18:34. "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad?" *sc.* Shalmaneser hath utterly destroyed them. See #2Ki 15:29 17:24 19:13. Arbel is by some interpreted the city of Bel, where Belus or Baal was worshipped. By others Betharbel is interpreted as the house of the ensnaring god, the god of policy or subtilty. It seemed to them that the people of this place had a god that they thought would ensnare and ensnarl all their enemies; but it proved much otherwise.

**For, the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children]** Dashed against the ground (so the word signifieth), against the walls, or pavements. See #Ge 32:11 Ps 137:9 Isa 13:16 ( רטשׁ εδαφιζειν. Sept.). Such is the savage cruelty of war, when God lets it out. Such was the barbarous dealing of the French in the Parisian massacre, such the Sicilian Vespers, and at Merindoll, where the paps of many women were cut off, which gave suck to their children; which, looking for suck at their mother's breasts being dead before, died also for hunger. Was not this to "kill the mother with the children?" which God forbade by a symbol of taking the dam with the young, #De 22:6, and again of killing the ewe and the lamb both in one day, #Le 22:28. The Spaniards murdered fifty million Indians in forty-two years, as Acosta, the Jesuit, testifieth. Arsenoe was killed upon her children by her bloody brother, Ptolemy, king of Egypt. And another of that name killed thirty thousand Jews, and compelled the living to feed upon the flesh of the dead. When the Switzers vanquished the Thericenses in battle, they banqueted in the place where they won the victory; using the dead bodies of their adversaries instead of stools and tables. The sight of such like cruelties, common in war, might well make Zwinglius say, when he had been abroad with the army, that he had found more wickedness and bad counsels and courses therein than ever he had known before, either by experience or out of books. This passage in God's book (and the like, #Ho 13:16, "their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up") he could not be ignorant of. The prophet refers his hearers to a sad example of fresh bleeding cruelty, well known to them; that they might relent, repent, and prevent the like misery upon themselves. This is the use we should all put such examples to. #Lu 13:2,3,5 17:26,28 1Co 10:6,7,8,11.

Ver. 15. **So shall Bethel do unto you]** *i.e.* The idolatry that you have committed at Bethel, by a *synecdoche* of the place, this shall undo you. Or, So shall he do unto you, O inhabitants of Bethel. Bethel shall be made a Betharbel. They that take not example by others shall be made an example to others. *Lege historiam, ne fias historia.*

**Because of your great wickedness]** Heb. the wickedness of your wickedness, the iniquity of your sin, the foolishness of your

madness, #Ec 7:25, your idolatry especially, that wickedness with a witness. Let us (by God's example) learn to lay load upon our sins, and not to extenuate, but to aggravate them against ourselves.

**In a morning shall the king of Israel be utterly cut off]** This was fulfilled in Hoshea, the last king of Israel, #2Ki 17:6, cut off in a morning, that is, in a moment, as foam, or a bubble upon the waters. The morning light lasteth not long, but shineth on to the perfect day. Or, in a morning, when some hope appears, and some comfort is expected, as #Ps 30:6, it is but a lightning before death.

*“ Accidit in puncto, quod non speratur in anno.”*

“It happend in a mon\ment because it was not k\looked for in that year.”

Contrarily, the saints at evening time have light, #Zec 14:7. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:7"}

## Chapter 11

Ver. 1. **When Israel was a child, then I loved him]** On, because Israel was a child I loved him. Young things are lovely; young children especially, for their innocence and ignoscence. Some sense it thus, Israel was a child, and had nothing of worth or lovely in him; yet I loved him freely, #De 7:7 Ho 10:9, called him out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, led him through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, #Isa 63:13, possessed him of the promised land. Out of which though I shall shortly cast him for his ingratitude, yet there is hope of his restoration, by the Messiah my Son, whom when I have called out of Egypt, he shall gather together again the dispersed of Israel, and bring life and immortality to light by the gospel. The foundation of which restoration he here maketh to be his own free grace. He hath holpen his servant (or his child, του παιδα, #Lu 1:53) Israel, in remembrance of his mercy. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," &c., #Joh 3:16. Here then beginneth our prophet's first evangelical sermon, as Tarnovius observeth, who also readeth the text thus: Albeit Israel was a child, such a forlorn outcast child, as is described #Eze 17 Eze 23, yet I loved him, and adopted him for my son; not for any defect on my part (for I had an only begotten Son, in whom I am well pleased), or

for any desert on his part, for I found him in his blood, in his blood, in his blood, when I cast my skirt of love over him, and said unto him, Live, #Eze 16:6. Yea, and for his salvation's sake, I have called, that is, I have decreed to call, out of Egypt (whither he fled from Herod, and where he abode two or three years at least) my child Jesus, whose office it is to "save his people from their sins," #Mt 1:21. And although I might justly have deprived them of such a Saviour for ever, because when he came to his own, his own received him not (yea, rejected him to whom their own signs given to Herod did so aptly and evidently agree), yet out of Egypt, to show the constancy of my love to Israel, have I called (by mine angel, as Jacob by a messenger called his wives to him into the field, #Ge 31:4) my Son Christ, #Mt 2:23, who is God's Son, first, by eternal generation, #Pr 8:22,23; secondly, by personal union, #Ps 2:7. And thus God called out of Egypt, first Israel his people, and then Christ, the head of his people; in whom at length this prophecy was fulfilled.

Ver. 2. **As they called them]** *i.e.* As the prophets and ministers (whose names are here concealed, that the Word only may be glorified, as #Ac 13:48) called to them, to come out of spiritual Egypt, out of darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among the saints, by faith that is in Christ, #Ac 26:18.

**So they went from them]** They went a contrary way, as the child Samuel, when God called him, ran to Eli; or rather as the wilful Jews, when God would have gathered them, as the hen doth her chickens, they would not. When God called his natural Son out of Egypt, he came presently, #Heb 10:7 Ps 40:7,8; not so his adopted sons; for they turned upon him the back, and not the face, #Jer 2:27, they refused to be reformed, they hated to be healed. See #Ho 7:1. {See Trapp on "Ho 7:1"} Nay, to make up the full measure of their sins, and to heighten their contempt,

**They sacrificed unto Baalim, and burnt incense to graven images]** *Quasi aegre facturi Deo*, as if they would despite God on purpose, and spit in his very face; commit the like villany in his presence, as the Irish rebels lately did, when they bound the husband to the bedpost, while they abused his wife before him. See the notes

on Ho. 2, and almost on every chapter where their idolatry is cried out upon, and their extreme ingratitude.

Ver. 3. **I taught Ephraim also to go**] A child he was, **#Ho 11:1**, and like a child I dealt with him, teaching him how to set his feet, *pedare*, to foot it, as nurses do their little ones: he keepeth the feet of his saints, **#1Sa 2:9**; he guideth their feet in the way of peace, **#Lu 1:79**. See for this, **#De 1:31 32:11 Nu 11:12**. So great is the goodness of God to his people, that he dealeth with us as with his little children, *nos sublevando, submonendo, docendo, ducendo, regendo, tegendo, convocando, condonando, portando, confortando, &c.*, we are supported, admonished, taught, lead, guided, protected, assembled, forgiven, carried, comforted, saith a learned interpreter truly, and trimly (Tarnovius). He speaketh unto us as unto children, **#Heb 12:5** *paterne diligit, amice dirigit*, he loveth us as a father, he directs us as a friend, guiding us with his eye, leading us in his hand, setting us between his knees, as some interpret that text, **#De 33:3**, setting us upon his knees, as a father doth his darling, and rejoicing over us with joy, yea, joying over us with singing, **#Zep 3:17**. His affections are more than fatherly; and his expressions are according. "We are like infants" (saith Mr Baine), "newly born in a manner. They are kept by the loving parents from fire and water; they are fed, laid to sleep, made ready, and unready, and shifted in their scapes, but they know not who doth all this for them. So doth our heavenly Father by us in Christ." But (he knows) little understanding have we of him. After this, he teacheth us to go,

**taking us by the arms.**] to help our feeble knees. And taking us up in his own arms, when we come to a foul or rough place, helping us over the quagmires of crosses, and the difficulties of duties. And whereas we fall seven times a day, and in many things fail all; he taketh us up after that we have caught a knock, and cherisheth us in his bosom, &c. Montanus and Junius carry the sense another way, as if the words were not a description of God's love to the people, but of their unthankfulness to God; rendering the words thus: When, as I inform Ephraim, he taketh them in his arms, that is, he setteth up idols, and after the manner of impudent and shameless strumpets, he taketh the puppets in his arms, and embraceth them before my face. But I like the former sense better.

**But they knew not that I healed them]** Not only held them, that they might not fall, but healed them when they had fallen. Daring they would be sometimes to stand upon their own legs, to prevail by their own strength, **#1Sa 2:9**, to say with her in the poet, *Consilii satis est in me mihi*, &c. (Arachno apud Ovid. Metam.). I am wise enough, and able enough to go on, as if they were petty gods within themselves, and had no need of nor dependance upon me. Hence they hurt themselves, but I healed them. I forgave all their iniquities, I healed all their diseases, **#Ps 103:3**, their bruises and putrefying sores, that else had not been closed, bound up, nor mollified with ointment, **#Isa 1:6**. God left not his people in their low estate, as some physicians do their patients; but provided a sovereign salve, a horn of salvation, such as would cure any disease or maim, {a} even the sin against the Holy Ghost too, but that it is the nature of it to rage and rave both against the physic and the physician. Christ is both the one and the other; as being made unto us of God, wisdom righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, **#1Co 1:30**. *Quod sanitas in corpore, id sanctitas in corde*. He is Jehovah that healeth for he is Jehovah that sanctifieth. This Ephraim knew not, that is, out of pride and stoutness they acknowledged it not, but sacrificed to their own nets, wits, endeavours, &c. Of all things God can least endure to be neglected or to have the glory of his benefits transferred upon others, {see **#Ho 2:8**, with the note} When men shall either say, in the language of Ashdod, It is a chance, or else, I have made myself thus and thus happy, **#1Sa 6:9** this, though the saints should at any time do yet God will pardon their frowardness, and say as **#Isa 57:17,18**, I have seen his ways, his waywardness, and will heal him nevertheless and restore comforts to him.

{a} An injury to the body which causes the loss of a limb, or of the use of it; a mutilation, or mutilating wound. †In early use more widely, any lasting wound or bodily injury. (ED)

**Ver. 4. I drew them with cords of a man]** Not of a beast; though they have deserved to be hampered as unruly heifers, and to be yoked and ruled over with rigour, to be tamed and taken down a link lower, yet I, out of my philanthropy, yea, out of singular grace, have dealt civilly, nay, courteously with them, in an amicable and amiable way, and not as I might have done out of my sovereignty, and according to my justice. I drew them by the cords of a man, that is, 1. Gently and favourably; suiting myself to their dispositions (which

are often as different as their faces), hiring them to obedience, afflicting them in measure, with the rods of men, **#2Sa 7:14**, fitted to the weakness of men. If God should plead against us with his great power, as Job speaks, **#Job 23:6**, it would soon grind us to powder; but he hath no such design; he correcteth his children, *vel ad demonstrationem debitae miseriae vel ad emendationem labilis vitro, vel ad exercitationem necessariae patientiae*, saith Augustine, Tract. in Joan. 124; *ad exercitium non ad exitium*, saith another ancient, to refine and not to ruin them. 2. Rationally, by cogent arguments and motives, befitting the nature of a man; able to convince them and set them down with right reason, would they but consider, **#De 32:29**, would they but be wise and weigh things aright. This God wisheth they would do, calleth them to reason the case with him, **#Isa 1:18**, pleads with them in a friendly way, **#Jer 2:31**, and then appeals to their own consciences, whether they have dealt well with him, yea or no, **#Isa 5:3**, making them read the sentence against themselves, as did Judas the traitor, **#Mt 27:4**, and those Pharisees, **#Mt 21:40**. He bespeaks them, after most clear conviction, as **#Isa 46:8**. Remember this, and show yourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Most people are led on in a continued hurry of lusts and passions, and never bethink themselves, as **#1Ki 8:47**, never say so much as, What have I done? *Si haec duo tecum verba reputasses quid ago?* saith Cicero to Nevius: Hadst thou but bethought thyself of those few words, What have I done? thou wouldst never have been so covetous a cormorant. Oh, could men have but so much power over their passions and lusts as to get alone and weigh God's ways, much good might be done upon them; but for want of this, *Fertur equis auriga, &c.*, they rush into all excess of riot, as a horse into the battle; yea, they are so far unmanned as to think that they have reason to be mad, and that there is no small sense in sinning. "I do well to be angry, even unto death," **#Jon 4:9**.

**With bands of love]** Heb, thick cords, cart ropes (as it is rendered, **#Isa 5:18**), ropes of many wreaths, twisted and intertwined with love, that sweetest attractive. So **#Jer 31:3**, "With lovingkindness have I drawn thee"; and **#Isa 63:9**, "In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." He gave them a law, the sum of which was nothing but love;

and multiplied mercies upon them without measure, as is amply set forth by those holy Levites, #Neh 9:4,5. Now, mercy commands duty; and every new deliverance is a new tie to obedience. Love should have love, publicans and sinners yield that, #Mt 5:46. Yea, love should show itself strong as death, #So 8:6. Jonathan would have died for his David; David for his Absalom; Priscilla and Aquila for Paul, #Ro 16:4. Christ out of his love did die for his people. Have I but one life to lose for Christ? said that holy martyr ( *Cos amoris amor*). Let men take heed how they sin against love, for this is the greatest aggravation of sin; this is bestial, this is like unruly horses in a team, to break the gears, to snap in sunder the traces that should hold them. Such yokeless sons of Belial shall one day be held by the cords of their own sin, and whipped with those cords of conviction, that they would not be drawn by. Shall the harlot's hands be bands, her words cords to draw men to destruction, and shall God stretch out his hand all day long to them to no purpose? Shall he lose his sweet words upon them? &c. Peter's heart burst, and he brake out in weeping, when he saw love sparkling in Christ's looks, #Mr 14:72, and considered how he had burst asunder the bands of love, sinned against such manifestations of mercy, wiped off all his comfortables for the present, drew from Christ those piercing quick questions, Lovest thou me? yea, but dost love me indeed? O let the cords of God's kindness draw us nearer to him, hold us closer; to sin against mercy is to sin against humanity; and as no surfeit is more dangerous than that of bread, so no judgment is more terrible than that which grows out of love felt and slighted.

**And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on the jaws, &c.]** *i.e.* on their neck; albeit it seemeth by that law, made for not muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn, that those creatures when they wrought were muzzled or haltered up; and that halter fastened to the yoke that was upon their necks. The sense is this, I unyoked them often to give them meat, as the good husbandman doth that is merciful to his beast; he lifts up the yoke that lies hard upon its neck, leads it to the manger, lays food before it. So dealt God by this people all along from the wilderness, and forward; not suffering them to abide, *iugiter, sub iugis Gentium*, long under their enemy's yoke; but delivering them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them, #Eze 34:27. Christ also hath delivered his out



of the hands of those that hated them, and lay hard upon them; as the devil is a hard taskmaster, that neither takes off the yoke nor lays meat; gives no rest or refreshment to his drudges and dromedaries; but acts them and agitates them day and night, &c. Now, those that are his, Christ brings them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may do works meet for repentance, that weigh just as much as repentance doth, #Ac 26:18,20, and so find rest to their souls; provided that they take and keep Christ's yoke upon them (not thinking to live as they list more, saying, as those libertines in #Jer 7:10, "we are delivered to do all these abominations") and learn of him to be meek and lowly in heart, #Mt 11:29, so shall they soon find Christ's yoke easy, and his burden light, #Mt 11:30. And of this easy yoke of Christ Luther understands this text in Hosea; and thereupon discourseth of the law's rigour, and gospel's relaxation, according to that of Austin, *Lex iubet, gratia iuvat*; the law commandeth, but the gospel helpeth; God by his Spirit assisting, and farther accepting pence for pounds, the will for the work, the desire for the deed done, and laying meat before us, meat that the world knows not of, hidden manna, the *convivium iuge* ever flowing banquet of a good conscience.

Ver. 5. **He shall not return unto the land of Egypt]** That is, he needs not run to Egypt for help (as King Hoshea did), nor to the Assyrian, to whom they were tributaries from the time of Menahem; for they wanted nothing, and less should have wanted if they would have been ruled by me.

**But they refused to return]** He was not to have returned to the land of Egypt or of the Assyrian, who is his king; so some read the text. Others sense it thus: When I threaten them with the Assyrian they think to move and shelter themselves in Egypt; but I shall keep them thence, or find and ferret them out there. God knows how to cross wicked men of their will, to spoil their plots. Egypt shall prove no better than a broken reed running into the hand of him that leaneth on it, #2Ki 18:21. The Egyptian was ever an enemy to Israel; and though for his own ends he gave goodly words, and seemed reconciled, yet such reconciliations are but *vulpine amicitiae*, friends to the fox. But were he never so fast a friend, yet sin guilty Israel shall not have there an *asylum, nec stabile stabulum* {see #Ho 9:3} {See Trapp on "Ho 9:3"} because the "desire of the wicked shall perish," #Ps

**112:10.** They take counsel together, but it shall come to nought, they speak the word, but it shall not stand, **#Isa 8:10.** Confer **#Isa 30:1,2 31:1-3 Pr 21:30.**

**But the Assyrian shall be his king]** Will they, nill they, they shall be carried captive to Assyria; and since they will needs be crossing of God, he will cross them much more; he will walk contrary, to those that walk contrary to him, **#Le 26:21,** and be as froward as they for the hearts of them, **#Ps 18:26.** They will not return to me, saith the Lord, they shall not therefore return to Egypt; they will not submit to my sceptre, they shall therefore have the Assyrian for their king, that proud, cruel, stout-hearted prince, **#Isa 10:5,7,12,** who will tyrannize over their bodies and over their cattle at their pleasure, so that they shall be in great distress, **#Ne 9:37.**

**Because they refused to return]** Heb. ( נאנן ) they disdained to do it, scorned the motion, slighted the messenger. By their sins they had run from God; by repentance they should have returned unto him, and then the amends had been well nigh made: for *quem poenitet peccasse poene est innocens*, the penitent is in almost as good a case as the innocent (Sen. in Agamem.); Ambrose saith he is in a better (*plus est a vitiis se revocasse quam vitia ipsa nescivisse*). But for these men, to all other their sins to add obstinace and impenitence, as Herod to all his former evils did the death of the Baptist, this was to "heap up wrath against the day of wrath," **#Ro 2:5.** The word here rendered "refused" is by the Seventy turned they would not (οὐκ ἠέλθσαν). That therefore they returned not to God, it was the fault of their will. True it is, they had no power to turn themselves; but the cause of that inability too was in themselves. They therefore neither could nor would return; and both by their own fault and folly.

Ver. 6. **And the sword shall abide on his cities]** Heb. shall keep residence or rush upon his cities. It can do no less; it cannot return into the scabbard, rest or be still, till the Lord, who put it into commission, call back again his commission, **#Jer 47:6,7.** It is a dreadful thing when the sword abideth on a people; as in Germany, that stage of war; Ireland, still a land of divine ire, &c. England hath some halcyons at present, praise be given to God; and let every good man pray with David, "Scatter thou the people that delight in war," **#Ps 68:30.** The Pirates' war was despatched by Pompey with

incredible swiftness, to his eternal commendation ( *incredibili celeritate et temporis brevitate a Pompeio confectum*). And we have cause to bless God (saith a countryman of ours) that God hath raised up instruments for us, who have hazarded the shortening of their own lives for the shortening of the war; who have done their work of late, as if they had took it by the great, &c. And the same author observeth, that it is a sad thing for the sword to be in the field; but for the sword to be in the cities it is much more sad: and he instanceth in Jerusalem out of Josephus, where the number of the slain was 1,100,000 (Jos. de Bell. Jud. l. 7 c. 7.). We may further instance in that unhappy city of Magdeburg, in Germany, where so much cruelty was exercised first by Charles V (much regretted by him at last in his retired life, taking account of his actions), and since that in our memory by M. Tilly, who, like a bloody villain, put to the sword there 20,000 persons at least of all ranks, ages, and sexes: that great city also he burned down, utterly turning it into cinders, excepting 139 houses. The like immunity was exercised by the pope's champions upon the poor Protestants at Angrogue, in France; where they killed and burned without mercy; but could never set fire upon the two temples there, nor upon the minister's house, which remained whole, the houses round about being all consumed with fire.

**And shall consume his branches and devour them]** His branches, or his villages, which are as branches of the greater cities. The trees of America (but especially of Brazil) are so large, that it is reported of them that several families have lived in several arms or branches of one tree, to such a number as are in some petty village or parish here. The greater cities are as the body or root of a tree, the village as the branches. The Scripture often calleth them mother and daughter, as Heshbon and all her daughters, that is, villages, **#Nu 21:25**, as the Chaldee here explaineth it. See **#Eze 16:44,45,48,53**. Hence we read of a city and mother in Israel, **#2Sa 20:19**. Branches also are called daughters of the trees they grow from, **#Ge 49:22**. The word here rendered branches is by some rendered bars, by others, diviners or liars, as the word here used is interpreted, **#Jer 50:36**. A sword is upon the liars or diviners, and they shall dote: *potest Augur Augurem videre et non ridere?* saith Cicero of such diviners: that is, Can they one look upon another and not laugh,

considering how they gull people with their lies and fopperies? The sword shall be upon such, as it was upon Balaam, Satan's spelman, they shall be a portion for foxes, **#Ps 63:10**, as those that

“*Astutam vapido servant sub pectore vulpem.*”

**Because of their own counsels]** He that goeth to school to his own carnal reason is sure to have a fool to his master; an *ignis fatuus*, a foolish fire, that will bring him into the bogs and briers. The wisdom of the flesh is enmity to God. *Nemo daeditur nisi a seipso.* {See Trapp on "*Ho 10:6*"}

Ver. 7. **My people are bent to backsliding from me]** They have a principle of apostasy in them, as those Galatians had of whom the apostle, "I marvel that you are so soon removed unto another gospel," **#Ga 1:6**, and as those old apostates in the wilderness, who, as soon as Moses' back was turned almost, cried out to Aaron, Make us golden gods. This people was before accused to be acted by a spirit of fornication, a certain violent impetus, a strong inclination to whoredom, and to be apt to backslide with a perpetual backsliding: all their recidivations and revolts were but a fruit of the bent of their spirits, which were false and unsettled; not resolved whether yet to turn to God, though they were beset with so many mischiefs; they hanged in suspense, and rather inclined to the negative than else. *Suspensi sunt*, so Calvin, Pareus, and others read this text. My people are in suspense, or in a mamerling whether to turn to me or not; they hang in doubt, as the same word is rendered, **#De 28:66**. God liketh not that his people should stand doubtful as sceptics, and adhere to nothing certainly; to be in religion as idle beggars are in their way, ready to go which way soever the staff falleth; but that they should strive to a full assurance in what they believe, **#Lu 1:4**, to be fully persuaded, as **#Lu 1:1**, and to a firm purpose of heart in what they should practise, **#Ac 11:23**. Irresolution against sin or for God can hardly consist with the power of godliness: be not off and on with him, halt not, hang not in doubt what to do, but follow God fully as Caleb did; come off freely as David, who had chosen God's precepts when he was solicited to have done otherwise, **#Ps 119:173**. And again, "I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me," **#Ps 119:30**. I have weighed them, and am resolved to keep them, I am come to a full determination. Mr

Diodati senseth the words thus, They desire and expect that I should turn in favour to them and relieve them; whereas they should turn to me by repentance, which they will not do: and herein he followeth Arias Montanus. Thus those stiffnecked Jews in Jeremiah expected that God should still deal with them (however they dealt with him) according to all his wondrous works, #Jer 21:2, presuming and promising themselves impunity; and thus Judas also had the face to ask, #Mt 26:25, as the rest did, "Is it I?" as resting upon Christ's accustomed gentleness, and that he would conceal him still, as he had done certain days before.

**Though they called them to the most High]** They, that is, the prophets, as #Ho 11:2, called them with great importunity, upon every opportunity, to the most High, to God (in opposition to those *dii minutuli*, petty deities, whom they doted on. See #Ho 7:16), to come up to him, to have high and honourable conceptions of him, not casting him in a base mould, as those miscreants did, #Ps 50:21, but saying as David, and with a David-like spirit, "Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods"; and therehence inferring, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil," #Ps 97:9,10. "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be upright," #Ge 17:1. "The God of glory appeared to Abraham," #Ac 7:2, he so conceived of God; and hence his unchangeable resolutions for God.

**None at all would exalt him]** Heb. together he exalted not, scarce a he, a single man, that would do it, that would lift up his head to listen to such good counsel (so some sense it), or that would exalt and extol the most High; who, though he be high above all praise, as #Ne 9:5, and cannot be praised according to his excellent greatness; yet is he pleased to account himself exalted and magnified by us, when, considering the infinite distance and disproportion that is between him and us, we lay ourselves low at his feet for mercy, we set him up in our hearts for our sole sovereign, we esteem him as the people did David, more worth than ten thousand, #2Sa 18:3, we give him room in our souls, and with highest apprehensions, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours we bestow ourselves upon him, as the only worthy. Now this is done but of a very few, and well done but of fewer yet; so drossy and drowsy are men's

spirits, and so little is the Lord lifted up by the sons of men. See the prophet Isaiah's complaint, #Isa 64:7.

Ver. 8. **How shall I give thee up, Ephraim]** Here beginneth the second part of this chapter, full of many sweet evangelical promises, and here, if ever, mercy rejoiceth against judgment, or treadeth on the very neck of it, as St James's word importeth, #Jas 2:18, κατακαυχεται from αυχην ( *cervix*). The Lord seemeth here to be at a stand, or at strife with himself, about the destruction of this people fore warning; which well might have been a guff to swallow them up, and a grave to bury them in for ever, being most worthy to perish, as were the cities which God destroyed in his wrath, #Ge 19:23-25. Howbeit God in the bowels of his mercy yearning and taking pity of his elect among them (for he had reserved seven thousand hidden ones that had not bowed their knees to Baal), spareth to lay upon them the extremity of his wrath, and is ready to save them for his mercy's sake. Hear how father-like he melts over them:

**How should I expose thee, O Ephraim? how should I deliver thee up, O Israel? How should I dispose thee as Admah? how should I set thee as Zeboim]** *q.d.* Justice requires that I should lay thee utterly waste, and even rain down hell from heaven upon thee, as once upon Sodom and her sisters. But mercy interposeth her four "hows" (in the original two only expressed, but the other two necessarily understood, and by interpreters fitly supplied), for such pathetic interrogations as the like are not to be found in the whole book of God, and not to be answered by any but God himself; as indeed he doth to each particular in the following words: "My heart is turned within me," that is the first answer; the second, "My repentings are kindled together"; the third, "I will not execute the fierceness of my wrath"; the fourth, "I will not return to destroy Ephraim." And why? First, "I am God and not man"; secondly, the "Holy One in the midst of thee."

**My heart is turned, or turneth itself, within me]** That is, my mind is changed, or at least is in doubt what to do in this business. This is spoken, ανθρωποπαθως, after the manner of men, and must be understood, θεοπρεπως, agreeably to God's greatness. Here is *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus, facti non consilii*, a

change of a matter not of God, to effect and not to alter, to do senselessly. Repentance with man is the changing of his will. Repentance with God is no more than the willing of a change: ill is not a change of his will, but of his work. Confer **#La 1:20 2:11 Am 1:12**. There are those who render it, My heart is turned against me, that is, against my former severe sentence of cutting them all utterly off at one blow; *Fiat iustitia, pereat mundus*. Oh! I cannot find in my heart to do it. For my

**Repentings are kindled together]** *Simul aestuant viscera mea poenitentia*. So Tremellius; My bowels are altogether on a light fire with repentings, as **#Ge 43:30 1Ki 3:26**. Now repentings are as improperly attributed to God as bowels. There were a sort of ignorant monks in Egypt, who started this foolish and ridiculous question (which yet bred no small stirs there, A.D. 403), *An Deus corporeus sit?* Whether the Divine essence be a body, having hands, heart, bowels? &c. The ruder sort of them held it affirmatively. What blasphemies Vorstius hath vented in that base book of his, *de Deo*, I need not relate. How God is said to repent hath been said already. Sure it is, that herein he graciously accommodateth himself to our rudeness, and speaketh as we are able to bear (Calvin). It appeareth that fury is not in God, **#Isa 27:4**. Our sins put thunderbolts into his hands, and it is, *Non nisi coactus* with him, when he proceeds to punishment. His bowels are very ready to work in the ways of grace and mercy toward sinners; and the least act of faith in that mercy would certainly set bowels on work amain. This the Church in Isaiah well knew, and therefore prayed when deserted, Look down from heaven, &c. Where is thy zeal, and thy strength? the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, notwithstanding thine austerities, **#Isa 63:15,16**. God seemeth sometimes to lose his bowels, and then we must find them for him; to sleep, and we must awake him; to hide himself, and then we must fetch him out, as the woman of Canaan did by the force of her faith, **#Mr 7:24,25**. God will come, but he will have the faithful prayers of his people to lead him. I came for thy word, **#Da 10:12**.

Ver. 9. **I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger]** Heb. the heat of it. God's heart kindled, and whatsoever might cause repentance came together, and lay glowing, as it were, at his heart;

and this cooled and even quenched the heat of his wrath (as the sunbeams when they shine full upon the fire), so that now he resolves not to execute the height of his heat, the extremity of his fury, for then the spirit should fail before him. Ephraim is God's dear son, his pleasant child; whom, when he hears bemoaning himself, as **#Jer 30:18-20**, he soon repents him of the evil, and cries,

—“ *Satis hoc pro crimine magno  
Paulum supplicii lenem sumpsisse parentem.* ”

***I will not return to destroy Ephraim]*** *I will not undo him twice over, or utterly ruin him; as those that have laid their enemy for dead, return to see whether he be dead outright; or as soldiers that have once pillaged a city return after a while to take all that little that was left before, and to set the rest on fire. God will not deal so hardly with Ephraim, though he might do it. Reprobates indeed shall have an evil, an only evil, #Eze 7:5, without mixture of mercy; they must expect one plague upon another, as it fared with Pharaoh, till God had dashed the very breath out of his body. But for his elect people, Hath he smitten them, as he smote those that smote them? No, but in measure, in the branches only; he stayeth his rough wind, &c., #Isa 27:7,8. And as Croesus' dumb son burst out into, Kill not King Croesus (' Ανθρωπε, μη κτεινε τον χροισον. Herod.), so when enemies are ready to devour the Church, or Satan to swallow God's child up in despair, his heart's work; he can hold no longer, but cries, Save my child, save my Church. Why should "the spirit fail before me, and the souls which I have made? I have seen his ways and" (though bad enough) "I will heal him, I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners," #Isa 57:16-18.*

***For I am God, and not man]*** *Yea, such a God as the like is not, for pardoning iniquity, and passing by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage, #Mic 7:18. It is natural to him, #Ex 34:6; it is usual, #Ne 9:17, there he is called a God of pardons, as, #Isa 55:7, he is said to multiply pardons. He hath commanded men to forgive an offending but repenting brother; seventy times seven times in a day, #Mt 18:22. What then will himself do? For he is God Almighty, and not man. Man is an angry, vindictive, cruel creature; one man is a wolf, yea, a devil, to another; unsociable, implacable, unmerciful, as*



those were, #Ro 1:31. Beware of men, saith our Saviour to his disciples, #Mt 10:17; absurd and wicked men, #1Th 3:2; barbarous and brutish, skilful to destroy, #Eze 21:31. Yea, beware of good men when enraged. What strange deaths doth David (soon after his foul fall and not fully recovered) put the poor Ammonites to, #2Sa 12:31. Further, men as they are unmerciful so they are unmindful of their promises. But God is not a man that he should lie, #Nu 23:18. What he hath spoken with his mouth he will make good with his hand. The Eternity of Israel will not lie (as men will, #Ro 3:4), nor repent (as men do, whatever he may seem to do; {See Trapp on "Ro 3:3"} #Ro 3:3); for he is not a man that he should repent, #1Sa 15:29. Men are mutable; the truest friend is εμεταβλητον ζων, an easily changeable creature, as the heathen complained; all in changeable colours, as Tertullian saith of the peacock; as often changed as moved. Not so Almighty God. "I am Jehovah, I change not," #Mal 3:6. {See Trapp On:mal 3:6"} and remember still to retain high thoughts of God; not measuring him by our model; as to think him to be as merciful as we are, as powerful as our understanding can reach, &c. See #Isa 55:8,9, and beg supernatural grace; without which it is impossible for a finite creature to believe the infinite attributes of Almighty God.

**The Holy One in the midst of thee]** Though Israel had deeply revolted, set up golden gods, and done wickedly as they could, so that there was no visible Church among them, yet God was the Holy One in the midst of them; seven thousand he had reserved that Elijah knew not of, #1Ki 19:18, and a Church there was in Israel when at worst. Like as there was in *medio Papatu*, in the darkest midnight of damned Popery; and at this very day there are said to be thousands of professed Protestants, even in Italy itself; and in Seville, a chief city of Spain, there are thought to be no fewer than twenty thousand.

**And I will not enter into the city]** I will not invade the city as an enemy, to waste all with fire and sword, as once at Sodom. For what reason? there are holy ones in the midst of thee (so Rivet expoundeth it by an enallage of the number), a considerable company of righteous people, for whose sake I will spare thee, #Jer 5:1.

Ver. 10. **They shall walk after the Lord]** Powerfully calling them by his Word and Spirit, going before them, and bringing up the rear, **#Isa 3:12**; their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them, **#Mic 2:13**. There was a time when they fled from God, **#Ho 7:13**, and said, "I will go after my lovers," &c. **#Ho 2:5-7**. Now they are of another mind and other manners; they shall walk after the Lord, *non pedibus sed affectibus*; they shall be carried after him with strength of desire and delight, which he shall work in them; they shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, **#Re 14:4**. God's people are said in Scripture to walk before him in godly sincerity, to walk with him in a humble familiarity, to walk after him in a holy conformity, yielding unto him the obedience of faith. As Israel in the wilderness, so must we, follow God and the line of his law, though it seem to lead us in and out, backward and forward (as them), as if he were treading a maze.

**He shall roar like a lion]** By the preaching of the gospel he shall shake heaven and earth. The voice of the gospel is, repent. *Aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*, except ye repent ye shall all perish. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," was a terrible voice, **#Mr 16:16**. Of the lion it is reported, that he roareth so fiercely that the rest of the creatures stand amazed; and that, whereas his own whelps come dead into the world, he roareth over them and reviveth them. Afterwards, when he meeteth with prey, he roareth for them to come about him. Let this be applied to the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Confer **#Joe 3:16**.

**Then the children shall tremble from the west]** The children of grace, **#De 14:1**, shall join themselves in spirit to the communion of the Church from all the ends of the world, where they have been scattered; they shall serve the Lord with fear, rejoice with trembling. The ancient Hebrews applied this promise to the coming of the Messiah; only they dreamed of an earthly kingdom of his, as did also the disciples, being soured with the leaven of the Pharisees. Others think it to be a prophecy of the conversion and calling of the Jews, to be accomplished in the last days; as also of the general spreading of the gospel, and gathering of the elect, far and wide,

from one end of the heavens to another. And this they call the time of the restitution of all things.

Ver. 11. **They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt]** *Trepide accurrent*, so Tremellius; they shall run tremblingly. Fear causeth haste. Men delay and trifle till God strikes their hearts with fear; then it is *Ecce ego, mitre me*, Here I am, send me; Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth; What wilt thou have me to do, Lord? &c. *Timor addidit alas*. As the doves when pursued by the hawk fly quicky into their dove cotes, as birds frightened fly to their nests, and other creatures to their holes and harbours; so do those that are pricked at heart with the terrors of the law flee to the precious promises of the gospel, hiding themselves in the wounds of Christ crucified, and are relieved. All St Paul's care was, that when he was sought for by the justice of God, he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, **#Php 3:9**.

**And as a dove out of the land of Assyria]** *i.e.* out of what country soever, where they shall be scattered, I will recollect them by my gospel, which is therefore called God's arm, because thereby he gathereth his elect into his bosom. Doves fly swiftly, **#Ps 55:6**, and by flocks, **#Isa 60:8**; so shall the elect to Christ, both of Jews and Gentiles. By the children of the west may be meant these western Churches, and plus the northern parts. By Egypt, the whole south. By Asshur, all the eastern tract, those large and mighty kingdoms that lie eastward from Judea, even to the sunrising. Thus "many shall come from east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven," **#Mt 8:11**. The molten sea stood upon twelve oxen, which looked to all the four quarters of the world; so did the twelve gates of the new Jerusalem.

**And I will place them in their houses]** Not in strong garrisons, but in their own houses; where they shall dwell securely under their own vines and fig trees; for they shall have the gospel of peace and the peace of the gospel, see **#2Sa 7:10**. Or thus, I will place them in their own houses, that is, in my Church (saith Polanus), which hath its houses and places of receipt among all people the whole world throughout, where they may serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all their days. Thus the apostles in their

travels, wherever they came, found brethren, &c., and having nothing, yet they possessed all things, #2Co 6:10. True tranquillity and sound security is to be found nowhere but in Christ, #Mic 4:4 5:5, nor by any but by those that hear him roaring, and calling them to the participation of his grace and peace. Those that hearken to Christ's oracles shall dwell in his tabernacle.

Ver. 12. **Ephraim compasseth me about with lies]** They get about me as if they would do me doughty service (#Ps 76:11, the saints are called a people that are round about God; and #Ps 148:14, a people near unto him, and that compasseth his altar. See #Re 4:4), but all is but counterfeit; a mere imposture, a loud lie, #Ps 78:36, whereby they would deceive me of heaven if they could; putting upon me false coin silvered over a little; and circumventing me, if it lay in their power. But what saith Bernard? *Sapiens nummularius Deus est; nummum fictum non recipiet.* God is a wise mint man; there is no beguiling him with counterfeit coin. Hypocrisy (that real lie) is an odious, a complexive evil; for it hath in it, 1. Guile, opposite to simplicity, as intending to beguile God, which he cannot, and man, which he fain would, and often doth, to farther his worldly and wicked designs, as Judas, Herod, #Mt 2:8, Pharisees, #Mt 23:14. 2. Falsehood, opposite to truth; as only acting religion, playing devotion, compassing God with deceit, as the house of Israel here, deceiving him not by impotence only, and in the event, but by imposture, and so in purpose; contenting themselves with a show, with a semblance, #Lu 8:18, with a form of knowledge, #Ro 2:20, and of godliness, #2Ti 3:5, rather seeming to be good than seeking to be so. These are hell's freeholders; and other sinners are said but to have their part with them. There are those who thus interpret this text: "Ephraim compasseth me," the prophet preaching mercy, and promising good things, they beset me, and gather close about me, as desirous of my doctrine: but it is *in mendacio*, in hateful hypocrisy, {see #Eze 33:31,32} and when I cross them never so little, they craftily conspire to prejudice my ministry, to asperse my person, &c. To preach, saith one, is nothing else but to derive the rage of the whole world upon a man's self, to become the butt mark, yea, the centre *ad quod omnes lineae dolorum tendunt*, to which all the lines of lies and falsehoods do tend (Meisner in loc.).

**But Judah yet ruleth with God]** To serve God is to rule with him; as Livia said, she ruled her husband Augustus by obeying him. It is the greatest liberty, **#Ro 6:18,22 1Pe 2:16**. Abraham was a prince of God. Jacob prevailed with God, and had power as a prince, **#Ge 32:28**. Moses (as if he had been chancellor of heaven) overruled the business, and God is fain to bespeak his own freedom, **#Ex 32:10**. Judah also is here said to rule with God, to be potent with him; because God was sincerely served among them, and they held fast their first integrity; the true religion was openly professed, and the true worship of God incorruptly maintained in the temple at Jerusalem. This made Abijah (though none of the best) so boldly to boast, and he prevailed; so that there fell down of Israel slain 500,000, **#2Ch 13:10,17**, and yet the men of Judah that slew them were but 400,000 in all, **#Ho 11:3**. Israel's apostasy is here aggravated by Judah's integrity; they were not under the temptation of evil example. Judah was the worse for them, and not they for Judah.

**And is faithful with the saints]** Or, with the most Holy: he keepeth the faith to God, those holy ones, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (so some sense it), as **#Jos 24:19 Pr 9:10**; he is far from those false and fraudulent dealings wherewith the ten tribes seek to circumvent and beguile God. Or thus, Judah is faithful with the saints of former ages; he holds to his old principles, to the good old way, wherein Abraham and the other ancients went before him. He is also faithful with such as are sanctified, the true priests of God, consecrated to himself, and set apart for holy use: in opposition to the ten tribes, who went after those leaden priests made by Jeroboam of the lower sort of the people, and well fitted to golden deities. Lastly, he is faithful with the people of God, those good souls that left the ten tribes and went to Judah, to the true worship of God. With these Judah was faithful, courteous, and communicative; embracing and encouraging them all that might be. This was a singular commendation.

## **Chapter 12**

Ver. 1. **Ephraim feedeth on wind]** Slender feeding; unless Ephraim were of the chameleon kind: *quippe nec cor auro satiatur nec corpus aura*. Wind fills, but feeds not, **#Isa 55:10**. Ephraim had

sowed the wind, **#Ho 8:7**, but to what profit? He that ministereth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, would here, surely, neither give bread for food, nor multiply their seed sown, **#2Co 9:10**, but send them to the gods that they had chosen, and to their confederates whom they so relied upon, from whom they should reap the whirlwind. {See Trapp on "Ho 8:7"} Wind, we know, bloweth up storms and tempests; so doth idolatry and creature confidence, the tempest of God's wrath that will never be blown over.

**And followeth after the east wind]** Which if he catch, a great catch he is like to have of it. *Eurus est ventus urens et exsiccans*. The east wind is noted in Scripture for pernicious and harmful to fruits and herbs, **#Ge 41:6 Eze 7:10 29:17 Ho 13:15**; violent it is also, and spareth not men, **#Jon 4:8**. The Seventy render it, *καυσωνα*, a burning blast, as they do the former words, Ephraim is an evil spirit, by a mistake of the points. Job speaketh of some that fill their bellies with the east wind; they think to do so, but it proves otherwise; they snuff up the wind with the wild ass, but it tumors them only, and proves pestilential. It is very dangerous for men to follow after their own conceits and counsels. It may be worse to them upon their deathbeds, when they are launching into the main of immortality, than any rough east wind (*Euroaquilo*), or than any Euroclydon, that wind mentioned **#Ac 27:14**, that hath its name from stirring up storms, and is by Pliny called *navigantium pestis*, the mariner's misery, *una eurus notusque ruunt* (Virg.). An empty body meeting with tempests will have much ado to bear up. If Ephraim first feed upon wind, and then fall under the east wind, it must needs go hard with him. The godly man, who is filled with all the fulness of God, **#Eph 3:19**, shall have him for a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall, **#Isa 25:4**. His prayer is that of Jeremiah, **#Jer 17:17**, "Be not thou a terror unto me, O Lord: thou art my hope in the day of evil." If the wind be not got into the earth, and stir not there, storms and tempests abroad cannot make an earthquake; no more can afflictions, or death, a heart attack, where there is peace with God. Such a man's mind, *immota manet*, is as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed.

**He daily increaseth lies and desolation]** This being the fruit and consequence of those; for *flagitium et flagellum sicut acus et filum*, sin and punishment are inseparable companions. "Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me," **#Ho 7:13**. {See Trapp on "Ho 7:13"} To heap up lies is to hasten desolation. "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish," **#Pr 19:9**. They tell us of a threefold lie, *i.e.* a merry lie, an officious lie, and a pernicious lie. But the truth is, every lie is pernicious; and a man should rather die than lie. He that lieth in jest may go to hell for it in earnest. Jacob told his father an officious threefold lie, and scarce ever had a merry day after it, **#Ge 27:19**. God followed him with one sorrow upon another, to teach him and us what an evil and a bitter thing it is to cumulate lies, as here, and how it ensnares and ensnarles us.

**And they do make a covenant with the Assyrian, and oil is carried into Egypt]** That is, all precious and pleasant substance was carried for a present, to make room for them. Oil is instanced, as the chief staple commodity of the land, {see **#Eze 27:17**} and in Egypt very scarce. This sin of theirs in seeking to other nations, and relying on the arm of flesh, is often reprov'd and threatened throughout this prophecy, {see **#Ho 5:13 7:11 9:8 10:4 11:5**} to teach God's ministers to continue crying out against the prevailing sins of the people, and never give over, till they see a reformation wrought among them. "The Cretians are always liars," &c. "Rebuke them sharply," saith the apostle, **#Tit 1:12,13**; yea, be instant and constant, in season and out of season, using the same liberty in beating down sin that men do to commit it. Chrysostom told his hearers at Antioch that till they stopped their swearing he would never stop preaching against it.

**Ver. 2. The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah]** Lest the prophet should be thought partial in the law, **#Mal 2:9**, {See Trapp on "Mal 2:9"} and lest Ephraim should say of Judah, as once Oded did of Israel, "Are there not with them, even with them also, sins against the Lord?" **#2Ch 28:10**. The prophet answers by way of concession, that there were so indeed; and that therefore God had a controversy with them, a litigation, or disceptation: he was expostulating with them by words, and some lighter strokes, notwithstanding he had commended them before, as ruling with God, and retaining his pure

worship. God would take his time to deal with them too for their many impieties, and especially for running to Egypt for help, as they did in the days of Ahaz and Zedekiah, see #**Isa 30:2 31:1**; but because they were not yet so bad as the ten tribes, nor so desperately wicked, therefore the Lord was yet but pleading with them; he had not passed sentence, he was not resolved upon their ruin and utter extirpation, #**Ho 4:15 5:5-14 6:11**; as he was for the ten tribes, those foul apostates and shameless covenantbreakers; concerning whom he saith, and is set upon it,

**I will punish Jacob according to his ways]** See the like words #**Ho 4:9**. {See Trapp on "Ho 4:9"} He calls them Jacob, because they gloried much in him, their progenitor; as did likewise the Samaritans that succeeded them, #**Joh 4:12**. So did the Jews in #**Mic 2:7**. But the prophet Hosea answereth them in effect (as there) by proving a disparity. "O thou that art named the house of Jacob" (that wilt needs be named so, and therein pridest thyself), "is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?" (ye are not surely straitened in him, but in your own bowels, that ye express Jacob no better, that ye resemble him no more). "Are these his doings?" was Jacob a man of your practices? No; {a} for he left no means unattempted that he might attain the blessing; he strove for it with his brother in the womb, βρεφος, afterwards with the angel, against whom with much wrestling and raising of dust he prevailed, as it followeth in the two next verses.

{a} *Odiosum et impium dogma Anabaptistarum, qui ideo pueris baptismum negant, quia sensu ac mente careant. Luther in loc.*

**Ver. 3. He took his brother by the heel in the womb]** To have hindered him if he could of the first birthright; so desirous he showed himself so soon of that desirable privilege and the promises annexed. Whence we may learn (saith one) that God taketh care even of unborn babes, that belong to him, and worketh strangely in them sometimes, as he did in the Baptist, #**Lu 1:44**, the child leaped in the womb, by a supernatural motion; he leaped more like a suckling at the breast, as the word signifieth, than an unborn embryo. Mention had been made in the former verse of the name of Jacob; here we have the etymology, or reason of that name; He took his brother by the heel, or foot sole, as if he would have turned up his heels and got to the goal before him. Hence his name was called



Jacob, #Ge 25:26, that is, *calcanearins*, or heel catcher, as if he would have pulled his brother back; or presage of what he should afterwards do, viz. supplant Esau, and get the pre-eminence both of birthright and blessing, #Ge 27:36, and with it a fruit, an instance of God's free grace, in preferring Jacob (when he could not yet do anything that was good) before Esau, though he were the elder, stronger, stouter, a manly child, a man already, as his name importeth, one that had everything more like a man than a babe. See #Mal 1:2. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:2"} And observe, that God here upbraideth Jacob's degenerate brood with his benefits toward him, their forefather, whereof they now walked so utterly unworthily.

**And by his strength]** By his hard labour, say the Seventy, εν κοπω αυτου: but better, by, or in, his strength, that is, by the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, #Php 1:19, and by the power of the Almighty, casting him down with the one hand, and bearing him up with the other.

**He had power with God]** Heb. he played the prince with God, *fortiter et fideliter se gessit*, he bore himself bravely, and had strength with God. He doth not lie down sullen and discouraged, but wrestleth with excellent wrestlings; he held with his hands, when his joints were out of joint. He wrestled in the night and alone, and when God was leaving him, and upon one leg, and prevailed, as it is in the next verse. This he did partly by his bodily strength elevated, for he was a very strong man, as appeareth, #Ge 29:10, by his rolling the great stone from the well's mouth; but principally by the force of his faith put forth in prayer, which can work wonders. Oh, it is a sweet thing indeed to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man, #Eph 3:16. *O quam hic homo, non est omnium!* This is the generation of them that seek him: that seek thy face, this is Jacob, #Ps 24:6; yea, this is Israel, for so God knighted him, as it were, in the field for his good service, and new named him, #Ge 32:28. Neither were the faithful ever since called Abrahamites, or Isaacites, but Israelites, for honour's sake.

Ver. 4. **Yea, he had power over the angel]** That Angel of the covenant, #Mal 3:1, the Angel of the great council (μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος), as the Seventy render #Isa 9:6, the Lord Christ, who redeemed Jacob from all evil, #Ge 48:16, and is called Elohim in

the former verse. Jacob is reprov'd for asking his name, an argument of his majesty. God, as he surmounteth all creatures, and hath no parallel, so he surpasseth all notion, and is above all name. The Africans call him Amon, that is, *Heus, tu, cluis es?* Our best eloquence of him is a humble silence: or if we say anything, to say as in the next verse following, Jehovah, God of hosts, Jehovah is his memorial.

**And prevailed]** Sept. εδυνασθη. He had power, or got the better, Christ yielding himself overcome by the prayers of the patriarch: "for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," saith St James. There is a kind of omnipotence in it, saith Luther, of whom also that saying passed among his friends, *Iste vir potuit apud Deum quod voluit*, That man could do what he would with God. The reason whereof is given by St Jerome, in these words, *Deus ipse qui nullis contra se viribus superari potest, precibus vincitur*; that is, God himself, who is otherwise insuperable, may be overcome by prayers (*Invictum vincunt vota precesque Deum*); provided that men persevere in prayer as Jacob did, holding out till the morning light, and growing more resolute toward the latter end than he had been before.

**He wept and made supplication]** Jacob did (not the angel, as Mercer and Drusins would carry it). His wrestling was by weeping, and his prevailing by praying.

“ *Verbum, preces, et lachrymae,  
Miserae arma sunt Ecclesiae.* ”

*We read not till this text of his weeping for the blessing (no more we do of the earthquake in Hezekiah's days, till #Am 1:1 Zec 14:4,5), but this we know, that ardent prayer is a pouring out of the soul to God, not without a shower of tears, or at least a storm of sighs. And as music upon the water sounds farther and more harmoniously than upon the land, so prayers with tears are more pleasing to God, and prevalent with him. Christ could not but look back to those weeping women that followed him to the cross, and comfort them. Tears of compassion and of compunction, when men love and weep, as Mary Magdalen did, are very acceptable to God, who puts them*

*into his bottle as precious. There are tears of another sort, lacrimae nequitiae, tears of wickedness, expressed either by hypocrisy or a desire of revenge: such were Esau's tears for the blessing too, #Ge 27:38, but he went without it, because he was a profane hypocrite; he cried out of discontent, and threatened his brother Jacob; he complained of his father's store, (Hast thou but one blessing?) of his brother's subtilty, (was he not rightly called Jacob?) but not a word of his own wickedness. He roared for the disquietness of his heart, but he did not, as Jacob, weep and make supplication to his Judge, deploring his own wants, and imploring the supplies of his grace, *quam unice expetiit*, as the main thing he desired.*

**He found him in Bethel]** That is, the Lord found Jacob there, #Ge 28:18,19; but especially, #Ge 35:14,15, confirming his promises to him and all his posterity.

**There he spake with us]** Who were then in Jacob's loins, and promised that God should be our God; but we have falsified with him, and turned Bethel into Bethaven; abusing that place to idolatry and calf worship, where we, in our forefathers, had so many manifestations of Divine mercy. Oh better he had never spoken with us there than that we should have so slighted his promises, cast his words behind our backs, and wickedly departed from our God. Is this Jacob-like? &c. There he spake with us. What he spake with Jacob he spake with us; and we are to hold ourselves no less concerned therein than he was. See a like expression #Ps 66:6. See likewise #Ro 15:4 Heb 13:5. What God spake to Joshua, #Jos 1:5, he spake to all believers. And that which he spake to his afflicted, #Ps 102:17, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer," that he spake to us: for, #Ps 102:18, "This shall be written for the generations to come." The Hebrews have a proverb, *Quae patribus acciderunt signum sunt filiis*, What things befell the fathers, those were a sign to their children; and thence it is that the deeds of the fathers are often attributed to the children. Let us labour to see our own names written upon every promise; and secure our interest by searching for the conditions whereunto the promises are annexed; and then put them in suit by faithful prayer,

saying with David, "Remember thy word unto thy servant, whereupon thou hast caused me to trust."

Ver. 5. **Even the Lord God of hosts]** Lo, he it is who promised, who spake with us at Bethel; even that Jehovah, who is himself unchangeable and Almighty; whose promises are eternal and infallible; who will perform with his hand what he hath spoken with his mouth, to the thousandth generation of those that return unto him. Concerning God's name, Jehovah, {See Trapp on "Mal 3:6"} Concerning his title, God of hosts, {See Trapp on "Mal 3:17"} Doct. 1.

**The Lord is his memorial]** Jehovah is that *nomen maiestativum* (as Tertullian hath it), that holy and reverend name of God, #Ps 111:9, whereby he will be known and remembered, #Ex 3:15, which place doth notably illustrate this. True it is that the Jews, to countenance their conceit of the ineffability of this name Jehovah, do corrupt that text; and for this is my name, *Legnolam*, for ever, they read, this is my name, *Legnalam*, to be concealed. Where it is well observed by one, how cross the superstition of men is to the will of God. They, in a pretended reverence to God, will not so much as mention this name, because they say it is a name that God so much glorieth in; and yet the text saith, this name is God's memorial; it is the name by which he would be remembered to all generations, as that which setteth forth his glory more than any other name whatsoever. So that when we would have a holy memorial of God (and to remember him is every whit as needful as to draw breath, saith an ancient, *tam Dei meminisse opus est quam respirare*. Nazianzen) we need no images or other unwarrantable helps: the meditation of the name Jehovah, and the import of it, will be of singular use that way. Papists have their pictures and their memories, as they call them; idolaters feign to themselves various representations and remembrances. "Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrances," #Isa 57:8, where God's law should have been written, according to #De 6:9 11:12, and whereas God's name should have been remembered, #Ps 135:13 Ps 102:12.

Ver. 9. **And I that am thy Lord God from the land of Egypt]** This seemeth to be interlaced for the comfort of the better sort, that trembled at the former threatenings; for as in a family if the dogs be beaten the children will be apt to cry, so is it in God's house. Hence he is capable to take out the precious from the vile, and telleth them

that he hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew; but would surely observe his ancient covenant, made even in the land of Egypt towards his spiritual Israel.

**I will yet make them to dwell in tabernacles, &c.]** *i.e.* I will deliver my Church from the spiritual Egypt, and make her to pass through the wilderness of the world, in particular Churches, aspiring toward the heavenly Canaan; even as my people dwelt in tents in the wilderness, the remembrance whereof is celebrated in the feast of tabernacles, **#Le 23:43**. See **#Zec 14:16**. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:16"}

Ver. 10. **I have also spoken by the prophets]** And not suffered you to walk in your own ways, as did all other nations, **#Ac 14:16**. The ministry is a singular mercy, however now vilipended, *{critized}* **#Isa 30:20**.

**And I have multiplied visions]** Whereby I have discovered thy present sins and imminent dangers, though thou hast said, "They shall find none iniquity in me," &c. The wit of mammonists will better serve them to palliate and plead for their *dilectum delictum*, their beloved sin, than their pride will suffer them once to confess and forsake it, though never so plainly and plentifully set forth unto them.

**And used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets]** Heb. by the hand, which is the instrument of instruments (*οργανον οργανων*), saith the philosopher; so is the ministry of the word for the good of souls. It is called a hand, because it sets upon men's souls with the strength of God, and a certain vehemence. "Did not my word lay hold upon your fathers?" **#Zec 1:6**. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:6"} It is said, **#Lu 5:17**, that as Christ was teaching the power of the Lord was present. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God," **#Ro 1:16**; it is his mighty arm, **#Isa 53:1**. Now it was ordinary with the prophets to use similitudes, as **#Isa 5:2 Eze 16:3**, which is an excellent way of preaching and prevailing; as that which doth both notably illustrate the truth, and insinuate into men's affections. Galeatius Caraeciolus, an Italian Marquis, and nephew to Pope Paul V, was converted by Peter Martyr, reading on **#1Co 1**. and using an apt similitude. Ministers must turn themselves into all forms and shapes, both of spirit and of speech, for the reaching of their hearers' hearts; they

must come unto them in the most wooing, winning, and convincing way that may be. Only in using of similes, they must, 1. Bring them from things known and familiar, things that their hearers are most acquainted with and accustomed to. Thus the prophets draw comparisons from fishes to the Egyptians, vineyards to the Jews, droves of cattle to the Arabians, trade and traffic to the Egyptians. And thus that great apostle, **#1Co 9:24**, fetcheth similes from runners and wrestlers, exercises that they were well acquainted with in the Isthmian games, instituted by Theseus, not far from their city. 2. Similes must be very natural, plain, and proper. 3. They must not be too far urged; we must not wit wanton it in using them: and let it be remembered, that though they much illustrate a truth, yet *theologia parabolica nihil probat*. theological comparisons prove nothing. There are interpreters of good note that read this whole verse in the future tense and make a continuation of that promise in the verse before. I will speak by the prophets, *sc.* in the days of the gospel, when "great was the company of those that published it," **#Ps 68:11**. I will multiply visions. See this fulfilled **#Ac 2:17 cf. Joe 2:28**. I will use similitudes, teach in parables, and illustrate therewith grave sentences and doctrines, as Christ and his apostles did, and as the best preachers still do, that they may thereby set forth things to the life, and make them as plain as if written with the sunbeams.

Ver. 11. **Is there iniquity in Gilead]** What, in Gilead, a city of priests? **{#Ho 6:8}** **{See Trapp on "Ho 6:8"}** yea, Gilead is a city of those that work iniquity, a very Poneropolis, a place of naughty packs, **#Ho 4:15**. Now there is not a worse creature on earth than a wicked priest, nor a worse place than a wicked Gilead. The Hebrew hath it thus, Is Gilead iniquity? Or as Luther, Drusius, and others, Surely it is so ( **¶** *certe, vere, profecto*). Confer **#Mic 1:5**. Gregory Nazianzen reports of Athens, that it was the plagiuest place in the world for superstition. Our universities were so in times of Popery, and began to be so again a few years since. *Revera Gilead est iniquitas, profecto vanitas sunt*, they were grown so incorrigibly flagitious that they seemed to be, as it were, transformed into sin's image. Some render the text thus: "Is there iniquity in Gilead? Are they only vanity in Gilgal? They sacrificed bullocks," and set this sense upon it. What? think you the men of Gilead, those beyond the river of Jordan, whom Tiglathpileser spoiled and led captives, that

they only were guilty of idolatry, and you not, because you remain at home, untouched of the Assyrian? Nay, saith he, the very entrance into the country, Gilgal itself, so aboundeth with idolatry, that it is not to be doubted but in the rest of the parts of the kingdom their altars are as thick as furrows in the field, that is to say, innumerable. Some think this last clause, "their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field" (or of my fields, whereof I am chief Lord, and wherein he should have served me, and not idols), hath reference to some superstitious way of theirs, of seeking God by erecting altars in the furrows, for the fructifying of their fields: the heathen did so to their *Dii Terminales*; boundary gods, and the Papists still do so in their solemn processions, erecting crosses and crucifixes in the bounds of their fields, and thereby thinking to get a blessing on their corn and pastures. Tarnovius noteth here, that God in the Old Testament would therefore have but one altar whereon to offer sacrifice, and that to be at Jerusalem only; to teach them that Christ, the anti-type of all their sacrifices, should once be offered up upon the altar of his cross, a propitiation for their sins, #**Heb 9:1-10:39**. This altar he also appointed to be in the temple, that the sacrificers might believe the gracious presence of God with them, and might worship him in spirit and in truth.

Ver. 12. **And Jacob fled into the country of Syria]** Jacob, in whom ye glory, was a poor forlorn fugitive, glad to run for his life, and to take hard on for his livelihood, #**Ge 28:1-29:35**. This they were bound by the law to make confession of ever when they offered their basket of firstfruits, and to say, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father," &c., #**De 26:5**; that, considering the meanness of their origin, they might not boast of their ancestry, but magnify God's free grace in their present enjoyments; and say, as that noble Athenian general, Iphicrates, did, in the midst of all his triumphs, εἰς οὐρανὸν ἐξ ὀνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ, from how great baseness and misery to what great blessedness and glory are we exalted! King Agathocles would be served in earthen vessels, to remind him of his father, who was a poor potter. Willigis, Archbishop of Mentz, A.D. 1011, being a wheelwright's son, hanged wheels and wheel wrights' tools round about his bedchamber, and underwrote in capital letters, *Willigis,!! Willigis,!! recole unde veneris*, Remember thine origins (Bucholcer). How low and mean were we of this nation at first! Brith signifieth blue-coloured, *sc.* with woad; hence our name Britains. This was their

fine clothing; their food was bark of trees and roots. Holinshed saith, that some old men he knew, who told of times in England, that if the good man of the house had a mattress, or a flock bed, and a sack of chaff to rest his head on, he thought himself as well lodged as the lord of the town; for ordinarily, they lay upon straw pallets covered with canvas, and a round log under their heads instead of a bolster; they said pillows were fit only for women in childbed; and in a good farmer's house it was rare to find four pieces of pewter; and it was accounted a great matter that a farmer should show five shillings, or a noble, together in silver. There are those who render the text thus: Thither fled Jacob out of the country of Syria, after Israel had served for a wife, and for a wife had kept sheep.

**And Israel served for a wife]** He had nothing to endow her with, he would therefore earn her with his hard labour; wherein he showed singular humility, patience, meekness, waiting upon God's providence; none of all which graces were found in his degenerate posterity, who yet prided themselves in their father Jacob.

**And for a wife he kept sheep]** *q.d.* Jacob, that he might obey his father, was content to serve his uncle, and to suffer a great deal of wrong from him; but ye refuse to serve me though a liberal lord, a bountiful benefactor, He held close to me in that hard service; but you, abusing your liberty, enslave yourselves to false gods. He in his misery kept his confidence of the blessing; but you in your prosperity cast it clean away, &c. Luther upon this text speaketh much about the blessing of a good wife (a commodity that cannot be too dearly bought), and the plague of a scold that is always railing and wrangling, *Cum qua perpetuo rixandum*. The heathen well saith, that every man when he marrieth bringeth either a good or an evil spirit into his house; and so maketh it either a heaven or a hell. Pareus well observeth here, the great use of histories and holy examples, according to **#Ro 15:4**. Plato (in Cratylo) thinks that *historia* comes *παρά το ἵσταναι τὸν ροῦν*, of stopping the flux of errors and enormities.

Ver. 13. **And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt]** That is, Gilead served as a sanctuary unto Jacob, when he fled from Laban. In Gilgal also God by Joshua renewed his covenant with your fathers, after he had brought them out of Egypt, by the hand of



Moses and Aaron. A horrible thing therefore it is, if well considered, that these two places should now be so impured with idolatry, and become the nurseries of evil, which heretofore were the means of so great comfort to God's people. Thus Junius, Polanus, and others. A witty interpretation, but somewhat forced. By Moses, that prophet, by an excellency; as Aristotle is called the philosopher, Cicero the orator, Paul the apostle, Calvin the most learned interpreter, &c. Moses was a famous prophet indeed, and a type of Christ. Confer **#De 18:15,18 34:10-12 Ac 3:22 7:35-38**. Theodoret calleth him the great ocean of divinity, τον της θεολογιας Ωκεανον. Bellarmine, God's special favourite, than whom antiquity had *nilhil sapientius, sanctius, mitius*, none more wise, meek, and holy; indeed, titles of honour are not worthy of him. Howbeit he was but a mean man at first; **#Ex 4:20**, "He took his wife and his son and set them upon an ass"; that was the best and the only beast that he had, for aught we read. It was not very likely that so poor a prophet should do so great a deed. But God loves to help his people with a little help, **#Da 11:34**, that through weaker means his greater strength may appear. His end here may seem to be the same as before, in setting forth Jacob's meanness, to take down the haughtiness of the people, proud of their founders and forefathers. A prophet he is purposely called, and his name concealed: 1. To show that the work was done not by might nor by power, but by God's Spirit, **#Zec 4:6 2**. To show what God will do for his people by the prayers and for the sake of his prophets, when they are most shiftless and hopeless; 3. To let this unworthy people see how much God had done for them once by a prophet, how little soever now they set by such. This is Cyrus' observation.

Ver. 14. **Ephraim hath provoked him to anger, most bitterly]** Heb. with bitterness, or unto bitter displeasure, or with bitter things, that is, sins that embitter God's Spirit and put thunderbolts into his hands. *Excusserunt ex suavissimo pectore meo suavitatem*. As a bee stings not till provoked, so neither doth God punish till there be no remedy, **#2Ch 36:16**. If Ephraim will provoke him to anger (which he will not dare to do to his landlord), if he will put it to the trial, whether God can be angry, as those did (εδοκιμασαν), **#Heb 3:9**, he shall know the power of his wrath, **#Ps 90:11**, he shall feel, to his sorrow, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that he hath forsaken the Lord, and that his fear is not in them, **#Jer 2:19**. There will be

bitterness in the end. *Principium dulce est, sed finis amoris amarus. Amor amaror.* Lust is a lie, as Amnon proved. "Her end is bitter as wormwood, though her lips drop as an honeycomb," saith Solomon of sinful pleasure, **#Pr 5:3**. It is like Jonathan's honey, or Esau's pottage, or Judas' thirty pence, which he would gladly have been rid of, but could not. Those that provoke God shall one day hear, "Do ye provoke me to anger? Are ye stronger than I?" they shall be taught to meddle with their match, and not to contend with him that is mightier than they, **#Ec 6:10**; they shall cry out in the bitterness of their souls, as **#La 3:15**, "He hath filled me with bitteresses, he hath made me drunk with wormwood." And God shall reply, as **#Jer 4:18**, "Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; and this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter."

**Therefore shall he leave his blood upon him]** God shall bring upon him deserved destruction; he shall bring him into the fire, and leave him there, **#Eze 22:20**; the guilt of his sin shall remain upon his soul, and then punishment cannot be far off. See **#Eze 24:7,8 cf. 18:13 Jos 2:19**. Or, the enemy shall leave him all bloody.

**And his reproach shall his Lord return unto him]** His Lord, not the Assyrian, as some sense it, but his liege lord (whom he hath reproached, by changing his glory into the similitude of a calf, and other corruptible things), shall cry quittance with him, as **#Ho 12:2**, cast utter contempt upon him, according to **#1Sa 2:30**, and make him know that he is his Lord.

### **Chapter 13**

Ver. 1. **When Ephraim spake trembling]** Or, there was trembling, as there is among the beasts of the field when the lion roareth. Ephraim, while innocent of the great offence, spake with authority, and none durst budge against him; for he had great power in his hand. Now, as the philosopher told Adrian the emperor, who challenged him to dispute, *Difficile est ei contradicere qui potest aqua et igni interdicerere; vel adversus eum scribere, qui potest proscribere.* It is dangerous meddling with the lion's beard. Nebuchadnezzar's majesty was such that "all people, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him," **#Da 5:19**; wheresoever his commands or armies came there were very great heart quakes

and concussions of spirit. "Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?" #Ec 8:4. Job was no king; and yet while he was Jobab, #Ge 36:34, that is, in a prosperous condition, "The young men saw him, and hid themselves; the nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth," #Job 29:8,10. The people feared Joshua, #Jos 4:14, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life; for what reason? the Lord had magnified him in the sight of all Israel. Natural conscience cannot but stoop to the image of God in whomsoever. When Ephraim was first in the throne he became formidable; but when he fell openly from God he grew feeble; first he was a terror, and then a scorn.

**But when he offended in Baal, he died]** When, by Jezebel (who did all under her husband, she was king, and he queen) Baal worship was brought in, then Ephraim fell from his dignity; then every paltry adversary trampled upon him, as the hare will do upon a dead lion. See how Benhadad insulted over Ahab, #1Ki 20:3,4 "Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have." Look how the worried cur falls upon his back, and holds up all four, as craving quarter; so did this sordid idolater, glad to crouch to his enemy: when God was departed from him he was even as a dead carcase.

*“Morti vicinus iam magis atque magis.”*

He that departeth from God (who is his life) by an evil heart of unbelief, #Heb 3:12, subjecteth himself to all sorts of deaths, natural, civil, spiritual, and eternal.

Ver. 2. **And now they sin more and more]** Heb. They add to sin: God in his just judgment hath given them up unto hardness of mind, and to their heart's lust; that for all this sudden change they repent not, but run more and more into idolatry. Not content to worship Baal and such heathen deities,

**They make them molten images of their silver]** They laid their money together, to make the golden calves, or silver shrines, as #Ac 19:24, and other idolatrous trinkets; they lavished silver out of the

bag, and were at no small charge. They multiplied their altars, **#Ho 10:1**, and abused God's gold and silver to mystical adultery, **#Ho 2:8**. All this they did now, saith the text; most unseasonably, and as it were in flat opposition to God; after he had sought to reclaim them both by counsels and corrections, and had hanged Ahab and his house up in gibbets, as it were, before them, for their admonition. Surely it is a just both presage and desert of ruin not to be warned. See **#Ho 7:1**. {See Trapp on "Ho 7:1"}

**And idols according to their own understanding]** *i.e.* According to their own inventions, *motu suo proprio*; forsaking the rule of the word, they will needs be scholars to their own reason, though they are sure to have a fool to their master. That is a good saying of Solomon, **#Pr 3:5**, "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding," in matters of God's worship especially; for there *Deus damnat quicquid arridet iudicio hominum vel rationi* God despises whatever is pleasing in the opinion of men or reason. (Calv. in loc.), "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God," **#Lu 16:15**.

**All of it the work of the craftsmen]** And should men worship the work of their own hands? what can be imagined more irrational and sottish? But it is a most righteous recompense of their error, **#Ro 1:27**. See **#Isa 29:13,14**, God doth blind and blast such, causing their madness to appear to all, and that they are men compact of mere incongruities, soloecising in opinion, speeches, actions, all: nothing is more irrational than irreligion.

**They say of it, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves]** They, that is, the king and his counsellors, or the idolatrous priests by their appointment. These were active to invite and incite men to partake of those idolatrous services. Should we be less diligent in calling upon others to "kiss the Son," with a kiss of love and homage? should we not be as serious and sedulous in building staircases for heaven as the wicked are in digging descents to hell?

**Kiss the calves]** That the custom of kissing in divine worship was used in all nations is evident. They kissed either the idol's mouth or

their own hand (where the idol stood on high, so that they could not come at it) in token of homage. See #**1Ki 19:18 Job 31:27**. (*Adorare est quasi applicare manum ad os.*) To worship is just as to bring the hand to the mouth. So (after the example of Dioclesian) the pope holds forth his foot to be kissed by the greatest potentates, while he sitteth as God, in the temple of God.

Ver. 3. **Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud**] They shall vanish and come to nothing: the morning cloud, irradiated by the sun, seems very gay at first, but is soon dispelled by it; the dew lies very lovely upon the grass, and seems to impearl it, but is soon dried up; see #**Ho 6:4**. The chaff lies hollow and high, but is soon dispersed before a whirlwind; see #**Ps 35:5 Da 2:35 Ps 1:5**. The smoke rolls out of the chimney as if it were some solid substance, and would muffle the whole heavens, but is presently scattered *evaporat et evanescit*, the higher it ascendeth the sooner it vanisheth. See here how that is verified, #**Ho 12:10**, "I have used similitudes by the ministry of my prophets" (four in a breath we have here), and be hereby advertised. 1. Of man's weakness; 2. Of God's power; 3. Of the swiftness of Ephraim's ensuing misery; 4. The severity of God's dealing with idolaters; he will leave no sign nor remain of them; he will utterly remove them, as a man takes away dung, till it be gone, #**1Ki 14:19**. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. So passes worldly honour. Life itself is but a shadow, a dream, yea, a dream of a shadow (*οκίας οναρ ανθρωπος*), #**Ps 144:4**; profit, an uncertainty, #**1Ti 6:17**; pleasure, a spirt; honour, a blast, pomp, a fancy, #**Ac 25:23**; the whole world a scheme or notion, that hath nothing in it of any firmness, or solid consistency, #**1Co 7:31**. Why then should wicked wordlings brag, and look so big? Why should the saints be affected either with its allurements or affrightments, and not cry out with that heroical Luther, *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor*, I care neither for Rome's favour nor fury, I am neither fond of the one nor afraid of the other, for all is but *fumus aut funus*, vanity and vexation?

Ver. 4. **Yet I am the Lord thy God, &c.**] Yet for all the sorrow; and though I thus threaten thee: "for since I spake against thee, I do earnestly remember thee still," &c., #**Jer 31:20**. It is easy to observe all along this chapter, an interchange of menaces and mercies, as in the preceding verse and this, so #**Ho 13:8,9,13,14,16 14:1**, to show how soon the Lord repents him of the evil, and how ready to show

mercy to the worst that return. If men could but find a penitent heart, he would easily find a pitying heart; like as David would have been friends with Absalom after all the unkindness, would he have been but better at last. To reduce Ephraim it was, that this chapter, like checquer work, is made up of promises and threatenings; that the tartness of the one might make him the better to taste the sweetness of the other.

**Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt]** See the note on #**Ho 12:9**. He was their God before, #**Ge 17:7**, but then he mainly manifested himself so to be, when he brought them thence with a strong hand, and so declared himself to be Jehovah, #**Ex 6:2**; yea, I am ready to show thee the like mercy still; for "I remember" (saith he) "the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown," #**Jer 2:2**.

**And thou shalt know no God but me]** *i.e.* Effectually acknowledge, worship, serve, love, none save me, #**De 13:2 Ga 5:9**. Thou shalt experience none other. It is a blessed thing to be ignorant of false worship; and not to be insighted into, or versed in, the depths of Satan, #**Re 2:24**. Thou shalt not inquire how these nations worshipped their gods, #**De 12:30**. Ahaz got hurt by seeing the altar at Damascus: many that will needs see the Popish service are insnared thereby.

**For there is no Saviour beside me]** This is a title that God much glorieth in; see #**Isa 60:16 63:1 Ac 5:31**; and we should go often to him in this name, as #**Jer 14:8**, since "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto him," #**Heb 7:25**, to save them perpetually, and perfectly, εἰς τὸ παντελές. He is a sole Saviour, a thorough Saviour, a Saviour *in solidum*; and doth not his work to the halves, as Papists make it. How blasphemous is that direction of theirs to dying men, to say, Join, Lord, mine obedience with those things which Christ suffered for me.

Ver. 5. **I knew thee in the wilderness, in a place of great drought]** *In terra torridissima*, where I gave thee *pluviam escatilem et petram aquatilem*, as Tertullian phraseth it, where I gave thee bread from heaven, set the flint abroach, kept thy clothes whole and fit,

kept back thine enemies, led thee by a pillar of cloud, sent thee in flesh at even and bread in the morning, served thee as never prince was served in his greatest pomp, **#Ps 78:20,24**. And wilt thou yet kiss the calf, *qui te nec servat, nec satiat, ut ego?* who neither saveth thee, nor satisfieth thee, as I have done? not suffering thee to lack anything, **#De 2:7**, but crowning thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; insomuch as Moses stands amazed at it, and cries out, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved of the Lord?" **#De 33:29**.

Ver. 6. **According to their pasture so were they filled]** Saturity bred security; fulness, forgetfulness. This was a foul fault, and is much complained of, **#De 32:13,14 Ps 78:10,11**. God had brought them out of a place of great drought into large and fat pastures, a land flowing with milk and honey, where he filled their "hearts with food and gladness," **#Ac 14:17**, where he fed them among the lilies, daily and daintily. But they, as if God had hired them to be wicked, basely abused his bounty to luxury, and having fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, grew proud as Sodom, and out of measure sinful, **#Eze 16:49**; forgetting God and his will, themselves and their duties, and running out into all excess of riot, though they had been fairly warned and commanded to the contrary, **#De 8:10**, &c. Their heart grew fat as grease, and became as a foul stomach, which the more you fill it the more you spill it; or like fed horses, they grew fierce and filthy, **#Jer 5:7,8**, there was no hoe with them, *οπισσον αυ θρεψης μαλλον βλαψης* (Hippoc.). See **#Eze 34:16,18,20**. While they were in the wilderness God knew them, yea, he knew their souls in adversity: they both knew God, and were known of him. But now, God neither knew them so much, nor they him; they lived not upon him now, as once in the wilderness; but being "filled, yea, filled," **#Gal 3:1,2**, (you have the word here twice together), to note how they fell upon those allowed delights, and even glutted themselves, gorged themselves; they flew upon them, as those in Saul's time did upon the spoil of the Philistines; they fed without fear, as those Pseudo-Christians in Jude, **#Jude 12**; they gormandized, as those flesh mongers before the flood, more like beasts than men, as the Greek word signifieth, *τρωγοντες*, **#Lu 17:27**. And hereupon

**their hearts were exalted]** Prosperity and plenty will easily blow up such a blab as pride, in the best hearts, if care be not taken to the contrary; as Agur knew, and therefore prayed, Give me a mediocrity, "lest I be full and deny," and proudly ask, "Who is the Lord?" **#Pr 30:9**; and as Solomon felt, whose wealth did him more harm than his wisdom did him good, **#Ec 2**; and as Hezekiah experimented to his cost, **#Isa 39**. Indeed of Jehoshaphat it is noted, **#2Ch 17:3**, that he walked in the first ways of David his father (for the truth is, David's first ways were his best ways; neither was he ever so good and tender as when he was hunted as a partridge in the mountains); and of Vespasian it is reported that he was made the better man by being made emperor ( *Vespasianus unus accepto imperio melior rectus*); but he was a rare bird and had scarce his fellow again. It is the property of prosperity to turn out the heart and *ubi uber, ibi tuber*: where there is pleny there is a tumor. See **#Ps 73:3,6 1Ti 6:17**, they eat and are swelled, as being poisoned with pride; they are fatted, but it is for the slaughter.

**Therefore have they forgotten me]** *Non tam theoretice quam practice*, they remember there is a God, but they honour him not as God; they forget their engagements to him, and through the pride of their countenance, they seek not after him, **#Ps 10:4**, they consider not their distance, their dependence, &c. Now of all things God cannot abide to be forgotten, **#Isa 1:2,3**, it is a sin that he can hardly pardon, **#Jer 5:7**. {See Trapp on "Ho 8:14"}

Ver. 7. **Therefore will I be unto them as a lion, as a leopard, &c.]** Thus still God proceedeth to use similitudes by the ministry of his prophets, as he did before, **#Ho 13:3**. He here compareth himself (who otherwise is compared to an eagle, bearing her young upon her wings; to a hen, hovering over chickens; to a father, cherishing his children, **#Ex 19:4 De 32:10,11 Mt 23:37**) to a lion, yea, to an old lion, which taketh the prey but seldom, and therefore is more ravenous of it when taken; {see **#Ho 5:14**} to a leopard, or panther, that diligently observeth by the way, and lieth in wait for his prey, and useth subtilty, as not being so swift of foot, confer **#Jer 5:6**; to a bear robbed of her whelps, which are very dear to her; to any other cruel creature, **#Ho 13:8**, as the tiger that flieth upon the very picture of a man, and teareth it, or if he cannot come at it, teareth himself for anger. Neither is it for nothing (saith Rivet) that God



compareth himself here to all these together; but to show that there was no hope of escape, neither could he that had avoided one danger be safe from another, so dreadful a thing is it to fall into the punishing hands of the living God. Oh consider this, ye that forget God; lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.

Ver. 8. **I will meet them as a bear bereaved of her whelps]** *Surgit hic oratio*. The bear is more cruel than the lion, for the lion is said to spare the prostrate; but the bear falleth foul upon all, yea, upon dead carcases. See #Am 5:9 cf. 2Sa 17:8 Pr 17:12. See also what work the two bears made upon the forty-two children, #2Ki 2:24.

**And will rend the caul of their heart]** The pericardium, <sup>{a}</sup> that fat heart of theirs, #Ho 13:6, that hoof upon their hearts which the Word could not pierce through, that filthy foreskin that grew to their uncircumcised hearts.

**There will I devour them like a lion]** Once more like a lion (לִיאֹן), *ut immanis leo*, for the word is not the same as before; as a lion, that is, in heart, and that loves to suck the blood, and the fat that is about the heart. "There will I devour them," that is, in their cities and houses, where they hold themselves safest; as the lions dealt by those mongrel colonies that made a mixture of religions, #2Ki 17:25.

**The wild beast shall tear them]** When they but stir anywhere abroad; so that there shall be no safety, no peace to him that goes out, or to him that cometh in, #2Ch 15:5, but

*“ crudelis ubique  
Luetus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago.”*

*"Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear: for even our God" (and not the God of the Jews only) "is a consuming fire," #Heb 12:28,29, is a devouring lion, is a furious leopard, a raging bear; yea, put all the dreadfulness of all the creatures in the world together, it is all to be found in the wrath of God, even the quintessence of all. Hence that of the Psalmist, "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath," #Ps 90:11; as who should*

*say, Let a man fear thy displeasure never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more, if once he fall into thy fingers. Now a fearful man can fancy vast and terrible fears, as ramping lions, ravenous leopards, fire, sword, racks, scalding lead, burning pitch, running bell metal, all this in extremity, and that to all eternity: and yet all these are but as a painted fire in comparison of the unconceivable and unsupportable wrath of God.*

{a} The membranous sac, consisting of an outer fibrous and an inner serous layer, which encloses the heart and the commencements of the great vessels. Also applied to the sac enveloping or enclosing the heart or corresponding organ in certain invertebrates. (ED)

Ver. 9. **O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself]** Heb. He, or, It hath marred thee, O Israel; that is, either thy sin of self-exaltation and forgetfulness of me, as #Ho 13:6; or thy king, in whom thou trustest, as #Ho 13:10; or thy calf, whom thou worshippedst, hath been the cause of thy confusion. Or thy feigned comforts, as Aben Ezra will have it; thy soothing up thyself in sinful practices. Or, one hath destroyed thee; or; somewhat hath undone thee, but not without thee. Whatever it is that hath done it, it is not I, what hard thoughts soever thou mayest have of me, because I appear thus dreadful to thee, as in the former verse. Fury is not in me, but thou mayest thank thyself, and fault thy sin as the mother of thy misery, as the cause of thy calamity, Σφησιν ατασθαλισιν υπερ μορον αλγε εχοντες (Hom. Odys.), thou hast destroyed thyself, and thine own heart may say to thee, as the heart of Apollodorus seemed in a dream to say to him, when he was tortured by the Scythians; It is I that have drawn thee to all this, εφω σοι τουτων αιτια. It is the observation of a great politician: England is a mighty animal, which can never die except it kill itself. Answerable whereunto was the speech of the Lord Rich to the justices in the reign of Edward VI. Never foreign power could yet hurt, or in any part prevail, in this realm but by disobedience and disorder among ourselves; that is the way wherewith God will plague us if he mind to punish us. We use to say, No man is hurt but by himself. "Ye have not injured me at all," saith St Paul to the Galatians, #Ga 4:12; you cannot do it unless I will. The devil can do nothing at us if we give not way to him. And though there were no devil, yet our corrupt nature would act Satan's part against itself; it would have a supply of wickedness (as a serpent hath of poison) from itself; it hath a spring of its own to feed it. *Nemo igitur sibi palpet de suo: quisque sibi Satan est*, saith an ancient. And it was no

ill wish of him that begged of God to deliver him from that naughty man, himself ( *Domine, libera me a malo heroine, meipso*), for he knew, that as in that first chaos, #Ge 1:2, were the seeds of all creatures (πανσπερμα), so in man's heart, of all sins and miseries that follow thereupon. "God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions," #Ec 7:29, many shifts and sharking tricks. Sin and shifting came into the world together; #Ge 3:12, "The woman whom thou gavest me," &c. God must bear the blame of Adam's sin; so must his decree of reprobation still be alleged as the cause of man's perdition. But this covering is too short; for no man is destroyed because he is reprobated, but because he is a sinner; neither are any damned because they cannot do better, but because they will do no better. If there were no will there would be no hell ( *Cesset voluntas propria, et non erit infernus*), and this indeed will be the very hell of hell, that they have been self-destroyers. The worm of conscience (say divines), that never dying worm, is nothing else but a continual remorse and furious reflection of the soul upon its own wilful folly, and now woeful misery.

**But in me is thy help]** Heb. In me, in thy help, that is (saith Drusius), I am in thy help, and thy help is in me; whatsoever help thou hast, I am in it. We can easily undo ourselves; as a child can easily break a glass that all the men in the country cannot piece up again. But God both can and will help us, though never so shattered; and repair that image of his, lost in Adam, that one that destroyed Israel. Lord, saith Augustine, *Ego admisi unde tu damnare potes me; sed tu non amisisti unde salvare potes me*: that is, I have done enough to undo myself for ever, but with thee there is enough for my safety here, and salvation hereafter. God, as he both can and will help his that cry, Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man; so he will then chiefly do it when they seem to themselves and others to be in an undone condition. "Thou hast destroyed thyself, in me is thy help": #Ps 9:11, his holy hand is reserved for a dead lift.

Ver. 10. **I will be thy king]** Thine eternal King, so Pagnine. As I have been thy prophet, #Ho 13:4,5, so I will be thy king; I will also be thy priest and thy Redeemer, #Ho 13:14, that so thou mayest hear my voice, submit to my sceptre, and apply my death for thy deliverance from death's dominion. Or, I will be thy king, and not be borne down by thy boisterousness, who calleth for another king, and

repinest against my righteous regiment. Thou wouldst cast off mine authority, but I will maintain it. The Lord is king, be the people never so unquiet, **#Ps 99:1**, he will reign over rebels in spite of their hearts; and those that will not be his subjects, his willing people, shall be his slaves, his footstool, **#Ps 11 0:1,3**. The Geneva Bible reads it thus, "I am: Where is the king that should help thee in all thy cities?" R. Aben Ezra, Calvin, Oecolampadius, and others go the same way; only they render it, Ere, I will be one and the same (according to that name of mine, "I am that I am," **#Ex 3:14**, and "Before Abraham was, I am," **#Joh 8:58**); though you be off and on with me, though you change often, yet I am Jehovah, I change not, I will be. What will he be? The same that I said I would be, thy Saviour, thine helper: or, I will be a bystander, to see what will become of thee, and how thy king (in whom thou trustest) will help thee. This last is R. Solomon Jarchi's interpretation. Pareus will have it run thus: I will be, what? a lion, a leopard, a bear, &c., and nothing shall alter my resolution.

**Where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities]** Thou sayest (but they are but vain words) I have counsel, and strength for war; I have a king, and princes, and strong cities. But alas, where are they? Let them increase their army, and come forth, as he once said, **#Jud 9:29**. *Ubi est Rex tuus? ubinam? nunc servet te, &c.* Where is the king? where is he? let him now save thee in all thy cities: so Polanus rendereth it. Can they save thee, who cannot save themselves? It is a sarcastic concession. See the like **#De 32:37,38 Jud 10:14 Am 4:4**. And observe that it is of God to deride and insult over men in their carnal confidence; and his people are licensed to do so too, so it be out of pure zeal, **#Ps 52:6,7**, and not out of private revenge.

**And thy judges]** Or chief officers, princes, that are necessary to a king, and are called his comites, cousins, and counsellors.

**Whereof thou saidst]** And wast set upon it; thou wouldst needs have them, *contra gentes*, against the nations, as they say, and hadst soon enough of them. Strong affections bring strong afflictions.

**Give me a king and princes]** It was partly their ambition, and partly discontent with the present government (as the present is always grievous, το παρον βαρυ, Thucyd.), that prompted them to this request; and they had it, but for a mischief. It is not always in mercy that prayers are answered: for *Deus saepe dat iratus, quod negat propitius*, God often throws that to his enemies, when they are overly importunate, which he denies to his friends, in great mercy to their souls. They do best that, acknowledging him the only wise God, pray, Not our will, but thy will be done.

Ver. 11. **I gave thee a king in mine anger]** As once before he gave them quails to choke them. A king, that is, all those kings they had since they fell off from the house of David. These were God's gifts, but giftless gifts (αδωρα δωρα και ουκ ονησιμα), which he cast upon them in his anger, for a punishment both of the sins of David's house, and likewise of the people's rebellion. It was *ab irate potius quam ab exorato Deo*. Take him (saith he, since you will needs have him) with all that shall follow after. The hypocrite shall reign, that the people may be ensnared, #Job 34:30. "Set thou a wicked man over him" (saith the psalmist), "and let Satan stand at his right hand," #Ps 109:6; see #Da 8:23. Saul was a hypocrite, Jeroboam a wicked man; so were all his successors in that throne. #Le 26:17, it is written as a heavy curse of God, If you still trespass against me, I will set princes over you that shall hate you, mischievous, odious princes; odious to God, malignant to the people.

**And took him away in my wrath]** Heb. In mine immoderate wrath, that passed the bounds. This is spoken of God after the manner of men; for he cannot exceed or over do; "fury is not in him," #Isa 27:4; but here he threateneth to take away king and kingdom together: as he did Hoshea, by the Assyrian that carried them all captive. Observe here, that better a bad magistrate than none, for this latter is the fruit of God's utter indignation. Those Anabaptists that from this text inferred that no Christian can with a good conscience take upon him kingly dignity should have observed, that as an evil king is reckoned as a plague to a people, so a good king is to be held a special blessing to them.

Ver. 12. **The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up]** *sc.* in a bundle, or fardle, or fagot, as the French hath it. And like as all fardles are opened on a fair day, so shall Ephraim's iniquities be brought to

light, and punished at the last day: as the householder bindeth up the tares in bundles at harvest and burneth them; so shall it be in the end of the world. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire," #Mt 13:30,41,42. As the clerk of assizes binds up the indictments of malefactors in bundles, or seals them up in a bag for more surety, and at the assizes brings his bag, takes them out, and reads them; so will it be at that last and great day. "My transgression is sealed up in a bag," saith Job, #Job 14:17, "and thou sewest up mine iniquity," viz. as the writings, or informations of a process, which is ready to be sentenced. See #De 32:34 Jer 17:1 Ho 9:9. Sinners shall one day know that God's forbearance is no quittance; and that however he is silent for a season, and thereupon they are apt fondly to conceit him to be such another as themselves, yet he will confute them, and set their sins in order before their eyes, #Ps 50:21 Their actions are already in print in heaven; and God will one day read them aloud in the ears of all the world. And then though their sin be hidden for the present, all shall be revealed, to their utter shame and everlasting contempt, #Da 12:2; that last light of the day of wrath shall reveal all, #Ro 2:5, punish all, #Ho 9:9. Whatever God hath threatened shall then be inflicted; whatever arrows are in the bowstring shall then flee, and hit, and stick deep. And the longer the Lord is in drawing the heavier they will light; *Morae dispendium faenoris duplo pensabitur*; the longer he forbeareth the heavier he punisheth; so that there shall be no cause why sinners should say, "Where is the God of judgment?" #Mal 2:17. {See Trapp on "Mal 2:17"} God will inquire after their iniquity, and search after their sin, #Job 10:6.

Ver. 13. **The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him]** This commonwealth was before compared to a mother, #Ho 1 Ho 3. And as a woman that hath conceived is not for a while discerned to be with child till she biggen, and burnish, and grow near her time; so it is with sinners. See it elegantly set forth by St James, #Jas 1:14,15. The sorrows of a travailing woman are known to be unexpected, exquisite, and inevitable; so shall God's judgments be upon the workers of iniquity, such as they shall never be able to avert, to avoid, or to abide. This is set forth by an apt similitude, ordinary in Holy Scripture, #Mic 4:9,10 Ps 48:7 Jer 49:24 50:43. And whereas some might say, A travailing woman is

soon delivered; her pain is sharp, but short; she hath hope, not only of an end but of a birth; the joy whereof maketh her remember her anguish no more, #**Joh 16:21**; the prophet replieth, that it is otherwise with Ephraim.

**He is an unwise son]** That will be the death both of his mother and of himself. He hath no wish to help himself, and to get free of the straits and perils of the birth, by passing through the narrow womb of repentance, and being born anew. God stands over him, stretching out his hands all the day long, to do a midwife's office, to take him out of the womb, as #**Ps 21:9**, to cut his navel and wash off his blood, to salt him, and swaddle him, as #**Eze 16:4**, but he hath no mind to come out of the filth of his sins, or to be washed from his wickedness. Rather than be regenerated (without which there is no heaven to be had, #**Joh 3:5**, or freedom from deadly dangers upon earth), he will venture to stay a while at least (as the text here hath it *על*) *in the mouth of the matrix*, though it cost him a choking. Such Ephraims we have not a few, that proceed no farther than to conviction; debarring themselves of the benefit of a thorough conversion. These go as far as Kadeshbarnea, they are nigh to God's kingdom, they are almost persuaded to be true Christians, they are come as far as the place of the breaking forth of children, but there they stick and are stifled; they are never brought forth from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins, and inheritance among the saints and sons of God, #**Ac 26:18**. Oh make much of the least beginnings of grace (saith a reverend man), even those called repressing; since they prepare the heart for conversion. There is a faith in the true convert of no better perfection than that in the temporary, though he stay not there, as the other (being an unwise sot) doth. And although we bring forth good things (saith another), as Sarah's dead womb brought forth a child; it was not a child of nature's, but of the mere promise; yet it cannot be denied that a natural man (though he be theologically dead, yet he) is ethically alive, being to be wrought upon by arguments; and that grace doth for the most part prepare naturals before it bring in supernaturals; and if we hide our talent we are not allowed to expect the spirit of regeneration; as if we die in the wilderness of preparatory antecedaneous works, we never get to Canaan.

Ver. 14. **I will ransom them from the power of the grave, &c.]** Some read it thus, I would have ransomed them, &c., I would have redeemed them, &c., had they been wise, or oughts (as we say), had not their incurable hardness and obstinace hindered; had they put forth into my hands, as unto a midwife, &c. But (alas) it is no such matter; therefore that which will die let it die.

**Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes]** I am unchangeably resolved to ruin them; or, repentance should have been hid from mine eyes, my goodness toward them should never have altered, &c. But let us rather look upon the words as a most sweet and comfortable promise of a mighty redemption and glorious resurrection to the remnant according to the election of grace, whom God would not have to want comfort. I will ransom them. Here, therefore, he telleth his heirs of the promises, that he will bring them back out of captivity wherein they lay for dead, as it were; and that this their deliverance should be an evident argument and sure pledge of their resurrection to life eternal. To which purpose the apostle doth aptly and properly allege it, **#1Co 15:55**, and thereupon rings in death's ears (out of this text and **#Isa 25:8**) the shrillest and sharpest note, the boldest and bravest challenge, that ever was heard from the mouth of a mortal: "Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? &c. Oh thanks be to God, who hath given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," and thereby hath made us more than conquerors, that is, triumphers, **#2Co 2:14**. But to return to the text. Be it, saith the prophet, that the commonwealth of Israel, both mother and child, must perish for want of wisdom, as was threatened in the foregoing verse; yet let not the penitent among them despair; for I, the Lord Christ, will ransom them, by laying down a valuable price (so the word Ephdem signifieth) *from the power* Heb. hand, of the grave, or of hell, that though hell had laid hands on them, yea, closed her mouth upon them, as once the whale had upon Jonas, yet I would open the doors of that Leviathan, and fetch them thence with a strong hand.

**I will redeem them from death]** By becoming their near kinsman according to the flesh, whereby I shall have the next right of redemption. But how shall all this be done? After a wonderful manner.



**O death, I will be thy plagues]** Not one, but many plagues, even so many as shall certainly do thee to death. The Vulgate rendereth it, *Ero mors tua, O mors, morsus tuus, O inferne*. The apostle for plagues hath sting; for the plague hath a deadly sting, and so hath sin much more; the guilt thereof is by Solomon said to "bite like a serpent, and sting like a cockatrice," **#Pr 23:32**. Now Christ by dying put sin to death, **#Ro 8:3 Eph 1:7 Heb 2:14**. We read of a certain Cappadocian, whom when a viper had bitten, and sucked his blood, the viper herself died, by the venomoas blood that she had sucked. But Christ (being life essential) prevailed over death; and swallowed it up in victory, as Moses' serpent swallowed up the sorcerers' serpents, or as fire swalloweth up the fuel that is cast upon it; yea, by death, he destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil; whose practice it was to kill men with death, **#Re 2:23**, this is the second death.

**O grave (or, O hell), I will be thy destruction]** Thy deadly stinging disease joined with the pestilence, **#Ps 91:6**. Death to a believer is neither total nor perpetual, **#Ro 8:10,11**. Christ hath made it to him, of a curse a blessing, of an enemy a friend, of a punishment an emolument, of the gate of hell the portal of heaven, a postern to let out temporal, but a street door to let in eternal life. And to assure all this,

**Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes]** *i.e.* there shall be no such thing as repentance in me, for "all things" that are at all "are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do," **#Heb 4:13**. The meaning is, I will never change my mind for this matter, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips," **#Ps 89:34**. Confer **#Ps 110:4 Ro 11:29**. Some render it (but not so well), Consolation is hid from mine eyes, and so make them to be the words of the Church, *q.d.* I see not this promise with mine eyes, but I receive it, and accept of it by my faith.

Ver. 15. **Though he be fruitful among his brethren]** In allusion to his name Ephraim, which signifieth fruitful and flourishing, **#Ge 41:52**. Confer **#Ge 48:16,19,20 49:22**. See the like allusions **#Am 5:5 Mic 1:10**.

**An east wind shall come]** Which is violent and hurtful to the fruits of the earth.

**The wind of the Lord]** A mighty strong wind, meaning that most merciless and impetuous enemy, the Assyrian, sent by the Lord to avenge the quarrel of his covenant.

**Shall come up from the wilderness]** Where the winds blow most fiercely, because they meet with no resistance.

**And his spring shall become dry, &c.]** This is a description of extreme desolation, and it is explained and amplified in the next words.

**He shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels]** He, that is, the Assyrian, not Christ (as Jerome, Mercer, and Ribera will have it), who shall take away from death and hell all matter of glorying. Not the fire of the last day, as Lyra. No, nor Ephraim, as Pareus and Tarnovius carry it: as if it were a promise of their conquest in Christ over all their enemies, corporal and spiritual, dividing the spoil of the converted Gentiles, who shall come in to them with all their desirable things, as some read that text, **#Hag 2:7**. Confer **#Am 9:11,12 Ob 18 Zec 14:14,16,20,21**. That this whole verse containeth a promise of Ephraim's reduction to the Church of God I could easily yield; reading it especially, as many good interpreters do, "For he shall fructify among his brethren, after that an east wind coming, a wind of Jehovah coming up from the desert, his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall dry up: the same shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels." This is a similitude (say they) from a piece of ground all dried up and parched, that nothing is able to grow: notably expressing the miserable and distressed estate of this people; that, as an easterly wind, and a tempestuous storm, hath dried them quite and spoiled all their delightful treasures, made them the vilest and most contemptible of the earth. Marcellinus tells of an emperor, that, meeting with some of this nation, and annoyed with the sight and stench of them, cried out, *O Marcommani, O Quadi, O Sarmatae, &c.*, O Mareomans, Quades, and Sarmatians, I have found at length a more loathsome and sordid people than you. All which notwithstanding, Ephraim shall flourish again, and hold up

their heads among their brethren, *sc.* by the merit and spirit of him who ransometh them from the power of the grave, from the dint of death. This sense of the words is confirmed by that which follows in the next chapter, **#Ho 14:5-7**.

Ver. 16. **Samaria shall become desolate]** Here many begin the fourteenth chapter, but not so well; for this verse evidently cohereth with the former, and showeth that Ephraim shall not only be plundered, but butchered by the Assyrian by their own default. "Samaria shall become desolate," or be found guilty, *rea peragetur*, (as the Chaldee hath it, and the words may bear). How can she be otherwise, whereas

**she hath rebelled against her God]** She hath embittered him, or bitterly provoked him to wrath, {as #Ho 12:14} {See Trapp on "Ho 12:14"} who therefore sent in the Assyrian to desolate her: "that bitter and hasty nation, to march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that were not theirs," **#Hab 1:6**. This was a bitter affliction, but behold a worse:

**They shall fall by the sword]** They shall lose not their land only, and the treasure of all their pleasant vessels, as **#Ho 13:15**, but their dearest lives, which to save a man will gladly part with all that he hath, **#Job 2:4**, or submit to any servile employment, as the Gibeonites in Joshua's days did; who were willing to take hard on as slaves and underlings rather than to be cut off with the rest of the Canaanites.

**Their infants shall be dashed in pieces]** Sept. τα υποπιτθια αυτων, their sucklings, that are ordinarily spared for their innocence, ignorance, &c. See **#Ho 10:14**, with the note; and consider that infants are not so innocent (though they have yet done neither good nor evil) but that God may justly inflict upon them all torments here, and tortures in hell, for the guilt of original sin that cleaveth to their natures. Howbeit this excuseth not the barbarous cruelty of his executioners, who shall be surely and suitably punished, **#Ps 137:8**.

**And their women with child shall be ripped up]** Of this kind of savage inhumanity, see **#Am 1:13 2Ki 8:12 15:16**, where you shall find that the tyrant Menahem ripped the infants of Tiphseh out of

their mothers' bellies, because their fathers opened not the gates unto him. The like cruelty was exercised in the Sicilian Vespers and Parisian Massacre, by those Romish Edomites; maugre whose malice Ephraim is yet fruitful, the Church flourisheth.

*Sanguine fundata est Ecclesia, sanguine crescit.*

By blood the church is established, by blood she thrives.

## Chapter 14

Ver. 1. **O Israel, return unto the Lord]** *Usque ad Dominum*, all the way to God, as far as to the Lord: give not the half, but the whole turn; and take it for a mercy that you are yet called upon to return, and may be received; "that yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing," #Ezr 10:2. All the former part of the prophecy had been mostly denunciations; this last chapter is wholly consolatory; the Sun of Righteousness loves not to set in a cloud.

**Return unto the Lord thy God]** He is yet thy God: no such argument for our turning to God as his turning to us, #Zec 1:3. See the note there. *Tantum velis et Deus tibi praeoccurrent.* If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat, &c. The father's plenty brought home the prodigal; he had but a purpose to return, and his father met him, #Isa 65:24. See #Joe 2:12,13 Isa 55:6,7 Jer 31:18 Ho 3:5 Ac 2:38. This is the use we should make of mercy. Say not, He is my God, therefore I may presume upon him; but, he is mine, therefore I must return unto him. Argue from mercy to duty, and not to liberty, for that is the devil's logic, which the apostle holds unreasonable, yea, to a good heart impossible, #Ro 6:1,2. His mercy is bounded with his truth, with which it therefore goes commonly coupled in Scripture. It is a sanctuary for the penitent, but not for the presumptuous.

**For thou hast fallen by thine iniquity]** *i.e.* "Consumption is decreed, yet a remnant reserved," #Isa 10:22,23. Thou hast fallen into great calamity, and that by thine iniquity, which puts a sting into thy misery. This it is fit thou shouldst be sensible of; for conviction is the first step to conversion. But if thou art fallen, wilt thou there lie and not rise again by repentance, and return to him that smiteth

thee? wilt thou not submit to his justice, and implore his mercy? Here, then, is another motive to conversion; as indeed this verse abounds with arguments to that purpose, Pareus well observeth. First, thou art a prince of God, who hath greatly graced thee above all people: return to him therefore. 2. Thou hast run away from him by thine iniquity; and turned upon him the back, and not the face: return therefore. 3. He is the author of thy being and well-being. 4. He is God, to whom thou must either turn or burn for ever: *aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*; he can fetch in his rebels. 5. He is thy God in covenant with thee, and will accept of pence for pounds, desires for deeds, sincerity for perfection. 6. Thou hast fallen by thine iniquity; and yet wilt fall farther, and never rise again, as **#Am 8:14**, if thou stop not, step not back by repentance, and stir up thyself to take hold of God.

Ver. 2. **Take with you words, and turn to the Lord**] Confess your sins, beg pardon, and promise amendment. Sue to God to give you those words that he bids you take: go to him in his own words, put his promises in suit; crave the help of his Holy Spirit, without which what can we do? **#Ro 8:26**. Say to God, as **#Job 37:19**, "Teach us what we shall say unto thee: for we cannot order our words, by reason of darkness." David promiseth not only to pray, but to marshal up his prayers, to put them in good array, so the word signifieth, **#Ps 5:3**, "In the morning will I direct my prayer," order it in the best manner: his words should be *nec lecta, nec neglecta*, neither curious nor careless, but such as are humble, earnest, and direct to the point, avoiding vain babblings. Here is a form prescribed in the text (forms of prayer therefore are not so unlawful as some conceive them), words put into their mouths (as the phrase is, **#2Sa 14:3**), that they might not miss. Men must as well look to their words as to their feet, when they come before God; and see that their affections in prayer be not without answerable expressions. Take with you such words as may testify that ye turn heartily to the Lord, and not from the teeth outward, as they in the Psalmist, **#Ps 78:36,37**. Turn before ye begin to pray; for God heareth not sinners, since their incense smells of their hand that offereth it, **#Isa 1:13**.

**Say unto him**] Mentally and vocally; with spirit and speech. True it is, that prayer is not the labour of the lips, but the travail of the heart; and God hath promised to answer his people before they call, **#Isa**

**65:24.** By calling upon his name we neither inform him of what he knoweth not, nor move him to show us more mercy than he intendeth. But yet prayers are necessary, as means which God will have used, that we may receive what he of free mercy giveth. Besides, it prepareth us holily to enjoy the things received; and makes us ready, either to wait for them, or to want them; and to be content that he may be glorified, though we be not gratified. And although God knoweth our thoughts, and understands the mind of the spirit, as being the searcher of hearts, **#Ro 8:27**, yet he calls for the calves of our lips, the service of our tongues, **#Jas 3:9**, guiding them now and then in a wonderful manner, far beyond all natural apprehension: and strangely enabling his praying servants, who do also find no small benefit by this practice of pouring out their hearts before him, both of the preventing of distractions, and kindling affections, and discerning their profiting in holy desires; for the more worthy effect followeth where more fervent affection went before.

**Take away all iniquity]** Few words, but full of matter: *O quam multa, quam paucis!* (Cicero, de Bruti epistola). What a short but pithy prayer is this! Such was that of the publican, **#Lu 18:13**; that of our Saviour in his agony, when yet he is said to pray more fervently; that also which he taught us to pray, **#Mt 6:7,8**, &c., set in fiat opposition to Paganish battologies. This in the text is not much unlike that perfect pattern; for here they are taught to beg, *Ut auferantur sua maleficia, conferantur Dei beneficia*, Take away all evil, and give good; and then to restipulate thanks, "So will we render," &c. Take away from us, as an unsupportable burden, such as we cannot stand under, all iniquity, stain and sting, crime and curse, power and punishment, that there be no later reckonings; cross out the black lines of our sins with the red lines of thy Son's blood, that Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world by his merit and Spirit, by his value and virtue; that true scape goat, that carrieth the sins of his people into the wilderness, **#Joh 1:29 Heb 9:28**.

**And receive us graciously]** Heb. Receive good, that is (as some interpret it), Accept, out of thy fatherly favour, the true witnesses and effects of our thorough conversion. But better they that thus

sense it, Take good, to wit, to bestow upon us, as **#Ps 68:19 cf. Eph 4:8**. And it is not improbable (saith Dr Reynolds) that the prophet here secretly leadeth us to Christ the Mediator, who first receiveth gifts from his Father, and then poureth out them forth upon his Church, **#Ac 2:33**.

**So will we render the calves of our lips]** Thy benefits shall not be cast away upon unthankful persons; but we will present unto thee a sacrifice that will please thee better than an ox or bullock, that hath horns and hoofs, **#Ps 69:31**. This cannot be done but by a sound convert; for the leper's lips must be covered according to the law; and the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord. To the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do to take my name into thy mouth," &c.; he liketh not a good motion from an ill mouth, as that state in the story: The lip of excellence becometh not a fool, {#Pr 17:7} no more than lying doth a worthy man that is renowned for his wisdom. It well becometh the saints to be thankful, to cover God's altar with the calves of their lips. This expression implieth (saith one) that God's people should not offer their thankfulness to God of that which cost them nothing; but bring, 1. A calf; do something to farther God's worship, or relieve the necessities of others. 2. It must be a dead calf, that is, it must proceed from humble and mortified minds. 3. A sacrificed calf: where is required, 1. An altar; our praises must be tendered in the mediation of Christ; 2. Fire; for the bare throwing out of words, though in the name of Christ, will not serve without feeling, ardency, and zeal. 3. We must lay our hands on the head of the calf; that is, in all humility, confess our unworthiness of the blessings we give thanks for, as being less than the least, **#Ge 32:10**.

Ver. 3. **Asshur shall not save us, &c.]** *q.d.* He cannot if he would; he shall not if he could. The two great sins of this people were creature confidence and idolatry; both these they do here renounce and abandon. The best repentance, saith Luther, is a reformed life. It is true, say they, we have gone to the Assyrian (wherein we have dealt as the silly bird flying to the snare, or as fishes, which, to avoid the pole wherewith the water is troubled, swim into the net); we have taken our horses instead of our prayers, and gone about to find out good; have been so foolish as to think that dumb idols, that cannot help themselves, should help us. But now we are otherwise

resolved, *experientia edocti et poenitentia ducti*; we find at length (that which we should have believed sooner, without trying conclusions) that men of high degree are but a lie, that horses are but a vanity, that an idol is nothing, and can give nothing: that power belongeth unto thee, none else can do it; that mercy belongeth unto thee, none else will do it: therefore since in thee only the fatherless, that is, the friendless and shiftless, find mercy, O be thou pleased to do us good.

**For in thee the fatherless findeth mercy]** The poor pupil, the forlorn orphan, that is left to the wide world, and lost in himself, cries out, Lord, I am hell, but thou art heaven, &c. I am an object, oh make me an object of thy pity. **#Jer 39:17**, "Because they call thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after, therefore I will restore health unto thee." *Miseria res digna misericordia* (Ruperti Imp. symb.). The proud Assyrian, and other enemies, would be apt to insult over Israel, as afterwards Cicero did; the Jewish nation, saith he, show how God regards them, that have been so often overcome by Pompey, Crassus, &c. But let God's people be but fatherless enough, let them withdraw their confidence from men and means, and cast it wholly upon God, making him their tutor and protector, and they shall be both preserved and provided for. *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*. Have confidence in God and you will never be disappointed, I will not leave you orphans, saith Christ, **#Joh 14:18**. Hence the Church resteth on God, in the fail of other comforts, **#Ps 10:14,17,18 27:10 Hab 3:17 Ps 102:13**. The prayer of the destitute he regards. The Hebrew word signifieth a poor worthless shrub in the wilderness, trod upon by beasts, unregarded.

Ver. 4. **I will heal their backslidings]** Relapses, we know, are dangerous, and apostasy little less than incurable, **#2Pe 2:20,21 Heb 6:6**. Bishop Latimer, in a sermon before King Edward VI, tells of one notorious backslider that repented; but beware of this sin, saith he, for I have known no more but one that did so. To fall forward is nothing so dangerous as to fall backward, with old Eli. Hence Paul so thundereth against the Galatians, and Peter against apostatizing libertines, **#2Pe 2:22**; but if Jehovah the physician (as he is called, **#Ex 15:26**) undertake the cure, and say, I will heal their backslidings, what can hinder? Christ, in the Gospel, cured the most



desperate diseases; such as all the physicians in the country might have cast their caps at, #Mt 4:23,24 8:16. *Omnipotentis medico nullus insanabilis occurrit morbus* (Isidor.). He refused none that came to him, #Mt 12:15, no, not his enemies, as Malchus. Will he then reject his Ephraim, a child, bemoaning himself, though not a pleasant child, a towardly son, #Jer 31:18,20, a backslider indeed, but such a one, as crieth now, that God bindeth him, #Job 36:13. No sooner doth God cry, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings, I will love you freely"; but Ephraim, melted with such a love, replieth, "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God," #Jer 3:22. O most happy compliance! See the like #Zec 13:9. {See Trapp on "Zec 13:9"} "They shall return even to the Lord" (from whom they had deeply revolted), "and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them," #Isa 19:22. They had begged of him to take away all iniquity, #Ho 14:2; and he here (in answer) promiseth to heal their backslidings, that compound of all iniquities, that falling sickness, that often hailes hell at the heels of it, #Heb 10:38.

**I will love them freely]** Ephraim might remember, and Satan would be sure to suggest, that the prophet had said before, "Ephraim is smitten or wounded, My God will cast them away, or hate them, Mine anger is kindled against them," #Ho 8:5 9:16,17. Here, therefore, upon their repentance, all this is graciously taken off in one breath, and Satan silenced. Be it that they are backslidden and sore wounded by their fall; I will heal their backslidings, and make their broken bones to rejoice. Be it that there is nothing at all in them that is laudable, or loveworthy, yet I will love them freely, *ex mero motu*, of mine own free, absolute, and independent grace and favour, out of pure and unexcited love, without any the least respect to their merit, which in nothing better than hell. Be it that they have bitterly provoked me to anger, and (as angry people use to do) I have both threatened them and punished them; yet now mine anger is turned away from them; I am fully reconciled unto them in Christ, will clear up my countenance toward them, and remove mine heavy judgments from them. God's favour is no empty favour. It is like the winter sun, that casts a goodly countenance when it shineth, but gives little heat or comfort. If he love a man freely, and out of the good pleasure of his will, *εν δωδoκiα*, *cum spontaneitate* (as he doth

all his, **#Eph 2:8**, making them accepted in the beloved, **#Eph 1:6**), such a man may promise himself all the blessings of this and a better life. Excellent is that of Bernard; He that sent his Son for thee, poured his Spirit into thee, promised to clear up his countenance upon thee, what can he deny thee? *Qui misit unigenitum, immisit spiritum, promisit vultum, quid tandem tibi negaturus est?* He that inviteth thee to feed upon the fatted calf, will not only take away all iniquity, but give good. That was the second petition they preferred, and they have it answered in the next verse, *ad cardinem desiderii*; God not only grants their prayer, but fulfils their counsel, **#Ps 20:4**.

Ver. 5. **I will be as the dew unto Israel]** I will give good in abundance; and this is sweetly set forth in a sevenfold metaphor, all answering to the name of Ephraim (which signifieth fruitful) and to the ancient promises made unto him; and all again opposite to the many contrary curses, threatened in the former parts of the prophecy, under metaphors of a contrary importance, as Pareus and (out of him) Tarnovius have well observed. As first of solid and fruit causing dew, in opposition to that vanishing and barren dew, **#Ho 6:4 13:3**; secondly, of the flourishing lily, contrary to those nettles, thorns, and thistles, **#Ho 9:16 10:8**; thirdly, of the well-rooted and durable trees of Libanus, contrary to dry roots, **#Ho 9:16**; fourthly, of spreading and growing branches, instead of branches consumed, **#Ho 11:6 9:16 10:8**; fifthly, of trees yielding pleasant shade and repose, contrary to **#Ho 9:3,6**; sixthly, of corn to satisfy hunger, contrary to **#Ho 8:7**; lastly, of a vine bringing forth excellent wine, contrary to **#Ho 9:16 10:1**. And all these fruits the fruits of Lebanon, a most fertile mountain, the valleys whereof were most rich grounds for pasture, grain, and vineyards.

**As the dew unto Israel, he shall blossom as the lily]** *Quot verba, tot lumina, imo flumina orationis.* This prophet aboundeth with similitudes, as is before noted. {see **#Ho 12:10**} {See Trapp on "**Ho 12:10**" } He beginneth here with a simile drawn from the dew of heaven; a mercy very much set by, in those hotter countries especially, where from May to October they had no rain. The Chaldee paraphrase and Hebrew doctors understand this text concerning Christ and his benefit. Truly he is good to Israel, to the pure in heart, **#Ps 73:1**. Peace and mercy, sanctity and safety, all spiritual benedictions in heavenly things in Christ, shall be upon the Israel of God, **#Ga 6:16**

**Eph 1:3.** What the dew is to the herbs, fields, fruits, that is Christ to his Israel. 1. The dew comes when the air is clear; so doth Christ by his blessing, when the light of his countenance is lifted up upon us, 2. As the dew refresheth and cherisheth the dry and fady fields (hence it is called the dew of herbs, **#Isa 26:19**, which thereby recover life and beauty), so doth Christ our hearts, scorched with the sense of sin; and fear of wrath. 3. As the dew allayeth great heats, and moisteneth and mollifieth the earth, that it may fructify; so Christ cooleth the devil's fiery darts, and filleth his people with the fruits of righteousness (Aristot. lib. 1, Meteor. cap. 10; Plin. lib. 2, cap. 60, et lib. 18, cap. 29). "He is unto them as a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest," **#Isa 18:4**, and maketh their souls as so many watered gardens, **#Jer 31:12** 4. As the dew falls in a narrow compass, without noise, and is felt only by those (in the force of it) on whom it descends; so the grace of Christ watereth his faithful only; secretly and sweetly insinuating into their hearts: the stranger meddleth not with their comforts. See **#Joh 14:17**. The cock on the dunghill knows them not.

**He shall grow as the lily]** Which hath its name in the Hebrew from its six leaves, and serves here and elsewhere to set forth the great comeliness, sweet odours, and true humility of the Church: for the lily grows in valleys, **#So 2:1**; as Theophylact upon this text notes, sweet it is but not great, *εχει την ευωδιαν μεγαθος ουκ εχει*, and the more it blossometh the more it shooteth upwards, to teach us heavenly mindedness. It is also of a perfect whiteness, to remind us of innocence. "Her Nazarites were purer than snow, whiter than milk," **#La 4:7**. Lastly, *Lilio nihil est foecundius*, saith Pliny, nothing is more fruitful than the lily; *et lachryma sua seritur*; saith the same author, it is sown in its own tears. Weeping Christians grow exceedingly.

**And cast forth his roots as Lebanon]** *i.e.* as the cedars of Lebanon, as the Chaldee Paraphrast interpreteth it; or as the frankincense tree, which taketh very deep rooting, so Cyril senseth it. The lily (with its six white leaves, and seven golden coloured grains within it) soon fadeth, and loseth both beauty and sweetness; but so doth not Christ and his people. He can as well die at the right hand of his Father as in the hearts of his elect, where he dwells by faith, **#Ro 6:10**,

whereby they are "rooted and grounded in love, strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man," #Eph 3:16,17, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against them. *Immota manet*, is the Church's motto; *Nec fluctu, nec flatu movetur*; It is not moved by wind or waves, which is the Venetian motto. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever," #Ps 125:1. Winds and storms move neither Libanus nor the well-rooted cedars thereof: which the more they are assaulted the better they are rooted. So fareth it with the saints. Plato compareth man to a tree inverted. The Scripture often compareth a good man to a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that taketh root downward, and beareth fruit upward, #2Ki 19:30.

—“ *quae quantum vertice ad auras,  
Aethereas, tantum radice ad tartara tendit.* ”

*Let us cast forth our roots as Lebanon; stand fast rooted in the truth, being "stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," and with full purpose of heart cleaving close unto him, #1Co 15:58, being established by his grace, #Col 1:11 Heb 12:28 13:9. In the civil law, till a tree hath taken root it doth not belong to the soil whereon it is planted. It is not enough to be in the Church, except, like the cedars of Lebanon, we cast forth our roots, and are so planted, that we flourish in the courts of our God, and bring forth fruit in our old age, #Ps 92:12-14.*

Ver. 6. **His branches shall spread]** Heb. shall walk, or expatiate; shall reach out, and stretch themselves all abroad: so shall the Church be propagated all the earth over; she shall flourish as the palm tree, which though it have many weights hung on the top, and many snakes hissing at the root, yet it still saith, *Nec premor; nec perimor*; I am insuperable: "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever," #Ps 52:8.

**And his beauty shall be as the olive tree]** That goodly tree, #Le 23:40, that retaineth her greenness in the depth of winter; yea, in that universal deluge, Noah's dove met with an olive leaf. "The Lord hath called thy name," saith the prophet to the Church, #Jer 11:16, "a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit." The cypress is fair, but not fruitful; the fig tree fruitful, but not fair and flourishing. But the

olive tree is both fair and fruitful; her fruit also is of singular use to mankind, both for food and medicine and light for the lamp, #Ex 29:20 Le 6:15,16. In one respect it is an emblem of peace, it maketh the face shine, #Ps 104:15; and in the other, it is an emblem of grace and spiritual gifts, #1Jo 2:20, of increasing with the increase of God, by the Spirit, and of reigning with him in eternal glory.

**And his smell as Lebanon]** Whereby is meant the sweet savour of the gospel, which spreadeth itself abroad in the ministry of the word, and in the lives of believers, #2Co 2:14,15, who besides their continual offering up to God spiritual incense and services in prayers, thanksgivings, alms, and good works, they perfume the very air they breathe upon by their gracious and savoury communication, #Eph 4:29; yea, the very company they come into: as a man cannot come where sweet spices and odours are beaten to the smell but he shall carry away the scent thereof in his clothes. When the Spirit of Christ blows upon them, and grace is poured into their hearts, then their lips drop sweet-smelling myrrh, #So 5:13 4:16, then also their "good name is better than a precious ointment," #Ec 7:1; see the note there; when the wicked stink alive and dead, *Nihil nisi foetidum et foedum exhalavit* (Rivet.).

Ver. 7. **They that dwell under his shadow shall return]** Or, shall sit still, shall be at rest. The Chaldee hath it, They shall dwell in the shadow of his Christ. See a like promise of reconcillation and protection, #Isa 4:6 25:4 Ps 35:8. The refuge and refreshment of the Church is wholly from Christ; under the shadow of whose divine grace she resteth in her members, shaded and sheltered under the hollow of his hand, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall, #Isa 25:4, when indignation is kindled, #Isa 26:20, and when the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the land for their iniquity; then shall true converts have a chamber of rest, a Pella provided for them; or, at least, be able to sing David's requiem, return to thy rest, O my soul, hover and cover under God's wing, run to his name as a tower, and be safe. Why art thou case down? trust in God, trust in an angry God, in a killing God, as Job, believe him upon his bare word; and that against sense, in things invisible; and against reason, in things incredible. This is faith's triumph, and this is the saint's safety.

**They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine]** The Seventy and Latin render it, They shall live with corn; that is, they shall have great plenty of all things necessary, as **#Ps 87 144:13**. But the other reading is better; They shall revive as the corn, which suffering much from frost, hail, snow, tempest, lieth for dead, as it were, in winter; but at the return of the sun in springtide reviveth, and yieldeth a great increase, **#Joh 12:24 1Co 15:36-38**. In like sort the vine, when pruned and lopped, spreads again, and is the more fruitful; so those that are *viti verae inserti*, set into the true vine, though lopped and harrowed with sore and sharp afflictions, yet can truly and triumphantly say, "As dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed," **#2Co 6:9**. Their bodies also by death are not so much rotted as refined, and shall be conformed to Christ's most glorious body the standard, **#Php 3:21**.

**And the scent thereof as the wine of Lebanon]** Which was noted for the best, as Kimchi proves, and Athenaeus confirmeth. Among the Jews at this day the women, when they speak of their dead husbands, say, His scent, or his memorial, is as the wine of Lebanon. Ver. 8. **Ephraim shall say, What have I to do, &c.**] Heb. Ephraim, what have I to do, &c. This some make to be the speech of God to Ephraim; as if Ephraim here were the vocative case and God were brought in abhorring the notion of parting stakes with idols, of sharing his glory with another. But because this God never did (for what communion hath light with darkness, Christ with Belial?) and because the Chaldee Paraphrast, and from him the best interpreters, supply "shall say," I take this latter to be the better translation. Here, then, God promiseth, first, what Ephraim shall do, or rather, what he by his grace will cause him to do; he shall utterly abominate and abandon his idols, whereunto his heart had been joined, or glued, **#Ho 4:17**; secondly, what he will thereupon do for Ephraim; what special favour he will show him, and what a gracious compensation he will make him: "I have heard him, and observed him," &c. Ephraim, now grown penitent, shall say (see the like ellipsis supplied, **#Isa 5:9**), with utmost indignation and aversion, with greatest heat of anger and height of hatred, shall he utter it. See the like **#2Sa 16:10 2Ki 3:13 Mt 8:29**.

**What have I to do any more with idols]** Or sorrows, or bugs, those Balaam's blocks, those images and monuments of idolatry, those images of jealousy, that provoke to jealousy, #Eze 8:3, those dunghill deities, that can produce no good, hear no prayers, work no deliverance, bring nothing but evil and auguish to us. What, then, should we rather do, than pollute those images that we had perfumed, cast them away with detestation, as a menstruous cloth, and say unto them, Get ye hence? #Isa 30:22. Then will God soon say, I have heard him thus bemoaning and befooling himself, #Jer 31:18. God hath a quick ear in such a case; he hath also an eye open to the supplications of his servants, in all that they call upon him for, as Solomon telleth us, #1Ki 8:52.

**I have observed him]** Or fixed mine eyes upon him, with a most vigilant care and critical inspection. It would be wide with God's Ephraims, and they would want many things, if he should not see as well as hear, if he should not seriously and solicitously consider and care for them, above all that they ask or think, #Eph 3:20, and without any monitor, aid and accommodate them. He is many times better to them than their prayers; for what reason? "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, as well as his ears are open to their cry," #Ps 34:15. The Vulgate Latin rendereth it, *Dirigam eum*, I will direct him, as a tutor and guardian doth his pupil, his orphan, see #Ho 14:8. He will also protect him, that nothing may be wanting to his happiness.

**I am like a green fir tree]** Green all the year about, and of so large branches, and broad leaves thick set, that neither sun nor rain can easily come at the wearied passenger, reposing himself under them. And whereas Ephraim might say, Here is repose, but where shall I have repast? it is added;

**In me is thy fruit found]** *q.d.* The fir tree is indeed green and shady, but also barren; it bears no fruit, either *ad esum*, or *ad usum* to eat or to use. It boweth itself down to the earth, so that a man may easily lay hold upon the branches, saith Rabbi David and other Hebrews. But what shall he get by that more than a green bower, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat? &c. As an ancient, speaking of Ahab, describeth him sitting in his ivory palace in Samaria, in the

time of the three years' famine: He had everything else, but wanted bread; so Ephraim here hath shade, but can he live by that? what shall he do for food? He shall not want for that, saith God all-sufficient; for

**From me is thy fruit found]** *Praesto est* (so some render it), here it is ready, and mouth meet; yea, *satis est* (so others render it), it is enough of it, satisfactory, and proportionable to thy necessity. Yea, I would thou shouldst know that what fruit soever thou hast, or shalt bear as an olive or vine, **#Ho 14:6,7**, it is found in me, proceeds in me; the root of the matter is in me, as Job speaketh in another case. *Sine Deo omnis copia est egestas* (Bern.). Without God, all plenty is poverty.

Ver. 9. **Who is wise and he shall understand these things]** A pathetic perclose, whereby the prophet (orator-like) would leave a sting in the hearts of his hearers, and so seal up, and set on all that he had said before, *conclusio gnomica, exclamatio emphatica*.

**Who is wise?] q.d.** I could wish there were more; but I see there are not many. Store there are of fools, *Stultorum plena aunt omnia*, such dust-heaps there are in every corner to be found, not a few that either know not the will of God, or stumble at it. "But who hath known the mind of the Lord?" **#1Co 2:16**. "Who among you will give ear to this? Who hath believed our report? or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Who is the wise man, that may understand this?" **#Isa 42:23 53:1 Jer 9:12**. *Lucerna accensa hominem quaerebat Aesopus*. Jeremiah was bidden run to and fro to find a man that sought the truth, v. 1. *Rari quippe boni* (Juven. Sat. 13). Not many wise, wise, I mean, to salvation, **#2Ti 3:15**, that make sure work for their souls, and draw their wisdom from God's holy word, from the mine of the mystery of Christ, **#Ps 119:98,99**. All others are "foolish people, sottish children; they have no understanding," **#Jer 4:22**, be they never so shrewd and of deep reach for the world, be they never so wise in their generation. The fox is so in his; and the devil in his, for when he was but young he outwitted our first parents, **#2Co 11:3**, who yet were no babes, simple and weak in understanding, as the Socinians affirm them to have been or else they would not (say they) have so sinned. A fond conceit, and without footing in God's holy word, where we find that



they were created in God's image, which consisteth in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, as saith the apostle, **#Eph 4:24**.

**And he shall understand these things]** "Which none of the princes of this world know," **#1Co 2:8**, because their learning hangs in their light; and, like moles, they dig dexterously under-ground, but are blind above-ground. *Sapiens est cui res sapiunt prout sunt*, saith Bernard. He is the wise man that savoureth things as they are. And herein lieth the whole wisdom of a man, saith Lactantius, *ut Deum cognoscat, et colat*, that he know and worship God aright, that with a practical judgment he ponder the words and ways of God, in order to salvation. This is that wisdom that dwelleth with prudence, **#Pr 8:12**. Aristotle, in many places of his works, distinguisheth between wisdom and prudence. Wisdom he maketh to be a right apprehending of truths in general; prudence, an applying them to particular cases and uses. But Socrates said, that there was no such difference; since he that knoweth good things to do them, and evil things to avoid them, is to be held a wise man, and none else. They may seem here to be put for one and the same; since the wise man is said not to know, but to understand, judge, and ponder, and the prudent to know; teaching us, that God calls for a prudent wisdom, and a wise prudence, directing the soul to an orderly carriage, and a holy care, that godliness (which is the only wisdom) may run through our whole lives, as the woof doth through the web.

**For the ways of the Lord are right]** Understand it not so much of the ways of predestination, providence, &c., wherein God walks towards us (which yet are all right and equal), as of those ways of his will, word, and worship, wherein he requireth us to walk towards him. These are called the way of God, **#Mt 22:16**, and the way of salvation, **#Ac 16:17**, and the way of truth, **#2Pe 2:2**, and the right way, **#2Pe 2:15**, and the way of righteousness, **#2Pe 2:21**. Right these ways are called, or straight. First, because they are conformed to the will of a righteous God, which is the *mensura mensurans*, the first rule of right, the standard, *Non solum recta, sed et regula*. Secondly, because the matter of it is holy, and just, and good, a doctrine of righteousness, that teacheth us to give God his due, and men theirs. It is also put for every purpose, **#Ps 19:7,8 Pr 30:5**. Of the Book of Psalms, Athanasius hath observed, that they are so

penned that every man may well think they speak *de se, in re sun*, of himself, and to his own particular necessities. Thirdly, because it rectifieth us, and transformeth us into the same image; it maketh such as deliver up themselves thereunto to walk as patterns of the rule, as a transcript of the word, that dwelleth richly in them, and worketh effectually, as a seed of immortality. Fourthly, because it carrieth us on in a straight line unto a right end without crooking or compassing about, **#Ps 19:8 25:4 125:5**. *Has vias qui terit, non terit*. Pray therefore as David did, **#Ps 18:29**, lest breaking out into byways (all which are highways to hell), or but stepping over the hedge, to avoid a piece of foul way, we brush and bruise ourselves to get in again, break our bones with David.

**And the just shall walk in them]** Such as are just with a double righteousness, imputed and imparted; that of justification, and this of sanctification: these will choose the way of truth, **#Ps 119:39 25:12**, and be willing to walk honestly, **#Heb 13:18**, orderly, and by rule, **#Ga 5:25**, accurately, and to the utmost, **#Eph 5:15**, directly and distinctly, eyeing the mark, and propounding to themselves the highest pitch, and the best patterns (στοιχεινακριβως): often comparing themselves with the rule, laying their lives by the line, and reforming their outstrays, **#Ps 119:59,60**, making it the main of their endeavour, that all their deeds may be wrought in God, **#Joh 3:21**. Lo, this is the just man's practice; and it is here propounded for a precedent.

**But the transgressors shall fall therein]** They perish from the way, **#Ps 2:12**; they stumble at the Word and fall into perdition, as the Chaldee here hath it; and so show themselves to be transgressors, traitors, rebels, yea, reprobates. See **#1Pe 2:8**, they "stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." Oh, fearful! "A bridge is made" (saith a reverend divine) "to give us a safe passage over a river, but he who stumbleth on the bridge is in danger to fall into the river. The Word is given us as a means to carry us over hell to heaven; but he who stumbleth and quarrelleth at this means shall fall in thither, from whence otherwise he had been delivered by it." Neither may we think the worse of the Word for this accidental effect of it upon transgressors; since the fault is merely in themselves: as when a lame man stumbleth in a plain path, the fault

is not in the way, but in the foot. Blear eyes cannot abide the light; nor children endure honey when they have sore mouths. The same sun makes flowers smell sweet, but carrions stink loathsomely. Moses saved the Israelite, killed the Egyptian; and Abigail's voice pacified David, but made Nabal's heart die within him as a stone. Oecumenius telleth us that the fragrance of precious ointments is wholesome for doves, but kills the beetle, *columbam vegetat, scarabaeum necat*. And Aristotle affirmeth, that oil of roses is deadly to vultures, who hunt after only dead men's carcasses. Christ himself, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, was set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign to be spoken against, #**Lu 2:34**, for a butt mark, against whom his enemies should shoot the shaft of their gainsayings. To the Jews he became a stumblingblock, and unto the Gentiles foolishness, #**1Co 1:23**. Let them alone (saith he, concerning the Pharisees, who were offended at his sayings, #**Mt 15:14**). Let them stumble and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken, #**Isa 8:15**. Christ in his ordinances is to reprobates a rock of offence, #**2Pe 2:8**, but such a rock as that, #**Jud 6:21**, out of which goeth fire and consumeth them. "For if any love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he is Anathema Maranatha," #**1Co 16:22**. "Behold, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" #**Jer 8:9**.

*"Linea ducta mihi est, gratia, Christe, tibi."*

"By the plumline it has been leading to me, oh Christ by grace to thee"

# Joel

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The word of the Lord that came, &c.**] See the note on **#Ho 1:1**, with whom Jerome and some other interpreters make this prophet a contemporary, for the likeness of argument; and that common canon of the Jewish doctors, that the prophet who sets not down his time is to be held of the same time with him that is placed before him. The Seventy set him not only after Hosea, but also after Amos and Micah: and the ancient Hebrew Chronicle, called Sedar Olam, affirmeth that Joel prophesied together with Nahum and Habakkuk, the days of King Manasseh; which Drusius would prove out of **#Joe 3:5**. Others, with more show of reason, out of **#2Ki 21:10 23:26**. Joel might very well be one of those prophets that denounced God's heavy judgments against Judah, for the sins and abominations of Manasseh, whom some make to be his convert. For although at first the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people, but they would not hearken, {#2Ch 33:10} yet the rod might set the word to work afterwards; for Manasseh, when he was in affliction, besought the Lord, and humbled himself greatly, {#2Ch 33:12} and Joel might very well be to him a son of Pethuel, or of God's persuasion: God, by his ministry, might speak to his heart, **#Ho 2:14**, set before him an open door (another Etymology of the name Pethuel, *ostium Dei* mouth of God), **#Re 3:8**, minister unto him an entrance farther and farther into Christ's everlasting kingdom, **#2Pe 1:11**. If any think it more likely that Joel prophesied under Josiah, king of Judah, when that great famine occurred which is described in like terms by Jeremiah, **#Jer 14:1,2 cf. 2Ki 23:26**, I shall not strive with him. But that this Joel was the son of Samuel (here called Pethuel, a persuader of God, because what he asked of God he obtained), as R. Salomon would carry it, I cannot imagine: for that Joel was not a prophet, but a corrupt judge, **#1Sa 8:1-5**.

Ver. 2. **Hear this, ye old men**] Who, as ye are fittest to hear serious discourses (Aristotle excludeth young men from his ethic lectures, because raw and rash: green wood is ever shrinking and warping), so ye are more experienced; and yet not so wise, but that, by hearing, ye may become wiser, **#Pr 1:5**. Solon said, he could never be too old to learn, *γηρασκω αιει πολλα διδασκομενος*. Julianus, the lawyer, said, that when he had one foot in the grave, yet he would

have the other in the school. David Chytraeus, when he lay dying, lifted up himself to hear the divine discourses of his friends that sat by him; and said, that he should die with better cheer if he might die learning something, *Si moribundus etiam aliquid didicisset.*

**And give ear, all, &c.]** Hear and give ear: draw up the ears of your minds to the ears of your bodies, that one sound may pierce both. When these two words are joined together, as they are often, the matter propounded is either very dark or very remarkable, and commands attention, as **#De 1:45 Isa 1:2,10 Jer 13:15 Ho 5:1.**

**All ye inhabitants of the land]** *sc.* of Judea, or all ye inhabitants of the whole earth, *q.d.* I shall speak of so great a matter, as that I could wish to be heard all the world over. And because all men love to hear news, I shall tell you that that was never known to happen in any age. *Rem novam pollicetur emphaticoteros quam more Rhetorico,* saith Oecolampadius. Prick up your ears, therefore, and listen.

**Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers]** Was there ever such havoc made by several sorts of vermin successively, for four years together? This was the very finger of God, **#Ex 8:19**, all whose works (by how small instruments soever) are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein, **#Ps 111:2**. His extraordinary works especially are to be noted and noticed; the memory of them is to be transmitted to all posterity. "This shall be written for the generation to come," **#Ps 102:18**. "They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this," **#Ps 22:31**. *Sed vae stupori nostro.* There is a woe to such as regard not the works of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands, **#Isa 5:12**, that make of them but a nine days' wonderment at best, and so pass them over. Whereas every judgment of God should be a warning peal to repentance. We be like the smith's dog (saith one), who the harder the anvil is beaten on, lies by, and sleeps the sounder. Like the hen (saith another), which loseth her chickens one after another by the devouring kite; and yet still continues to pick up what lies before her: such a deep drowsiness and dressiness of spirit there is upon most of us.

Ver. 3. **Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children]** Heb. Cipher them up diligently, after the manner of mathematicians; reckon up the several years with the several calamities thereof to your children and nephews, that they may hear, and fear, and do no more so, **#De 19:20**. Let your woes be their warnings, your sufferings their standing sermons; your corrections their instructions. See **#1Co 10:5-12**. *Ruina maiorum sit cautela minorum* (Greg. Mot.). Hast thou marked the old way (saith Eliphaz to Job, **#Job 22:15,16**), which wicked men have trodden, which were cut down out of time; whose foundation was overflown with a flood (Heb. a flood was poured upon their foundation), which said unto God, Depart from us? &c. He speaketh of those antediluvian atheists, buried in one universal grave of waters. See **#Jos 22:20 Ne 13:26 Jude 5-7**, and learn to keep a catalogue of God's great works, whether of mercy or judgment; yea, to polish and garnish them for the use of posterity, not with vain affectation of wit, nor with pedantic pomp of words, but with sobriety and holy gravity, as here; such as may stick by our children, and leave impression.

Ver. 4. **That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten]** The palmerworm hath its name in Hebrew from shaving, לרד (because it shaveth off the fruits of the earth). In Chaldee from creeping; in Greek from crookening; in Latin from gnawing. (Zachala. καμπη. *Eruca ab erodendo*.) The locust hath its name in Hebrew from multitude, wherewith the very sun is darkened; in Latin from burning places, where it spoileth, Locusts, *quasi loca ustulans*; in Greek from cropping the tops of grain and plants, which, as they fled, they fed upon. The cankerworm hath its name in Hebrew from licking; in Chaldee from fleeing; in Greek and Latin from feeding upon the flowers of apples and other fruits, Ακρις Μηλοχονθη. Comester some render it. Flemings call it, The preacher, *a bombo quem palando edit*, from the noise it maketh as it flies. The caterpillar hath its name, Chasil, from wasting, because it utterly consumeth all, not only fruits and leaves, but tender boughs and branches: *Ut ita creseat oratio sicut ipsum malum*, to show that as their sin increased so did their punishment. The Lord of hosts cannot possibly want a weapon wherewith to beat a rebel; neither may wicked men expect that he should lay down the bucklers first. To that bold question of Pharaoh, **#Ex 5:2**, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?" God made a large reply, by his armies of locusts,

lice, flies, &c., till Pharaoh was forced to answer himself, "The Lord is righteous." What spoil hath been made by these despicable creatures here mentioned in other countries, Pliny recordeth. Pierius testifieth that the Egyptians made the locust a hieroglyphic of famine. And although we find not expressly set down in the holy history when this particular plague was executed, yet we need not doubt but it was done according to **#De 28:38,39**. See **#1Ki 8:37**.

Ver. 5. **Awake, ye drunkards]** Ye ale stakes, and suckers (Heb. Shiccorim), that pour in heady and intoxicating drinks, such as soon lay you to sleep, and (besides) take away your heart, **#Ho 4:11**, rob you of yourselves, and lay a beast in your room. *Portentosum sane potionis genus*, saith Pliny concerning ale, that excessively drunk maketh men mere sleepy than dormice: besides that worse sleep of carnal security, **#Eph 5:14 Ro 13:11**. These, therefore, are here called upon to be sober and watch, {see #1Th 5:6 1Pe 5:8 1Pe 4:7} yea, to weep and howl, to turn their laughter into mourning, and their joy into heaviness. And why? For their sin they should have done (as that drunkard in the ecclesiastical history, that, touched with a sense of his sin, wept himself blind), but here they are sarcastically called upon to weep for their great loss, as they esteem it.

**Because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your mouth]** As many things occur between the chin and the chalice, the cup and the lip: you made account to have mouthed it, to have swilled your souls, as they say, and to have swallowed it down your wide gullets, *Vinum merum nondum dilutum*. But behold, it happens somewhat otherwise; the caterpillar hath been before you, and left you nothing better than Adam's ale to tipple. This as cold comfort to the drunkard, whose word is that of the vine in Jotham's parable, *Non possum relinquere vinum meum*, I am not able to leave my wine. Take away my liquor, you take away my life. Austin brings him in saying, *Malle se vitam quam vinum eripi*, He would rather lose his life than his wine. And Ambrose tells of one Theotimus, that being told by his physicians, that much quaffing would make him blind, *Vale lumen amicum*, said he, Farewell, sweet eyes; if ye will not bear wine, ye are no eyes for me. This drunkard would rather lose his sight than his sin; his soul than his lust. Such kind of persons are like the panther, which is said to love the dung of man so much, as if it be hanged on high from it, it will skip and leap up, and never leave

till it have burst itself in pieces to get it; and this is the way they take that creature. God will take these natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, #2Pe 2:14, after another manner. He will not only cut them short enough here, but turn a cup of fire and brimstone down their throats, #Ps 11:6, which will be worse to them than that ladleful of boiling lead poured down the throat of a drunken Turk, by the command of a bashaw.

Ver. 6. **For a nation is come up upon my land]** A nation, *sc.* of vermin, by swarms, as #Joe 2:9, called afterwards an army, #Joe 2:11, and a people, #Joe 2:2. See the like #Pr 30:25,26. "Is come," that is, shortly shall come, "upon my land," this glorious and goodly land, as it is called, #Da 11:16. Tarnovius makes this by a *mimesis* {a} to be the drunkard's lamentation. "A nation is come up," &c.

**Strong and without number]** Yea, therefore strong, because without number; insuperable, because innumerable. Feeble they are, and yet formidable; because set on by God Almighty, whose warriors they are, as the Roman spoilers are called, #Mt 22:7. And perhaps the Assyrians may here be hinted at. I doubt not but the literal sense is chiefly intended; neither can I concur with Oecolampadius, who holdeth it to be *propheta indignum*, unbeseming the prophet to preach thus concerning worms and locusts: for concerning such poor creatures deal the prophets by the instinct of the Holy Ghost, in sundry other places, #Pr 6:6 Am 4:9 7:1 Na 3:15.

**Whose teeth are the teeth of a lion]** That is, they devour all that is in their way; as there is no standing before a lion, no, not before a moth that hath commission to crush a man, #Job 4:19.

{a} *Rhet.* A figure of speech, whereby the supposed words or actions of another are imitated. CED

Ver. 7. **He hath laid my vine waste]** The prophet proceeds in aggravating the calamity, that he might make the people the more sensible. There is nothing in the world more stupid and more stubborn than a drunkard. Of such it is that that saying of an ancient is often verified, *Ablatus est a peccantibus timor, ne possit esse cautela*, Fear is taken away from offenders, that there should be no caution against it. Here therefore let the words of the wise be as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies. Let



them so preach with Peter, that their hearers may be pricked at heart, #Ac 2:37, may be galled and sawed, as it were, #Ac 7:54, may startle and tremble, as #Ac 24:25, may awaken out of that dead lethargy, whereinto Satan hath cast them, and recover out of his snare who are taken captive by him at his pleasure, #2Ti 2:26. True it is, we can hardly get men to believe that hell is so hot, or sin so heavy, or the devil so black or God so unmerciful as the preachers make him. The lion, say they, is not so terrible as he is painted; nor is our case so dangerous as is borne us in hand. *Sed non pergamus exaggerare*, saith Pareus here. Let God's ministers lay load upon men's sins, and set forth to the full the miseries that will fall upon them. The prophets did so for temporal (as here most graphically and to the life), shall not we much more for eternal punishments? "Oh" (saith one) "that I could get words to gore your very hearts with smarting pain; that this doctrine might be written in your flesh!"

**And barked my fig tree]** Take away the bark from the tree, and the sap can never find the way to the boughs. These vermin had barked the trees with their teeth, cast the bark out of their mouths upon the ground, and made the branches naked and all white as froth; so that the drunkards, deprived of their sweet draughts, were brought *ad effiationem animae* (as the Chaldee here expounded Chetsephah), to a yielding up of the ghost, yea, *ad laqueum et restim*, as the Latins, to the very halter.

Ver. 8. **Lament like a virgin]** Our prophet hath done with his drunkards; and now applieth himself to the soberer sort, whom also he calleth to deep and downright mourning, in this case of common calamity; there being not any so innocent and holy, but had some hand, if not upon the greater cart ropes, yet surely upon the smaller cords, that drew down dearth and judgment upon the land.

**Lament therefore like a virgin]** Betrothed, but bereft of her espoused husband before she was married to him: so Placater. Others understand it of her that (lately a virgin, but now newly married) passionately loved her husband and bitterly bewaileth his death; which some young women have taken so grievously, that they have refused to live any longer; but have chosen to put an end to their life and grief together, as historians testify.

**Girded with sackcloth]** *Sacco non serico*, with mourning weeds as a testimony of help to your humiliation. The dead we see may be lawfully lamented; indeed, it is one of the dues of the dead, *τα νομιζόμενα*, *iusta defunctorum*. It is fit that the body, when sown in corruption, should be watered by the tears of those that plant it in the earth. Only we must not mourn in this case as heathens, without hope, #1Th 4:13. Our grief must not be excessive, either for measure or continuance; neither must we mourn so much for our friends departed as for our sins against God. In the former case baldness is forbidden; in the latter it is required, #Isa 22:12 Zec 12:10 11:13. One poor woman weeping over Christ shall be as deeply affected as all the people were in that unspeakable loss of their good king Josiah, at Hadadrimmon, in the valley of Megiddo, where Jeremiah lamented, and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentation, and made them an ordinance, #2Ch 35:24,25.

Ver. 9. **The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off]** *Periit libatio et oblatio*. This was the godly man's greatest grief, that there wanted matter of testifying their thankfulness to God in his commanded worships; and that God was so deeply displeased, as that he had deprived himself and his ministers of the due allowance; so that they also mourned, and could not cheerfully execute their office, for lack of maintenance; for they were not of the chameleon kind.

Ver. 10. **The field is wasted, the land mourneth]** The sacrifices are not only cut off for present, but little hopes left for the future; for the field, that common storehouse, that *horreum unde hauriatur*, is wasted: *Shuddad Sadeh*, there is an elegant allusion in the original: as in the following words a personification not inferior to those of the poets, as Luther and Vatablus here note.

**The land mourneth]** By an ordinary metaphor among the Hebrews, those things are said to mourn that are wasted, desolated, corrupted, and changed for the worse. #La 2:8, the rampart and the wall are said to lament, and to languish together. When Ephestion died, Alexander not only clipped his horses' and mules' hair, but plucked down also the battlements of the walls of the city; because it should appear that the wails and ramparts did mourn for his death

(Plutarch): so **#Isa 24:7**, "The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry hearted do sigh." It is fit that if the land mourn and fail of her increase, men should much more mourn and be moved with a sense of their sins, the cause of such calamities. The earth lies under a curse of barrenness, at its best, **#Ge 3:17**, and was never so beautiful and cheerful since the fall of Adam. At this day it lieth bedridden, as it were, waiting for the coming of the Son of God, that it may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, **#Ro 8:20**. But in times of dearth it seemeth to mourn more than ordinary, yea, to blush and bleed.

**The new wine is dried up]** Or is abashed; as loth to look men in the face, because not answerable to their expectation: see **#Isa 33:9**.

**The oil languisheth]** Or, is sick. Grain, wine, and oil are the main supports of man's life: all is gone.

**Ver. 11. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen]** This repetition of his former exhortation is not needless; for man is a stout and stubborn creature; neither goeth anything more against the hair and the heart with him than to come downward, and to be so soundly sensible of God's judgments as seriously to repent. Hence St James's extraordinary importunity in pressing this most needful but much neglected duty, **#Jas 4:9,10**. He knew, and so did our prophet, that this work must be done, or else men are undone. Hence that heap of words. *Nunquam satis dicitur quod nunquam satis discitur* (Seneca). That can never be too much taught that is never enough learned.

**Ver. 12. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth]** God cutteth you short of all things both for necessity and delight; and this is so much inculcated and iterated that you may not slight it as a common occurrence; but be deeply affected with it, as a sore affliction. *Verba toties repetita viva sunt, vera sunt, sana sunt, plana sunt* (Aug.). Let no man think that this is a superfluous tautology, or an idle repetition of the same thing. For, in sacred Scripture there is not a tittle in vain; there is not an apex whereon there hangs not a mountain of sense, as the Rabbis use to say. By one and the same thing repeated, memory is helped, affection is excited, and matters of moment are better minded, **#Php 3:1**. Besides, *Repetitio confirmatio est*, saith Ambrose, The repeating of

a matter implieth, 1. The infallible truth of it; 2. The inexpressible excellency of it; 3. The profitable use of it; 4. The absolute necessity of it. *Aut faciendum, aut patiendum.* Either to do or to endure.

Ver. 13. **Gird yourselves and lament, ye priests]** Be you priest, and first in the practice of humiliation: be you an example of the believers in word, in conversation, &c., #**1Ti 4:12**, a pattern of piety, τυπος. *Si vis ne flere, &c.* If others shall lament, you must begin to them; and say, as Abimolech did to his soldiers, "What ye have seen me do, make haste and do likewise," #**Jud 9:48**; and as St Paul doth to his Philippians, "Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you," #**Php 4:9**.

**For the meat offering and the drink offering, &c.]** Your maintenance is subtracted, and (that which should more affect you) the sacred service of God is intermitted, and so the glory is departed, the daily sacrifice is neglected, which the Jews counted and called the abomination of desolation. Phineas's wife was not without natural affection, #**1Sa 4:21**, but her spiritual affections prevailed. Therefore in the declaration of her sorrow, that of her father-in-law and husband is but once named; but twice it came in, The glory is departed, The glory is departed. All comforts are but Ichabods to a good heart without the ordinances: without the sincere milk of the word God's new-born babes cannot be quitted. I could not live in paradise without the word (said Luther), as with the word I could easily live in hell itself.

Ver. 14. **Sanctify ye a fast]** Having humbled yourselves, preach repentance to others. That is the best sermon that is digged out of a man's own breast. "Sanctify yourselves first, and then prepare your brethren," saith Josiah to the priests of his time, #**2Ch 35:6**. A religious fast (for that the prophet intends here by sanctify), rightly observed and referred to religious ends, is both a testimony of true repentance, and a furtherance thereunto; for it tames the rebel flesh, #**1Co 9:27**, which else will wantonize and overtop the spirit, #**De 32:15**. And it giveth wings to our prayers, which before grovelled on the ground, as it were. Fasting inflameth prayer; and prayer sanctifieth fasting.

**Sanctify therefore a fast, call a solemn assembly]** Heb. a day of restraint, separating yourselves, as **#Zec 8:19**, from all fleshly delights; amercing and punishing yourselves in that sort by a holy revenge, as **#Ps 35:18**, and afflicting your souls with voluntary sorrows for your sins and miseries.

**Gather the elders]** Both those *qui canis et annis sunt tales*, who are full of days and so of sins; and also those that are in place of authority, whose offences have soared higher on the wings of example and scandal.

**And all the inhabitants of the land]** For as all are sin guilty, so your unanimity and charity will further the service. All should get together in this case, and bring their buckets to quench a common fire; the more public and general the humiliation is, the more pleasing and prevalent, **#Jud 20:26 2Ch 30:8,13 Jon 3:5,7,8**.

**Into the house of the Lord your God]** Which house was a type of Christ (in whom God heareth his), and had made many promises to prayers there put up in faith, **#1Ki 18:37-39 2Ch 6:28,29**.

**Of the Lord your God]** Yours still by virtue of the covenant: be sure to keep faith in heart, when we are at the greatest under.

**And cry unto the Lord]** With the heart, at least, as Moses did at the Red Sea, when yet none heard him but the ear of heaven only (*Moses egit vocis silentio ut magis audiretur*); and as Hannah did when she uttered no audible voice, and yet poured forth her soul to the Lord with such a strange and unwonted writing of her lips, that Eli thought she had been drunk, **#1Sa 1:15**.

Ver. 15. **Alas, for the day, &c.]** Gr. Alas, Alas, Alas; the Vulgate Latin A, A, A, which a Lapidè makes much ado about, to little purpose.

**For the day of the Lord]** That is, the day of the greatest evils and miseries that ever hitherto they had suffered, if repentance prevent not. That they had suffered much already appeareth **#Joe 2:25**, but those were but the beginnings of their sorrows, if they yet went on in their sins.

**For as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come]** An elegant alliteration there is in the original; together with an allusion to that tremendous title of God, Shaddai. The Jews (probably) boasted much and bare themselves overly bold upon their interest in God Almighty. The prophet therefore tells them that God's greatest power should be little to their profit while impenitent; for that it should be put forth and exercised for their utter destruction. Aben Ezra interpreteth Shaddai a conqueror, others a destroyer, which a conqueror must needs be. And hereto this text and that **#Isa 13:6**, do allude, when they say Shod shall come from Shaddai, Destruction from the Almighty. Here, also, we may learn when we are under affliction to ascend to the first cause thereof, **#Am 3:6**, as David did in that three years' famine, **#2Sa 21:1**. See **#Jas 3:3-8**.

Ver. 16. **Is not the meat cut off before your eyes]** Heb. before your eyes: and so it appeareth to be the prophet's speech, and not a form prescribed by him to the people, by adding the word (saying) to the end of the fourteenth verse, "Cry to the Lord, saying, Alas, for the day," &c. And it is as if the prophet should say; Do ye not yet see what case you are in? Are ye so stupid and so stout or sturdy, as not to stoop, though starved almost? should not vexation give understanding? are not the fiercest creatures tamed with hard hunger? Will not men in such case buy or beg food of their deadly enemies? O brawny breasts! O horny heart strings!

**Yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God]** All God's services were to be performed with joy; but now, for want of corn and wine (which cheereth God and man, **#Jud 9:13**), the daily sacrifice ceased, and all good hearts were thereby saddened. **#Joe 1:9**. {See Trapp on "Joe 1:9"}

Ver. 17. **The seed is rotten under their clods]** It lieth buried or drowned with excessive rain and moisture, corrupting the seed soon after it was sown: and that which was not so marred was afterwards, when it came to be grain, dried up with excessive heat.

**The corn is withered]** So that the garners were desolated, the barns broken down for want of stuffing, and for that there was no use of them, since they sowed but reaped not, **#Mic 6:15**. The husbandman was called to mourning, **#Am 5:16**, for a threefold calamity that lay

upon his tillage. First, immoderate rain in or about seeding; secondly, locusts and other vermin at spring; thirdly, extreme drought after all, #**Joe 1:19,20**. Thus God followeth sinners with one plague in the neck of another (as he did Pharaoh, that sturdy rebel), till he have made his foes his footstools. To multiply sin is to multiply sorrow, #**Ps 16:4**; to heap up wickedness is to heap up wrath, #**Ro 2:5**. "I will heap mischiefs upon them," saith God; "I will spend mine arrows upon them," #**De 32:23**, which yet cannot be all spent up, as Ovid feared of his Jupiter, that if he should punish men for every offence his store of thunder bolts would be soon spent and exhausted.

“ *Si queries peccent homines sua fulmina mittat*

*Jupiter, exiguo tempore inermis erit.* ”

Ver. 18. **How do the beasts groan]** The wild beasts groan in their kind.

**The herds of cattle]** Home and tame beasts, as oxen,

**&c., are perplexed]** as not knowing what to do; it is the same word with that, #**Es 3:15**. God had "hid his face" (withdrawn his hand), "and they were troubled; he taketh away their breath" (for lack of pasture), "they die and return to their dust," as David telleth us in his psalm, #**Ps 104:29**. Epiphanius's physiologer reporteth of the bird called Charadius, that being brought where a sick man lieth, if he look upon the sick with a fixed and unremoved eye there is hopes of recovery, but if he look another way the disease is deadly. Sure it is, that if God look in mercy upon man and beast they are cared and catered for, #**Ps 36:7 104:27 145:15,16**, &c. and the contrary. Yea, the flocks of sheep, &c., which yet can bite upon the bare, live with a little, and get pasture where the larger creatures cannot come.

Ver. 19. **O Lord, to thee will I cry]** I will, though others will not. I have called upon others to cry mightily unto thee, and to meet thee by repentance; but they, *tanquam monstra marina*, as so many sea monsters, pass by my words with a deaf ear, they refuse to return. "Thy hand is lifted up" in threatening, and will fall down in punishing, but "they will not see," #**Isa 26:11**, they will not search, they will not have their eyes (like the windows in Solomon's temple)

broad inward, #1Ki 6:4; the eyes of their minds are as ill set (for this matter) as the eyes of their bodies, they see not what is within. But whatever they do, "my soul shall weep in secret for their pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore," &c., #Jer 13:17, for their insensibleness of their misery.

**For the fire hath devoured the pastures]** That is, the immoderate scorching heat of the season. See #Ps 83:14 Jer 17:6. Or the blasting wind, as Lyra expounds it; or the locusts, as Drusius, or God (who is a consuming fire), by any, or all these instruments of his wrath, as Tarnovius.

**And the flame hath burnt all the trees of the field]** This was dreadful, but yet nothing to that *conflagratio mundi*, spoken of by St Peter, #2Pe 3:12, "when the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat" on the heads of the wicked; who shall give a terrible account, with the world all on a light fire about their ears.

Ver. 20. **The beasts of the field cry also unto thee]** *Glocitant*, a term taken from deer; they cry as they can, they cry by implication, imploring thine help, each for himself. See #Ps 149:9 Job 39:3 Ps 104:27; and should men be silent?

**For the rivers of the waters are dried up]** This maketh the hart bray after the waterbrooks, yea, shed tears, as hunters say the hart will, when hot and hard pressed for water. Hereto David seems to allude, #Ps 42:3, "My tears have been my meat," &c.

**And the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness]** This had been said before, #Joe 1:19. The reason of such repetitions, {See Trapp on "Joe 1:11"} {See Trapp on "Joe 1:12"} Neither let this last exaggeration of the common calamity, by that which befell the brute beasts, seem superfluous. For whereas the security and obstinace of most men is such, that they take little notice of present pressures, but promise themselves peace and safety, whatsoever God, by his servants, shall say to the contrary; it is but needful, surely, that their danger should be inculcated, and their calamity set out, and set on with utmost importunity and vehemence.



## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Blow ye the trumpet in Zion**] *Idem aliis verbis repetit*, saith Mercer here. The prophet repeats the same as in the former chapter, only in other words, more at large, and after another manner; pressing the people further to the practice of repentance by many sweet promises of the blessings of this and a better life. Our prophet may seem to be of the same mind with Tertullian, who said that he was *nulli rei natus nisi poenitentiae*, born for no other end but to repent, and to call upon others so to do. *Tot autem verbis et figuris utitur*, saith Luther, he useth so many words and figures, because he had to do with a people that were harder than rocks, #**Jer 5:8**; as also, because there is an absolute necessity of repentance. *Aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*, as our Saviour tells his disciples twice in a breath, #**Lu 13:2,5**. The prophet had urged them hereunto from the evils they felt or feared, #**Joe 1**. Pain and penitence are words of one derivation. God plagueth men that he may make them cry *peccavi*; I have sinned, not peril only, I am undone, as Cain; but *peccavi*, I have done very foolishly, as David. The first seventeen verses of this chapter are hortatory, the rest consolatory. The day of the Lord cometh, therefore repent. This is the sum of the exhortation. It cometh, and that instantly: give warning therefore. God loveth to foresignify, saith the heathen historian, and to admonish before he punish, Φύλει ο Θεός προσημαίνειν (Herod.). He dealt so with Cain, to whom he read the first lecture of repentance, #**Ge 4:9-15**, as he had done of faith to his father Adam, in the chapter before. He dealt so with the old world, with the Sodomites, Ninevites.

**Sound an alarm in my holy mountain**] Ring the bells backwards (as among us they do), the house is on fire, the enemy is at hand.

**Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble**] And take course to prevent or mitigate the ensuing mischief, to cut the cart ropes of sin that pull down wrath upon the land.

**For the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand**] "An end is come, is come, is come," as Ezekiel hath it, #**Eze 7:6,7** "I will overturn, overturn, overturn," as the same prophet hath it elsewhere, #**Eze 21:27**, "Should we then make mirth?" as it is in the same

chapter, #Eze 21:10; should we sleep upon a mast pole, dance upon a weather cock, go hallooing and whooping to the place of execution?

Ver. 2. **A day of darkness and of gloominess]** Lest they should imagine it to be some light matter that hath been, and is still threatened, he sets forth to the life, the bitterness of that day, so lowering and lightless, that it can hardly be called a day; a dark and doleful doomsday it will be to the impenitent, *infaustus et infelix*, dismal and dreadful. What better can be expected by those Tenebriones, that delight in the deeds of darkness, and are acted by those rulers of the darkness of this world, #Eph 6:12, the devils, whom they follow as they are led, #1Co 12:2, till they fall into outer darkness, σκοτος εξωτερον, even that darkness beyond a darkness (as the dungeon is beyond or below the prison), where they shall never see the light again till they see all the world on a light fire. Let those *Lucifugae* look to it, that love darkness better than light; for, besides what they meet with here, they shall one day have their bellies full of it in that dungeon of darkness.

**A day of clouds and of thick darkness].** Caused by that huge army of locusts, coming in great swarms and darkening the air.

**As the morning spread upon the mountains]** *i.e. longe, lateque*, far and near, all the country over, and that in an instant; even as the morning spreadeth abroad suddenly over the tops of hills, though they be a great way off. *Postera vix summos spargebat lumine montes Orta dies* (Virg.) *Lux subit, et primo feriente cacumina sole.* (Ovid.) Hereby is imported that the calamity here threatened is such as they can neither avert nor avoid. *Irretensibilis est*, saith Luther.

**A great people and a strong]** So the locusts are called, see #Joe 1:4-6, not without some respect to the Chaldeans, that should afterwards carry them captive, as Jerome here glosseth.

**There hath not been ever the like]** *sc.* in the land of Judea, nor of the like continuance. See #Joe 1:2,3.

**Even to the years of many generations]** Heb. Of an age and an age, so #De 32:7 Joe 3:20. This assureth us of the greatness of this

people's sin, since they were so signally punished, for God doth not use to kill flies with beetles, as they say.

Ver. 3. **A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth]** Such waste these vermin shall make, like as it is said of the Great Turk, that wherever he sets his foot there never grows grass again; he doth so eat up the countries where he comes with his huge armies. And the late Lord Brook, in his discourse of episcopacy, notes, that that unhappy proverb among us was not for nought, The bishop's foot hath trodden here. In Biscay, a province of Spain, they admit no bishops to come among them; and when Ferdinand, the Catholic king, came in progress hither, accompanied among others by the Bishop of Pampelune, the people arose in arms, drove back the bishop, and gathering all the dust on the which they thought he had trodden, flung it into the sea. What fires they kindled here in Queen Mary's days, devouring six or seven hundred, at least, of God's faithful witnesses in five years' time; and what work they made in our remembrance throughout the three kingdoms, to the embroiling of all and their own utter ruin, I need not relate. That renowned author cited before had told them time enough, but that they were destined to destruction, that if they forbear to touch the supreme authority of the land, which they affected, it was but as once Mercury spared Jupiter's thunderbolts, which he dared not steal, lest they should roar too loud, or, at least, burn his fingers.

**The land is as the garden of Eden]** *i.e.* of all kind of pleasures and delights. See **#Ge 2:8 13:10**. *Eden inde ηδονη*. Strabo speaks spitefully of the land of Canaan, as if it were a dry, stony, and barren country, not worth the seeking after, Rabshakeh shows more ingenuity than this, *Strabus et pravus Strabo* (as one therefore calleth him), **#2Ki 18:32**. Tacitus commends it for a fertile soil, so doth Pliny; but above all, the holy Scripture setteth it forth to be *Sumen totius orbis*, the bread basket of the whole world, a land flowing with milk and honey, &c., **#Ex 3:17 De 32:13**.

**And behind them a desolate wilderness]** Not such a wilderness as yielded pastures, and habitations for shepherds, **#Joe 1:19,20**, but utterly desolate, and therefore uninhabitable, as under the torrid zone. No place can be so pleasant but sin can lay it waste. "A fruitful land turneth the Lord into barrenness for the wickedness of them that

dwell therein," #Ps 107:34. There is no footstep left to this day of that gallant garden, planted by God himself; or if any, *cecidit rosa, est spina*; the place remains in the upper part of Chaldea, but not the pleasantness of the place. The like we may say of Sodom, of Jerusalem, of Greece, of Asia the less, of Germany, Ireland, &c. England hath hitherto subsisted merely by a miracle of God's mercy, and by a prop of his extraordinary patience. The Lord continue it to the glory of his name and the good of his poor people. *Fiat, fiat.*

Ver. 4. **The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, and as horsemen]** *i.e.* the locusts and other insects come on a main; they march with much nimbleness and swiftness. A horse is a warlike creature, full of terror; so swift in service, that the Persians dedicated him to their god, the sun, as the swiftest creature to the swiftest god, *ωσπερ το ταχιστον τω ταχυτατω* (Pausan.). See #Job 41:20 Pr 21:31. In Persia they do all almost on horseback; they buy, sell, confer, but especially fight on horseback to this day. So they did of old, and so did the Chaldeans, from whom they took the monarchs. These were horsemen, and not as horsemen; the place, therefore, is properly and principally to be understood of the locusts. Confer #Re 9:7.

Ver. 5. **Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains]** Not only on the tops of standing grain, as other locusts, which therehence also have their name *Ακριδες*, but as the hurry of chariots in stony places, #Re 9:9. For in that book of the Revelation, the penman borrows all the elegancies and flowers of the Old Testament, thereby to set out the story of the New in succeeding ages; as here hence the Popish priests are fitly called locusts for their numerosity and voracity, #Re 9:3. They are also likened unto horses, #Joe 2:7, fed and fierce to run, and rush into the battle not without noise. "Like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble," #Ec 7:6; or the rattling of "the jumping chariot wheels," #Na 3:2.

**As a strong people set in battle array]** In a bloody fight between Amurath, the third King of Turkey, and Lazarus, despot of Servia, many thousands fell on both sides. The brightness of the armour and weapons was as it had been the lightning the multitude of lances and other horsemen's staves shadowed the light of the sun. Arrows and darts fell so fast that a man would have thought they had poured down from heaven. The noise of the instruments of war, with the

neighing of horses and outcries of men, was so terrible and great, that the wild beasts in the mountains stood astonished therewith, and the Turkish histories, to express the terror of the day, vainly say that the angels in heaven, amazed with that hideous noise, for that time forgot the heavenly hymns, wherewith they always glorify God.

Ver. 6. **Before their face the people shall be much pained]** This is a confirmation of the former assertion. The people when they shall see those swarms of locusts, &c., mustering and marching in the air, they shall be much pained, as a travailing woman is, "pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them, their faces shall be as flames," #**Isa 13:8**, for fear lest they should light on their country and lay all waste.

**All faces shall gather blackness]** *Pallorem*, paleness, so Castalio rendereth it; a blackish lead-like paleness, such as on sooty pots. The original here is, "hath gathered a pot," that is, by a metonymy, a pot-like blackness, *Nigricantern colorem significat* (Mercer). See #**Na 3:10 Jer 30:6 Ps 68:13**, where, by blackness (such as slaves and scullions contract by lying among the pots, and smokey and sooty chimney corners), is set forth the exceeding great fear and affliction that God's people are often in and from whence he graciously promiseth to deliver them that trust in him. Such shall not "be afraid whose heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." It was fear that now caused (the natural heat and the blood retiring to the heart to receive it, as, in a sudden surprise, the soldiers run to the castle) paleness and blackness of face. It was hunger afterwards that burnt them, #**De 32:24**, and made their visages blacker than a coal, as #**La 4:8**, or, "darker than blackness," as the original hath it.

Ver. 7. **They shall run like mighty men]** *Horribiles, fortissimi ut gigantes*. They shall strike terror into others, as in the former verse, but themselves, as giants and conquerors, shall overrun all with incredible swiftness and prowess. Strong soldiers have strong sinews, and thence their speedy marches and quick despatch. "Asahel was light of foot as a wild roe," #**2Sa 2:18**. Achilles is everywhere by Homer called swift-footed, *ποδας ωκυς*. Alexander the Great, being asked how he so quickly conquered so many countries, answered, *Μηδεν αναβαλλομενος*, by my nimbleness. *Caesar in omnia princeps*, Caesar in all things first, saith Lucan, he passed the Alps, and was at Rome with a trice, as they say. His word

was, *Veni, vidi, vici*, I no sooner came, but I overcame. He is said to have taken a thousand towns, conquered three hundred nations, took prisoner one million of men, and to have slain as many. What a deal was done by Joshua in a short space at the conquest of Canaan? Charles V, Emperor of Germany, is reported to have won in the Indies, by his captains and commanders there, twenty-eight kingdoms in twenty-eight battles. Bajazet, the great Turk, for his swiftness and fierceness, was surnamed Gilderun, or lightning. To such worthy warriors, ready and speedy, prompt and present, are these locusts, God's armed soldiers, here compared. "They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of war," that cannot be kept out, that will not be worsted.

**They shall march every one (Heb., man) on his way]** Though many, yet they shall not one hinder or hurt another, but hold a comely equipage, keep rank and file, observe the laws and rules of discipline, and so

*“ Coniuncti pollent etiam vehementer inertes.”*

They go forth all of them by bands, or gathered together, saith Solomon, #Pr 30:27. So do those locusts in the Revelation, the Popish clergy under their king, the destroyer, #Re 9:11. Locusts they are fitly called for their numerosity and voracity. The Jesuits alone have sometimes 200,000 scholars. And how they feed on the fat and drink the sweet where they swarm who knows not.

**They shall not break their ranks]** Or, writhe and pervert their paths, as Aben Ezra out of the Arabic idiom rendereth it. Jerome testifieth that he and others saw in Judea troops of locusts flying in so even an order, *ut ne puncto quidem aut ungue transverso declinent ad alteram*, that you could not say they brake rank at all; *tanto ordine et dispositione iubentis Dei volitant*, saith he, so strict and beautiful discipline there is in God's whole army, to whom belong the shields of the earth, the militia of the whole world, #Ps 47:9.

Ver. 8. **Neither shall one thrust another]** Or straiten another. The Greek word  $\delta\iota\omega\kappa\omega$ , to press and persecute, seems to come from this Hebrew word *Dakag*. The prophet still alludeth to the matter of

marshalling armies in such sort, as that neither may the soldiers hinder one another, nor the enemy have any advantage to break in upon them. *Exercitus pulchre dispositus, et amicis pulcherrimus videtur, et hostibus inexpugnabilis*, saith Xenophon (In Oeconom.); that is, a well ordered army seemeth both beautiful to their friends and invincible to their enemies.

**They shall walk every one]** Heb. מַגֵּב Man, mighty man, *q.d.* each locust shall walk and stalk, as a strong lusty man in his trodden track, in the path that God hath put him into, and shall hold to it. (*Vir validus, Mesillah, Via trita.*)

**And when they fall upon the sword]** Heb. the long sword, or javelin, they shall not be wounded; as if they were unwoundable, or shot free, as the poet fabled of Achilles, and as the Persians, vanquished by the Athenians at the field of Marathon, cried out

Βαλλομεν, ου πιπτουσι τιτρωσκομεν, ου φοβεονται.

“We fell them, yet they fall not;  
we them wound,  
And think them dead, but they are  
safe and sound” (Stobaeus).

Ver. 9. **They shall run to and fro]** As soldiers do when they have taken a town by assault, and have leave to plunder. *En victoriam et hostilem insultationem*, saith Mercer here. See the lively portraiture of victory and triumph.

**They shall run upon the wall]** After they have scaled it (as before) they shall walk or run upon it as conquerors, without fear of an enemy. Alexander the Great would do so.

**They shall climb up upon the houses]** No longer now the owners' castles; for they shall be ferreted out of their retiring rooms, or forced to do as Sardanapalus the Assyrian monarch did; who, straited by the enemy, sacrificed himself with his wealth and wench to Vulcan in a woodpile (as one phraseth it) in his royal palace.

**They shall enter in at the windows, as a thief]** Whose property is, 1. To climb up some other way and not to enter in by the door, #**Joh 10:1**; death also getteth in by the windows and that way entereth into palaces, #**Jer 9:21**; so doth Satan (that thief of the truth, as Basil calleth him) wind himself into the soul by the eyes, those windows of wickedness and loop holes of lust. 2. To rifle and ransack, and leave little enough behind him. What clean work these insects made, see before, #**Joe 1:4**, and take notice what great matters God Almighty can do by the most contemptible creatures. *Quid cimice vilis*, saith Philo the Jew, what can be baser than a louse? and yet all the strength of Egypt was brought down by that despicable vermin? Pliny in his eighth book and 24th chapter tells us out of Mr Varro, that a great town of Spain was undermined and overturned by conies; another in Thessaly by moles; a third in France undone by frogs; a fourth in Africa by locusts; a fifth in Italy by serpents, *Clara exitii documenta sunt ex contemnendis animalibus* (Plin.). Who hath not heard of Hatto, that merciless Archbishop of Mentz, devoured by mice, though he had moated up himself against their invasion in an island? God cannot possibly want a weapon wherewith to beat his rebels.

Ver. 10. **The earth shall quake before them, &c.]** *Tragicis figuris calamitatem amplificat*, saith Luther here. By such tragic terms the prophets used to set forth a horrible desolation, such as first the Assyrians and afterwards the Romans brought upon the Jews; the Turks and Saracens upon the Christian Churches. Whether there were any such earthquake or stupendous concussions of the heavenly bodies as is here described, is uncertain. Strange forerunners there were both in heaven and earth of the last destruction of Jerusalem, as Christ also had foretold. In the days of Justinian the emperor, the sun for the greatest part of a year gave so little light that it was but equal to the light of the moon, the sky being clear without clouds or anything to shadow it; after which, there followed a great famine, and much war and bloodshed.

**The sun and the moon shall be dark]** Wondrous expressions to meet with their wondrous stupidity. The Hebrew doctors (and Oecolampadius much disliketh it not) allegorize the text; and by the earth understand the common people, by the heavens the grandes,



by the sun and moon the king and kingdom, as by the stars those of indifferent rank, all which are woe begone (as they say) by reason of the present calamities; as when upon the death of Prince Henry, Great Britain was said to be all in black; and as Demades was wont to say of the Athenians, *nunquam eos sapere nisi pullis vestibus indutos*, that they were never so wise as when they were in mourning weeds (Plutarch).

Ver. 11. **And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army]** In the head of his army, as generals used to do for encouraging the soldiers. A general should be like Quintilian's orator, *Vir bonus, dicendi peritus*, both valiant and eloquent, as was Cato Censorius, *Optimus Orator; Optimus etiam Imperator*, saith Pliny; and Julius Caesar, and Hunniades, who were masters of speech as well as men of their hands; *Si actu eius penitus ignorasses, per linguam tamen militem esse diceres, ut quidam de Caesare*. So was Joab, David's general, of whose speech to the army, **#2Sa 10:12**, Pellican saith, *Non potuit vox Duce dignior cogitari*, A braver speech could not have been uttered by the mouth of a mortal. But here God himself uttereth his voice before his army; for "the Lord is a man of war," **#Ex 15:3**, a victor of wars (as the Chaldee there hath it), and what wonder, since "the voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty," **#Ps 29:4**, he sets on and gives the signal of the battle to these locusts, he puts spirit into them and cries, Courage, my hearts; and thence it is that they are so valorous and victorious.

**For his camp is very great]** His camp these locusts are called, though they knew it not. He hisseth for the fly of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come and rest all of them in the desolate valleys, **#Isa 7:18,19**. The Assyrian is the rod of God's anger, and the staff in his hand. "I will send him," saith the Lord, "against an hypocritical nation, to avenge the quarrel of my covenant. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so," **#Isa 10:5-7**. But it is here as when, in applying horse-leeches, the physician seeketh the health, of his patient, the leech only the filling of his gorge. Almighty God, as he disposeth and ordereth *membra culicis et pulicis*, as Austin hath it, the members of the meanest creatures; so by the same power and providence he overruleth all their motions, to his own glory.

**For he is strong that executeth his word]** Or, that thing is strong, that weak locusts, set awork by God, shall do his will vigorously (and not faintly, as #Jer 48:10), shall go throughstitch with it, and none shall hinder it.

**For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible]** Tremble, therefore, and humble under this mighty hand of God; let this earthquake work in you a heartquake, these horrible commotions and calamities draw from you a shower of tears, or at least a storm of sighs, for your sins; unless ye hold it better to be carnally secured than soundly comforted.

**Who can abide it]** Or else avoid it, otherwise than by repentance? #Am 8:12. Fly, saith a reverend man, from God's anger to God's grace. Bloodletting is a cure of bleeding; and a burn a cure against a burn. Running to God is the way to escape him; as to close and get in with him that would strike you doth avoid the blow.

Ver. 12. **Therefore also now, saith the Lord]** Now, though it be late first, and, as you may think, too late, *Nunquam sero si serio*. Now, though the dreadful day of the Lord be very near at hand; yea, though the locusts be already come, as Kimchi senseth it. Oh that ye would know at the last in this your day of grace, the things that belong to your peace, before the gate be shut, the drawbridge taken up, the taper burnt out, &c. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," #2Co 6:2. The apostle (after the prophet Isaiah) purposely beateth upon the *to vuv*, as if he should say, Now, or never; since thou mayest, the very next minute, be cut off by the stroke of death from all further time of repentance and acceptation. Up, therefore, and be doing. It is the Lord himself that thus saith,

**Turn ye even to me]** *Usque ad me*, altogether as far as to me; give not the half turn only; begin not to repent, and then give over the work. Some are ever about to repent, but they can never find time and hearts to set seriously about it, to do it in good earnest, *stultitia semper incipit vivere* folly always begins to live (Sen.). Some wamblings they have, as I may say, and some short-winded wishes, some kind of willingness and velleity, but it doth not boil up to the full height of resolution to return. The prodigal changed many places

ere he came home. Many came out of Egypt that yet never came into Canaan.

**With all your heart]** With the heart, **#Jer 4:14 Pr 23:26**, and with the whole heart, in opposition to a divided heart, **#Ho 10:2**, a double heart, **#Jas 4:8**, a heart and a heart, **#Ps 12:2**. This whole heart is elsewhere called a true heart, **#Heb 10:22**, a perfect heart, **#2Ch 16:10**, truth in the inwards, **#Ps 51:6**, where there is an unfeigned faith, **#1Ti 1:5**, laborious love, **#1Th 1:3**, sound and cordial repentance, as here, undissembled wisdom, **#Jas 3:17**, such holiness as rendereth a man like to a crystal glass with a light in the midst of it, doing the truth, **#Joh 3:21**, and having his works full, **#Re 3:1,2**, being a true worshipper, **#Joh 4:24**, an Israelite indeed, **#Joh 1:47**. God he knows to be just and jealous: he will not endure co-rivals or co-partners in the kingdom. His jurisdiction is without peculiar: he will not divide with the devil. Be the gods of heathen good fellows? saith one; the true God is a jealous God, and will not share his glory with another. He must be served truly, that there be no halting; and totally, that there be no halving.

**And with fasting, weeping, and with mourning]** With deep and downright humiliation, suitable to your sins, as **#Ezr 9:6**. Ye have inveterate stains; such as will not be gotten out till the cloth be almost rubbed to pieces. Satan hath intrenched himself in your hearts, and will not be gotten out but by fasting and prayer. Fasting is of itself but a bodily exercise, and meriteth nothing; for religion consisteth not in meat and drink; in the belly, full or empty, **#Ro 14:17 Col 2:23**; but fasting is a singular furtherance to the practice of repentance and the enforcing of our prayers. See **#Ezr 8:21**. As full feeding increaseth corruption, **#Jer 5:7,8**, so religious abstinence macerath, tameth, and subdueth the rebel flesh, **#1Co 9:27**, giving it the blue eye,  $\upsilon\pi\omega\tau\iota\alpha\zeta\omega$ , as there and **#2Co 7:11**, so that not the body so much as the soul is made more active by emptiness. Fasting days are soul fattening days, they fit men for conversion, as here, and make much to the humbling of the spirit; hence they are called days of humiliation and of self-affliction, **#Le 16:31 23:37**.

**And with weeping]** Drown your sins in a deluge of tears; cleanse your wounds by washing in this precious water; quench hell fire with it, kill the worm, fetch out sin's venom: there is a healing property in these troubled waters. Tears of vine branches are said to cure the leprosy, and the olive is reported to be most fruitful when it most distilleth. These April showers bring on May flowers, and make the heart as a watered garden; or as some faces appear most oriently beautiful when most bedewed with tears. Peter never looked so sweetly as when he wept bitterly; David never sung more pathetically than when his heart was broken most penitentially, **#Ps 6 Ps 51**. when tears instead of gems were the ornament of his bed, as Chrysostom speaketh. Mary Magdalene (that great weeper), as she made her eyes a fountain to wash Christ's feet in, so she had his wounds as a fountain to bathe her soul in; yea, she had afterwards the first sight of the revived Phoenix, whom she held fast by those feet that had lately trod upon the lion and the adder.

**And with mourning]** This is added, as a degree beyond the former. Men may fast, and yet find their pleasures, **#Isa 58:13**, weep out of stomach, as Esau, or compliment, as Phryne the harlot, who was surnamed κλαυσιγελως, weep-laugh, because she could easily do either: and as among the Brasilians tears are for a present salutation, and as soon gone as if they had said, How do ye? *Ut flerent oculos erudiere suos* (Ovid). What is a humbling day without a humbled heart? not only a religious incongruity, but a high provocation; like Zimri's act, when all the congregation were weeping before the door of the tabernacle. Here, therefore, the Lord calleth to mourning, funeral mourning, as the word signifieth: with tabering upon the breast, **#Na 2:7**, smiting on the thigh, **#Jer 31:19**, beating on the head, face, and other parts, *sicut mulierculae in puerperio facere solent*, saith Luther there. *Nudaque marmoreis percussit pectora palmis* (Ovid). See **#Isa 32:11 22:12**. Sorrow for sin must not be slight and sudden, but sad and soaking: the heart must be turned into a Hadadrimmon, **#Zec 12:10,11**, where the prophet seems, in a sort, to be at a stand for comparisons fit enough and full enough to set forth their sorrow, who, looking upon Christ, whom they had pierced, felt the very nails sticking in their own hearts as so many sharp daggers, or stings of scorpions. The good soul (say the schoolmen) seeth more cause of grief for sinning than for the death of

Christ: because therein was *aliquid placens*, something that pleaseth: but sin is *simpliciter displicens*, simply displeasing. So that God's mourners need not send for mourning women to teach them to mourn, as **#Jer 9:17**, but rather have need to be comforted, lest they should be swallowed up with overmuch grief, **#2Co 2:7**, and lest Satan get an advantage against them, **#2Co 2:11**, by mixing the detestable darnel of desperation with the godly sorrow of a pure penitent heart, as Mr Philpot, martyr, speaketh.

Ver. 13. **And rend your heart and not your garments]** *i.e.* not your garments only, which was *gestus perturbationis* among the Jews, a gesture usual with them, to set forth the greatness of their grief and displeasure; as, 1. At funerals and loss of friends, as **#Ge 37:34 2**. In case of blasphemy, as **#2Ki 18:37 3**. In time of common calamity, **#Es 4:1**. *Tum pius Aeneas humeris abseindere vestem Auxilioque vocare Deos, et tendere palmas* (Virg.). Godly sorrow for sin should exceed all other sorrows whatsoever, both in intention and extension; the whole soul sending continual streams into it out of every faculty. And hence it is that the prophet here calleth upon them to rend, and as it were to discontinue their hearts. *Cor integram cor scissum*, the broken heart is the only sound heart; and to rend the garment, and not the heart, is as very a fraud as that of players, who seem to wound themselves, but do not; and make a show of thrusting themselves through their bodies, but the sword passeth only through their clothes. Stage players can act to the life those whom they impersonate; yea, outstrip them in outward actions; so do hypocrites the true Christian. Doth good Josiah melt at the menaces of the law, and weep, and rend his clothes, and humble himself? **#2Ch 34:27**; wicked Ahab will also, in like case, rend his clothes, put sackcloth upon his flesh, fast, lie in sackcloth, and go softly and heavily, as sorrowful men and mourners use to do, **#1Ki 21:27**. Doth the publican fix his eyes on the ground? those hypocrites in Isaiah will hang down their heads as bulrushes. Doth holy Timothy weaken his constitution with religious abstinence? the false Pharisee will not only weaken his constitution, but wither and disfigure his complexion, *αφανίζουσι*, that he may appear to men to fast, **#Mt 6:16**. Such pains men will be at for applause, for a little stinking breath, which yet cannot blow one cold blast upon them when they shall be frying in hell for their seemingness. "Rend, therefore, your hearts," saith the prophet; "break up your fallow

ground, circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the filthy foreskin of your hearts," **#Jer 4:3,4**, "wash them from wickedness, that ye may be saved," **#Joe 2:14**. Be ye active, and voluntaries in your sorrows for sin. *Virtus nolentium nulla est*, feigned and forced grief is nothing worth. Judas grieved, confessed, restored, and yet miscarried. He went not forth, as Peter, to weep bitterly; he did not cast himself into heaviness, as **#Jas 4:9,10**. It was fired out of him, as sweet water out of roses; it was squeezed out of him, as verjuice out of crabs. God's people are commanded to afflict themselves with voluntary sorrows, **#Le 16:31**; to loathe themselves for all their abominations, **#Eze 6:9**, to mortify the deeds of the body by the spirit, **#Ro 8:13**, to do it with their own hands; and not to give over the practice of it till they feel their hearts to ache and quake within them, yea, to fall asunder in their bosoms, like drops of water. See all this done by David, after he had numbered the people, **#2Sa 24:10**. Some shadow of it we have in the example of Epaminondas, the Theban general, who the next day after the victory and triumph went drooping and hanging down his head: and being asked, why he did so? he answered, Yesterday I felt myself too much tickled with vain glory: therefore I correct myself for it today. But we have a better example in holy David, "whose heart smote him," saith the text, **#2Sa 24:10**, and made him smart inwardly. He was not yet smitten, either by God's hand or the prophet's reproach (as afterwards), but his sanctified conscience did its orifice of a faithful monitor and household chaplain; his heart misgave him. Bee masters tell us that those are the best hives that make the greatest noise. Sure it is that that is the best conscience that suffers not a man to sleep in sin. David's heart smote him. But for what? for numbering the people. It was for his own sin, for a small, for a secret sin, for a failing in the manner only. David knew that a man may die as well of an inward bleeding as of an outward hurt. The good soul is oft afflicted for failings in that holy duty which others applaud and extol. "And David said unto the Lord": he could not rest till he had opened his mind unto him by confession and supplication, and so got a vent to his troubled spirit: as when a sore is opened there is ease immediately. To God, therefore, he addresseth himself, not to men (as Judas did and Papists do, and many among us, being in pain of conscience, will rather shark for ease than sue for pardon), and acknowledgeth with aggravation the iniquity of his sin, **#Ps 32:3**,

the sinfulness of it, as Paul's expression is, **#Ro 7:13** (for sin is so vile that he could call it no worse than by its own name), "I have sinned greatly in that I have done": his sin swelled like a toad in his eyes, and he spat it out of his mouth with utmost indignation. He confesseth sorrowfully, but not desperately, as Judas; for he both cries for pardon, "Take away the iniquity" (for as for the punishment how he stood affected, see **#Ro 7:17**: "Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and my father's house"), and concludeth himself God's servant, yea, proveth himself so (as some godly learned think), by those following words, "For I have done foolishly"; *q.d.* If I deserve not to be called God's servant in regard of my late sin (and indeed God calls him but plain David, **#Joe 2:12**, "Go and say to David," not to my servant David, as at other times), yet at least in regard of my later service of confession joined with reformation; for now I see "I have done very foolishly," who once thought I had done wondrous wisely and politcly.

**And turn unto the Lord your God]** Of turning to God see at large the note on **#Zec 1:3**. Here it is prescribed as a remedy against God's wrath, and pressed again and again, to show the necessity of doing it, or we are utterly undone. So elsewhere, "Turn you, turn you, why will you die? except ye repent, ye must needsly perish." *Aut poenitentium aut pereundum*, either you must turn on earth or burn in hell; be born again, or ye cannot enter the kingdom of God, **#Joh 3:3**. Heaven was too hot to hold the apostate angels. And although the devil could get into paradise, yet no unclean thing ever got into heaven. No dirty dog may trample on that golden pavement. The pure in heart only can see God, as whole eyes can look upon the sunbeams, and as transparent bodies receive the light. "Turn you," therefore, "unto the Lord." If a man see a lion or a burning fire before him he will make some shift to turn another way. So here, *biasse*, for there is no safety in going forward; since our God is a consuming fire, and as a roaring lion will tear and rend the caul of our hearts in sunder, **#Ho 13:8**, if we rend not our hearts and turn unto him. By turning may well be here meant reformation, that repentance from sin, as humiliation, before required, is in Scripture called repentance for sin, for it is not enough to mourn unless we mend also, to bewail our wickedness, but we must embrace better courses, **#Jer 26:13 Isa 1:16 Mt 3:8 Ro 12:9 13:11 Eph 4:22**. God

for this cause gives us the light of nature and Scripture, besides other means, and time enough. Had he given us but one prophet only, and but forty days, as he dealt by Nineveh, we should have done it as they did. How much more now that we abound with leisure (read Jezebel's sin and sentence, #Re 2:21), and have so many prophets rising up early and speaking to us. "Turn ye again now every one from his evil way," #Jer 25:4,5. What will become of us if we refuse to be reclaimed, hate to be healed? This one prophet here fills his mouth with arguments, #Job 23:4. First, it is not to a tyrant or a stranger that you are exhorted to turn, but to the Lord your God, to him that is your head, husband, father, who hates putting away, having once betrothed you to himself in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in tender mercies, #Ho 2:19. Next, this Lord our God is, for his sweet and patient nature, here set forth, to be gracious, and will therefore love you freely, #Ho 14:4; merciful, and will therefore pity your misery; slow to anger, or not apt to snuff, but a master of his wrath, #Na 1:2, *Bagnal Chemah*, and one that can bear more than any other whatsoever, #Mic 7:17.

**And of great kindness]** Or much in goodness, doing good to the evil and unthankful, as our Saviour yokes them.

**And repenteth him of the evil]** A little punishment being enough to a father for a great fault, *Pro peccato magno paululum supplicii satis esto patri* (Terent.). Where note, that God's repentance is not a change of his will, but of his work only; and so he repents for his people when he seeth their power is gone, #De 32:36; when there is *dignus vindice nodus*, an extremity fit for Divine power to interpose, when the enemies are ready to devour the Church, or Satan to swallow down God's child in despair, his bowels work, he can hold no longer, but cries, Save my child, save my Church, &c., #Jer 31:20; then he sends out his *mandamus* trust for deliverance, #Ps 44:4; then he comes with his *non obstante*, as #Ps 106:8 Isa 57:15. Now who would not return to such a God? and what heart can resist such powerful rhetoric? A heap of words we have here, taken for the most part out of #Ex 34:6, and all to draw out faith and encourage those that have any mind to look toward God. It is no such easy thing to believe, as fond folk conceit, and to comfort a conscience cast down in the sense of sin and fear of wrath is no less difficult,



saith Luther, than to raise the dead from the grave. If men fear they shall fail of mercy upon their return to God, either they will fall into dedolency or despair. But persuade them once of the goodness of God, and it will lead them to repentance, **#Ro 2:4**. Let them see that in their Father's house is bread enough, and they will come home immediately; that God will abundantly pardon, and he shall have suitors great store, **#Isa 55:7**. The sweet and gracious nature of God should be as a perpetual picture in our hearts, and an effectual motive to make men turn unto him.

Ver. 14. **Who knoweth if he will return and repent, &c.**] Hitherto the prophet had argued from God's gracious disposition; now here from his courteous and bounteous dealing with his converts.

**Who knoweth if, &c.**] This is not the speech of one that doubteth and is uncertain, as was that of David, **#1Sa 12:22**, who can tell that God will have mercy on me, that the child may live but of one earnestly affirming and avouching, as was that of Mordecai, **#Es 4:14**, "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" *q.d.* It is sure thou art. And it is no less sure that if men turn to God he will turn to them, **#Zec 1:3**; and that whithersoever he comes, he leaves a blessing behind him. His favour is no empty favour, it is not like the winter sun, that casts a goodly countenance on the earth, but gives little heat and comfort. God ever comes with his cornucopia in his hand, and his steps drop fatness. "Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us," saith the Church, **#Ps 67:6**. He will do it the rather, saith our prophet, that his people may the more cheerfully serve him, when they shall have a meat offering and a drink offering, *et sic maneat integer cultus ipsius*, and so he may have his daily service duly performed (Calvin), for of this the saints are most solicitous. It is their desire that God should be glorified rather than that themselves should be gratified and their own turns served.

Ver. 15. **Blow the trumpet in Zion**] That all may hear and convene, those of Jerusalem in the temple, and the rest in their several synagogues, **#Le 23:31**, for that yearly fast was a standard to the rest, kept upon extraordinary and emergent occasions, as here, for the preventing of the forethreatened judgment. Papists appoint set fasting days, as Lent, and Friday in every week, eves of holidays, &c., whether the times be clear or cloudy. A. Lapide, also, the Jesuit,

keeps a coil against Luther and the Centurists, for decrying their Popish processions and public litanies, which he thinks to be here and elsewhere authorized. A discourse he giveth us here, too, about the use and origin of bells among Christians, answerable to trumpets among the Jews. A symmist of his, Cenalis, Bishop of Auranches, to prove their Pope-holy Church the true Church, maketh no mention at all either of preaching or sacraments, but produceth bells for a sufficient mark of the Catholic true Church. "We have bells," saith he, "whereby our assemblies are ordinarily called together, but the Lutherans have claps of harquebuses and pistolets for signs whereby they congregate," between which and bells he maketh a long anti-thesis, and from hence inferreth that the Church of Rome is the true Church. A proper argument, and yet the man pleaseth himself as much in it as the second Council of Nice did in their profound proofs for idolatry, which, as one well saith of them, were such as that the images themselves, if they were sensible, would blush to hear repeated.

**Sanctify a fast]** {See Trapp on "Joe 1:14"} Proclaim a religious abstinence from all kind of sustenance, {#2Sa 12:17 Jon 3:5} for a season, either from morning till evening, as #Jud 20:26 2Sa 3:35, or from evening till evening, #Le 23:32, or longer, as #Es 4:16 Ac 9:9, as the hand and wrath of God is more or less felt or feared; but the least time that may be is a whole day. There is an old canon that our fasts should continue *usque dum stellae in coelo appareant*, till the stars appear in the sky. The very Turks in their solemn fasts eat nothing all the day till night; yea, so precise they are, that upon their fasting days they will not so much as wash their mouths in water till the stars appear; which maketh their fasts (especially in the summer, when the days be long and hot) to be unto them very tedious. Christians hold and teach that nature is by fasting to be chastised, and not disabled for service; and that such as cannot fast so long but they shall either endanger health or be unfitted for the spiritual duties of the day, may eat; provided that they abuse not this liberty to the satisfying of the flesh, #Col 2:23 1Ti 5:23.

**Call a solemn assembly]** See #Joe 1:14. {See Trapp on "Joe 1:14"}

Ver. 16. **Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, &c.]** Let the priests, God's ministers, see to it, that the people come together; and

for the better too, as much as in them lies. For they are to the people in place of watchmen, of sentinels, of ambassadors, and in Christ's own stead, who seems to say unto them, as #Ps 50:5, "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," that they may meet me with entreaties of peace, disarm mine indignation conceived against them, and quench the flame thereof with their tears; not quench the spirit in their teachers by their crossness and backwardness to business of this nature.

**Assemble the elders]** Whether for age, as #Job 15:10, or for place of authority, as #Jos 7:6 1Sa 15:30 Ru 4:4. These must be chief doers and most forward at fasts, as was Joshua, Jehoshaphat, the King of Nineveh, Ezra, &c. For, 1. They are most guilty in regard of their years and their office, which either addeth two wings to their sins, viz., example and scandal, whereby *facile volant, non facile violant*, they soar much higher, and fly much farther; 2. Their presence, counsel, and countenance may be a great furtherance to the work. See #Eze 46:10. The prince in the midst of the people, when they go in shall go in; and when they go forth shall go forth. A. Lapide saith, that the elder sort are to meet, because they are least lustful and more prayerful. It should be so, I confess; but how many old goats are there abroad that even hang over hell, which gapeth for them? and as the canker soonest entereth into the white rose, so doth corruption easily creep into the white head. He was a rare old man of whom we read, that being tempted to sin said, Nay: lest he should stain his white head.

**Gather the children, and those that suck the breasts]** For they are Church members, and to them also pertain the public dangers and calamities; out of which times and cases, children and novices are not to be tied to these austerities of religion (as our Saviour showeth, #Mt 9:17), as little, as new wine is to be put into old vessels. Add hereunto, that the parents might by the sight of their poor children (subject to God's wrath by their default) be brought to a farther sense of their own sinfulness; and moved by their cries and laments *ut ferventius orent, et plorent*, to cry and pray more earnestly, #Eph 2:3 Ro 5:12.

**Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber]** The newly married man was by the law allowed to cheer up his wife, **#De 24:5**, and therefore exempted from warfare and other public employments abroad, **#De 20:7**, and the wedding day is called the "day of the rejoicing of a man's heart," **#So 3:11**. They were wont to have a week of feasting at such times, **#Ge 29:27**. Fulfil her week, *sc.* of banquet and bride's ale, as they call it. And it is noted as an absurd thing in Samson's wife, that she wept all the seven days of such a feast, when mirth was so much in season, **#Jud 14:17**. But is it a time for men to hang their hearts upon the merry pin when God calls them to hang up their harps upon the willow trees? when the sword is sharpened to make a sore slaughter, when it is furbished and glittereth, and contemneth the rod (*i.e.* lesser and lighter judgments that usually forerun it), should we then make mirth? **#Eze 21:10**. Should men eat, and drink, and marry, and be merry, when tomorrow they may look to die, and are already stumbling in the valley of the shadow of death? Such a thing the old world may do, buried in security, and to be shortly therefore buried in one universal grave of waters. But holy Noah was vexed at it; and Ambrose thinks (not without reason) that during the time of the Deluge, all the while that he was in the ark, he came as little at his wife as Uriah did while the ark and Judah and Israel abode in tents, and Joab and the host encamped in the fields, **#2Sa 11:11**. Nehemiah, though a great courtier, and the king's cupbearer, could not but be sad when it went ill with the Church; all comforts then were but Ichabods to him, he had no joy of them, **#Ne 2:2,3**. Sorrow at such a time is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better, **#Ec 7:3**. The mad world is a perfect stranger to the truth of this sacred position, as having so far banished sadness, that they are professed enemies to seriousness; and stick not to light a candle at the devil (as they say), for sinful lightsomeness. But woe be to such mad mirthmongers, saith our Saviour, **#Lu 6:25**, and after him St James, **#Jas 5:1,5**, and before them both, the prophet Isaiah, **#Isa 22:12-14**, and the prophet Amos, **#Am 6:4,6**. What so lawful as the use of the marriage bed? **#Heb 13:4**; and for whom more lawful than for the bridegroom and bride? Yet in a common calamity, and in a day of restraint (as a fast day is called, **#Joe 2:15**), married couples must abstain, **#1Co 7:5**, where the apostle speaketh of a public fast, as Peter Martyr observeth. Hence, **#Zec 8:19**, they separated

themselves at such a time. And it is spoken of as a foul sin, **#Isa 58:3**, "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure." All sensual delights, though never so lawful at other times, must be then suspended and laid aside; as music, mirth, perfumes, **#Da 6:18**, brave apparel, **#Ex 33:4**, all ornaments of the body, soft lying, **#2Sa 12:16**, all cheerfulness and outward joy, **#Jud 20:26 1Sa 7:8**. The Roman censor punished one that showed himself out of a window with a garland upon his head in the time of the second Punic war.

Ver. 17. **Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord]** Let not them be either dull or dumb (as Popish mass-priests, with their dumb shows at divine service), but as (for their dignity) they are the Lord's ministers, as likewise the good angels are, and their fellow-servants, so (according to their duty) they must be first in holy exercises, **#Ps 103:21 Re 22:9**, going in and out before God's people in the performance of their trust, and that worthy work of theirs, **#1Ti 3:1**, for the which they are to be very highly esteemed in love, i Thess. v. 13. Let ministers, therefore, pray hard for their people, as did Aaron, Samuel, Paul, &c. Let their prayers (at fasts especially) be well watered with tears (those effectual orators, that cry to God for mercy, **#Ps 39:12**, as blood doth for vengeance, **#Ge 4:16**), as theirs were, **#Jud 20:28 2:5 1Sa 7:6**; and as Ezra, x. 1, and Jeremiah, ix. 1; xiii. 17; and why? but for corruption, in magistrates, ministers, all sorts; a general defection, drawing on a general desolation. Oh let God's two faithful witnesses be clothed in sackcloth, **#Re 11:3**, teaching God's people with many "tears and temptations, both publicly and from house to house"; yea, not "ceasing to warn them night and day with tears," to redeem their own sorrows by sound repentance, **#Ac 20:19,20,31**. It is said of Athanasius, that by his tears, as by the bleeding of a chaste vine, he cured the leprosy of that tainted age. And of Luther, that by his prayers and tears he had prevailed with God, that Popery should not overrun his country during his days. When I am dead, said he, let those pray that can pray, Melancthon, his colleague, writeth, that he constantly prayed with abundance of tears; for he knew, that as music upon the water sounds farther and more harmoniously than upon the land; so prayers, joined with tears, find much respect with Christ; who could not but look back upon the weeping women, and comfort them, though he was then going to his death.

**Between the porch and the altar]** This was that void place, where the priests prayed after the sacrifices were offered, #Eze 8:16. As in man there is body, soul, and spirit, #1Th 5:23, so in the temple at Jerusalem, 1. between Solomon's porch, #Ac 3:11, and the altar of burnt-offering, was the outer great court, #2Ch 4:9, where the people met for preaching and prayer. Next, there was the second court, for the priests only; and here was the altar of incense, #Lu 1:9,10. Thirdly, the most holy place, for the high-priest to enter once a year, #Le 16:17. The first is here spoken of, the outer court, where the priests might be best heard to pray, and seen to weep; and the people might comport, and say, Amen; the want whereof St Paul counts no small loss, i Cor. xiv. 16.

**And let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, &c.]** Other exercises there were usually performed at public fasts; as reading the Scriptures, #Jer 36:5,27, expounding and preaching, #Ne 8:4,8, examining, censuring, and punishing such sins as then most reigned, #Ne 9:2 Eze 9:2 Jos 7:6 22:5. Binding themselves to God by a covenant of better obedience, #Ne 10:18,29,30, contributing to good uses, #Isa 58:7 2Ch 31:3,4; but the chief business and duty of the day was, as here, prayer to God for pardon of sin, and removal of shame and other punishment; whence also it was called, a day of atonement, or expiation.

**Spare thy people, O Lord, &c.]** *Brevis oratio, sed tota affectibus ardens*, saith Mercer, A short prayer, but very affectionate; so are all Scripture-forms: they have fulness of matter in fewness of words. *Quam multa, quam paucis!* How much in a little! as Cicero said of Brutus's laconical epistle. See #Nu 6:24-26 Ho 14:2 Lu 18:13 Mt 6:9,10, &c., which is both a prayer and a pattern: as the standard is the exactest measure. Why, then, should any man fall out with forms, and call them idols, odious as swine's-flesh, &c.? Why should they say, that the use of the Lord's Prayer is the note of a formalist? Is not this to speak evil of good, &c.

**And give not thine heritage to reproach]** Suffer us not, for our sins, to be forced by famine to beg bread of our enemies, the Ammonites and Moabites; for that will reflect upon thee, Lord, and turn to thy dishonour, as if thou hadst no care of thine heritage,

couldst not maintain thy servants. See a like prayer to this **#Nu 14:11,12,16,17 De 9:26-28**, and learn to deprecate shame and reproach as a fruit of sin, and a piece of the curse, **#De 28 Le 26 1Sam 2:30**. Beg of God, 1. To keep thee from reproachful courses, such as may expose thee to the scandal of the weak and scorn of the wicked. David is much in this petition. 2. To hide thee in a pavilion from the strife of tongues, **#Ps 31:20**, either to preserve thee from aspersions, or so to oil thy name, that they may not stick. 3. To give thee good repute and report among the best. It was God gave Solomon honour; and he promiseth it to all his, as a reward of religion, **#Pr 22:4**.

**That the heathen should rule over them]** It is a heavy hand of God upon his people, when Pagans or Papagans have dominion over them, **#Ne 9:9,10,27 Ps 79:1 80:1,2 137:1,2 La 1:2,4,5**. They are bloody in their positions and dispositions. See **#Ro 1:31**. Their government is tyrannical, such as the Spaniards' is over the poor Indians, the Turks' over Greece, the rebels over the English in Ireland, &c. The saints also are, 1. Conscientious, and cannot yield to their unlawful commands, as the three children; 2. Zealous, and cannot but contest, as Stephen, Paul at Athens, the martyrs; 3. Friendless and destitute, **#Mt 10:16**, as Paul before Nero, Christ before Pilate, forsaken of all. Pray, therefore, as here, and prevent such a mischief, by shunning Jerusalem's sins of ignorance, ingratitude, incorrigibleness, formality, &c., and by putting our necks under the yoke of Christ's obedience, observing from the heart that form of doctrine which he hath delivered unto us, **#Ro 6:17**.

**Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?] q.d.** Why should they cast our religion in our dish? why should they twit us with thy neglect of us? why should thy name be blasphemed and thy power traduced, as it were on a public theatre? This was that which most galled these good souls (as it had often done David before them), that God, with whom they quartered arms, should be reproached for their sakes, and through their sides; and his glory defaced. This was as a murdering knife in David's bones, **#Ps 42:10**, and worse to him than all the evil that he had suffered from his youth up. Our nature is most impatient with reproach: for there is none so mean but thinks himself worthy of some regard; and a

reproachful scorn shows an utter disrespect which flows from the very superfluity of malice. You shall find some (saith Erasmus) that if death be threatened can despise it; but to be belied or reproached they cannot brook, nor from revenge contain. God's people can bear wrongs best of any; compel them to go a mile, they will be content, if it may do good, to go two, yea, as far as the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel of peace will carry them. But if wrong be offered to God, if he be any way dishonoured, or his name bored through by blasphemies, O what a stomach they have presently, and how blessedly blown up are they with a zeal of God's glory, which even eateth them up.

Ver. 18. **Then will the Lord be jealous (or, zealous) for his land]** Then *dicto citius* straight upon it: no sooner shall you repent (as is prescribed) but the Lord will be jealous, &c. Of God's jealousy for his people, {See Trapp on "Zec 1:14 8:2"} And of the happy effect of fasting turned to feasting, {See Trapp on "Zec 8:19"} see also **#Jud 20:23 Ezr 9:6 Da 9:20 2Ch 20:3,24,25** Bacah turned into Berachah; besides the constant experience of these and former times, of the happy success and unmiscarrying returns of holy fasting and prayer; no instance to the contrary. God usually answers his humbling people, as here, according to the desire of their hearts: neither so only, but according to the request of their lips also, **#Ps 21:2**, he fits his mercy *ad cardinem desiderii*; and lets it be to his, even as they will. They say, "Spare thy people," and accordingly he will pity or "spare his people," saith the prophet. They would not have God to give "his heritage to reproach" by inflicting famine upon them, as if they served a hard master that would affamish them. To this God gives a full answer in the next verse, "Behold, I will send you corn," &c. Again, they desire God to take care of his own great name, and to vindicate it. I will, saith God, by doing greatest things for you, **#Joe 2:20**, and by causing the blasphemers to return and discern that "their rock is not as your Rock, themselves being judges," **#De 32:31**; and that to ask, "Where is now their God?" is as great folly as if one should say, between the space of the new and old moon, Where is now the moon? when as it is never nearer the sun than at that time. There are some interpreters of good note, that read this verse not in the future, but in the preter tense, thus, Then was the Lord zealous for his land, and pitied his people; *sc.* when once he saw them seriously to repent he did all this that followeth for them.



Neither maketh it anything against this interpretation, that the repentance of this people, their assembling and fasting, &c., is not recorded. For no more is it that Moses went to Pharaoh according to God's command, to threaten those swarms of flies, **#Ex 8:20**, or that Isaiah took his son Shearjashub, and went to Ahaz to confirm and comfort him, as God had commanded, **#Isa 7:3**, which yet we doubt not but the prophet did. This is an ordinary aposiopesis.

**And pity his people]** Or, spare them, pardon them. The word signifies to show mercy to him whom by all right thou mayest justly destroy, **#Eze 5:11 1Sa 15:3**. Oh the Divine rhetoric and omnipotent efficacy of repentance! This is the rainbow, which if God seeth shining in our hearts, he will never drown our souls. *Dat poenitentiam et postea indulgentiam* (Fulgent.). He gives his people to repent, and then spareth them "as a man spareth his own son that serveth him," **#Mal 3:17**. But it is otherwise with those that partake not of the Divine nature: they are fierce, and implacable, as is the devil, who works effectually in them, as a smith doth in his forge. Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, came in the midst of a sore winter, upon his bare feet, to the gates of the castle of Canusium, and stood there fasting from morning to night for three days together, waiting for the judicial sentence of the pope, and craving pardon of him; which yet he could not obtain by his own or others' tears, or by the intercession of any saint, save only of a certain harlot, with whom the pope was then taking his filthy pleasure. The emperor mistook, who thought that the pope could be pacified by fasting and prayer. This god required another kind sacrifice than these.

Ver. 19. **Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people]** He will say it in answer to their prayers (see the note on **#Joe 2:18**). Fear not, my people, that ye shall be a reproach among the heathen:

**Behold, I will send you]** As a token of my love, and a pledge of better blessings;

**Corn, and wine, and oil]** All that heart can wish or need require, a sufficiency of outward comforts, and (if not a superfluity, yet) an honest affluence, as **#Ps 23:5,6**, and boldness to conclude from temporals to spirituals, as there David doth; because bestowed in mercy and as an answer to prayer; for God never said to the seed of

Jacob, Seek ye me in vain (he scorns that), whether it be for *Bona throni* or *Bona scabelli*, as Austin distinguisheth, good things of this life or a better, upper springs or nether springs, though we ask but the one (as here) yet we shall have both. "Nay, take two," saith he, as once Naaman did to Gehazi; take thy back-burden, take even as much as thou canst bring faith to bear away. God deals with his servants as the prophet did with the Shunammite; when he bade her ask what she needed, and she found not what to ask, he sent for her again and makes her a free promise of that she most wanted and desired, a son, #2Ki 4:16. So, often God is pleased to do for his servants exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think. David asked but life of God, and he gave him "length of days for ever and ever," #Ps 21:4. This people prayed that God would not (for that turn) give his heritage a reproach among the heathen; and he graciously promiseth that he will never any more make them a reproach, &c. (so they continue penitent), for רַוֵּ here signifies perpetuity, as Mercer noteth, and not for a time only, as Lyra would have it.

Ver. 20. **But I will remove far off from you the northern army]** *sc.* of vermin, of those destroying creatures that came from the north. *Ab Aquilone nihil boni* was a proverb among this people. God promiseth here to free them of that mischief, and to disimpest the country of those noisome insects. *Gratiae privativae plures sunt quam positivae*, saith Gerson, God's privative favours to us are more than his positive; hence man's happiness is usually called salvation, which properly betokeneth the privative part thereof. Little do we consider or understand from how many deaths and dangers we are daily and hourly delivered. It is good to keep a catalogue of God's providences, and to transmit them to posterity, such as was that of the gunpowder plot; and before that, of the Reformation begun by Henry VIII, and carried on by his son, to the ridding of the land of those popish locusts; which Reformation, how imperfect soever, to be done by so weak and simple means, yea, by casual and cross means, against the force of so puissant and political an adversary, is that miracle, which we are in these times to look for. An outlander speaketh thus of it, *Ecclesiae Anglicanae reformationem desperasset aetas praeterita, admiratur praesens, obstupescet futura* (Scultet.). This was the Lord's own work, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Oh that the same Lord would be both author and finisher! and

as he hath in good part cut off the names of the idols out of the land, so that they shall be no more remembered; so he would cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land, that he would send all false doctrine and heresy packing to hell from whence they came. *Fiat, Fiat.* Do it, do it!

**And will drive him into a land barren and desolate]** Or, dry and forlorn, where he shall perish for want of food. The body of this army shall be driven into the wilderness, the vanguard into the lake of Sodom toward the east; and the rearward into the Mediterranean Sea, toward the west; for the Western Ocean was hardly known to the Hebrews; as neither was it to the Romans, till the days of Julius Caesar.

**And his stink shall come up, and his ill savour, &c.]** *se.* by reason of their dead carcasses covering the earth, and infecting the air. The old Hebrews understood this text concerning the destruction of the devil in the days of the Messiah. Oh that God would once destroy that firstborn of the devil, that king of locusts, Abaddon, the pope, and dung his vineyard with the dead carcasses of his incurable complices, that their stink might ascend, and their ill savour come up into all men's nostrils. Matthew Paris (an ingenuous Papist), speaking of the court of Rome long since, said, *Huius foetor usque ad nubes fumum teterrimum exhalabat*, Her filthiness hath sent up a most noisome stench to the very clouds of heaven, as Sodom's did. And Theodorus Vrias (another of her good sons in Germany) complained, A.D. 1414, that the Church of Rome was become *ex aurea argenteam, ex argentea ferream, ex ferrea terream, superesse ut in stercus abiret*, of gold silver, of silver iron, of iron earth, and that she would next become of earth dung, &c. She is so already, and stinks alive worse than any carrion, rotting in its slime. Oh that God would once put into the hearts of the kings of the earth to loathe her, and burn her, for an old stinking bawd, as is prophesied they shall, **#Re 17:16.**

**Because he hath done great things]** Heb. he hath magnified to do, he hath made great spoil and havoc, he hath revelled in the ruins of God's poor people, and so hath hastened his own destruction, and their deliverance. The saints are many times more beholden to their

enemies' outrages than to their own deserts or duties for deliverance. Some interpreters, at Castalio, Leveley, &c., understand the text of God; and render it *Quia magnifice aget*, for the Lord shall do great things, as it is also in the following verse; there being here the same anomaly, or change of person, as is **#Isa 22:19**, "And I will drive thee from thy station and from thy state shall he pull thee down."

Ver. 21. **Fear not, O land]** O red earth, or O tilled land, that hast lain bedridden, as it were under the heavy curse of God, ever since the fall of Adam; and wast never beautiful on cheerful since that time, **#Ge 3:17**. Thou that hast lately been under that great and very terrible day of the Lord, **#Joe 2:11**, who hath made bloody wales upon thy back, and laid thee as a desolate wilderness, **#Joe 2:3**, to thy great grief and terror, cheer up now, and fear not thine inhabitants are penitents, and repentance hath turned their crosses into comforts as scarlet pulls out the teeth of a serpent; as wine draweth a nourishing virtue from the flesh of vipers, as the philosopher's stone, they say, turns all into gold. See **#1Pe 1:7**. God will turn all thy sadness into gladness: neither shalt thou any more lie to those that manure thee (as the Scripture phrase is, **#Hab 3:17**), that is, disappoint and frustrate their expectation; but "thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee," **#De 33:29**. *Spem mentita seges* (Virg.). *Victum seges aegra negabat* (Horat.).

**For the Lord will do great things]** *Magnificentius aget Deus*; far greater things God will do for thee than the locust hath done against thee: so that thou shalt gain by thy losses and say, *Periissem nisi periissem*, I had been undone if I had not been undone. Wherefore be glad and rejoice with inward and outward joy. And because fear is a passion opposite to joy (for "fear hath torment," **#1Jo 4:18**. and that was a rare mixture in those good women that returned from our Saviour's sepulchre "with fear and great joy," **#Mt 28:8** see **#Ps 2:11**), therefore, "Fear not, O land," quit thine heart of that cowardly passion, and be as merry as mirth can make thee; for the Lord hath done great things for thee, whereof thou hast good cause to be glad. Faith in God's power quelleth and killeth distrustful fears: filling the heart with unspeakable joys "and full of glory," **#1Pe 1:8**.

Ver. 22. **Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field]** *q.d.* Ye shall have no cause to fear for the future: though hitherto ye have suffered hardship, **#Joe 1:18**. Beasts and birds do *in diem vivere* to live for

the day, (as Quintilian saith of them), and take no further thought than for present sustenance. But by a personification (as before the land, so here) the beasts that till it are forbidden to fear want; for God, the great housekeeper of the world, will provide them their meat in due season, #Ps 104:27,28, and several meats according to their various appetites. He will hear the heaven, the heaven shall hear the earth, the earth shall bear all kind of fruits, both natural, as herbs of the field and grass of the wilderness, and such as are sown and planted, as wine, oil, figs; so that neither man nor beast shall want anything *ad esum, vel ad usum*, to eat or to use but have plenty without penury, &c. It shall be said of Judea, as Solinus saith of Spain, *In Hispania nihil infructuosum, nihil sterile*, that there is no unfruitfulness in any part of it; or, as it is said of Campania, in Italy, that it is the most fruitful plat of earth that is in the universe.

**The fig tree and the vine]** That before had been barked and wasted, #Joe 1:7,12,

**do yield their strength]** *i.e.* their utmost fruits; which they could not do without God, into whom therefore the prophet Hosea rightly resolveth the genealogy of grain, wine, oil, &c., #Ho 2:22. It is no otherwise with us in spiritual regards. For though we have grace, yet we cannot bring forth that grace to act without new grace; like as trees, though they be fitted to bear fruits, yet, without the influence of the heavens, they cannot put forth that fitness in fruit. *Nolentem praevenit Deus ut velit: volentem subsequitur, ne frustra velit* (Aug. Enchir. chap. 32).

Ver. 23. **Be glad then, ye children of Zion]** "Ye righteous ones," #Ps 32:11, and none else; for joy is the just man's portion, and none have any reason to rejoice but such; nay, they are flatly forbidden it, #Ho 9:1. See the note there. "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let the saints be joyful in glory," #Ps 149:2,5. *Gaudeant in re, gaudeant in spe, gaudeant de possessione, gaudeant de promissione*, saith Bernard. If Plato could tell the musicians, philosophers knew how to dine and sup without them, they could be merry without a fiddler, how much more may Zion's children! Be it that there is a cord in the sin of the wicked, to strangle their joy with, yet the "righteous sing and are merry," #Pr 29:6. In the greatest fail of all outward comforts, they

can "rejoice in the Lord their God," as here, and as David at the sack of Ziklag, #1Sa 30:6; and Habakkuk, amidst all the miseries of the world and malice of Satan, iii. 17. It is in the Lord their God that they rejoice, it is a holy and spiritual joy, not profane and carnal, as is the wordling's, who feedeth upon ashes, &c., #Isa 44:20, rejoiceth in a thing of nought, #Am 6:13; his joy is no better than a little counterfeit complexion, crackling of thorns, &c.

**For he hath given you the former rain moderately]** As a pledge of his love, and as a fruit of the covenant. Moderate showers ye shall have, neither too much nor too hasty; rain of righteousness in such measure and moderation as shall be needful.

**And he will cause to come down for you]** The vanities of the heathen cannot give rain, #Jer 14:22, nor can the heavens yield showers. God therefore must be waited upon, #Jas 5:7; and prayed unto, #Joe 2:18, and the thundering legion, κεραινοβολος, so famous in Church history. He must not have cause given him to complain of men's brutishness and inadvertence, as #Jer 10:18,14.

**The former rain]** That fell in October, when they had sown. St James calleth it the morning rain, πρωιμον, #Jas 5:7.

**And the latter rain]** Heb. the gathering rain, because it fills and fits the corn for ingathering; as falling about May and a little before their harvest.

**In the first]** Not month, but *primo quoque tempore*, as soon as is fit. See #Zec 10:1. {See Trapp on "Zec 10:1"}

Ver. 24. **And the floors shall be full of wheat]** Such fatness shall God's footsteps drop, that your houses shall be full of all "precious and pleasant riches," #Pr 24:4; so that you shall, as rich men love to do, *de pleno tollere acervo*. Only take heed you have not, as that rich fool, *animam triticeam*, a wheaten soul, that your abundance get not within you, Τα ενοντα, as the Pharisees' did, #Lu 11:41 (so that they did not more possess than were possessed of what they had), that ye set not your hearts upon your riches, #Ps 62:11.

—“ *difficile est opibus non tradere mentem.*”

(Martial.)

**And the fats shall overflow]** There shall be plenty of all things, as **#Pr 3:10**, the fruits and effect of that rain promised before. And doth not God daily turn water into wine, when of water falling upon the vine, and concocted by the heat of the sun, he produceth the grape, whence wine is pressed?

Ver. 25. **And I will restore to you the years, &c.]** I will so make up your former losses, that there shall remain no sign nor sense thereof. See a like promise **#Zec 10:6**, "They shall be as though I had not cast them off," *{See Trapp on "Zec 10:6"}* See also **#Isa 60:10**.

**My great army]** *sc.* the locusts, see above, **#Joe 2:2,5,11**. God is Lord of Hosts, and (as the Rabbis well observe) he hath the upper and lower troops, as his horse and foot ready prest.

Ver. 26. **And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied]** Which, what a great blessing it is, see **#Hag 1:6 Ec 6:1,2**. *{See Trapp on "Hag 1:6"}* *{See Trapp on "Ec 6:1"}* *{See Trapp on "Ec 6:2"}*

**And praise the name of the Lord your God]** Not haunch up God's creatures, as swine do swill, but tasting the sweetness of the Creator in them, lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to him. This was better than the former blessing, for naturally fulness breeds forgetfulness of God, **#De 32:15**.

**That hath dealt wondrously with you]** Heb. *ad mirificandum, sc.* in so sudden and strange a change of his hand, whereby he hath made himself marvellous, as he delights to do by working wonders, such as man's power cannot perform, nor reason reach unto.

**And my people shall never be ashamed]** As they have been among the heathen, **#Joe 2:19**, and as those are that pray to no purpose. *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*. Their faith is unfeigned, and therefore their hopes unfailable, **#Ro 5:5**.

Ver. 27. **And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel]** These temporal blessings shall seal up my love to you and presence of grace with you. True it is that no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them, **#Ec 9:1**; because all things come alike to all, **#Joe 2:2**. But yet from this text we may comfortably conclude,

that if the good things of this life make us more cheerful, thankful, hopeful; if mercy excite us to duty, and the sense of God's love make us love God, his ways, and people, with a desire to love them more; then we are loved of God, who is in us of a truth, **#1Jo 4:10,19**, and we may know it too. For if instinct of nature teach dams to know their young ones, and the young their dams, shall not God's Spirit teach us to know him, that he is in the midst of us, not by his omnipresence only, but by his gracious presence? yea, that he is the Lord our God, and none else; and that while we hold us to this anchorhold of the faithful soul, we shall never be ashamed, **#Ps 31:1**. That was a brave speech of Luther, and one of those that a man would fetch upon his knees from Rome or Jerusalem to be author of them, *Ipse videret ubi anima mea mansura sit, qui pro ea sic sollicitus fuit, ut vitam pro ea posuerit*, Let him see to it where my soul shall rest, who took so much care for it as that he laid down his life for it (Joh. Manl. loc. com.).

Ver. 28. **And it shall come to pass afterwards]** *sc.* In the days of the Messiah, which is called the "world to come," **#Heb 2:5**, but especially after his ascension, see **#Joh 7:37 Ac 2:17-21**, where this prophecy was fulfilled, and this place taken for the first text preached on by the apostles, **#Joe 2:17**, to the conversion of three thousand souls at one sermon. For together with the word there went forth a power, even that "spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind," **#Lu 7:21 2Ti 1:7**, here promised to be poured out, not distilled only, {*See Trapp on "Zec 12:10"*} and that upon all flesh. Spirit upon flesh, the best thing upon the basest; yea, upon all flesh, without respect of persons or difference made of sex, age, or condition, provided that they know and acknowledge themselves to be but flesh, **#Ge 6:3**, corrupt and carnal (*animas etiam incarnavimus*, as St Bernard complaineth), and that whatsoever is of "the flesh is flesh," **#Joh 3:6** (for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?) that whole man is in evil, and whole evil in man; neither can it be gotten out in any measure, till the heart be mollified and made tender as flesh, **#Eze 11:19 36:26,27**, which cannot be done till men be taught of God, and drawn out of darkness into his marvellous light; till they be spiritualized and "transformed into the same image from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord," **#2Co 3:18**.



**And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy]** This was fulfilled **#Ac 2:17-21**, as St Peter showeth. For the New Testament is but the Old unfolded and fulfilled, as was also typified in the two cherubims of the sanctuary, looking intently into the propitiatory, {*Christ, #Ro 3:25*} but with their faces turned one towards another: **#Ex 25:20 Ac 26:22**. It was fulfilled, I say, in that visible descension of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles and the rest, **#Ac 2:8:15,17 10:44**. So that this makes nothing at all for the enthusiasts' raptures and dotages. The true offspring they are of those ancient Euchites or Messalanii, who, leaving their trades, gave themselves to much sleep, and called their dreams and phantasies prophecies (Funcc. Chronol., A.D. 371).

**Your old men shall dream, &c., your young men shall see visions]** *i.e.* God will no less open his will unto them than he did of old to the propbets by dreams and visions; for by the conduct of the Spirit they shall be led into all truth and holiness they shall be all a royal priesthood, **#1Pe 2:5 Re 1:6**, "full of all goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another," **#Ro 15:14**.

Ver. 29. **And also upon the servants]** They shall be the free men and women of Jesus Christ, **#1Co 7:22**, by as full a measure of God's free and noble Spirit bestowed upon them as upon their masters and mistresses. The Trent translation hath it, upon my servants and my handmaids but there is no such pronoun in the original though it is true that all that have the Spirit are his; and the contrary, **#Ro 8:9 Eph 1:13** The scope of the text is, as Mercer well noteth to show that *ut gratuitum et commune Christ beneficium, sic et spiritus*, as the benefits of Christ are free and common to all his people, so is the Spirit. And surely, next to the love of Christ indwelling in our nature, we may well wonder at the love of the Holy Ghost, that will dwell in our defiled souls, and act in them as he doth. For there are diversity of gifts, but the same Spirit, **#1Co 12:4**, as the diverse smells of flowers come from the same influence, and the diverse sounds in the organ from the same breath.

Ver. 30. **And I will show wonders in the heavens]** *Prodigia beneficia credentibus, malefica et horrida incredulis*, saith Cornelius a Lapide, who interpreteth the text of those signs and wonders that shall precede the day of judgment: and for confirmation hereof allegeth **#Joe 3:2**, together with **#Mt 24:29 Lu**

**21:25.** And had he looked a little higher into those chapters, and taken in all the troubles that befell the Church from our Saviour's ascension to his second coming, together with those horrible calamities and confusions that shall befall the wicked, for contempt of the gospel, and persecution of the professors thereof, he had done right, in mine opinion. It is ordinary with the prophets to set forth horrible commotions by such figurative expressions: see **#Jer 4:23**, &c.; **#Isa 13:10 Re 6:12**. Those that have received the spirit of adoption, must not dream of a delicacy, but expect persecution. Christ came to send fire on the earth, **#Lu 12:49**. Neither may persecutors hope to escape unpunished, but look to be pursued by Divine justice. {See Trapp on "Re 6:15"} How heavy was the hand of God upon Jerusalem, that slaughter house of the saints; and afterwards upon the ten persecutors of Rome! 1. Nero (whom Tertullian rightly calleth *Dedicatorero damnationis Christianorum, quippe qui orientem fidem primus Romae cruentavit*, the first bloody persecutor of the Christian religion) lost 80,000 of his subjects by the pestilence, had his army utterly routed and cut off in Brittany, both the Armenias revolted from him, the senators rose up against him, and compelled him to be his own executioner; 2. Domitian was butchered by his soldiers; 3. Trajan died of a dropsy; 4. Severus died miserably here at York; 5. Maximinus, with his son, was cut in pieces; 6. Decius died in a far country; 7. Valerian was flayed by Sapore, King of Persia, who took him prisoner. 8. Aurelian was slain by his own men; 9. Dioclesian poisoned himself; 10. Maximian hanged himself. What should I speak of Julian, Anastasius, Heraclius, &c.; the French persecutors, Francis II, Charles IX, Henry III, the Guises, &c.; Philip II of Spain, who returning out of the Low Countries, met a storm, and suffered shipwreck, to the great danger of his life? He said he was delivered by the singular providence of God to root out Lutheranism, which he presently began to do with all his might. He afterwards died miserably of the lousy disease. Queen Mary died of a tumour, or else of grief of heart for King Philip's unkind departure, severe losses, Calais surrendered, harm done by thunders from heaven and by fire in the royal navy, extreme dearths raging, her conceptions failing. What heavy judgments befell various particular persecutors of those times, Poole, Gardiner, Bonner, Morgan, Story, Burton, see Acts and Mon. 1902, 1904, &c., 1915. George Eagles (alias Trudge-over-the-world)

having hid himself in a grain field, was for money descried by one Ralph Lurdain, and burnt at Chelmsford: where afterwards the same Lurdain was hanged for stealing a horse (Mr Leigh's Saints' Encouragement, Epistle to Reader.)

**Blood and fire]** Signs terrifying, and testifying the wrath and displeasure of God for the sins of men, and such a face of the whole fabric of the universe; as that all the parts thereof may seem to have conspired for the destruction of mankind. Before the war between Pompey and Caesar the sea seemed to be bloody (Lucan. lib. 1, *monstra enumerans quae bellum civile praecesserunt*).

—“ *Superique minaces  
Prodigiis terras implerant, aethera, pontum  
Ignota obscure viderunt sidera noctes,  
Ardentemque polum flammis, coeloquevolantes  
Obliquas per inane faces—  
Fulgura fallaci micuerunt crebra sereno,  
Et varias ignis dense dedit aere ferrous.*”

*Before Caesar's death not only drops of blood fell from heaven, but also pits and pools flowed with blood. Puteique cruore mutati* (Claudian. lib. 1 in Eutropius). In the year of grace 874, at Brixia, in the entrance of Italy, it rained blood for three days and three nights together. In the year 1505 there appeared in Germany upon people's garments and women's rocks as they were spinning, diverse prints and token of the nails, of the sponge, of the spear, of the Lord's coat, and of bloody crosses, &c. Maximilian the emperor had and showed the same to Francis Mirandula; who wrote thereupon his book called *Staurostichon*, wherein are these verses,

“ *Non ignota cano, Caesar monstravit: et ipsi*

*Vidimus: innumeros prompsit Germania testes.*”

*It is not many years since a shower of blood fell about Gloucester, if our intelligence deceived us not. Such prodigies are usually sad presages, nec inania terriculamenta haec esse, res ipsa testatur; saith Gaulther here: and event proveth that these are no vain spectres. By fire here, understand those terrible flaming apparitions*

in the air, lightning, comets, &c., portending lamentable calamities. Such there were to be seen (as I have heard from eyewitnesses) on that very night wherein the gunpowder plot was detected and defeated, in a very terrible manner. And such were those meteors in the likeness of fiery serpents that fell here, A.D. 788, before the invasion of the Danes: whereunto we may add the new star that appeared in Cassiopeia in November, 1572, and continued sixteen months: soon after which Charles IX of France (author of the Parisian Massacre) died of exceeding bleeding at several parts of his body, *inter horribilium blasphemiarum diras*, saith the historian, cursing and swearing. And lastly that prodigious comet, A.D. 1618, forerunner of the German wars and our late troubles; whatever is yet behind to be suffered by us. Certainly if the sorcerers of Egypt were among us, they would wonder at men's stupendous stupidity, and tell them that these extraordinary occurrents in heaven and earth were the very finger of God, for their warning.

**And pillars of smoke]** Heb. palms of smoke, {so #So 3:6} by similitude, because tall and straight as palm trees; which also lift up themselves under their burden, and will not be held down. Smokey vapours mounting upright are fitly compared thereunto, *Elationes fumi*, so Tremellius.

Ver. 31. **The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood]** By strange and stupendous eclipses: such as was that of the moon for 12 nights together, a little before the last destruction of Jerusalem; and that of the sun this present 29th day of March, 1652, wherein I write these things, but could scarce see to write, or forbear to behold: for though busy enough to bring this work to an end, if God please, yet I cannot say, as the Duke of Alva did to the King of France, who asked him whether he had observed the late great eclipse? "No," said he, "I have so much to do upon earth, that I have no leisure to look toward heaven." Of this day's eclipse I may well say, as Lucan doth of another,

*“ Ipse caput medio Titan cum ferret Olympo,  
Condidit ardentis atra caligine currus;  
Involvitque orbem tenebris, gentesque coegit  
Desperate diem.”*

*I heartily pray it do not presage a dreadful eclipse of the sun of Christ's glorious Gospel among us; that this bright sun should go down at noon over our heads, and our earth be darkened in the clear day, #Am 8:9. And let every good soul pray that that dismal day may never arise unto us, wherein it shall be said that this glory is departed from our English Israel.*

*'- nobiscum, Christe, maneto;  
Extingui lucem nec patiare tuam.'*

***And the moon into blood]*** *That is, into redness, as it was likewise on the 15th day of this instant March, in the morning. Two such eclipses so near together having seldom been seen, I fear we may have cause, ere the year come about, to sing sadly with the poet (Ovid. Metam. lib. 15)*

*" Signa dabant luctus superi haud incerta futuri*

*Saepe faces visae, solis quoque tristis imago;  
Caerulus et vulture ferrugine Lucifer atra*

*Sparsus erat, sparsi lunares sanguine currus."*

***Before the great and terrible day of the Lord come]*** *i.e.* The great day of general judgment, called here the great day, because the great God will on that day do great things and determine great matters; and the terrible day, because it is a day of anger and of wrath, #Re 6:17; yea, the day of the declaration of the just judgment of God, according to the gospel, #Ro 2:5,16. It is elsewhere called "that day" by an appellative proper, #Mr 13:32 Lu 21:34 Mt 7:22. That day of note, wherein God will break silence, "execute judgment upon all, and convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," #Jude 15. Enoch foretold this great day before Noah did the Deluge. This day is longer before it comes, but shall be more terrible when it is come. Whether it shall come in the year of our Lord, 1657, as some have gathered out of the numeral letters of these two words, *Mundi Conflagratio*, and because the year of the world 1657 was the year of the flood, let time determine: I have nothing to say to it.

Ver. 32. **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever, &c.**] Lest any good soul, hearing the former heavy menaces, should say with the disciples, **#Mr 10:26**, "Who then can be saved?" or, with those despondents in **#Jer 2:25**, "There is no hope," the prophet concludeth with this comfortable corollary,

**Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord]** Yea, that but "nameth the name of Christ" in faithful prayer, desiring and endeavouring to "depart from iniquity," **#2Ti 2:19**; the same

**shall be delivered]** He shall have safety here and salvation hereafter, **#Ro 10:13**. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always," saith our Saviour, "that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man," **#Lu 21:36,25**. Something God will yield to the prayers of his people when he seemeth most bitterly bent and unchangeably resolved against them, **#Mt 24:20**, and when the tribulation is so great that it is not likely that any flesh shall be saved, **#Joe 2:21,22**. Prayer, saith one, is the best lever at a dead lift, provided that it be the prayer of faith; for mercy is the mother, faith the midwife of deliverances. Hence it followeth,

**For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem]** Where the pure word of God was preached, **#Isa 2:3**, and men's hearts purified by faith, **#Ac 15:9**,

**shall be deliverance]** From all evils and enemies. **#Ps 76:3**, "There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah." There? where? In Salem, in Zion, **#Joe 2:2**, where God's people were praying. This Moab knew, and therefore more feared a praying people than a numerous army, **#Nu 22:3**. This the queen mother of Scotland knew, and therefore said, that she feared more the fasting and prayers of John Knox and his disciples than an army of twenty thousand men. Let God's suppliants but call upon him in the day of their trouble, and he will deliver them, that they may glorify him, **#Ps 50:15**. He will deliver them; yea, and honour them. With long life will he satisfy them, and show them his salvation, **#Ps 91:16**. Holy Merlin, chaplain to the Admiral of France, at the Parisian massacre, had the performance of this

promise, among many others. For understanding the danger they were all in, he prayed in the Admiral's chamber, and, by his command, a little before the murderers brake in, and by a singular providence, escaped into a hay mow, where he lay hidden for a fortnight, and was miraculously fed by a hen that that came daily and laid an egg near by him.

**As the Lord hath said]** And God's suppliants have steadfastly believed, and do therefore put his promises in suit. In the want of other rhetoric, let Christians in their prayers burden God with what he hath said, sue him upon his own bond, urge this with repetition, Lord, thou hast promised, thou hast promised, and they shall find that he cannot deny himself; and he can as soon deny himself as his promises. "His covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips," #Ps 89:34.

**And in the remnant whom God shall call]** Those holy brethren that shall partake of the heavenly calling, #Heb 3:1, to glory and virtue, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. "Faithful is he that calleth them, who also will do it?" #1Th 5:24. And although they are but a remnant, which is but a small to the whole piece, a handful to a houseful, a fold to a field, a little, little flock, μικρον ποιμνιον, #Lu 12:32, yet being the called of Jesus Christ, #Ro 1:6, and such as call upon him in truth, they are not only his called, but chosen and faithful, #Re 17:14. They are also heirs of that promise, #Mic 5:7, which shall be fully made good to them, that, as for their propagation, "this remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from Jehovah." The dew is engendered and distilled from the Lord immediately, so, for their growth and increase, "they shall be as the flowers upon the grass, as the sprouting up of grass and herbs in the wilderness, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men," to come with watering pots to nourish them, as herbs in gardens do, but these have showers from heaven that give the increase.

### **Chapter 3**

Ver. 1. **For behold, in those days, and in that time]** In his *diebus illis ipsis, et in hoc tempore ipso*, in those very selfsame days and in that selfsame time, *sc.* in the time of the Messiah, in the days of the

gospel, when God shall deliver Jerusalem and call the remnant of the Gentiles, and so bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, of the whole Israel of God, preaching liberty to the captives, **#Isa 61:1**, and proclaiming the everlasting jubilee, **#Job 8:3-6**. In those happy days, I say, **#Jer 23:5,6**, woe to the wicked enemies of the Church, it shall go ill with them. They are sure to be broken with a rod of iron, to be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel, **#Ps 2:9**, dashed against Christ the King, who, as he is *piorum rupes*, a rock of refuge to his people, such as was that to Moses, **#Ex 33:22**, so he is *reorum scopulus*, a rock of revenge to persecutors, to split them to pieces, such a rock as that out of which fire arose, **#Jud 6:21**, the fire of God's jealousy, **#Zec 1:14**, which burneth unto the lowest hell, **#De 32:22**. Let them, therefore, have grace (as the apostle from this ground adviseth, **#Heb 12:28,29**). Let them, at least, have so much wit for themselves as Pilate's wife had in a dream, to take heed of having anything to do with just men. Let them do as Tertullian counselled Scapula, If thou wilt not spare us, yet spare thyself; if not thyself, yet spare Carthage thy country, which will certainly suffer for thy cruelty to Christians: *si non nobis, tibi; si non tibi, Carthagini parcas*. God will reduce the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, which shall be as a cup of poison to all the people round about, as a burdensome stone, as a hearth of fire, **#Zec 12:2,3,6**; {See Trapp on "Zec 12:2"} {See Trapp on "Zec 12:3"} {See Trapp on "Zec 12:6"} Their destruction must needs go along with the saints' salvation, **#Php 1:28,29 Isa 8:9 Pr 11:8**. The Jewish doctors collect from this and other like places in the prophets, that when the Messiah cometh, he shall recollect the Jews into the land of Canaan, where they shall get the better of their enemies, and have a most flourishing commonwealth and glorious Church. For this they daily expect the visible appearance of the Messiah, often throwing open their windows to behold, and crying all together to God, Let thy kingdom come, let it come quickly, even in our days, quickly, quickly, quickly (Buxtorf). That he stays so long is for our sins, say they, which are many. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:2"} {see Trapp on "Zec 14:3"}

Ver. 2. **I will also gather all nations]** That are adverse to my Church, that I may have my pennyworths of them, and do execution upon them with ease (troubling those troublers of his Israel, **#2Th 1:6**, *licet videantur plures et potiores*), as he dealt by Jehoshaphat's enemies, **#2Ch 20:25**, and leaving them no more place to escape



than those have who are surrounded in a valley by a potent enemy, who hath gotten them into a pound, as the proverb is. And this God will do in the valley of Jehoshaphat (a valley, saith Lyra, Adrichomius, and Montanus, between Jerusalem and Mount Olivet), in the very view of the Church, that the righteous may rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, and wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the righteous, see **#Joe 3:4**; verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth, as in the valley of divine judgment (so some render Jehoshaphat here, as if it were an appellative, Chaldeus R. Salmon, Mercer), called, **#Joe 3:14**, the valley of decision, and the words that next follow seem to favour, "and I will plead with them" ( *iudicio* I judge again), judicially plead with them there, for my people; which word also God useth when he foretellethe the destruction of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel. So that the valley of Jehoshaphat, saith Mercer, is the place wheresoever God shall please to punish the enemies of his people. As for that conceit of Lyra and others, who gather out of this text that this valley near Jerusalem shall be the very place where Christ shall sit to judge the world at the last day, and for confirmation allege **#Ac 1:11**. Mercer judgeth it to be a childish conceit, and Luther asketh where all mankind shall have room to stand in so small a valley? Though others judge it not unlikely that it shall be thereabouts, because Jerusalem is in the middle and about the centre of the earth, and besides, it will be the more for the glory of Christ, to sit there as judge where he himself was judged; but it is probable he will sit in the air, near the earth, whither the elect shall be raptured up to meet the Lord. **#1Th 4:17**, that the devils may be subdued and sentenced in the air, where they have ruled and played *Rex*, king, **#Eph 2:2**, and that the wicked may be doomed on the earth, where they have offended.

**For my people and for my heritage Israel]** All was his, and the wrongs done to them were done to God's self, as the injury done to the subject is said to be done to the sovereign, his crown and dignity. See **#Ac 9:4 Mt 25:45**. So that ye cannot tread upon the least toe in Christ's mystical body, but the head cries out from heaven, Why hurtest thou me? The saints' sufferings are his, **#Col 1:24**, their reproach his, **#Heb 13:13**. *Manet compassio, etiam cum impassibilitate* (Bern.). Christ retaineth still compassion, though free

from personal passion; and though without feeling, yet not without fellow feeling. He doth *condolere proportionate ad miseriam*, as Pareus rendereth the apostle, #**Heb 5:2**, condole, and that proportionably to his people's misery, μετριπαθειν.

**And for my heritage Israel]** Israel, εμφατικως, saith Mercer, the people of God's purchase, that comprehend all his gettings, and are much more dear to him than Naboth's inheritance was to him. He sets them before his face for ever, #**Ps 41:12**, as loving to look upon them; yea, upon the very "walls of the houses where they dwell," #**Isa 49:16**. They are his portion, #**De 32:9**; his inheritance, #**Isa 19:25**; the dearly beloved of his soul, #**Jer 12:7**; his glory, #**Isa 46:13**; dear to God, though despised and dispersed in the world. He may suffer them to be *Anathema secundum dici*, as Bucholcer said, but not *secundum esse*.

**Whom they have scattered among the nations]** The Jewish doctors refer this to Titus and Adrian, the Roman emperors. The first carried 97,000 of them captives, saith Josephus; the second drove them utterly out of Jewry, and by proclamation, commanded them not so much as look toward that land from any tower or high mountain. But all this was for their sedition and other wickednesses. And ever since they have continued a dejected and despised people, exiled out of the world, as it were, by a common consent of nations, specially for their inexpressible guilt in murdering Christ, and persecuting his people, concerning whom, therefore, this text is to be understood, #**De 28:64**. See how Christians were soon scattered abroad throughout the regions, #**Ac 8:1 Jas 1:1 1Pe 1:1**, where they are called strangers of the dispersion. Afterwards the heathen persecutors relegated and confined them to isles and mines, and scattered them into corners. So did the pope and his agents: forcing them to flee for their lives.

**And parted my land]** As Shalmaneser did to his new colonies; as Sennacherib also designed to do, had not God prevented him; as the pope taketh upon him to do, those countries whom he counteth heretical. He gave this land, in Henry VIII's time, *primo occupaturo*, to him that could first seize it. He declared John, King of Navarre, schismatic, a heretic, an enemy to the see apostolic, and

gave his kingdom to the Spaniard, because he took part with the French, and would not allow the Spaniard to march through his kingdom against the French; and what work he hath lately made in the palatinate and other parts of Germany, who knows not?

Ver. 3. **And they have cast lots for my people]** Impiously and imperiously domineering over them as those rude soldiers that cast the dice upon our Saviour's coat, at his passion. It was ordinary to divide by lots the enemies they had taken in the fight, **#Na 3:10 Ob 11 La 3:53 Jud 5:30**; but at base rates thus to sell God's people ignominiously, and that to satisfy their lewd lusts—this was unsufferable.

**And have given a boy for an harlot]** Heb. that boy, as afterwards that girl, with an emphasis; a son and daughter of Israel, those earthly angels *Angli quasi Angeli*, the English boys just as angels, as Gregory the Great once said of the English boys presented to him. "Thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire," said God not without very great indignation, to their idolatrous parents, **#Eze 16:21**. His they were more than theirs, by virtue of the covenant he had made with that people; hence **#De 14:1**, "Ye are the children of the Lord your God," and can he bear with your misusages? "Should he deal with our sister as a harlot?" said they with courage (as the great Zaijn, in Zonah, importeth) **#Ge 34:31**. So here, should they give a boy such a boy, for a harlot? that is, for the hire of a harlot, and to gratify such abhorred filths? In the reign of Henry II of France, A.D. 1554 many precious sons of Zion were burned there for religion, not without the indignation of honest men, who knew that the diligence used against those poor people was not for any piety or religion, but to satiate the covetousness of Diana Valentina, the king's mistress, to whom he had given all the confiscations of goods made in the kingdom for cause of heresy.

**And sold a girl for wine, that they might drink]** "The wine of violence," **#Pr 4:17**; "drink and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more," **#Jer 25:27**; worthy, therefore, to be served as that drunken Turk was by that severe bashaw who caused a ladleful of boiling lead to be poured down his throat. God will turn a worse cup down their wide gullets one day, **#Ps 11:6** *Quorum vivere est*

*bibere*, and whose profane proverb it is, *Bibere et sudare, est vita Cardiaci* To drink and to sweat is the life of the heart. But what a heathenish baseness is that of the Papists, besides a horrible abuse of God's holy ordinance, that at Rome a Jewish maid may not be admitted into the stews of whoredom unless she will first be baptized. Espensaeus, a modest Papist, writeth it, not without detestation.

Ver. 4. **Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, &c.]** Or, what are ye to me? I value you not, but look upon you as vile persons, how great soever in the world. See #Da 11:21. Or, what have I to do with you? What wrong have I done you that ye invade my land and molest my subjects? It is an idle misprision to sever the sense of an injury done to any of his members, from the head, and it was a malapert demand of the devil, "What have I to do with thee, O Jesus, the Son of the living God?" while he vexed a servant of his. But there is an old enmity between them and their seed, #Ge 3:15, and it will never be extinct while the world stands. Israel had given Tyre and Zidon as little cause to quarrel them, as once they had done Moab, whom they had assured that they would not meddle nor molest them. Howbeit, "Moab was distressed," or irked, fretted, vexed at them, #Nu 22:3, carried with satanical malice against God's people, because of a different religion, and sought their ruin. Lo, this was the case of Tyre, Zidon, and Palestine, near neighbours, but bitter enemies to the Church. Bats fly against the light. Malice breaks all bonds, and vents itself by utmost inhumanity. Mercer understandeth by those nations, #Joe 3:2,3, the open and professed enemies of the Church, and by these neighbouring peoples here mentioned, those more subtle adversaries, that pretend love, and can draw a fair glove upon a foul hand, but will take the first opportunity to do the saints a mischief, and to spit their poison at them. This is an old stratagem of the devil, still practised by the renegade Jesuits among us.

**Will ye render me a recompence? and if ye recompense me, &c.]** *Num meritum mihi refertis, an etiam infertis?* so some render it. While ye afflict my people, is it to be avenged on me, for an old injury I have done you? or is it rather to pick a quarrel with me, who have done you no wrong? Surely, whether it be this or the other, I shall handle you according to your deserts.

**Swiftly and speedily will I return your recompence]** *Repente e vestigio*, while you will say, what is this? I will execute my fierce wrath upon you, and you shall soon feel what it is despitefully to spit in the face of Heaven, and to wrestle a fall with the Almighty: see **#Ob 15**. God cannot bear long with sins of this high nature: he resisteth the proud persecutors.

Ver. 5. **Because ye have taken my silver, &c.]** Sacrilege is a second sin they here stand charged with. Ye have taken, that is, taken away (by which observation, ye shall easily reconcile the Psalmist, **#Ps 68:19**, with the apostle, **#Eph 4:8**, saith Tarnovius here), my silver and my gold; vessels consecrated to my use and service; or mine, that is, my people's, whom ye have robbed; but it shall not thrive with you; it shall prove as the gold of Toulouse (Aurum Tholosanum), fatal to them that had any part of it, or as Achan's wedge, that cleft his body and soul asunder.

**These ye have carried into your temples Or palaces, even my goodly pleasant things]** My desirable goods, either to adorn your houses or your idols, to your own bane, as Belshazzar. It is surely a snare to a man who devoureth dedicated things, **#Pr 20:25**, that bowseth in the bowls of the sanctuary. And it was a sad complaint of Luther, that even in the reformed Churches, parishes and schools were robbed of their due maintenance; as if they meant to starve us all. The like saith Gualther in his homily upon this text: *Non desunt pseudo-evangelici*, saith he, There want not such false gospellers among us, who restore not the Church her wealth, pulled out of the Papists' fingers; but make good that saying of one, *Possidebant Papistae, possident Rapistae*, Papists had Church livings, and now Rapists have gotten them; like as a good author observeth upon the battle of Montlecherye, that some lost their livings by running away, and they were given to those that ran ten miles farther.

Ver. 6. **The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem]** "The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold," **#La 4:2**, with whom you were anciently confederate in the days of Solomon, **#1Ki 4:25**, and seemed to be then their prosperity proselytes.

**Have ye sold unto the Grecians]** That is, to the Gentiles in general, for so St Paul often useth the word Grecians, as contradistinct to Jews; who were barbarously sold, as if they had been brute beasts, and that into the farthest countries, that they might never ransom themselves, nor return to their native soil again. This was singular, yea, savage cruelty, which the merciful God cannot abide, but will severely punish, **#Jas 2:13,14 Isa 47:6**, "Thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke." See the Babylonian cruelty graphically described, and accordingly recompensed, **#Jer 51:34,35**, &c. The Spanish cruelty to the poor Indians is unspeakable. They have made away 50,000,000 of them in 42 years, as Acosta the Jesuit testieth, and that under pretence of converting them to the faith. They suppose they show the wretches great favour when they do not (for their pleasure) whip them with cords, and day by day drop their naked bodies with burning bacon: such a devil is one man to another, when set to work by the devil, and spurred on by him. But "shall they thus escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God," **#Ps 56:7**. He will do it: for those words are not more a prayer than a prophecy.

Ver. 7. **Behold, I will raise them out of the place, &c.]** Seem it never so improbable or impossible, I will do it, saith God, and you shall see it. Behold, I will fetch home my banished, though they may seem to be as water spilt on the ground. I will make those dead bones live; and raise myself a name, and a praise, by outbidding their hopes, and marring your design of utter extermination. Ribera understands the words concerning the resurrection of the dead at the last day, because the Hebrew word properly signifieth, to raise one out of sleep. Some think it is meant of the apostles and martyrs, fetched out of banishment; as was John out of Patmos, Athanasius, Chrysostom, who yet in his last banishment, by reason of the barbarous usage of the soldiers that led him along, hired for that purpose, sweetly and blessedly breathed out his last, (Erasm. in Vita Chrysost.), the English exiles in Queen Mary's time, whereof many returned and did excellent service here. But I doubt not, saith judicious Calvin (in loc.), but God intends here a spiritual gathering together of his people into one body, by the bond of faith; and this was principally fulfilled after the death of Christ, who died for that nation, "And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together into one the children of God that were scattered abroad,"

**#Joh 11:52**; so that those whom God hath gathered together and caused to return ( *non pedibus vel navigio*, for that needs not, to Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all), from the lands of the east, of the west, of the north, and of the south, shall praise the Lord together, as the psalmist hath it, **#Ps 107:2,3**.

**And will return your recompence upon your own head]** God delights to retaliate, to bloody and deceitful men especially; as were easy to instance in the Egyptians, Adonibezek, Agag, Attilius Regulus, the Roman general, who dealt most cruelly with the Carthaginians, and was shortly after as cruelly dealt with by them, when fallen into their hands (Polybius). Here at home, in King Edward VI's time, the remembrance of Somerset much moved the people to fall from Northumberland (who had wrought his death) in his greatest attempts, and to leave him to his fatal fall; whereas also they openly rejoiced, and presented to him handkerchiefs dipped in the blood of Somerset, for whom they thought he suffered rather late than undeserved punishment. So certain it is (saith the historian), that the debts both of cruelty and mercy go never unpaid.

Ver. 8. **And I will sell your sons and your daughters]** And so the scene shall be soon altered, and a strange vicissitude easily observed. But when was this done? or was it ever done? *Ego putarim factum, etsi scriptura non dicat quando*, saith Tarnovius: I suppose it was done, though the Scripture say not when. Others fly to allegories, and understand the text of the conversion of the Gentiles. I like their way best, that say, That which God did for the Church's sake, the Church itself is said to do it. For their cruelties to the Jews, God delivered these nations up into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar first (who had a hard tug of it, and had therefore Egypt given him for his wages), and afterwards by Alexander the Great, who took Tyre, and razed it. And this was that great service spoken of **#Eze 29:18**, wherein every head was made bald, and every shoulder bare, in filling up that strait of the sea, which separated it from the continent, before it could be taken. But taken it was, together with Sidon and Philistia; and their children sold as far as Sabaea, which was then counted the utmost part of the known earth, **#Mt 12:42 Lu 11:31**, being part of Arabia the Happy, or (as some will) the Desert. All this was done for the Jews' sake, though the world little considereth it. It was enough for them that they knew

it to be so, according to this prophecy; and that God did hereby show his high esteem of them, by avenging them of their enemies, and by thus giving men for them, and people for their life, **#Isa 43:4**.

**For the Lord hath spoken it]** And will therefore surely do it; neither could their Apollo deliver them out of God's hands; though, to prevent his forsaking of them, when besieged by Alexander, the Tyrians chained and nailed that idol of theirs to a post, that they might be sure of it. But all would not do.

Ver. 9. **Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles]** *Oratio tota est figurata*, saith Pareus: All this following discourse is figurative; *Hortatio sarcasmon habens*, saith Mercer. It is an ironic challenge to all God's enemies, to do their worst to Christ and his Church; somewhat like that **#Jud 9:29**, "Increase thine army, and come out" (which seems to be the challenge that Gaal sent to Abimelech, by some messenger), or that of Rabshakeh, **#Isa 36:8**, "I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders on them," or that, **#Isa 8:9,10**.

**Prepare war]** Heb. sanctify war; that is, laying aside all other business, give yourselves wholly to it (like as at holy services they were called upon, *Hoc agere*, This to manage, to mind the business in hand, and nothing else), as Scanderbeg did; out of whose lips, while he was fighting, the very blood would start; so earnest he was at it.

**Wake up the mighty men]** The giants, the champions, such as were Goliath the Gittite, David's band of worthies, Achilles, Albertus, Marquess of Brandenburg, who for his valour was called Achilles Teutonicus. Put what mettle you can into these your mighties, that they may do their utmost. But also know that they shall soon meet with their matches, viz. God's "mighty ones" mentioned **#Joe 3:11**.

**Let all the men of war draw near]** That they may join battle, and not stand daring and facing one another; as the two armies of Christians and Turks did in the days of Baldwin II, King of Jerusalem, for three months together, and then rose and returned without any notable thing done. It is the ancient and manful fashion



(saith our chronicler) of the English (who are naturally most impatient of lingering mischiefs) to put their public quarrels quickly to the trial of the sword. *Praestat semel quam semper* was Caesar's motto; and his property was

“ *Credere nil actum, dum quid superesset agendum*” (Lucan).

Ver. 10. **Beat your ploughshares into swords]** Come with the best preparation you can make, that ye may seem (as they say of a travelling Turk) to be so many walking armouries.

**Let the weak say, I am strong]** Come forth full and whole, young and old, weak and strong, all that are able to bear arms, without excuse. It is an ancient custom in Scotland, in cases of importance, to command the fire cross to be carried, that is, two firebrands set in fashion of a cross, and pitched upon the point of a spear, and proclamation is thereupon made that all men over sixteen years of age and under sixty, shall come into the field to oppose the enemy. Those were desperate boys in Ket's conspiracy, that at the battle near Norwich pulled the arrows out of their own flesh, and delivered them to be shot again by the archers on their side: and those other wounded and weakened, no less desperately resolved, who being disabled almost to hold up their weapons, would strive what they could to strike their enemies; others being thrust through the body with a spear, would run themselves further on, to reach those that wounded them deadly. The enemies of the truth will make hard shift, but they will bear arms against Christ; and though feeble, yet will say, "I am strong," *a Satana impulsus et armatus*, saith Mercer here, as being pricked on, armed and agitated by the devil, that old manslayer; according to that of Bernard, Seest thou thy persecutor outrageous, marvel not; but know that the devil rides him, makes him run, *Scito quia ab ascensore suo daemone perurgetur*.

Ver. 11. **Assemble yourselves, and come all ye heathen]** Come and fetch your bane, whereof by your forwardness to come uncalled ye may seem to be ambitious; judgments need not go to find you out; for you associate yourselves, that ye may be broken in pieces, **#Isa 8:9**, as at Armageddon, **#Re 16:16**. Come on, therefore, since you will needs be so mad, and take what befalls you. "Who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together," **#Isa 27:4**; see **#Zec 14:2,3 Eze 38:4,16-**

**23 Re 19:17,18.** {See Trapp on "Zec 14:2"} {See Trapp on "Zec 14:3"} The word here Englished assemble is by Jarchi rendered *festinate*, hasten; by others *conglobamini*, cluster together, that ye may be the sooner cut off, that the mouth of God's sword may have its full bit, that he may make an utter end, and your affliction may not rise up the second time, #Na 1:9.

**Thither cause thy mighty ones to come down]** *Vel angeles vel alios*, saith Mercer, either thine angels (called God's mighties, #Ps 103:20 Isa 10:34 Ps 18:17, where these "mighty ones" are said to make Sion as dreadful to all her enemies as these angels made Sinai at the delivery of the law) or other thine officers and executioners, that by thy command they may fall on, and destroy these heathen armies, see #Joe 3:13; the answer to this prayer of the prophet, and the power of prayer which Luther fitly calleth *bombardas et instrumenta bellica Christianorum*, the great ordnance and warlike weapons of Christians.

Ver. 12. **Let the heathen be awakened]** Here begins God's answer to the prophet's prayer. The heathen, though at ease, #Zec 1:11, and fast asleep, must be aroused and assembled to the valley of Jehoshaphat, where God the righteous Judge (at the prophet's request reminding him of his promise, "I am come for thy words," saith he to Daniel, #Da 10:12) gets up to the tribunal, and there sits to judge all the heathen round about. Let not us doubt of the like success of our suits; but, when wronged, run to the Judge of heaven and earth, who will do us right. So we pray over the promises, as here, and not faint, though he bear long with us. This our Saviour has taught us, by that famous parable of the unrighteous judge and the importunate widow, #Lu 18:2,3, wherein we may take notice of many excellent encouragements to pray down our enemies. 1. He was a judge only; but God is our Father also. 2. He was an unrighteous judge; but is there unrighteousness with God? #Ro 9:14. 3. He, as he feared not God, so he cared not for man; but God is *φιλανθρωπος*, properly and peculiarly loving to man above other creatures, #Tit 3:4. 4. He avenged the widow, as wearied out with her, and merely to be rid of her; and shall not God do as much for us, out of his love to righteousness and hatred of wickedness? #Ps 45:7. 5. It was troublesome to him to be sued unto; but God is displeased with us for nothing more than for our backwardness and

bashfulness, #**Joh 16:24**. *Quid est cur nihil petis?* What meanest thou to ask me nothing? said Severus to his favourite. 6. The unjust judge had no care of his credit; but God is most tender of his glory; and delights much in that title of his, "O thou that hearest prayers."

Ver. 13. **Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.**] It even hangs for mowing, as we say: the enemies are ready ripe for ruin; down with them, therefore, that they may not shed in the field and seed again; let this valley of decision be unto them a valley of excision; let it be as a winepress to those bunches and branches of the grapes lopped off the vine. *Lacus iste locus caedis*, see #**Re 14:18,19 Mt 13:39**. There is a stint set to men's sins, #**Ge 15:16 Zec 5:8,11 Mt 23:32**. {See Trapp on "Mt 23:22"} What more beautiful to behold than a field for harvest, than a vineyard before the vintage? and yet how sudden an alteration, when workmen once take in hand!

**For the wickedness is great**] Here is that plainly that before was expressed parabolically. The Scripture often expounds itself in the same text; and is everywhere its own best interpreter.

Ver. 14. **Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision**] Or concision, as Jerome and Tremellius, or of threshing, as Piscator, in reference to Jehoshaphat, who once threshed the Moabites and Ammonites there. These multitudes are thither summoned (*Turbae, Turbae adeste*), or are there laid dead, even heaps upon heaps, with those Philistines, #**Jud 15:16**. So Aben Ezra senseth it, and thence the name of the valley of concision, or decision: to show that their having passed a definitive sentence upon the Church's enemies, and a very severe one too, such as was that kind of punishment, to put men under harrows of iron, &c., #**2Sa 12:31 Am 1:3**, would now finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, #**Ro 9:28**, *idque cito et certo*, as sure and as soon as if that day of slaughter were at next door by.

**For the day of the Lord is near**] Lyra understands it of the last day, which cannot be far off; and Diodati was of the same mind; for upon the next words,

Ver. 15. **The sun and the moon shall be darkened**] he sets this note, "Signs which shall go before the last judgment," #**Mt 24:29 Lu 21:25**. {See Trapp on "Joe 2:13"} The prophets, by such forms of speech, use to decipher greatest calamities when all things look dark; as it

fareth also with them that are under spiritual desertion, #Isa 50:10, who yet are exhorted there to "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God"; to cast the anchor of hope, as Paul and his company did in the shipwreck, #Ac 27:20, when they saw neither sun nor moon for many days together, and no small tempest lay upon them; all hope that they should be saved being taken away.

Ver. 16. **The Lord also shall roar out of Zion]** Out of his Church he shall terrify his enemies, as the lion doth the rest of the creatures by his dreadful roar; so that they are amazed thereat, and have no power to stir from the place. Lyra interpreteth it of that terrible *Discedite*, Go, ye cursed, that shall be uttered by Christ at the last day; a sentence that breatheth out nothing better than fire and brimstone, stings and sorrows, woe, and, alas! torments without end and past imagination.

**And the heavens and the earth shall shake]** The heavens with thunder, the earth with earthquake, to the terror of the wicked, but comfort of the godly, #Hag 2:6.

**For the Lord will be the hope (or, harbour) of his people]** They shall have a good bush on their backs in the greatest tempest; they shall not be afraid, "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea," #Ps 46:2.

*“ Si fractus illabatur orbis,  
Impavidos ferient ruinae” (Horat.).*

*O the force of a lively faith, and the privy armour of proof that believers have about their hearts! O the dignity and safety of God's people in the worst of times! #Hab 3:18,19. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, the sword of thine excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shall tread upon their high places," #De 33:29.*

Ver. 17. **So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God]** You shall experiment that which, during your deep afflictions, ye made some doubt of, and were ready to say, as Gideon did to the angel "If the Lord be for us, why is it thus with us?" or, as your unbelieving

forefathers in the wilderness, "Is God among us?" as if that could not be, and they athirst.

**Dwelling in Zion]** Defending my people and dispensing my best blessings to them. "The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion," #Ps 134:3. The blessings that come out of Zion are far beyond those that otherwise come out of heaven and earth.

**Then shall Jerusalem be holy]** With a double holiness, imputed and imparted; the profane being purged out here in part, but hereafter in all perfection. This our Saviour sweetly sets forth in those two parables of the tares and of the dragnet, #Mt 13:24-30,36-42,47-50. Or, "It shall be holy," that is, dear to God, and under his care, favour, and protection from the dominion, direption, and possession of profane heathens.

**And there shall no strangers pass through her any more]** Either to subdue her and prejudice her (as the proverb runs of the Great Turk, that wherever he sets his foot no grass grows any more, such havoc he makes), or to fasten any filth or contagion upon her. See #Re 21:27, where St John alludeth to this text, as all along that book he borroweth the elegancies and flowers of the Old Testament to set out the state of the New in succeeding ages. If this promise be not so fully performed to us as we could wish, we must lay the blame upon our sins, whereby the reformation is ensnared and our prosperity hindered. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear," #Isa 59:1,2. Nothing intricates our actions more than sin; this is that devil in the air that hinders our happiness; this is that mischief-making hell-hag, Trouble-town. Charm this devil and make him fall from his heaven (which is to do hurt), and we shall inherit the promises. The godly man only prospers, #Ps 1:3.

Ver. 18. **The mountains shall drop down new wine]** By these hyperbolic expressions is promised plenty of all things pertaining to life and godliness, such a golden age as the poet describeth (Ovid. Metam.),

“ *Flumina iam lactis, iam flumina nectaris ibant,  
Flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella.* ”

Where it must be observed that spiritually good things are promised under the notion of temporal, as of must, milk, &c., *ob populi infantiam*, by reason of the infancy of that people, of that time. The mountains, *i.e.* the most barren places, shall drop down *απονητι*, without our labour shall yield plentifully new wine, strong consolations, and Scripture comforts, for strong Christians; and the hills shall flow with milk, that unadulterated sincere milk of God’s word for his babes, #1Co 2:2 1Pe 2:2.

**And all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters]** Sanctuary waters, wholesome doctrines, such as have a healing, cooling, quenching, quickening property in them, #Isa 44:3.

**And a fountain shall come forth]** viz. Baptism, that laver of regeneration, #Tit 3:5; that fountain opened, #Zec 13:1; that pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, that washeth away sin, #Re 22:1 Ac 22:16.

**And shall water the valley of Shittim]** That dry valley in the borders of Moab, near to Jordan, and not far from the Dead Sea, #Nu 25:1 Jos 2:1. Here it was that the Israelites defiled themselves with the daughters of Moab, as Jarchi noteth, but shall be purified and sanctified with the washing of water by the word, #Eph 5:26. Tarnovius renders the text, *Qui irrigabit vallem cedrorum*, which shall water the valley of cedars, those choicest trees planted in the paradise of God, #Ps 92:13; for, saith he, as the Tabernacle was built and garnished of old with shittim wood for the most part, #Ex 25:5 26:15 27:1 30:1, so is the spiritual temple with these spiritual cedars.

Ver. 19. **Egypt shall be a desolation]** By Egypt and Edom are meant all Christ’s adversaries, whether they be professed open enemies, as were the Egyptians, or false brethren, as the Edomites. Romists have been both, and shall therefore be desolated, #Re 17:16 cf. 11:8.

**For the violence against the children of Judah]** From the very cradle of the Church, #Ex 1:8-14, yea, sooner; for Esau in the very womb jostled his brother Jacob, and offered violence against him, that he might lose no time.

**Because they have shed innocent blood in the land]** The saints' blood is called innocent blood, 1. Because their sins are remitted; 2. Because they are causelessly killed. And this is a landdesolating sin. The innocent blood spilt by Manasseh brought the captivity: the Marian times, our late troubles. The blood of the martyrs, shed by Turk and Pope (whom the Jewish doctors understand by Egypt and Edom here), shall be the ruin of them both.

Ver. 20. **But Judah shall dwell for ever]** *Perpetuitas Ecclesiae declaratur*; saith Mercer, the perpetuity of the Church is declared and assured. The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church. Christ is with his to the end of the world; and those Roman persecutors who sought to root out Christian religion, and erected pillars in memory of what they had done, or rather attempted, that way, what got they thereby but perpetual ignominy, besides the irreparable loss of their souls, bodies, and fortunes?

“ *Tu vero, Herodes sanguinolente, time.*”

The Church, as the palm tree, spreadeth and springeth up the more it is oppressed, as the bottle or bladder that may be dipped, not drowned; as the oak, that taketh heart to grace from the maims and wounds given it, and sprouts out thicker, *Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus* (Horat.); as fenugreek, which the worse it is handled the better it grows, as Pliny. saith. No fowl is more preyed upon than the pigeon; no creature more killed up than sheep; yet are there more pigeons than birds of prey, more sheep than slaughtermen.

Ver. 21. **For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed]** *i.e.* I will clear their consciences from dead works, from the stain and sting of all sin, that they may not question their right to these precious promises, but boldly take the comfort of them. I will say unto them, Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified. Be of good cheer, therefore, since your sins, your bloody sins, are forgiven you. Or thus, "I will cleanse their blood," that is, I will declare that the blood of the

godly, which the world thought to have been justly spilt, was indeed innocent blood, and that they were slain without cause. This I will do, partly by rooting out and damning their enemies, and partly by clearing their innocence, and crowning their constancy. Thus Mercer, Lively, &c.

**For the Lord dwelleth in Zion]** This is the last promise, but not the least. It referreth, saith Danaeus, to Christ taking our flesh, by the which he dwelt among us, being God manifest in the flesh, **#1Ti 3:16 Joh 1:14**, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw the glory thereof," &c. This is reserved to the last place, as the *causa et cumulus felicitatis*, especially since he dwelleth with his Church for ever, as it is in the precedent verse, and maketh her a true Jehovah Shammah, as she is called **#Eze 48:35**.



# Amos

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The words of Amos]** Not of that Amos who was father to Isaiah (as some ancients, for want of Hebrew, mistook it), but a man of meaner rank; "rude in speech, but not in knowledge," #2Co 11:6, *tam sensuum nomine quam simplicitate verborum clarus*, as Jerome saith of Didymus. The Jews surname him *ψελλος*, the stammerer; as if he had been a man, not only of a low, but of a letsome language; one that had an impediment in his speech (*μογιλαλος*), as #Mr 7:32, and this they gather from his name Amos, which signifieth a burden, as if this herdsman had had *bovem in lingua*, a clog upon his tongue; and could not utter himself freely (like Michael Balbus). But let this pass for a Jewish tradition. True it is, that Amos is by interpretation a burden; and no less true, that the words of Amos are *onerosa prophetia*, the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by him, {See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"} who is a vehement prophet, laden with reproofs and threatenings *comminationibus ae reprehensionibus onustus* (as Luther saith of him), such as the land was not able to bear, said that malcontent Amaziah, {#Am 7:10} who had *fel in aure*, his gall in his ears, as they write of some creatures. But truth must be spoken, however it be taken: neither may God's ministers meddle with toothless truths only (as Balak did, Neither curse nor bless at all), but bind heavy burdens, if need be, upon the shoulders of obstinate sinners, that may cripple their iron sinews, and make them buckle under the sense of God's unsupportable displeasure.

**Who was among the herdmen of Tekoah]** He was no prophet, neither was he a prophet's son; but a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, #Am 7:14, and extraordinarily called to this high office by Him "who chooseth the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," #1Co 1:27, who enabled the dumb ass to forbid his master's madness, #2Pe 2:16, and sent this downright neat herd to deal with a brutish people, worse than the ox and ass that have no understanding, #Ps 32:9 Isa 1:8 Job 10:4, and who had changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into a fourfooted calf and creeping things, #Ro 1:28. Tekoah is said to be six miles from Bethlehem, twelve from Jerusalem, situated in the tribe of Judah, #2Ch 11:6.

Quinquius, that learned Hebrew, therefore, is utterly out in saying that Tekoah was a great town in the tribe of Asher.

**Which he saw concerning Israel]** He not only heard these words, but saw them in a vision; he had them by revelation from God. {See *Trapp on "Ho 1:1"*}

**Concerning Israel]** Or, against Israel, that is, the ten revolted tribes, who had many prophets sent them to foretell their captivity. God loves to foresignify.

**In the days of Uzziah, &c.]** At the same time with Hosea and Isaiah and Micah, when Procas Sylvius was king of the Latins, and Sardanapalus of the Assyrians, as Jerome saith.

**And in the days of Jeroboam]** The second; not that *funestum Iudaeis caput*, that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin, **#2Ki 14:23,27 2Ch 26:6-12**. Under the reign of these two kings Judah and Israel were in great prosperity; and, bewitched therewith, applauded themselves in their impiety, as **#Ps 73:5,6**. This prophet, therefore, is sent to rouse them and rub them up, to tell them their own, and what they should trust to.

**Two years before the earthquake]** That notable earthquake, famous and fresh in most men's memories. Whether it fell out just then, when Uzziah attempted to offer incense, and was therefore smitten with leprosy, **#2Ki 15:5**, as some ancients affirm; or whether at that instant when Isaiah in a vision saw the Lord in his glory, and the posts of the door moved, **#Isa 6:4**, as some Rabbis tell us, I have not to say. It seems to be foretold, **#Am 3:5**, and so terrible it was that people fled from it, **#Zec 14:5**. See the note there. Josephus maketh mention of it in the ninth book of his Antiquities, Am. xi., and telleth us, that half a great hill was removed by it out of its place, and carried four furlongs another way; so that the highway was obstructed, and the king's gardens utterly marred. God, by such extraordinary works of his, showeth his justice and displeasure against sin, **#Ps 18:8 Isa 13:13**, as also his special mercy to his praying people, as at Antioch, in the year 529, and at Bern. A.D. 1584; near unto which city a certain hill, carried violently beyond

and over other hills, is reported by Polanus (who lived in those parts) to have covered a whole village that had 90 families in it; one half house only excepted, wherein the master of the family with his wife and children were earnestly calling upon God. Oh the terror of the Lord! and oh the power of prayer!

Ver. 2. **And he said, The Lord will roar]** This is spoken for the terror of the wicked, as the like was, **#Joe 3:16**, for the comfort of the godly. {See Trapp on "Joe 3:16"} The word, as Moses, saves the Israelite, slays the Egyptian; and is as the fragrance of precious ointment, of which Oecumenius tells us that it refresheth the dove but killeth the beetle, *Columbam vegetat, scarabaeum necat*. See **#2Co 2:16**. {See Trapp on "2Co 2:16"} The prophet here tells idolatrous Israel to their teeth that God will no longer deal fairly with them, as a shepherd, but fiercely, as a lion; he will not only roar upon them, but rend the caul of their hearts; as the lion, together with his roar, lays his paws upon the prey; and that ye may know that these are not hobgolbin terms, devised on purpose to frighten silly people, and that I shoot not popguns at you.

**The habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, &c.]** That is, all your bravery shall down; all your wealth and worldly greatness shall wither; the top of your Carmel, the zenith of your prosperity, shall be blasted, and the scene soon altered. All this the prophet, used to shepherdly, expresseth accordingly, *artis sum usus sermonibus* (as it is natural for all artists to do), but with a great deal of life and boldness. *Navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator. Verbis vivis, animatis sententiis, et spiritus fervore flagrantissimus*, as Bucholcer saith of Savonarola's Meditations upon Psal. 51.

Ver. 3. **For three transgressions of Damascus and for four]** For their seven, that is, several sins, not a few; for their many and bony provocations, for their progress in sin, without mean or measure. The Jews here note, that for three faults God will pardon a man, but let him beware of the fourth: God will not always serve man for a sinning stock, but break off his abused patience, and proceed to punishment. Lo, all these things worketh God twice and thrice with man, **#Job 33:29**, but let him not thereupon grow overly bold, lest he pay for his presumption. Sin iterated is greatly aggravated; as ciphers added increase the sum; and though it may sleep a long time, yet it is but a sleeping debt, not called for of many years, required at

length; as Saul's sin in slaying the Gibeonites was not punished till forty years after; as Joab's killing of Abner slept all David's days. Now, lest Israel, looking upon Syria yet flourishing, should promise themselves like impunity, they are here thus threatened.

**I will not turn away the punishment thereof]** But pay them home for the new and the old; yea, for the old by occasion of the new; for their obstinate and incurable wickedness, I will punish them seven times more, and seven times more, and seven to that, **#Le 26:24**, and so hang them up, as it were, in gibbets, for a warning to Israel, that they may wash their feet in the blood of these heathens, and redeem their own sorrows.

**Because they have threshed Gilead]** *i.e.* the Gileadites whom they had taken captive, and thus cruelly intreated; see **#2Ki 13:7 10:32**, where it appeareth, that all this was done not without the Lord; which yet is no excuse to Hazael's cruelty. That conquerors were wont to use this kind of torment and punishment, see **#2Sa 12:31**. But that David should do so, is some wonder: he was hardly recovered of his late foul fall; and thence, haply, so much harshness. Certain it is, that the merciful God abhorreth cruelty toward his creature, and severely punisheth it; such as was this of Hazael toward Israel, foretold by Elisha, **#2Ki 8:12**, and afterwards of Ptolemy Lathurus, king of Egypt, who slew 30,000 Jews at once; and forced the rest to eat up their dead carcasses. (Joseph.) So that barbarous Duke of Alva roasted some of his prisoners to death, starved others, and that even after quarter, saying, though he promised to give them their lives, he did not promise to find them food. Dio telleth us of the Jews that dwelt about Cyrene in the days of Trajan; that they slaughtered a great sort of Romans and Greeks after a miserable manner; sawing them down the middle from the crown of the head, tearing their flesh with their teeth, smearing themselves with their blood, and wearing their skins for coverings, &c., so that 220,000 people perished there; and besides, in Egypt and Cyprus, 240,000, by the like abhorred cruelty, and about the same time, by the same hands. {*Dio, In Vitae Trajan, l. 58. c. 75. 8:421,423*} "Beware of men," **#Mt 10:17**.

Ver. 4. **But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael]** Sin doth as naturally draw judgments to it as the lodestone doth iron or

turpentine fire; and heinous sins, heaviest judgments, devouring plagues. Such as are the fire of war, #Ps 78:62; pestilence, #Le 26:25; foreign enemies, #Nu 21:28 Jer 48:45; homebred conspiracies, #Jud 9:15,20; besides the fire of hell, whereof all miseries here are but typical. Let men kiss the Son therefore, lest God's anger be kindled; and get the spirit of judgment, and of burning, that they may dwell with everlasting burnings. For even "our God is a consuming fire," #Heb 12:29.

Ver. 5. **I will break also the bar of Damascus]** *i.e.* their power and might, all strength defensive, or offensive, and so make way for the enemy into the city; give him a fair entrance without resistance. It is God that orders the battle, and renders men's attempts vain or prosperous, #Isa 54:17 Jer 50:9; wherever the sword comes it is "bathed in heaven," #Isa 34:5.

**And cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven]** *Campus idoli*, the plain or valley of idols (so Mercer rendereth it), that is, of Syria given to idolatry; or Damascus, a very *Poneropolis*, and therefore ripe for ruin.

**And him that holdeth the sceptre]** & plain periphrasis of a king (called often by Homer, σκηπτοῦχος, sceptre bearer), or of him that was to succeed in the kingdom. The French call him Dauphin; the Spaniards, Infant, &c. Our Henry II crowned his eldest son Henry while he was yet alive, and put the sceptre into his hand; which made his ambition quite turn off his obedience.

**From the house of Eden]** Or of pleasure, the king's palace, a very paradise. God denieth not great men their lawful pleasures for refreshment, amidst their weighty businesses, &c., but yet they must remember St James's charge, #Jas 5:5, against the grandees of his time: "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter," or of good cheer. And that of Abraham to Dives, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things," &c., #Lu 16:25, which text Gregory the Great could never read but his heart ached with fear, lest it should be his own case. It is well observed that (φιληδονοι) lovers of pleasure are set as last and worst of those wicked ones,

**#2Ti 3:4.** Solomon is blamed for spending thirteen years in building his house, and planting those paradises about it, **#Ec 2:5.**

**And the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir]** A place of Media, called by other authors Cyrha, or (as others think) Cyrene, in Egypt or Africa. This was fulfilled fifty years after by Tiglathpileser.

**Saith the Lord]** Who spake the word and it was done, **#Ps 33:9 148:5.** And what wonder, when his fiat only made the world, and he can as easily unmake it if he please.

Ver. 6. **For three transgressions]** {See Trapp on "Am 1:3"}

**Of Gaza]** One of the five chief cities or satrapies of the Philistines; an ancient name, **#Ge 10:19 De 2:23 1Sa 6:17,** and not so first called by Cambyses, making it his magazine when he marched against Egypt, as Mela would persuade us.

**I will not turn away]** Or I will not convert them, as some render it, {so #Am 1:2,1,4,6} *i.e. non reducam ad misericordiam suam,* I will show them no mercy; but they shall have "an evil, an only evil," **#Eze 7:5,** without mixture of mercy. This is punishment enough.

**Because they carried away captive the whole captivity]** This cruelty God singleth out (as before) as a singular sin that shall be surely punished. Now that is called a whole or perfect deportation, when none escapeth; but all of all sorts, sexes, and sizes, are carried away, as by a sweeping rain, or universal deluge: **#Jer 13:19,** "Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive." Whether this were Judah or Israel that was so inhumanly dealt with by the Philistines we find not. Something like it we read, **#2Ch 21:16,17 Joe 3:6.** {See Trapp on "Joe 3:6"}

**To deliver them up to Edom]** Or to shut them up in Edom, their most inveterate deadly enemy; to whom the Philistines delivered or sold them on this condition or bargain, that they should hold them there in perpetual and irrevocable slavery.

Ver. 7. **But I will send a fire]** *i.e.* an enemy, saith Drusius, which, as a fire, shall consume all. This was fulfilled by Uzziah, #2Ch 26:6, whence it was afterward called "Gaza, which is desert," #Ac 8:26.

**Which shall devour the palaces thereof]** Built likely in the blood of the poor afflicted, and having sin at the bottom, which blew up all at length, as the voice from heaven said to Phocas, who likewise laid his foundation in blood. {See Trapp on "Am 1:4"}

Ver. 8. **And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod]** These other four Satrapies of the Philistines (Gath is not mentioned, because happily time had now triumphed over it, so that it lived by fame only) were the worse likely, and fared the worse for Gaza's ill neighbourhood; like as Hamath did for Damascus, #Zec 9:2.

**And I will turn mine hand]** Not in mercy, as #Zec 13:7, but for further mischief; I will have a double blow at Ekron, where Beelzebub the *Grandiabolo* is worshipped, *Iterabo plagam*: and when I have done with the rest I will begin again with Ekron; *Acheronta movebo*.

**And the remnant of the Philistines]** This is dreadful, but due to them, and just upon them for their savage dealing with Israel, #Am 1:6. This was fulfilled by Hezekiah conquering all that country, #2Ki 18:8. See Josephus, lib. ix. 13.

Ver. 9. **For three transgressions of Tyrus]** That crown of the sea, #Isa 23:8, *media insuperabilis unda*, island unconquerable by sea, till Alexander's time, who joined it to the continent, and afterwards ruined it. Charged it is here as those before, 1. With incurable obstinace; 2. With extreme cruelty.

**Because they delivered up the whole captivity]** Which either themselves had taken, or that had fled to them for refuge in some common calamity; but were betrayed by them into the hands of their bitterest enemies. See #Am 1:6, and acknowledge the truth of that Divine proverb, "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel": they help their clients no otherwise than the wolf in the fable helped the sheep of his cough, by sucking his blood.

**And have not remembered the brotherly covenant]** That passed of old between David, Solomon, and Hiram their king. Or rather, that between Jacob and Esau and their respective posterity, which the Tyrians should have promoted by labouring a reconciliation between these dissenting brethren; but they contrariwise blew up the coals, and rather stirred up more strife then stinted it. They called not to mind what unity and amity ought to be between people so near allied; and what good offices they should therefore have done for them.

“ *Protenus indigni fraternum rumpere foedus.*” Horat.

"Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother." This is God's argument to Israel, #De 23:7. Should not the Tyrians have said the like to the Edomites, and so sought to have pacified them, rather than gratified them in their hereditary hatred and deadly feud, &c.? They put themselves among those worst of men, which, given over of God, though they know the law, how that they which commit such things are worthy of death, yet not only do the same, but also take pleasure in those that do them, #Ro 1:32.

Ver. 10. **Therefore I will send a fire upon the walls of Tyrus]** This was fulfilled shortly after in the war that Shalmaneser waged against the Tyrians, whereof see Joseph. lib. ix. chap. 14. Or in Nebuchadnezzar's war with them, whereof read #Eze 29:18 Jer 27:3 47:4. Joseph. cont. Apion, lib. 2. Or Alexander's, Curt. lib. 4; Justin. lib. 11. It is good for men to tremble at God's judgments while they hang in the threatenings, as Josiah did; and not to tempt the Spirit of the Lord, as Ananias and Sapphira did, #Ac 5:9, by putting it to the proof, whether he will be *dicti sui Dominus*, as good as his word.

Ver. 11. **For three transgressions of Edom, &c.]** *i.e.* of the Edomites, the Rabbis understand the Romans, those false brethren the Pope's bloodhounds. See the parallel made by Dr Taylor, in his sermon called the Romish Edomite.

**Because he did pursue his brother with the sword]** First, when he drove him from house and home for fear of his life, which he threatened to take from him, #Ge 27:41-45; and afterwards came against him (returning homewards) with four hundred cut-throats at



his heels, #Ge 32:6,8, "to smite the mother with the children," #Ge 32:11. Next, in his posterity, those sworn swordsmen of the devil; that denied God's Israel passage in the wilderness, coming out against him with much people, and with a strong hand, #Nu 20:20, to his great discouragement, #Nu 21:4. And ever after bore him an aching tooth, and waited him a shrewd turn; joining with the enemy, and taking all advantages of mischief. See #2Ch 28:17 Ps 137:7 Ob 10,11. Malice is commonly hereditary, and runs in the blood; and (as we use to say of runner) the older it is, the stronger.

**And did cast off all pity]** Heb. corrupted his compassions, forgot his brotherhood, banished natural affection out of his bosom, and put off all humanity. The Rabbis tell us, that out of the profaneness of his spirit Esau put away his circumcision, by drawing up again the foreskin with a surgeon's instrument. Whether this were so or not, I have not to say; but that he corrupted his compassions (if any ever he had), violated the law of nature, and abolished the love of a brother, the "brotherly covenant," this text assureth us; even all the affections, duties, and respects of blood and nature by which he was bound. His grandfather Abraham could say to his nephew Lot, "Let there be no difference between thee and me; for we are brethren," #Ge 13:8. This one consideration was retentive enough, cooler sufficient to his choler; it was even as the Angel that stayed his hand when the blow was coming, #Ge 22:12. It should have been so with Edom; good blood would not have belied itself; but he had lost his brotherly bowels, and even put off manhood; he had wiped out all stirrings of good nature, as a man wipeth a dish, "wiping it and turning it upside down," #2Ki 21:18, as the Scripture speaketh in another case: or as when a man emptieth wine out of a cup, the sides are yet moist; but when it is rinsed and wiped, there remains not the least taste or tincture.

**And his anger did tear perpetually]** *i.e.* He in his anger did tear, as a beast of prey, and rage without intermission. The enemies of the Church do so still: such is their implacable hatred against God and his truth; they "eat up God's people as they eat bread," #Ps 14:4, yea, they tread down and tear in pieces, as if there were none to deliver. At the town of Barre, in France, when it was taken by the Papists, all kinds of cruelty was used, saith Mr Fox: children were

cut up, and the guts of some of them and hearts pulled out, which in rage they tare and gnawed with their teeth. The Italians likewise which served the king there did, for hatred of religion, break forth into such fury, that they did rip up a living child, and took his liver being as yet red-hot, and eat it as meat. Erasmus tells of an Augustine friar, who openly in the pulpit at Antwerp, wished that Luther were there, that he might bite out his throat with his teeth. And Friar Brusierd, in a conference with Bilney, brake out into these angry words: But that I believe and know that God and all his saints will take revengement everlasting on thee, I would surely with these nails of mine be thy death. Pray therefore with David, "Deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove" to these destroyers. "Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel," #Ps 74:19 Ge 49:7.

**And kept his wrath for ever]** Though himself was mortal, yet his wrath might seem to be immortal; as was Hannibal's against the Romans, and our Edward I's against the Scots; against whom being about to march, he adjured his son and nobles, that, if he died in his journey into Scotland, they should carry his corpse with them about Scotland, and not allow it to be interred till they had absolutely subdued the country. Anger may rush into a wise man's bosom, but should not rest there (Aug. Ep. 87. Eccl. vii. 9); for it corrupteth the heart, as vinegar doth the vessel wherein it long continueth. Of the Athenians it was said, that their anger was *αειμνηστος*, everlasting; but that was but small to their condemnation. Thou shalt neither revenge nor remember ill turns, #Le 19:18, where *servare* is put for *servare iram*; to keep, for to keep one's anger; to show that there is nothing that a man is more ready to keep, as being a vindictive creature. Aristotle saith (but absurdly) that it is more manly to be revenged than to be reconciled; and this the world calleth manhood, but indeed it is doghood rather. The manlier any man is, the milder and more merciful, as David, #2Sa 1:12. And Julius Caesar, when he had Pompey's head presented to him wept, and said, *Non mihi placet vindicta sed victoria*, I seek not revenge but victory. And the apostle purposely disgraceth revenge of injury by a word that signifieth disgrace, loss of victory, or impotence of mind. *ληττημα*, #1Co 6:7} Thunder, hail, tempest, neither trouble nor hurt celestial bodies; no more doth anger great minds. Edom was short spirited, soon

kindled and not easily appeased; his wrath kept no bounds, as the word here used importeth; his coals were coals of juniper, fierce and long lasting; his fire not elementary, but culinary; nourished by low and unworthy considerations; a fruit of the flesh, and such as excludes out of heaven, #Ga 5:20,21. It was not the passion but the habit of hatred which St James calleth the devil, #Jas 4:7, and St Paul counselleth men not to give place to that devil; and for that end, not to let the sun go down upon their wrath, #Eph 4:26. See #Eze 25:5, where Edom is charged with a perpetual hatred, and therefore threatened with blood and desolation, as here.

Ver. 12. **But I will send a fire]** A fierce enemy, *ut supra*. The inhabitants of Teman and Bozra, together with other the posterity of Esau, were famous for power and policy, #Ob 8,9 Jer 49:7 Isa 34:6. But there is no wisdom, might, nor counsel against the Lord, #Pr 21:30,31. He can make fools and babies of the Church's enemies: he can fire out their malice.

Ver. 13. **I will not turn away the punishment thereof]** Or I will not turn and reduce him to myself by repentance, that I may show him mercy, as #La 5:22 Jer 31:18, but harden his heart, and hasten his destruction.

**Because they have ripped up the women with child]** *Immane facinus, et vicinis indignum*, saith Mercer, a cruel fact, and the worse because done by so near neighbours and allies; thus to kill two at one blow, and those also innocent and impotent, and such as they ought to have spared by the law of nature and of nations: and all this, merely out of covetousness and ambition.

**That they might enlarge their border]** But first root out the little ones, that else might hereafter claim and recover their fathers' possessions. So at the Sicilian Vespers they ripped up their own women that were with child by the French; that no French blood might remain among them. {See Trapp on "Ho 13:16"} Learn to detest covetousness, that "root of all evil," #1Ti 6:10. Better converse with a cannibal than with a truly covetous caitiff; and more courtesy you may expect.

Ver. 14. **But I will kindle a fire, &c.]** With mine own hands (not only send a fire, as before, #Am 1:10,12); as Charles V Emperor of Germany (when it was told him how that Farnesius, the Pope's

general, had ravished certain ladies), brake out into these hot words: If I had the villain here I would kill him with mine own hands; neither was he ever heard to speak anything with so great anger in all his days.

**With shooting in the day of battle]** *Cum clangore, vel ululatu*, with noise of trumpets and soldiers, so terrible, haply, as that in the bloody fight between the great Turk, Amurath III, and Lazarus, despot of Servia; where the noise was so great that the wild beasts in the mountains stood astonished, and the birds fell to the earth amazed thereat.

**With a tempest]** *i.e.* with incredible swiftness, and all on the sudden; and so the more terrible, because impetuous.

Ver. 15. **And their king shall go into captivity]** Where he may find as little favour as Zedekiah did with Nebuchadnezzar, Valerian with Sapore the Persian, Bajazet with Tamerlane the Scythian; and not so much as Gilimer, king of Vandals, with Belisarius, of whom he requested (and obtained) these three things, a loaf, a sponge, and a harp; a loaf to relieve him, a sponge to wipe his weeping eyes, and a harp to cheer him up in his captivity.

**He and his princes together]** Lords and lowlies shall fare alike; the sword spares neither. And in hell *potentes potenter torquebuntur*; mighty men shall be mightily tormented.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **For three transgressions, &c.]** Or malicious wickedness with a high hand committed, and heaped up to that height. See #Am 1:3.

**Because he burnt the bones of the king of Edom]** "A wicked man," but yet a man: and God (who is a lover of mankind, *φιλανθρωπος*) shows himself sensible of the injuries and indignities done but to his dead body; such an enemy he is to cruelty to his creatures. That Mesha, king of Moab, bore a special edge against the king of Edom, sought to break through the army to him, but could not, and afterwards sacrificed his son and heir, whom he had taken in that sally made upon the king of Edom's quarters, we read, #2Ki

**3:26,27.** There are some that think that at another time, overcoming the Edomites, he dug up the bones of that king out of his sepulchre, he burnt them to lime, that is, *prorsus, perfectissime et absolutissime*, as some sense it (Targum), to ashes and cinders, as **#Isa 33:12**, or (for greater revenge and contempt) he white-limed the walls of his palace therewith, as **#Ge 11:3 Ps 69:23 Isa 22:12**. Thus, in that horrid massacre of Paris, they cut off the admiral's head (whom before they had murdered) and presented it to the Queen's mother; who, embalming it, sent it for a present to the Pope, who, thereupon, caused the massacre to be pictured in the Vatican hall; under one side is *Colignii et sociorum caedes*; Colignii and his allies slaughter, on the other, *Rex Colignii caedem probat* The King of the Coligni approves the slaughter. (II Mercurio Italico, 92). The king himself (*viz.* Charles IX) beholding the bloody bodies of those then massacred, and feeding his eye on so woeful a spectacle, breathed out this bloody speech, *Quam bonus est odor hostis mortui*: How sweet is the smell of a slain enemy. Another hell hag said upon a like occasion, that she never beheld so goodly a piece of tapestry as the faces of those butchered saints. This insulting over the dead is that piece of cruelty which the Church complaineth of, **#Ps 79:2**. Cornelius a Lapide, upon this text, cries out of it as an inhuman and shameful thing, both because the honour of sepulchre is the last dues of the dead (*τα νομιζόμενα, iusta defunctorum*); and also because this is to fight with dead carcasses. Yet this hath been practised by one Pope against another, and by many of the Pope's champions here in England, who unburied and burnt the bodies of Paulus Phagius, Peter Martyr's wife, and many others. Cardinal Wolsey had a purpose (had he not been prevented by death) to have taken up King Henry's body at Windsor, and to have burnt it. How much better Charles V (yet no friend to the Reformation, but a prudent prince), who, entering Wittenberg as a conqueror, and being importuned to dig up the dead bodies of Luther and other reformers, refused to violate their graves, and sent away Melancthon, Pomeran, and some other eminent preachers, unhurt, not so much as once forbidding them to publish openly the doctrine that they professed! Cambyses heareth ill among all men for his digging up the dead body of Amasis, king of Egypt, and causing it to be whipped and bricked; and Sulla, for the like cruelty to Gaius Marius. Of all fowl we most hate and detest the crows; and of all beasts the jackals (a

kind of foxes in Barbary), because the one digs up the graves and devours the flesh, and the other picks out the eyes of the dead. *Hinc moraliter disce*, saith a Lapide: learn hence also what a baseness it is to tear and deface the good names of those that are dead; to secretly corrupt their names is worse than to burn their bones to lime. And yet among many other men of mark that might be instanced, *Melancthon mortuus tantum non ut blasphemus in Deum cruci affigitur*; saith Zanchius; not Papists, but Lutherans laid blasphemy to his charge after his death, whom all Christendom worthily honoured for his learning and piety.

Ver. 2. **But I will send a fire]** See #Am 1:4.

**And it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth]** A city so fair and large that it hath a plural name, which signifieth cities by way of excellence; as Athens was called the Greece of Greece; Rome, the epitome of the world. Ἑλλάς ἐλλαδος ἐπιτομή της οἰκουμένης.

**And Moab shall die with tumult]** With all these together, on a huddle, as it were: they are here set down by an elegant asyndeton, to set forth the suddenness and terror of the judgment threatened. They shall be stormed, and have no quarter given them. Here Osiander noteth, that it is one of the many punishments of sin for a man not to die in his bed, but in battle. It was promised to Josiah "he should die in peace," #2Ch 34:28. True it is he died in battle; but he died before that general desolation that followed shortly after (for, indeed, with him died all the prosperity of that people). And beside, his weeping and humiliation had altered the very nature of the trouble, and made war to be peace to him.

Ver. 3. **And I will cut off the judge]** *i.e.* the king, who sometimes sits himself in judgment, as King Henry VIII did here, at the condemnation of Lambert, martyr; as the king of Persia doth often to this day. I have seen him (saith a traveller) many times to alight from his horse, only to do justice to a poor body. The Grand Seignior himself sits one day in the week to receive the poor's petitions, and punish the faulty grandees about him. For as he styles himself, *Awlem Penawh*, that is, the world's refuge; so he would have the world to take notice, that such as lament unto him shall be sure to have redress and succour from him, although his ministers fail them,

or abuse them, through their injustice; hence few viziers die in their beds.

**From the midst thereof]** *i.e.* of Kerioth, the chief city where the court was kept, as Kimchi saith, with a great deal of pomp and pride. We have heard of the pride of Moab. See **#Jer 48:7,11,14,18 Zep 2:8,10**. It was their national sin, and forerunner of their fall.

Ver. 4. **For three transgressions of Judah]** Who were therefore worse than the above mentioned nations, because they ought to have been better *Ideo deteriores quia meliores esse debebant*. Beset they were with enemies round about, who dealt cruelly with them; and this should have made them to cleave more closely to God; these horns pushing and scattering them, should have pushed them home to him, **#Zec 1:19**: but it proved otherwise. For Judah also is found to be incorrigibly flagitious, guilty, as the former, "of three transgressions, and of four," &c., worse in them than in others, because "in Judah was God known," and to them were committed the oracles of God, whom they might hear again screeching out unto them, when they were putting forth their hands to wickedness, "Oh do not this abominable thing," **#Jer 44:4**. But they, *tanquam monstra marina*, as one saith, like so many sea monsters, passed by God's words with a deaf ear.

**They despised the law of the Lord]** They would have none of his counsel; they liked well to live in God's good land, but not to live by God's good laws; like those in the Gospel, "they rejected the counsel of God within themselves," **#Lu 7:30**, and that with scorn and disdain, as the word here used signifieth. {*See Trapp on "Ho 6:6"*}

**And have not kept his commandments]** Though holy, just, and good, though such as, if a man keep them (be it but evangelically, *si faciat, etiamsi non perficiat*, Liv. xviii. 5), he shall live in them, by a life of grace, as the flame lives in the oil, or the creature by his food; though in "keeping thereof" (how much more for keeping thereof!) "there is great reward," **#Ps 19:11**.

**And their lies caused them]** That is, their idols (as the Vulgate well rendereth it), and their will worships, their new inventions, and good intentions thereby to serve and please God. These are properly

called lies; because, contrary to the law of truth (whereto they are here opposed), and to David's practice, who "did the truth," #1Jo 1:6; and could safely say, "I hate and abhor lying; but thy law do I love," #Ps 119:163,104, "through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."

**After the which their fathers have walked]** So that they are a race of rebels, a seed of evildoers, and do fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, till wrath come upon them to the utmost. This is no small aggravation: #Eze 20:30, "Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations." See #Ac 7:51. Must I be provoked by you from one generation to another.

Ver. 5. **But I will send a fire upon Judah]** They shall also bear the punishment of their iniquities; yet, is it not said, as #Am 2:2, that Judah shall "die with tumult?" &c. God will make a difference in his dealings with his own and others, his sons and his slaves; these shall totally and finally be consumed at once, #Na 1:9, not so the saints. The remnants of the Philistines shall perish, #Am 1:8. But of Judah a remnant shall be still reserved, for royal use, #Isa 11:11,16.

Ver. 6. **For three transgressions of Israel, &c.]** The ten tribes come in last, lest they (with whom his main business lay, and to whom he will henceforth apply himself) should conceit themselves privileged, because for the present prospered; lest they should read or hear the menaces of God's mouth, as men do the old stories of foreign wars, that nothing concern them.

**Because they sold the righteous for silver]** Even God's own pasture sheep, that had golden fleeces, precious souls; these they made sale of for a little money, which ever was and still is a common medler, and drives the bargain and business to an upshot. Money, saith one, is the world's great monarch, and bears most mastery: whence it is that the Hebrew word, *Adarcon*, used for money, #1Ch 29:7 Eze 8:27, comes of *Adar*, strong, or mighty, and *Con*, to prepare; to show that a moneyed man is a mighty man, as this world goes. Unless we may say of money, as one doth wittily of *Sardanapalus*, the last of the Assyrian monarchs: *Sardanapalus*, saith he, had a terrible name. *Sar* noteth a prince, *Dan* a judge, *Niphal* an overthrower, or conqueror; not otherwise applicable to



him, but that his luxury was the overthrow of both sovereignty and judgment. So is money mighty and well prepared, but it is to blind the eyes of the wise, and to pervert the matters of the righteous, **#De 16:10**, who because not so well underlaid as his adversary, lies long languishing many times at Hope's hospital; as that lame man did at the pool of Bethesda, but might not be sped, because (for want, belike, of stirring angels) he could get none to put him into the pool immediately after the angel had stirred it. That was a sad complaint made by the prophet Habakkuk, **#Am 1:4**, "Behold, the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth circumvent the righteous," viz. by his bribery and baseness, "therefore wrong judgment proceedeth." A judge is to retain the decency and gravity of the law; yea, of the law maker, with whom there is no iniquity, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts, **#2Ch 19:7**. *Nec prece, nec pretio*, should be the magistrate's motto; he should be above all price or sale.

**And the poor for a pair of shoes]** For a cup of wine, **#Joe 3:3**; for handfulls of barley, or pieces of bread, **#Eze 3:19**; for a thing of nothing, so base they were grown at length; a very small deal of gain would win them over. See **#Am 8:6**. At first, a little matter would not hire them; it must be silver, and a considerable sum too; as a harlot, that requires at first no small reward, but afterwards prostituteth herself quite cheaply to all comers. Sin seemeth modest and maidenly at first; but meddle not, for it soon woadeth an impudence in men's foreheads, and debaucheth them.

**Ver. 7. That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor]** Covetousness is craving and cruel; it rides without reins, as Balaam did after the wages of wickedness; and cares not whose head it rides over, to compass commodity. Yea it "panteth after the dust of the earth, on the head of the poor," as desirous not only to lay them in the dust, but to lay them a bleeding and a dying there. They gape over the head (or life) of the poor, in the dust of the earth (so some read the words), as devising to destroy them. A poor man's livelihood is his life, **#Mr 12:44 Lu 8:43**, for a poor man in his house is like a snail in a shell; crush that and you kill him. These cormorants earnestly desired, and endeavoured to bring dust upon poor men's heads (the garb of those that were in heaviness, **#Job 2:12 Eze 27:30 La 2:20**), by their oppressions and injustice; yea, to

bring them down to the dust of the earth, to set them as far underground as now they were above. Lo, this they do as greedily and as greatly desire, as serpents and other hot creatures covet the fresh air, to cool their scorched entrails. See **#Jer 14:6 Job 5:5 7:2**. It is said of Saul the persecutor, that he "breathed out threatenings against the Church," **#Ac 9:1**, as a tired wolf, that wearied with worrying the flock lieth panting for breath. So Bonner whipped the poor martyrs till he was breathless. Some interpreters note out of Joseph Ben Gorion, that there was an old custom that those that were accused before the judges, should be arrayed in black, and have their heads covered with dust. And hence they conceive the sense to be this: "That pant," *i.e.* that earnestly desire that such poor men may be accused by the rich, of whom they may receive gifts to pervert judgment. And this they think to be confirmed by the following words.

**They turn aside (or pervert) the way of the meek]** That is, the cause, business, judgment of the modest and self-denying poor, the subject of rich men's injuries (for most part), the unreasonable oppressions, **#Jas 2:6**. A crow will stand upon a sheep's back pulling off wool from her side; she dare not do so to a wolf or a mastiff. <sup>{a}</sup> Even reasonless creatures know whom they may be bold with; so do wicked oppressors. The meek by pocketing up one wrong, invite another. (*Veterem ferendo iniuriam invitas novam.*) "Ye have condemned and killed the just: and be doth not resist you," **#Jas 5:6**. Ye not only rob, but ravish the poor, that are fallen into your nets, **#Ps 10:9**, ye do even whatsoever you please to them; as one martyr said of John Baptist, that he was put to death, as if God had been nothing aware of him.

**And a man and his father will go in, &c.]** By a horrible (if not incestuous) filthiness; such as heathens by the light of nature condemned and execrated, **#1Co 5:1**. The Indians abhor it; showing themselves in respect of the incestuous Spaniards among them, as the Scythians in respect of the Grecians, whom they so far excelled in life, as they were short of them in learning. Am I a dog, said Abner to Ishbosheth, **#2Sa 3:8**, that is, so impudently and excessively lustful as a dog is, so scalded in his own grease, **#Ro 1:27**. Some libidinous sensualists put off all manhood, become dogs,

worse than dogs; following their harlots, styled in Scripture, salt-bitches, #De 23:18, such as having abandoned both the fear of God and shame of the world, care not whom they admit, father, son, any one, every one.

**To profane my holy name]** As if I were author or fautor {b} of such cruelties and villainies. This is to take God's name in vain, #Pr 30:9, yea, this is to blaspheme, #1Ti 1:20, by breaking down the banks of blasphemy and causing the enemies of the truth to speak evil with open mouth, as they did in David's days, #2Sa 12:14. And in Paul's days, #Ro 2:24. And in Origen's days, *Nunc male audiunt castiganturque vulgo Christiani; quod vitia sub obtentu nominis Dei celent*, Christians and their religion heareth ill among heathens, by reason of their impious and impure lives, and their conversation not becoming the gospel of Christ, #Php 1:27. Of such carnal gospellers it may be truly said, as Diogenes said to Antipater (who being vicious wore a white cloak, the ensign of innocence), that they do *virtutis stragulam pudefacere*, put honesty to an open shame, bring contempt upon God and his ways.

{a} A large, powerful dog with a large head, drooping ears and pendulous lips, valuable as a watch-dog. CED.

{b} An adherent, partisan, supporter, abettor. CED

Ver. 8. **And they lay themselves down upon clothes]** *i.e.* table carpets, or bed coverlets, laid under those that sit at a meal; whether on the ground, with their legs gathered under them, (as the Turkish basbaws do to this day, and the Trojans of old, *stratoque super discumbitur ostro*), or at beds or tables, leaning on the left elbow, #Es 1:6 Joh 13:23. *Et cubito remanete presso.*

**Laid to pledge]** These should have been restored, and not detained beyond the time prescribed, #De 24:12,13 Ex 22:26,27.

**By every altar]** It was their fashion to feast in their idol temples, #1Co 8:10 10:21. See Horat. Od. xxxvii, lib. 1. And this in imitation belike of God's people, who were commanded to feast before the Lord, in the place that he should choose to place his name in. See #De 14:23,26 1Sa 1:3,4, &c. And here *paucis verbis multiplex scelus arguit*, saith Gualther, in few words he accuseth them of much wickedness.

**And they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god]** A god they have of their own devising, a wooden god, and such as, if he had but a pair of horns clapped on his head, might make an excellent devil, as the Mayor of Doncaster told the wise men of Cockram, in Queen Mary's days, that came to complain of the carver for making them an ugly crucifix. Next, they "drink wine in the house" of their god, besides their drink offerings (which David's soul hated, **#Ps 16:4**), they had their drunken computations in their idol temples, as now they say in the Isle of Sardinia, after mass done they fall to drinking and dancing in the midst of the church; singing in the mean time songs too immodest for an alehouse. Lastly,

**They drink the wine of the condemned]** Or of such as they have fined or mulcted for not coming along with them to the idol temples. Diodati rendereth it, the wine of the ameracements, that is bought with such money as they have unjustly fined and condemned the innocent in. There are those who here understood that wine that was wont to be given to malefactors led to execution, **#Pr 31:6**, to cheer them up; but these wretches drank it off from them. The former sense is the better.

Ver. 9. **Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them]** It is not usual with God to hit men in the teeth with what he hath done for them, **#Jas 1:5**, unless in case of unthankfulness, as here. Then, indeed, people shall hear of what they have had, and be taught the worth of good turns by the want of them. Good turns aggravate unkindnesses; and our offences are not a little increased by our obligations. Hence this approbation; and it is as if God should say, This people hath not only done the evils before mentioned, but also after the receipt of mercies without measure, and many miraculous deliverances; as if I had even hired them to be wicked; and as if that were to pass for truth which the snake in the fable said to the countryman that had showed it kindness, *Summum praemium pro summo beneficio est ingratitude*. In the year 1245 the Pope was denied entrance into England; it being said that the Pope was but like a mouse in a satchel, or a snake in one's bosom, who did but ill repay their hostess for their lodging. God had done exceeding much for this perverse people; and this they now hear of with stomach enough, as well they deserved. At Athens, if a servant proved ungrateful for his

manumission, his master had an action, ἀποστασιου, against him; and might recover him again into bondage. Lycurgus, the Lacedemonian lawgiver, would not make a law against ingratitude; as holding it monstrous not to requite a kindness, not to acknowledge a good turn. The old Romans decreed that such as were found guilty of this fault should be cast alive to the cormorant, {a} to be pulled in pieces and devoured. Our Saviour fitly yokes together the evil and the unthankful, #Lu 6:35; and God here sums up all his people's sins in this one, as the epitome of all the rest.

**Yet I destroyed the Amorite]** When once his iniquity was full, #Ge 15:16, when he had filled the land from corner to corner with his uncleanness, #Ezr 9:11, then sent I my hornets before them, which drove them out before them. But not with their sword nor with their bow, #Jos 24:12. See this thankfully acknowledged by this Church after she had prayed for her learning, #Ps 44:2,3,9,10.

**Whose height was like the height of the cedars, &c.]** For stature and strength they seemed insuperable, #Nu 13:28, &c. But God soon topt them and tamed them, he took them a link lower, and made them know themselves to be but men, #Ps 9:20; or if trees, cedars, oaks (as Plato saith of man, that he is but *arbor inversa*), yet,

**I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath]** I left him little enough to be proud of; less than Nebuchadnezzar, who had a stump left, and was reserved for royal state again, #Da 4:15. God cut off these Amorites; that is, all the seven nations, head and tail, root and branch, old and young together, #De 7:2 Jos 6:21 (behold the severity of God), as if he had forgotten that forepart of his back parts, Jehovah, Jehovah, gracious, merciful, &c., and had taken up that emperor's motto, *Fiat iustitia, pereat mundus*, Let justice be done, though never so many be undone.

{a} A large and voracious sea bird (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), about 3 feet in length, and of a lustrous black colour, widely diffused over the northern hemisphere and both sides of the Atlantic. (ED)

**Ver. 10. Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt]** Which lies lower than Judea; as doth also mystical Egypt than Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all. To what great preferments

and privileges God's people are now brought up by Christ. See **#Heb 12:22-24**, and cry out, with that noble Athenian, ἐξ, οἴων εἰς οὐα, from how great miseries to what great mercies are we advanced! Even from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God: that we may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among the saints, **#Ac 26:18**. And shall we then again break God's commandments? **#Ezr 9:14**, or say, "We are delivered to do all these abominations," **#Jer 7:10**. Would not the heaven sweat over us, and the earth cleave under us, yea, hell gape for us upon such an entertainment of Divine bounty?

**And led you forty years through the wilderness]** Led you all along in my hand "as a horse in the wilderness," that ye "should not stumble," **#Isa 63:13**. Led you, and fed you daily and daintily, sending you in angel's food, and then setting the flint abroad that you might not pine and perish in that vast howling wilderness, **#De 32:10**. Besides that, I there bore with your evil manners (ετροποφορησεν), **#Ac 13:18**, as a mother bears with her child's frowardness; or as a husband bears with his wife's crossness, which he knows he must either *tollere* or *tolerare*, cure or cover.

**To possess the land of the Amorite]** To fit you for such a mercy, to humble you, to prove you, and to do you good at the latter end, **#De 8:16**. God knows the height of our spirits and the naughtiness of our natures, &c.; how ill able men's brains are to bear a cup of prosperity; and how soon their hearts are lifted up with their estates, as a boat that riseth with the rising of the water. God, therefore, usually brings his people into the wilderness, and there "speaketh to their hearts," **#Ho 2:14**; he holds them first to hard meat, and then puts them into full possession.

Ver. 11. **And I raised up your sons for prophets]** The ministry is worthily instanced as a singular mercy, **#Ps 147:19,20**. Other nations had their prophets, such as they were, **#Tit 1:12**, προφητης. Tragedians and comedians were said, εἰς διδαχην εργαζεσθαι, to labour in teaching the people, and were highly esteemed of the Athenians; insomuch as that after their discomfit in Sicily they were relieved out of the public stock who could repeat somewhat of Euripides. But what were these to Israel's prophets, those holy men of God, who spake as they were moved, acted, and, as it were,

carried out of themselves by the Holy Ghost, to say and to do what God would have them? φερομενοι, #2Pe 1:21; yea, those holy children, such as Samuel and Jeremiah (for of them especially the Rabbins understand this text), who devoted themselves to the work betimes, being more forwardly than either Athanasius, the boy bishop, or Cornelius Mus, who (if we may believe Sixtus Senensis) was a preacher at twelve years old, and such a one as with whom all Italy was in admiration.

**And of your young men for Nazarites]** The Chaldee hath it doctors, or teachers; it being the office of these holy votaries to teach the people. Heathens also had a kind of Nazarites, as Lucian setteth forth in his *Dea Syria* (*Habent et vespae favos, simiae imitantur homines*), and the Turks at this day have their Dermislars, and their Imailers, whom they call the religious brothers of love. Epicurian hogs they might better term them, saith the historian. The Papists would prove their monks to be Christian Nazarites: but the abolishing of that order is declared, #Ac 21:25; and monks are so far from the abstinence of the Nazarites, that they eat of the best and drink of the sweetest that sea and land can afford. So far also from the singular sanctimony of the Nazarites, whereof see #La 4:7, that the poet sung truly of them,

“ *Non audet Stygius Pluto tentare quod audet*

*Effraenis Monachus.*—”

*They may better profess themselves successors to the scribes and Pharisees, who may seem (saith one) to have fled and hid themselves in the monks and friars. Now, the Pharisees pretended to succeed the ancient Nazarites, as their very name imports, vitae sanctimonia et voto singulari ab aliis separati, but they were (as likewise the Popish monks) a generation never instituted by God, nor brought in by the prophets, but only a human invention, and through their own boldness; whence Chemnitius, upon the tenth of John, takes thieves there to be the Pharisees. An interpreter here showeth how God hath now made all his people Nazarites, i.e. separated and sanctified unto himself, by making them patterns of piety, as the Rechabites, holy, harmless, undefiled of dead works and evil works, from whom they are bid to stand off, #1Ti 6:5, as also*

not to "be drunk with wine, wherein is excess," but "to be filled with the Spirit"; abstaining from all appearance of evil, hating the garment spotted with the flesh, **#Eph 5:18 1Th 5:22 Jude 23**. {See *Trapp on "Nu 6:1"*} &c

**Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel?**] If it be not testified against me, as **#Mic 6:3**, and if ye cannot then read the sentence against yourselves, as Judas did, **#Mt 27:4**, that ye may appear to be subverted and self-condemned, **#Tit 3:11**. God loveth to fetch witness from men's own consciences for the justifying his proceedings; and to convince them clearly that he is no way wanting to them, but they to themselves. A cunning carver can carve the similitude of any creature, but not on a rotten stick. What could God do more to his vineyard than he had done? **#Isa 5:4**. "How oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen her chickens," &c., **#Mt 23:37**. "How long shall, thy vain thoughts, lodge within, thee?" **#Jer 4:14**. God as so far from being guilty of Israel's misery as that, besides other undeniable arguments of his love, as bringing them out of Egypt, destroying the Amorite, &c., he had raised them up prophets and Nazarites, given them his word, sacraments, all good helps to mollify their hearts; and then appealeth to their consciences by this rhetorical interrogation, "Is it not even thus?" so to wring from them a confession of the truth, in spite of their teeth.

Ver. 12. **But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink**] *Opponit iam Propheta pessimam gratiam*, saith Gualther. Here was the ill requital they made the Lord for all his benefits; they corrupted his young Nazarites (as buzzards snatch up young lapwings) and silenced his prophets, or enjoined them at least to meddle with toothless truths only, to preach *placentia*; pleasing things, threatening them if they did otherwise (for so the original importeth) that so they might sin without control, and go to hell without hindrance. This God heavily here complains of, as a horrible ingratitude. To render good for evil is Divine, good for good is human, evil for evil is brutish, but evil for good is devilish.

Ver. 13. **Behold I am pressed under you, &c.**] A country comparison (such as this prophet is full of), plain, but pithy; to show how God is pressed and oppressed with people's sins, wearied as it were, **#Isa 43:24**, and his patience even worn out; so that he can forbear them no longer, **#Isa 42:14**, but like a travailing woman, that



bites in her pain as long as she is able, at length cries out: so here, God hath much ado to forbear killing men in their sins; as he was ready to have a blow at Moses, when he met him in the inn, and could hardly hold his hands; he even groans under the pressure as a cart seems to do under an extraordinary load laid on it, till it creak and crack again; he seems to screech out to sinners, as **#Jer 44:4**, "Oh, do not this abominable thing!" And (when he cannot be heard) to sigh out, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity," &c., **#Isa 1:4**, as *Fasciculus temporum*, A.D. 884, bitterly bewailing the iniquities of those times, cries out, *Heu heu, Domino Deus*, &c. That ninth age is much complained of by many writers. God hath as much, nay, more, cause to complain of ours, considering his pains with us, and patience towards us, to so little purpose and profit. {See *Trapp on "Mat 1:1"*} Many interpreters make these words not a complaint, but a communication; rendering it thus, I will press or straiten your place as a cart full of sheaves presseth, &c.; either the ground whereon it goeth, or the corn which it thresheth out of the husk, **#Isa 28:27,28**; or as the creature that lieth under the wheels of it is crushed in pieces. It was a memorable saying of Mr Bradford, martyr, He that will not tremble in threatening shall be crushed in pieces in feeling. These perverse Israelites would not be warned by any threatening, therefore they were pressed to some purpose in that sore famine and strait siege of Samaria. *Obsidione vos premam*, Press hard your seige, saith the Chaldee here; I will so beleaguer your city that there shall be no escaping. Look how a laden cart, *onustum sibi*, so laden that another sheaf can hardly be laid on, so gets stuck in narrow places, that it can neither go forward nor backward; so will I bring you into those distresses, that you shall not know how to avoid or abide them, στενοχωροουμενοι. {confer **#Ps 4:2 Pr 4:12 2Co 4:8**} I will distress my distressers, and press with such piercing afflictions as shall make you sigh and screech out another while, Oh it is an evil thing and a bitter to forsake the Lord, &c., **#Jer 2:19**. Oh, he is worse than mad that would buy the sweetest sin at so dear a rate.

Ver. 14. **Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift**] Men are apt to bless themselves when God curseth, **#De 29:19**, and to bind upon impurity in a common calamity, to make fair weather, when such a tempest is up as shall never be blown over. Or, if worse come, then, as all creatures run to their refuges, **#Pr 30:25 Ps 104:18 Pr**

**18:11 Da 4:12,14 Jud 9:50,51** (the hunted hare runs to the form, to the bushes that she formerly haunted, but now these cannot save her), so men in misery bethink themselves of and betake themselves to creature comforts and refuges, either natural, or artificial, as here, but these all serve them as Absalom's mule did her master, hanging between heaven and earth, but rejected of both. Let a man be as swift as Asahel, God can easily overtake him; his sin will find him out, and he shall but in running from his death run to it; as the historian speaketh of those Scots defeated by the English at Musselborough field, that they so strained themselves in running for their lives that they fell down breathless and dead. Surely as the coney that flees to the holes in the rocks doth easily avoid the dogs that pursue her, when the hare that trusts in the swiftness of her legs is at length overtaken and torn in pieces; so those that trust in God shall be secured, whereas those that confide in themselves or the creature shall be surprised, and come to an ill end. David ran to God in distress and was relieved; Saul goes to the witch, and from thence to the sword's point; Judas to the Pharisees, and thence to the halter.

**The strong shall not strengthen his force]** But be made weak as water. "None of the men of might have found their hands," **#Ps 76:5**; their hands are palsied, their sinews cracked and crippled. It is God that both strengtheneth and weakeneth the arms in the day of battle, **#Eze 30:24**.

Ver. 15. **Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow]** Arcitenens, though he can do it never so dexterously, yet if he trust in his bow, **#Ps 44:6**, God will break it, **#Jer 49:35**, or otherwise render it unuseful; as it befell the army of Sennacherib in Egypt, of Maximus against Theodosius, and the French in the battle between our Edward III and their King Philip, who being enraged with a defeat, resolved presently to revenge it, being elevated with an assured hope of triumphant victory. But it happened otherwise; for there fell at the instant of the battle a piercing shower of rain which dissolved their strings, and made their bows useless.

**Neither shall he that rideth the horse]** Though it be as good a one as Cain is feigned by Dubertas to have managed, or as Alexander's Bucephalus, or Julius Cesar's great horse serviceable, and full of terror. A horse is so swift that Job saith he "eateth up the ground";

and the Persians dedicated him to their god the sun, as the swiftest creature to the swiftest power divine, *ωσπερ το ταχιστον το ταχυτατο θεων* (Pausan.). But as the sun in heaven can neither be outrun nor stopped in his race, so neither by men nor means can God be frustrated, or his anger avoided. The Canaanites had both horses and chariots, the Israelites had neither; and yet they found a horse a vain thing for victory, #Ps 33:17 147:10.

Ver. 16. **And he that is courageous]** Heb. strong of his heart, a *Coeur de Lion*, as one of our kings was called, *Egregie cordatus homo*, one of a Roman resolution to vanquish, or die; they were wont to say of cowards in Rome, that there was nothing Roman in them. But let man be as bold as Brutus, whom one pronounced *Romanorum ultimum*, the last of the Romans, as if after Rome had brought forth no courageous man and worthy of herself. Let him be "courageous among the mighty," such as were those lion-like chieftains among David's worthies, Scanderbeg, Zisca, Huniades who was in that unhappy battle at Varna (by a just hand of God upon him for joining with that perjured Popish King Ladislaus) beaten out of the field.

**And forced to flee away naked in that day]** Escaped narrowly with his life; as he did also another time, when after a slaughter of 34,000 Turks, he was compelled to save himself by flight; and all alone by uncouth ways to travel three days and nights, without meat or drink; and afterwards, being on foot and disarmed, which is here meant by naked, {confer #Isa 20:3 Mic 1:8 Isa 19:24} he fell into the hands of two notable thieves, who despoiled him of his apparel, and on the next day he lit upon a shepherd of whom he for God's sake craved something to eat, and obtained bread and water and a few onions, as the Turkish history hath it.

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken, &c.]** Here beginneth the second sermon, tending to confirm what had been affirmed in the former, and evincing the equity of the judgments there threatened for their hateful ingratitude and other horrible offences, condemned and cried out upon by the very heathens.

**Hear this word]** *Verbum hoc decretorium*, this notable word. There are three articles in the original; and there is not the least tittle in the text upon which there hangeth not a mountain of sense, said the Rabbis; this next verse (הִזָּה רַבֵּרָה תֵּא; so #Mt 22:21; τα του Θεου τω Θεω).

**That the Lord hath spoken]** And shall he not do it? Who ever waxed fierce against God and prospered? #Job 9:4.

**Against you, O children of Israel]** By his word Christ many times secretly smites the earth, #Isa 11:4, that is, the consciences of carnal men, glued to the earth: He sets a continual edge upon the word, and consumes them by his rebukes, till he have wearied them with his secret buffets and terrors; and then in the end casts them into a reprobate sense, as he did the Pharisees, who were *toties puncti et repuncti, minime tamen ad resipiscentiam compuncti*.

**Against the whole family]** The *Dodecaphylon*, all the twelve tribes, the whole house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, #Isa 48:1; God stands not upon multitudes, #Ps 9:17, nor matters whether it be against a nation that he speaketh and acteth, or against a man only, #Job 34:29.

**Which I brought up from the land of Egypt]** This they often hear of by way of exprobatation, as #Am 2:10. God seeming to repent him for their detestable unthankfulness, as David did of the kindness he had shown unworthy Nabal, in safe guarding his substance, #1Sa 25:7; and to complain, as Frederick III, Emperor of Germany did, that of those courtiers whom he had advanced he found scarcely any that proved faithful to him, but the worse for his courtesy; or as Queen Elizabeth, that in trust she had found treason.

Ver. 2. **You only have I known]** That is, owned and honoured, called and culled, chosen and accepted to be my people, when I had all the world before me to choose in, #De 10:14,15, and nothing to move me thereto but mine own mere grace, even the good pleasure of my will (ευδοκῶ).

**Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities]** Not passing by the least without a sensible check: the least, I say, that is allowed and wallowed in; and that because of the disloyalty and treachery that is therein. Other mens' sins are rebellions against God; but the saints' sins are treacheries, because against the covenant. Let such, therefore, look to themselves, and walk accurately, or they shall be sure to rue it, ακριβως, #Eph 5:15. God will be sure to plough his own ground, whatsoever becomes of the waste; and to weed his own garden, though the rest of the world should be let alone to grow wild. His own he will not fail to punish. 1. In case of scandal, as David. 2. For sins unrepented of, though not scandalous. Oh the bloody welts that God hath left upon the backs of his own dear children for such sins! Bastards may escape scot-free, but sons shall pay for it. *Ingentia beneficia, flagitia, supplicia.* The punishing angel is bidden begin at God's sanctuary, #Eze 9:6. He will be sanctified in all that draw near unto him, #Le 10:3. Sanctified I say, either actively or passively; either in the sincerity of men's conversation or in the severity of their visitation; at which time his articles of inquiry will be very strict and critical against his own professed people, who are therefore worse than others (and shall therefore speed worse), because they ought to be better.

Ver. 3. **Can two walk together, except they be agreed]** God permits his people to walk together with him in a humble familiarity; but then they must take care that familiarity breeds not contempt; and that they conceit not that he will connive at their iniquities, or that their holy services will bear them out in any known sin. He is just and jealous of his glory, wherein he should be no small loser, if he did wink at any besides involuntary failings and unavoidable infirmities; for which there is a pardon of course, if sued out. If I shall walk with you, saith God, as a father, friend, husband, you must agree with me, consent and conform to me, *idem velle, et idem nolle*, will and nill the same that I do; or else I shall walk with you no otherwise than as a severe judge or cruel enemy, #Le 26:24, as a lion with the prey that he hath taken, as the fowler with the bird he hath caught, or the hunter with the wild beast he hath gotten into his snare.

Ver. 4. **Will a lion roar in the forest, when, &c.]** It is said of the lion, that he sets up a double roar; first, when he spies his prey, next, when he seizeth it; then, saith Plutarch, he roareth, or rather

belloweth like a bull, that other beasts may come to him, and take part with him. It is not for nothing that the lion uttereth his voice; much less that Almighty God thundereth and threateneth by his prophets, your sins without repentance will be your ruin, according to those threatenings; though you are so sturdy, or at least so stupid, as to fear them no more than Behemoth doth the iron weapons, which are esteemed by him as straws, or bullrushes, #Job 40:15. Shall the wrath of a king be as the roaring of a lion, #Pr 19:12, and as the messengers of death, #Pr 16:14, and shall God's menaces be slighted? will vile men imagine him a God of clouts? One that howsoever he speaketh heavy words, will not do as he saith? intends them no otherwise than *in terrorem*, for spectres? Surely they will find it far otherwise; and it must be concluded, that being already sentenced, either their beds are very soft, or their hearts very hard, that can sleep securely in so deplorable a condition. Surely God's predictions shall have their accomplishment, #1Sa 3:19 15:29. Believe them, therefore; stand in awe and sin not, since he that "despiseth the word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded," #Pr 13:13. {See Trapp on "Pr 13:13"}

**Will a young lion cry out of his den]** *q.d.* Is it for nothing that God so terribly threateneth? "Is there not a cause?" as David said in another case, #1Sa 17:29. Surely, as in the Revelation we never read that heaven opened, but some great matter followed; so here: Hath the Lord spoken it, and shall he not do it? Never think it. Oh think of God as of one not to be thought of; as one whose wisdom is his justice, whose justice is his power, whose power is his truth, and all himself. He is the God of Amen, #Ps 31:6, faithful and true; he can as soon die as lie; neither can he be hindered or resisted, as angels, men, and devils may. In the creature there is an essence and a faculty whereby they work; as in fire is the substance and the quality of heat. Now between these God can separate, and so hinder their working, as in the Babylonish fire. In the angels there is an essence and an executive power: God comes between these often and hinders them from doing what they would. Not so in God, who is most simple and entire, armed with power irresistible to tame his rebels: "Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame," #Zep 3:5; the fool passeth on and is punished, #Pr 22:3.

Ver. 5. **Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth? &c.]** Think you that all things are carried here by blind fortune, and not by a particular providence, as if

*“ mundo nullus inesset  
Rector, et incerto fluerent mortalia casu? ”*

*Will you say of the evils you have suffered, in the language of Ashdod, "It is a chance?" #1Sa 6:9. Is that heathen idol fortune anything in the world, #1Co 10:19, more than a blasphemy, spued out by the devil against the Divine providence? Can a sparrow fall to the ground, or any the least bird into a snare upon the earth, without your heavenly Father? #Mt 10:29. Birds flying seem to be at liberty, yet are guided by an overruling hand. They fall sometimes into a gin; and do not you thereupon conclude that some fowler's hand is in it? Lo, you are ensnared and ensnarled by your enemies; and can you not discern that it is the Lord who hath done it? #La 3:37,38 Ac 17:25,28 Ec 9:12, "For man knoweth not his time" (nor his chance, #Am 3:11): "as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly" (but providentially) "upon them."*

**Or shall one take up a snare from the earth, &c.]** No wise fowler will take up his nets till he have gotten his prey; no more will God withdraw his hand, or call off the enemy and the avenger, till he have his design; till he hath either reformed or ruined you.

Ver. 6. **Shall a trumpet be blown]** sc. out of a watch-tower in time of war, to sound an alarm, and to say, *Hannibal ad portas*, the enemy is at hand, the Philistines are upon you.

**And the people not be afraid]** Or run together to make resistance? Will ye not then tremble at my threats, saith the Lord? "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob," #Jer 5:22 Ps 114:7. Fear is an affection of the soul, shrinking in itself from some eminent evil. God is the proper object of it, whence he is called fear in the abstract, #Ps 76:11, and those that come on his errand should be received with reverence, yea, "with fear and trembling," as was Titus, #2Co 7:15, and before him

Samuel, by those elders of Bethlehem, #1Sa 16:4, as suspecting it was the purpose of some judgment that brought him thither. Comest thou peaceably? said they. It is a good thing to stand in awe of God's messengers, and to tremble at his judgments, while they yet hang in the threatenings. It appeareth by this prophet that carnal security was grown epidemical, and had overspread the land, #Am 6:2,3. Some there were that said, God had not sent the prophets to denounce those evils, but that they had done it of their own volition, as we say. Others doubted the certainty of those evils denounced, #Am 6:3, against whom he here disputeth by these foregoing similitudes; and in the next words plainly asserteth the Divine providence, and the authority of the prophets, God's privy councillors.

**Shall there be evil in a city]** Understand it of the evil of punishment. See #La 3:37 Isa 45:7 Mic 1:12 Ec 7:14 1Ki 9:9 21:29. See my treatise called God's love-tokens.

**And the Lord hath not done it?]** Although God doth it not but only as it is *bonum iustitum*, good in order to his glory. That which we are here advertised is that it is not luck and fortune that doth toss and tumble things here below; but that God sits at the stern, and steers the affairs of the world. The Gentiles, indeed, held Fortune as a goddess; representing her by a woman sitting upon a ball, as if the whole world were at her command; having with her a razor, as if she could at her pleasure cut off and end man's happiness; bearing in her right hand the stern of a ship, as if she could turn about all things at her pleasure, and in her left hand the horn of abundance, as though all plenty came from her. This was abominable idolatry, to be shunned by Christians; yea, the very name of luck or fortune is to be spit out of their mouths with utmost detestation. It repented Austin that ever he had used that wicked word, *Fortuna*, Chance (Aug. Retract.).

Ver. 7. **Surely the Lord God will do nothing]** *i.e.* hardly anything. He loveth to foreshadow, to warn before he wound; and this merely out of his philanthropy. Howbeit sometimes, and in some cases, he is more sudden and still in his revenges; that he may thereby, first, maintain his honour and glory, the eyes whereof are by some sins extraordinarily provoked, as #Ac 12:23. And secondly, to teach men not to continue in sin, no, not for a moment; since they may be



presently cut off from all further time of repentance, acceptation, and grace for ever; this made Austin say that he would not be an atheist, no, not one half hour, to gain all the world. See #Lu 17:32 12:20. Pharaoh had warning of the first and second plagues, not so of the third; and again of the fourth and fifth, but not of the sixth; and yet again of the seventh and eighth, but not of the ninth. And when neither warning nor no warning would do good, then came that sweeping plague;

“ *Tandem prototocos ultima plaga necat.*”

**But he revealeth his secret to his servants the prophets]** God’s prophets, then, are his menial servants; not his underlings, or inferior hinds but of noblest employment about him. Every faithful minister is servant to the King of heaven (#Ac 27:23, "whose I am, and whom I serve"; this the devil denied not, #Ac 16:16,17), yea, his steward, ambassador, herald (as here), by whom he proclaims war, but first proffers pardon and proposes conditions of peace: a practice usual not only among the people of God, by his appointment, #De 20:10, but also among the heathens, as histories inform us. The Romans had their *Lex Faecialis*; by their heralds they sent to such as had wronged them, *Caduceum et Hastam*, as ensigns of peace and war, that within thirty days they might take their choice; within which time, if they did them not right, the herald presently denounced war against them, casting forth a dart in token thereof. Alexander’s course was as follows, when he sat down before a city, to set up a torch; to show that if they would come in and submit before that torch were burnt out, they should have hearing; Tamerlane hanged out first a white flag, then a red, and lastly a black; and the Turks to this day first make to their enemies some offer of peace, how unreasonable soever it matters not. God’s offers in this kind are all of grace, and for our good. If it were otherwise, what need he give warning? and why doth he not as Absalom did, when, intending to murder Amnon, he spake neither good nor evil to him? Well might the Lord say, "Fury is not in me: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself. As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner," &c. If he did, why might he not rush suddenly upon such and confound them at once, as he did the reprobate angels, even in the very act and first moment of their sin? Why comes he first in a soft still voice,

when he might justly thunder strike us? and why sendeth he his heralds to proclaim war, but yet with articles of peace and reconciliation open in their hands? Why was he but six days in making the world, and yet seven days in unmaking and destroying one city, Jericho? (Chrysost.). Was it not to show that "the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great kindness?" **#Ps 103:8**. And this he hath commanded his prophets to make known, that the goodness of God may lead men to repentance, **#Ro 2:4**. As, if they turn his grace into wantonness, and pervert his patience to presumption, their commission is to declaim against such practices with all authority, **#Tit 2:15**, and to proclaim hell fire, in case men amend not. Necessity is laid upon them so to do, and woe be to them if they preach not law as well as gospel; that when they return up their commission they may report the matter, saying, "Behold, we have done as thou hast commanded us," **#Eze 9:11**. True it is, that perverse people question the prophets, and quarrel them for this plain dealing; as Ahab did Elijah for a troubler of Israel, and Amaziah our prophet Amos for a trumpeter of rebellion. But this is as great folly as if some fond people should accuse the herald or the trumpet as the cause of their war; or as if some ignorant peasant, when he seeth his fowls bathing in his pond, should cry out of them as the causes of foul weather.

Ver. 8. **The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?**] Who that knoweth the terror of the Lord can dare to do otherwise, when he commandeth it? Shall men fear fire, water, bears, lions, &c., and not the great and terrible God? If he roar upon his servants and say, as to Jeremiah he once did, "Thou therefore, gird up the loins of thy mind, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them," **#Jer 1:17**. We must roar against men's sins, and be instant, though they roar against us for so doing, and threaten never so much. Micaiah will not budge for a king's authority when once he had seen the Lord in his majesty; nor Paul for an angel's, **#Ga 1:8**, the rest of the apostles for the Sanhedrim's, **#Ac 4:19 5:25**. When the emperor threatened Basil with imprisonment, banishment, death, he answered: Let him threaten boys with such spectres; I am resolved: neither menaces nor flatteries shall silence me, or draw me to betray a good cause or conscience. If I deal not plainly and faithfully with your souls, said

Bernard, *vobis erit damnosum, mihi periculosum. Timeo itaque damnum vestrum, timeo damnationem meam si tacuero: i.e.* it will be ill for you, and worse for me. The truth is, you would be betrayed, and I should be damned, if I should hold my peace. Let me be accounted proud, pragmatic, anything rather than found guilty of sinful silence when the Lord calleth me to speak, saith Luther. These were men whose hearts were fraught with the reverential fear of God; and therefore found themselves necessitated to be faithful; besides the love of Christ constraineth them, #2Co 5:14, so that they could do no less, they could not but speak, #Ac 4:19.

Ver. 9. **Publish in the palaces at Ashdod, &c.**] That is, in the courts of the Philistine princes, and of the Egyptian kings, who are here attested and invited, to judge between God and his vineyard, to pass an impartial sentence, and to say whether Israel's sins deserved not all the judgments that God by his prophets had denounced, yea, and greater too. Holy Ezra acknowledgeth as much, #Ezr 9:13. But because that many were ready to say, as those in Jeremiah, "Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee (saith the Lord), because thou sayest, I have not sinned," #Jer 2:35. Yea, thy sworn enemies shall give true evidence against thee, and judge of the justice of my proceedings with thee, that I may be justified, and every mouth stopped.

**Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria]** That therehence ye may be eyewitnesses, and have a full prospect of their lewdness; which will be to you a pleasant spectacle; that out of their tragedies you may frame comedies. Samaria was a city set upon a hill; and as itself, so its wickedness, could not be hidden. Carnal people are very inquisitive into the miscarriages of professors; and ready to search more narrowly thereinto than Laban did into Jacob's stuff. What a jeer made Ammianus Marcellinus of the pride and luxury of some of the primitive bishops! Averroes, of the Papists' breading god! the Turks, of the Papists' *Asinus palmaris!* the Jews, of their clipping the crucifix, and weeping over it in the pulpit! as also the swearing that is so common among Protestants, together with that mad conceit of some, that he that cannot swear with a grace, wanteth his tropes and figures befitting a gentleman! This and such like unchristian practices made learned Lineker, when he read Christ's Sermon in the Mount, cry out, Certainly, either this is not

Gospel, or we are but bad gossellers ( *Profecto aut hoc non est Evangelium; aut nos non sumus Evangelici*). It is a lamentable thing, that it should be commonly reported that there be such abominations found in the Church as are hardly heard of among the heathens, **#1Co 5:1**.

*“ pudet haec opprobria nobis,  
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.”*

*Why should it be told in Gath, or published in the palaces of Ashdod? #2Sa 1:20; why should Egyptians condemn Israelites, as the Scythians once did the Greeks, and the heathen Indians now do the beastly Spaniards that tyrannize over them? Why should there be any successors to those heretics mentioned by Bellarmine, and called Christianocategori, accusers of Christians; because by their unchristian conversation they delivered up Christ and his people to be buffeted and spat on by their enemies? {See Trapp on "Ho 7:16"} "This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt."*

**And behold the great tumults]** Or the humming noises, the garboils, the violent irruptions upon the poor oppressed, causing them to cry out, as those that are crushed or broken in pieces.

**And the oppressed in the midst thereof]** Whether by force or fraud oppressed; whether it were επιβολη or επιβουλη, "The Lord is the avenger of all such," **#1Th 4:6**. This the heathen shall take special notice of, and say, with Calocerius the consul, *Vere magnus est Deus Christianorum*, The Christian's God is a righteous God indeed. Ver. 10. **For they know not to do right]** They have done wrong so long together, against knowledge and conscience, that now they are given up to a reprobate sense, to an injudicious mind, εις νουν αδοκιμον, **#Ro 1:28**, having sinned away the light they had, and lost that little knowledge they had learned out of the law of Moses concerning good works: this they had wickedly blotted out of their own minds; as also those common notions of good and evil, that glimmering of Divine light left in the natural man; this in a defiled conscience is wholly extinct. "Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?" No, not they, as appears by what follows: "they eat up my people as they eat bread," **#Ps 14:4**. These cannibals, like

pickerels in a pond, or sharks in the sea, devour the poorer as they the lesser fishes. And though they cannot but know this to be evil, condemned by the light of nature, and much more of Scripture, yet they do it, and will do it; their eyes being put out with the dust of covetousness, and their hearts so exercised therewith, #2Pe 2:14, that they can say, as that wretched fellow did, We are masters of our consciences, we can do what we will for all them; and as Balaam resolved at length, to curse, whatever came of it.

**Who store up violence and robbery in their palaces]** Till the screech owls of woe cry aloud from the walls, and the beams out of the timber make answer, #Hab 2:11,12; till their cursed hoards of evil gotten goods witness against them, and eat their flesh as it were fire, #Jas 5:3; till very Philistines and Egyptians cry shame on them, and say, as the Indians did of the cruel Spaniards, that they carried themselves neither like Christians nor men, but like devils; that it had been better the Indies had been given to the devils of hell than to them; and that if the Spaniards went to heaven when they were dead, they would never come there. Let no man think to thrive, *violentia et vastitate*, by rapine and robbery; to treasure up sin is to treasure up wrath, #Ro 2:5, which, as a fire, will devour their palaces, and it shall not be quenched, #Jer 17:27.

Ver. 11. **Therefore thus saith the Lord]** And he saith it in great haste and heat; as appeareth by that concise kind of expression that he here useth, after the manner of those that are thorough angry, and therefore say not much, but mean to do the more, *Aposiopesis, ut Quos ego* (Virg. Aen. i. 135).

**An adversary round about the land]** A distresser at every corner; that as all the borderers have beheld thy wickedness, so shall they thy wretchedness, by reason of the enemy and the avenger, who shall meet thee at every turn, and leave thee neither hope of better nor place of worse.

**And he shall bring down thy strength from thee]** Thee in the feminine gender; haply because they should be so enfeebled and impoverished: or else, to express the heat of God's anger against them, as #Nu 11:15, where meek Moses, being in a great passion of anger and grief together, saith to God, "If thou" (in the feminine)

"deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand," &c.; he was so out of measure moved that he could not fill up his speech, nor utter the last syllable, At for Atta, *ex magna perturbatione*.

**Thy strength]** Thy strongholds, or thy riches, those treasures of wickedness wherein thou trustest, **#Pr 10:2 Am 3:15**, "The rich man's wealth is his strong city." It is called his strength because he confideth in it, **#1Ti 6:17**, and because he is enabled, by it, to bring about his designs.

**And thy palaces shall be spoiled]** They shall be blown up, because their foundation was laid upon fireworks, their mortar mixed with blood, their materials raked together by rapine and robbery; their furniture, and those ill gotten goods therein hid and hoarded, shall be given, *hosti non haeredi*, not to thine heir, but to thine enemy for a booty. "An inheritance may be hastily gotten at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed," **#Pr 20:21**. "As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end be a fool," **#Jer 17:11**. A poor fool God will make of him ere he hath done with him, as he did for Balaam, Achan, Ahab, Gehazi, the rich man, **#Lu 12:16-21 16:19-31**.

Ver. 12. **As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion]** By a country comparison (as before often) the prophet sets forth the fewness of such as shall escape the enemy's hands. It is but a little that a shepherd dare pull out of the jaws of a lion. **#1Sa 17:35**. Few Davids or Lysimachuses, that dare look such fierce creatures in the face. Something a shepherd in this case may adventure to do, that he may not be made to stand to the loss, **#Ex 22:13 Ge 31:39**. But it is not much; neither are they many that shall make escape, and those few shall be of the poorer sort too, that have scarcely a corner of a bed to lie on (*quibus non est lectus integer*; Tarnov.); or such as are sick in bed and not cared for by the enemy, not counted worth the killing. Or such as are in good health, but glad to hide themselves for fear of the enemy under any bed or bench hole, as is usual in the sack of a city.

**And in Damascus in a couch]** Or in the corner of a couch. Now Samaria and Damascus are joined together, because they were both

desolated about the same time, by the same enemy, and for the same cause, viz. their invading Judaea in a hostile manner, #2Ki 16:7,9 Isa 7:4 8:4 17:3.

Ver. 13. **Hear ye and testify, &c.**] Ye my prophets and all true believers. The Septuagint add, O ye priests, whose lips were to preserve knowledge, and to present it to the people. All that were thereunto commissioned by the Lord God, the God of hosts, are here straitly charged to hear and to charge, testify, or contest, {#2Ti 4:1} and what they have received of the Lord to deliver the same to the whole house of Jacob: not stealing away the word from them, #Jer 23:30, or shunning to declare unto them his whole counsel, #Ac 20:27, but faithfully handling the law, #Jer 2:8.

Ver. 14. **That in the day that I shall visit, &c.**] Tell them so from me, saith God: say to these wicked, Woe be unto them, it shall be ill with them! #Isa 3:11. The jealous Lord of hosts will surely visit the iniquity of idolatrous fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation, #Ex 20:5. See #Jer 3:21,22 Eze 16:21,36 Ho 2:4. As they have their day of defection, so hath he of visitation; his season, his harvest for judgment, #Mt 13:30. What then will they do when God riseth up: and when he visiteth, what will they answer him? #Job 31:14.

**I will also visit the altars of Bethel]** At first there was but one altar, #1Ki 12:32,33 13:2, but afterwards they multiplied, as in Peter's at Rome there are said to be now over one hundred altars, #Ho 8:11 10:1: there is no end of will worship; but, like the Jerusalem artichoke, plant it where you will, it overruns the ground and chokes the heart. Now as God "loved the gates of Zion," where he was solemnly worshipped, "more than all the dwellings of Jacob," #Ps 87:2, and as the walls of good people (whose houses are little churches) are continually before him, #Isa 49:16, so he heartily hateth places and monuments of idolatry; and layeth them waste as he hath done our abbeys and monasteries. Zisca overthrew three hundred of them in Bohemia; and among the rest the famous monastery called the King's Court, a mile from Prague; in the walls whereof the whole Bible was most exquisitely written in letters of gold; but little read or regarded by those filthy abbey lubbers, of whom Luther testifieth that they were *tam desperatae malitiae, &c.*,

so desperately debauched that they dared adventure upon any villany whatsoever.

**And the horns of the altar, &c.]** Which were held the holier parts thereof. This was fulfilled by good Josiah many years after, **#2Ki 23:15 2Ch 34:4,6.** *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi.* Time can be no prejudice to God's proceedings; neither is his forbearance any quittance.

Ver. 15. **And I will smite the winter house with the summer house]** Heb. upon the summer house, I will lay them both on one heap; they shall one dash against the other. To have change of houses or of rooms in one house fit for the several seasons is not unlawful, so we set them not up by wrong dealing, nor set our hearts upon them (*Haec sunt quae nos invitos faciunt mori*); for so we are apt to do (as Charles V, emperor, told the Duke of Venice, who had showed him his stately palace), and this brings a curse.

**And the houses of ivory]** *i.e.* decked and enamelled, checkered and entrained with ivory (*eboratus*), as some sense it. Ahab had made him an ivory house, Heb. a house of tooth, *i.e.* of elephant's tooth: so did other kings (likely) after him. The Porphyrogeniti in Constantinople were born in a room made of porphyry, a precious stone, &c. All must down together.

## Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan]** *Obesae et bene pastae,* ye fat bawsons (as we use to call them), ye that are

*“Boeotum in patria, crassoque sub aere natae.”*

Ye that have hearts as fat as grease, and delight not in God's law, **#Ps 119:70.** Ye that cover your faces with fatness, **#Job 15:27,** till both your eyes stand out with it, **#Ps 73:7,8** (as fulness breeds forgetfulness, **#De 32:15,** the fed hawk forsakes his master), as untamed heifers fully fed, ye have been unruly and refractory, means of much mischief to my poor afflicted, as was Jezebel to Elijah, Herodias to the Baptist, Eudoxia, the empress, to Chrysostom, Theodora to Belisarius, that brave and noble captain, and others. Poor Tegedine suffered many years' captivity in misery and irons, by



the Turk, for one word in a sermon, which distasted a proud and petulant woman without the least cause. What cruel persecutions raised the Queen Mother of Scotland, about the beginning of the Reformation there! the Queen Mother of France, Katherine *de Medicis*, for 30 years together! Queen Mary here, being wholly possessed by the bishops, as Alexandra was by the Pharisees, of whom Josephus testifieth that she had the name, but they had all the power of the kingdom! Oh these kine of Bashan, these wanton and wicked women (for so I understand the text after the Jewish doctors Vatablus, Lyra, Lively, &c.), when once they get the reins in their hands there is no hoe with them; when once the devil gets passage, *per costam ad cot* (as Gregory), by the rib to the heart, what may he not effect? when the hen is suffered to crow, what hope is there of good? David complains of strong bulls of Bashan, **#Ps 22:12**, but those he might better deal with than with these cursed cows of Bashan that thrust with side and shoulder, and pushed the diseased with their horns, till they had scattered them abroad, **#Eze 34:21**.

**That are in the mountains of Samaria]** Ladies of the court, accustomed to high titles, such as I, that am *non aula sed caula natus et educatus*, no courtier but carter rather, and used to call a spade a spade, care not to compliment.

**Which oppress the poor, which crush the needy]** As did, much about the same time, Jezebel in Israel, and Athaliah in Judah; and (besides the above mentioned) Dame Alice Piercy, King Edward III's concubine, an impudent woman; who so far wrought upon the king's impotencies, and presumed on his favour, that she imprisoned Sir Peter Lamar, speaker in parliament, and intermeddled in courts of justice and other offices; where she herself would sit to effect her desires; which, though in all who are so exalted are ever excessive, yet in a woman most immoderate, as having less of discretion and more of greediness. I have spoken before of Diana Valentina, King Henry II of France's mistress, to whom he had given all the confiscations of goods made in the kingdom for cause of heresy, whereby many poor Protestants were oppressed, and needy crushed and quashed to pieces; for a poor man in his house is like a snail in his shell; crush that, and you kill his heart.

**Which say to their masters]** Or lords, that is, to their husbands; as Sarah called her husband lord, **#Ge 18:12**. She in obedience, but these in craft and counterfaisance; that they may the sooner subdue them, and have what they will of them.

**Bring and let us drink]** *q.d.* *Fan nobis potestatem in hos aut illos*, saith Mercer: that is, Give us authority over such and such, that we may pick their bones, drink their tears, enrich and feast ourselves with their spoils, make no more scruple to undo them by force or forgery, than to eat a meal's meat when huntry; or than the luxurious Italians (who have twenty distinct species of liquor, to please the gusto) do, to take off a cup of the most delicious, which they profanely call *Lachrymae Christi*. the tears of Christ.

**Ver. 2. The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness]** He hath sworn for more assurance, **#Heb 6:16-18**, it being hard to persuade secure sinners of the certainty and infallibility of the threatenings; which yet will as surely befall them without repentance, as the coat is on their back, or the heart in their bodies. And, "by his holiness," he hath sworn; that is, by himself (as having none greater to swear by); confer **#Ge 22:16 Jer 51:14 Isa 45:23 62:8**, where God swears by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength. **#Ex 17:16**, he is brought in laying his hand upon his throne, and swearing to root out Amalek. And so some in this place think, that by God's holiness is meant heaven, the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory, **#Isa 63:15**. But Drusius dislikes that, because swearing by heaven is condemned by Christ, **#Mt 5:34**. If God be holiness itself, let him be sanctified in righteousness, **#Isa 5:16**, and let men swear (when called to it, and not till then; the Hebrew word *Neshbang* here used is passive, and signifieth to be sworn, rather than to swear) "in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness," **#Jer 4:2**.

**Behold, the days come]** *Certo et cito*, surely and suddenly: even those dismal days of blackness and darkness, of greatest calamities; see **#Am 5:18,20**. And let this prediction be to you as the knuckles of a man's hand, to write you your destiny; or as a prophet, to read it unto you.

**That he will take you away]** *i.e.* Ye shall be taken away, and hurried into another country; like as **#Isa 8:4**, He shall take away the

spoil of Samaria, *i.e.* It shall be surely taken away; so #Lu 12:20, They do require thy soul (απαιτουσι), that is, it shall be required of thee.

**With hooks]** Heb. with thorns, which were wont to be used in fishing, till iron hooks were more frequent. See #Job 40:24 Eze 29:4 19:4, They brought him with hooks, that is, with chains, into the land of Egypt. Those that were overcome were wont to be linked and langold together; and so led captive by their conquerors.

**And your posterity with fishhooks]** Heb. that which is last of you; your children, and nephews, as #Da 11:4. It is foretold of Alexander the Great that none of his race shall succeed him, but strangers. See enemies compared to fishers, #Jer 16:16 Hab 1:16; and note, that hereby is intimated, that these insolent dames shall be no more like fat kine, that abide in their pastures; but as fishes hanging on the hook, that are easily pulled up, and quickly carried away with little labour, but much delight to the fisher. See a like comparison from swimming, #Isa 25:11, the motion wherein is easy and not strong; to show, that God can subdue his stoutest adversaries with greatest ease.

Ver. 3. **And ye shall go out at the breaches, every cow]** *Qua data porta ruitis*, ye shall be glad to get out at any breach to save your lives, which now hang in suspense, #De 28:66, yea, to ride one upon the back of another for haste, as kine do, in a narrow strait. Or, ye shall be led into captivity, after the taking and dismantling of your cities; see #Eze 12:5,12.

**And ye shall cast them into the palace]** Or, ye shall cast away the things of the palace. Ye shall cast them, that is, your children and nephews, {#Am 4:2} into the palace; either that ye may not see their destruction, as #Ge 21:16, or that they might with greater celerity provide for their own safety. That was a singular example of the Vindelici (now called Suevians) subdued by Drusus, the Roman general, under Augustus, but not without great resistance; the women throwing their young children at the Romans instead of darts. These were monstrous mothers, mad cows indeed.

Ver. 4. **Come to Bethel and transgress]** Do so, if you think it good; and since you are so set upon it, go on, despair, die and be damned:

That which will perish, let it perish, *quoniam vobis stat sententia*, since you are resolved, and there is no removing of you, take your own course, at your own peril. Here then we have a most bitter sarcasm, wherein God, in seeming to command sin, showeth his utmost dislike of it; for he is not a God that loveth wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him, #Ps 5:4. See the like ironic expressions, #Jer 7:21 Eze 20:39 Ec 11:9 Nu 22:20 Isa 29:1 8:9 47:12 Jud 10:14 1Ki 18:27. Bethel-Place of Transgression

**At Gilgal multiply transgressions]** That your madness may appear to all men, #1Ti 4:15. See #Ho 4:15. {See Trapp on "Ho 4:15"}

**And bring your sacrifices every morning]** Like apes, imitate the daily sacrifice; and do those self-same things to your idols which I have commanded to be done to myself alone; and in other places, that should be done at Jerusalem only. Do all this, and try what will come of it. Will you try a fall with God? will you despitefully spit in the face of Heaven? Do ye provoke me to anger, saith the Lord? do ye not provoke yourselves to the confusion of your own faces? #Jer 7:19.

**And your tithes after three years]** That so ye may seem to keep my law exactly, #De 14:28, and to be wanting in no duty, either of piety or charity. Wasps also have their honeycombs; idolaters a form of devotion.

Ver. 5. **And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven]** Which I have flatly forbidden to be done, #Le 2:11. Neither leaven nor honey (which hath a leavening property in it) might be burnt in any offering made by fire; to show how God hateth hypocrisy; which, as leaven, soureth, swelleth, impureth, both us and our services. Out with it, therefore, #1Co 5:7. God indeed permitted his people to offer leavened bread with the peace offerings, #Le 7:13, *ut ostenderetur, Deum ferre nostram infirmitatem*, saith Alsted, to show that God beareth with our infirmities. But those leavened loaves were not to be burnt upon the altar; they were only for food to be eaten.

**And proclaim and publish the free offerings]** That you may not seem in anything to come short of my most forward worshippers;

nor to be without your holy convocations solemnly proclaimed. *Atque ita omnino in caepta idololatria strenue pergite*, and so show yourselves thorough idolaters (Tarnov.); as the historian saith of our Richard III, that knowing it was no good policy to play the villain by half deal, he resolved to suffer never a rub to lie in his way that might hinder the true running of his heart.

**For this liketh you]** Heb. so ye love. Idolatry is marvellously pleasing to corrupt nature; as is to be seen in little ones delighting in babies. The whole world wondered after the beast, **#Re 13:3**. The papacy with its pomp and pleasure is an alluring, tempting, bewitching religion. The great whore with her cup of fornications may easily boast, as that harlot in Aelian did, that she could soon get scholars from Socrates; not he from her. But what an odd or rather sad thing is it, that men should so like that which will be their bane? and that God should be put to complain, as here, and **#Jer 5:31**, "My people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Polybius saith, that whereas man is counted the wisest of all creatures here below, to him he seemeth to be the most foolish; for other things love and seek their own preservation, *Solus homo ab aevo ad aevum peccat fere in iisdem et punitur*. Man only persisteth in sin, and is punished, as if he were ambitious for destruction.

Ver. 6. **And I have also given you cleanness of teeth]** So that you need not spend time in picking them, as those that are fully fed; for I have cut you short enough, and held you to hard allowance; as those that would tame wild creatures keep them empty and waking; but you have been, and so continue, untamed and untractable, incorrigibly flagitious, incapable of repentance. Your diseases are complicated, yea, they are so ingrained, that they are not easily stirred, much less destroyed by any potion I have yet given you. In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction, **#Jer 2:30**.

**In all your cities]** One as well as other, lest you should say as those Philistines, It was a chance, **#1Sa 6:9**: and as the Rabbis tell us, that the idolatrous priests told Jeroboam that the drying up of his hand happened merely by accident.

**And want of bread in all your places]** Thus the Scripture often interpreteth itself, and is ever its own best gloss. Some think that by "want of bread" here, is meant dearth of grain; as by cleanness of teeth, scarcity of flesh; and that by "all your places" we are to understand all your houses. This occurred in the times of Elias and Elisha, #1Ki 17:1 2Ki 6:25 8:1; and God would not have it to be forgotten, but is justly angry that they remained so irreformable. That dearth in Elias' days lasted over three years; and might likely be as extreme as that here in England (about the year 700) of three years' continuance; and so violent it was, that not only many died daily for hunger, but great numbers, joining hand in hand, 40 or 50 in a company, threw themselves headlong into the sea. A like three years' famine also we read to have been in Bohemia and Polonia, A.D. 1312, so great, that children devoured their parents, and parents their children; some fed upon the dead carcasses that hanged in gibbets. Wolves also were so famished, that they fell upon all they met, and fed upon them.

**Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord]** Ye have lost the fruit of your afflictions ( *perdidistis fructum afflictionis*. Aug.), and all mine hammers hitherto have but beaten cold iron. The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed, the founder melteth it in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away, *sc.* from their wickedness; his dross is yet with him, his great scum still in him, #Eze 24:6,12,13, it is woven into the very texture of his heart, and cannot be separated. Reprobate silver shall men call him, because he returneth not to God that smiteth him, #Jer 6:29,30 Isa 9:12,13.

Ver. 7. **And also I have withholden the rain from you, &c.]** And so have punished you with thirst and drought, as well as with dearth and famine: and because I have found you wells without the water of piety, #2Pe 2:17, therefore I have refused to rain upon you, as I threatened, #De 28:23,24.

“ *En quia iam vobis sunt ferrea pectora, reddit*

*Coelum etiam vobis durius aere, Deus.* ”

**When there were yet three months, &c.]** *When you could worst of all want it* {See Trapp on "Joe 2:23"} for the watering of the seed and opening of the earth.

**And I caused it to rain upon one city]** It rains not then by haphazard; neither are the seasons of the year (whether barren or fruitful) ruled by the course of nature or influence of the stars, but by God, **#Ac 14:17**. It is he that giveth rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons. He covereth the heaven with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth, he maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, and standing corn in the fields, **#Ps 147:8**. He weighs these waters by measure; so that not a drop falls in vain, or in a wrong place, but by Divine decree, **#Job 28:26**, for the fattening of the earth, allaying the heat, nourishing the herb and tree, **#De 32:2 Isa 63:14**, producing unto us "the appointed weeks of harvest," **#Jer 5:24**, "that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater," **#Isa 55:10**. This the poor Pagans ascribed to their god Jupiter, whom they therefore styled *Νεφεληγερετης*. Him they confessed the greatest of all, calling him *υπατος*, the overseer of their trading; hence *αγαραιος*, the keeper of their houses, hence Jupiter Herceus, from *ερκος*, a wall, or hedge. This they did, to the great shame of many atheists among us, who hold that all things come either by benign nature or blind chance.

**One piece]** *sc.* Of the same field, was rained upon, and fructified (this was near to a miracle; as when Gideon's fleece was wet and no place else; and again, every place else, and not Gideon's fleece, **#Jud 6:37**).

**And the piece whereupon it rained not]** It, that is, the cloud, but by God's appointment; for he it is that filleth those bottles of the sky, and emptieth them again, where and when he pleaseth, either in mercy, as **#Joe 2:23 Zec 10:1 Le 26:4**, or for a judgment, as **#Joe 1:17 Ge 17:11,12 1Sa 12:18,19**. In the year of grace 1551 a great multitude of men and cattle in Germany were drowned and destroyed; *decidentibus subito nubibus, ac effusis certatim aquis*, saith Bartholinus; by excessive showers and immoderate waters, pouring down upon people as by spouts. This was the very finger of God, who will one day rain upon the wicked snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest, **#Ps 11:6**, Heb. a burning tempest; like as now out of those very clouds where hence he raineth, he doth again scatter sudden fires unto all parts of the earth, astonishing the world with the fearful noise of that eruption.

**Withered]** It must needs do so; and so must God's own vineyard, the Church, when he shall command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it, **#Isa 5:6**, that is, his ministers, that they drop no doctrine upon it, **#De 32:2 Eze 21:2 Am 7:16**, fitly resembled to rain in regard, 1. of cooling heat; 2. quenching thirst; 3. cleansing the air; 4. allaying the winds; 5. mollifying and mellowing the parched and heat hardened earth; 6. causing all things to grow and fructify. This rain of righteousness goes sometimes by coasts, as here: God tying up the tongues of his most faithful labourers, and withholding their showers, though they be clouds thick, and full, and likely enough to drop down in abundance; see **#Eze 3:26,27 Ho 9:7 Pr 16:1**. Pray, therefore, oh pray earnestly, both ministers, for ability and liberty to "drop their word toward the holy places, and prophesy," **#Eze 21:2**, and people, that he would fill their ministers as full of good matter as ever Elihu was, **#Job 32:18**, and then be with their mouths, **#Ex 4:12**, yea, stretch out his holy hand, and touch them, **#Jer 1:9**, performing that piece of midwifery, **#Pr 16:1**, that they may freely utter their conceptions, "and come to their hearers in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace," **#Ro 15:29**. In the Island of St Thomas, on the back side of Africa, in the midst of it, is a hill; and over that a continual cloud, wherewith the whole island is watered. This is our happiness for present. Oh that we knew but this gift of God, **#Joh 4:10**, and were answerably thankful and fruitful! Oh, how cursed a generation are those that repine at it, saying, Never was merry world, since so much preaching, &c. How shall such miscreants one day wish to have but one drop fall from these full clouds to cool the heat and horrors of their consciences, but shall not obtain it.

Ver. 8. **So two or three cities wandered]** Necessity is a hard weapon: and want of water will make men wander far and part with anything for it; as Lysimachus did with his kingdom, sacrificing his estate to the service of his life. Oh that we were as solicitous for our souls! Those good souls, **#Ps 84:7**, went "from strength to strength," travelled many a mile to see God's face, though but in that dark glass of the ceremonies. The good Shunammite went every sabbath and new moon to the prophet. Our forefathers were unweariable in making out after the means, which we vilipend, and make no reckoning of.



**To drink water]** Rain water; for in those countries (as Jerome testifieth, who lived there many years, and therefore knew the situation and nature thereof) they have but few springs, and no considerable rivers, but only Jordan; and are therefore glad to keep rain water in cisterns for all uses; being much afflicted with thirst and drought, if it rain not.

**But they were not satisfied]** Either because there was not enough to be had; or by a singular curse of unsatisfiability, see **#Hag 1:6**. {See *Trapp on "Hag 1:6"*}

**Yet have ye not returned unto me]** *Usque ad me*, so far as me. You have made some faint overtures and essays of returning, but they have not reached out unto me; they have not amounted to the full measure of a sound conversion. *Plectimur*, may you well say, *nec tamen flectimur: corripimur, sed non corrigimur* (Salvian). God rained not upon us that we might return unto him, and learn righteousness, **#Isa 26:10**, that we might pour out a prayer when his chastening was upon us, **#Isa 26:16,18**. But we, alas, have done nothing less; "we have turned every one to his own way"; and done what in us lies to defeat God and undo ourselves by our incorrigibleness and uncurableness.

Ver. 9. **I have smitten you with blasting and mildews]** This by immoderate rain; that by drought caused by an east wind, that *ventus urens et exsiccans*. God cannot possibly want a weapon to tame a rebel.

**When your gardens and your vineyards increased]** Or were trimmed and tricked up. *Taxat nimium eorum studium*, saith Mercer. The prophet here taxeth their overmuch pains taken and cost cast away in multiplying and dressing their orchards and vineyards; when, in the mean while, they neglected the sincere service of God; and suffered their own hearts to lie like the sluggard's field, that was all grown over with thorns and briars, **#Pr 24:31**, that is, with lusts and sins, under which lurketh that old serpent.

**The palmerworm]** Which is worse than the locust, as Jerome noteth; for the locust feeds only on the tops of the ears of grain as he

flies (and thence hath his name in Greek, ακρις), but palmerworms stick close to the fruits or flowers they light on; and will not off till all be consumed. It is the last and worst of evils, saith he; and leaves nothing behind it: *omnia corrodit et converrit*, makes clean work. See #**Joe 1:4,10-12**. {See Trapp on "Joe 1:4"} {See Trapp on "Joe 1:10"} {See Trapp on "Joe 1:11"} {See Trapp on "Joe 1:12"}

**Yet have ye not returned unto me]** No, not yet; but have rejected the remedy of your recovery: see #**Am 4:8**.

Ver. 10. **I have sent among you the pestilence]** That evil angel, #**Ps 78:49**, that το θειον, eminent hand of God, as Hippocrates calleth it; that destruction that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noon day, as the Psalmist styleth it, #**Ps 91:6**. This God sent; for it is a messenger of his sending, an arrow of his shooting, #**2Sa 24:15**, and may better be called *morbus sacer* than the falling sickness; as being an extraordinary hand of God, such as was that *Sudor Anglicus*, in the days of Edward VI the sweating sickness that raged very violently for forty years together here in England (as Sennertus testifieth), and slew so many, that strangers wondered how this island could be so populous as to bear and bury such incredible multitudes. No stranger in England was touched with this disease; and yet the English were chased therewith not only here, but in other countries abroad; which made them, like tyrants, both feared and avoided wherever they came. So long as the ferventness of this plague lasted, there was crying, *Peccavi, Peccavi*; I have sinned, I have sinned, and some pretences of turning to the Lord. The ministers were sought for in every corner (saith Mr Bradford), Oh, you must come to my lord, you must come to my lady. Thus, "when he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues," #**Ps 78:34,36**; as the fox, when taken in a snare, looks pitifully, but it is only that he may get out; as ice melts in the day and hardeneth again in the night; or as iron is very soft and malleable while in the fire, but soon after returneth to its former hardness.

**After the manner of Egypt]** In the way to Egypt (so some read it), as you were trudging down to Egypt for help against enemies, or for corn in time of famine (for Egypt was the world's granary), I have

stretched my net over you: Egypt hath gathered you up, Memphis hath buried you, #Ho 9:6. But taking the words as we translate them, "After the manner of Egypt," *i.e.* so as I plagued the Egyptians, when you were among them {see #Ex 12:29} with mortality of men and murrain of cattle, #Ex 9:15. The plague of Athens is graphically described by Thucydides; whence Ovid and Virgil are thought to have borrowed their descriptions of the pestilence. The plague of Italy is set forth in lively colours by Dionys. Halicarnass. lib. xi. Antiq. That of Constantinople by Nicephorus and Sigebertus.

**Your young men have I slain with the sword]** *Iuvenes a iuvando*, saith Varro: because they are able and apt by arms to defend the commonwealth, and to help it at a dead lift. In Hebrew they have their name *a delectu*; because they are chosen to fight and do business, as fittest for the purpose, #Ex 17:9 2Sa 6:1. These God had slain with the sword, which cutteth its way through a wood of men, and heweth down the youngest and strongest; spareth neither lord nor losel, as they say; is despatched with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, #Isa 9:5.

**And I have made the stink of your camps]** By means of the slain, both men and horses, that lie unburied, and poison the air; see #Joe 2:20 Isa 34:3.

**And yet have ye not returned]** *Nec sic tamen: Vide contumaciam*, saith Mercer here. Obstinate men will sooner break than bend. *Monoceros interimi potest, non capi*. The unicorn is able to be killed but not captured.

Ver. 11. **I have overthrown some of you]** Some and not all: thus, in the midst of judgment he remembered mercy, he did not stir up all his wrath, #Ps 78:38, he let fall some drops, but would not shed the whole shower of it; for he remembered that they were but flesh. Some he hanged up in gibbets, as it were, for example to the rest: as St Jude saith he dealt by Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, thrown forth for an instance of Divine vengeance to all succeeding ages, #Jude 7 (προκεινται); and as Herodotus telleth us, that the sparks and ashes of burnt Troy served for a lasting monument of God's great displeasure against great sinners. See the like threatened to Babylon, #Isa 13:19,20.

**As God overthrew Sodem]** As Jehovah from Jehovah rained hell out of heaven upon them, **#Ge 19:24**, that is, God the Son from God the Father: and so Eusebius observeth that the Father here saith of the Son, that he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah (De Praepar. Evang. 1. 5, c. 23. Vide Socrat. Hist. Eccles. 1. 2. c. 30.): "he condemned them with an overthrow," **#2Pe 2:6**, he overthrew them and repented not, **#Jer 20:16**, he overthrew them in a moment, and no hand stayed on them, **#La 4:6**. And yet worse shall be the condition of those that despise the grace of the gospel, which is the great sin of these last times, **#Mt 11:24**; yea, the devils will keep holy-day, as it were, in hell, in respect of such sinners against their own souls.

**And ye were as a firebrand]** *Ambustus et fumigans titio*, smutchy and smoky, and scarcely escaping with the skin of your teeth, **#Job 19:20**, as Lot out of Sodom, as the man of Benjamin out of the army, **#1Sa 2:12**, as the young man that fled naked away at Christ's attachment, **#Mr 14:52**, or as Hunniades narrowly escaping with his life from the battle of Varna; where he had like to have fallen with that perjured Popish king, as good Jehoshaphat had for joining with Ahab. It is as if God should say: There are not many of you that are left, and have your lives for a prey; howbeit they are ill bestowed upon you, for any good use you have made of my forbearance. "Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness," **#Isa 26:10**; and if thou deliver him once, yet thou must do it again, and when all is done that can be done. "A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment," **#Pr 19:19**; and so (to be sure of it) shall a man of great stomach and stubbornness, that refuseth to return, as these of whom the fifth time it is here complained.

**And yet ye have not returned, &c.]** *O prorsus obstinati!* saith Tarnovius here: *Prorsus indurati et contumaces*, saith Mercer. "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, do ye thus always resist the Holy Ghost?" **#Ac 7:51**: will ye needs be like horse and mule, uncounsellable, untractable? will ye, after conviction, needs run away with the bit in your mouths and take your swing in sin. If so resolved, yet stay, saith the Psalmist, and take this along with you, "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked," **#Ps 32:10**; your

preservation from one evil shall be but a reservation to seven worse, **#Le 26:21**, as it fared with Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and others; God will surely subdue or subvert you.

Ver. 12. **Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel]** Thus? how? *Non nominat mala ut omnia timeant*, saith Ribera. He tells them not how, that they may fear the worst; even all that is written and unwritten. It was the very policy of Julius Caesar never to extenuate or deny to his soldiers the danger of an enemy, but rather to raise up thoughts of valour by aggravating the contrary forces: and this way he did (not seldom) hyperbolically rhetoricate saith the story. Now the Lord need not do so; since his judgments are a great deep, neither can any man know the power of his anger, **#Ps 90:11**: let a man fear it never so much, he is sure to feel it a great deal more if he once fall into his fingers. Is it nothing to drink the dregs of God's displeasure, when it is eternity unto the bottom? Is it nothing to launch into an infinite ocean of scalding lead, and to swim naked in it for ever? Oh, do anything rather than be damned; and as Lewis, King of France, cast the pope's bulls into the fire, saying, he had rather they should burn than himself fry in hell for obeying them; or as Mary, Queen of England, restored again all the ecclesiastical livings assumed to the crown, saying that she set more by the salvation of her own soul than she did by ten kingdoms; so "let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him; and to our God, that he may multiply pardon," **#Isa 55:7**.

**And because I will do this unto thee]** Which (had I not wished thee well) I would never have told thee. But God loves to forewarn; and therefore threateneth evil that he may not inflict it (*Ideo minatur ut non puniat*): he would gladly be prevented by our humble addresses unto him, and by our entreaties of peace. Hear him else.

**Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel]** Turn and try; thou canst not likely lose thy labour; or if thou shouldst, yet thou hast lost many a worse. Let Ephraim but bemoan himself, and God will soon melt over him, **#Jer 31:20**. Let God's prodigals return to their merciful Father and he will meet them half-way, and receive them with all sweetness. *Tantum velis, et Deus tibi praeoccurrent*. Do as those, **#Jer 3:17**. Alexander's Macedonians, being sensible of his

displeasure, laid by their arms, put on their mourning attire, came trooping to his tent, where, for almost three days, they remained with loud cries and abundance of tears, testifying their remorse for offending him, beseeching his pardon, which at last they gained. And Guicciardin tells us, that Lewis XII of France (when he entered Genoa in his triumphant chariot with his sword naked), resolved to make a prey of their riches, and an example of many of the chief among them, and to leave the rest to his soldiers' mercies. But being met first by the chief, afterward by the multitude, making great lamentation for their folly, with abundance of tears and cries, his wrath was appeased toward them. The like we read of Henry VII, emperor, toward the citizens of Cremona; of our Edward III toward the inhabitants of Calais. And in Cade's conspiracy here, after that twenty-six of the chief rebels were executed, the multitude, naked in their shirts, met the king on Blackheath, humbly praying mercy; which they obtained.

Ver. 13. **For lo, he that formeth the mountains, &c.]** *q.d.* If my mercy move thee not to a humble submission, let my majesty; and for that end consider and tremble at my *Nomen Maiestativum*, my transcendent excellencies as they are here displayed, descried, and described, for thy learning, with a great deal of solemnity and state; to the end that thou mayest not expect evils, but prevent them, as Demosthenes counselled his countrymen.

**He that formeth the mountains]** At first, doubtless, with the rest of the universe (though some held they were cast up by Noah's flood); see **#Ps 90:1,2**; by his mere Fiat, without tool or toil, **#Isa 40:28**. This the blind heathens saw, and thus hieroglyphically set forth: in Thebes, a town of Egypt, they worshipped a God, whom they acknowledged to be immortal. And how painted they him? In the likeness of a man blowing an egg out of his mouth; to signify that he made the round world by his word.

**And createth the wind]** The world's besom (as Rupertus calleth it) wherewith God sweepeth his great house, and whereby he setteth forth his inexpressible power. See for this **#Ps 18:11 148:8 Job 28:25 Jer 10:12**; Senec. lib. v. Nat. Quaest. cap. 18. And although we cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, **#Joh 3:8**, yet can we with Cruciger contemplate the footsteps of God in this and

other creatures; saying with Paul, that God is so near unto us, that he may almost be felt with our hands, *ψηλαφησειαν*, #Ac 17:29.

**And declareth unto man what is his thought]** What language he hath in his heart, what he talketh within himself ( *quid sermocinetur, quidve cogitet*, Drus.), as the rich fool did, #Lu 12:17. Jesus knew the Pharisee's thoughts; yea, "thou understandest my thought afar off," saith David, #Ps 139:2, even before I conceive them. Jerome and Theodotion refer the affix to God, and renders it thus, Who declareth unto man his word and will therein revealed, *Eloquium suum*, *τον λογον αυτου*. The Seventy read thus, Who declareth unto man his Christ *τον χριστον αυτου*, *sensu pio et egregio*, saith Mercer, *sed alieno*; for *Ma-sicho* they read *Meshicho*; *perperam*. wrongly.

**That maketh the morning darkness]** As he did at Sodom, whereon the sun shone bright in the morning, but ere night there was a dismal change. So in Egypt, #Ex 10:22; so in Jewry at Christ's death, #Mt 27:45. Let this teach us to bless God for the light both natural, #Ge 1:4, and supernatural, #2Co 4:4,5, and to pray, that our gospel sun may not set at noon tide, nor our light be put out in obscure darkness; but rather that he would make our darkness morning (for so the words may be read here), by clearing up those truths to us that yet lie in part undiscovered. Oh, cry after Christ, as the poor man in the Gospel, "Lord, that mine eyes might be opened!" Oh that thou wouldest give me sight and light! Sun of righteousness, shine upon my dark soul.

**And treadeth upon the high places of the earth]** As being "higher than the highest," *excelsus super excelsos*, #Ec 5:8, "terrible to all the kings of the earth" (those dread sovereigns), #Ps 76:12, "the most high God," #Ge 14:18,22, that hath heaven for his throne and earth for his footstool; yea, those highest places of the earth, the tops of mountains, and rocks inaccessible. "But who is this King of glory?"

**The Lord, the God of hosts is his name]** "Give therefore unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due to his name; worship the Lord in the beauty

of holiness," &c.: "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy," #Ps 29:1,2 99:5.

## Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Hear ye this word]** A new sermon, as appeareth by this new O yes; not unlike that of St Paul, #Ac 13:16, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience": or rather, that of Diogenes, who cried out at Athens, Ακουσατε ανδρες, Hear, O ye men. And when as (thereupon) a great sort of people resorted to him, expecting some great matter, he looked about him, and said, ανδρας εκαλεσα, ου καθαριματα, I called men, and not slaves. They were no better surely that our prophet had to deal with; "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers," #Isa 1:4, children that were corrupters; they had forsaken the Lord, provoked the Holy One of Israel, they had increased revolt. Hence this *onerosa prophetia*, this word, this weighty word, this burdensome prophecy.

**Which I take up against you]** Heb. lift up, being scarce able to stand under the burden of it, נשׂא, from this נשא, *onus*. burden. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"} And it is against you, not for you; but that is your own fault; for "do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?" #Mic 2:7. Excellently Austin, *Adversarius est nobis quandiu sumus et ipsi nobis*. The word of God is adversary to none but such as are adversaries to themselves; neither doth it condemn any but those that shall be assuredly condemned by the Lord except they repent. But we have in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, saith the apostle, #2Co 10:6, and if any man will hurt God's faithful witnesses, for discharging their duties, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed, #Re 11:5, for Elisha had his sword as well as Jehu and Hazael, #1Ki 19:17. And when Elisha unsheatheth and brandisheth his sword, it is a fair warning that the sword of Jehu and Hazael are at hand, See #Ho 6:5 Jer 1:18.

**Even a lamentation]** Heb. a very bitter lamentation, #Eze 19:14, like those of Jeremiah for Judah, or of the mourners in Jerusalem, #Eze 9:4, or of Christ weeping over that city, #Lu 19:41,42. Or of Paul bewailing his wretched countrymen, #Ro 9:3 10:1: or of the two witnesses clothed in sackcloth, #Re 11:3, the habit of mourners:



or of Athanasius, who by his tears (as by the bleeding of a chaste vine) sought to cure the leprosy, and prevent the misery of that tainted age. *Heu, heu, Domine Deus*, Alas alas, Oh God, God, was the cry of the ancient Christians. *Flete nefas magnum, nam toto flebitis orbe* (Cardan.). Their books are like that in Ezekiel, written on both sides, and there was written therein, "lamentations, and mourning, and woe," #Eze 2:10. This of Amos was a sad song, a doleful ditty, a lamentable prophecy of Israel's utter destruction, as it followeth in the second verse, where (prophet-like) he speaketh of it as already done, notwithstanding their present prosperity and tranquillity. And have not England's turtledoves groaned out for a great while the sad and lamentable tunes of woe and misery to this sinful nation; and plainly foretold what we have felt already, and have yet cause enough to fear. Ah! great be the plagues that hang over England (said Mr Philpot, martyr, long since). Happy shall that person be whom the Lord shall take out of this world, not to see them, &c. And the like said Rogers, our proto-martyr, Bradford, Ridley, Lever, &c., besides the concurrent predictions of God's faithful servants lately, whose hearts and tongues he hath so guided, as that they all, as one man, have denounced heavy judgments, and taken up loud lamentations against us. Now, as before great storms cocks crow loud and thick: so is it here; and so it should be, #Ex 32:31,32 Jer 18:20 Joe 2:17; else God will be displeased, #Eze 13:5 22:30,31.

Ver. 2. **The virgin of Israel is fallen**] *i.e.* Though of the spouse of God she be become the devil's adulteress, #Jer 3:1 Ho 1:2, yet she will needs be counted and called a virgin still; as Sardis, she hath a name to live, but is dead, #Re 3:1; as the Romish crew cry themselves up the only Church Catholic, and therein (like oyster wives) do much outcry us. But what saith the Lord by his prophet Jeremiah, #Jer 18:13? "Ask ye now among the heathen; who hath heard such things?" And "the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing." And the virgin of Rome may well say, as Quartilla the strumpet in Petronius doth, *Iunonem meam iratam habeam, si unquam me meminerim virginem fuisse*: I can hardly remember myself a maid. Israel may also be called a virgin, because she yet subsisted and flourished in her first liberty and splendour, till taken and defloured, as it were, by the Assyrian. And in this sense we read of the virgin of Babylon, #Isa 47:1; of Egypt, #Jer 46:12; of Zidon,

**#Isa 23:12**; and now of Venice, whose motto is, *Intacta maneo*, I am still a maid; as having never yet fallen into the enemies' power. Tournay, a town in France, was ever counted so invincible, that this sentence was engraven over one of the gates, *Iannes ton me perdu ton pucelage*, Thou hast never lost thy maidenhead. Yet was it yielded up to our King Henry VIII, with 10,000 pounds sterling, for the the citizens' redemption. The virgin of Israel sped not so well.

**She is fallen]** That is, she shall fall, surely, suddenly, utterly.

**She shall no more rise]** *i.e.* Return out of captivity, and be restored to her pristine splendour; yet some think otherwise.

**She is forsaken upon her land]** *Proiecta est, prostrata iacet*, she is thrown hard upon her ground, and as it were dashed against it, like an earthen pot against a rock; and all this, because she had left off righteousness in the earth, **#Am 5:7**. Those that forsake God shall be forsaken of him, **#2Ch 15:2**.

**There is none to raise her up]** God will not; and then, man cannot. "Behold," saith Bildad, "God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he take the ungodly by the hand," **#Job 8:20**, and he will bring them into trouble, and there leave them, **#Eze 22:20 29:5**. His own he will not leave; or if he do, yet forsake them he will not, **#Heb 13:5**; and if men do, he will relieve them the rather. "Because they called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after; therefore I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord," **#Jer 30:17**.

Ver. 3. **The city that went out by a thousand]** *i.e.* That had a thousand inhabitants passing to and fro through the gates, {see **#Ge 34:24 23:10**, for men love not to be cooped up, or confined to a place, as the Duke of Venice is, but to be travelling and trading} or that can send out a thousand fit to bear arms.

**Shall leave an hundred]** Here is a woeful decimation, purporting a very great paucity of people; such as was threatened, **#De 28:62**, a tenth man only shall be left, if that. Behold the severity of God, and betray not the lives of others by an impenitent continuance in sin. Turn to God, if but for your poor brethren's sake, that are in danger, or in durance. Hezekiah's reason to repent is very remarkable, **#2Ch**

**30:9:** "For if ye turn again to the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land; for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn his face from you, if ye return unto him."

**Shall leave ten]** Not take ten in a hundred and leave the rest, as the Roman generals used to do in the army, in case of a mutiny. This was fulfilled in that three years' siege of Samaria, **#2Ki 18:10**, as afterwards the like occurred at Jerusalem, which could hardly be repopled in Nehemiah's time, and at this day is but thinly inhabited; there being not a hundred households of Jews to be found there. In our countries, of the abundance of people cometh dearth, which maketh many malcontents to mutter; but in many parts of Turkey, for want of men to till the ground; most of the poor being enforced with victuals and other necessaries to follow their great armies, in their long expeditions; of whom scarce one of ten (saith mine author) ever return home again, there by the way perishing, if not by the enemies' sword, yet by the wants, intemperateness of the air, or immoderate painstaking.

Ver. 4. **For thus saith the Lord]** Or, truly thus saith the Lord; notwithstanding the former terrible sentence, which the prophet could not denounce with dry eyes; but takes up a lamentation, though less concerned in it, and might well say, as one did in another case,

*“ Tu quibus ista legis, incertum est, lector ocellis,  
Ipse quidem siccis dicere non potui.”*

*All God's threatenings (for the most part) are conditional, #Jer 18:7 26:2, sc. if men repent not. As if they do, they may live in his sight, and be accounted worthy (such is God's great goodness) to escape all those things that shall befall the impenitent, #Lu 21:36. The gospel is post naufragium tabula, writing tablet after the ship wreck, sand hath its reward too, #Heb 11:6, sc. of grace and mercy. Do this and live, saith the law. Seek the Lord, and live, saith the gospel. "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," and that is the force of the Hebrew word here used, which signifieth to inquire, to make serious search and scrutiny, to seek him out*

(εκζητησατε με, as the Seventy have it), when he is withdrawn; to seek him as a student doth sciences, a worldling gold, a hungry man meat, &c., as a man studiously turns over a commentary to find out the sense of a text, **#Isa 34:16**. Do this, saith God, and ye shall live; not only have your lives for a prey, but live merrily, happily. "Now we live," saith the apostle; that is, we rejoice, **#1Th 3:8**: and "Thus shall ye say to him that liveth"; that is, hath a comfortable life, and a confluence of blessings, **#1Sa 25:6**. But besides all this, ye shall live for ever; and *aeterna vita, vera vita*, eternal life is the only life properly so called. Life (in what sense soever taken) is a sweet mercy: "A living dog is better than a dead lion," saith Solomon, **#Ec 9:4**; and "Joseph is yet alive," saith Jacob (he doth not say, Joseph is lord of Egypt), "I will get down, and see him before I die," **#Ge 45:28**. "But eternal life is" (by a speciality and with an accent) "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord," **#Ro 6:23**; and this gift he will freely bestow on all that so seek him as not to be satisfied without him, as Moses, who would not be put off with an angel, but said, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence," **#Ex 33:15**; and as Luther, who when great gifts were sent him, refused them and said, *Valde protestatus sum, me nolle sic satiari a Deo*: I deeply protested that I would not be satisfied with these low things, but that I would have God or nothing. This was one of those brave apophthegms <sup>{a}</sup> of his, concerning which Melchior Adam well saith, A man would fetch them upon his knees from Rome, or Jerusalem, rather than be without them.

<sup>{a}</sup> A terse, pointed saying, embodying an important truth in few words; a pithy or sententious maxim. (ED

Ver. 5. **But seek not Bethel, &c.**] Make not lies your refuge, idols your oracles; "they that observe lying vanities do" (by their own election) "forsake their own mercies." <sup>{#Jon 2:8}</sup> But I (saith the prophet, who had now paid for his learning, and was yet under the lash) will sacrifice to thee alone, will seek thy face and favour, not at Bethel, or Gilgal, but in the place where thine honour dwelleth; not at Hull, Sichern, or Loretto, but in the true reformed Churches, in the beauties of holiness, in the midst of those seven golden candlesticks, in the hearts and houses of his faithful people, concerning whom he hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them," **#2Co 6:16**, and when they walk within their houses with a perfect heart, I will come unto them, **#Ps 101:2**. I will there command my blessing, "even life

for evermore," #Ps 133:3: see #Am 4:4 Ho 4:15. {See Trapp on "Am 4:4"}  
{See Trapp on "Hos 4:15"}

**For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity]** An elegant alliteration in the original, such as the prophets are full of, and this plain prophet among the rest ( הלגלג ללג הלג גללג): see #Am 8:2. Ministers may sometimes rhetoricate; and it had need to be an elaborate speech that shall work upon the conscience.

**And Bethel shall come to nought]** Heb. shall be Aven, as elsewhere it is called Betharch, #Ho 4:11 10:5. Against Beersheba he saith nothing; because that name afforded him not the like elegance, as Mercer thinketh; or because that city belonged to Judah, and so was not destroyed with the ten tribes, as Jerome holdeth, #IKi 19:3. Seek not these places, saith the prophet, for help and succour in distress; but say, as #Jer 3:23, "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from these hills: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." Ver. 6. **Seek ye the Lord, and ye shall live]** See #Am 5:4. *Sic eadem saepe surdis et obstinatis inculcantur* (Mercer). The continual pressing of a duty imports: 1. The excellency; 2. The necessity; 3. The difficulty of doing it: else what need so many words? *Perquam durum est, sed ita lex scripta est*, saith Ulpian. Hard or not hard, it must be done, or men are undone.

**Lest he break out like fire]** Lest he go through you and burn you together, #Isa 27:4, lest ye be "utterly burnt with fire in the same place," #2Sa 23:7, that is, in hell (as some expound it), which the prophet called tormenting Tophet, #Isa 30:33, and Plato calleth πυριφλεγεθων, a fiery lake; so terrible, saith Bellarmine, that one glimpse of it were enough to make a man not only turn Christian and sober, but anchorite {a} and monk; to live after the strictest rule that may be.

{a} A person who has withdrawn or secluded himself from the world; usually one who has done so for religious reasons, a recluse, a hermit. (ED)

Ver. 7. **Ye who turn judgment to wormwood]** Ye grandees and governors of the people, that turn the sweetest thing into the sourest (as *corruptio optimi pessima*), right into wrong dealing; that follow the administration of justice as a trade only, with an unquenchable

and unconscionable desire of gain; not caring what becomes of righteousness, but leaving it off in the earth, or rather not leaving it at all upon earth ( *terras Astraea reliquit*), but chasing it out of the world as much as in you lieth; while you cast it down to the ground, and tread it underfoot, **#Da 8:12**, while you oppress the just, crush the needy, &c., **#Am 4:1**: see the note there. Some read the text, by way of exclamation, thus: O ye that turn judgment, &c.; *q.d.* What strange creatures are you! what monsters of men! what public scourges! what scabs! **#Isa 5:7**, God "looked for judgment, but behold oppression" (in the original it is, behold a scab); "for righteousness, but behold a cry": such a cry as entereth into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, *Iudices instar scabiei molesti sunt oppressis* (Piscator in loc.).

Ver. 8. **Seek him that maketh the seven stars]** Once again, "Seek him"; that is, Return to him by true repentance; and by faith take hold of his strength, that ye may make peace, and ye shall make peace with him, **#Isa 27:5**. To stand out it boots not; since it is he that made Bootes and Orion, &c., that is, of infinite power; and doeth whatsoever he will in heaven and earth, "who only doeth wondrous things," **#Ps 72:18**. See **#Am 4:12,13**. Chimah and Chesil, that is, Pleiades and Orion, are twice mentioned together in Job. Noted stars they are, and known to shepherds and such like. Amos, likely, was but such an astronomer as herdsmen use to be. Those who write of these stars tell us, that Chimah comes of Chamah, to love ardently; because of the fellowship and working together that appears in them. They be seven stars that have all one name; because they all help one another in their work, which is to bring the spring; and like seven sisters or lovers, so are they joined together in one constellation, and in one company. We see (saith one) that God will have the sweetest works in nature to be performed by mutual help. The best time of the year cometh with these seven stars (hence we read of their sweet influence, **#Job 38:31**), and the best time of our life cometh when we enter into true love and fellowship. As for Orion, it is the star (saith the same author) that brings winter; and his bonds cannot be loosed. It binds the earth with frost and cold, that the fruits thereof might be seasoned and made kindly against the spring: neither can the spring come till Orion have prepared the way. God will have us suffer before we reign. The word Chesil here used signifies, in the

Chaldee, to perfect; because by suffering and offering violence to ourselves we enter into perfection, #Lu 13:32. If we would have a pleasant spring of graces in our hearts, we must first have a nipping winter: the spirit of mortification must be like the cold star Orion, to nip our quick motions in the head, and to bind all our unclean desires and burning lusts, that they stir not in us; and unless we do thus, the seven stars of comfort shall never appear to us.

**And turneth the shadow of death,**] that is, the thickest darkness (*tenebras ferales et letales*, #Ps 23:4),

**into the morning]** Into "the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," #Pr 4:18. This severing of night from day and day from night, this mutual and orderly succession and course of the night after the day, and the day after the night, the lengthening and shortening of the days in summer and winter, the wonderful eclipses, and other occurrents of that nature, are works of God's power and providence, not to be slighted, but improved to true repentance. We are to mark the countenance of the sky, and to discern the face of heaven; that every day and night winketh at us, and beckoneth to us, to remember the wisdom, power, justice, and mercy of God lined out unto us in the brows of the firmament. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork," #Ps 19:1. The creatures are *Regii professores*, ministers of the King, saith one; Catholic preachers, saith another; Real apostles of the divinity, saith a third. Clemens Alexandrinus saith, that the world is *Dei scriptura*, word of God, the first Bible that God made for the instruction of man. Antonius Eremita told a philosopher, who objected to him his want of books, that the universe was to him instead of a well furnished library, everywhere ready at hand. Hugo affirmeth, that everything uttereth these three words, *Accipe, Redde, Fuge*, Receive mercy, Return duty, Shun sin, together with that hell that it hailes at the heels of it. Much a man may learn out of the book of nature, with its three leaves, Heaven, Earth, and Sea; but there he must not rest. For, as where the naturalist ends the physician begins; so, where nature fails and can go no farther, there Scripture succeeds and gives more grace, #Jas 4:6 Ps 19:1,2,7,8. The Chaldee paraphrast takes this text allegorically, as if the sense were; God changeth his hand towards

the sons of men at his pleasure, prospering them one while, crossing them another; so that they walk in darkness and have no light, **#Isa 50:10**, yea, they walk through the vale of the shadow of death, **#Ps 23:4**. Not through a dark entry or churchyard in the night time, but a valley, a large, long, vast place; not of darkness only, but of death; and not bare death, but the shadow of death, that is, the darkest and most dismal side of death, in its most hideous and horrid representations. And yet if God be with his Davids in this sad condition, no hurt shall befall them, but much good.

*“FleBILE principium melior fortuna sequetur.”*

**That calleth for the waters of the sea]** That is, for great armies, saith the Chaldee. But better take it literally, of the generation of rain, the chief author whereof is God: the material cause is the sea sending up vapours; the instrumental cause is the sun, by the beams whereof God draws the vapour upwards; sends for them, as it were, into the middle region of the air, there thickeneth them into clouds, and then resolveth them into rain. This Kimchi illustrateth by the simile of a boiling pot, whereout vapours and fumes, ascending to the colder pot lid, are turned into drops of water, see **#Ge 2:6**.

**The waters of the sea]** **#1Ki 18:44**, a little cloud arose out of the sea like a man's hand. And presently the prophet said to Ahab, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds," &c.

*“Humorem magno tollunt ex aequore ponti*

*Nubes, qui in tote terrarum spargitur orbe,  
Cum pluit in terris” (Lucret. lib. 6).*

*The naturalists observe that it snows not in the sea, because it sends up hot vapours, which presently dissolve the snow.*

**The Lord is his name]** His memorial, **#Ho 12:5**. {See Trapp on "Ho 12:5"} He is not an idol, to be dallied with and deluded.



Ver. 9. **That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong]**  
*Victorem a victo superari saepe videmus.* God can quickly change the scene, turn the scales, #**Jer 37:10**, though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire. In a bloody fight between Amurath III, king of Turks, and Lazarus, despot of Servia, many thousands fell on both sides. In conclusion the Turks had the victory, and Lazarus was slain. Amurath, after that great victory, with some few of his chief captains, taking view of the dead bodies, which without number lay on heaps in the field like mountains, a Christian soldier, sore wounded and all blood, seeing him, in staggering manner arose (as if it had been from death) out of a heap of slain men, and making toward him, for want of strength fell down various times by the way as he came, as if he had been a drunken man. At length, drawing nigh unto him, when they which guarded the king's person would have stayed him, he was by Amurath himself commanded to come nearer, supposing that he would have craved his life of him. Thus this half-dead Christian, pressing nearer unto him, as if he would, for honour's sake, have kissed his feet, suddenly stabbed him in the bottom of his belly with a short dagger which he had under his coat; of which wound that great king and conqueror presently died. The name of this man was Miles Cobelite, who, before sore wounded, was shortly after in the presence of Bajazet (Amurath's son), cut into small pieces. So in that memorable fight between the Swissers and the Dolphin, near to Basil, when Burcardus, monk, a nobleman and a great soldier, grew proud of the victory, and put up his helmet that he might behold what a slaughter they had made, one of the half-dead Swissers, rising up upon his knees, threw a stone at him, which, hitting right, gave him his death's wound. At the battle of Agincourt, where our Henry V won the day, the French were so confident of a victory, that they sent to King Henry, to know what ransom he would give. Henry, comforting his army with a speech, resolved to open his way over the enemy's bosom, or else to die. After which, such was the courage of the English, notwithstanding their great wants, as he that ere while could scarcely bend his bow is able now to draw his yard long arrow to the very head.

**So that the spoiled (or spoil) shall come against the fortress]** And take it by assault. *Deus loca, quantumvis valida, vasta facit.* There is no strength against the Lord, **#Pr 21:30.**

Ver. 10. **They hate him that rebuketh in the gate]** *In dome iudicii,* saith the Chaldee: for the gate was the place of judgment, **#Am 5:12,15 De 17:5,12,15.** Those, then, that did not approve and applaud the oppressions and wrongdealings of the judges, and rich bribers, but cried out against such, and took the same liberty to rebuke them that they did to commit them, these were hated, *cane peius et angue,* worse than any toad. Thus Ahab hated Micaiah, the Sodomites Lot, the Jews Jeremiah, their successors Christ, the Baptist, Stephen, Paul. Thus those of Geneva hated Farellus, their faithful minister, tried him for his life, banished him out of their territories. Thus afterwards some of them hated Calvin, calling him Cain; yea, calling their dogs Calvin, in derision and detestation of him. And thus Bishop Ridley, lamenting the state of England, even of thy greatest magistrates, saith he, some (the king's Highness excepted) evermore unkindly and ungently against those that went about most busily and wholesomely to cure their sore backs, spurned privily, and would not spare to speak evil of them, even to the prince himself; and yet would they toward the same preachers outwardly bear a jolly countenance and fair face. As for Latimer, Lever, Bradford, Knox, their tongues were so sharp, they ripped in so deep in their galled backs, to have purged them, no doubt, of their filthy matter that was festered in their hearts, of insatiable covetousness, of filthy carnality and voluptuousness, of intolerable ambition and pride, of ungodly loathsomeness to hear poor men's cases, and to hear God's word. And these men, of all others, these magistrates then could never abide, &c. Thus he, and much more to the same purpose. They were then sick of a *Noli me tangere,* do not be touched by me, and so, alas, they are still. How few Vespasians to be found, of whom Quintilian testifieth, that he was *patientissimus veri,* one that would patiently hear the naked truth of things; not toothless truths only, but such as touched to the quick! How few Davids, that loved Nathan the better ever after, for dealing so plainly and faithfully with him, and made him of his cabinet council! How few Queen Elizabeths, who called often for her Deering by whom she was barely told of her faults; though the bishops, those court parasites, would never suffer him to preach more before her! The

Queen of Navarre would not hearken to such ministers as disliked that fatal French match (that gave opportunity afterwards to the Parisian Massacre) in regard of the diversity of religions; but inclined rather to those that smoothed her up, and told her that it would lay the foundation of a lasting and most happy peace. And generally of those French Reformed churches it was observed, that for some years before that bloody massacre they affected a frothy, flashy kind of preaching; and cared not for that which came home to the conscience. See my Common Place of Admonition.

**And they abhor him that speaketh uprightly]** *Auget orationem*, saith Drusius. The prophet groweth in his expression of their wickedness: for to abhor is more than to hate; see **#Pr 6:16**. Hatred (as they say of the crocodile) groweth as long as it liveth. Sin is of an encroaching nature. If a serpent devour a serpent (saith the proverb) he becometh a dragon, *Serpens si serpentem comederit fit draco*. Hatred of the truth, as runner, the older it is the stronger; the Pharisees for instance, who did not only inwardly swell and boil with hellish hatred of Christ, his works, and doctrine, but also outwardly belched out against him the basest blasphemies; and in their pertinacious working, constantly persecuted him, even to the most reproachful death of the cross. This is *merces mundi*, the world's wages to God's faithful witnesses. They "make a man an offender for a word" (yea, for speaking uprightly), "and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought," **#Isa 29:21**. *An expectas ut Quintilianus ametur?* said he: Dost thou think that plain dealing Quintilian should be loved? it is not likely. To preach, saith Luther, the truth which is according to godliness, is nothing else but to derive the rage of the whole world upon a man's self.

**And ye take from him burdens of wheat]** Heb. the finest wheat, and best winnowed; these ye force him to make money of, for your use; glad to feed upon the rotted wheat himself.

**Ye have built houses of hewn stone]** Squared and polished, thinking to flourish, and frolic (οικους ξεστους. *Domos rasiles et politas*. Sept.): but the screech owls of woe crying aloud from the stones out of those walls, shall mar your mirth, **#Hab 2:11**.

**But ye shall not dwell in them]** For either ye shall be prevented by death, and sent to dwell with devils; or be carried away captive, and a stranger possess your new buildings, **#De 28:30**.

**Ye have planted pleasant vineyards]** As he in the history, that, having a cup of new wine in his hand, expressed out of the grapes of his newly planted vineyard, was set upon and slain by a wild boar, before he could drink it, and gave occasion to that proverb, *Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque labra*; Many things fall between the cup and the lip, between the chin and the chalice (Erasm. Adag.). Hereunto agreeth that story in Mr Burroughs upon Hosea (Burr. on Hos. i. p. 379). I had, saith he, certain information, from a reverend minister, that in his own town there was a wretched worldling, who had a great crop of grain. A good honest neighbour of his walking by his field, saith, Neighbour, you have a very fine crop of grain if God bless it. Yea, saith he, I will have a good crop, speaking contemptuously; and before he could come to get it into the barn, it was so blasted, that the grain of the whole crop was not worth sixpence. God hath many ways to defeat the wicked man's expectation, and the hope of unjust men perisheth, **#Pr 11:7**. *Etiam spes valentissima perit*, so some render that text, he shall die or miscarry, in the very height of his hopes and expectations.

Ver. 12. **For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins]** I know them, and can easily set them in an order before your eyes, **#Ps 50:21**, bring them out (as they did the vessels of the sanctuary) by number and by weight, **#Ezr 8:34**: make you answer for all with flames about your ears, lay open your many transgressions, and mighty sins, *fortia peccata*. The Hebrew hath it, your bony, or big boned sins; huge, heinous, and monstrous, capable of all manner of aggravations. All these I know, saith God, they are all in print in heaven, and I will one day read them aloud in the ears of all the world. *Fac ergo confitendo propitium, quem tacendo non facis nescium*, saith Austin. Make, therefore, God thy friend, by confessing thy sins to him, which thou canst not by any means conceal from him.

**They afflict the just]** They pinch and distress him by their oppressions, which are often here laid in their dish, as an abomination to the Lord; for he is merciful, see **#Am 2:6**.

**They take a bribe]** A ransom to blind their eyes (Copher), as **#1Sa 12:3**, or a pacification of their pretended displeasure against heinous crimes brought before them. *Olim didiei quid sint munera*, said a worthy man: Once I have learned long since, how dangerous a thing it is for men in place to meddle with gifts. A public person, as he should have nothing to lose, so nothing to get; he should be above all price or sale.

**They turn aside the poor in the gate]** That is, in the place of judicature. This makes many that go to law, to be at length of Themistocles' mind; who professed that if two ways were shown him, one to hell, and the other to the bar, he would choose that which went to hell, and forsake the other. Another said, that he wondered much at two sorts of men; viz. those that go to sea, and those that go to law: not so much that they did so at first, but that, after trial, they would ever go a second time.

Ver. 13. **Therefore the prudent shall keep silence]** According to that old and good rule, Either keep silence, or speak that which is better than silence, η σιγαν, η κρεισσονα οιγης λεγειν. There is "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak," **#Ec 3:7**, and it is a singular skill to time a word, **#Isa 50:4**, to set it upon its circumferences, **#Pr 25:11**, so to speak, and so to do, as those that shall be judged by the law of liberty, **#Jas 2:12**. He that would be able to speak right and forcible words, must first learn how and when to keep silence. It is not good casting pearls before swine; nor pulling a bear or mad dog by the ear. It is the true ambition of a Christian, to study to be quiet, to meddle with his own business, **#1Th 4:11**, ιδιοπραγμονειν, to affect rather quietness from the wicked world than acquaintance with it, and to pass through it with as little noise and notice as he can. Not but that God's faithful servants must cry aloud, and not spare, lifting up their voices like a trumpet, &c., **#Isa 58:1**, and casting away the inverse trumpets of Furius Fulvus, which sounded a retreat, when they should have sounded an alarm. But this must be done with godly discretion. Zeal should eat us up, but not eat up our wisdom (saith one), nor should

policy eat up our zeal. The apostles professed that they could not but speak the things that they had heard and seen; they must either vent or burst. And yet holy Paul (who was full of the spirit of judgment and of burning, #Isa 4:4), though he preached at Ephesus (where he lived two years and more together) that they be no gods that are made with hands; yet he made no particular invective against their great goddess Diana, whereon they so impotently doted, #Ac 19:26,37, He that hath a good mixture of zeal and prudence is like a ship well ballasted, that sails with a prosperous gale; but zeal without discretion is like fire on the chimney top; or like mettle in a blind horse; or the devil in the demoniac, that cast him sometimes into the fire, and sometimes into the water. What a storm of persecution raised Bishop Abdias in Persepolis by his intemperate zeal, not bridled with discretion; as the poets fable that Minerva put a golden bridle upon Pegasus, lest he should fly too fast? And it was some disadvantage to Paul, when in the council (though provoked and unjustly smitten) he called the high priest whited wall; he was glad to excuse it by his ignorance. We may not be too bold or too forward to speak in a good matter, to such as hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and abhor him that speaketh uprightly, #Am 5:10.

**For it is an evil time]** By reason of an evil and adulterous generation, that make it so. It is a day of evil, as #Ps 41:1, that is, of difficulty and danger, to those that dare speak out: such as were Tiberius's times. That tiger laid hold with his teeth on all the brave spirits that could speak their minds fitly, and dared to do it freely. He put to death a certain poet, which in a tragedy had inveighed against Agamemnon; suspecting himself to be intended. Freedom of speech used by the Waldenses in blaming and reproving the vices, dissolute manners, life, and actions of great ones, made them looked upon and persecuted as heretics and enemies to the see apostolic, as Manichees, Catharists, what not? (Girardus).

Ver. 14. **Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live]** See #Am 5:4,6. Oh seek, seek, seek, saith our prophet; as some of the martyrs cried out, Pray, pray, pray: Mr Sanders and Mrs Askew repeated those words two different times together, Mr Marsh once, adding, Never more need. To seek God is to seek good, and to find life; for with him is the fountain of life, #Ps 36:9. To seek evil is to seek the devil,

who is that evil one (ο πονηρος): it is, as Solomon saith in a like case, "a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death," #Pr 21:6.

**And so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you]** To assist and accept you in seeking good; to protect and provide for you in shunning evil. Deal courageously, therefore, and God shall be with the good, #2Ch 19:11, as your seven-fold shield (επραβοειος), and exceeding great reward, #Ge 15:1. {See Trapp on "Ge 15:1"}

**As ye have spoken]** *Ut praedicatis et iactitatis*, as ye boast and bear yourselves bold upon; saying, as #Mic 2:11, "Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us." But that is as you make it; for ye are upon your behaviour. The fault is not in God, but wholly in yourselves, if ye live not happily, reign not everlastingly,— *at Paris ut vivat regnetque beatus Cogi posse negat* (Horat. ep. 2). God is far from men's hearts; and therefore far from their help: for "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" #Am 3:3.

Ver. 15. **Hate the evil, and love the good]** God doth so; you must also, or else never look for his gracious presence with you: for *idem velle, atque idem nolle, ea demure vera est Amicitia*; True friends do both will and nill the same things. Minutius Felix saith, that he and his friend Octavius did so. The like did Basil and Nazianzen, Jonathan and David:

“ *Corporibus geminis spiritus unus erat.*”

All God's people, as they partake of the Divine nature, so they live the life of God, #Eph 4:18, and have the same both sympathies and antipathies (as I may so speak), abhorring that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good, #Ro 12:9. God, they know, hateth evil worse than he hateth the devil; for he hateth the devil for sin's sake, and not sin for the devil's sake: so do they, looking upon sin as the most loathsome thing in the world, the very vomit of the devil, which (so far as they are regenerate) they do infinitely loathe to lick up. And for that which is good, whether things or persons, these they heartily love; not only with a love of desire, as #Ps 42:1,2, but also of complacency, as #Ps 73:25,26, herein resembling Almighty God; not as an image doth a man, in outward lineaments only, but as a son doth his father, in nature and disposition; being daily more and more

conformed to the heavenly pattern, and transformeed into the same image from glory to glory, by his Spirit.

**And establish judgment in the gate]** Which hitherto ye have not done, **#Am 5:10,12**. Perform the duties of your own particular places; be good justicers as well as good men. It is said of Galba and of our Richard III, that they were bad men but good princes; but I hardly think it. Some good parts they might have, and some good acts they might do; but good princes they could not be, unless they did "hate the evil and love the good": but so doth not any bad man, for want of better principles. Make the tree good and the fruits will be good: and the contrary. Evil men may be some way useful to the public, and do good offices for the Church, and yet perish, because not in a good manner, upon a good motive, and for a good end. **#Re 12:16**, the earth helped the woman; and yet, **#Re 16:1**, the vials of God's wrath were poured out upon the earth. A good magistrate, as he sits in God's place (the judgment seat is called the holy place, **#Ec 8:10**), so he, loving what God loveth, and hating where God hateth, can boldly write over it that distich, that is said to be written over the tribunal in Zant, in letters of gold;

*“ Hic locus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,  
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, iura, bones.”*

**It may be that the Lord]** Or, out of doubt, the Lord God of hosts will be gracious, &c. He is surely ready, were men but ripe and right for mercy; it sticks only on their part, and not on his; he waiteth to be gracious, **#Isa 30:18**. Oh unworthy we that cause him so to do. *Currat poenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia* (Chrysologus). They are but a remnant that shall have mercy; a few that shall find favour. Oh, labour to be of those few that shall enter into life, **#Lu 13:24**.

Ver. 16. **Therefore the Lord God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus]** Therefore? wherefore? because neither promises of mercy nor menaces of misery will work upon you, stand forth, and hear your doom, your sentence of condemnation; and it beginneth, as is usual, *In nomine Dei*: In the name of God, neither can you say, as that martyr did, when wrongfully sentenced, ye begin in a wrong name. To assure the matter, the prophet here heapeth up three majestic names of God; that they might tremble and turn, considering the



greatness of him with whom they here have to do, being "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders," #Ex 15:11.

**Wailing shall be in all streets, &c.]** A general outcry, as once in Egypt, when in every house there was a dead corpse; or, as at the taking and sacking of Troy there was

“*Luctus ubique, pavor, et plurima morris imago*” (Virg.).

**And they shall say in all the highways, Alas, alas]** Man is a creature apt to overly grieve for crosses, and to fill the air with moans and complaints of his misery. The Latin word *Aeger*, for a sick person, is judged to come from Αι, αι, the doleful expression of his grief. The Greek word ουαι is as much as ουκ αι, Not ever. We are soon weary of suffering, and would fain see an end of it; and therefore cry out for help. The Hebrew word here used, *He, He*, is the same with our Oh, Oh; it is *dolentis particula*, it is *eiulantis*, the broken speech of one in great dolour and durance. Nature need not to be taught to tell her own tale when in distress, then men are apt to be eloquent even beyond truth; they add, they multiply, they rise in their discourse, like him in the poet, I am thrice miserable, nay, ten times, nay, a hundred, ten hundred times: τρις κακοδαμων, και τετρακις και μυριακις (Aristoph.): whereas they should correct their excessive complaints with that other, ομοι τι δ ομοιο, Alas, alas. But why alas? Nothing hath befallen us but what is human, common to men and our betters, #1Co 10:13.

**And they shall call the husbandman to mourning]** For the marring of his grain by the enemy, or by the vermin. Others read it thus, The husbandman shall send for those that are skilful in lamentation to mourning and wailing.

**And such as are skilful of lamentation]** An ordinary practice in those eastern parts (as now also in Ireland) to hire artificial mourners at funerals to sing doleful ditties. *Ut qui conducti plorant in funere*. See #Jer 9:17 Mt 9:23. {See Trapp on "Jer 9:17"} {See Trapp on "Mt 9:23"} Of the lawfulness of this custom the prophet speaketh not. Many things are mentioned in Scripture and made use of but not approved, as usury,

#Mt 25:27; dancing, #Mt 11:17; theft, #1Th 5:2; injustice, #Lu 16:1; the Isthmian games, #1Co 9:24.

Ver. 17. **And in all vineyards shall be wailing]** Where used to be great jollity and revelry riot in time of vintage, #Ps 4:7. The calamity shall be common, the scourge overflowing; and all sorts shall have their share. See #Joe 1:5,11,13.

**For I will pass through thee, saith the Lord]** As a fire in a thick wood, #Jas 3:5, or dry stubble, #Joe 2:5 Na 1:10. I will go through them, I will burn them together, #Isa 27:4, make a short work with them, #Ro 9:28. So fearful a thing it is to fall into the punishing hands of the living God, #Heb 10:31, to stand in his way, when his sword is in commission, and he saith to it, "Sword, go through the land; cut off man and beast from it," #Eze 14:17. Let this be thought on by those secure ones that live as if they were out of the reach of God's rod; for "what if the sword condemn even the rod?" #Eze 21:13, and be drenched in the gall of these sturdy rebels? what then? Ver. 18. **Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord]** The day of his visitation when he will go through us, as you prophets would make believe. Where is the promise of his coming? Let him make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it, #Isa 5:19 Jer 17:15. Let him increase his army and come down, #Jud 9:29. Such jeering and daring spirits there are still abroad. But do they provoke the Lord to anger? are they stronger than he? The great and terrible day of the Lord will come time enough to their cost; they need not accelerate it. Can they stand to his trial? or abide the thunder of his power? #Job 26:14.

**To what end is it for you]** When God shall answer you, as he did a far better man, out of the whirlwind, and say, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man," #Job 38:2,3. Where, then, shall the ungodly and the wicked appear? #1Pe 4:18; what hills will they call upon to fall on them, when the elements shall fall upon them like scalding lead or burning bell metal; and yet all this be but the beginning of their sorrows! "Now therefore be not ye mockers, lest your bands be made strong," #Isa 28:22. God can easily hamper you if he once take you in hand.

**The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light]** No interchange of light; "an evil, an only evil," without mixture of mercy, #Eze 7:5, a black and dismal day of one mischief upon another, in a continued series. "Affliction shall not rise up the second time," #Na 1:9, but ye shall totally and finally be destroyed; wrath shall come upon you to the utmost, #1Th 2:16. This is illustrated in the next verse by an apt similitude.

Ver. 19. **As if a man did fly from a lion]** And so by running from his death should run to it; by seeking to shun the shelves should split against a rock, *Incidit in Scyllam, &c.*, as Nicodemus Frischline (that famous poet, orator, and philosopher), endeavouring to escape out of close prison, by casting himself out at a window, the rope broke, and he perished by falling headlong upon a rock: so fareth it with those that fear not God. *Aliud ex alio malum*, one mischief treadeth on the heels of another, as Job's messengers. The clouds return after the rain, #Ec 12:2, as in April weather one shower is unburdened, another is brewed: "and deep calleth upon deep at the noise of the waterspouts," #Ps 42:7. "Evil shall hunt the violent man to destroy him," #Ps 140:11, your sins shall find you out as a bloodhound, #Nu 32:23, as it did that Popish priest in London, who, having escaped the fall of Blackfriars, A.D. 1623 (where Drury had his brains knocked out of his head, together with his sermon), and taking water, with a purpose to sail into Flanders, was cast away (together with some others) under London bridge; the boat being overturned. And as Philip II, King of Spain, who, going from the Low Countries into Spain by sea, fell into a storm in which almost all the fleet was wrecked, his household stuff of very great value lost, and himself hardly escaped. He said he was delivered by the singular providence of God to root out Lutheranism, which he presently began to do. But the hand of God was upon him in an extraordinary manner; for beside the invincible Armada here defeated, to his great heartbreak (for his pretended patience was but as the fever called Epialis, wherein men are cold without but as hot as fire within), he fell into that most loathsome lousy disease, called Phthiriasis, whereof at length he died.

**And a bear met him]** A bear robbed of her whelps (which she licketh into form, and loveth above measure) is a very fierce and fell creature. To meet her in such a rage is to meet death in the very face;

and yet that danger may be sooner shifted and shunned than the heavy wrath of God avoided or averted without true and timely repentance: there is no way to run from him but by running penitently to him; as in a tempest at sea it is very dangerous to strike to the shore; the safest way is to have sea room, and to keep in to keep in the open main still.

**Or went into the house]** To shelter himself from the bear; as every creature in danger runneth to its harbour, **#Pr 30:26 Ps 104:18**.

**And leaned his hand on the walls]** As being breathless in running, and glad to stay himself on what he can next lay hold on. Man, like the vine, must have somewhat to lean on, if it be but a broken reed or bulging wall, **#Ps 62:3**; he shifts and shirks in every bycorner for comfort, as the Papists (stung by the friars' sermons) do by pardons and penances, which are but palliate cures.

**For a serpent bites them]** The guilt of sin abiding, "biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," **#Pr 23:32**.

Ver. 20. **Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, &c.]** *q.d.* How say ye now; when thus beset with mischief on all hands, such as ye can neither avoid nor abide, must ye not needs subscribe to the truth of what I said, **#Am 5:18**, and do here again repeat (that you may the better observe it) with greater emphasis and earnestness? you shall not have the least glimmering of comfort, ease, direction, or good counsel. To what end, then, should you desire this dreadful day of the Lord? Are you in haste to be undone?

Ver. 21. **I hate, I despise your feast days]** Wherewith ye think to stop my mouth and to make me your debtor; saying, as that Roman emperor, when his enemy came against him, *Non sic Deos coluimus ut ille nos vinceret*, We have not so served the gods that they should serve us no better than to give the enemy the better of us. The feast days and solemn assemblies you so much build upon are yours, and not mine; "I never commanded them" (*viz.* as you may use them), "neither came they ever into my mind," **#Jer 32:35**. So far am I, therefore, from accepting your sacrifices, as that I hate, I despise, I will not smell: an elegant asyndeton, importing God's utter distaste of what they did ("The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind!" **#Pr 21:27**),

and assuring a sudden vengeance, as in that quick and smart passage, Go, preach, baptize, "he that believeth not shall be damned," #Mr 16:16. Will-worship and outsideness in religion is very odious to the Almighty; and stinks worse in his nostrils than any ill vapour from the vilest dunghill doth in ours: or as those poisonous smells that ascended up once from the five cities of the plain, and brought down from him a counter poison of fire and brimstone. Rome also (that spiritual Sodom) shall be destroyed in like sort, with a terrible fire, #Re 17:16 18:8,9, for her detestable will-worships, superstitions, and idolatries, which no other nitre can possibly purge. #Re 13:18, the whole "number of the beast," whatsoever is numbered to belong unto him, is but the "number of a man," human inventions and will wisdom; men will have it so; and this is the sum of all Popish religion. When the wit of man will be overpleasing God, with better devices than his own, will needs despite him with seeming honours; it turns to madness, and ends in mischief.

Ver. 22. **Though ye offer me burnt offerings, &c.]** So long as ye stick in the bark, please yourselves in the external performance, rest in the work done, think to expiate your sins by your duties, and to set off with God for your bad deeds by your good, and to get a licence thereby to live as you list: "though ye offer me burnt offerings," which were wholly burnt in sacrifice to God, and so were ordinarily most acceptable.

**I will not accept them]** Nor shall you be a button the better for them, but the worse. #Isa 63:8, yea, though ye added wine, oil, and incense, that there might be a savour of rest in it. The very heathens could say, that God's favour is not to be gained by multitude of sacrifices, but by the integrity of those that offer them.

**Neither will I regard (or look at) the peace offerings of your fat beasts]** Whether sheep or oxen, or another distinct creature bigger than an ox, called in the Arabic dialect *gamus*, as Aben Ezra affirmeth, the French call it *buffie*, and we the *buffe*, or wild ox: all would not do; God would neither see nor hear, as it followeth.

Ver. 23. **Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs]** No more pleasing to me than the grunting of a hog or the braying of an ass, because hateless, heartless; for as every sound is not music, so

neither is every musical sound melodious to God. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet to our ears as that which comes from the depth of the breast. "Sing with grace in your hearts," is the best tune to all the psalms; which are therefore called "spiritual songs," #Col 3:16, both because they are indited by the Spirit, and are to be sung with the spirit, #1Co 14:15, and because they being so sung, do make us more spiritual in the use of them; while we sing David's Psalms with David's heart.

**For I will not hear the melody of thy viols]** Or of thine organ, harp, cittern, lute, bag pipe, for so some render it, with respect to the etymology of the word *Nebel*. The Greek rendereth it, Of the psalteries. What need we trouble ourselves much about those things whereof we can neither have proof nor profit, at least not profit enough to pay for the pains? God will not hear either their voice or instrument music, because the heart was wanting.

“ *Non vex sed votum, non musica chordula, sed cor.*”

The deeper and hollower the belly of the lute or viol is the pleasanter is the sound; the fleeter, the more grating and harsh in our ears. Think the same of God, and see how exceeding offensive to all his senses, yea, to his very soul, hypocrisy is, #Isa 1:11-13.

Ver. 24. **But let judgment run down]** Heb. roll down freely, plentifully, and plainly, *ut devolutus monte praecipiti torrens*, as the great billows of the sea, or as waves rolling over rocks, so let judgment and equity be constantly and vigorously administered and executed.

**And righteousness as a mighty stream]** That comes with a force, and bears down all before it. *Fiat iustitia, runt orbis*, Let justice be done whatever come of it. The sun might as soon be turned out of his course as Fabricius out of the track of truth and justice, saith the historian. How much better might this have been said of Job, Moses, Phineas, Nehemiah, &c., famous in their generations for brandishing the sword of justice against the friends of Baal, Balaam, and Bacchus, for turning the wheel over all such roaring monsters, such lewd and lawless Belialists, as, hardened with impunity, dare oppose with crest and breast whosoever or whatsoever standeth in the way

of their wicked lusts and practices. Oh this was better than burnt offerings without this; this was that actual, magisterial, and majestic kind of devotion, that pleased God far better than an "ox that hath horns and hoofs."

Ver. 25. **Have ye offered unto me sacrifices, &c.]** *i.e.* To me only, and not to other gods also? did ye not begin betime to play the idolaters? and do ye not "fill up the measure of your fathers?" **#Mt 23:32.** They sojourned in Egypt, and brought thence a golden calf: Jeroboam sojourned there, and brought home two; which were no sooner up than you were down upon your knees, where still you continue at your mawmet worship. Is it not even so, O house of Israel? And was it not even so in the wilderness, where and when I bore with your "evil manners" (ετροποφορησα) "about the time of forty years," **#Ac 13:18** (for full forty it was not, but thirty-eight only and some few months), and was provoked by you ten times, **#Nu 14:22**, when I had but newly brought you out of Egypt, **#Am 3:1,2.** So that your idolatry is hereditary; and therefore the more ingrained and to be abhorred. God alone is to be worshipped, **#Ex 20:2,3 1Ki 18:21**; truly that there be no halting, and totally that there be no halving. Be the gods of the heathen good fellows, saith one: the true God is a jealous God, and will not share his glory with another. For indeed he is the one, **#De 6:4**, and only God, **#Ps 86:10**, besides whom, **#Ps 18:32**, without whom, **#1Sa 2:2**, and beyond whom, **#1Ki 8:6**, there is none other, **#De 4:39**, nor any like him, **#2Sa 7:22**, nor any with him, **#Isa 44:24**; he is the only Lord, and besides him there is none other, **#Joe 2:27.**

Ver. 26. **But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch]** That idols were wont to be carried upon men's shoulders we may see, **#Isa 56:7 /RAPC Bar 6:3 2:5.** That Moloch or Milcom was the abomination of the Ammonites (who called their king as the Israelites called the true God, **#Isa 44:6 33:22**), see **#1Ki 11:5**; that the Israelites should do thus in the wilderness (where they had God's tabernacle erected), carrying about them privily some portable chapels or pictures of these idols (as some hold they did, and Josephus seems to say as much), was monstrous wickedness, and the guise of men given up to a reprobate sense, **#Ro 1:23 2Th 2:10,11.**

**And Chiun your images]** That is, your notable image, the plural for the singular, as often; especially in names of dignity. Jerome here for

Chiun hath Remphan; confer #Ac 7:43, and the commentators thereon. Aben Ezra thinks that by Chiun is meant the planet Saturn, called Chivan in the Arabic. And other Hebrews by the star of your god (that is, the star which is your god), understand Mercury.  
Ver. 27. **Therefore will cause you]** Idolatry is a land desolating sin.

**Beyond Damascus]** And not only so, but also beyond Babylon, #Ac 7:43, by the way of Damascus, by Tiglathpileser, sent for by Ahaz for that purpose, #Isa 8:4 2Ki 15:29.

## Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **Woe to them that are at ease in Zion]** That lie sleeping on both sides (*In utramvis aurora dormiunt*), and slighting the former menaces, as Leviathan doth the iron weapons, #Job 41:27, that live as if ye were out of the reach of God's rod; and as for all your enemies, ye puff at them, saying, We shall not be moved, we shall never be in adversity, #Ps 10:5,6. To these sleepers in Zion God here sends forth his summons (the word *Hoi* signifieth as well *Heus* as *Vae*, *ho* as *wo*, #Isa 55:1 Zec 2:6. Ho, ho, come forth), that were quiet and still, #Zec 1:11, lulled asleep by Satan, or rather. cast into a dead lethargy: Samson-like their enemies are upon them, and they fast asleep the while; Ishbosheth-like they stretch themselves upon their beds of ivory, till they lose, not their precious lives only, but their immortal souls. Security ushereth in destruction; those that are at ease in Zion shall be raised by a dreadful woe rung in their ears, that shall make their hearts fall down, and their hairs stand upright. In the froth of carnal security and sensual delights is bred that worm of conscience that never dieth, #Mr 9:44, and here begins to grub and gnaw; like as while the crocodile sleepeth with open mouth, the Ichneumon, or Indian rat, shoots himself into his bowels; after which he never is at ease, as having his entrails daily devoured; so that one while he will be in the water, and anon after on the land, till life fails him.

**And trust in the mountain of Samaria]** Are carnally confident and secure (*πεποιθοσιν*. Septuag.), as when good David also gotten upon his strong mountain, #Ps 30:6,7, but was soon confuted: "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." The best are apt by rest to contract rust; and being fully fed, to wax wanton, #De 32:15. To



affect more *mundi delicias quam Christi divitias*, as one saith, the world's dainties than Christ's comforts: to trust in uncertain riches than to rely upon the living God, who giveth them all things richly to enjoy, #1Ti 6:17. This must be looked to; for it hath a woe hanging at the heels of it, #Jer 17:5,6 Ps 52:7,9.

**Which are named chief of the nations]** Heb. expressly named, declared, notified, celebrated,

**chief]** the head, or first-fruits, the head and height, *principium, id est, praecipuum gentium*. So Amalek is called the first of the nations, #Nu 24:20; haply they held themselves so: as the Egyptians afterwards boasted much of their antiquity, and the Chinese at this day do of their excellence and perspicuity above other nations. Many wicked ones are of great renown in this world, #Ps 73:4,6, and stand much upon their titles and terms of honour; who yet in the next generation shall be utterly forgotten, #Ps 109:13, for that their names are not written in heaven, #Re 17:8; and look how much they have glorified themselves, and lived deliciously, so much torment and ignominy shall be given them, #Re 18:7.

**To whom the house of Israel came]** The whole house of Israel, viz. the two tribes to Zion, the ten to Samaria, *vel sacrorum causa, vel iudiciorum*, saith Drusius, as to places of worship, and besides, courts of justice. Others sense it thus, The house of Israel came unto them, that is, the Israelites invaded those nations that once held Zion and Samaria, and succeeded them therein; not by any strength of their own, but by God's mighty hand and outstretched arm, which they, ungrateful wretches, acknowledge not: but come in for themselves (לְהוֹרֵת), so Ribera rendereth it, *quasi sibi tantum nati, se solos esse aliquid*, as if they were the only proprietaries, the sole owners of all; and owned no service to any chief lord. Such insolence grows from security. See #Job 21:23.

Ver. 2. **Pass ye unto Calneh and see]** Take a voyage to and a view of those most famous bordering cities, Calneh, or Seleucia, in Mesopotamia on the east (whereof see #Ge 10:10, the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom), Hamath the great, or Antiochia (now Aleppo, a famous market town), on the north. Then go down southward to Gath of the Philistines, which was of all the five satrapies *potissima*

*et potentissima*, most strong and powerful, and is therefore called Methegammah, #2Sa 8:1 cf. 1Ch 18:1, because, being a town of great strength, it was, as it were, the bridle, whereby the whole country about was kept in awe: it was afterwards known by the name of Diocaesarea. Away to these neighbouring cities, and see in them, as in so many telescopes, how much more God hath done for you than for them in every respect; the greater is your guilt, and the deeper will be your judgment in the end, for abuse of these rich mercies, of a fertile soil, a large empire, to security, oppression, and other detestable vices and villanies.

**Be they better than these kingdoms]** *sc.* of Judah and Israel? which were certainly *multis nominibus laudatissima*, very fruitful and pleasant countries, #De 8:7-9 Nu 14:7,8, whatsoever Strabo spitefully reporteth to the contrary, being therein worse than Rabshakeh, #Isa 36:17.

**Or their border grearer than your border]** *sc.* Till the Babylonians, Syrians, and Assyrians took part of your country from you, and cooped you up, cut you short. And now that you are so straitened for room, doth not the Lord recompense you in multitudes of people? Judea was not over two hundred miles long and fifty miles broad, say geographers; and yet what large armies brought they into the field! Observe, then, saith the prophet, the great things that God hath done for you above other nations, and walk accordingly; or else take lessons out of their losses and damages, and know that the case will be your own: *Aliorum perclitio vestra sitcantio*: Learn by other men's harms to beware.

Ver. 3. **Ye that put far away the evil day]** Woe to you that would do so if you could; that fondly persuade yourselves there is no such danger in evil doing as the prophets pretend: but that all shall be hail and well with you, though ye walk in the imagination of your hearts, to add drunkenness to thirst, #De 29:19, and to heap up sin as high as heaven, #Re 18:5. This cursed security and hope of impunity is the source of much wickedness in the world. See #Pr 7:19,20 Mt 24:48. {See Trapp on "Pr 7:19"} {See Trapp on "Pr 7:20"} {See Trapp on "Mt 24:48"} *Quae longinqua sunt, non metuuntur* (Arist. Rhet. l. 2, c. 5). It is a sad thing when men shall say, as #Eze 12:27, "The vision that he seeth is for many day to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far

off." This atheistic conceit accelerates the judgment: **#Eze 12:28**, "Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God." *Tarditatemque supplicii, gravitate compensabo* (Val. Max.).

**And cause the seat of violence to come near]** *Amota Iustitiae sella*: setting aside the care of justice together with the fear of God, for whom ye ought to have reserved the chief room in all your public meetings, as the Ethiopian judges are said to do. *Atque vi angeritur res*, might overcomes right; and robberies are daily done by authority. See **#Ps 94:20**. The throne of iniquity shall not have fellowship with God; neither will he take the wicked by the hand, whatever those corrupt vice gods do (as we may in the worst sense best term them), "whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not," **#2Pe 2:3**. The evil day that they put far away will suddenly surprise them, and then what will they do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what will they answer him? **#Job 31:14** (Clandian, l. 2, in Eutrop.).

“ *Sed quam caecus inest vitiis amor? omne futurum,  
Despicitur, suadentque brevem praesentia fructum.* ”

Ver. 4. **That lie upon beds of ivory]** Which was a commodity far fetched (even out of India), and dearly bought; precious and sumptuous, **#Eze 27:15**. The wealthier sort used to deck their houses with such kind of beds decked with ivory ( *lectis eburatis*, as Plautus phraseth it), as **#Es 1:6**, with gold and silver; hence their houses are called houses of ivory, **#Am 3:15 1Ki 22:39**. See Plin. lib. 33. cap. 11; Horat. l. 2. Sat. 6. Here, then, is condemned their luxury, and abuse of God's good gifts, with neglect of the public welfare, and contempt of judgments threatened.

**And stretch themselves upon their couches]** *Pandiculantur in suis cubilibus*, so Rabbi Solomon. Others render it, *redundantibus ac diffluentibus*. Woe to them that delight in overlong and large coverlets, curtains, &c., superfluously hanging down on all sides upon the very ground: so Kimchi. The Seventy and Vulgate render it, Woe to those that wantonize upon their couches, melting in sensual pleasures. *Κατασπαταλώντες. Lascivientes. Deliciantes.*

Compare #1Ti 5:6 Jas 5:5. God grudgeth not his people an honest affluence, #Ps 23:4, but granteth them all things richly to enjoy, #1Ti 6:17. Howbeit he requireth them to be sober and watch; not making provision for the flesh, to live after the lusts thereof, but walking decently as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, #Ro 13:13,14.

**And eat the lambs out of the flock]** *E grege, id est, egregios ac optimos*, the very best and fattest morsels, pampering their paunches; swinish belly gods.

**And the calves out of the midst of the stall]** The French call them high-grass-veals, *Veaux de haute graisse*. Nothing would down with them but tid bits, λιπαρα και λαμπρα, dainty and goodly, #Re 18:9. Those abbey lubbers of the Romish synagogue are compared to fed horses, pampered in their cloisters (as war horses in their stalls or stables), and prepared unto battle, #Re 9:7. Lawful it is, I grant, at some times to eat of the fat and drink of the sweet, #Ne 8:10, and to please the appetite, #De 4:26, to gratify it with what it liketh and lusteth after. But yet it must still be remembered, that it is a sin to feed without fear; and a shame for a servant of God to be a slave to his palate. "Eat such things as are set before you," παρατιθεμενα, saith Christ to his disciples, be it never so homely or wholesome, #Lu 10:8. And #Ge 9:3, after, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you," it is added, "even as the green herb have I given you all things," that is, soberly and without curiosity, to take and make use of such meats as are at hand, as Dr Willet interprets it. And this Nature seems to teach man, in giving him so narrow a mouth, throat, and belly; whereas to swine she hath given a wide mouth, a very thick neck, a large belly, and but a very little brains; that they might the sooner grow fat, and take no other thought but for the belly, saith Bodine.

Ver. 5. **That chant (or quaver) to the sound of the viol]** That sing division with much variation of their voices, and many distinctions of diverse tones, modulations fractions. *Particularizant*, they sing their parts in concert. The Hebrew root word signifieth the single grains of grapes that remain after the vintage; or the particular berries, #Le 19:10. Our word parting, answereth to the Hebrew peret. It is their wanton and unseasonable music (emasculating,

dissolving, and drawing out their spirits) that they are here threatened for. This abuse of music (given to men for better purposes) is elsewhere condemned, #Am 5:23 Isa 5:12 Ex 32:18 Ec 2:8. God made not man more *avium minurire*, to be chirping of birds to sport on earth as leviathan doth in the sea; to spend his whole time (as the people of Tombutum, in Africa, are said to do) in singing and dancing; and, when he is cast out of one paradise, to make himself another. It is charged as a foul fault upon those sensualists in St James, that they had "lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton," #Jas 5:5.

**And invent to themselves instruments of music, like David]** Whose example likely they pleaded to patronize their fiddlings and chanting of menial songs. But his music and theirs agreed like harp and harrow, as the proverb is. Two may do the same thing and yet it not be the same; because not from the same principles and for the same purposes: as we see in Cain and Abel, the Pharisee and the publican, David and these singsters, who did nothing less than help forward their devotion by music, as did David; and as did our late holy Esty, who, when he sat and heard a sweet concert of music, seemed upon this occasion carried up for the time beforehand to the place of his rest, saying very passionately, What music may we think there is in heaven? (Dr Hall's Art of Div. Medit.)

Ver. 6. **That drink wine in bowls]** *Non in scyphis, cyathis, aut calicibus*, not in cups, pots, or chalices, but in vessels of price, and of largest receipt, that they may be counted and called (as young Cicero was) *Tricongii*, such as can drink whole ones, and no small ones either. (The Seventy and the Chaldee render it, In phials; others, in goblets.) Diotimus, of Athens, for his excessive drinking, was termed  $\chi\omega\upsilon\eta$ , Tun-dish. Alexander the Great gloried that he could drink down any man; and one time, inviting many to supper, he provided a crown of one hundred and eighty pounds to be given to those that drank most; and forty-one of the company killed themselves with drinking to get that crown. Darius, King of Persia, caused this to be engraven upon his tomb; I was able to drink much wine, and to bear it bravely. Was not this to glory in his shame? had he no way else to show his valour? Did he never take notice of that Persian law, that it should not be lawful for their king to be drunk but only once a year, when they sacrificed to the sun, whom they

took to be the greatest of the gods? How much better Bathsheba, in her Lemuel's lesson, "It is not for kings, Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink and forget the law," #Pr 31:4,5. And if not for kings, much less is it for others to be "drunk with wine, wherein is excess," #Eph 5:18, lest with Nabal, and the rich glutton, they drink deep of the wine of God's wrath, and have the full vials of his vengeance poured upon them for ever.

**And anoint themselves with the chief ointments]** After the manner of the Jewish nation, whereof see #2Sa 12:20 Ec 9:8 Lu 7:38,46 Ps 23:5 104:15 Mt 6:17. They spare for no cost or pains to please all their senses. And such a prodigal pleasure monger was that rich citizen's son, mentioned in the second part of the Theatre of God's Judgments; who, to please all his five senses at once, allowed to the delight of every sense a several hundred pounds. For which end, 1. He bespake a curious fair room richly hanged, and furnished with the most exquisite pictures, to please the eye. 2. He had all the choicest music that could be heard of, to give content to the ear. 3. He had all the aromatics and odoriferous perfumes, to delight his scent in smelling. 4. All the candies, preserves, junkets, even to the stretching of the apothecary's or confectionery's art, to please his taste. 5. And, lastly, a beautiful and fair strumpet lodged with him in a soft bed, and the daintiest linen that could be compassed to accommodate his touch: and all these this epicure (more than ever Sardanapalus did) enjoyed at one instant. He spent 30,000 pounds in three years, and swore after all, that if he had ten times more than ever he had, he would spend it all to live one week like a god, though he were sure to be damned in hell the next day after.

**They are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph]** *i.e.* Of the Israelites, #Ps 80:2 77:16 Am 5:6. Joseph is mentioned and put for all the rest, because he was famous among his brethren, *vel ob mala quae pendit, vel ob bona quae rependit*, both for the evils that he suffered and for the good turns that he returned (Aug. de Doct. Christian. lib. 4, cap. 6). When poor Joseph was badly handled by his merciless brethren; he could not be heard, though he used many entreaties, #Ge 37:23 42:21. They, when they had cast him into the pit, there to pine and perish with hunger, sat down to eat, and so to

ease themselves of any remorse of conscience that might be wrought in them. They should have been sick at heart (as the word here signifieth) for the affliction, the contraction, the breaking to shivers, of Joseph (םירכש): poor Reuben was so as far as he dared to show it; and Joseph did not forget his kindness when he came to his greatness. God, who is all heart, will never forget those that forget not his afflicted, but commiserate and relieve them as they have opportunity and ability.

Ver. 7. **Therefore now shall they go captive with the first]** Heb. in the head of those that go captive: as they have been first in the degrees of honour and of sin, so shall they be now of punishment, according to that saying of the Centurists, *Ingentia beneficia, ingentia flagitia, ingentia supplicia* vast blessings, immoderate disgraces, enormous punishments (Magdeburg). This they shall have of God's hand, they shall lie down in sorrow, **#Isa 50:11**; yea, many sorrows shall be to those wicked ones, **#Ps 32:10**, these merciless men shall not have the least mercy shown to them, **#Jas 2:13**. God will surely set off all hearts from such, as he did from Haman, for whom in his misery not one man openeth his mouth once to intercede, and he will punish, *magnum luxum magno luctu*, as one saith, great luxury with great necessity.

**And the banquet of them that stretched themselves]** They shall neither have mind nor money to make feasts, that were wont to lay on in all sorts of superfluities. That prodigal abovementioned was by a just hand of God reduced to extreme penury, and cast off by all his former acquaintance. That luxurious Roman, Apicius (the expenses of whose kitchen amounted to more than two millions of gold), having eaten up his estate, and fearing poverty, poisoned himself; leaving behind him ten books of direction how to furnish and set forth a feast with all manner of varieties, which now he could sooner talk of than take of. The word here rendered banquet is taken for a funeral feast, **#Jer 16:5**, and so some think the sense here is; they shall be carried captive into a far country, and there be deprived of the honour of burials; which is a judgment elsewhere threatened, **#Jer 22:18,19**. Aben Ezra rendereth it, *facesset canticum*, the song of the wanton shall be set packing; and for this he allegeth, that in the Arabic dialect the root word here used signifieth to lift up the voice, either for joy or grief. The Seventy render it the neighing of

horses; as noting their immoderate lust, according to **#Jer 5:8**. And this sense Ribera commendeth.

Ver. 8. **The Lord God hath sworn by himself**] Heb. by his soul, which is himself; since whatsoever is in God is God. So **#Am 5:2 Ge 22:16 Heb 6:16,17**. Or, He hath sworn by his soul, that is, *Serie et ex animo*, Seriously and heartily. Among the heathens *ex animi sui sententia* was instead of an oath.

**Saith the Lord God of hosts**] Who hath power enough in his hand to perform what he hath so solemnly assured.

**I abhor the excellency (or, the pomp and pride) of Jacob**] So Basil, speaking of the Western Church, *Odi fastum istius Ecclesiae*, saith he, I hate their pride. This he elsewhere calleth οφρυν δυτικην, the Western brow, from the forehead, that seat of pride and arrogance, which at length occasioned that lamentable separation of the Eastern or Greek Church from communion with the Latin; the other four patriarchs dividing themselves from the bishop of Rome. Pride is an odious evil; fitly compared by one to a great swelling in the body, which unfits it for any good service; and is apt to putrify, and break, and run with loathsome and foul matter; so doth pride disable the soul from doing duty, and at last breaks forth into odious deeds, abominable to God and man. There are those who by excellence or glory here understand their glorious temple and other privileges, wherein they so much gloried, see **#Ps 47:5**; but Mercer thinks it rather meant of the ten tribes than of the two, whose crown of pride is elsewhere taxed, **#Isa 28:1 Ho 7:10**. "The pride of Israel testifieth to his face," it breaketh out in his forehead, as a great master pock.

**Therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein**] Heb. with the fulness thereof; both persons and things are all forfeited, and shall be seized by the enemy; be the city of Samaria never so rich a Cargazon, so full a magazine of men and means, I will shut them up (so the word signifieth), after a strait siege, into the enemies' hand, who shall make a spoil of them.

Ver. 9. **And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men, &c.]** That is, many, as **#Zec 8:23 Le 26:26**, because ten is the utmost of single number: *q.d.* though a considerable company escape the



enemy, yet pestilence or some other destruction shall put an end to them.

**They shall die]** See this fulfilled **#2Ki 17:5**. In which common calamity what a happiness had they, that belonging to the election of grace, could confidently say, as **#Hab 1:12**, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die" (or if we do, death may kill us, but cannot hurt us, *Occidere potest, non laedere*). "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." The wicked are killed with death, **#Re 2:23**, undone by it; to them it is no other but a trap door to hell, as to the saints it is as the valley of Achor, a door of hope, the very daybreak of eternal brightness, **#Ho 2:15**.

Ver. 10. **And a man's uncle shall take him up]** Him, that is, every one of the ten before mentioned, being now dead of the plague, shall his uncle or dearest friend take up on his own shoulders, for want of the ordinary mercenary officers (called by the Latins *Vespillones, Libitinarii, Pollinctores*), their best friends shall be forced to bury or burn their dead corpses. So Seneca in Oedipo.

*“ portat hunc aeger parens  
Supremum ad ignem, mater hunc amens gerit,  
Properatque ut alium regerat in eundem rogam.”*

**To bring out the bones out of the house]** For burial, as **#1Sa 31:13**, the flesh being first burnt. Bones are a part of a man's body; and therefore to be committed to the earth, or laid up in a safe place, as Joseph's were, **#Ex 13:19 Jos 24:32**, and with his, the rest of the patriarchs doubtless, **#Ac 7:16**. This is one of the dues of the dead, *τα νομιζόμενα*: 1. In honour of God, who made man's body with admirable art, **#Ps 139:5**, and as it were by the book, **#Ps 139:14-16**. 2. Next because the dead body was sometime a temple of the Holy Ghost, and an instrument of many holy actions, **#1Co 3:16,17 2Co 6:16**. 3. Because it shall be raised one day and conformed to Christ's glorious body, the standard, **#Php 2:21**. "We know," saith the same apostle, "that when Christ, our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory"; like as in the transfiguration, that body of Moses which was hidden in the valley of Moab appeared with Christ in the hill of Tabor.

*And shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house] To him that burneth the dead, as before, that assisteth a man's uncle to inter him. The Jews did not usually burn, but bury; yet sometimes they did, #Jer 34:5 1Ki 13:2; and at this time they were forced by the raging pestilence to do it (as Jerome here noteth), for the preventing of stench and further infection.*

*Is there yet any with thee] sc. left alive; or hath death made a clean riddance? Or thus: Are there yet any more dead corpses which I may carry forth for the burial?*

**And he shall say, No]** Or, And he shall say an end, a total consumption; they are all dead and gone. A sad verdict.

**Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue]** *sc. bear it patiently, fret not, murmur not, it is God's doing, #Ps 39:9. Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God, #Zep 1:7.*

**For we may not make mention of the name of the Lord]** This is *vox desperantis*, the voice of despair and despondency; and it is as if he had said, it is bootless to pray; for God is set to plague us, and will not be pacified: Surely there is no hope; but we are all "free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom God remembereth no more," #Ps 88:5, neither helpeth it us to remember or mention him any more. Men under sharp afflictions are apt to think that there is left them neither hope of better nor place of worse, as the Church in the Lamentations. Others sense it otherwise; but to me this seemeth the likeliest.

Ver. 11. **For, behold, the Lord commandeth]** Calamities, and they come; the Chaldeans, and they are at hand with their battle axes, but it is he that gives them their commission, and biddeth them fall on.

**And he will smite the great house with breaches, &c.]** *i.e.* He will destroy rich and poor together; pale death will knock at both their houses with an even foot (*aequo pulsat pede*), as in time of plague, earthquake, or the like epidemic evil. The grave is the congregation house of all living, #Job 30:23, whereinto men chop often before they think; as a man that walks in the snow may fall into a clay pit.

The mortal scythe is master of the royal sceptre; and it mows down the lilies of the crown as well as the grass of the field. Death is the only king "against whom there is no rising up," as Agur phraseth the most absolute predominance, **#Pr 30:31**; it levelleth lords and lowlies, and lays all waste; breaking down the greater houses and cleaving the lesser, with an utter extermination of all. Search you therefore, search you, O nation not desired; before the decree come forth, &c., **#Zep 2:1,2**. Being wise after the fact helps not; repentance, though true, may come too late in respect of temporal judgments, as in Moses, **#De 1:37**, and David, **#2Sa 12:10**.

Ver. 12. **Shall horses run upon the rock]** Is it possible they should do so and not first break their hoofs, and then their necks? will the rider therefore venture there? were it not matchless madness in him?

**Will one plough there with oxen]** Sure he will conceive it too hard a tug, and too vain a labour. Jerome rendereth it *Bubalis*, with wild oxen; which, not accustomed to the yoke, are like to make but wild work wherever they are ploughed with. Now as there is no good horse racing upon a rock, nor fit ploughing there; so neither must you ever hope to escape unpunished, or to keep up your commonwealth unshattered, so long as ye deal thus preposterously, perversely, and absurdly, **#Pr 14:14**. That of Virgil is not much unlike:

“*Atque idem iungat vulpes, et mulgeat hircos.*”

**For ye have turned judgment into gall, &c.]** Or into poison; the Chaldee rendereth it, into the head of hurtful serpents. The word seemeth to signify the poison of serpents, which is in the head. See **#Ho 10:4**. {See Trapp on "Ho 10:4"}

**And the fruit of righteousness into hemlock]** Or wormwood, as if ye were akin to that star in the Revelation that is styled Wormwood, **#Re 8:11**, that great Antichrist, who would make the world believe that he hath power, *de iniustitia facere iustitiam, ex nihilo aliquid, ex virtute vitium*, that is, of injustice to make justice, of nothing to make something, of virtue vice, to dispense with any of the Ten Commandments, to make new articles of the Creed, to dispose of all kingdoms at his pleasure, and what not (Bellarm. lib. 4, de Pontif.

Roman.)? Pope John XXIII saith, that he may grant a dispensation against the law of nature and of nations, against St. Paul and St Peter, against the four Gospels. The Council of Constance comes in with a *Non obstante* against Christ's own institution, withholding the cup from the sacrament; and the like for priests' marriages, prayers in a known tongue, singing of Psalms. When the cardinals meet to choose a Pope they make a vow, whosoever is chosen he shall swear to such articles as they make. And Sleidan telleth us, that the Pope is no sooner chosen but he breaks them all, and checks their insolencies, as if they went about to limit his power, to whom all power is given both in heaven and earth, both in spirituals and temporals. And, indeed, he is called the beast, in respect of his civil power, and the false prophet, in respect of his spiritual; and the star Wormwood, because being himself in the gall of bitterness and bond of perdition, he turneth all judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood: see #Am 5:7.

Ver. 13. **Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought]** In the creature, saith a Lapidé, which is a mere nothing: in your wealth and strength (called horns in the next clause), which are an uncertainty, an obscurity (αδηλοτης), as the apostle deemed them, #1Ti 6:17, and have no solid subsistence, said Solomon, #Pr 23:5, though the foolish world call them substance and goods. Indeed, it is only opinion that sets the price upon them, as when gold is raised from twenty shillings to twenty-two, the gold is the same; estimation only raiseth it. It is said of the people of the East Indies, in the Isle Ceylon, that having an ape's tooth gotten from them, which was a consecrated thing by them, they offered an incredible mass of treasure to recover it. Such things of nought are highly prized and pursued by the world's ουτιδανοι, by worthless persons, such as Antiochus was in all his state, #Da 11:21, and Agrippa in all his pomp (or as the Greek hath it, in all his phantasy or vain show, μετα πολλης φαντασιας, #Ac 25:23), and as these voluptuaries in the text, who had their wine and their music, fat calves and choicest ointments, wherein they held themselves happy, #Am 6:4-6, but the prophet telleth them that in rejoicing in these low things they rejoiced in a thing of nought; they fed altogether upon ashes, a deceived heart had turned them aside, so that they could not deliver themselves from these empty vanities, nor say (as wise men would have done), "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" #Isa 44:20.

**Which say, Have we not taken to us horns]** Yet, no doubt, but such as God, by his carpenters, can soon cut off, **#Zec 1:20,21**, or without them, by his own bare hand, **#Ps 75:10**. But what an arrogant brag is here! Have we not taken? and to us? and horns? and by our own strength? *Hic Deus nihil fecit*, Here God did nothing; they were all the doers; so small a wind blows up a bubble,

“ *Sic leve sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avarum  
Subruit, aut reficit.—*”

*It is a notable witty expression of Luther; By men's boasting of what they have done, saith he, Haec ego feci, haec ego feci, This and that I have done, they become nothing else but faeces, that is, dregs: if themselves were anything they would not thus rejoice in a thing of nothing; they would not crack in this sort.*

Ver. 14. **But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, &c.]** Which shall be a cooler to your courage, a rebater to your swelth, a means to take you a link lower, and to stain the glory of your pride. I tell you not what a nation it is, that you may imagine the worst; but you will find their quiver is an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men, and no less merciless, **#Jer 5:16,17**.

**And they shall afflict you (or crush you) from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness]** From one end of your land to the other; that as ye have filled it from corner to corner with your uncleannesses, **#Ezr 9:11**, so there may pass over it an overflowing scourge to wash the foul face of it, as once the old world. Hamath was before noted to be Antiochia, which was one of the bounds of the land of Israel to the north-east.

**The river of the wilderness]** Is elsewhere called the river of Egypt, as some will have it: see **#Nu 34:5,8 De 3:17 Jos 13:3 15:47**, where the wilderness was, **#Joe 1:20**. I cannot but concur with Kimchi, who by the river of the valleys here understandeth the Dead Sea, comparing this text with **#2Ki 14:25 De 3:17**, it being common in Scripture to call lakes and great rivers by the name of seas, **#Lu 5:1 cf. Nu 34:11**. The Dead Sea also is in human authors called the lake Asphaltites, the lake of Palestina, of Sodom, &c. It lieth to the

south-west; and is elsewhere made the bound of the promised land, #Nu 34:3 Jos 15:2.

## Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me]** *sc.* In a prophetic vision: this being the first of those five that follow to the end of the prophecy; all foretelling the evils that should befall this people, to whom Amos is again sent, as Ahijah was to Jeroboam's wife, with heavy tidings, and as Ezekiel was afterwards to his rebellious countrymen, with a roll written full of lamentations, and mourning, and woe, #Eze 2:10.

**And, behold, he formed grasshoppers]** Or, locusts, forerunners of famine, #Joe 1:4, {See Trapp on "Joe 1:4"} or (as some will), of the Assyrians, whom the Divine justice made a scorpion to Israel, as Israel had been a scourge to Judah. When the Israelites were in their flourish, as the grass or wheat is in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth, they had been first mowed by Benhadad, King of Syria; but, growing up again under Jeroboam, their king, they were devoured by Pul and his army, as by so many greedy locusts.

**In the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth]** For in those fat and fertile countries they use

*“Luxuriam segetum tenera depascere in herba.”*

Now if the latter growth were eaten up too, what else could follow but extreme famine?

**It was the latter growth after the king's mowings]** Or sheep shearings, as some read it; but the former is better: and Diodati here noteth that it is thought that the kings did take the first crop, *in esum et usum iumentorum*, to keep their wax horses and for other services; leaving the latter mowings for other cattle, who were taught to say, After your majesty, is good manners.

Ver. 2. **When they had made an end of eating]** Not the grain only, but the grass, to the very roots; besides a pestilent stench left behind them; when, I say, they had done their worst. Prayer is the best lever

at a dead lift; as is to be seen, #Jas 5:18; upon the prayer of Elias the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit, after three years and a half's drought; when it might well have been thought that root, and fruits, and all had been dried up, and that prayer had come too late. But that is seldom seen; as all God's people can say experimentally. But what shall we think of Jamblicus, a heathen author, who hath such a commendation of prayer, which might well beseeem an experienced Christian? He calleth it *Rerum divinarum ducem et lucem, copulam qua homines cum Deo coniunguntur*, the guide and light of Divine duties, the band whereby men are united to God (Lib. 5, cap. 27). Nay, he proceedeth and saith, that prayer is *clavis instar, qua Dei penetralia aperiuntur*, instead of a key, wherewith God's cabinet is opened; and much more to the same purpose. All this the prophet knew full well, and therefore sets to work in good earnest; and, as when a cart is in a quagmire, if the horses feel it coming they will pull the harder till they have it out, So he.

**Then I said, O Lord God, forgive, I beseech thee]** Sin, he knew, was their greatest enemy; the mother of all their misery. Of that therefore he prays for pardon, and then he knew all should be well; as when the sore is healed, the plaster falleth off. Of Christ it is said, that "He shall save his people from their sins," #Mt 1:21, as the greatest of evils; and the Church in #Ho 14:2, cries, "Take away all iniquity." *Feri Domine, feri*, saith Luther, *nam a peccatis absolutus sum*. Smite me as much as thou pleasest, now that thou hast forgiven my sins.

**By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small]** Here is much in few. It is Jacob, thy confederate; and he is down upon all four: and he is but small, low, and little, and (as some render it) *Quis stabit Iacobo?* "Behold, he whom thou lovest is sick," #Joh 11:3. They that are thine by covenant are at a very great under; trodden on by the bulls of Bashan, as a poor shrub of the wilderness; so the Psalmist's word imports, #Ps 102:17. "Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished" (that knows not whether he had best help or not), or "as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not," #Jer 14:9. Thus the prophets indeed prayed for their unkind countrymen; so did Paul,

Athanasius, Luther. I have obtained of God, said he, that never while I live shall the Pope prevail against my country: when I am gone let those pray that can pray. And, indeed, he was no sooner gone but all Germany was on a flame: as when Austin's head was laid, Hippo was soon surprised by the enemy; and when Pareus's, Heidelberg.

Ver. 3. **The Lord repented for this: It shall not be, saith the Lord]** Here was *mutatio rei, non Dei; facti, non consilii*: a change, not of God's will, but of his work; therefore (by way of explication) it followeth, "It shall not be, saith the Lord." To speak properly, there can be no repentance in God, #1Sa 15:20, but this is spoken after the manner of men; and it notably setteth forth the power of faithful prayer, able, after a sort, to alter God's mind, and to transfuse a dead palsy into the hands of omnipotence, #Ex 32:10, where God is fain to bespeak his own freedom; and Moses is represented as the great chancellor of heaven.

Ver. 4. **And, behold, the Lord God]** Whose asterisk, or starry note, this "behold" is, saith Tarnovius, stirring up to attention. Another compareth it to a hand in the margin of a book, pointing to some notable thing. Another, to the sounding of a trumpet before some proclamation; or to the ringing of a bell before the sermon of some famous preacher.

**The Lord God called to contend by fire]** That is, by parching heat and drought, causing dearth, as #Joe 1:19. For which purpose God called his angels, those ministering spirits, that execute his judgments upon the wicked (as they did once upon Sodom), to contend for him (a metaphor from civil courts), to plead for him by fire, to destroy the perverse Israelites by fire and brimstone, #Isa 66:16 Eze 38:22, as they had done Sodom and Gomorrah (so some interpret it according to the letter); or by the woe of war, compared to fire, #Isa 26:11, as being a misery which all words (however wide) want compass to express; or, by immoderate heat and drought, as before; so great, that

**it devoured the great deep]** as that fire of the Lord in Elijah's time licked up the water that was in the trench, #1Ki 18:38. See #Isa 51:10.



**And did eat up a part]** Or, it devoured also the field: not only the waters in and under the earth, that serve to make it fruitful, but a part of the earth itself; which was altogether above and against the common course of nature. Some render it, and did eat up that part, or that field, *sc.* that mentioned **#Am 7:1**, the king's field; that as the king had chiefly offended, so he should be principally punished. Others interpret it by **#Am 4:7**, "One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereon it rained not withered."

Ver. 5. **Then said I, O Lord God, cease, I beseech thee]** See **#Am 7:2**; and persevering in prayer for the public remember to plead, not merit, but misery, **#Ps 79:8,9**, and with all humility to acknowledge that "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not," **#La 3:22**.

Ver. 6. **The Lord repented for this]** As he is gracious, **#Ex 22:27**, and quickly repenteth him of the evil, **#Joe 2:13**. *Redire nos, non perire desiderat* (Chrysologus). "I said, I would scatter them into corners," &c., **#De 32:26,27**. Mercy could not behold such strange wrath and cruelty and not weep herself even sick, as it were.

**This also shall not be, saith the Lord]** So ready is he to yield himself overcome by the suits of his servants, *Flectitur iratus voce rogante Deus*. See **#Am 7:3**.

Ver. 7. **This he showed me, and behold]** See **#Am 7:4**.

**The Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, &c.]** Here he was set, or stood firm (as the word signifieth), as not to be removed from his purpose by any entreaties: he was fully resolved upon their ruin, and it should be done exactly, *ad amussim*, by line and by rule, as it were, and with so much justice, and most exquisite diligence, that against it should lie no manner of exception. It is said of the Areopagites, in Athens, that their sentence was so upright that none could ever say he was unjustly condemned of them. How much more true is this of the righteous judgment of God, who must needs therefore be justified, and every mouth stopped? **#Mt 22:12**. And he was speechless, because self-condemned, **#Tit 3:11**, and had not what to request.

**With a plumbline in his hand]** To show that he would accurately examine their actions and punish their depravities, {#La 2:8 2Ki 21:13} not sparing them as heretofore. A heavy sentence surely, #Ps 130:8.

Ver. 8. **Behold, I will set a plumbline]** I will call them to a strict account, and show them no favour, #Jer 16:3, I will now actually execute my justice which I have hitherto suspended; and pay them home for the new and the old; bringing upon them an evil, an only evil, without mixture of mercy, #Eze 7:5.

**I will not again pass by them any more]** A metaphor from men that pass by such things as they slight and count inconsiderable; winking at small faults as not worthy to be reckoned upon. Hence, #Mic 7:18, God is said to pardon iniquity and pass by transgression; as elsewhere he is said to bind them up in a bundle, to seal them up in a bag, to cast them behind his back, to remove them "as far as the east is from the west," #Ps 103:12, so that he beholdeth no sin in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel, #Nu 22:21. The Church, privy to her own infirmities, calleth herself black, #So 1:5, but Christ calleth her fair all over, #So 4:7. She saith, God hath punished us less than our sins, #Ezr 9:13. He saith, She hath received double for her sins, #Isa 40:2. Too much, saith God; too little, saith she. O beautiful contention! But this is a privilege proper to the communion of saints, with whom God will not deal according to the rigour of his law (as he doth with the wicked), but according to his prerogative.

Ver. 9. **And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate]** The Edomites also came of Isaac; but by a synecdoche <sup>{a}</sup> the Israelites only are here, and #Am 7:16, to be understood. Like as elsewhere Heber is put for the Israelites only, #Nu 24:24, and Joseph for Ephraim, #Re 7:8. Some think that the high places of Isaac are here mentioned to show that they were erected by the people in an apish imitation, either of Beersheba, where Isaac worshipped, or of Mount Moriah, where Isaac should have been offered: and that Isaac is here written with sin, and not *tsadi*, to show that God held himself not adored, but derided by those high places of derision, or those ridiculous altars, which therefore he threateneth to desolate and lay waste.

**And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword]** As a prelude to the utter extermination of all by the Assyrians. See this

fulfilled, #2Ki 15:10 17:5,6; Jeroboam was very prosperous and victorious; yet designed to destruction. It is said of wicked men, that *foenea quadam felicitate temporaliter floreat*, they flourish today as grass, and tomorrow are cast into the oven, #Mt 6:30: and as the metal whereof men make glass is nearest melting when it shineth brightest, so are graceless persons nearest destruction when at greatest lustre. The Turks, observing that few of their viziers die in their beds, have this proverb among them, that the greatest man is but as a statue of glass.

{a} A figure by which a more comprehensive term is used for a less comprehensive or *vica versa*: as whole for part or part for whole, genus for species or species for genus, etc. (ED)

Ver. 10. **Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel**] Observing that the prophet had foretold a desolation, and not prayed as before that it might be averted; because he saw God was fully resolved, and their destruction determined.

**Amos hath conspired against thee in the land**] Thus Elijah was the troubler of Israel, Jeremiah a seedsman of sedition, Christ an enemy to Caesar, Luther a trumpet of rebellion; all contra-remonstrants, anti-magistratical. As Athaliah cried, Treason, treason, when herself was the greatest traitor; and as in Nero's days sedition was *unicum crimen eorum qui crimine vacabunt* (Lipsius), laid ordinarily to the charge of those that were most free from it, so was it here. "Amos hath conspired," &c., whereas Amos might well have said, as Latimer did, As for sedition, for aught that I know, methinks I should not need Christ, if I might so say. Religion is an utter enemy to rebellion; and as there are few conscionable Christians (prophets especially) that have not passed under this calumination, so he cannot be rightly esteemed such a one that deserveth it. But Amaziah's honour and incomes were now at stake; as he well perceived when he heard Amos say, Go not up to Bethel, &c., the high places of Isaac shall be destroyed; and hence his zeal against the prophet; like as Erasmus told the Elector of Saxony, that the Pope and his shavelings were therefore so sharp set against Luther because he lifted at the triple crown, and sought to bring down the monks' fat paunches.

**The land is not able to bear all his words]** His burdensome prophecies, {#Mal 1:1} {See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"} much less can I endure them, or any faithful servant of thine, true to his trust. Such a lying accusation we read of, #Es 3:8, made by haughty Haman against the innocent Jews, that they kept not the king's laws, and that therefore it were good policy to weed them out, as not to be longer endured. So Francis, King of France, desiring to excuse to the Protestant princes of Germany his cruel persecution of the Lutherans in his kingdom, wrote to them that he looked upon them all as Anabaptists, and as enemies to civil government; and therefore used such severity against them. This gave occasion to Calvin to write his admirable Institutions, to vindicate our religion from that foul aspersion (Saultet. Annal. 454). The like devilish policy was afterwards used to blanch over that horrid French massacre. For it was given out, that the Protestants had conspired against the king, the queen mother, the king's brethren, the King of Navarre, and the princes of the blood. There was also coin stamped in memory of the matter, in the forepart whereof with the king's picture, was this inscription, *Virtus in rebelles;* power on rebels, and on the other side, *Pietas excitavit iustitiam:* Piety hath stirred up justice. Here was a fair glove drawn upon a foul hand; and this they learned from the devil, who was first a slanderer and then a murderer; as those that have a mind to kill another man's dog make the world believe he was mad first, that they may do it with the better pretext.

Ver. 11. **For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, &c.]** When did Amos say so? He said indeed that the house of Jeroboam should be smitten with the sword, #Am 7:9, and this Amaziah maliciously transferreth to the person of Jeroboam, the more to enrage him against the prophet; whom therefore he nameth once and again, to create him the more displeasure. That Jeroboam died by the sword we read not, but that his son Zachariah was slain, and his house destroyed in the next generation, we find #2Ki 15:10, according to Amos's prophecy. But to colour this calumny, some truth shall be admingled.

**And Israel shall surely be led away captive]** This indeed the prophet had often affirmed (though not in any of those three last visions), and it proved too true: but because Amos saith so he must pass for a traitor against the majesty both of the king and of the

people. What an impudent informer was this! The king and people are pretended; and what good subject can endure it? but that which irked him was, that his own authority was by this plain dealing prophet impaired, and his gain like to be lessened, if the superstition of Bethel were thus decried. It is said of Phlugius and Sidonius (authors of the Interim in Germany) that, among other points of Popery therein defended, they spake much for chrism and extreme unction, *ut ipsi discederent unctores*, that thereby they might hold fat bishoprics. Such arguments prevail much with all self-seekers, whose covetousness and ambition usually ride without reins, and over whose neck it mattereth not.

Ver. 12. **Also Amaziah said unto Amos**] After he had maliciously misinformed the king, but prevailed not; so God would have it, in whose heart is the king's hand, and who rebuketh even kings for their sakes, saying, Do my prophets no harm.

**O thou seer**] Fair words; the better to insinuate.

“ *Mel in ore, verba lactis:  
Fel in corde, fraus in factis.* ”

*Some think he calleth the prophet thus by way of jeer, quasi fatidicum aut fanaticum, as a fortune teller or distracted. Others, that he giveth the prophet good words, and seemeth to give him good counsel, as fearing the people, with whom Amos was in some credit; and therefore the king was told of a conspiracy against him "in the midst of the house of Israel," #Am 7:10.*

**Flee thee away into the land of Judah**] *Age, fuge*: as a friend wrote to Brentius, when he was in danger to be surprised by the emperor's agent, *Fuge, fuge, Brenti cito, citius, citissime*, Fly for thy life, haste, haste, haste. So the Pharisees (for no great love, be sure, but only to be fairly rid of him) came and said to Christ, "Get thee out and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee," #Lu 13:31.

**Into the land of Judah**] This he speaketh scornfully, *q.d.* we are not good enough for you; you are so strict, &c.

**And there eat bread, and prophesy there]** *Invidiose omnia et contemptim dicit:* If you stay here you may hap to starve for it. Away, therefore, into your own country; and there make thee a living by prophesying. He seems to measure Amos by himself; as if he were of those that prophesied for a handful of barley and a morsel of bread, #Eze 13:19 Mic 3:11; and as a certain Popish priest confessed concerning himself and his symmists, We preach the gospel, said he, *tantum ut nos pascat et vestiat*, only to pick a living out of it.

Ver. 13. **But prophesy not any more at Bethel]** Take heed of that; lest, by diffusing too much light among us, thou mar our markets, and hinder the sale of our false wares. This was the naked truth of the business; though something else was pretended, and the king's interest pleaded.

**For it is the king's chapel, and the king's court]** Touch these mountains and they wiil smoke. Truth is a good mistress, but such of her servants as follow her too close at heels may hap to have their teeth struck out. Ahab hateth Micaiah, and Herod John Baptist, and the Pope Savonarola, for their plain dealing, laying them fast enough for it. Great ones love it, ηδιστα η ηκιστα, they must hear pleasing things; or if told of their faults, it must be done with silken words, as she said, λογοις βυδνιοις. They are usually beset with their *Aiones* and *Negones*, as one hath it, that will say as they say: *et mirifica est sympathia inter magnates et parasites*, and there is a wonderful sympathy between kings and court parasites, as was between Ahab and the false prophets. Few Vespasians are to be found, of whom as it was said, that he was the only one who was made the better man by being made emperor, so Quintilian commendeth him for this, that he was *patientissimus veri*, most patient of truth, though never so sharp. Jeroboam was none such; or at least Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, would make the prophet so believe, when he tells him it is the king's court, an ill air for truth to breathe in. *Nihil veritate gravius, nihil assentatione suavius.*

Ver. 14. **Then answered Amos and said to Amaziah]** With no less courage, I suppose, than Paul and Barnabas used to the stubborn Jews, #Ac 13:46; see #Joh 1:19,21; or Basil to Valent, the emperor, or Johannes Sarisburieusis to the Pope, A.D. 1540; or Bishop Ridley, when offering to preach before the Lady Mary, and receiving a

repulse, he was brought by Sir Thomas Wharton, her servant, to the dining place, and desired to drink, which after he had done, he paused a while, looking very sadly; and suddenly broke out into these words: Surely I have done amiss. Why so? quoth the knight. For I have drunk, said he, in that place where God's word offered hath been refused; whereas, if I had remembered my duty, I had departed immediately and shaken off the dust of my shoes for a testimony against this house. These words were by the said bishop spoken with such a vehemence, that some of the hearers afterwards confessed the hairs to stand upright on their heads.

**I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son]** Neither born nor bred a prophet; neither have I rashly or ambitiously put myself upon this tremend employment; my call thereto was extraordinary. The prophet's scholars were called their sons, #2Ki 2:8,5,7,15 Isa 8:18 Mr 10:24 1Co 4:14,17.

**But I was a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit]** Of low condition, and hardly bred; so that I could live with a little, and needed not to turn prophet, *ventris causa*, for food sake. When one said to the philosopher, If you will but please Dionysius you need not feed upon green herbs, he presently replied. And if you can feed upon green herbs you need not please Dionysius. Nature is content with a little, grace with less. It is not for a servant of God to be a slave to his palate: Luther made many a meal of a herring.

Ver. 15. **And the Lord took me, as I followed the flock]** As he took Elisha from the plough tail, the apostles from casting and mending their nets, &c. *Asinos elegit Christus et idiotas, sed oculavit in prudentes: simulque dona dedit, et ministeria*, he called them to the office, and withal he gifted them. He called also learned Nathanael, and Nicodemus, a master in Israel; lest, if he had called none but such as were simple (saith John de Turrecremata), it should have been thought they had been deceived through their simplicity. But it is God's way to choose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence, #1Co 1:27-29.

**And the Lord said unto me]** He often inculcates the name of the Lord, to show that there was a necessity of his prophesying; for who

can safely disobey such a commander? see **#Am 3:8**. *Aut faciendum, aut patendum*. The philosopher could tell the emperor, who challenged him to dispute, that there was no contesting with him that had twenty legions at his command.

**Go, prophesy unto my people Israel]** Keep within my precincts, and thou shalt be sure of my protection; be true to thy trust, and I will see to thy safety. If thou have not fine manchet (as Bucer said to Bradford, encouraging him to bestow his talent in preaching), yet give the poor people barley bread, or whatever else the Lord hath committed unto thee. Having therefore such a call from heaven to this work, with what face canst thou hinder me therein? With what countenance will ye appear before the judgment seat of Christ (said Dr Taylor, martyr, to Stephen Gardiner, Lord Chancellor, who had thus saluted him, Art thou come, thou villain? how darest thou look me in the face for shame? knowest thou not who I am, &c.?) How dare ye for shame look any Christian man in the face, seeing you have forsaken the truth, denied our Saviour Christ and his word, and done contrary to your own oath and writing? And, if I should be afraid of your lordly looks, why fear you not God, the Lord of us all? who hath sent us on his errand, which we must deliver, and truth be spoken, however it be taken, **#1Co 9:16**.

Ver. 16. **Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord]** Hear, thou despiser, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in thy days, a work which thou wilt in nowise believe, though a man declare it unto thee, **#Ac 13:41**. But whether thou wilt hear or forbear, believe or otherwise, thy doom is determined, and shall be pronounced, **#Eze 3:27**: "Hear, therefore, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken it." Oh that thou wouldst give glory to the Lord, and confess thy sin! **#Jer 13:15,16**. Oh that thou wouldst submit to Divine justice, implore his mercy, and putting thy mouth in the dust, say, as once that good man did, *Veniat, veniat, verbum Domini, et submittemus, ei sexcenta si nobis essent colla*. Let the Lord speak, for his servant heareth! But because there is little hopes of that, stand forth and hear thy sentence, and the evil that shall befall thee, as sure as the coat is on thy back, or the heart in thy body. For hath the Lord spoken, and shall he not do it?



**Thou sayest, Prophecy not]** By a bold countermand to that of God in the former verse, "Go, prophesy," &c. "But woe to him that striveth with his Maker I Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth," #Isa 45:9; let men meddle with their matches, and not "with him that is mightier than they," #Ec 6:10.

**And drop not thy word]** Which is as sharp as vinegar and nitre. Or, though it were as sweet as honey, yet it would cause pain to exulcerate parts when dropped upon them.

**Against the house of Isaac]** Though commanded so to do, #Am 7:9. Toothless truths would be better digested.

Ver. 17. **Therefore thus saith the Lord: Thy wife, &c.]** Thou shalt be sure of thy share in the common calamity, which thou wilt not hear of; but thou shalt hear and be ashamed, &c., #Isa 26:11. So little is gotten by thwarting with God, and seeking to frustrate his counsel. With these froward pieces God will show himself froward, #Ps 16:4; and if they walk contrary to him, he will also walk as cross to them, #Le 26:21; he will tame such sturdy rebels as he did Pharaoh, and that way raise him a name; all they shall get by him is but more weight of punishment: as when Jehoiakim had burnt Jeremiah's roll of curses, all that he gained was that the roll was renewed, "and there were added besides thereunto many like words," #Jer 36:32. See the like, #Jer 20:2 1Ki 13:4 22:25 Ac 5:38,39. The counsel of God (saith Gregory) while shunned is executed; the wisdom of man may wriggle, but cannot escape.

**Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city].** A common strumpet, for a punishment of thy spiritual harlotry; together with thy "seducing my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols," #Re 2:20.

**Or, thy wife shall be an harlot]** That is, she shall be ravished by the enemy before thy face (*Per vim stuprabitur*); so Theodoret, Calvin, Mercer, &c. See #Isa 13:16 La 5:11. The Irish rebels bound the husband to the bedpost, while they abused his wife before his face.

**And thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword]** Because thou hast taken my sons and my daughters, and these hast thou

sacrificed unto devils to be devoured. "Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children," and brought them forth to the murderer? #Eze 16:20,21; that thou hast sent so many souls to hell, and nuzled up thine own sons and daughters in ignorance and superstition, being therein rather a parricide than a parent, *peremptores potius quam parentes* (Bern.)?

**Thy land shall be divided by line]** Thy purchases shall be parted among the enemies; thine ill gotten riches shall be made a spoil to the soldier.

**And thou shalt die in a polluted land]** *i.e.* In Assyria, filled with the uncleanness of the inhabitants from corner to corner, as Canaan was, #Ezr 9:11 Le 26:38. Here thou shalt die for thine abominable idolatries, to thy great regret. Seldom do such escape the visible vengeance of God, as by virulent tongues or violent hands persecute his true prophets. Whether Amos for his boldness was first scourged by Amaziah, and then wounded to death by his son Uzziah (as some will), is uncertain.

**And Israel shall surely]** Though thou wouldst not believe it, #Am 7:11.

## Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me]** viz. in this fourth vision, whereby (for better assurance, and to shake them out of their desperate security) Israel's utter ruin is again foretold by a lively type, which is here, 1. propounded; 2. expounded, #Am 8:3,5, that he may run that readeth it, and none may fall, but with open eyes, #Hab 2:2.

**And behold a basket]** Made up haply in the form of a dog, as the word Calub seemeth to import.

**Of summer fruit]** Heb. of summer; that is, of that which the summer affordeth; toward the end of it especially, when fruits ripen, and even fall into the hand of the gatherer. The summer itself hath its denomination from a root that signifieth to awaken; because then the

fruits and flowers, that seemed to be asleep all winter long, do awake, as it were, and show themselves.

Ver. 2. **Amos, what seest thou?**] This the Lord asketh, to stir up attention and affection in the prophet; who might haply need as much to be aroused, as Zechariah in like case did, **#Am 4:1**, with whom it fared as with a drowsy person, who though awaked and set to work, is ready to sleep at it.

**And I said, A basket of summer fruit**] Apples, saith Jerome; figs, say others; and why not as well grapes ripened in the summer sunshine? Whereby the Holy Ghost in the Revelation, **#Re 14:20 19:15**, describeth such as are ready ripe for the wine-press of God's wrath? Nahum compareth them to stubble, laid out in the sun drying, that it may burn the better, **#Na 1:10**.

**The end is come upon my people**] An elegance in the original beyond translation into English: קץ קצץ, the Latin interpreters have (some of them) assayed the like, but they fall far short of it. The Old Testament is full of such surnames; and God seemeth delighted with them. See **#Jer 1:11,12 48:2 49:23,24 La 3:47 Am 5:5 Mic 1:10,14 Zep 2:5 Ex 2:10 Ge 3:20 4:1,25 5:29 17:5 21:5,6**, &c. There is a pedantic style and a majestic; an effeminate eloquence and a manly. This latter is lawful, and may very well become the man of God; who yet must not wit-wanton it in weightiest matters; but shun those more gay and lighter flashes and flourishes, wherewith the emptiest cells affect to be most fraught; as they, who for want of wares in their shops, set up painted blocks to fill up vacant shelves, as one well expresseth it.

**The end is come upon my people**] *Exitus et exitium*. As the summer is the end of the year and the time of ripening fruits; so, now that this people are ripe for ruin, "An end is come, is come, is come: it watcheth for them; behold, it is come," **#Eze 7:6,7**, even the precise time and term of their final overthrow.

**I will not again pass by them any more**] See **#Am 7 Am 8**. God can pass by, that is, pardon, his people better than any other, **#Mic 7:18** (like as they that are born of God, and partake of the Divine nature, can bear wrongs best of any; compel them to go a mile they

will be content, if it may do good, to go two; yea, as far as the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace will carry them). But as the saints of God may not be therefore injured (which was Julian's jeering cruelty) because they are meek: so must not God be presumed upon and provoked because he is merciful. "There is mercy with him, that he may be feared," saith the Psalmist; for abused mercy turneth into fury, and opportunities of grace are often so headlong, that if once past they are irrecoverable. Woe be to that people or person to whom God shall say, "I will not again pass by you any more."

Ver. 3. **And the songs of the temple shall be howlings]** Heb. shall howl, shall be turned into the black santis, as they call it ( *cantus in planctum laetitia in lachrymas*), such as I hate, **#Am 5:23**, and feel it grating mine ears, as an *harmonia discors*.

**There shall be many dead bodies in every place]** Either through pestilence or sword. Others read it thus, In every place it shall be said, *Proiece, sile*, Out with them, make no words; an earnest aposiopesis {a} {#Am 6:10} {See Trapp on "Am 6:10"} *q.d.* Patiently acquiesce in the just judgment of so mighty a God. Or, throw these dead bodies into pits, and say nothing; lest we be sequestered as unclean by the law. It is no small misery to be under hard and heavy crosses, and yet to be forced to dissemble and suppress them; to bite in pain, and to digest grief, as horses do their choler by biting on the bridle. "I was dumb with silence," saith David, "I held my peace, even from good"; that is, from just defense; "but my sorrow was stirred thereby"; my sore was exulcerate, renewed (as the Greek there saith) and increased, **#Ps 39:2**. Give sorrow a vent, and it will wear away.

{a} A rhetorical artifice, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed.

(ED)

Ver. 4. **Hear this, ye that swallow up the needy]** That seep them up as drink (our word seep seems to come of the Hebrew *Shaaph*), that would make but a breakfast, nay, but a bit of them; that would swallow them at once down their wide gullets, and do, for that purpose, pant and even faint, as well nigh windless, after them, to devour them. Hence they are called man eaters, cannibals, **#Ps 14:4**. See **#Am 2:7**. {See Trapp on "Am 2:7"}

**Even to make the poor of the land to fail]** Heb. the meek of the, land. Poverty should meeken and tame men's spirits; howbeit, some are humbled but not humble, low but not lowly. Those that are both are often oppressed by the great ones of the earth; and even devoured, as the lesser fish are by the bigger. "Ye have condemned and killed the just," saith St James to the wicked rich men of his time, "and he doth not resist you," #Jas 5:6. He only committeth his cause to him that judgeth righteously, #1Pe 2:23, and indeed he need do no more than so; for God is the poor man's king, as James V of Scotland was termed for his charity; yea, he is the world's refuge, Awlen Penaugh, as the Great Turk vain gloriously styleth himself, and would have the world to take notice, that such poor people as lament to him shall be relieved by him, although his ministers fail them or abuse them, through their injustice, to make the poor of the land fail. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him," #Ps 12:5. Neither doth God say it only (though that were sufficient), but swear it too in this chapter, yea, in this text (the two next following verses are put in as by a parenthesis), and these cormorants are called upon to hear it, and not to pass it by with a deaf ear, *tanquam monstra marina*, as such kind of creatures used to do.

Ver. 5. **Saying, When will the new moon be gone, &c.]** "O, what a weariness it is! and ye have snuffed at it," #Mal 1:13. See the note there. This ye have said, or thought at least; and God knoweth the language of your hearts. He presseth upon no man; neither will he accept that service that is pressed out of people, as verjuice out of a crab. All his saints are free hearted, #Ps 110:3, all his soldiers volunteers; they welcome the sabbath, as that holy man did, who went forth to meet and salute it with *Veni sponsa mea*, Come, my sweet spouse, I have dearly longed for thee. The sabbath they call *Desiderium dierum* a day of delight. They also pass it over with singular delight, #Isa 58:13, walking into Christ's garden of spiritual duties, whereof there is so great variety for the good soul to breathe itself in and not be sated; and then are taken into Christ's wine cellar, and (after a holy manner) inebriated with Divine consolations, #So 2:4,5 2Co 1:5, such as the cock on the dunghill knows not, such as pass all carnal men's understanding. They find no more relish in holy days and duties than they do in the white of an egg or in a dry

chip; the work they do at such times, for fashion-sake or fear of law, &c., is dead work, as the apostle calleth it; they sit in the stocks when they are at prayers, and come out of the church when the tedious sermon runs somewhat beyond the hour, as prisoners do out of a jail, &c.; they cannot tell how to wear out the sabbath, which therefore they wish over, and constantly violate, either by corporal labour or else (which is as bad, or worse) by spiritual idleness. Full ill would these men, *addere de profano ad sacrum* (as the Jews say we should do), pronouncing those happy that begin the sabbath with those of Tiberias, and end it with those of Tsepphore; the former began it sooner than others, the latter continued it longer (Buxtorf. Synag. Jud.). Full ill would they have liked our King Edgar's law, that Sunday should be solemnized from Saturday, nine o'clock, till Monday morning. Full loth would these men be to beg David's office out of his hand, of being a doorkeeper in God's house; that is, to be first in and last out. And what would they do to keep an everlasting sabbath in heaven that are so troubled and even tired out with so short an attendance on the Lord's day; not without a world of wilful distractions, such as spoil and corrupt their performances, so that they stink in the nostrils of the Almighty?

**And the sabbath]** Not the sabbath of the seventh year (called *Shemittah*, Remission, #Le 25:3-7), as some would have it meant; but the weekly sabbath, which the unrighteous Mammonists here cry out of, as if on that day the sun proceeded a slower pace than on others; and they greatly grudged, *lucellum suum Dei cultui cedere*, that God should be served to their disadvantage. Their fingers therefore itch to be setting out corn; and they as dearly desire it as David did once to come and appear before the Lord. As he had his "When shall I come?" by way of wish, #Ps 42:2, so they had their "When shall we sell corn? when shall we set forth wheat? Surely as David's soul longed sore to go forth unto Absalom, #2Sa 13:39, so that he could have found in his heart, but for stark shame, to have gone himself and fetched him home; so was it with these grapple grain masters, these *frumenti corrasores et veluti corrosores*, #Pr 11:26. They had a good mind to have been doing on the new moons and sabbaths, but that they were flatly forbidden by the law, made on purpose for "these lawless and disobedient," #1Ti 1:9, these masterless monsters, these yokeless Belialists, to be to them as

chains and shackles, to confine them, {#Ex 20:8 34:21 Le 23:3 Ne 10:32 13:15} as Solomon's command did Shimei, that they may not leap over the pale after profit and pleasure, or if they do they may die for it. **#Isa 66:23**, it is prophesied that, in the restitution of the Church from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another (as often as they come), without tiresomeness, all flesh shall come to worship before the Lord, they shall "call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable," **#Isa 58:13**, be rapt and ravished in spirit, **#Re 1:10**, be in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost all the day long: Πνευματικως σαββατιζειν, μελετη νομου χαιροντας, as Ignatius hath it: Sabbatize spiritually, rejoicing in Divine meditations (Epist. 3. ad Magnes.). This well practised would take men off from the world's tasteless fooleries, as his mouth will not water after homely provisions, that hath lately tasted of delicate sustenance. It would also blessedly free them from those many foolish and hurtful lusts, **#1Ti 6:9**, those heavy sorrows and self-created miseries, wherewith covetous caitiffs pierce themselves through, gall and gore their own hearts, and trouble their own houses, **#Am 8:10**, taking no more rest than if upon a rack or bed of thorns.

**Making the Ephah small, and the shekel great]** Selling by small measures but for great rates; which was directly against the law, **#De 25:13,14**, and that golden rule of right, the standard of equity, the royal law of liberty, **#Mt 7:12**, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." This is the sum of what they have said, for duties of the second table.

**And falsifying the balances by deceit?]** Heb. perverting the balances of deceit, that is (by a metonymy, as **#Job 22:6**), making those that were right deceitful. See **#Pr 20:10,23**. {See Trapp on "Pr 20:10"} {See Trapp on "Pr 20:23"} Such falsifiers are counted no better than Canaanites, **#Ho 12:7**, and shall have small joy of their cursed hoards of evil gotten goods.

Ver. 6. **That we may buy the poor for silver, &c.]** Thus the poor always pay for it; the modest and mild poor especially, as **#Am 8:4**. Hence poor and afflicted are put for one and the same, **#Zep 3:12**, and to want and to be abased, **#Php 4:12**; they that want shall be

sure to be abased and abused by the wretched rich, who will ever go over the hedge where it is lowest, and catch the poor by drawing him into the nets, #Ps 10:9, that is, into their debts, bonds, and mortgages, and at length making such their bondmen by abuse of that permission, #Le 25:39. See #Am 2:3.

**Yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?**] *Quisqnilias*, the husks, more fit for pigs or poultry; hardly man's meat, and yet held good enough for the poor ( *deciduum, purgamenta*, the offal); although their flesh was as the flesh of their brethren, and their children as their children, #Ne 5:5, however they used them. How far were these rich wretches from considering the poor, as David's blessed man, #Ps 41:1, and as Dr Taylor the martyr did, whose custom was once in a fortnight at least to go to poor men's houses, look into their cupboards, see how they fared, and what they lacked, that he might either make or procure them a supply from such as were better able. Ver. 7. **The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob**] *i.e.* by himself, the matter of Jacob's chief boasting, there being no God like unto their God (their enemies themselves being judges, #De 32:31), neither any nation so great as to have God so nigh unto them as Israel had, in all things that they called upon him for, #De 4:7. So that this oath of God grates upon their ingratitude for such imparallege privileges, and it is uttered in great wrath, as appeareth by the following angry aposiopesis, {a} wherein the apodosis {b} is not set down but understood.

**If I ever forget any of their works**] Forget to punish them. These oaths, *cum reticentia*, are very dreadful. Take heed lest by stubbornness we provoke God to swear in his wrath that we shall not enter into his rest, #Ps 95:11. Take heed lest a promise of entering being left us, and a proffer made us, we should seem to come short of it, to come lag or late, #Heb 4:1, ὑστερηκεναι, a day after the fair, an hour after the feast. God is now more quick and peremptory than ever in rejecting men that neglect so great salvation, #Heb 2:3; the time is shorter, he will not wait so long as he was wont to do. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned," #Mr 16:16. Surely God "will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will he make in the earth," #Ro 9:28. "The time is short," saith the apostle, #1Co



**7:29**, a metaphor, say some, from a piece of cloth rolled up (συνεσταλμενος), only a little left at the end. "Let us therefore fear" (as the same apostle inferreth upon the consideration of God's oath, **#Heb 3:18 4:1**, and let our fear not weaken but waken our diligence in well doing, lest he swear and repent not, lest he come to a resolution and decree (God's oath is nothing else but his inviolable and invariable decree) to cast us off as he did Saul, for his wilful disobedience, **#1Sa 15:20-23**. Saul lived long after his utter rejection, and men could see no alteration in his outward condition; but God had sworn, as here, never to forget any of his works. Now, saith Samuel to him (and it is fearful), the eternity of Israel (the excellency of Jacob) "will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent," **#1Sa 15:29**. Do not think this a case that seldom comes; it is done every day upon some or other, saith a great Divine; but woe be to that man upon whom it is done! it had been much better for him that he had not been born, **#Mt 26:24**. Oh consider this all ye that forget God, lest he swear by his excellency, "Surely I will never forget any of your works."

{a} A rhetorical artifice, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed.

ⒺD

{b} The concluding clause of a sentence, as contrasted with the introductory clause or *protasis*; now usually restricted to the consequent clause in a conditional sentence, as 'If thine enemy *hunger, feed him*.' ⒺD

**Ver. 8. Shall not the land tremble for this]** *q.d.* So great are the oppressions here exercised, that the very axle of the earth is even ready to crack under them. Amaziah, that hedge priest of Bethel, had said of our prophet, that the land was not able to bear all his words, **#Am 7:10**, but Amos more truly affirmeth, that the land trembled under their many and mighty sins, and could bear them no longer; the earthquake happened about this time, **#Am 1:1**, and it was a just wonder, that the earth had not opened her wide mouth, and swallowed them all up quickly into hell, as **#Nu 16:31,32**, and as it did a great part of the city of Antioch, A. D. 527, for their horrible heresies and blasphemies there held and broached by her bishops.

**And every one mourn]** *i.e.* smart, till they mourn. National sins bring national plagues. The Hebrews hold that there is not a worse sin than oppression. St James saith, that it cries to heaven, and

entereth into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth, #Jas 5:4, who will not fail to hear, for he is gracious, #Ex 22:27.

**And it shall rise up wholly as a flood]** *i.e.* the land shall rise up, shall seem to do so, when it is floated and flooded with water; as the sluggard's field is said to rise up or ascend with thorns, that is, to be overgrown therewith. Here then is threatened an overflowing scourge, a universal destruction covering the face of the country, as Nile doth a great part of the land of Egypt every year, leaving much mud behind it; whereof see Pliny and other authors. Mercer thinks the words would be best read by interrogation, as the former, thus, And shall it not rise up wholly as a flood? *q.d.* shall it not be turned into a large lake, as once Sodom and her sisters were for like cruelties to the poor? #Eze 16:46.

Ver. 9. **And it shall come to pass in that day, &c.]** Here the Lord threateneth (saith Mr Diodati) to encumber the land with horrible and mournful calamities, when it shall be least thought of. Earthquakes, inundations, sudden and dreadful darkness, are sure effects and signs of God's heavy displeasure against men's sins, #Ps 18:8,12 Mt 24:6,7 Lu 21:10,11 Joe 2:10 Jer 15:8,9, and promise contrary to this threat, #Job 18:5,6.

**I will cause the sun to go down at noon]** A sudden change, as was at Sodom; the sun was fair risen upon it that very day that it was destroyed in, #Ge 19:23,24; as at Babylon, when surprised by Cyrus, they could not at first believe their own calamity; as it was with Jerusalem often, and shall be with Rome: #Re 18:7,8, "She saith in her heart, I shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine," &c., to confute their fond conceit of an eternal empire. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then shall sudden destruction come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape," #1Th 5:3. Philosophers say, that before a snow the weather will be warmish; when the wind lies the great rain falls; and the air is most quiet when suddenly there will be an earthquake. Pharaoh had all fair weather made before him till the instant that he was drowned in the sea. Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, and other tyrants were smitten in the height of their pride and ruff of their jollity. Jerusalem had three years' great plenty before her last destruction, of which some

interpret this text. Those seven once flourishing Churches of Asia, how glorious and resplendent were they till they had sinned away their light! The same might be said of many others; and who knows how soon it may be said also of us? who knows whether we be not, even now, upon the very tropics and turning points of time? Surely God's patience towards us, *quo diuturnior eo minacior*, the longer it lasteth the more evil is toward us, if we abuse it. If in a land of light we love darkness better than light, we may soon have enough of it. *Solem in Britannia non occidere nec resurgeto retulit Tacitus*. Tacitus telleth us that at some time of the year the sun seemeth neither to rise nor fall in this country; but so lightly to pass from us in the night that you can scarce discern day from night. Of England for this many years it may be said, as Solinus doth of the Rhodes, that it is *semper in sole sita*, ever in the sun. How long it shall be so, he alone knows that knows all. Walk while ye have the light; and pray that God would discloud these gloomy days with the beams of his mercy, and not cause our sun to go down at noon, nor our land to be darkened in the clear day. Oh stop this Sun of righteousness posting as it may seem from us (when the blind man cried lustily, Jesus, though journeying, stood still), stay him by your importunities, as those two did at Emmaus, and say,

“ *Vespers iam venit; nobiscum, Christe maneto,  
Extingui lucem nec patiare tuam.* ”

Ver. 10. **And I will turn your feasts into mourning]** Whether your idolatrous feasts and templemusic, whereby you vainly conceit to be secured from danger, saying, "Is not the Lord among us? what evil can come unto us?" or your common feasts, whereat you have songs to cheer you up, and so to put sorrow from your hearts and evil from your flesh, nourishing yourselves as in a day of slaughter or good cheer, #Jas 5:5; all shall be turned into mourning, funeral mourning, see #Am 8:3.

**And I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins]** For a token of your great grief, as the custom then was, and is still for mourning weeds. The Hebrew word sack is the same in almost all languages; which showeth that the Hebrew is the mother of all the rest, saith Mercer.

**And baldness upon every head]** You shall pull off your hair for grief; or, because they had learned of the heathens, their neighbours, in token of lamentation, to shave their heads, **#Eze 7:18 Jer 48:37**, and beards too, **#Isa 15:2**, which yet was forbidden them to do, **#Le 19:27 21:9**, unless it were to show their sorrow for sin, **#Isa 22:12**.

**And I will make it as the mourning of an only son]** Which was very bitter, **#Jer 6:26 Zec 12:10**. The loss of a loving yoke fellow is more grievous than that of a son; but to father and mother together nothing more bitter than *luctuosa faecunditas* (Laeta's case in Jerome), to bury many children, and especially to bury all in one.

**And the end thereof as a bitter day]** Thereof, that is, either of that land or of that lamentation there shall be bitterness in the end. So the poet (Tibul. lib. 2),

*“ Nunc et amara dies, et noctis amarior umbra est;  
Omnia iam tristi tempera felle madent.”*

*How could it be otherwise than extreme bitter with this people, when heaven and earth conspired to punish them? neither had they the good word of God (called the word of his patience, #Re 3:10, written on purpose that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, #Ro 15:4, that out of those breasts of consolation we might suck and be satisfied, #Isa 66:11), to help them and keep from swooning, #Ps 119:92. And this was the greatest plague of all the rest; and is therefore reserved to the last place, deterrima tanquam colophon, as a most sad catastrophe.*

Ver. 11. **Behold, the days come]** Behold it; for it is a just wonder. The Lord created a new thing in the earth when Israel should want the word; Israel, to whom were committed the oracles of God; Israel, to whom God had spoken "by the mouth of his holy prophets, which had been since the world begun," in a sweet succession, **#Lu 1:70**. See my True Treasure. "He made known his ways to Moses, his acts and monuments to the children of Israel," **#Ps 103:7**. Yet even these, who had the cornucopia of God's word, shall now suffer a famine of it; they shall have cause to cry out, "We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet; neither is there among us any that knoweth how long," **#Ps 74:9**. The word of God shall be

precious, #1Sa 3:1, and they shall be hard put to it to come by it. Amaziah and his complices shall not need to pack away the prophets, as #Am 7:12, and to bid them go preach elsewhere; for God will, for a singular plague to an unworthy people, withdraw them; the law shall be no more, the prophets also shall find no vision from the Lord, #La 2:9.

**That I will send a famine in the land]** Heb. I will let it out (*sc.* out of my treasury of plagues, where I have it ready and desirous to be abroad), and turn it loose (εξαποστειλω, Septung.), which before I kept up, as a wild beast, that it might not hurt nor destroy in all mine holy mountain; now it shall out among you, and the devil with it, #Re 12:12, with hell at the heels of it.

**Not a famine of bread]** Though that is very grievous, #La 1:11,19 2:12,20 4:4,9 5:9; and puts people to many hard straits and extremities (as were easier to instance), even to the eating of one another.

**Nor a thirst for water]** A torment more intolerable than the former. Lysimachus to save his life parted with his kingdom for a draught of water.

**But of hearing the word of the Lord]** Which is *pabulum animae*, the soul's proper food, such as she cannot live without; but when God sooth his oracles vilipended and lying under the table, it is just with him to call to the enemy to take away. It was so with those seven Churches of Asia among many others; as also with those of Africa, that vast continent (thrice as large as Europe), in all which there is not any region entirely possessed by Christians but the kingdom of Habassia: for as for the large region of Nubia, which had from the apostles' time (as it is thought) professed the Christian faith, it hath again over a hundred years since forsaken it, and embraced, instead of it, partly Mahometanism, and partly idolatry; and that by the most miserable occasion that might be, viz. famine of the word of God, for lack of ministers. For, as Alvarez hath recorded, at his being at the king of Habassia's court, there were ambassadors out of Nubia to entreat him for a supply of ministers to

instruct their nation and to repair Christianity, gone to ruin among them; but they were rejected.

Ver. 12. **And they shall wander from sea to sea]** Trouble themselves to no purpose, take pains (as Esau did for venison, but lost his labour), run to all coasts and quarters to seek the word of the Lord.

**And shall not find it]** And why? they despised it when it was in their power; they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, with those lawyers, **#Lu 7:30**. He would have gathered them, but they would not be gathered; he would have purged them, but they would not be purged, **#Eze 24:13,14**, they are therefore miserable by their own election; as Saul was, who slighted Samuel while he was alive, and would have been fully glad of his counsel when he was dead. He that would not once worship God in Samuel worships at length Samuel in Satan; and no marvel. Satan was now become his refuge, and preacheth his funeral; his Urim now was darkness, his prophet a ghost: O woeful condition! But what should a parent do when the child loathes and spills his victuals? snatch it from him, and lay it out of his reach. Samaria felt this more severe famine, when carried captive especially; so did Jerusalem, after Malachi, whose prophecy the Jews fitly call *Chathimath Chazon*, the sealing up of vision. *Bath Chol*, or the echo from heaven, they had now and then after this time, **#Mt 3:17 Joh 12:28**; they had also the writings of Moses and the prophets interpreted after a sort by the Scribes and Pharisees, whom (while they sat close in Moses' chair, and kept it warm) men were bound to hear, **#Mt 23:2,3**, which because Dives did not, he suffered hunger and thirst in hell for ever, **#Lu 16:24**. And had he been granted the liberty of hearing again upon earth but one more sermon, how far would not he gladly have gone for it! and how, as for life, would he have listened to it! But this could not possibly be, for out of hell there is no redemption, **#Ps 49:8,9**, and when the night of death once comes men can work no more. Night is a time not of doing work, but of receiving wages; up therefore and be doing, while it is yet day, **#Joh 12:35,36**. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," **#Isa 55:6**, seek him seasonably, seek him seriously: "Then shall ye seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart," **#Jer 29:13**. That was a dismal doom that our Saviour passed upon those stiffnecked Jews and

uncircumcised in hearts and ears (as St Stephen rightly styles them, #Ac 7:51), that were as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever their fathers had been before them. "Ye shall seek me, and yet shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come," #Joh 8:21. Ye shall wander up and down for meat, making a noise like a hungry dog, and grudge that ye be not satisfied, #Ps 59:14,15. Do not the miserable Jews do so all the world over to this day, expecting their Messiah? *quem tantis ululatibus exposcunt*, throwing open their windows to behold him, and praying for the rebuilding of their temple, thus (Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 13), *Templum tuum brevi, valde cito, valde cito, in diebus nostris citissime, nunc aedifica templum tuum brevi*: Merciful God, great God, bountiful God, beautiful God, sweet God, mighty God, thou God of the Jews, now build thy temple, do it shortly, suddenly, quickly, very quickly, very quickly, very quickly, even in our days now, this day before the next, &c. Ah, poor creatures! they would not, when time was, know in that their day the things which belonged to their peace; therefore to this day they are hid from their eyes, and wrath is come upon them to the utmost, #Lu 19:42. *Alterius perditio tun sit caudio*, Let their harms be our warning, not to stand out the day of grace, not to surfeit of the word, lest we suffer a famine of it; not to retain the snuffs of our sins, lest they dim our candlestick; a removal whereof, except we repent, may be as certainly foreseen and foretold as if visions and letters were sent us from heaven, as once to Ephesus telling them so, #Re 2:5. And indeed it hath been the opinion, and is still the fear of some not unconsiderable divines, that Antichrist, before his abolition, shall once again overflow the whole face of the West, and suppress the whole Protestant Churches. Now if ever this come to pass (as justly we may fear it will), what may we thank but our detestable lukewarmness and loathing of the heavenly manna, our not receiving the love of the truth, that we might be saved? for which cause, if God shall send us strong delusions, even the efficacy of error, that we should believe a lie, #2Th 2:10,11, that being infatuated we should be seduced, and being seduced be damned, as Austin glosseth that text, whom can we blame for it?

Ver. 13. **In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst]** When God depriveth a People of his ordinances, and so withdraweth his gracious presence from them, what wonder though temporal judgments come rushing in as by a sluice? "Persecute and

take him" (said David's enemies), "for God hath forsaken him, and there is none to deliver him," #Ps 71:11. "The Philistines are upon me," saith Saul, "for God hath forsaken me." "Behold, I am cast out from thy presence," said Cain (that is, from my father's house where thine ordinances are administered), "and therefore every one that findeth me shall slay me," #Ge 4:14. In that day of the want of the word, in the day of spiritual famine and thirst, behold, *aliud ex alio malum*, another thirst shall seize upon the choicest and fairest; as flies settle upon the sweetest perfumes, when they are cold, and corrupt them.

**Shall the fair virgins]** Whom all men favour for their comeliness, οτι καλον φιλον εστι. Beauty is of itself lovely and attractive, it needeth no letters of commendations: but God is no respecter of persons, and beauty abused is like a fair house with an ill inhabitant, said Diogenes; like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, said Solomon, #Pr 11:22. Some are Helenas without, but Hecubas within, painted sepulchres, Egyptian temples; like Aurelia Orestilla, of whom Sallust saith, that she had nothing in her praise worthy but her beauty: fair she was and foolish, not καλη και σοφη, beautiful and wise, as it is reported of Aspasia, Cyrus's concubine (Athenaeus). Now these fair maids, together with the choice young men, best able to endure thirst a long season,

**Shall faint for thirst]** Heb. shall be overcovered with grief, shall be troubled and perplexed, shall faint and swoon, shall find by experience that all flesh is grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field, that "even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint," #Isa 40:30,31.

Ver. 14. **They that swear by the sin of Samaria]** *i.e.* By the calf set up at Bethel, not far from Samaria. This calf is called the sin, or guilt, of Samaria, to show the abomination of it; for which cause also Paul calls it sinful sin, #Ro 7:13, as not finding for it a worse epithet; and antichrist for like cause he calleth "that man of sin," #2Th 2:3, to note him *merum scelus*, pure wickedness, saith Beza, merely made up of sin. Now, to swear by this of Samaria was to



deify it; to swear by anything besides the true God is to forsake him, #Jer 5:7, which is a hateful wickedness, #Jer 2:12,13; as in Papists who familiarly swear by their he-saints and she-saints, and so sacrilegiously transfer upon the creature that which pertaineth to God alone.

**And say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth]** God only liveth, to speak properly, #1Ti 6:17, but to say that Dan's Deunculus lived (being no better than a dumb and dead idol), and to swear by the life of it (as the Spaniards do now in the pride of their monarchy, by the life of their king), this is horrible impiety. As for that of Abigail to David, #1Sa 25:26, "Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth," the former was an oath, the latter was not an oath, but an asseveration or obtestation only, conjoined with an oath.

**And, The manner of Beersheba liveth]** That is, the forms and rites of worshipping in Beersheba (another nest of idolatry, #Am 5:5 Ho 10:13), as the Chaldee paraphraseth it. Durandus hath written, the Romish ritual, the way of worship used in that synagogue of Satan: Mercer rendereth it, *Vivit peregrinatio Beersheba*, the way or passage of Beersheba liveth. Beersheba had an idol, and was the way to Dan and Bethel; hence this superstitious oath drawn out to the full length, By the sin of Samaria, by the god of Dan, and by the manner of Beersheba: like as the Great Turk, Mahomet, promising his soldiers the spoil of Constantinople for three days together, if they could win it, for confirmation of his oath solemnly swore by the immortal God, and by the four hundred prophets, by Mahomet, by his father's soul, by his own children, and by the sword wherewith he was girt, faithfully to perform whatsoever he had to them in his proclamation promised.

**Even they shall fall, and never rise up again]** Fall fatally, ferally, irrecoverably, as old Eli did when his neck was broken, but first his heart. The ten tribes, for their idolatry and contempt of the word, never returned out of captivity. From the famine foretold what could follow but irreparable ruin, though for a time they might flourish? see #Pr 29:1. {See Trapp on "Pr 29:1"} Of that spiritual famine let us be most impatient, and say as Luther did, I would not live in paradise

without the word; but with it I could make a shift to live in hell itself.

## Chapter 9

Ver. 1. **I saw the Lord]** This seer, #Am 7:12, saw the Lord in a vision; for otherwise God is too subtile for sinew or sight to seize upon him. We cannot look upon the body of the sun, neither can we see at all without the beams of it; so here.

**Standing upon the altar]** Or, firmly set, *sc.* to do execution upon that altar, *sc.* that idolatrous altar at Bethel mentioned before, and formerly threatened by another prophet, #1Ki 13:1,2. The Rabbis say, God was seen standing upon that altar, as ready to sacrifice and slay the men of that age, whose idolatries and other impieties he could no longer bear with. And hence it is haply, that he is brought in standing; like as #Ac 7:55, Jesus, at Stephen's death, was seen standing at the right hand of God, where he is usually said to sit. *Stat ut vindex, sedet ut iudex.* He stood as his defender and sat as his judge.

**And he said]** *sc.* to the angel that stood by, #Zec 3:7, or to the enemy commissioned by him, or to some other creature, for they are all his servants, #Ps 119:91, neither can he want a weapon to tame his rebels with.

**Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake]** Smite with a courage, as #Eze 9:5. Angels give no light blows. "Behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forests with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one," #Isa 10:33,34; that is, by an angel shall he smite to the ground that mighty army which was like a thick wood. See #Isa 37:36 Ps 78:25 89:6. So at our Saviour's resurrection, an angel, in despite of the soldiers set to watch, rolled away the grave stone, and sat upon it. And as a mighty man, when he sitteth down, shaketh the bench under him, so did he shake the earth; "and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men," #Mt 28:2,4. Down with this idol temple, down with it, saith God here, even to the ground.

**And cut them in the head, all of them]** Cleave them down the middle, so that every post may be sure to fall, being divided from the top to the bottom; and let this act be a sign to them all of what I intend to do to their persons, as many of them as by this gate have entered into this idol temple and altar. A deep cut in the head is dangerous and deadly, **#Ge 3:15 Ps 68:21**.

**And I will slay the last of them]** I, by mine agents and instruments, as before: for it is but one hand and many executioners that God slays men with. Job could discern God's arrows in Satan's hand, and God's hand on the arms of the Sabeen robbers. The sword is bathed in heaven before it is imbrued in men's blood, **#Isa 34:5**. "The Lord killeth and maketh alive," saith holy Hannah, **#1Sa 2:6**.

**He that fleeth of them shall not flee away]** See **#Am 2:14**. {*See Trapp on "Am 2:14"*} and say, Behold the severity of God, **#Ro 11:12**.

Ver. 2. **Though they dig into hell, &c.]** No starting hole shall secure them from the wrath of God and rage of the creature, set at work by him. "Hell and destruction are before the Lord," **#Pr 15:11**, yea, hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering, **#Job 26:6**. He hath a sharp eye, and a long hand, to pull men out of their lurking holes; as he did Adam out of the thicket, Manasseh from among the thorns, **#2Ch 33:11**, Jonah from the sides of the ship, the Duke of Buckingham in Richard III's time, &c. "Be sure," saith Moses, "your sin will find you out," **#Nu 32:23**, and God's hand will hale you to punishment.

**Though they climb up to heaven]** That is (by a hyperbole), to high and strong places; as the Babel builders, the Benjamites that fled to the rock Rimmon, and there abode four months, **#Jud 20:47**, the gibing Jebusites, that were so confident of their stronghold of Zion that they flouted David and his forces, **#2Sa 5:8**, the proud prince of Tyre, and others.

**Thence will I bring them down]** From their loftiest tops of pride and creature confidence, which God loves to confute and defeat: as I might instance in Nebuchadnezzar, Xerxes, Haman, Sejanus, Bajazet, that terror of the world, and (as he thought) superior to

fortune, yet in an instant, with his state, in one battle overthrown into the bottom of misery and despair; and that in the midst of his great strength. The same end awaits the Pope and his *hierarchyruet alto a culmine Roma*, that Jupiter Capitolinus shall be one day unroosted by him, who casteth the wicked down to the ground, **#Ps 147:6**.

**Ver. 3. And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel]** *In densis silvis, inter spelaea ferarum*. In the thick woods among the dens of the wild beasts. Lawful enough it is in some cases to hide, as David did often and Elias, and Christ, and Paul, **#2Co 11:32,33**, and Athanasius, and various other saints. Tertullian was too rigid in condemning all kind of hiding in evil times. But to hide from God, who searcheth Jerusalem with lights, and to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, **#Ps 139:12**, to whom *obscura clarent, muta respondent, silentium confitetur*; this is base and bootless. Carmel shall not cover them, nor any other startinghole secure them from Divine justice. The poor Jews were pulled by the Romans out of privies and other underground places, where they had hid themselves, as Josephus writeth; and so were those Samaritans served by the Assyrians, who ferreted them out, and slaughtered them.

**And though they be hid from my sight]** As they think, but that cannot be; for he (like the optic virtue in the eye) sees all and is seen of none.

**In the bottom of the sea]** Which, how deep and troublesome soever, is to God a sea of glass like unto crystal, **#Re 4:6**: *corpus diaphanum*, a pervious, clear, transparent body such as he sees through, and hath the sole command of.

**Thence will I command the serpent]** For therre is that crooked serpent leviathan, **#Isa 27:1**, there are also creeping things innumerable **#Ps 104:26**, to arrest wicked men as rebels and traitors to the highest majesty, and to drag them down to the bottom of bell. All elements and creatures shall draw upon them, as servants will do upon such as assault their lord *Rebellisque facta est, quia homo numini, creatura homini*, as Austin truly and trimly avoucheth.

Ver. 4. **And though they go into captivity, &c.**] And so may hope the worst is over ("Surely the bitterness of death is past," #1Sa 15:32) yet it shall prove otherwise: the hypocrite's hope is as the giving up the ghost, saith Job and that is but cold comfort; or, as the spider's web, spun out of her own bowels; and, when the besom comes, swept to the muckhill.

**Before their enemies]** Whose custom was to drive their captives before them, #La 1:5 young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, #Isa 20:4. Or, "before their enemies," that is, before they are taken captive by the enemies, by voluntary yielding, in hope of quarter for their lives. The Jews indeed had a promise from the prophet Jeremiah, #Jer 21:9, that if they went out and fell to the Chaldeans that besieged them they should have their lives for a prey but the ten tribes had no such promise made them; they were strangers from the covenants #Eph 2:12, and therefore could look for no mercy. Loammi, and therefore Loruhamah #Ho 1:8, the ark and the mercy seat were never sundered.

**Thence will I command the sword]** See #Isa 13:15,16 Jer 9:10 43:11 Eze 14:17.

**And I will set mine eyes upon them]** Heb. *eye (Emphaticoteron est quam si dixisset Oculo pluraliter. Mercer)*, viz. the eye of my providence, that *oculus irretortus*, whereby I will look them to death, and take course that nothing shall go well with them; see a little below, #Am 9:8 Jer 21:10 Ps 34:10. In Tamerlane's eyes sat such a majesty as man could hardly endure to behold; and man in talking with him became dumb. He held the East in such awe, as that he was commonly called, The wrath of God and terror of the world. Augustus Caesar frowned to death Cornelius Gallus; and so did Queen Elizabeth Sir Christopher Hatton, lord chancellor God's enemies are sure to perish at the rebuke of his countenance, #Ps 80:16, and if he but set his eyes upon them for evil, and not for good, all occurrences shall certainly work together for the worst unto them.

Ver. 5. **And the Lord God of hosts is he, &c]** Here the prophet proveth what he had said in the foregoing verses, by an argument drawn from the wonderful power of God, which profane persons are

apt to question, that they may harden their hearts against his fear. Consider, saith he, first, that he is the Lord God of hosts, and (as the Rabbis well observe) he hath the upper and lower troops ready pressed, as his horse and foot, to march against his enemies. Next, that he toucheth the land, as it were, with his little finger, and it shall melt, like the fat of lambs before the fire; it shall crumble to crattle, moulder away, and be moved, because he is wroth, #Ps 18:7: and shall men be unmoved? shall they be more insensible than the senseless earth? The people of Antioch, though many of them gave their hands for Chrysostom's banishment, yet, terrified by an earthquake (which wrought in them a heartquake, as it had done in the jailer, #Ac 16:25-30), they immediately sent for him again. But, thirdly, the tremendous power of God appears in this, that

**The land shall rise up wholly like a flood; and it shall be drowned, as by the flood of Egypt]** God can float it and flood it at his pleasure, see #Am 8:8. Water is naturally above the earth as the garment above the body, saith David; and would (but for the power and providence of God) prove as the shirt made for the murdering of Agamemnon, where the head had no issue out. Let God be seen herein, and men's hearts possessed with his holy fear; who can so easily pull up the sluices, let in the sea upon them, and bury them all in one universal grave of waters. "Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?" #Jer 5:22. This Aristotle admires, and David celebrates in his physics (as one calleth that 104th Psalm), #Ps 104:6,9, and all men should improve, to frighten their consciences from provoking to anger so great a God.

Ver. 6. **It is he that buildeth his stories (or spheres) in the heaven]** *Surgit hic oratio*. The prophet here riseth in his discourse; and as Chrysostom said of St Paul, *Tricubitalis est, et coelos transcendit*; Low though he were, and little, yet he got up into the third heaven; so may we of Amos, though but a plain spoken and illiterate herdsman, yet, in setting forth the power of God, he mounts from earth to heaven, and shows himself to be *Virum bonum, dicendi peritum*, an exquisite orator, according to Quintilian's character. God, this great architect and public workman, δημιουργος (as the

apostle after Plato, whom he seemeth to have read, calleth him, **#Heb 11:10**, hath, without tool or toil, **#Isa 40:28**, builded his stories in the heaven, which is three stories high, **#2Co 12:2**, wherein, as in a theatre, or molten looking glass, **#Job 37:18**, his majesty most clearly shineth, **#Am 4:13 5:8 Ps 104:3**; every sphere and star twinkling at us, and as it were, beckoning to us, to remember his omnipotence (whereof that rare fabric is a notable work and witness), and not to think to escape his judgments if we go on in sin. For although he be higher than the heavens, **#Job 35:5**, yet "his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men," **#Ps 11:4,6**, "Upon the wicked he shall rain down snares, fire and brimstone," &c.

**And hath founded his troop (or bundle) in the earth]** That is, the other three elements, say some: the sea, which, together with the earth, maketh one globe, say others: the universe (saith Mr Diodati), which is like the fabric of a building; of which the earth, being the lower part, and only unmoveable, hath some resemblance of a foundation.

**He that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Am 5:8"}

Ver. 7. **Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me]** The emphasis lieth in this last word, "unto me," who am no respecter of persons, "but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," **#Ac 10:35**. Unto yourselves indeed you seem some great business, because Israelites; "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants," **#Ro 9:4**. To others also you seem a great nation, yea, a wise and understanding people, as having God so nigh unto you and so set for you, **#De 4:6,7 33:29**. But tell me, *Quis te discrevit?* Who made you to differ? and what have ye more than others that ye have not me to thank for? You look upon the Ethiopians with scorn, as an ignoble and servile people; as likewise upon the uncircumcised Philistines and unhallowed Syrians. But wherein are you beyond them, if you look back to your original, and consider my dealings with them and you? It is nothing else but self-love that maketh you thus insolent; and teacheth you to turn the glass to see yourselves bigger, others lesser than they are. You foolishly set up your counter

for a thousand pound; and are in some sense like those Ethiopians, or Negroes, so much slighted by you; of whom it is said they paint the devil white, as being a colour contrary to their own. But much more to blame are you, that being God's peculiar people, and partakers of such great privileges, you do no more change your evil manners than the Ethiopians do their black hue, **#Jer 13:23**, you are nowhere white but in your teeth, as they; good a little from the teeth outward. I am near in your mouths, but far from your reins, **#Jer 12:2**. Such a one was that stigmatic Cush the Benjamite, mentioned in the title of the seventh Psalm (perhaps Saul, the son of Kish the Benjamite, is intended), *non tam cute quam corde Aethiopicus*, of black and ill conditions; and therefore to God no better than an Ethiopian, or any other Pagan people.

**Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt]** *q.d.* I grant I have; and you glory very much in it; whereas you should rather glorify me much for it, and walk worthy of such a deliverance; for every blessing is a binder, and every new deliverance a new tie to obedience. But what singular thing have I herein done for you more than for Philistines and Syrians, whom yet you look upon as dogs and outcasts!

**Have not I also brought up the Philistines from Caphtor]** *i.e.* from Cappadocia (called an island, **#Jer 47:4**, because it bordered upon the sea), or, as some will have it, from Cyrus, a rich island, called therefore Macariah, that is, blessed.

**And the Syrians from Kir]** *Syros e Ciro*, from Cyrene, a country of Asia, as Beroaldus thinketh. It is mentioned, **#Isa 22:6**, as subject to the king of Assyria; and thither the Syrians were resettled by Tiglathpileser, **#2Ki 16:9**, but when either these or the Philistines were brought back again to their own countries, we read not in Scripture or elsewhere at this day. "These are ancient things" (as it is said in another case, **#1Ch 4:22**), and are here alleged as well known to the Israelites, who are nipped on the crown, as they say, and pulled from that perilous pinnacle of self-exaltation, whereupon they had unhappily perked themselves.

Ver. 8. **Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom]** Be it Ethiopia, Palestina, Syria, or Israel, but especially



Israel, #Am 3:2, not his eye only, his εκδικον ομμα, his jealous eye, as #Am 9:4, for evil, and not for good; but both his eyes, yea, his seven eyes, for he is ολοφθαλμος, all eye, to look through and through the sinful kingdom, to judge and punish, to inflict "tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first," because of his privileges, "and also of the Gentile," #Ro 2:9. "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond," #Jer 17:1, and Israel is therefore worse than others, because he ought to have been better. His whole kingdom is a kingdom of sin, *a merum seclus*, from pure wickedness, a very Poneropolis, as that place in Thraeia was called whither Philip had assembled all the infamous persons and men of evil demeanour. "What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?" #Mic 1:5; their capital sins were most in their capital cities; and thence overflowed the whole kingdom; called therefore here a sinful kingdom, wholly given to idolatry (as Athens was, #Ac 17:16, κατειδωλος), which is that sin with an accent, that wickedness with a witness, #Ex 32:21 1Ki 12:30 15:3,30, that land desolating sin, #Jer 22:7-9 Ps 78:58-62.

**And I will destroy it]** See here the venomous nature of sin, and shun it, else we shall prove traitors to the state, and have our hands, if not upon the great cart ropes, yet upon the lesser cords, that draw down vengeance upon the land. And here some one sinner may destroy much good, #Ec 9:18, how much more a rabble of rebels, conspiring to provoke the eyes of God's glory!

**Saying that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob]** A remnant shall be left for royal use, *reliquas faciam reliquias*, and so make a manifest difference, see #Jer 30:11, remembering my promise, #Le 26:40, which is a special text touching the rejecting and conversion of the Jews, as is also this in some men's judgments. For here (say they) is a threatening of extreme desolation with some comfort interlaced of a remnant to be reserved; among whom it is further promised, 1. That the kingdom of David through Christ shall be set up as glorious as ever it was before, in the most flourishing times of David or Solomon, #Am 9:11 2. Next, other nations shall join with them and be made partakers of one common inheritance, #Am 9:12. So doth James, #Ac 15:16,17, expound it. 3. Thirdly,

there is promised the fruitfulness of their land, #Am 9:13, the inhabiting in their own country, #Am 9:14, and the perpetuity of their abode there, #Am 9:15. But all this others think to be, *optabile magis quam opinabile*, little better than a golden dream.

Ver. 9. **For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel]** It is not without God's command and good leave that evil spirits and men can sift the saints, as Satan desired to have done Peter. He desired it, as a challenger desireth one of the other side to combat with; so he begged leave to sift Job, and so he tempted David to number the people, but it was by God's permission. Up therefore and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, #Lu 22:31,46, or, that ye may come clear out of it, and more than conquerors, even triumphers. The enemy is stinted; yea, Christ will tread him under your feet shortly, #Ro 16:20.

**And I will sift the house of Israel among all nations]** The ten tribes among the Assyrians (who were emperors of the whole East), and whither since are they scattered, whether into China, Tartary, West Indies, or other countries, is not known. The whole twelve tribes (those also that once "instantly served God day and night," #Ac 26:7), are now woefully dejected and dissipated; being cast out of the world, as it were, by a common consent of nations, and generally slighted and hated. The Romans permitted other nations to call themselves Romans after they had conquered them; but so they would not suffer the Jews upon any terms to do; lest there should be some blot stick to the glory of the Romans by that odious and sordid people. The Pope useth them as sponges, the Turk as slaves.

**Like as corn is sifted in a sieve]** Or, by a fan, to the same sense as that, #Zec 13:9, for as here a sieve, so there fire serveth to denote affliction with the use of it; *sc.* to purge God's people, specially of those two troublesome choke weeds, high-mindedness and earthly mindedness: *cribratione Dei non perditur sed purgatur frumentum*, saith Zanchy, God's good grain is not lost, but made clean by the sifting they suffer.

**Yet shall not the least grain (Heb. stone) fall upon the earth]** As the chaff and dust shall; for "what is the chaff to the wheat?" saith the Lord, #Jer 23:28. *Improbi nobiscum esse possunt in horreo, sed*

*non in area* The wicked are able to be with us in the storehouse but not on the threshingfloor. (Augustine). Christ hath his fan in his hand, and will surely discriminate, #Mt 3:12; he will take out the precious from the vile, he will drive the chaff one way and the wheat another; and take care that not the least grain of weighty wheat, that had good tack in it (as a stone hath, though but a little stone), shall be lost. He will turn his hand upon the little ones, and secure them, #Zec 13:7.

Ver. 10. **All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword]** The flagitious, presumptuous persons, that bless themselves when I curse them, saying, We shall have peace, though we walk every man in the imagination of his heart, and take his full swing in sin, #De 29:19. Such sinners in Zion, #Isa 33:14, such sacrificing Sodomites, #Isa 1:10, such profligate professors shall die by the sword; either by the hand of the enemy, or, which is worse, *gladio spiritali*, saith Mercer, by the spiritual sword, being blinded and rejected by God; so that their preservation is but a reservation to a greater mischief. Whereas, on the other side, some of God's elect might in a common calamity perish by the sword, but then (Josiah-like) they died in peace, though they fell in battle; their death was right precious in the sight of the Lord, and a plentiful amends made them in heaven.

**Which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us]** Or, for our sakes, by our default, *Begnadenu propter nos*. If affliction do find us out, yet we have not deserved it; common occurrences we cannot be against. Thus the wicked man "flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful," #Ps 36:2. "In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin," #Ho 12:8. "Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned," #Jer 2:35.

Ver. 11. **In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David]** A most sweet conclusion of the prophecy by sundry evangelical promises, after so many very severe and sharp menaces: the Sun of righteousness liketh not to set in a cloud. In that day, that happy day, whensoever it shall dawn, that Christ shall come; for the prophets knew not the certain time when, but made diligent inquiry as far as they might with sobriety, #1Pe 1:11, and well knew that the law, which they preached and explained, was an introduction to a better hope, #Heb 7:19, which they saw afar off and saluted, #Heb 11:13.

**Will I raise up the tabernacle of David]** That is, the kingdom of the house of David, saith the Chaldee paraphrast; meaning, of the Messiah, whom the sounder sort of Rabbis from this text call Ben Niphlei, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. Now the Church is here called the tabernacle of David, because that once stately palace of David was by many desolations reduced to a tent, as it were, and that ready to drop too. The Branch grew out of the root of Jesse, when that goodly family was sunk so low as from David the king to Joseph the carpenter. Besides, all was out of order both in Church and State when Christ came.

**And close up the breaches thereof]** Heb. wall up; by unwalling (as the Hebrew hath it, #Nu 24:17) all the children of Seth; by subduing the sons of men, the godly seed, to the obedience of faith; by bringing into captivity every haughty thought, #2Co 10:4,5 (that at the name of Jesus every knee may bow, #Php 2:10), and getting a full conquest by the preaching of the gospel, which shall quickly close up all ruptures, and raise up all ruins, by chasing away terrors and false worships, doctrines of devils, and traditions of men, whereby the scribes and Pharisees had made the commandment of God of none effect.

**And I will build it as in the days of old]** In those purer times of David and the other holy patriarchs, who made up but one and the same Church with us, and were saved by the same faith in Christ Jesus, that Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, #Re 13:8. Mine antiquity is Jesus Christ, said Ignatius, the martyr. As we prefer the newest philosophy, so the most ancient divinity, saith another.

Ver. 12. **That they may possess the remnant of Edom]** "That they" which are called by my name, which are called Christians, viz. the apostles and their successors to the end of the world, "may possess," together with Christ (to whom the Father hath given the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession), "the remnant of Edom"; those few of them that receive the faith, who are but as a remnant to the whole piece, a handful to a houseful. And not of the Edomites only, those inveterate and hereditary enemies to the Israel of God, but of all the heathen which

are called by name, **#Ps 2:8**, who beseech and are baptized into Christ's name, being content to receive his mark and to profess his religion, which formerly they were perfect strangers to. These and those first preachers of the gospel, and planters of Churches (being Israelites by birth), are said to possess by inheritance, because Christ was pleased to make use of their ministry; and upon these his white horses to ride abroad the world, "conquering, and to conquer," **#Re 6:1,2**. In a like sense it is promised, **#Isa 14:2**, that the house of Israel shall possess their proselytes in the land of the Lord for servants and for handmaids, and take them captives whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors. Such a change shall the gospel make.

**Saith the Lord that doeth this]** For indeed none else could have done it. Effectual conversion is his work alone. God persuaded Japhet. Noah may speak persuasively, but God only can persuade. Rebecca may cook the venison, but Isaac only can give the blessing. "Paul may plant," &c. *Deus potest facere, nec solet fallere.*

Ver. 13. **Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman]** The gospel of peace brings with it the peace of the gospel, and with peace plenty, with the horn of salvation the horn of plenty, a confluence of outward comforts and contentments, as in Solomon's days and Constantine's (whom God prospered and blessed beyond all that he could have wished, saith Austin, *Bonus Deus Constant tantis terrenis implevit muneribus quanta optare nullus auderet.* De C. D. l. 5, 25), and Queen Elizabeth's whom, for her care to propagate the gospel, he made to be the happiest woman that ever swayed sceptre, as her very enemies were forced to acknowledge: so liberal a paymaster is the Lord, that all his retributions are more than bountiful; and this his servants have not *ex largitate, sed ex promisso*, out of his general providences, but by virtue of a promise, which is far sweeter. The Masorites have observed, that in this verse are found all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet (as also in 26 more verses of the Old Testament), *{Hebrew Text Note}* to note, say the Calvinists, that in the kingdom of the Messiah (*In instauratione casulae Davidicae collapsae*) there shall be great abundance of all things, *et plenum copiae cornu*: or, if that should fail, yet plenty of all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, **#Eph 1:3**, and contented godliness, **#1Ti 6:6**, which hath an *autarkeia*, a

self-sufficiency; so that having nothing, a man possesseth all things, #2Co 6:10. This the prophet expresseth in the following words, by many excellent hyperboles, though (to say sooth) *Christus et regnum eius non patiuntur hyperbolen*. All words are too weak to set forth the worth of Christ and his kingdom.

**The plowman shall overtake the reaper]** *In signis hyperbole*, saith Mercer: no sooner shall harvest be ended but seeding shall succeed and that promise be fulfilled, #Le 26:5: all businesses belonging to the tillage of the ground and the inning of the fruit shall have their fit and suitable seasons; where, under the name of corporal blessings, spiritual are to be understood; and indeed those blessings out of Zion are far beyond any other that come out of heaven and earth, #Ps 134:3.

**And the treader of grapes, him that soweth seed]** "Precious seed," #Ps 126:5, sowingseed (as one translates it), drawn out of the seed basket, and cast all along upon the land: the meaning is, that the vintage shall last so long, that the seedsman shall scarcely have time to do his business, for waiting upon the winepress.

**And the mountains shall drop sweet wine]** Or juice of pomegranates, more delicious liquor than that which the Italians profanely call *Lachryma Christi*, or that which at Paris and Louvaine is called *Vinum Theologicum*, or *Vinum Cos*, that is, *coloris, odoris, saporis ortirol*, the best in the country for colour, savour, and taste, to please the palate.

**And all the hills shall melt]** *sc.* With milk, honey, oil, #Joe 3:18, the same almost with this. And the heathen poet (Claudian) hath the like,

—“ *Subitis messor gaudebit aristis:  
Rorabunt querceta favis stagnantia passim  
Vina fluent oleique lacus.*”—

Ver. 14. **And I will bring again the captivity of my people]** There is an elegance in the original that cannot be translated into English, and God seems delighted with such alliteration, as hath been before observed; to show the lawful use of rhetoric in divine discourses, so

it be not affected, abused, idolized. This promise is fulfilled when believers are by the gospel brought "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins," #Ac 26:18, and be set free from the tyranny of corruption and terror of death, #Heb 2:14,15 Col 1:13 Lu 1:74 Zec 9:11 Ps 68:19.

**And they shall build the waste cities]** Restore the sincere service of God, as those noble reformers did in all ages; fetching the Church, as it were, out of the wilderness, where she had long lain hidden, #Re 12:6, and whence she is said at length to come "leaning upon her beloved," #So 8:5.

**And they shall plant vineyards]** That is, particular Churches.

**And drink the wine thereof]** Have the fruit and comfort of their labours in the Lord, which they shall see not to be in vain, #1Co 15:58.

**They shall also make gardens, and eat of the fruit]** While they shall see their people to be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, #2Pe 1:8, but far off flourishing, #Ps 92:13, *actuosi et fructuosi*, #Isa 51:3. The Popish commentators (as it is the manner of many of them to mar and bemire the text with their absurd glosses) by cities here would have men to understand the state of married people, by vineyards their prelates, and by gardens monks. Is not this to wrest the Scriptures, and so to set them on the rack, as to make them speak more than ever they intended? Is it not to compel them to go two miles when they are willing to go but one? Is it not to taw them, and gnaw them, as Tertullian saith that Marcion, the heretic (that *Mus Ponticus*, as he therefore calls him), did, to make them serviceable to his vile purposes?

Ver. 15. **And I will plant them upon their land]** As "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified," #Isa 61:3,11, being well-rooted and no worse fruited, #Php 1:6.

**And they shall no more be pulled up]** None shall pull them out of Christ's hand; for he and the Father are one, #Joh 10:29,30. None shall separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus, #Ro 8:39,

they shall be sure of continual supplies of sap and safety, being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, #2Pe 1:3. The paradise of God was so planted, that it was watered on all sides with most noble rivers, to keep it flourishing; how much more will the Lord do this in his heavenly garden, the Church! see #Ps 92:13,14, when it comes to be transplanted especially.

**Saith the Lord thy God]** "Thy God," O prophet, who will ratify and verify what promises soever thou hast uttered in his name. Or "thy God," O people, now reconciled unto thee in Christ, #Joh 20:17, and therefore ready to heap upon thee all things needful for life and godliness.



# Obadiah

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The vision of Obadiah]** The same, say some, that hid the Lord's prophets, and fed them by fifty in a cave, when sought for to the slaughter by wicked Jezebel, #1Ki 18:4, whereupon himself also received a prophet's reward; that is (saith Lyra), was endued with the spirit of prophecy. Jerome addeth, that he was buried at Samaria (called afterwards Sebaste, by Herod, in honour of Augustus), and that there his sepulchre was yet to be seen. The Rabbis say, that this Obadiah was that widow's husband whom Elisha relieved by multiplying her oil, #2Ki 4:6. Others (with more show of reason) conjecture that this was that Obadiah mentioned #2Ch 34:12, a faithful Levite, set by Josiah to oversee the artificers, who repaired the temple in the eighteenth year of his reign; and so was contemporary to Ezekiel and Jeremiah, with whom also he consenteth in many passages, #Jer 49 Eze 25: and besides, he maketh mention of the Babylonish captivity, and the Edomites' cruelty to the Jews at that time, #Ps 137:7. But let him be who he will (for where the Scripture hath no tongue we need not find ears; but may well content ourselves with a learned ignorance), his doctrine he entitleth not a burden, because he concludeth it comfortably, but a vision, which is more general; it being his scope to comfort the people of God, that were under great affliction.

**Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom]** If Obadiah were himself an Edomite, but a proselyte to the Church (as some Rabbis have reported him), his vision should have taken the better with his cruel countrymen, to bring them to repentance. But whether he were or not, they should have observed his authority: and that his doctrine came *cum privilegio*, and that it was the Lord God, the *Tremend Trinunus*, that spake by him; and that he was, according to his name, a servant of the most high God, which showed unto them the way of salvation, #Ac 16:17. *Sed surdo fabulam:* the Edomites were so fleshed in blood, and such inveterate enemies to the Church, that there was little good to be done upon them. Howsoever, to leave them without excuse, and, if possible, to rouse them out of their security, he saith,

**We have heard a rumour from the Lord]** We, that is, I and my fellow prophets (who are *a secretis* to the Lord, #Am 3:7), have heard for a certainty that the Edomites are devoted to destruction. And that this was no vain rumour, but accordingly accomplished, see #Jer 25:9,21 Mal 1:3.

**And an ambassador is sent among the heathen]** A herald at arms, sent by Nebuchadnezzar, say some, to stir up his Chaldeans against the Edomites: others make this ambassador to be Christ, or a created angel, or a Divine instinct, or lastly, the prophets. Whosoever he is, he doth his work very vigorously.

**Arise ye, saith he, and let us rise up against her in battle]** Let us join our forces, and do our utmost against Idumea. After this sort also shall God's warriors stir up themselves one day and one another against the Romish Edomites, those pseudo-christians, anti-christians, when God shall once put into their hearts to hate that old withered whore of Babylon, to "make her desolate and naked, to eat her flesh, and burn her with fire," #Re 17:16,17. The alarm was long since given them (not unlike this in the text) by Francis Petrarch, in these words, *Babylon altera, nempe propinquior atque recentior, adhuc star: cito itidem casura; si essetis viri.* There yet standeth a nearer and newer Babylon than that of old; but it should not stand long were you but men. "Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle." The Jews at this day call the hierarchy of Rome the wicked kingdom of Edom; and for Dumah, #Isa 21:11, they read *Roma*, by a very easy but willing mistake. See Dr Taylor's Sermon, called The Romish Edomite.

Ver. 2. **Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen]** That is, vile, despicable, and abject, as #Ps 119:141, "I am small and despised." Nothing is more ordinary than to "despise the day of small things," #Zec 4:10. And whereas God is said to be *magnus in magnis, nec parvus in minimis*, much in the greater neither little in the least, he had always kept down these profane Edomites, shutting them up in Mount Seir, a craggy barren country (not unlike Ascre, Hesiod's country, Ασκηρ χειμα κακη θερος αργλαει, ουδεποτ' ειλη, or Llandaff in Wales, which is said to be a place neither pleasant, fertile, nor safe), and not suffering them to attain to any fame or almost name among other nations. Were it not that they are

mentioned in the Bible (and never there for any goodness either) it would hardly have been known that there ever had been such a people. Wherefore, then, should Edom be so intolerably insolent, as **#Ob 1:3**? swell to such a height of pride, play such bloody, pranks, as he is here accused of? especially since God is taking a course to make him yet lesser and lower than yet he is, by those armies of his that are coming upon him, to stain the pride of all his glory, **#Isa 23:9**.

Ver. 3. **The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee**] So as to make thee think thyself some great business when it's no such matter, and that thou canst secure thyself in thy strongholds from thy strongest enemies: but herein thy pride hath befooled thee, and put the same trick upon thee that the serpent did once upon the first woman, **#Ge 3:13** (the same word is there used as here), who complained, when she was in the transgression, **#1Ti 2:14**, "The serpent hath deceived me." He is still the king of all the children of pride; and thereby cheateth them, ravisheth them of their right reason, and rendereth them the direct objects of God's hatred and heavy displeasure, **#Jas 4:6**; he setteth himself in battle array against them, *αντιτασεται*. "Though his excellency, mount up to the heavens" (saith Zophar concerning the proud person, **#Job 20:6**), "and his head reach unto the clouds; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?" There is a deceitfulness in sin, **#Heb 3:13**, a lie in all these outward vanities, **#Jon 2:8**: they were never true to those that trusted in them. But the proud person "feedeth upon ashes": he feedeth himself with false hopes; "a deceived heart hath turned him aside," put him into a fool's paradise, "that he cannot deliver his soul," get out of his golden dreams, "nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" **#Isa 44:20**. His case is not unlike that man's who, lying fast asleep upon the edge of a steep rock, dreams merrily of much happiness and safety; but upon the sudden starting for joy breaks his neck, and tumbles headlong into the bottom of the sea.

**Thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock**] In a rocky, mountainous country, as the Highlander in Scotland, out of the reach of my rod, as thou fondly fanciest; in Arabia Petraea, where thine enemies cannot come at thee, and where thou thinkest thyself no less safe and out of harm's way than Moses was, when God had put him

into the cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand, #Ex 33:22; or Elias, when he stood in the mouth of the cave, #1Ki 19:13.

**Whose habitation is high]** Heb. his habitation is high; by a change of the person out of a holy disdain of Edom's pride and creature confidence, as if he were *extra iactum*, out of gunshot, above danger.

**That saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down?]** (Atreus in Thyeste apud Senec.)

“ *Aequalis astris gradior, et cunctos super*

*Altum superbo vertice attingens polum,  
Demitto superos, summa votorum attigi, &c.*

*My roof receives me not, 'tis air I tread:  
At every step I feel my advanced head*

*Knock out a star in heaven.*”—(Ben Jonson.)

*Such great swelling words of vanity speaks the proud man, #2Pe 2:18; such big bubbles of words, sesquipedalia verba*, words a foot and a half long. Who shall bring me down? who is the Lord? who is lord over us? &c. Such haughty expressions, such lofty language is a forerunner, a presage of imminent destruction, as here. A bulging wall is not far from a downfall. While the word ("Is not this great Babalyon," &c.) was yet in Nebuchadnezzar's mouth he was deprived of his kingdom and driven from men, #Da 4:31. Megasthenes the Persian (an ancient writer) reporteth that the Chaldeans relate that Nebuchadnezzar, returning home laden with victories, fell mad, and being in a fanatic vein, foretold the destruction of Babalyon. Whether he foretold it or no it is sure he occasioned it, by confiding in it and by robbing both God of his glory, and his ancestors, the first founders, of their honour; for he only enlarged it, and built the palace entirely; and now he saith, "Who shall bring me down?" That will I, saith God, in the next words. Aesop being asked by Chilo (one of the seven wise men of Greece) what God was doing? answered, He bringeth down the proud and lifteth up the lowly. See the like #Ps 147:6.

Ver. 4. **Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle]** Or, as the Arabic text hath it, *ad aquilam*, hard by the eagle; couldst thou fly as high a pitch as that bird, which is said to soar out of sight, and build thy nest aloft, as he doth, on the highest mountains and tallest trees, that the serpent may not come at his young.

**And though thou set thy nest among the stars]** *i.e.* Upon such high hills as reach to the upper region of the air. Of Ithaca (Ulysses' country) the orator saith, that it was *in scopulis quasi nidus affixa*, set as a nest upon the rocks. And Paulus Aemilius, the Roman general, pulled down the castles at Athens, saying that they were *tyrannorum nidi* nests of despots; and our Henry VIII commanded the abbeys here to be demolished, saying that those crows' nests were to be destroyed, *ne iterum ad cohabitandum convolent*, that they might never breed again among us. Lucifer and his antitype Nebuchadnezzar spake of ascending into heaven, above the heights of the clouds, and of the setting their thrones above the stars of God, **#Isa 14:13,14**. See the like language, or bigger, from the prince of Tyre, **#Eze 28:2**, with the issue, much like this that here followeth.

**Thence will I bring thee down]** Down with a vengeance, as he did Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Edom, Attilas, Gensericus, Bajazet, &c. The Philistines flouted Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will show you a thing: that is, we will give you your payment before we part with you. They held it impossible to get up that sharp, steep, craggy rock where they kept garrison. But Jonathan clambered over that rock on his hands and feet, and put them to the rout, **#1Sa 14:13**. An exploit of as great, or rather of greater valour, than that of Alexander the Great, for which he is so crowned and chronicled by Plutarch and Curtius. The story is this. Arimazes having garrisoned a very strong rock (held almost inaccessible, and to which there was but one only passage) in the Sogdian country, with thirty thousand men; and being sent unto by Alexander to yield up his stronghold, derided him, and asked whether Alexander could fly? whereunto Alexander returned this answer, I will make thee know ere thou art a night older that the Macedonians can fly. Hereupon he picked out three hundred of the boldest men he had, and by great promises prevailed with them the next night to climb up the back side of the rock to the top of it,

which accordingly they did, and killing the guards, took the garrison, letting in Alexander, who nailed Arimazes to a cross.

**Saith the Lord]** Who will surely do it, how improbable or impossible soever you may judge it.

Ver. 5. **If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night]** Or, what? have thieves come to thee? have robbers been here? O, sure it is worse than so with thee; they would never have made such clean work as they say, but have left somewhat behind them; they would never have played the harpies <sup>{a}</sup> in this sort, and taken all before them. Thus the neighbour nations stand wondering at this woeful desolation, and sarcastically insulting. Now to be mocked in misery is no small grief to the party. Thus the prophet pricks them by a rhetorical addubitation, the better to affect their minds with an effectual fear of no ordinary or easy calamity, but such as will be wonderful and incredible; so that they that hear of it will say,

**How art thou cut off!]** Or, how silent art thou! what, did thine enemies set upon thee *per amica silentia lunae*? did they take thee napping that they shred thee thus? Have they dealt by thee as Sir Francis Drake in his travels did by the Spaniard, whom he found sleeping on the bank of a river with many wedges of gold lying by him; he never waked the man, but eased him of his charge: or rather as Epaminondas did by the watchman, whom he found fast asleep; he thrust him through with his sword; and being chid for so severe a fact, replied, *Talem eum reliqui, qualem inveni*, I left him but as I found him.

**If the grape gatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grates?]** Surely they would, **#De 24:21**; there would likely be a gleaning of grapes after the vintage is done, **#Isa 24:13**, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough; four or five in the outmost fruitful branches, **#Isa 17:6**. It is hard but some may escape out of the battle to bring the ill news. Edom's ruin therefore and desolation was most deplorable and irreparable, since none was left alone; but all, both men and means, raked and racemated. <sup>{b}</sup>

<sup>{a}</sup> A rapacious, plundering, or grasping person; one that preys upon other CED

<sup>{b}</sup> A salt of racemic acid. CED

Ver. 6. **How are the things of Esau searched out!**] Or, as Drusius reads it, How are the posterity of Esau searched out! the men to the slaughter, the wealth to the spoil! what cunning and daring soldiers were these to pry into every corner for prey, and to pull them out of every lurking hole, where they might have been circumvented and butchered, in those dark and narrow places: this shows surely that they were both armed and animated by God himself. Confer **#Joe 2:6-9**, but especially **#Jer 49:10,11**, where you have the full of that which is here but abridged; and therefore this verse hath not so much as an Athnach in it for distinction.

**How are his hid things sought out!**] *i.e.* his treasures and jewels, which have their name in Hebrew from hiding, because men used to secret and secure them with utmost care and diligence. See **#Mt 13:44**; hence they are called treasures of darkness, **#Isa 45:3**; see **#Job 3:21**. Abundance of this was found at Constantinople, taken by the Turks; so that the soldiers divided it among themselves by hatfuls, wondering at their wealth, and deriding their folly, that possessing so much, they would bestow so little in defence of themselves and their country, lost by their tenacity and niggardice. And the same is reported of Heidelberg. This that is here threatened against Edom was accordingly executed in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, saith Josephus; Nebuchadnezzar, in the 23rd year of his reign, invading and wasting Idumea. Ill-gotten goods prosper not. Men rake together their riches, and know not who shall gather them, **#Ps 39:6**. But, "let no man go beyond and defraud another: for God is the avenger of all such," **#1Th 4:6**. They do best that renounce, with St Paul, those hidden things of dishonesty, **#2Co 4:2**, not walking in craftiness, nor making haste to be rich; for treasures of wickedness profit not, **#Pr 10:2**; and when God comes by his judgments to turn the bottom of the bag upwards, as Joseph's steward once did, all our secret thefts will out. See **#Ec 12:14**.

Ver. 7. **All the men of thy confederacy]** Which therefore should be true to thee, but prove treacherous; so vain it is to trust to that broken reed of carnal combinations. Many friends are like deep ponds, clear at the top and all muddy at the bottom; the causes they will be, but not the companions of calamity. Like they are, saith one, to crows which flock to a dead carcass, not to defend it, but to

devour it; and no sooner have they bared the bones but they are gone. David complaineth of such, #Ps 55:13-15, and Jeremiah of his unkind countrymen of Anathoth, #Jer 11:23. But for Edom it was no great pity, considering their perfidy both to God (because they had transgressed the laws, moral and municipal, changed the ordinances, that is, the law of nations, and broken the everlasting covenant, that is, the law of nature, which is that light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world, #Joh 1:9), and also to their brethren the Israelites, their extreme inhumanity, as it followeth, #Ob 1:10,11. They had therefore but their own measure meted again to them; as they had forgotten the brotherly covenant, #Am 1:9,11, so they met with those that paid them home in their own coin; neither were they any more pitied than Haman, when the king frowned upon him, or Sejanus, when he fell into the displeasure of Tiberius; his friends showing themselves most passionate against him, saying, that if Caesar had clemency he ought to reserve it to men, and not cast it away upon monsters.

**All brought thee even to the border]** And there left thee at the worst; pretending to help thee, but betraying then indeed to the enemy, and helping to cast thee out of thy country, under a show of courtesy.

**The men that were at peace with thee]** Heb. the men of thy peace, the Ammonites, Moabites, and other neighbouring nations from whom thou fearedst no hurt; these to ingratiate with the king of the Chaldeans.

**Have deceived thee]** *Tuta frequensque via est per amici fallere nomen* (Ovid.). This made a certain heathen cry out, Friends, there is no friend to be found, φίλοι, ουδεις φίλος (Socr.); and another to pray God to deliver him from his friends; for, as for his enemies, he could better beware of them.

**They that eat thy bread]** Heb. thy bread men, thy fellow commoners, *convictores et consalanei*, others' *amici*, they are seldom either satisfied or sure.



**Have laid a wound under thee]** The Hebrew word signifieth both a wound and a plaster; they would secretly wound them, lay a wound under them, and yet seem willing to bind up their wounds, and heal them by applying a plaster: such daubing there is in the world, *Fide, diffide. Cavebis autem si pavebis.*

**There is none understanding in him]** That is, in Edom, and this seemeth spoken by way of apostrophe to the Israelites, whose comfort is intended in this whole prophecy. It is as if it had been said, Edom holds himself wise, but will show himself a very sot, destitute of common sense; such as taketh not notice that these are the wounds with which he was wounded in the house of his friends: the wittol is either insensible of it or else well content with it, till he hath bought his wit, and begins to open his eyes but not till the pains of death are upon him, as it is said of the mole.

Ver. 8. **Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, &c.]** Edom was famous for wisdom, as appeareth by Eliphaz the Temanite, and other of Job's friends who were Idumeans; and Rabshakeh could say that counsel and strength are of war, **#Isa 36:5** What a price did Agamemnon set upon Nestor and Darius upon Zophirus? Scipio did nothing without his Polybius, and ascribed most of his victories to his advice. "Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war," saith Solomon, **#Pr 20:18.** *Romani sedendo vincunt* passed for a proverb of old. The Romans conquered by sitting in council; and Cyneas got more cities by his wisdom than Pyrebus by his puissance. But "where no counsel is the people fall," **#Pr 11:14;** and this was Edom's case in that day, that is, at that time when their confederates betrayed them to their enemy and desolation was at next door by God destroyed their wise men; he either cut them off or infatuated them. *Deus, quem destruit, demen tat.* When God intends to undo a man (say the Dutch) he first puts out his eyes, and befools him. Pliny saith of the eagle that, setting upon the hart, he lights upon his horns, and there flutters up and down, filling his eyes with dust borne in her feathers; that at last he may cast himself from a rock, and become a prey. God blindeth the understanding and expectorath the wisdom of those whom he designeth to destruction. "Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the wise counsellors of Pharaoh are become brutish, they have also seduced

Egypt. The Lord hath mingled a spirit of perversities in the midst thereof," #Isa 19:11-14.

Ver. 9. **And thy mighty men, O Teman]** Thy giants, thy champions, that dare to look death in the face upon great adventures in the field; these were now dismayed and dispirited; their courage was quailed, and even broken with fear, as the word signifieth; so that, as Saul, when the devil had preached his funeral, made haste and fell with the fulness of his stature all along on the earth, as being sore afraid, #1Sa 28:20; so shall it be with the mighties of Teman, that is, of Edom, for Teman was nephew to Esau and son to Eliphaz, #Ge 36:11, and of him some city or part of the country took its denomination. The Chaldee and the Vulgate Latin take the word Teman appellatively, and render it thus, Thy mighty men shall perish from the South: or those that dwell to the southward of thy country, and so are more remote from the northern Chaldees; yet they shall no sooner hear of thy coming but they shall tremble and forget their prowess.

**To the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter]** Heb. every man, be he never so manly and magnanimous.

**Of the mount of Esau]** Of Idumea, which was mountainous, and therefore fitly called Seir, that is, rough and rugged.

**May be cut off by slaughter]** So that they shall live by fame only, and hardly that.

Ver. 10. **For thy violence against thy brother Jacob]** For thine open violence. Hence tachmas, the vulture, who liveth by rapine, #Le 11:14. Thine iniquity, rapine, injury done by force and in public view, set upon the "top of a rock," that all might behold it, #Eze 24:7.

**Against thy brother]** Thine own mother's son, #Ps 50:20. This is no small aggravation of thy sin, that is *in germanum Iacob*, thy nearest allies. Edom had other sins not a few; but this was the chief, and is therefore here and elsewhere chiefly alleged as the cause of their utter ruin, #Eze 25 Eze 35 Am 1 Mal 1. Nothing is more hateful to God than unnaturalness. "A brother is born for adversity,"

**#Pr 17:17**; his birth binds him to it: and he must first offer violence to himself that is unkind to his distressed brother; he must tear the dictates of nature out of his own heart. And however at other times brethren may jar and jangle, yet at a strait, and in a stress good nature (if there be any remains of it) will work; and good blood will not belie itself. Israel was charged for this cause not to abhor an Edomite, because he was his brother, **#De 23:7**; and yet the Edomites used them as discourteously in their passage to Canaan as the Moabites and Ammonites did, **#Nu 20:20,21**; they were also their perpetual enemies, and of a devilish, vindictive spirit toward them to the very last; hence their ensuing doom.

**Shame shall cover thee]** For thy violence covering thee as a garment, and for thy pride compassing thee as a chain, **#Ps 73:6**. The face of such as are ashamed is wont to be covered with blushing, the blood flushing to the outward parts to relieve them, and, as it were, to hide their shame. Hence the Hebrews say, that those that blush for shame "are covered with shame," **#Mic 7:10 Ps 69:9 35:26 109:29 Job 18:20**. Those that "shame the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge," **#Ps 14:6**, shall themselves be covered with confusion here, and be raised up at the last day "to shame and everlasting contempt," **#Da 12:2**.

**And thou shalt be cut off for ever]**

*"Aeternuum, ex ima decisus stirpe, peribis."*

Isaiah prophesieth the same irreparable ruin to Edom, **#Isa 34:10**, and so doth Ezekiel, **#Eze 35:9**. That which Jeremiah speaketh of seventy years' continuance only of their serving the king of Babel, **#Jer 25:11**, is not meant of an end of their captivity, but of the Babylonish monarchy.

Ver. 11. **In the day that thou stoodest on the other side]** Over beside, curiously eyeing and maliciously promoting, by thy virulent tongue and violent hands, the downfall of Israel. *Nemo curiosus quin malevolus*, saith an ancient. These Edomites fed their eyes with their brethren's miseries, as with a pleasant spectacle. At first perhaps they were only onlookers, but afterwards they "stood

against them in battle" (when they saw them worsted) and took part with their enemies. See **#Es 8:2 Ps 9:6 Eph 6:11**. The Samaritans afterwards served them in like sort, as Josephus reporteth; especially when Antiochus tormented the Jews, they wrote to him to excuse themselves as no Jews; and (offering him their service) basely styled him Antiochus, the mighty God.

**In the day that the strangers carried away captive, &c.]** Edom's malice is here aggravated by the circumstance of time they took to express it; viz. when God's people were at worst, and when their extreme misery should have moved pity. This was a dog-like, devil-like practice, to fall upon those that are down before; "to add affliction to the afflicted," **#Ps 69:26**; to push the wounded out of the herd, as they say deer do. Of such barbarous and savage usage David often complaineth, and Job, and Jeremiah, and Jesus, **#Ps 22**; such shall one day cry out at God's bar, as Joseph's brethren did, **#Ge 42:21**, and find no mercy, **#Jas 2:21**, no more than cruel Haman did, **#Es 7:10**, it being just with God to set off all hearts from him who had been so unreasonably merciless. This Job well knew, and therefore so studiously purgeth himself of this heinous wickedness, **#Job 31:29**. Ausonius also out of Pittacus Mytilenaeus affirmeth him to be a beast and worse that maketh himself merry in another man's misery. The beastliest among brute creatures, even swine, seem to be affected with the outcries of their kind. Men only, more brutish than they, triumph in the calamities of each other, and are not moved with their outcries, albeit as bitter as that of Hezekiah, **#Isa 38:14**, "O Lord, I am oppressed, help me." This Solomon calleth oppression of a high nature, **#Ec 4:1**; see **#Ps 142:4**.

**And foreigners entered into his gates]** Having taken the city; then did the Edomites set fire to the temple, **#/RAPC 1Es 4:45**. Citizens in a siege fortify their gates, and defend them to the utmost; for if the gates be gained the city is lost; as it was at Jerusalem, and as it had like to have been at the city of Coccinum, in the island of Lemnos, which the Turks had surprised suddenly, but that they were happily prevented by the courage of one Marulla, a maiden of that city, who seeing her father slain in the gate, took up the weapons that lay by him, and like a fierce Amazon, notably revenged his

death, desperately fighting in defence of her country with those few that were in the gate at the first, and so kept the Turks out until the rest of the citizens, moved with the alarm, came to the gate.

**And cast lots upon Jerusalem]** *i.e.* upon the plunder of Jerusalem; according to the custom of old soldiers, #Nu 26:56. See this fulfilled #2Ki 24:13,14 25:13-17 See also more of this practice, #Na 3:10 Joe 3:3; and how grievous it is to the ingenuous, hear Andromache (Virg. Aeneid. III 323),

*“ O foelix una ante alias Priameia virgo,  
Hostilem ad tumulum, Troiae sub moenibus altis*

*Iussa mort, quae sortitus non pertulit ullos,  
Nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile.”*

**Even thou wast as one of them]** *The emphasis lieth in the word "thou"; as in that of Julius Caesar, beholding Brutus among the conspirators that took away his life, What? Thou my son Brutus? Και συ τεκνον βρουτε (Dio Cass.). Even thou, brother Edom, whom we spared in our passage through the wilderness, when we destroyed other nations, #De 2:5; thou, who hast from David's days, for the most part, been our vassal and tributary. Jerome applieth this to heretics; Mercer, to that arch-heretic antichrist, an utter opposite to Christ, yet a pretended friend, as was Judas; a servant of God's servants (if you will believe him), but a most bloody persecutor of the Church, in whose ruins he yet revelleth, and will do, till Christ shall punish him, with "his sore, and great, and strong sword," #Isa 27:2, and dung his vineyard with the flesh of that wild boar.*

Ver. 12. **But thou shouldest not have looked on the day]** Unless it were with weeping eyes. *Iisdem quibus videmus oculis flemus.* Men have the same organ of seeing and of weeping; that when they behold a doleful object, they might weep over it; not as the crocodile doth over the dead body which she had slain before, and afterwards devoureth; but with true tears of compassion, weeping with those that weep. God takes it ill here, that any should once look upon his afflicted people, unless it be to pity and relieve them. He observed Cain's lowering upon his brother, #Ge 4:6, and the Jews' wagging their heads, #Mt 27:39, Rabshakeh's lofty looks, #Isa 37:28,

Laban's change of countenance, #Ge 31:2. Men may not look at liberty, and as they list. *Vultu saepe laeditur charitas*. It was not for nothing, therefore, that in Queen Elizabeth's days, at a meeting of the borderers in the marches between England and Scotland, about goods unjustly taken, security was given and confirmed on both sides by oath, according to custom and proclamation made, that no man should harm other by word, deed, or look.

**When he became a stranger]** And fell under a strange punishment, as Job speaketh, #Job 31:3, that is, a rare and unheard of misery, *monstruosum exilium*, Tremellius rendereth it. This was threatened, #2Ch 7:21, and accordingly fulfilled, #La 1:9. Israel became the world's wonderment, a famous instance of God's severity against a people of his wrath and of his curse. Aben Ezra rendereth it, In his strange day, such as he had never seen the like before. Others, when he was banished his own borders, and became a stranger at home: when God seemed to look strange upon him, and to stand aloof, or as a man astonished, that knows not whether he had best help or no, as a mighty man that cannot save, #Jer 14:8,9. John Baptist was beheaded in prison without any law, right, or reason, as though God had known nothing at all of him, saith that martyr (Acts & Mon. 1423).

**Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children, &c.]** For this is to be sick of the devil's disease, *επιχαιρεκακια*, and such are assured that they shall not go unpunished, #Pr 17:5. God will soon see it, and be displeased, and turn the current of his wrath upon such an offender, #Pr 24:18, as he did here upon Edom, for looking with liking on the calamity of his brother, for rejoicing at the downfall of his enemy.

**Neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly]** Heb. Magnified thy mouth, blustering and breathing out big threats, setting up thine horn on high, and saying, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof," #Ps 137:7.

“ *Diripite, ex imis evertite fundamentis.*” (Buchanan.)

Such a Pyrgopolynicas was Nebuchadnezzar, #**Isa 10:13**, and Alexander the Great, and Antiochus, that little antichrist, #**Da 7:8**, and that great antichrist of Rome, bellowing with his bulls, and menacing hell to all that adhere not to him. See #**Re 13:5,6**, and a like phrase to this, #**Eze 35:13**.

Ver. 13. **Thou shouldst not have entered into the gate, &c.**] But have looked upon them as my people, though under a cloud of calamity; which will soon blow over. To enter, therefore, into their gates for prey and spoil is to burden yourselves with that burdensome stone that shall break you; to drink of that poisonous cup that shall bane you; to lay your hands upon that hearth of fire that will burn you, #**Zec 12:2,3,6**. Look to it, hands off, keep you far from so evil a matter, lest it prove as that gold of *Toulouse, Aurum Tholosanum*, a mischief to all that meddle with it.

**Thou shouldst not have looked**] See #**Ob 1:12**. The repetition shows the heinousness of the sin. The Holy Ghost doth not open his mouth in vain (whatever Job did, #**Job 35:16**), nor multiply words without reason.

**In the day of their calamity**] This is thrice mentioned, to show how sensible God was of this savage dealing of theirs with his poor people, who now lay under the strokes and stripes of a displeased mercy. The Hebrew word here rendered calamity signifieth a fog, vapour, or misty cloud, #**Ge 2:6 Job 36:27**; and by a metaphor, it is put for affliction and misery, as it is also in Latin. *Tempera si fuerint nubila, solus eris* (Ovid.). *Nubecula est, cito transibit*, said Athanasius.

Ver. 14. **Neither shouldst thou have stood in the crossway**] To intercept those poor fugitives, who sought to save themselves by flight, since they could not by fight. But alas,

“ *Una salus victis, nullam sperare salutem.* ”

Seeking to shun the shelves, they ran upon a rock. Mischievous Edomites waylaid them; and either slew them or drew them back to prison, as in the next words.

**Neither shouldst thou have delivered up]** Or shut up close prisoners the residue, Heb. *Serido* (the same almost with the English, the letters only transposed), those poor few that were yet undevoured by the sword. This was the greatest cruelty of all. And see the Edomites' progress in it, and what proficients they prove. *Nemo repente fit deterrimus*. Sin proceeds by degrees; neither is any man at his worst at first. First they looked at the Church's calamity, and then they laughed, and then they insulted and spoke big words, and then they plundered, and lastly they butchered some and imprisoned others. Did not God's enemies do all this among us in our late unnatural commotions? wherein, besides the many massacres made everywhere, it was a like difficult thing, in those parts where they prevailed, to find a wicked man in their prisons or a good man out of them.

Ver. 15. **For the day of the Lord is near, &c.]** "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming," **#Ps 37:12,13**, the particular day of his sore punishment, a type and pledge of the general judgment, that great day of the Lord, as it is called, **#Re 6:17 16:14**, because the great God will on that day do great works, and determine great matters, **#Jude 19**. But as some men's sins go before to judgment (as it were, by a special sessions preceding and anteverting the great Assizes), so should Edom and his neighbouring nations taste also of Nebuchadnezzar's cup and whip, **#Jer 25:17**, and this day is said to be near upon them, though it came not of above a hundred years after; so is the coming of Christ to judgment near, though we presume not to set the time, as some have done, deceiving and being deceived.

**As thou hast done, it shall be done to thee]** God loves to retaliate, and to oppose frowardness to frowardness, **#Ps 18:26**, contrariety to contrariety, **#Le 26:18,21**, severity to cruelty, as he did to Adonibezek, Agag, Zebah, and Zalmunna, **#Jud 8:19**, and Edom here, and **#Eze 35**. And the heathens held this but meet, as appeareth by their fables and stories of Phineus (Ovid).

“ *Quid fodis immeritis natis sua lumina, Phineu?*

- *Poena reversura est in caput ipsa tuum.* ”



*So of Diomedes, King of Thrace, cast by Hercules to be devoured by his own dogs, which he had so often fed with man's flesh. The like might be said of Perillus and his brazen bull, whereof himself had the lucky omen. Iustum est, ait Rhadamanthus, quod quis iniuste aliis intulit idem subeat et patiatur* (Arist. Ethic.). Herein they said no other thing than what God had in the old law decreed, #Le 24:19, and Christ in the new hath confirmed, #Mt 7:2, for a terror to evildoers, who shall have like for like returned unto them, and be filled with their own ways, #Pr 14:14. See #La 4:21. The Rabbis conceive all this to be spoken of the Romans (whom they call Edomites); sure we are God will be even with that Romish antichrist, and render him his own in kind, when he once takes him in hand, as #Re 13:10 18:6.

Ver. 16. **For as ye have drunk upon mine holy mountain]** As you, O Edomites, have rejoiced and revelled in the ruins of Zion, carousing and carolling in her calamity, so shall many nations, and you among, yea, above the rest (for your excessive perfidy and cruelty), drink deeply of the cup of God's fury, which hath eternity to the bottom.

**And they shall be as though they had not been]** This clause makes against that other sense that some set upon the text, viz. The heathen shall drink, feast, and triumph over thee, O Edom, whom they have subdued; yea, they shall drink so stoutly that they shall swallow thee up, and all thy substance, leaving thee nothing, *praeter coelum, et coenum*, as that Roman prodigal boasted he had done to himself. Their exposition seemeth more probable who here begin the consolatory part of the prophecy, and make this verse an apostrophe to the afflicted Jews thus: Like as ye my people have drunk your part of the cup of affliction (an ordinary metaphor, not in Scripture only, as #Eze 23:32 Jer 49:12 Mt 20:22, but also in heathen writers, in allusion perhaps to the cup of poison given at Athens to malefactors, or, as some think, to the manner of their feasts, whereat the *symposiarch*, or ruler of the feast, #Joh 2:9, gave order what, and how much, every one should drink), so shall all the heathen drink, and that continually; yea, they shall not only sip of the top, that which is sweetest and clearest; but the dregs and sediments too, they shall both drink and swallow down; till such time as it hath wholly swallowed them up, so that they shall be as though they had

not been. See, for confirmation of this sense, #**Jer 25:15 49:12**, and pray for the ruin of Rome, so long since foretold by Sibylla: *Tota eris in cineres, quasi nunquam Roma fuisses*. The prophecy is fulfilled already in Edom; whose very name is lost, more than what the Scripture reporteth of them. The Chaldees cut off abundance of them, together with the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighbouring nations. After that Judas Maccabeus, and his nephew Hircanus, slew a great sort of them; and then, lastly, the Romans and other princes rooted them utterly out. See Joseph. lib. i. Antiq. cap. 10; #**Rapc 1Ma 5:65 2Ma 10:16,32**.

Ver. 17. **But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance]** God will "turn again their captivity as the streams in the south." He stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to send them home; he restored unto them both religion and liberty; he did all that could be done for them, by sanding his Son among them in the fulness of time, "made of a woman," &c., made also unto all his people, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," #**1Co 1:30**. Jesus hath delivered us from the wrath to come, #**1Th 1:10**. Neither is there any other name, whereby heaven is to be had, but only by the name of Jesus.

**And there shall be holiness]** "Holiness to the Lord," as #**Zec 14:20**. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:20"} All the Lord's people shall be a holy nation, #**1Pe 2:9**. Every inhabitant of the city of God shall be partaker of holiness, both imputed and imparted; that, for justification, being inherent in Christ, imputed to us; this, for sanctification, imparted by Christ, inherent in us.

**And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions]** They returning from Babylon shall not only recover their own possessions, out of the hands of the Edomites, Samaritans, and Syrians, by virtue of an edict from King Darius; but they shall also possess the Edomites themselves, and their territories; when converted to the faith of Christ, they shall bring their wealth unto the Church, and (as it is said of Tyre, #**Isa 23:18**) feed and clothe therewith the saints of God.

Ver. 18. **And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, &c.]** The house of Jacob are the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; the house of Joseph are the ten tribes of Israel, whereof Ephraim was the head. The sense

is this, those two tribes, together with such of the ten as joined themselves to them, either before or after the captivity, shall invade Idumea, burn it, and subdue it, as fire doth stubble fully dry. This was done by Hircanus and Judas Maccabeus, who compelled the Edomites to be circumcised; and so wholly possessed those parts, that there were not any relics of them remaining; no, not so much as one πυροφορος (as the Septuagint render it), or, πυρφορος (as some read them), any to carry grain after the camp or fire before it, according to the custom of the Greeks and Easterlings; which torchbearer might as little be violated as an ambassador; but here, he should be cut off with the rest, and not so much as a messenger left, to relate the overthrow. The Edomites were so utterly rooted out by Hircanus, that they thenceforth ceased to be Edomites, and became Jews. Those of them that were converted by the preaching of the gospel, ceased to be either Edomites or Jews, and became Christians. The apostles, burning with the zeal of God's glory and love to men's souls, devoured and wasted the infidelity, idols, and vices of the Gentiles wherever they came preaching, Hence Chrysostom saith, Peter was a man made all of fire, walking among stubble; Paul was *insatiabilis Dei cultor*, an insatiable servant of Christ. And to the like purpose it was, that to one that desired to know what kind of man Basil was, it is said, that was presented in a dream, a pillar of fire, with this motto, *Talis est Basilius*, Such a one is Basil. And old Latimer, when he was demanded the reason why so little powerful preaching? answered, *Deest ignis*, the spark of the spirit is wanting. Howbeit this prophecy, as it began to be fulfilled at first by the apostles, and the apostolic persons that came after them; so it is daily, and shall be continually to the world's end, fulfilled by the faithful preachers of God's holy word, who are clothed with a spirit "of judgment and of burning," #Isa 4:4, and out of whose mouth proceedeth fire, #Re 11:5; to purge the gold, and to consume the stubble.

Ver. 19. **And they of the south shall possess the mount of Esau]** Those of the south, that is, the tribe of Judah. For Judaea was divided into five parts, #Jos 15, whereof one was southward, toward the coast of Edom, #Jos 15:21. Another was in the vale or plain, near unto the Philistines, #Jos 15:33. Here, then, Obadiah showeth that the Jews shall not only recover their ancient inheritances, but also much enlarge the same; whereby he signifieth that the Church

of Christ shall grow so very great, that Jewry shall be too narrow for them, see #**Zec 10:10**; the ancient bounders shall not receive them, see #**Nu 24:17 Isa 40:14**. The gospel was soon spread, not only to the neighbouring nations, but to all the ends of the earth: the Edomites, Philistines, &c., are only mentioned, as being better known and more adverse to the Jews than other nations were.

**And they of the plain the Philistines]** *i.e.* Those five lordships, Gath, Gaza, Ascalon, Ekron, and Azotus, all which country (called Saron, #**Ac 9:35**) Augustus gave to Herod the Ascalonite; and, after his death, to his sons; dividing it into tetrarchies, #**Lu 3:1**.

**And they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria]** All which Hircanus subdued, and destroyed their temple built in mount Gerizim.

**And Benjamin shall possess Gilead]** That is shall propagate and extend his habitation beyond Jordan; and in respect of his exceeding great multitude, shall be compelled to hold and possess Gilead, all the country between Jordan and mount Libanus. Thus Jerome with the Hebrew scholiasts and many others; who do also note, that under these earthly felicities heavenly are described; and that all this is chiefly accomplished under Christ, when as the faithful are made heirs and lords of all things by him, who is their head. See #**Eze 37:16-23**.

Ver. 20. **And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel, &c.]** *i.e.* The multitude of the Jews carried captive to Babylon, returning at length into their own country, shall possess all the places of the Canaanites, all the maritime cities, all the tract of ground as far as Sarepta, which is between Tyre and Zidon, therefore called Sarepta of Zidon, #**1Ki 17:9**. Here dwelt the Canaanites, whom Asher could not expel, #**Jud 1:31,32**. See #**Mt 15:22**.

**And the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad]** That is, either in some city of Assyria or in the utmost bounds of the Babylonish dominion (as some interpret the word Sepharad, by taking it asunder), or as far as Apharad (so the Septuagint), that is, Euphrates. The Hebrew doctors, as by Canaanites here they understand the Dutch, and by Zarephath France, so by Sepharad

they will needs have Spain to be meant, subdued, say they, by Nebuchadnezzar, after other of his great conquests, and by him planted with Jews, carried captive from Jerusalem. With such bold and frivolous fancies do these poor deluded creatures fondly feed themselves. They are generally light, aerial, and fanatical brains, saith one; apt to rework themselves into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage. They not only expect a corporal restitution to their own country, but also a sovereignty over all other nations, and possession of their provinces, saith another; they believe that the Messiah is not yet come, because the Christian Empire is not yet destroyed; and therefore they pray daily for the overthrow of the Roman Empire (Buxtorf. Synag. c. 5). Out of the east it is that they expect their Messiah, whither the Spanish Jews fled (when they were banished), and are exceedingly multiplied; for those do they hold to be this captivity of Jerusalem here mentioned, viz. of the tribe of Judah; and the other in Germany and Italy, to be of the tribe of Benjamin; who, in honour of the more noble tribe, and to correspond with them the better, do learn the Spanish tongue; which those still retain, in hope, belike, to be one day lords of that large and rich country.

**Shall possess the cities of the south]** *i.e.* Shall return to their own southerly cities and provinces. And this prophecy of recovering the holy land is to be taken in a spiritual sense; and it importeth, that all those that are Israelites indeed, Jews inwardly, shall flee to the Church of Christ, **#Ro 9:24-29**.

Ver. 21. **And saviours shall come up on mount Zion]** Judas Maccabeus and Hircanus in the history: as in the mystery, the apostles and others of Christ's ministers, who are here and elsewhere called saviours, a very high style, because God maketh use of their ministry, as he doth likewise of the angels, for the good of them that are heirs of salvation, **#Heb 1:14**, and by their help the faithful are saved. Hence those expressions, **#1Ti 4:16**, "thou shalt save thyself and those that hear thee"; **#Jas 5:20**, he "shall save a soul from death"; **#Job 33:24**, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have received a ransom." See also **#Mic 5:6 Jude 23 1Co 3:6,7,9 4:1 9:22**. Let ministers hence learn their dignity and their duty. Christ hath communicated to them many of his own most honourable titles, as Light of the world, Doctor, Pastor, Saviour, Redeemer, &c. True it

is, he alone is the principal Saviour, and therefore it followeth in the closure of this shortest, but most difficult prophet ( *Brevissimus sed difficilimus Propheta*. Mercer), "the kingdom shall be the Lord's," he, to speak properly, is the sole both Sovereign and Saviour of his body, the Church. *Sed servatores dicuntur*, saith Mercer, but they are called saviours, because they preach the word of this salvation, and are instrumental to Christ in that great work; like as the apothecary is to the skilful physician, in curing his patient of a deadly disease.

**To judge the mount of Esau]** Antichrist with his adherents; all other infidels also, and atheists, condemned here by Christ and his faithful ministers, as rebels against God, and sinners against their own souls. "Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know their abomination," #Eze 20:4, and to judge themselves worthy to be destroyed; that judging themselves, they may not be judged, #1Co 11:31, but of Esauites may become true Jacobites; as Jetur, by nature an Ishmaelite, #1Ch 1:31, is, for his faith and piety, called an Israelite, #2Sa 17:25. To thus "judge the mount of Esau," ought to be the ambition of Christ's ministers; for to gain them to Christ, by convincing "the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," that is, of the mischief of sin, the necessity of justification by Christ's merit, and of sanctification by his Spirit, #Joh 16:8. This is to be both judges and saviours; as those judges of old were, whereunto the prophet here seemeth to allude. This is to save people "with fear, pulling them out of the fire," #Jude 23. This is to proclaim Christ King, and to set the crown upon his head, as #So 3:11, with that glorious acclamation, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, and he will save us," #Isa 33:22.

**The kingdom shall be the Lord's]** Not only the kingdom of power over all creatures, #1Ch 29:11, and of grace in the hearts of his people here (called often the kingdom of heaven in the gospel), but also of righteousness, and of glory hereafter, to be chiefly exercised at that great and dreadful day.

“Now to this King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” {#1Ti 1:17}



# Jonah

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **Now the word of the Lord came]** Heb. *And the word* For with that particle "And" the Hebrews sometimes begin a discourse, as **#Eze 1:1** **Le 1:1**, an elegance proper to that tongue. Howbeit Hugo Cardinalis maketh this "And," not an inceptive particle, but a copulative to many other things that were in the prophet's mind. Others conceive it to be continuative of some other history not now extant; or at least connective of this history with the course of his ordinary calling and prophetic employment among the ten tribes, to whom he prophesied together with Hosea, Amos, and others, but with little good success, in the reign of Jeroboam II.; a prince more prosperous than pious, **#2Ki 14:25**. Jonah prophesied of his prosperity and victories; whereof when no good use was made by the house of Israel, their calamity and captivity was likewise foretold by Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah; and hence some conclude that Jonah was the first of all the prophets whose writings are extant; for he lived, say they, before the battle of Joash, King of Israel, with the Syrians, about the end of the life and prophecy of Elisha, **#2Ki 13:14**.

**Unto Jonah the son of Amittai]** Jonah signifieth a dove, but Jonah had too little of the dove in him: *plenus enim fuit effraenatis motibus*, saith one; as passionate a man of an honest man as you have lightly heard of, saith another. Whether he was that "mad fellow" (as those much more mad captains called him **#2Ki 9:11**), that was sent to anoint Jehu, or else the widow of Sarepta's son raised by Elijah (as the Hebrews will have him to be), I have not to say. But that he was a servant of the Lord we find, **#2Ki 14:25**, and a type of Christ, **#Mt 12:40**, concerning whom he prophesied, *non tam sermone quam sua quadam passione* (Augustine), far more plainly than if he had by voice foretold his death and resurrection. And whereas the grandees and potentates of the world get them a great name by the death and danger of many others; *Ionas his omnibus superior est*, saith an interpreter, Jonah surpasseth them all in this, that by his sermon at Nineveh he preserved that great city, wherein were so many thousand persons, and so much cattle, **#Jon 4:11**. That he was called and sent thither by God it appeareth by this



text, and Oecolampadius observeth it. He was not, saith he, of them that run before they are sent; but, being sent, he refused to run, because of the hardness of the task laid upon him, as did likewise Moses and Jeremiah, till better tutored. There is less danger in refusing to run when sent than in running unsent. But when God calleth a man to the ministry, let him not doubt or despond, though at first he find not so much encouragement. *Magna semper fecerunt, qui Deo vocante docuerunt*, saith Luther. They have always done great things that have followed God's call, as did Jonah at Nineveh, and doth still in the Church of God; for among others Cyprian, that famous martyr, confesseth that he was converted from idolatry and necromancy by hearing the history of the prophet Jonah read and expounded to him by Cecilius, whom he thenceforth called *novae vitro parentem*, the father of his Christian life.

Ver. 2. **Arise, go to Nineveh]** *Haec est vocatio prophetae*, saith Oecolampadius: this was the prophet's call, which he should have obeyed without bucking or shucking, delays or disputes, conferring, or consulting with flesh and blood, **#Ga 1:16**. True it is, that in human governments, where reason is shut out, there tyranny is thrust in. As in the papacy (where the whore sitteth upon them, **#Re 17:1**, that is, useth them vilely and basely; sitteth upon their consciences, as Rachel did upon her father's images), though their superiors command the friars a voyage to China or Peru, without dispute or delay they must presently set forward; to detract or disobey in this case is held breach of vow, equal to sacrilege: this is intolerable tyranny. But where God calleth or commandeth (as here), to ask a reason is presumption; to oppose reason is rebellion. Paul dared not but be obedient to the heavenly vision, **#Ac 26:19**. Jonah declined his apostleship (την αποστολην παρητησατο, as a father calleth it), but it had like to have cost him a choking; whereof, when in danger, he could confess that "They that observe lying vanities" (as he had done to his cost) "forsake their own mercy," **#Jon 2:8**, are miserable by their own election. As for the expression here used, "Arise, go," it is *hortantis particula, et studium notat*; it is an encouraging and exciting particle. Up and be doing. Be "fervent in spirit; serving the Lord," **#Ro 12:11**. *Surge, age, summe Pater*; said Mantuan to the Pope, exciting him to take up arms against the Turk. There is a curse to him that doeth the work of the Lord negligently, **#Jer 48:10**, and a command to do it with all our might, **#Ec 9:10**.

**Nineveh, that great city]** Built by Ninus, and by him so named; as Adrianople, Constantinople, Charlestown, &c. A great city it was, indeed, never any so great; as consisting of three cities, and having more people within the walls, than are now in some one kingdom, saith an author. It was sixty miles about, saith Diodorus Siculus (Bunting saith Alcaire at this day is no less: Paulus Venetus saith Quinsay, in Tartary, is a hundred miles in circuit, but we are not bound to believe him. It is enough that Cambalu, the chief city there, is twenty-eight miles in compass). Nineveh was three days' journey in Jonah's days, fortified with a wall of a hundred feet high; and that also beautified, and beset with fifteen hundred towers, each of them erected to the height of two hundred feet. Thus far Diodorus, who also tells us that this great city received one ruin by the river Tigris, which, at an inundation, brake out upon the wall, and threw down two and a half miles of it, see **#Na 1:8**. Its last destruction was undertaken and ended by Nebuchadnezzar, as the Jews in their chronology testify. Herodotus saith, by Cyaxares, not by Astyages, as Jerome mistaketh him. If Sardanapalus were King of Nineveh when Jonah cried against it (as Corn. a Lapide contendeth), it was much that such an egregious voluptuary should so soon be wrought upon, as **#Jon 3**. But he and his people soon relapsed to their former impiety; and were therefore destroyed, as Nahum had foretold; so that it may now be said of Nineveh, as once it was of another great city, in Strabo, *magna civitas, magna solitudo*. That great city is become a great desert, see **#Zep 2:15**, it is nothing now but a sepulchre of itself, a little town of small trade, where Nestorius's sect have taken their shelter, at the devotion of the Turk. It is become like that other Nineveh mentioned by Eusebius, *quae est parvum quoddam in angulo Arabico oppidum*, which is a certain little town in a corner of Arabia (Lib. de loc. Ebraic.).

**And cry against it]** Cry aloud with open mouth and full throat, *sic clames, ut Stentora vincere possis*. The voice said, Cry: but what should he cry? **#Isa 41:6-8**. Cry that their wickedness is come up before me (so some), but that is not all. Cry, as **#Jon 3:5**, Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed, for their wickedness is come, &c., their iniquity will be their ruin; tell them so from me, **#Isa 41:10,11**.

**Their wickedness is come up before me]** Their pride, cruelty, and other many and bony sins, as Amos hath it, **#Am 5:12**. Of their idolatry we read not, and yet we doubt not; they declared their sins as Sodom, **#Isa 3:9**, they set them upon the cliffs of the rocks, **#Eze 24:7,8**; they did wickedly as they could, and filled not only the earth with their abominations, but the heaven also with the noise and stench thereof, to the annoying of God's senses and the vexing of his soul; more than any filthy drunkard doth those that are sober, with his hooting and spewing. See **#Ge 4:10 18:20 Re 18:5**. {See Trapp on "Ge 4:10"} {See Trapp on "Ge 18:20"} {See Trapp on "Re 18:5"}

Ver. 3. **But Jonah rose up to flee, &c.]** *i.e.* He made haste (more haste than good speed) to disobey God. *Homo est inversus decalogus*. The natural man standeth across to the will of God; "being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate," **#Tit 1:16**. Jonah was a spiritual man, and should have discerned all things, **#1Co 2:15**. But this spiritual man was mad, **#Ho 9:7** (as they that are cured of a frenzy will yet have their freaks and frantic tricks sometimes), he cast off the yoke, and turned, for the time, renegade from the Lord; who met him at half turn, and brought him back again, though by weeping cross. Of the blackbird's dung is made the lime whereby he is taken; so here. They that would excuse Jonah, and say that he sinned not, *Dei scriptis iniuriam faciunt*, saith Luther, they wrong the Scriptures. The best have their infirmities; as the snow-like swan hath black legs; and as no pomegranate is without some rotten grains. David saw such volumes of corruptions, and so many erratas in all that he did, that he cries out, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults," **#Ps 19:12**.

**To flee unto Tarshish]** Tarsus, in Cilicia, St Paul's country, **#Ac 21:39 22:3**, rather than the city Tunis, in Africa, as Vatablus will have it, or the East Indies, as others. Tarshish sometimes signifieth the main ocean, as **#Ps 48:7** (whence some take it here for the sea), but that may be by a metonymy *{a}* of the adjunct; because Tarsus stood upon the ocean shore, and was a fit haven whence to hoist up sail into various countries.

**From the presence of the Lord]** *Ab ante Domini*, from the special and spiritual presence of God, wherein he had hitherto stood and ministered. For from God's general presence, whereby he filleth all places, and is "not far from any one of us," #Ac 17:27 (not so far, surely, as the bark is from the tree, the skin from the flesh, or the flesh from the bones), Jonah knew he could not flee. Blind nature saw, and could say,

——“ *quascunque accesseris eras,*  
*Sub Iove semper eris.*”——

*God is a circle, said Empedocles, whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference is nowhere. Why the prophet fled many causes are assigned by interpreters: as Amor patriae, timer humanus, his fear of the Ninevites, his love to his Israelites, his conceit that it would be to little purpose to preach to heathens, since he had prevailed so little at home. The very cause was that which we find #Jon 4:2, "I fled to Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God," &c., and I feared, lest I should thereupon be counted a false prophet. So much there is of self found in the best; who, when once they are got out of God's way, they may run they know not whither, and return they know not when.*

**And went down to Joppa]** Heb. Japho, a sea town in the tribe of Dan, #Jos 19:46; distant about fifty miles from Gathhepher (Jonas's town, #2Ki 14:25), which was in the tribe of Zabulon, towards the lake of Tiberias. Sinners are no small painstakers. There is the same Hebrew and Greek word for wickedness and toilsomeness ( למעל πονηρία). Would sinners be at the same pains for heaven that they are at for hell they could not lightly miss it.

**And he found a ship going to Tarshish]** They that have a mind to commit sin shall easily meet with an occasion. The tempter, who feeleth their pulses, and knoweth which way they will beat, will soon fit them a pennyworth. He hath a wedge of gold to set before Achan, a Cozbi before Zimri, *Non causabitur, aptabitur*. It is not to be excused or acommodated. Indeed it is the just man's happiness that no evil shall happen to him, #Pr 12:21; that is (as Mercer interpreteth it) *non parabitur ei, et dabitur occasio iniquitatis*, God

shall cut off from him the occasions of sin, remove stumblingblocks out of his way; either not lead him into temptation or not leave him in it.

**So he paid the fare thereof]** *Forsan ut citius navim solveret* (Mercer); perhaps to make the mariners hasten the more. Jonah might better have obeyed God, and gone to Nineveh on free cost. But wit is best when it is bought, they say. How many be there who perish at their own charge, as Phocion, the Athenian, paid for the poison that despatched him.

**To go with them to Tarshish from the presence, &c.]** *i.e.* Out of God's blessing into the world's warm sun. All wilful sinners are renegades from the Lord; *factique sunt a corde suo fugitivi*, saith Tertullian, fain they would also run (if they knew how or whither) from their own consciences. But if they belong to God, conscience shall be awakened to do its office; and they shall one day say with her, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi? call me Mara, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me," **#Ru 1:20,21.**

{a} A figure of speech which consists in substituting for the name of a thing the name of an attribute of it or of something closely related. (ED)

**Ver. 4. But the Lord sent out]** Heb. cast forth, *sc.* out of his treasures, **#Ps 135:7**, wherehence he sendeth at his pleasure mighty great winds which he (the only Aeolus) holdeth in his fist, hideth in his repositories, checketh them as he seeth good, weighs them in his hand, **#Job 28:25**; sends them out as his posts, makes them pace orderly, appoints them their motion, whether as messengers of mercy, **#Nu 2:13 Ge 8:1 Ex 14:21**, or as executioners of justice, **#Ex 10:13 Job 1:19**, hurting men's houses, cattle, corn, persons; yea, hurrying and hurling the wicked into hell, **#Job 27:21.**

**A great wind into the sea]** Whither they that go down in ships see God's great wonders in the deep. For "he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof," &c., **#Ps 107:23-29.** Did it not so in a marvellous manner here in 1588, and again in that other 1688, some few years since? Had not Jehoshaphat his ships broken at Eziongeber, **#1Ki 22:48**, and Charles V at

Algiers, by two terrible tempests, which destroyed almost all that goodly fleet? The very mariners acknowledged this wind to be an effect of God's justice, and therefore thought fit to implore his mercy; for

**There was a mighty tempest in the sea]** Which is troublesome of itself and never still, though sometimes it seems so; but by blustering and big winds is made out of measure troublesome (*Inhorruit mare.* Virg.), such as was that *λαιλαψ*, #Lu 8:23, and that Euroclydon, #Ac 27:14; which Pliny calleth *navigantium pestem*, the mariner's misery.

**So that the ship was like to be broken]** Heb. thought to be broken; Or. was in danger to be broken, *εκινδυνευεν*: the mariners made no other reckoning, they looked upon all as lost. God reserveth his holy hand for a dead lift usually, and loveth to help those that are forsaken of their hopes.

Ver. 5. **Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man to his god]** Forced by the present necessity, first these stout fellows were surprised with fear; neither could they look pale death in the face with blood in their cheeks. Death is the "king of terrors," #Job 18:14, Nature's slaughter man, God's curse, and helps purveyor. Next they "cried every man to his god." This was a lesson of Mother Nature's teaching, *sc.* that there is a God, and that this God is to be called upon, and especially in distress. Those fools of the people that said there was no God could not (when hardly bestead) but look up to heaven and cry out for help. All "people will walk every one in the name of his god," #Mic 4:5. These mariners or saltmen *מִיִּהְלָמָה* (so called, either because they dealt in that commodity, or else because they rowed in the salt sea) had their several gods, according to their several countries, and these they now called upon, whom, till now, perhaps they little enough cared for; seamen are not overly pious for the most part. And yet of the Turkish mariners I have read, that every morning they salute the sun with their general shouts, and a priest saying a kind of Litany, every prayer ending with *Macree Kichoon*, that is, be angels present: the people answer in the manner of a shout *Homin*, that is, Amen. But it is remarkable that these in the text, though they cried every man to his god, yet, lest they might all mistake the true God, they awaken Jonah to call upon his God.

This uncertainty, attending idolatry, caused the heathens to close their petitions with that general *Diique Deaeque omnes* (Serv. in Georg. lib. 1). But thirdly, as they cried to their gods, so (according to that rule, *Ora et labora*),

**They cast forth the wares that were in the ship]** Not doubting to sacrifice their goods to the service of their lives. "Skin for skin, and all that a man hath," &c.: so #Ac 27:18,19,38. Let us lose anything for eternal life, #Lu 16:8 9:25 Mt 18:8; suffer any hardship for heaven: we cannot buy it too dear. A stone will fall down to come to its own place, though it break itself in pieces by the way; so we, that we may get to our centre, which is upward.

**But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship]** Into the bottom of it: hither he had betaken himself before the storm; not considering that God had long hands to pull him out of his lurking holes, and bring him to judgment.

**And he lay, and was fast asleep]** It is likely that he had not slept many nights before (through care, fear, and grief, those three vultures that had been gnawing upon his inwards), and therefore now sleeps the more soundly. Or rather it was carnal security, his heart being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, #Heb 3:13. He had hardened his heart against God's fear, and wilfully withdrawn from his obedience; hence this spiritual lethargy, this deep sleep in sin, not unlike that of the smith's dog, whom neither the hammers above him nor the sparks of fire falling round about him can awaken: though the waterpot and spear be taken from the bolster, the secure person stirs not; though the house be on fire over his ears he starts not. Their senselessness God will cure in his Jonahs by sharp afflictions. Cold diseases must have hot and sharp remedies. The lethargy is best cured by a burning ague. God will let his presumptuous people see what it is to make wounds in their consciences, to try the preciousness of his balm: such may go mourning to their graves. And though with much ado they get assurance of pardon, yet their consciences will be still trembling, as David's, #Ps 51, till God speaks farther peace, even as the water of the sea after a storm is not presently still, but moves and trembles a good while after the storm is over.

Ver. 6. **So the shipmaster came unto him]** God might have come himself with his drawn sword (as Baanah and Rechab did upon sleeping Ishbosheth) and taken off his head, or have sent an evil angel to arouse him in a fright, or have thrown him into the burning lake, as Agrippa did his dormouse <sup>{a}</sup> into the boiling caldron; but such is not God's manner of dealing with his people, though he be deeply displeased. Correct them he will, but with judgment, not in his anger, lest they be brought to nothing, **#Jer 10:24**. Instruct them also he will ("Corrections of instruction are the way of life," **#Pr 6:23**) by one means or other, as he did here Jonah by a rude mariner, and as long before he had done Abraham and Sarah by Abimelech, a heathen prince, to shame them.

**What meanest thou, O sleeper?]** Heb. what is come to thee? **#Ge 20:9**. What a senseless stupidity hath seized thee! Are we all in danger, and dost thou sleep? as the philosopher (in danger likewise of shipwreck) said to one that made light of it,—Do we all stand upon our lives, and dost thou play the fool? *ημεις παντες κινδυνευομεν. και συ παιζεις*; The spiritual sleeper, in like sort, may he be but warm in his own feathers, regards not the danger of the house. He is, saith one, a mere mute and cipher, a nullity in the world, a superfluity in the earth, Jeremiah's rotten girdle, good for nothing, or like the branches of a vine, **#Eze 15:3**.

**Arise, call upon thy God]** For our gods will do nothing for us. The gods of the heathen are "silver and gold, the work of men's hands; they have mouths, but speak not," &c., **#Ps 115:4**. But if God's Israel trust in the Lord, he will be their help and their shield, **#Jon 1:9**. Forasmuch as there is none like unto him, **#Jer 10:6**; neither is "their rock as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges," **#De 32:31**.

**If so be that God will think upon us]** The Chaldee hath it, will be merciful unto us; the Hebrew word signifieth will clear up, and behold us with a serene countenance; granting us a calm, and taking care that we perish not. So shall we acknowledge him to be *Haelohim*, that God by an excellency. Queen Elizabeth (that *Regina Serenissima* most unruffled Queen), for her merciful returning home certain Italians that were taken prisoners in the 1588 invasion, was



termed Saint Elizabeth by some at Venice; who also affirmed to the English ambassador there, that though they were Papists, yet they would never pray to any other saint but that Saint Elizabeth.

{a} A sleepy or dozing person. (ED)

**Ver. 7. And they said every one to his fellow]** When Jonah had now prayed, and yet the tempest continued, (for we know that God heareth not sinners, **#Joh 9:31**; no, not a David or a Jonah, if he "regard iniquity in his heart," **#Ps 66:18**; how should the plaster prevail while the weapon remains in the wound?) they resolve to try another course for the safeguard of their lives. Man is ζῶον φιλοζῶον, a creature that would fain live, said Aesop; and "what man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good," saith David; whereunto Austin answereth, *Quis vitam non vult?* who would not be master of such a happiness?

**Come and let us cast lots]** And so put the matter into God's hands, **#Pr 16:33**. He disposeth of lottery, so it be rightly undertaken, not superstitiously, curiously, rashly; but as trusting in God, and not tempting him.

**That we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us]** Some extraordinary cause they knew there was of this extraordinary tempest. Sinful men strike not their dogs, much less their children, without a cause. A bee stings not till provoked; neither doth God punish his creatures till there be no other remedy, **#2Ch 36:16**. Good, therefore, is the counsel of the prophet, **#La 3:39,40**, "Why is living man sorrowful, a man for the punishment of his sin Let us search and try our ways" (find out the sin that God strikes at), "and turn again to the Lord"; turn and live.

**So they cast lots]** They should have also prayed, as **#Ac 1:24 6:6**; saying as Saul, **#1Sa 14:41**, "Give a perfect lot." Wicked men also are bound to pray, **#Ps 14:4**; but although they do not, God can get himself glory by their profane lottery; as he did by Nebuchadnezzar's, **#Eze 21:20,21**.

**And the lot fell upon Jonah]** Secret sins will come out at length, and be brought into judgment, **#Ec 12:14**. *Saeculi laetitia est*

*impunita nequitia* (Augustin). Surely the bitterness of death is past, said Agag, but he found it otherwise, #1Sa 15:32. Jonah thought himself out of the reach of God's rod, &c. Wicked men's faults shall be written in their foreheads, and they forced to answer for all at last, with flames about their ears.

Ver. 8. **Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause, &c.**] He confessed not till urged and necessitated. Sin gags people, and prompts them to hide their faults, as Adam; or at least to mince, extenuate, shift them upon other persons and things, as Eve. Sin and shifting came into the world together; and Satan, that old manslayer, knowing that there is no way to purge the soul but upwards, holds the lips close, that the heart may not disburden itself: God, by this means, is often put to his proof, and must bring the malefactor to trial; who, refusing ordinary trial, must therefore be pressed, #Jer 2:35.

**What is thine occupation?**] For that thou hast one we take it for granted. At Athens every man was, once a year, at least, to give account to the judges by what art or trade he maintained himself. By Mahomet's law the Grand Signior himself must use some manual trade; Solyman the Magnificent made arrowheads; Mahomet the Great horn rings for archers, &c. That which the mariners here inquire after is, whether Jonah's occupation be honest and lawful? whether he "laboured the thing that was good," #Eph 4:28. For if any man overreach or oppress his brother in any matter, by the use of any ill arts, he shall be sure to find that "the Lord is the avenger of all such," #1Th 4:6; though haply they lie out of the walk of human justice, or come not under man's cognizance.

**And whence comest thou?**] Art thou not of an accursed country? and is not thy people a people of God's wrath, as England was in the time of the sweating sickness, pursuing the English wherever they came; which made them like tyrants, both feared and avoided by all nations? How the Jews are to this day hated and shunned as an execrable people is known to all.

**What is thy country? and of what people art thou?**] *Notanda brevitatis*, saith Jerome here, note the brevity of these questions, nothing short of those in Virgil so much admired (Aen. viii. 112).

——“ *iuvenes quae causa subegit  
Ignotas tentare vias? qua tenditis? inquit,  
Quod genus? unde domo? pacemne hue fertis, an arma?*”

*Note also here, how these Pagans proceed not to execution till they have fully inquired into the matter; This was far better than that ugly custom of some people in Europe, mentioned by Aeneas Sylvius: that if any one among them be suspected of theft or the like crime he is presently taken and hanged. Then three days after they examine the business; and if the party be found guilty they suffer his body there to hang till it rot down; or, if otherwise, they bury him in the churchyard, and keep a funeral feast at the public charge.*

Ver. 9. **And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew]** *i.e.* A true believer, as was Eber the patriarch, #Ge 10:21, and, after him, Abram the Hebrew, as he is called, #Ge 14:13. This name of Hebrews, as it was the first title given to Abraham and his seed, so it endureth one of the last, #2Co 11:22 Php 3:5; Epistle to the Hebrews, title.

**And I fear the Lord God of heaven]** That is mine occupation; "I serve God with my spirit in the gospel of his Son," as Paul hath it, #Ro 1:9. Every faithful minister is servant to the King of heaven, #Ac 27:23 (this the devil could not deny, #Ac 16:16,17); neither is he of his meaner or inferior servants, of his underlings, but of the noblest employment; ministers are his stewards, ambassadors, paranymphs, or spokesmen, &c., and this is their occupation, or their work; far beyond that of Solomon's servants.

**Which hath made the sea and the dry land]** This troublesome sea that now so threateneth you, and that dry land which you would so fain recover. These, with all their contents, are his creatures; neither did he make them, and then leave them to fate or fortune, as a carpenter leaves the house he hath built to others, or a shipwright the ship; but he ordereth and ruleth them at his pleasure, and will unmake all again rather than have his people lack help in one season, #Ps 124:8 134:3. This was part of Jonah's confession, and but part of it; for he told them (no doubt) how ill he had dealt with this great and good God, running away by stealth from his Master's service, and detracting his yoke, and that, therefore, he was justly

apprehended and adjudged to death. To this purpose was Jonah's confession, *quae ei salutis fuit exordium*, saith Mercer, which was the beginning of his safety and salvation. Now his hard heart is broken, and his dumb mouth opened, not only to confess his offence, but to aggravate it; in that being not only a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a member of the true Church, but a prophet, a doctor in Israel, he should deal so perversely and perfidiously. It is a sweet happiness when sin swells as a toad in a man's eyes, and he can freely confess it in the particulars, and with utmost aggravation; laying open "all his transgressions in all his sins," as Moses phraseth it, #Le 16:21. Affliction sanctified will bring a soul to this, as here it did the prophet; like herein to that helve Elisha cast into the water, that fetched up the iron that was in the bottom.

Ver. 10. **Then were the men exceedingly afraid]** Heb. with great fear; when once they had heard the business, and weighed the particulars, of his message to Nineveh, of his miscarriage, and of his present misery, together with the danger that themselves were in for his sake; how much more for their own, as being conscious to themselves of far more and greater sins than Jonah had to answer for. This put the mariners into a great fright; and as all fear hath torment, they could not be at quiet till they had further questioned him, saying:

**Why hast thou done this?]** Lo, he that would not be subject to God's command is now liable to the censures, conviction, and condemnation of rude barbarous men; which, being humbled in the sense of his sin, he doth patiently endure without grudging. Daneus's note here is, that concerning themselves and their own sins against God these good fellows speak nothing, whatever they think; but demand of the prophet, why hast thou done this? as if he were the only misdoer.

**Because he had told them]** As willing now to give glory to God and take shame to himself: this is the property of a true penitentiary. See #Ps 51:1 title (where David stands to do penance in a white sheet, as it were), and Augustin's Confessions. Hypocrites deal with their souls as some do with their bodies; when their beauty is decayed they desire to hide it from themselves by false glasses and from others by painting: so do they their sins from themselves by

false glosses and from others by excuses. But as the prisoner on the rack tells all; and as things written with the juice of lemons when held to the fire are made legible; so when God brings men into straits, when he roasteth them in the fire of his wrath, then, if ever, they will confess against themselves, and so give glory to God, **#Jos 7:19**, by putting themselves into the hand of justice, in hope of mercy.

Ver. 11. **Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee?**] *q.d.* Thou art a prophet of the Lord, and knowest how he may be pacified. Thou art also the party whom he pursueth: say what we shall do to thee to save ourselves from thy death, that even gapeth for us? from this sea, which else will soon swallow us up? for the sea worketh and is tempestuous: so Kimchi readeth the text; making these last also to be the words of the mariners. Thou seest that there is no hope, if thine angry God be not appeased. "Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods?" **#1Sa 4:8**. If the sea be thus rageful and dreadful, as **#Jon 1:15**, if it thus work and swell more and more, as we see it doth, thereby testifying that it can now no longer defer to execute God's anger, tell us what we shall do in this case and strait. What?

Ver. 12. **And he said unto them**] More by God's inward revelation than by discourse of reason; not as rashly offering himself to death, but as freely submitting to the mind of God, signified by the lot that fell upon him, calling for him to punishment.

**Take me up, and cast me forth unto the sea**] *Eximia fides*, saith Mercer. Before we had his repentance, testified by his confession with aggravation; here we have his faith, whereby he triumpheth over death in his most dreadful representations (Take me up, saith he, with a present mind and good courage), as also his charity, whereby he chose rather to die, as a piacular <sup>{a}</sup> person, than to cause the death of so many men for his fault. Like unto this was that of Nazianzen, who desired, Jonah-like, to be cast into the sea himself so be it all might be calm in the public; that of Athanasius, who by his sweat and tears, as by the bleeding of a chaste vine, cured the leprosy of that tainted age; that of Ambrose, who was far more solicitous of the Church's welfare than of his own; that of Chrysostom, who saith, That to seek the public good of the Church, and to prefer the salvation of others before a man's private profit, is

the most perfect canon of Christianity, the very top gallant of religion, the highest point and pitch of piety. In #1Co 11 τουτο ορος ηκριβωμενος αυτη η κορυφη η ανωτατω.

**So shall the sea be calm unto you]** Not else: for I have forfeited my life by my disobedience; and my repentance (though true, and so, "to salvation never to be repented of," #2Co 7:10) comes too late, in regard of temporal punishments; as did likewise that of Moses, #De 3:26, and of David, #2Sa 12:10, such is the venomous nature of sin in the saints (it is treachery, because against covenant), and such is the displeasure of God upon it, that he chastiseth his here more than any other sinners, #La 4:6 Da 9:12, and whoever else escape, they shall be sure of it, #Am 3:2. The word here rendered calm signifieth silent; for the sea, when troubled, roareth hideously, so that the roaring of the devils at the painful conceit of their last doom of damnation is set forth by a word that is taken from the tossing of the sea and the noise thereupon, #Jas 2:19, "The devils believe and tremble," or shiver and shudder with horrible yellings (φρισσουσι. φριξ, *est maria agitatio*. Eustath. in Hom. Iliad).

**For I know that for my sake this tempest is upon you]** If Jonah were a type of Christ in that being cast into the sea a calm followed; yet herein he differed, that Christ suffered not for his own offences, but "bore our sins in his own body on the tree," and died, "the just for the unjust," #1Pe 2:24 3:18.

{a} Making expiation or atonement; expiatory. ED

Ver. 13. **Nevertheless the men rowed]** Heb. digged: for so they that row seem to do with their oars as with spades. Hence also the Latin poets say, that boatmen cut, plough, furrow the waters (Virg. Aeneid.), *Vastum sulcavimus aequor. Infundunt pariter sulcos*. The Seventy render it παρεβιαζοντο, they did their utmost endeavour, with violence, to bring the ship to shore, and to save Jonah: and not as those bloody emperors, Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius, who took delight in the punishment of offenders, and used to come early in the morning into the marketplace to behold their executions. *Non nisi coactus*, said that better emperor, when he was to subscribe a sentence of death; and, Oh, that I could not write mine own name (*Utinam literas nescirem*), said another upon the like occasion.

**But they could not]** They did but strive against the stream, for the Lord had otherwise determined it; and *Voluntas Dei necessitas rei*, who hath resisted his will?

**For the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.]** As #Jon 1:11. *Praesentemque viris intentant omnia mortem.*

Ver. 14. **Wherefore they cried unto the Lord]** Not unto their false gods, but unto the true Jehovah of whom they had learned something by what they had seen and heard from Jonah. *Va torpori nostro.*

**We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee]** A most ardent and affectionate prayer. A natural man may pray from the bottom of his heart, out of a deep sense of his wants; but he cannot give thanks from the bottom of his heart; because void of the love of God and joy of faith. Danaeus noteth from these words that judges ought to pray before they pass sentence of death upon any.

**Let us not perish for this man's life]** Which we take away, but full sore against our wills. Wilful murder was ever accounted a heinous crime among the heathens also. Abel's innocent blood had as many tongues as drops, to cry to heaven against Cain, #Ge 4:10, "The voice of thy brother's blood"; and #2Ki 9:26, "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth." Murder ever bleeds fresh in the eye of God; and to him many years, yea, that eternity that is past, is but yesterday. Full well, then, did these men so earnestly deprecate the guilt of innocent blood, which they knew would lie and light heavily.

**And lay not upon us innocent blood]** Innocent as to us; for he hath done us no hurt, but much good by his piety and patience; whence it is that we are so loth to part with him, after this sort especially.

**For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleaseth thee]** Thou hast appointed him to this death, and now callest for him, as we easily collect by the circumstances. *Sic quicquid superi voluere, per actum est* (Ovid. Metamor. l. 8).

Ver. 15. **So they took up Jonah]** Not against his will, but in a sort offering himself to condign punishment. The mariners had tried all ways to save him, till they saw they must either destroy him or be destroyed with him. So deal many with their beloved sins, which they are loth to mortify, they see they must either kill or be killed, **#Ro 8:13**; either turn from them to God, or burn for ever in hell. Jonah's charity is exemplary, who yielded to perish alone rather than to have others perish with him and for him; the devil and his imps desire to draw company the same way with themselves; and say, as that wretch of old, When I die, may the earth be all fired, *εμου θανατος γαια μιχθητω τυρι εμου δε ζωντος dixit Caligula* .

**And cast him forth into the sea]** Thus dealeth God by his servant Jonah; formerly faithful in his office, and able thereunto, and therefore sent to Nineveh. "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth," **#Pr 11:31**; here they are sure of their payment, neither can all their good deeds bear out one prepened wickedness of a lesser fault that lies unrepented for, as were easy to instance in Moses, Miriam, David, and others. And all this proceeds from love displeased.

**And the sea ceased from raging]** Heb. stood from its wrath, or indignation. *Nee marls ira manet* (Ovid. Metam.). *Nec horret iratum mare* (Horat. lib. Epod.). The sea having found what it sought for, and now possessed of the prisoner it pursued, resteth quiet and content; *Vide hic mare et disce sapere*, saith one; see the sea here, and learn obedience to thy Creator, since winds, waves, and all are at his beck and check. See **#Mt 8:26**.

Ver. 16. **Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly]** Heb. with a great fear. They feared before, **#Jon 1:10**, with a natural fear; but now they feared Jehovah. They began to bear all awful respect to the Divine majesty, of whose power and goodness they were by this miracle clearly convinced, and, as it may seem, to the true faith effectually converted.

**For they offered a sacrifice to the Lord]** They sacrificed spiritual sacrifices presently (that holocaust of themselves, **#Ro 12:1**, that broken heart that lieth low and heareth all that God saith, giving thanks to his name, **#Heb 13:15**), and resolved to cover God's altar



at Jerusalem upon their safe arrival, as the Chaldee here paraphraseth.

**And made vows]** That the true God should be their God (as Jacob, the father of vows, promised, #Ge 28:21), and that they would bestow cost on the temple, on the poor saints, to feed and clothe them, as #Isa 23:18.

Ver. 17. **Now the Lord had prepared a great fish]** A whale, #Mt 12:40, which is a great fish indeed. Pliny tells of one taken that was six hundred feet in length, and three hundred and sixty in breadth; when they swim and show themselves above water, *annare insulas putes*, saith the same author, you would think them to be so many islands. So many mountains, saith another; who also addeth, that when they grow old they grow to that size and weight, that they stay long in a place. Insomuch as *ex collectis et condensatis pulveribus frutices erumpere cernantur*, the dust and filth gathered upon their backs seems to be an island, which while shipmen are mistaken and think to land at, they incur a great deal of danger (Sphinx Philid.).

**Such a great fish God prepared]** Either at first, when in creating of whales, *creavit vastitates et stupores*, as one saith; or he now commanded this great fish to be ready to ship Jonah to the shore, and to afford him an oratory in the mean while.

**And Jonah was in the belly of the fish]** Where interpreters note a concurrence of these four miracles. 1. That he was not there consumed, but that the concoctive faculty of the fish's stomach was so long time kept from doing its office. 2. That he could in such a close prison breathe and live without the common use of air and light. 3. That he was not killed up with intolerable stench in so loathsome an outhouse. 4. That he could there frame such an excellent prayer, or rather song of thanksgiving; for Jonah was the true Arion whom the poets feign to have been a minstrel cast into the sea by the mariners, and saved by a dolphin.

**Three days and three nights]** Part of them at least; as Christ was in the grave, #Mt 12:40, where, in the history of Jonah, he descrieth the mystery of his own death, burial, and resurrection; teaching us thereby to search the Scriptures, to search them to the bottom

(ερευνατε); as those that dig for gold content not themselves with the first or second ore that offers itself, but search on till they have all. The Rabbis have a saying that there is a mountain of sense hangs upon every apex of the word of God. And so great is the depth of the Holy Scriptures, saith Augustin, that I could profit daily in the knowledge thereof, though I should set myself to search them from my childhood to decrepit old age, at best leisure, with utmost study and a far better wit.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God]** *i.e.* Praised God with this *Canticum eucharisticum*, this gratulatory song, as Tremellius calleth it. That he prayed in the ship, in the sea, in the whale's belly, we doubt not; but that he chiefly intendeth to show his thankfulness for the return of prayers and the sweet support he felt in the whale's belly we do as little doubt, see **#Jon 2:2,6,7**; yea, that this was the substance (though now better methodized) of what he prayed and praised in the bowels of the fish we have cause to believe from this very verse; and therefore also his deliverance is set down, **#Jon 2:10**, after his doxology. The word here rendered prayed signifieth also, sometimes, to give thanks, as **#1Sa 2:2**; and who knows not that thanksgiving is a special part of prayer? This therefore is prayer. Jonah having prayed, and perceiving that he was heard, and by the goodness of God preserved safe in body and sound in mind, he grows "strong in faith, giving glory to God," **#Ro 4:20**, and being fully persuaded that he should yet walk before him again in the land of the living.

**Out of the fish's belly]** Where, though he might seem buried alive, and free among the dead, yet he enjoyed God's gracious presence, and those strong consolations that made him live in the very mouth of death, and say in effect, as blessed Bradford did, I thank God more for this prison and for this dark dungeon than for any parlour, yea, than of any pleasure that ever I had; for in it I find God my most sweet God always.

Ver. 2. **And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction]** His lips did not move in affliction, like a creaking door or a new cart wheel, with murmuring and mutinying against God and men; he set not his mouth against heaven (as the howling wolf when hunger bitten),

neither did his tongue walk through the earth, cursing the day of his birth, and cutting deep into the sides of such as were means of his misery, #Ps 73:9. But putting his mouth in the dust, if so be there might be hope, he cried by reason of his affliction, #La 3:29. The time of affliction is the time of supplication; no time like that for granting of suits, #Zec 13:9. God's afflicted may have what they will of him then, such are his fatherly compassions to his sick children; he reserveth his best comforts for the worst times, and then speaketh to the hearts of his people when he hath brought them into the wilderness, #Ho 2:13. This Jonah experimented, and therefore said, "I cried out of mine affliction unto the Lord."

“ *Ad Dominum afflicto de pectore suspirando.*”

**And he heard me]** How else am I alive amidst so many deaths? Here is a visible answer, a real return: O, "blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me," #Ps 66:20. Surely as the cloud, which riseth out of the earth many times in thin and insensible vapours, falleth down in great and abundant showers; so our prayers, which ascend weak and narrow, return with a full and enlarged answer. This was but a pitiful poor prayer that Jonah here made, as appears #Jon 2:4; and so was that of David, #Ps 31:22, "For I said in mine haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee." It would be wide with us if God should answer the best of us according to our prayers, yea, though well watered with tears; since, *Ipsae lacrymae sint lacrymabiles*, we had need to weep over our tears, sigh over our sobs, mourn over our griefs. Jonah was so taken with this kindness from the Lord his God that he repeats it and celebrates it a second time.

**Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice]** The whale's belly he calleth hell's belly, because horrid and hideous, deep and dismal. Thence he cried, as David did, *De profundis*, from the depths, and was heard and delivered. Yea, had hell itself closed her mouth upon a praying Jonah, it could not long have held him, but must have vomited him up. A *mandamus* commission from God will do it at any time, #Ps 44:4, and what cannot faithful prayer have of God? there is a certain omnipotence in it, said Luther.

Ver. 3. **For thou hadst cast me into the deep]** A graphic description of his woeful condition, which yet he remembereth now as waters that are past, and is thankful to his Almighty deliverer: see the like in David, **#Ps 116:3**, and learn of these and other saints to acknowledge the uttermost extremity of a calamity after we are delivered out of it. For hereby thy judgment will be the better instructed and the more convinced; thine heart also will be the more enlarged to admire, and thy mouth the wider opened to celebrate the power, wisdom, and mercy of God in thy deliverance. As if this be not done, God will be provoked either to inflict heavier judgments, or else to cease to smite thee any more with the stripes of a father, and to give thee up for a lost child.

**For thou hadst cast me into the deep]** Not the mariners, but thou didst it, and therefore there was no averting or avoiding it. Thou hadst cast me with a force, as a stone out of a sling, or as that mighty angel, **#Re 18:21**, that took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence," &c.

**In the midst of the seas]** Heb. in the heart of the seas; so **#Mt 12:40**, "So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." And **#De 4:11**, we read of the heart of heaven, that is, the middle of it, as the heart sitteth in the midst of the body as king of that Isle of Man. Now, if it were so grievous to be cast into the main sea, what shall it be to be hurled into hell by such a hand, and with such a force into that bottomless gulf, whence nothing was ever yet buoyed up again?

**And the floods compassed me about]** *Aquarum confluges*, the sea, whence all floods or rivers issue, and whereto they return (Homer calleth the ocean ποταμον, a river, by the figure meiosis, <sup>{a}</sup> Ποταμοιο ρεεθρα ωκεανου. Iliad. xiv.). Danaeus here noteth that out of that gulf of the sea, which of Plato is called Tartarus, that is, hell, the waters do flow into the veins of the earth (as it is, **#Ec 1:7**), losing their saltness in the passage. Here Jonah cried out, as **#Ps 69:1,2**, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into the deep waters, where the floods overflow me." It was only his faith

that held him up by the chin; and, like blown feathers, bore him aloft all waters.

**All thy billows and thy waves passed over me]** All; so it seemed to Jonah, that God had poured out all his displeasure upon him; but he suffereth not his whole wrath to arise against his people; neither remembereth iniquity for ever. Thy billows or surges; not the sea's, but thine. God seemed to fight against Jonah with his own hand. David likewise in a desertion complains that all God's waves and floods were gone over him, **#Ps 42:7**. In this case (for it may be any one's case) let us do as Paul and his company did (in that dismal tempest, **#Ac 27:20**, when they saw neither sun nor star for many days and nights together), cast anchor of hope, even beyond hope; and then wait and wish for day. God will appear at length, and all shall clear up; he will deliver our souls from the nethermost hell.

{a} A figure of speech by which the impression is intentionally conveyed that a thing is less in size, importance, etc., than it really is. (ED)

**Ver. 4. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight]** Thus those straits brought him to these disputes of despair, as they did likewise David, **#Ps 31:22**, the Church in the Lamentations, **#La 4:22**, and others, apt enough in affliction to have hard conceits of God and heavy conceits of themselves. While men look at things present, while they live by sense only, it must need be with them as with a house without pillars, tottering with every blast; or as a ship without anchor, tossed with every wave. They must therefore thrust Hagar out of doors, and set up Sarah; silence their reason, and exalt faith, as did Jonah here; "Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight." Here you may take him up for a dead man; here he inclineth somewhat to that of Cain, **#Ge 4:13,14**, and surely they that go down to this pit of despair, as Hezekiah speaketh of the grave, **#Isa 38:17**, cannot hope for God's truth as long as there they stay.

**Yet I will look again toward thine holy temple]** Here he recollects and recovers himself; as the same soul may successively doubt and believe, not simultaneously; and faith, where it is right, will at length outwrestle diffidence, and make a man more than a conqueror, even a triumpher. When sense saith such a thing will not be, reason saith, It cannot be, faith gets above and saith, Yea, but it

shall be; what talk you to me of impossibilities, I shall yet (as low as I am, and as forlorn) look again towards God's holy temple of heaven; yea, that here on earth, where God is sincerely served, and whereto the promises are annexed. Faith is by one fitly compared to the cork upon the net; though the lead on the one sinks it down, yet the cork on the other keeps it up in the water. The faithful soon check themselves for their doubtings and despondency, as Jonah here; as David chides David, #Ps 43:5; and as Paul saith of himself and his fellows, that they were staggering, but not wholly sticking, #2Co 4:8.

Ver. 5. **The waters compassed me about, even to the soul]** That is, *usque ad animae deliquium*, till I laboured for life, and was as good as gone.

**The depth closed me round about]** {See Trapp on "Jon 2:3"} and further observe, that God's dear children may fall into desperate and deadly dangers, see #Ps 18:3 88:3 116:3. And this for, 1. Prevention, 2. Purgation, 3. Probation, 4. Preparations to further both mercies and duties. Let us not therefore censure ourselves or others as hated of God, because greatly distressed; but encourage ourselves in them, as did David at Ziklag, #1Sa 30:6. The right hand of the Lord shall change all this.

“*Flebile principium melior fortuna sequetur.*”

**The weeds were wrapped about mine head]** *Alga* as *Alligando*. The weeds which the fish had devoured, or whereunto the fish, wherein I was, had dived and lain down among them. Or this might befall Jonah in the bottom of the sea, before the fish had swallowed him; for weeds easily wrap about those that swim, or are drowned.

Ver. 6. **I went down to the bottoms of the mountains]** That is, of the promontories or rocks of the sea, where the waters are deepest. Thus Mercer after Kimchi. "The channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered," #Ps 18:15. The mountains are said to be under water, #Pr 8:25, because their foundations are there placed.

**The earth with her bars was about me for ever]** As if resolved there to keep me close prisoner; that though the fish had disgorged

me, yet I should never have got to land. The shores are set by God as bars to keep the sea within his bounds, **#Job 38:8,10,11 Jer 5:22**. Here then all the creatures seemed to set against poor Jonah, and (which was more than all) the Creator too: so that he might sigh and say, as in the poet (Martial).

*“ In me omnis terraeque aviumque marisque rapina est,  
Forsitan et coeli ”*

***Yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption]*** *i.e.* From the place where I was likely to have lain and rotted. *Cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moses:* when things are at the worst God appeareth, as it were out of an engine, εκ της μηχανης. In the mount will the Lord be seen, **#Eze 37:11 2Ki 19:3**; he stays so long sometimes that he hardly "finds faith on earth," **#Lu 18:8**, and yet comes at last to the relief of his poor people; viz. when they are ripe and ready for it. He is a God of judgment, he knows how and when to deal forth his favours; and even waiteth to be gracious, **#Isa 30:18 28:21**.

**O Lord my God]** *sc.* by the mean and merit of thy Son, in whom alone it is that thou, Lord, art my God, and that I can call thee Abba, Father. It is well observed by an interpreter, that in this short history of Jonah are all things contained which may make to the sound and saving knowledge of God and his will, of ourselves also and our duties.

Ver. 7. **When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord]** And could say, as the Church in **#Isa 63:16**, when at lowest, "Doubtless thou art our father, our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting." As there is in the creatures an instinct of nature to do after their kind; so there is of grace in the saints to run to God. "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early," **#Isa 26:8,9**. "O Lord," saith Habakkuk, **#Hab 1:12**, "art not thou from everlasting my God, and mine Holy One?" It was a bold question, but God approves and assents to it in a gracious answer ere they went farther: "We shall not die" (say they abruptly), "O Lord, thou hast ordained them" (the Chaldeans) "for judgment"; but us only for chastisement. Here was

the triumph of their faith, and this was that which held up Jonah's hope, though with wonderful difficulty, held head above water. He remembered "the years of the right hand of the Most High," #Ps 77:10; he called to mind his songs in the night season, #Jon 2:6, his former experience, a just ground of his present confidence. He remembered the Lord, his power and goodness, those two pillars, the Jachin and the Boaz, that support faith; and this fetched him again when ready to faint. "I had even fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," #Ps 27:13.

**And my prayer came in unto thee]** *q.d.* Though I was so faint I could scarcely utter a prayer, yet thou hearkenedst and heardest, as #Mal 3:16; thou madest hard shift to hear (as I may say); thine ears were in my prayers, as St Peter hath it, #1Pe 3:12; thou feltest my breathing, when no voice could be heard, #La 3:56; thou heldest not "thy peace at my tears," #Ps 39:12, *quando fletu agerem non afflatu;* yea, thou heardest the voice of mine affliction, #Ge 16:11.

**Into thine holy temple]** Whether we take it to be the temple at Jerusalem (a type of Christ), Jonah's prayer was accepted for Christ's sake; and proved to no less purpose, though made in the whale's belly, than if he had been pouring it out in God's holy temple. Or if we understand it to be heaven, the habitation of God's holiness, and of his glory, his prayers were come up thither for a memorial before the Almighty, #Ac 10:4, and like pillars of incense pierced into his presence, #So 3:6, neither would they away without their errand, but lay at God's feet till he should command deliverance out of Zion.

Ver. 8. **They that observe lying vanities]** That listen to sense and reason in matters of God, and make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, as Jonah had done to his cost, till, having paid for his learning, he descried them all to be but "lying vanities," or most vain vanities, empty nothings.

**Forsake their own mercy]** Are miserable by their own election, because sinners, in a special manner, "against their own souls," as were Korah and his accomplices, #Nu 15:38; as was Pope Silvester, who gave his soul to the devil for seven years' enjoyment of the popedom; and as are all those wilful wicked persons, that refusing to



be reformed, and hating to be healed, choose to spend the span of this life after the ways of their own hearts, though they thereby perish for ever. These are those fools of the people, that prefer an apple before paradise, a mess of pottage before the inheritance of heaven, their swine before their Saviour, turning their backs upon those blessed and bleeding embracements of his, and cruelly cutting the throats of their own poor souls by an impenitent continuance in sin; so losing, for a few bitter sweet pleasures, or paltry profits in this vale of tears, for an inch of time, that fulness of felicity at God's right hand, through all eternity. It is written of them who tame the tiger, that when they have taken away the young one, knowing that presently they shall be pursued by the old tigress, they set lookingglasses in the way by which they flee; whereunto when she cometh and seeth some representation of herself, she lingereth about them a good space, deceived by the shadow, and detained in a vain hope to recover the young again; meanwhile the hunter most speedily posteth away with his prey. Likewise deals Satan with the men of this world (saith mine author); he casts before them the deceitful lusts of profit, pleasure, and preferment, the worldling's trinity, those "lying vanities," being none other than shadows and semblances of good; yet are men so delighted with these that they dote about them, having no care to pursue the enemy for recovery of that image of God, the Divine nature, that Satan hath beguiled them from. He setteth them to the tree of knowledge, that they may not taste of the tree of life. He putteth out their eyes with the dust of covetousness, and shutteth their ears against the instructions of life, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and God should heal them, #Mt 13:15. In all which there is not anything more to be lamented than this, that people should "love to have it so," #Jer 5:31; be active in their own utter undoing, #Ho 13:9; wittingly and willingly forsake God, the fountain of living waters, their own mercies, as he is here called, and elsewhere, #Ps 144:2, and hew themselves out "cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water," #Jer 2:13.

Ver. 9. **But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving]** *q.d.* Let others do as they think good; let them make a match with mischief till they have enough of it; let them walk till they have wearied themselves in the ways of their hearts and in the

sight of their eyes; but let them know (I speak it by woeful experience) that for all these things God will bring them to judgment, #Ec 11:9. The best that can come of sin is repentance: and that is not in man's power but in God's gift, #2Ti 2:25. If he had not melted my hard heart, and brought me back to himself with a strong hand, I had pined away in mine iniquities, and perished for ever. But now having been so miraculously delivered from so great a death, "I will sacrifice unto the Lord with the voice of thanksgiving"; I will set up my note and sing aloud unto God my Saviour, who hath thus beyond all desert delivered such a miserable wretch, rebel, and regegade as myself.

**I will sacrifice]** Heb. I will slay, *sc.* those birds and beasts in use for feasts and sacrifices at Jerusalem,

**with the voice of thanksgiving]** Heb. of confession, that is, I will confess and acknowledge God to be what he is, to do what he doth, and to give what he giveth. Now to offer a sacrifice at such a confession or thanksgiving added much to the solemnity thereof; and made it more honourable in itself, and more acceptable to God. To these gratulatory sacrifices the word slaying is attributed, as hero, to show that even in gratulation expiation must be made; and that by the blood and sacrifice of Christ all our offerings are accepted in heaven.

**I will pay that I have vowed]** Not my general vow only as a covenanter, to devote myself to his fear and service all my days; but those particular, personal, voluntary vows made in my distress; such as was that of Jacob, #Ge 28:20; Hannah, #1Sa 1:11; David, #Ps 132:1,2, &c. In affliction men are wondrously apt to promise great matters, if they may but be delivered. See #Ps 78:36. Pliny, in an epistle to one of his friends, that desired rules from him how to order his life aright; I will, saith he, give you one rule, that shall be instead of a thousand: *Ut tales esse perseveremus sani, quales nos futuros esse profitemur infirmi*: That you be sure to be the same when well that you vowed to be when you were sick. But this is few men's care. See #Jer 34:10,11. Sons of Belial break these bonds as Samson did the green withes, and cast away those cords from them; if they could, at least; being worse herein than those mariners, #Jon 1:16,

than Saul, that made great conscience of violating his vow, #1Sa 14:21, than Turks and Papists, who are superstitiously strict this way. Jonah knew it to be as bad, if not worse, than perjury, to vow and not to perform, #Nu 30:3, and that God is the avenger of all such, #De 23:21. He therefore, not merely for fear of punishment, but chiefly for hatred of that sin, saith,

**I will pay that I have vowed]** The Hebrew word *Ashallemah* seemeth to imply two things. First, that his vow till paid was incomplete, it was an imperfect thing; the better part of it was yet wanting. Next, that till that chare were done he could not be at peace within himself, he could not be quiet; for vows are debts; and debts, till they be paid, are a burden to an honest mind, and do much disease it.

**Salvation is of the Lord]** *Salus omnimoda*, as the Hebrew word *Jeshugnathah* (having one letter more than ordinary in it) importeth; all manner of salvation, full and plentiful deliverance, "is of the Lord"; who is therefore called, the "God of salvation," unto whom belong the issues from death, #Ps 68:20. *A quo vera salus non aliunde venit.* This Jonah speaketh, as he doth all else in this holy canticle, not by reading, or by rote, but out of his own feeling and good experience; his whole discourse was dug out of his own breast, as it is said of that most excellent 119th Psalm, that it is made up altogether of experiments; and it therefore hath *verba non legenda sed vivenda*, words not so much to be read as lived, as one said once of it. Dives thought that if one went from the dead to warn his wicked brethren they would never be able to resist such powerful rhetoric. Behold, here is Jonah raised from the dead, as it were, and warning people to arise, and stand up from dead courses and companies, that Christ may give them light; why do they not then get up and be doing at it, that the Lord may be with them? Shall not the men of Nineveh rise up in judgment with this evil generation, and condemn them, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, #Mt 12:41, but these do not, though they have may Jonahs, that both preach and practise, *non verbis solum praedicantes sed et exemplis*, as Eusebius saith Origen did, that live sermons, and not teach them only?

Ver. 10. **And the Lord spake unto the fish]** He spake the word and it was done: he is the great centurion of the world, that saith to his creature, Do this, and he doth it. *Dei dicere est facere* (Aug.). Yea, he is the great, great Induperator, *{Imperator}* to whom everything saith, *Iussa sequi tam velle mihi quam posse necesse esse* (Lucan.): I am wholly at thy beck and check. Jonah spake to God, and God to the fish. It may be said of faithful prayer, that it can do whatsoever God himself can do; since he is pleased to yield himself, overcome by the prayers of his people, and to say unto them cordially, as Zedekiah did to his courtiers colloquingly, The king is not he that can deny you anything. Prayer is of that power that it can open the doors of leviathan, as we see here (which yet is reckoned as a thing not feasible, **#Job 41:14**), yea of the all devouring grave, **#Heb 11:35**. If the Lord, pricked on by the prayer of his people, set in hand to save them, and shall "say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth," **#Isa 43:6**, they shall come amain, and none shall be able to hinder them; "Come, therefore" (with those good souls in Hosea, who had smarted for their folly, as well as Jonah), "and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight," **#Ho 6:1,2**. A time we must have to be in the fire, in the fish's belly, as in God's nurturing house; but he will take care that we be not there overly long; what is two or three days to eternity? Hold out, faith and patience: "Yet a very little, little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," **#Heb 10:37**.

**And it vomited up Jonah upon the dry land]** And here death was defeated and wiped; it was much more so when it had swallowed up Christ; and little dreamt that itself should have been thereby "swallowed up in victory." *Quantum in devoratione mors laetata est, tantum luxit in vomitu* (Jerome). But then was fulfilled that of the prophet, O death, I will be thy death. And as there, so here, in a proportion, and as a type, *omnia iam inversa*, saith Mercer, all things are turned the other way. Before the fish was an instrument of death; now of life, and serves Jonah for a ship to bring him to dry land. This fish useth not to come near the shore, but to sport in the great waters; howbeit now he must, by special command, "vomit up

Jonah upon the dry land." "Why then should it be thought a thing incredible with any that God should raise the dead?" #Ac 26:8. The sea shall surely give up the dead that were in it; and death and hell deliver up the dead that were in them; and they shall be judged every man according to his works, #Re 20:13. This some of the heathens believed; as Zoroaster, Theopompus, and Plato. And the Stoics' opinion was, that the world should one day be dissolved by fire or water; and all things brought to a better state, or to the first golden age again (Sen. Nat. Quaest. 1. 3, c. 26-30). But we have a more sure word of prophecy; and this that is here recorded may serve as an image and type of our preservation in the grave, and our resurrection from the dead, by one and the same almighty power of God.

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time]** Jonah is a sinner, but not a castaway. God lays him not by as a broken vessel, treads him not to the dunghill, as unsavoury salt; but receives him upon his return by repentance, and restores him to his former employment, gives him yet a name and a nail in his house; yea, sends him a second time on his message to Nineveh; and counting him faithful, puts him again into the ministry, who was before a runagate, a rebel, &c. But he obtained mercy, #1Ti 1:13, as did likewise the apostles, after that they had basely deserted our Saviour at his passion; and Peter, after he had denied him, see #Joh 20:22,23 21:15-17. The penitent are as good as innocent, *Quem poenitet peccasse, pcene est innocens* (Sen. Agam.). "Return, ye backsliding children" (saith the Father of mercies), "and I will heal your backslidings," #Jer 3:22. The Shulamite returning is as lovely in Christ's eye as before; and all is as well as ever between them, #So 6:4. There is a natural Novatianism in the timorous conscience of convinced sinners to doubt and question pardon for sins of apostasy and falling after repentance; but had they known the gift of God, and who it is that saith to them, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," they would have conceived strong consolation.

Ver. 2. **Arise, go unto Nineveh]** Begin again, and take better heed; as that Nazarite was to do that had defiled the head of his consecration, #Nu 6:9,12.

**Unto Nineveh, that great city]** {See Trapp on "Jon 1:2"} There was no city since, by the estimation of Diodorus, had the like compass of ground or stateliness of walls; the height thereof being a hundred feet, the breadth able to receive three carts abreast, adorned with fifteen hundred turrets. Some think (as Annius and Berosus) that those three cities spoken of, #Ge 10:11,12, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen, were all included in Nineveh, and they conceive it thus; that when Nimrod had built Babylon, Ninus, disdainning his government, went into the fields of Asshur, and there erected a city after his own name. Raphael Volaterranus saith it was eight years in building, ten thousand men working at it. Quintilian saith, that great Milan, ancient Ravenna, brave Bononia, noble Naples, and other great cities of Italy, are but towers to Rome: but what was Rome to Nineveh? and yet Lipsius hath written a treatise of Rome's greatness; and when the Emperor Constantine came to Rome, and beheld the companies that entertained him, he repeated a saying of Cineas, the Epirote, that he had seen so many kings as citizens; but, viewing the building of the city, he thought, *naturam vires omnes in urbem unam effudisse*, that nature had showed the utmost of what she could do in that one great city. {See Trapp on "Jon 3:3"}

**And preach unto it the preaching]** Heb. Proclaim unto it (or against it) the proclamation that I say to thee, that I have formerly put into thy mouth, and do now so again, *sc.* that their wickedness is come up before me, and I am even upon the way toward them to punish it grievously. *Flagitium et flagellum sunt sicut acus et filium*, Who ever waxed fierce against God and prospered? #Job 9:4. This wicked men must be boldly told, #Isa 3:11, however they take it; neither may God's ministers steal away the word, #Jer 23:30, or keep back from the people any part of God's counsel, #Ac 20:27, "handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," #2Co 4:2, as becometh his ambassadors.

Ver. 3. **So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh]** He went not home first to bid them farewell, as #Lu 9:61, neither went he another way, as once; it was enough of that once, and he had learned obedience by the things that he had suffered. To Nineveh he goes, though a mere and a lowly stranger, unknown, unregarded, and with a harsh message; such as he might fear would cost him his life from that

fierce and furious people. But Jonah feared nothing now but disobedience; and seems to say, as afterwards Luther did, *Inveniar sane superbus, excors et mode impii silentii non arguar*; Let me be called and counted proud, mad, anything, everything that naught is, so that I be not found guilty of sinful silence, and of betraying the trust committed unto me, by a dastardly deserting the cause of God. Jonah was now of another spirit, and fulfilled after God ( *implevit post me*), as Caleb, **#Nu 14:24**; for what reason? he had now received not a "spirit of fear," and of bondage (δειλειας, δουλειας, **#Ro 8:15**), "but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," **#2Ti 1:7**; his Spirit of grace had sanctified to him his afflictions, which else would have been but as hammers to cold iron; as they were to Pharaoh, Ahaz, the railing thief. Aben Ezra saith that as soon as ever the whale had vomited up Jonah he got up and took the direct way to Nineveh; that if God should command him thither again he might be ready, and show his forwardness. It is a very good sign when men are the better for what they suffer; when thereby the iniquity of Jacob is purged, and this is all the fruit, the taking away of their sin, **#Isa 27:9**.

**According to the word of the Lord]** His call and command, which Jonah had formerly cast behind him, *Sed Piscator ictus sapit*, There shall be only fear to make you understand the hearing, **#Isa 28:19**. Isaiah stood off till frightened; but then he offers his service; "Here I am, send me." {#Isa 6:8}

**Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city]** Heb. a great city of God, or, to God; which some interpreted dear to God, and such as he would not destroy, *Deo chara et cura*. Others, a city not idolatrous, though otherwise vicious. Others, a city which God himself accounted great, and looked upon as such. But if to a great mind nothing is great, as Seneca saith ( *animo magno nihil magnum*), what can be great to him who is great, **#Ps 77:13**, greater, **#Job 33:12**, greatest, **#Ps 95:3**, greatness itself, **#Ps 145:3**, and to whom all "nations are but as the drop of a bucket, or dust of the balance? behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing," **#Isa 40:15**. Oecolampadius applieth it to the Church of the Gentiles, that "city of the living God." They do best that take it, as we read it, for "an exceeding great city"; like as elsewhere tall mountains and cedars

are called mountains of God, #Ps 36:7, and cedars of God, #Ps 80:10 &c., and excellent wrestlings are wrestlings of God, #Ge 30:8. See #Ge 23:6. So the Greeks and Latins call great things divine; God being the measure of all true greatness, *διος Αχιλλευς, λακεδαιμονα διαν* (Homer). Nineveh, since it was a very great city (of fifty miles around, as Herodotus and Diodorus), so Jonah is often told so; that he might come to it well prepared and resolved; since he was to have a great task and a hard tug of it, see #Jon 3:2 Jon 1:2.

**Of three days' journey]** Not such a journey as a traveller could despatch in no less time; but such as a preacher, *pedetentim obambulando*, by leisurely walking, might in three days go through (Theodoret); see #Jon 3:4. This is added to set forth further the greatness of the city.

Ver. 4. **And Jonah began to enter into the city]** Having seen God he now fears no colours, dreads no danger; as neither did Moses, Micaiah, Isaiah, #Isa 6:9-12, Paul, #Ac 21:13, Luther going to Worms. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men," #2Co 5:11, we forewarn them to flee from the wrath to come, #Mt 3:7, we pull them out of the fire of hell, as firebrands, #Jude 23.

**A day's journey]** One of the three days, #Jon 3:3. Not all the three in one day, for haste, as Jerome would have it.

**And he cried, and said]** Not fearfully muttering his message, but delivering it with a courage, Boanerges-like, able almost to make his hearers' hearts fall down and hairs stand upright, as one saith of Master Perkins.

**Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown]** The word properly noteth a sudden, inevitable, and perpetual destruction, such as was that of Sodom and her sisters, #Ge 19:25 Jer 20:16 Isa 13:19 Am 4:11. Now we must not think that Jonah said no more than is here set down; that he expressed no condition, such as was that, #Re 2:5, "except ye repent"; or that like a madman he ran up and down the city (as one did once about Jerusalem, and another lately about London), repeating and thundering out these words only, *inconditis et ineptis clamoribus*, with harsh and hoarse



outcries. God therefore threateneth that he may not punish, and all his threats are conditional, #**Jer 18:8**, if they repent, he will also. This, if Jonah expressed not, yet the Ninevites understood; for else they would never have repented, but despaired (as Judas with his *poenitentia Iscariotica*), and defied Jonah as an evil messenger sent against them. They might well enough think that if God had not meant them mercy he would never have forewarned them, never have given them forty days' respite: the Septuagint cannot be refused for rendering it three days' (though some have attempted it). It is probable that Jonah omitted nothing that pertained to the preaching of repentance, though here we have it set down in some only. The Hebrews tell us that the mariners also went to Nineveh; and, telling what had befallen Jonah at sea, confirmed his doctrine and sentence against the Ninevites, who thereupon repented. But these, as they affirm without reason, so they may be dismissed without refutation.

Ver. 5. **So the people of Nineveh believed God]** See the mighty power of God's holy word. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds," #**2Co 10:4**, to the laying flat those walls of Jericho, making the devil fall as lightning from the heaven of men's hearts, #**Lu 10:18**. These Ninevites, though rich, great, peaceable, prosperous, profane above measure (as great cities use to be), &c., yet, at the preaching of Jonah, they believed God, and repented of their evil ways; whether truly and seriously I have not to say. There is a historical faith, an assent to the truth of what God speaketh, and trembling thereat, #**Jas 2:19**; there is also a natural and moral repentance wrought by natural conscience, such as was that of Pharaoh, Saul, Ahab, Alexander the Great, when, having killed Clitus, he was troubled in conscience, and sent to all kind of philosophers (as it were to so many ministers) to know what he might do to appease his conscience, and satisfy for his sin. There are very good authors that hold this conversion of the Ninevites to have been sound and serious (and for this they allege that of our Saviour, #**Mt 12:41**), flowing from a lively faith in God, which is the root of all the rest of the graces, the very womb wherein they are received; the fountain also and foundation of all good works, as the apostle Peter hinteth when he saith, #**2Pe 1:5**, "add to your faith virtue," which is nothing else but faith exercised.

**And proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth]** These were the fruits of their faith; and though but bodily exercises and external performances, yet they might serve both to evidence and to increase their inward humiliation. *Ieiunium et saccus arma poenitentiae* (Jerome). True it is that hypocrites and heathens may do all this and more, as Ahab; those **#Ps 78:34,36 Isa 58:3**. The Romans in a strait, *ad Deos populum et vota convertunt*, commanded the whole people with their wives and little ones to pray and pacify the gods, to fill all the temples, and the women to sweep and rub the pavements thereof with the hairs of their heads (Liv. 1. 3).

**From the greatest, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Joe 2:16"}

Ver. 6. **For word came unto the king of Nineveh]** I can hardly believe that this was Sardanapalus, as some will carry it, but some other better prince, that, Vespasian-like, was *patientissimus veri*, very tolerant of the truth, one that had those about him that would tell him the truth of things, and he was content to hear it, and submit to it (Quintilian). Like enough it is, that this was but harsh news to him at first hearing; but when he had well considered it, and taken advice upon it, he set upon a reformation. Our chroniclers tell us of a poor hermit that came to Richard I, A. D. 1195, and, preaching to him the words of eternal life, bade him be mindful of the overthrow of Sodom, and to abstain from things unlawful. Otherwise, said he, the deserved vengeance of God will come upon thee. The hermit being gone, the king at first seemed to slight his words. But, afterwards falling sick, he more seriously bethought himself; and, waxing sound in soul as well as body, he grew more devout and charitable to the poor, rising early and not departing from the church till divine service were finished. If the King of Nineveh had ever heard of Jonah's being in the whale's belly, it might well be some inducement to him to believe his preaching, it might do him no less good than John Frith's book, called "A Preparation to the Cross," brought in a fish's belly to the University of Cambridge a little before the commencement, did to some good people here, that had hearts to make use of it. One grave divine (Mr Jeremiah Dike) gave this note upon it in a sermon before the parliament, over 20 years since: That such a book should be brought in such a manner, and to such a place, and at such a time, when by reason of people's

confluence out of all parts notice might be given to all places of the land, in mine apprehension it can be construed for no less than a Divine warning, and to have this voice with it, England, prepare for the cross.

**He arose from his throne]** Laid aside his state, as the Great Turk also doth, at this day, when he entereth into his temple to pray. **#Jer 13:18**, "Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even to the crown of your glory." This great king could not but know himself to be a great sinner; and that his sins had done much harm: 1. By imputation: for *plectuntur Achivi*, the people often pray for their rulers' follies, as in David's days, **#2Sa 24:2**. By imitation: for magnates are magnets, they draw many by their example; and as bad humours flow from the head to the body, so do bad rulers corrupt the rest. This conscious and (as some think) conscientious king therefore riseth up from his throne (as Eglon, that unwieldy king of Moab, had once done to hear God's message by Ehud, **#Jud 3:20**), *et qui paulo ante sedebat superbus in folio, nunc iacet humilis in solo*, he lieth low, and putteth his mouth in the dust, **#La 3:29**, laying aside all cogitation and pride of his kingly majesty; together with all soft and sumptuous raiment, that nest of pride, as one calleth it.

**He laid his robe from him]** *Paludamentum suum*, saith Tremelius; but that is a cloak which the Roman emperors used to put on when they went forth to battle, and therefore not so proper here (as Piscator thinks), since there was no visible enemy, which makes the Ninevites' repentance the more remarkable. Mercer rendereth it *Chlamydem suam*, his imperial cloak; the Chaldee, his precious garments. The word signifieth his sumptuous and gorgeous attire, his cloak of state, no less costly, perhaps, than that of Alcisthenes, the Sybarite, sold to the Carthaginians by Dionysius for 120 talents; or that of Demetrius of Macedon, which none of his successors would wear, *propter invidiosam impendii magnificentiam*, for the exceeding great costliness thereof. This robe or purple and other ornaments the King of Nineveh laid aside, as was fit, in this day of restraint, as a fast day is fitly called. So "the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb," where they had made a golden calf, **#Ex 33:6**. "For the Lord had said to

Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee," #Ex 33:5, that I may determine how to dispose of thee: and this is spoken after the manner of men, who judge by the outward actions, as #Ge 18:21 22:12, for otherwise, God knoweth all his works from the beginning of the world, #Ac 15:18. But he speaketh this here as if he would hereby judge by their repentance, whether it were true or false. The prophet Isaiah objects it to those of his time for a foul fault, "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find your pleasure," #Isa 58:3.

**And covered him with sackcloth]** And so, as Chrysostom hath it, *quod non poterat diadema, id saccus obtinuit; sicut ferrum potest quod aurum non potest.* Sackcloth could prevail more than silk, as iron can do what gold cannot.

**And sat in ashes]** *In cinere illo*, so Vatablus rendereth it; in that ashes wherein he used to sit when he most mourned. Our sorrow for sin should be the deepest of all sorrows, #Zec 12:11-13. {See Trapp on "Zec 12:11"} {See Trapp on "Zec 12:12"} {See Trapp on "Zec 12:13"}

Ver. 7. **And he caused it to be proclaimed]** By sound of trumpet, as #Joe 2:12; or otherwise, as #2Ch 20:3,4,18-20 22:6,7; at which times he that obeyeth not is culpable before God and man, #Le 23:29.

**By the decree of the king and his nobles]** Who all unanimously consenting to so good a work, *iis quibus praeerant, praeibant*, became a precedent to their inferiors, who looked upon them (no doubt) as their lookingglasses, by which most men dressed themselves. When Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed, many Corinthians believed also, #Ac 18:8. The primitive Christians were wont to pray that their emperors might have good counsellors (Tertullian). Of a certain prince in Germany it was said that, *Esset alius, si esset apud alios*, He would have been a far better man had he had better servants and officers about him (Bucholcer).

**Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing]** The whole action of fasting hath its name, both in Hebrew and Greek, צרם νηστεια, from abstinence and forbearance of meats and drinks; *a toto*, if it may be, at least, *a tanto et a tali*, as #Da 10:2,3; and as it might be here, till the forty days were expired; besides, that one or more solemn days of total fasting, "wherein neither man nor beast," &c. But why is the beast abridged of sustenance? both to testify and increase the people's lamentation by their lowings and bellowings. Alexander the Great, at the death of his favourite Hephaestion, clipped his horses' and mules' hair, and cut them short, in token of his great grief; he pulled down also the battlements of the walls, that they might seem to mourn with him (Plutarch). So Virgil, speaking of the general grief for Caesar's death, saith (Eclog. 5):

“ *Non ulli pastos illis egere diebus*

*Frigida, Daphni, boves ad fiumina; nulla nec annem  
Libavit quadrupes, nec graminis attigit herbam.*”

**Let them not feed, nor drink water]** *But what they get of themselves without man's care, who is to be wholly intent and taken up in God's service; and so to begin the heavenly life here, the sweetness whereof makes him forbear both meat and thirst. Besides, they took pride in their palfries, covering them with purple and rich trappings, see #Jud 8:26, they catered for the flesh, by fattening cattle and other creatures to please their palate. This they were now forbidden to do by an edict from the king, who interesteth himself in matters of religion; as did also Artaxerxes, #Ezr 7:26 (for which Ezra seeth cause to bless God); and Nebuchadnezzar, #Da 3:29, which the Scripture commendeth, and recordeth as a work of his repentance.*

Ver. 8. **But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth]** Let all best means be used for the humbling of the heart; without which what is a humbling day but a religious incongruity (saith one) and a very high provocation; like Zimri's act, when all the congregation were weeping before the door of the tabernacle? The beasts covered with sackcloth were as a house hung with black, to move men to mourn the more. Chrysostom tells us of a custom in his time (and it is still in use among us), that when great men were buried their horses followed the hearse clothed in black, as seeming to mourn for

their masters. The coarsest weeds are fittest for fasting days; to show that but for shame we would have none, as having forfeited all; and that we look upon our better apparel but as finer covers of the foulest shame.

**And cry mightily unto God]** Cry with a courage; let the beasts roar lustily and rend the clouds, as it were, with their clamours; want of food will make them do so. And as God can so speak as that the brute beasts shall understand him, **#Joe 2:11 Am 5:8 9:4 Joh 2:10**; so can they, after a sort, so speak or moan that he can understand them, **#Joe 1:20 Ho 2:21 Ps 147:9**: he heareth the young ravens that cry unto him, though but with a hoarse and harsh note; whence also they have their name in Hebrew. Much more will he hear men that cry unto him, if they cry mightily with intention of spirit, and extension or rather contention of speech; if they set up their note, as the noise of many waters, **#Re 19:6**; if they thunder and threaten heaven, as Nazianzen saith his sister Gorgonia did; if they bounce hard at heaven's gates, and resolve to wring mercy from God by a holy violence, as Tertullian saith the good people of his time did, *Preces fundimus, coelum tundimus, misericordium extorquemus* (Tert.). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"; but then it must be the working, stirring, labourful prayer, as the word *ενεργουμενη*, **#Jas 5:16**, signifieth; that strives and struggles, and strains every vein in the heart (as Elias seemed to do by that posture in prayer of "putting his head between his legs," **#1Ki 18:42**); that sets to work all the faculties of the soul and all the graces of the spirit; that stirs up dust, as Jacob did; maketh a man sweat, as our Saviour; who, being in "an agony, prayed the more earnestly," **#Lu 22:44**; not without strong crying and tears, and was heard in that he feared, **#Heb 5:7**. For such a prayer, when a man cries to God, *εξ ισχυος αυτου*, mightily, or with all his strength, *πολυ ισχυει*, it availeth much, it can do anything, as Paul, using the same words, saith, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me," **#Php 4:13**.

**Yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, &c.]** For else prayer profits not, humiliation is to no purpose without reformation; repentance for sin, without repentance from sin; there must be fruits meet for repentance, answerable to amendment of life, tantamount

as repentance, and that weigh just as much as it, ἀξία; for, *Optima et aptissima poenitentia est nova vita*, saith Luther, the best and truest repentance is a new life; and if God's people will humble themselves, and pray and seek his face, and also turn from their evil ways, then he will do much for them, #2Ch 7:14.

**And from the violence that is in their hands]** Heb. In the hollow of their hands, where it lay hidden, as it were, but not from God, who here bids them turn from their wrong dealing and rapacity. This was their special sin (*ut in magnis imperiis et emporiis magnae sunt rapinae*), therefore are they charged to relinquish it. It is a speech, saith Mercer, like to that of our Saviour, "Go, tell my disciples and Peter," &c. Tell them all, but be sure you tell Peter. So here, turn from all your evil ways, but especially from the violence that is in your hands. See #Isa 59:6 Eze 23:27 Ps 7:4. The Hebrews understand this text of restitution to be made of ill-gotten goods, or wrongfully detained from the right owners. This, say they, must be done, or the party can be no more renewed by repentance than a man could be legally purified by the washing of water, when he continued to hold in his hand an unclean thing. That of Austin is well known. The sin is not remitted till that which hath been ill-gotten from another be restored, *Non remittitur peccatum nisi restituatur ablatum* (Aug.). And that of Father Latimer: "Restore, or else you will cough in hell, and the devils will laugh at you. Gravel in the kidneys will not grate so upon you as a little guiltiness of this kind will do upon your consciences." The same Latimer tells us, in a sermon before King Edward VI, that the first day that he preached about restitution there came one and gave him twenty pounds to restore; the next time another, and brought him in thirty pounds; another time another gave him two hundred pounds ten shillings. The law for restitution, see #Nu 5:6,7; the party must not only confess but restore, or he is not a true convert. And this will well appear when death comes to draw the curtain, and look in upon a man. Hence our Henry VII in his last will and testament, after the disposition of his soul and body, he willed restitution should be made of all such monies as had unjustly been levied by his officers. And the like we read of Selimus, the Grand Signior, in the Turkish history.

Ver. 9. **Who can tell if God will turn and repent]** This is the speech of one that doubteth and yet despaireth not, like that of David praying for his sick child, "Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?" **#2Sa 12:22**. We are staggering, saith Saint Paul, but not wholly sticking, **#2Co 4:8**. They that go down to the pit (of despair, as well as of the grave, **#Isa 38:18**) cannot hope for thy truth, but are hurried headlong into hell, as the Gergesites' swine were into the sea. The prophet Jonah was peremptory, that by such a day Nineveh should be destroyed. These men, therefore, had good reason to doubt, if not the pardon of their sins, yet the saving of their city. All their hope is, that this that Jonah denounced was not God's absolute decree, but only his threatening, and that conditionally too, viz. except they repented. This, if they could do, and heartily, they knew not but that mercy might be yet obtained. Keep hope in heart, or the work will go on heavily, **#Ps 43:5**. Hope is the daughter of Faith; but such as is a staff to her aged mother. {See Trapp on "Joe 2:14"} Of God's repenting I have spoken elsewhere.

Ver. 10. **And God saw their works]** *i.e.* He noted and noticed them to others; or, he saw them, that is, he approved of them. *Videre Dei, est approbare*. Let God but see repentance as a rainbow appearing in our hearts and lives, and he will never drown us in destruction. But unless God sees turning, he sees no work in a fast, saith one upon this very text. God may say to impenitent fasters, saith another, as Isaac did to his father, "Behold the fire and wood, but where is the lamb?" Or as Jacob did concerning Joseph, "Here is the coat, but where is the child? Get thee behind me," saith Jehu to the messengers, "what hast thou to do with peace?" Confessions and humiliations are our messengers; but if the heart be not broken, if the life be not amended, what peace? The Talmudists note here, that God is not said to have seen their sackcloth and ashes, but their repentance and works, those fruits of their faith, truth in the inward parts, which God eyeth with singular delight, **#Jer 5:3**; as the work of his own Spirit, **#Eph 2:10**. *Certum est nos facere quod facimus; sed ille facit ut faciamus* (August.); and he is pleased to call his grace in us our works, for our encouragement in well doing, and freely to crown it in us, without any merit on our part.



**That they turned from their evil way]** To which they were by nature and ill custom so wedded and wedged, that they could never have been loosened but by an extraordinary touch from the hand of Heaven. The conversion of a sinner from the evil of his way is God's own handywork, **#Jer 31:18 2Ti 2:25 Eze 6:9**. Plato went three times into Sicily to convert Dionysius, the tyrant, and could do no good on him. Polemo, of a drunkard, by hearing Xenocrates, is said to have become a philosopher. But what saith Ambrose to him? *Si resipuit a vino, &c.* If he repented of his drunkenness yet he continued an infidel; he was still *temulentus sacrilegio*, drunk with superstition. He recovered of one disease, and died of another, as Benhadad did; he gave but the half turn, and therefore turned at length, and nevertheless into hell, **#Ps 9:17**. We conceive better of these Ninevites, though some are of the opinion that their repentance was but feigned and forced, as was that of Pharaoh and Ahab, as appears (say they) by the sequent history, by their dealing against the Jews, and by Nahum.

**And God repented]** This was *mutatio rei non Dei*, change of intention not of God himself, as is above noted.

## **Chapter 4**

Ver. 1. **But it displeased Jonah exceedingly]** *Mirabilis homo profecto fuit Ionas*, saith Winckelman here, as strange a man was Jonah of an honest man as you shall lightly hear of. Well might David caution, **#Ps 37:8**, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. A fretful man is easily drawn to evil. David was (once at least) displeased at God's dealing, which was no whit for his credit or comfort, **#2Sa 6:8**. Discontented he was, not at God's lenity, as Jonah, but at God's severity against Uzziah, and that all the people's joy should be dashed and damped with such a sad and sudden disaster. How much better minded was he when dumb, not once opening his mouth, because God did it, **#Ps 39:9**. The Greeks give this rule, Either say nothing, or say that which is better than nothing, *η σιγαν η κρεισσονα σιγης λεγειν*. "O that you would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom," said Job to his friends, **#Job 13:5**. Silence sometimes comes to be a virtue; and never more than when a man is causelessly displeased. *Prima semper irarum tela maledicta sunt*, saith Sallust.

Angry people are apt to let fly, to mutter and mutiny against God and man, as here. Reason should say to choler that which the nurse saith to the child, Weep not, and you shall have it. But either it doth not, or if it do, yet the ear (which tasteth words, as the mouth doth meat) is oft so filled with gall (some creatures have *fel in aure* gall in gold) that nothing can relish with it. See #Ex 6:9. If Moses' anger was pure, free from guile and gall, #Ex 32:19, yet Jonah's was not so. It is surely very difficult to kindle and keep quick this fire without all smoke of sin. Be angry and sin not is, saith one, the easiest charge, under the hardest condition that can be. Men, for the most part, know not what they do in their anger; this raiseth such a smoke. Put fire to wet straw and filthy stuff, and it will smoke and smutch you quickly; yea, scorch you and scald you, when once it breaks out. #Le 13:5, we read of a leprosy breaking out of a burning: seldom do passions burn but there is a leprosy breaking out of that burning. It blistereth out at the lips: hence the Hebrews have but one and the same word for anger and foaming at the mouth, *Ketseph*, *spuma*, #Ho 10:7 Es 1:18 Zec 1:2. They have also a proverb, that a man's disposition is much discovered, *bechos*, *bechis*, *becagnab*, by his cup, by his purse, and by his passion, at which time, and in which cases, "A fool uttereth all his mind," #Pr 29:11 (all his wrath, say the Seventy, *θυμου*), and that suddenly, rashly, as the Hebrew intimateth; but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards, #Pr 29:11 (*אִתָּא* a fool, and *אִתָּא* suddenly, rashly, are from the same root. *De sera numin, vindict.*). Ahasuerus, when he felt himself enraged against Haman, walked into his garden, #Es 7:7. And Plutarch tells of one Archytas, that, displeased with his servants for their sloth, he fled from them, saying, *Valete quoniam vobis irascor*; I will leave you, for that I am angry with you. The very first insurrections of inordinate passions are to be crushed, the first smoke of them to be smothered, which else will fume up into the head, and gather into so thick a cloud, as we shall lose the sight of ourselves and what is best to be done. Cease, therefore, from rash anger, and stint strife betime. "The beginning of it," saith Solomon, "is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with," #Pr 17:14. Storms rise out of little gusts, and the highest winds are at first but a small vapour. Had Jonah stopped or stepped back when he felt himself first stirred, he had not so shamefully overshot himself, nor heaped up so many sins, as he

did in the following intercourse with Almighty God. He was naturally hot and hasty, and so were those two brethren, the sons of thunder; they had quick and hot spirits, #Lu 9:54,55. Now, where there is much untowardness of nature there grace is the more easily overborne: sour wines need much sweetening. God's best children, though ingrafted into the true vine, yet carry they about them a relish of the old stock still. It is thought by very good divines, that Jonah, feeling his own weakness in giving place to anger, thought to strive against it, and so addressed himself to prayer, #Jon 4:2; but transported by his passions of grief and rash anger, while by prayer he thought to have overcome them, they overcame him and his prayer too. So true is that of the apostle, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," #Jas 1:20.

Ver. 2. **And he prayed unto the Lord]** *i.e.* He thought to have done so, but by the deceitfulness of his own heart he quarrelled with God, and instead of wrestling with him, as Jacob, he wrangled with him. The words seem to be rather a brawl than a prayer, which should ever proceed from a sedate and settled spirit, and hold conformity with the will of God. Could Jonah be in case to pray, when he had neither right conceptions of God nor a heart of mercy to men, but that millions of people must perish rather than he be held a false prophet? Say there were something in it of zeal for God's glory, which he thought would suffer, as if God were either mutable or impotent; say that there were in this outburst something of affection to God's people, who had then no greater enemy to fear than these Ninevites, whom therefore Jonah would have had destroyed, according to his prediction; yet cannot he be excused for falling so foul upon God, and upbraiding him with that which is his greatest glory, #Ex 33:18,19 34:6,7. The truth is, nothing makes a man eccentric in his motions so much as headstrong passions and private respects. He that brings these into God's presence shall do him but little good service. The soul is then only well carried when neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet tossed with tempests to move disorderly, as did Jonah here, and Job, in that peevish prayer of his, #Job 6:8,9. See also #Jer 20:7,8.

**I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, &c.]** That is, my thought: for whether he worded it thus with God till now it

appeareth not; but God heareth the language of men's hearts, and their silence to him is a speaking evidence.

**When I was yet in my country?**] And had Jonah so soon forgotten what God had done for him since he came thence? Oh, what a grave is oblivion! and what a strange passage is that (and yet how common!) "Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel." {#Ps 106:12,13} Jonah did not surely wait for God's counsel, but anticipated it. *ldcirco anteverti*, saith he in the next words (therefore I fled before), and thought he had said well, spoke very good reasoning. It is the property of lust and passion so to blear the understanding of a man that he shall think he hath reason to be mad, and that there is great sense in sinning. Dogs in a chase bark at their own masters; so do people in their passions let fly at their best friends. "They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth," #Ps 73:9. Jonah in his heat here justifieth his former flight, which he had so sorely smarted for, *et quasi quidam Aristarchus*, he taketh upon him to censure God for his superabundant goodness, which is above all praise.

**For I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, &c.**] This he knew to be God's name, #Ex 34:6,7, but withal he should have remembered what was the last letter in that name, viz. that he will by no means clear the guilty. See #Na 1:2,8. The same fire hath burning heat and cheerful light. Gracious is the Lord, but yet righteous, saith David, #Ps 116:5, his mercy goes ever bounded by his truth. This Jonah should have considered; and therefore trembled thus to have upbraided God with that mercy by which himself subsisted, and but for which he had been long since in hell, for his tergiversation and peevishness. But "mercy rejoiceth against judgment," #Jas 2:13, and runneth as a spring, without ceasing. It is not like those pools about Jerusalem that might be dried up with the tramlings of horse and horsemen. "The grace of God was exceeding abundant," #1Ti 1:14. It hath abounded to flowing over (*υπερ επλεονασε*) as the sea doth above the largest rocks. See this in the present instance. Jonah addeth sin to sin, and doth enough to undo himself for ever: so that a man would wonder how God could forbear killing him, as he had like to have done Moses when he met him in the inn. But he is God,

and not man; he contents himself to admonish Jonah for his fault, as a friend and familiar, *velut cum eo colludens*, jesting with him, as it were, and, by an outward sign, showing him how grievously he had offended. Concerning these attributes of God here recited, {See Trapp on "Joe 2:13"} and say, with Austin, *Laudent alii pietatem: Dei ego misericordiam*. Let no spider suck poison out of this sweetest flower: nor out of a blind zeal make ill use of it, as Jonah doth, for a cloak of his rebellion, lest abused mercy turn into fury.

Ver. 3. **Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me]** A pitiful peevish prayer, such as was that of Job, and that of Jeremiah above noted; to which may be added Sarah's hasty wish for God to arbitrate between her and her husband; Moses' quibbling with God, till at length he was angry, #Ex 4:10,14; Elias's desire to die out of discontent, &c. What a deal of filth and of flesh clogs and cleaves to our best performances! Hence David so prays for his prayers, and Nehemiah for pardon of his reformations. Anger is ever an evil counsellor; but when it creeps into our prayers it corrupts them worse than vinegar doth the vessel wherein it standeth. "Submit yourselves therefore to God," as Jonah should have done, "resist this devil" of pride and passion, "and he will flee from you," #Jas 4:7; as by giving place to impatience ye "give place to the devil," #Eph 4:26, who else by his vile injections, or at least by his vain impertinencies, will so spoil and mar our duties that we may well wonder they are not cast back as dirt into our faces. Sure it is that if the Holy Ghost had not his hand in our prayers there would not be the least goodness in them; no, not uprightness and truth, without which Christ would never present them, or the Father accept them.

**For it is better for me to die than to live]** *sc.* in that disgrace that I shall now undergo of being a false prophet, not henceforth to be believed. Lo, this was it that troubled the man so much, as it did likewise Moses, #Ex 4:1, "They will not believe me; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." But God should have been trusted by them for that, and his call obeyed howsoever, without consults or disputes; careless of their own credit, so that God might be exalted. True it is that a man had better die with honour than live in disgrace truly so called. "It were better for me to die," saith holy Paul, "than that any man should make my glorying

void," #1Co 9:15. Provident we must be (but not overly tender) to preserve our reputation; learning of the unjust steward by lawful (though he did by unlawful) means to do it; for our Saviour noted this defect in the children of light, that herein they were not often as wise as they should be, #Lu 16:8. But Jonah was too heady and hasty in this wish of his death; because his credit, as he thought, was cracked, and he should be looked upon as a liar. But was the *Euge* of a good conscience nothing to him? was God's approbation of no value, nor the good esteem of his faithful people? It was enough for Demetrius that he had a good report of the truth, #3Jo 12, whatever the world held or said of him. What is the honour of the world but a puff of stinking breath? and why should any Jonah be so ambitious for it, as that without it he cannot find in his heart to live? Life is better than honour. "Joseph is yet alive," saith Jacob. To have heard that Joseph lived a servant would have joyed him more than to hear that he died honourably. The greater blessing obscureth the less. He is not worthy of honour that is not thankful for life. St Paul's desire to be dissolved that he might be with Christ, which is far the better, #Php 1:23, was much different from this of Jonah.

Ver. 4. **Doest thou do well to be angry?**] Or, what? art thou very angry? *Nunquid recte?* Summon the sobriety of thy senses before thine own judgment, and see whether there be a cause. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?" #Mt 20:15. Shall I not show mercy on whom I will show mercy? Or enviest thou these poor Ninevites their preservation, for my sake? Cannot I provide for mine own glory and for thine authority by other means and ways than thou imaginest? Have patience, Jonah, and rest better satisfied with my dispensation. "Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." For, I wot well, the "wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," #Jas 1:19,20. This thou wilt see, and say as much, when thou comest to thyself, for now thou art quite off; and being transported as thou art,

“*Nil audire voles, nil discere, quod levet aegrum*” (Horat.).

Jerome seeks to excuse Jonah's anger; but God here condemneth it, as not well: and Jonah himself, partly by not answering it again, and partly by recording the story, seems to say of himself, as Father Latimer doth in another case (Serm. 3rd Sund. in Advent), I have

used in mine earnest matters to say, Yea, by Saint Mary, which indeed is not well. Anger is not altogether unlawful so it be well carried. It is, saith one, a tender virtue; and as it is not evil to marry, but good to be wary, so here. Let a man ask himself this question, Do I well to be thus angry? and is mine indignation rightly regulated for principle, object, measure, end? If it be not, the Spirit of God will be grieved in the good soul, and sensibly stir; yea, thou shalt hear the correcting voice thereof within thee, saying, Doest thou well to be thus angry? Should not "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away, with all malice?" And should ye not be "kind one to another, and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you?" #Eph 4:30-32.

Ver. 5. **So Jonah went out of the city]** As not yet knowing what God might do, though he found him inclinable to show them mercy upon their repentance. Or he might think, haply, that these Ninevites were only sermon sick, penitent indeed for the present, but it was too good to hold long: these seemingly righteous men would soon fall from their righteousness, and then be destroyed, though for present somewhat favoured of God. Mercer reads the text in the pluperfect tense, and makes it a *hysteron proteron*, <sup>{a}</sup> thus, *exierat autem Ionas*; but Jonah had gone out of the city, *sc.* before he had shown himself so hot and hasty against God, and brawled with him as above. Others think that when he saw which way the squares were like to go, he flung out of the city in a great pout: and if God had fetched him again with a sharp blow on the ear (as Queen Elizabeth did the Earl of Essex, her favourite, when being crossed by her of his will, he uncivilly turned his back, as it were in contempt), he had done him no wrong. But God is longsuffering; he considereth whereof we are made, and with what strong corruptions we are beset. He knows that sin hath a strong heart, and will not easily be done to death; that nothing cleaves more pertinaciously or is more inexpugnable than a strong lust, whether it be worldliness, wantonness, passionateness, pride, ambition, revenge, or the like: these Jebusites will not easily be driven out; these sturdy rebels will hardly be subdued; these stick closest, as a shirt doth to a leprous body, and cannot be done off but with great ado. Now if Jonah be of a choleric constitution, and soon kindled; if this evil of his nature have been confirmed by custom (a second nature); if Satan stir up

the coals, and say to him, as the people did to Pilate, "Do as thou ever hast done"; God graciously considereth all this, and beareth with his evil manners.

**And sat on the east side of the city]** Quite out of the precincts; where he might see their ruin, and not suffer with them. Fawkes, after he had laid his train, and set it to work to fire the powder at such an hour, was to have retired himself into George's Fields, and there to have beheld the sport. That Jonah was so uncharitable as to wish and wait for the overthrow of Nineveh, and not that they would rather return and live, admits no excuse. But that expecting its overthrow (according to that God had threatened by him), he secured himself by separating from those sinners against their own souls, was well and wisely done of him. See **#Isa 48:20 52:11 2Co 6:17 Re 16:4** Lot did so from Sodom, the people from Core and his accomplices, John and his disciples from Cerinthus the heretic: he sprung out of the bath from that blasphemer (εξηλατο του Βαλανειου), lest he should be punished with him; so the Church of Jerusalem packed away to Pella (Euseb. 1. 3. c. 5).

**And there made him a booth]** A sorry something, wherein to repose himself, till the indignation were overpast. Ministers, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, must suffer hardship, be content to dwell in tents, or to lie in huts, till they come to the heavenly palace, where they shall have a better building, **#2Co 5:1**; yea, a throne in that city of pearl, whose master builder is God, **#Heb 11:13**. Meanwhile, let them not seek great things for themselves, but, as the Turks never build sumptuously for their own private uses, but content themselves with simple cottages, how mean soever, good enough, say they, for the short time of our pilgrimage here; so much more should Christians, and especially ministers, whose reward, how little soever upon earth, is great in heaven, **#Mt 5:12**. Let them live upon reversions, and though their dwelling be but mean, a booth, or little better, yet they shall have stately mansions above, and, in the mean time, if they can but say as that heathen did, 'Ενθα και οι θεοι, God dwells here with me, this house of mine is a little church, a tabernacle of the God of Jacob; oh, how happy are they in that behalf, even above the Great Turk, with his harem. (which is two



miles in compass); yea, with his whole empire, which (saith Luther) is but a crust cast by the great housekeeper of the world to his dogs.

**And sat under it in the shadow]** "Having food and raiment," saith the apostle, "let us therewith be content." Where the word *σκεπασμα*, rendered raiment, signifieth any covering over head, if it be but a hair cloth. Some say it signifies *domicilium*, a house; others say that houses are not named, for that they were not anywhere to fix, but to be ready to run from place to place, and to leave house and all behind them; or as soldiers burn their huts when the siege is ended, that they may go home to their houses, being discontentedly contented in the mean while; so should we, glad to hover and cover under the shadow of the Almighty by the grace of faith, *quae te pullastrum, Christum gallinum facit*, which makes Christ the hen and thee the chicken, saith Luther.

**Till he might see what would become of the city]** Whether God would not ratify his word by raining down hell from heaven upon it, as once he did upon sinful Sodom, or overwhelm it with the river Tigris, as once he did some part of it, saith Diodorus Siculus, so that two and a half miles of the town wall were thrown down by it. And the prophet Nahum threateneth, that with an overflowing flood God would make an end of the place thereof, **#Na 1:8**.

{a} A figure of speech in which the word or phrase that should properly come last is put first. (ED)

**Ver. 6. And the Lord God prepared a gourd]** *sc.* after that his booth was dried up, and the leaves withered, God, by his providence, and not without a miracle (because without seed, and so suddenly), furnished Jonah with his gourd or ivy bush, or white vine, or the plant called *Palma Christi*, or *Pentedactylon*, because it resembleth a man's hand with five fingers; something it was, but what is not certainly known. Kimchi thus describeth it: *Est herba longis et altis frondibus umbrosa*: It is a herb or plant that yieldeth good shade with its long and large leaves. And many years before him, one Rabba, son of Hanna, said, that it grows by the water's side, is commonly set for shade's sake before tavern doors, and that oil is made of the seeds of it.

**And made it to come up over Jonah]** Not only to refresh him (who having been so lately in the whale's belly, was haply more tender skinned than before, and not so well able to endure the heat of the sun), but also to make way to that reproof he afterwards gave him, **#Jon 4:10**. *Hoc enim externo signo*, saith Mercer, for by this outward sign, God sporting with him, as it were, clearly convinceth him of his impatience, and admonisheth him of his duty; and this he thinketh was not done till the forty days were over.

**To deliver him from his grief]** From his headache, caused by the heat of the sun; which yet he cursed not as the scorched Atlantes are said to do. Or to exhilarate and refresh his spirits after his self-vexing; for the hasty man never wants woe, and the envious person, because he cannot come at another man's heart, feedeth upon his own. Now though God chide him for his fault, yet, as a father he tendereth his infirmity, and taketh care that the "spirit fail not before him, and the soul that he had made." And it is as if he should say: Jonah goeth on frowardly in the way of his heart; "I have seen his ways and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him," **#Isa 57:16-18**; as it is a rule in medicine still to maintain nature.

**So Jonah was exceeding glad]** Heb. rejoiced with great joy, that is, *supra modum*, he was excessive in all his passions, which speaks him a weak man. Some think he rejoiced the more in the gourd, as conceiving that God thereby voted with him, and for him. This was also Leah's error, when rejoicing in that whereof she should have repented rather, she said, **#Ge 30:18**, "God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband, and she hath borne me a fifth son." So much mistaken are the best sometimes, and so bladderlike is man's soul, that filled with earthly vanities, though but wind, and gone with a wind, it grows great, and swells in pride and folly, but if pricked with the least pin of piercing grief it shrivellet to nothing.

Ver. 7. **But God prepared a worm]** All occurrences are to be ascribed not to nature, fate, or fortune, but to God, who, as he is great in great things, so is he not little in the least, *maximus in magnis, nec parvus in minimis*. He prepared first the gourd, and then the worm, and then the wind. He was the great doer in all. He so

attempereth all that his people shall have their times and their turns of joy and sorrow. These two are tied together, said the heathen, with chains of adamant; hence also Ageronia's altar in the temple of Volupia (Plut.). See the circle God usually goes in with his, **#Ps 30:5-7**, &c., to teach them that all outward comforts are but as grass or flower of the field, which he can soon blast or corrode by some worm of his providing. *Moneo te iterumque iterumque monebo*, saith Lactantius, I warn thee, therefore, and will do it again and again, that thou look not upon those earthly delights as either great or true to those that trust them; but as things that are not only deceitful, because doubtful, but also deadly, because delicious. There is a worm lies couchant in every gourd to smite it, a worm to waste it, besides the worm of conscience bred in that froth and filth, for a perpetual torment.

**And it smote the gourd that it withered]** Plants have also their wounds, diseases, and death, saith Pliny (lib. 17, cap. 14). The gourd being gnawed at the root, and robbed of its moistness, withered. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. So fleeting is the glory of the world. But "the righteous shall flourish like a palm tree" (not like this palm crist), **#Ps 92:12**. Now the palm tree, though it have many weights at the top and many snakes or worms at the root, yet it still says, *Nec premor nec perimor*; I am neither borne down nor dried up; but as Noah's olive drowned, kept its verdure; and as Moses' bush fired but not consumed; so fareth it with the righteous, "persecuted, but not forsaken," &c., **#2Co 4:8,9**, and at death a crown of life awaits him, *quanta perennis erit*, an imperishable crown, an inheritance undefiled, and that withereth not, **#1Pe 5:4**, that suffereth no wasting away but is reserved fresh and green for you in heaven; like the palm tree, which Pliny saith never loseth his leaf nor fruit; or like that Persian tree, whereof Theophrastus saith, that at the same time it doth bud, blossom, and bear fruit.

**Ver. 8. God prepared a vehement east wind]** The winds then blow not where they list, at random I mean, and without rule; but are both raised and laid again by God at his pleasure. He prepared, and sent out of his treasure, **#Jer 10:13**, this

**Violent east wind]** Heb. silent; so called either because it silenceth all other winds with its vehemence; or because when it blows men

are made silent or deaf with its din, so that their tale cannot be heard. There are those who, by silent here, understand a still, low, gentle east wind, that cooled not the heat of the air inflamed by the sun, but rather added to it, and set it on; *καυσωνα* the Greeks interpret it; and this suits well with that which followeth.

**And the sun beat upon the head of Jonah]** *Ussit et laesit, #Ps 121:6.* So the poet,

“*feriente cacumina Sole.*”

Chrysostom cannot but wonder, that whereas all fire naturally tendeth upwards, the sun should shoot his beams downwards, and affect these lower bodies with his light and heat. Whereby if he be troublesome to any Jonah, it is because God will have it so (for he is a servant, as his name *שמש* in Hebrew importeth), without whom neither sun shineth nor rain falleth, **#Mt 5:45**, and who by afflictions (set forth in Scripture by the heat of the sun) bringeth back his stragglers, **#Ps 119:75 Mt 13:6,21 Re 7:16 16:8,9 1Pe 4:12.**

**That he fainted]** Though the head of man hath a manifold guard upon it, as being overlaid first with hair, skin, and flesh, like the threefold covering of the tabernacle; and then encompassed with a skull of bones like boards of cedar; and afterwards with diverse skins like silken curtains; and lastly enclosed with the yellow skin which Solomon calleth the golden bowl. **#Ec 12:6**

**Yet Jonah fainted and wished in himself to die]** *Ita ut ab animo suo peteret mori*, he required of his soul to go out of his body, *Obtectus fuit maerore, ολιγοψυχησε* (Sept.) *Egredere o anima mea*, as Hilarian said, but in a better sense he called for death, as his due; being, belike, of Seneca’s mind, that nature hath bestowed this benefit on men, that they may bereave themselves of life, whensoever they please, not considering that God is Lord of life and death, neither may any one lay down his life but when he calleth for it, as a soldier may not leave his station but at the command of his captain.

**It is better for me to die than to live]** Not so, Jonah, unless you were in a better mind. You should rather say, as Martinus on his sick bed did, *Domino, si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius*, Lord, if I may yet be serviceable to thee, and useful to thy people, I refuse not life and labour. Or as Mr Bolton on his death bed, desirous to be dissolved, when he was told by some bystanders, that though it was better for him to die than to live, yet the Church of God would miss him: he thus sweetly replied with David, #2Sa 15:25,26, "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, but, if otherwise, lo here I am, let him do what seemeth good in his eyes" (Mr Bagshaw in the Life of Mr Bolton). A good man is born for the benefit of many, as Bucer's physicians said to him (Melchior Adam), *Non sibi se, sed multorum utilitati esse natum*, neither may he desire to die out of discontent, as Jonah did for a trifle, wherein he was crossed; and rather than which to have been deprived of, Nineveh, that great city, by his consent should have been destroyed. That he never after this would return to his own country, but was so sick of the fret that he died of the sullens, as some Hebrews say, I cannot believe. {See Trapp on "Jon 4:3"}

Ver. 9. **Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?**] What? so soon blown up for a thing of nothing.? *Tantaene animis coelestibus irae?* (Eneid. lib. i.).

“ *Diine hunc ardorem mentibus indunt*

*Euryale? an sua cuique deus fit dira libido?*”

*Knew not Jonah that to be angry without a cause was to be in danger of the judgment? #Mt 5:22, that it was a mortal sin, and not venial, as Papists falsely conclude from the text; which sets not forth a different punishment of rash anger, but a diverse degree of punishment? that it is the murder of the heart, as our Saviour there shows, and the fountain of the murder both of the tongue and of the hand? will he be like the foolish bee, who loseth her life to get revenge? {See Trapp on "Jon 4:4"}*

**And he said]** Before he said nothing when reprov'd for his rash anger, #Jon 4:4, and that was best. Now he chats against God, laying the reins on the neck of his unruly passions and running riot. Who can understand his errors? and who can tell how often a

servant of God may fall into a foul sin, if strongly inclined thereto by nature, or violently tempted by Satan and his instruments? Of Judah indeed it is expressly noted, that he knew his daughter-in-law Tamar again no more, #Ge 38:26. But what shall we say to Lot's double incest? to Samson's going down again to Gaza, #Jud 16:1? to Abraham's twice denying his wife? to John's twice adoring the angel, #Re 19:10 22:8? "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall": and let God's people see that there be no way of wickedness found in them, that they allow not, wallow not in this guzzle: since hereby they lose not their *ius haereditarium*, but yet their *ius aptitudinale*, not their title, but yet their fitness to God's kingdom; and, perhaps, their fulness of reward there, #2Jo 8.

**And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death]** A fearful outburst! Resist passion at the first rising up; else who knows whither it may transport us? Passions, saith one, like heavy bodies down steep hills, once in motion move themselves; and know no ground but the bottom. Jonah (saith another upon this text) slights admonition, riseth up in an animosity against it to a desperate degree of anger; such wild beasts are furious passions when we give them the reins. Thus he, Surely as the lion beateth himself with his own tail, and as sullen birds in a cage beat themselves to death, so could Jonah in this rage find in his heart to do and he shames not to tell God as much. It was therefore no ill wish of him that desired God to deliver him from that naughty man himself (*Domino libera me a malo homine meipso*), from headlong and headstrong passions, which may not only dissweeten a man's life, but shorten it. The Emperor Nerva died of a fever contracted by anger. Valentinian by an irruption of blood. Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia, in a rage against his cupbearer, fell presently into a palsy, whereof he died. What disease Jonah died of I know not: but this I know, that in his heat he did and said enough here in this text to have made Almighty God resolve, as he did once against those muttering rebels in the wilderness, "As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you," #Nu 14:28. Thou shalt surely die, Jonah; out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, &c. But God chose rather to glorify himself in Jonah's salvation than in his deserved destruction. *Dat igitur poenitentiam, et postea indulgentiam* (as that father prayed), he therefore first giveth him repentance, and then

pardon, as appeareth partly by his recording these passages, and so shaming himself, as it were, before all the world; and partly also by his closing up his prophecy with silence; not striving with God for the last word, as Peter did with Christ, and would needs carry it, till the events of things confuted him, and he was glad to seek a corner to cry in, #Mt 26:35,75.

Ver. 10. **Then said the Lord]** He did not roar upon Jonah, nor run upon him with a drawn sword, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers, #Job 15:26; but gently said unto him, that he might the more admire his own impotence and God's lenity; both which he studiously describeth all along this prophecy; a good sign of his sound repentance.

**Thou hast had pity on the gourd]** Here is the end, scope, and application of the parable; whereby it appeareth that God prepared not the gourd so much for the ease and use of Jonah's body as for a medicine to his soul, convincing him of the iniquity both of his ways and wishes, by an argument drawn from the less to the greater; and confuting him by a comparison. Thou, a sinful and wretched man, hast had pity, or spared, and art sorry it perished. The gourd a sorry shrub, a mean mushroom, and none of thine either, but as lent thee; Alas, master, said they, it was but borrowed.

**For the which thou hast not laboured]** And so canst not be so fast affected to it. For all men love their own works rather than other men's, as parents and poets, saith Aristotle (*παντες αγαπωσι μαλλον τα εργα αυτων*. Ethic. 1, 4); proving thereby, that those which have received their riches from their parents are more liberal than they which have gotten them by their own labour.

**Neither madest it grow]** Thou hast neither planted nor watered it, or any way added to it, by thine industry; for that also was no part of thy pains, but mine. Not that God laboureth about his creatures, for he doth all his work without tool or toil, #Isa 40:28; but this, as many other things in Scripture, are spoken after the manner of men, and so must be taken.

**Which came up in a night]** Heb. was the son of a night, not without a miracle; though Pliny speaks of the quick and wonderful growth of this shrub.

**And perished in a night]** *Cito oriens, cito itidem moriens*, quickly come, and as quickly gone; a fit emblem of earth's happiness. Surely man walketh in a vain show; *foenea quadam faelicitate temporaliter florens*: they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. They are but *ημεροβιοι*; their life is but a day (and such a day too, as no man is sure to have twelve hours to it), as this gourd was but of one day's continuance, as it came up in a night, so it perished the next; *cito crevit, cito decrevit, repente prolatus, repente sublatus*, quickly created, quickly destroyed, suddenly coming, suddenly cut down, of very small continuance (Tarnov.).

Ver. 11. **And should not I spare Nineveh]** I, who am all bowels (*Ego emphaticum*. Mercer); I, who am a sin pardoning God, #**Ne 10:31**, none like me for that, #**Mic 7:18**; I, who am "the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort," #**2Co 1:3**, whose property and practice it is to comfort "those that are cast down," #**2Co 7:6**; I, who am so transcendently gracious, that thou hast even hit me in the teeth with it, #**Jon 4:2**; should not I be affected with the destruction of Nineveh?

**That great city]** {See Trapp on "Jon 1:2"} {See Trapp on "Jon 3:3"} {See Trapp on "Jon 3:4"} Yea, I will spare it, since it is ten thousand times more worth than that gourd of thine so much pitied.

**Wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons]** More than twelve myriads of innocent infants that cannot discern, &c., but live a kind of sensitive life, as not yet come to the use of reason, and are therefore matched and mentioned with beasts.

**And also much cattle]** A part of my care, which have had their share, as they could, in the common humiliation; and shall therefore share in the common preservation. And hast thou a heart to repine at this, and not to be set down with so good reason? Jonah is now sad and silenced; and although we hear no further of him, yet methinks I see him (Job-like) laying his hand upon his mouth in a humble



yieldance; yea, putting his mouth in the dust, and saying, "Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further," #**Job 40:5**. "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: for thou hast caused me to understand wherein I have erred. How forcible are right words!" #**Job 6:24,25**.

# Micah

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The word of the Lord, &c.**] {See Trapp on "Ho 1:1"}

**To Micah the Morasthite]** To distinguish him from Micaiah, the son of Imlah, who prophesied in Ahab's days, over a hundred years before this. Micah the Morasthite, so called from the place of his birth or abode, which is made famous by him (as Abder was by Democritus, Hippo by Austin), and not he by it. Ambrose saith his name signifieth *Quis iste?* Who is this? Who (saith that father in answer)? not one of the common sort, but an elect vessel to carry God's name to his people. Jerome, from his title, Morasthite, interpreted, calleth him *cohaeredem Christi*, co-heir with Christ, of whom and his kingdom he sweetly prophesieth; and may, therefore, be called the evangelical prophet; as was Isaiah, his contemporary, with whom he hath many things common; and this one thing above him, that he nameth Bethlehem, Christ's birthplace, **#Mic 5:2**, for the which (as well as for his boldness, **#Jer 26:18**) he was famous in the Church, **#Mt 2:6 Joh 7:42**.

**In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah]** Ahaz standeth between Jotham and Hezekiah, as a thistle or thorn between two lilies, or roses. Manasseh comes after, and degenerates into his grandfather Ahaz. To his time Micah attained not, much less to Josiah's, as Isidore hath it; for between Jotham and Josiah were a hundred and twenty years at least. It is probable that Micah prophesied forty years, if not more; wherein he saw many changes and met with many molestations; had cause enough to cry out with his colleague, "Who hath believed our report?" "My leanness, my leanness," &c. Yet held he on his course; as being of Latimer's mind, who, speaking in one of his sermons of a minister that gave this answer why he left off preaching? viz. because he saw he did no good. This, saith Latimer, is a naughty, a very naughty answer.

**Which he saw]** *sc.* with the eyes of his mind for the use of the Church; whereto this prophecy comes commended, first, as "the word of the Lord," and, secondly, as extraordinarily revealed to this prophet.

**Concerning Samaria and Jerusalem]** Samaria seemeth to be first named because most guilty before God. They are yoked together, because there was scarcely ever a better (Aholah and Aholibah, sisters in sin), and one the much worse for the other's neighbourhood. Jerusalem would take it in high scorn, likely, to be matched with Samaria, so much slighted and shunned by her, **#Joh 4:9**, as Papists now do to be set by Protestants, Turks by Christians (the word of a Mussulman bears down all other testimony among them). But this prophet is very bold (as it is said of Isaiah's contemporaries, **#Ro 10:20**), binds them both up in one bundle, and spareth not to show Judah their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Ver. 2. **Hear, all ye people]** He beginneth as Isaiah, in a lofty and stately style, pouring himself out in a golden flood of words (as Cicero speaketh of Aristotle's Politics), and calling for utmost attention and affection; as knowing that he had to do with men more deaf than sea monsters, and more dull than the very earth they trod on; which is therefore here commanded to hearken, since men (that habitable part of God's earth, **#Pr 8:31**) will not hear and give ear; wherein they are worse than the insensible creatures, **#Ps 119:91**.

**And let the Lord God be witness against you]** Here he turneth his speech to the refractory Jews; speaking to God as a righteous judge and swift witness, *Iudex, Iudex, vindex*, against them if they hearkened not to his message: *nisi pareant, ideoque pereant*.

**The Lord from his holy temple]** That is, let him testify from heaven, **#Ps 11:4**, that he is displeased with you, and that I have carefully sought your soul's health. Or, from his temple at Jerusalem, wherein ye glory, and where ye think ye have him as fast bound to you as the Tyrians had their idol Apollo, whom they chained and nailed to a post, that he might not forsake them, when Alexauder besieged their town, and took it (Macrob. lib. 8, cap. 9). The heathens had a trick, when they besieged a city, to call the tutelar gods out of it by a certain charm, as believing that it could not otherwise be taken (Virg. Aen. 2). In a like sense whereunto some have interpreted the following verses here.

Ver. 3. **For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place]** That is, say they, out of Judea and his temple there, leaving it to the Chaldeans and Assyrians. See #Eze 3:12, and chapters 9-11, where God makes various withdrawals from the cherubins to the threshold, from thence to the east gate, from thence to mount Olivet, quite out of the city, #Eze 11:23, and when God was gone, then followed the fatal calamity, in the ruin of the city. But by God's coming forth out of his place here I conceive is meant his descending from heaven to do justice on this hypocritical nation, #Isa 26:21, and because *hypocritis nihil stupidius*; hypocrites, resting on their external performances and privileges, will hardly be persuaded of any evil toward them. #Mic 3:11, "Is not the Lord," say they, "among us? none evil can come upon us"; therefore we have here an emphatic *Ecce*, "Behold, the Lord cometh"; he is even upon the way already, and will be here with the first. He will come down as once at Sodom, when their sin was very grievous, #Ge 18:20, when they were overcharged with the superfluity of naughtiness; God came from heaven to give their land a vomit; and so he would do here; for unregenerate Israel was to God as Ethiopia, #Am 9:7, as the rulers of Sodom and people of Gomorrah, #Isa 1:10.

**And tread upon the high places of the earth]** The high and mighty ones, that, having gotten on the top of their hillocks as so many ants, think themselves so much the better and safer, repose confidence in their high places and strongholds, as Nebuchadnezzar did in his Babel, Edom in his clefts of the rocks, munitions of rocks, #Ob 3, the rich fool in his heaps and hoards, #Lu 12:19; these, with their false confidences, God will tread down in his anger, and trample them in his fury, as the mire of the streets; he will bring down their strength to the earth, and lay their honour in the dust, #Isa 63:3,6.

Ver. 4. **And the mountains shall be molten under him]** This is to the self same sense; though men swell, in their own eyes, to the size of so many mountains; and though, gotten upon their hill of ice, they think they shall never be moved, #Ps 30:6,7; yet, when God, with his devouring fire and everlasting burnings, comes in presence, these craggy mountains shall soon dissolve and melt as wax, they shall be as waters poured down a descent, they shall flow as a land flood. By which similitudes, and familiar comparisons, is notably set forth the irresistible wrath of God for the frightening of hard hearted sinners,

that they may take hold of his strength, and make peace with him, **#Isa 27:5.**

**The valleys also shall be deft]** The poorer sort also shall have their share in the common calamity. God will neither spare the high for their might, nor the base for their meanness, but lords and lowies together, shall be

**as wax before the fire, &c.]** Wax is a poor fence against fire, sticks and stubble against a strong torrent; so human force against Divine judgments.

**Ver. 5. For the transgression of Jacob is all this]** Lest they should think, either that these things were threatened *in terrorem* in fear only, and would never be inflicted; or else that they had not deserved such severity, but that God should pour out his wrath rather upon the heathen, that knew him not, and upon the families that called not on his name. The prophet here showeth that Jacob was become a just object of God's indignation, by his transgressions or rebellions, and the whole house of Israel by their sins; there was a general defection, and therefore they must expect a general destruction. For what reason? the just Lord is in the midst thereof: he will not do iniquity, he will not acquit the guilty: morning by morning doth he bring his judgments to light, he faileth not: but the unjust knoweth no shame, will take no warning, which is a just both presage and desert of his ruin.

**What is the transgression of Jacob?]** Say they in a chatting way; like those miscreants in Malachi, that so worded it with God, **#Mal 1:1-14 3:1-15.**

**Is it not Samaria?]** Saith the prophet, in answer to that daring demand of theirs. So,

**what are the high places of Judah?]** viz. the superstitious and carnal confidences thereof? Is it not Jerusalem? saith the prophet. Are not their capital cities become their capital sins? Read we not of the calf of Samaria, **#Ho 8:5**, and did not her kings set up idols at Dan and Bethel, and Gilgal and Beersheba? As for Jerusalem, had she not turned the very temple into a high place, by resting in her

ceremonial services and sacrifices? Did not some of her best kings wink at the high places? And Ahaz, that stigmatic Belialist, shut up God's temple and set up strange worships? How then could these frontless fellows ask "What is the transgression?" and "What are the high places?" The prophet goes not behind the door to tell them that the best of them were no better than a rabble of rebels against heaven; and their chieftains were most in fault, though they least liked to hear of it. Samaria is a very Poneropolis, and Jerusalem is little better; they both are even transformed into sin's image; the prophet here speaks of them as if they were not only sinful, but sin itself; as Cicero saith of one Tubulus, a Roman praetor, that he was so desperately wicked, *ut eius nomen non hominis sed vitii esse videretur*; that he passed not for a man, but for a vice, so flagitious were his practices; or, as Austin saith of this present evil world, that it is nothing else but a sty of filthy hogs, or a kennel of mad dogs, *Hara porcorum, vel colluvies rabidorum canum* (Aug.).

Ver. 6. **Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field]** *i.e.* When stones are gathered out of a field they are laid together on heaps, so I will take course that where Samaria now is, there shall be nothing to be seen but heaps of stones and rubbish. God is the true *προλιπορθος*; "for thou hast made of a city a heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built," **#Isa 25:2**. Of Rome it was long since prophesied:

*"Tota eris in cineres, quasi nunquam Roma fuisses."*

"The entire city will be in ashes, just as Rome never existed."

Oh that God would hasten that day! Scipio foresaw it, and wept, *sc.* when he saw Carthage set all on fire by himself. In the greatness of the Turkish empire are swallowed up many kingdoms and countries; besides all those churches and places so much spoken of in Scripture, the Romans only excepted; yet, no doubt, for their many and mighty sins, time shall triumph over this so great a monarchy, when it shall but then live by fame, as others now do. *Iam seges est ubi Troia fuit*. Though thou build thy walls as high as heaven (said the oracle to wicked Phocas), yet sin, that lieth at the foundation, will one day overturn them.

**And as plantings of a vineyard]** That is, it shall be made a place fit for the planting of vines; it shall be utterly rased and harassed. A Lapidè observeth the fitness of the expression here used, in that Samaria was situated on a hill that bore vines; and before it was a city it had been a vineyard: God threateneth to make it so again, and so to stain the pride of all its glory. See what a trouble town sin is. Surely did people but know what it will once cost them and cause to them, they dared not but be innocent.

**And I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley]** That is, into a bycorner. Clearing of stones is necessary to a vineyard, **#Isa 5:2**, there being no possession that requireth more pains and care, as Cato hath observed.

**And I will discover the foundation thereof]** I will not leave a stone upon a stone, nor any footstep of so stately a city, that hath so long time been a cage of unclean birds, an Augean stable of abominable idolaters. God, as he hath loving respects to the places of his servants' birth and abode, **#Ps 87:6 Isa 49:16**, so he sets the marks of his wrath upon those places where foul sins have been perpetrated, as upon our abbeys and monasteries, whose very foundations are laid naked.

Ver. 7. **And all the graven images thereof]** Upon these the jealous God will execute vengeance: so to show his hatred of idolatry. "The stones of the altars he will make as chalk stones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and the images shall not stand up," **#Isa 27:9**. As for those that "worship them, and repent not of the works of their hands," **#Re 9:20**, they shall smart surely for their idolatries, as did those of old in the wilderness; and the more ingenuous of their posterity acknowledge at this day, that there is no punishment befalleth them in which there is not still an ounce of that golden calf. True it is, that the Samaritan superstition which was grosser at first (and for which they were carried captive by the Assyrian), was afterwards refined by Manasseh, a Jewish priest, that in Alexander's time made a defection to him, and brought many Jews with him, but that saved them not from utter destruction.

**And all the hires thereof shall be burnt with fire]** Her rewards given her by her sweet hearts, **#Ho 2:5,12 9:1**; her vowed presents

and memories (as Papists now call them), her monies and donaries, shall be set on a light fire. God will confute their vain confidences, as he did those Popish rebels of Norfolk, in Edward VI's time, who brought into the battle the Pix under his canopy, and with all his trinkets, crosses, banners, candlesticks, memories, &c., which in the end could neither help themselves nor save their friends from the hands of their enemies (Acts and Mon. fol. 1190).

**For she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, &c.]** Ill-gotten goods thrive not. Few harlots are found to be rich. Indeed we read of Phryne, a notable strumpet, that she offered to rebuild the walls of Thebes, on the condition that this might be engraved on them, Ὁ μὲν Ἀλεξάνδρος κατεσκαψεν, &c. Alexander pulled them down, and Phryne set them up again, but it would not be accepted. Flora also, the Roman harlot, was very rich; and so is the whore of Babylon to this day, by her trading with the merchants of the earth; but this will not hold long, **#Re 18:10**. In one hour shall her judgment come, and in one hour so great riches shall come to nothing, **#Re 18:17**. England was wont to be counted and called the Pope's ass, for bearing his burdens, and his *puteus inexhaustus*, his infinite pit of treasure, whence he drew at pleasure. Polydore Virgil was sometime collector of his Peter Pence here, &c.; but Henry VIII cashiered and cast him out hence, depriving him of his harlot hire. And well he had done, had he not given occasion to those that came after to complain, *Possidebant Papistae, possident iam Rapistae*.

Ver. 8. **Therefore I will wail and howl]** Good men are usually more deeply affected with the wretched estate of wicked persons than they themselves are. Thus Samuel mourned for Saul's rejection; Daniel was astonished and troubled at the import of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, **#Da 4:19**; Habakkuk's belly trembled, and his lips quivered, at the consideration of the judgments that were to come upon the Chaldeans, **#Hab 3:16**. Do we so (saith Mr Perkins) at other men's smartings?

**I will go stripped]** *Tam mente quam veste*, rending off my garments, and casting them from me, as if bereft of my wits: *Pro demente vel insane quidam accipiunt*, saith Calvin here. See **#Isa 59:15**, with the margin, and **#Isa 20:2**.



**I will make a wailing like the dragons]** Which, sucking the elephant's blood till he fall down dead upon them and oppress them with his huge bulk, make a horrible howling; so horrible (saith Palacius out of Pliny and Solinus) that they amaze, yea, kill those that hear it. *Fides sit penes autores.*

**And mourning as the owls]** Heb. as the daughters of the owl, or of the ostrich. Young ostriches cast off by their dams, **#Job 39:14 La 4:3**, and hunger bitten, howl pitifully, as do also the young ravens for like cause, **#Ps 147:9**. Of the ravens of Arabia it is recorded, that, full gorged, they have a tuneable sweet song; but empty, screech horribly. By these similitudes here used the prophet would express his grief to be unexpressible.

Ver. 9. **For her wound is incurable]** Or, she is grievously sick of her wounds; or, her wounds are full of anguish, neither is there any to pour in balm of Gilead, to allay it; any to lick it whole, as the Lady Elinor did her husband Prince Edward's wound, traitorously given him in the Holy Land, by an assassin, with a poisoned knife.

**For it is come unto Judah]** viz. Samaria's wound and plague is come, *i.e.* shall shortly come, though now they live as if out of the reach of God's rod, or as if they had a protection.

**He is come unto the gate of my people]** Sennacherib (flushed with former successes at Samaria, which had been carried captive by his father) came up to the very gate of Jerusalem as an overflowing scourge; and thought to have cut off all the Jews at once, as if they had had all but one neck. He came up over all his channels, and went over all his banks. He passed through Judah, and overflowed, reaching even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings filled the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel, **#Isa 8:8**. But Immanuel soon took a course with him, **#Isa 37:33**, so that though he came to the gates, yet he entered not into the city, nor shot an arrow there, nor cast a bank against it. "Look upon Zion," saith that prophet, "the city of our solemnities," and see if Jerusalem be not still "a quiet habitation," **#Isa 33:20**. "Walk about Zion," saith the psalmist, "and go round about her: tell the towers thereof." See if any be missing since Sennacherib came up against them. "Mark ye well her bulwarks": are they diminished? "consider her palaces": are they at

all defaced? #Ps 48:12,13. What if Jerusalem be wicked? yet Sennacherib is insolent. If therefore Jerusalem shall be smitten with the rod of Sennacherib's fear, Sennacherib shall be smitten with the sword of God's revenges, who of all things cannot endure a presumptuous and self-confident vaunter; but will deal with his people not according to his ordinary rule, but according to his prerogative. Surely "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel," #Jer 51:5.

Ver. 10. **Declare ye it not at Gath, weep ye not at all]** *sc.* in their sight and hearing (though at home weep your fill, #Mic 1:8), lest the daughters of those uncircumcised triumph, #2Sa 1:20; lest out of your tragedies they compose comedies, and ye become their music, while they revel in your ruins and make themselves merry in your misery.

**In the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust]** An elegant word play in the original; *q.d.* dust thyself in the house of dust. Aphrah had its name from its dustiness; as Paris is called *Lutetia a lute*, from its dustiness, and as Hiram called the twenty cities of Galilee given him by Solomon, *Cabul*, that is, dirty, or displeasing, #1Ki 9:13. Fitly was this city called Aphrah, or dusty, saith the prophet; for it shall be reduced to dust, and the inhabitants occasioned to roll themselves in the dust, in token of extreme sorrow. See #La 2:10. Some think Aphrah is put for Ephraim; others better understand it for a particular city; either that in the tribe of Manasseh, Gideon's city, #Jud 6:11, or that other in the tribe of Benjamin, #Jos 18:23, not far from Jerusalem.

Ver. 11. **Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir]** Or, thou that dwellest fairly, as it were in a city set with sapphires, see #Isa 54:11, such as was Susa in Persia, and Antioch in Syria, a city so sweet and specious that Mahomet never dared come into it, lest he should be there detained by the pleasure of the place. Saphir here (say some) may allude to Samaria, that instead of her fairness shall be exposed to ignominy and nakedness: they shall be carried away, "young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Samaria," #Isa 20:4. So the Pope's champions dealt by the Waldenses in France, those ancient Protestants. One great city of theirs they took, and put to the sword sixty thousand. To another

they gave quarter for life; but so as that both the men and the women should depart stark naked, and show all, *partibus illis quae honeste nominari non possunt, sanctorum illorum cruciatorum oculis expositis.*

**The inhabitant of Zaanan]** *Loci pecorosi*, saith Junius, the country of flocks. Some make it to allude to Zion. Others say it signifieth an outlet; and make it to be as a gate to the kingdom of Judah. These came not forth of their gate in the mourning of Bethazel, or of the place together, to condole with them, as having their hands full at home, and matter enough of mourning for their own misery.

**He shall receive of you his standing]** The enemy shall stand and stay among you till he hath subdued you, and made a clear conquest; he shall not give you over till he have done the deed.

Ver. 12. **For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good]** Or, shall grieve for the good, viz. that he hath lost in the common calamity; grieve till he be heart sick, as **#Am 6:6**, or wait till he faint, for "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," **#Pr 13:12**. The name of this city is Maroth, that is, bitternesses; and bitter things shall befall her, see **#Ru 1:20**, because together with the good of piety, which she ought to have waited upon, she hath lost the good of prosperity, which in vain she hath waited for. "The expectation of the wicked is wrath," **#Pr 11:23**.

**But evil came down from the Lord]** It is he that sends and sets the enemy to work; as Titus acknowledged, at the last destruction of Jerusalem, that he only lent his hands to the Divine justice. It was God that stirred up enemies to revolted Solomon. And Job descried God's hand on the arms of the Sabeen robbers.

Ver. 13. **O thou inhabitant of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast]** To the camel or dromedary, saith Calvin, which is a very swift beast (we call a slow body dromedary, *per antiphrasin*), or to the post horses *Aniariis*, as Junius; he means, Make haste away. Salmaneser is already at Samaria, and Sennacherib will be ere long at Lachish, **#Isa 36:2**. *Hannibal ad portas*, Hannibal at the gates, begone with all possible speed; haste, haste, haste.

**She is the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion]** Not partner only, but author and ringleader. Such are all leaders of heresy and inventors of evil things, **#Ro 1:30**. These shall drink deep of God's wrath here, and be cast alive into the burning lake, **#Re 19:20**. Some apply the words to the confederacy of Lachish with Jerusalem against King Amaziah, **#2Ki 14:19**, slain at this city.

**For the transgressions of Israel were found in thee]** The often change of person in this verse is remarkable. The chief sin that Lachish stands charged with is that, being near to Beersheba, she had learned her manner, **#Am 8:14**, that is, her rites and religions, instituted by Jeroboam, and transmitted them to Jerusalem. Superstition soon spreads, and is catching; like the Jerusalem artichoke, it quickly overruns the ground, and chokes the heart.

Ver. 14. **Therefore shalt thou give presents, &c.]** And so seek to make thee friends among the Philistines; but such carnal confederacies never prosper. The Greek Churches, A. D. 1438, afraid of the Turks, sent and subjected themselves to the Bishop of Rome, that they might have the help of the Latin Churches; but shortly after they were destroyed, their empire subdued, and swallowed up by the Ottoman greatness, &c. How much better were it to send a lamb to the ruler of the earth! **#Isa 16:1**, to bring presents unto him that ought to be feared! **#Ps 76:11**, even to God, who cutteth off the spirits of princes, and is terrible to the kings of the earth! **#Mic 1:12**. Was he not so to Sennacherib, whom Lachish here feared, and fled from? to Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Xerxes, who, after he had wasted over two million men into Greece, and whipped the Hellespont (for battering his bridge of boats over it) with three hundred stripes, was defeated, routed, and forced to flee back in a poor fisher's boat, to save his own life? (Herod.)

**The houses of Achzib (that is, of a lie) shall be a lie to the kings of Israel]** Or have been a lie to the kings of Israel; never true to those that trusted them: and wilt thou confederate with them, and confide in them?

Ver. 15. **Yet will I bring an heir unto thee]** Or, a possessor, who shall lay claim to thee, as by right of inheritance. This heir was the Assyrian, and those colonies brought by him into the cities of Israel, **#2Ki 17:34**. These took upon them as heirs and owners of the

country, till turned out afterwards by Josiah, King of Judah, #2Ki 23:4,8. Here is another elegant allusion, as this chapter is full of them, for *Mareshah* signifieth an inheritance or possession. And if it were Micah's own country, as many think, we may see the prophet's integrity in not bearing with his best friends; but taking the same liberty to tell them of their sins and dangers that they did to commit the one and to incur the other. "Physician, heal thyself," said they to our Saviour, #Lu 4:23, that is, thine own country, as it is there explained.

**He shall come unto Adullam, the glory of Israel]** Haply so called, because David was once there hidden and housed, and the place thereby renowned. Or, because it was a stronghold, wherein Israel gloried and trusted, but in vain, since the enemies should come to it, and surprise it. Some think poor Adullam is called "the glory of Israel" ironically, and by way of scorn. Some read it thus, O glory of Israel (to wit, then lost and overthrown); and they make it to be a deep sigh of the prophet, sent from the bottom of his heart; whereby he witnesseth that he is greatly sorry for the ruin of the Israelites; that he might move them also to mourn in like manner. This he further presseth them to in the next words.

Ver. 16. **Make thee bald and poll thee]** *i.e.* Make most bitter lamentation. He alludes to a custom among the Easterlings, of tearing off the hair of their heads and beards in times of great heaviness. See #Job 1:20 Isa 15:2 Jer 7:29 Ezr 9:3. In other cases baldness was forbidden Israel (lest they should symbolize with heathens), but in case of sorrow for sin they were called to it, #Isa 22:12.

**For thy delicate children]** To whom thou hast been rather a parricide than a parent; dealing by them, as that false schoolmaster in Italy, that brought forth his scholars to Hannibal.

**As the eagle]** When he is old, and loseth his feathers; and with them not only his beauty, but also his swiftness and courage.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Woe to them that devise iniquity]** Or, labour, affliction, vanity, a lie. The Hebrew word *Aven* is of large use; applied to all

kinds of sin which causeth pain, sorrow, and misery; and here in particular to covetousness, that root of all evil to a man's self and others, #1Ti 6:9,10. Our prophet flings a woe at it, as doth likewise Habakkuk, #Hab 2:9, calling it an evil covetousness, as the prophet Isaiah tells us, that for the iniquity of his covetousness God was wroth with Israel and smote him, #Isa 57:17. The world counts it a light offence; and casts a cloak of good husbandry over it, #1Th 2:5. But this disguise will serve such no better than that which Ahab once put on and perished. "Let no man deceive you with vain words" (those plastered words, πλαστοις λογοις, #2Pe 2:3, used by bell's proctors): "for because of these things" (*sc.* fornication, covetousness, &c., those peccadillos as they are counted) "cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience," #Eph 5:6. For what reason? They devise iniquity, *cogitant quasi coagitant*, they plot and plough mischief, being men of wicked devices, #Pr 14:2, talking again to themselves, as that covetous wretch did, #Lu 12:17, beating their brains about their worldly projects, and resting no more, no, not upon their beds by night (a time and place appointed for rest, when men should together with their clothes put off their cares, and compose themselves to sleep, that nurse of nature, and sweet parenthesis), than one doth upon a rack or bed of thorns.

**Thus they work evil upon their beds]** They work hard at it, having the devil for their taskmaster, who shall therefore also be their paymaster. He hath their souls here as in a sling, #1Sa 25:29, violently tossed about and restless; they are his drudges and dromedaries, driven about by him at his pleasure, #2Ti 2:26, wholly acted and agitated by him, #Eph 2:2, having as many lords as lusts, wherewith their hearts are night and day exercised, #2Pe 2:14, without intermission. See this in Felix, who at the same instant trembled and coveted a bribe; in Ahab, who, sick of Naboth's vineyard, laid him down upon his bed, but rested not, #1Ki 21:4. His heart did more afflict and vex itself with greedy longing for that bit of earth than the vast and spacious compass of a kingdom could counter comfort.

**When the morning is light they practise it]** And so they lose no time, being up and at it by peep of day; when others are fast asleep, and so more easily surprised and circumvented by them. The

morning is the most precious part of the day; and should be employed to better purpose. But "wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, as saith the proverb of the ancients," #1Sa 24:13, and as they like not to have God in their heads, #Ps 10:4, nor hearts, #Ps 14:1, so neither in their words, #Ps 12:4, nor ways, #Tit 1:16, but the contrary; surely Satan is rightly called the god of this world; because as God at first did but speak the word and it was done, so, if the devil do but hold up his finger, give the least hint, they are ready pressed to practise.

**Because it is in the power of their hand]** The Vulgate hath it, Because their hand is against God; and, indeed, the same word *El* signifieth God and power. The Seventy render it, Because they have not lifted up their hands to God (an exercise proper and fit for the morning, #Ps 5:4). The Tigurine, *Quia viribus pollent*, They have strength enough to do it. Their hand is to power (so the original hath it), that is, saith Calvin, *quantum possunt, tantum audent*, they dare do their utmost, they will try what they can do; their hand is ever ready to rake and scrape together commodity; neither can they be hindered either by the fear of God or any respect to righteousness. *Nihil cogitant quod non idem patrare ausint*. (De Monachis, Lutherus).

Ver. 2. **And they covet fields, and take them by violence]** See here the several degrees of sin, and what descents covetous men dig to hell, and beware betimes. Surely as the plot of all diseases lies in the humours of the body, so of all sin in the lust of the soul. The heathen could say (Laertins),

Παντων μεν πρωτιστα κακων επιθυμια εστιν.

Covetousness is called the lust of the eyes, #1Jo 2:16, because from looking comes lusting, from lusting acting (hence lusts of the soul are called deeds of the body, #Ro 8:13), yea, acting with violence, they covet and take, they rob and ravish, #Ps 10:9, there is neither equity nor honesty to be had at their hands; but as they take away fields, houses, heritages shamelessly; so they bear them away boldly, and think to escape scot free; because it is *facinus maioris abollae* (Juvenal), the fact of a great one, whose hand is to power, as #Mic 2:1.

**And houses, and take them away]** Though a man's house be his castle, as we say, yet it cannot secure him from these cormorants. Scribes and Pharisees devoured widows' houses, #Mt 23:14, where was a concurrence of covetousness and cruelty, for these seldom go sundered, besides the putrid hypocrisy of doing this under a pretence of long prayers. A poor man in his house is like a snail in his shell; crush that and you kill him.

**So they oppress (or defraud) a man and his house]** Either by fraud or force, by craft or cruelty, they ruin a man (a well-set man, *virum validum*, גבר) and his family, his whole progeny; which might not be done to the unreasonable creatures, #De 22:6. This is to be like Uladus, that cruel prince of Valachia; whose manner was, together with the offender, to execute the whole family; yea, sometimes the whole kindred.

Ver. 3. **Behold, against this family do I devise an evil]** They had devised iniquity, #Mic 2:1, and now he deviseth their misery. God usually retaliates, and proportions provocation to provocation, #De 32:21, frowardness to frowardness, #Ps 18:26, contrariety to contrariety, #Le 26:18,21, and device to device, as here. He loves to pay sinners home in their own coin; and to make them know, by sad experience, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter to forsake the Lord and his fear, #Jer 2:19. Woe be to that man against whom the Almighty sets himself to devise an evil; such a one shall find, that thought is not free (as that pestilent proverb would make it), either from the notice of God's holy eye, the censure of his mouth, or the stroke of his hand, see #Jer 4:14 6:19 Re 2:23 De 29:19. And this nature itself had some notion of, as appeareth by his censure who judged that Antiochus did therefore die loathsomely, because he had but an intent to burn Diana's temple (Polybius). *Fecit quisque quantum voluit*, saith Seneca; and *Incesta est, et sine stupro, quae stuprum cupit*, saith the same author. Vain thoughts are very sins, and expose men to punishment; these shall either excuse or accuse at the last day, #Ro 2:15. Meanwhile, God is devising what to do to them; he is preparing his bow and making ready his arrows upon the string, even a Tophet of the most tormenting temper will shortly swallow them up, without true and timely repentance.



**From which ye shall not remove your necks]** It shall so halter and hamper you, that, like "fishes taken in an evil net, and as birds caught in a snare, so shall ye be snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon you," #Ec 9:12, ye shall never be able either to avoid it or to abide it. But as the bird in a gin, the fish on the hook, the more it strives the more it sticks ( *Sic laqueos fera, dum iactat, astringit.* Sen.); and as the bullock under the yoke, the more he wriggles the more he galls; so shall it be here. Your fair necks, that would not bear the easy yoke of God's obedience, shall be ridden on by the enemy and bound to your two furrows, #Ho 10:10,11; yea, a yoke of iron shall be put upon thee, until thou be destroyed, #De 28:48.

**Neither shall ye go haughtily]** Heb. *Romah*; and hence haply *Roma* had its surname, from its height and haughtiness; according to that of the poet (Virg. Aeneid. I),

“ *atque altae moenia Romae.*”

The meaning here is, God would deject and darken them, so as that they shall utterly lose their former renown and splendour. He will thrust them down, as it were, with a thump on the back, and there hold them. See #Eze 21:26,27; the scene shall be changed, and the haughty abased.

**For this time is evil]** Both sinfully and penally evil. The apostle seemeth to allude to this text when he saith, "Redeem the time, because the days are evil"; and "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof" (κακια, *i.e.* κακωσις), that is, the misery of it, saith Christ, #Mt 6:34. And again, Those very days shall be affliction, θλιψις (so the Greek text hath it), #Mr 13:19, as if the time were turned into affliction; because of that evil, that only evil, without mixture of mercy, #Eze 7:5, here foretold, and therefore foretold that it might have been prevented, *ideo minatur Deus ut non puniat.*

Ver. 4. **In that day shall one take up a parable, &c.]** In that day, that doleful and dismal day of their calamity.

**Shall one]** Any one that is moved at your misery, and would work you to a sense of your sin, the mother of your misery.

**Shall take up a parable]** *Tristem et querulam*, sad and sorrowful.

**And lament with a doleful lamentation]** Heb. with a lamentation of lamentations, or with heigh-ho upon heigh-ho, as the word seems to signify.

**We be utterly spoiled]** Plundered to the life, laid naked to the very foundation, #**Mic 1:6**, put into such a condition as that there is neither hope of better nor place of worse.

**He hath changed the portion of my people]** That is, God, or the Assyrian, by God's appointment, hath taken away our country, and given it to strangers. The Pope took upon him, in Henry VIII's days, to give England, *Primo occupaturo*, to him that could first win it. This *brutum fulmen* bridging of lightning came to nothing; but when God's people changed their glory for that which profited not, #**Jer 2:11**, he soon changed their portion; he caused that good land to spew them out, he turned their weal into woe, and brought wrath upon them to the utmost. Neither profited it them any more to have been called God's people than it did Dives in flames, that Abraham called him son; or Judas, that Christ called him friend.

**How hath he removed it from me!]** This is lamentation-like indeed, see #**La 1:1 2:1 4:1**, all beginning with the same word, How. The speech is concise and abrupt, meet for mourners. There is an elegance in the original not to be translated. How uncertain are all things here! God sits upon the circle of the earth, and shakes out the inhabitants at pleasure, as by a canvas, #**Isa 40:22**. Persons and things are said to be in heaven, but on earth; on the outside of it only, where they have no firm footing. Dionysius was driven out of his kingdom; which yet he thought was tied to him with chains of adamant, saith the historian (Aelian. lib. 2).

**Turning away (from us as a loathsome object, being so incorrigibly flagitious) he hath divided our fields]** *sc.* to the enemy for a reward, as he gave Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar for his pains at Tyre. Or thus. Instead of restoring (which now we are hopeless of) he hath divided our fields, our fertile and fat country, to

those that will be sure to hold their own in it, as the Gauls and Goths did in Italy, after they had once tasted the sweetness of it. Vatablus rendereth the text thus: How hath he taken from me those fields of ours, which he seemed ready to restore! He hath even divided them, *sc.* to others.

Ver. 5. **Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot]** Fields were divided with cords of old, and inheritances also. See #Ps 16:5 105:11 78:55 2Sa 8:2. This hope is henceforth cut off from revolted Israel; the ten tribes never returned, the other two did, and some few of the ten among them. Whether upon their conversion to Christ they shall be restored to the promised land, Time, the mother of Truth, will make manifest.

**In the congregation of the Lord]** So you were once, but now nothing less. A congregation ye are still, but of malignants; a rabble of rebels conspiring against heaven. A name ye have to live, but ye are dead; ye cry out *Templum Domini*, The temple of the Lord are we; but in truth ye are no better than those Egyptian temples, beautiful without, but within nothing to be seen but a cat, rat, or some such despicable creature. Here they are called the congregation of the Lord by an irony, as the Cardinal of Ravenna is so called by way of derision.

Ver. 6. **Prophesy ye not, say they to them that prophesy]** Prodigious impudence thus to silence the prophets, or else to prescribe to them, according to the other reading of the text. Prophesy not, as they prophesy, for they are too tart; therefore drop not ye, who thus drop vinegar and nitre, who vex our galled consciences no less then the cruel Spaniards do the poor Indians' naked bodies, which, for a sport, they do day by day drop with burning bacon. But let these drop that can smooth us up, that can utter toothless truths, that will drop oil into our ears, and give us silken words (*byssina verba*), these be prophets for our turns, &c. God cannot please some hearers unless he speak tinkling and tickling words. Now, these must get their ears healed (as Demosthenes advised his countrymen of Greece) ere they can be in case to hear with profit. They must learn of bees, to pass by roses and violets and sit upon thyme; to heed, I mean, sound rebukes rather than smooth supparasitations. There are those who note a jeer in the term drop. It is well known that the word preached is often

compared to rain, **#De 32:2 Isa 55:10,11**. The prophets therefore are here in derision called droppers or distillers, and forbidden to do their office, or at least, to drop in that sort. Thus their successors in evil, the Pharisees, who were likewise covetous, derided Christ, **#Lu 16:14**. And thus their predecessors also, in Isaiah's time, put a scoff upon him and his preaching, **#Isa 28:10**, where the sound of the words in the original carries a taunt, as scornful people, by the tone of their voice and rhyming words, gibe and jeer at those whom they vilify.

**They shall not prophesy to them]** *q.d.* You shall have your wish; my droppers shall give over dropping, and be no further troublesome, nor take shame any more by prophesying to such a perverse people, so shamefully, so lawlessly wicked.

**That they shall not take shame]** Or, shall they not take shame? *q.d.* though they will not hear of it, that shame shall be their promotion and confusion their portion; yea, they shall surely feel and find it so. Ver. 7. **O thou that art named the house of Jacob]** That hast a name to live but art dead, **#Re 3:1**; that art called a Jew, and makest thy boast of God, **#Ro 2:17**; thou hast a form of knowledge, **#Ro 2:20**, and a form of godliness, **#2Ti 3:3**; a semblance of sanctimony, **#Lu 8:18**; acting religion, playing devotion, as if it were a name only, or as if it were enough to be named the house of Jacob, or to have his voice, though the hands are the hands of Esau, the practice nothing suitable to the profession. Thus many among us content themselves with the bare name of Christians, as if many a ship hath not been called safeguard or good speed which yet hath fallen into the hands of pirates. The devil will surely sweep and hell swallow all such Nominalists; such shall find that an empty title yields but an empty comfort at the last. What was Dives the better for this, that Abraham called him son, or Judas, that Christ called him friend, or the rebellious Jews, that God styleth them his people? Doth he not elsewhere disclaim them, and call them a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity; the people of his wrath and of his curse? May not all formalists fear Jacob's fear, **#Ge 27:12**, "My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver, and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing." Our heavenly Father will surely feel us in our addresses, and if he find us but

complimenting and contenting ourselves to be called the house of Jacob, he will confute our vain confidences, and cut us out of the roll, as he did Dan and Ephraim, who were named the house of Jacob, and yet, for their wickedness, are passed by in the reckoning up of the twelve tribes, **#Re 7:4-8**, as if they were soldiers put out of pay and cashiered.

**Is the spirit of the Lord straitened?]** Or shortened? Is he a penny father? Hath he but one blessing? Is there not with him "the residue of the spirit," **#Mal 2:15**; plenteous redemption, an exceeding abundant goodness, even to a super redundancy? *υπερεπλεονασε*, **#1Ti 1:14**. Where, then, is the fault that you are no more Jacob-like, plain hearted and persuasible; that ye refuse to be reformed, hate to be healed, saying to me, Depart, and to my prophets, Drop not, &c. Neither curse ye nor bless ye, as he said to Balaam. Wherein if they should hearken to you, and be ruled by you, yea, should you straitly threaten them with bonds to speak henceforth to no man in my name, as **#Ac 4:17**; yet my word is not bound, **#2Ti 2:9**, but runs and is glorified, **#2Th 3:1**; my Spirit is not straitened, but is free and not fettered. I tell you that if these (prophets) should hold their peace, and not drop, the stones would immediately cry out, **#Lu 19:40**; which against change of weather do stand with great drops of water to confute your unyieldingness. "Turn ye therefore now at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you," **#Pr 1:23**. I will do it howsoever; yea, in despite of you I will do it, as some sense the foregoing verse, reading it thus, and the original will bear it, Drop ye not, but they shall drop.

**Are these his doings?]** *i.e.* Such as God doth approve of, or rather, are these Jacob's doings? Tread you in the steps of your father Jacob? Did he ever silence the prophets and withstand those that were sent unto him? Did he not rather lie low, put his mouth in the dust, and cry out, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth?" Good is the word of the Lord which ye have spoken. And whereas ye will be apt enough to reply that Jacob had no other cause, for the prophets never spake but good and comfortable things to him, it is answered in the next words:

**Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?]** Heb. upright; that pondereth his paths by the weights of my word, and turneth not to the right hand nor to the left, **#Pr 4:26,27**, but walketh exactly, accurately, and precisely, **#Eph 5:15**, keeping within my precincts. Do not my words do good to such, and speak they not peace to him? David felt it as sweet as honey, **#Ps 119:103**. But as honey causeth pain to exulcerate parts, though of itself it be sweet and medicinal, so doth the word of God to exulcerate consciences. Children, though they love to lick in honey, yet they will not endure to have it come near their lips when they have sore mouths: so is it here,  $\delta\rho\iota\mu\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\ \mu\epsilon\lambda\iota\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \epsilon\lambda\kappa\epsilon\sigma\iota$ . Excellently saith St Austin, *Adversarius est nobis, quamdiu sumus et ipsi nobis*. The word of God is adversary to none but such as are their own greatest adversaries. It may well be compared to Moses's rod, which, while he held it in his hand, it flourished and brought forth almonds, but being cast on the ground it turned into a serpent. Did it not take hold of those refractories, **#Zec 1:6**, that would not take hold of God's covenant, and choose the things that pleased him? **#Isa 56:4**. Does it not still sting wicked people with unquestionable conviction and horror, when as "great peace have they which love God's law, and nothing shall offend them?" **#Ps 119:165**.

Ver. 8. **Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy]** Heb. yesterday, no longer ago; to all their former flagitious practices they have now newly added this of execrable rapine and robbery, which is still fresh, and as it were flagrant in mine eyes. Although the truth is, that God looketh upon former sins as presently committed, for as there is no beginning of eternity, so neither is there any succession. But let men take heed how they heap up sin, lest they heap up wrath, for although God may bear with people for one or two backslidings, yet when once it comes to three transgressions and to four, he will not turn away the punishment, **#Am 1:2**; and one new sin may set many old to work in the conscience, making it like Ezekiel's scroll, wherein was written "lamentations, and mourning, and woe," **#Eze 2:10**. "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord," **#2Ki 9:26**. The word signifieth last night, though it were done some while before. See the word yesterday so used by the apostle Hebraizing with his Hebrews, **#Heb 13:8**. Some read the text thus, He that was yesterday my people is risen up on the other side as against an enemy, viz. raging against

God and ranging against all men, biting all they came near, as mad dogs. See #**Isa 9:21 1Th 2:12**; they please not God, but rise up in rebellion against him, and are contrary to all men, being rather Ishmaelites than Israelites, #**Ge 16:12**; and therefore not rightly named the house of Jacob (that plain man, #**Ge 25:27**, without welt or guard, guile or gall), nor could the word of the Lord do good unto them so long as their deeds were evil, and they "loved darkness rather than light," #**Joh 3:19**.

**To pull off the robe with the garment]** Robbing and pillaging passengers with greatest inhumanity; not leaving them a rag to cover them or a cross to bless them with, as the proverb is. This was common in Scotland and Africa, saith Dameus here. It was in England also, till the days of King Alfred, who first divided the land into shires, and then the subjects into tenths or tithings; every one of which severally should give bond for the good bearing of each other. By this course men were not careful only of their own actions, but had an eye to all the nine, for which they stood bound, as the nine had over each. Insomuch that a poor girl might travel safely with a bag of gold in her hand, and none dared meddle with her.

**From men that pass by securely, as men averse from war]** There are a sort of such as delight in war, #**Ps 68:30**, that make a sport of it, as Abner, #**2Sa 2:14**; that take more pleasure in it than in an empire, as Justin saith of Pyrrhus, King of Epirots, *Nulli maior ex imperio, quam illi ex belle fur voluptas*. David was none such; and yet he wanted not for courage. His motto was, I am for peace, or (as the Hebrew hath it) I am peace. He had seen the woe of war, and knew well the lawlessness of it. The law is no more, saith the Church in the Lamentations, #**La 2:9**. *Inter arma silent leges*, saith the heathen, The noise of wars drowns the voice of laws. A reverend man hath well observed, that as those three commandments, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal," are ranked together in the law; so they are commonly violated, together, by unruly soldiers. #**Isa 13:16**, "Their children also shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their waves ravished." These are the miseries of war. But what meant these miscreants to shed the blood of war in peace, #**1Ki 2:5**, to strip the innocent and therefore fearless passenger of his raiment,

as those thieves did him that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, dreading no such danger, #Lu 10:30; neither to rob him only, but to ravish him too, #Ps 10:8-10, that they might "find all precious substance, and fill their houses with spoil," #Pr 1:13. And what meant the corrupt rulers to suffer it so to be, and not to brandish the sword of justice against such stigmatical Belialists?

Ver. 9. **The women of my people]** Or, the wives; once wives, but now widows, and therefore calamitous, friendless, comfortless, as a vine whose root is uncovered, as a wandering bird, or a nest forsaken, #Isa 16:2.

**Have ye cast out from their pleasant houses]** Where they had long lived with their husbands in love, peace, and much sweetness, as good Naboth's wife had. This was barbarous cruelty. God had taken order in the law, that none should harm a bird sitting upon her own nest, how much less a daughter of Abraham! Widows and orphans are his clients, #Ps 146:9.

**From their children have ye taken away my glory]** *i.e.* My maintenance and that livelihood that I had allowed them for their better education, which might have redounded to my great glory. Whereas now, being by you bereft both of friends and means, *gemunt, fremunt, vobis maledicunt, clamantque vindictam in coelum*, saith Montanus, they groan, they moan, they curse you, they cry to me for vengeance.

Ver. 10. **Arise ye and depart]** *Veteres migrate coloni*, make up your fardels and prepare for a deportation. Here is no longer being for you unless ye were better. Behold, "the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants," #Le 18:25.

**This is not your rest]** As you falsely, fancy and vainly vaunt, binding upon the promise, but not performing the condition. It is the guile of graceless men to stuff themselves with promises, till they have made them a pillow for sin. *Et sic praesumendo sperant, et sperando pereunt*, they presume till they perish, as he did who died with this desperate saying in his mouth, *Spes et fortuna valete*, Farewell life and hope together.



**Because it is polluted]** *sc.* by your sin, which is of so sullyng a nature that it defileth also the very visible heavens, which are therefore to be purged by the fire of the last day, like as those vessels that held the sin offering were either to be broken, if earthen, or to pass the fire if of better metal; they must not think to rest that let sin lie unrepented of in the conscience. But as a man that hath used himself to drink poison, at the first and second time he may do well, but the last it overcomes and destroys himself; so the next sin, though less, may set all the former to work. And as two poisons met in the stomach make a man restless, so sin and wrath, met in the conscience, raise a great garboil there. Neither must they think to dwell in God's good land that will not live by God's good laws, **#Isa 1:19 Ps 107:39,40**; they walk upon fireworks every moment ready to be blown up, "brimstone also is scattered upon their habitations," that is, the fire of God's wrath do but lightly touch it, they are suddenly consumed. Eusebius telleth us of Dioclesian, that bloody persecutor of the Church, that giving over the empire, he decreed to lead the rest of his life quietly; but he escaped not so. For after that his house was wholly consumed with lightning and a flame of fire that fell from heaven, he hiding himself for fear of the lightning, died within a little after.

**It shall destroy you even with a sore destruction]** *Dissipatione roborata* saith Calvin. *Perditione praecisa*, saith Tremellius. The land longs for a vomit to spue you out, and it shall do it effectually. Poison given in wine works more furiously than in water. Woe be to that people or person whom God will "destroy with a violent destruction!" This he doth not willingly, or from his heart, **#La 3:35**, but men's sins compel him to it. Surely as many a fowl is shot with an arrow feathered from her own body, and as of the blackbird's slime is made the lime whereby he is taken; so out of the dung of men's sins doth God make his lime twigs (his judgments I mean) to take them also. Long they might rest would they but let him rest; but pollution is the forerunner of perdition.

Ver. 11. **If a man, walking in the spirit, &c.]** *Si vir ventosus*, so Junius rendereth it, if a windy and false man lie, saying, &c. Let a man but feed them with vain hopes and frothy fancies; let him but make fair weather before them when the storm of God's wrath is ready to break out upon them; let him promise them plenty of all

things, and prophesy to them of wine and strong drink, as the Popish priests in Gerson's time publicly preached to the people, that if any one would hear a mass he should not on that day be struck blind, nor die suddenly, nor want sufficient sustenance, &c. These call themselves the spirituality, or men of the Spirit (as Hosea hath it), as if all others to them were carnal, and destitute of the Spirit. They also, after the manner of those false prophets of old, take to themselves big swollen titles, and as they increase in their pretended holiness, so they proceed in their titles from Padre benedicto to Padre Angels, then Archangels, Cherubino, and lastly Serephino, which is the top of perfection. But what is all this more than a light flask, or a pillar of smoke, which the higher it mounteth the sooner it vanisheth? And what are all such vain boasters but *gloriae animalia, popularis aurae mancipia vilia*, animals of reknown, cheap slaves of the breeze of popularity, as Jerome calls Crates the philosopher? may it not fitly be said of them, as #Ho 9:7, "The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad," and as #Eze 13:3. Surely these are "foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing. O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts," &c. "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" #Jer 5:31. All will be naught, no doubt. There is not a more dangerous creature than a parasitical prophet. Ezekiel calleth them the devil's dirt daubers, #Eze 13:10, his upholsterers, for they sew pillows, &c. And these are prophets for this people, fit lettuce for such lips, *dignum patella operculum*, a singular plague of God upon the men of this world, who deserve to be deceived; for what reason? they have desired it, and it best pleaseth their vitiated palates. Most people, having first flattered themselves, are well content to be soothed up by others; and I cannot but accord him that saith, If there were judges ordained for flattery they would have no doings, there being so very few that will complain that they are flattered.

Ver. 12. **I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee]** An evangelical promise (saith Diodati, after others) of gathering together the universal Church, under the kingdom of Christ, contrary to the precedent dispersion, #Mic 2:10. Assembling, I will assemble, and gathering, gather them, sc. into the bosom of the Church, called

therefore ecclesia (as culled and collected out of the world), and Church, or Kirk, of Κυριακή; because it belongs to the Lord Christ, who gathereth his together as the hen doth her chickens, "and died not for that nation of Jews only, but that also he might gather together into one the children of God that were scattered abroad," #Joh 11:51,52. Here he is called the breaker up, and his apostles likewise those that have broken up, and have passed through the gate, doing great exploits, and subduing souls to the obedience of the faith, as here in Britain, where Caesar himself could not break through, but

“ *Territa quaesitis ostendit terga Britannis,*”

as Pompey in Lucan upbraids him. Hence Tertullian saith, Christ brake into those places of Brittany that the Romans could never come at, *Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca Christo patuerunt*. He is that "king against whom there is no rising up," #Pr 30:31. He is Jehovah on the head of his people, or in the forefront of them, as their captain general, to lead them on, *Quasi antesignanus et ductor* (Lapid.), and bring them off safely in all encounters. *Habent ista amplissimam promissionem*, saith Gualther here; this is an excellent promise, and carrieth in it a most sweet consolation. But I rather think it to be a continuation of the former threatening: "I will surely assemble them," *sc.* to the slaughter. I will gather them together, *sc.* that they may be broken in pieces, #Isa 8:9. I will put them (or pen them up) together as the sheep of Bozrah, that are fat and fit, and appointed for the slaughter. See #Isa 34:6. Bozrah was a rich pasture country in Edom, from whence most fat sheep and meet for meat were sent to the shambles.

**As the flock in the midst of their fold]** So will God first shut you up by strait sieges, and then number you out to the sword, and ye shall "all bow down to the slaughter," #Isa 65:12. There is a memorable story of the suffering of certain good people in Calabria, A.D. 1560, by the hands of the bloody Papists there. A great sort of them being thrust up in one house together, as in a sheepfold, the executioner comes in, and among them takes one, and blindfoldeth him with a muffler about his eyes, and so leadeth him forth to a larger place, where he commandeth him to kneel down, which being

done, he cutteth his throat, and so, leaving him half-dead, and taking his butcher's knife and muffler, all of gore blood, cometh again to the rest; and so leading them one after another, he dispatched them all, to the number of eighty-eight. In Ireland many like barbarous butcheries have been committed by those breathing devils, the Romish rebels, those fat wolves, worrying Christ's flock in the midst of the land, λυκοι βαρεις, #Ac 20:29. But "shall they thus escape by iniquity?" No verily, "in thine anger cast down that people, O God," #Ps 56:7. Give them blood again to drink, for they are worthy. A Lapidè saith, that Bozrah signifieth Rome, and that Micah here, after a sort, foretelleth that the Church of Rome should be the common sheepfold of the sheep of Christ, under one chief shepherd, the Pope. But this conceit is far fetched; and Rome (the slaughter house of the saints) is no otherwise Bozrah than that she is of Edom (the Rabbis for Dumah, #Isa 21:11, read Roma, and call the court of Rome the wicked kingdom of Edom), and that her brats, as the vulture's young ones, do glut glut blood (so the Hebrew soundeth, #Job 39:30, רָדַעֲלֵעוּ), and where the slain are there is she.

**They shall make a great noise]** Heb. a humming noise. By reason of the multitude of men, or rather wolves, *Lycanthropi*, wherewith they are environed, to their no small heartbreak.

Ver. 13. **The breaker is come up before them]** The πτολιπορθος, τειχεσπιλητης, breach maker shall handle them hardly and cruelly, as galley slaves, or men condemned to the mine pits.

“ *Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem.*”

**They have broken up]** Made havoc, and laid heaps upon heaps.

**And their king shall pass before them]** Not only *fex populi*, the dregs of the people, but *Rex ipse*, the king himself shall be carried captive, as were Hoshea and Zedekiah, the city being broken up, #Jer 52:7.

**And the Lord on the head of them]** Jehovah, that man of war, #Ex 15:3, going before them, as captain of the enemies' forces, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant, #Le 26:25.

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **And I said]** viz. At another time, and in a new discourse; the heads whereof we have here recorded. A stinging sermon it is, preached to the princes and prophets, those great heteroclitites *{a}* in the house of Israel. For as in a fish, so in a Church and state, corruption begins at the head; and as rheum *{b}* falling from the head upon the lights, breeds a consumption of the whole body, so is it here. To the chieftains therefore, and *capitanei*, capital, our prophet applieth himself. And as it is said of Suetonius, that *ea libertate, scripsit Imperatorum vitas qua ipsi vixerunt*, that he wrote the emperors' lives with as much liberty as they lived them; so did Micah as boldly reprove the princes' sins as they committed them. Such another preacher among us was Latimer, and after him Deering; who in his sermon before Queen Elizabeth, speaking of the disorders of the times; These things are so, saith he, and you sit still and do nothing. And again, May we not well say with the prophet, saith he, It is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, seeing there is so much disobedience both in subjects and prince. Once it was *Tanquam ovis*, as a sheep, before the shearer: but now it is *Tanquam iuvenca petulca*, as an untamed heifer. In our days Reverend Mr Stock had this commendation given him by a faithful witness; that he could speak his mind fitly, and that he dared speak it freely. I will go to the Bishop (Stephen Gardiner, then lord chancellor), and tell him to his beard that he doth naught, said Dr Taylor, martyr; and he did so, though his friends dissuaded him. Truth must be spoken, however it be taken. And if God's messengers must be mannerly in the form, yet in the matter of their message they must be resolute and plain dealing. It is probable that Joseph used some kind of preface to Pharaoh's baker in reading him that hard destiny, **#Ge 40:19**, such haply as was that of Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, **#Da 4:19**, or as Philo brings him in with *a Utinam tale somnium non vidisses*. But for the matter he gives him a sound, though a sharp, interpretation. So dealeth Micah by these corrupt princes, to whom nevertheless he giveth their due titles; and of whom he fairly begs audience. "Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob," &c. Or, hear ye now, who formerly have refused to hearken. It was in Hezekiah's days that this sermon was preached, as appeareth **#Jer 26:18**, not long before Sennacherib invaded the land, **#Mic 5:5**. And although the king himself were religious and

righteous, yet many of his princes and courtiers, who in the reign of his father Ahaz had been habituated in rapine and wrong-dealing, still played their pranks, and are here as barely told their own.

**Is it not for you to know judgment?]** To know it and do it? as it is said of our Saviour, that he knew no sin, that is, he did none. And have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? "they eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon God," #Ps 14:4. Of all men magistrates should be knowing men, fearing God, hating covetousness and cruelty, #Ex 18:21. They are the eyes of their country, and if they be dark, how great is that darkness! They are the common lookingglasses by which other men use to dress themselves. Judges they are, to discern and decide controversies; fit it is, therefore, and necessary that they know judgment, how else shall they execute it? Cicero complaineth of the Roman priests in his days, that there were many things in their own laws that themselves understood not. "I will get me to the great men," saith Jeremiah (when he found things far amiss among the Vulgate), "and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds," #Jer 5:5.

{a} Deviating from the ordinary rule or standard; irregular, exceptional, abnormal, anomalous, eccentric.

Said of persons and things. (ED)

{b} Watery matter secreted by the mucous glands or membranes, such as collects in or drops from the nose, eyes, and mouth, etc., and which, when abnormal, was supposed to cause disease; hence, an excessive or

morbid 'defluxion' of any kind. (ED)

**Ver. 2. Who hate the good, and love the evil]** *q.d.* That you know not judgment, but are men ignorant of the truth which is according to godliness, appeareth by your wicked practices. For you stand across to what God requireth, hating what you should love, and loving where you should hate, *Homo est inversus decalogus*. Goodness is in itself amiable and attractive but you are perfect strangers to it, and therefore hate it and those that profess it. Evil is of the devil, and must therefore needs be loathsome; and yet you love it, allow it, and wallow in it; whereas you should "abhor that which is evil," hate it as hell, *αποστυγουντες*, "and cleave," or be fast glued, *κολλωμενοι*, "to that which is good," #Ro 12:9. You are direct antipodes to the godly, #Ps 15:4, and have nothing in you of

the Divine nature, #2Pe 1:4, or of the spot of God's children, but are a "perverse and crooked generation," #De 32:3.

**Who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones]** Like so many carnivorous cannibals or truculent wild beasts. As the ossifrage, or breakbone, pursueth the prey, tears off the flesh, breaks the bones, and sucks out the marrow: such were these griping tyrants, their furious rapacity surmounted all bounds of humanity. Such a one was Verres among the Romans, as Cicero describeth him; that tiger, Tiberius, those Romish usurers in King John's time here, called *Caursini, quasi capientes ursi* (quoth Paris), devouring bears, who left not so much money in the whole kingdom as they either carried with them or sent to Rome before them. Money and lands are here called men's skin, flesh, and bones; and a poor man's substance is his life. See #Mr 12:44 Lu 8:48. Hence oppression is called a bony sin, #Am 5:12,18, and oppressors, men eaters, #Ps 14:4, and murderers, #Hab 2:12. Cyprian cries out, *Ferae parcunt Danieli, Ayes pascunt Eliam, homines saeviunt*; Lions spare Daniel, ravens feed Elias, but men rage and are worse than both. Melancthon makes mention of a certain prince, some few years before his time, who, to get money out of his subjects, would send for them, and by knocking out first one tooth, and then another (threatening to leave them toothless else), would extort from them what sums soever he pleased. Our King John's exactors received from his subjects no less sums of curses than of coin, saith the chronicler; and so did Cardinal Woisey, under Henry VIII, by his importable subsidies, which caused Suffolk to rise up in arms, making poverty their captain.

Ver. 3. **Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skins, &c.]** He still proceeds in the allegory, the better to argue and aggravate their extreme cruelty. Money, saith the heathen, is a man's flesh, blood, life, all. Of this, when the people were pilled and polled by their cruel princes, who are here compared to butchers and cooks, they are looked upon as not only excoriated, but excarnified, and even exossated, and laid for dead; for *mortis habet vices quae trahitur vita genitibus*. It is a lifeless life that many poor people live for want of necessaries. Such savage shepherds Ezekiel inveighs against, that not only shear their sheep, but hold them and suck their

blood, #Eze 34:1-10. *Atqui pastoris est pecus tondere, non deglubere, non carnem et ossa concidere.* (Tiber. ap. Sueton.).

**Chop them in pieces, as for the pot, &c.]** Making no more bones of undoing them and their families than to eat a meal's meat when hungry; yea, nourishing their hearts therewith, "as in a day of slaughter," or good cheer, #Jas 5:5.

Ver. 4. **Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them]** Then, *sc.* when God shall have changed their cheer, pulled the fat morsel from between their teeth, and fed them with the bread of affliction and water of affliction, #1Ki 22:27, with prisoners' pittance, as they call it, which will neither keep them alive nor suffer them to die; then shall they cry and whine as hogs when hungry, as dogs when tied up from their meat; but God will not hear them. He will even cast out their prayers with contempt, as being the prayers of the flesh for ease, and not of the spirit for grace. They cry unto the Lord aloud, but it is only to be rid of his rod; they roar when upon the rack, but it is only to get off; they look ruefully, as the fox doth when taken in a gin, but it is only to be set at liberty; they chatter out a charm when God's chastening is upon them, yea, they may be with child (as it were) of a prayer, and yet bring forth nothing but wind, #Isa 26:16-18. For either God answereth them not at all, which was Saul's case and curse, #1Sa 28:15, and Moab's, #Isa 16:12, and David's enemies', #Ps 18:41; or else he give them bitter answers, #Eze 14:4 Jud 10:13,14. Or if better; it is but for a further mischief, that he may curse their blessings, and consume them after that he had done them good, #Jos 24:20. Their preservation from one evil is but a reservation to seven worse; as we see in Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Ahab, and others. "Lo, this is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors which they shall receive of the Almighty," #Job 27:13-15, &c. See the place. Remediless misery shall befall them, calamities that shall wring from them clamours, but to no purpose or profit. See #Pr 1:28.

**He will even hide his face from them]** That is, withdraw his favour, care, providence, help, presence, and benefits, of all which the face is the symbol: that like as they have turned upon God the back and not the face, and have been merciless to men, hiding their eyes from



their own flesh, **#Isa 58:7**; so shall it be done to them in the day of their distress. God will award them judgment without mercy who showed no mercy, **#Jas 2:18**. He will set off all hearts from them, as he did from wicked Haman, when the king frowned upon him. Lastly, he will turn their own consciences loose upon them (as once he did upon Joseph's brethren, **#Ge 42:21**), to ring that doleful knell in their ears, **#Isa 33:1**, "Woe to thee that spoileth," &c. "when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled," &c. *Talionis lege mulctabere*, as Adonibezek, Phocas, Charles IX. See **#Pr 21:18**. {See Trapp on "Pr 21:18"}

Ver. 5. **Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets]** False prophets, who pretended Divine authority, when as God never sent them, but expressly declareth here against them, and threateneth them. Those profane princes had their fleshflies, those court parasites, to soothe and smooth them up in their sins; to promise them peace, albeit they walked in the imagination of their own hearts, "to add drunkenness to thirst," and to live as they wanted, **#De 29:19**. *Mirifica est sympathia inter Magnates et parasites*, saith Bucholcer. There is a strange sympathy between great men and clawbacks: nothing so troublesome to such as truth, nothing so toothsome as flattery: this is the fruit of sinful selflove; and the end thereof are the ways of death **#Pr 16:25**.

**That make my people to err]** That seduce them and carry them out of the right way into bypaths and blind thickets of error, where they are lost for ever, **#De 13:18**. Seducers are said to draw men violently, *αποσταν*, **#Ac 20:30**, or to thrust them onward. Jeroboam is said to have "driven Israel from following the Lord"; and the false apostles to drag disciples after them, **#Ac 20:29,30**, compelling them, by their persuasions, to embrace those distorted doctrines that cause convulsions of conscience.

**That bite with their teeth]** The dogs of Congo bite though they bark not, saith Mr Purchas (Pilgr. of Religion): there are a sort of cur dogs, saith another, that suck a man's blood only with licking (Christ's Politician, by The. Scot). Seducers are such: "Beware of false prophets for they come to you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves." And in this sense Jerome and Theodoret take this text: they devour those they make prize of, as the apostle's

word signifieth, συλαγωγειν, #Col 2:8. Others think their covetousness and gormandise is noted.

“ *O Monachi, vestri stomachi sunt amphora Bacchi:  
Vos estis, Deus est testis, certissima pestis.*”

*As hungry dogs they snap at a crust, and make clean work, such is their voracity and unsatisfiability.*

“ *Ingluvies, et tempestas, barathrumque macelli.*”

**And cry, Peace]** Παντα καλωσ εσται. All shall be as well as heart can wish or need require. Let these Cerberuses <sup>{a}</sup> but be morselled and you shall hear no worse of them. Like they are to the ravens of Arabia, that, full gorged, have a tuneably sweet record, but empty, screech horribly. *Si veatri bene si lateri*, as Epicurus saith in Horace; Let their bellies be filled and their backs fitted, and they will prophesy all good to you: as those false prophets, nourished by Jezebel, did to Ahab; as the Pharisees cried up to the centurion, who had built them a synagogue, #Lu 7:5; as the Popish clergy canonize their benefactors, and extol them to the skies. Wulfin, Bishop of Sherborn, displaced secular priests and put in monks. Hence the monkish writers make him a very holy man, and report of him, that when he lay dying he cried out suddenly, "I see the heavens open and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God," and so died. Yea, they had a trick to make their images speak their minds this way. As the cross of grace here in England had a man within it enclosed with a hundred wires to make the image goggle with the eyes, nod with the head, hang the lip, move and shake his jaws, according as the value was of the gift that was offered. If it were a small piece of silver, he would hang a frowning lip; if a piece of gold, then should his jaws go merrily. This idolatrous forgery was at last, by Cromwell's means, disclosed, and the image, with all his engines, showed openly at Paul's Cross, and there torn in pieces by the people who had been so seduced (Acts and Mon. fol. 1084).

**And he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him]** Heb. sanctify a war, *id est, excommunicatis aqua et igni interdicut, crucem adversus eos praedicant*, they thunder

against them, and throw them out of the Church: publish their crusades, as they did against the Waldenses in France, the Hussites in Bohemia, and Luther in Germany, whom the Pope excommunicated, the emperor proscribed, various divines wrote against: the reason whereof, when Erasmus was asked by the Elector of Saxony, he rightly answered, Because he meddleth with the Pope's triple crown and with the friar's fat paunches.

{a} In Greek and Latin mythology the proper name of the watch dog which guarded the entrance of the infernal regions, represented as having three heads. (ED

**Ver. 6. Therefore night shall be unto you]** Ye shall be benighted, your gifts blasted, and your persons baffled: your lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness; the sword shall be upon your arms, and upon your right eyes; your arms shall be clean dried up, and your right eyes utterly darkened, #Zec 11:17. Those illuminations and inspirations that ye seemed to have shall be taken from you, and God shall pass that dreadful sentence, Take the talent from him, even here in this life; let him not have the least dram or drop of a prophetic spirit, of ministerial abilities; and then, in the next world, cast "ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness," &c., #Mt 25:28,30.

**And it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine]** *Tenebrae vobis a divinatione, vel propter divinationem*, so Calvin. All the reward ye shall have for your divination shall be disgrace and confusion: your folly shall be manifest unto all men, as was that of Jannes and Jambres, #2Ti 3:9.

**And the sun shall go down over the prophets]** The same thing is set forth by sundry metaphors, for more assurance: for *Hypocritis nihil stupidius*, it is hard to persuade a hypocrite that evil is towards him. See #Mic 3:11.

**Ver. 7. Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded]** They shall be hissed and hooted at for impostors and falsaries; shame shall be the promotion of these fools, as it is at this day of the heathen philosophers, of the Jewish Rabbis, of the Popish doctors and schoolmen, who once carried the hell for most acute and accurate divines, but now appear to be great triflers; a rotten generation of dunghilldivines, as one styleth them: in detestation of

whose vain jangling and noting about questions, #1Ti 6:4, Luther saith, *Prope est ut iurem, &c.*, I could swear almost that there was not a schoolman that understood one chapter of the Gospel (Luth. tom. 1, oper. lat. ep. 47). Latimer professed that by hearing Bilney's confession he learned more than before in many years. So from that time forward, saith he, I began to smell the word of God, and forsake the school doctors and such fooleries.

**Yea, they shall all cover their lips]** And stand aloof, as lepers. See #Le 13:45 Eze 24:17,22. Or they shall leave off their lying; for I will stop their mouths, that they shall not hereafter so much as mute any more, *Ego illis os claudam* (Calv.). The Septuagint render it, All men shall abhor them, shall open their lips against them. *Montanus, involvent mystacem suam*, they shall wrap up their moustaches, which (saith a Lapid) the false prophets wore upon their upper lip, *et incedebant comptuli*, and went neatly trimmed, as do now the Calvinistic ministers. But if some do so, yet this is better than the Popish priests shaving, which is a ceremony so bald, that some priests in France are ashamed of the mark; and few of them have it that can handsomely avoid it.

**For there is no answer of God]** He comes not at them, as sometimes he did to Abimelech, Laban, Balaam; neither speak they according to his word, for what reasons? "there is no light in them," #Isa 8:20. The philosophers "professing themselves to be wise" (but wanting the wisdom from above) "became fools," #Ro 1:22. The Pharisees, had they known anything aright and as they ought, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, #1Co 2:8. Oracles they had, and miracles enough; but they "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized," #Lu 7:30; or if they were, yet remained they a viperous brood, #Mt 3:7, and never attained to that answer of a good conscience toward God, #1Pe 3:21. The schoolmen often cite the philosophers, seldom the apostles; they count the authority of Fathers as good as that of Scriptures: neither doubt they to call the writings of the Fathers by the name of Scripture (*Lombard passim*). Was not this to set "men's threshold by God's threshold; and their posts by his posts," #Eze 43:8. What marvel therefore though they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, while they taught for doctrines

men's traditions? What marvel though Popish fopperies, once so admired, be now so much slighted, since the world seeth further into them than formerly? Notable is that passage in King Henry VIII's protestation against the Pope: England is no more a babe; there is no man here but now he knows that they do foolishly that part with gold for lead. Surely, except God take away our right wits, not only the Pope's authority shall be driven out for ever, but his name also shortly shall be forgotten in England. We will from henceforth ask counsel of him and his, when we list to be deceived, when we covet to be in error, when we desire to offend God, truth, and honesty.

Ver. 8. **But truly I am full of power]** But doth it become the prophet thus to praise himself? *Laus proprio sordescit in ore:* and those who vaunt most have often the least courage; as those creatures who have the greatest hearts of flesh are the most timorous; as the stag, panther, hare. For answer, it must be considered that the prophet speaketh not here of his own good parts, out of a vain glorious humour (it was enough for him that he was "all glorious within," #Ps 45:13, *virtusque sue contenta theatre est*), but to separate himself from those false prophets aforementioned, and to assert his calling by his qualifications, as doth likewise St Paul, #2Co 12:1-13, to those who sought a proof of Christ speaking in him. The word rendered But, truly signifies, All which notwithstanding: *q.d.* Albeit there is such a general defection from God, and such unfaithfulness in the prophets of these times, yet I am full of power, lively and lusty, vigorous and vivacious.

**By the spirit of the Lord]** That noble spirit, as David calleth him, #Ps 51:12, that spirit "of power, of love, and of a sound mind" (as Paul, #2Ti 1:7), that putteth spiritual mettle into the soul, and steeleth it against all opposition. And truly if the Spirit put not vigour into us how dead and fiat are our duties and all ordinances, like liquor that hath lost its spirits! there is as much difference many times as between cold water and *aqua vitae*, water of life.

**And of judgment]** To discern things that differ, to time a word, as the prophet Isaiah hath it, #Isa 50:4, and to teach things profitable and proper to my auditors (not as he in the emblem, that gave straw to the dog and a bone to the ass; or as those false prophets, who spake good of evil and evil of good), and wisely to distinguish

between law and gospel *in praxi*; which whoso can do let him thank God, saith Luther, and let him know that he is a divine indeed; *gratias agat Deo, et sciat se esse Theologum* (Luth.).

**And of might]** Or, of manhood, virtue, prevalence against an adversary, patience under whatsoever cross occurrences for the truth's sake, and for my plain dealing. A minister had need be a man every inch of him; and to play the man ἀνδριζέσθε, #1Co 16:13, yea, as the good soldier of Jesus Christ, to suffer hardship; being "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." He must be like the diamond in the high priest's breastplate for hardness and hardiness, as of Athanasius Nazianzen testifieth that he was *Magnes et Adamas*, both a lodestone, for his loveliness and humility, and an adamant, for his resolute stoutness and magnanimity against those that were evil.

**To declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin]** To tell them of their wickedness with the same liberty that they commit it. See here the true picture of a preacher, both how he must be gifted, and how deeded. A thankless office it is with the world to be thus bold and busy; and very many ministers affect to be counted no meddlers: they think it enough to preach toothless truths, and not to incur the displeasure of people by telling them of their transgressions and God's judgments. But this is not the garb and guise of those that are sent and gifted by God. See #Eze 3 Eze 33 Ver. 9. **Hear this, I pray you, ye heads, &c.**] He had had a bout with them before; but because little good was thereby done, he is at them again; according to that counsel of the wise man, #Ec 11:6, "In the morning sow thy seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not," &c. "Preach the word," saith the apostle, "be instant" (or stand over the work, ἐπιστηθι) "in season, out of season," #2Ti 4:2. Chrysostom told his Antiochians, that he would never give over preaching against that sin of swearing till they gave over their swearing; which, because he could not get them to do, he breaks out into these words, It will be a hard speech unto you, but I will speak it: though there be so many thousands of you, yet there cannot be found a hundred that shall be saved; and I tell you true, I doubt of them too.

**Ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel]** As bad as they were he gives them their titles. The devil also is to have his due; he is called by the Holy Ghost "Prince of the air," and his angels are styled "principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world," **#Eph 6:12**. {See Trapp on "Mic 3:1"}

**That abhor judgment]** They were not only ignorant of it, **#Mic 3:1**, but abhorred it; and therefore abhorred it because they knew it not. Plato could say, that if moral virtue could be beheld with mortal eyes it would attract all hearts to itself. "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, spake evil of those things that they understood not," **#2Pe 2:12**, and "what they knew naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupted themselves," **#Jude 10**; being carried away by their impetuous and imperious lusts, they not only did that which was evil, but also hated the light of the law that reproved and sentenced them; licensing others by their practice, at least, to do the like. Such Centaurs and Cyclopes were these princes of Israel grown; such Heteroclitites these heads of the house of Jacob. "The whole head was sick," **#Isa 1:5**, the rulers were a scab, **#Isa 5:7**. The Lord "looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." They had made the age not unlike that under Nero, wherein nothing almost was unlawful; but villany was acted by authority (Dio Cassius).

**And pervert all equity]** Heb. they pervert, &c. It is spoken to others, in token of abomination; see the like, **#Ge 49:4**, with the note. Now equity or rectitude is perverted, when the guilty are acquitted and the innocent condemned, see **#Isa 5:20,23**, when there is accepting of persons. and receiving of gifts,

Ver. 10. **They build up Zion with blood]** Heb. bloods, that is, with goods gotten by rapine and robbery, to the utter undoing of many poor oppressed, whose livelihood is their life, **#Mr 12:44 Lu 8:43**. How much better Selimus, the Great Turk, who, being upon his death bed moved by Pyrrhus, the basha, to bestow the great wealth taken by him from the Persian merchants upon some notable hospital for relief of the poor, took order that those evil gotten goods should be forthwith restored again to the right owners, to the shame of many Christians who will not be drawn to do so. Our Henry VII, indeed, in his last will and testament, devised and willed restitution

should be made of all such moneys as had unjustly been levied by his officers. But how few such princes are to be found! It is held a goodly thing to build Zion, though it be with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. But God, as he will not have *ex rapina holocaustum*, so he infinitely abhorreth all those who, under pretext of religion in building some poor hospital with the fragments of their accursed wealth, seek to make him a party, a partaker of their cruelty, as those did, **#Isa 66:8,4 Mr 7:11 Mt 23:14**. Our Henry III, when he had, after his many great exactions, sent the friar minors a load of frieze {a} to clothe them, had the same sent back again with this message, That he ought not to give alms of what he had rent from the poor, neither would they accept of that abominable gift. Zion is not to be builded or beautified with bloods.

{a} A kind of coarse woollen cloth, with a nap, usually on one side only (ED)

Ver. 11. **The heads thereof judge for reward]** Being so many locusts, *et latrones cum privilegio*, both robbers with immunity, as one saith. Well might St Paul say that covetousness is the root of all evil, **#1Ti 6:10**. It is here assigned as one cause, and carnal security as another, of that regiment without righteousness, here justly complained of. And it was the worse, because it had overrun all sorts of such as were in place of power, whether civil or ecclesiastical. The princes and judges took gifts, which they should not only not have taken, but have hated, **#Pr 15:27**, they should have shaken their hands from holding of bribes, **#Isa 33:15**, since there is a curse to such magistrates with an Amen to it, **#De 27:25 Ps 25:5**, exclusion out of heaven: *Olim didici quid sint munera*, said one once. Rain is good (said another), and ground is good, *sed ex eorum coniunctione fit lutum*, of the mixture of these two is dirt: so, giving is kind and taking is courteous; yet the mixing of them maketh the smooth paths of justice foul and uneven. *Nec prece nec pretio*, neither by request or reward, should be the magistrate's motto. And Justice justice (as Moses phraseth it, **#De 16:20** margin), that is, clear sheer justice without mud should run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty torrent, **#Am 5:24**.

**And the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money]** They were merely mercenary; and as Apollo's oracles, corrupted by Philip's gold, were said φιλιππαζειν, to speak



as he would have them, so was it here. Both priests and prophets were *ignava ventris mancipia* #**Mic 3:5**, {See Trapp on "Mic 3:5"} greedy dogs, slow bellies, they all looked to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter, #**Isa 56:11**. Albertus Magnus complained of the covetousness of pastors in his time. Bernard for this cause calleth them impostors and byseers. Hugo Cardinalis said that the devil had two daughters, Avarice and Luxury; the former whereof he had married to the Jews, the latter to the Gentiles; but now, saith he, the priests have taken away both of them from their right husbands, and make use of them for their own. *Si posui aurum in coniugium meum*, so the Septuagint read that text, #**Job 31:24**, signifying the covetous man's great love to money; whence St James calleth such adulterers and adulteresses, #**Jas 4:4**. St Paul saith they mind only earthly things (*sc.* their purses and paunches), #**Php 3:19**, and incessantly woe this *Mundus immundus*, this vile strumpet, the world; having eyes full of the adulteress, and that cannot cease to sin, #**2Pe 2:14**. But their money shall perish with them that teach for hire, that follow the ministry only as a trade to pick a living out of, *qui plus fisco quam Christo vacant, plus attensioni quam attentioni gregis, et ubi non vident quaestum, rident Christum*. All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, #**Php 2:21**.

**Yet will they lean upon the Lord]** Or, lay their weight upon him, as upon a staff or crutch, *velut sirmissimo seipione*. Thus their forefathers, #**Ps 78:32,35**, though they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works, yet they would needs believe that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer. So their successors, #**Jer 3:3-5**, when they had spoken and done evil as they could, yet, having a whore's forehead, they could give goodly words, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth? Will he reserve his anger for ever? will he keep it to the end?" Here were good words (for they are good cheap, as we say), but nothing more. The Lord was much in their mouths, but far from their reins, #**Jer 12:2**. Self-deceivers think they lean upon the Lord when it is no such matter; their faith is a mock faith, a strong fancy, a blind presumption, which will prove but a broken reed, and was never true to those that trusted it. Surely, as he that maketh a bridge of his own shadow cannot but fall into the brook, so neither can he escape the burning lake, that had rather be carnally secured than

soundly comforted. Good gold is a cordial; so is not alchemy gold; neither will it pass the seventh fire, as the other will. Security is the forerunner of calamity; neither miscarry any so sure or so soon as the overly confident.

**And say, Is not the Lord among us?]** And hath he not promised so to be for ever? True, but upon condition that you be with him, and no otherwise, **#2Ch 15:2**. He is not so tied to you, but that he can go away from you. See his many removes **#Eze 9:3 10:4,18 11:23**, and observe, that still as he goes out, some judgment comes in. They call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel, the Lord of hosts is his name, **#Jer 48:2**, but all this was but court holy water, as they call it, empty words, such as our profligate professors are full of. But wilt thou know, O vain man (or, O empty man, κενε), that words without works are bootless? **#Jas 2:20**, that external privileges alone profit not, **#Jer 7:4 Ac 6:14**, that formal profession and performances are disaccepted, and those that please themselves therewith are but as women travailing with a false birth, **#Isa 26:18**. Men are wont to do with these as those conjurers did with the name of Jesus; they thought if they used that name it was enough. They hear, therefore, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" **#Ac 19:15**. So shall it fare with such as glory in this, that they were born in the bosom of the Church, live under the means of grace. Gehazi took the prophet's staff; but there was something more, else the child had not been raised. Those tell but an ill tale for themselves that have no more to say but this, "Is not the Lord among us?" Men are the worse for his presence with them if they walk not worthy of the Lord in all well pleasing, **#Col 1:10**, if they have not grace to serve him with reverence and godly fear: for even our God is a consuming fire, **#Heb 12:28,29**.

**None evil can come upon us]** Let prophets say what they please, we shall have peace, **#De 29:19**, all shall be well with us while God is with us, and for us. But God will not take the wicked by the hand, saith Job, **#Job 8:20**; neither will he at all acquit the guilty, saith Moses, **#Ex 34:7**. "The foolish shall not stand in his sight," saith David: "for he hateth all the workers of iniquity," **#Ps 5:5**. "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions," **#Ex 23:21**; or if he do, yet it is two to one that

he will take vengeance of your inventions, #Ps 99:8. Shake off, therefore, carnal security; fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

Ver. 12. **Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field]** Even for your sakes, O wicked princes, priests, and prophets; you are the traitors that have betrayed us all into the hands of Divine justice. To be angry with us for saying so, and telling you what to trust to, is as if some fond people should be angry with the herald, or the trumpet, as the cause of their wars.

**Zion shall be plowed as a field]** Shall be utterly laid waste and levelled. Conquerors used to plough up those places that they would not have rebuilt; and to sow them with salt, #Jud 9:45. It must needs be a dismal destruction that is described in such exquisite terms. *Alterius perditio tua sit cautio.* This threatening of the prophet took so well that the judgment was respited for over a hundred years, #Jer 26:19. But now men's hearts are more hardened, and therefore their destruction more hastened.

**And Jerusalem shall become heaps]** *Rupes ruderum.* This they once thought as possible as to overthrow God's own throne; the very disciples had a conceit that the world could not outlast the temple, as may be gathered from #Mt 24:3. But they (some of them) lived to see themselves confuted, and our Saviour's words verified, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down," #Mt 24:2.

**And the mountain of the house]** That famous house, that was worthily reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world, and stood upon Mount Moriah.

**As the high places of the forest]** As woody and desert places, fit only for wild beasts. *Lege et Luge,* Read and weep, saith one, speaking of Jerusalem's desolation.

#### **Chapter 4**

Ver. 1. **But in the last days it shall come to pass]** God reserveth his best comforts till the last, as that ruler of the feast did his best wine, #Joh 2:10, and as the sweetest of the honey lieth at the bottom. These last days are the Gospel days, #Heb 1:2, times of reformation,

**#Heb 9:10**, of restitution, **#Ac 3:21**, called the world to come, **#Heb 2:5**, that "new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," **#2Pe 3:13**, that new Jerusalem, that is all of gold, **#Re 21:18**, Ezekiel's new temple, larger than all the old Jerusalem, and his new Jerusalem, larger than all the land of Canaan, **#Eze 40:41-49**. Let Popish buzzards blaspheme that description of the temple and city; calling it (as Sanctius doth once and again) *insulsam descriptionem*, a senseless description; so speaking evil of the things that they know not, **#Jude 10**. We believe and are sure, **#Joh 6:69**, that God hath provided some better thing for us than for those under the law, **#Heb 11:40**, viz. that great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, **#1Ti 3:16**, who should again restore the kingdom to Israel, the spiritual kingdom to the Israel of God; as is here foretold in the self same words with those of Isaiah, **#Isa 2:1,2**, whence he is not ashamed to take it.

**That the mountain of the house of the Lord]** The Church, **#1Ti 3:15**, called elsewhere the mountain of the Lord, and his holy hill, **#Ps 15:1 24:3 48:2 Isa 30:17**, both for its sublimity, **#Ga 4:26**, and firmness, **#Ps 46:3 125:1**: winds and storms move it not; no more can all the power and policy of hell combined prevail against the Church, **#Mt 16:18**. She is ἀνικητος και ακινητος, a kingdom that cannot be shaken; and may, better than the city of Venice, take for her posy *Immota manet*. May she stand immovable.

**Shall be established in the top of the mountains]** *Constituatur firmiter*, She shall be established more securely, shall be strongly set upon a sure bottom, upon munitions of rocks; yea, upon the Rock of Ages, **#Mt 15:18 Jer 31:35 Isa 33:16**. Some by "the house of the Lord" here understand the Church; and by the mountain of this house, Christ, whereon it is built, and whom Daniel describeth by that great mountain that filled the whole earth, that stone cut out without hands that smote in pieces the four monarchies, **#Da 2:35**. And hence it is that this mountain of the Lord's house is exalted above the hills: the Church must needs be above all earthly eminences whatsoever, because founded upon Christ; who therefore cannot be exalted, but she must be lifted up aloft together with him. God, who is rich in mercy, saith that great apostle, "hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," #Eph 2:5,6. The Church is mystical Christ, #1Co 12:12, she is his wife, and wherever he is *Caius* she is *Caia*; she shineth with his beams and partaketh of his honours; union being the ground of communion.

**And people shall flow unto it]** As waters roll and run toward the sea; but that these waters shall flow upward, flow to the mountain, as here, is as wonderful as that the sun should send his beams downward to the earth, when as it is the property of all fire to aspire and fly upwards. This is the Lord's own work, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The metaphor of flowing importeth the coming of people to Christ by the preaching of the Gospel. 1. Freely, #Ps 110:3 2. Swiftly, as the waters of the river Tigris, swift as an arrow out of a bow. See #Isa 60:8 3. Plentifully, by whole nations turned to the faith, and giving up their names to Christ. 4. Jointly, as #Mic 4:2 Zec 8:21 5. Zealously, bearing down all obstacles that would dam up their way. 6. Constantly and continually, as rivers run perpetually, by reason of the perennity of their fountains; and are never dried up, though sometimes fuller than some: *quin ut fluvii repentinis imbribus augentur*; saith Gualther; as rivers swell often with sudden showers, and overflow the banks, so, beyond all expectation, many times doth God take away tyrants, and propagates his truth, enlarging the bounds of his Church with new confluxes of converts. Ver. 2. **And many nations shall come and say]** The conversion of the Gentiles is here foretold, a piece of that mystery of godliness, #1Ti 3:16. The Jews usually call Christians in contempt *Gozin* (the word here used), and *Mamzer Goi*, bastard Gentiles. But, either they must come under this name themselves or deny that they are the posterity of Abraham, #Ge 12:2, where God saith, "I will make of thee a great nation."

**Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord]** The wicked have their Come, #Pr 1:11, and would not go to hell alone. Should not the saints have theirs? should they not get what company they can toward heaven? The Greeks call goodness *Καλον*, from *καλειν*; and *Αγαθον*, from *Αγαν θειν*, because it doth, as it were, invite and call others to it; and every man is willingly to run after it.

**And to the house of the God of Jacob]** To the public ordinances, where we may hear and believe, and be sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, as those Ephesians were, **#Eph 1:13**. We read that Marcellinus, Secundanus, and some others were converted to Christianity by reading Sibylla's oracles of Christ's birth; and that by Chaucer's book some were brought to the knowledge of the truth. But either this was not so, or not ordinary; for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word preached, which therefore the people of God do so prize as Luther did, who said, He would not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible; and that without the preaching of the word he could not live comfortably in paradise; as with it, he could live and enjoy himself, though it were in hell.

**And he will teach us of his ways]** *Cathedram in coelis habet qui corda docet*, saith Austin. All true converts are taught of God, **#Joh 6:45**, and then *quam cito discitur quod docetur?* saith the same Father: how soon are men discipled! how soon learn they the ways of God, whereby to serve him here, and be saved by him hereafter! For it is false that some contend for; *sc.* that every man may be saved in his own faith, be it right or wrong. For none can come to the Father but by the Son, **#Joh 14:6**. Neither is there any other name but his under heaven, whereby men must be saved, **#Ac 4:12**. See **#Joh 17:3 6:40 Heb 11:6**, whatsoever the Huberians affirm of universal election, or the Puccians of a natural faith.

**And we will walk in his paths]** Which are all paved with mercy and love; so that the saints run therein and faint not; walk, and are not weary, **#Isa 40:31**. They are all peripatetics, ever in action, **#Ge 17:1**; they are *currists* caretakers, not *quaerists*, seekers, saith Luther elegantly; they do not reason, but run the paths of God's precepts. *Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratis* (Ambrose).

**For the law shall go forth of Zion]** The law, or doctrine, as **#Pr 13:14**. Understand here the gospel, that law of God, **#Ps 19:7**, that law of Christ, **#Ga 6:2**, that perfect law of liberty, **#Jas 1:25**, a counterpane whereof God putteth into the hearts of his people, **#Jer 31:33**, whereby they become (as it was once said of the Thracians) *αυτονομοι*, a law to themselves; as being transformed into the same

image with the gospel, like as the pearl, by the often beating of the sunbeams upon it, becometh radiant as the sun (Herod.).

**And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem]** Not from Africa at first (as the brethren of the Rosycross would have it), though it is thought the gospel was received and the Christian faith professed even from the apostles' time, in that large region of Nubia, in Africa. But repentance and remission of sins was preached "among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," #Lu 24:47. The Jews were God's library keepers, and the apostles sent and went from Jerusalem to plant Churches abroad the world, and to gather into one the children of God that were dispersed, #Joh 11:52.

Ver. 3. **And he shall judge among many people]** We had before Christ's prophetic office; here we have his princely, and elsewhere his priestly (wherein both the former are founded), for he is the true Trismegist, <sup>{a}</sup> and Melchisedec was a right type of him. He is the only judge, and needs no vicar upon earth, such as the Pope claims to be, #Isa 37:20, no such officers to see his laws executed as the ephori were among the Greeks, and the censors among the Romans. This seems to have been the effect of that old prophecy among the Easterlings, that *Judaea profecti rerum potirentur*; some that came out of Jewry should conquer all. Vide Sueton. in Vespas., et Tacit. lib. 21. The Lord that "sent the rod of his strength out of Zion," as #Mic 4:2, doth also give him to "rule in the midst of his enemies, while his people are willing in the day of his power, in the beauties of holiness," #Ps 110:3, willing that Christ should send forth judgment to victory, #Mt 12:20, that is, perfect his own work of grace begun in their hearts. To which end, as it here followeth,

**He shall rebuke (or convince) strong nations]** Convince them, I say (by his Spirit), "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," #Joh 16:8: of the loathsomeness of sin, of the necessity of getting righteousness by Christ, and repentance from dead works; that men may serve the living God, and as much as in them is live peaceably with all, #Ac 17:30.

**And they shall beat their swords into plowshares]** *i.e.* Their fierce and fallen natures shall be mansuefied, as #Isa 11:6-9, and if they wage war it shall be *non nisi coacti*, not unless required, either for

the just punishment of delinquents, whom they cannot otherwise come at, or for their own necessary defence, and that they may establish peace with truth. But if men would live by the laws of the gospel, they need not wage war or lack peace, either of country or of conscience: but they might take for their motto that of David, *Ani shallom*, I am peace; and have for their portion that peace, peace, **#Isa 27:3**, even a perfect, sheer, pure peace, a multiplied peace with God, with themselves, and with others: this is a main piece of Christ's kingdom upon earth, who is the Prince of peace, and came in a time of peace: viz. in the reign of Augustus, when as there was *Totius orbis aut pax aut pactio*, saith Florus, a general peace or truce throughout the whole world.

**Neither shall they learn war any more]** To make a trade or a gain of it, and so to earn a curse, **#De 27:25**, to delight in it, **#Ps 68:30**, and make a sport of it (as Abner did, **#2Sa 2:14**, and Pyrrhus, King of Epirots), to wage it without weighty reason rashly. If we princes (said our Henry VII) should take every occasion that is offered, the world should never be quiet, but wearied by continual wars. We may also here take warring (as St James doth, **#Jas 4:1**) for jarring, and jangling, for private discords and dissensions. Now, these the people of God are so far from learning that they utterly lay them aside, and are kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave them, **#Eph 4:32**.

{a} Belonging or ascribed to, following, or having the character of Hermes Trismegistus. (ED)

**Ver. 4. But they shall sit every man under his vine]** Feeding upon the fruit that shall even fall into his mouth, saith a Lapide. Sit they shall under Christ, the true vine, saith Hugo, and under the Holy Ghost, as a fig tree, whose fruit is far sweeter than any honey. But these are coined interpretations, saith Gualther. I should rather expound this text by that 91st Psalm; wherein the safe and happy condition of the godly is at large described. Vine yards and fig yards were ordinary in those countries; and hence this proverbial expression, to set forth, doubtless, the spiritual security, and that peace of conscience chiefly, that is granted to Christ's subjects: a peace far beyond that under Solomon, which is here pointed at; or that under our Queen Elizabeth, not to be passed over without one touch at least upon that string which so many years together sounded



so sweetly in the ears of our fathers. Then it was, if ever, that the mountains brought forth peace, and the little hills righteousness, #Ps 72:3. The great ones defended their inferiors, and the inferiors blessed their superiors; the magistrate righted the subject, and the subject revered the magistrate.

**And none shall make them afraid]** God, they know, will not hurt them, man cannot: he may take away their heads, but not their crowns; their lives, but not their hopes; for the righteous hath hope in his death; his posy. is not only, *Dum spiro spero*, while I live, I have hope, but *Dum expiro*, While I die, also. Let the wicked have a trembling heart and failing eyes while he lives, #De 28:65, and when he dies cry out, as a great man was heard to do, *Spes et fortuna valete*, Farewell life and hope together. The servant of Christ, as he sits *mediis tranquillis in undis* calm in the midst of the waves, all his life long, so when he dies, he can call his soul to rest; and sing old Simeon's *Nuno dimittis*, "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace," &c.

**For the mouth of the Lord of hosts]** And what better assurance can we desire, since God can neither die, lie, nor deny himself; since, secondly, he is the "Lord of hosts," and so armed with power to make good what he hath spoken. Peter had a will to deliver Christ from the Jews, but lacked power. Pilate had power to have done it, but lacked will. God lacked neither of these to do for his people, and to deliver them out of danger. Courage, therefore.

**Ver. 5. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god]** They will do so, they are resolved not to alter their religion; as Cicero said, *Me ex ea opinione quam a maioribus accepi de cultu deorum, nullius unquam movebit oratio*; I will never be dissuaded by any one from that way of Divine worship, which I have received from my forefathers. How wilful at this day are Jews, Papists, Pagans, heretics! And how much easier a matter do we find it to deal with twenty men's reasons than with one's man will! A wilful man stands as a stake in the midst of a stream, lets all pass by him, but he stands where he was. Nay, but we will have a king, say they, when they had nothing else to say. Nay, but I will curse howsoever, though against my conscience, said Balaam; and do not the Popish Balaamites as much as this, many of them? As for the vulgar sort of

them, they are headlong and headstrong, resolved to retain *contra gentes* against the people, the senseless superstitions transmitted unto them by their progenitors. But what saith the oracle, #Re 14:7? "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and" (whatever your ancestors did) "worship you him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

**And we will walk in the name of the Lord our God]** This was well resolved, and is as well practised by all Christ's faithful people, who dare not follow a multitude to do evil, #Ex 23:2; dare not walk by their fathers' practice, #Jos 24:2,14,15, for they consider that no commandment doth so expressly threaten God's judgments upon posterity as the second. They therefore resolve to walk in the name, that is, by the laws, and under the view of the Lord their God, who is "God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible," as Moses describeth him, in opposition to all other deities, whether so reputed or deputed, #De 10:17.

**For ever and ever]** We will not only take a turn or two in his ways, as temporaries, who are hot at hand but soon tire; and give in but we will hold on a constant course of holiness, and not fail to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, #Ps 1:2 Joh 8:12 10:4,14 Re 7:17. As for those apostates that change their God, that change their glory for that which doth not profit, as they therein commit a horrible wickedness, such as the heavens have cause to be astonished at, #Jer 2:11-13; so they could not choose out for themselves a worse condition, #Heb 10:37,38: for what reason? they put the Son of God to an open shame, #Heb 6:6, (like as those that are carted among us are held out as a scorn) and do in effect say, that they have not found him such as they took him for.

Ver. 6. **In that day]** *sc.* of grace and of the gospel. It is called a day, and that day, by an excellence, in regard of revelation, adoration, consolation, distinction, speedy preterition.

**Saith the Lord]** Whose word cannot be broken, #Joh 10:25, and is therefore the best security, #2Co 1:20.

**Will I assemble her that halteth]** Heb. that goeth sideling, that is maimed, disjointed, lamed, #Isa 35:3, torn, #Ps 35:15, and tired out

with long journeys into captivity, as the Jews were by the Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans before Christ's coming: that they might breathe after those days of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, #**Mal 3:1**.

**And I will gather her that is driven out]** Or, rejected, thrust away with a force, that is, the Gentiles suffered to walk in their own ways, #**Ac 14:16**, and carried away unto dumb idols, even as they were led, #**1Co 12:2**.

**And her that I have afflicted]** Both Jews and Gentiles, the whole community of people: for God shook all nations then, when the Desire of all nations {*Christ*, #**Heb 12:26**} was to come, #**Hag 2:7,22,23**. Junius, after the Septuagint, rendereth it, *ut veniant desiderati omnium gentium*, So may they come, the desire of all nations, that the saints, those desirable ones, out of all nations may come: for unto Shiloh in a most afflicted time (when the sceptre was departed from Judah, &c.) was the gathering of all people to be, #**Ge 49:10 Isa 26:8,9**, See #**Isa 66:20**: rather in litters (as lame people are carried) should they come, than not at all: rather on one leg, with Jacob, should they wrestle, than not prevail.

Ver. 7. **And I will make her that halted a remnant]** Yea, a renowned remnant, #**Zep 3:19**. Not many Jews were converted in comparison to the Gentiles; hence they are called a remnant. They both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets; they have also persecuted us, saith the apostle, or cast us out, as by an ostracism; and they "please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles," #**1Th 2:15,16**. Thus the generality of them then: and so to this day they continue cross, and cursing Christ and his followers thrice a day in their synagogues (Jerome in Isaiah. Buxtorf. Synag.). Howbeit at this present time, also, there is a "remnant according to the election of grace," #**Ro 11:5**, and that remnant became the seminary of the Christian Church.

**And her that was cast far off a strong nation]** Numerous and valorous. *Vide fidem et passionero martyrum, et de genere robusta non ambiges*, saith Jerome here: Consider the faith and patience of the martyrs, and you will easily yield them to be a strong nation indeed. Christians have showed as glorious power in the faith of

martyrdom as in the faith of miracles. They can do that which others cannot turn their hands to; they can suffer wrongs best of any; compel them to go a mile, they will be content to go two, yea, as far as the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace will carry them. There is nothing that they dare not undertake and undergo for the glory of their God. This courage in Christians heathens counted obstinace (Tertull. in Apolog.), but they knew not the power of the Spirit nor the privy armour of proof that the saints have about their hearts, which maketh them insuperable, more than conquerors.

**And the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion]** *i.e.* In the Christian Church, out of which went the law, that is, the gospel, **#Mic 4:2**. See **#Isa 40:9 52:7 Heb 12:22**. There shall Christ reign, and so he did ever: but now he shall declare himself to be "Messiah the Prince," **#Da 9:25**, Lord and Christ, **#Ac 2:36**, Saviour and Sovereign. As King he, 1. Of rebels makes them subjects, willing to be ruled by him; 2. He preserves them in that privilege by his Spirit; 3. He gives them laws far better than those of the twelve tables in Rome, which yet far exceeded (saith Cicero) all the learned libraries of the philosophers in worth and weight; 4. He sweetly inclineth their wills to yield universal obedience thereunto, and to cross themselves so they may please him; 5. He rewards them with comfort and peace here, and with life eternal hereafter; 6. He destroys all the enemies of his Church, and then at last delivers up the kingdom to his Father, **#1Co 15:24**, not his essential kingdom as God, but his economical kingdom as mediator.

Ver. 8. **And thou, O tower of the flock]** That is, O Church of Christ, who is often compared to a shepherdess in the Canticles; here to a Migdaleder, or tower of the flock (that flock of Christ which hath golden fleeces, precious souls), in reference either to that tower, **#Ge 25:21**, built for the safety and service of shepherds, or else to the sheep gate in Jerusalem (whereof read, **#Ne 3:1 12:39**), so called from the sheep market, which, for the couvenience of the temple, was near to it; as was also the sheep pool, called Bethesda, **#Joh 5:2**, where the sacrifices were washed. The world is a field, the Church a fold in that field; and a strong fold (strong as a tower), yea, a stronghold, ophel, as it is styled in the next words; and that of the daughter of Zion, that is, of the Christian Church, the inviolable security whereof is here noted.

**Unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion]** Such as was in David's days and Solomon's; large, rich, peaceable, prosperous, terrible to other nations. This was carnally understood by the Jews, who therefore dream to this day of an earthly kingdom, and have in their synagogues a crown ready to set upon the head of their Messiah whenever he shall come: neither were Christ's disciples without a tincture of this Pharisaical leaven; whence their often inquiries, when the kingdom of God shall come? and their frivolous contests among themselves, who should be the greatest in Christ's kingdom? who should sit at his right hand and at his left? &c., as if there should have been in Christ's kingdom (as in Solomon's) a distribution here of honours and offices. And this groundless conceit hung as bullets of lead at their eyelids; that they could not look up to see that Christ's kingdom was spiritual, and not of this present world.

**The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem]** This the Jews (mistaking it as before) pray earnestly that it may come, *cito, citius, citissime*, quickly, more quickly, most quickly *bimberah, bejamenu* (Buxtor. Syn. Jud.), with speed, and even in our days; often throwing open their windows to behold their king, and to receive their long looked for preferment in his earthly monarchy.

Ver. 9. **Now why dost thou cry out aloud?]** Shout and howl? *q.d.* hast thou any such cause to be so unreasonably and outrageously impatient, so long as Christ is thy king and counsellor? What if there now be no king in thee? what if thy counsellor perished? A woeful case, I confess, and great confusion must needs be the issue of it; as it happened in Jerusalem after Josiah was slain: confer #**Ho 3:4**. {See Trapp on "Ho 3:4"} But yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing; neither need the saints be so excessively dejected with outward crosses so long as Christ is with them and for them. If Seneca could say to his friend Polybius, *Fas tibi non est salvo Caesare, de fortuna tua queri*, Be thy case never so miserable, thou hast no cause to complain, so long as Caesar is in safety; how much less ground of mourning or murmuring have Christ's subjects, so long as he liveth and reigneth! *Gaudeo quod Christus Dominus est, alioqui totus desperassem*, I rejoice because Christ est Lord, otherwise, I am in total despair, writeth Miconius to Calvin, of the Church's enemies: I

am glad that Christ is Lord of all, for otherwise I should have had no hope of help at all. David in deep distress comforteth himself in the Lord his God, **#1Sa 30:6 Ps 119:94**, "I am thine, save me," saith he, *q.d.* my professed subjection to thee calleth for thy care and protection of me, and here he stays himself. Kings and counsellors are great stays to a state, but Christ is not tied to them. These are but particular good things, as is health against sickness, wealth against poverty, &c., but Christ is a universal good, all-sufficient and satisfactory; every way proportionable and fitting to our souls and several necessities. Why then do we cry aloud as utterly undone? why sing we not rather with David when at greatest under, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be the God of my salvation. It is God that avengeth me, and delivereth me from the violent man," **#Ps 18:46**. He is King of all the earth. He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. It was a learned man's motto, Blessed be God, that he is God; and blessed be Christ, that he reigns for ever; that counsel is his, and sound wisdom; that he hath understanding, he hath strength, **#Pr 8:14**.

**For pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail]** They have, but they needed not, hadst thou but turned into thy counting house, and considered thy manifold privileges in Christ, thy king and counsellor. We often punish ourselves by our passions, as the lion that beats himself with his own tail. *Sed o bene* (saith an interpreter here) *quod sint hi dolores saltem similes parturientium*, It is yet a happiness that the Church's pangs, though bitter, yet are no worse than as those of a woman in travail (Tarnovius). For, 1. The pains of travail seldom bring death, but life both to mother and child; so do afflictions to the saints, **#2Co 4:17 Heb 12:9**. 2. Travail comes not by chance, nor for long continuance; neither doth affliction, **#Joh 7:30 Lu 22:53**. 3. Travail is unavoidable, and must be patiently borne; so must affliction; or else we lose the fruit of it, **#Ac 14:22 2Ti 3:12**

4. Sharp though it be, yet it is short; so mourning lasteth but till morning, **#Ps 30:6 73:24 135:14 Joh 16:22 Jer 10:24**. 5. As the travailing woman hath the help of other women; so hath the afflicted, of God, angels, and men. 6. Lastly, as she remembereth the sorrow no more for joy of a man child born into the world; so is it here, **#Joh 16:20 Ro 8:17,18**.

Ver. 10. **Be in pain and labour to briny forth, &c.]** Be sensible of thine ensuing captivity, and take on; but yet with hope of a gracious deliverance in due time. {See Trapp on "Mic 4:9"} It is no less a fault to despise the chastening of the Lord than to faint when thou art rebuked, **#Heb 12:5**. The hypocrite in heart heapeth up wrath, saith Elihu, and why? he crieth not when God bindeth him, **#Job 36:13**. The wicked, saith Hannah, are silent in darkness, and shall therefore lie down in sorrow, **#1Sa 2:9 Isa 50:10**. This is not patience, but pertinace, the strength of stones and flesh of brass, **#Job 6:12**. It is not valour, but apathy, stupidity, and indolence, much complained of in Scripture, and threatened with a succession of sorrows, **#Le 26:18,28**, seven more, and seven more, and seven to that. Three times in that chapter God raiseth his note of threatening, and he raiseth it by sevens, and those are discords in music. Such sayings will be heavy, songs, and their execution heavy pangs; worse than those of a woman in travail.

**For now shalt thou go forth out of the city]** This now occurred not out of a hundred years after. Foul weather seldom rotteth in the air. Time weareth not out God's threatenings, *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi, nedum Deo*: Time can be no prejudice to the Ancient of days; sooner or later his word shall be accomplished. When the sins of the Amorites are full they shall be sure of their payment. The bottle of wickedness, when once filled with those bitter waters, will sink to the bottom.

**And thou shalt dwell in the field]** *Sub dio*, under daylight, having no canopy over thee but the azured sky; so little account is made of poor captives: if they may have the open air to breathe in, though they lie without doors, it is better than a stinking dungeon, or to be shut up close under hatches among the excrements of nature, as Barbarossa's Christian prisoners taken in Greece were; so that all the way as he went home with them to Constantinople, every hour almost some of them were cast dead overboard.

**And thou shalt go even to Babylon]** There to dwell among plants and hedges, making flowerpots for a foreign prince. "There they dwelt with the king for his work," **#1Ch 4:23**.

**There shalt thou be delivered, there the Lord shall redeem thee]** This "there" is as emphatic as that "yet" so often repeated **#Zec 1:17**. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:17"} It seemed improbable to many, and to some impossible, that ever they should return out of Babylon. But God effected it, to the great astonishment of his poor people, who were like them that dream, **#Ps 126:1** and could scarcely believe their own eyes. God loves to deliver those that are forsaken of their hopes. *Ad nos ergo transferamus promissionem istam*, saith Gualther upon the text. Let us apply this promise to ourselves; and as often as we are pinched with poverty, or tormented with diseases, or cast out into banishment, or are in any great danger by water or land, or under terrors of conscience, let us think we hear God thus speaking to us, "There shalt thou be delivered: there will I redeem thee."

Ver. 11. **Now also many nations are gathered, &c.]** That is, they shall lie once gathered, when the Babylonians, who are lords of the world, shall muster many nations against thee. Would any man take the Church's picture, saith Luther? then let him paint a silly poor maid, sitting in a wood or wilderness, compassed about with hungry lions, wolves, boars, and bears, and with all manner of cruel and hurtful beasts and in the midst of a great many furious men assaulting her every moment and minute, for this is her condition in the world.

**That say, Let her be defiled]** *sc.* with blood and slaughter. Or, let her be condemned as a hypocrite, let her be stoned as an adulteress; so the Trent translation. Thus they pretend, as Rabshakeh did, that they were sent by God against a hypocritical nation, that had broken their faith with God and men. The like craft and cruelty was used in the Parisian massacre, and gunpowder plot; God and man, said they (in that blind letter, that brought all to light), have agreed to punish the wickedness of this age. Those that would kill a dog give out that he was mad first, saith the French proverb. Whom no man looketh after, **#Jer 30:17**.

**And let our eyes look upon Zion]** Let us feed our eyes with such a delightful spectacle; and say, as that cruel Charles IX of France did, when he saw the streets strewed with the bodies of the massacred Protestants, and the rivers dyed with their blood, *O pulchrum*



*spectaculum!* O brave sight! or as the Queen mother of Scotland, when she beheld the dead carcasses of her Lutheran subjects, said, that she never saw a goodlier piece of arras {a} in all her days. See the accomplishment of this prophecy in the Lamentations, #Ps 137, and in the Book of Nehemiah.

{a} A rich tapestry fabric, in which figures and scenes are woven in colours. ⒸED

Ver. 12. **But they know not the thoughts of the Lord]** Nothing like their thoughts, #Isa 55:8. Confer #Isa 10:7,8 Zec 11:15,16. His thoughts are fatherly, while theirs are butcherly. The physician in setting leeches to his patient seeks his good; he aims not at filling the leech's gorge; neither will he set more on him than will make for his health. God by his wisdom, and according to his eternal counsel (which the wicked understand not), ordereth and draweth the blind and brute motions of the worst creatures to his own honour and his Church's good; as the huntsman doth the rage of the dog to his pleasure, or the mariner the blowing of the wind to his voyage, or the artist the heat of the fire to his work, or the physician the blood thirstiness of the leech to a cure (Dr Reynolds). "Surely," saith the Psalmist, speaking of Sennacherib's cruelty in the siege of Jerusalem, "the wrath of man shall praise thee" (eventually, though not intentionally): "the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain," #Ps 76:10. Let the enemies think and project as they please, let them rage and resolve upon your utter ruin; "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end; to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest," #Jer 29:11 2Th 1:6,7. "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength," #Isa 30:15. "And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God, and I will hear them," #Zec 10:6. Surely as it was said of old, neither shall Rome fall while Scipio standeth, neither shall Scipio live when Rome falleth; so may it more truly be affirmed of Christ, that he and his people shall stand and fall together. But "he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," #Job 19:25, yea, he shall set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, #Re 10:2, as Lord of

sea and land, maugre the malice of all that sought to supplant him, who shall therehence fall, and never rise up again, #Am 8:14.

Ver. 13. **Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion]** "Go in this thy might" (wherewith thou so lustily threshest out thy wheat by the winepress, said the angel to Gideon, #Jud 6:14), and thresh the Midianites another while, "thou shalt smite them as one man," #Jud 6:16; thresh them as the sheaves of the floor, that lie ready for the flail, or, as the custom of those countries was, #De 25:4 1Co 9:9 1Ti 5:18, for oxen to tread out, or the wheel to turn over, #Isa 28:28.

**For I will make thine horn iron, &c.]** So that thou shalt do great exploits, by mine assistance, against Sennacherib, Antiochus, and other enemies subdued and threshed down to straw by the valiant Maccabees. *Spiritualiter etiam hoc intelligendum*, saith Sa. here; this is also spiritually to be understood of converting people to the faith, *separata palea infidelitatis*. This the apostles did vigorously and effectually, being furnished by Christ with horns of iron and hoofs of brass; with spiritual courage and mettle, whereby they did soon beat in pieces many people, and brought them to Christ by the obedience of faith, together with all their wealth and substance, which they cheerfully consecrate unto the Lord of the whole earth. This was typified of old by the tabernacle built with the spoils of the Egyptians; and by David's dedicating to the Lord the gold and silver which in great abundance he had taken from the enemies, #2Sa 8:11. It is prophesied of Tyre, that being converted, she should find another manner of merchandise than formerly, viz. to feed and clothe God's poor with durable clothing, #Isa 23:18. The centurion, when once he became a proselyte, built the Jewish synagogues, that had been thrown down by Antiochus, #Lu 7:5. Constantine the Great was bountiful to the Church above measure, insomuch as that he was by the heathens in scorn called *Pupillus*, orphan, as if he had wanted a guardian to overrule and order his expenses. *Sed refriguit hoc studium hodie in magistratibus plerisque*, as Gualther here complaineth, and not without cause. The Church is not only scanted, but spoiled of her revenues; and that which was piously consecrated is impiously converted to other uses, &c. Thus he.

## Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops]** Here the virgin, the daughter of Zion, despiseth her adversaries of Assyria and Babylon, and laughs them to scorn; "the daughter of Jerusalem shaketh her head at them," #**Isa 37:22**; and bearing herself bold upon the foregoing promise, #**Mic 4:13**, that she should beat in pieces many people, she taketh liberty to taunt the Assyrian monarch with all his troops beleaguering her, and basely abusing her judges, telling him, that the babe of Bethlehem would shortly take an order with him. And although she were but a virgin, yet, having such a champion as Christ, who is in love with her, that will take her part and fight her quarrel, she doubteth not to say, "Now gather thyself in troops," &c. *Nunc turmatim coito, o turmaria*, Increase thine army and come forth. "Gather yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us," #**Isa 8:9,10**; Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our champion, Jehovah is our king; he will save us, #**Isa 33:22**. Lo, this is the Church's confident boasting in Christ, this is the triumph of her trust in him. The thought of his birth swalloweth up all her fears and discontents; and compasseth her about with songs of deliverance, #**Ps 32:7**.

**He hath laid siege against us]** And already devoured us in his hopes; but if we do but turn us to Christ, and say, Behold, she whom thou lovest is distressed the Assyrian as a strong river is come up over all his channels, and reacheth even to the neck; yea, the stretching out of his wings filleth the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel, #**Isa 8:7,8**, he will soon bestir himself, he will besiege our besiegers, he will smite them upon the cheek bone, and break the teeth of those ungodly, #**Ps 3:7**, that smote the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek, for a reproach to the whole people. Hugo by this judge of Israel understandeth Christ, who was indeed at his passion contumeliously buffeted (*εραπισαν Bacillis ceciderunt*. Beza), and smitten with rods upon the cheek, #**Mt 26:6,7**. But this, though it be true, yet cannot be the sense of this text.

Ver. 2. **But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah]** Not so called from Ephratah, Caleb's wife, #**1Ch 2:19,50,51**, but from its fruitfulness; whence also it had the name Bethlehem, that is, the house of bread,

where Jesus (that bread of life, that came down from heaven, **#Joh 6:33**) was born in the fulness of time, as is here first foretold by this prophet; that great mystery of godliness being revealed to the world by degrees, in several ages. Here was Christ born by mere accident, in regard of his parents, who were brought hither by a tyrannical edict of Augustus, **#Lu 2:2**, but yet by a sweet providence of God, that this Scripture might be fulfilled, and our faith in Christ settled.

**Though thou be little among the thousands of Judah]** Or, Art thou little? &c.; *q.d.* no such matter: and so it agreeth with **#Mt 2:6**. Or thus: And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, it is a small thing to be among the princes of Judah: Out of thee shall come a ruler, *q.d.* thou hast a dignity above this, and above them all, in that out of thee shall come a ruler. Take *tsagnir* in the neuter gender (as Scultetus, after Osiander, and Forster doth), and then the seeming difference (*εὐαγγελοφάνος*) between the prophet and evangelist is taken away. Some make St Matthew to relate the words of the Scribes to Herod, as they had varied the text before him. But we find not that they are anywhere taxed for altering or corrupting the text, but for misinterpreting it only, **#Mt 5:17-48**. Besides that, they were by their office text men, to look to the letter of the Scripture, and to keep it pure, **#1Co 1:20**; where they are distinguished from teachers of traditions and teachers of allegories.

**Yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me]** That is, to God the Father; that we may know that the coming of Christ in the flesh was a plot of God's own contriving. He came not by chance, but by counsel; him hath God the Father sealed, anointed, and appointed to the work, **#Joh 6:27**. This is comfortable to consider.

**That is go be ruler in Israel]** Matthew rendereth it, a captain that shall feed my people Israel, **#Mt 2:6**. {See Trapp on "Mt 2:6"}

**Whose goings forth have been from of old]** This is spoken of Christ's eternal generation, which none can declare, **#Isa 53:8**. "What is God's name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" **#Pr 30:4**. The Scripture usually speaketh of this grand mystery by way of circumlocution. It is here spoken of in the plural number for the excellence of it. In this text, then, we have a description of

Christ, in his natures and offices. See the like **#Ro 1:3,4**, and adore the fulness of the Scriptures, *Adoro plenitudinem scripturarum* (Aug.).

Ver. 3. **Therefore will he give them up]** As a little before the day springeth it is darker than ordinary; so before the day spring from on high visited God's people they were under very hard and heavy pressures and miseries; whereby their desires after him were increased and ineagered. The enemy oppressed them, by God's permission, yea, by his active providence; that they might pant after a Saviour, and sigh out with old Jacob, their father, **#Ge 49:18**, "O Lord, I have waited for thy salvation."

**Until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth]** She, that is, the Virgin Mary, say some: or, she, that is, say others, the afflicted Church, according to **#Mic 4:9,10**; {See Trapp on "Mic 4:9"} {See Trapp on "Mic 4:10"} She must have a time of travail, of trouble, before she can bring forth, and be delivered. Luther saith well, that the Church is *haeres crucis*, cling to the cross and that every Christian is a *Crucian*; we must suffer before we can reign, and bear the cross or e'er we wear the crown.

**Then the remnant of his brethren]** *i.e.* The converted Gentiles, whom Christ is not ashamed to call his brethren, **#Heb 2:11,12**.

**Shall return unto the children of Israel]** Shall be proselyted, and conjoined to the elect Jews, that there may be one sheepfold under one shepherd. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one," **#Zec 14:9**. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:9"}

Ver. 4. **And he shall stand and feed (or rule) in the strength of the Lord]** He shall stand, and none shall be able to stir him; there shall be lifting at his government, but it stands firm and fixed. Earthly monarchies have their times and their turns, their ruin as well as their rise. The Roman empire fell under the weight of its own greatness. The Turkish, although it be indeed very strong, yet is it by many probably thought to be on the declining hand. But Christ shall stand when all earthly greatness shall lie in the dust. And he shall feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, neither shall any ravenous lion or grievous wolf pluck them out of his hand, because he and the

Father are one, **#Joh 10:30**, and God hath laid help on one that is mighty, **#Ps 89:19**.

**And in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God]** That is, by the power of God's word, called his name, **#Ac 9:15**, and elsewhere. This word hath a singular majesty in it, whereby it aweth and affecteth men's consciences, to the propagating of Christ's kingdom, viz. when it is accompanied with the Spirit of God, called his strength in the former clause. And that these ever go together in all the subjects of Christ's kingdom, see **#Isa 59:21**: "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

**For now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth]** How, that is, ere long; in God's due time, which often seems long because we are short, apt to antedate the promises in regard to the accomplishment, to limit the Holy One of Israel, and to set him a time, to set his sun by our dial: **#Jer 8:20**, help they would have that summer at furthest. But as God never fails in his own time, so he seldom comes at ours. We must live by faith, **#Hab 2:4**, and stay God's leisure, as David did for the kingdom, and those in Esther for deliverance. God's promises will at length take their way over all Alps of opposition, but we have "need of patience. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," **#Heb 10:36,37**.

Ver. 5. **And this man shall be the peace]** "The man Christ Jesus," **#1Ti 2:5**; that man, that shall be "as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," **#Isa 32:2**. Winds and tempests will arise, and that upon the Church. Assyrians and Babylonians (Nimrod's brats) will invade and infest her; but that famous he before mentioned shall be her peace, her Prince of peace, **#Isa 9:6**, who giveth her *pacem omnimodam*, peace internal, external, eternal, called by the apostle life and peace, **#Ro 8:6**. This peace, peace, as Isaiah calleth it, **#Isa 26:3**, that is, a multiplied, renewed, continued peace; this peace, *regionis et religionis*, of country and of conscience, as God hath promised, and Christ hath purchased. He merited and made it through the blood of his cross,

**#Col 1:20 Isa 53:5 Eph 2:16.** And hence it was, that as he was brought from heaven with that song of peace, **#Lu 2:14**, so he returned up again with that farewell of peace, **#Joh 14:27**, left to the world the doctrine of peace, **#Eph 2:17**, whose ministers are messengers of peace, **#Ro 10:15**, whose followers are the children of peace, **#Lu 10:6**, whose rarity is in the bond of peace, **#Eph 4:3**, and whose duty is the study of peace, **#Ro 12:18**, and to whom God hath promised "I will give peace in your land. And ye shall chase your enemies," **#Le 26:6,7**. If any ask, how peace and pursuit of enemies can consist? it is easily answered. You shall have civil peace among yourselves, and besides an ability to quell and quiet foreign enemies. Or, you shall have peace; and if it happens that war arise, you shall have the better in battle. If the Assyrian come into your land he shall be a loser by it; if he tread in your palaces he shall retreat with shame and defeat, as it befell Sennacherib.

**Then shall we raise against him seven shepherds]** That is, a competent number of chieftains and champions, with their victorious forces, which shall repel the enemies and secure the Church, *Christo duce et auspice Christo*, under Christ the arch-shepherd. This some understand to be the apostles, those anointed or authorized ones, as the word here signifieth, the weapons of whose warfare were "not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds," **#2Co 10:4,5**, and bringing in, not the heads, but hearts of those whom they had subdued: as Paul did of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, **#Ac 13:7**, where also he is first called Paul, in memory belike of those first spoils he brought into the Church. By shepherds here are meant (saith Gualther) the ministers and preachers of the word, who feed, defend, and watch over the flock. By principal men, magistrates, endued with that free (or, as the Chaldee hath it) kingly spirit, **#Ps 51:12**, to decree, and act for the good of the Church. Such shepherds in the time of the Assyrian war were Isaiah, Micah, Joel; such principal men were Hezekiah and Eliakim, **#Isa 22:20**, &c. Such after the captivity were Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Zorobabel, Nehemiah, Judas Maccabeus. *Qui nutantem rempublicam et Ecclesiam suis consiliis, et fortibus gestis fulserunt*, who underpropped and kept up the tottering Church and commonwealth by their prayers, counsels, and valiant achievements, both before and since the days of Christ upon earth.

Ver. 6. **And they shall waste the land of Assyria]** Heb. They shall eat it down, as shepherds do pastures with their flocks. *Pascere* to graze is put for *perdere*, to destroy, saith Calvin; they shall leave nothing there safe or sound, but either bend or break the Church's enemies, bring them to Christ by the sword of God's word, or utterly ruin them by temporal slaughters. *Aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*. Either repent or perish.

**Thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian]** It is Christ that delivereth his, what instruments soever he please to make use of, #Lu 1:71 1Co 15:24, and he must have the praise of it. The Grecians thankfully acknowledged to Jupiter their deliverance from the Persians, wrought by Themistocles; and therehence called him ελευθεριος, as the Romans for like cause *Sospitator*, presenting a palm to him, and sacrificing a white ox (Liv. lib. 6), so acknowledging it was his power whereby the conquest was achieved. Our Edward III, after his victory at Poitiers (where he took the French king, A.D. 1356), took speedy order by Simon, Archbishop of Canterbury, that eight days together should be spent in giving God the thanks and glory. How much more should we praise him for spiritual deliverances from sin, Satan, the world, &c., and consecrate ourselves wholly to his service, since *Servati sumus ut serviamus*, #Lu 1:74, deliverance commands obedience, #Ezr 9:14.

Ver. 7. **And the remnant of Jacob]** The "remnant according to the election of grace," #Ro 11:5. These are but a few in comparison, as a remnant to the whole piece, or a handful to a houseful; but they shall increase and multiply, by God's blessing upon them, as is here set forth by two similitudes. First, for their propagation and multiplication, the prophet compareth them to the dew, which is engendered and distilled from heaven immediately. Therefore also, #Ps 110:3, new converts are compared to dew, and God's begetting them, to the womb of the morning, when overnight the earth was dry. Secondly, for their growth and increase, he compareth it to the sprouting up of herbs and grass in the wilderness, where man cometh not, and so their springing tarrieth not for man, nor "waiteth for the sons of men," for them to come with their watering pots to nourish them (as herbs in gardens do), but these have showers from heaven that give the increase. "I the Lord do keep my vineyard, I



will water it every moment," #Isa 27:3. There is an honour due to God's ministers, #1Th 5:13, but the word only must be glorified, #Ac 13:48, and Christ earnestly entreated, that as of old the manna came down with the dew, which covered the manna (whence that expression, "hidden manna," #Re 2:17), so he himself, who is the bread of life, would descend unto us by the word of his grace, and fill us with the fruits of righteousness; that he would, *rigare et recreare*, refresh and cherish our hearts, as the dew from heaven doth the dry and lady fields.

Ver. 8. **And the remnant of Jacob...as a lion among the beasts of the forest]** The saints shall prosper and do great exploits, as being endued with an invincible force of the spirit, making them as so many *Coeur-de-lions*; or as Chrysostom saith of Peter, that he was like a man made all of fire walking among stubble. What lion-like men were all the apostles, those white horses upon which the Lord Christ rode about the world, "conquering and to conquer?" #Re 6:2. That Lion of the tribe of Juda, #Re 5:5, had put upon them of his own spirit; and of his fulness bestowed upon them grace for grace, #Joh 1:16; hence their transcendent zeal and courage for the truth. Stephen was among his countrymen, the Jews, as a lion among the beasts of the forest. So were in their several generations Athanasius, Basil, Ambrose, Luther, Latimer, Farel, &c., that noble army of martyrs. One of them told the persecutors that they might pluck the heart out of his body, but never pluck the truth out of his heart. Another, that the heavens should sooner fall than he would turn. A third, that if every hair of his head were a man he would suffer death in the opinion and faith that he was now in. A fourth said, Can I die but once for Christ? And generally, the valour of the patient and the savageness of the persecutors strove together; till both exceeding nature and belief bred wonder and astonishment in beholders and readers, and in some effectual conversion, as in Justin Martyr, in Calberius, in those four hundred said to be converted at the martyrdom of Cecilia; and lastly, in Silvester, the executioner at the martyrdom of Simon Laloe, at Dijon, in France; where seeing the great faith and constance of that heavenly martyr, he was so compuncted with repentance, and fell into such despair of himself, that after much ado, being comforted and converted, he moved with all his family to the Church of Geneva. But what a silly conceit is that of the Jews at this day, that when Messiah comes they shall be

these lions among the Gentiles in the midst of all other people to tread them down, and to tear in pieces without rescue; and what a true character hath a late writer (Sir H. Blount) given of them, that they are a light, aerial, and fanatical brained people; and easily apt to work themselves into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage!

Ver. 9. **Thine hand shall be lift up upon thine adversaries]** *q.d.* Adversaries thou shalt be sure of, O my Church, but thou shalt have the better of them. Thou shalt keep footing still under the standard of the cross, and prevail, *Sub militia crucis* (Calv.). The mountain of the house of the Lord shall overtop all other mountains of worldly power, #**Mic 4:1**. It shall be as that mountain not far from Arbela (where the empire of the world was won and lost in one day), called Nicatorium by Alexander the Great, as a constant trophy of that famous victory he there got over Darius, *νικατοριον ορος* (Strabo). As she is highest in the favour of God, so she shall be highest in herself; and her enemies shall be found liars unto her. Her hand shall be lifted up, and fall very heavily upon her adversaries: if not sooner, yet at utmost at the resurrection. The upright shall have dominion over them in that morning, #**Ps 49:14**, the Church shall shine as the sun in his strength, when her enemies shall be in that place that is fittest for them, even the lowest place, the footstool of Christ. Meanwhile she conquereth then when she is conquered (as Christ overcame as well by patience as by power), and is sure not to be shivered though shaken, not to be drowned though doused over head and ears in the waters of affliction.

*“Niteris incassum Christi submergere navem:  
Fluctuat, at nunquam mergitur illa ratis.”*

*That ship may be tossed, saith one, not shipwrecked, whereof Christ is the pilot, the Scripture the compass, the promise the tacklings, hope the anchor, faith the cable, the Holy Ghost the winds, and holy affections the sails, filled with heavenly graces. Such a soul sails safely, and will neither fall upon the soft sands of presumption nor hard rocks of despair.*

Ver. 10. **And it shall come to pass in that day]** viz. Of Christ's power and kingdom, #**Ps 110:3**. The word day here signifies *non spatium diurnum, sed diuturnum, ac a Deo destinatum*, saith

Danaeus, not the space of twenty-four hours, but a long time, yet certain and set by God.

**That I will cut off thy horses out of thee]** For the which thou hast been trading with Egypt: and in which thou trustest more than in me. "Some trust in horses, and some in chariots," &c. I will therefore cut off both, I will take away thine earthly idol; and that in much mercy to thee, that in quietness and confidence may be thy strength, **#Isa 30:15 Mic 5:7**: your strength is to sit still, or your Egypt is to sit still, *q.d.* by sitting still you shall have an Egypt (the same word Rahab signifieth strength and Egypt); by being without their horses, you shall do better than when you had them, and thought yourselves simply the better or safer for them. See **#Zec 9:10**.

**And I will destroy thy chariots]** That other prop and supposed help I will pull from thee: that thou mayest not trust to such uncertainties that cannot save; but in the "living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy," **#1Ti 6:17**. Trust is God's jewel; and of all things he cannot endure to be robbed of it, or wronged in it by creature confidence, for it giveth him the sovereignty, **#Jud 9:15**, and sets the crown on his head, and the contrary.

Ver. 11. **And I will cut off the cities of thy land]** Thy fenced cities and places of strength, for like reason as before, that thou mayest look upon my name alone as a strong tower, and thereto run and be safe, **#Pr 18:10**, that thou mayest hover and cover under my wings, **#Ps 91:1,2**, and there hold thee as secure as in a tower of brass or town of war. "Blessed be the Lord" (saith David, who could not be safe in Keilah, that had gates and bars), "for he hath showed me his marvellous lovingkindness as in a strong city," **#Ps 31:21**. The tower of Shechem saved not those that ran into it, **#Jud 9:49**. The stronghold of Zion could not secure the Jebusites, that in the height of their pride scorned David and his host, that laid siege to it, **#2Sa 5:6,7**. Belshazzar and his Babylonians bare themselves so bold upon the strength of their city, and provision laid in for twenty years, if need were (as Xenophon testifieth), that they reproached the Persians that besieged them, and derided their attempts as to no purpose; yet were shortly after made a prey to the enemy. Arimazes, having garrisoned a very strong and steep rock in the Sogdian country with 80,000 men, sent to Alexander the Great, who

demanded it, to know whether he could fly or not? But the next day he was taken together with his stronghold, and nailed to a cross (Plut. in Alex. Curt. lib. 7). God delights to confute men in their confidences; that those that are his may run to the Rock of ages, **#Isa 26:4**, to that *Arx roboris* strong citadel of his holy name, which alone is impregnable, inexpugnable. The Spaniards called their navy in '88 the Invincible Armada, but it proved otherwise, and that upon St James's day, whom they count their patron, their tutelary saint. It is not unlawful to have cities and strongholds, but to confide in them, by rising up to a corky, frothy hope when we have them; or to sit down in a faithless, sullen discontent and despondence when we want them; this is to make flesh our arm, and so to incur that heavy curse, **#Jer 17:5**. God will cut off all occasions of so doing from those whom he loveth, as here he promiseth: and as accordingly he performed to this people, after their return from Babylon, and especially a little before the coming of Christ in the flesh, when they were reduced by Pompey into a province of the Roman empire.

Ver. 12. **And I will cut off witchcrafts, &c.**] As before God had promised to take away such things as in themselves are not evil, but only by our abuse; so here he will also remove from his people things simply evil and unlawful, such as are witchcrafts, idolatry, &c., that he may make way for mercy, which he is ready to give were they but fit to receive it. The word here rendered witchcrafts hath the signification of changing or turning; and is used for unlawful devilish arts and artisans: **כַּשְׁפִּי** hence **βασκαίνω**, *fascino*, to bewitch. It is also applied to false teachers and their magic acts, **#Ga 3:1 Re 18:23**. See a like promise **#Zec 13:2**. {See Trapp on "Zec 13:2"} See **#Mal 3:5**. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:5"}

**And thou shalt have no more soothsayers]** Or star gazers, diviners, fortune tellers. One derivation of the word clepeth them *nebulones* or knaves; as those that undertake to foretell future things, *ex nebulis*, by the clouds, planets, star, by calculating nativities, and the like unlawful practices of judiciary astrology, necromancy, pyromancy, oneiromancy, aruspicy, sortilegy, and other diabolical arts of that nature. The Ephesians were much addicted to such wicked practices: hence the proverb **εφεσια γραμματα** for the black art. The Samaritans also, **#Ac 8:11**; and hence that malicious slander of the Jews, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan," that is, one

that dealeth with the devil, **#Joh 8:48**; for otherwise they knew that Christ was no Samaritan, but a Galilean, as they called him in scorn, in truth a Bethlehemite, as **#Mic 5:2**. The Jews themselves are taxed, **#Isa 2:6**, that they were soothsayers, like the Philistines; and told that God had therefore forsaken them, or sent them away into captivity. See more against this sort of sin and sinners, **#Isa 44:24-26 47:12-14 Jer 10:2,25 Da 2:1-3, &c.**; but especially **#De 18:10,11**, where we have these five arguments (as one well observeth) against astrological and other unlawful predictions. First, that all such are abomination to the Lord, **#De 18:12**; Secondly, that for such arts the Canaanites were driven out; Thirdly, that unless men cast away the use of the said arts they cannot be perfect, that is, upright and sincere with God, **#De 18:13**; Fourthly, that godly men must differ from Canaanites and heathens, in the abandoning of such arts, **#De 18:14**; Lastly, that instead of such ways of prediction, the Lord raiseth up Christ, the great prophet, to foretell unto them what is meet for them to foreknow, **#De 18:15 cf. Ac 3:23**. To seek to know more is condemned for curiosity and rashness by Christ himself, in his own disciples, **#Ac 1:7**; it derogateth from the glory of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: it is to go a whoring from Christ, **#Le 20:6**, and is therefore in this text fitly yoked with idolatry. It is here also reckoned among those things that must be cut off, if Christ's kingdom shall be set up among us. So that if there were no other text of Scripture against that wickedness but this alone, it were sufficient. Ver. 13. **Thy graven images also will I cut off**] Sorcery and idolatry are fitly coupled here and elsewhere: for they commonly go together, as in the Pope and his clergy, see **#Re 9:21 21:8**; as also in the Canaanites, Philistines, and other heathens. True it is that the temples at Rome were without images for 170 years after it was built; that the Lacedaemonians would not endure pictures or images, lest by them they should be distracted; that the Turks and Jews both at this day do abhor Christian religion, for the abominable idolatry they see among Papists: for since the captivity of Babylon the graven images and statues have been so cut off from the Jews, that they would never be drawn to worship the work of their hands. They have a saying among them to this day, that no punishment befalleth them, wherein there is not an ounce of that golden calf they once made in the wilderness (Moses Gerand). Having paid, therefore, for

their learning, they abhor idols, **#Ro 2:22**, and count it sacrilege, as Plutarch did, to worship by images. The Papists should do so likewise; and not say, as their Vasquez (unable to answer our arguments) doth, that the second commandment belonged to the Jews only; or bring such proofs of their idolatry that the images themselves (if they were sensible) would blush to hear repeated.

Ver. 14. **And I will pluck up thy groves, &c.**] Wherein thou placest a part of thy happiness (as the Hebrew word importeth), and hast an overly high opinion of them, because anciently frequented by the Fathers, before the law. But it should have been considered that it was but will worship at best; yea, that God had flatly forbidden the planting of groves, **#De 16:21**, as things in use among Pagans for honour either of some god or some great man's ghost which was thought to dwell there. *Nulli certa domus, lucia habitamus opacis* (Virg. Aeneid). The worshippers of Priapus (that shame), when they had ended their sacrifice, stepped into a grove close by the altar, and there, like brute beasts, promiscuously satisfied their lusts; thereby, as they conceived, best pleasing their god.

**So will I destroy thy cities]** Or, thine enemies: and this will be the end or fruit of that forementioned reformation. Mr Fox observeth, that in King Edward VI's time the English put to flight their enemies in Musselborough field in the self-same day and hour wherein the Reformation, enjoyed by Parliament, was put in execution at London, by burning of idolatrous images.

**And I will execute vengeance in anger]** Upon those that refuse to be reformed, that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, **#2Th 1:8**. Such as were the Jews' enemies, the primitive persecutors, the stubborn Papists, some of whom have professed that they would rather take part with the Turks than with the Lutherans: as some rigid Lutherans again have protested openly, that they would return to the Papacy rather than to admit ever that sacramentary and predestinary pestilence (as they called it) of the Calvinists. But what a sad story is that related by Mr Burroughs, who had it from a worthy minister of those parts, that at Hamburg was not long since held a consultation by some learned Lutherans, concerning the cause and cure of German calamities; and where it was concluded, that Germany suffered so much in these late wars, because their images in churches were not adorned enough, which

therefore they would presently procure done. Had they consulted this text. they might soon have seen their mistake, and bethought them of better. But, "Lord, when thine hand is lifted up, they will not see: howbeit they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy towards thy people," #**Isa 26:11**. Yea their ears shall be opened, and their instruction sealed, #**Job 33:16**, that they might be accounted worthy to escape that vengeance, that shall be executed in anger and fury upon the heathens that have not heard the joyful sound, but, as so many sea-monsters, have with a deaf ear passed by the doctrine of salvation, the Gospel of peace.

## Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **Hear ye now what the Lord saith]** *Exordium breve est, sed plane patheticum*, saith Gualther. This is a short, but pithy and pathetic preface, wherein he woos their attention: *Audite quaeso*, Hear, I pray you. Ministers are spokesmen for Christ, and must therefore give good words: and yet remembering on whose errand they come, it is required that they be found faithful, #**1Co 4:2**.

**Arise, contend thou]** Surge, age, O Micah! Debate thou God's cause against this rebellious and ungrateful people, as it were in judgment; calling all, even the insensible creatures, to be judges. See the like #**De 32:1 Isa 1:2 Mic 1:2** (for these two prophets have many things common), and be sensible, that some sit as senseless before a preacher still as the seats they sit on, pillars they lean to, dead bodies they tread upon; so that we have need (as one did once in my hearing) to call to the walls and windows to hear the word of the Lord. This heavy ear is meted for a singular judgment, #**Mt 13:13,14 Isa 30:8,9**. The philosopher was angry with his Boeotians: telling them that they had not their name for nought, since their ears were ox ears, and that they were dull creatures, and incapable of counsel. Demosthenes also, for like cause, called upon his countrymen of Athens to get their ears healed; and Diogenes used to tell his tale to the statues and images, that he might inure himself to lose his labour, as he had so often done, in speaking to the people. Let us, to the wearing of our tongues to the stumps, preach and pray never so much, men will on in sin, said blessed Bradford, in that excellent sermon of his of repentance. We cry till we are hoarse (saith another rare preacher), we speak till we spit forth our lungs;

but all to as little purpose as Bede did, when he preached to a heap of stones. *Asino quispiam narrabat fabulam: at ille movebat aures.* But shall people thus carry it away, and God lose the sweet words? Never think of it. Those that will not hear the word shall bear the rod, #**Mic 6:9**: and if they could but see their misery they would do as the prophet requires, cut their hair and cast it away, under the sense of the horror of God's indignation, #**Jer 7:27,29**, they would beg of God a hearing ear (which is as an earring of gold, #**Pr 25:12**), and beseech him to make the bore bigger, that his word might enter; yea, to draw up the ears of their souls to the ears of their bodies, that one saving sound might pierce both at once. Let him that hath an ear to hear, hear; or if yet any think good to forbear, let him forbear, #**Eze 3:27**, but he will certainly repent it. He that now gives God occasion to call to the hills, &c., shall one day tire the deaf mountains, saying, Fall on me, hide me, dash and quash me in a thousand pieces. Oh that I might trot directly to hell, and not stay to hear that dreadful *discedite*, Go, ye cursed!

Ver. 2. **Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy]** Although the people would neither hear nor obey God, the prophet doth; and, according to command, he summoneth the mountains to hear and testify; the Lord seeming to say unto him, as once he did to Ezekiel, "But thou, son of man, be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house; but hear what I say unto thee, and do it." It might seem to him a senseless thing to cite the mountains. But he knew that if God command a thing, to argue or debate upon it were bold presumption, to search the reason of it proud curiosity, to detract or disobey it flat rebellion. To the mountains and foundations of the earth he applies himself; haply with like mind and in like manner as the host of Nola did to the churchyard, and there called at the graves of the dead, Oh, ye good men of Nola, come away; for the Roman censor calls for your appearance; for he knew not where to call for a good man alive.

**And ye strong foundations of the earth]** Those "roots of the mountains," #**Jon 2:7**; yet not so strong but God can shake them, #**Job 9:5,6** Na **1:5,6**; and that by so weak a creature as air, gotten underground, and seeking a vent. He can lift them off their foundations, #**De 32:22**, and carry them to another place to hear his controversy, as he did the hill in Herefordshire, A. D. 1571, and that other in the territories of Bern, that removing out of his place in an



earthquake, covered a whole village, that had ninety families in it.  
{See Trapp on "Am 1:1"}

**For the Lord hath a controversy with his people]** {See Trapp on "Ho 4:1"} Learn to tremble before this great God, who "sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers," **#Isa 40:22**; which he can shake out of their place at pleasure, and send them packing to hell. O consider what a fearful thing it is to be at controversy with God, and to have him both our accuser, witness, and judge. O the terror of the Lord at that great and last day of the world! *Utinam ubique de hoc iudicio differetur!* "Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us" (but they shall reply, We are witnesses against you for your detestable unthankfulness), "and to the hills, Cover us," **#Lu 23:30**, but they shall echo out, Cover us; for who can dwell with this devouring fire? who can abide these everlasting burnings?

**And he will plead with Israel]** At which time they shall find that an empty title hath but an empty comfort; and that tribulation and anguish shall be on every soul of man that doeth evil: but of the Jew first, because of his privilege, and then of the Gentile, **#Ro 2:9**. None so deep in utter darkness as those that once were angels of light. Let us all pray with holy David, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord," **#Ps 143:2**. And with Job, "If thou shouldst contend with me, I could not answer thee one of a thousand," **#Job 9:2,3**. And with Daniel, "O Lord, righteousness belongs unto thee; but to us confusion of face, because we have sinned against thee," **#Da 9:7,8**.

Ver. 3. **O my people, what have I done unto thee?**] Or rather, what have I not done to do thee good? "O generation, see ye the word of the Lord," and not hear it only; was ever anything more evidencing and evincing than what I now allege? "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel, a land of darkness?" **#Jer 2:31**. May I not well say unto you, as Themistocles did to his ungrateful countrymen, What? are ye weary of receiving so many benefits from one man? But say, What harm have I ever done you? and wherein have I wearied you, or been troublesome to you? unless it be by daily loading you with lovingkindnesses, **#Ps 68:19**, and bearing with your provocations? Forgive me that injury, **#2Co 12:13**.

**Testify against me]** "Put me in remembrance, let us plead together, declare thou against me, that thou mayest be justified," **#Isa 43:26**. See here, first, with what meekness and mildness God proceedeth against sinners: so **#Isa 5:3**. *Iudicate quaeso*. See, next, that God is content, for our better confliction, to submit his courses unto scanning, and to bring his proceedings with us to a trial before he pass sentence; that "he might be justified when he speaketh, and cleared when he judgeth," **#Ps 51:4**. Here he wills them to plead the cause with him, as it were at even hand; offering to make answer to whatsoever they could object or lay to his charge. *Seipsum quasi reum sistit* (Gaulther). He maketh himself the defendant, and bids them put in their bill of complaint against him, freely and without fear. This is *stupenda sane dignatio*, a wonderful condescension indeed. Should he use martial law against us, and as soon as ever we offend (like Draco) write his laws in blood upon us (as one well saith), it were but just and right. But for him to reason and plead with us about the justice of his cause before he proceeds to judgment, this deserves admiration and acknowledgment in the highest degree. O the depth!

**Ver. 4. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt]** Here God twits them with his former favours; which he never doth but in case of brutish unthankfulness. Now there was brutish, and worse. To render good for evil is divine; good for good is human; evil for evil is brutish; but evil for good devilish. This makes God, contrary to his custom, upbraid people with what he hath done for them; and angrily call for his love tokens back again, as **#Ho 2:9**. For their deliverance out of the Egyptian servitude how great a mercy it was, {*See Trapp on "Ho 11:1"*} such as they were again and again charged never to forget, **#De 6:12 5:15 26:5-12**. How much more bound are we to God for our redemption by Christ! for what is Pharaoh to Satan? Egypt to this present evil world? Egyptian bondage to sin's slavery? Seeing then that our God hath given us such deliverance as this, should we again break his commandments? Well might the hills and mountains testify against such a monstrous unthankfulness and disingenuity.

**And redeemed thee out of the house of servants]** *Gradatim progreditur*, saith Calvin. It was something to be brought out of the

land of Egypt, a most superstitious place, where they turned the glory of the incorruptible God to the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, **#Ro 1:23** (for they deified their king, Osiris), and of birds (for they worshipped the hawk and ibis), and of four-footed beasts (for they worshipped an ox, a dog, a cat, a swine), and of creeping things, for they worshipped the crocodile, ichneumon, &c., yea, they worshipped plants and pot herbs. Hence Juvenal,

*“ Felices genres, quibus haec nascuntur in hortis Numina ”—*

To be brought out, therefore, from among such hateful idolaters was no small favour, lest they should smell of their superstitions, as Micah’s mother did after all that erring sin in the desert, **#Jud 17:3**; and Jeroboam, by being there a while, had learned calf worship; hence that strict charge never to make league with them. But to be redeemed out of the house of servants was more; out of the iron furnace, **#De 4:20 Jer 11:4**, where they wrought night and day in *latere et luto*, **#Ex 1:11**, in setting up those famous pyramids and treasure cities for Pharaoh, where they served with rigour, **#Ex 1:13**; their lives were made bitter with hard bondage, **#Ex 1:14**, till God withdrew their shoulders from the burden, and their hands did leave the pots, **#Ps 81:6**, "till they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone," **#Ex 24:10**, to show that God had now changed their condition, their bricks made in their bondage to sapphires. Confer **#Isa 54:11**, and consider what God hath done for us, by bringing us into the glorious liberty of his own children, who were once the devil’s drudges and dromedaries, "serving divers lusts and pleasures," **#Tit 3:3**, which gave laws to our members, **#Ro 7:23**, and held us under in a brutish bondage, much worse than the heathen’s mill house, the Turks’ galleys, Bajazet’s iron cage, the Indian mines, or Egyptian furnace. For there, if they did their task they escaped stripes; but here, let men do the devil never such doughty service, they are sure of scourges and scorpions after all, armies and changes of sorrows and sufferings, terrors and torments, without any the least hope of ever either mending or ending. This should make us lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to our most powerful Redeemer; saying with St Paul, "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible,

the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen,"  
#1Ti 1:17.

**And I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam]** As three principal guides, and Miriam for one who did her part among the women, #Ex 15:20, and having a prophetic spirit, became a singular instrument in the hand of God, who spake by her, #Nu 12:2. But her weak head was not able to bear such a cup of honour without being intoxicated; which caused her father to spit in her face, #Nu 12:2,14. Her death is recorded in Scripture, #Nu 20:1, but not her age, as is Sarah's, #Ge 23:1. Some have observed that God thought not fit to tell us of the length of the life of any woman in Scripture but Sarah, to humble that sex. But as souls have no sexes, so of some women (such as were Miriam, Deborah, the Virgin Mary, Priscilla, Blandina, the Lady Jane Grey, Queen Elizabeth) it may be said, that in them, besides their sex, there was nothing woman-like or weak: as if (what philosophy saith) the souls of these noble creatures had followed the temperament of their bodies, which consist of a frame of rarer rooms of a more exact composition than man's doth. It is possible that Miriam might (till that matter of emulation between her and Moses's wife occurred) be as helpful to Moses and Aaron as Nazianzen's mother was to his father; not a help fellow only, but a doctress and governess, *Non solum adiutricem in pietate, sed etiam doctricem et gubernatricem* (Nazian.).

Ver. 5. **O my people, remember now what Balak]** There must be a recognition of God's mercies, or else there will neither follow estimation nor retribution; else we that should be as temples of his praises shall be as graves of his benefits. Our souls are naturally like filthy ponds, wherein fish die soon and frogs live long; rotten stuff is remembered, memorable mercies are forgotten; whereas the soul should be as a holy ark, the memory like the pot of manna preserving holy truths, as the law; and special blessings, as Aaron's rod, fresh and flourishing. This Israel did not, and are therefore justly blamed, #Ps 106:7,13,21, and here again reminded of one signal mercy among many, that they might take notice of the enemies' malignity, God's benignity, and their own indignity and ingratitude, that parching wind, that drieth up the fountain of Divine favours, *Ventus urens et exsiccans*.

**What Balak king of Moab consulted]** Joshua saith, that he arose and fought against Israel, **#Jos 24:9**, that is, he had a good mind to have fought, but he did not because he dared not. So **#Es 8:7**. Haman is said to have laid his hand upon the Jews, because he intended and attempted such a matter. They, that is the *Sortilegi*, or Lot-sorcerers, with whom, Balak-like, he consulted, "cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month," **#Es 3:7**; viz. to find out what month or day would be lucky for the accomplishment of his intended massacre of the Jews; but before that black day came Mordecai was advanced and Haman hanged. Now, as there, by the special providence of God over ruling the superstition of that wicked wretch, way was made for the preservation of God's people; so was it here. Balak consulted, and Balaam answered him; that is, he was as willing to curse as the other would have had him, but might not; for God would not hearken unto him, but blessed his people still, and delivered them out of his hand, **#Jos 24:10**. Yea, though at length he was resolved to curse howsoever, and therefore went not forth as at other times to seek for enchantments, but set his face towards the wilderness, as if he would do the deed, whatever came of it, **#Nu 24:1**; yet his endeavour was fruitless and frustrated. So shall the malicious attempts of Rome and hell be against the Reformed religion and the professors thereof (whom the Romish Balaam banns and curses with bell, book, and candle at the instigation of the Spanish Balak, with his factors the Jesuits), so long as they adhere to him, and pray as **#Ps 109:26-29**, "Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy: that they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, hast done it. Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed: but let thy servants rejoice. Salvation is of the Lord: his blessing is upon his people."

**From Shittim unto Gilgal]** *Oratio elliptica: q.d.* Remember what I did for you at Shittim in the wilderness, and so all the way until you came into the promised land, even to Gilgal, where you first pitched tent, **#Jos 5:8-10**. At Shittim it was, where, by the pestilent counsel of Balaam (the devil's spellman), the Midianites out witted them, by setting fair women before them as a stumblingblock, **#Nu 25:1,18**, to draw them to those two sisters sins, adultery and idolatry. Then and there the heads of the people were hanged up before the Lord

against the sun, and some others; when as God might justly have cut them all off, and cast them away from being a people before him, *Digni qui funditus deleantur* (Gualth.). *Nonne illic refulsit admirabilis Dei gratia?* saith Calvin; was not this a miracle of God's mercy?

**That ye may know the righteousness of the Lord]** *i.e.* The faithfulness and goodness of God in keeping promise with your fathers, notwithstanding your provocations. Or my righteous dealings with those fornicators and adulterers, whom I there judged; preserving the innocent, or penitent, till they came to Gilgal, and onwards. Or, that thou mayest know how just my complaint is of thee, and mine action against thee. So Vatablus expounds it.

Ver. 6. **Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?**] This is *vox populi*, the voice of the people now convinced in part; or at least of some one for them. *Praestat herbam dare quam turpiter pugnare:* Better yield than disgracefully hold out the contest. God, say they, hath the better of us; neither need he now call upon heaven and earth to arbitrate, nor on the mountains and strong foundations to hear the quarrel, for we are self-condemned, **#Tit 3:11**. Our own consciences read the sentence against us, we have deserved to be destroyed; but O, what may we do to avert and avoid his wrath? "what shall we do that we might work the works of God?" **#Joh 6:28**. Lo, this is the guise of graceless men; fain they would pacify God, and work themselves into his grace and favour by ceremonies and frivolous businesses; yea, they offer largely for a dispensation to live in their sins, which they had as lief be knocked on the head as part with. *Interea per flexuosos circuitus fingunt se ad Deum accedere, a quo tamen semper cupiant esse remoti*, saith Calvin; they fetch a compass about God, but care not to come near him. Heaven they would either steal if they could, or buy at any hand, if they might; fain would they pass *e coeno ad coelum, a deliciis ad delicias*, from Delilah's lap to Abraham's bosom; fain they would (as one saith) dance with the devil all day, and then sup with Christ at night. They seem here very inquisitive and solicitous about their soul's health; they give the half turn, *sed ad Deum usque non revertuntur*; but they return not even to God; like a horse in a mill, they move much, but remove not at all; like those silly women, **#2Ti 3:6,7**, or as ants that run to and fro about a mole hill, but grow not greater.

**And bow myself before the high God]** Or, shall I bow myself, will that, or any like bodily exercise, please him or pacify him? If cringing or crouching will do it, if sackcloth and ashes, if hanging down the head and going softly, if penances and pilgrimages, &c., hypocrites do usually herein outdo the upright. Doth the publican look with his eye on the ground? the hypocritical Jews will hang down their heads like bulrushes. Doth Timothy weaken his constitution by abstinence? the Pharisee will never give over till his complexion be wholly withered and waned. Doth Paul correct his body with milder correction, as it were a blow on the cheek? the Jesuit will martyr his sides with the severe discipline of scorpions. But although God must be glorified with our bodies also, **#1Co 6:20**, and external service is required (whatever the Swenkfeldians say to the contrary), yet bodily exercise of itself profiteth little, **#1Ti 4:8**, and let those that brag of or bind upon their outward worship of Christ consider, that the devil himself in the demoniac of Gadara fell down and worshipped him. What comfort can there be in that which is common to us with devils? who, as they believe and tremble, so they tremble and worship. The outward bowing is the body of the action; the disposition of the soul is the soul of it.

**Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, &c.]** Shall I prevent him, and propitiate him with burnt offerings? shall I meet him marching against me, and thus make my peace with him? The Jews were much in sacrifices, till they wearied God's soul therewith, and all his senses, **#Isa 1:13-15**; but they were sacrificing Sodomites, **#Mic 6:10**, they stuck in the bark, they pleased themselves in the work done, not attending the manner, which either makes or mars every action, and is mainly eyed by God; their devotions were placed more in the massive materiality than inward purity; and hence rejected David could tell (though these questionists could not) that God desired not sacrifice further than as thereby men were led to Christ; and that the sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit, **#Ps 51:16,17**; that no burnt offering is acceptable, nor calf of a year old, unless laid on the low altar of a broken heart, which sanctifieth the sacrifice.

**Ver. 7. Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams?]** It was taken for a maxim among all nations that no man was to come

before God empty handed, nor to serve him of free cost. And although Lycurgus the Lacedaemonian made a law that no man should be at very great charge for a sacrifice, lest he should grow weary of God's service; yet when the famous carver Phidias advised the Athenians to make the statue of Minerva rather of marble than of ivory, 1. Because more durable (this passed with allowance), 2. Because less chargeable, at the mention hereof, with infinite indignation, they commanded him silence. Pliny tells us of Alexander the Great, that when, as being yet a youth, he cast great store of frankincense upon the altar, and his schoolmaster told him he must not be so liberal till he had subdued the frankincense countries; when once he had conquered Arabia he sent his schoolmaster a shipfull of frankincense, largely exhorting him to worship the gods therewith. Superstition is, for the most part, not liberal only, but prodigal and no wonder, when as good works are by Bellarmine said to be *mercatura regni coelestis* the price and purchase of heaven. Hence their churches are so stuffed with vowed presents and memories, as at Loretto, and elsewhere, they are fain to hang their cloisters and churchyards with them. What would not men give, what will they not suffer, that they may be saved? I would swim through a sea of brimstone, said one, that I might come to heaven at last. But those that would buy heaven, and do offer, as these here, a bribe for a pardon, shall hear, Thy money perish with thee; and those that seek to be saved by their works Luther fitly calls the devil's martyrs; they suffer much and take much pains to go to hell, they buy their damnation, as one saith the Pharisees did when they gave Judas those thirty pieces, for which he sold his salvation.

**Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, &c.]** The superstitious Jews used, we know, to offer up their children in sacrifice to Moloch, or Saturn, #2Ki 17:15-17 21:5-7 23:10, and that in an apish imitation of Abraham's offering his son Isaac. To the same Saturn the Phoenicians are said to have sacrificed the best of their sons (Euseb. Praep. Evang. lib. 4). So did the Carthaginians, as Diodorus Siculus testifies. And when as they had for a while left off so to do, and were overcome by Agathocles, they (supposing that the gods were therefore angry with them, because they had not done as formerly) slew two hundred at once, at the altar, of their young nobility, to pacify the offended deity. Of like sort were Anammelech



and Adrammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim, unto whom that people "burnt their children in the fire," #2Ki 17:31. And little better were our ancestors, the old Britons, who not only sacrificed their strangers, but their children too, *non ad honorem sed ad iniuriam religionis* (Cared. Britan.). Here then the prophet seemeth to speak by way of concession, that he may show these questionists how little it would avail them to sacrifice their children, if such a thing were lawful to be done.

Ver. 8. **He hath showed thee, O man, what is good]** *i.e.* what is right, just, and acceptable to himself. He showed it by the light of Nature; for Aristotle (Nature's secretary) saith, It is not likely that God is so well pleased with the costliness of the sacrifices as with the godliness of the sacrifices. He hath showed it much more by the light of Scripture; there he hath told thee what is the *unum necessarium*, one thing necessary; in comparison whereof all other things are but side businesses; what is the *totum hominis*, the whole duty of man, *sc.* to "fear God, and keep his commandments," #Ec 12:13; what is the *bonum hominis*, as here, yea, the *summum bonum*, or chiefest good of man attainable in this life, *viz.* communion with God and conformity to God.

**And what doth the Lord require of thee]** But thee? *Quia in omni creatura terrena nihil melius fecit te, ipse quaerit te a te, quia perdideras te in te*, as Augustine elegantly paraphraseth this text: Inasmuch as God hath among all earthly creatures made nothing better than thee, therefore he requireth thee of thee.

**But to do justly, and to love mercy]** This is the sum of the second table; as that which followeth is of the first, to walk humbly with thy God. Here then is a brief of the whole Bible, a little Bible, as the eleventh to the Hebrews is by one not unfitly called a little book of martyrs. Do this and live: do this here enjoined, and thou shalt never fall; yea, thou shalt go gallantly into heaven, as St Peter hath it, #2Pe 1:10,11. *Certa semper sunt in paucis*, saith Tertullian. Things simply necessary, whether to be believed or practised, are few in number but many in virtue; in sight small, but great in weight; like gold, which being solid, is contracted into a narrow room; but may be drawn into so large an extent that one angel may cover an acre of ground, as the naturalists have observed. To do justly is the duty, not

only of magistrates, whom God hath intrusted with the administration of his earthly kingdom, by the due execution of vindictive and remunerative justice, but also of all other persons in their various places and stations, whose rule must be that golden saying of our Saviour, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets," #Mt 7:12. {See Trapp on "Mt 7:12"}

**And to love mercy]** This is more than to show mercy; for that a man may do, and yet, for want of love, lose all, #1Co 1:3. He must not only draw out his sheaf, but his soul to the hungry, #Isa 58:10, nor distribute spiritual alms, but do it out of deep affection, as Titus, #2Co 7:15; he must be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," #1Ti 6:18; his mercy must flow from him as water doth from the fountain, or light from the sun; it must not be wrung from him, as verjuice <sup>{a}</sup> from a crab apple, or as distilled water is forced out by the heat of the fire. Let the love of Christ constrain us to look out some of his receivers (as David did Jonathan's flock), to whom we may show mercy for his sake. What though we be weak, yet if willing to show mercy, God accepteth according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, #2Co 8:12. The widow's mite is beyond the rich man's magnificence, because it came out of a richer mind. The apostle bids, "put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness," #Col 3:12, such as the jailer had toward Paul and Silas; such as the Samaritan had toward the wounded man by the wayside; such as those primitive Christians had, who came to the church with strong affections, with large contributions, #Ac 4:34. The like is foretold of Tyre, when converted, #Isa 23:18; and of Ethiopia, #Ps 68:31, that she shall "hastily stretch her hands unto God," Heb. she shall make them run, noting her readiness and speediness in giving her goods unto the saints. The tender mercies of the Almighty, shed forth abundantly upon his, leave a compassionate frame upon their hearts, and do dye their thoughts, as the dye vat doth the cloth.

**And to walk humbly with thy God]** Or, bashfully, with a holy shamefacedness, and solicitousness of doing anything that may offend the eyes of God's glory. "Yea, what care," saith the apostle, #2Co 7:11, *sc.* of walking worthy of the Lord, unto all-pleasing,

**#Col 1:10**, as proving your hearts and lives to him in every part and point of obedience. This the Lord in a mystery taught his people, **#De 23:13,14**, when commanding them to cover their excrements with a paddle, he giveth this reason thereof: "For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee." They that stand in the presence of princes must be every way exact; and give them all due respect. Now a good man, like a good angel, is ever in God's presence; and must therefore walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, with all lowliness and meekness, **#Eph 4:1,2**, with all modesty, and demission of mind and of demeanour (as the word here signifieth), and especially when he draweth nigh to God in holy duties. Then it must be his care to exercise a threefold humility. First, precedent: before he sets upon God's service, he must in heart devote and dedicate all that he is, and hath, as a due debt to the Almighty, saying with David, **#1Ch 29:14**, It is of thine own, Lord, that I give thee:  $\tau\alpha\ \sigma\alpha\ \epsilon\kappa\ \tau\omega\upsilon\ \sigma\omega\upsilon$ , as that good Emperor Justinian said. The second is concomitant; when in the performance of good duties he hath grace (this lovely grace of humility especially), "whereby he may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear," **#Heb 12:28**; which is nothing else but an awful respect to the Divine majesty, with whom we have to do, **#Heb 4:13**. The third is subsequent; when after he hath done his best he is dejected in the sense of his many failings in the manner; and looking on his plumes, he looketh also on his black feet, and is abashed and abased before the Lord. Lo, this is to humble himself to walk with his God. And as many as walk according to this rule peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

{a} The acid juice of green or unripe grapes, crab apples, or other sour fruit, expressed and formed into a liquor; formerly much used in cooking, as a condiment, or for medicinal purposes. (ED)

Ver. 9. **The Lord's voice crieth unto the city**] Or, shall cry, viz. by his prophets.  $\phi\iota\lambda\epsilon\iota\ \omicron\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \pi\rho\omicron\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\iota\upsilon\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ , said the heathen. God loves to forewarn, to warn before he woundeth, to foretell a judgment before he inflicteth it. He had shown his people what was good, and what he required of them; but to little purpose, through their unteachableness and stubbornness. He threateneth, therefore, here to take another course with them.

**And the man of wisdom shall see thy name]** Gualther rendereth it, And the man of essence, &c., that is, *qui revers vir est, non caudex aut truncus*, he that is a man indeed, or not a stock, or trunk (such a one as was that sapless fellow Nabal, in whom all true reason was decayed and faded), will easily see God's name, that is, the Divine majesty of the word working powerfully upon his heart, as the sunbeams beat upon Jonah's head, and disquieted him. Danaeus rendereth it, And wisdom seeth thy name, that is, wisdom's children, as **#Lu 7:35**, which will justify her, when others are either so froward that nothing can please them (neither John fasting, nor Christ eating, **#Mt 11:16**, &c.), or so dull that nothing can affect them, as these here; the word of God was worse than spilt upon them. Sure it is, that wisdom's children are not many. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things," saith Hosea, **#Ho 14:9**, the very question imports a paucity; see the note there. Though a gun be discharged at a whole flight of birds, there are but a few killed; though the net be spread over the whole pond, but a few fishes are taken. *Rari sunt qui philosophantur*, saith Ulpian. It is with our hearers as it was with Jonathan's signal arrows, two fell short, and but one beyond the mark; so where one shoots home to the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus, many fall short. Three sorts of four of those that heard our Saviour were naught, **#Mt 13:4-8**. And of those that heard Paul at Athens, some derided, others doubted, and but a very few believed; as Dionysius, and Damaris, and some others with them, **#Ac 17:34**.

**Hear ye the rod]** Since ye would not hear the word, and so redeem your own sorrows. All God's rods are vocal, they are speaking as well as smiting; they are not mute, but mingled with instructions. They are his free school teachers (*Διδασκαλοι αμισθοι*); curst and crabbed, but such as whereby he openeth men's ears (till then uncircumcised, and stopped with the superfluity of naughtiness) to discipline, and commandeth them to return from iniquity, **#Job 36:10**. By chastening men God teacheth them out of his law, **#Ps 94:12**. Hence Luther calleth affliction *Theologium Christianorum* the Christian man's divinity; and another saith, that *Schola crucis est schola lucis*, The school of the cross is the school of light. There shall be only fear to make you understand the hearing, **#Isa 28:19**. As God is said to hold his peace when he punisheth not, **#Ps 50:21**

**Isa 41:14**, so, to preach and teach when he doth. And look bow Gideon, by threshing the men of Succoth with thorns and briers of the wilderness, taught them, **#Jud 8:7,16**, so here. "I have a message from God unto thee, O king," said Ehud, **#Jud 3:20**. Lo, his dagger was God's message. Whence one well observeth, that not only the vocal admonitions, but the real judgments, of God are his errands and instructions to the earth, the inhabitants of the world. "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," **#Isa 26:9**. Smart makes wit, and vexation giveth understanding.

**And who hath appointed it]** God, who hath not only a permissive, but an active hand in all our afflictions. Others render the text, *Quis sit, qui accersat istud*, Who is it that hath procured it, or sent for it, who, but yourselves? according to **#Ho 13:9**, see the note there. *Nemo laeditur nisi a seipso*. Men may thank themselves for all their sufferings; for God afflicteth not willingly, **#La 3:33**. He cometh forth of his place to do it, **#Isa 26:21**, and counteth it "his work, his strange work," **#Isa 28:21**. He doth justice (when there is no other remedy), but he loveth mercy, and so requireth us to do in the verse next before going.

Ver. 10. **Are there yet the treasures of wickedness]** What yet? for all that ever I can say or do to the contrary? Though I cry out unto you by my word (and have set it on with my rod, that it might stick the better), Oh do not this abominable thing! is there yet unto every man a house of the wicked and treasures of wickedness (so some read it)? see **#Mic 2:2**. See Trapp on "**Mic 2:2**") The Vulgate reads it (and Gualther disliketh it not), Is there yet fire in the house of the wicked? *sc.* the fire of God's wrath? and treasures of wickedness, as fuel cast upon it, to consume all? see **#Jas 5:1-3**. Treasures of wickedness profit not, **#Pr 10:2**, since to heap up sin is to heap up wrath, **#Ro 2:5**, and to rake together ill-gotten goods is to carry home a fardel of plaguey clothes, and death with them. Ephraim said, "Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance," **#Ho 12:8**. But in so doing, Ephraim fed upon the wind, **#Mic 6:1**, yea, upon pestilential air; he daily increased lies and desolation, that is, such lying vanities as bring desolation and not consolation, *desolationem potius quam consolationem* (Aug.), as hale hell at the heels of them (as we see in the parable of that wretched rich man,

**#Lu 16:19-31**); *Animam ipsam incendio gehennae mancipant*, the fire that is in them shall feed upon their souls and flesh throughout all eternity. Out of doors, therefore, with these treasures of wickedness, by restoring them to the right owners, as Zaccheus did; and as Justinian the emperor, who would not put the vessels of the temple taken by Titus, and recovered from Gensericus, into the treasury, but restored them.

**And the scant measure that is abominable?**] Heb. the ephah of leanness, so called, both because it lacks its due proportion ( *modius macilentus*), and makes men lean, full of wrath; *q.d.* you scant it to those you trade with, but God fills it up with his fierce wrath and indignation. See **#Am 8:5**. {See Trapp on "Am 8:5"}

Ver. 11. **Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances?**] Shall I clear and acquit such? I that am the righteous judge of heaven and earth, I abhor all injustice; I that have named myself a God that will by no means clear the guilty, nor take the wicked by the hand? **#Ex 34:7 Job 8:20**. Do they think to draw me in as a party; or, that I will bear with their false and fraudulent dealings, which I have so often declared against, and doomed both in the law, and by my servants Solomon, Amos, and others. No: assure yourselves, your sins shall find you out, and I will curse you, smite you, plague you, and so set it on, as no creature shall be able to take it off. Let earthly judges warp as they will, and wink at sin, I neither can nor will; but as men have sowed, so they shall reap; as they have sowed in hardness of heart, so they shall reap in horror of conscience, *et quorum oculos culpa clausit, poena aperiet*, as they have lived unconscionably, so they shall die uncomfortably; at which times, their treasures of wickedness shall leave them in the lurch; as the devil leaves witches, when they come to prison.

Ver. 12. **For the rich men thereof are full of violence**] After that they have once enriched themselves by fraud and false dealing, they take the boldness openly to oppress, and to exercise regiment without righteousness, which is no better than robbery with authority; of which before, **#Mic 2:1-3:12** Thus wicked men wax worse and worse, **#2Ti 3:13**, "till wrath come upon them to the utmost," **#1Th 2:16**.

**And the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies]** Not the rich men only are in fault; but as the Cretians, so these are always liars, loud and lewd liars; their tongue is deceitful in their mouth, so that they no sooner open their mouths but swarms of lies issue out; they are *mendaciorum loquacissimi*, they have taught their tongues to speak lies, **#Jer 9:5**, they are now become artists at it; yea, they take fast hold of deceit, **#Jer 8:5**, so that they cannot be got off, without striving. This is lamentable, and yet common; especially in trading and trafficking. But oh when shall that golden age return, that the argument may again proceed, *Sacerdos est, non fallet: Christianus est, non mentietur*. He is a minister, and will not deceive you: He is a Christian, and will not lie! See **#Isa 63:8**.

Ver. 13. **Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee]** This is one twig of that rod, **#Mic 6:9**, that now they shall hear and feel too, that would not hearken to God's word. Bernard telleth us concerning a brother of his; that when he gave him many good instructions and he, being a soldier, minded them not, he put his finger to his sides and said, One day a spear shall make way to this heart of thine, for instructions and admonitions to enter. God can (and, where he intendeth mercy will) make way for his word by his rod; and seal up instructions by chastening men with pain upon their beds, "and the multitude of their bones with strong pain," **#Job 33:16,19**. He can fasten them to their beds, as he did Abimelech, David, Hezekiah, and thereby tame them, and take them a link lower, **#Job 33:17**. He can smite them with sickness, and make them desolate, as it is here; with such sickness as shall make their best friends afraid of them, and that none dare look at them, but as through a grate; and all this with a sting too in the tail of it, because of thy sins. "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat" (so sick they are and stomachless, that nothing will down with them); "and they draw near to the gates of death," **#Ps 107:17,18**. This was the case of that rich and wretched cardinal, Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England, in the reign of Henry VI, who, tossing upon his sick bed and perceiving he must die, murmured at sickness and death, that his riches could neither relieve him under the one, nor reprieve him from the other (Fox, Martyrs, tel. 925). This was also the case of that great Emperor Charles V, of whom Duplessy reporteth, that when he was old and

crazy he cursed his honours, his victories, trophies, riches, saying, *Abite hinc, abite longe*, Away, begone, miserable comforters are ye all. Mention is made before of a great man that wrote this a little before his death, *Spes et fortuna valet*. Farewell hope and prosperity. And surely there are not a few rich cormorants, who may well say to their wealth when they are sick, as Cornelius Agrippa did to his familiar spirit, *Abi perdita bestia, quae me perdidisti*, Begone, thou wicked beast, thou hast been mine undoing, &c. A promise contrary to this threatening in the text is that **#Isa 33:24**, "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

Ver. 14. **Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied]** Either as not having enough to satisfy, but prisoner's pittance, so much only as will keep life and soul together; or else, troubled with a bulimy, *an appetitus caninus*, desire of a dog, a weakness of the digestive faculty, so that thy meat feeds thee not: the staff of it being also broken by God, the nutritive property of it being taken away. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:6"}

**And thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee]** Thou shalt be laid low enough by civil and intestine discords, which as a fire feedeth upon the people, **#Isa 9:19**, no man shall spare his brother. Or like as a hungry man snatcheth on the right hand and eateth on the left hand, and yet is not satisfied, **#Isa 9:20**, till thine unnatural convulsions end in a deadly consumption.

**And thou shalt take hold, but shall not deliver]** Thou shalt catch up thy children, thy jewels, and think to secure them from the enemy, but shalt not be able. Of this misery we had overly woeful experience in our late unnatural garboils.

**And that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword]** Other judgments forerun the sword; which, when they will not do, the sword will then contemn the rod, **#Eze 21:10**, that is, it will set at nought whatever the rod hath done, and come furbished and sharpened for the slaughter.

Ver. 15. **Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap]** This had been long since threatened by Moses, **#De 28:38-40**, and was now over seven hundred years after to receive its accomplishment in this people. There is an infallibility in all the menaces of God's mouth.



Men are apt to think that they were uttered *in terrorem* in fear only; and to put them off, as those in the Gospel did, with a God forbid: "Who knows if the Lord will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that is evil may pass from us?" #Jer 21:2. But what saith the prophet Zephaniah? "The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not: but the unjust knoweth no shame," #Zep 3:5; sin hath wended such an impudence in his face, that he shuns no sin, dreads no danger.

Ver. 16. **For the statutes of Omri are kept]** *Subest verbis hisce sarcasmus.* Here the prophet taunteth them for their idolatry; and telleth them plainly what will be the issue of it: *q.d.* You think you deal wisely and take a safe course for yourselves, that together with Ephraim you are joined to idols, and have such great names as Omri and Ahab to countenance you therein. Omri's statutes can be observed when mine lie neglected.

“*Haec tibi pro vili, sub pedibusque iacent*” (Ovid).

The works of the house of Ahab, that non-such, can be imitated, and their counsels embraced, when my work lies undone, and my counsel is rejected, #Lu 7:30. "Full well" (*καλως, sane, bene*) "ye reject the commandment of God" (being *ingrati gratiae Dei*, unthankful of the grace of God, as Ambrose speaketh), "that ye may keep your own tradition," #Mr 7:9. And do not the Papists even the very same at this day. The Pope's canons are kept exactly, and all the rites of the Church of Rome; they walk in the track of the Trent conventicle, and hold it worse to deface an idol than to kill a man; to eat flesh or eggs on a fasting day than to commit incest; to work on a holy day than to break the sabbath. There is no command of the moral law but they can dispense with it; but none of their ceremonial laws. Let God (say they, profanely) look to the breach of his own law; we will look to ours.

**That I should make thee a desolation]** Luther here observeth, that oppression and other violations of the second table God usually punisheth with war, famine, and pestilence; but breaches of the first table, and especially idolatry, with utter desolation. This is a land destroying sin, #Jer 22:7-9.

**Therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people]** That is, of such as had been my people, if you could have held you so; but you are now *Loammi*, disprivileged. Or, that which I threatened in the law long since to bring upon you, if ye carried not yourselves as my people; or, that which you deserved for having profaned the name and title of being my people, **#Eze 36:20,28 Ro 2:24 cf. Lu 12:47.**

## **Chapter 7**

Ver. 1. **Woe is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits]** *Allai li*, Alas for me. This last sermon of his the prophet begins with a pathetic queritation, bewailing his own unhappiness in the little good success of his ministry. *Mirifice autem nostris temporibus hic sermo convenit*, saith Gualther. This discourse suits well with these times; wherein we may justly cry out with the prophet Isaiah, "Who hath believed our report?" And again, "O my leanness, my leanness! woe is me, for there is only as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done," **#Isa 24:13,16.** *Hei mihi quam pingui macer est mihi taurus in arvo.* Though he had worn himself to a very skeleton in the Lord's work; yet had he laboured in vain, Israel was not gathered, **#Isa 49:4,5**, and hence his woeful complaint. The like we read of Elias, **#1Ki 19:10**, where he bitterly bewails his aloneness; so did Athanasius in his age; and Basil in his *Fasciculus temporum*, A. D. 884, cries out, for the paucity of good people, *Heu, heu, Domine Deus*, Alas, Lord, how few appear to be on thy side.

“ *Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.* ”

And Gualther complains, that the Anabaptists in Germany urged this as a chief argument to draw people from communion with our Churches, that there was so little good done by preaching, and so few souls converted. Hence some ministers despond, and are ready to kick up all. Latimer tells of one who gave this answer why he left off preaching, because he saw he did no good. This, saith Latimer, is a naughty, a very naughty answer. A grief it will be, and fit it should be; piety to God and pity to men calls for it. Christ wept over Jerusalem; Paul had great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart (not inferior to that of a woman in travail Ὀδυνη, **#Ro 9:2**)

for his contumacious countrymen; neither could he speak of those lewd lowlies at Philippi with dry eyes, #**Php 3:18**. But an utter discouragement it should not be, since our reward is with God however, #**Isa 49:5**, and perhaps a larger, because we have wrought with so little encouragement: we have ploughed when others have only trod out the grain: they trod and fed together, when as those that plough have no refreshing till the work be done, #**Ho 10:13**. Certain it is that God will reward his faithful servants, *secundum laborem, non secundum proventum*, according to their pains taken in the ministry, and not according to their people's profiting, *κατα κοπον ου κατα καρπον*..

**There is no cluster to eat]** None to speak of: hedge fruit there is great store; wild grapes not a few; grapes of Sodom, clusters of Gomorrah; but for good grapes, pleasant fruit, godly people, there is a wondrous scarcity of such. Diogenes lighted a candle at noonday to look for a man; the host of Nola went to the graves to call for the good men of the town. Cicero saith, that if there be one good poet in an age it is well. Christ wondered at one good Nathaniel, and tells us in the same chapter, that they are but few that receive him, and with him the adoption of sons, #**Joh 1:12**. Clusters we must not look for; but if there be found two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches, it is well, #**Isa 17:6**. *Sufficit mihi auditor unus, sufficit nullus*. Paul when he came first to Philippi had a poor audience, only a few women, #**Ac 16:13**, and one convert: neither had he much better success at Athens, and no Church could be planted there, #**Ac 17:33,34**.

**My soul desired the firstripe fruits]** *Praecocem fructum*, the early ripening fruit, as a great dainty, a precious rarity. We highly prize nettlebuds when they first bud; so doth God our young services. #**Jer 1:11**, he made choice of the almond tree because it blossometh first; so of Jeremiah from his infancy. He called for firstfruits of trees, and of the earth, in the sheaf, in the threshingfloor, in the dough, in the loaves. He would have ears of corn dried by the fire; and wheat beaten out of the green ears, #**Le 2:14**. He would have the primrose of our childhood. There were three sorts of firstfruits. 1. Of ears of grain offered about the passover. 2. Of the loaves, offered about Pentecost. 3. About the end of the year, in autumn. Now of the

two first God had a part, not of the last. He likes not of those *arbores autumnales*, autumn trees, #**Jude 12** (φθινοπωρινα), that bud at latter end of harvest. Conversion (as divines observe) usually occurs between eighteen years of age and twenty-eight: besides Abraham in the Old Testament, and Nicodemus in the New, we have not many instances of men converted in old age. When people grow crooked and rooted in evil practices they are hardly ever set straight again. "Remember therefore thy Creator in the days of thy youth"; his soul delighteth in the first ripe fruits. Remember that Jesus Christ shed his blood for thee when he was but eight days old when he was circumcised; and took thee into his family by baptism when thou didst hang on thy mother's breast.

Ver. 2. **The good man is perished out of the earth**] Heb. The saint, or, gracious man, that out of mercy obtained from God, can extend mercy to men. *Rari quippe boni*. Of such it may be said, as one doth of faithful friends in this age, that they are all (for the most part) gone on pilgrimage; and their return is uncertain.

**And there is none upright among men**] None (to speak of) that maketh straight paths for his feet, #**Heb 12:13**, that foots it aright (ορθοπαδει), according to the truth of the gospel, #**Ga 2:14**, that walketh evenly, #**Ge 17:1**, and accurately (ακριβως), as it were by line and by rule, #**Eph 5:15**, and that halts not between two opinions, as those Israelites; but is right in his judgment, and undefiled in his way, #**Ps 119:1**, rather desiring to be good than to seem to be so: few such to be found surely; black swans you may count and call them.

“ *Sed nec Brutus erit, Bruti nec avunculus usquam*” (Juven.).

**They all lie in wait for blood**] A company of sanguinaries, blood suckers, hunting for the precious lives of men; but especially of such as reprove them in the gate. If you touch them in their lusts, they will seek to touch you in your life, as Joash did Zechariah, and as the priests and people said of Jeremiah, This man worthy to die. All malice is bloody, and wisheth him out of the world whom it spiteth.

**They hunt every man his brother with a net**] They add fraud to their force and craft to their cruelty; these seldom go sundered: as

some write of the asp, he never wanders alone without his companion with him; and as the Scripture speaks of those birds of prey and desolation, none of them shall want their mate, #Isa 34:16. The matter is made the worse, because it is a brother whom they hunt: whether he be so by race, place, or grace, a brother should be better dealt with.

Ver. 3. **That they may do evil with both hands earnestly]** Heb. for good and all, or, for ado; that they may speak and do evil as they can, #Jer 3:5, and seek to outsin one another; like unhappy boys that strive who shall go farthest in the dirt. *Nohunt solita peccare*, saith Seneca: *Et pudet non esse impudentes*, saith Austin. Luther testifieth of the monks in Germany, that they were so desperately wicked, *ut nihil cogitent quod non idem patrare ausint*, that they could not devise that wickedness which they dared not do.

**The prince asketh]** A beggarly practice for a prince, but so base they were grown, and so greedy of filthy lucre. "The prince asketh," and, by asking only, compelleth; for who dare deny him? If some Naboth do, he shall die for it. There is a memorable story of a poor man in Spain, to whom, when the lord's inquisitors sent for some of his pears, which they had cast their eye upon, he, for fear of offending, brought them his pears, tree and all by the roots.

**And the judge asketh for a reward]** Heb. The judge for a reward, *sc.* will gratify that *sordidum poscimummum*, the prince (Plaut.); who, when he giveth him his commissions, hinteth to him haply, as Nero did to his public officers, *Scis quid nobis opus est* (Dio.), Thou knowest what I want, and must have; see then that thou help me to it. Such trading there was likewise between our Richard II and judge Belknap with his fellows. To this purpose the Chaldee paraphrast here. The prince, saith he, requireth supplies of the judge, and this bespeaketh him, *Fac pro me, et retribuam tibi*; Negotiate for me, and I will be thy paymaster; favour me, help me at my need, and I will requite thy courtesy, whensoever thou wilt. Thus *muli mutuo scabunt*, one hand scratches another; and between the oppressive prince and unconscionable judge "the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth," #Hab 1:4.

**And the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire]** Heb. he speaketh out the corruption of his soul. "He" doth it. *Emphaticum est pronomen Ipse*, saith Calvin. This same "he" hath a special emphasis in it, *q.d.* This impudent man, being now past all grace (for *Illum ego periisse dico, cui perit pudor*), boasteth of his villany; and thinks to bear it out bravely, because it is *facinus maiores abollae*, the fact of a great one. But who is this "he," this great man in the text, that dares thus obtrude, and justify to the world his most malapert misdemeanour? The rich client, saith Calvin, that hath his money to plead for him; for in suits both of love and of law, money mostly maketh mastery ( *Ibi fas ubi maxima merces*); and angels trouble the current of justice (saith one) at certain seasons. Others understand it of counsellors, pleaders, advocates, solicitors, and other officers of justice; who, when as they ought to reprove the iniquity of the judges, do rather help it forward, by justifying the wicked for a reward, and taking away the righteousness of the righteous from him, **#Isa 5:20**, by making the law a nose of wax, and by quirks and devices varnishing falsehood and wrongdealing.

**So they wrap it up]** *Contorcuplicant*: they wreath their wrong dealings together, as a rope twisted of many threads, till their iniquity be found to be hateful; till there wanteth but a hurdle, a horse, and a halter (as Belknap said of himself) to do the right. They make a league together, they join and strengthen their evil counsels and frauds, so Mr Diodati. These men agree among themselves, and conspire with one consent to do evil; so the Genevists.

Ver. 4. **The best of them is as a brier]** Which a man cannot handle without harm. See **#2Sa 23:6 Ps 55:21 58:10 Eze 2:6 Mt 7:16 13:7,22**; so, you cannot deal with them without danger; guilt, or grief you shall be sure of. Lot felt it so at Sodom, **#2Pe 2:7,8**, and so did those that set up that bramble Abimelech for their king, **#Jud 9:15,16**.

**The most upright is sharper than a thornhedge]** *Ut ibi inveniatur dolor, ubi sperabatur auxilium*, saith Jerome here; so that a man shall have grief where he hoped for help and succour; as a man that, taking hold of a thorn hedge to get over, hath his fingers pricked by it, and is glad to let go; or, as a sheep that, fleeing to the bush for defence in weather, loses part of her fleece. Now if the best

and most upright among them were no better, what can be imagined of the many (οἱ πολλοί)? and what better can be hoped for by us (for one egg is not more like another than these times are those here described; it is but the same fable acted over again, only everything is now worse than ever) than a day of visitation, a time of perplexity, as it followeth here? For while they be folded together as thorns, and while they be drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry, #Na 1:10, as sear thorns under the pot, #Ec 7:6. I will go through these briars, saith God, I will burn them together, #Isa 27:4, they shall be utterly burnt with fire in the same place, #2Sa 23:7, that is, in hell, as some interpret it.

**The day of thy watchmen, and thy visitation cometh]** Where sin is in the saddle punishment will be upon the crupper. <sup>{a}</sup> God will have a visitation day; and that for his watchmen, prophets, and governors, as well as for the common sort. "Thy visitation cometh," thou shalt share in punishment with them, as thou hast done in sin; neither shall it help thee to say, Our watchmen were in fault; for God will visit you all; and his visitation articles will be very strict and critical.

**Now shall be their perplexity]** They shall be so intricately and entangled; so ensnared and ensnarled, as that they shall not know which way to turn them. They shall be in as great a distress as Israel was at the Red Sea, #Ex 14:3, or as the Jews at Shushan were, when the decree was gone out for their utter destruction, #Es 3:15, or as Manasseh was, when taken by the Assyrians among the thorns, he was bound with fetters, and carried to Babylon, #2Ch 33:11.

<sup>{a}</sup> A leathern strap buckled to the back of the saddle and passing under the horse's tail, to prevent the saddle from slipping forwards. (ED)

Ver. 5. **Trust ye not in a friend]** Friends (said Socrates), there is no friend: and a friend is a changeable creature, saith another (ζῶον εὐμεταβλητόν); all in changeable colours as the peacock, as often changed as moved. Besides, many friends are not more fickle than false, like deep ponds, clear at the top, and all muddy at the bottom. *Fide ergo: sed cui vide.* Try before you trust; and when you have tried your utmost, trust not overly far, lest you cry out at length, as Queen Elizabeth did, In trust I have found treason; or as Julius

Caesar, when stabbed by Brutus among others, What thou, my son Brutus? He was slain in the senate house, with 23 wounds, given, in the most part, by those whose lives he had preserved.

**Put ye not confidence in a guide]** *Potenti et pollenti consilio et auxilio.* Be he never so potent or politic, beyond thousand others, as the word importeth: and as the people said to David, "But now thou art worth ten thousand of us," #2Sa 18:3, thou art the light of Israel, thou art the breath of our nostrils; so that if thou miscarry, we shall all breathe out our last. All which notwithstanding, princes are not to be trusted, #Ps 62:7 118:8,9 146:3, for either they may die, or their affections may die; all their golden thoughts may perish. Great men's words, saith one, are like dead men's shoes; he may go barefoot that waiteth for them.

**Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom]** From thy wife, thine ἀκοιτις, called the wife of thy bosom, because she should be as dear unto thee as the heart in thy bosom. Be not too open hearted to her, lest she tell all, as Samson's wife; or as Fulvia, in Sallust, who declared all the secrets of Cneius, a noble Roman, her foolish lover. A fool telleth all, saith Solomon, #Pr 29:11, he is as little able to keep as to give counsel. He is full of chinks, and leaks every way; the doors of his mouth are seldom kept shut; you may know him by his gaping: fools are called by Aristophanes and Lucian, κεινηνοτες; gapers. "But a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards," #Pr 29:11; Tacitus he holds to be the best historian; and keeps his mouth with a bridle, as David did, #Ps 39:1, and as the poets feign of Pegasus, that he had a golden bridle put upon him by Minerva, their goddess of wisdom. God and nature have taught us by the site of the tongue in a man's mouth, to take heed to it, and to keep the doors of it; and when all is done, to pray God to keep that door, #Ps 141:3. The tongue is ever *in udo*, in a moisture; but yet tied by the roots, that it may not stir out of place; it is also guarded with a percollis of teeth and a two-leaved gate of lips, which we must carefully keep, and hold that for an oracle,

“ *Si sapis, arcano vina reconde cado.*”  
“If you have sense, hide your personal wine in a jar”



Ver. 6. **For the son dishonoureth the father]** Or, revileth the father (Menabbel), be-Nabals him, beknaves him (of Nabal comes *Nebulo*), *turpitudine afficit*, bepastles him, vilifleth him. This is monstrous wickedness, #**Mal 1:6**, and a sure sign the devil hath set his limbs in a man that is thus unnatural, fierce, traitorous, heady, high-minded; which yet is foretold of these dregs of time, these last and worst days, both by our Saviour, #**Mt 10:21,35,36**, and likewise by St Paul, #**2Ti 3:3,4**. Such a son was he who, when his father complained that never father had so undutiful a child as he had: Yes, said his son (with less grace than wit), my grandfather had. Such a son was Ham, and Absalom, and Amida, son of Muleasses, King of Tunis, who cast his father out of his kingdom, and put out his eyes; and Henry, eldest son to our Henry II, who rebelled against his father, and died before him of a fever and a flux, with excoriation of the bowels; and, lastly, Adolphus Egmondanus, who imprisoned his own father six years for no other cause but for living so long, and keeping him from the dukedom of Guelderland.

**The daughter riseth up against her mother]** As Mr Fox mentioneth some that witnessed against their own parents here in Queen Mary's days, and were a means of their martyrdom.

**A man's enemies are the men of his own house]** See #**Mt 10:36**. *{See Trapp on "Mt 10:36"}* Take our Saviour's counsel there; "Be ye wise as serpents, innocent as doves"; but beware of men, yea, of the men of your own house.

*" Fide Deo soli: mortali fidito nulli:*

*Fallunt mortales: fullere Iova nequit. "*

Ver. 7. **Therefore will I look unto the Lord]** "Therefore," inasmuch as there is no faith nor fair dealing among men, "I will look unto the Lord"; look wishly and intently, as a watchman in his watch tower doth look as far as ever he can see on every side. I also will lift up mine eyes unto those hills of heaven, from whence cometh my help, #**Ps 121:1**; I will pray and look up, #**Ps 5:3**; I will keep close communion with the Lord, and by faith commit the keeping of my soul to him in welldoing, as unto a faithful Creator, #**1Pe 4:19**. This I will do; and yet more than this.

**I will wait for the God of my salvation]** If he tarry, I will wait for him; because he will surely come, he will not tarry, **#Hab 2:3**. This is the voice of faith; and here is the faith and patience of the saints, **#Re 13:10 14:12**. God sometimes lies off and stays long; even till our eyes even fail with looking for his salvation, **#Ps 119:82**; and all to try what we will do; as Samuel tried Saul, who, because he stayed not out his just time, lost his kingdom. David waited for the kingdom; and had it not till he had learned to quiet and behave himself as a child weaned of his mother, **#Ps 131:2**. Those in Esther waited for deliverance; and had it not till almost forsaken of their hopes. "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord," saith dying Jacob, **#Ge 49:18**; and "I will wait for the God of my salvation," saith our prophet here, for a precedent to all the good souls of his time. Let us but consider our distance from God in worth and degree, together with our dependence upon him, our undone condition without him, how long he waited for us, how he hath hitherto helped us, as **#1Sa 7:12**, and now seems to say unto us, as he did once to Peter, "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," **#Joh 13:7**, and we shall be content to wait, as here, and to say,

**My God will hear me]** According to my faith, and his own faithfulness. The whole force of faith consisteth in this, saith Luther, *Ut quis bene applicet pronomina*, that a man will apply pronouns; that he can fiducially say, My God; and, will hear me. Were it not for this word of possession, mine, the devil might say the creed to as good purpose as we. He believeth there is a God, and a Christ, and such a Christ as is there described; but that which torments him is, he can say my to never an article of the faith. At the time in which Christ heard the devil begging that he might enter into the swine; but he could not say, My God hath heard me. Let us secure our interest in God; let us individuate Christ (*ιδιοποιεσθαι*), and appropriate him to ourselves by a particular faith, and then all shall be well with us.

**Ver. 8. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy]** Here is the triumph of faith, in the fail of outward comforts, in the midst of the world's insultations and irrisions. *Ne laeteris de me*. O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed, thou that art *victrix gentium, captiva vitiorum* (as Austin said of Rome in her pride), thou that for present carriest the ball upon the foot, and none can come near thee: Rejoice

not against me, as forlorn and hopeless; say not, "This is Zion, the outcast, whom no man seeketh after," #Jer 30:17. For assure thyself, The right hand of the Lord will change all this, and

“ *Flebile principium melior fortuna sequetur.*”

**When I fall, I shall arise]** Because fall I never so low, I cannot fall below the supporting hand of God, which will help me up again, #Ps 37:24. The wicked fall and never rise, #Am 8:14, they shall drink of the cup of God’s wrath, "and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more," #Jer 25:27; their carcasses shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them, #Jer 9:22. This is fearful. If Haman fall before Mordecai the Jew, he shall not easily stop, or step back, #Es 6:13. A Jew may fall before a Persian and get up and prevail. But if a Persian or other persecutor begin to fall before a Jew, he can neither stay nor rise. There is an invisible hand of omnipotence that strikes in for his own, and confounds their opposites.

**When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me]** He can lighten the greatest darkness, as he did the dungeons to the martyrs. From the delectable orchard of the Leonine dungeon, so Algerius, an Italian martyr, dated his heavenly epistle. I am now in the Bishop of London’s coal house (saith Mr Philpot), a dark and ugly brison as any is about London; but my dark body of sin hath well deserved the same; and the Lord now hath brought me into outer darkness, that I might be the more lightened by him; as he is most present with his children in the midst of darkness. And in his letter to the Lady Vane, I thank the Lord, saith he, I am not alone, but have six other faithful companions, who in our darkness do cheerfully sing hymns and praises to God for his great goodness. We are so joyful that I wish you part of my joy. The posy of the city of Geneva stamped round about their money was formerly out of Job, *Post tenebras spero lucern*, After darkness I look for light; but the Reformation once settled among them, they changed it into *Post tenebras lux* (Scultet. Annul.), Light after darkness. Like as the Saxon princes, before they became Christians, gave for their arms a black horse; but being once baptized, a white.

Ver. 9. **I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him]** The Church had sinned, and God was angry with her. So #Zec 1:12 Isa 57:17. What mean, then, the Antinomians to tell us that God is never angry with his people for their foul and flagitious practices; no, not with a fatherly anger? nor chastiseth them for the same; no, not so much as with a fatherly chastisement? Is not this *contra Solem mingere*? Godliness is no target against affliction. Blind Nature saw this.

“*nec te tua plurima, Pantheu,  
Labentem textit pietas*”—

*Only it helps to patient the heart under affliction by considering, 1. That it is the Lord. 2. That, a man suffers for his sin; as the penitent thief also confessed, #Lu 23:41 3. That the rod of the wicked shall not lie long upon the lot of the righteous, το πικρον μικρον. Say we then, every one, with David, I know that thy judgments are right, and thou hast afflicted me justly, #Ps 119:75; yea, in very faithfulness hast thou done it, that thou mightest be true to my soul: and with that noble Du-pleddy, who when he had lost his only son, a gentleman of great hopes (which was the breaking of his mother's heart), quieted himself with these words of David, "I was silent and said no word, because thou, Lord, didst it," #Ps 39:9. See my Love Tokens. It shall be our wisdom in affliction to look to God, and to reflect upon our sins, taking his part against ourselves; as a physician observes which way nature works, and helps it.*

**Until he plead my cause]** *As a faithful patron and powerful avenger; for though it be just in God that I suffer, yet it is unjust in mine enemies, who shall shortly be soundly paid for their insolence and cruelty.*

**He will bring me forth to the light]** *He will uncloud these gloomy days, and in his light I shall see light.*

**I shall behold his righteousness]** *That is, his faithfulness in fulfilling his promise of deliverance in due time. Meanwhile I will live upon reversions, live by faith, and think to make a good living of it too. All the ways of God to his people are "mercy and truth," #Ps*

*25:10: this is a soul satisfying place of Scripture indeed. All the passages of his providence to them are not only mercy, but truth and righteousness; they come to them in a way of a promise, and by virtue of the covenant, wherein God hath made himself a voluntary debtor to them, #1Jo 1:9.*

Ver. 10. **Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, &c.]** Not only shall I behold his righteousness (as before), but mine enemy shall see it, and feel it too, to her small comfort. They shall see it when it is too late to remedy it; as they say the mole never opens her eyes till pangs of death are upon her.

**And shame shall cover her]** When she shall see that thou hast showed me a token for good; that thou hast helped me, and comforted me, #Ps 86:17.

**Which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God?]** So laying her religion in her dish, whereby God became interested in her cause, and concerned in point of honour to appear for her. The Church is no less beholden to her enemies' insolence for help than to her own devotions; for God will right himself and her together. See #Joe 2:17. {See Trapp on "Joe 2:17"}

**Mine eyes shall behold her]** And feed upon her misery, not as mine enemy, but as God's; nor out of private revenge, but out of zeal for his glory.

**Now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets]** *Exit infra omnes infimos:* she shall be as mean as may be. Nineveh, that great city, is now a little town of small trade; Babylon is nothing else but a sepulture of herself. Those four monarchies that so heavily oppressed the Church are now laid in the dust, and live by fame only; so shall the Romish hierarchy and Turkish empire. All Christ's enemies shall shortly be in that place that is fittest for them; *sc.* under his feet, as was before noted; he will dung his Church with the carcasses of all those wild boars and bulls of Bashan that have trod it down.

Ver. 11. **In the day that thy walls are to be built]** In the type, by Nehemiah, #Ne 3, who did the work with all his might; and having a ready heart, made riddance and good dispatch of it. In the truth, and

spiritually, when the gospel was to be "preached to every creature," #Mr 16:15, and a Church collected of Jews and Gentiles. The Church is in the Canticles said to be a garden enclosed; such as hath a wall about it and a well within it, #So 4:12. {See Trapp on "So 4:12"} God will be favourable in his good pleasure unto Zion, and build the walls of Jerusalem, #Ps 51:18. His spirit also will set up a standard in his saints, against strong corruptions and temptations; and make them more than conquerors, even triumphers, #Isa 59:19 Ro 8:37 2Co 2:14.

**In that day shall the decree be far removed]** That decree of the Babylonians, forbidding the building of the temple and city, shall be reversed; and those statutes that were not good (given them by Gods permission, because they had despised his statutes, #Eze 20:24,25), shall be annulled, and removed far away. Some read it, In that day shall the decree go far abroad; and interpret it, by #Ps 2:7,8, of the doctrine of the gospel.

Ver. 12. **In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria]** To thee, Jerusalem, in the type, shall recourse be had from all parts, as if thou wert the chief city of the world (Pliny saith, that in his time she was the most famous of all the cities of the East; and Titus himself is said to have wept at the last destruction of it by his soldiers, whom he could not restrain from firing the temple). To the new Jerusalem, the Church of the New Testament, in the antitype: from whence the gospel was sent out to "every creature which is under heaven," #Col 1:23, and whereunto people of all sorts flowed, and many nations came, #Mic 4:1,2, with highest acclamations, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours bestowing themselves upon the Lord Christ, #Ac 2:9. Jerusalem in the Hebrew tongue is of the dual number; in regard of the two parts of the city, the upper and the nether town. Or (as the Cabalists give the reason), in regard of a two-fold Jerusalem, the heavenly and the earthly; and the taking away of the earthly, they say, was signified by the taking away of the letter *jod* out of *Jerushalajim*, #2Sa 5:13. "But Jerusalem which is above is free," firm and full; "the desolate" (once so) "having many more children than she that hath a husband," #Ga 4:26,27, "Whom the Lord of hosts also doth bless, saying" (as a father to them all), "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance," #Isa 19:25.

**And from the fortress even to the river]** *i.e.* from all bounds and borders of the land, yea, of the world, {#Ps 89:12, *Tabor and Hermon are put for the east and west parts of the world*} shall people come to the new Jerusalem, which hath "twelve gates: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates," #Re 21:12,13.

{See Trapp on "Re 21:12"} {See Trapp on "Re 21:13"}

Ver. 13. **Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate]** Understand it, not of the land of Chaldea, as A Lapide doth; but of Judea, which must be desolated before the coming of Christ in the flesh. And this is here foretold. 1. Lest the impenitent, by misapplying the former promises, should dream of impunity, *saeculi laetitia est impunita nequitia* (Aug.); and, 2. Lest the godly, because of this desolation shortly to ensue, should despair of the former promises.

**Because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their delays]** What their doings were, and what the fruit thereof, see #Jer 9:3-5,12-16. This prophet could not but tell them of both, though he had small thanks for his love and labour; even as little as Moses had of that perverse people in the wilderness. His service among the Jews was in some sense like that of Manlius Torquatus among the Romans; who gave it over, saying, Neither can I bear their manners, nor they my government. Jeremiah once thought to have done so, #Jer 20:9, but might not. He lived to see this prophecy of Micah fulfilled; and was afterwards carried down to Egypt by his ungrateful countrymen; where also (for a reward of his 41 years' incessant pains in the ministry as a prophet) they stoned him to death, who had been a brazen wall to his country, *eiusque commodis adaugendis natus*, and a common blessing.

Ver. 14. **Feed thy people with thy rod]** Rule them with thy sceptre, or feed them with thy *pedum pastorale*, thy shepherd's rod, or staff, #Ps 23:4. This, say some, is the speech of God the Father to God the Son, or (as others), of God to the ministers and pastors, charging them to take heed to his flock, and to feed his Church; but it seems rather to be a prayer of the Christian Church (seeing the ruin of the Jewish synagogue) that Christ (the chief shepherd) would do all good offices for his poor people, feeding them with his rod, that is, with his word and Spirit, guiding them with his eye, #Ps 32:8, leading them in the way everlasting, #Ps 139:24, lest, seduced by

their own lusts, or other men's evil lives, they should any way miscarry.

**The flock of thine heritage]** Those poor of the flock, #Zec 11:7, that hear his voice and follow him, #Joh 10:3-5,27, being holy, harmless, tractable, sociable, patient, profitable as sheep; which have wool for raiment, skin for parchment, flesh for meat, guts for music. Such shall go in and out, and find pasture, #Joh 10:9, pasture that will breed life, and life in more abundance; see #Ps 23, David's pastoral, where he assureth himself, as a sheep of Christ's heritage, that he shall have all things needful for life and godliness; and so may every poor Christian, grounding his faith upon the covenant, #Eze 34:25,28.

**Which dwell solitarily in the wood]** Sleepeth in the woods, #Eze 34:25, where they meet with many a brush; yea, many a bruise, #Eze 34:28; where they walk in dark and dangerous paths, even in the valley of the shadow of death, #Ps 23:4, of the darkest side of death, of death in its most horrid and hideous representations. Feed them, therefore; fence them with thine omnipotent arm, bear them in thy bosom, see to their safety.

**Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead]** Not bite upon the bare ground, but feed pleasantly, plentifully; feed among the lilies, frequent also the foddering places, turn to the under-shepherds, the ministers, and so return to the Arch-shepherd and Bishop of their souls, following the Lamb wheresoever he goeth; who will teach them many things, and that out of deepest compassion, #Mr 6:34, who will also show them great and mighty things, that they knew not, #Jer 33:3.

**As in the days of old]** As thou wast with the Church of the Old Testament, so be not wanting to that of the New; but feed them according to the integrity of thine heart, and guide them by the skilfulness of thine hands, #Ps 78:72. Pull them out of the lion's mouth, seek them up when lost, tend them, handle them, heal them, wash them, drive them as they can go, bearing the lambs in thy bosom, #Isa 40:11. Do for them as thou hast ever done for thy people in former ages. "So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture



will give thee thanks for ever: we will show forth thy praise to all generations," #Ps 79:13.

Ver. 15. **According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt]** Here is a present and full answer to the Church's prayer; so ready is the Lord to fulfil the desires of the righteous. It is but ask and have; and they are worthily miserable that will not make themselves happy by asking. The sum of Christ's answer is this: As I led Joseph like a flock out of Egypt through the wilderness, and fed them there daily and daintily, with angels' food (never was prince so served in his greatest pomp), so will I show thee marvellous things at Babylon, and bring thee thence with a mighty hand, #Eze 20:34, to make me a glorious name, #Isa 63:14, and both these deliverances shall be a most certain type of thy spiritual redemption by Christ. Lo, thus will I do for thee as in the days of old, #Mic 7:14, and so fit mine answer, *ad cardinem desiderii*, give thee not only the desire of thine heart, but the request of thy lips, #Ps 21:2, let it be to thee even as thou wilt, #Mt 15:28.

Ver. 16. **The nations shall see and be confounded]** Considering how I have defeated and befooled them, how I have made all their might to melt and moulder, they shall stand amazed, and be made a common table talk; as Belshazzar and the Babylonians were, when Cyrus (God's servant) suddenly brake in upon them and surprised their city, which they held insuperable: and as the heathen emperors of Rome were, when the Christians, under the conduct of Constantine, carried it against them.

**They shall lay their hand upon their mouth]** Be struck dumb, as if they had seen Medusa's head; they shall not be able to contradict the gospel, or to hinder the progress of it. Valens, the Arian Emperor, coming upon Basil while he was in holy duties, with an intent to do him harm, was not only silenced, but so terrified, that he reeled, and had fallen had he not been upheld by those that were with him.

**Their ears shall be deaf]** With the sudden bursting forth of God's wonderful and terrible works, saith Mr Diodati.

Ver. 17. **They shall lick the dust like a serpent]** That is, be reduced not only to extreme hunger and penury, but to utmost vility and baseness of condition, so as to lick the very dust. And whereas it is added, like a serpent, he puts them in mind of that old malediction,

Gen. iii., and gives them to know, that as, like that old serpent, they have lifted themselves up against God, so will God cast them down again to the condition of serpents, and abase them to the very dust. See #Ps 22:29 72:9 Isa 49:23.

**They shall move out of their holes like worms (or creeping things) of the earth]** They shall tumultuate, and be all on a huddle, like ants when their molehill is thrown up with a spade. The Hebrew word imports great commotion and bustle.

**They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee]** O God, or, O Church, terrible as an army with banners. Impiety triumpheth in prosperity, trembleth in adversity: and contrarily, saith holy Greenham, since the fall, we tremble before God, angels, and good men. What have I to do with thee, thou man of God (said she), art thou come to call to mind my sin and to kill my son? At the siege of Mountabove, in France, the people of God within the walls ever before a sally sang a psalm: with which holy practice of theirs, the enemy becoming acquainted, when they heard them singing would so quake and tremble, crying, They come, they come, as though the wrath of God had been breaking out upon them. Ver. 18. **Who is a God like unto thee?**] No God surely (whether so reputed or deputed; whether heathen deities, heavenly angels, or earthly rulers) can compare with our God, or come near him, for pardoning of sin. Indeed, none can do it at all but he; as the blind Pharisees saw and could say. Men may pardon the trespass, but God alone the transgression. But say they could do something that way; yet nothing like our God, who maketh his power appear to be great, #Nu 14:17, in pardoning such offences as no God or man besides would pardon. See #Jer 3:1 Ne 9:31. He forgiveth iniquity, transgression and sin, #Ex 34:6,7, that is, all sorts of sins, to all sorts of sinners, without exception, #Mt 12:31. This is the express letter of God's covenant, which we ought not either to obliterate or to interline; but to believe it in the full latitude and extent. We are apt to cast God's pardoning grace into a mould of our own; and to measure it by our model. But against this we are cautioned, #Isa 55:8. God must be magnified in our thoughts, his quarters there enlarged, high and honourable conceptions are to be had of him; or else we wrong him no less than we should do a king by respecting

and receiving him no otherwise than we would do another ordinary man. He is set forth here as a God imparallel, and that not without an interrogation of admiration, O! who is a God like unto thee? Thy mercy is matchless, thy grace aboundeth even to an overflow, **#1Ti 1:14**, it is more than exceeding, it hath a superpleonasm, υπερεπλεονασε, saith the apostle here. Surely as the sea swallows up huge rocks, and as the sun scattereth greatest mists; so doth he pardon enormities as well as infirmities, and blotteth out the thick cloud as well as the cloud, **#Isa 44:22**. His mercy rejoiceth against, or glorifieth over, judgment, **#Jas 2:13**, and is ready to say of a great sinner indeed

—“ *Iam dignus vindice nodus:*”

The more desperate the disease is, the greater glory redoundeth to him that cureth it. Our Saviour received a glorious name by curing incurable diseases; and gained greatest love by frankly forgiving Mary Magdalen’s and others’ sins, **#Lu 7:42,47**, which were many and mighty, or bony, as the prophet’s word signifies, **#Am 5:12**. Adam’s apostasy, Noah’s drunkenness, Lot’s incest, David’s blood guiltiness, Manasseh’s idolatry and witch craft, Peter’s thrice denying and abjuring his Master, Paul’s blasphemy and persecution, —all these sins and blasphemies, have been forgiven, to the sons of men neither can they commit more than he both can and will remit to the penitent. Note this against Novatus, that proud heretic; and strive against that natural Novatianism that is in the timorous conscience of convinced sinners, to doubt and question pardon for sins of apostasy, and falling after repentance, and to say as those unbelievers of old, Can the Lord prepare a table for us in the wilderness? so, can he forgive such and such iniquities so often reiterated? This is a question, no question; what cannot our God do in this kind, who pardoneth sin naturally, **#Ex 34:6** (and therefore freely as the sun shineth, or as the fountain casteth out waters); who doth it also abundantly, **#Isa 55:7**, multiplying pardons as fast as we multiply sins; and lastly, constantly, **#Ps 130:4 Joh 1:29 Zec 13:1**. It is his perpetual act; and it should be as a perpetual picture in our hearts. We should go on our way toward heaven, as Samson did toward his parents, feeding on this honeycomb.

**That pardoneth iniquity]** Heb. that taketh away, sheer away, *non ne sit, sed ne obsit*, not sin itself, but the guilt of it; the damning and domineering power of it: this David calleth the iniquity of his sin; and saith that this God forgave him, **#Ps 32:5**, pronouncing himself and all such happy as are so dealt with, **#Mic 7:1,2**.

**And passeth by the transgression]** Heb. passeth over it, taketh no notice of it, as a man in a deep muse, or as one that hath haste of business, seeth not things before him; his mind being upon another matter, he neglects all else besides that. As David, when he saw in Mephibosheth the features of his friend Jonathan, took no notice of his lameness, or any other defect or deformity; so God, beholding in his people the image of his Son: winks at all faults, that he might soon find in them. That which Cicero said flatteringly of Caesar is truly affirmed of God, *Nihil oblivisci solet praeter iniurias*, He forgetteth nothing but the wrongs that are daily done him by his; and as it is said of our Henry VI, that he was of that happy memory that he never forgot anything but injury: so here.

**Of the remnant of his heritage?]** Not of all, but of those poor few that confess and forsake their sins, **#Pr 28:13**, and "in whose spirit there is no guile," **#Ps 32:2**; that are mortified persons, **#Ro 11:26 cf. Isa 59:20**. It is a privilege proper to the communion of saints.

**He retaineth not his anger for ever]** Angry he may be, and smite in his anger, **#Isa 57:17**; yea, he may take vengeance of the inventions of those whom he hath pardoned, **#Ps 99:8**, temporal vengeance I mean; but it soon repenteth him concerning his servants; and a little punishment serveth turn for a great offence, **#Jer 31:19-21**. David no sooner said, "I have sinned," but he heard, "The Lord hath taken away thy sin," **#2Sa 12:13**.

**Because he delighteth in mercy]** And hence he pardoneth iniquity of free grace, *ex mero motu*, out of his pure and unexcited love, out of his philanthropy and undeserved favour, the sole impulsive cause of pardon. What a man delighteth to do he will do howsoever. If the sun delight to run his race, who shall stop him? If God so delight in mercy that he will save for his name's sake, and come in with his *Non obstante*, as he doth, **#Ps 106:8**, who or what shall hinder him?

Ver. 19. **He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us]** Here is the pith and power of faith, particularly applying promises to a man's self. Say that sin hath separated between us and our God, **#Isa 59:2**, and made him send us far away into captivity; yet he will turn again and yearn toward us, he will turn again our captivity as the streams in the south. His compassions are more than fatherly, **#Ps 103:13**; motherly, **#Isa 49:15**; brotherly, **#Heb 2:12**. This the Church knows, and therefore cries after him, "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart," **#So 8:14**, which when it fleeth looketh behind it, saith the Chaldee paraphrast there. And this that he will do, she is bold to believe. He will, he will, and that to us, saith the prophet here. Lo, this is that work of faith, to wrap itself in the promises as made to us in particular, **#1Ti 1:15**; and unless faith be on this sort actuated, it is, as to comfort, as good as no faith. See **#Mt 8:26 cf. Mr 4:30**.

**He will subdue our iniquities]**. By force and violence (as the word signifieth), *subiugabit, pessundabit, conculcabit*. Sin is sturdy, and will rebel where it cannot reign. It hath a strong heart, and will not easily yield. But yield it shall, for God will subdue it. And this is a further favour (as every former is a pledge of a future). To pardon of sin God will add power against sin; to justification by Christ's merit, sanctification by his Spirit; he will let out the life blood of sin, and lay it a dying at our feet; he will tread Satan with all his black train under our feet shortly, **#Ro 16:20**. He will not only turn us again, but turn his hand upon us, and purely purge away our dross, and take away all our tin, **#Isa 1:25**. *In fine* at the end he will so mortify the deeds of the body by his Spirit, that sin shall not have dominion over us, **#Ro 6:14**, shall not play *Rex King* in us; the traveller shall not become the man of the house, as Nathan's parable speaketh.

**And thou wilt cast all their sins into the bottom of the sea]** Wherehence they shall never be buoyed up again. Thus the prophet, by an insinuating apostrophe, turneth himself to God, and speaks with much confidence. Such is the nature of true faith, *sc.* to grow upon God, and, as I may so say, to encroach; as Moses did, **#Ex 33:12,13 34:10**; and as David did, **#1Ch 17:23**, &c. See how he improves God's promise, and works upon it, **#1Ch 17:24,25**, he goes over it again, and yet still encroacheth; and the effect was good,

**#1Ch 18:14.** We hinder ourselves of much happiness by a sinful shamefacedness. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, **#Heb 4:16;** so shall we see our sins, as Israel did the Egyptians, dead on the shore.

Ver. 20. **Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham]** Heb. Thou wilt give; for all is of free gift. His love moved God to promise, his truth binds him to perform; **#2Sa 7:18,21,** "For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things." Having made himself a voluntary debtor to his people, he will come off fairly with them; and not be worse than his word, but better. Hence, **#Re 10:1,** Christ is said to have a rainbow upon his head; to show that he is faithful and constant in his promises, and that tempests should blow over, the sky be cleared. "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me," saith the Lord: "for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart," &c., **#Isa 54:9,10.** God hath hitherto kept promise, with nights and days, **#Jer 33:20,25,** that one shall succeed the other; therefore much more will he keep promise with his people.

**Which thou hast sworn unto our fathers]** And, in them, to us, by virtue of the covenant. So he spake with us, when he spake with Jacob at Bethel, **#Ho 12:4;** and that the promises sworn to the fathers of the Old Testament belong also to us of the New, see **#Lu 1:55,73,74.** Now, that God swore at any time to them, or us, he did it for our sakes doubtless; "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us," **#Heb 6:17,18.** {See Trapp on "Heb 6:17"} {See Trapp on "Heb 6:18"}

*Gloria Deo in excelsis.*

# Nahman

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The burden of Nineveh**] *i.e.* The burdenous prophecy, {See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"} It is a burden to wicked men to be told of their sins and foretold of their punishments, to whom we may not unfitly apply that of the civilian, *Perquam durum est, sed ita lex scripta est* (Ulpian). It is extremely hard, but so the law is written. If it be so tedious to hear of it, what will they do to bear it? Nineveh had fair warning before by Jonah; and for the present, the unclean spirit seemed to be cast out of her; but he returned soon after, with seven worse, as appears by this prophecy; and so their last state was worse than the former, #Mt 12:45. Their boil, half healed, breaking out again, proved to be the plague of leprosy, #Le 13:18-20, such as shut them out of heaven. God will do good to those that are good and continue so. But "as for those that turn aside unto their crooked ways" (as all apostates do), "the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity" (as cattle are led to the slaughter, or malefactors to execution): "but peace shall be upon Israel," #Ps 125:5.

**The book of the vision**] Or, the epistle of the vision. Hence some collect that Nahum went not to Nineveh, as Jonah had done; but sent this prophetic epistle thither, to let them know what should shortly befall them. So Jeremiah sent an epistle to Babylon, #Jer 29:1., and Elijah wrote a threatening letter to Jehoram, King of Judah, #2Ch 21:12, before his translation to heaven; and left it to be sent to him by Elisha, or the other prophets, who dared not show themselves in his presence, such was his insolent cruelty, as it is conceived.

**Of Nahum the Elkoshite**] Elkosh was a small town in Galilee beyond Bethabara, as say Jerome and Dorotheus. Here was our prophet born, and named Nahum, *non sine numine*, saith Gualther; for Nahum (as Noah) signifieth a comforter; and so he proved, by this book of his, both to the ten tribes now newly carried captive by the Assyrian monarch, and also to the other two tribes, who were shortly after besieged by the same Assyrian, in the reign of Hezekiah; under whom Nahum prophesied. {See Trapp on "Ex 3:1"}

Ver. 2. **God is jealous**] {See Trapp on "Zec 1:14"}

**And the Lord revengeth, the Lord revengeth]** As he is *Pater miserationum* to his people, a father of mercies, and God of consolation; so to his and their enemies he is a most sure and severe revenger: *Deus ultionum*, as David calleth him, **#Ps 94:1**. A God of recompenses, as Jeremiah, **#Jer 51:56**. And when he comes against a people, he usually takes them to do when they are at the strongest and most confident; as Nineveh now was, in the days of proud Sennacherib.

**And is furious]** Heb. And is master of hot wrath; he is all on a light fire, as it were, with fierce indignation against the enemies of his Church; yet not so, but that he is master of his anger too; and doth nothing in it but what is just and equal. Here the vials of his wrath are said to be golden vials, **#Re 15:7**, his anger is holy, his fire is pure, and without smoke. And this is further declared in the following words.

**The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries]** Such as seek to thrust him beside his throne, that oppose his worship, condemn his word, persecute his people, send proud messages after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us," "Bring hither those mine enemies," saith he, "and slay them before me," **#Lu 19:27**. As for such as sin of infirmity and return to him by repentance, they shall not find him furious, but gracious.

**And he reserveth wrath for his enemies]** Their preservation for a time is but a reservation to that wrath to come. As he precipitateth not his anger, but defers the execution of it, giving men space to repent, as he did Jezebel, **#Re 2:20**, so they shall find that his forbearance is no quittance; and that

*Poena venit gravior, quo mage tarda venit*

The penalty comes more heavily which comes with great slowness.

Ver. 3. **The Lord is slow to anger]** "Slack he is not, as some men count slackness," saith St Peter, "but longsuffering to us-ward," **#2Pe 3:9**. The devil stirred up the heathen poets to persuade people that God either knew not or cared not what was done here below; that he was often from home, feasting with the Ethiopians, &c. The



Epicureans also taught the like doctrine; and the Sadducees among the Jews, the Manichees among the primitive Christians, the Libertines among us. But they shall one day find that God is slow, but sure; that the higher he lifteth his hand the harder he will strike; the farther he draweth his bow the deeper will be the wound.

**And great in power]** Heb. Great of power, able to knock down sinners in the very act of their rebellion, and to send them packing to their place in hell. So that it is not for want of power that he is so patient. "For the Lord our God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible," #De 10:17. But what need we go farther than the text, where he is called the strong God, great in power, and

**that will not at all acquit the wicked]** This is the last letter in his name (that *nomen maiestativum*, as Tertullian calleth it), #Ex 34:7, which he will in nowise forget; as neither must we. He will not take the wicked by the hand, saith Job, #Job 8:20, nor wink at the workers of iniquity, saith David, #Ps 50:21, but will render a just recompense to every transgression and disobedience, saith Paul, #Heb 2:2. "A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he," #De 32:4.

**The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm]** The word *Suphah*, here rendered whirlwind, begins with a small *Samech*, *ad minuendum timorem piis, ne propterea terreantur*, to take off the saints from their inordinate fears, and to assure the wicked, that when the Lord cometh, *imminet inde Soph finis et exitium*, there shall be an end of them, and an utter destruction. "As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation," #Pr 10:25. Or, as some read it, The righteous is the foundation of the world, as firm as the world's foundation, *sc.* the earth, which is immovable.

**And the clouds are the dust of his feet]** He walketh upon them as men do upon the dust of the earth; he maketh the clouds his chariot, and rideth upon the wings of the wind, #Ps 104:3: see #Isa 60:8 19:1. The wicked's happiness shall take its end surely and swiftly, as

Ezekiel tells them in his seventh chapter, "An end is come, is come, is come."

Ver. 4. **He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry]** He had showed what wonders God can do in the air; now he telleth what he doeth in the water and in the earth. And it is well observed by an interpreter (Tarnov.), that when the prophets speak of God, they do for the most part imitate the expressions of Moses, that most severe lawgiver, and allude to his history; to show that by the law is the knowledge of sin, **#Ro 3:20**, without which the stony hearts of men melt not, that the promise of the gospel may relish sweetly with them, **#Ps 19:10,11**. The word here rendered he rebuketh, importeth that God rateth and rattleth the sea, *verborum pedumque strepitu*, with such a voice and other noise, as causeth fright and flight. "The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?" **#Ps 114:3,5**. "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled," **#Ps 77:16**: see **#Ex 14:21 Ps 78:14 66:6 136:16 106:9**. This is not in the power of any man to do; though Xerxes vainly attempted something, when he wasted two million men over the Hellespont, and, for battering his bridge of boats, caused it to be beaten with three hundred stripes, and cast a pair of fetters into it, to make it his prisoner. But to how small purpose all this, together with his digging through Isthmus, his drinking up rivers with his army, and the like, it well appeared, when he was forced to flee back out of Greece in a poor fisher's boat, which being over loaded, had sunk all if the Persians, by the casting away themselves, had not saved the life of their king. The story of Canute the Dane, sometime king of England, is well known. He was told by a court parasite that all things in his dominions were at his beck and command. Canute, to confute him, caused a chair to be set on the seashore; wherein being set, he said to the sea flowing fast toward him, Thou belongest to me, and the land upon which I now sit is mine own, neither is there any whosoever that obeys me not shall escape unpunished. I command thee, therefore, thou sea, that thou come up no higher into my land; nor presumest once to wet thy master's legs or garments. But the sea, keeping his ordinary course, without duty or reverence, washed both his legs and gown. He then leaping back said, Let all the inhabitants of the world know, that the power of kings is frivolous and vain; neither is there any mortal man worthy the name of a king, but he to

whose beck heaven, earth, and sea, by his laws eternally are obedient. Neither did Canute after this time wear a crown; but set it upon the crucifix, according to the superstition of those times; thereby acknowledging it to be a royalty proper to Christ alone to rebuke the surges of the sea, and to say unto them, Peace, and be still, #**Lu 8:24 Mr 4:39**.

**And drieth up all the rivers]** As he did Jordan, #**Jos 3:15-17 2Ki 2:7,8,13,14** Chereth, #**1Ki 17:7**; the great river Euphrates, #**Re 16:12**. {See *Trapp on "Re 16:12"*} See also Plin. Nat. Hist. 1. 2, cap. 85, 103.

**Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth]** All the beauty of those fertile and pleasant places fadeth. When the earth beareth fruit and flowers, she is said to yield her strength, and to bring forth her increase; as when through drought or otherwise she doth not, she is said to languish and hang the head, see #**Joe 1:10,12**. If the eclipse of the sun cause a drooping in the whole frame of nature, how much more the wrath and vengeance of God!

Ver. 5. **The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt]** Though valleys and low places are also liable to earthquakes, as Antioch often, Ferrara in Italy, A.D. 1516 and 1578, yet hill countries much more, because there are more holes and caverns: see #**Ps 29:6 144:4 Zec 14:4,5**. In the year 1618, Aug. 25, Pleurs, a town in Rhoetia, was overwhelmed by a hill, which, with a most swift motion, buried 1500 men. So that village mentioned before, in the country of Bern, that was covered over by a hill in an earthquake, to the destruction of 50 families. All this and that which followeth is alleged here, to show how easily God can overturn the Assyrian greatness.

**And the earth is burnt at his presence]** Viz. by his fire from heaven, as Sodom, and by others of his land desolating judgments, such as Judea (that once fertile, now barren country), Greece, Asia (once so flourishing), Germany, Ireland, &c., do at this day groan under. God turneth "a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," #**Ps 107:34**.

**Yea, the world, and all that dwell therein]** *Quae quidem sunt mira, sed tamen vera divinae potentiae effecta* (Turnov.). Wicked

men, besides what they here suffer, shall one day give an account of what they have done in the body, with the world all on a light of fire about their ears: the trial of their works shall be by fire, #1Co 3:13, the tribunal of fire, #Eze 1:27, the judge a consuming fire, #Heb 12:29, his attendants seraphims, flaming creatures, #Isa 6:2 his pleading with sinners in flames of fire, #2Th 1:7, the place of punishment a lake of fire fed with tormenting temper, #Isa 30:33, Sodom's fire and brimstone was but a toy to it. And shall the Ninevites think to mort up themselves against this formidable fire, which the most solid parts of the world cannot avoid or abide?

Ver. 6. **Who can stand before his indignation?**] A glass bottle may as well stand before a cannon shot. There is no standing before a lion, much less before a devouring fire, least of all before an angry God. When our Saviour did but put forth a beam of his Deity, and said, "I am he," the stout soldiers fell to the ground, #Joh 18:6, and there they had lain if he had not licensed them to rise again. *Quid autem iudicaturus faciet, qui iudicandus hoc fecit?* (Augustin.) The wicked shall not stand in judgment, saith David, #Ps 1:5.

**Who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?**] Heb. in the inflammation of his nostrils, *Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem*. Thus the prophet describeth God's terrible executions of justice on the Church's enemies, *pulcherrimis metaphoris, hypotyposi evidentissima, et distributionis artificio insignissimo*, by most elegant metaphors, evident demonstrations, and artificial distributions (Crocus in loc.).

**His fury is poured out like fire]** A metaphor either from metals melted or from showers of rain, such as God poured down upon Sodom (whereunto probably the prophet here alludeth, as #Na 1:8, to Noah's flood), flaming showers, #Jer 7:20 44:6.

**And the rocks are thrown down by him]** That is, by his fierce wrath, when it is at the full height; as the fire which at first burns a little within, upon a few boards and rafters, but when it prevaieth, bursteth out in a most terrible flame, as thunder; which we hear at first, a little roaring noise afar off, but stay awhile, and it is a dreadful crack, cleaving the very rocks. See #Jer 4:28,24 Mt 27:51.

Ver. 7. **The Lord is good]** To Israel (though terrible to the Assyrians, as hath been plainly and plentifully set forth), to the pure in heart, **#Ps 73:1**, and he doth good, **#Ps 119:68**, to those that are good, that are upright in their hearts, **#Ps 125:4**. These shall taste and see that the Lord is good: these shall feelingly say, "Oh, blessed is the man that trusteth in him," **#Ps 34:8**, "Oh, praise the Lord, for he is good," &c.

**A strong hold in the day of trouble]** *Praesidium, aut fortalitium*, A strong fort or fortification, better than a tower of brass or town of war: "the righteous run thereinto and are safe," **#Pr 18:10**. Hezekiah (for whose sake this is spoken) had the experience of it. He had a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: the children were come to the birth, and there was not strength to bring forth, **#Isa 37:3**. To God, therefore, he runs in this doleful day of his, and had present help. And what though the gods of the nations had not delivered them; yet Hezekiah's God, in whom he trusted, did not deceive him, as Sennacherib said he would, **#Na 1:10,12**. He is the champion of his Church, and will be the strong hold of his people, when the heathen's tutelar gods and the Papists' patron saints will leave them in the lurch. England was sometime said to have a warlike George, but the Papists being offended with us (to do us, as they suppose, a mischief), have robbed us of our George, and left us God alone to be our champion: for which honour and favour all true English hearts are bound to thank them, and can merrily sing, as he did once, *Contemno minutulos istos deos, mode Iovem propitium habeam*, We care not for their he-saints or she-saints to shelter us, so that the great God will be good to us, a stronghold in the day of trouble.

**And he knoweth them that trust in him]** That hover and cover under his wings, as the chickens do under the hen's: for that is the force of the Hebrew word here used. Such as these God knoweth for his, **#2Ti 2:19**; he knoweth their soul in adversity, **#Ps 31:7**; he knoweth how to deliver them, as he did the righteous Lot, **#2Pe 2:9**; then, when they know not what to do, as Jehoshaphat, **#2Ch 20:12**, yet if their eyes be toward him, their affiance in him, he will extricate and deliver them. So well pleased is he with those that trust in him (for that is meant here by his knowing of them, **#Ps 1:6 cf.**

**Job 9:29 1Th 5:12**), he taketh such complacency and delight in them **#Ps 147:11 33:18**, and such continual care of them (as hath been proved by a universal experience, not one instance can be given to the contrary), that they shall be sure to have whatsoever heart can wish or need require, **#2Sa 22:2,3**, even miraculous lovingkindness from God in a strong city, **#Ps 17:7 31:21**, so great as cannot be uttered, **#Ps 31:19**. This is for the comfort of God's Israel. But lest the wicked (as they are apt) should meddle with children's meat, which was never meant for them; lest Nineveh should please herself in a fond conceit of God's goodness to her also, and so turn it into wantonness, the prophet brings in a stinging "but" in the next words.

Ver. 8. **But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof]** *i.e.* Of Nineveh, that great but bloody city, **#Na 3:1**. Her state shall be utterly ruined, as the old world by the general deluge. But because the word here rendered flood is used for rivers that overflow the banks, **#2Ch 32:4**, and the adjunct, overrunning, also implies as much, {see #Isa 8:8 Da 11:10,40} I suppose the Holy Ghost here forethreateneth that ruin of this city by the river Tigris, which at an inundation broke out upon the wall, and threw down two and a half miles of it. This was a sad foretoken to them of their ensuing desolation by the enemy (as that rain was that fell in Egypt, where it used not to rain, a little before Cambyses with his Persians subdued it), for it occurred in the time of the siege, as Diodorus testifieth, according to an oracle that the Ninevites had received by tradition from their progenitors, *sc.* that their city should then be taken by the enemy, when the river took part against them: and it happened accordingly.

**And darkness shall pursue his enemies]** *i.e.* Terrible and inextricable calamities shall overtake them: their ruin shall be irreparable. And indeed it may now be said of Nineveh, which once was of a great city in Strabo, *Magna civitas, magna solitudo* Great city, great wilderness. See **#Zep 2:13-15**. Drusius rendereth it thus, *Hostes suos persequi faciet tenebras*, He shall cause darkness to pursue his enemies, or, He shall make his enemies to pursue darkness, according to that noted saying of the ancients, *Deus quem destruit dementat*, whom God intends to destroy him he first infatuateth. But the former sense is the better.

Ver. 9. **What do ye imagine against the Lord?**] Because against his people. So #Ps 62:3, "How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence." The blind and bloody Ninevites looked no farther than the Jews, whom they invaded: they considered not that God was engaged in the quarrel of his people. This made the virgin, daughter of Zion, confident of God's help, shake her head in scorn and pity at them, saying, "Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel," #Isa 37:22,23. She knew well (though her enemies knew not), that as an unskilful archer in shooting at a beast hitteth a man sometimes; so the Church's adversaries, in troubling of her trouble Almighty God, who will not fail to be even with them: for he that toucheth God's people toucheth the apple of his eye, #Zec 2:8. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" #Ac 9:4. It was a simple question of Satan to our Saviour, "What have I to do with thee?" while he vexed a servant of his. Hath he his name from knowledge, and yet could he so mistake him whom he confessed to be the Son of the living God? It is an idle misprision to sever the sense of an injury done to any of the members from the head. Drusius reads the text thus, *Quid cogitatis de Domino?* what think ye of the Lord? what conceit or opinion have ye of him? Do ye imagine that he cannot perform what he threateneth by his prophets? or that he cannot, when he pleaseth, deliver his people out of your hand?

**He will make an utter end]** Not a consumption only, but a consummation. This he is ever doing, as the Hebrew hath it: he is busy about it, and will not fail to finish it; for he useth not to do his work to the halves. Surely a short work will the Lord make in your land, now that he taketh you to do, *certo, cito penitus*.

**Affliction shall not rise up the second time]** God will despatch you at one blow. See a like expression #1Sa 26:8. Nineveh had many brushes before, by Phraortes, King of Medes, and his son Cyaxares, and afterwards by the Scythians, whereof see #Jer 49:34, and by Astyages, &c. Now Nebuchadnezzar was appointed by God to make an utter end of it, &c. The wicked shall totally and finally be consumed at once. Not so the saints: these he corrects with a rod,

those with a grounded staff, **#Isa 30:32**. These in mercy and in measure, in the bunches only, "he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind," **#Isa 27:8**, he stayeth such afflictions as would shake his plants too much, or quite blow them down. But to the wicked he hath no such tender respect: he smites them at the root, and, after many blows, he resolves to have them down. For instance, compare God's different dealing with Noah and the old world, with Lot and the Sodomites, Israel and the Canaanites, Moses and Pharaoh, David and Saul, &c. "Fret not therefore thyself because of evil doers," **#Ps 37:1**. "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever," **#Ps 92:7**. Pharaoh had fair way made for him till he came to the midst of the sea; not one wave may rise up against him to wet so much as the hoof of his horse. It was a fair sunshine day when Lot went out of Sodom; but ere night there fell out a dismal change. It was in the spring <sup>{a}</sup> that the flood came, then when everything was prime and pride: besides that, the world never more flourished in wealth, peace, arts, and all magnificence; yet sudden destruction came upon them, they were all at once buried in one universal grave of waters.

<sup>{a}</sup> The growing season in Palestine starts in mid-fall and is similar to our spring in the northern hemisphere.

**Ver. 10. For while they be folden together as thorns]** And so can hardly be handled without hurt, God will burn them together in the same place, **#2Sa 23:7**, as a man puts thorns folden, and that cannot easily be sundered, all together into the fire, where they make a sudden blaze and are extinct. So will God deal with the Ninevites, notwithstanding their carnal combinations and confederacies.

**And while they are drunken as drunkards]** Who are very quarrelsome, bragging and braving; but may be easily dealt with, and pushed down with one finger.

**As stubble fully dry]** That hath long lain a sunning, and so is very combustible. The wicked are oft compared to stubble, because good for nothing but the fire; and when fully dry, when ripe for ruin, they shall be fully devoured, as some read the words. *Ecquem vero mihi dabis rhetorem, &c.*, as one saith of another text. But what gallant rhetoric is here! well might God say, **#Ho 12:10**, "I have spoken also



by the prophets and used similitudes," &c. (see the note there); here we have three in a breath, and all little enough to work on the hearts of the wicked, who are loth to believe the truth and certainty of God's threats; but rather bless themselves when God curseth, #De 29:19.

Ver. 11. **There is one come out of thee that imagineth evil against the Lord]** Many there are, but one among and above the rest; *sc.* Sennacherib, that bold Briareus, that lifteth up his hundred hands at once against heaven, and threateneth to cut off at a blow God's people, as if they had all but one neck. See #Na 1:9. "He is come up over all his channels, and gone over all his banks," #Isa 8:7; but God shall soon put a stop to him, and with an "overrunning flood" (that he may be even with him) "make an utter end of his place," as it is here, #Na 1:8.

**A wicked counsellor]** Heb. a counsellor of Belial, or of the devil, who lendeth him his seven heads to plot, and his ten horns to push God's people. What pernicious counsel he gave them, see #2Ki 18:19-35 2Ch 32:9-19 Isa 36:4-10,13-20; *sc.* to cast off God as not able to deliver them out of his hands; and to make an agreement with him by a present, &c. This pestilent counsel he gave them by Rabshakeh, who was, say the rabbins, a renegade Jew. Every vizier and bashaw of state among the Turks useth to keep still a Jew for his private counsel; whose malice, wit, and experience of Christendom, with their continual intelligence, is thought to advise most of that mischief which the Turk at this day puts in execution against us (saith mine author), the Jews being found the most nimble and mercurial wits in the world, but counsellors of Belial. In all the shop of hell there is no anvil so well set, whereon to forge, no engine so apt, whereby to execute any choice piece of mischief, as that man, who is *ingenuose nequam et publico male faeundus* (as it is said of Gaius Curio the Roman), wittily wicked and pestilently eloquent. Such were Cardinal Pole to England, Cardinal Sadoletus to Geneva, and the Jesuits generally, great politicians and factors for Rome. They say, Satan sent Luther, and God sent them to withstand him. They destroy many souls, as the dragon doth the elephant, by biting his ear and sucking his blood; because he knows that to be the only place which the elephant cannot reach with his trunk to defend. They take crafty counsel against the Church, #Ps 83:3.

Ver. 12. **Thus saith the Lord]** To thee, O Jerusalem, and for thy comfort. The Lord will speak peace to his people; and ministers are charged to speak to their hearts, **#Isa 40:1**.

**Though they be quiet]** Or still, well disciplined, as the Turkish army is, to the wonder of all that pass through it, *Turcae perpetuum silentium tenent ut muti* (Cuspin. de Caesar.) There was no falling out nor complaining in the Assyrian hosts; therefore, and by this means, did their king march on, pass through.

**And likewise many]** How great an army they were may be gathered from the many thousands of them that were slain by the angel, **#Isa 37:36**. It is all one with God whether it be done against a nation or against a man only, **#Job 34:29**; he stands not upon multitudes, who "taketh up the isles as a very little thing," **#Isa 40:15**.

**Yet thus shall they be cut down]** Heb. shorn; with as little ado as one would shear a sheep, mow down a meadow, or shave off hair with a sharp razor. The prophet seemeth to allude to that text in Isaiah (with whom, as his contemporary, he hath many things common), **#Isa 7:20**, and to threaten the Assyrian, that he shall be paid home in his own coin; and that as he had done to Israel so should it be done again to him. God loveth to retaliate.

**When he shall pass through]** Heb. And he passeth, or away he goeth, *sc.* to his own country, after the loss of his army, slain by the angel, so Jerome. Others, they shall be cut down, *sc.* by the hand of a mighty one, as **#Isa 10:34**, or of an angel, when he, that is, Sennacherib, and every one of his army hath passed through, *sc.* the land without restraint or control, and now maketh account that he is master of all.

**Though I have afflicted thee, yet I will afflict thee no more]** *sc.* By these Ninevites; no, nor by any other enemies, unless there be a very great need, **#1Pe 1:6**. The Church hath ever had her halcyons, her interchanges of prosperity and adversity. God will not always chide, **#Ps 103:9**, he delighteth in the prosperity of his servants, **#Ps 35:27**, and wisheth, O that this people were wise, &c. "O that my people had hearkened," &c., **#Ps 81:13-15**. There is another reading

of the words, as may be seen in the margent. This is Junius. The Chaldee paraphraseth thus: Although the Ninevites enjoy great peace, and by peace are so multiplied that they are very numerous, yet shall they be shorn and cut down.

Ver. 13. **For now will I break his yoke from off thee]** Lest the promised deliverance should be any whit doubted, the time when and the misery whence they should be delivered is here laid open. God hath set the time of his people's sufferings, which shall be neither so little a while as they would, nor so long as the enemy would. Hold out faith and patience; deliverance is at next door by.

**And will burst thy bonds in sunder]** By yoke and bonds here understand those tributes which the Assyrians, called out by Ahaz, imposed upon the kingdom of Judah, #2Ki 16:7-9. God promiseth them here their ancient liberty; which was, soon after this, recovered under Hezekiah, who, trusting in God, and reforming religion, rebelled against the King of Assyria, and served him no longer. Shortly after also the Persians destroyed Nineveh, dealt more gently with the captive Jews, and gave them good leave to return home again, as many as had a mind to it, #Ezr 1:4 2Ch 36:23.

Ver. 14. **And the Lord hath given a commandment]** *sc.* To his upper and lower forces, for he is Lord of hosts, commander-in-chief of all creatures.

**Against thee]** O Sennacherib, devoted to destruction for thine intolerable pride and cruelty. God resisteth the proud, #Jas 4:6, he setteth himself in battle array against him, as the word *αντιτασσειται* signifieth, commanding all his creatures to fall on; and no wonder. For whereas all other vices flee from God, pride alone fleeth in his face; casteth down the gauntlet of defiance, and maketh head against him. Hence his hatred of a proud person.

**That no more of thy name be sown]** *i.e.* That no more children be born to thee, so Lyra expounds it; that thy posterity perish, so Gualther. This must needs be grievous to proud and ambitious persons, who promise themselves a kind of immortality here in their posterity, and that there shall be a perpetual succession of their name in this world. "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever; they call their lands after their own names," #Ps

**49:11.** But their "lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness," **#Pr 20:20**, there shall be— *Nullus, cui lampada tradant*. Others sense the text thus: Thou shalt no more be talked of; but the memory of thy name shall be utterly extinct. "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth," **#Ps 34:16**. See **#Isa 10:12,13 Jer 49:33**. Sennacherib had done great exploits, till he lifted up his hand against heaven he had been very victorious and famous; but now lies wrapped up in the sheet of shame, and is made an instance of Divine vengeance, even among the heathen; for so Herodotus, tells us, that in Egypt there was Sennacherib's statue erected, with this inscription: Let whosoever looketh upon me learn to fear God, Ἐμε τις εἰσοριῶν εὐσεβῆς εἶπω (Her. l. 2). He lifted up himself against his Creator and Father; he is therefore slain by his own children. He thought to overturn the true service of God; he is therefore slain at his idol worship. He went about to destroy the house of God; he is therefore destroyed in the house of his god, **#Isa 37:38**.

**Out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image]** This those superstitious heathens held a great loss, a sore affliction. It is reported of the people of the East Indies, in the isle of Ceylon, that having an ape's tooth got from them, which was a consecrated thing by them, they offered an incredible mass of treasure to recover it. What a noise made Micah after his ephod and images! **#Jud 18:24**, and Laban after his teraphim! **#Ge 31:19**, and the men of Ophrah for their altar and grove! **#Jud 6:30**. And what a price set Papists on their pictures and trinkets!

**I will make thy grave]** *sc.* Of thine idol temple, polluted by thy slaughter therein, and so converted into a sepulchre for thee. There is a story (but of no great authority) that Sennacherib, after his shameful return out of Judea, demanding of some about him what might be the reason that the unresistible God of heaven so favoured the Jewish nation, as he had found by sad experience, answer was given him, that Abraham, from whom they descended, sacrificed unto him his only son, which purchased this protection to his progeny. If that will win him, saith he, I will spare him two of my sons, to procure him to be on my side: which Sharezer and Adrammelech, his sons, hearing of, prevented their own deaths by

slaying him. It is more likely that they laid wicked hands upon their father either out of ambition or discontent for the loss of the army (Castal. Annot.). Howsoever, God made use of their cruelty for the just punishment of Sennacherib; and is here therefore said to have commanded it. After this cruel war arose among Sennacherib's sons, which were the utter overthrow of that nation, and laid them open as a prey to the kings of Babylon, as Xenophon writeth.

**For thou art vile]** Worthless and weightless. All wicked men are so, be they never so great, **#Ps 15:4 Da 11:21**, "In his estate shall stand up a vile person," that is, Antiochus Epiphanes, the great King of Syria, whom the Samaritans in flattery stiled, The mighty god. It is virtue only that ennobles. Them that honour God he will honour; but they that "despise him shall be lightly esteemed," **#1Sa 2:30**. Contempt shall be their portion, and "with ignominy reproach," **#Pr 18:3**. Here, then, the prophet threateneth the same that Joel had done, **#Joe 2:20**, "His stink shall come up, and ill savour shall, come up, because he hath done the great things," *i.e.* he hath attempted to do them, but was hindered from heaven. God put a hook in his nose and a bridle in his lips, and turned him back to Nineveh; where, within less than fifty days after, he was slain by his two sons, **#/RApc Tob 1:21**; and although his third son, Esarhaddon, reigned in his stead, yet he soon after lost both his life and his kingdom, which was devolved to the Babylonians, and all the royal race of Assyria was rooted out. Antiochus Epiphanes-Vile person  
Ver. 15. **Behold upon the mountains the feet of him, &c.]** This "behold" is as the sound of a trumpet before some proclamation, to bespeak attention. Jerusalem is surrounded with mountains, **#Ps 125:2**, and on the mountains a voice may be heard afar off.

**The feet of him that bringeth good tidings]** Or of an evangelist (*Pedes Evangelizantis*, Vulgate), that brings news of Sennacherib's ruin; but especially of Satan subdued by Christ, which is the sum of all the good news in the world, **#Lu 2:10**.

**That publisheth peace]** *Pacem omnimodam*; external, internal, eternal peace of country and of conscience, by Christ, who is our peace. It is usual with the prophets to rise from earthly things to heavenly, from corporals to spirituals. See **#Ro 10:15 Isa 52:7**.

**O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, &c.]** Which hitherto, hindered by the enemy, thou hast intermitted. Perform thy vows (made in the day of thy distress), bring presents to him that ought to be feared, #Ps 76:11 2Ch 32:13.

**For the wicked]** Heb. Belial, that stigmatical Belialist Sennacherib, that lawless, yokeless, masterless monster, that *merum scelus*, sheer wickedness, that is so portentously, so peerlessly vicious.

**He is utterly cut off]** His army by the angel, himself by his sons, his monarchy by the Babylonians. See #Isa 27:1,2.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face]** Nebuchadnessar the elder, that maul <sup>{a}</sup> of the whole earth, #Jer 50:23, that brake, and dispersed the nations, as a maul or great hammer doth the hardest stones. See how like a right Pyrgopolynices he vaunteth of his valour and victories, #Isa 10:8-12. So Demetrius was surnamed Poliorcetes, the destroyer of cities; Attilas called himself *Orbis flagellum*, the scourge of the world. Julius Caesar was *Fulmen belli*, the thunderbolt of war; he had taken in his time a thousand towns, conquered three hundred nations, took prisoner one million of men, and slain as many. These were dissipatores indeed, and dashers in pieces, rods of God's wrath; and this they took to be a main piece of their silly glory. How much more honour was it to Augustine to be styled *Haereticorum malleus*, the hammer of heretics! and to Mr Hildersam, to be *Schismaticorum malleus*, the maul of schismatics! and lastly, to Luther, that he could thus say of himself:

“*Pestis eram virus, moriens ero mors tua papa!*”

“I living, stopped Rome's breath, and dead, will  
be Rome's death!”

**Is come up before thy face]** Nineveh lay high, and those that went thither were said to go up, #Ho 8:9. Nebuchadnezzar is said here to

be come up, to it long before he did (which set forth God's omniscience: "Known to him are all his works from the beginning of the world," #Ac 15:18 Ps 139:2; and present to him are all things, both past and future), and to come up before Nineveh's face; who thought none dared have been so bold as to look her in the face. But though she had been a terror, yet now she is a scorn; as was likewise Ephraim, when he offended in Baal, #Ho 13:1. {See Trapp on "Ho 13:1"}

**Keep the munition, watch the way, &c.]** *Ironice omnia, q.d.* Do all this if you think it will do any good. But it is all to no purpose; you are an undone people, your enemies are above fear and you below hope: you have hitherto delighted in war, you shall now have enough of it; you have troubled the world with your arms and armies, now you shall meet with your match, a people terrible from the beginning. Up, therefore, and do your utmost; neglect nothing that may serve for your necessary defence; but it will not be: for "except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain," #Ps 127:1.

{a} *trans.* and *fig.* after L. *malleus*. (Often, like *hammer*; *scourge*, applied to a person as the irresistible foe or the terrible oppressor of some person, class, or institution.) *Obs.* ED

**Ver. 2. For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel]** Both the ten tribes carried captive already and the other two (vexed by Sennacherib's invasion) have taken their turns, and have had their part of bitter affliction; and shalt thou, O Nineveh, altogether escape unpunished? Never think it. Especially since thou hast exceeded thy commission, and exercised an unheard of cruelty upon God's people; for he was but a little displeased, but ye have helped forward the affliction, #Zec 1:15. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:5"}

**For the emptiers have emptied them out]** The Assyrians have spoiled and pillaged till they have left neither men nor means behind them; such clean work they have made, sweeping all before them, like a sweeping rain that leaveth no food, #Pr 28:3. *Omnia corradunt et converrunt.*

**And marred their vine branches]** That is, their sons and their daughters, saith Lyra; their cities and villages, say others; like a malicious vinedresser, that not only cuts off the luxurious or barren

branches, but pulls up the young sprouts by the roots, and so mars the vineyard. The Assyrians endeavoured utterly to destroy the whole seed of Abraham without any mercy or compassion; and this undid them. The jealous and just God cannot bear with such boars out of the wood, that waste his vines, #Ps 80:13.

Ver. 3. **The shield of his mighty men is made red]** *Panoplia terrorem auget.* All was red (a colour much affected by the Medes, Persians, and Chaldees), to show that they were a sanguinary nation, and not more gold thirsty {#Isa 13:17} than blood thirsty (Herodot., Dioed. Sic., Xenophon, Curtius).

**The valiant men are in scarlet]** A colour affected by martial men, that would seem to fear no colours. The Lacedaemonians used it much when they went to fight: that if they should be wounded their blood might not appear upon their apparel, for the discouragement of themselves and encouragement of the enemy by such a sight. The Romish cardinals are clothed in scarlet, and are created by a red hat which the Pope giveth them, in a token that they should be ready to shed their blood for the Catholic faith; which if they should do (as never any of them yet did) they would be no better than the devil's martyrs; since it is the cause, and not the punishment, that maketh a true martyr. A Tyburn tippet (as plain Mr Latimer was wont to speak) would well become those scarlet fathers; who, like bells, will be never well tuned till well hanged; for their blood guiltiness and soul murder especially. In the kingdom of Naples there were two notable thieves (the one named Pater Noster, the other Ave Maria) who at various times had murdered one hundred and sixteen men, and were therefore deservedly put to a cruel death (Rainold. de Idol. Rom. praefat.). But nothing so cruel as the Pope and his conclave deserve, for their sending of so many souls daily to that great red dragon; red with the blood of souls which he hath swallowed, as St Peter hath it, #1Pe 5:8 Re 12:3.

**The chariots shall be with flaming torches]** Those *currus falcati*, chariots armed with scythes and hooks, with and in which they were wont to fight: these shall be with flaming torches carried along in them, either to light them fighting by night, or else to fire the enemies' houses, and to terrify their hearts.



**And the fir trees shall be terribly shaken]** With the rattling of the chariots and clattering of the armour. In a bloody fight between Amurath, the third King of Turks, and Lazarus, Despot of Servia, the noise of warlike weapons, the neighing of horses, and outcries of men were so terrible and great, that the wild beasts in the woods stood astonished therewith, the trees seemed to be shaken; and the Turkish histories, to express the terror of the day, vainly say, that the angels in heaven, amazed with that hideous noise, for that time forgot the heavenly hymns, &c. The word here rendered terribly shaken is rather Chaldee than Hebrew; as spoken of the Chaldees coming against Nineveh.

Ver. 4. **The chariots shall rage in the streets]** Shall run so fast, as if they were mad that drove them.

**They shall jostle one against another]** *Coxabunt*, they shall smite side to side, through haste and heat of fighting.

**They shall seem like torches]** Heb. Their aspect is as of torches; fire sparkleth out of their eyes that are in them; they look upon the Assyrians, as if they would look through them.

**They shall run like the lightnings]** Heb. They shall break through as the lightnings; that is, with incredible swiftness; as lightning in an instant cometh out of the east and shineth even to the west, **#Mt 24:27 Lu 10:18.**

Ver. 5. **He shall recount his worthies]** Or gallants, magnificoes. These Esarhaddon, the King of Nineveh, seeing himself straitened, shall muster up, and mind of their duties; bidding them now or never play the men, since the empire was at stake.

**They shall stumble in their walk]** Through fearfulness and faint heartedness; according to that of the Psalmist, "The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep," **#Ps 76:5,6.** God struck a terror into the Ninevites upon the first coming of the Chaldees. See **#De 11:25.** Therefore there is no great credit to be given to Diodorus Siculus (cap. 7, lib. 3), who saith, that the Chaldees were thrice

overcome in battle by the Assyrians, when as they came in arms to besiege Nineveh.

**They shall make haste to the wall thereof]** The Chaldees shall; taking advantage of the Ninevites' fear, that cowardly passion, that disarmeth and disableth a man for his own defence: or, the Assyrians shall hasten to the wall as fast as their fainting and failing legs will carry them; to try what they can do to keep out the enemy. So the Emperor of Constantinople, certainly advertised the Turks' purpose for the general assault shortly to be given, after that he had many times with tears requested to have borrowed money of his covetous subjects, to have been employed for defence of their city; he first commended himself and them to the Almighty by general fasting and prayer; and afterwards appointed every captain and commander to some certain place of the wall, for defence thereof, &c., but all in vain, as here at Nineveh.

**And the defence shall be prepared]** Heb. the covering or coverer, *Testudo militaris*. Some military engine or moveable defence.

Ver. 6. **The gates of the rivers shall be opened]** Notwithstanding all afore mentioned endeavours to save the city, the water gates of those that stood near the river Tigris flew open either, by means of that inundation above mentioned, or by the enemies' irruption, or the treachery of some that were within.

**And the palace shall be dissolved]** Or melted, haply by that inundation; howsoever by hostile impression: whether we understand it to be the palace royal or the idol temple, or both (the word will bear either), for it was not unusual for princes to have their houses near to the temples, as the kings of Judah had, **#Jer 22:14**. The Trojans had their palladium in the tower; the Romans their temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in the capitol; Constantine the Great built the Lateran church in his Lateran palace; William Rufus, his Westminster hall near the minster.

Ver. 7. **And Huzzab shall be led away captive]** The queen; so called because she stood firm, and was best underlaid of any other, as was thought. Some render it, *quae firma stabat, ducta est in exilium*. She that was wont to stand at the king's right hand, {as #Ps 45:9} which is a place both of dignity and of safety. As Christ is at

God's right hand, #Ps 110:1, so the Church is at his, #Ps 45:9, and he hath led captivity captive, #Eph 4:8, spoiled principalities and powers, made an open show of them, triumphing over them in himself, #Col 2:15. This is the saints' happiness: they are out of gunshot, more than conquerors, even triumphers, #2Co 2:14.

**She shall be brought up]** Whither she would not, to take horse or coach to go into captivity, as Queen Zenobia was brought in triumph to Rome, in golden fetters, by Aurelianus, the emperor.

**And her maids shall lead her]** Her maids of honour. The *gyneceum* or *seraglio* or harem shall fall into the hands of rude soldiers, and by them be hurried away into a far country. Neither is it without desert: for *omne malum fere ex Gynaeeo*; Women are many times means of such mischief, and for their miscarriages men "fall by the sword, and the mighty in the war; the gates also of the city lament and mourn," #Isa 3:11,25,26, even for the ladies' gallantry, whereof we have here an inventory. What a deal of trouble bred Jezebel in Israel, Athaliah in Judah, those two late turbulent queen mothers in Scotland and France! of which latter and her Cardinal Lorraine, one made this stinging distich,

“ *Non audet Stygius Pluto tentare quod audet*

*Effraenis Monachus, plenaque fraudis anus.*”

**As with the voice of doves]** Mourning secretly to themselves, and groaning inwardly ( *In morem columbarum mussitantium*, #Isa 38:14 59:11), as not suffered to bark at those that carry them captive (as Hecuba, Queen of Troy, did, and is therefore famed to be turned into a bitch), or to fill the air with complaints of their hard fortunes, as they call it, or to ease their grief by loud lamentations; but forced to smother it, and take it all to themselves, which is no small aggravation of it; for *Expletur laehrymis egeriturque dolor* (Ovid). Their tongues and their tears are women's best weapons. *Et hic fere lasciviae, luxus, et libidinis finis est*, saith Gualther here. Lo such, for the most part, is the end of lasciviousness, luxury, and lust. Let women be warned.

**Tabering upon their breasts]** Not singing and playing on instruments, after their ladies, as once; but moaning and groaning and knocking their breasts, for the greatness of their grief and heaviness; whereof this is an excellent and eloquent description.

Ver. 8. **But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water]** Like a fish pool of water, and therefore happy. The word (הכרוב) here used for a pool, or pond, signifieth also a blessing. The Pope was wont to say of England, that it was *puteus inexhaustus*, his pit that could not be drawn dry. Such a pit or pool was Nineveh. Populous, wealthy, potent, &c., #Isa 8:7, the magazine of the whole east, a rich Cargazon, and not unlike the island Cyprus, anciently called Macaria, that is, blessed for the plenty, prosperity, and pleasure there abounding. This invited the Romans to subdue it; as the pearls usually cast out at the flood, and gathered at the ebb, drew Caesar's affection for the conquest of Britain; and as Nineveh's fish pool did the Chaldean fishermen. The greater wealth the greater spoil awaiteth a people or person, #Pr 1:19. As if a tree hath thick and large boughs, every man desires to be lopping at it. Nineveh's antiquity is here also noted. Of old, or of a long time, she hath been Empress of the East; she was the seat of the first monarchy, which she also held longest of any, even over 1300 years. Howbeit this shall be now no protection to her, but an article or an argument against her, that she is an old sinner, and hath been long time heaping up and hoarding the mammon of unrighteousness.

**Yet they shall flee away]** As waters do when the banks of a pond are broken down; and as fish do when the water is drawn out or dried up; then they friggle any way. So shall the Ninevites flee away, when their city is once broken: *pugnae obliti, pristinaeque virtutis*.

**Stand, stand, shall they cry]** Their own commanders, desirous to rally them; or their enemies, desirous to ransack them, and make prize of them: *Sed surdo fabulam*.

**But none shall look back]** Or, cause them to turn. *Nemo potest eos resupinare;* their hearts are fallen into their heels, and they have much more mind to save themselves by flight than by fight.

Ver. 9. **Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold]** This is the voice of God to the Chaldeans; encouraging them to fall on, since

they are sure of good booty, plenty of plunder, which he here freely bestoweth upon them. In like sort Mahomet, the Great Turk, the better to encourage his soldiers to storm Constantinople, caused proclamation to be made through his camp the day before, that he would freely give all the spoil of the city for three days unto them if they could win it. And for confirmation thereof, he solemnly swore the Turk's great oath, &c. Now the love of money is Δεινος και παντολμος, saith a Father, daring and desperate.

**For there is none end of the store]** Fat plunder, as was at Constantinople; the wealth whereof the Turks themselves wondered at; and were therewith so enriched, that it is a proverb among them at this day, if any grow suddenly rich, to say, He hath been at the sacking of Constantinople. Neither did they more wonder at their wealth than derided their folly; for that possessing so much, they would part with so little to their emperor, for the defence of themselves and their country. And the like is reported of Heidelberg.

**And glory out of all the pleasant furniture]** Heb. Vessels, or utensils of desire; which are said to yield glory, because with men one hath so much glory and respect as he hath wealth and rich household stuff. See #Ge 31:1. {See Trapp on "Ge 31:1"} #1Ki 10:23 2Ch 32:27. See here also the just judgment of God upon such as set their affections upon that costly vanity, rich furniture (Hezekiah smarted for it, #Isa 39:2,6 2Ch 32:27), or rich attire, which is *superbiae nidus*, the nest of pride, saith one. The worst apparel is nature's garment; the best but folly's garnish, saith another.

Ver. 10. **She is empty, and void, and waste]** An elegant alliteration in the original, beyond translating, הקלבפו הקובסו הקוב, whereby the utter destruction and consternation of the city and monarchy is graphically depicted, and set forth to the life. See a like elegance #Jer 16:15. The last word, rendered waste, signifieth burnt up, or void of all verdure; a place where nothing green groweth. Such a horrible devastation followeth upon God's word of command to the Chaldees, #Na 2:9, like as when Christ cursed the barren fig tree it withered away immediately, #Mt 21:20, though it be the most succulent of any tree, and beareth the brunt of winter blasts unwithered. God's words, however slighted, are not wind, but fire, #Jer 5:13,14.

**And the heart melteth]** The heart ( *in quo fortitudo stabulum habet*, the seat of courage) fell asunder in their bosoms like drops of water; they were cowed out. See #**Jos 2:11 5:1 7:5 Isa 13:7 Eze 21:12**.

**And the knees smite together]** *Genus labant*, as is usual in extreme fear; the blood retreating to the heart, to relieve it. See #**Da 5:6 Job 4:4 Isa 35:3**.

**And much pain is in all loins]** Such pain as befalleth women in travail, #**Isa 21:3 13:8 Joe 2:6 Mic 4:9,10**; the doubled form of the Hebrew word implieth the extremity of it. The loins are the seat of strength; whence the Latins call weak men ( *Elumbes*) loinless men.

**And the faces of them all gather blackness]** Heb. A pot, *i.e.* such blackness as is on the sides of a pot ( *Olla, lebas, cacabus*). See #**Joe 2:6**. Joy and sorrow will show themselves in the face as in a glass. Now if for a temporal mischief there is so great a consternation in wicked men, what shall we think there is in hell?

Ver. 11. **Where is the dwelling of the lions, &c.]** Where is Nineveh, once so terrible, now so despicable? *Leoni mortuo vel mus insultat*. A dead lion or a lively mouse! Once none dared look at it or mute against it, now each passenger can insult over it, inquire where it stood, and not be afraid to take this lion by the beard. "God poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty," #**Job 12:21**, when once they turn tyrants, and exercise regiment without righteousness, as #**Mic 3:2,3**. Such a mighty hunter, or devourer of men and nations, was Nimrod (the first founder of this Assyrian monarchy), and became a proverb against all tyrants and persecutors, #**Ge 10:9**. Such a lion was Nero, #**2Ti 4:17**. Such a tiger Tiberius, of whom one saith, that he laid hold with his teeth on all the excellent spirits of his time; Domitian, who, not content with the blood of Christians, commanded all Jews that were of the stock of David to be sought out, and put to death; Diocletian, and the rest of the primitive persecutors; as also that man of sin, the whole pack of popes, successors to Boniface VIII (who came in like a fox, reigned like a lion, died like a dog), and to Benedict XII, who, when he died, had this epitaph made of him:

“ *Hic situs est Nero, laicis leo, vipera clero:  
Devins a vero, turba repleta mere.*”

**And the feedingplace of the young lions]** Where the old ones provided prey for them till they could skill to do it for themselves; that which they would soon learn and practise, when once grown up. The Assyrian young princes were accustomed to rapine and cruelty from the first; being no better than young Tiberius, whom his tutor, Theodorus Gadareus, rightly characterized when he said, he was dirt kneaded with blood (*πηλος αιματι περιραμενος*); or than Nero the lion; of whom his father, Domitius, prophesied, that of himself and his wife, Agrippa (both notoriously naughty), no good man could be born. *Mali corvi, malum ovum.* The wicked ravens lay bad eggs. Of an ill breed, *ne catulus quidem relinquendus*, to leave not even a young dog behind, said the Romans, when they slew one of their tyrants together with his young son. It was Maximinus, if I mistake not.

**Where the lion, even the old lion, walked]** The courageous or hearty lion (named of Leo, a heart), walked and stalked with his whelps, and none made them afraid (Labi). But now his heart melteth, his knees knock together with fear and faintness, as **#Na 2:10**, his city Nineveh, that was not only *spoliarium latronum*, but *spelunca leonum* (Calv.), is how nowhere; it shall live by fame only, time shall triumph over it. God will "stain the pride of all glory, and bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth," **#Isa 23:9**. So Ovid. (Metam. lib. 15):

“ *Clara fuit Sparte, magnae viguere Mycenae,  
Vile solum Sparte est, altae cecidere Mycenae.  
Oedipodioniae quid sunt nisi nomina Thebae? &c.*”

Ver. 12. **The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps]** *i.e.* That which might have been enough and spare, but that they were unsatiable. So covetous they were and ravenous, that their posy might have been, *Totus non sufficit orbis*; their desire of more was enlarged as hell; greedy lions they were, that could never have enough, **#Isa 56:11**. As a ship may be overladen with gold and silver, even unto sinking, and yet have compass and sides enough to hold ten times more; so the cormorants and covetous wretches of

this world though they have enough to sink them, yet never have they enough to satisfy them.

**And strangled for his lionesses]** *i.e.* For his wives and concubines, by whom they were commanded, being *captivarum suarum captivi*, as Plutarch saith of the Persian kings; slaves to their she-slaves, whom they enriched and adorned with the spoils of the subdued nations. Cicero, in his fifth action against Verres, saith that the kings of Persia and Syria (think the same of Assyria), as they had many wives, so they would bestow upon them whole cities for their maintenance. Antiochus, King of Syria, gave two fair cities to his concubine, #/RAPC 2Ma 4:30. Antony gave all Egypt to Cleopatra. Henry II of France gave to Diana Valentina all the confiscation of goods made in the kingdom for cause of heresy, A.D. 1554, which caused the burning of many good people. *Utinam hodie non essent leaenae*, saith Calvin here: It were to be wished there were not today lionesses, that can of themselves strangle and devour; but we see that there are some women that exceed all men in impudence and cruelty. The queen mother, he meant, in all likelihood, as Beza did her cruel son, Charles IX, author of the massacre, in that verse of his, made upon that new star in Cassiopeia, 1572:

“ *Tu vero Herodes sanguinolente time.*”

“Truly you are Herod by bloody fear.”

**And filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin]** His palaces with treasure, his coffers with cash, raked together by evil arts and oppressive practices. What else was the whole Assyrian empire but a great thievery? Alexander the Great was told to his teeth, that he was the greatest thief in the world. And was not Julius Caesar such another? who said, that for a kingdom's sake right might be violated? and who robbed his country of her liberty for the satisfying of his unlawful desire of ruledom? But for whom all this? surely for those that never thanked them for anything, but fought for their spoil.

Ver. 13. **Behold, I am against thee]** *Ecce me conira te (Hoc ecce non excitat mode sed perterrefacit)*. Behold, I, who am of myself a whole army of men, van and rear both, #Isa 52:12. I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts ( *Deus serierum*) God of order, who



have all creatures at command, if need were, as auxiliaries; and can arm your forces against you, sheath your own swords in your own bowels. Woe be to those that have God against them! The Tigurine rendereth it, *En me tibi hostem, &c.*

**And I will burn her chariots in the smoke]** That is, saith Danaeus, I will burn all their munition and furniture for war, with a most bitter and soft fire, that they may be the more grieved and the more tormented thereby. Others by smoke understand the suddenness of the judgment, *q.d.* No sooner shall my wrath begin to kindle, but I will consume them; *primo impetu*, on the first assault, so soon as ever the flame beginneth to break forth, or rather before. By chariots may be also meant those that were carried in them. The Hebrew gloss here is, By smoke, that is, by a fire whose smoke is seen afar off, see **#Jud 20:40**. Such shall be the fire of the last day, as A Lapidè here noteth out of Jerome; when all the lions and lions' whelps, that is, all tyrants and oppressors, shall be burnt, together with all their chariots, pomps, and messengers, *ac imprimis eorum dux et princeps Antichristus*, and especially antichrist, their captain and chieftain. He and his Jesuits shall doubtless then be cast "alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone," **#Re 19:20**. Let A Lapidè note that.

**And the sword shall devour thy young lions]** Thou shalt bring forth children to the murderer, and those that have taken the sword (though never so young) shall perish by the sword, **#Mt 26:52**. As a nettle stings quickly, an urchin is rough while young, and a crab soon goes backward; so sanguinary dispositions will soon discover themselves.

**And I will cut off thy prey from the earth]** Thou shalt be no further terrible and troublesome to the nations, whom thou hast vexed and spoiled. Of Baldwin, that apostate, one saith, that when he died, *desiit simul maledicere et vivere*, he ceased at once to live and to rail. And of our Henry II the chronicler writeth, that in a great distemperature against his rebellious sons he departed the world, which so often himself had distempered. Nineveh, the great huntress, was now under that woe, **#Isa 33:1**.

**And the voice of thy messengers]** Thy heralds, by whom thou hast proclaimed war, or made unreasonable demands, or laid hard laws upon other nations, or exacted grievous tributes, or published thy new victories, to keep people in awe; or lastly, blasphemed my great name, as Rabshakeh, one of thy messengers, will do, **#2Ki 18:19**. These shall all be silenced, an end shall be put to them and thee.

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Woe to the bloody city]** Nineveh, that delighteth in war, which one well calleth the slaughter house of mankind and hell of this present world, **#Isa 9:5**: the Greek word πολεβμος, war, signifieth much blood (πολυ αιμα). besides that, many murders were committed in her, and connived at, if not countenanced, by a pretence of justice. Such a sanguinary city is Rome; not only drunk with the blood of saints, but also of her own children. Brazutus, set on by Hildebrand, was the death of six popes successively within the time of thirteen years. Pope John XXII (who sat A.D. 1316) flayed a bishop, who had some way offended him, and afterwards burned him. Pope Paul III poisoned two cardinals Fulgosus and Contarenus, a bishop also, and Johannes Baptists Vergerus, because he suspected them of Lutheranism. The Italians generally, as they blaspheme oftener than they swear, so they murder more than they revile or slander. Such another city of bloods is Paris, in France; witness that barbarous massacre, wherein they poisoned the Queen of Navarre, murdered the most part of the peerless nobility of France, with their wives and children, with a great sort of the common people, 100,000 in one year, in various parts of the realm, besides 6000 gentlemen, slain there in private quarrels, within the time of ten years, as it appears by the king's pardons. Now if the blood of one Abel had so many tongues as drops {**#Ge 4:10**, "*the voice of thy brother's blood's crieth unto me,*" } what shall we think will be the woe of such bloody cities and states? Luther rendereth this text, Woe to the murderous state! Austin interpreteth it of all heinous offences wherewith Nineveh was polluted. But surely if other sins have a woe hanging at their heels, according to that of **#Job 10:15**, "If I be wicked, woe unto me," bloody men shall have a woe with a witness, as those that walk in the way of Cain, **#Jude 11**: see **#Eze 24:6 Hab 3:12**, and remember that it was the ruin of that great city Nineveh.

**It is all full of lies]** Ολη ψευδης, so the Seventy render it ( *universa mendacium*), she is wholly made up of fraud and falsehood, *mendaciorum loquacissima*; no truth in her private contracts, no trust in her public transactions and capitulations with other nations; be they never so strongly concluded or never so solemnly confirmed, yet had they no longer force with them than stood with their own profit. This was *fides Ninevetica*, as it was afterwards *Punica*, and is now *Turcica*; which will at length prove their downfall; as it befell Nineveh and Carthage.

**And robbery]** Or ravage ( *laceratio*); such as lions exercise, #Ps 7:2. Liars are commonly thieves; fraudulence is no better than robbery. If I have beguiled any man, saith Zaccheus, I restore him fourfold, #Lu 19:8, as having wronged him no less than if I had robbed him. Hence they go here coupled. Violence is seldom sundered from cunning contrivance; in those especially that hunt after monarchy, as Nimrod, Julius Caesar, Lysander (whose counsel and practice was to eke out the lion's hide with the fox's skin, if need were, *pellem vulpinam leoninae assuere*), Jeroboam, Jehu, Herod, that fox, Julian, Caesar Borgia, whom Machiavel propounds for a pattern to princes; telling them that justice itself should not be sought after, but only the appearance; because the credit is a help, the use a cumber. That great elixir, called reason of state (though falsely so called, unless it be seasoned with justice and truth), hath so transmutative a faculty as to make copper seem gold, right wrong, and wrong right; yea, when all pleas fail, it will stand for good while there are forces to support it.

**The prey departeth not]** They fetch in booty continually, they spoil and prey upon others without end or measure. Once they seemed to repent of their luxury and cruelty at the preaching of Jonah; but now they are as bad again, or worse than ever. They tear in pieces (our English seems to be made of the Hebrew here), and greedily feed upon those murdering morsels of sin which they must digest in hell, without better repentance than they were ever yet acquainted with.

Ver. 2. **The noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels]** A most elegant and lively hypotyposis, or description, of the Chaldeans coming to take Nineveh; *Tam pulchra*, saith Jerome, *et picturae similis, ut omnis meus sermo sit vilior*; So gallant and

picture like a representation of an advancing army, that no words of mine can come near it. Virgil is commended for his excellent expressions suitable to the matter he treateth of; as when he sets forth the cutting down of trees, by— *Sonat icta securibus ilex*; the ferryman's trade, by— *fremet ictibus aerea puppis*; the gliding of his boat, by— *Labitur uncta vadis abies*, &c. But all this is but dull stuff to the divine rhetoric here to be read. Let those that refuse to hear God's sweet words fear lest they be forced to hear the noise of the whip, the rattling of the wheels, &c., **#Ps 7:12,13 Lu 19:42,44 Pr 1:24**. The enemy is sent to revenge the quarrel of God's covenant; the red horse is at the heels of the white, **#Re 6:4**.

Ver. 3. **The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword]** Heb. The flame of the sword, brandished against the sun, which maketh it seem flaming. Such a sword is man's tongue, thin, broad, long, and of a red fiery colour. See **#Ps 42:10 44:3 Pr 12:18**. David cries out of this murdering weapon in his bones, whereby they killed him alive, as with a tuck, or rapier, and buried him in their throats, those gaping graves, open sepulchres.

**And the glittering spear]** Heb. The lightning of the spear, because of its bright and swift motion. Thus the prophet, *perpetuis metaphoris et periphrasibus luxuriat* (as one saith of Apuleius), aboundeth with rhetorical expressions and continued metaphors. Bajazet, the Great Turk, for his valour and skill in handling his arms was surnamed Gilderum, or lightning.

**And there is a multitude of slain]** So that it is not *fulgur ex vitro*, an empty terror, a bare fright only, as a fool's dagger, that rattleth and snappeth, but without an edge. *Vide bis effectum*. See here the sad effect, lo, the tragedy represented, behold a multitude of slain, and a great number of caresses. This the prophet spake, not with any delight, further than made for the glory of God and the Church's deliverance; but that he may set forth by this example what they must look for that imitate Ninevites in their practices; for sin ever ends tragically; and God is still the same, as he is set forth **#Na 1:2**. I wonder, saith Cicero to Verres, that thou shunnest not their vices whose fearful ends thou art much afraid of: *Mirror te quorum mores imitaris eorum exitus non perhorrescere* (Cic.). And St Ambrose, closing up the sad story of Ahab and Jezebel, whom God destroyed

for their wickedness, *Fuge ergo dives eiusmodi exitum*, saith he, Tremble at such dismal ends, and be careful to avoid them. Such ends ye shall avoid if ye carefully flee from such flagitious practices.

**And a great number of caresses]** Heb. The heaviness of dead caresses, which lie so thick that the earth seemeth to groan under the burden of them.

**There is none end of their corpses]** That lie on heaps like so many mountains; as they did after the fight between Amarath, King of Turks, and Lazarus, Despot of Servia, which, while Amurath took a view of, he was suddenly stabbed to death by a half-dead soldier, starting up from among the carcasses.

**They stumble upon their corpses]** And afterwards, perhaps, use them instead of stools and tables, as the Swissers did the Thuricensis, their adversaries, A.D. 1443, banqueting in the place where they won the victory.

Ver. 4. **Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot]** Specious, and therefore gracious with her paramours; of a fair countenance, but foul condition; like Aurelia Orestilla, that had beauty, but no good property, *Cuius prater formam nihil unquam bonus laudavit* (Sallust.). Chrysippus called beauty the flower of virtue; but that is not generally true. Diogenes saw cause to say to some fair women in his time, *O quam bona domus, sed malus hospes*, Here is a fair house, but an ill inhabitant. Nineveh is the well favoured harlot here spoken of; her very name signifieth a fair habitation. Jerome and others interpret it, she was indeed *urbs formosa et famosa*, fair and famous, but foolish and filthy. *Meretrix meretricissima*; she multiplied her whoredoms, both corporal and spiritual; for these are seldom sundered; as we see in that once well favoured, but now withered, whore of Rome, **#Re 17:1**. *Roma* inverted is *amor* ; preposterous love, unnatural filthiness, is there as commonly practised as idolatry. And as a common harlot paints and decks herseff to please her lovers, so did Nineveh, so doth Rome in her pompous and men-pleasing worships. I have read of a lady in Paris, that when she saw the bravery of a procession to a saint she cried out, Oh, how fine is our religion

beyond that of the Huguenots! And Sir Walter Raleigh was wont to say, that were he to choose a religion for fleshly liberty and lasciviousness, he would choose Popery, which is indeed an alluring, tempting, bewitching religion, none like it.

**The mistress of witchcrafts]** Harlots are many of them enchantresses; and have their *philtr*a, their love potions, wherewith to ensnare men, and to draw them on to lewdness, and to take away their hearts, #Ho 4:11. Athenaeus brings in Plato bewailing himself, that he was taken so much with a filthy harlot. And Aelian tells of a whore that boasted to Socrates that she could easily get followers from him, not he from her. Of Samson and Hercules (whom some think to have been the same) those two verses verified,

“ *Nam potuit lenam, potuit superare leaenam:  
Quem fera non potuit vincere; vicit hera.* ”

*Think the same of idolatry also, and of those sorceries, whereby the purple whore hath deceived all nations, as St John (in allusion to this place) saith of her, #Re 18:23; for in that book of the Revelation the Holy Ghost borrows all the elegance and flowers in the story of the Old Testament, thereby to set out the story of the New in succeeding ages.*

*That selleth nations through her whoredoms]* Maketh prize of them, as those impostors did, #2Ti 3:6, and then make sale of them as her slaves, #2Pe 2:3, or otherwise use them at her pleasure, as homely as the whore of Babylon now doth those her slaves and souls of men, #Re 18:13, whom she sits upon, even upon peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues, #Re 17:15, tyrannizing over their consciences, and appointing them to very mean offices, as that posture of hers, in sitting upon them, seemeth to import.

Ver. 5. **Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord]** And I need say no more, wert thou but sensible of thy misery herein. Be not thou a terror to me, O Lord, saith Jeremiah, and then let what will else befall me, I shall the better bear it. Do not you fall upon me yourselves, said Samson to his countrymen that came to bind him; and then for the Philistines I shall order them well enough, #Jud 15:12: so saith the good soul, Let not God set against me. Tyrants

and oppressors shall be sure to have him their enemy; and this he tells them here again and again, to beat down their vain confidence in their greatness, whereby they think to bear down all before them.

**And I will discover thy skirts upon thy face]** *i.e.* I will turn up thy clothes about thy ears, and so show to all thine utter disgrace, a fit punishment for so filthy a harlot, **#Isa 47:3 Jer 13:22 Eze 16:37.**

**And I will show the nations thy nakedness]** Which nature teacheth to cover; therefore when a man hath committed a sin he blusheth, the blood, as it were, would cover the sin, that mother of shame: **#Re 3:18**, that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear. The whore of Babylon is, and more and more shall be, served on this sort, **#Re 17:16.** Before God ye are all bare souled, said Mr Philpot, martyr, to the Popish synod, before whom he was convented. The kings of the earth shall make Rome desolate and naked. Luther and many other Protestant writers have done it already by laying her open in her colours to the world, taking the same boldness and liberty to discover her lewdness that she did to commit it.

**And the kingdoms thy shame]** Who shall therehence slight thee and hate thee, together with all thy policies and superstitions, whereby thou hast enslaved them.

Ver. 6. **And I will cast abominable filth upon thee]** As they do chamber pots and worse upon harlots that are carted. I have read of a heathen people that put the adulterers' and adulteresses' heads into the paunch of a beast, where all the filth lieth, and so stifled them to death.

**And make thee vile]** *Conspurcabo, deturpabo te,* I will bespattle thee and make thee stink above ground, as loathsome carrion doth: so the word signifieth. It was long since complained of by one of her own sons, that the stench of the Church of Rome was gone up to heaven. And by another, that of gold she was become silver, of silver iron, of iron earth, *superesse ut in stercus abiret*, and now there remained no more, but that she should be looked upon as dung. Accordingly it followeth:

**And I will set thee as a gazingstock]** The Septuagint render it, for an example (εις παραδειγμα), others, a lookingglass, but Calvin (after R. Salomon and Aben Ezra), *ponam te quasi stercus*, I will set thee as dung, which men gladly look beside. Luther rendereth it *Ponam te in terriculamentum*, I will make thee a bugbear. All this was done to Nineveh, that great city, and all was done by God, not by fate or fortune, or any necessity of nature, that states and kingdoms must have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin, as politicians dote.

**Ver. 7. And it shall come to pass that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee]** Thou shalt be a very *Magormissabib*, a terror to all that are round about thee, so that they shall decline thee and stand aloof off. *Resilient a te*, they shall leap back from thee (saith the Vulgate translation), as if they had trod upon a snake. *Ubi simul hominum mores exprimit*, saith Gualther. This is the manner of most people: they measure friendship by profit, and shamefully forsake those in adversity whom they were wont to follow and fawn upon in prosperity. David complains of such dealing, and Ovid, and many others, *Tempora si fuerint nubila solus eris. Cum fortuna petit nullus amicus erit.*

**And say, Nineveh is laid waste]** Which most men held impossible, and never looked to have seen such a day. So Rome was called *Aurea* golden and *Aeterna* eternal, and the Romans once thought (as it is said Dionysius did) that the monarchy of the world had been tied unto them with chains of adamant. But God confuted their golden dreams by breaking their empire, and giving up their city six different times in one hundred and thirty-nine years into the hands of the barbarians, who exercised therein all kinds of cruelty. Besides that, it is observed that Rome since it became Papal was never besieged by any enemy, but it was taken. The final ruin of it is daily expected, according to that prophecy of St John, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," #Re 18:2, and that other of Sibylla before recited,

*"Tota eris in cineres; quasi nunquam Roma fuisses."*

**Who will bemoan her?]** Heb. Who will move (his lips) for her. Some perhaps will shake his head or shoot his bolt at her; but none open his mouth to bemoan her. It was the just hand of God to set off



all hearts and shut up all mouths from her, that had been so unreasonably merciless and hard hearted, #La 2:13.

**Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?**] *q.d.* So odious thou art that none will do thee that good office; or if they would, so calamitous thou art that no comfort will fasten. For as to sore eyes the gentlest medicine is troublesome, so is comfort ministered to such as are in a hopeless condition. The ear that tasteth words as the mouth doth meat is at such a time embittered and out of taste.

Ver. 8. **Art thou better than populous No**] Heb. No Amon, a great grain country, and therefore populous; for where victual and good trading is to be had thither people will repair apace. No (that is Alexandria) was the nursing mother of Egypt (Amon, *i.e.* *Nutritia Alma mater*), and Egypt was called the world's barn or storehouse, *horreum unde hauriatur*, #Ge 42:1. It is called, #Jer 46:25, *Amon de No*; #Eze 30:13, *Hamon No*; and #Eze 30:14,16, *No*, without any addition. This was the old name of this city before it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God had given Egypt as his pay for his pains in taking Tyre. It was rebuilt by Alexander the Great, and he called it, after his own name, Alexandria. Amon it was called for the reasons above given. Though there be those who fetch that name of it from Ham, the son of Noah, Theodoret will have it so called from Jupiter Hammon, whose son Alexander desired to be held, and from whom the Egyptian husbandmen were called Ammonii, and their arable Ammonia, as Herodotus writes. Plutarch also telleth us that the Africans worship an unknown God by the name of Amon, that is (in their language) *Heus, tu quis es?* This city, therefore, is called No Amon, probably to distinguish it from other cities of the same name, as Alexandria of Egypt, Caesarea of Philippi, Augusta Vindelicorum, &c. Josephus saith that it abounded in people and wealth; being little less than Jerusalem in size (Lib. 2, de Bell. Jud., cap. 16). Thinkest thou now, O Nineveh (saith God here), that thou art in a better or safer condition than this city once was? but

“*Iam magnum infelix nil nisi nomen habet.*”

Let Nineveh go to Jerusalem, to Shiloh, #Jer 7:12, and do as Scipio did when, beholding the downfall of Carthage, he foresaw and

bewailed the like future destiny of Rome, his own country, *Succurrat illud, mutato nomine de to fabula narratur.*

**That was situate among the rivers]** Which is held the best situation for profit, pleasure, and strength.

**That had the waters round about it]** The river Nile surrounded it (saith Strabo), but could not mote it up from God's fire. See **#Ps 33:17 Pr 21:30**. {See Trapp on "Ps 33:17"} {See Trapp on "Pr 21:30"}

**Whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?]** She had the Egyptian sea on one side and the lake of Mareotis on the other, which the Hebrews called the sea.

Ver. 9. **Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength]** No was the metropolis of Egypt, and knew no end of her power, as bearing rule over Ethiopia the strong and Egypt the infinite, *Chus valida et Egyptii infiniti* (some read this text), and as having all the rest of the peoples inhabiting Africa and Libya for her confederates. See **#Jer 46:9**, where the prophet speaketh of such people as brought aid to Egypt against the Chaldees, but were foiled and worsted. Of the huge armies that Ethiopia was able to raise see **#2Ch 14:9 16:8**. Egypt for her strength was called Rahab, **#Ps 87:4 89:10** that is, mighty and proud.

**Put and Lubim were thy helpers]** By Put Jerome understandeth Africa (which was over beside Alexandria, the sea between), a waste continent, thrice as big as Europe; and by Lubim Libya, a considerable part of that continent sometimes put for the whole. These would have been helpers to No, but could not; because overpowered by Nebuchadnezzar, sent against them by God. Leagues entered into with wicked men profit not those whom God will punish. The Grecian Churches, A.D. 1438, being afraid of the Turks, sent and subjected themselves to the Bishop of Rome, that they might have the help of the Latin Churches; but shortly after they were destroyed, and their empire subdued, and swallowed up in the Turkish greatness. It is gathered by some out of **#Re 16:14-16**, that the Pope and his adherents shall, towards the end of the world, for the restoring of his decayed authority, call in the help not only of Popish princes, but of foreign states, out of Asia, Africa, and

America, to suppress the heretics (as they call us) and to root out religion; but with evil success, for they shall associate themselves only to be broken in pieces, #Isa 8:9; these auxiliaries, shall, speed no better than those subsidiary Syrians did, #2Sa 10:18,19; they shall receive a famous foil at Armageddon, such as Sisera did at the waters of Megiddo, #Jud 5:19, and a voice from the throne shall say, "It is done," #Na 3:16,17.

Ver. 10. **Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity]** Whereof though there be no other record, yet we ought not to doubt the truth, since it is here alleged by the Holy Ghost, as a thing either done before or shortly after to be done, as may be probably gathered from #Jer 46:25 Eze 30:19,21 cf. Jer 20:5 44:28. To God (by reason of the vastness of his being) all things are present. As he that stands on a high mountain, and looks down, though to the passenger that goes by some are before some behind, yet to him they are all present; so here.

**Her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets]** A terrible spectacle to those that passed by; who were to look for little mercy, when children, in whom there is so little guile or gall, and who are usually favoured for their innocence and ignoscence, met with such hard measure. {See Trapp on "Ho 13:16"} War is an evil, #Isa 45:7, such as no words (how wide soever) can sufficiently set forth. *Bellum a belluis.*

**And they cast lots for her honourable men]** Whether so for age or authority; the dice were cast on them for slaves, as #Ob 11. A great alteration on the sudden. Tamerlane's coach horses were conquered kings; Adonibezek's dogs, seventy kings, gathering crumbs under his table; Saporess used the Emperor Valerian for a footstool; Croesus, carried captive by Cyrus, cries out, "O Solon, O Solon"; Gelimer: led in triumph by Belisarius, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," and calls to him for a crust to relieve him, a cittern to solace him, and sponge to dry his eyes with (Procop. lib. ii de Belle Vandal.).

*“ Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendencia file:  
Et subito casu, quae valere, ruunt.”*

*Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, after 10 years' reign was deposed; and by his enemies, driven to that exigent, that he desired only a clerkship in a house at Spire, of his own founding; which was barbarously, by the bishop of that place, denied him. Our Henry VI, that had been the most potent monarch for dominions that ever England had, was, when deposed, not the master of a molehill nor of his own liberty, but beaten and wounded, &c., to show that mortality is but the stage of mutability, when "they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills," #La 4:5.*

**Bound in chains]** *Not of gold, as Zenobia was; but of iron, as the word signifieth.*

Ver. 11. **Thou also shalt be drunken]** *sc. with the cup of the wine of God's wrath; #Jer 25:27 thou shalt "drink, and be drunken, and spue and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you." This is that κοινος μεθη, dry drunkenness of them that are "drunk, but not with wine," #Isa 51:21; of them that remember their affliction and their misery, the wormwood and the gall, #La 3:19. If the saints sip sometimes of the top of God's cap, the wicked shall drink deep of it; yea, though it be eternity to the bottom.*

**Thou shalt be hid]** *Or, thou shalt lurk, either for fear of the enemy (who wast once above fear, and thine enemies below hope), or for shame of thine undone condition. See #Re 6:16 Lu 23:30 Ho 10:8. Or, thou shalt vanish, and be brought to nothing; as if there never had been any such. Confer #Ob 16. Nineveh nothing else now, saith one who had been there, but a sepulchre of herself, a little town of small trade, where the patriarch of the Nestorians keeps his seat at the devotion of the Turk.*

**Thou shalt also seek strength because of the enemy]** *Or, from the enemy; beg help of them, to whom thou wouldest once have scorned to be beholden; or of them against whom thou hast professed and practised open hostility.*

Ver. 12. **All thy strong holds shall be like fig trees]** *i.e. Tam infirma ac si ficulnea essent. Look how the fig tree casteth her untimely (or green) figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind, #Re 6:13; yea, though it be but of a gentle wind, if the figs be ripe, as*

here, they fall with little ado; so shall thy munitions, wherein thou trustest.

**They shall even fall into the mouth of the eater]** That is, of the Chaldean, who gape for thy destruction, and desires nothing more than to revel in thy ruins. They shall take thy fortresses as easily as Timotheus did towns, which were said to come into his toils while he slept, *Aemuli ipsius dormientem pinxerant, &c.* (Plut. in Sulla). Or, as Charles V, who in twenty-eight battles in America, waged by his Generals Cortez and Pizarro, won twenty-eight kingdoms.

Ver. 13. **Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women]** *i.e.* Fearful and faint hearted; Ἀχιιδες ουκετ Αχαιοι. See **#Isa 3:12 Jer 51:30 48:41**. And this in the midst of thee, where they should be most valiant, like cocks on their own dunghills, as they say. Lo, those that formerly faced the heavens, and, by a cyclopal kind of impiety, slighted God, and dared the devil to a duel, how crestfallen they are and courageless when the enemy is upon them; the noise of a driven leaf frightens them, **#Le 26:36**; a panic terror seizes upon them, as it did once upon the Syrians, **#2Ki 7:15**, and upon the Imperialists, in the war against the Hussites, so that they could not strike a stroke; and upon the Burgundians, who, expecting a battle, thought long thistles were lances, and turned their backs, with those Ephraimites, **#Ps 78:9**. It is God that puts mettle into men, that strengthens or weakens the arm of either party, **#Eze 30:24**. These lions, as they are called **#Na 2:12**, that formerly rushing out of Nineveh, their den, filled it with ravine, tearing and spoiling all they met with, are now become harts and stags; that have great horns, but do nothing with them, *quia deest animus*, because they lack courage; or as those Eretrians, of whom Themistocles said, that they were like the sword fish, that had a sword indeed, but not a heart to make use of it (Plutarch).

**The gates of thy land shall be set wide open]** Thy frontier towns and five ports, those keys of the kingdom, *aperiendo aperientur*; shall open to give the enemy entrance; as at the siege of Jerusalem the iron gate opened of its own accord.

**The fire shall devour thy barns]** Because God, who is a consuming fire, shall remove out of the enemies' way all obstacles and

impediments; so that all shall be pervious and patent to them. Fire God had threatened once before, #Na 2:13, and it may very well be that the gates were fired without a metaphor. See #Na 3:15.

Ver. 14. **Draw thee waters for the siege, &c.**] A most bitter and biting taunt, or mock (*sarcasmus*), whereby the prophet laugheth to scorn the fortifications of the Ninevites and their diligence and providence in defending themselves, which shall nothing avail them, because God will curse their enterprises, #Ps 127:1,2: see the like sarcasm #Na 2:1. In those eastern countries there was a great scarcity of water. Draw thee good store, for the better holding out the siege; for if water fail thee thou must needs yield.

**Fortify thy strong holds**] But they shall soon fail thee, #Na 3:12, as the tower of Shechem did those that fled to it, and as the strong hold of Zion did the braving Jebusites, #2Sa 5:7. If God be against us no other help can relieve us. Brass and iron can fence a man against a sword, but not against fire.

**Go into clay, and tread the mortar**] viz. To make brick of. For in maritime and moorish places, where stones are not to be had, they used to wall their cities and make their munitions with brick. This proud Nineveh is commanded here to do, by an irony, as Theophylact noteth; but she shall but labour in the very fire, take pains to no purpose; for God will destroy the works of her hands, #Ec 5:6.

**Make strong the brickkiln**] Or repair it, that all may be ready. And these things they did, no doubt, very diligently; neither were they for that to be blamed. But this was their fault, as it was also the fault of the Jews in like case, #Isa 22:8-11, that "they looked not to the Maker of all, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago." This, if they had done seriously, though they had made less preparation, the enemy might have been daunted and dismayed as much as that Duke of Saxony was, who, having proclaimed war against the Bishop of Magdeburg, and understanding by his intelligencers that the bishop levied no army, made no preparation, but only gave out that he would commit his cause to God, who would not fail to take up arms for him. *Insaniat alius*, said the duke, It were a mad prank for me to make war upon such a one that

trusteth in God to right and revenge him. Let who will meddle with such a man: I will not (Bucholcer, Chronol.).

Ver. 15. **There shall the fire devour thee]** There, that is, in thy strongholds, where thou thinkest thyself most safe. These shall be to thee *pro carcere et pistrino*, for a prison, or little ease; when the fire of God's wrath shall kindle upon thee the fire of war shall consume thee. See **#Am 1:4 Joe 1:19 2:3,30 Am 7:4**. {See Trapp on "Am 1:4"} {See Trapp on "Joe 1:19"} {See Trapp on "Joe 2:3"} {See Trapp on "Joe 2:30"} {See Trapp on "Am 7:4"} Evil shall hunt the violent man to destroy him, **#Ps 140:11**, neither must he think to be safe anywhere from Divine vengeance, **#Am 9:2,3 Ps 139:7-10 Ob 4**; which will not suffer them to live, as those Barbarians could tell, **#Ac 28:4**. The heathens called Nemesis, or Vengeance, Ἀδραστεια, to show that no guilty person could shun it. Shuffle he may for a season from side to side, as Balaam's ass did, to avoid the angel's sword, **#Nu 22:27**, but at length lay down under it, and so condemned her master's madness, **#2Pe 2:16**. Running into God is the only best way to escape him; as to close and get in with him that would strike you doth avoid the blow.

**The sword shall cut thee off]** *Est haec vehemens plane comminatio*, saith Gualther. This is truly a very vehement threat. See how thick it falls, like hail shot upon them, that they can hardly take breath; and all too little to work upon their hard hearts, which could not repent. These uncounselable Ninevites were like the smith's dog; whom neither the hammers above him nor the sparks of fire falling round about him can awake. Like leviathan, they esteemed iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. Darts were counted by them as stubble, they laughed at the shaking of the spear, **#Job 41:27,29**. It is proper to God's people to tremble at his word, to stand in awe of his judgments, while they yet hang in the threatenings. Wicked men laugh when they should fear; and say in their hearts when God threateneth them, as Frederick II, Emperor of Germany, was wont to say openly, in the greatest threatening of his enemies, *Minarum strepitus, Asinorum crepitus*. The noise of threatenings, the rustlings of asses.

**It shall eat thee up as the cankerworm]** Which useth to make quick despatch and clean work, see **#Joe 1:1-2:32**, to shear all before it.

**Make thyself many]** Heb. weighty with multitude; so that the axletree of the earth may seem to groan under thy grandeur and massiness. Do this thou, O King of Nineveh (for the Hebrew verb here is masculine). Do the like thou, O city of Nineveh.

**Make thyself many as the locusts]** Which hath its name in Hebrew from multitude; because, as that legion in the Gospel, they are many: and here the Hebrew verb is feminine. Ministers must lay about them on all hands; and be ready to turn themselves, as it were, into all shapes and fashions, both of speech and spirit, to bring people to the knowledge of God and his will, of themselves and their duties.

Ver. 16. **Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven]** And so thinkest to have a stake in store howsoever the dice chance to turn. For these merchants were very rich, and could furnish her with money, which is the sinews of war. Besides, they traded far and near; and so could give intelligence, and if need were, waylay and intercept the enemies' contributions, that it came not to them. But would you know, saith the prophet, how these merchants will serve you at your greatest need?

**The cankerworm spoileth and fleeth away]** *q.d.* They will serve themselves upon you and then leave you in the lurch, to make as good shift as you can. They are mere cankerworms, which first eat up all, and then haste away. These false friends, well, they may be the causes, but companions they will not be, of your calamity; like crows that flock to a dead carcass, not to defend it, but to devour it; and no sooner have they bared the bones but they are gone. Such false merchants as these hath this land been much pestered with from Rome in former ages. Matthew Paris telleth us of one Florentinus, the Pope's delegate here, in King John's reign, Ferentinus the wiser sort called him, for bearing away so much money; and of another named Otto, one of the Pope's merchants, or rather mice catchers (*Muscipulatores*), as he calleth them, who after three years' raking together of money, by most detestable arts, at last departing hence, to avoid a storm, he left not so much money in the whole kingdom as he either carried with him or sent to Rome before him. In the year 1235 there were spread through England certain Roman cankerworms, called *Caurisim* (*quasi capientes ursi*,



devouring bears, quoth Paris), who had entangled the king, nobles, and all others that had to deal with the court of Rome, in their cunning snares and usurious practices, under colour of supplying with money such as wanted present pay to the Pope. These were called the Pope's merchants, saith Speed.

Ver. 17. **Thy crowned are as the locusts]** *i.e.* Thy barons (saith Diodati) and great lords, wearing diadems and wreaths, in token of dignity; such a Nazarite (that is the Hebrew word here) was Joseph, #Ge 49:26, because separate and exempt from other men, as a chieftain. Calvin likewise rendereth it, thy princes; the Vulgate Latin, thy keepers; some others, thy Nazarites, or thy religious persons, set apart from the common sort to pray for the city's safety. Such were those chemarims, or chimney chaplains, among the Jews, #Ho 10:5 Zep 1:4; such are the mailers among the Turks, who call them the religious brothers of love; and the shaveling mendicants among the Papists. These locusts are, #Re 9:7, said to have on their heads as it were crowns like gold.

**And thy captains as the great grasshoppers]** Heb. as the grasshoppers of grasshoppers, by a Hebraism, like that King of kings, Song of songs, &c. The word rendered captains is foreign; R. David and others render it, *Imperator, Dux, Princeps*. It seemeth to be a name of dignity among the Assyrians, as Zaphnathpaaneah was among the Egyptians, #Ge 41:45. These are called grasshoppers and locusts, for their uselessness and fearfulness.

**Which camp in the hedges]** *sc.* Of the gardens or vineyards, and they are said to camp, in regard of their multitudes, as if they were an army of them. See Joel ii. The prophet taxeth here Nineveh's vain confidence in her confederates and such other hangers on, as might truly say,

“ *Nos numeri sumus, fruges consumere nati.*,”

We are men of no great moment, such as Aristophanes in Plutarch prettily played upon, when he said, ταμιαί λαμιαί, *i.e.* *quaestores bubones*. treasurers of eagles.

**But when the sun ariseth they flee away]** So these trencher flies, when they have served their own turns upon thee, and now see the tempest of war growing on amain, they worship the rising sun, keep themselves on the warm side of the hedge, leave thee to shift as thou canst, and seek out for themselves a better fortune.

Ver. 18. **Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria]** This apostrophe to the king is emphatic. He is given to know that his nobles and officers, #Mic 5:4-6 7:14, his councillors of state, and greatest politicians, should be benighted, and not know what counsel to give or course to take. Or, they slumber, that is, they are dead, as #Ps 77:6. And this is more agreeable to that which followeth:

**Thy nobles shall dwell in the dust]** The Vulgate hath it *sepelientur*; shall be buried. Others, *iacebunt*, shall lie on the ground, like beasts, through fear and consternation of mind: #1Sa 28:20, "Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid."

**Thy people is scattered upon the mountains]** Diffused and dispersed abundantly; as sheep without a shepherd, whereof none being wiser than other, no man gathereth them into the sheep cotes of better order.

Ver. 19. **There is no healing of thy bruise]** *Clades et strages tua irreparabilis est*. Thy disease is desperate, thy condition comfortless; thou art utterly to be destroyed. When God smiteth his own people it may well be asked, as #Isa 27:7, "Hath he smitten him as he smote those that smote him? or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?" Surely no; there is a manifest difference. "He hath torn," saith the Church, "and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up," #Ho 6:1. Hence that distinction of punishment, or pain, *in condemnantem, et corrigentem, in poenam vindictae, et poenam medelae*. Afflictions and temporal evils are in the nature, to the wicked of a curse, to the godly of a cure; to the former mortal, to the latter medicinal. "When the wicked spring as grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish," it is not for any goodwill that God beareth to them; but "it is that they shall be destroyed for ever," #Ps 92:7. {see Trapp on "Na 1:9"}

**Thy wound is grievous]** Not only incurable, but full of anguish intolerable. Thus, "many sorrows shall be to the wicked," #Ps 32:10, and yet all that they suffer here is but as drops of wrath, forerunning the great storm in hell; or as a crack, preceding the fall of the whole house upon them: the leaves only fall on them here; there, the whole tree.

**All that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands, &c.]** As rejoicing at thy ruin, and subscribing to God's just judgment upon thee; they shall take up this taunting speech against thee, and say, "How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers," &c. #Isa 14:4-7.

**For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?]** "Thy wickedness," that is, thy wicked counsels, edicts, enterprises, have they not extended far and near for mischief to many nations? and this not for a little while, but jugiter, continually? It hath been thy constant trade from thy youth up ( *neque enim nova est aut nupera haec tua crudelitas*) to waste and weary out other nations with thine inroads and hostilities. The destruction therefore is of thyself, O Nineveh; the insultations, and complosions of others at thy misery, is no more than thou hast merited. *Os quod in sorte tua ceciderit, illud rodas*, as the Arabian proverb hath it. Bear the reward of thy wickedness, which is now come home to thee; thy wickedness is the root of thy wretchedness: this the prophet here repeateth and inculcateth in the perclose; that he may leave it as a sting in the minds of his hearers, as Gualther well observeth.

# Habakkuk

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The burden**] The prophetic burden, saith the Chaldea paraphrast; the burdenous prophecy, saith Tremellius. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"}

**Which Habakkuk the prophet did see]** *Amplexator ille*, That embracer (so some interpret his name), yea, *Optimus Amplexator* (as they gather from the last radical emphatically doubled), That best embracer. *Et carte omen habet nomen*, He hath not his name for nought; for (as Luther writeth) in this prophecy he loveth and huggeth his afflicted countrymen; he helps and solaces them, as the mother doth her crying babe, to still it. Jerome and others make Habakkuk to signify *Luctatorem amplex stringentem*, a wrestler, that, by closing, strives to prevail; that, by might and slight, seeks to get the better. Such a one was Jacob, whose wrestling was by weeping, and his prevailing by praying, **#Ho 12:4**. Such another was Habakkuk, who argueth earnestly with God about the state of his people, and prayeth ardently for them; not doubting but that the Lord would "preserve the faithful, and plentifully reward the proud doer," **#Ps 31:23**. A prophet he is here styled, and a seer, and that is all is said of him; nothing of his pedigree, or time of prophesying; that the word (and not the man) might be glorified, **#Ac 13:47**. *Regis epistolis acceptis*, saith Gregory; when a king's letters are brought to his subjects, it is a ridiculous thing for them to inquire with what pen they were written; it is the matter must be minded: so here. A prophet Habakkuk was; and is therefore to be received into our hearts, if we look for a prophet's reward. He received heavenly visions, whereunto therefore we must not be disobedient, **#Ac 26:19**. That memorable sentence of his, "The just shall live by faith," is more than once made use of by St Paul, in that weighty business of justification, **#Ro 1:17 Ga 3:11**, which proves the canonical authority of this prophecy. The precise time when it was uttered is not known. In the days of Manasseh most think; but some are of the opinion in Josiah's time rather, or not long before; because he foretelleth the Babylonish captivity, and seemeth to agree with Jeremiah in many things. Sure it is, that this prophet lived not after the captivity, {**#Hab 1:6,7**} as Epiphanius and Jerome would have it;

grounding upon those Apocryphal additions to Daniel, which either are false, or else there were two Habakkuks.

Ver. 2. **O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear?**] Lo, this is the confidence of a good conscience towards God, #1Pe 3:21, when it is parleying with him by prayers and bold intercessions (εντευξεις), #1Ti 2:1, it dare plead, as #Jer 12:1, and interrogate, as #Ro 8:33-35 Isa 63:15, and expostulate, as David often: when God seems to be asleep, he wakes him; when to delay, he quickens him; when to have lost his wonted kindness, he finds it for him; so doth Habakkuk here; for he knew he might do it. See his holy boldness beneath, #Hab 1:12, and learn to continue instant in prayer, #Ro 12:12, crying, *Quousque Domine?* How long, Lord? This was Mr Calvin's motto, ever in his mouth, as *Deo gratias* grace to God, was in Austin's.

**Even cry out unto thee of violence**] *i.e.* Of all sorts of heinous sins, which I have long cried out upon, and sought by preaching and prayer to redress, but cannot; so incorrigibly flagitious are they grown, that I have now no other way left, but to turn them over to thee, with a *Non convertentur*; They will not be converted. Shall they still "escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God," #Ps 56:7, and let them feel the power of thy wrath that will not submit to the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thus the holy prophet {*Elijah-like*, #Ro 11:2} maketh intercession to God against Israel (when once incorrigible, incurable), for whose souls' health he would have spent and been spent, *Impendam et expendar*.

Ver. 3. **Why dost thou show me iniquity? &c.**] These were Hazael's to Habakkuk's eyes, he could not see them with dry eyes, he could not but vex his righteous soul from day to day, as Lot did at Sodom, with their unlawful deeds, #2Pe 2:8, privately committed (as here in their common commerce), and publicly, as in the next words, in courts and consistories; for all was out of order.

**And cause me to behold grievance**] Molestation and mischief done to those that would live peaceably in the land, {#Ps 7:14,16 94:20 55:11} to the poor that are fallen into their nets, debts, bonds, and mortgages, #Ps 10:9. It is as if the prophet should say, Why dost thou not punish these enormous practices, but suffer evildoers to abuse thy longsufferance, to thy dishonour? Averroes, the philosopher, drew an

argument from God's patience to deny his providence. But what saith Austin? Some wicked God punisheth here, lest his providence, and but some, lest his patience and promise of judgment, should be called in question.

**For spoiling and violence are before me]** *E regione mei vastatio et violentia*, so that I cannot look beside them, I cannot but complain of them. Elijah and Jeremiah were more passionate, #**1Ki 19:4,10,14 Jer 15:10 20:14**.

**And there are that raise up strife and contention]** These are Satan's seeds men, and kindling coals. He is an unquiet spirit, and strives to make others so; loves to fish in troubled waters, doth all he can to set one man against another, that he may prey upon both; as the master of the pit supbeth upon the bodies of those cocks whom he hath set to kill one another. Be not mischief maker, seeds men of sedition.

Ver. 4. **Therefore the law is slacked]** *Defluit lex*. An elegant metaphor from the pulse, which, in a dying man, beateth faintly. The law is the pulse of the commonwealth. If it stir not at all, the commonwealth is dead. If it have but slow motion, the commonwealth is weak. But if it keep an equal course, the commonwealth is in good constitution. *Lex lux*, the law is a light, saith Solomon; but the deluge of sin had well nigh put out this light in Israel; who was now grown in a manner lawless, through long impunity.

**And judgment doth never go forth]** Or, it goeth not forth to the utmost, to victory; it is not carried on to a right upshot, as the Septuagint and Latin render it, *Usque ad finem*, εις τελος.

**For the wicked doth compass about the righteous]** As a crown compasseth the head; he surroundeth and circumventeth him to his hurt. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation," &c. The Midianites outwitted the Israelites, #**Nu 25:18**. The Pharisees hemmed in our Saviour to insnare him; but were disappointed.

**Therefore wrong judgment proceedeth]** Distorted judgment. So #**Eze 9:9**, the city was full of *Mutteh*, that is, of (*mishpat din mitteh*,

as Kimchi expoundeth it, *κατα προσκλισιν*), judgment turned from the bias; the balance of justice was tilted on the one side, #1Ti 5:21. A judge is to retain the decency and gravity of the law; to do nothing of partiality or popularity; to proceed, not according to opinion or appearance; but as a just law is a heart without affection, an eye without lust, a mind without passion, &c., so should he. Else wrong and wrested judgment will soon proceed, to the prejudice of the righteous.

Ver. 5. **Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously]** Heb. Wonder, wonder. This is God's answer to the former expostulation, which he disliketh not, but encourageth the rest of his people to the like holy boldness. It containeth a promise to the prophet and the rest that were like affected, that he would shortly vindicate his glory and be avenged of the wicked, though he bore long with them. This that he may the better assure, he proceedeth by an elegant climax, wherein his speech getteth ground and ariseth higher and higher, that the despisers might be the more affected. "Behold, ye despisers," so St Paul after the Septuagint (whose translation he here followeth as most received, and most making for his purpose), #Ac 13:41, the sense being one and the same.

**For I will work a work in your days]** This phrase noteth the strong intention of God upon it; as #Jer 18:18, to devise devices, noteth strong plotting to mischief the prophet. So Christ is said to work a work, #Joh 5:36. Many do rather play their works than work them. This is not God-like. He is serious and thorough in his works.

**Which ye will not believe, though it be told you]** But put off all, as those in the Gospel did, with a God forbid; and so go on in sin, till wrath come upon you to the utmost. To this day we cannot get men to believe the truth of God's judgments, while they hang in the threatenings; but one put-off or another they get, through self-delusion, or obstinace of heart, #La 3:65, next unto which followeth, Thy curse upon them.

Ver. 6. **For lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation]** The Chaldeans were anciently the philosophers of the Babylonians: Babylon was a province of the Assyrian empire; but not the same with Nineveh (only walled about by Semiramis, and by

her called Babylon), as Suidas noteth. Nineveh was the metropolis, Babylon ruled by prefects. One of whom, viz. Merodach-Baladan, rebelling against Esarhaddon, King of Nineveh, translated the whole kingdom to the Babylonians, using the help and counsel of the Chaldeans, famous for their wisdom and authority; which yet was not done without the Lord, who then stirred them up, and now sent them against the Jews, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. In like manner God hath in these last times raised up the Turks, "that bitter and hasty nation," bitter and bloody, hasty and headlong, *νηδεν αναβαλλομενην*, pursuing their victories and subduing in a short time many nations and kingdoms to their empire. Hence the Jews are in the former verse called upon to view among the heathen what havoc the Chaldeans had made; that is, should shortly make by overrunning Syria, the greater part of all Asia, and some part also of Africa. In the greatness of the Turkish empire is swallowed up at this day both the name and empire of the Saracens, the most glorious empire of the Greeks, the renowned kingdoms of Macedonia, Peloponnesus, Epirus, Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia, Armenia, Cyprus, Syria, Egypt, Judaea, Tunis, Algiers, Media, Chaldea, with a great part of Hungary; as also of the Persian kingdom, and all the Churches and places so much spoken of in Scripture (the Roman only excepted, which yet he daily threateneth), and, in brief, so much in Christendom, as far exceedeth that which is thereof at this day left. In fine, no part of the world is left untouched by the Ottoman monarchy but America only; not more happy in her rich mines than in that she is so far from so great and dangerous an enemy. The King of Spain, of all other princes, Mahometan or Christian, that border upon the Turk, is best able to wage war with him. How far and with what bitterness and haste he hath carried on his Catholic monarchy is better known than that it need here to be related. Queen Elizabeth put a stop to him. Captain Drake and his soldiers, when they took Saint Domingo, A.D. 1585 (where his arms were to be seen in the townhall with this inscription, *Non sufficit orbis* The world is not enough), derided his avarice and ambition; but the poor Indies groan heavily under his cruelty: and Grynaeus commenting upon these words, "that bitter and hasty nation," *Tribuuntur illis duo*, saith he, Two things are here attributed to the Chaldees' bitterness and swiftness in undertaking and despatching conquests: *quibus dotibus Iberos nostra aetate praeditos, proh*



*dolor, experimur*, this by woeful experience we find today too much verified of the Spaniards.

Ver. 7. **They are terrible and dreadful**] Or horrible, such as were those giants called Emims, #De 2:10,11 Ge 14:5, and far more formidable than that disputant at Paris, who would needs be styled *horribilis Sophista*, the horrible Sophister, *non minorem eam appellationem ratus* (saith Vires) *quam Africani aut Asiatici*, taking it for as great an honour as to be a conqueror.

**Their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves**] *i.e.* They shall do as they list; their lust shall be their law, *Pellitur e medio sapientia, vi geritur res*. See #Ps 12:4,5 Ex 5:2. These Chaldeans will be their own carvers; ministering law according to their own pleasures. The honour also and dignity of this nation (now base and obscure) shall grow up and appear. *Ipsa sibi iudicabit, et decretum suum exequetur: vel ex decreto sue exequetur*. So Symmachus.

Ver. 8. **Their horses also are swifter than the leopards**] Or panthers, famous for their swiftness; whence the proverb, *Panthera velocior* (see Plin. i. 10, viii. 17). The horse is so swift in service that the Persians (as Pausanias hath it) dedicated him to their god, the Sun; as the swiftest creature to the swiftest god, *ὡσπερ το ταχιστον το ταχυτατω θεων*. See #Job 41:20 Pr 21:31.

**And are more fierce than the evening wolves**] Heb. More sharp-set, after that they have been held hunger bitten and empty all the day long. See Virg. Aeneid. ix. 59, &c.; Oppian. i. 3. *Homo homini lupus*, One man (left to himself) is a wolf, nay, a devil to another. The metaphor is here taken from sharpest swords, which quickly cut.

**And their horsemen shall spread themselves**] With incredible swiftness, which in war is most necessary and useful, as Julius Caesar experienced, and we in our late commotions.

**And their horsemen shall come from far**] The Jews were secure of the Chaldeans, as being far remote; but that shall be no hindrance.

**They shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat]** *In singulis verbis pondus est*, saith Drusius, here each word hath its weight; for he that hasteth on his way is said to fly, and the eagle is swifter of flight than any bird, and especially when she hasteth to eat, **#Job 9:26**. Of the eagle's swiftness why and whence, see Ambrose, Hexam. l. i. c. 14.

Ver. 9. **They shall come all for violence]** That by force and violence they may carry all before them. *Fit via vi, Cedit viribus aequum*. They are set upon it, and will have it so.

**Their faces shall sup up as the east wind]** That *ventus urens et exsiccans*, they shall blast all they look upon; Euroclydon-like, they shall overturn all, **#Ac 27:14**. *Navigantium pestem*, the mariner's misery, Pliny calleth this wind, for the hurt it doeth by sea. Some read it, their faces shall look towards the east, viz. towards Babylon, whither they carry the booty they get.

**And they shall gather the captivity as the sand]** So many shall be their captives, and so little accounted for as the dust or sand they tread upon. Thus the Turks carry out of Hungary and other Christian countries near unto them innumerable booties and captives, fifteen thousand at a time. And so the Spaniards, when they had taken the island Hispaniola, in the Indies, within a few months they rid it clean of the inhabitants and natives, while they gathered unto themselves captives and slaves.

Ver. 10. **And they shall scoff at the kings]** Heb. He shall scoff, *i.e.* Nebuchadnezzar shall, and that not once only, but often; shall make a practice of it, as the Hebrew word signifieth. *Hithpael notat assiduam illusionem*. Thus Adonibezek dealt by the kings he took, the Philistines by Saul, **#1Sa 31:8-10**, Nebuchadnezzar by Zedekiah, **#Jer 25 Jer 29 2Ki 25**; as also by the kings of Egypt, Tyre, Arabia, and others whom he had taken, and used them, haply, as Tamerlane did Bajazet, or those other captive kings whom he caused as horses to draw his chariot. How much better Evilmerodach, who (mindful of the instability of all human affairs) lifted up the head and spoke to the heart of his prisoner, Jehoiachin, King of Judah, **#Jer 52:31**; Cyrus, who honoured his captive Croesus, and made him of his council (neither was he less enriched by the good counsel Croesus gave him, than by all the wealth he had from him); our Edward III,

who having the King of Scotland and the French king his prisoners here in England both together at one time, gave them stately entertainment, and made them princely pastime, by holding royal jousts in Smithfield for their delight!

**And the princes shall be a scorn unto them]** Through the just judgment of God, "who scorneth the scorners," #Pr 3:34, that is, saith Rabbi Levi, *facit ut aliis sint ludibrio*, he maketh others mock them in their misery who in prosperity scoffed at those that were better than they. "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong," &c., #Isa 28:22.

**They shall deride every stronghold]** As that which cannot long hold out against their assault. How should they, when God breaketh the bars and setteth open the gates to them? #Am 1:5 9:3 Pr 21:30.

**For they shall heap dust, and take it]** *i.e.* By casting up mounts and ramparts, take it with as much ease as if they were in sport. The Turks have their *Asapi*, or common soldiers, of whom they make no great reckoning, but to blunt the swords of their enemies and to fill up ditches with their dead bodies, that they may the better come at the town or fort which they would take.

Ver. 11. **Then shall his mind change]** For the worse, *in peius proficiet*; his good and his blood shall rise together, as the proverb hath it; he shall be puffed up with his victories.

“*Luxuriant animi rebus plerunque secundis.*”

Pride compasseth prosperous persons as a chain, #Ps 73:5,6 Job 15:25-27; their hearts are lifted up with their successes, as a boat that riseth with the rising of the water. Evagrius noteth it for a special commendation of Mauricius the emperor, that notwithstanding his great prosperity he retained his ancient piety.

**And he shall pass over]** Or transgress all the bounds of modesty. Pride was anciently portrayed with three crowns on her head. Upon the first was written *Transcendo*, upon the second *Non obedio*, upon the third *Perturbo*. David calleth wicked men *effractores*, breachmakers.

**And offend, imputing this his power to his god]** Bel, or Jupiter Belus. This was a wickedness with a witness; thus to transfer the glory of victory due to God alone upon an idol. When Nebuchadnezzar offended in this sort God turned him a grazing till he had learned better, **#Da 4:37**. For, be the gods of the heathen good fellows, saith one; the true God is a jealous God, and will not share his glory with another, **#Isa 42:8**.

Ver. 12. **Art not thou from everlasting, O Lord my God]** Art thou not Jehovah the unchangeable, and shall we, poor sons of Jacob, be utterly consumed by these Chaldees? **#Mal 3:6**. Art not thou my God, my *Iudex et Vindex*, who hast hitherto judged and revenged my cause? and wilt thou now abandon me to the fury of such an enemy? Art not thou mine Holy One, whom I have hitherto sanctified in mine heart and life, **#Isa 5:16**, and whom I have avouched for mine, **#De 26:17**, devoting myself wholly to thy fear and service? Art thou not all this, and more than this, saith the prophet, in the name and behalf of the Church here? Well, then,

**We shall not die]** I am confident, and dare be bold to say it. Lo, here the triumph of faith and the top gallant of it, "We shall not die" (saith she), abruptly, but sweetly, that is sure enough. She drinks to the disconsolate soul in a cup of Nepenthes, and saith, Courage, my heart! Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God. If he be everlasting, so shalt thou; if he be thy God, and thine Holy One, thine in an inviolable covenant, in a league defensive and offensive, shalt thou die? *Lo tamuth*, Thou shalt not die (so some say this text was anciently read), *Lo Namuth*, We will not die. So the Church promiseth herself upon the former promises; and such an answer she receiveth in her own heart to her former prayers. And whereas it might be objected that they were likely to be little better than dead in the Babylonish captivity (for *Morris habet vices quae trahitur vita gemitibus*, an afflicted life is a lifeless life), the prophet answereth:

**O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment]** *i.e.* The Chaldeans (our oppressors), for punishment, for destruction, to burn thy rod, when thou hast therewith whipped thy children. See **#Ex 9:16**.

**And, O mighty God (Heb. O rock), thou hast established them for correction]** Heb. Thou hast founded them, *sc.* thy people Israel; thou hast thereunto appointed them, #1Th 3:3, thou hast both founded and fitted them for thy fatherly chastisements, who are therefore chastened of the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world. See here the different kinds and ends of good and bad men's sufferings. It hath been noted before that Almighty God, as he is *Piorum rupes*, a rock of refuge to the truly religious, so he is *Reorum scopulus*, a rock of revenge to dash in pieces the impenitent; as Valerius. Maximus saith of Lucius Cassius's tribunal. Ver. 13. **Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil]** *sc.* With patience, and without punishing it. This I am right sure of; and therefore cannot but conclude that thou wilt take an order with our oppressors, thou wilt one day pay them home, for the new and the old, though for a time they ruffle and revel in our ruins. God, as he is *ολοφθαλμος*, All-eye, neither can we be at any time from under his view; so *εχει θεος εκδικον ομμα*, he hath a holy eye that cannot behold evil and bear with it. Hence that of Joshua to the people, #Jos 24:19, "Ye cannot serve the Lord," *sc.* unless ye first throw all your lusts out of service: "for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." Now, therefore, if *Cave, spectat Cato*, was such a forcible watchword among the Romans, and a retentive from evil; Take heed, Cato sees you, and will punish you; how much more should this prevail with Christians, *Cave, videt Dominus*, Take heed, the Lord beholdeth!

“ *Ne pecces, Deus ipse videt, bonus Angelus astat.*”

Surely, as they were wont to say at Rome concerning cowards, that they had nothing Roman in them; so may it be said of such as stand not in awe of God's pure eyes and dreadful presence, that they have nothing Christian in them, whatever they pretend; since it is every godly man's care and comfort to be in the fear of the Lord all the day, to walk evermore in the sense of his presence and light of his countenance.

**And canst not look on iniquity]** Heb. And to look on iniquity thou canst not do it. Lo, this is one of those things that God cannot do; as

he cannot lie, he cannot die, he cannot deny himself; so here, he cannot look on iniquity, *sc.* with approbation or delight. He cannot but hate it; and (as the next thing to hatred is revenge) he cannot but punish it, such is the holiness of his nature, #Ps 5:4-6. He hateth sin naturally, as we hate poison for itself; and therefore let it be in a toad or in a prince's cabin, we hate it still. Nevertheless, it must be remembered for our comfort, that, like as we hate poison in a toad, but pity it in a man, because in the one it is their nature, in the other their disease; so sin maketh wicked men the object of God's hatred, but the saints of his pity; and accordingly, he chastiseth the one, but plagueth the other.

**Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously]** And yet, such is thy tolerance, seemest to take no notice of their trespasses and treacheries; which I am sure thou hatest with a perfect hatred. Here then the prophet, *disceptat potius secum, quam cum ipso Deo*, saith Calvin, contesteth rather with himself than with God about the ordering of things here below. He doth not question the Divine providence, because good men suffer, bad men prosper, as Aristotle did. He doth not say with Pompey, when discomfited by Caesar, that there was a mist, at least, over the eye of providence; so blaming the sun because of the soreness of his own belear eyes. He doth not impatiently cry out with Brutus, defeated, *ω τλημων αρετη*, O wretched virtue, or, O hard fortune. But he modestly expostulated with the Lord about his proceedings, having before justified him; and now dareth not reprehend what he cannot yet so fully comprehend; but, putting his mouth in the dust, concludeth with David, after some conflict with his own doubtings, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness" (*non ad exitium, sed ad exercitium*, not for destruction but for discipline, and that thou mightest be true to my soul) "hast afflicted me," #Ps 119:75.

**And holdest thy tongue]** And so, by silence, seemest to consent (as the civilian's rule is *qui tacet, consentire videtur*), but thou seemest so only, #Ps 50:21 Or, art thou deaf? Not so neither, #Ps 50:3.

**When the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he]** *i.e.* The Chaldees destroy the Jews, which were some of them

better than they; and the rest were therefore the worse, because they ought to have been better. The truth is, none are so bad as they that either have been good and are not; or that might have been better, but would not.

Ver. 14. **And makest men as the fishes of the sea]** That are easily drawn out with hook or net. So doth Nebuchadnezzar, with little ado, bring whole nations under his power and pleasure. Here, therefore, saith Drusius, Nebuchadnezzar is the fisher, the world is the sea, men are the fishes, the armies and arts of the Chaldees are called the net, drag, hook, to the which Nebuchadnezzar ascribed his victories, and not to God. Whereas he should have written upon them, as the ancients did upon their greatest exploits, Θεος, Θεος, and have said, as Titus did, when some cried him up for his sacking the city of Jerusalem; I only lent mine hand to God, who did the work by me (Pausan.).

**As the creeping things]** Or, the lesser fishes; for in the sea also are creeping things innumerable, #Ps 104:25 Le 11:46.

**That have no ruler over them]** To right and revenge them; and are therefore devoured, the lesser by the greater, without remedy. And what will men imagine, but that thy people have no ruler over them, no God to take care of their comfort, or to protect them from their enemies? How will they conclude them to be in as bad condition as those of Brazil, who are said to be *Sine rege, sine lege, sine fide, &c.* Or, the old Nomades, *sub regno Cyclopico?*

Ver. 15. **They take up all of them with the angle]** No less than all will serve their turns or satisfy their ambition; as we read of Alexander, who wept that there was but one world for him to conquer; Julius Caesar, who would be *aut Caesar, aut nullus;* either Caesar or nothing, this Nebuchadnezzar in the text, fitly compared to a greedy fisherman, who could wish to enclose and catch all the fishes in the river. Covetousness is boundless; and ambition rideth without reins. The curse of unsatisfiability, the disease of a spiritual dropsy, is upon all carnal hearts; so that though one man should engross a monopoly of all the wealth in the world, and heap up his hoards and his honours to the stars, yet would his heart be as hungry after more as if he had nothing.

**Therefore they rejoice and are glad]** This is worse than all the rest, that they please and applaud themselves in their wickedness, that they hug and stroke themselves on the head, as Doeg did, **#Ps 52:2**, and those Sodomites, **#Isa 3:9**. This shows that men are arrived at that dead and dedolent disposition spoken of **#Eph 4:19**, and are even straddling over hell's mouth, which gapeth for them.

Ver. 16. **Therefore they sacrifice to their net]** Thus wicked men grow worse and worse; their sin is infinite; what marvel, then, if their punishment be also infinite in hell? To all other their iniquities these Chaldeans add this of abominable idolatry, they sacrifice to themselves, as Sejanus did, *Seianus sibi sacrificabat* (Dio), to their net, drag, &c., that is, to their weapons, as Ajax called his sword his god; and thanked it for all his brave achievements. And as Mezentius (another atheist) is brought in, saying;

“ *Dextra mlhi Deus, et telum quod missile libro.*”

So Sesostris, King of Egypt (in Samson's days), would needs be called *κοσμοκρατωρ*, lord of the whole world; and when he had conquered any country he caused these words to be engraven there upon marble pillars, This country I gained by mine own strength (*τοις ωμοισιν εμοισιν εκτησαμην*. Herod. l. 2). So Antiochus (that little antichrist) is said to worship his god Mauzzim, that is, his forces and armies, **#Da 11:38**. It was Nebuchadnezzar that was here pointed at; and how he deified himself and his own doings, see **#Isa 10:13 Da 4:26**.

**And burn incense to their drags]** While they ascribe to the instrument that which is due to God alone, the chief agent. Hold out, net, said they; well done, drag, &c. *Hoc ego primus vidi*, said Zabarell, *Hoc ego feci*, saith another. But what saith Luther? By men's boasting in this sort, *Haec ego feci, haec ego feci*, they become nothing better than mere *faeces*, dregs and lees.

**Because by them their portion is fat]** "By them," that is, by their net and drag, they think that their condition is well mended, and their meat is fat, *opimus et optimus*, abundant and good. God (the giver of all this) is not in all their thoughts; but as the moon, the



fuller it is of light the further it gets from the sun, the fountain of her light, so deal men with God.

Ver. 17. **Shall they therefore empty their net]** That they may fill it again anew, and so draw to themselves, as to a pond or pool, the wealth and power of the whole east? *Interrogatio precatiois speciem habet*, saith Gualther. This question is an effectual prayer; and it is as if the prophet should thus say, If, as hitherto, thou go on to wink at their wickedness, O God, will they not grow more audacious every day, and mischievous to mankind? Arise, therefore, O Lord of recompences, to the help of thy people. Set up and show thyself above the heathen, that they may know themselves to be but men.

**And not spare continually to slay the nations]** *q.d.* This cannot hold long; and that it may not, is mine earnest suit and supplication. Lord, when thou makest inquisition for blood, remember their blood guiltiness, and forget not the cry of the humble, **#Ps 9:12**. These cruel Chaldeans do not only subjugate, but slay, not a few, but whole nations and that continually, and that without mercy. Is it not high time for thee to set to thy hand, O preserver of men, &c. Note the prophet's ardency in prayer; and learn of him to get upon the battlements, and look up, to see what comes of it, **#Hab 2:1**. This was also David's practice, **#Ps 5:3**, where he useth the selfsame military word, *atsappeh*; importing that he would be as a spy upon a tower, to see whether he prevailed with God, whether he got the day.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **I will stand upon my watch]** To see what becomes of my prayer, and what will be the issue of my doubts and temptations about God's providence, ruling the affairs of the world. See the note on **#Hab 1:17**. There are spaces between our prayers and God's answers. God hearkens what Habakkuk speaks; and Habakkuk must hearken another while what God speaks. This he had learned from David, **#Ps 85:8**. Prayer is a Christian's angel, seed, dove, messenger; and must be looked after. Who shoots an arrow, or casts a bowl, and takes not notice where it lights? They that observe not the answer of their prayers do as scoffing Pilate, who asked in scorn of Christ what is truth? but stayed not for an answer.

**And set me upon the tower]** Heb. Set me firm and fast (as a champion that will keep his ground) upon the tower or fortress of Divine meditation, upon God's word, which alone hath *virtutem pacativam*, a settling property to compose the soul when distempered, and to lodge a blessed calm, a sabbath of rest in it, far above all philosophical consolations; whereunto when Cicero had ascribed very much, yet he is forced to conclude, that the disease was too hard for the medicine, *Nescio quomodo imbecillior est medicina quam morbus*. And this well appeared both in Socrates, who died doubtingly, and Cato, who desperately slew himself, after he had first read Plato's discourse concerning the immortality of the soul. So foolish a thing it is to fly in distress of mind *ad consolatiunculas creaturulae*, as Luther speaketh; and not to run to the name of the Lord, that strong tower, #Pr 18:10. R. Kimchi reads the text thus, I have set me in a circle, *q.d.* I will not quit till I have an answer, why thou deferrest to punish the wicked.

**And will watch to see what he will say unto me]** Or, in me, viz. by a prophetic spirit, by internal revelation, #2Sa 23:1 Zec 1:9 2:2. Preachers must still hearken what the Lord God saith unto them and in them; speaking as the oracles of God, #1Pe 4:11, and able to say with St Paul, "I have received of the Lord that which also I deliver unto you," #1Co 11:23. For, *ut drachmam auri sine imagine Principis, sic verba Praedicantis sine autoritate Dei, contemnunt homines*, saith Lipsius. Bring Scripture, or else you do but throw forth words without wisdom, and to little purpose, because they come not *Cum privilegio*.

**And what I shall answer, when I am reproved]** Heb. Upon my reproof or arguing. *Increpationis nomine tentationes intelligit*, saith Gualther. Under the name of reproof he understandeth those temptations whereby his faith was assaulted, when he saw bad men prosper, good men suffer. Satan and the weed do usually set upon God's servants with this weapon, to unsettle their faith, and to make them fall from their own steadfastness. "Dost thou still retain thine integrity?" said Job's wife to him. Seest thou not how little good there is to be got by God's service? that all things are in a huddle here below, that they run on wheels, and have no certain course?

Thus the devil and his imps suggest to the godly, and thereby greatly disquiet them; setting their thoughts all on a hurricane. It was the case of David, #Ps 73:2,3, of Jeremiah, #Jer 12:1,5, of Basil, under the heat of the Arian persecution: *An Ecclesias suas prorsus dereliquit Dominus?* saith he; What? hath the Lord cast off all care of his Churches? Is it now the last hour? &c. Of many good people in Salvian's time, for whose satisfaction he was forced to write those eight excellent books, *De Gubernatione Dei*; as likewise Austin (upon a like occasion) did those two-and-twenty elaborate books, *De Civitate Dei*; and as the prophet Habakkuk here doth the following vision which he had for some time waited for, and now receiveth as a gracious answer to his prayer, #Hab 1:2-4, for his own and others' settlement in the doctrine of Divine providence.

Ver. 2. **And the Lord answered me, and said]** Wisdom he had sought of God, who giveth liberally, #Jas 1:5; and wisdom is granted him without hitting him in the teeth with his bold expostulations and contestations about providence. Faithful prayer never miscarrieth, but is sure of an answer, either before, as the prodigal, see #Isa 65:24, or in the act, as #Da 10:12, "I am come for thy words," with an answer thereunto. Or soon after, as here. If it come not all out so soon as we would have it, know that there is water enough in the spring, but the pipes are stopped or broken.

**Write the vision]** That is, the following admonition; write it for the use of all posterity. Note this against those opinionists, that say that the word of God was not written by his command; or that it was written only for the use of the present ages, and of those particular Churches to whom it was directed or declared.

**And make it plain upon tables]** Boxen tables (as the Seventy render it), for on box, for the firmness of the matter, were the ancients wont to write.

**That he may run that readeth it]** That though he be no great clerk, or in never so great haste of business, yet he may read it, being written in great letters and very legible. See #De 27:8 Isa 8:1 30:8 Ga 6:11, "you see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand," the Greek signifieth with what good great text letters I have written (πηλικοις γραμμασι). God hath written for us

the great things of his law, **#Ho 8:12**, and with much perspicuity and plainness in things needful to be known: he hath written them, as it were, with the beams of the sun; that none may plead difficulty or obscurity; see **#Ps 19:9 119:105 Pr 6:23 2Pe 1:19**. Of the Scripture it may be said *et latet et lucet*; both hidden and clear, the knowledge thereof doth even bow down to us as trees do that are laden with fruits, so that a child may gather them.

Ver. 3. **For the vision is yet for an appointed time]** This he is commanded to write, that God's people may learn to wait. He that believeth maketh not haste, he can both wait (as knowing that many of God's promises bear a long date) and also wait, go without the good he desireth; being well content that God is glorified, though himself be not gratified. And this is the work of effectual faith, which is herein like unto crystal, of which it is reported that the very touching of it quickens other stones, and puts a lustre and loveliness upon them.

**But at the end it shall speak]** *Effabitur*; It shall speak confidently, boldly, and freely, to the great comfort of those that antedate not God's promises, but patiently abide the accomplishment thereof. If any ask when this shall be? it is answered, In the end, that is, in God's good time. Shall he lose his right because he hath it not by the day set down in our calendar? Possibly the calendar of heaven hath a postdate to ours. Sure it is, that as God seldom comes at our time; so he never fails at his own. God's expectants shall shortly clap their hands for joy; and cry out with that holy martyr, He is come, Austin, he is come, he is come (Mr Glover. Act. and Mon.).

**And not lie]** That is, not disappoint; as the earth is said to lie when it yields not her expected increase. God is faithful, and cannot lie. Christ hath a rainbow on his head, **#Re 10:1**, to show that he is faithful and constant in his promises, and that tempests which blow over the sky shall be cleared. He hath hitherto kept promise with nights and days, that the one shall succeed the other, **#Jer 33:20,25**, and shall he break with his people? How then should he be Amen, the faithful and true witness? **#Re 3:14**. Every man is a liar either by imposture, and so in purpose, or by impotence, and so in the event deceiving those that rely upon him, **#Ps 62:9**. But God is "a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he," **#De 32:4**.

**Though it tarry wait for it]** This is the duty, wait; and because it is a very difficult duty (the Hebrews found it easier to bear evil than to wait for the promised good, #Heb 10:36), therefore is the promise here not delivered only, but doubled and trebled. It shall speak, it will come, it will surely come; nay, doubled again for more surety; It shall not lie, it will not tarry. It is as if God had said, Do but wait, and you shall be delivered, you shall be delivered, you shall be delivered, you shall, you shall. Oh the rhetoric of God! and oh the certainty of the promises!

**It will not tarry]** *sc.* Beyond the time appointed of God.

“ *In se non tardat, carni tardare videtur.*”

God’s help seems long, because we are short. A short walk is a long journey to feeble knees. But that God tarries not beyond his appointed time, see #Ex 12:40,41; at midnight were the firstborn slain, because then exactly the four hundred and thirty years were up. And #Da 5:30, "In that night was Belshazzar slain"; because then exactly the seventy years were ended.

Ver. 4. **Behold, his soul which is lifted up]** *Ebulat, protuberat*, which swelleth like a bubble, and reacketh through its own weakness; he that by unbelief or carnal security withdraweth from God, and confideth in the creature; {*υποστειλῆται*, #Heb 10:38} seeking to shift and save himself some other way, as he is a proud and presumptuous person, so let him know that,

**His soul is not upright in him]** That is, it is very corrupt and crooked, stark naught; and God’s soul can take no pleasure in him; but he will punish him as a runaway, as one that hath fled from his colours, forsaken his captain, revolted to the enemy, #Heb 10:37,38. *Transfugas ubicunque inventi fuerint, quasi hostes interficere licet*, was the old law of arms. What God will do to such, see #Ps 125:5.

**But the just shall live by his faith]** This is an answer to those that would ask what shall we do till the vision speak? how shall we hold out till it come? till the seventy years of captivity be expired? "The

just shall live by faith," saith he, and shall make a good living of it too; he shall live and be safe by the same faith whereby he is just. He shall feed upon faith, as some read that **#Ps 37:3**. And whereas we find in those Apocryphal additions to Daniel, that Habakkuk brought a mess of pottage to that prophet in the lions' den; as it seems to be but a Jewish fable, so the Jew that invented it, grounding his conceit upon this text, would express thus much, that as pottage (that *succus benignus*, as Keckerman calleth it) preserveth this natural life from perishing, so doth faith's acting upon the promises, and extracting nourishment from the same, maintain life spiritual; and thereby it was that Daniel stopped the mouths of the lions, **#Heb 11:33**. How Habakkuk taketh out his own lesson of living by faith, and not by sense. *Although the flg tree shall not blossom.* {*Hab 3:17*} See here the life of faith, in the fail of outward comforts, so true is that of Solomon, **#Pr 2:7**, "The Lord layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous": when he is in greatest straits, then he hath such quietness, soundness, and presence of mind, as bears him up above all troubles; like as blown bladders do the body aloft all waters. Faith furnisheth him with strongest and most satisfying joys; such as the flames cannot dry up, nor rivers of blood drown; faith, actuated upon the promises, maketh the believer walk above the middle region of the air (as it were) in a continual serenity, as Enoch did; and sealet him a double charter of privative and positive privileges. See it set down **#1Co 3:21-23**. Faith makes him live in the mouth of death, by strengthening him against the horrors of it, **#Ps 23:4 Ro 8:38 Heb 11:31 1Co 15:55-57**, and by showing him heaven beyond it, **#Heb 11:13**, and therein freedom from all evil, fruition of all good.

Ver. 5. **Yea, also because he transgresseth by wine]** Or, How much more because he is a wine bibber, perfidious, proud, neither keepeth at home. These four faults the prophet here layeth to the charge of the Babylonian, and therehence inferreth for the comfort of the distressed captives, that his destruction cannot be far off; and therefore the just should meanwhile live by faith, and bear up under affliction. For if those that believe not the promises, but shift and shark for help and comfort elsewhere, shall smart for their unbelief, as **#Hab 2:4**, where shall those appear that are here described? shall these *bipedum nequissimi*, worst of men, escape by iniquity? Never think it. First, their drunkenness alone would undo them; as it did

Amnon, Elah, Nabal, Belshazzar, Bonosus, &c. Aristotle saith, that double punishments are due to drunkards (Τοις μεθουσι διπλα τα επιτιμια): first for their drunkenness, and then for other sins committed in and by their drunkenness. Nebuchadnezzar (or, as some will have it, Belshazzar) is here called, wine, or (by an ordinary elipsis) a man of wine; not only *Meribibulus*, but a deep and desperate drunkard, a very tundish <sup>{a}</sup> (as Diotimus of Athens was called), a hogshead, as young Cicero. No wonder therefore though he were all the rest that followeth. 1. Perfidious, to those that committed themselves to his trust, or made leagues with him, which he kept no longer than stood with his profit. 2. Proud, or arrogant, **#Pr 21:24**. See **#Da 4:30**, how he spreads his peacock's tail, and prides himself in it: his great wealth tumoured him up with great swelfth.

3. **He keepeth not at home]** *Non habitabit*, his own country will not contain him, but he encloseth all nations in his dragnet, **#Hab 1:15**.

4. **He enlargeth his desire as hell]** Which hath its name (Sheol) in Hebrew, from its unsatiableness, **#Pr 30:15,16**, and in Latin it is called *Inferuus ab inferendo*, say some, from the devil's continual carrying in souls thither, and yet it is not filled.

**And is as death]** Which is the end of all men, **#Ec 7:2**; the way of all flesh, **#1Ki 2:2**; of all the earth, **#Jos 23:14**; the house appointed for all living, the great congregation house, **#Job 30:23**.

**And cannot be satisfied]** Lust is unsatisfiable, and whatsoever it getteth is but as fuel to the fire. Ambition groweth as the crocodile doth, as long as he liveth. It rideth without reins, and there is no ho with it.

**But gathereth unto him all nations, &c.]** All that he could come at; all Asia, and a great part of Africa; and could never have enough, till his mouth was filled with a spade full of mould. Therefore he shall not keep home (so some read the words above in this verse), *Ideo non manebit in habitaculo*. His kingdom shall not long continue, but after a few years be overturned by the Persians: this golden head (as

Daniel calleth the Babylonish monarchy) held not up over 170 years, if we reckon from Merodach Baladan, the first founder, to Belshazzar, slain by Cyrus, who translated the kingdom to the Persians, #Da 5:30,31

{a} A wooden dish or shallow vessel with a tube at the bottom fitting into the bung-hole of a tun or cask, forming a kind of funnel used in brewing. CED

Ver. 6. **Shall not all these take up a parable against him?]** Shall not the Babylonian, who is now a terror, be ere long a scorn? shall he not inherit with ignominy, reproach?

**And a taunting proverb against him]** Heb. An interpretation, and riddles. For example, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his, that is both a proverb (because in many men's mouths) and an interpretation, because it is plain and perspicuous. But that which followeth is a riddle. "That ladeth himself with thick clay!" This nut must be broken up ere the kernel can be come at. See #Jud 7:15.

**Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!]** Heb. Lo, lo. Some render it he, he that multiplieth not for himself but for another, *sc.* for the Medes and Persians, not woe, but he, a note of insulting and upbraiding, answerable to the Latin *Vah, Vah, tunc ille es, &c.* Ah sirrah, are you he that increaseth that which is not yours, &c. Eugo, ευρι θεος τον αλιτρον.

**How long?]** This is the common complaint of the oppressed nations, groaning out their grievances, and longing for deliverance from those troublers of the world. Neither is this *usque quo* in vain; for God is gracious, and may better style himself, than the Great Turk, *Awlem Penawh*, that is, The world's refuge: the poor man's king, as James IV of Scotland was called.

**And to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!]** With gold and silver, that guts and garbage of the earth, fitly called clay, because of the clogging and polluting property, and said to load people as a sumpter horse laden with treasure all day, but at night turned into a stinking stable, with his back full of galls and bruises. He that first called riches *bona*, goods, was mistaken; the Scripture calleth them thorns, snares, thick clay, &c., a great burden to the owner,



according to the proverb, *Magna navis, magna cura*, a great ship is a great care, and the lading oft proves no better than that which Captain Frobisher brought back with him after his voyage to discover the Straits, viz. a great quantity of stones, which he thought to be minerals, from which, when there could be drawn neither gold nor silver, nor any other metal, they were cast forth to repair the highways. This was labour in vain, pressure to no purpose; and no less is theirs that heap up riches without right, #Jer 17:11, or, if by right means, yet set their hearts upon them, #Ps 62:10, still striving (as they say the toad doth) to die with as much earth in their mouths as may be, till at length their never enough be requited with fire enough in the bottom of hell. Neessan the lawyer was wont to say, He that will not venture his body shall never be valiant, he that will not venture his soul never rich. *O curvae in terras animae, et coelestium inanes*. Is it nothing to lose an immortal soul? to purchase an everlasting death? to sink into the bottomless lake under this thick clay?

Ver. 7. **Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee?**] Rend and tear thee as hunting dogs do the beast they pursue. See #Isa 13:14,21 Jer 51:58. The interrogation here used importeth both the certainty of the thing and their security, as if no such thing could possibly befall them. Suddenly, therefore, saith the prophet, shalt thou be surprised and spoiled by the Persians, when thy city Babylon is held impregnable, and boasteth of provision enough laid in for twenty years' siege. Security is the certain usher of destruction, as we see in Benhadad's army, and those Midianites, #Jud 7:12,20-23, and the Amalekites, #1Sa 30:16,17; and Pompey's marching against Caesar; and the French at the battle of Agincourt; so confident they were of a victory, that they sent to our King Henry V, who was then in the field against them, and got the day, to know what ransom he would give.

Ver. 8. **Because thou hast spoiled many nations]** God loves to retaliate (as hath before been often observed), to spoil the spoilers by a remnant of the people, by such as were of no note, and much unlikely to do such exploits. Thus he spoiled these Babylonians by Cyrus and his Medes; the Persians, by Alexander and his Macedonians (whom they so slighted, that Darius, in his proud embassy to him, called him his servant, but himself the king of kings, and cousin of the gods). So the Roman empire was miserably

rent and torn by the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Lombards, people not before heard of, and the Greek empire by Turks, Tartars, Saracens, Scythians, &c., that it might the better appear, *haec non sine numine fieri*, these events happen not without divine intervention, that it was the Lord's own doing, who often suffers his enemies, like Adonijah's guests, to feast and frolic in a jocular security and promise of continued prosperity. But at last, when they are at the height of their joys and hopes, he confounds all their devices, and lays them open to the scorn of the world, and the spoil of the remnant of the people whom they vilified.

**Because of men's blood]** Heb. Bloods, every drop whereof had a tongue to cry to God for vengeance, saying, Give them blood to drink, for they are worthy, Oh let not bloody and deceitful men live out half their days, **#Re 16:6 Ps 55:23**. That soldier can never answer it to God that hath not a good cause, and striketh not rather as a justicer than as a soldier.

**And for the violence of the land]** Heb. Of the earth, though principally of that land of desires, the promised land, and the inhabitants thereof, whom he that touched, touched the apple of God's eye, that little man in the eye (*Ishon*) that may not be meddled with, **#Zec 2:8**.

**Of the city]** Jerusalem, called the city by an excellence, and by a better right than ever Rome was. See **#La 1:1**, and Jeremiah's elegy there over it, when captivated by these Chaldees.

Ver. 9. **Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness]** For there is a good covetousness (which few are guilty of), **#1Co 12:31**, "Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." Covet earnestly the best graces, such as are faith, hope, and charity, these are better than gifts. A shop full of barrels enrich not unless they be full of commodities. Gifts (as to heaven) are but the lumber of a Christian; it is grace makes him rich toward God, and of that he cannot be too covetous. But the covetousness of the Chaldeans here threatened and thundered against was of another nature. It is called an evil covetousness and hath its name in the original of piercing or wounding, as **#Joe 2:8**, and fitly, both in respect of a man's self, **#1Ti 6:10**, and others, **#Pr 1:19 Am 9:1**, and

here. Woe to such, and destruction too, as **#Ho 7:13**. The Lord, to show his just indignation against covetous persons, smiteth his fists at them, as Balak did at Balaam, **#Nu 24:10**. See **#Eze 22:13**, "Behold, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee." Now, lest people should object or conceive that those were but great words, and that the Lord would not do so as he said, or that they should deal well enough with him, therefore it followeth **#Hab 2:14**, "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken, and will do it."

**To his house]** *i.e.* To his family and posterity, which he intends to advance, but indeed undoes them, by leaving them a cursed hoard of ill-gotten goods, wherein they do them a greater displeasure than Joab and Gehazi did in leaving their children the leprosy for a legacy. Job speaketh, **#Job 15:34**, as though the wicked, when they set up their houses by pilling and polling, by getting riches without right, did but make a stack of wood, and then comes a spark of God's wrath, and makes an end of all. As in another place, "Brimstone," saith he, "shall be scattered upon his habitation," **#Job 18:15**, so that if the fire of God's displeasure do but light upon it, &c. Thus Dioclesian, that cruel persecutor, had his house wholly consumed with lightning and a flame of fire that fell from heaven upon it, as Eusebius tells us (*De Vita Constant. lib. 5*). Add hereunto that many times there comes a son that is as good with a fork as his father was with a rake; as great a spend-all as his father was a get-all.

**That he may set his nest on high]** And there feather it at his pleasure, {#Ob 4} and secure his children like as the eagle builds on high, to save her young from the serpent that seeks to destroy them.

**That he may be delivered from the power of evil]** Which he hath cause to fear from others, to whom he hath been so injurious and oppressive. But how will he be hid or freed from the terrors of his own guilty conscience; well he may build cities with Cain, and set up high towers with Phocas, but what said the oracle to him? Though thou set up thy strongholds as high as heaven, yet sin at the

foundation thereof will soon overturn all, and lay it level with the ground.

Ver. 10. **Thou hast consulted shame to thy house, &c.**] Thou hast taken a wrong course both for thy house of the kingdom (so the Persians called the king's palace, #Da 4:27), which shall be blown up; and for thine own private family and posterity; it is not all thy care, pains, plotting, and practising that can preserve it from ignominy and utter ruin. God will turn thy glory into shame, and make thy name to rot and stink as putrified flesh, #Pr 10:7,9, "He that perverteth his ways shall be known." And when such a man is raked up in the dust his evil courses shall be cast as dung in the faces of those whom he leaveth behind him. What fools, then, are extortioners, muckworms, and cormorants, that live miserably and deal unjustly, opening the mouths of all to cry out upon their craftiness, covetousness, and cruelty, and yet think to raise up their houses and advance their names, and adorn their children with glory and estimation?

**By cutting off many people]** A poor glory it was to Sulla to have made such a merciless massacre at Athens (σφαγη ανηλεης), and after that, to have proscribed and slain 4700 citizens of Rome, as he caused it to be publicly recorded, *videlicet ne memoria tam praeclarae rei dilueretur*; saith mine author. So for Julius Caesar to have been the death of a million of men, Mahomet, the Great Turk, of 800,000. So for Stokesly, Bishop of London, to boast upon his deathbed that he had in his time brought to the fire 50 heretics, as he called them; or, for the bloody Spaniards, that they have murdered 50,000,000 of Indians in 42 years, as Acosta the Jesuit testifieth.

**And hast sinned against thy soul]** The worth whereof is incomparable, the loss irreparable, as Christ (who only went to the price of souls) telleth us, #Mt 16:26. It was therefore no ill counsel that Francis Xaverius gave John III, King of Portugal, to meditate every day a quarter of an hour on that Divine sentence, What shall it profit a man to win the world, and lose his soul? Neither was it any evil answer that Maximilian (King of Bohemia, afterwards emperor) gave the Pope, who persuaded him to be a good Catholic with many promises of profits and preferments; the king answered, I thank your Holiness, but my soul's health is dearer to me than all the things in

the world. This pleased not the Pope, who said that it was a Lutheran form of speech; and yet that of Lewis, King of France, about the year 1152, pleased him much worse, who cast his bulls (whereby he required the fruits of vacancies of all cathedral churches of France) into the fire, saying, I had rather the Pope's bulls should roast in the fire than that my soul should fry in hell.

**Ver. 11. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it]** Here are woeful echoes; screech owls of woe cry aloud from the beams of the oppressors' chambers, and make most hideous noises in the ears of their consciences. So that although none other should dare to mute against them, or accuse them of wrong dealing; yet their very houses, built by rapine and blood, shall testify against them; so shall other creatures that groan under their abuses, **#Ro 8:19-22**. They seem all to say unto us those three words, saith Hugo, *Accipe, Redde, Fuge; Accipe beneficium, Redde Officium, Fuge Supplicium* (Lib. 2, de Ar. cap. 3). Receive, Return, Flee, Receive the favour, Return the honour, Flee Punishment. Now, if we hearken not to them, but do the contrary, they shall be one day as so many swift witnesses against us.

**And the beam out of the timber shall answer it]** *Tignum e ligno respondet ei*. An allusion to responders, as in choirs and music; and perhaps the prophet here tacitly taxeth the Babylonian luxury in keeping choristers and musicians for their sinful delight. God, saith he, will fit you with other songsters shortly, that shall twit you by turns with your murders and ravages; for the stone shall cry out of the wall, Woe to him that buildeth a town with bloods! and the beam out of the timber shall answer it, And woe to him that stablisheth a city by iniquity!

**Ver. 12. Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood]** This seemeth to be the senseless creatures, black *Cantus* Song, (as they call it), chanted out against the wrong doer, by God's own appointment, *cui obscura clarent, muta respondent, silentium confitetur*; saith an ancient (Juvonal),

—“*cui servi ut taceant, iumenta loquentur;*”

The very beasts have a verdict to pass upon oppressors; as the dumb ass did upon Balaam: yea, the lifeless creatures shall ring a doleful

knell of woe and alas in their ears, and cry them guilty; as the earth did Cain, and the heaven did Phocas; and as the *tignum e ligno* logs of wood, doth here Nebuchadnezzar. His town of Babylon was built in blood by Semiramis, who slew her husband, so was Rome by Romulus, so was Alexandria, in Egypt, by Alexander, that great manslayer, the founder of populous No, of whose woe read **#Na 3:8,10**. {See Trapp on "Na 3:8"} {See Trapp on "Na 3:10"} And for Alexander himself, he lay unburied thirty days together, neither did his bloody conquest above ground purchase him any title for a habitation underground. The like befell our conqueror William, who laid his foundation here upon fireworks; and was punished in his posterity for his depopulations at New Forest and elsewhere.

**And stablisheth a city by iniquity]** That thinketh so to establish it, but it proveth otherwise. Josephus telleth us that Nebuchadnezzar set three different walls of brick about his Babylon, one within another; but all would not do when once God took it to do. Oppression is a bony sin, **#Am 5:12,13**.

Ver. 13. **Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the fire]** Labour in vain to quench the fire, wherewith Babylon shall be burnt, **#Jer 51:58**. Or have laboured to no purpose in building that city and enlarging that empire, which now God will have down. Is it not evident, that they have lost *oleum et operam*, oil and work, yea, hazarded their own lives, as those do that strive against a flame. What profit hath he that laboreth for the wind, **#Ec 5:16**, much less he that laboreth in the fire, that devouring element, see **#Isa 33:14**. Possibly he may be saved himself, yet so as by fire, but his work shall be burnt, that loss he shall suffer, **#1Co 3:15**. As they that seek after the philosopher's stone labour in the very fire to as little purpose as may be; for they must use so much gold, and spend so much gold, and then perhaps they can turn as much into gold by it as they have spent in making of it. Hence one calls alchemy a multiplying of something by nothing; another an *Omne, Aliquid, Nihil* all things, some things, nothing, another, an art without art, never taught by Moses and Miriam, as some have doted, and delivered, that this was a piece of their Egyptian learning. But it is certain that those holy souls never either learned or taught any such laborious loss of time and money. Demetrius Phalereus complaineth of these alchemists long gone not without indignation,

*quod certis consumptis incertorum gratis, quae se capturos sperabant, non ceperunt, quod vero habebant abiecerint*, that they cast away certainties for uncertainties, that they attained not what they hoped for, but cast away what they had (Athenaeus). Julius Scaliger also, *Fornaculas istas odi*, saith he, *odio plus quam Vatiniano. Sunt enim noctuae ad aucupia crumenarum*. I cannot abide those furnaces; indeed, they are pick purses, &c.; know there is a true alchemy called by some the Spagirick art, being in great use in medicine. This I condemn not, so it be warily and wisely dealt in. But this by the way only. It seemed to some an impossible thing that Babylon should so suddenly be destroyed as was foretold, **#Hab 2:7**. It will be done *certo, cito, penitus*, suddenly, surely, severely, saith the prophet, for the Lord of hosts hath undertaken the doing of it. *Annon ecce a Domino exercituum* (so the Hebrews hath it by an emphatic aposiopesis {a} device)? Is it not, look you, of the Lord of hosts? The people shall labour in the very fire.

**The nations also shall weary themselves for very vanity]** viz. In seeking to save Babylon, which by a Divine decree is to be destroyed without remedy, **#Ps 137:8**. So is Rome, that other Babylon, **#Re 18:2**, *cito itidem casura, si vos essetis viri*, said Petrarch long since (De rein. ut. fort. dial. 118). It would soon be down would you but stand up as men. Neither shall the Jesuits (that *ultimus diaboli crepitus*) be able to uphold it; there is a cold sweat upon all the limbs of antichrist already.

{a} A rhetorical artifice, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed.

(ED)

Ver. 14. **For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, &c.]** He shall make himself a glorious name among the nations of the earth, by executing vengeance upon Babylon, and so pleading the cause of his oppressed people (whom he seemed, during their captivity there, to neglect), that men shall have cause to say, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth," **#Ps 58:11**.

**As the waters cover the sea]** The channel of the sea; that is, plentifully and abundantly; see a like promise **#Isa 11:9**, but to another purpose. That is a famous promise of the coming and

kingdom of Christ; and so some interpreters apply this. Wherein though they seem to be mistaken, considering the context; yet the ancients rightly here hence argued, that Christ would certainly come again to judgment, because many wicked men escape in this world without condign punishment, which then they shall be sure of, **#2Th 1:6,9**. Then all shall be set to rights, though now they may seem less equally carried; and the reason of God's proceedings with men shall be cleared up, which now also we are bound to believe (sometimes secret, but) ever just. At the day of judgment we shall see an excellent harmony in this discord of things; and all obscure passages shall be made as plain to us as if they were written with the most glittering sunbeam upon a wall of crystal. Then shall this sweet promise have its full accomplishment: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," in greatest abundance, and redundancy.

Ver. 15. **Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink]** The Babylonians (among other their flagitious practices afore mentioned) were much addicted to drunkenness, as is recorded by Herodotus, Ctesias, and others. Their land was sick of drink, and would therefore spue them out: themselves were men of wine, **#Hab 2:5** (see the note), and should therefore drink deep of the wine of God's fierce wrath. They drank to their neighbours or companions, not in a way either of courtesy or charity, but purposely to intoxicate them, to make them drunk, that they might either deride them or abuse them to filthy pleasure, or both; they bucked them with drink, and then laid them out to be shunned and scorned, as Noah was by his graceless son. Therefore as he cursed Canaan (though Scaliger excuse him), and it stuck to his posterity for ever, so doth God here denounce a woe to drunkards, and so sets it on, as no creature shall ever be able to take it off.

**That putteth thy bottle to him]** Not thy bowl only, but thy bottle, that he may drink, and be drunk, and spue, and fall, **#Jer 25:27**. This is ordinarily practised by our roaring boys (as they will needs be called by a woeful prolepsis, here for hereafter), in their Cyclopicall, *κυκλοποσιαι*. Either by persuasions or threats the bottle is set to the mouth, and must be emptied ere it come thence. The civil, sober, and temperate man is urged, and, it may be, forced to swallow down long and needless draughts, as a horse doth a drench, by



domineering drunkards, that they may see his nakedness, triumph over him, as laid up, or (as the new term is), satisfied. Their vile courses are here graphically, and in lively colours, described by the Holy Ghost; to set forth the hatefulness thereof, and how woeful will be the issue. There are those who read the words thus, That puttest thine anger to him, thy fervour, and thy fury, viz. if he pledge thee not whole ones, and drink not all the outs, as they call them. Domitius, the father of Nero, slew Liberius, an honest Roman, because he refused to drink so much as he commanded him. Others read it, That puttest thy poison to him; and indeed, *Ebrietas eat blandus daemon, dulce venenum, suave peccatum*. Drunkenness is a fair spoken devil, a pleasant poison, a sweet sin, which he that hath in him hath not himself, and which he that runs into runs not into a single sin, but is wholly turned into sin. How often (saith a grave divine) have I seen vermin sucking the drunkard's blood, as fast as he that of the grape or malt, yet would he not leave his hold or lose his draught? Gualther reads it, *Coniungens fervorem tuum*, Joining thine heat, inflaming thyself, that thou mayest drink him under the board. This was great Alexander's sin and ruin; so it was Mark Antony's (who wrote a book of his abilities to drink down others, *De sua bibacitate librum conseripsit, seu potius evomuit*), and before them both Darius's, as Athenaeus hath left recorded. How much better his successor, Ahasuerus, who made a law at his great feast that every man should drink according to his pleasure, #Es 1:8. So Minos, King of Crete, ordered that his subjects should not drink one to another, εἰς μέθην, unto drunkenness.

“ *Quinetiam Spartae mos est laudabilis ille,  
Ut bibat arbitrio pocula quisque sue.* ”

*Among the old Germans, diem noctemque continuare potando, nulli probrum*, saith Tacitus, It was no disgrace to drink night and day together. It is still the sin of that nation, as Gualther upon this text heavily complaineth; and it is grown to a proverb, the drunken Dutchman. Of them the English, much commended for their sobriety, learned, in the Netherland wars, to drown themselves by immoderate drinking; and by drinking to others' healths, to impair their own; so that in our days came forth the first restraint thereof by severity of laws, saith Camden; who yet, being so great an antiquity,

could not but know that in the year 959 Edgar, king of this land, made an ordinance for putting pins in cups, that none should quaff whole ones.

**And makest him drunk also]** Robbest him of himself, and layest a beast in his room. The same Hebrew word, *Zolel*, signifieth a drunkard and a vile person: filthy venomous creatures breed in those fennish grounds, **#Job 40:21**. Behemoth lieth in them; which Gulielmus Parisiensis applieth to the devil in drunken hearts; whereas in dry places, sober souls, he walketh about seeking rest but findeth none, **#Mt 12:43**. The very heathen, in hatred of this sin, feigned that Cobali (a harmful and pernicious kind of devils) accompanied Bacchus; and that Acratus, or the intemperate devil, was their captain. Seneca calleth it a voluntary madness, another a noonday devil ( *daemon meridianus* ), no more a night walker, as once, **#1Th 5:7**. The Lacedaemonians punished it severely; so do the Turks to this day, pouring ladlefuls of boiling lead down their throats sometimes; and at least thrashing of them on the bare feet, till they are disabled for walking in haste again to their societies of good fellowship. Morat Bassa commanded a pipe to be thrust through the nose of a Turk which was found taking tobacco; and so in derision to be led about Constantinople. Let men shun this shameful sin, and be far from drawing others to it; for have they not sins enough of their own to answer for? Must they needs go to hell in company? *Dives* desired that his brethren and companions in sin might not come to that place of torment, **#Lu 16:28**. This he did not out of any goodwill to them, but because he knew if they were ever damned, he should be double damned.

**That thou mayest look on their nakedness]** Those parts that nature would have covered are called nakedness, *per Antiphrasin*. To look on them with delight is by some held a sin against nature; the ground of their opinion is **#Ge 3:7**. To make men drunk for that purpose is worse. But if for further abuse of their bodies to uncleanness (as Attalus, the Macedonian, dealt by Pausanias, a young courtier, who afterwards slew King Philip, because he would not punish Attalus for so doing), that is worst of all; and hath a woe, woe, woe, hanging at the heels of it, *Pausaniam solutum mero Attalus non suae tantum*

*verum et convivarum libidini, velut scortum vile subiecit, ludibriumque omnium inter aequales reddidit.*

Ver. 16. **Thou art filled with shame for glory]** Or, more with shame than with glory. That is, thou shalt be filled shortly with ignominy for that glory wherein thou presently pridest thyself; thy drunkenness shall redound to thine utter disgrace, as it was to Darius, Alexander, Antoninus, Bonosus, Trajan (a good emperor otherwise, but a drunkard, and a sodomite, as Dio Cassius reporteth him). Yea, Cato, that most severe censurer of other men's manners, to whom it was sometime objected (how deservedly I know not), *quod nocturnis potationibus induigeret*, that by night he would drink soundly. This is a blur to him, if true, and confutes that eulogium given him by Paterculus, that he was *omnibus humanis vitiis immunis*, free from all vices, and as like virtue herself as might be, *Homo virtuti simillimus, et rigidae innocentiae*. In Scripture the drunkard's style begins in lawlessness, proceeds in unprofitableness, ends in misery; and all shut up in that denomination of his pedigree, A son of Belial.

**Drink thou also]** Since thou art so able at it, since thou hast so well deserved that infamous epitaph of a certain drunkard,

*“ Heus, hic situs est Offellius Buratius Bibulus,  
Qui dum vixit, aut bibit aut minxit, abi praeceps.”*

*Drink another while of the cup of shame and sorrow; take thy part of all manner of miseries, #Jer 25:26 Ob 16. "Snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest, shall one day be the portion of thy cup: For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness," #Ps 11:6,7. Yea, he loveth to retaliate, and will therefore make these drunkards drink also; and those that made others drunk that they might look on their nakedness, to lie with their foreskins uncovered to their perpetual reproach. Uncircumcision was a shameful spectacle indeed among that people.*

**The cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned to thee]** *Heb. Turned about, or shall turn itself, quia rerum omnium vicissitudo;* thy turn is now come to take off the dregs of God's cup of calamity, #Jer 25:15, that hath eternity to the bottom.

**And shameful spewing shall be on thy glory]** *Kikalon*, a compound word, the vomit of ignominy; a fit punishment for filthy drunkards, who break their heads, as swine do their bellies, over charge their stomachs, as dogs do their gorges, and then disgorge themselves in a Shameful sort; as Antonius did at Narbon amidst his guests at a feast; and as Eccius, Luther's great adversary, whom he merrily called *Ieccius*, from his casting; as Tiberius was nicknamed *Biberius*.

**Shall be on thy glory]** The Hebrew word for glory properly signifieth weightiness; as the word twice here used for shame signifieth lightness; an elegant opposition, showing that whatsoever the Babylonians gloried in, and held themselves honourable for, should be lightly accounted of, and lie buried in the sheet of shame, as in a dunghill of filthy vomit.

Ver. 17. **For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee]** Here, for the comfort of God's people (which is the main scope of this prophecy), he repeateth the chief causes of Babylon's calamity; viz. her cruelty to Lebanon, that is, to all Judaea (a part being put for the whole). Or else he speaketh of the violence done to the temple, which was built of the cedars of Lebanon; as was likewise the temple of Diana at Ephesus made of cedar wood. The devil loves to be God's ape. This violence in firing the temple and desolating the country shall cover thee all over as a garment doth the body; yea, it shall be as the shirt, made for the murdering of Agamemnon, where the head had no issue out.

**And the spoil of beasts which made them afraid]** Men are here called beasts, as the land, Lebanon; these were spoiled and terrified, these were murdered and massacred by the Chaldeans, who shall therefore be severely punished, and this written, as it were, over their heads, to signify for what they suffer,

**Because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein]** {See Trapp on "Hab 2:8"}

Ver. 18. **What profiteth the graven image]** The Chaldees promised themselves much help against their enemies from their idols; and were ready to say, as that Roman emperor, Antoninus, the

philosopher, did, when he was to meet his enemy, *Non sic deos coluimus, ut ille nos vinceret*: We have not so served the gods as that he should overcome us. The prophet here rejecteth their confidence, and layeth open their folly. See the like #Jer 10:8,14,15 Zec 10:2 Isa 44:16,17, &c. Confer #Jer 51:47,52 Eze 20:30,32.

**That the maker thereof hath graven it]** And can he hope for help from the work of his own hands? can the image give that to others which it hath not for itself? In Henry VIII's time one Mr Cotismore was accused of heresy, for saying that images were but carpenter's chips; and that when men go to offer to them, they did it to show their new gear. The men of Cockram, not pleased with their new rood, quarrelled with the joiner, and refused to pay him; he complained to the mayor of Doncaster, who gave them this counsel: Pay the poor man his money, and go your ways home, and look on it, and if it will not serve for a god, make no more ado, but clap a pair of horns on his head, and so he will make an excellent devil. This the parishioners took well in worth; the poor man had his money, and various laughed well at itt; but so did not the Babylonish priests, saith Mr Fox. Horace brings in Priapus, that ridiculous garden god, saying thus,

“ *Olim truncus cram ficulnus, &c.*”

He thought no otherwise of the images of Jupiter, and the rest; but durst not say so, for fear of the people. So that of him it might be said, as Augustine doth of Seneca, who wrote a book against superstitions, but *colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat, adorabat*, he reproveth them, but yet used them (De Civ. Dei, lib. 6. c. 10).

**The molten image, and a teacher of lies]** *Pictura falsa veritas est*, saith one. It is but a shadow of the person that it representeth. God cannot be pictured or expressed by any image. Images of Christ are not only defects, but also lies, saith the homily against peril of idolatry, set forth in Queen Elizabeth's days. Ireneus reproveth the Gnostics for carrying about the images of Christ, made in Pilate's time, after his own proportion. Lactantius saith that there is no religion where there is an image. Varro had said the same long

before him, as Austin reciteth him. Plutarch saith it is sacrilege to worship by images, and telleth us that Numa forbad the Romans the use of images in temples; neither had they any for the first 170 years together; no more had the Persians, saith Strabo, nor the old Germans, saith Tacitus. The old Britons indeed had their idols, *Portenta diabolica* (so Gildas calleth them), *pene numero Aegyptiaca vincentia*, ugly for shape, and almost as many as the Egyptians for number. These all fell down together, when Christ was first known here (as they say the Egyptian idols did, when Christ with his parents fled thither, for fear of Herod), but antichrist soon set up others in their stead, and taught the people that they were laymen's books. But if they be lying teachers (as here they are called) they must be lying books too; and therefore not to be read by any that would receive the love of the truth, that they may be saved. Bern, in Switzerland, was the first town that, after the Reformation, was purged of images; making a bonfire of them on an Ash Wednesday. The like was done here in England, in King Edward VI's reign, on that very day wherein the victory was gotten at Mussleborough, in Scotland; and now I hope we are rid of them for ever. The Turks will not endure them, no, not upon their coins; because of the second commandment; for they also do so honour piece of paper wherein anything of his is written, and do exceedingly hate Papists for their abominable idolatry; as do likewise the Jews.

**That the maker of his work trusteth therein]** Which he would never do, if not bewitched and bereft of his right mind. To trust in a god of a man's own making is a prodigious error, a stupendous stupidity.

**To make dumb idols]** In the Hebrew there is an elegant alliteration, *Elilim illemim*, speechless, No-gods, that give no answer to their suitors, and

“ *quorum sunt numina nomina tantum.*”

Ver. 19. **Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake]** It is wood still, and yet he saith to it, Awake, Arise, &c., as if he would deny his own reason, and unman himself. When Hezekiah saw that such was the venom of the Israelitish idolatry, that the brazen serpent stung

worse than the fiery, he pulled it down, and in contempt called it Nehushtan, that is, a piece of brass, #2Ki 18:4. Pagnine rendereth it, *aenusum*. Marinus, *aeniculum*, that is, *parum quid aeris*, a little piece of sorry brass (Thes. Ling. Sanct.). The Jews to this day say that as long as they see the preacher direct his speech and prayer to that little wooden crucifix, that standeth in the pulpit by him, to call it his Lord and Saviour, to kneel to it, to embrace it, to kiss it, to weep upon it (as is the fashion of Italy), this is preaching sufficient for them; and persuadeth them more with the very sight of it to hate Christian religion, than any reason that the world can allege to love it. Woe, therefore, to those Popish idolaters, because of offences; destruction to them, that thus say to the wood, Awake, and

**to the dumb stone, Arise]** A prayer, fit to be preferred to God only, {as #Ps 35:23} who giveth not his glory to any other, nor his honour to graven images, #Isa 42:8. He that is the right object of men's prayers must be omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, a God also in covenant with us, &c. Is any wood or stone so? Is it not *inutile lignum*, useless wood, a dead stock? *Eben dumam*, a dumb stone? Our English seems to come of the Hebrew.

**It shall teach]** Dumb, and yet teach? Others read it as a question, *Ipse doceat?* Can it teach? What better lesson can ye learn from it than a lie? as #Hab 2:18. Bid adieu to it, therefore, as King Henry VIII did to the Pope (if he had done so to Popery too, it had been better for him) in his protestation against him. England is no more a babe, to be led and fed with lies—. Surely, except God take away our right wits, not only the Pope's authority shall be driven out for ever, but his name also shortly shall be forgotten in England. We will from henceforth ask counsel of him and his when we wish to be deceived, when we covet to be in error, when we desire to offend God, truth, and honesty.

**Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver]** *q.d.* Come and see, believe your own eyes at least, behold the matter, form, workmanship of this newly made god, and grow wiser. The rood of grace with all its trinkets, the blood of Hales (that notable impostor) was laid open at Paul's Cross by Cromwell, and there viewed and torn in pieces by the people.

**There is no breath at all in the midst of it]** No soul, not so much as that of a beast. *O pulchrum caput, sed cerebrum non inest*, said the ape in the fable, coming once into a carver's shop. The best thing that an image can teach a man is, that itself is dumb and dead; and that the maker thereof cannot give life and breath to it, much less a deity.

Ver. 20. **But the Lord is in his holy temple]** It is not enough to condemn superstitions; but we must know and serve the true God in a true manner. Cicero wished that he could as easily find out the true religion as disprove the false ones. Cambyses destroyed the Egyptian idols, rather in scorn of all religion than hatred of idolatry. Lucian jeered the heathen gods; and yet was an enemy to Christianity. Erasmus was no Papist, nor yet good Protestant. Henry VIII despised the old religion, and yet envied the new. There are many (said he in parliament) that are too busy with their new Mumpsimus: *{a}* and others that dote too much upon their old Mumpsimus. *{b}* Hence it is that the prophet here to those dunghill deities of the heathens, those dead idols, opposeth the living and only true God. Jehovah, saith he, "is in his holy temple"; that Essentiator who hath his being of himself, and gives being to all things else, ζων και πνοην, as St Paul elegantly expresseth it, #Ac 17:25. He is in his holy temple, *sc.* in heaven, by his power and glory, and in his Church on earth, by his grace and goodness. The use of which doctrine followeth.

**Let all the earth keep silence before him]** Heb. *sc.* Or be still, all the earth, &c. *Reverentiae causa silete*, tremble at his judgments, trust in his promises, wait upon him in his ordinances, walk before him in obedience, speak not of him or to him, but as knowing your distance, your infancy. In speaking of God our best eloquence is silence, saith Mr Hooker. In speaking to him, *quanta cum reverentia, quanto timore, quanta humilitate, accedere debet e palude sua procedens et repens villa ranuncula*, saith Bernard: with what reverence and godly fear, with what humility, should a poor small frog, creeping out of his mud, draw near unto this great God, before whom angels appear with greatest self-abasements! What abhorrence then and self-annihilation can be sufficient to accompany our approaches to this great God of heaven? And how should the



enemies of the Church stand in awe, and even quake before him, wriggling into their holes, as worms do when it thundereth, and being all hushed, as sheep are before the wolf, birds before the hawk, all the beasts of the field before the lion when he roareth.

{a} A correct expression taking the place of an incorrect but popular one (*mumpsimus*). *OED*

{b} One who obstinately adheres to old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that they are wrong; an ignorant and bigoted opponent of reform. *OED*

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet]** Habakkuk signifieth a wrestler, that by closing striveth to get the better, as hath been before noted on **#Hab 1:1**. To close with the adversary is the best way to supplant him, or to avoid the blow: so is running into God the way to escape him. The prophet had heard God's speech and was afraid, **#Hab 3:2**. He saw his wrath ready to break forth, and therefore gets in with him by this prayer. He knew that,

“*Flectitur iratus voce rogante Deus*” (Ovid).

God suffereth himself often to be overcome by the prayers of his people; and yieldeth much unto them when most bitterly bent, **#Mt 24:20**; he therefore sets shoulders and sides to work, and wrestles lustily in this chapter. He knew it was a prophet's work to pray as well as preach; and between these two to divide his time. "God forbid" (saith Samuel, who is reckoned the first of prophets, **#Ac 3:24**), "that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: I will also teach you the good and right way," **#1Sa 12:23**. So doth this prophet; he both preferreth a prayer (the word *הִלַּפְתָּ* say some, signifieth such a prayer as is made by a mediator before a judge; we have an advocate with the Father, **#1Jo 2:1**), and dedicated the same to the people, to be used by them in the time of the captivity: which yet they shamefully neglected to do, as Daniel acknowledgeth, **#Da 9:13**; or if they did anything towards it, they merely sought themselves in it, and so lost their labour, **#Zec 7:5**; whereas had they prayed as here is prescribed, confessing their sins, and beseeching God not to deal with them after their deserts, but according to his ancient lovingkindnesses, that never fail, they might have found mercy, **#La 3:22**. The altar of incense stood against the mercy seat;

and, #Re 9:13, the prayers of the saints from the four corners of the earth sound and do great things in the world, make it ring. It was the speech of a learned man; If there be but one sigh come from a gracious heart it fills the ears of God, so that God hears nothing else.

**Upon Shigionoth]** *Vocabulum musicum est, cuius ratio Hebraeis ignota*, saith Buxtorf; it is a musical term, the reason whereof is unknown to the Hebrew doctors to this day. Yet Rabbi Salomon (and with him most interpreters) rendereth it *pro ignorantibus*, for ignorances, or as touching his own and his people's errors; which the prophet here (convinced by God's former answer to his expostulation) confesseth with confusion of face. Ignorance surely is a blushful sin; especially if affected and delighted in (as the Hebrew word seemeth to imply, confer #Pr 5:1 20:1). Private ignorance, though it do somewhat excuse a man (*sc. a tanto* from so much not *a tote*, from everything, #Lu 12:47), yet is it a sin to be confessed and bewailed; for Christ died for the not knowing of the people, #Heb 9:7, ἀγνοῦματα, and destruction is threatened, *pro nonscientia*, or lack of knowledge, #Ho 4:6. But Calvin well observeth here, that the prophet by begging pardon for ignorances, doth not omit his own and the people's more grievous sins; but showeth that men must also be sensible of their lesser lapses, and cry out with David (after whose example this whole song is framed), "Who can understand his errors" (or ignorances, unwitting and inconsiderate sins)? "O cleanse thou me from secret faults," #Ps 19:12.

Ver. 2. **O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid]** *Audivi auditionem tuam*. I have heard (not thy *fume* or thy report, as some render it, unless it be in the prophet Isaiah's sense, #Isa 53:1, but) thy preceding discourse, in answer to my disceptation. I have heard that the Babylonians will come, and that my people must go into captivity. This was no pleasant hearing; for we all naturally shrink in the shoulder when called to carry the cross; but those that do what they should not must look to hear and feel too what they would not.

**And was afraid]** Fear is *constrictio cordis ex sensu mali instantis*, a passion of the soul shrinking in itself from some imminent evil. The wicked hear and jeer: or their fear driveth them from God, as it did guilty Adam. Contrarily, the godly tremble at God's judgments while

they hang in the threatenings; and draw nigh to him with entreaties of peace. In this fear of the Lord is strong confidence, "and his children have a place of refuge," #Pr 14:26.

**O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years]** *i.e.* Preserve alive thy Israel, that work of thine hands, #Isa 45:11, together with thy work of grace in their hearts; keep that spark alive upon the sea of tribulations and temptations. The angels (saith a reverend man) are kept with much less care, charge, and power, than we; because they have no bias, no weights of sin hung upon them, &c. There is not so much of the glory of God (saith another) in all his works of creation and providence as in one gracious action that a Christian performeth.

**in the midst of the years make known]** *sc.* Thy power in perfecting thy glory, and not forsaking the work of thine own hands, #Ps 138:8. It was Luther's usual prayer, Confirm, O God, in us that thou hast wrought; and perfect the work that thou hast begun in us, to thy glory. So be it. So Queen Elizabeth, when prisoner at Woodstock, prayed thus: Look, Lord, upon the wounds of thine hands; and despise not the work of thine hands. Thou hast written me down in thy book of preservation with thine own hand: O read thine own handwriting, and save me, &c. But what meant the Seventy here to translate, In the midst of two beasts: which while Ribera striveth to defend, he tells us a tale of the babe of Bethlehem, born in a stable, and laid in a manger between two beasts, an ox and an ass (εν μεσσω δυο ζωων). It may very well be that the Church here prayeth for God's grace and favour during the time of her captivity.

**In wrath remember mercy]** *In commotione irae:* when thou art most moved against us, and hast as much ado to forbear killing of us as thou hadst to forbear Moses when thou mettest him in the inn, then remember to show mercy, call to mind thy compassions which fail not. "Look then upon us, and be merciful unto us, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name," #Ps 119:132. The wicked are threatened with an evil, an only evil, without any mixture of mercy; this the prophet here deprecate, and beggeth mercy, #Eze 7:5. *Per miserere mei, tollitur ira Dei.* through mercy to me, the wrath of God is born away.

Ver. 3. **God came from Teman]** The prophet alludeth to that of Moses in his swan-like song, **#De 33:2**, and allegeth God's benefits of old, for his own and their present confirmation of faith; without which prayer would be to no purpose; hence effectual prayer is called the "prayer of faith," **#Jas 5:15**. Whatsoever ye ask believing ye shall receive, saith our Saviour, **#Mr 11:24**. "Cast thy burden" (or thy request) "upon the Lord," saith David, **#Ps 55:22**. To help us so to do it is of singular use to consider what God hath done heretofore; for thou hast, thou wilt, is an ordinary medium of Scriptural logic, see **#Ps 85:1-4**. There be six hast's drawing in the next, Turn us again, &c., **#Ps 85:4**; see also **#2Co 1:10**. God's majesty and might when he gave the law in Sinai is here set forth, to show how easily he can, if he please, turn again the captivity of his people, as the streams in the south, **#Ps 126:4**.

**And the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah]** He that is holiness itself (a title far too good for that man of sin, that *Merum Scelus* pure wickedness, the Pope, Philip the Fair of France did him right in writing to him thus, *Sciat tua maxima Fatuitas, &c.*, Be it known to your foolishness, not to your holiness), and that must be sanctified in righteousness, **#Isa 5:16**. Mount Paran was contiguous to the mountains Sinai and Teman, otherwise called Seir for its roughness, **#De 33:2**. Selah. This the Seventy make to be a musical notion, rendering it *Diapsalma*. a pause in music. It seemeth to import an asseveration of a thing so to be, and an admiration thereat. The Jews to this day use it in their prayers for *Legnolam, i.e.* For ever, or Amen. It is probable, that when the singers of the temple came to a Selah (which word is used ninety-two times in Scripture, and only in Psalms and Songs) they made a pause, that the hearers might stay their thoughts awhile upon the preceding matter, worthy of more than ordinary observation. Hence Tremellius and Junius express Selah by the adverbs *Summe, Maxime, Vehementissime, Excellenter*. It was doubtless a singular mercy of God to his people of Israel, that he came from Teman, &c., to speak with them from heaven; and there to give them "right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments," **#Ne 9:13,14**. This when he did,

**His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise]** The law was given in a most majestic manner, {#Ex 19:17-25}

partly to procure reverence to the doctrine of it, partly to set forth the nature and office of it, which is to terrify offenders, and to drive them to Christ; and partly also to show that God hath power and weapons enough to defend those that keep his law, and to punish such as would draw them off from their obedience thereunto. That is a pious meditation of a reverend writer (Dr Hall), if the law were thus given, how shall it be required? If such were the proclamation of God's statutes, what shall the sessions be? I see and tremble at the resemblance.

Ver. 4. **And his brightness was as the light**] The glory of the Lord was as a devouring fire on the top of the mountain, #Ex 24:17; the noonday light, the sun in his strength was nothing to this incomparable brightness, which was as the light, or as the sun, see #Job 31:26 37:20. Hence the heathens called Apollo or the sun Orus (which is the word here used), hence also the Greek *οραω*, to see (οραω).

**He had horns coming out of his hand**] Or, bright beams out of his side, as the sun hath: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place," #Pr 16:3, and every man before him is all window, #Job 34:22; the whole world is to him as a sea of glass, #Re 4:6, a clear transparent body, he shines and sees through it. God's hand or side is said to be horned in the sense that Moses's face was, #Ex 34:30.

**And there was the hiding of his power**] Not the revealing of it, but *velamen, symbolum, integumentum*, the veil, the cover, such as God put over him when he showed Moses his glory. He could see but his back parts, and live; we need see no more that we may live. God is invisible, incomprehensible, and dwelleth in light unapproachable. How little a thing doth man here understand of God, #Job 26:14; the greatest part of that which he knoweth is but the least part of that which he knoweth not. Surely as a weak eye is not able to behold the sun, no, nor the strongest eye without being dazzled; we cannot look upon it *in rota*, in the globe but only *in radiis*, into the rays; so here we cannot see God in his essence, but only in his effects, in his works, and in his Word, where also we have but a show, but a shadow of him, we see but his train in the temple, as Isaiah; the holy angels cover their faces with their wings as with a double scarf

before God's brightness, which would put out their eyes else, #Isa 6:2; see #Ps 104:2 1Ti 6:16.

Ver. 5. **Before him went the pestilence]** *Dever*; the word signifieth such a disease as cometh by a Divine decree, *θηλατον*. So Hippocrates call the pestilence *το θειον*, because sent by God in a spiritual manner, a stroke of his own bare hand as it were. Here it is made one of his *apparitors* or *pursuivants*, sent before him to destroy the Canaanites, as it had done the Egyptians.

**And burning coals went forth at his feet]** Or, the carbuncle burning bile, #De 32:24. The Vulgate translate it the devil; others *Ανθραξ*, a deadly inflammation, whereof good Oecolampadius died, and was lamented by Melancthon. But Luther very uncharitably (the best have their failings) wrote that he believed *Oecolampadium ignitis Satanae telis et hastis confossum, subitanea metre periisse* (Lib. de Missa privat.), that Oecolampadius died suddenly, being stabbed to death with the fiery darts of the devil.

Ver. 6. **He stood, and measured the earth]** Not Joshua, but God, brought his people into the promised land, and divided it among them, #Ps 78:55. Like as also he had divided the whole earth by bounds and borders to the various nations, #Ps 74:17, and doth still appoint men the bounds of their habitations, #Ac 17:26.

**He beheld, and drove asunder the nations]** He did it with his looks, as it were; that is, with very little ado. Let the Lord but arise only and his enemies shall be scattered, let him but frown and they fall before him. If Augustus could frown to death Asinius Pollio, and Queen Elizabeth her chancellor Hatton, what shall we think of God's bended brows?

**And the everlasting mountains were scattered]** *i.e.* Those kingdoms of the Canaanites that were held firm and immoveable as the mountains, yea, riveted as it were upon eternity, see #Nu 13:28,29,33. These were scattered, *dissilierunt*, fell in pieces, and leaped this way and that way, as stones broken with a great hammer. God threshed these mountains, and beat them small, he made the hills as chaff, #Isa 41:15. No worldly height could stand before him. By mountains here some understand kings and princes, as by hills those of inferior rank.

**His ways are everlasting]** Heb. His walks or journeys, that is, his government of the world by his power and wisdom, is perpetual, he never casteth off the care thereof. There are those who refer the word his to the Canaanites, who had of old possessed the land without disturbance (*αυτοχθονες*); but the former sense is the better. Ver. 7. **I saw the tents of Cushan]** King of Mesopotamia, who tyrannized over Israel eight years after Joshua's death; God selling his people to him for nought, and not increasing his wealth by their price, #Ps 44:12 Jud 3:8. But delivering them in the end by that valiant Othniel, who brought the tents of Cushan under affliction or vanity. Some render it *propter iniquitatem*, because of iniquity, and set this sense upon it; It was for sin that God sold his people into the hands of Cushanrathaim, and yet afterwards sent them a Saviour; why then should they now despair of a seasonable return out of captivity, though by their sins they have provoked the Lord to wrath; since if they return unto him and seek his favour, there is yet mercy with the Lord, that he may be feared? Lo, this is the right use of histories: and this is our duty, to make observations to ourselves, as did the prophet here: I saw the tents of Cushan; I considered the thing that hath been, it is the same which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done, &c., #Ec 1:9. *Historiae fidae monitrices dicuntur παρα το ισταναι του ρουυ.*

**And the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble]** *Cortinae vel pelles, &c.* When by the sword of the Lord and of Gideon they were cut off and discomfited, #Jud 7:7.

Ver. 8. **Was the Lord displeased against the rivers?]** As Xerxes, that brutish man, was against the Hellespont, for battering his bridge of boats, beating it and casting a pair of fetters into it? Was God thus angry against Jordan and against the Red Sea? No such matter. If God seem angry at any time against the reasonless or lifeless creatures, it is for a punishment of man's sin. But here his end and purpose was to show that he did ride upon those horses and chariots (the rivers and sea) for the salvation of his people. He did so when time was, and that he will do so again, when time shall serve, this question in the text shows that there is no question to be made of it.

Ver. 9. **Thy bow was made quite naked]** *sc.* Out of the case. He meaneth, thy power was clearly manifested and powerfully exerted

against the nations above mentioned; so that all men might see plainly that thou wert that man of war, **#Ex 15:3**, which shootest thine arrows at a certainty, and never missest thine enemies, thy buttmark, see **#Job 16:12**.

**According to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word]** *i.e.* According to thy promises to thy people, confirmed with oaths, even those sure mercies of David, or assured to David. Some render it, according to the oaths, those props of thy word. His word is sure and sufficient of itself; but, for our better settlement, and as a prop to our faith, he hath bound it with oaths; "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation," **#Heb 6:18**. For now we may say with Solomon, "For thy word's sake," nay, more, for thine oath's sake, "and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this," **#2Sa 7:18,21**. Thy love moved thee to make promise, yea, to give oath; and now thy truth bindeth thee to perform. All thy paths to thy people are mercy and truth, **#Ps 25:10**; not mercy only, but mercy and truth; not by a providence only, but by virtue of a promise ratified with an oath: this is sweet indeed; this deserves a *Selah* to be set to it.

**Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers]** **#Ex 17:6 Ps 78:15,16 De 8:15 Ne 9:15**. This cleaving the hard rock, and setting it abroach, this turning of the flint into a fountain, **#Ps 114:8**, was a work of omnipotence, and is therefore so much celebrated. It maketh much to the miracle that the earth was cleft with rivers; this importeth both the plenty and the perennity thereof; for the rock, that is, the river out of the rock, followed them, **#1Co 10:4**, lest in that dry and barren wilderness they should perish for want of water. The same God also who had given his people *petram aquatilem*, gave them *pluviam escatilem* (as Tertullian phraseth it), manna from heaven, quails in great abundance, and never was prince better served in his greatest pomp. He also defended them from the fiery serpents, and delivered them from a thousand other deaths and dangers; all which mercies are here implied, though one only be instanced; and all to ascertain the saints how much God setteth by them, and what he will yet do for them, as occasion requireth. As he made the world at first, that he might communicate and impart himself to his elect; so for their sakes doth he still preserve and govern it, ordering the world's



disorders by an over ruling power, for his own glory and their eternal good.

Ver. 10. **The mountains saw thee, and they trembled**] *sc.* At the promulgation of the law, #Ex 19:17 Ps 114:4,6, when God came with ten thousand of his saints, #De 33:2; and so terrible was the earthquake, that it wrought an earthquake, even in Moses himself, #Heb 12:21. It is the office of the law to do so; and happy is he who, terrified and thunder struck by the threats thereof, runs to Christ for refuge, as to One who is able to save to the utmost them that come unto God by him, #Heb 9:25. Some take mountains metaphorically, for the mighties of the earth, and read it thus, The mountains saw thee, and they grieved, see #Nu 22:3 Jos 2:9-11.

**The overflowing of the water passed by**] The inundation of Jordan passed into the Dead Sea, the lower part of it, I mean, like as the upper stood, and rose up upon a heap, #Jos 3:13, being bounded and barred up by the almighty power of God.

**The deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high**] *i.e.* *Summo consensu suffragatus est.* It voiced, and voted for God's judgments; helping forward the execution thereof.

Ver. 11. **The sun and moon stood still in their habitation**] *viz.* In the days of Joshua, and upon his prayer, #Jos 10:12,13, whereupon one crieth out, *O admirabilem piarum precum vim ac potentiam quibus etiam coelestia cedunt, &c:* Oh the admirable power of prayer, that worketh wonders in heaven! and oh the heroic faith of Joshua, the trophies whereof he set in the very orbs of heaven.

**At the light of thine arrows they went**] By these shining arrows and glittering spears, some understand that terrible lightning, mixed with that horrible hail, #Jos 10:11 with #Ex 10:23, and then it is *figura plane poetica*, a poetic expression; for the poets call lightning Διος βελος, Jove's arrow. See the like #Ps 18:14. The huge hail stones were God's glittering spears, wherewith he slaughtered his enemies. Others suppose that these things are meant of the arms and weapons of the Israelites, called God's arrows and spears, because used at his command and ordered by him (as the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, #Jud 7:18). This sense Gualther liketh better, as most comfortable to Christian warriors, who fight the Lord's battles.

Ver. 12. **Thou didst march through the land in indignation]** Heb. Thou didst walk in pomp, as a conqueror, through the land, *sc.* of Canaan, in contempt of the opposite forces, treading upon the necks of thine enemies, #**Jos 10:24**.

**Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger]** See #**Am 1:3 Mic 4:13**. God, by the hands of Joshua, did all this. The most of the old inhabitants were destroyed. Some few fled into Africa, and left written upon a pillar for a monument to posterity, We are Phoenicians, that fled from the face of Joshua, the son of Nave.

Ver. 13. **Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people]** *q.d.* Thou wast *Generalissimo* grand general in our expeditions, in the days of the judges, who therefore were so successful. How could they be otherwise, when God came with them into the field? If Queen Elizabeth could take for her motto, *Cui adhaereo, praeest*, He to whom I adhere prevaieth, how much more may Almighty God say as much?

**Even for salvation with thine anointed]** *i.e.* With David, #**1Sa 16:12,13 2Sa 5:3,17 19:22 22:51 Ps 20:7**; a lively type of Christ, that Messiah the prince, the mystery of which promised Saviour the ancient Jewish doctors confessed to be contained in this text. It is not altogether unlikely that the prophet might intend here to point at Jesus Christ, when he saith, for salvation (*Jeshang*, whence Jesus) for thine anointed, or thy Christ. There are those who read the words in the future tense, thus: Thou shalt go forth for the salvation of thy people, *sc.* when Messiah, the great *Sospitator*; preserver cometh: thou shalt wound the head of the wicked, *sc.* of the devil, #**Ro 16:20**. Thou shalt make naked the foundation of his kingdom, unto the neck. *Selah*: thou shalt utterly destroy sin, death, and hell. A remarkable mercy indeed, a mystery of greatest concernment, and most worthy to be considered. Gualther carries the sense this way; and yet addeth, that if any please to refer the words to the history of the Old Testament, they must be understood as those tyrants that persecuted the true Church, and whom God, for Christ's sake, subdued and subverted, together with their kingdoms.

Ver. 14. **Thou didst strike through with his staves, the heads of his villages]** Heb. Thou didst pierce, or bore through, as with an auger, with his staves (a metaphor from shepherds, according to that,

**#Ps 23:4**, "thy rod and thy staff"), or, with his tribes (the Δωδεκαφυλον, **#Ac 26:7**), that entered the land of promise; with these men, or with these weapons, though never so unlikely, thou didst, by the hand of David, wound the hairy scalp of thine enemies, those pagans and persecutors; and much more wilt, by the Son of David, subdue Satan and his complices.

**They came out as a whirlwind to scatter me]** Heb. They tempested, they raised a hurly-burly, being turbulent spirits, as the devil is, to disperse me, as the dust of the mountains is scattered before a whirlwind.

**Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor]** *i.e.* Poor me, they devoured in secret, as if God had been nothing aware of their doings; and this was their exultation, or rejoicing; they took pleasure in their cruelty, and promised themselves impunity.

Ver. 15. **Thou didst walk through the sea, &c.]** *q.d.* Shall they thus prevail by iniquity? and did they carry the ball upon the foot till they had gotten the goal? Hath ever any waxed fierce against God, and prospered? **#Job 9:4**. I think not. Thou that of old didst walk through the Red Sea, didst tread it, or foot it, and that most swiftly, as if thou hadst had thy change of horses.

**Through the heap of great waters]** Which thou laidest on heaps for thy people's sake, so that, instead of being swallowed up, they were preserved thereby. Thou, Lord, I say, hast many times since (when all hope failed) opened a fair way for thy servants to escape out of greatest dangers; and so I trust thou wilt again, when they most stand in need of thine heavenly help. *Cum res est in acie novaculae*, God will be seen of his in the mount.

Ver. 16. **When I heard, my belly trembled, &c.]** Heard what? That speech of thine, **#Hab 3:3**, whereunto the prophet now returneth, after a long digression for the people's support and comfort. Digressions in Divine discourses are not always and absolutely unlawful. God sometimes draweth aside the doctrine, to satisfy some soul which the preacher knows not; and, sparingly used, it quickeneth attention. "O Lord, I have heard thy speech" (touching Israel's captivity, **#Hab 1:6-11**, and after that, the Chaldeans' calamity, **#Hab 2:5-18**), "and was afraid," **#Hab 3:2**. Neither was

this a slight or sudden pang, and soon put over; but such as soaked to the very roots, so that my belly, or my heart in my belly, trembled; see #Pr 20:27.

**My lips quivered]** Through want of natural heat, which in this fright was gone inward to succour the heart; as soldiers upon the approach of an enemy run into the castle.

**At the voice]** At the dreadful denunciations of judgments.

**Rottenness entered into my bones]** *Poetico more ex signis describit*, saith Gualther. The prophet, in manner of a poet, describeth his great fear by the gracious effects and signs thereof in his body.

**That I might rest in the day of trouble]** This was the fruit of his holy fear of God's imminent judgments, and that contrition of spirit that followed thereupon; viz. that both he, and all that took part with him in those pious practices of sensibleness and self-abasement, should have peace with God, and be able to call their souls to rest in the evil day.

**When he cometh up, &c.]** *i.e.* The Chaldean spoiler.

**He will invade them with his troops]** Or, cut them in pieces. And that this was done see #2Ki 25:4-11. and the Book of Lamentations throughout. Howbeit in judgment God remembereth mercy, as the prophet had prayed; for, besides the favour that the Jews found at Babylon by means of Daniel and others, Cyrus, having taken that city, gave commandment that no Jews, or any that spake the Syrian tongue, should be harmed, as Xenophon relateth; and after this he gave them free leave to return home.

Ver. 17. **Although the fig tree shall not blossom]** Here the prophet showeth a well settled and a sedate mind indeed; that he had attained, and, by prayer, waded unto a blessed composedness and sabbath of spirit, such as the cock on the dunghill meddled not with, neither knoweth the worth of; it being the most precious and peerless jewel that ever the heart of man came acquainted with. It

hath been before noted, that the prophet here taketh out his own lesson of living by faith in the fail of outward comforts. Origen's teaching and living were said to be both alike. Habakkuk's were so. Divinity is practical: If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them; as lessons of music must be practised, and a copy not read only, but imitated, so is it here. It is a blushful thing, *quando dicta factis erubescant*, as Tertullian hath it; when men's lives put their words to the blush, when *Sanctiores sunt aures plebis quam corda sacerdotum*, there are more heavenly doctrines in the people's ears than ever were in the preacher's heart, as Hilary hath it; when, as one said of Erasmus's Enchiridion, there is more holiness in an author's book than in his bosom (*Plus sanctimoniae conspicitur in ipso libello, quam in libelli Authore*):

“*Exemplis sane qui docet, ille docet.*”

Aristotle requireth in a teacher that he show himself a pattern of his own rules; and it is a good thing to teach (saith Ignatius), εαν λεγεις ποιης, if thou practise the same that thou teachest. That is an excellent commendation indeed that is given to a late eminent divine among us, that his life was but one continued commentary upon his doctrine, and an exemplary sermon, consisting of living words, or of words translated into works. "The just shall live by faith," saith Habakkuk; and that I do so, it shall well appear by my living upon God when I have nothing else to subsist with; by believing him upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible.

**Although the fig tree, &c.]** *q.d.* Let war come on, and with war famine; as it befell Jerusalem at the last siege in the days of Zedekiah, #2Ki 25:8 Jer 52:6 La 2:11,12, there was no relief left for the people, the enemy had eaten up all, as #Joe 1:4, and made clean work, so that faithless men were woebegone, and ready to run mad for the sight of their eyes, #De 28:24,51, and to devour their own fingers, as Pope Boniface VIII did, when shut up close prisoner in St Angelo and sorely straitened.

Ver. 18. **Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation]** This joy of the Lord was the prophet's strength, and kept his head above all waters of affliction, #Ne 8:10. So it was David's

at the sack of Ziklag, #1Sa 30:6, when Saul at the same time for want of it ran first to the witch, and thence to the sword's point. A good man hath God for his portion; and if any occasion of discontent or trouble befall him he retireth into his counting house, and there seeth himself so well stored with unlosable graces and invaluable privileges that he cannot be greatly moved, #Ps 62:2. His soul in greatest straits can magnify the Lord, and his spirit rejoice in God his Saviour. Disquieted he may be sometimes for a season, till he hath recollected and better bethought himself. We are staggering, saith the apostle, but not wholly sticking, #2Co 4:8, for not the evenest weights but at their first putting into the balance do somewhat sway both parts thereof, not without some show of inequality, which yet after some little motion do settle themselves in a meet poise and posture.

Ver. 19. **The Lord God is my strength]** And hence his joy of faith, and ability to bear up under pressures of afflictions, as a man that is well lined within, and hath abundance of good blood and fresh spirits, can endure to go with less clothes than another.

**And he will make my feet like hinds' feet]** As these do swiftly and suddenly run up to the top of inaccessible rocks, so shall I quickly escape out of trouble and walk upon mine high places again in the holy land; yea, as Jacob, after he had conversed with God at Bethel, lifted up his feet and went lustily on his way to Padanaram, #Ge 29:1, so shall I go lightly on my long journey to heaven; and, having my soul supplied with the oil of spiritual joy, I shall find it made more lithe, nimble, and ready to every good work.

**To the chief musician on my stringed instruments]** This is David-like indeed, as in the whole prayer or song he resembleth that sweet singer of Israel; and the verse hath caused a cloud. Euthymius saith of David, that he was *Primi regis et lingua et cor et calamus*, the tongue, heart, and pen of Almighty God. In the primitive times happy was he held that could repeat *aliquid Davidicmn*, anything of David's doings. Our King Alfred translated the Psalter himself into his own Saxon tongue. Andronicus, the Greek emperor, made it his manual, his *Vade mecum*. It appeareth by the context of this whole chapter that the prophet Habakkuk was well versed in the Psalms, which is a sweet field and rosary of promises, a summary of the Old

Testament, saith Luther; the good soul's soliloquy, saith another, wherein are amulets of comfort more pleasant than the pools of Heshbon, more glorious than the tower of Lebanon, more redolent than the oil of Aaron, more fructifying than the dew of Hermon. Most worthy to be laid up in that Persian casket embroidered with gold and pearl, which Alexander reserved for Homer's Iliad. Our prophet, as he partly imitated, and partly transcribed them in this Canticle, yea, in this verse, *{confer #Ps 18:33,34}* so he concludeth as David many times beginneth, To the chief chanter or music master, or, To him that excelleth in the art of singing and playing on instruments, those holy Levites, whose charge it was, **#1Ch 9:33**, and for whom he doubted not but God would afford and provide new matter of psalmody, by compassing his people about with songs of deliverance. Selah. **#Ps 32:7**.

# Zephaniah

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah]** Which is (by interpretation) God's secretary, or, hidden one, **#Ps 27:5 83:3**. Or, as Jerome and some others will have it, God's watchman, **#Eze 33:7**. A fit name for a prophet.

**The son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, &c.]** These were, if not prophets (as the Jewish doctors make them), yet men famous in the Church ( *Hebraei Prophetarum patres, quotquot nominatim recensentur; ipsos quoque prophetas fuisse dicunt*); as were Alexander and Rufus, though they be but mentioned and no more, **#Mr 15:21**.

**In the days of Josiah]** Who reigned thirty-one years, but, being in his minority, began not to reform religion, much corrupted in the days of his idolatrous father, Amon, till the eighteenth year of his reign, **#2Ki 22:1 23:23**, whether before or after the reformation, "the word of the Lord came unto Zephaniah," interpreters agree not. Jeremiah (his contemporary) began not to prophesy till the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign, **#Jer 1:1,2**, at what time (viz. in his twelfth year) he had begun to reform with a great deal of zeal, **#2Ch 34:3**, but also he met with a great deal of opposition from the princes and people who had been woefully hardened and abituded in their idolatry under Manasseh and Amon, and therefore with much difficulty drawn off. Zephaniah and Jeremiah were singular helps, no doubt, to that peerless king in his zealous undertakings for God. But why he should send to Huldah, the prophetess, rather than to either of them, **#2Ki 22:13**, what other reason can be given but that she dwelt in the college at Jerusalem, and so was next at hand? And why he went up against Pharaoh Necho, and sent not first to any prophet to ask their advice, what can we say but this, that sometimes both grace and wit are asleep in the holiest and wariest breasts? and that the best of God's saints may be sometimes miscarried by their passion, to their cost?

Ver. 2. **I will utterly consume all things from off the land]** *Exordium plane tragicum*. A tragic beginning of a terrible sermon. Hard knots must have hard wedges; hard hearts, heavy menaces;



yea, handfulls of hell fire must be cast into the faces of such, that they may awake out of the snare of the devil, by whom they are held captive at his pleasure, #2Ti 2:26. It is in the Hebrew, gathering I will gather all things, &c. *q. d. g.* I will pack up, I will take mine own, and be gone. *Converram et convasabo omnia*, I will sweep away all by the besom of my wrath, and leave a clean hand behind me, for the sins of those that dwell therein. The doubling of this denunciation, *colligendo colligam*, importeth the certainty, verity, and vehemence thereof.

**Saith the Lord]** *Dictum Iehovae*. You may believe it, therefore; for every word of his is sure, and cannot be broken, #Joh 10:35, may not be slighted or shifted off, #Heb 12:25.

Ver. 3. **I will consume man and beast]** Heb. I will gather {as #Zep 1:2} them, and cast them away as they do the sweepings of the house. See the word used in this sense, #Ps 26:9, "Gather not my soul with sinners," &c. God gathered his people for a better purpose; both while they are alive, #Ps 27:10, and when they die, #Isa 57:1. The righteous is taken away (Heb. gathered) from the evil to come: as a shepherd gathereth his sheep when a storm is coming; or as a master of a family doth his jewels, when his house is on fire. But as for the wicked, they are gathered too, but it is for slaughter, as beasts in a pound, malefactors in a prison; and at the last day the tares shall be gathered and bundled up together for hell's furnace, #Mt 13:41,42.

**I will consume the fowls of the heaven]** Made for man's use, to be to him for food, #Ge 9:2, for health and for delight, as companions of his life; hence it is threatened as a judgment to him to lose them, #Jer 4:25, and here.

**And the fishes of the sea]** Made likewise for man's use to feed him, #Nu 11:5,22 Lu 24:42; hence the Latin *piscis* of *pasco*, to feed, and the Hebrew *Berechah* for a fishpool; the word signifieth a blessing, #Ge 12:2 cf. Ne 2:20. Now the Lord here threateneth destruction to beasts, birds, and fishes, not by the way of hyperbole, as the Rabbis dream; but because in common calamities, in warlike tumults, and when God will destroy a people indeed, the beasts also are killed, the fowls hunted away, the fishpools wasted, &c. Let those that will not believe this look into Illyricum, Thracia,

Macedonia, Greece, and various parts of Turkey, laid utterly desolate and empty both of men and other creatures. Jerome upon this text, and likewise upon **#Hos 4:3**, affirmeth the same of his native country, wasted so with war, *ut praeter coelum et coenum, et crescentes vipres et condensa silvarum, cuncta perierint*, that besides air and earth, and briers and forests, all was destroyed. And that we may not wonder at this severity of God, hear what the same Father saith elsewhere of his ungracious countrymen (Epist. ad Chremat.): *In men patria deus Venter est, et in diem vivitur, et sanctior est ille qui ditior*: In my country their belly is their god, their glory is in their shame, they mind earthly things: and so their end hath been destruction, and utter desolation, as **#Php 3:19**. Gualther's note here is very good; herein we may observe, saith he, the judgment of God and his wonderful providence; that whereas we see in populous places rivers and pools to abound with fish, woods and fields with birds and beasts, though they be continually caught and carried away; yet where there lack men to make use of them, there are few or none to be found. For as they were all made for man, so when men are consumed they also are consumed, as is here threatened. *Non ita temere fieri putemus*. Let us not think this to happend rashly. Let God's hand herein be acknowledged, and his anger appeased by faith in Christ Jesus and repentance from dead works, that our land may be sowed with the seed of men and of beasts.

**And the stumblingblocks of the wicked]** Those Balaam's blocks, those moments and monuments of idolatry, that so much offend God, and cause offence and ruin to those that worship them (as Eucherius interpreteth it), who are here called wicked, with an accent, and by a speciality.

**And I will cut off man from off the land]** Even the better sort of men too, who shall be wrapped up together with the wicked in the common calamity. The good figs as well as the bad are packed to Babylon; but with this difference that God will there set his eyes upon the good for good, **#Jer 24:6**, as the grain is cut down as well as the weeds, but for better purpose.

**Saith the Lord]** Who hath spoken it twice that you may once well observe it, and lay it to heart.

Ver. 4. **I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah]** To whom I have so long stretched out my hand in vain to reclaim them, **#Isa 65:2 Pr 1:25**. If God do but put forth his hand to afflict, as Satan solicited him to do against Job, **#Job 1:11 2:5**, who can abide it? but if he stretch it out as here, woe be to those that must feel the weight of it! His hand is a mighty hand, **#1Pe 5:6**, the same that spans the heavens, and holds the earth as a very little thing, **#Isa 40:15**. "Lord," saith David (who had felt it in part), "who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath." *q.d.* Let a man fear thee never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more who falleth under the stroke of thine heavy hand. Oh keep out of his fingers, who can crush us to death before the moth, **#Job 4:19**.

**And upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem]** Who are therefore worse than others because they should be better; and shall fare the worse for their external privileges wherein they glory.

**And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place]** That which remained since Josiah's reformation, **#2Ki 23:3-5**, saith Diodati, shall a nation be born at once? **#Isa 66:8**.

**And the name of the Chemarims]** Baal's chimney chaplains, they are translated idolatrous priests, **#1Ch 23:5**. But because we find them here mentioned as distinct from the priests, therefore many expositors hold that they were certain ministers of their idolatry different from the priests; such as the monks are among the Papists. The Vulgate rendereth it *Aedituos*, underlings to the other priests: Elias in Tisby, saith they were such as were shut up in cloisters, *Chemarim Atrati* they are called, either from their black garments, or because they were smutched with burning incense, or from the brandmarks they had superstitiously set upon their bodies, or because of their pretended fiery zeal and fervency in their religion, such as are the *Sacrifici Seraphici* among the Papists, who falsely and foolishly call them the lights of the world, *sc.* to light them into utter darkness.

Ver. 5. **And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops]** Called elsewhere the Queen of heaven, the constellations and heavenly bodies: whom they thought to worship so much the more acceptably, if in an open place and on high, in the very sight of the stars. *Observent ista qui hodie Astrologiam iudiciariam profitentur*; saith Gualther, Let those among us observe this who profess judiciary astrology; for these worship the stars no less than did the heathens of old, and do openly bring in heathenism again; while (first) they call the stars by the names of those heathenish deities, that ought to be abolished; and next, they subject to those stars all events of things, yea, man himself as touching all his manners and fortunes, which the Scripture affirmeth to depend upon the eternal providence of God alone. This is intolerable impiety, and they that fall into it, shall not escape the just judgment of God.

**And them that worship and that swear by the Lord (or to the Lord, consecrating themselves as by oath to his service), and that swear by Malcham]** That is, by their king, as the Egyptians did of old, #Ge 42:15. The Spaniards at this day, in the pride of their monarchy, are grown also to swear by the life of their king. There are a sort of mongrel Christians in the East called Melchites, as one would say of the king's religion, because they resolved to do as Melech the king commanded them, though it were to make a mixture of religions, as these in the text would, and as our late moderators, *Sancta Clara* and others, of whom one said well, that they had made a pretty show, had there been no Bible, to tell us, that the jealous and just God hateth and plagueth halting between two, lukewarmness and neutrality in religion, all dough baked duties, speckled birds, ploughing with an ox and an ass, mingled seeds, linseywoolsey garments, #Le 19:19. Upon which text the Douay doctor's note is, here all participation with heretics and schismatics is forbidden. But by Malcham most understand here an idol of the Ammonites, otherwise called Molech, served in Tophet near to Jerusalem, and in the mount of Olives, called therefore the mount of corruption, #2Ki 23:13. Which God could not but see as often as he looked out of the sanctuary. These worshippers of Malcham would not utterly renounce the true God, but they would set up others with him as partners: this would not be endured. Such were of old the

Samaritans among the Jews, the Ebionites among the Christians, the Papists to this day, who swear by God and saints, and pray to God and his saints, and commit themselves to them (together with God) as their tutelars and patrons.

Ver. 6. **And them that are turned back from the Lord]** Not gross idolaters, but yet treacherous backsliders, that fall off from their former forwardness, that turn from the holy commandments, **#2Pe 2:21**, that depart *a post Dominum*, from after the Lord, as the Hebrew here hath it, apostates, those worst of men, that do not only not fulfil after the Lord, as Caleb, but utterly forsake him. A heavier judgment awaiteth such. "God shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity," **#Ps 125:5**.

**And those that have not sought the Lord, nor enquired after him]** Diligently sought him, **#Heb 11:6**, zealously inquired after him, as after a lost jewel, **#Jer 29:13**. God will visit for unzealousness; and curse those that do his work carelessly, cursorily, in a perfunctory, formal, bedulling way.

Ver. 7. **Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God]** When his hand is upon thy back let thy hand be on thy mouth. Chat not against him, murmur not at his menaces, but stand mute before him. He is the Lord God, Three in One, and One in Three: thou art also always in his presence, which thou canst not flee from them, **#Ps 139:7**, therefore see **#Hab 2:20**, {See Trapp on "Hab 2:20"} and the rather because God stands over thee with his judgments.

**For the day of the Lord is at hand]** Wherein he will powerfully declare himself to be a God that cannot lie, and that his wrath is *quo diuturnior eo minacior*, the longer in coming the heavier it lands. This was soon after fulfilled in the death of their good King Josiah, with whom died all the peace and prosperity of that people: and Judea often changed her masters, but not her miseries, till at length she was carried captive to Babylon.

**For the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice]** That is, a bloody slaughter of you, by the cruel Chaldees, who shall sacrifice you, that have so much gloried in the multitude of your sacrifices: and God shall glorify himself as much now in your just destruction as ever he did in your forefathers' commendable devotion.

**He hath bid his guests]** The Babylonians, and (after they have filled themselves) the birds and beasts, as **#Re 19:17,18**, so that ye shall have *sepulturam insepultam*, a graceless burial.

Ver. 8. **And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice]** Or, good cheer; for at their sacrifices they used to feast their friends; and here the Lord is providing dainties for his guests; viz. the flesh of princes, gallants, courtiers, **#Zep 1:9**, merchants, **#Zep 1:11**, who use to eat the fat and drink the sweet, "nourishing their hearts as in a day of slaughter," **#Jas 5:5**; and now also for a day of slaughter, when the beasts shall tear their flesh and the birds bare their bones.

**That I will punish the princes and the king's children]** Who might seem to be safest of any, and farthest off from danger; but God's hand can easily reach them, and shall do with the first, because their faults fly fast abroad upon those two wings of example and scandal. See this threatening fulfilled in Josiah's sons, those degenerate plants, *Heroum filii noxae*. Jehoahaz ambitiously stepped into his father's throne before his elder brother, and was soon after carried down to Egypt, and there slain. Jehoiakim, the elder brother, succeeded him; but rebelling against the King of Babylon, he was carried captive, and dying by the way, was buried with the burial of an ass, being cast out, to be torn by birds and beasts, according to this prophecy, **#Jer 22:19**. Jechoniah came after, and was likewise carried into captivity: but because he hearkened to Jeremiah, persuading him to yield, and to go into voluntary banishment, he had some good days toward his latter end, **#Jer 52:31,32**. Lastly Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, was made king; who as he was worse than the former, so he sped worse. See **#Jer 39:6,7**. *Potentes potenter torquebantur*. The powerful are twisted powerfully.

**And all such as are clothed with strange apparel]** Those gallants, that imitated in their raiment those whom they most inclined to; some the Egyptians, others the Babylonians. A vanity not known in England, they say, till the wars in Holland. And (as *ex malls moribus bonae leges*) then first were great ruffs, with huge wide sets, and cloaks reaching almost to the ankles, no less uncomely than

costly, restrained by proclamation (Camd. Eliz. 215). Now, what so common with our fashion mongers (against whom this is a stinging and a flaming text) than to be clothed with strange apparel, *a la mode de France* especially, and other Popish countries? But what saith one, borrow not (fashions) of the Egyptians; if you do you may get their boils and botches; of the Polonians, lest you get the *plica Polonica* in your hairy scalps; of the French, lest the *lues Gallica* befall you. Oh what enemy of thine hath taught thee so much vanity? said Mr John Fox to his son, returning from his travels, and attired in a loose outlandish fashion. (Hist. of Modern Divin.) Those that affected the Babylonian habit were sent captives to Babylon, **#Eze 23:15**, and those proud dames (whose wardrobe is inventoried, **#Isa 3:16-24**) were a cause that the mighty men fell in battle, **#Isa 3:25,26**. Seneca complaineth, that many in his time were more solicitous of their attire than of their good behaviour; and that they had rather the commonwealth should be troubled than their locks and set looks. And doth not our age abound with such fantastic *Cincinnatuli*?

Ver. 9. **In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold]** *i.e.* Great men's officers, who by an absolute power went into other men's houses, and to whom no doors were shut, saith Mr Diodati. These leap upon the threshold, that is, with great impudence and insolence, they invade and spoil other men's houses, and do what they wish, like so many *lurdaines*, or lord danes: neither dare any question or control them. Lo, such things were done in good Josiah's days without his consent or so much as knowledge; for none might be suffered to come to him with a complaint; always being shut up by those great ones about him, whose houses were by that means filled with violence and deceit, that is, with those ill-gotten goods, got by wrench and wile from the right but unrelieved possessors, through the might and sleight of those unconscionable subordinates.

Ver. 10. **There shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate]** Called also the first gate, **#Zec 14:10**, whereat the Chaldeans entered, and caused a great hubbub, as in such a case is usual.

**And an howling from the second]** Called by the Chaldee paraphrast the bird gate; there was also one called the horse gate, **#Jer 31:40**. Some understand the text, not of any gate, but of the

second part of the city: for there was the upper town and the lower town (whence Jerusalem is of the dual number, *Jerushalajim*), and the tower of David, on the hill of Zion. Others, of the college where Huldah dwelt, #2Ki 22:14, a school of learning, as the Chaldee interpreteth it, and called Mishneh, as you would say, a place of repetition, or of catechizing the younger sort; with whom nothing sticks but what is repeated to them over and over, as the knife goeth over the whetstone. *Shanan et Shauah repetere, sicut in acuendo.* See #De 6:7.

**And a great crashing (or shivering, Heb. shebhor) from the hills]** Gareb and Goath, #Jer 31:39, and the rest that were round about Jerusalem, #Ps 125:2. The prophet's scope is to show that all places shall be full of tumult and outcry upon the approach of the enemy. They, that would not listen to the sweet voice of God, inciting and enticing them to repentance, have now their ears filled with hideous and horrid notes and noises.

Ver. 11. **Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh]** Or, of the mortar, or of the low and hollow place, of the base town, where grain was ground in mortars, before mills were in use. These are here called upon to "turn their laughter to mourning, and their joy into heaviness, to weep and howl for the evils that shall come upon them," #Jas 4:9 5:1, but especially for their sins, the cause of those miseries; for God's judgments upon sinners are feathered from themselves: as a fowl shot with an arrow feathered from her own body.

**For all the merchant people are cut down]** The merchant men were wont to furnish the mortar men, such as dealt in grain, spicery, and the like. These shall be cut down, as being more like Canaanites (a people devoted to destruction) than Israelites, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of their help, and the sword of their excellency, #De 33:29. See #Ho 12:13. {See Trapp on "Ho 12:13"} He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress, see #Am 8:5,6 Mic 6:10-12. Merchandise well managed is of great use to kingdoms and states, for many reasons. 1. For determining the counsels and strength of other nations. 2. For procuring the love and friendship of foreign princes and people. 3. For exchanging of commodities; for *non omnis fert omnia tellus.* not everything is born from all ground. 4. For gaining experience of many and great



matters; this caused Thales, Hippocrates, and Solon to exercise merchandise. 5. It occasioned the building of many famous cities: Massilia for one, as Plutarch writeth. Nevertheless this honourable profession is much abused by those whom Nahum calleth cankerworms, #Na 3:16, for their covetousness, luxury, oppression, bringing in unnecessary wars (that emasculate and dissolve men's spirits), and heretical books that undo their souls; and, lastly, for their carrying out the wealth of their country to strangers, yea, to enemies sometimes. Hence they are justly cut down by God, and are to be ordered by the magistrates according to #Le 19:35,36 De 25:15 Eze 45:9-12.

**All they that bear silver are cut off]** The rich traders, that had *marsupia plena* full purse, and carried money in great burdens, these shall be also cut off or silenced, have nothing to say for themselves why they should not be destroyed with the rest, as those that have been *involuti argento*, as the Vulgate translation hath it here, so wrapped up in their money, and affected to it, as that it hath rather possessed them than they it. *Cor habent in aere non in aethere*, "their heart goeth after their covetousness," #Eze 33:31. Here they are called *portatores argenti*, silver carriers, sumpter horses, laden with thick clay. Silver is that which the basest element yieldeth, the most savage Indians get, servile apprentices work, Midianitish camels carry, miserable muck worms admire, covetous Jews swallow, unthirsty ruffians spend. It is to be wondered (saith one) that treading upon these minerals we cannot condemn them. They lie furthest from heaven; and the best of them are in India, furthest from the Church; and yet how many doth money make to run quick to the devil on an errand, and pays them home for their pains?

Ver. 12. **I will search Jerusalem with candles]** Which yet he needs not do, sith the "darkness hideth not front him, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are to him alike," #Ps 139:12 cf. Job 34:22 Jer 23:24. *Deo obscura lucent, muta respondent, silentium confitetur*; Night will convert itself into noon before God, and silence become a speaking evidence. His eyes also are "a flaming fire," that needs no outward light, but sees by sending out a ray; but when Jerusalem is threatened to be searched with lights, the meaning is, that it shall be set all upon a light fire, and the inhabitants ferreted out of their lurking holes, their princes and

potentates pulled out of privies and sepulchres by the pursuing enemy, as Jerome out of Josephus here affirmeth they once were. Besides that, they shall be brought to a particular and punctual account for their sins; God will be very exact and accurate with them that way; setting all their evil deeds in order before their eyes, #Ps 50:21, and bringing wrath upon them to the utmost, #1Th 2:16. This is fearful, #Ps 130:3, and shall be fulfilled especially at the last day, when wicked men shall give an account of every detail, of all their atheistical thoughts, #Ps 14:1, ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him, #Jude 15, with the whole world flaming about their ears, #2Pe 3:7,10,12 1Co 4:5 2Th 1:8.

**And punish the men that are settled on their lees]** *Coagulati*, curded or thickened, congealed and condensed; that are habituated and hardened in their evil practices; that have got a sward, nay, a hoof upon their hearts; that have brawny breasts and horny heartstrings; that stick stiffly in the mire of their sins, as Moab, #Jer 48:11, and being deeply drowned in the world, are desperately divorced from God, whom they basely fancy to be a God of clouts. one that, however he speak big words, yet will do neither good nor hurt.

**That say in their heart]** As that sapless fellow doth, #Ps 14:1, לבן. Some set their mouths against heaven, and shame not to utter their reasonings and resolutions of this kind. These are *Epicuri de grege porci*; such as was Lucretius, Diagoras, Horace with his

— *credat Iudaeus Apella.*

*Non ego, namque deos didici securum agere aevum.*

*Let the Jews believe a providence; not I, &c., saith that profane poet. But behold here were Jews, yea, and that in good Josiah's days, that said in their hearts (those feculent hearts of theirs, full of dregs and dross),*

***The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil]***

“ *Nec bene pro meritis capitur, nee tangitur ira.*”

Of such practical atheists, that say in their hearts there is no God, and live thereafter, there are great store even among us; of such dust-heaps we may find in every corner. And when men are once arrived at this *Terra del Fuego*, this desperate degree of atheism, what wonder though they run riot in all sinful licentiousness.

Ver. 13. **Therefore their gods shall become a booty]** Their illgotten goods, #Zep 1:9,11 (for a proof of my providence which they blushed not to deny), shall be carried away by the Chaldees, to their unmedicinable sorrow and heartbreak, #Ec 4:1-3.

**And their houses a desolation]** Because built in blood. See #Na 2:11,12.

**They shall also build houses, but not inhabit them, &c.]** *Ex lege mutuatur minas.* That they might the more regard his words, the prophet makes use of the menaces of the law, #De 28:30,39, whereof the prophets were interpreters; applying, as here, the general doctrine thereof to the people of their times. To rebuke or exhort men in good words, in God's own words, is the readiest way to prevail with them; unless they be *Lucifugae scripturarum* (as Tertullian saith of the Marcionites and Valentinians), which yet will take hold of them howsoever, #Zec 1:6.

Ver. 14. **The great day of the Lord is near, it is near]** It is the "day of the Lord," that fatal day appointed by him to ruin the nation; for with him it is all one, whether it be done against a nation or against a man only, #Job 34:29. Next, it is his great day; because therein the great God will set himself to do great matters: how much more at the day of judgment, called also "a great day," #Re 6:17 16:14.

**This great day is near, yea, very near, it hasteth greatly]** It hath wings, and wind under those wings, as #Zec 5:9; it will be upon men ere they are aware; neither will anything more hasten it than their security and fearlessness. Think the same of the last day, which cannot but be at hand, and then the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off, #Ps 37:38.

**Even the voice of the day of the Lord]** Methinks I hear it.

“ *Fallor? an arma sonant? non fallimur, arma sonabant.  
Mars venit, et veniens bellica signa dedit.* ”

*Jerome speaketh thus to himself, whether I eat, or drink, or sleep, methinks I hear that last trump sounding these words in mine ears, Surgite mortui, venite in iudicium, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment. A very necessary meditation.*

**The mighty man shall cry there bitterly]** How much more the *turba imbellis*, the weak and cowardly! they shall take up a loud lamentation, and cry with the breaking of their loins.

**Ver. 15. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress]** By this synathroismos, or heap of words, the prophet would frighten and arouse these dead and indolent sinners, settled upon their lees, so wedded and wedged to their wicked practices that nothing can sunder them but an extraordinary touch from the hand of Heaven. See **#Joe 2:1-3 cf. Am 5:18-20**, {See Trapp on "Am 5:18"} {See Trapp on "Am 5:19"} {See Trapp on "Am 5:20"} and consider what the terror of the Lord's last day will be.

**Ver. 16. A day of the trumpet]** With its horrid *taratantara* and alarm; not of those that shout and praise God, neither with a noise of joy and triumph, as **#Nu 23:21 Ps 67:5 Ezz 3:11,12**; but of those that shout with broken sounds in the day of battle, as **#Am 1:14**, *in classico*, in a war trumpet with a vociferation and horrible howling, such as the Turks to this day make when they storm a city.

**Against the fenced cities, and against the high towers]** Wherein ye trust, but in vain. These high towers were built at the corners of the walls. Hence the Hebrew text here hath it, Against the high corners. Great men and such as bear up the weight of the commonwealth are sometimes called by this name, **#1Sa 14:38**. Draw ye near hither, all ye chief of the people: Heb. All ye corners. See the like **#Zec 10:4 Jud 20:2**. Neither men nor means were ever true to those that trusted them. Our help is in the name of the Lord, that strong tower whereto the righteous run and are safe, **#Pr 18:10**.

**Ver. 17. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men]** The Dutch have a proverb, God puts out the eyes of him whom he intendeth to destroy; *i.e.* he besots and infatuates

them, they shall be *consilii et auxilii inopes: in rebus liquidis aqua haerebit*: they grope for the wall like the blind, they grope as if they had no eyes: they stumble at noon day as in the night; they are in desolate places as dead men, **#Isa 59:10**. This was long before threatened, **#De 28:28,29**.

**Because they have sinned against the Lord]** Sin is the mother of misery. See my Lovetokens.

**And their blood shall be poured out as dust]** Than which nothing is more vile and abject; the enemy shall make no more of spilling their blood than of sprinkling a little dust, *Copiosissime et abiectissime* most richly and lowly. (Turner.)

**And their flesh as dung]** Spread upon the land to manure it. The Hebrew word for flesh here may seem to signify worms' meat. Our bodies are no better, why then do we pamper and pink them up?

Ver. 18. **Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath]** "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold," **#1Pe 1:18**. Money hath drowned many a soul, **#1Ti 6:9**, delivered none. See **#Pr 11:4 Isa 13:17 Eze 7:19**. {See Trapp on "Pr 11:4"} It is righteousness, and not riches, that delivereth from death, **#Pr 10:2**. Money can neither pacify God, nor still the conscience, nor stop the enemy's mouth, but inflame them rather with an unsatisfiable desire of enjoying all, as Rome did the Gauls, and Cyprus the Romans (Sextus Rufus); and as the pearls, usually cast out with the flood, and gathered at the ebb, drew Caesar's affection for the conquest of Britain (Sueton.).

**But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy]** The sins of God's people are not only disobediences, but treacheries, because of the covenant. God is thereby provoked to jealousy, which "is cruel as the grave," or hard as hell; "the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame," **#So 8:6**, the word signifies the consuming flame of God.

**For he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land]** Swept clean by God with the besom of destruction; so that the land was desolate after them, **#Zec 7:14**. Affliction rose not

up the second time, #Na 1:9. See the notes there, and learn to give God the glory of his severity against sin.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together]** *Excutite vos, iterumque excutite*. Fan yourselves, yea, fan yourselves (Tremell.). The precept is doubled, as it is likewise #Nu 3:40 2Co 13:5, to show the necessity of our doing it, as also the utility if well done; and, lastly, our crossness and averseness thereunto, together with God's exceeding great desire that it should be thoroughly done for our greatest good. Grievous things he had threatened in the former chapter; all which to prevent, he here prescribeth them a course of self-examination, and thereupon sound conversion; so true is that of an ancient, *Ideo minatur Deus ut non puniat*, God doth therefore threaten that he may not punish (Isidore). It is as if God should thus say, Behold, thou art in danger of destruction; is it not therefore high time to search, yea, to be serious and exact in the scrutiny? to gather thy dispersed wits together, to summon the sobriety of thy senses before the bar of thy best judgment? to consider and consult what is fit to be done in this case? to have thine eyes in thine head, with Solomon's wise man? #Ec 2:14; yea, to have thine eyes like the windows in Solomon's temple, broad inward, #1Ki 6:4. Men's minds are naturally as ill set as their eyes; they turn neither of them inward. *Lamiae* or witch-like, they are sharp sighted abroad to discern other men's faults; but blind at home to take notice of their own. Nature shows no sin: What is our iniquity or our sin? said those in Jeremiah, when wrath was even breaking out upon them, #Jer 16:10; so #Ho 12:8. Men deal with their souls as some do with their bodies; who, when their beauty is decayed, they desire to hide it from themselves by false glasses, and from others by painting; so their sins, from themselves by false glosses, and from others by excuses. But he that thus hideth his sins cannot prosper, #Pr 28:13, he must not look for Gaius's prosperity, #3Jo 2, but for further hardness of heart, #Pr 28:14, and horror of conscience, #Ps 32:3. For God will not rap up men's bones before they are set, nor lap up their sores before they are searched. Wherefore search you, search you, O nation, &c. Search yourselves to the quick, sift you to the bran, lay your hands upon your hearts, thrust them deep into your bosoms, with Moses, so shall you take

them out again leprous as snow, #Ex 4:6. Commune with your consciences and be still, or, make a pause, #Ps 4:4, lay a peremptory charge upon them to be true to you, and to do their office impartially, in laying open how many transgressions are wrapt up in your sins, #Le 16:21, in bringing them all forth to you, as they in Ezra brought forth the vessels of the sanctuary, by number and by weight, in their circumstances and aggravations, #Ezr 8:34. Why should God say unto thee of thy sins, as once Samuel did to Jesse of his sons, Are these all thy children? Conscience, if not charged to the contrary, and well watched, will either lie to thee, as Gehazi did to his master; or, at least, subtract a part of thy sins, as Ananias and Sapphira did a part of the price. Search, therefore, and follow your work close, that ye may say, with Ephraim, #Jer 31:19, After that I was made known to myself, I repented; and, with David, I examined my ways, and finding all out of order, "I turned my feet to thy testimonies," #Ps 119:59.

**O nation not desired]** As not desirable; having nothing of worth in thee wherefore any should be found of thee, or seek any further after thee. Daniel was a man of desires, #Da 9:23. David a man after God's own heart. Moses fair to God, #Ac 7:20. The saints are the desired ones of all nations, as some read that text, #Hag 2:7, *ut veniant desiderati omnium gentium* (Jun.). The precious sons of Zion comparable (not to silver only, as the word here used importeth, but) to fine gold, #La 4:2. As for the wicked, they are all dross, #Eze 22:18,19, and God doth so little desire them, as that he putteth them away, or maketh them to cease as dross, #Ps 119:119, and commandeth others to do the like by them, #Pr 25:4,5. Some take the words in the active sense, and render them, O nation not desirous; viz. to search thy ways and turn again to me. Thou that hast no mind to be dealing with thyself, or to draw nigh to me, but hadst as lief be knocked on the head as do either: *Gens vacua desiderio*. O nation, void of any good desires. Whereas *tota Christiani hominis vita sanctum desiderium est*, the whole life of a good Christian is one continous desire after God, his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, #Mt 6:33; he followeth after it, #Pr 21:21, as an apprentice followeth his trade, though he be not his craftsman. Some faint desires, luskish longings, short winded wishes, may be found in a wicked man; but they rise not up to the

full height of well knit resolution for God. Like they are to meteors that are carried above the earth, but not united to the element of fire; therefore they fall and return to their first principles; like ice, which melteth in the day and hardeneth again in the night; like the sluggard in his bed, that puts out his arm to rise, and then pulls it in again, see **#Ps 78:34,38**.

Ver. 2. **Before the decree bring forth]** The decree is great bellied, and will shortly bring forth, if not prevented. There is an execution towards; and if course be not timeously taken, ye are like to pay, not the debt only, but charges and damages. Look to it quickly "before the decree," &c. Here are three cautionary "befores," as there are four comfortable "yets" to be read **#Zec 1:17**. God yet offers them mercy, as Alexander did those he warred against, while the lamp burned; and as Tamerlane, while the white flag was hung out. See **#Jer 18:7,8**.

**Before the day pass as the chaff]** Before that day of the Lord that is near, very near, **#Zep 1:14,15**. Pass upon you, and ye become as chaff before the wind, as the dust of the mountains before the whirlwind. O fan you, fan you; for else God will fan you after another fashion; search you, or he will soon search you with candles, **#Zep 1:12**; gather yourselves together, or he will gather your souls with sinners, and your lives with bloody men, **#Ps 26:9**. Would men but judge themselves God would not judge them, **#1Co 11:31**; did they but see their sins to confession they should never see them to their confusion, **#Pr 28:13**, would they but meet God, as Abigail did David, they might disarm his indignation. Saving a little pains in this case doubleth it; and the best that can come of negligence is repentance. It is better that we should try ourselves, than that he should try us in his furnace of temptation, or other affliction. Do it, therefore, "before the day pass as the chaff," or before the chaff or stubble pass in that day, pass before the wind wherewith God shall winnow you, who would not winnow yourselves. The scholar that will not scan his own verses shall find that, his master will scan them to his cost. And the tradesman that will not cast up his books shall have his books to cast up him at length.

**Before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you]** As a mighty torrent of fire, such as you are never able to avoid or abide. Abused



mercy turneth into fury; neither will God suffer his patience to stand still for a sinning stock. Twice in a breath these hypocrites are here told what to trust unto for more surety.

Ver. 3. **Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth]** Here the prophet turneth himself to the better sort; for upon those hypocritical halters aforementioned he had but lost his sweet words; he did but wash a blackamoor. We read not in Scripture of any hypocrite's conversion; and what wonder? for whereas after sin conversion is left as a means to cure all other sinners, what means to recover him who hath converted conversion itself into sin? This made our Saviour say to his disciples concerning the Pharisees, those cankered hypocrites, "Let them alone," #Mt 15:14, and himself weary of wasting words upon them, called to the multitude and said, "hear ye and understand," #Zep 2:10. In like sort this prophet here, "Seek ye the Lord"; for it is past time of day with them to seek him; therefore they shall go with their flocks and their herds to seek the Lord, but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them, #Ho 5:6. Concerning seeking the Lord see. {See Trapp on "Am 5:6"} {See Trapp on "Am 5:8"}

**All ye meek of the earth]** This is the character, the distinctive note of a true Christian; who, as he is sure to be afflicted (affliction and meekness grow both upon the same root in the holy tongue), so by affliction he is meekened and mortified, his flesh is crucified with the affections and lusts; and so he is fitted to seek the Lord, to lie at his feet and say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. These meek and lowly ones (ταπεινοι, Septuag.) are they whom God will teach, #Ps 25:9, beautify, #Ps 149:4, solace, #Isa 29:19 61:1, save: God will save the humble person, #Job 22:29. Now meekness and humility are a pair of twin sisters, never asunder ( *Sorores collectaneae*) sisters nourished at the same breast. See how they go coupled, #Mt 11:29, and the Seventy render this text, all the lowly of the earth, that are as low as the earth in your own eyes and esteem (ταπεινος, *quasi, εδαφεινος, solo aequatus*).

**Which have wrought his judgment]** *i.e.* Have been doing at it, *qui fecistis praecepta etsi non profecistis*, who aim at perfection though ye cannot attain to it, who think upon his commandments to do them, #Ps 103:18, having respect to them all, and wishing well to

the work, #Ps 118:5,6, which God graciously accepteth as a working his judgment, and yet would have you to abound more and more. Wherefore,

**Seek righteousness, seek meekness]** *i.e.* Further measures of holiness and degrees of grace. Let him that is holy be holy still, let him persevere, grow, and advance forward toward the high prize proposed unto him, taking for his motto that of Charles V, *Plus ultra*, further yet, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, #2Co 7:1 1Ti 6:11, "But thou, O man of God" (that is, O godly man, as the life of God is put for a godly life, #Eph 4:18; see #2Ki 4:9), "fly these things" (what things? heterodoxies, #1Ti 6:3-5, and love of money, #1Ti 6:9,10), "and follow after" (Gr. persecute, pursue, *alacriter et acriter*) eagerly and briskly "righteousness," this is the *totum hominis*, whole of man, #Ec 12:13, the *bonum hominis*, good of man, #Mic 7:8, and by way of distribution comprehendeth, as to God, "godliness and faith"; as to men, "love, patience, meekness."

**It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's wrath]** Possibly ye may, probably ye shall be; pardon of sin ye shall be sure of; mitigation also of sorrow, if not prevention; saved ye shall be, or more gently handled, or so inwardly calmed, that ye shall be able to call your souls to rest when others are at their wits' ends. You shall be safe under the cover of God's wings, and in the hollow of his hand; when others, that are without God in the world, shall be as a naked man in a storm, an unarmed man in the field, or as a ship at sea without anchor, subject to dash and split against rocks and quicksands.

Ver. 4. **For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Askelon, &c.]** Here is dainty rhetoric in the original. This prophet was (as Quintilian saith a good orator ought to be) *Vir bonus, dicendi peritus*, a good man, and a master of speech. The Hebrew tongue seemeth to have been in the prime and flourish when Isaiah, Micah, and Zephaniah prophesied, like as the Latin was about Cicero's time. The Philistines are here threatened, for a terror to the impenitent Jews, who should taste of the same whip, and for the comfort of the godly, who should be hid when these their enemies should be utterly destroyed. Gaza was so forsaken, according to this prophecy, that it was thence called Gaza, the desert; Askelon, according to its

name, became *ignis ignominia*, the reproach of the fire that wasted it, and (as a merciless element) laid it desolate. Ashdod (called in the New Testament Azotus, #Ac 8:26) shall also, according to its etymology, be wasted with fire, and her inhabitants driven into a far country as captives at high noon, when the sun, in those hot climates especially, is most parching and scorching; they shall be driven out with all the disadvantage that may be.

**And Ekron shall be rooted out]** Ekron was the place where Beelzebub, the prince of devils had his throne. The poets put it for hell. *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*. Threatened it is therefore here (not without an elegance that cannot be translated) with utter extirpation. The grand devil had nested and nestled himself as near the Holy Land as might be; but he shall not long rest there, the Hebrew child (*παις εβραιος*) will disquiet the great Pan.

Ver. 5. **Woe to the inhabitants of the sea coast]** These were the Philistines; they lay between the Jews and the sea; God having so disposed of it, that his people might not have much commerce with foreign nations, nor learn their manners. Into havens and maritime towns there is usually a conflux of vices, like as there is of waters into the sea: witness Tyre and Sidon, Corinth, Carthage, Capernaum, &c. Hence that proverb, *maritimi mores*; naval customs, and that censure of such people, *littorales duri, horridi, immanes, latrociniiis dediti, omnium denique pessimi*, Those that dwell by the seaside are usually ill-conditioned, fierce, cruel, thievish, and the worst of men. These Philistines were no better, and are therefore here put under a woe, and threatened with utter destruction.

**The nation of the Cherethites]** *i.e.* Destroyer; so the Philistines had styled themselves, as glorying to have conquered and cut off many people. The old Latin translation rendereth it *Gens perditorum*, The nation of destroyers; so doth Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. Now it comes to their turn to be destroyed, according to #Isa 33:1. That these Cherethites were a sort of Philistines, see #1Sa 30:14,16 Eze 25:16 That they were valiant men appears by that legion of them that guarded David, #2Sa 8:4, and were highly esteemed by him, because they stuck to him in his affliction at Gath, and also when Absalom was up in arms, #2Sa 15:18.

**The word of the Lord is against you]** And not only against Israel. This was spoken, as for the terror of those Philistines, who thought themselves out of the reach of God's rod, and slighted his word, so for the comfort of the people of God, who thought much that themselves should be so severely dealt with, and the uncircumcised Philistines escape scot free.

**O Canaan, the land of the Philistines]** Indeed, of the Israelites, #**Jos 13:3**, but held by force by the Philistines, who were of the stock of the Canaanites, but not subdued; and had detained part of the land from the right owners for eight hundred years and upwards; and now they come to be reckoned with. *Subito tollitur qui diu toleratur.* Suddenly be destroyed who where tolerated for a long time.

**I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant]** No settled inhabitant, that shall fix there, as the word signifieth. Thus *Poena venit gravior, quo mage sera venit*, the longer God stays the heavier he strikes.

**Ver. 6. And the sea coasts shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds]** It shall be waste and untilled, and therefore unfrequented by any but shepherds, who pitch their tents up and down, where they may best feed their flocks, in desert places.

**And folds for flocks]** God may do thus in his just judgment upon his enemies, that live in his good land, and not by his good laws; but woe be to our depopulators, that drive out men and put in cattle; that betray towns, as Rome did Carthage, with a distinction, We will save the city, but destroy the town. How dangerous it is to prove Abaddons appeareth by God's punishing hand upon William the Conqueror's issue in New Forest, wherein thirty-six parish churches had been demolished by him, with the removing of all the inhabitants, to make room for beasts, or dogs' game. There his second son, Richard, was gored in hunting by a deer; Rufus, his other son, mistaken for a deer, was by chance shot through with an arrow; Henry likewise, his nephew, while he hotly pursued the chase was struck by a bough into the jaws, and, as Absalom, left hanging until he died.

Ver. 7. **And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah]** Who had not only their own country kept empty for them all the seventy years of captivity, and not any displaced to make room at their return {See Trapp on "Zec 7:14"} but liberty to make use of the Philistines' country; which was also further subdued by the Maccabees, but especially by the apostles, who preached the gospel, and planted Churches in those parts, as we read in the Acts, **#Ac 8:26,40 9:32,35,36.**

**They shall feed thereupon]** They shall go in and out, and find pasture, under the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, who shall feed them daily and daintily among the lilies, by the powerful preaching of the gospel among them, **#Joh 10:9 1Pe 2:25.**

**In the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening]** *Ubi temporis circumstantia securitatem notat*, saith Gualther, The circumstance of time noteth their spiritual security; evenings are often dark and dangerous. They shall lie down as cattle do, that take no care; they know whom they have trusted, and are fearless.

**For the Lord their God shall visit them]** Visit and redeem his people, raising up a horn of salvation for them, **#Lu 1:68,69.** His visits are not empty visits; **#Ps 8:5;** his favours are not like the winter sun, that lighteth, but heateth not.

**And turn away their captivity]** To their inexpressible comfort, **#Ps 126:1,** but especially when Christ, ascending up on high, leadeth captivity captive, **#Col 2:14,15 Eph 4:8.**

Ver. 8. **I have heard the reproach of Moab]** How can he but hear who is all ear? who is both above us, and within us, in whom we subsist, **#Col 1:17.** And what will he sooner be sensible of than the reproachings of his people? see **#Isa 37:28 57:3,4;** "But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore." (See how he becalls them.) "Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood?" The Moabites and Ammonites were great jeerers of the Jews, and revilers of their religion. These reproaches, *leniter volant, non leniter violant*, cruel mockings the apostle calleth them, **#Heb 11:36.**

David felt them as a murdering weapon in his bones, **#Ps 42:10**. God will call such men to a heavy reckoning one day as deride the power of godliness and the professors thereof. Bede saith, that this was the great sin of the ancient Britons immediately before their destruction by the Saxons; and it is at this day both a presage and desert of our ruin, that as the Turks count all fools to be saints, so men with us account all saints to be fools.

**And the revilings of the children of Ammon]** How good they were at it we may see in those words of Sanballat and his companion Tobiah the Ammonite, **#Ne 4:2,3**, words as full of pride and scorn as profane wit or rancoured malice could make them; and they lay so heavy upon Nehemiah's spirit that he could not ease himself but by breathing heavenward: **#Neh 2:4**, "Hear, O our God; for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity," &c. Hear, saith Nehemiah: I have heard it, saith God. "Thou hast seen it," saith the Psalmist, "for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thine hand," **#Ps 10:14**.

**And magnified themselves]** By speaking big and blustering words, bubbles of words, great swelling words, full of wind, **#2Pe 2:18**, these shall find that such words are not wind, but will be required in fire, **#Jude 15**. God is an utter enemy to boasting and threatening braggards.

Ver. 9. **Therefore as I live]** This is God's oath; so, As true as I live, **#Nu 14:21 cf. Ps 95:10**, therefore they are to blame that use it in their common talk.

**Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, &c.]** Whereas they think that I either hear not their revilings or regard them not, I shall make Moab and Ammon smart and smoke for them.

**Even the breeding of nettles and salt pits]** They shall not indeed be consumed with fire from heaven; but their land shall lie waste for a long season. Nettles grow in barren places, and are good for nothing, unless it be the buds at first coming. Pliny writeth, that where salt is digged little good else groweth, see **#Jud 9:45 Ps 107:34**.

**For a perpetual desolation]** Certain it is that those nations carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar were never restored; but that in later times a mixed multitude of vagrants out of many nations met there, taking upon them the old title of Arabians, and living by rapine and robbery. Out of these came Mahomet, founder of the Turkish empire and superstition, who overturned the Christian Churches, there planted by the apostles (as was here afore prophesied, "The residue of my people shall spoil them," &c., see #Zep 2:7; confer #Ga 1:17, and soon overrun all the east and south, as Popery did all the west and north, at the same time.)

Ver. 10. **This shall they have for their pride]** Moabites were as much noted for their pride as now the Spaniards are; and are therefore here devoted to destruction. Pride goeth before a fall, &c. A bulging wall stands not long; a joint luxated and swelled, till that be down cannot be set. God resisteth the proud, #1Pe 5:5, he bringeth those ungodly down to the ground, #Ps 147:6.

**Because they have reproached, &c.]** And all this out of the pride of their hearts, which breaketh out, as a master pox, in their body; so that the pride of Moab testifieth to his face, and it shall be to him an abomination of desolation.

Ver. 11. **The Lord will be terrible unto them]** For he shall march forth in battle array against proud persons, #1Pe 5:5, and stain the pride of all their glory (Ἐναντίαςσεται); he will pull them down from their pinnacle of self-exaltation, and make them know themselves to be but men. Attilas, king of the Huns, proudly gave out that the stars fell before him, the earth trembled at his presence, and that he would be the scourge of all nations. But what became of him? He died suddenly by a flux of blood, breaking out at his mouth and choking him, on his weddingday at night. It were easy to instance further, in Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus, Herod, the king of Tyro, &c. "With God is terrible majesty," #Job 37:22, "he is terrible to the kings of the earth, while he cutteth off their spirits," #Ps 76:12. Heb. he slippeth them off, as one should slip off a flower between one's fingers, or a bunch of grapes off the vine; so soon is the business done.

**For he will famish all the gods of the earth]** He will cast them into an atrophy, into a consumption. This was fulfilled partly when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the nations, and proclaimed the true God to be the only God, **#Da 4:34**, but principally when Christ came in the flesh, and sent out his apostles to decry those heathen deities, and to preach the everlasting gospel, "saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, a worship him that made heaven, earth, sea, and fountains of waters," **#Re 14:7**. Now it was that Satan fell like lightning from heaven, the oracles were silenced, the heathen emperors amazed at the prevailing power of the gospel in despite of them, the very names of most of the gods of the earth were abolished, the temple of Apollo at Delphi fired from heaven; and at that very time when Julian's ambassadors were there to inquire what should be the issue of the Persian war. Thus the heathen superstition fell flat to the ground, their gods were famished for want of worshippers and sacrifices, &c. And the same we hope and wait for to befall the antichristian rout and religion. That idol is grown very lean, and hath lost a collop, as we say. Bellarmine is very sensible, and bewails the business, that ever since we began to count and call the Pope antichrist he hath suffered no small decays and losses in the Christian Churches. He hath indeed, and more and more shall do, till he be left as lean as a rake, and all his plumes pulled, his credit cracked, his honour laid in the dust.

**And men shall worship him]** Heb. Bow down to him. He is thy Lord, and bow thou down unto him, **#Ps 45:11**. Body and soul both must stoop to God; and both at once, **#2Co 6:14-18**. Swenckfeldians (Stinkfeldians Luther called them, from their ill savour) take away all external service; so do the Nicodemites. Hypocrites draw nigh to God with their lips only, when their hearts are elsewhere; their bodies are *in facellis*, in torment, their hearts *in sacculis*, in a little bag, as **#Eze 33:31**. But the true Israelites give God both inward and outward worship; he doth *ponere dextram in pectore*, as Persius phraseth it; being shod with the preparation of the gospel, he treads it not awry (ορθοποδει), neither too much outward, as the formalist, nor too much inward, as the Swenckfeldian. He looks upon our late worship scorners, our high attainers, as the last brood of Beelzebub; and reckons that to cast off ordinances is to cast away the remedy, **#2Ch 36:15,16 Pr 29:1**.



**Every one from his place]** Not at Jerusalem only, as once, **#Joh 4:21**, but in all places, pure hands and hearts shall be lifted up, without wrath, without doubting, **#1Ti 2:8**; both in church and chamber; any place whatsoever shall be a sufficient oratory, so that God be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and the public not neglected.

**Even all the isles of the heathen]** That is, all countries, though not encompassed with the sea; for the Jews called all lands islands which they could not come to but by water. That God shall be worshipped in the four corners of the earth. *{See Trapp on "De 6:4"}* It was the last speech of dying Chrysostom, Glory be to God from all creatures. Let the Jesuits at the end of their books subscribe *Laus Deo et beatae Virgini*, Praise to God and happiness to ther Virgin. Let this be the badge of the beast; let us cry, To God alone be glory all the world over.

Ver. 12. **Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword]** Which is long enough to reach you, though far remote. The poets feign that Jupiter was wont to be feasted by the Ethiopians; but that shall not save them from God's sore and great strong sword. Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God had given Ethiopia, and Egypt, and Saba as a ransom for his people, **#Isa 43:3**. See **#Pr 11:8**. *{See Trapp on "Pr 11:8"}* The Ethiopians and Egyptians were subdued together, **#Jer 46:2 Isa 18:1,2**. It is now inhabited by the Abyssinians (a kind of mongrel Christians), and called Prester John's country; where they say they have this custom, among others: In their great solemnities they have a cup of gold borne before them, filled within, and besmeared without with dirt, yet so as the gold appeareth; and next to this cup is carried a crucifix. Hereby they would show that man should be pure as gold; but being within and without defiled by sin, he is restored by Christ crucified, so as that the gold of God's graces appeareth in him here in part, and shall do hereafter in all perfection.

Ver. 13. **And he will stretch out his hand against the north]** *i.e.* Against Assyria (which lay north from Judea), as is presently added by way of exposition. The Scripture sometimes hath its own interpretation annexed, as **#Joh 2:19,21 7:39**. Howsoever, the Rabbis have this saying among them, *Nulla est obiectio in lege*

*quae non habet solutionem in latere;* i.e. there is not any doubt in the law but may be resolved by the context.

**And destroy Assyria]** Cast this rod of his wrath into the fire, after that he had worn it to the stump (as that martyr said) upon other nations.

**And will make Nineveh a desolation]** See #Nah 2, with the notes.

Ver. 14. **And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, &c.]** Here are various and vehement expressions of the dreadful face of her desolations. *Omnia congerit quae vastitatem horribilem denotare solent,* saith Gualther, because it was held a thing almost impossible that Nineveh should be destroyed. Hence that admiration of bystanders and beholders, #Zep 2:15. But what can be impossible to the Almighty? and what will not he do for his Church's cause and comfort? See #Zep 2:6.

**All the beasts of the nations]** Which shall come from far to haunt this new desert, beaudesert. See #Isa 13:21,22, and observe that parallel texts, like glasses set one against another, do cast a mutual light. The lapidary brighteneth his hard diamond with the dust shaved from itself; so must we clear hard Scriptures.

**Both the cormorant (or pelican) and the bittern]** Those inauspicious birds of prey that are signs both of God's curse and man's misery, #Isa 34:11. The former hath its name in Hebrew from vomiting, and seemeth, saith one, to be the same that we call the shovelard, which swallows shell fishes, and after vomiteth them to get the fish. The latter liveth about lakes, saith Pliny, and with her beak beateth the fish out of the shell with great vehemence.

**Shall lodge in the upper lintels of it]** Beautified with pomegranates, flowers, and other curious garnishes, as are wont to be seen at the porches of palaces.

**Their voice shall sing in the windows]** The black saints, as they say; where was wont to be heard all manner of music and melodious noises. *Luxus cadet in luctum,* their merry dances shall end in a miserable downfall.

**Desolation shall be in the thresholds]** Which were wont to be worn out with the abundance of clients and parasites tracing over them.

**For he shall uncover the cedar work]** *i.e.* God, or the enemy by God's appointment, shall uncover the roof made of cedar, for better continuance. Cedar is strong and durable; and by reason of the dryness of it the timber chawneeth not, rotteth not; yea, it hath a property to preserve other things from putrefication, saith Scribonius. The Ninevites rafted their houses with it, as they say the Africans do with whale bones. But now that God shall bare them and expose them to the injury of wind and weather, how can they stand? and what can be in the thresholds but desolation?

Ver. 15. **This is the rejoicing city]** *Exultabunda*, that could stand on no ground, but was ready to leap out of her skin as it were; her inhabitants were mere mirthmongers altogether set upon the merry pin; like the people of Tombutum in Africa, who spend their whole time in singing and dancing. Now the case is altered, and the Church, out of zeal for God's glory, thus insulteth over them.

**That dwelt carelessly]** As if situated in the clouds, above all fear; and altogether insuperable. Security ushereth in destruction. See **#Jer 49:31,32.**

**That said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me]** This was a proud word indeed. I am is one of God Almighty's names, **#Ex 3:14**, and there is none besides me is one of his titles, **#Isa 45:5,21 48:12**. Thus empty man would be something (the toad would swell to the size of an ox), though man be born like a wild ass's colt, **#Job 11:12**, and man being in honour, understandeth not that he is, or shortly shall be, like the beasts that perish: that die of the murrain, and so become carrion, good for nothing. {#Ps 49:20, *pecoribus morticinis*. Tremel.}

*“ Unde superbit homo cuius conceptio turpis,  
Nasci poena, labor vita, necesse mori? ”*

*“ Whence will man show his pride, whose conception is  
shameful,*

*to be born a penalty, life of work, and needs die”*

**How is she become a desolation]** Here the prophet, *Nineven in Theatre statuit, et traducit apud Iudaeos* (saith Calvin), setteth Nineveh upon the stage, and showeth his Jews the tragic end of her; how she should wonderfully be brought down beyond all expectation. God delighteth to make himself marvellous; he is the only true *Thaumaturgus*.

**Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand]** In scorn, horror, and disdain; and why, see #Na 3:19 La 2:15,17 1Ki 9:8 Eze 27:36 Mic 6:16. {See Trapp on "Na 3:19"} Surely God scorneth the scorers, #Pr 3:34, and maketh that the merciless find no mercy, #Jas 2:13.

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Woe to her that is filthy and polluted]** Meaning Jerusalem, once a faithful city, now an harlot, #Isa 1:21, *faedissimum prostibulum*, of the kind of those sordid men who are called *Borboritae*, of their miry filthiness, whom Epiphanius and Oecumenius speak of. The word ( 787) here rendered filthy comes from a word that signifieth dung, or that signifieth an example (παράδειγμα); and so it is a metaphor taken from light women that are carted in a disgraceful way and made a public example, an infamous instance. It is rendered also gluttonous, or all crawl, as #Le 1:16.

*“Ingluvies et tempestas, barathrumque macelli.”*

**To the oppressing city!]** *Praedatrici*, that maketh a prey of others (either by force or fraud), as the silly dove is made a prey to the hawk and other ravenous birds.

Ver. 2. **She obeyed not the voice]** *sc.* Of her teachers, nor inclined her ear to them that instructed her, as #Pr 5:13. Hence she was so filthy and oppressive; who, if she had hearkened to wholesome counsel, and hidden the word of God’s grace in her heart, would have purified herself even as he is pure, #1Jo 3:3, and not have exacted money and grain, but have left off that usury, #Ne 5:10.

**She received not correction]** Or discipline, as being incurable or incorrigible, pining away in her iniquity, **#Le 26:39**, and not accepting the chastisement of her sin.

**She trusted not in the Lord]** But knocked at the creature's door for help in her distress, and made flesh her arm, her heart departed from the Lord, **#Jer 17:5**. This God taketh very ill, **#Jer 2:12,13**, as he hath very great reason; confidence being the least and yet the best we can render to him for all his benefits.

**She drew not near to her God]** Though he were her God, yet she went as far from him as she could; and, like a wild beast, would not be tamed nor managed by him. Now, if these be undoubted arguments of a filthy and polluted state, as surely they are, what shall we think of ourselves, who are as deeply guilty as ever Jerusalem was in the promises? what shall the Lord do, or what shall he not do, rather, to a nation so incorrigibly flagitious, so obliged, so warned, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked?

Ver. 3. **Her princes within her are roaring lions]** Roaring over the meaner sort, and tearing them with their claws. {See Trapp on "Mic 3:1"} {See Trapp on "Mic 3:2"} {See Trapp on "Mic 3:3"}

**Her judges are evening wolves]** See **#Hab 1:8**. This rapacity and bribery they had learned (likely) under Manassah and Amon; and exercised under good Josiah, who either knew it not, or could not redress it. *Est ergo periculi plena reipublicae forma, quae ab uno dependet*, saith Gualther here. And Tertullian telleth us, that one special thing the primitive Christians prayed for the emperor was, that God would send him *Senatum fidelem*, a faithful senate, pious councillors, good subordinates. Of Aurelian's council it was said, that by them the good emperor, who might know nothing but as they informed him, was even bought and sold. Alphonsus, King of Aragon, said that princes were for this in a worse condition than other people; because they could seldom hear the truth of things. Augustus bitterly bewailed the death of Varus; because now, said he, I have none about me that will deal truly with me. The Grand Signior goes often abroad that he may receive poor men's petitions, and right them upon the greatest beshaws, who, bewitched by bribery, have denied them justice. And hence it hath been ever

observed, that few of his chief officers die in their beds. These evening wolves many times have not a morrow left them to gnaw the bones in.

Ver. 4. **Her prophets are light]** Rash, headlong, futilous, debauched (as the French translatheth it), aerial, fantastic, weightless, worthless men, such as in whose doctrine there is no authority, in whose life no gravity, staidness, severity, constancy (Rodulphus, Archbishop of Canterbury next after Anselm, was surnamed Nugax for his jesting and toying): like the planet Mercury, they can be good in conjunction with good, and bad with bad; like that French apostate of whom Beza saith that he had *religionem ephemeram*, for every day a new religion, *ab his ad illos, ab illis ad hos leviter iens et levius transiens*, double-minded and unstable in all his ways, #Jas 1:8.

**And treacherous persons]** *Viri perfidiarum*, most perfidious persons. This is their true title, whom the world counteth and calleth facile, facetious, fair conditioned, comportsing, condescending, people pleasing preachers. Can there be a worse treachery than to betray men's souls, as your Aiones and Negones do, that cry peace, peace, and so betray men to hell.

**Her priests have polluted the sanctuary]** Or holy services.

“ *Cum coelum terrae commiscent sacra profanis.*”

God looks to be sanctified in all those that draw nigh unto him, #Le 10:3, that they should be singularly holy, handling the word, *sancte magis quam scite* with greater reverence than knowledge, (as one once told the wanton vestal), and living so that malice itself may be silenced. God of old appointed both the weights and measures of the sanctuary to be twice as large as those of the commonwealth; to show that he expects much more of those that serve him there than he doth of others. See #1Ki 7:15 cf. 2Ch 3:15.

**They have done violence to the law]** *sc.* By their crafty and perverse glosses, setting it on the rack, as it were, and so making it speak more than it would; tawing it with their teeth, as shoemakers

do their upper leather, forcing it two miles when it would go but one, yea, murdering it, as Tertullian saith of some, *quod caedem scripturarum faciant*, that they slaughter the Scriptures to serve their own purposes; for which cause also he calleth Marcion the heretic, *Murem Ponticum*, the Rat of Pontus, for his arrodging and gnawing the text.

Ver. 5. **The just Lord is in the midst thereof]** The unjust princes were said to be in the midst of Jerusalem as roaring lions, **#Zep 3:3**. Here the just Lord is also said to be in the midst of her, as a sin revenging judge. He sitteth as God in the midst of those uncircumcised vicegods (as I may in the worst sense best term them), he sets a jealous eye upon all their unrighteous proceedings, and is with them in the judgment. Neither eyeth he them only, but all others in like sort; as the king in the Gospel came in to see his guests. His eye, like a well drawn picture, taketh view of all that come into the room. Oh that we could be in his fear all the day! Oh that we would ever walk in the sense of his presence, and light of his countenance! *Noli peccare, nam Deus videt, angeli astant, diabolus accusabit, conscientia testabitur, Infernus cruciabit*. Sin not; for God sees you, the good angels stand about you, Satan will accuse you, conscience will give in evidence against you, hell will torment you. A reverend and religious man had this written before his eyes in his study.

**He will not do iniquity]** *i.e.* He will not let enormities go unpunished, nor pass by the infirmities of his people without a sensible check, **#Ps 99:8**. See **#Hab 1:13**.

**Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light]** Daily and diligently doth he both threaten by his prophets and execute with his hand the menaces of his mouth upon those that will not be warned, that refuse to be reformed. He hath in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, **#2Co 10:6**. Maturely he will do it, and accurately; it is his morning's work, **#Ps 101:8**, like as it is theirs to rise early, and corrupt all their doings, **#Zep 3:7**. He will be up and at it as soon as they.

**He faileth not]** As he may seem to do when he forbearth. *Non deest*, he will not be wanting to his office to proceed against the uncounsellable.

**But the unjust knoweth no shame]** He can blush no more than a sackbut, as the proverb is. Such an impudence hath sin woaded <sup>{a}</sup> in his face, that he basheth nothing. *Et pudet non esse impudentem*, he is past all grace, as we say, and as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever those Jews were that had a whore's forehead, **#Jer 3:3**, sinews of iron and brows of brass, **#Isa 48:4**. When neither fear of God nor shame of the world will rein men in, what hope is there of such? *Illum ego periisse dico cui periit pudor*, saith Curtius, a heathen. He is an undone man that knoweth no shame. Prevent it in time; for the modest beginnings of sin at first will make way for immodest proceedings. The thickest ice that will bear a cart beginneth with a thin trembling cover, that will not bear a pebble.

{a} A bluish dye the ancient British warriors covered themselves with when going to battle to make their appearance more terrible to the enemy.

**Ver. 6. I have cut off the nations]** And hanged them up in gibbets, as it were, before your eyes, for your admonition, *ut ruina maiorum sit cautela minorum*, that their destruction might be your instruction; that, seeing your neighbour's house on fire, you might look to your own; that, observing others to suffer shipwreck, you might see to your tackling. This is the use God expects we should make of his judgments upon others, **#Lu 13:3,5 17:26,29 Mt 12:13,41,42 1Co 10:1,2**, and surely he deserveth to be made an example that will not take example by others.

**Their towers are desolate]** Or, their corners, *sc.* of their munitions, whereon towers were set. Or, their extremities, *q.d.* I have overturned them from one end to another. Drusius and Ribera interpreteth it of their princes. {See Trapp on "Zep 1:6"}

**I made their streets waste, &c.]** See **#Zep 2:5,6,14,15**. To the end, that when my judgments were thus on the earth, the inhabitants of the world (but especially of the Church) might learn righteousness, **#Isa 26:9**; that the righteous, seeing the vengeance, might wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, **#Ps 59:10**, taking warning by his



harms. Observe here, by the way, what great account God makes of his people, since for their instance and instruction he thus wasteth the wicked; like as the Persian kings, when their sons had committed a fault, made their servants to be beaten before them.

Ver. 7. **I said, surely thou wilt fear me]** As in a school, when one boy is whipped the rest tremble; and as in the commonwealth, *poena ad paucos, metus ad omnes*; punishment for the few, fear for everybody so it should be in the Church. Other men's woes should be our warnings; others' sufferings our sermons; others' lashes our lessons; God's house of correction a school of instruction, where we should hear and fear, and do no more so, **#De 17:13**. He that trembleth not in hearing shall be crushed to pieces in feeling, said that martyr.

**And receive instruction]** This I promised myself of thee, but am disappointed, **#Jer 15:3**. See **#Zep 3:2**, thou art therefore ripe for destruction.

**So their dwelling should not be cut off]** They should have redeemed their sorrows and saved their city. And this God speaks to others, as weary of speaking any longer to them to so little purpose.

**But they rose early and corrupted, &c.]** *Manicabant*, they made haste, that no time might be lost; they woefully wasted that best part of the day, the morning (which *παν εργον οφειλλει*, furthereth every business), in corrupting their practices, doing evil as they could. Once (saith a reverend man) Peter's argument was more than probable; These men are not drunk, for it is but the third hour of the day. Now, men are grown such husbands, as that by that time they will return their stocks, and have their brains crowing before day.

Ver. 8. **Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, &c.]** Stand forth, and hear your doom; which that ye may know that I do not precipitate or rashly pass upon you, "Wait ye upon me," &c.; and yet, that ye may not presume upon my patience, know that there is a day set, a determination settled for your full payment.

*“ Nostra Deus subitis non damnat crimina poenis:  
Compensat longas sed gravitate moras.”*

*To gather the nations] To put them up, as it were sheep, into a pound for slaughter. See more of this, #Jer 25:15-33*

*To pour upon them mine indignation] Here is mention made of God's prey, of his indignation, fierce anger, fire of jealousy against nations and kingdoms; the better to persuade people to that which they are so hardly drawn to believe, viz. that God is not made all of mercy; but, though fury be not in him, to speak properly, #Isa 27:4, yet that he will not by any means "clear the guilty," #Ex 34:7, but punish them severely, taking vengeance of their inventions, #Ps 99:8.*

Ver. 9. **For then will I turn to the people a pure language]** "Then," when my sword hath rid circuit, #Ec 8:17, and been bathed in the blood of all nations, for their many and mighty sins, "I will turn to the people," I will turn mine hand upon the little ones, mine elect, that remnant reserved for royal use. These I will bring, not into the fire only, but through it, and will refine them as silver is refined, #Zec 13:7,9, so that their tongue shall be as choice silver, #Pr 10:20, their lip shall be a pure lip, as it is here, a lip of excellence, #Pr 17:7, so that they shall scatter pearls, #Mt 7:6, throw abroad treasure, #Mt 12:35, even apples of gold in shrines of silver, #Pr 25:11, they shall purify themselves, as God is pure, #1Jo 3:3. Old things shall be past with them, all things shall become new; new constitution, new communication, new conversation. Look how the Conqueror sought to bring the French tongue into England, commanding it to be taught in schools, spoke in courts, &c., so doth the Lord Christ, who rideth about the world upon his white horses, the apostles and other ministers, "conquering and to conquer," #Re 6:2; wherever he prevails, he turneth to such "a pure language," even the language of Canaan; not the Hebrew tongue (as R. Abraham senses this text) which all nations shall speak, saith he, in the kingdom of Christ (what they do in heaven, I have not to say, some are confident), but words of grace, #Col 4:6, words of truth and soberness, #Ac 26:25, right words, #Job 6:25, spiritual speeches, #Eph 4:29, Scripture language, #1Pe 4:11.

**That they may call upon the name of the Lord]** As all God's people do, it is their character, #1Co 1:2, he hath no dumb children, they no sooner breathe but pray, #Ac 9:11, for prayer is the breath of

the spirit, **#Ro 8:26**, and the fruit of faith; hence it is called the prayer of faith, and under the phrase of calling upon the name of the Lord here is meant believing in his name, and reposing upon Christ for safety here and salvation hereafter.

**To serve him with one consent]** Heb. with one shoulder, that is, unanimously, and with conjoined endeavours (ομοθυμαδον), a metaphor from oxen yoked and setting their shoulders together to the work (υπο ζυγον ενα, Sept.); or else from porters, who set their several shoulders to the same burden. The saints may the better do so because they have the Spirit to lift with them and be over beside them, as the apostle's word (συναντιλαμβανεται) importeth, **#Ro 8:26**. Let them therefore endeavour, by all good means, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, **#Eph 4:3**, that they may say, as holy Miconius did of himself and his colleagues at Gotha, *in Thuringia, cucurrimus, certavimus, laboravimus, pugnavimus, vicimus, et viximus semper coniunctissimi*. We ever ran together, strove, laboured, fought, vanquished, and did all together, in much peace and concord. This is Christian-like indeed, see **#Ac 1:14 2:1,46 4:32**, *animo animaque inter se miscebantur*; saith Tertullian, they were all of one heart and of one mind. The very heathens acknowledged that no people in the world did hold together and love one another so as Christians did. To see their travails (saith Master Fox concerning the saints here in times of persecution), their earnest seeking, burning zeal, readings, watchings, sweet assemblies, love, concord, godly living, faithful marrying with the faithful, may make us now in these our days of free profession (but lamentable divisions) to blush for shame. They served the Lord with one shoulder, we shoulder one another: they kept unity with purity without schism, much less heresy, glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and with one mouth, **#Ro 15:6**, with a pure lip, as it is here; we are *quot homines, tot sententiae*, so many men, so many minds. How many religions are there now among us! saith one; old heresies new vamped! Our Saviour Christ saith, if the Son of man come, shall he find faith? &c. Yes, sure he may find many faiths; so many men, so many faiths. *Pudet opprobria nobis, &c.* It is a shame and a repraoch to us. It is not peace but party that some men mind, saith another; their chief studies are *studium partium, et studium novarum rerum*, part-taking,

and novelling. But what saith the apostle? If ye speak with several tongues will not he that comes in think ye are mad? so when the world hears of so many dissonant opinions, will they not think we are run wild? **#1Co 14:23**. Is it not a shame to us that the Turks should say, we may sooner look that the fingers on our hands should be all of one length than that the Christians should be all of one judgment? Why should any Julian jeer us for our divisions? why should any Camian hit us in the teeth with our many sects and schisms? Pardon may be gotten for our other sins by faith in Christ's blood, *discordiam neque si sanguinem fundamus expiabimus* (saith Oecolampadius to the Lutherans of his time), our scandalous discords God will judge.

Ver. 10. **From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia]** Heb. Of Chush, that is of Arabia Chusaea, which lay between Judea and Egypt. Confer **#Isa 18:1,7**. Some understand it of Ethiopia, which is beyond the river Nile, and hath two very great rivers. See this in part fulfilled by that Ethiopian eunuch, **#Ac 8:26-40**; neither may we think that he was alone in that country. Matthias the apostle is said to have preached the gospel to the Ethiopians (Euseb. i. 1). The large region of Nubia there had from the apostles' time (as it is thought) professed the Christian faith, till about two hundred years since it forsook the same (Alvarez, Hist. Aethiopic.). The kingdom of Habassia, held by presbyter John, are yet Christians, differing from us in a few ceremonies only. {See Trapp on "Zep 2:12"}

**My suppliants]** My praying people, that ply the throne of grace, and multiply strong suits, pouring out a flood of words in humble supplication (as the Hebrew signifieth), continuing instant in prayer, as knowing that their safety here and salvation hereafter is of me alone.

**Even the daughter of my dispersed]** Jews and Gentiles, elect of both sorts, **#Joh 11:52**, scattered here and there, as the salt of the earth upon the face thereof, to keep it from putrefying. Danaeus thinketh that there is mention made of the daughter of the dispersed affectionately; namely, both to describe the earnestness of the saints in serving God (for women, *quicquid volunt, valde volunt* whatever they wish, they greatly prefer), and that this so goodly and joyful a spectacle or sight of women worshipping and serving God, and of

virgins especially, might stir up and move affections. It is easy to observe that the New Testament affordeth more store of good women than the old, who can make masculine prayers, mingled with tears; and as music upon the waters sounds further and more harmoniously than upon the land, so do prayers well watered.

**Shall bring mine offering]** Heb. My meat offering, or rather my wheat offering (*Minchathi*), their bodies and souls, **#Ro 12:1**, that best of sacrifices, for a reasonable service, a solemn present; such that the Chaldee paraphrast might express; he translateth it thus: They shall bring as presents unto me the banished of my people, who were carried captive, and shall return by my mercies. Some think that here is foretold the return of the Jews to their own land, toward the end of the world, to set up the spiritual worship of God there; the famous Church that shall be among them, full of sanctity and rid of all wicked ones, **#Zep 3:11-13**, the joy and gladness that shall possess their souls, **#Zep 3:14**, through God's removing of all cause of fear from them, **#Zep 3:15**, the encouragement they shall receive from others, **#Zep 3:16**, and (which is the cause of all this) the apparent arguments of God's great love and favour, **#Zep 3:17**, the quality of those that shall be received to be citizens of this New Jerusalem, **#Zep 3:18**, the utter rooting out of all their enemies, the fame and dignity that this Church of the Jews shall be of among all nations, **#Zep 3:19,20**. Thus they: *quam recte iudicium sit penes Lectorem.*

Ver. 11. **In that day shalt thou not be ashamed]** There is a holy shame for sin, such as was that of Ezra, **#Ezr 9:6**, of the penitent publican, **#Lu 18:13**, and of those good souls in Ezekiel, who blushing and bleeding loathed themselves for their abominations, **#Eze 16:52**. To be ashamed on this sort is no shame, but a sign of that godly sorrow that worketh repentance never to be repented of; and not to know shame, to be frontless and impudent, is the note of a naughty man, **#Eze 16:52**. But that which God promiseth here is that he will cover their sins, not impute them, **#Ps 32:1,2**, and that he will by his grace preserve them from scandalous and reproachful practices that might render them ignominious and despicable, see **#Ps 18:39**; shining upon them himself, and giving them honour in the hearts of others, as he did Solomon.

**Them that rejoice in thy pride]** Or, in thine excellence, as **#Ps 68:35**, that is, in thine external privileges, wherein thou hast hitherto so prided thyself as the only people of God, holy and beloved.

**And thou shalt no more be haughty]** Stand upon thy tip-toes, upon thy sandles, as if there were none such.

**Because of mine holy mountain]** **#Jer 7:4**. The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, cried they aloud that nothing cared for the Lord of the temple. So the Jesuits and their Romish crew cry, the Church, the Church, the Catholic Church, *ad ravem usque*, until hoarse like so many oyster-wives: but this is not the guise of God's people. He will purge his Church of such formalists.

Ver. 12. **I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people]** Poor and therein afflicted, therefore despised. Poverty is an affliction, and makes a man trodden upon, *Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se, Quam quod ridicules homines facit*, Men will be sure to go over the hedge where it is lowest. Hence St Paul joins them together, I have learned to want and to be abased. They that want must look to be abased. This thy son, saith he, **#Lu 15:30**, not this my brother; he would not once own him, because in poverty. But though men will not, yet God will, **#Jas 2:5 Re 2:9**. I know thy poverty, but that is nothing, thou art rich: poor in spirit, rich to Godward, glorying in nothing but this, that thou understandest and knowest me and my will, thyself and thy duty, **#Jer 9:23**, and art therefore a rich cargazon, a full magazine, such as the world is not worthy of.

**And they shall trust in the name of the Lord]** As having nothing else to trust to. So St Paul's widow indeed, being desolate and left alone, trusteth in God, who while she had a husband trusted too much in him, **#1Ti 5:5**. A noble woman of Savoy, mother to John Galear, Duke of Milan, after her husband's decease, caused a coin to be made, upon the one side whereof she drew these words, *Sola facta solum Deum sequor*; Being left alone, I trust in God alone.

Ver. 13. **The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity]** Sanctity and security are here promised to all the citizens of the Church. Being justified by Christ they shall do righteousness and truth: there shall no way of wickedness be found in them, **#Ps 139:24**, they shall be

kept from foul flagitious practices, neither shall they wallow or allow themselves in any known sin unrepented of. Their spot, if any, shall be the spot of God's children, **#De 32:5**, involuntary and avoidable infirmity, such as there is a pardon of course for; only they must sue it out by praying daily, Forgive us our trespasses.

**Nor speak lies]** For that is a foul fault, and rarely found in a saint, **#Isa 63:8**. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour." It was wont to be as current an argument, *Christianus est, non mentietur*; He is a Christian, he will not lie, as afterwards it was, *Hic est frater, ergo mendax*, This is a friar, and therefore a liar. Sophronius testifieth of Chrysostom, *nunquam eum mentitum fuisse*, that he was never heard to tell a lie. Whereas of Pilate Hegesippus telleth us, that he was *vir nequam et parvi faciens mendacium*, a naughty man, and one that made little conscience of a lie. It may seem so indeed by that scornful question of his, "What is truth?" **#Joh 18:38**.

**Neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth]** Their pure lip, **#Zep 3:9**, is not used to the language of hell, their spirit without guile, **#Ps 32:2**, produceth speech without deceit; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, **#Mt 12:34**. {See Trapp on "Mt 12:34"}

**For they shall feed and lie down]** Shall have all that heart can wish or need require; plenty, safety, security.

**And none shall make them afraid]** So as to make them do iniquity or speak lies; as very good men when frightened have dared to do; witness Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, but especially David, deeply guilty of this sin, **#1Sa 21:2,8 27:8,10**, In the sense of which sin he prayeth, "Remove from me the way of lying," **#Ps 119:29**; we also should pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from that evil one," the father of lies. And having the shepherd of Israel to feed us and tend us, we should not fear, **#Ps 23:2,3**, but choosing rather to die than to lie, to suffer than to shift, commit the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator, **#1Pe 4:19**. Ver. 14. **Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel]** Joy is the just man's portion, which the wicked may not meddle with, **#Ho 9:1**. In

the transgression of an evil man there is a snare or a cord to strangle his joy with, to check and choke all his comforts, but the righteous sing and rejoice, #Pr 29:6, they are commanded so to do; yea, the command is doubled and trebled here and elsewhere in both Testaments; and it is a sin for such not to rejoice, as well as not to repent.

**Be glad and rejoice with all the heart]** Which no wicked man can do: his mirth is but the hypocrisy of mirth; like a little counterfeit complexion. It may smooth the face, never cheer up the heart; like a slight dash of rain that soaketh not to the root, or a handful of brushwood or sear thorns under the pot, #Ec 7:6. As their humiliations are but skin deep, they rent their garments and not their hearts, they grieve in the face and not in the heart, #Mt 6:16, so do they rejoice in the face and not with all their heart, #2Co 5:12.

Ver. 15. **The Lord hath taken away thy Judgments]** *i.e.* He hath remitted thy sins, removed thy punishments, turned again thy captivity as the streams in the south, commanded his prophets, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," &c., #Isa 40:1,2; tell her that all accusations and actions laid against her in the court of heaven are non-suited, and God's wrath appeased. This is the sum of all the good news in the world; this is a short gospel.

**He hath cast out thine enemy]** As rubbish and sweepings of the house are cast out ( *סוף* *rempurgare everrere significat*); so hath God dealt by thine enemies corporal and spiritual; that thou being delivered out of the hands of both, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all thy days, #Lu 1:74,75.

**The king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee]** In the many testimonies of his powerful and gracious presence; yea, he hath set him up a mercy seat, a throne of grace, and bidden thee come boldly thereunto, #Heb 4:16.

**Thou shalt not see evil any more]** *sc.* So long as thou retainest God with thee, who is both a sun and a shield, #Ps 84:11, and children have a place of refuge, #Pr 14:26.

Ver. 16. **Fear thou not]** Why shouldest thou while the King of Israel is in the midst of thee? Be of good cheer, said Caesar to the



ferryman in a storm, thou canst not miscarry: *Casarem enim fers et fortunam Caesaris*, for you carry Caesar and luck of Caesar, so long as Caesar is in the same bottom with thee. May not the Church much more gather comfort, having God in her company; and so many of his servants to say to her, Fear thou not? True faith quelleth and killeth distrustful fear; but awful dread it breedeth, feedeth, fostereth, and cherisheth.

**And to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack]** *Remollescant*. Let not thy fears weaken, but rather waken thy diligence in well doing; lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, **#Heb 12:12**. Up and be active; pluck up your good hearts, and buckle close to your business; your task is long, your time short; your master urgent, your wages inconceivable. It troubled a martyr at the stake, that he should then go to a place where he should ever be receiving wages, and do no more work. Up, therefore, and be doing. "Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," **#Heb 6:12**. *Spontaneae lassitudines morbos loquuntur*, faithlessness argueth a diseased soul.

Ver. 17. **The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty]** Even the mighty strong God, **#Isa 9:6**, the giant, as the word signifies, the champion of his Church. He being in the midst of thee cannot but see who thou art set upon; and how many dangers and difficulties thou encounterest with, and will send thee in new supplies, **#Eph 1:19**, seasonable help.

**He will save]** This properly signifieth the privative part of man's happiness; but includeth also the positive. Jesus will do all for his people.

**He will rejoice over thee with joy]** As a bridegroom doth over his bride, **#Isa 62:5**. He will take special complacence and content in thee, being made accepted in the beloved, **#Eph 1:6**.

**He will rest in his love]** And seek no further. Heb. He will be silent in his love, passing by small faults without any the least signification of his displeasure; as if he were even fond over his Church, and did err in his love towards her, as husbands are licensed to do toward their wives, **#Pr 5:19**. Some render it *obmutescet in*

*amore suo*, he shall be dumb in his love, so as he cannot speak through excess of love. Lovers are so transported sometimes that they cannot utter their minds.

**He will joy over thee with singing]** As a father doth over his child whom he beareth in his besom, or dandleth on his knee.

Ver. 18. **I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly]** Which now they cannot celebrate, as being in captivity; and are therefore in great heaviness; as was David, **#Ps 42:2,3,5**. Nothing goes nearer to a good heart than to be debarred the benefit of God's holy ordinances, than to hear the sabbaths mocked at by the enemies, as these good souls did, **#La 2:7**, and to be asked, as David was, "Where is now thy God," **#Ps 42:3**. All outward comforts in this case are mere Ichabods. When the ark was taken Eli could live no longer; that word struck him down backward, and killed him in the fall. No sword of a Philistine could have slain him more painfully; neither is it easy to say whether his neck or heart were first broken.

**Who are of thee]** True children of the Church, as appeareth by their strong affections to the ordinances, **#1Pe 2:2**. Luther said he would not live in paradise without the word; as with it he could easily live in hell. An infant cannot be quieted with gauds <sup>{a}</sup> or fine clothes without the dug; so neither can a true Christian with anything but the public services, the solemn assemblies.

**To whom the reproach of it was a burden]** It lay heavy upon their spirits, and made them send up many a deep sigh to God, who heareth the breathings of his people, **#La 3:56**, and will restore comfort to such his mourners, **#Isa 57:18**. He that helped his Levites to bear the ark, **#1Ch 15:26**, will help those that grieve at the want of it and groan under the reproach cast upon it, which they ever honoured as the face of God, **#Ps 105:4**. Yea, as God himself, **#Ps 132:5**.

<sup>{a}</sup> One of the larger and more ornamental beads placed between the decades of 'aves' in a rosary. (ÆD)

Ver. 19. **Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee]** Heb. Behold me; look not to thyself as unworthy or unlikely to inherit such precious promises; for, "not for your sakes do this, saith the

Lord God, be it known unto you; but for mine own holy name's sake," #Eze 36:22,32: your unworthiness shall serve for a foil to set forth the freeness of my love; your unlikeliness the greatness of my power; "my grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is perfected in thy weakness," #2Co 12:9. Again, look not to thine enemies, how many and mighty they are, how witty and wealthy, how active and combined ( *loricatus incedit Satan et cataphractus*, saith Luther), let thine eyes be upon me, as Jehoshaphat's were, when he knew not whither else to look, #2Ch 20:12; let thine heart be lift up in my ways, as his was, #2Ch 17:6; behold me, behold me, #Isa 65:1. Look not downward on the rushing and roaring streams of miseries and troubles which run so swiftly under thee, for then thou wilt be giddy; but look upward, and steadfastly fasten on my power and promise; believe in the Lord thy God, so shalt thou be established; believe his prophets, so shalt thou prosper, #2Ch 20:20; thine enemies also shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places, #De 33:29. I will undo them, saith God here; Heb. I will do them ( *per antiphrasin*); or, I will bruise them and break them in pieces, as R. David rendereth it, by comparing #Eze 23:3,21. I will not only repress them, but root them out. Those that offer violence to the Church, like blind Samson, they lay hands upon their pillars, to pluck the house upon their own heads.

**And I will save her that halteth]** As enemies shall not hinder the Church's happiness, so neither shall her own infirmities. Grant she be lame and luxated, maimed and disjointed, so that she goeth sidling and halteth downright, #Ps 38:17; say she be driven out of her country as an exile, out of all companies, as an outcast (whom no man seeketh after, #Jer 30:17), and out of all good conceit of herself, as an abject, vile in her own eyes not fit for the communion of saints or kingdom of heaven; yet I will save her, I will gather her, like as the gathering host in the wilderness {*see #Jos 6:9*} took up the lame, feeble and those that were left behind, see #Mic 4:6, {*See Trapp on "Mic 4:6"*} and #Eze 32:16; I will seek that which was lost and reduce that which was driven away.

**And I will get them praise and fame in every land, &c.]** So that glorious things shall be spoken of thee, O city of God; as thy sin shall be remitted, so thy name shall be healed thy fame spread, *per*

*ora hominum volitabis* I will fashion men's opinions of thee, so that those that formerly shamed and shunned thee shall highly esteem thee, and stand for thee.

Ver. 20. **At that time will I bring you again]** And this I tell you again, that you may the better believe it; only you must wait my time, for, in time will I bring you again, and in time will I gather you, and in time will I make your name and a praise among all people of the earth, as before I promised; but you must give me time to do all this. He that believest maketh not haste. The vision is yet for an appointed time, **#Hab 2:3**. {See Trapp on "Hab 2:3"} Limit not the Holy One of Israel, set him not a day, say not now or never; wake not your beloved till he please. He is a God of judgment, and waiteth to be gracious, **#Isa 30:18**. Have patience, therefore, yea, let patience have her perfect work, **#Jas 1:4**, that ye may receive a full reward, **#2Jo 8**. For behold I come, and my reward is with me, to give you an expected end, **#Jer 29:11**.

**When I turn back your captivity]** Heb. Captivities; that is, all four captivities together For the Jews were carried captive to Babylon (1) Under Manasseh, **#2Ch 33:11**. (2) Next, under Jehoiachim, **#2Ch 36:6**. (3) Under Jechonias, **#2Ki 24:12 2Ch 36:10**. (4) Lastly, under Zedekiah, **#2Ch 36:17 2Ki 25:6**. All these shall be brought back together by an eminent and signal deliverance.

**Before your eyes]** Those eyes of yours that failed almost for my salvation, and for the word of my righteousness, **#Ps 119:123**, shall see the accomplishment thereof, and be satisfied **#Ps 54:7 92:11**. *Dexter tibi prae laetitia salter oculus.*

**Saith the Lord]** This is the seal of all, and security sufficient, for *Dei dixisse est fecisse* To God to have said is to have done, God will not suffer his faithfulness to fail nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips **#Ps 89:33,34**.

*Laus Deo in aeternum.*

# Haggai

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **In the second year of Darius the king]** Not of Darius the Mede, as Genebrard noteth, for he was predecessor to Cyrus, **#Da 5:31**, and Haggai prophesied after Cyrus and Cambyses, **#Ezr 4:5 5:1**, neither of Darius Nothus, as Scaliger in his book, *De Emend. Temporum* (the doctrine whereof is almost wholly fictitious, saith one, and founded upon the confines of nothing); but of Darius son of Hystaspes, who succeeded Cambyses in the kingdom of Persia; being chosen king by the peers, upon the neighing of his horse first, as Herodotus testifieth. Whether this Darius was the husband of Queen Esther, as some affirm, or her son, as others (and was therefore so favourable to the Jews), I undertake not to determine; only take notice, that by heathen historians it is said, that the wife of this Darius was called Atossa, which sounds in part somewhat like Hadassah, that is, Esther, **#Es 2:7**. Hadassah was her own Hebrew name; and after she was made queen she was called Esther. He is called Darius the king, as if he were the only king on earth. His successor, Darius, in his proud embassy to Alexander, called himself the king of kings and cousin of the gods; and for Alexander, he called him his servant; but Alexander soon after became his lord: for the kingdom of Persia was lost by that Darius, as it had been restored by this to its former splendour, after the havoc made by Cambyses (*παλιν επι Δαρειου σχεδον εσωθη*); who among other vile acts of his (as "wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, according to the proverb of the ancients," **#1Sa 24:18**), forbade the building of the temple, **#Ezr 4:22**. But he who sets up princes at his pleasure, and turns their hearts whithersoever he will, **#Pr 21:1** (as the ploughman doth the watercourse with his paddle, or the gardener with his hand), turned here the heart of this great king to his people the Jews; so that he made a new decree for the advancement of the building, **#Ezr 5:8**. God also seasonably stirred up Haggai and Zechariah to quicken the people (who were soon after their return from Babylon grown cold again and careless), and so blessed their ministry, that the house, that is, the sanctuary, and the holy of holies, was finished in four years' time, or thereabouts, **#Ezr 6:14**. The outward court, and so the whole temple, in three years after that, as Josephus witnesseth.

**In the sixth month]** In the 3484th year of the world, as Ussher computeth it, on the first of September, *{confer #Hag 2:19}* when the Jews were ingathering their harvest and fruits, and found a dearth toward. This the prophet makes use of, pressing it upon the people as a just hand of God upon them, for slighting and slacking the rebuilding of his house. It is good for God's ministers to set in with him, to strike while the iron is hot, to cry, "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it," **#Mic 6:9**; for as iron is very soft and malleable while in the fire; and as molten metals are fit for the mould; so when men are under the cross they are more easily wrought upon; they will hearken to instruction, that before laughed at it, as the wild ass doth at the horse and his rider, **#Job 39:18**. The wild ass, that is used to the wilderness, though she kick up her heels, and snuff up the wind at her pleasure, so that they that seek her will not weary themselves, yet there is a time when she may be taken; in her month they shall find her, **#Jer 2:24**.

**In the first day of the month]** Heb. In one day. One for first is ordinary in both Testaments, **#Ge 1:5 Nu 29:1 Da 9:1 Mt 28:1 Joh 20:1 1Co 16:2**. The time of this prophecy (as of others, **#Isa 1:1 Jer 1:2,3, &c.**) is precisely noted, to teach us what account we should make of God's oracles and inspirations; and how God will one day reckon with us for the helps we have had and the time we have enjoyed them. He sets down all: how much more should we, and live up to our means and mercies, propagating our thankfulness into our practice! Jeremiah prophesied forty years, but with ill success; it was his unhappiness to be physician to a dying state, *Tunc etiam, docta plus valet arte malum*. The Holy Ghost sets a special mark upon these forty years of his prophesying, **#Eze 4:6**, by bidding the prophet lie forty days upon his right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days, a day for a year.

**Came the word of the Lord]** *i.e.* He began to prophesy, as **#Ezr 5:1**, being sent and set to work by God, whose alone it is to make fit ministers of either Testaments, **#2Co 3:5**, to send, gift, and bless them, **#Jer 23:21**. *Prophetarum ora sunt Dei os* The mouths of the prophets are the mouth of God. (Chrysost.).

**By Haggai the prophet]** Heb. by the hand of Haggai, that is, by his means and ministry. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"} Haggai signifieth merry and pleasant ( *Festivus et laetus* ), as at a solemn feast; which name of his excellence suited both with the time of his prophecy, viz. after the return from captivity, see **#Ps 126:1,2**, and also with the matter whereof he treats and whereto he drives, Christ, the Desire of all nations, **#Hag 2:7** Wilt thou be merry at any time? saith Seneca, think on Caesar: canst thou be sad and he be in health? How much more cause have we to be merry in the Lord Christ! Let us keep the feast with all solemnity; let us keep holy day (εορταζωμεν), since Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, **#1Co 5:7,8**. Let this swallow up all our discontents, and crown the calendar of our lives with continual festivals; let the ransomed of the Lord return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, &c., **#Isa 35:10**. The Septuagint ascribe certain of the Psalms to Haggai and Zechariah, in the titles they prefix; though some think that the Hallelujah Psalms (as they are called, because they begin and end with Hallelujah, or, Praise ye the Lord) were sung by the Jews, returning out of Babylon; those two prophets beginning the tune, or giving the verse (as they call it). And hereunto the prophet Jeremiah might have an eye, **#Jer 31:12** "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together, to the goodness of the Lord," &c.

**Unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel]** Philo saith he was also called Barachias; others Pedaiah, out of **#1Ch 3:19**. He is called Sheshbazzar, **#Ezr 1:8**. His name, Zerubbabel, signifieth either, Born in Babel, or, Far from confusion. A prince (of all men) should observe order, and keep the peace. By the laws of England a nobleman cannot be bound to the peace; because it is supposed that the peace is always bound to him, and that of his own accord he will be careful to keep others in good order. But what a *regnum Cyclopicum* was at Rome in Nero's days, *Quando poterat quisque ea quam cuperet potiri, negare licebat nemini? Turn servus cum Domina, praesente Domino suo, et gladiator cum virgine nobili inspectante patre rem habuit* (Dio in Vit. Neron). Blessed be God for better times.

**Governor of Judah]** Or duke, captain, provincial, president. The many headed multitude hath need of a guide, who may be ἀθορυβος και φρονιμος, peaceable and prudent (saith Plato), to keep and care for the welfare of his subjects. Such a one was Zerubbabel, *Nobilis genere, nobilior sanctitate*, Noble by birth, but more noble by his piety; drained from the dregs and sifted from the brans of the baser sort of people. In the seventeenth year of his age he led back part of the people from Babylon to Jerusalem, where he continued governor for the time of 58 years, saith Gryaenus. Those that make Darius in the text to be Darius Nothus must needs allow him a much longer life and government; which God, say they, granteth to some because he hath something to be done by them. The change of states may here also be remarked. This people was first governed by judges, or captains; then by kings, and now by captains again. So the principality of Edom, as it began with dukes, and rose to kings, so it returned to dukes again, after the death of Hadad, in Moses' time, **#1Ch 1:51 Ge 36:43**. *Adeo nihil est in vita firmum aut stabile* (ασταθμητον του βιου). Truly, nothing in life is fixed and secure. So uncertain are all things.

**And to Joshua the son of Josedech]** A brand plucked out of the fire, **#Zec 3:2**, and therefore the fitter for such a preferment, *ut in alto positus non altum sapiat* (Bernard). David came not to the kingdom till his soul was even as a weaned child, **#Ps 131:2**. Queen Elizabeth swam to her crown through a sea of sorrows. Matthias, King of Hungary, was taken from the prison to the throne. But to the business: Joshua, the high priest, was a type of Christ in regard, 1. Of his name, which signifieth a Saviour. 2. Of his office of high priesthood. 3. Of his partnership with Zerubbabel, in bringing the people home to their own country. The Lord Christ is both our Prince of life and our merciful and faithful High Priest, ever living to make request for us, **#Ac 2:15 Heb 4:14-16 7:24-28**

**The high priest, saying]** Zerubbabel and Jehoshua were the chieftains of the people; and though not themselves in fault, or, at least, nothing so much (for they were both very religious), yet they were not so forward and forth putting as they should have been in so excellent a work. Howsoever, if the task be not done, the taskmasters are beaten, **#Ex 5:14**. It is the misery of those that are



trusted with authority that their inferiors' faults are beaten upon their backs. If the people gather manna on the Lord's sabbath Moses and Aaron shall hear, "How long refuse ye to keep. my commandments?" #Ex 16:28. It is Mr Calvin's opinion that Haggai, therefore, addressed himself to these two principal persons; to the end that they might join their forces with him, in reprehending and exciting the people to the Lord's work. When the word and the sword go together there is great likelihood of much good to be done. Upon the sword of Charles the Great was written *Utriusque tabulae custos*. Guard of both tables of the law. And Queen Elizabeth riding progress once in Suffolk, said, that now she saw the reason why that county was so well governed, for she observed that all the justices coming to meet her had every one his minister next to his person.

Ver. 2. **Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying]** This title is oft used in these three last prophecies (eighteen different times in that eighth of Zechariah) because, being to build, they had many enemies; therefore had need of all encouragement. And Jerome, in his prologue, noteth it as an act of great courage in Haggai and Zechariah that, against the edict of King Artaxerxes (or Cambyses) and the oppositions of Sanballat, and other potent adversaries, they should stir up the people to build the temple; and as an act of heroic faith in the prince, priest, and people, to set upon the work, and finish it, "Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts," #Zec 4:6. See more of this title. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:17"} Doct. 1.

**This people say]** Words then have their weight; neither are men's tongues their own; but there is a Lord over them, {#Ps 12:4} that will call them to a strict account of all their waste words, #Mt 12:36, and hard speeches, #Jude 15, and then they shall experiment that by their words (which they haply held but wind) they shall be justified, and by their words condemned, #Mt 12:37. How good is it, therefore, to carry a pair of balances between the lips? *Nescit poenitenda loqui qui proferenda prius suo tradidit examini*, saith Cassiodore; He that weighs his words before he utters them shall prevent an after reckoning for them.

**The time is not come, the time, &c.]** He repeateth their frivolous and frigid excuses in their own very words; that he may the better

confute them, and the sooner bring them to a sight of their sin, *Usus est μμησει ut rei indignitatem amplificaret*. Sin and shifting came into the word together, **#Ge 3:12**. And this is still the vile poison of our hearts, that they will needs be naught, and yet never yield, but that there is reason to be made, and great sense in sinning. These Jews, likely, had both Scripture and reason to plead for their backwardness (as there is no wool so coarse but will take some colour; and the sluggard is wiser in his own eye than seven men that can render a reason, **#Pr 26:16**). For Scripture: To everything there is an appointed time, a set season, such as we can neither alter nor order, **#Ec 3:1 Hag 1:3** "There is a time to break down, and a time to build up." And that this time to rebuild the temple was not yet come, some might pretend that the seventy years foretold were not yet fully expired; others (with more show of reason) that they had been too hasty in laying the foundation long since, as appears by their ill success and many adversaries; that God, who had dwelt so long in a tabernacle, and was now worshipped at his newly created altar, would bear with them, if they first built their own houses, and then be more free to build his house, which they intended to do hereafter, with great care and cost. This is still the guise of graceless procrastinators, to future and fool away their own salvation. Hereafter, say they, may be time enough, and what need such haste to build the spiritual temple? In time comes grace, God is more merciful than so; and at what time soever a sinner repents from the bottom of his heart, &c. Fools and blind men (as our Saviour calls the Pharisees, **#Mt 23:17**), that thus stand trifling and baffling with God and their souls, being *semper victuri*, as Seneca saith, always about to do that which, if not well done, they are utterly undone for ever; for upon this little point of time hangs the crown of eternity. The gales of grace are uncertain, the day of grace (which is very clear and bright) is usually a short one. *Non licet in belle bis peccare*, It is not permitted to error twice in wartime, said Lamachus to a soldier of his brought before him, and pleading he would do so no more: so God will not suffer men twice to neglect the day of grace, which, if once past, will never dawn again. Let none, therefore, when pressed to the present now of meeting God by repentance, answer as Antipater, King of Macedonia, did, when one presented him a book treating of happiness, ου σχολάζω, I am not at leisure. Or as Archias, the Theban, when forewarned of a conspiracy

against him, cast the letters by, with *In crastinum seria*, and was slain ere the morrow came. Or as these Cunctators in the text, that had often in their mouth, "The time is not come, the time," &c., lest the very next minute they be cut off by death from all further time of repentance, acceptation, and grace for ever. Men may purpose, promise, expect a time of healing and happiness, when they shall be deceived, and find a time of terror and torment, #Jer 14:19. Some, when a dying, would have given a world for time: as I have heard (saith a reverend man) one crying day and night, call time again; but that could not be. As in war, so here, none are permitted to err twice. Time must be taken by the forelock, as being bald behind, *Posthac occasio calva*.

Ver. 3. **Then came the word of the Lord, &c.**] "Then," after a short silence, as it were, *profertur Domini quasi cogitata responsio*, follows the Lord's elaborate and deliberate answer, not without some touch of holy tartness at their ingratitude; for, of all things, God can least endure to be slighted where he hath better deserved. He looks upon such with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts, #Mr 3:5. He complains of such with a sigh; "Ah, sinful nation," #Isa 1:4; he is ready to rid his stomach of them, #Isa 1:24 "Ah, I will ease me," &c.

Ver. 4. **Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, &c.**] Not covered only, but ceiled with cedar (as the Chaldee here hath it), arched and garnished, as the Greek, carved and trimmed, as Ambrose rendereth it (Lib. 3. epist. 12). Sure, either your beds are very soft or your hearts very hard, that you can not only come into the tabernacles of your houses, but give sleep to your eyes, or slumber to your eyelids, before ye have found "a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob," #Ps 132:4,5. Good David could not find in his heart to dwell in a house of cedar when the ark of God dwelt within curtains, #2Sa 7:2. Valiant Uriah deemed it altogether unfit and unreasonable that when the ark, and Israel, and Judah, abode in tents, he should go to his house to eat and drink, and to take his ease and pleasure, #2Sa 11:11. Solomon first built a house for God, and then for himself. The Christian emperors, Constantine, Theodosius, Honorius, &c., exceeded in building churches, which, from their stateliness, were styled *Basilicae*, or places for a king. The very Turks to this day, though content to dwell in mean and homely houses, yet their Mosques or meeting houses

are very sumptuously built and set forth. It is a principle in nature, that the things of God are older and more to be respected than the things of men (τα του Θεου πρεσβυτερα η τα των ανθρωπων. Herodot.). A professor of the Turks' laws proclaims, before they attempt anything, that nothing be done against religion. This is better than that which was written over the gate of the senate house in Rome (which yet is not to be disliked, in its place and order), *Ne quid detrimenti Resp. capiat*. Let nothing be done to the harm of the republic. Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's: but with all, and above all, Give unto God the things that are God's. The Greek article is twice repeated by our Saviour, when he speaketh for God, more than when for Caesar (τα του θεου τω θεω, #Mt 22:21); to show that our special care should be to give God his due, to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and then all other things shall seek us. *Caetera aut aderunt, aut caetera non oberunt* The rest either will happen or the rest will not harm. (Cicero). But most people are so busied about their own houses, their cottages of clay, #2Co 5:1, the body, that God's house, the soul, lies waste and neglected; the lean kine eat up the fat; the strength of the ground is spent in nourishing weeds. Earthly mindedness sucketh the sap of grace from the heart, as the ivy doth from the oak, and maketh it unfruitful. Men are so taken up about the world, that they think not of God's kingdom: as the Duke of Alva told the French king, who asked him whether he had observed the recent great eclipse? No, said he, I have so much to do upon earth, that I have no leisure to look toward heaven. But is not one thing necessary, and all others but side businesses? And have we not in our daily prayer five petitions for spirituals and but one for temporals? Are we not taught to make it our first request, that God's name may be hallowed, though our turn should not be served? Is not Esau stigmatized for selling his birthright for a mess of broth? #Heb 12:16. And is not Shimei chronicled for a fool, who, by seeking after his servants, lost his life? Pope Sixtus for a madman, that sold his soul to the devil, to enjoy the Popedom for seven years? "What shall it profit a man to win the world and lose his own soul?" to win Venice, and then be hanged at the gates thereof, as the Italian proverb hath it? Surely such a man's loss will be, 1. Incomparable, 2. Irreparable; for "What shall a man give in exchange of his soul?" #Mt 16:26. It was no evil counsel that was given to John III, King of Portugal, to meditate

every day a quarter of an hour on that Divine sentence. It would be time well spent to ponder as often and as long together on this text, "Is it time for you, O ye," that are so sharp set upon the world, so wholly taken up about your private profits, your pleasures and preferments, to sit in your ceiled houses, as Ahab once did in his ivory palace, or Nebuchadnezzar in his house of the kingdom (as he vain gloriously calleth it, #Da 4:30), and God's house lie waste, and his service neglected, to whom we ourselves owe, #1Co 6:19, our lives, #Mt 16:25, our parents, children, friends, means, #Mt 19:29, our gifts and abilities, #1Co 4:7, our honours and offices, #Ps 2:10-12, all that we are and have? How justly may God curse our blessings (as he threateneth these self-seeking, God neglecting Jews both here and #Mal 2:2), scatter brimstone upon our houses, dry up our roots beneath, and above cut off our branches, drive us from light into darkness, and chase us out of the world with his terrors, #Job 16:15-21. Surely such are the (ceiled) dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God, that inverteth the order appointed of him, by coveting, not the best gifts, #1Co 12:21, but an evil covetousness, #Hab 2:9, by setting his affections, not on things above, but on things on the earth, by seeking their own things, every man, and not the things of Jesus Christ, #Col 3:2 Php 2:21.

Ver. 5. **Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts]** Haggai was but a young man, saith Epiphanius: now, therefore, lest any one that heard him should despise his youth, and slight his doctrine, he shows his authority, he comes to them *cum privilegio*, he delivers not the conceptions of his own brain, but the word and mind of God. For as Chrysostom saith of St Paul, so may we say of all the rest of the penmen of the Holy Scripture, *Cor Pauli est cor Christi*, The mind of Paul is the mind of Christ, their heart is Christ's own heart; and their words are to be received, revered, and ruminated, not as the words of mortal men, but (as they are indeed) the words of the ever living God, #1Th 2:13. Excellently spake he who called the Scripture *cor et animam Dei*, the heart and soul of God. It is, every whit of it, divinely inspired, or breathed by God, saith the apostle, and is profitable both for reproof and for instruction in righteousness, #2Ti 3:16. See an instance hereof in this text, together with the prophet's rhetorical artifice in first chiding, and now directing them: to reprove, and not withal to instruct, is to snuff the lamp, but not pour in oil that may feed it.

**Consider your ways]** Heb. set your hearts upon them, diligently recogitate and recognize your evil doings; and so shall ye soon find out the cause of your calamity. Judge yourselves, so shall ye not be judged of the Lord: accept the punishment of your iniquity, so iniquity shall not be your ruin; your ruth (repentance), but not your ruin, **#1Co 11:30 Le 26:41 Eze 18:32**. *Capite consilium ex rebus ipsis, vel experimentis*, Learn at least by the things ye have suffered: let experience, the mistress of fools, reduce you to a right mind. Lay to heart your manifold miseries, those διδασκαλοι αμισθοι, as one calleth them, free school masters, cursed enough and crabbed, but such as whereby God openeth men's ears to discipline, and eyes to observation of his works and their own ways, **#Job 36:8-10**; according to that of **#Eze 40:4** "Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I shall show thee," &c.: the senses must be exercised that the heart may be affected with the word and works of God; according to that, "mine eye affecteth my heart," **#La 3:51**; and Solomon got much of his wisdom by observation, as appeareth by his Ecclesiastes, which some have not unfitly called Solomon's soliloquy. It is but little that can be learned in this life without due and deep consideration; which is nothing else but an act of the practical understanding, whereby it reflects and stays upon its own intentions; and, comparing them with the rule, it proceeds to lay a command upon the will and affections to put them in execution. Thus David considered his ways, and, finding all out of order he turned his feet to God's testimonies, **#Ps 119:59**. And, to still God's enemies, **#Ps 4:4**, he bids them commune with their own hearts and be still, or, make a pause, viz. till they have brought their consideration to some good upshot and conclusion. For when consideration hath soundly enlightened a man's mind, informed his judgment according to that light (that candle held to his mind), and determined his will according to that judgment, it must needs bring forth sound resolutions purposes, and practices; as it did in the Ninevites, Ephraim, **#Jer 31:19**, Josiah, **#2Ch 34:27**, the prodigal, **#Lu 15:17-19**, the Church in Hosea, **#Ho 2:6,7**. She considered she was crossed, and hedged in with afflictions, and resolved to return to her first husband. The contrary inconsiderateness is complained about as a public mischief, **#Jer 6:8 8:6 12:11**. They have laid it waste, and being waste it mourneth unto

me; the whole land lieth waste, because no man layeth it to heart, that is, considereth deeply of the cause of its desolation. Without this, though a man had all possible knowledge locked up in his brain and breast, it would be but as rain in the middle region, where it doth no good; as the horn in the unicorn's head, where it helps no disease; or as a fire in a flintstone, insensible and unprofitable till beaten out by sound consideration; this makes knowledge to become experimental, as **#Ps 116:6** **Ro 8:1,2**; this is to "follow on to know the Lord," **#Ho 6:3**, as without this men's knowledge is but a flash, and may end in ignorance and profaneness; because never formed and seated in their hearts, never digested by due meditation and application to their own consciences.

Ver. 6. **Ye have sown much and bring in little**] This was visible to them; and they are called upon to consider it. The philosopher affirms that man is therefore the wisest of creatures, because he alone can compute and consider. And yet how little doth man respect this privilege, without which he were to be sorted with beasts or madmen! "God hearkened and heard, but no man spake advisedly, no man repented of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?" **#Jer 8:6**; no man humbled himself under the mighty hand of God, though God thrust him down, as it were, with a thump upon the back. Most men's minds are as ill set as their eyes are; neither of them look inwards. "Lord," saith the prophet, "when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see," &c., **#Isa 26:11**. So, when God's rod call for reformation they will not hear it and who hath appointed it, but they shall hear, **#Job 33:15**. Conscience, their domestic chaplain, shall ring this peal in their ears, "Consider your ways: Ye have sowed much but brought in little," &c. *Omnia fuistis et nihil profuit*, you have tried all ways to live, and it will not be, laboured all night, and taken nothing, "laboured in the very fire, and wearied yourselves for your vanity," **#Hab 2:13**; as those that seek after the philosopher's stone, the most they can look for is their labour for their pains. Either vanity or violence hath exhausted you, as **#Zec 8:10**, and God's vengeance is visible enough in those secret issues and drains of expense at which your estates run out, because he puts not his holy finger on the hole in the bottom of the bag. For it is his blessing alone that maketh rich, **#Pr 10:22** "and except he build the house, they labour in vain that build it," **#Ps 127:1**. There is a curse upon unlawful practices, though men be never so

industrious, as in Jehoiakim, **#Jer 22:13-19** And all their policies, without dependence upon him for direction and success, are but *arena sine calce*, sand without lime; they will not hold together when we have most need of them, but fall asunder, like untempered mortar. Hence the Psalmist assureth us that "promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor yet from the south," where the warm sunshine is, "but from the Lord: he putteth down one, and setteth up another," **#Ps 75:6**. So Hannah: "The Lord," saith she, "maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up," **#1Sa 2:7**. And albeit no man knows either love or hatred by all that is before them, because all things come alike to all, **#Ec 9:1,2** (God maketh a scatter, as it were, of these outward commodities: good men gather them, bad men scramble for them), yet if he blow upon a man's estate, and by losses and crosses so beat him down with his own bare hand (as here in the text) that either he hath not to eat, or dare not eat his fill for fear of wanting another day, or if he do eat, yet the staff of bread being broken, and for want of God's concurrence, he eats and is not satisfied, &c., he hath but prisoners' pittance, which will neither keep him alive nor yet suffer him to die; he is to be very sensible of it, to consider his ways, and looking upon his penury (as a piece of the curse for neglect of God's service, **#Le 26:14-20**), to deprecate that last and worst of miseries, the judgment of pining away in their iniquities, **#Le 26:39**. This is worse than any scarcity, than any bulimy or doggish appetite, a disease common in times of famine. "The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want," **#Pr 14:25**. As his belly prepareth deceit, **#Job 15:35**, so it suffers deceit; *imposturam faciunt et patiuntur*; as the emperor said of them that sold glass for pearls. *Fumos vendidit, fumo pereat*, he that sells vapours let him pass away as a vapour. as another. Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little, as it followeth, **#Hag 1:9**; and why? but because they thought every little too much for God, and all well saved that was kept from him, **#Mal 3:9-11**. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:9"} {See Trapp on "Mal 3:10"} {See Trapp on "Mal 3:11"} The Popish commentators upon this text call upon the people (if ever they mean to thrive) to keep holy days, to hear masses, &c.; yea, some priests in Gerson's time publicly preached to the people that whosoever would hear a mass he should not fall blind on that day, nor be taken away by sudden death, nor want sufficient sustenance, *Non erit caecus, nec subito*



*moriatur, nec carebit sufficienti sustentatione.* This was more than they had good warrant to promise; and yet they are believed. Shall not we learn to live by faith, to trust "in the Lord and do good? so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed," **#Ps 37:3**. The wicked in the fulness of their sufficiency are in straits, **#Job 20:22**. Contrarily, the godly, in the fulness of their straits are in a sufficiency; and this is the gain of godliness, **#1Ti 6:6**. Piety is never without a well-contenting sufficiency, it hath treasure that faileth not, bags that wax not old, **#Lu 12:33**; and shall have hereafter riches without rust, wealth without want, store without sore, beauty without blemish, mirth without mixture.

Ver. 7. **Consider your ways]** See **#Hag 1:5**. Do it early and earnestly. *Excute vos, iterumque excute*, as Tremellius rendereth that in **#Zep 2:1** "Search you, search you, O nation not worthy to be beloved." So **#La 3:40** "Let us search and try our ways." Not search only, but try, and, as it were, sift them to the bran. So **#2Co 13:5** "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves," as it were, with redoubled diligence, in a most needful but much neglected duty, of dealing with your own hearts. But if ye will not, see that flaming place, **#Eze 16:43**. If men will not judge themselves, God will; as, though scholars will not scan their verses, their masters will. Men are as loth to review their actions, and read the blurred writings of their own hearts, as schoolboys are to parse their lessons and false Latins they have made. But as he who will not cast up his books, his books will cast up him at length; so those that will not consider their ways, and take themselves to task, shall find that sparing a little pains at first will double it in the end; and that the best that can come of this forlorn negligence is the bitter pangs of repentance. Oh, therefore, that, with Solomon's wise man, we had our eyes in our heads, and not in the corners of the earth! **#Ec 2:14**. And that our eyes were, like the windows in Solomon's temple, broad inward, that we might see our sins to confession, so should we never see them to our confusion, **#1Ki 6:4**. The Israelites confessed their murmuring and stubbornness when God sent evil angels among them, that is, some messengers of his wrath and displeasure. The prophet Haggai here would have their posterity consider, and better consider, since the hand of God was so heavy upon them, and that he came against them, as it were, with a drawn

sword, how they might disarm his just indignation by a speedy reformation. To which purpose he addeth,

Ver. 8. **Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, &c.**] Set upon the work, and be serious; build the temple with like zeal as Baruch repaired the wall, **#Ne 3:20**, *accendit seipsum*, he burst out into a heat, being angry with his own and others' sloth; and so finished his task in a short time. It must be an earnest, upright, and constant endeavour of reformation that must follow upon our sense of sin and fear of wrath; or else all will be but *motus aliquis evanidus* (as Calvin on the text hath it), a very flash; it will be but as prints made on water; as soon as finger is off all is out. It was certainly, therefore, an excellent saying of Luther (though condemned for heretical by Pope Leo X), *Optima et aptissima poenitentia est nova vita*. Amendment of life is the best repentance; neither is there any wiser way to break off our sins than to practise the contrary duties. He that repents with a contradiction (saith Tertullian), God will pardon him with a contradiction. Thou repentest and yet continuest in thy sin. God will pardon thee and yet send thee to hell. Those that will have God to take pleasure in them, as in his temple, to love them and come unto them, and make his abode with them, **#Joh 14:23**, to dwell in them, and walk in them, **#2Co 6:16** (as they did in Solomon's porch, and other walks and galleries about the temple, **#Zec 3:7**), to be glorified in them (accounting himself to receive, as it were, a new being, by those inward conceptions of his glory, and those outward honours we do to his name), they must go up to the mountain, not of Lebanon (though that was a pleasant and plentiful place, **#De 3:25**), but of heaven, that hill from whence comes their help, and bring wood (growing wood, **#So 1:17**, living stones, **#1Pe 2:5**), and build the house, **#1Co 3:9 Eph 2:22**, laying faith for a foundation, love for a covering, having hope for a pinnacle, humility for a pavement, washing it with tears, sweeping it by repentance, beautifying it with holiness, perfuming it with prayers, hanging it with sincerity. So shall Christ the King be held in the galleries, **#So 7:5**, he shall covet their beauty, **#Ps 45:12**, and be held fast bound to them in the bands of pure affection and spiritual wedlock. He will take pleasure in them, as he did in those that prayed in or toward the temple, **#De 12:11 1Ki 8:29**, as he did in Daniel, that man of desires, **#Da 9:23**, in David, God's *corculum*, or darling, **#1Sa 13:14**, in his Hephzibah, or sweetheart, the Church, **#Isa 62:4**,

called elsewhere the beloved of his soul, or his beloved soul: and he will be glorified in them by their spiritual sacrifices, #1Pe 2:5, reasonable services, #Ro 12:1, performed in spirit and in truth, #Joh 4:24, by some one of which God is more glorified than by all the actions of unreasonable or unregenerate creatures.

Ver. 9. **Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little]** *Spes in oculis, luctus in manibus*, as Jerome here. The hope of unjust men perisheth, #Pr 11:7, *etiam spes valentissima*, his likeliest hope, as some render it; he thinks himself sure, as Esau did of the blessing, but he only thinks so; God cuts off the meat from his mouth, #Joh 1:16, takes away his corn in the time thereof, #Ho 2:9, confutes him in his confidences, which prove like the brooks of Tema, #Job 6:17, and serve him as Absalom's mule did her master; his high hopes hop headless, as one phraseth it. It happens with him as with those perverse Israelites in the wilderness, made to tack about forty-two times after that they thought themselves sure of the promised land.

**I did blow upon it]** *i.e.* I dispersed it with ease. By a like phrase (for sense) God is said, #Isa 25:11, to spread forth his hands in the midst of his enemies, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim; and to bring down their pride, together with the spoils of their hands, with greatest facility. The motion in swimming is easy, not strong; for strong violent strokes in the water would rather sink than support. In like sort God blasted their treasure or blew their hoards hither and thither, he consumed their substance and cursed their blessings, as #Mal 2:2. {See Trapp on "Mal 2:2"}

**Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, &c.]** Their sin of preferring their own private interests and self-respects before God's work and service is here repeated, and exaggerated, as the ground and cause of all their calamities: and all little enough to bring them to a sound and serious sight and hatred of their sins. Such a deep kind of drowsiness hath surprised us, for the most part, that whereas every judgment of God should be a warning peal to repent, we be like the smith's dog, who the harder the anvil is beaten on lieth by and sleepeth the sounder; or like the silly hen, which loseth her chickens one by one by the devouring kite, and yet, as altogether insensible of her loss, continues to pick up what lieth before her. This is to swelter and pine away in iniquity, as if nothing

could awaken men, #Le 26:39, and it is threatened last of all, as worse than all their losses, captivities, &c. A lethargy is no less deadly than the most tormenting disease. Let ministers, therefore, by such forcible and quick questions as this in the text and otherwise, arouse their hearers (as they once did here their dear friends in the sweating sickness, who, if suffered to sleep, died certainly), that they may awake, and recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, &c. It is well observed by one that the devil's particular sin is not once mentioned in Genesis, because he was not to be restored by repentance; but the sin of man is enlarged in all the circumstances. And why this? but that he might be sensible, ashamed, and penitent for his sin. They say in philosophy that the foundation of natural life is feeling; no feeling, no life; and that the more quick and nimble the sense of feeling is in a man the better is his constitution. Think the same of life spiritual, and of that hidden man of the heart, as St Peter calls him.

**And ye run every man unto his own house]** Or, ye take pleasure every man in his own house, *q.d.* Ye are all self-seekers, privatespirited persons, ye are all for your own interests; like the snail, that seldom stirs abroad, and never without his house upon his back; or like the eagle, which, when he flies highest, hath still an eye downward to the prey, that he minds to seize. *In parabola oves capras suas quaerunt.* In the parable of the sheep, he seeks his sheep. They serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, #Ro 16:18; or if they serve Christ, it is for gain, as children will not say their prayers unless we promise them their breakfasts. In serving him they do but serve themselves upon him; as those carnal Capernaïtes did, #Joh 6:26. Well might the apostle complain, as #Php 2:21, and another since, that it is his pleasures, his profit, and his preferment that is the natural man's trinity; and his carnal self that is these in unity. May he be but warm in his own feathers, he little regards the dangers of the house. He is *totus in se*, wholly drawn up into himself, and insensible of either the public good or common danger: though the waterpot and spear be taken from the bolster, yet he stirs not. Far enough from St Paul's frame of spirit or speech, Who is offended, and I burn not? far enough from his care and cumber, anxiety and solicitude for the house of God (ἐπισυστασις μεριμνά) and prosperity of his people, #2Co 11:28.

Nothing like they are to Ambrose, who was more troubled for the state of the Church than for his own dangers. Nothing like Melancthon, of whom it is said, that the ruins of God's house and the miseries of his people made him almost neglect the death of his most beloved children. True goodness is public spirited, though to private disadvantage; as nature will venture its own particular good for the general, so will grace much more. Heavy things will ascend to keep out vacuity and preserve the universe. A stone will fall down to come to its own place, though it break itself in twenty pieces. It is the ingenuity of saints, in all their desires and designs, to study God's ends more than their own; to build God's house with neglect of their own, as Solomon did; to drown all self-respects in his glory and the public good, as Nehemiah did; of whom it might be more truly said than the heathen historian (Dio) did of Cato, that he did *υπεραγαπᾶν το κοινον*, overly loved the commonwealth, and that he did— *toti genitum se credere mundo*, believe himself born for the benefit of mankind (Lucan).

Ver. 10. **Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from rain, &c.]** It is never well with man (whose life is ever *in fuga*, in flight, as the philosopher hath it, and must be maintained by meat, as the fire is by fuel) till God "hear the heaven, and the heaven hear the earth, and the earth hear the corn, the wine, and the oil, and these hear Jezreel," #Ho 2:21,22, where we may see the genealogy of these good creatures resolved into God. The earth, though a kind mother, cannot open her bowels, and yield "seed to the sower, and bread to the eater," if not watered from above. The heaven, though the storehouse of God's good treasure, which he openeth to our profit and nourishment, #De 28:12, cannot drop down fatness upon the earth if God close it up, and withhold the seasonable showers. This the very heathens acknowledged in their fictions of Jupiter and Juno; and the Metapontines, having had a good harvest, consecrated χρυσου θερος, a harvest cut in gold, to their god, in the temple at Delphi. Now, when a rabble of rebels shall conspire against God, and fight against him with his own weapons, as Jehu did against Jehoram with his own men, what can he do less than cut them short? that make them know the worth of his benefits by the want of them?

Ver. 11. **than call for a drought &c.]** and so for a dearth (which inevitably followed in those hot countries), and consequently for pestilence and sword, the usual concomitants? The Septuagint for

drought here (by a mistake of points) translate a sword *Pro chorebb legunt cherib*. And in the original there is an elegance alliteration past the ability to translate. Because my house is *chareb*, that is, waste, therefore I have called for a *choreb*, drought, or for a *chereb*, a sword, which shall in like sort lay your land waste and make your houses desolate; according to that which is threatened, **#De 28:15-68 Mt 23:38**. And in the very next chapter **#Mt 24:7**, Christ telleth his apostles that those refractory Jews, and others, that rejected him, the true temple, in "whom the Godhead dwelt bodily," **#Col 2:9**, that is, essentially (and not in clouds and ceremonies, as once between the cherubims, which they used to call Shechinah), because they loathed the heavenly manna, therefore they should be pined with famine. They that would have none of the gospel of peace should taste deeply of the miseries of war. They that despised the only medicine of their souls should be visited with pestilence. The black horse is ever at the heels of the red; and the pale of the black **#Re 6:4**. As there hath been a conjuncture of offences, so there will be of miseries; a conflux of them abideth the neglecters of God's house, the contemnners of his gospel. Ursine tells us, that those that fled from England for religion in Queen Mary's days, acknowledged that that great inundation of misery came justly upon them, for their unprofitableness under the means of grace, which they had enjoyed in King Edward's days. Zanchy likewise tells us, that when he first came to be pastor at Clavenna there happened a grievous pestilence in that town, so that in seven months' time there died twelve hundred persons. Their former pastor, Mainardus, that man of God, as he calleth him, had often foretold such a calamity, for their profaneness and Popery; but he could never be believed till the plague had proved him a true prophet; and then they remembered his words, and wished they had been warned by him (Zanch. Miscel. ep. ad Lantgrav.). Let us also fear, lest for our many and bony sins (as the prophet's expression is, **#Am 5:12**, *Peccata ossea*, bony sins *i.e. fortia*) strong, but especially for our hateful and horrible contempt of his servants and services (never the, like known), we pull upon our land Amos's famine, not of bread, but (which is a thousandfold worse) of hearing the words of the Lord, **#Am 8:11**; a famine long since foretold and feared by our martyrs and confessors; and now, if ever (if God forefend not), *in procinctu*, in readiness of battle to fall upon us, as the most unworthy and unthankful people that ever the

sun of heaven beheld or the sun of Christ's gospel shone upon so fair and so long together. The best way of prevention is prevision and reformation; beginning at our own, as Gideon did at his father's household, **#Jud 6:27**. And the best almanack we can rely upon for seasonable weather and the lengthening of our tranquillity is our obedience to God, love to our neighbours, care of ourselves.

Ver. 12. **Then Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, &c.]** So mighty in operation, so quick and powerful, is the good word of God in the mouths of his faithful ministers, when seconded and set on by his Holy Spirit. See for this **#Isa 55:10,11 Jer 23:28,29 Ac 19:20 1Co 14:24,25 Heb 4:12**. See that *scala coeli*, ladder of heaven, as one calleth it, **#Ro 10:14,15**, and consider how mightily the word of God grew and prevailed in those primitive times. It spread through the world like a sunbeam, saith Eusebius; it was carried about into all places as on eagles', or, rather, as on angels' wings. Athanasius of old and Luther of late, were strangely upheld and prospered against a world of opposers to the truth they preached. Farellus gained five large cities with their territories to Christ. How admirably and effectually King Edward VI was wrought upon by a sermon of Bishop Ridley's, touching works of charity, see his Life, written by Sir John Heywood. It is the Spirit that quickeneth the seed of the word, and maketh it prolific and generative. And as in the body there are veins to carry the blood, and arteries to carry the spirits that quicken the blood; so is it with the word and spirit in the soul. If God's Spirit open not man's heart, the word cannot enter. If he enlighten not both organ and object, Christ, though never so powerfully preached, is both unkent and unkist, as the northern proverb hath it. The word heard profited them not, because not mixed with faith in them that heard it, **#Heb 4:2**. They heard it only with the hearing of the ear, with that gristle that grew on the outside of the head; whereas they should have drawn up the inward ear to the outward, that one and the same sound might have pierced both. But this all that hear cannot do, because all are not of God, **#Joh 8:47**, and so have not his earmark, spiritual senses habitually exercised to discern good and evil, **#Heb 5:14**; they have a heavy ear, which is a singular judgment, **#Isa 6:10**.

**With all the remnant of the people]** *i.e.* The generality of the returned captives followed their leaders. A remnant they are called,

because but few in comparison of those many hedge rogues, Mr Dyke calleth them, potters they are called, #1Ch 4:23, men of base and low spirits, that dwelt still in Babylon among plants and hedges; being the base brood of those degenerated Israelites, who, when liberty was proclaimed for their return to Jerusalem, chose rather to get their living by making pots for the King of Babylon. These are ancient, or rather obsolete things, as Junius rendereth it, worn out and forgotten; and indeed they deserve to be utterly forgotten, and not written or reckoned among the living in Jerusalem, #Isa 4:4.

**Obedied the voice of the Lord their God]** With the obedience of faith; and this they did by the good example of their rulers. Thus, when Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed, many of the Corinthians believed also, #Ac 18:8, When the kings of Judah were good or evil the people were so likewise. Great men are the lookingglasses of their country; according to which most men dress themselves. *Qualis Rex, talis grex.* How excellent a king, such a great company. "Why compellest thou the Gentiles," said Paul to Peter, so, by thine example, to Judaize? #Ga 2:14.

**And the words of Haggai the prophet]** Whose mouth God was pleased to make use of. And this is added for a confirmation of the prophet's calling to the work; because of long time before there had been no prophet among the people, nor any to tell how long, as the Church complaineth, #Ps 74:9.

**As the Lord their God had sent him]** Heb. according as the Lord their God had sent him, after the same manner they heard, and obeyed the prophet, as the Lord had sent him; they did not wrest his words to a wrong sense; nor did they question his commission; but receiving it as the word, not of man, but of God, they set forthwith upon the work, yielding as prompt and present obedience, as if God with his own mouth had immediately spoken to them from heaven.

**And the people did fear before the Lord]** As if he himself had been visibly present in his own person. So St Peter's hearers, #Ac 10:33, Now, therefore, say they, we are all here present before God, to hear all things commanded thee of God. If young Samuel had known that it was the Lord that called him once and again he would



not have returned to his bed to sleep. If men were well persuaded that the God of heaven bespeaks them by his faithful ministers they would not give way to wilful wanderings, but hear as for life, and fear to do anything unworthy of such a presence; they would work out their salvation with fear and trembling, yea, work hard at it, as afraid to be taken with their task undone. "They that fear the Lord will keep his covenant," saith David, **#Ps 103:13** "Fear God, and keep his commandments," saith Solomon, **#Ec 12:14** "And, in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him," saith Peter, **#Ac 10:35**.

Ver. 13. **Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger**] Or angel. {*See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"*} (Then speaks) Namely, on the four and twentieth day of the month, as it is in the last verse; until which day they had been building for three weeks together. But Governor Tatnai and his complices came upon them, and discouraged the people and hindered the work, **#Ezr 5:6,8**. It was but needful, therefore, that God's command should be repeated, and a special promise added, "I am with you," saith the Lord. Where we may well take up that of Cicero concerning Brutus' laconical epistle, *Quam multa, quam paucis!* how much in a little. "I am with you," saith the Lord, you need not therefore fear what man can do unto you. God is all-sufficient to those that are altogether his, see **#2Ch 15:2**. The Church is called Jehovah Shammah, that is, "The Lord is there," **#Eze 48:35** "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved," **#Ps 46:5**. *Immota manet* may better be her motto than Venice's. She is surely invincible, **#Zec 12:5-7**, as having a mighty champion, even the Holy One of Israel; and this makes her (though but a virgin) to laugh to scorn her proudest enemies; yea, to shake her head at them, **#Isa 37:22,23**, as rather to be pitied than envied. There were they in great fear (saith David, of the Church's enemies); for what reason? God is in the generation of the righteous, **#Ps 14:5** Hence those Philistines were so woe-begone, **#1Sa 4:7**. And the Egyptians no less, **#Ex 14:25**. Let us flee, say they, from the face of Israel; for the Lord fights for them. "What shall we then say to these things?" saith Paul (who had often heard when he was in the enemy's hand, Fear not, I am with thee), "If God be for us, who can be against us?" who dare be so fool-hardy, so ambitious of his own destruction? Hath ever any waxed fierce against God and prospered? **#Job 9:4**. Where is Pharaoh, Nero, Nebuchadnezzar, &c.? Was it safe for these or any

other to provoke the Lord to anger? were they stronger than he? Oh that men would (according to Solomon's counsel) meddle with their match, and not contend with him that is mightier than they! Can God be with his people and see them abused to his face? Will they force the queen also before him in the house, #Es 7:8. Will they, giant-like, fight against God? will they needs touch the apple of his eye, that tenderest piece of the tenderest part? Will they invade his portion, plunder him of his jewels, pull the signet from his right hand? Surely God is so with his people, that as he taketh notice of the least courtesy done to them to reward it (even to a cup of cold water), so of the least affront or offence, to revenge it, be it but a frown or a frump, #Ge 4:6 Nu 12:10 "Better a millstone were hanged," &c. Better anger all the witches in the country than one of God's zealous witnesses, #Re 11:5. Death cannot hurt them, #Ps 23:3. Hell could no more hold them (the pains of hell got hold on David, but he was delivered, #Ps 116:3) than the whale could hold Jonas; it must needs render them up again, because God is with them. Now I had rather be in hell (said Luther) with God than in heaven without him, and it were far safer for me.

Ver. 14. **And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, &c.]** Here is the appendix of the foregoing sermon, whereof we have heard but the brief notes. That one word, I am with you, seconded and set on by God's holy Spirit, set them all to work. "How forcible are right words!" #Job 6:25. One seasonable truth falling on a prepared heart hath often a strong and sweet operation, *sc.* when God is pleased to work with it, and make it effectual; this man cannot do no more than the husbandman can make a harvest. "The weapons of our warfare are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds," #2Co 10:4. Luther, having heard Staupicius say, that that is kindly repentance which begins from the love of God, found from that time forward the practice of repentance far sweeter to him than before. Galeacius Caracciolus, an Italian marquis, was converted by an apt similitude used by Peter Martyr, reading on the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Dr Taylor, martyr, blessed God that ever he became fellow prisoner to that angel of God (as he called him), John Bradford. Senarclaeus (in his epistle to Bucer, prefixed before the history of the death of John Diarius, slain by his own brother, as Abel was, for religion's sake), I remember, saith he, when he and I were together at Newburg, the day before his

slaughter, he gave me a great deal of grave and gracious counsel: *Ego vero illius oratione sic incendebam, ut cum eum disserentem audirem, Spiritus Sancti verba me audire existimarem, i.e.* I was so stirred up with his discourse, as if I had heard the Holy Ghost himself speaking unto me; so fervent was he, and full of life; for he first felt what he spake, and then spake what he felt. So should all do that desire to speak to purpose; and then pray to God, as for a door of utterance, so for a door of entrance to be opened unto them; such as St Paul had to the heart of Lydia, and as Bishop Ridley had to the heart of good King Edward VI, whereof before.

**And they came and did work]** The governors also, by overseeing others, and ruling the business by their discretion. Where God's glory and the common good is concerned all sorts must set to their helping hand.

**Ver. 15. In the four and twentieth day]** {See Trapp on "Hag 1:13"} The time is diligently noted, to teach us to take good note of the moments of time, wherein matters of moment have been, by God's help, begun, continued, and perfected in the Church. This will be of singular use, both for the increase of faith and of good affection in our hearts.

## Chapter 2

**Ver. 1. In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month]** This is the preface to the fourth sermon, as some reckon it; noting the exact time when it was delivered. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:1"} {See Trapp on "Hag 1:15"}

**Came the word of the Lord]** This he often inculcated, to set forth the truth of his calling, and validity of his commission. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:5"}

**By the prophet Haggai]** Heb. by the hand of the prophet. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:1"}

**Ver. 2. Speak now to Zerubbabel, &c.]** The better to hearten them on in the work, the prophet is sent again to them, with a like message as before. Note here, 1. That there are none so forward for God and his work but may stand in need of continual quickening; there being more snares and backbiting earth than there are stars in heaven; and the good gift of God having so much need of righting

up; for, like a dull sea coal fire, if it be not now and then blown or stirred up, though there be no want of fuel, yet will of itself at length die and go out. Besides that, every inch, every artery of our bodies, if it could, would swell with hellish venom to the size of the largest giant, that it might make resistance to the work of God's sanctifying Spirit. Let us, therefore, consider one another, and study every man his brother's case, to stir up, or whet on, to love and good works, **#Heb 10:24**. God will not forget this our labour of love, but abundantly both regard and reward it, **#Mal 3:16**. See the notes there. 2. That continual preaching makes men continue in well doing. Therefore it was that Barnabas was sent to Antioch, **#Ac 11:22,23**, who, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. And hence also it was that Paul and Barnabas, {#Ac 14:21} returned again to Lystra and to Iconium and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and ordaining preachers everywhere for that very purpose, for the increase of their knowledge, for the strengthening of their faith, for the help of their memories, and for the quickening of their affections. *Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi sed saepe cadendo*. God's tender plants need be often watered that they may spring and sprout, *Plantas tenellas frequentius adaquare proderit* (Primas.).

**And to the residue of the people]** *Non enim sacris Eleusiniis, quae in vulgus apargi nefas erat similia sunt oracula Dei*, saith an interpreter here. God's oracles are not to be hidden from the common sort, as Sibylla's were, and as the Popish doctors hold, lest men should be made heretics thereby, that is, right believers. It is heresy, saith one of them, to read the Scriptures. It was the invention of the devil, saith another. A husbandman, reading the Scriptures, was possessed, saith a third. It is not needful for the common sort to know more of God's mind than the Articles of the Creed, saith Aquinas, Bellarmine, &c. John Barclay, in his Parenesis, excusing the Church of Rome for taking away the Scriptures from the common people, saith thus, *Sed de his quoque providit Ecclesia concionibus, in quibus Evangelia referuntur, &c.*: But for this the Church hath made sufficient provision by appointing sermons to be made upon the Gospels for the day, and by permitting books of devotion wherein much use is made of the Holy Scriptures. And for

the historical part of the Old Testament, saith he, men may read Josephus's Antiquities, where it is set down more plainly and plentifully than in the Bible, &c. But I am weary of raking in this foul channel.

Ver. 3. **Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?**] Some such there were among them (as is here implied), and these must needs be very old, one hundred and twenty, at least, some say more. Zerubbabel might well be one of these; for he was a chieftain in the first year of Cyrus, **#Ezr 2:2**. And Jehoshua, the high priest, might be another; for he came out of Babylon with Zerubbabel at the same time, **#Ezr 3:2**. We see by experience that men's lives are daily shortened. Natural reasons whereof may be these. 1. Untimely marriages. 2. Filling our bodies with variety of foods, and so digging our own graves with our own teeth. 3. Much ease and delicacy. The supernatural reason may be that so the world may sooner come to an end. God maketh haste to have the number of his elect fulfilled, and therefore dispatcheth away the generations, shorteneth life for his elect's sake, fetcheth home his pilgrims, makes their days few, though evil, {#Ge 47:9} takes them away from the evil to come, &c., death being to them *aerumnarum requies* rest from all toils, (as Chaucer's motto was), yea, *ianua vitae, porta coeli*, the door of life, the gate to heaven, the daybreak of eternal brightness.

**And how do ye see it now?**] It is a part of old men's prudence rightly to compare things long since past with things present, and so to conjecture at things to come. Thus the prudent person, by discourse of reason, foreseeth an evil and hideth himself, when the young fool passeth on and is punished.

**Is it not in your eyes?**] That is, in your thoughts; for God taketh notice of the inward workings of the heart, **#1Sa 16:7 Ps 139:2 1Ki 8:39**. For he made the heart, and must therefore know all that is in it; as a watchmaker knows all the wheels and motions of the watch. He also will bring every secret thing into judgment, **#Ec 12:14**. Therefore thought is not free (as foolish folk dote), either from the notice of his eye (he had soon found out these Jews, when they did but despise the day of small things in their hearts, **#Zec 4:10**), or from the censure of his mouth, **#Heb 4:12,13 Ro 7:14** (the law is

spiritual and meets with involuntary motions to sin, #Hag 2:7), or, lastly, from the stroke of his hand, which is a mighty hand, #1Pe 5:6, and falls very heavy, #De 29:19, even for a root of bitterness, as it is there, for vain thoughts, #Jer 4:14; how much more for mischievous, murderous, covetous, vain-glorious, and adulterous thoughts, &c. It were good, therefore, to write upon walls and windows (yea, would it were written upon the tables of our hearts) that short motto, which as short as it is, yet our memories are shorter, *Cave, Deus videt*, Take heed, God looks on; for he is omnipresent and omniscient.

**Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?**] A mere non-entity or nullity? not fit to be named in the same day with the former temple? For, first, Cyrus appointed the full proportion of this second house, the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits, #Ezr 6:3, which was but one-half so large as Solomon's temple. Herod indeed, to curry favour with the Jews (which yet would never be), built upon Solomen's foundation, and bestowed a great deal of cost, if we may believe Josephus. But so could not these Jews do, that returned from Babylon; for they were (secondly) but few, and those also poor, and, though helped both by Cyrus and Darius, yet they were glad to build the temple of common stone, and unpolished, nothing like those precious carved stones wherewith Solomon built, #1Ki 6:36. Thirdly, God hereby would draw their minds from the legal ceremonies and services; the Sun of Righteousness being now ready to arise upon them, the Dayspring from on high to visit them. Howbeit, because they could not have so glorious a temple as the former, they slighted it in their thoughts, and would have neglected it. Learn hence, That men naturally account as nothing of God's service, if not accompanied with outward pomp and splendour. The Israelites in the wilderness would needs have a calf (as the Egyptians had) made of their jewels and ear-rings. Jeroboam would have two, and those of gold. Nebuchadnezzar dedicated a golden image with all manner of music, #Da 3:1-7 The people wept when the foundation of this temple was laid, #Ezr 3:12, because nothing so magnificent as the former. And the Papists explode our religion in comparison of theirs, because nothing so pompous and plausible to the rude people, whom they deceive with apish toys and trinkets, shows and pageants. In their

petition to King James they pleaded for their religion, that it was more pleasing than ours, and more agreeable to nature. John Hunt, a Roman Catholic, in his humble appeal to King James, thus blasphemeth: The God of the Protestants is worse than Pan, god of the clowns, which can endure no ceremonies nor good manners at all. Many, like children, like that book best that hath most babies in it; neither will they eat their milk but in a golden dish. This proceeds from a blind understanding and carnal affection. The Church in its infancy was enticed with shows and shadows; but now God requires a reasonable service, he calls for spirit and truth.

Ver. 4. **Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, &c.**] Here he exhorteth all ranks, first, to good affection, Be strong, or of a good courage; secondly, to good action, work, or, Be doing; for affection without action is like Rachel, beautiful, but barren. Be strong, so as to prevail and carry on the service, all discouragements notwithstanding ( *Charach unde ισχυειν, valeo. Sept. vertunt. υπερκρατειν υπερισχυειν*). Those that will serve God in the maintenance of good causes must be courageous and resolute, **#1Co 16:13**; for otherwise they shall never be able to withstand the opposition that will be made either from carnal reason within, or the world and devil without, for want of this spiritual mettle, this supernatural strength, this "spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind," **#2Ti 1:7**; opposed to the spirit of fear, that cowardly passion that unmans us, and expectorath and exposeth us to sundry both sins and snares; when he that trusteth in the Lord shall be safe, **#Pr 29:25**. Here, then, that we falter not, budge not, betray not the cause of God, nor come under his heavy displeasure, who equally hateth the timorous and the treacherous; let us, 1. Be armed with true faith; for *Fides tamen non formidat*, faith quelleth and killeth distrustful fear. 2. Get the heart fraught with the true fear of God; for as one fire, so one fear, drives out another, **#Mt 10:28 1Pe 3:13,14 3**. Get and keep a clearing, cheering conscience; for that feareth no colours, as we see in St Paul, Athanasius, Luther, Latimer, and other holy martyrs and confessors. 4. Think on God's presence, as here, Be strong and be doing, for I am with you. Though David walk through the vale of the shadow of death, that is, of death in its most hideous and horrid representations, he will not fear; for what reason? "thou art with me," saith he, **#Ps 23:3,4**. Dogs and other creatures will fight stoutly in their master's presence. 5. Consider your high and

heavenly calling, and say, Shall such a man as I flee? &c. Either change thy name or be valiant, saith Alexander to a soldier of his that was of his own name, but a coward, *Et Turnum fugientem haec terra videbit?* (Virg.). Lastly, look up, as St Stephen did, to the recompense of reward, steal a look from glory, as Moses, **#Heb 11:26**, help yourselves over the difficulty of suffering together with Christ, by considering the happiness of reigning together. Thus, be of good courage, or deal courageously, and God shall be with the good, as Jehoshaphat told his judges when to go their circuit, **#2Ch 19:11**.

**And work]** Good affections must end in good actions, else they are scarcely found, but much to be suspected. Good wishes (and no more) may be found in hell's mouth, **#Nu 23:10**. Orpah had good affections, but they came to nothing, **#Ru 1:14**. God must be entreated to fix our quicksilver, to ballast our lightness, to work in us both to will and to do, that it may be said of us, as of those Corinthians, that as there was in them a readiness to will, so there followed the performance also, **#2Co 8:12**. Desire and zeal are set together, **#2Co 7:11**; desire after the sincere milk, and growth in grace, **#1Pe 2:2**. John Baptist's hearers so desired after heaven that they offered violence to it, **#Mt 11:12**. True affections are the breathings of a broken heart, **#Ac 2:37 Ro 7:23**. But the desires of the slothful kill him, **#Pr 21:25**. *Virtutem exoptat contabescitque relicta* (Pers.), Good affections are ill bestowed upon the sluggard, since they boil not up to the full heat and height of resolution for God, or, at least, of execution of his will. The sails of a ship are not ordained that she should lie always at road, but launch out into the deep. God likes not qualmy Christians, good by fits, as Saul seemed to be, when David's innocence triumphed in his conscience, or as Ephraim, whose duties were dough-baked, and whose goodness was as the morning dew, &c. "Be ye stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Stick not at any part of it; difficulty doth but whet on heroic spirits, as a bowl that runs downhill is not slugged, but quickened, by a rub in the way. If this be to be vile, I will be yet more vile, **#2Sa 6:22** "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain," **#Zec 4:7** "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness," **#2Co 12:9**.



**For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts]** By a twofold presence: 1. Of help and assistance; 2. Of love and acceptance. Of the first see **#Hag 1:13**. *{See Trapp on "Hag 1:13"}* The second seems here intended. The Jews were poor, yet God assureth them they had his love. So had the Church of Smyrna, **#Re 2:9**, I know thy poverty, but that is nothing, thou art rich, rich in reversion, rich in bills and bonds; yea, rich in possession, or, All is theirs, they hold all in capite: they have, 1. plenty; 2. propriety in things of greatest price; for they have God all-sufficient for their portion, for their protection. "I am with you," saith he, and that is enough, that is able to counterpoise any defect whatsoever, as we see in David often, but especially at the sack of Ziklag; where, when he had lost all, and his life also was in suspense, the text saith, he comforted or "encouraged himself in the Lord his God," **#1Sa 30:6**; whereas Saul in like case goes first to the witch, and then to the sword's point. A godly man, if any occasion of discontent befall him, retires himself into his counting-house, and there tells over his spiritual treasure; he runs to his cordials, he reviews his white stone, **#Re 2:17**, his new name ("better than that of sons and of daughters," **#Isa 56:5**), he hath meat to eat that the world knoweth not of, the stranger meddleth not with his joy. *Virtus lecythos habet in malis. Tua praesentia, Domine, Laurentio ipsam craticulam dulcem fecit*, saith a father, Thy presence, O Lord, made the very gridiron sweet to the martyr Laurence. It made the fiery furnace a gallery of pleasure to the three worthies, the lions' den a house of defence to Daniel, the whale's belly a lodging chamber to Jonah, Egypt a harbour, a sanctuary, to the child Jesus, &c. He goes with his into the fire and water, as a tender father goeth with his child to the surgeon. "Nevertheless," saith David, "I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory," **#Ps 73:23,24**. Again, "I am with you"; that is, I will accept your worships, though in this meaner temple. If God may have the substance of worship, he stands not much upon the circumstance. The sick may pray upon their beds, the persecuted in chambers, **#Ac 1:12-14**, yea, "in dens and caves of the earth," **#Heb 11:38**. The Church, in Queen Mary's days, met and prayed often together in a cellar in Bow church yard. It was one of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome, *Ad divos adeunto caste, pietatem adhibento, opes*

*amovento*. The upright shall approach to the gods, they shall summon the righteous, they shall put away their deeds. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire" (viz. in comparison of obedience, **#1Sa 15:22**), but, as a better thing, "mine ears hast thou opened," **#Ps 40:6**. Hypocrites by cold ceremonies think to appease God; they observe the circumstance, neglect the substance; they stick in the bark of rebellion, gnabble on the shell, offer the skin, keep back the flesh, serve God with shows; and shall be served accordingly.

Ver. 5. **According to the word**] Or, as Tremellius hath it better, *Cum VERBO quo pepigeram vobiscum*, With the WORD, in and for whom I covenanted with you, &c. So my Spirit remaineth among you. And so it is a gracious promise that the whole Trinity will be with them. The particule *eth* seemeth put for *gnayim*; and the article *he* is emphatic, showing that by Word is meant the second person, often called the Word both in the Old Testament, **#2Sa 7:21** cf. **#1Ch 17:19**, and in the New, **#Lu 1:2 Joh 1:1 1Jo 5:7**. The Chaldee seemeth to favour this interpretation, for he rendereth it, My word shall be your help. Jerome, Albertus, Nyssen, and Haymo dissent not. Haggai, and other prophets and patriarchs of old, did well understand the mystery of the sacred Trinity. {See Trapp on "Ge 1:1"} Elihu speaks of the Almighty his makers, **#Job 35:10**. Solomon the same, **#Ec 12:1 So 1:11**, which Jarchi interpreteth of the Trinity. Isaiah hath his *Trisagion*, or, "Holy, holy, holy," **#Isa 6:3** In **#Isa 42:5** "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and they that stretched them out." So **#De 6:4**, when Moses beginneth to rehearse the law, and to explain it, the first thing he teacheth them is the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one." Three words answering the three persons; and the middle word, "our God," deciphering fitly the second, who assumed our nature, as is well observed by Galatinus. Others observe that the last letters in the original, both in the word "hear" and in the word "one," are bigger than ordinary; as calling for utmost heed and attention. The old Rabbis were no strangers to this tremendous mystery (as appeareth by R. Solomen's note on **#So 1:11** "We will make," &c.), though their posterity desperately deny it. The Greek Church was not as sound in this fundamental point; therefore their chief city, Constantinople, was taken from them by the Turks (as Estius observeth) on Whitsunday, or (as others) on Trinity Sunday; which day (saith our chronicler) the Black Prince

was used every year to celebrate with the greatest honour that might be, in due veneration of so divine a mystery. Now, Christ is here and elsewhere called The Word, either because he is so often promised in the word, or else because by him God's will was manifested and revealed to men, and that either mediately, in the prophets, whence Peter, martyr, thinketh that phrase came, Then came the word of the Lord, that is, Christ; or, immediately, himself, #Heb 1:2 2:3.

**That I covenanted with you]** Or, in whom I covenanted, and whence Christ is called the angel of the covenant, #Mal 3:1. Christ, then, was a Saviour to those of the Old Testament also, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," #Re 13:8. Christ undertook to pay his people's debt in the fulness of time; and hereby they were saved. A man may let a prisoner loose now upon a promise to pay the debt a year after. See #Heb 9:15, and take notice of the unity of the faith in both Testaments; they of old saw Christ afar off in the promises, they greeted him (ασπασαμενοι), and were regreeted by him, #Heb 11:13

**When ye came out of Egypt]** Ye, that is, your ancestors. Things done by the parents may be said to be done by the children; because of the near conjunction that is between them. Hence Levi is said to pay tithes in Abraham, #Heb 7:9, and Adam's sin is imputed to us all.

**So my spirit remaineth among you]** Not the substance, but the gifts of the Spirit; not the tree, but the fruits. Those whom God receiveth into the covenant of grace he endues them with the spirit of grace. See #Ro 8:9,11. How else should they be able to perform their part of the covenant, since we cannot so much as *suspirare* unless he do first *inspirare*, breathe out a sigh for sin till he breathe it in to us by his Spirit? Hereby, then, we may know whether or not we are in covenant with God (the devil will be sure to sweep all that are not), *sc.* if his Spirit remain in us, #Jer 31:33, working illumination, #1Co 2:14,15, mortification, #Ro 8:13, motion, #Ro 8:14, gifts, #1Co 12:4,7,8, &c., fruits, #Ga 5:22,23, strength, #Isa 11:2, courage, as here.

**Fear ye not]** *Cur timer hominem homo, in sinu Dei positus* (Aug.)? Why should such fear man who have God in Christ by his Spirit standing with them and for them? The righteous may be bold as a lion; he hath the peace of God within him and the power of God without him, and so goes ever under a double guard; what need he fear? It is said of Achilles that he was *Styge armatus*, and therefore could not be wounded. But he that is in covenant with God is *Deo, Christo, Spiritu Sancto armatus*, and may therefore be fearless of any creature.

Ver. 6. **For thus saith the Lord of hosts]** *i.e.* The three persons in Trinity, as appeareth by the note on the former verse. Howbeit, the author to the Hebrews, **#Heb 12:25,26**, applieth the words to Christ; whence observe that Christ is Lord of hosts and God Almighty; even the same second person that is called haddabhar, the Word, in the former verse, is very God. **#Joh 1:3 cf. Col 1:14,16 #Joh 1:9 cf. Joh 8:12 #Joh 1:11 cf. Ac 3:13-15**. See those coherencies of sentences, **#Joh 9:3,4 11:4 12:39,40**, besides the apostle's argument, **#Heb 1:4**. That one Gospel written by St John, who was therefore called the Divine, by an excellency (as afterwards Nazianzen also was), because he doth professedly assert and vindicate the Divinity of Christ (ever strongly impugned by the devil and his agents, those odious apostates and heretics ancient and modern; and no wonder, for it is the rock, **#Mt 16:18**), setting him forth, 1. As co-essential to the Father, his only begotten Son, **#Joh 1:14**. One with the Father in essence and power, **#Joh 10:30,38 14:23** 2. As having the incommunicable names and attributes of God, **#Joh 8:58 20:28**. Eternity, **#Joh 1:1 17:5**, infiniteness, **#Joh 3:18**, omniscience, **#Joh 2:24 21:22** 3. As doing the works of God, such as are creation, **#Joh 1:3**, conservation, **#Joh 5:17**, miracles, &c. 4. As taking to himself divine worship, **#Joh 9:38 20:28 14:1**. This truth men must hold fast as their lives, and be rooted in it; getting strong reasons for what they believe. The second ground wanted depth of earth; the seed was good and the earth was good, but there was not enough of it; therefore the heat of the sun scorched it up. Christ is here called the Lord of hosts, and the Lord of glory, **#Isa 6:1 cf. Joh 12:41 Jas 2:1**.

**Yet once, it is a little while, &c.]** *Adhuc unum pusillum*. This little little while, this inch of time, was the better part of 500 years, viz. till Christ came in the flesh, **#Heb 12:26**, the Jewish doctors say no

less. A long time to us is but a little while to God. A thousand years is but as one day to the Ancient of days. His prophets also, being lifted up in spirit to the consideration of eternity, count and call all times (as indeed they are in comparison) moments, and points of time: *Punctum est quod vivimus, et puncto minus*, could the poet say. What is that to the infinite? said a certain nobleman of this land to one, discoursing of an incident matter very considerable, but was taken off with this quick interrogation. So say we to ourselves, when under any affliction, we begin to think long of God's coming to deliver us. What is this to eternity of extremity, which yet we have deserved? *Tantillum, tantillum, adhuc pusillum*. Yet a very little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry; as in the interim, the just must live by faith, **#Heb 10:37**. God's help seems long, because we are short. We are short-breathed, short-sighted, apt to antedate the promises, in regard of the accomplishment. We also often find it more easy to bear evil than to wait till the promised good be enjoyed. Those believing Hebrews found by experience that the spoiling of their goods exercised their patience; but staying God's leisure for the good things he had promised them required more than ordinary patience, or tarrance **#Heb 10:36**. Take we heed of prescribing to the Almighty, of limiting the Holy One of Israel, of setting him a time, with those Bethulians.

**And I will shake the heavens]** Not the earth only, as at the giving of the law (to purchase reverence to the law-giver), but the heavens also; viz. by the powerful preaching of the gospel, whereby Satan was seen falling from heaven, **#Lu 10:18**, that is, from men's hearts; and the saints set together in heavenly places, or privileges in Christ Jesus, **#Eph 2:6**. For he that hath the Son hath life, **#1Jo 5:10**, he hath heaven beforehand. 1. *In pretio*. In price. 2. *In promisso*. On Promise. 3. *In primitiis*. In the firstfruits. Here, then, the prophet encourageth these builders; telling them that under this second temple, how mean soever it seemed, he would first send Christ (called the desire of all nations, **#Hag 2:7**, and peace, **#Hag 2:9 cf. Eph 2:14**) to grace it with his presence. Secondly, he would cause the gospel to be preached in a pompous and powerful manner. "I will shake," &c. Shake them, to settle them, not to ruin them, but to refine them, shake their hearts with sense of sin and fear of wrath, that they may truly seek Christ. "For the law was given by Moses,

but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," #Joh 1:17. And the end of this universal shake was to show, saith Chrysostom, that the old law was to be changed into the new, Moses into Messiah, the prophets into evangelists, Judaism and Gentilism into Christianity. When Christ was born we know how Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him, #Mt 2:3. What a choir of angels was heard in the air at Bethlehem, and what wondering there was at those things which were told them by the shepherds, #Lu 2:18. Eusebius tells of three suns seen in heaven not long before his birth. Orosius tells of many more prodigies. The Psalmist, foretelling our Saviour's coming in the flesh, breaks out into this joyful exclamation; "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with truth," #Ps 96:11-13 98:7-9. This, I know, is by some (but not so properly) understood of Christ's second coming to judgment. And both Augustine and Rupertus construe this text also the same way. But the whole stream of interpreters, old and new, carry it against them; and some of them tell us of various strange and stupendous commotions that occurred even according to the letter, in heaven, earth, and sea, about the time of Christ's birth, death, resurrection, and soon after his ascension, when he rode about the world upon his white horse, the apostles and their successors, #Ps 45:4; with a crown upon his head, as King of his Church, and a bow in his hand, the doctrine of the gospel, whereby the people fall under him, "and he went forth conquering, and to conquer," #Re 6:2.

Ver. 7. **And I will shake all nations]** First, by the civil wars between the Triumviri, not long before Christ's incarnation. Secondly, by the general tax, #Lu 2:3, when all went to be taxed every one into his own city. Thirdly, by the preaching and miracles of Christ and his apostles, whereby the nations were shaken out of their sinful condition, and brought to the obedience of faith by effectual conversion. Thus a Lapide. "I will shake all nations" with wonder at so great a mystery, with joy and with newness of life, saith Sa. The gospel (saith Forbes on #Re 14:6) hath three degrees of operation in the hearts of men. First, it falleth to men's ears as the sound of many waters, a confused sound, which commonly bringeth

neither terror nor joy; but yet a wondering and acknowledgment of a strange force, and more than human power, **#Mr 1:22,23 Lu 4:32 Joh 7:46**. This may be in the reprobate, **#Ac 13:41**. The second effect is the voice of thunder, which brings not only wonder, but fear. This may also be in a reprobate, as Felix. The third effect, proper to the elect, is the sound of harping; while the gospel not only ravisheth with admiration, and shaketh the conscience with terror, but also filleth it with sweet peace and joy. Certain it is, that the gospel maketh a stir where it cometh, and brings an earthquake to men's souls, as it did to the jailer's, **#Ac 16:26,27**, and Peter's converts, **#Ac 2:37** And this partly through the frowardness of our affections, and partly through the malice of Satan, fearing the ruin of his kingdom. For, as for the gospel, this effect follows it, by accident. See **#Mt 10:34,35**, {See Trapp on "Mt 10:34"} {See Trapp on "Mt 10:35"} See also **#Lu 12:49**. It is by accident to the sun that it maketh the dunghill stink. It is by accident to the sea that it maketh the passenger sick; the ill humours in his stomach disease him. So here.

**And the desire of all nations shall come]** That is, Christ, for so the apostle expoundeth it, **#Heb 12:25,26**. And the Church saith of him, *Totus ipse desideria*, **#So 5:16**, he is all over desirable (*Valete mea desideria*. Goodbye my love, Cic. xiv. 2, *ad Uxorem et Filiam* to wives and daughters). And again, **#Isa 26:9** "With my soul have I desired thee in the night: yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early." "And unto Shiloh shall the gathering of the people be," saith Jacob, **#Ge 49:10**, as unto the standard bearer, **#So 5:10**, the carcass, **#Mt 24:28**, as the doves scour to their columbaries, **#Isa 60:8**. When I am lifted up, saith he, I will draw all men after me, **#Joh 12:32**, that is, all mine elect; these will follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, as the hop and heliotrope <sup>{a}</sup> do the sun. And because the nations had not heard of Christ till he came in the flesh, and this coming of the desire of all nations seems to follow presently upon the preaching of the gospel, therefore Junius renders it *Desiderati*, the desirable ones of all nations, and interprets it, of the elect (the Septuagint also say the same, of οι εκλεκτοι των εθνων), who should come to the second temple in a spiritual sense, worshipping the same God that these good Jews did, and should come with strength of affection (as the Hebrew importeth), should make hard shift to come, **#Isa 66:20** "They shall bring your brethren

as an offering to the Lord, upon horses, in chariots, and in litters," that is, though sick, weakly, and unfit for travel, yet rather in litters than not at all. Neither shall they come empty handed, but with all their desirable things (so some render this text), *colligent omnes suos thesauros*, saith Calvin, they shall come with strong affections, with liberal contributions, as **#Ac 4:34**, and as Tyrus, who, when once converted, leaves hoarding and heaping up wealth (as formerly), and finds another manner of employment for it, namely, to uphold God's worship, and to feed and clothe his saints, **#Isa 23:18**.

**And I will fill this house with glory]** This rebuilding temple shall be honoured with Christ's bodily presence (Diodati); and the spiritual temple, which is the Church, shall be honoured by my presence in spirit, the abundance of my graces, the light of my word, and power of my spirit, who shall rest upon my people as a spirit of glory when the world loadeth them with greatest ignominy, **#1Pe 4:14**, rest upon them by a blessed Shechinah.

{a} A name given to plants of which the flowers turn so as to follow the sun; ED

**Ver. 8. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts]** Whereas the Jews might object that it was not likely the second temple should be more glorious than the first, since they wanted that wealth wherewith Solomon abounded; God answereth in like sort, as once he did Moses, alleging the slowness of his speech, "Who hath made man's mouth?" **#Ex 4:10,11**, so here, whose is the silver and the gold? Am not I the true proprietor and chief Lord of all? cannot I furnish you out of my great purse, the earth, and the fulness thereof? **#Ps 24:1** (*Terra est marsupium Domini*). What is silver and gold but white and red earth, the guts and garbage of the earth, as one phraseth it? things that I have no need of, **#Ps 50:13**. They lie furthest from heaven; the best of them are in Ophir (perhaps the same with Peru), furthest from the Church. Adam had them in the first paradise, **#Ge 2:11,12**, in the second you shall not need them, **#Job 26:2,3**, &c. In defect of other, I myself will be your gold, and you shall have plenty of silver, **#Job 22:25**. Christ, girt about the paps (that seat of love) with a golden girdle, shall walk in the midst of his seven golden candlesticks, **#Re 1:12,13**, with a golden censer in his hand, perfuming and presenting



the prayers of his people upon the golden altar, #Re 8:3, and measuring that city of pearl, his Church, with a golden reed, #Re 21:15. Ribera and some others think that God, as of old he had stirred up Cyrus and Darius (both of them heathens) to contribute to the building of the temple, so afterwards he stirred up Herod, a wealthy king, not long before Christ came, to bestow abundance of cost upon the same temple; and that this was here afore prophesied. But I should rather incline to Calvin, who doubteth not but that the devil stirred up Herod to do as he did; that the Jews, doting upon the splendour of that brave structure (the disciples did no less, #Mt 24:1,2), might cease looking for Christ or trusting in him. And who knows (saith he) whether Herod himself might not have such a fetch in his head. Howsoever, the devil was in it, doubtless, to take off their minds from the expectation of Christ's coming, which was now at hand, by those external pomps; and to withdraw the spirits of the godly from the furniture and gaiety of the spiritual temple. We know how the disciples (who, leavened with the leaven of the Pharisees, dreamt of an earthly kingdom) were taken with the beauty and bravery of Herod's temple, showing the same to our Saviour, and fondly conceiting that by that goodly sight he might be moved to moderate the severity of that former sentence of his, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," #Mt 23:38 24:1. But his thoughts were not as their thoughts. The bramble reckoned it a great matter to reign over the trees; so did not the vine and olive. The Papists hold that God is delighted with golden and silver vessels in the administration of the eucharist, and offended with the contrary. But the primitive Christians celebrated the sacrament of the Lord's supper in vessels first of wood, and afterwards of glass. That saying also of Ambrose is well known, *Aurum sacramenta non quaerunt, nec auro placent, quae auro non emuntur*. It was grown to a proverb soon after Constantine's time, Once we had golden ministers and wooden vessels, now we have wooden ministers and golden vessels. Religion brought forth wealth; and the mother devoured the daughter.

Ver. 9. **The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former]** Because Christ shall appear and preach in it, *{as #Hag 2:7}* who is the brightness of his Father's glory, *ac consequenter urbis et orbis*; any relation to whom heighteneth and ennobleth both places and persons. Bethlehem, though it be the least, *{#Mic 3:6}* is yet not the

least among the princes of Judah, {#Mt 2:6} because Christ was born there. The tribe of Naphtali is first reckoned of those by Rachel's side; because at Capernaum, in this tribe, Christ inhabited, #Re 7:6, in which respect also this town is said to be lifted up to heaven, #Mt 11:2,3. Benjamin is called the beloved of the Lord, #Ge 42:4, God's darling (as their father Benjamin was old Jacob's), because God dwelt between his shoulders, *sc.* in his temple built upon those two mountains, Moriah and Zion, #De 33:12. The glory of that first temple was, that the majesty of God appeared in it, covering itself in a cloud. The glory of this latter house was greater, because therein the same Divine majesty appeared, not covered with a cloud but really incarnated. "For the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," #Joh 1:14. In this flesh of ours, and under this second temple, Christ not only uttered oracles, did miracles, and finished the great work of our redemption, but also laid the foundation of the Christian Church. For the law (that perfect law of liberty, the gospel, #Jas 1:25) came out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, to all the ends of the earth, #Isa 2:3 Ps 110:1. From hence it was that the Lord of glory, whom the blind Jews had crucified, sent out his apostles, those messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ, as they are called, #2Co 8:23, to gather together unto him those desirable ones his elect, {#Hag 2:7} {See *Trapp on "Hag 2:7"*} whom he calleth the glory, #Isa 46:13, the house of his glory, #Isa 60:7, a crown of glory, #Isa 62:3, the throne of glory, #Jer 14:21, the ornament of God, #Eze 7:20, the beauty of his ornament, and that set in majesty, a royal diadem in the hand of Jehovah, #Isa 62:3.

**And in this place will I give peace]** Even the Prince of peace, and with him all things also, #Ro 8:32, *pacem Pectoris et Temporis*, Peace of country and of conscience; this latter especially seemeth here to be meant. For the former (*viz.* outward peace) was not long enjoyed by these Jews; and their second temple was often spoiled by the enemies, and at length burned and overturned. But the "peace of God that passeth all understanding" is that legacy which the world can neither give nor take from God's people, #Joh 14:27. And of this inward peace the Septuagint (according to the Roman edition) taketh the text, and so doth Ambrose; *Haec est pax super pacem*,

This is peace above peace. saith he. Christ, as he Was brought from heaven, with that song of peace, #Lu 2:14 "On earth peace, good will toward men" (which is the same with that salutation of St Paul, who learned it, belike, of those angels, "Grace be to you, and peace"), so he returned up again with that farewell of peace, #Joh 14:27, and left to the world the doctrine of peace, the gospel of peace, #Eph 2:17, whose author is the God of peace, #1Co 14:33, whose ministers are ministers of peace, #Ro 10:15, whose followers are the children of peace, #Lu 10:6, whose unity is in the bond of peace, #Eph 4:3, whose duty is the study of peace, #Ro 12:18; and whose end is, to enter into peace, to rest in their beds, their souls resting in heaven, their bodies in the grave till the joyful resurrection, even every one walking in his uprightness, #Isa 57:2 Ps 37:33.

Ver. 10. **In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius]** This diligence of the prophets in noting and noticing the precise time of God's hand upon them, should teach us to do the like. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:1"} The churches in Switzerland kept that day yearly as a holiday whereon the Reformation began among them (Scultet. Annal). Bugenhagen kept a feast every year on that day of the month wherein he and some other divines had finished the Dutch Bible, and called it The feast of the translation of the Bible (Melch. Adam in Vit. Bugenag.). The University of Heidelberg kept an evangelical jubilee three whole days together, A. D. 1617, on the first of November, in the remembrance of the renowned Reformation of religion begun by Luther just a hundred years before. Hereby God s name shall be sanctified, our faith strengthened, and our good affection both evidenced and excited. By the time here described it appeareth that they had now been three months building, and the prophet meanwhile had given them great encouragement thereunto. But forasmuch as he found that they stuck in the bark, as they say, rested in the work done, thought they should therefore win upon God because they built him a temple, the prophet gives them to understand that there is more required of them than a temple, viz. that therein they worship the Lord purely and holily, in spirit and in truth; that their divine worship be right both *quoad fontem et quoad finem*, for principle and end of intention; for else they impure all that they touch, and are no whit better, but a great deal the worse for all their performances. This the prophet teacheth

them in the two following oracles propounded by way of demand to the priests. How apt are men to lose themselves in a wilderness of duties! to dig for pearls in their own dunghills! to think to oblige God to themselves by their good works! to spin a thread of their own to climb up to heaven by! to rest in their own righteousness! to save themselves by riding on horses! **#Ho 14:8**. The prophet's design is here to beat them off from such fond conceits; telling them that the person must be accepted ere the service can be regarded, as Abel's. "To the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled," saith the apostle, **#Tit 1:15**. Calvin upon this text saith no more; and yet Corn. a Lapide is very angry with him for saying so much. There is in Peter Lombard this golden sentence cited out of Augustine: The whole life of unbelievers is sin: neither is anything good without the chiefest good. This sentence Ambrose Ribera, a Popish expositor, censureth for harsh and cruel (*Crudelis est illis sententia*); but doth not God here say the same thing? Certain it is that good actions from bad men displease; as a man may speak good words, but we cannot hear, because of his stinking breath. "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord," **#Pr 15:8**. Charity is nothing unless it flow out "of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," **#1Ti 1:5**.

Ver. 11. **Ask now the priest concerning the law**] For who should know the law better than the priests? And who so fit to resolve cases of conscience as they? It was their office, **#Le 10:10,11 De 33:10 Mal 2:7**. See the note there. It was an evil time with God's people when he was put to complain, "Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent?" **#Isa 42:19**. When the prophet was a fool, the spiritual man was mad for the multitude of their iniquity, and the great hatred, **#Ho 9:7**. Varro upbraided the Roman priests of old with their gross ignorance of many things in point of their own rites and religions; and Cicero brake a jest upon Gaius Popilius, an ignorant lawyer, at Rome. For when Popilius, being called for a witness to some controversy, answered, *Nihil se scire*, that he knew nothing, Cicero answered, by way of jeer, *Paras fortasse te de iure interrogari*, You mean (perhaps) that you know nothing in the law, which yet you profess to have skill in. What a shame was it for the Pharisees, who took upon them to be guides of the blind, teachers of babes, &c., **#Ro 2:19,20**, to be found "blind

leaders of the blind!" #Mt 15:14 So is it for divines, being asked concerning the law, or will of God, in such and such cases, not to be able to answer discreetly (vovvεχως), and intelligently, as he did #Mr 12:34, as an *egregie cordatus homo?* distinguished wise man. But so bungler-like, and so far from the purpose, that it may well be seen that "desiring to be teachers of the law, they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm," #1Ti 1:7. How like the motion of a puppet, the language of a parrot, is the discourse of such unlearned or uninterested casuists! Every minister of God's making can truly say, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know to time a word to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned," #Isa 10:4. See #1Co 12:8 Tit 1:9 Eph 3:4,7 1Co 2:13.

Ver. 12. **If one bear holy flesh in the skirt, &c.]** Problems and parables are notable helps to the bolting out of the truth, and conviction of the gainsayers. For problems see #Mt 13:10-15 21:25 22:42. For parables see #Jud 9:7-15, that of Jotham, of Nathan, #2Sa 12:1-4, of the woman of Tekoah, #2Sa 14:5-7, of our Saviour concerning the two brethren sent into the vineyard, the wedding of the king's son, the sower. {See Trapp on "Hag 2:10"}

**And the priests answered and said, No]** Roundly and readily; without hacking and hewing, without doubling and dissembling; as those perverse priests, those self-condemned hierophants, <sup>{a}</sup> #Mt 21:27, that, against their consciences, "answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell." The wit of graceless persons will better serve them to falter and fumble, deny, or devise a thousand shifts to evade and elude the truth, than their malice will suffer them to yield to it, or profess it. This is to detain the truth in unrighteousness, #Ro 1:18, as Plato, who had the knowledge of one God, yet he dared not to communicate it to the common people; and as some of the chief champions of Popery, who held justification by faith alone, but refused to say so, lest their Dagon should down, their Diana be despised. Let every spiritual man (but especially ministers) be ready, as to every good work, so to this of comparing spiritual things with spiritual, that he may judge or discern of all things, #1Co 2:13,15, according to the analogy of faith, #Ro 12:6, the tenor of the Scriptures, his sure cynosura; and laying up all in his heart, #Lu 2:18, he may have a treasure there of new and old, a word of

wisdom and a word of knowledge too, #1Co 12:8, both as a teacher and as a pastor, to bring forth for common benefit.

{a} *Antiq.* An official expounder of sacred mysteries or religious ceremonies, esp. in ancient Greece; an initiating or presiding priest. (ED)

Ver. 13. **If one that is unclean by a dead body]** With a ceremonial uncleanness. The Hebrew hath it thus, If one that is unclean in soul, that is, in his whole person, as every wicked man is *totus totus pollutus*, wholly covered with corruption, a loathsome leper from head to foot, wholly set upon sin, as #Ex 32:22, lying down in wickedness, or in that wicked one, #1Jo 5:19, sick of such a disease as the physicians call *corruptionem totius substantiae*, nay, dead in sins and trespasses, #Eph 2:1; and can therefore do no better than dead work at best, #Heb 9:14, such as the living God will not be served with. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:16"} doct. 4, use 1. He is unclean, unclean, and impureth all that he toucheth, according to that which followeth.

Ver. 14. **So is this people, and so is this nation before me]** Though pure in their own eyes, #Pr 30:12, and to the world-ward unrebukeable, as Paul the Pharisees, #Php 2:14,15, and those self-justiciaries, #Lu 16:14,15 "Ye are those that justify yourselves" (and have the world's good word for you), "but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." *Sordet in conspectu iudicis quod fulget in conspectu operantis*. Filthy in the sight of the judge who glisten in the sight of their works. Wicked men's services are but glistening sins (*splendida peccata*), they rejoice in a thing of nought, as Amos hath it, #Am 6:13, like as Leah rejoiced in that whereof she had cause to repent, and said, "God hath given me my hire," when she had more cause to say, God, I fear, will give me my hire, my payment, "because I have given my maiden to my husband," #Ge 30:18. But she was in the common error of measuring and judging of things by the success; as if God were not many times angry with men, though they outwardly prosper; or as if there were not here one event to the clean and to the unclean, #Ec 9:2. Until the day that God shall separate the sheep from the goats, whom for the glory of his name and the good of his people he suffers for present to go one among another, to make his own to stick the faster together and to their principles. Shepherds say that it is wholesome for a flock of sheep to

have some goats to feed among them; their bad scent being good medicine for the sheep, to keep them from the shakings. {a} Only let God's sheep take heed that they contract no corruption by conversing with goats; which is soon done, for sin is catching, and ill company is contagious. *Nemo errat sibi ipsi; sed dementia spargit in proximos*, saith Seneca, No man errs out of the right way alone, but draws others along. And *multos sollicitat societas nefanda*, saith Chrysostom, evil company soliciteth many to sin. Virtue is oft overcome by vice, saith Nazianzen, as a little wormwood sooner embittereth a great deal of honey than twice so much honey can sweeten a small deal of wormwood; or as one spoonful of vinegar will soon sour a great deal of sweet milk; but a great deal of milk will not so soon allay one spoonful of vinegar. Remove but one stone, and the whole river will rush downward; but you can hardly stop the stream again with a strong dam. Touch pitch and you shall presently be defiled, but touch soap and you shall not presently be made clean without much rubbing and rinsing. Mezentius the tyrant, *Corpora a corporibus iungebat mortua vivis*, tied living men to dead carcasses; but the dead did not revive the living, the living rather putrefied by reason of the dead. He that bore consecrated flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt touched bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any food, he made it not thereby holy. But if an unclean person touched any of these he made it unclean. The Donatists abused this text, to prove that baptism was defiled and vacated if administrated by an unregenerate minister; but Augustine again, against Fulgentius the Donatist, vindicateth the text from their false glosses, and asserteth from it the contrary truth. May not clean grain be sowed with foul hands, and grow nevertheless? May not a trumpet be well sounded by an impure breath? And is not the water in baptism, that cleanseth the child, cast afterwards into the draught? saith Gregory, *Aqua baptismatis baptizatos ad regnum caelestis mittit, et ipsa postea in cloacam descendit*.

**So is this people, and so is that nation before me, and so is every work of their hands, and that which they offer, &c.]** Note the order of the induction. First, themselves were unclean, both people and nation; there was a general defection and defilement ran through all sorts and sexes, as the woof runs through the warp; so that they

were all together but one continued web of wickedness, as it were, spun out and made up by the hands of the devil, and the flesh, an evil spinner, and a worse weaver; both root and fruit were nought, as **#Isa 5:4**, both head, heart, and foot were out of order, **#Isa 1:5,6**, and they are barely and boldly told of it by the prophets. Secondly, the works of their hands were unclean; for not only the praying, but "the plowing of the wicked, is sin," **#Pr 21:4**, all their natural and civil actions also are abominable. Whether they plough, or play, or eat, or sleep: corruption is like copperas, *{b}* which will turn wine or milk into ink; or leaven, which turns a very passover into pollution; or as the sanies of a plague sore, which will render the richest robe infectious. Thirdly, that which they offer there, their sacrifices and all their religious performances, were likewise unclean; not in respect of God, who commanded them; nor of the matter, for they offered clean beasts; but of the manner of offering (which makes or mars the action), and of the men, who were unregenerate, and rested in the work done, and drew near to God with their lips, thinking to put God off with an external worship only; *Ludenes cum Deo tanquam pueri cum suis puppis*, as Calvin hath it, that is, playing with God, as children do with their babies. The poets declaimed against this foppery, as Persius; and another, *Non bene caelestes impia dextra colit*.

*{a}* A disease in sheep and swine. Also the ague. (ED)

*{b}* A name given from early times to the protosulphates of copper, iron, and zinc (distinguished as *blue*, *green*, and *white* copperas respectively). (ED)

**Ver. 15. And now, I pray you, consider]** Heb. Lay it upon your heart, as **#Hag 1:5**; *{See Trapp on "Hag 1:5"}* The often repetition of this precept sets forth, 1. The necessity of the duty pressed. 2. Their singular stupidity, that were no more affected with such manifest marks of God's wrath upon them; no, though he had even snatched the meat out of their mouths, and kept them hunger-starved, which is the way of taming the most untameable creatures.

**From this day and upward]** To the end that when I shall have blessed you with greater plenty, as **#Hag 2:19**, ye may recognize your sins, the cause of your calamities, and, remembering (as Jacob did his *baculinam paupertatem*, **#Ge 32:10**) your former penury, you may thankfully cry out with that noble Iphicrates; From how



hungry to how plentiful an estate am I raised (ἐξ οἴων εἰς οἴα)! Let a profane Demetrius attribute such a change as this to blind fortune, saying, Εὐ με ἐφύσας σὺ καὶ καταθεῖν δοκεῖς. But let all saints sing with holy Hannah, "They that were full have hired themselves out for bread; and they that were hungry ceased. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up," #1Sa 2:5,7.

**From before a stone was laid upon a stone]** *i.e.* Before there was any hand set to the work of rebuilding the temple, which was interrupted for many years, after the return from Babylon. See #Ezr 3:8 5:2.

Ver. 16. **Since those days were]** Or, as some read it, *Antequam essent in eo opere*, Before they were about that work, minding God's house more than their own.

**When one came to an heap of twenty measures]** That is, where you expected twenty measures (and experienced good husbands can partly guess at harvest how their grain will yield when threshed out) there were but ten. God's hand was upon your increase, not in the field only, but also in the floor; so that you were defeated and your hopes frustrated; and not in the barn only, but at the winepress too, God hath cut you short. This was that which was long before threatened, but little regarded, #De 28:20. Carnal men read the threats of God's law as they do the old stories of foreign wars, or as they behold the wounds and blood in a picture, or piece of coat of arms, which never makes them smart or fear. This hasteneth their judgment, and shows them ripe for wrath, even then when they think themselves far enough out of the reach of God's rod.

Ver. 17. **I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail]** *Pugnis pluvi, colaphis grandinavi*, I have followed you close with one judgment upon another; and all to bring you back into mine own bosom; that as ye had run from me by your sins, so ye might return to me by repentance; but, behold, I have lost my labour, and ye have lost the fruit of your sufferings, which indeed is a very great loss, were ye but soundly sensible of it, *Perdidistis fructum calamitatis* (Aug.). These Jews were sensible of their calamities and disasters abroad and at home, but they did not wisely inquire into the cause thereof; as David did into the cause of the famine that fell out in his days, #2Sa 21:1. God had not hitherto "given them a heart to

perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear," as it is **#De 29:4**. And as **#Isa 9:13** "The people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts." But after their hardness and impenitent heart treasured up wrath, &c., **#Ro 2:5**. They could not but see themselves grievously crossed, and cursed in all the labours of their hands. Neither were they so blind as not to see God in that they suffered. They had learned that out of **#Ps 78:47,48 29:3**, &c. Cicero indeed thought that God minds not mildew, or hail, &c. *Nec si uredo aut grando quippiam nocuit, id Iovi animadvertendum fuit: neque enim in regni reges omnia minima curant*, &c. As kings take not notice of smaller businesses in their kingdoms, saith he, so neither doth God of these ordinary occurrences. But the Jews (for the generality) had learned better things. And the apostle tells those heathens too, **#Ac 14:15-17**, that God had not left himself without witness among them, in that he did good and gave rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, &c. Cicero himself likewise, another time, could say, *Curiosus est et plenus negotii Deus*, God taketh care of all, and is full of business. And oh that this truth were as fruitfully improved as it is generally acknowledged! Oh that men would turn at God's reproof; his real reproofs, his vocal rods, **#Mic 6:9**; and not put him to his old complaint, "Why should ye be smitten any more? ye revolt more and more," **#Isa 1:5**. This we may wish, but God alone can effect. For till he please to thrust his holy hand into men's bosoms, and pull off the foreskin of their hearts; afflictions (those hammers of his) do but beat cold iron. See **#Jer 2:30,31 6:29,30 Le 26:41**. *Plectimur a Deo, nec flectimur tamen: corripimur sed non corrigimur* (Salvian.). We are put to pain, but to no profit, **#Jer 12:13**, as Ahaz, that stiff stigmatic, **#2Ch 28:23**, and Ahaziah, who sent a third captain to surprise the prophet, after two before consumed with fire from heaven, **#2Ki 1:13**; as if he would despitefully spit in the face of God, and wrestle a fall with the Almighty.

Ver. 18. **Consider now from this day and upward]** And see how punctually the time of benediction answereth to the time of your conversion; so that you no sooner begin to build, but I begin to bless. It is said of the men of Issachar, that they were in great account with David because they "had understanding of the times," **#1Ch 12:32**. It is certainly a point of spiritual prudence to consider the times, and to compare things past with present and future. Time

is the wisest of all things, said Thales; the best counsellor, said Plutarch. Truth is the daughter of time, saith another philosopher. {See Trapp on "Hag 2:15"}

Ver. 19. **Is the seed yet in the barn?**] Jerome rendereth it, *in germine*, in the sprouting, or spirting, as they call it, and so far enough from the harvest; and yet farther, if yet in the barn, and not put into the ground. Nevertheless, for your diligence in building God's house, I assure you, in the word of truth, that you shall have a very great increase, a plentiful harvest.

**From this day will I bless you]** And it is the blessing of God that maketh rich, as is to be seen in the examples of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Others, whose godliness was their gain, whose piety was profitable to all things, as having the promises of both lives, **#1Ti 4:8**. Now all that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, **#Ga 3:9**, are heirs of the world with him, **#Ro 4:13**, and so have right to all things in Christ, the heir of all things, **#1Co 3:22 Heb 1:2**; though these things on earth be detained from them for the present by those men of God's hand, **#Ps 17:14**, as Canaan was from Israel by the cursed Amorites, till their sins were full; yet they shall shortly have power over the nations, and (which is better) Christ will give them the morning star, **#Re 2:28,22:16**, that is, himself, and with himself a cornucopia of spiritual blessings, **#Eph 1:3**. The Lord that made heaven and earth will bless them out of Zion, that is, with better blessings than heaven or earth afforded. We read not here of any other blessings but increase of corn, wine, oil, &c., because this people was wholly almost affixed to earthly things. The prophet could not speak wisdom among those that were perfect, **#1Co 2:6**. But better things were implied and assured to the godly, as appeareth by the ensuing oracle.

Ver. 20. **And again, the word of the Lord]** Again the same day. Twice a day preaching is no new practice then. This prophet did it; so did our Saviour, **#Mt 13:1**. So did Chrysostom, as appeareth by his note on **#1Th 5:17**. So did Luther; which, because one Nicholas White commended in him, he was accused of heresy, in the reign of Henry VIII It is not so long since it was held here practical Puritanism. The late arch-prelate being sued unto by a nobleman to prefer a chaplain of his (whom he commended for an able divine,

and a twice-a-day preacher), turned away in a great heat, saying, The more fool he.

Ver. 21. **Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah]** Governors are sure to meet with many difficulties and discouragements (high seats are never but uneasy), and had need therefore of singular consolation, that they may hold on their course, like the sun in the firmament, and show themselves to be of an undaunted resolution. We may well say to governors, as that prophetic Simeon spoke to the pillars which he whipped before the earthquake: Stand fast, for ye shall be shaken.

**I will shake the heavens and the earth]** *sc.* By abrogating and abolishing both Jewish ceremonies and heathenish superstitions, **#Heb 12:27**. As also by national commotions, and translations of monarchies; the Greeks shall break the power of the Persians, the Romans of the Greeks, the Goths and other barbarous nations of the Romans, **#Mt 24:7**. But especially, by casting the devil out of the heaven of men's hearts, **#Lu 10:18**, those strongholds wherein he had entrenched himself, **#2Co 10:4,5**, that the ransomed of the Lord may receive a kingdom, which cannot be moved, **#Heb 12:28**, and partake of those new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, **#2Pe 3:13**, even that world to come, as these days of the gospel are called, **#Heb 2:5**. *{See Trapp on "Heb 2:6"} {See Trapp on "Heb 2:7"}*

Ver. 22. **And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms]** *sc.* "By pouring contempt upon princes, and causing them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way," **#Ps 107:40** (as he dealt with Darius, the last Persian monarch); "by putting down the mighty from their seat, and exalting them of low degree," **#Lu 1:52** (as he dealt with Bajazet, the Great Turk, and Tamerlane, the Scythian shepherd); by changing the times and the seasons, removing kings, and setting up others in their stead, **#Da 2:21**. All this God will do, and all that follows in the text, *viz.* destroy the strength of kingdoms, overthrow the chariots and their riders, &c., rather than his Church shall be unhelped or his kingdom of grace hindered. "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth," **#Ps 124:8**, and will rather unmake all again than we shall be unrelieved. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion," **#Ps 2:6**. Yet, for all the sorrow, for all the malicious machinations and attempts of his enemies to the contrary; who are therehence admonished to be wise

for themselves, and to kiss the Son, for he must reign, and all his foes must be his footstool. There is a council in heaven will dash the mould of all contrary councils upon earth. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands (which is Christ the conqueror) will break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever, #Da 2:44,45. So, #Da 7:21,22,26,27, after that the prophet had described the greatness and glory of all the four menarchies, at length he comes to speak of a kingdom which is the greatest and mightiest under the whole heaven, and that is the kingdom of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom: and all rulers shall serve and obey him, #Da 7:27.

Ver. 23. **I will take thee, O Zerubbabel]** That is, O Christ, of whom Zerubbabel was both a father and a figure, #Lu 3:27 Zec 4:10 "I will take thee," that is, I will advance and exalt thee. See this expounded and applied by that great apostle, #Php 2:5-12.

**And will make thee as a signet]** That is, I will highly esteem thee, inviolably keep thee, and entirely love thee, #So 8:6 Jer 22:24, and all my people in thee, and for thee, #Isa 49:16.

**For I have chosen thee]** As #Isa 42:1. *Quoniam in te mihi complacui*, saith the Chaldee. For in thee I am well pleased, as #Mt 3:17. See the note there.

**Saith the Lord of hosts]** This is three different times set down in this one verse, for our greater assurance and confirmation of our faith. I shall close up all with that observation of divines, that all the prophets (except Jonah and Nahum) expressly end in some prophecy concerning Christ. He being their mark at which all of them chiefly aimed. Indeed, he is both mark and matter of both Old and New Testament. And therefore if we profit in teaching, hearing, reading, we must have the eye of our mind turned toward Christ, as the faces of the cherubims were toward the mercy-seat. Do this, if ever you will do well.

# Zechariah

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **In the eight month, in the second year of Darius]** Two months after Haggai began to prophesy. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:1"} These two prophets did jointly together reprove the Jews for their sloth in rebuilding the temple, and incite them to set forward the work, **#Ezr 5:1**, contributing their utmost help thereunto, **#Zec 1:2**. They were also a singular help the one to the other, in the execution of their office. For "two are better than one"; and why, see **#Ec 4:9**. {See Trapp on "Ec 4:9"} For which cause also Christ sent out first the twelve, and then the seventy, by two and two, **#Mr 6:7 Lu 10:1**. So Paul and Barnabas were sent abroad; the two faithful witnesses, **#Re 11:8**. Σὺν τε δὺ ἐρχομένῳ, as the poet speaks of Ulysses, and Diomedes sent to fetch in the palladium. {a} One good man may be an angel to another (as Bradford was to his fellow martyr, Dr Taylor), nay, a god to another, as Moses was to Aaron, **#Ex 4:16**. And for others; in the mouth of two or three witnesses a truth is better believed by them; and a twisted cord not easily broken. Haggai lays down the mind of God to the people more plainly in direct and downright terms; Zechariah flies a higher pitch, abounding with types and visions; and is therefore worthily reckoned among the abstrusest and profoundest penmen of Holy Scripture, *Prae caeteris obscurus est, profundus, varius, prolixus, et aenigmaticus* (Cor. a Lapide). For it must be understood (and let it here be prefaced) that albeit all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable to instruct, **#2Ti 3:16**, pure, precious, and profitable, every leaf, line, and letter of it, **#Ps 12:6 Pr 30:5**; yet, between Scripture and Scripture there is no small difference; some pieces of God's Book for their antiquity, and some other for their obscurity, do justly challenge our greater attention and industry. Of the former sort, famous for their antiquity, are the five Books of Moses, whom Theodoret fitly calleth the great Ocean of divinity (τοῦ τῆς Θεολογίας ὠκεανόν), the fountain of the following Scriptures. Of the second sort, noted for their difficulty, and that will not be acquainted with us but upon further suit, some are hard through their fulness of matter in fewness of words, as the poetical books, wherein (no doubt) the verse also hath caused some cloud: and others again, by the sublimity of the subject they handle; such as are the Books of Ezekiel, and Daniel, and this of Zechariah, who is

*totus fere symbolicus*, the whole is to take symbolically and is much followed by St John in his Revelation. Hence Jerome in his prologue to this prophet saith, *Ab obscuris ad obscuriora transimus, et cum Mose ingredimur ad nubem et caliginem. Abyssus abyssum invocat.* We pass from dark prophecies to that which is much more dark; and with Moses we are entering into the cloud and thick darkness. Here one deep calleth upon another. And, being in a labyrinth, we hope to get out by Christ's golden clue; concerning whose passion, resurrection, and glory, he speaketh more like an evangelist than a prophet, and may therefore be rightly styled, The evangelical prophet.

**Came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah]** Therefore the same that our Saviour speaketh of **#Mt 23:35 Lu 11:51**, though I once thought otherwise, after Jerome, Luther, Calvin, Beza, Glassius, Grotius. But, 1. the name of his father, Berechiah; 2. the manner of Christ's account (reckoning from Abel, the first martyr, to this, *penultimus prophetarum*, last, save one, of the prophets, and last of all that was slain by the Jews, after the rebuilding of the temple, whither, being assaulted, he ran for sanctuary), easily persuades me to alter mine opinion. As for those that hold that our Saviour there speaketh of Zacharias, the father of John Baptist, **#Lu 1:59**, slain by the Jews, because he preached *Virginis partum et Christi ortum*, Christ born of a virgin, Baronius, Tolet, and others, as they affirm it without reason, so they may be dismissed without refutation. *Hoc, quia de scripturis non habet auctoritatem, eadem facilitate contemnitur, qua probatur*, saith Jerome.

**The son of Iddo the prophet]** Whether the word prophet be to be referred to Zechariah or to Iddo is uncertain. That there was a prophet Iddo we read, and Zechariah might well be of his line, after many descents, **#2Ch 12:15**. He is here mentioned (as also **#Ezr 5:1**) *ut nepoti suo Zachariae nomen et decus conciliet*, for an honour to his ab-nephew, Zechariah; according to that of Solomon, "The glory of children are their fathers," to wit, if they be godly and religious, **#Pr 17:6**. What an honour was it to Jacob that he could swear by the fear of his father Isaac! to David, that he could say, "Truly, Lord, I am thy servant, I am thy servant, the son of thine

handmaid!" #Ps 116:16; to Timothy, that he had such a mother as Lois, such a grandmother as Eunice! #2Ti 1:5; to the children of the elect lady, to the posterity of Latimer, Bradford, Ridley, and other of those men of God, who suffered for the truth! If the degenerate Jews so boasted of Abraham, their father, #Joh 8:33 Mt 3:9, how much more might Zechariah (no degenerate plant, no bastardly brood, as they were, #Mt 12:39, γενεα μοιχαλις) boast and bear himself bold on his lather, Berechiah (the blessing of God), and his grandfather, Iddo (God's witness, confessor, or ornament), since he trod in their holy steps, and was adorned with their gifts and virtues! The Papists brag much of Peter, and other apostles, their founders and predecessors; but this is but an empty title, to talk of personal succession (which yet cannot be proven), unless they could also show us their gifts and graces, as all the world may see they cannot. We read of a painter who, being blamed by a cardinal for colouring the visages of Peter and Paul too red, tartly replied that he painted them so, as blushing at the lives of their successors.

{a} *Gr. and Lat. Myth.* The image of the goddess Pallas, in the citadel of Troy, on which the safety of the city was supposed to depend, reputed to have been thence brought to Rome. CED

Ver. 2. **The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers]** Heb. He hath boiled against your fathers with foaming anger, with height of heat. There are degrees of anger, see #Mt 5:22 De 29:28. The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation. *Surgit hic oratio:* and the last of those three words is the same here used in the text; noting a higher degree than the two former, even such a fervour and fierceness of God's wrath as maketh him ready to kill and cut off, {see #2Ki 6:6, and note the affinity of that word with this} like as he had much ado to forbear killing of Moses, when he met him in the inn, #Ex 4:24, and as Nebuchadnezzar was not only angry, but very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon, #Da 2:12. Now if the wrath of a king be as many messengers of death, #Pr 16:14, what shall we think of the foaming and frothing wrath of God, which burns unto the lowest hell, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains, #De 32:22. After which followeth, in the next verse, "I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them," #De 32:23. He had done so upon the ancestors of these refractory Jews, who had been *saepius puncti et repuncti, minime tamen ad resipiscentiam*



*compuncti*, often punished, but could never be reclaimed; so incorrigibly flagitious, so shamelessly, so prodigiously wicked were they, till there was no remedy. This their vile stubbornness made him sore displeased with them; and put thunderbolts into his hands to destroy them; for though fury be not in God, #**Isa 27:5**, to speak properly, he is free from any such passions as we are subject to, yet if briars and thorns set against him in battle, if a rabble of rebels conspire to cast him out of his throne, saying, "We will not have this man to rule over us," &c., "I would go through them, I would burn them together," saith he, in the same breath. Abused mercy turneth into fury. Nothing so cold as lead, and yet nothing so scalding, if molten. Nothing more blunt than iron; and yet nothing so keen, if sharpened. The air is soft and tender; yet out of it are engendered thunder and lightnings. The sea is calm and smooth; but if tossed with tempests, it is rough above measure. The Lord, as he is Father of mercies, so he is God of recompences: and it is a fearful thing to fall into his punishing hands, #**Heb 10:31**. If his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, woe be to all those upon whom it lights, #**Ps 2:12**: how much more when he is sore displeased with a people or person, as here! For "who knoweth the power of thine anger?" saith Moses; "even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath," #**Ps 90:11**; that is, let a man fear thee never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more, if once he fall into thy fingers. And this is here urged by the prophet as a motive to true repentance; since by their fathers' example they might see there was no way to escape the dint of the Divine displeasure but to submit to God's justice, and to implore his mercy: men must either turn or burn, "For even our God is a consuming fire," #**Heb 12:29**.

Ver. 3. **Therefore say thou unto them]** These Jews, saith Cyrill, had neither seen their fathers' wickedness, nor heeded their calamities. *Mittitur ergo ad eos Zacharias quasi paedagogus*, Zechariah therefore is sent unto them as a schoolmaster or monitor; that by considering what had been, they might prevent what otherwise would be, and redeem their own sorrows.

**Thus saith the Lord of hosts]** A far greater Lord and potentate than that great King of Persia, who was now their sovereign. True it is that they had been commanded by a former king to desist from building the city, #**Ezr 4:12,21**. But there was no one word in that

letter to forbid the building of the temple. There was also now another king set up, and of another family. They are therefore by this prophet and by Haggai called upon again and again to turn to the Lord, and to return afresh to their work, #Ezr 5:1. Wherein, because they were sure to meet with many enemies, therefore here and elsewhere (eighteen several times in that eighth chapter) there is frequent mention made of the Lord of hosts, for their better encouragement. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:17"}

**Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts]** This is the great doctrine of the Old Testament; as "Repent ye" is of the New. And this he purposely prefixeth as a preface and preparative to the other prophecies both of mercies and judgments, whereof the whole is fitly made up. Sour and sweet make the best sauce. Promises and menaces mixed make the most fruitful discourse; and serve to keep the heart in the best temper. Hence David's ditty was composed of discords, #Ps 101:1 "I will sing of mercy and judgment," and so be both merry and wise. But, to the words of the text:

**Turn ye unto me, &c.]** By sin men run away from God (whereby it appeareth that sin is the greatest evil, because it sets us furthest off from the greatest good), and by repentance they return unto him, #De 30:2,8-10 Mal 3:7 Jer 4:1 Ho 14:1 Ac 26:18. Hence, #Ac 3:19 "Repent, and be converted." Contrition is repentance for sin, #2Co 12:21 Re 9:20. Conversion is repentance for sin, #Ac 8:22 Heb 6:1. Hereunto is required first a serious search of our ways (for it is a metaphor taken from a traveller), "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord," #La 3:40. I considered my ways, and then (seeing myself far wide) I turned my feet to thy testimonies, #Ps 119:59. *Satius est recurrere, quam male currere*, said that emperor in his symbol; It is better to stop or step back, than run on when out of the way; for here he that hasteth with his feet sinneth, #Pr 19:2, the faster he runs the farther he is out. But as the deceived traveller (when once he finds his error) in his judgment he disliketh it, in his will he turneth from it, in his affections he grieveth at it, and is angry with his false guides, with his utmost endeavour he not only turns again to the right way, but makes the more haste that he be not benighted; so is it here, David not only turned his feet to God's testimonies, from which he had swerved, but he thenceforth

made haste and delayed not to keep his commandments, **#Ps 119:59,60**. For this true conversion we are speaking of, this repentance never to be repented of, is an upright, earnest, and constant endeavour of an entire change of the whole man from all that is evil to all which is good. This is the doctrine of the gospel, **#Tit 2:11**, and this is all the fruit, **#Isa 27:9**. To turn from one sin to another is but to be tossed from one hand of the devil to the other; it is but with Benhadad to recover of one disease and die of another; it is but to take pains to go to hell. See this in Saul, John, Herod, Agrippa, and others, who gave but the half turn; turned not from east to west, but from east to north only; their change was not essential, but only gradual; it is not a thorough change for subject and object, but partial and temporal, as being but moral, or formal, or merely mental. It proceeds from conviction of judgment only, and not from aversion of will; from horror of punishment, not from hatred of sin; which they leave (haply) but loathe not; leave it, I say, for the inconveniences that follow it, for the fire that is in it, not for the filthiness that is in it. Now all these seeming converts, because they cast not away all their transgressions (all is a little word, but of large extent), are therefore to be reckoned among those fools of the people that pass on and are punished, **#Pr 22:8**, those enemies of God, that instead of turning again (turning short again upon themselves with the prodigal, and returning to the Lord with Ephraim), go on still in their trespasses till their hairy scalp be wounded, **#Ps 68:21**, till evident and inevitable judgments be incurred, till iniquity prove to be their utter ruin, **#Eze 18:30**. Wherefore now "Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts." Add not to all your other sins that of impenitence, for which there remains no more sacrifice (as Herod added to all his former abominations the beheading of the Baptist), but "Turn you, turn you, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" And for this, consider these ensuing particulars. 1. Who you are that are required to return; weak and worthless creatures, the slime of your fathers' loins, dust and ashes, altogether unable to avert or avoid God's judgments; beaten rebels you are; and have therefore no help left, but to fall down before God and implore his mercy. Turn and live; except ye repent ye shall all perish. 2. Next, see who it is to whom ye are required to return: not to some tyrant, or implacable enemy, that having gotten us into his hands, will deal cruelly with us (as the Duke of Alva roasted some to death, starved others, and that

even after quarter), but to "the Lord your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and quickly repenteth him of the evil," **#Joe 2:13**. He will surely both assist such as have but a mind to return (why else doth he bid us turn, which he knows we cannot do without him? and why doth he bid us pray to him to turn us? when we bid our children ask us for this or that, it is because we mean to give it them). He will also accept us with all sweetness, as he did Ephraim, **#Jer 31:19,20**, and the prodigal, **#Lu 15:20-24**. The father met him, **#Lu 15:20**, so he will do us, **#Isa 65:24**. The prodigal came, the father ran, *Tantum velis, et Deus tibi praeoccurreret* (Basil); he fell on his neck, as Jacob did on his dear Joseph's, he kissed him, when one would have thought he should have kicked him, or killed him rather, for his former riotousness. He calleth for the best robe, and for the gold ring, and for the fatted calf *Filius timet convitium, Pater adornat convivium* (Ambrose), "Let us eat, and be merry," saith he, "For this my son was dead" (given up for dead, "free among the dead," **#Ps 88:5**, free of that company), "and is alive again: he was lost, and is found." Of himself he left his father and ran riot; and yet he is called the lost son, in the best sense. Hunger drove the wolf out of the wood; and yet he is accepted, as if not necessitated. 3. Thirdly, take notice from what you are required to turn. "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, ye house of Israel?" **#Eze 33:11**. It is your sin only that you are to part with, and why should ye be so fond of it? if you look upon it, either in the author of it, the devil, **#Joh 8:44**, or in the nature of it, as it is an offence against God (your rightful Lord, your bountiful benefactor), and a breach of his law, which is holy and just and good; or in the horrid effects of it (as upon other creatures for man's sake, so especially) upon man himself, whom sin hath excluded from the possession of the lower paradise, and the possibility of the higher, into an eternity of all extremities, after many a little hell here beforehand; or (lastly) in the ransom of it, Christ's blood and bitter sufferings, that soul of sufferings which his soul then suffered when God made our sins to meet upon him, **#Isa 53:6**. Oh think on these things sadly, seriously, fixedly, and copiously, and you will soon see cause enough to turn to him from whom these children of Israel had deeply revolted, and were therefore grievously plagued, they and their fathers, that they might return to him that smote them, **#Isa 31:6**. Which because they did not, but stood stouting it out with God

(which was their manner from their youth), therefore were the Syrians before, and the Philistines behind, to devour Israel with open mouth: and for all this his anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still, **#Isa 9:12,13**. Besides the hindrance and hurt they did to others by standing out: "For if ye turn again to the Lord, your brethren shall find compassion," said Hezekiah to his people, moving them to repent, **#2Ch 30:9**. And should not we lend them this friendly help.

**And I will turn to you, saith the Lord of hosts]** And should not such a favour from such a Lord melt them and make them malleable? Should not the goodness of God lead them to repentance? **#Ro 2:4**. Should they not rend their hearts because God is gracious? return unto him because he will multiply pardon? repent because his kingdom is now at hand? fear him the rather, because with him there is mercy? draw nigh to him, who thus draws nigh to them? make haste home, with the prodigal, where there is bread enough? Surely nothing worketh so much as kindness upon those that are ingenuous, **#Isa 55:7 Mt 3:3 Ps 130:4 Jas 4:4**. Those Israelites at Mizpeh drew water, and poured it forth before the Lord, upon the return of the ark. There is no mention of their lamenting after the Lord, while he was gone; but when he was returned and settled in Kirjathjearim, **#1Sa 7:6**, David argues from mercy to duty, **#Ps 116:8,9**; Ezra, from deliverance to obedience, **#Ezr 9:13,14** "The love of Christ constraineth us," saith Paul; his grace that bringeth salvation teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and to live up to our principles, **#2Co 5:14 Tit 2:14** "I beseech you, by the mercies of God," saith the same apostle, as not having any more prevailing, more heart-attaching, attracting argument in the world to press them with, **#Ro 12:1**. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with mercy have I drawn thee, **#Jer 31:8**. And again, I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love, **#Ho 11:4**, that is, with reasons and motives of mercy befitting the nature of a man, with rational motives; to neglect mercy is to sin against humanity; not to convert by kindness, is to receive the grace of God in vain; nay, it is to heap up wrath against the day of wrath. A son, feeling his father's love, creeps nearer under his wing. A Saul, sensible of David's courtesy in sparing him, when he might have spilt his blood, was strangely mollified and melted into tears. Shall God offer to turn to

us, and we refuse to turn to him? Shall he beseech us to be reconciled, and we go on in our animosities and hostilities? Doth he offer to pour out his Spirit even upon scorers, and to make known his words unto them, and all this that they may turn at his reproof, **#Pr 1:23**; and shall they yet turn their backs upon such blessed and bleeding embracements? Had God given us but one prophet, and forty days' time only to turn unto him (as he dealt by Nineveh, that great city), surely we should have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. But how justly, alas, may he complain of us, as he did once of Jezebel, **#Re 2:21**. I gave them time to repent, but they repented not. I have striven with them by my Spirit, and wooed them by my word. I have heaped upon them mercies without measure; and all to bring them back into mine own bosom. I have also smitten them with blasting and mildew, with judgments public and personal; and yet they have not turned unto me, saith the Lord, **#Am 4:9**. Ah sinful nation, &c. If any ask, What can we do toward the turning of ourselves to God? I answer:

*First*, you must be sensible of your own utter inability to do anything at all toward it, **#Jer 10:23 Joh 15:5 Php 2:12**. *Non minus difficile est nobis velle credere, quam cadaveri volare* (Beza). It is no less hard for us to be willing to believe than for a dead carcase to fly upwards.

*Secondly*, know that yet it is possible, feasible, by the use of these means that God hath appointed; who also hath promised to make it both possible and easy to us. He bade Moses fetch his people out of Egypt; but himself effected it. He bade the Israelites go and blow down the walls of Jericho; they obeyed him, and it was done; so here.

*Thirdly*, as our liberty in external acts is still some (as to come to the public ordinances, to set ourselves under the droppings of a powerful ministry, and there to lie, as he did at the pool of Bethesda, waiting the good hour), so must our endeavours be answerable. The Bereans brought their bodies to the assembly, took the heads of St Paul's sermon, compared them with the Scriptures, **#Ac 17:11,12**, and yet they were unconverted.

*Fourthly*, make much of the least beginnings of grace, even those they call repressing; since they prepare the heart for conversion. See #**Lu 11:32**.

*Fifthly*, pray, Turn us, O God, and we shall be turned; draw us, and we shall run after thee. And here remember to be earnest. Ask, seek, knock, as the importunate neighbour that came to borrow two loaves, or as the widow that came for justice, and would not away without it, #**Lu 18:1**. He that beareth the young ravens that cry only by implication, will he be wanting to his weak but willing servants?

*Lastly*, wait for the first act of conversion, the infusion of the sap of grace, which is wholly from God; our will prevents it not, but follows it; and whensoever the Spirit breathes into you, turn about, like the mill; when God hath tuned and doth touch you, do you move and make melody; resigning up yourselves wholly to him, and putting yourselves out, God into possession. Thus if you turn to him he will turn to you. "The Lord is with you while ye be with him; if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you," #**2Ch 15:2**. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh in this text with so much affection and earnestness; see that ye slight him not, that ye shift him not off (as the word signifieth, *παραιτησθητε*, #**Heb 12:25**); for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that thus speaketh from heaven, *sc.* by his blood, word, sacraments, mercies, motions of his Spirit, crosses. When physic, that should remove the disease, doth co-operate with it, then death comes with the more pain and speed. The stronger the conviction of sin is the deeper will be the wrath against it, if it be not by repentance avoided. No surfeit more dangerous than that of bread; no judgment more terrible than that which grows out of mercy offered and despised.

Ver. 4. **Be ye not as your fathers**] Man is a creature apt to imitate, to be led more by his eyes than by his ears; and children think they may lawfully be as their fathers. St Peter's converts had received their vain conversation from their fathers, as it were, *ex traduce*, or by tradition, #**1Pe 1:18**. And St Stephen tells his perverse hearers that they were as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as their fathers had been before them, #**Ac 7:51**. They used to boast much of their

ancestors, #Joh 8:33, and to bind much upon their example and authority, #Jer 44:17 Mt 5:21. They thought they were not much to be blamed, because they did but as their fathers had done before them. The prophet therefore dehorts or rather deters them from that folly; setting forth both the crime and doom of their forefathers, whom they so much admired, and so stiffly imitated, and this he often repeateth that they might once consider it, and be wrought upon by those domestic examples.

**Have cried]** Loudly and lustily; according to that, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet," #Isa 58:1: *sic clames ut stentora vineas*, A minister should be a Simon Zelotes, a son of thunder; as Basil was said to thunder in his preaching, lightning in his life; as Jerome for his vehemence was called *Fulmen Ecclesiasticum*, the Church's light bolt; as Harding, before his shameful apostasy, wished he could cry out against Popery as loud as the bells of Oseney; and as Farellus (that notable French preacher), whose voice when the envious monks sought to drown by ringing the bells as he was preaching at Metis, he lifted up his voice *ad ravim usque*; and would not suffer himself to be outroared. The saint's bell (as they called it) Pierius useth for a hieroglyphic of a preacher, who must not speak the word only, but sound it out into all the earth, #Ro 10:18, not preach it only, but cry it, as the apostle's word signifieth, #2Ti 4:2, *clangite, clamate*, #Jer 4:5. *Boate, vociferate*, #Mt 3:3 (βοωντος, *boantis, vociferantis*). Ministers have to do with deaf men, dead men, living carcasses, walking sepulchres of themselves. Now therefore as our Saviour lifted up his voice when he said, "Lazarus, come forth"; so must they stand over men and cry aloud, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, that Christ may give thee light," #Eph 5:14.

**Turn you now from your evil ways, &c.]** This was the constant cry of the prophets, as here, and apostles, as #Ac 26:18, to open men's eyes (naturally closed up that they cannot see the evil of their ways, #Jer 2:35 Re 3:15), to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

**And from your evil doings]** Heb. Designs, gests, or exercises, enterprised advisedly, and prosecuted studiously, of natural



disposition and inclination, as #Pr 20:11 1Sa 25:3. This St John usually calleth committing of sin, #1Jo 3:4,8,9 Joh 8:34; this is to add rebellion to sin, #Job 34:37, impudence to impotence, brows of brass to iron sinews, #Isa 48:4. This is wickedness with a witness, which if men could but see in its native colours and cursed consequents, they would soon be persuaded to turn from it. As the eye cannot but be offended with a loathsome object, so neither can the understanding. Take rat poison, it looketh not evil; but when a man feels it boil, burn, torture him, &c., he hates it extremely. So he should do sin; he will do else at length, when it is too late. For prevention: take the counsel of a martyr, get thee God's law, as a glass to look in. So shall you see your faces foul arrayed, and so shameful, mangy, pocky, and scabbed, that you cannot but be sorry at the contemplation thereof, and seek out for cure; especially if you look to the tag tied to God's law, the malediction; which is such, as cannot but make us to cast our currish tails between our legs, if we believe it. But O faithless hard hearts! O Jezebel's guests, rocked and laid asleep in her bed! O wicked wretches! &c.

**But they did not hear]** Though the prophets cried, and spake loud enough to be heard and heeded. A heavy ear is a singular judgment, #Isa 6:10; a hearing ear, a precious mercy, #Pr 20:12. God must be entreated to bore our ear, #Ps 40:6, and to make the bore so big that the word may enter; to say as #Isa 42:18, Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see.

Ver. 5. **Your fathers, where are they?]** Is not the grave their house? have they not made their beds in the dark? are not they gone down to the congregation of all living? #Job 30:23. Every man should die the same day as he is born; as being born a child of death; the wages of sin is death, and this wages should be paid him down presently. But Christ begs their lives for a season, #1Ti 4:10; he is the Saviour of all men, not of eternal preservation, but of temporal reservation. But what a sad thing is it for men to die in their sins, as these in the text and their nephews did, #Joh 8:21,24. How may such men, on their deathbeds, say to their sins, as Charles V did of his honours, victories, riches, *Abite hinc, abite longe*, Go, go, get you out of my sight (Mornaeus); or as Cornelius Agrippa, the conjuror, did to his familiar that used to accompany him in the shape of a dog, *Abi a me perdita bestia, quae me perdidisti*, Begone, thou wretched beast that

hast wrought my ruin (Joh. Manl.). Petrius Sutorius speaks of one that, preaching a funeral sermon on a religious man (as he calls him), and giving him large commendations, heard at the same time a voice in the church, *mortuus sum, iudicatus sum, damnatus sum*, I am dead, judged, and damned. The devil preached Saul's funeral, #1Sa 28:19, though David made his epitaph, #2Sa 1:19-27.

**And do the prophets live for ever?]** Those false prophets (so Jerome senseth it) that cried peace, peace, to your fathers, and made all fair weather before them, when the fierce wrath of God was even ready to burst out upon them as an overflowing scourge. But they do better that understand it of God's true prophets, who are dead indeed (for wise men die as well as fools, #Ps 44:10, good men die as well as bad, #Eze 21:4, yea, good men often before the bad, #Isa 57:1), but their words died not with them; the truth of their prophecies not only lived for ever (for ever, O Lord, thy word is stablished in heaven, #Ps 119:89), but struck in the hearts and flesh of their perverse hearers like the envenomed arrows of the Almighty throughout all eternity. Wicked men may, as the wounded hart, frisk and skip up and down when the deadly arrow sticks in their ribs, but not so easily shake it off, *Haeret lateri lethalis arundo*.

Ver. 6. **Did they not take hold of your fathers]** Overtake and catch them (as huntsmen their prey, or as one enemy doth another in flight, #1Ki 18:27 2Ki 25:5), to drag them down to the bottom of hell. A godly man, as he hath peace with God, with himself, and with the creatures; so he hath also with the ordinances, and may say, as Hezekiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. Are not my words always good, saith God, to them that walk uprightly? #Mic 2:7. Excellently Augustine, *Adversarius est nobis, quamdiu sumus et ipsi nobis: quamdiu tu tibi inimicus es, inimicum habebis sermonem Dei*. God's word is adversary to none but such as are adversaries to themselves; neither doth it condemn any but such as shall be assuredly condemned by the Lord; for what is the word but the heart and soul of God (*cor et anima Dei*), as Gregory saith. And what saith the essential Word of God, who came out of the bosom of his Father and knew all his counsel? "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," #Joh 12:48. Oh consider this, ye that forget God, that slight his word as if it were

but wind, that belie the Lord, and say, "It is not he; neither shall the evil" (foretold) "come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine. And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them. Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word" (and is there not such language of many men's hearts today?) "behold, I will make my words" (not wind, but) "fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them," **#Jer 5:12-14**. The word of God in the mouths of his ministers may well be likened to Moses' rod; which, while he held it in his hand, it flourished, and brought forth almonds; but, being cast upon the ground, it became a serpent. Semblably, God's words and statutes, if laid to heart, they yield fruit and comfort; but if slighted or snuffed at, *{as #Mal 1:13}* serpent-like they will sting the soul, and become a savour of death, &c. This contempt will also call for a sword, to revenge the quarrel of the covenant; as it did upon these men's fathers for their instance and admonition. It is reckoned by Daniel as a great aggravation of Belshazzar's sin, **#Da 5:22**, that he was not sensible of his father Nebuchadnezzar's pride and fall "And thou, his son, Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this." The sin of these Jews in the text was the greater because their fathers and elders (either out of sound conversion, or at least out of clear conviction of conscience) had confessed and remonstrated the truth and justice of God in threatening and executing his judgments upon themselves, saying, as **#La 1:18** "The Lord is righteous; for we have rebelled against his commandments"; and as **#La 2:17** "The Lord hath done that which he had devised; he hath fulfilled his word; he hath thrown down and hath not pitied," &c. Hear them in their own words here: "Like as the Lord of hosts," whose power is irresistible, "thought" (devised, determined with himself, and accordingly denounced by his prophets) "to do unto us," who did not the words which he commanded us, **#Jer 11:8** "according to our ways," which were always grievous, **#Ps 10:5** "and according to our doings," that were not good, **#Eze 36:31** "so hath he dealt with us"; for he loves to retaliate, and to render to every transgression and disobedience a just recompence of reward, **#Heb 2:2**.

**Ver. 7. Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month]**  
The third month after the former prophecy, when the Jews probably had practised the doctrine of repentance, so earnestly pressed upon

them; and had humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God, who was now ready to lift them up by this and the seven following most comfortable visions touching the restoration and reformation of the Church and State. The devil and his imps love to bring men into the briars, and there to leave them, as familiars forsake their witches when they have brought them once into fetters; as the priests left Judas the traitor, to look to himself, #Mt 27:4; and as the Papists cast off Cranmer, after that, by subscribing their articles, he had cast himself into such a wretched condition, that there was neither hope of a better nor place for a worse; *ut iam nec honeste mori nec vivere inhoneste liceret* (Melch. Ad. in Vita). But such is not God's manner of dealing with those that tremble at his word, and humble at his feet. *Deiecit ut relevet, premit ut solatia praestet*. He comforteth those that are cast down, #2Co 7:6, commandeth others to comfort the feeble-minded, #1Th 5:14, and noteth those that do not with a black-coal, #Job 6:14, *Nigro carbone notari*. See the workings of his bowels, the rollings of his compassions, kindled into repentance toward his penitentiaries, #Jer 31:20 Ho 11:8 Isa 40:1,2. See how he comforts them with cordials according to the time wherein he had afflicted them, #Ps 90:15, and in the very thing wherein he had abased them; as he once dealt with their head, #Php 2:7,8.

Ver. 8. **I saw by night]** The usual time for such revelations. It may note, moreover, the obscurity of the prophecy; hence also the mention of myrtle trees, low and shady, and that in a bottom, as Calvin conceiveth; and all this that he might give a taste of good hope to the Jews by little and little.

**And behold a man riding upon a red horse]** Not Alexander the Great, riding upon his horse Bucephalus, and translating the empire from the Persians to the Grecians, as Arias Montanus conceited it; but the man Christ Jesus, #1Ti 2:5, the Captain of the Lord's host, #Jos 4:14, and of our salvation, Heb. ii. 0.

**Riding upon a red horse]** In the same sense, saith one, that this colour is given to his garments, #Isa 63:1-3, and to the angel's horse, #Re 6:4. The wild bull, saith another, of all things, cannot abide any red colour. Therefore the hunter for the nonce, standing before a tree, puts on a red garment; whom when the bull seeth, he runneth at him as hard as he can drive; but the hunter, stepping

aside, the bull's horns stick fast in the tree; as, when David slipped aside, Saul's spear stuck fast in the wall. Such a hunter is Christ; he, lifted up upon the tree of his cross, had his garment dipped and dyed in his own blood, as one that cometh with red garments from Bozrah. Therefore the devil and his angels (like wild bulls of Bashan) ran at him with all their force (in that three-hours' darkness especially), but he, delivering himself as a mighty conqueror, their horns stick fast, as it were, in his cross; as Abraham's ram, by his horns, stuck fast in the brier.

**And he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom]** Myrrh trees some render it. Here Christ, that horseman and head of his Church, keepeth himself, as touched with the feeling of our infirmities, **#Heb 4:15**, as suffering and sorrowing with his people, who are fitly compared to myrtles, that grow in a shady grove, in valleys and bottoms, and by waters' sides, *et amantes littora myrtos* (Virg. Georg.). "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters," **#Isa 32:20**. Myrtles also are odoriferous, and precious, **#Isa 41:19 55:13**; so are the saints, **#Isa 43:4 Col 4:6**, they cast a good scent wherever they go, by the grace of God that is in them; as Alexander the Great is said to do, by the excellent temperament of his body. Lastly, **#Le 23:40 cf. Ne 8:15**, the Jews, at their joyful feast of tabernacles, used myrtle branches among others, to testify their thankfulness for a settlement in the promised land, after so long wandering in the wilderness. The Gentiles also in their solemn feasts, interludes, and — *cingebant tempera myrto*, wore garlands made of myrtles. Let us keep the feast; let us keep holy day (*εορταζομεν*), saith the apostle, **#1Co 5:8**, who himself did over abound exceedingly with joy, had an exuberance of it, at that constant feast of a good conscience, **#2Co 7:4**. Diogenes could say that a good man keeps holy day all the year about. Christ crowneth the calendar of his people's lives with continual, festivals here how much more in heaven! Pliny tells us that *ex myrto facta est ovantium corona, subinde et triumphantium*; of myrtle was made, among the Romans, the crown or garland of those that did shout for victory, or ride in triumph.

**And behind him were there red horses]** *i.e.* Horsemen: *Nam nimis crassum est illud commentum, fuisse locatos equos*, saith Calvin here. These horsemen are angels, as **#Zec 1:10**, deputed to

several offices and executions, for judgment, for mercy, or both; shadowed by the various colours of their horses.

Ver. 9. **Then said I, O my Lord, what are these?**] Thus the prophets inquired and searched diligently (as saith St Peter (ερευνωντες), #1Pe 1:11), for the truth of things, as hunters seek for game, and as men seek for gold in the very mines of the earth; who, not content with the first ore that offered itself to their view, dig deeper and deeper till they are owners of the whole treasure. See #Pr 2:4; and rest not till ye see that blissful sight, #Eph 1:18,19.

**And the angel that talked with me]** Or, in me, as the Vulgate rendereth it. This was some created angel, who might reveal things to the prophet by working on the phantasy and spirit, by way of information and instruction, as #Da 9:21 Lu 1:11 Re 1:1.

**I will show thee what these be]** How ready are the holy angels to serve the saints, #Heb 1:14, rejoicing more in their names of office than of honour, of employment than preferment, to be called angels, that is, messengers, or *internuncios*, than principalities, thrones, dominions, #Eph 1:20; accounting it better to do good than to be great, to dispense God's benefits than to enjoy them. Hence they are with and about the saints, as their companions, guides, protectors, monitors, and rulers of their actions, as here.

Ver. 10. **And the man that stood among the myrtle trees]** The man Christ Jesus, that is ever with the Church, and in the midst of his people, that feedeth among the lilies, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. He, being asked by the foresaid angel, answered him (in Zechariah's hearing), for he is *Palmoni hammedabber*; that excellent speaker, as Daniel calleth him, and therefore asketh him of the vision, #Da 8:13.

**These are they whom the Lord hath sent]** As his εφοροι, or overseers and intelligencers. Not that God needeth them, as princes need the counsel and aid of their subjects. The holy angels receive more from God than they perform or bring to him. But he maketh use of their service about us. 1. For the honour of his majesty, and comfort of our infirmity. 2. To make out his love unto us, by employing such noble creatures for our good. 3. To make and maintain love and correspondence between us and angels, till we

come to walk arm in arm with angels, as **#Zec 3:7**, and to be like unto them, yea, their equals (ισαγγελοι), **#Lu 20:36**, if not more, **#Eph 1:23**.

Ver. 11. **We have walked to and fro through the earth]** Itavimus, we have coursed up and down with incredible swiftness. Hence they are called the chariots of God, **#Ps 68:17** (Heb. God's chariot, to note out their joint service, as of one), as here his horsemen, ready pressed to do his pleasure.

**And behold all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest]** Excepting the Church alone, which, like Noah's ark, is ever tossed up and down till it rest at last on the everlasting mountain; then she shall have her happy halcyons; then she shall see her enemies afar off, as Lazarus did Dives, or as the Israelites at the Red Sea did their persecutors, dead upon the shore. Meanwhile, she must not expect to be calm and quiet for any continuance. In the world ye shall have trouble, and ye shall weep and lament; but the world shall rejoice; they shall revel, and laugh themselves fat, **#Joh 16:20,23** "The king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed," **#Es 3:15**. The Church is called God's threshing floor, because threshed with continual crosses; and God's husbandry, because he will be sure to plough his own ground, and to make long furrows upon their backs, whatsoever become of the waste, **#Isa 21:10 1Co 3:9**; and to weed his own garden, though the rest of the world be let alone, and grow wild. Moab is not poured from vessel to vessel, but setteth upon the lees, **#Jer 48:11**; when the Israel of God is poured out as milk, and curdled like cheese, as Job speaketh in another case, **#Job 10:10**.

Ver. 12. **Then the angel of the Lord]** That advocate with the Father, Jesus, the just one, **#1Jo 2:1**, who appeareth to his afflicted people, and feelingly pleads for them, as being afflicted in all their afflictions, even the angel of his presence that saveth them, **#Isa 63:9**. It much moved him to hear that God's enemies were in better case than his people; and this puts him upon the following passionate expostulation.

**O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, &c.]** *Usquequo Domine.* Calvin had these words much in his mouth; thereby breathing out his holy desires in the behalf of the afflicted Churches, with whose sufferings he was more affected

than with anything that befell himself. It is said of Melancthon that the miseries of the Church made him almost neglect the death of his dearest children; and put him upon many prayers and tears; which, like music upon the water, made a most melodious noise in the ears of God. When Luther in a certain epistle checked him, and chided him for his exceeding great care of the Church's welfare, calling him *pertinacissimam curarum hirudinem, &c.*, he meekly replied, *Si nihil curarem, nihil orarem*; If I should not care so, I should not pray so. God seemeth sometimes to have lost his mercy (as here, How long wilt thou be unmerciful to Jerusalem?), and then we must find it for him. He seems to have forgotten his people; we must remind him. He seems to sleep, delay; we must waken, quicken him, with "How long, Lord?" "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come," saith Daniel, who is probably held to be the penman of that excellent Psalm {#Ps 102:13 cf. Da 9:2} and he speaks it with as much confidence as if he had been in God's blessed bosom the while. This also he spake, not now by a spirit of prophecy, or special revelation; but by way of argumentation, or necessary demonstration: "For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof"; they pity her, and melt over her, therefore thou, Lord, much more; since all their tenderness is but a spark of thy flame, a drop of thine ocean.

**Against which thou hast had indignation, these threescore and ten years]** There is much ado among interpreters about Jeremiah's seventy years and Zechariah's seventy years, whether one and the same, or different one from another. That of Scaliger is most unlikely, who reckoneth these years of the captivity from the first year of Xerxes with his father Darius, unto the fourth year of Darius Nothus. How much better our countryman, Lydiat (whom yet Scaliger so much scorned, saying, *Quis est ille ex ultima Britannia Canis, qui Ios. Scaligerum audeat allatrare?*), who concludes it to be 70 years from the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldees to this second year of Darius Hystaspes, wherein Zechariah prophesied. That of a Lapid upon this text I cannot pass by, *Moraliter idipsum dicamus, idipsum oremus et obsecremus pro Anglia*. Let us say the same, pray the same, for England, Scotland, &c., that the angel here doth for Jerusalem; How long, Lord, wilt thou not have mercy upon England, where heresy hath prevailed



now these hundred years and upwards? The English fugitives beyond seas write upon their college and church doors, in great golden letters, *Iesu, Iesu, converte Angliam: Fiat, Fiat. Iesu*, convert England: Amen, Amen. Why, yet this is somewhat better than that of Pererius, the Jesuit, upon **#Ge 15:16**. If any man marvel, saith he, why England continueth to flourish, notwithstanding the overflow of heresy, and cruel persecution of Catholics (just execution of Catholics, he should have said), we answer, because their iniquity is not yet full (God grant it, **#Jer 28:6**), *Sed veniet tandem iniquitatis complementum*. But the time is not far off; and forbearance is no quittance.

Ver. 13. **And the Lord answered the angel]** How should God do otherwise than answer his well beloved Son with good and comfortable words, since he is all in all with the Father, and can do anything with him? Father, saith he, I know thou hearest me always, **#Joh 11:42**. Did God hear Abraham for Ishmael, nay, for Sodom? Did David hear Joab, interceding for Absalom? Did Herod hearken to Blastus, making request for those of Tyre and Sidon, with whom he was highly displeased? **#Ac 12:20**. And shall not God give ear to his Son, praying for his people, that are as dear to him as the apple of his eye? Good and comfortable words he doth surely answer him; such as were once those, **#Joh 12:27,28**, when Christ had thus prayed, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I to this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven" (Bath-col the Rabbis call it), "saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." So, when he shall say in his daily intercession (for he ever liveth to make request for us, at the right hand of the majesty on high), It irketh me, that the whole earth is at rest, and my Church at so much unrest: "Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants," **#Ps 90:13** "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity," **#Ps 118:25**. How can God do less than answer, as **#Isa 33:10** "Now will I arise, now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself"; or as in the words next following here (which indeed are all good along words and comfortable words), I am jealous for Jerusalem. The Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem; yet for all the sorrow he shall do for it, and for all that others call her an outcast, saying, "This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after," **#Jer 30:17**; and she

herself concludeth her doleful ditty with, "Thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us." #La 4:22

Ver. 14. **So the angel that communed with me]** See the note on #Zec 1:10.

**Cry thou, saying]** *q.d.* Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, speak ye to her heart and cry unto her, saying, that her appointed time is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, and so the quarrel is ended; for she hath received of the Lord's hands double for her sins. Nothing so much as I have deserved, saith she, #Ezr 9:13; twice so much as she hath deserved, saith he. O sweet contradiction! O beautiful contention! The same Hebrew word signifieth to repent and to comfort, #1Sa 15:35 Isa 60:1. God's care is to comfort those that are cast down. His command to his prophet is, to cry comfort to the penitent with an extraordinary earnestness, from the God of all consolation.

**I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy]** Love is strong as death, zeal, or jealousy (for the same word signifieth both), is hard as hell, #So 8:6. *Non amat qui non zelat*, saith Augustine. He loves not that zeals not. And Basil, venturing himself very far from his friend, and by some blamed for it, answered, *Ego aliter amare non didici*, I cannot love a man, but I must do mine utmost for him. When one desired to know what manner of man Basil was, it is said there was presented in a dream to him a pillar of fire with this motto, *Talis est Basilius*, Lo, such a one is Basil. It is certain that our God is a consuming fire. "Who would set the briars and the thorns," saith he, that is, the Church's enemies, "against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together," #Isa 27:4. And yet he saith in the same place, "Fury is not in me." What will he do then when jealousy is in him as here? "Jealousy is the rage of a man," #Pr 6:34, and hath these three properties:

*First*, it is exceeding watchful and quick sighted; hardly shall the paramour escape the husband's eye, and a wanton glance is soon noted and noticed. God is no less sensible and observant of the least indignity done to his dear spouse, his Hephzibah, be it but in a frown

or a frump. Why is thy countenance cast down? saith God to that dog-bolt Cain, **#Ge 4:6**. Why dost lower upon my righteous Abel? What, will he force the queen also before me in the house? **#Es 7:8**. If David's enemies mow and make mouths at him, if they cry, Aha, aha, so would we have it, God will reckon with them for it, **#Ps 40:15**. If Edom say jeeringly to the prophet, Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night? If Ammon clap but his hands at God's Israel, if he stamp with the feet, and rejoice in heart only, when it goes ill with the Church, "God will stretch out his hand upon him, and cut him off out of his country, and he shall know that he is Jehovah," **#Eze 25:6,7**; yea, that the Lord God of Israel is a jealous God. He will be jealous for his land, and pity his people, **#Joe 2:18**.

*Secondly*, jealousy is violent, it is cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, **#So 8:6**. The same word is elsewhere put for fiery thunderbolts, **#Ps 78:48**; also for a carbuncle or burning fever, **#De 32:24**. Jealousy puts a man into a fever fit of outrage; arms him with fiery darts, yea, with lightbolts; makes him cast firebrands, be ready to take any revenge. Think the same of God in a way of justice. He will spit in the face of a Miriam, that shall but mutter against his Moses, **#Nu 12:14**; what, then, will he do (or rather, what will he not do) against Jezebel, Athaliah, Herodias.

*Thirdly*, jealousy is irreconcilable, implacable: **#Pr 6:34,35** "He will not spare in the day of vengeance, He will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content though thou give many gifts." What would not Balak have given to have had his will upon Israel? What large offers made Haman! he would pay ten thousand talents of silver to those that had the charge of the business to destroy the Jews. Ahasuerus yielded; but so did not God. "We are sold (said Esther), I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain and to perish." But God never consented to the bargain, **#Es 3:9 7:4**. He had war with Amalek for ever, and laid his hand upon his own throne, as swearing to root him out, **#Ex 17:16**. And this proud Agagite Haman shall feel the force of his curse in his very bowels. Let the labouring Church but cry out, Help, O King, hear, O husband, give ear, O shepherd of Israel, the enemy is come into thy land, O Immanuel, and the stretching out of his wings filleth the whole breadth of it. Where is thy zeal (or jealousy) and thy strength, the sounding of thy

bowels, and of thy mercies towards me? are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, our Redeemer, or near kinsman, nay, our husband, **#Isa 8:8 63:15**. Thy Church is unto thee a sister, a spouse; and canst thou hide thine eyes from thine own flesh? **#Isa 58:7**, from her that is joined to the Lord, and is one spirit? **#1Co 6:17**; shall Abraham venture for the rescue of his kinsman, David of his two wives, and wilt thou do nothing for the dearly beloved of thy soul? shall she be given up into the hand of her enemies? shall the sword reach unto the soul? **#Ge 14:14 1Sa 30:18 Jer 12:7 4:10**. Let Christ but hear such words from the mouth of his spouse; and he will soon gird his sword upon his thigh, he will act Phineas' part and execute judgment; he will smite his enemies in the hinder parts (whip them, as men used to do boys), and so put them to a perpetual reproach; shame them for ever, as a company of punies or zanies, **#Ps 78:66**.

Ver. 15. **And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease]** Heb. I am in such a heat as causeth fuming and foaming. I am boiling hot, and even ready to burst out upon them to destroy them; for the word here used hath great affinity with another word that signifieth to cut down and to destroy, **#2Ki 6:6**, and importeth a higher degree of displeasure, a greater height of heat, than either anger or wrath, as may be seen in that signal gradation, **#De 29:28** "The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation." The last of these three is this word in the text, *Fervore maximo ferveo*, I am as hot as may be against those heathens that are at ease, at heart's ease, that come not in trouble, like other men, neither are they plagued as better men, **#Ps 73:5**, and are therefore secure and insolent above measure, **#Job 21:23**, haughty and haunty, so that the Church cannot rest for them; they thrust with the shoulder and push with the horn (as afterwards, **#Zec 1:18,19 cf. Da 8:4**), yea, they push the diseased, **#Eze 34:21**, which is a singular cruelty.

**They help forward the addiction]** They fall like dogs upon the wounded deer. This David complains of as an unsufferable grievance, **#Ps 69:26**. For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten: and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. God smiteth his in mercy and in measure, in the branches only, **#Isa 27:10**, and not at the root, *neque ad exitium sed ad exercitium*

neither for destruction but for training. (Aug.). Displeased he may be with his own, and make bloody wales upon their backs, if need be; but then he looks that others should pity them, and not lay on more load, and seek to bring them to utmost extremity. God puts his people sometimes into the hands of his enemies for correction sake. Now they commonly being enraged with haughty, revengeful, and malicious desires, exceed their commission, and so derive the mischief upon themselves, {see #Pr 24:17,18} they cannot do but they must overdo (as Nebuchadnezzar, the rod in God's hand, #Isa 10:5), and thereby utterly undo themselves for ever: for their cruelty comes up to heaven, #2Ch 28:9, and God soon heareth the cry of his oppressed (for he is gracious), and avengeth himself on their pitiless enemies; standing over them and saying, as #Isa 47:6 "I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou heavily laid thy yoke." And again, "Because these Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred: therefore I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them," #Eze 25:15,17 26:2. Joab never pleased David better than when he made intercession for banished Absalom, for the soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom, #2Sa 13:39, whom yet he had very just cause to be greatly displeased with. God, in a heat, as it were, against Israel, offereth Moses a great fortune, #Ex 32:10, but would have taken it very ill that Moses should have taken him at his word.

**He is but a little angry with his people]** And soon repenteth him of the evil; but woe be to those that help forward the indignation, that deal by God's afflicted as the herd of deer do; which, when any of the herd is shot, the rest push him out of their company. It is said of Queen Elizabeth, that she hated, no less than did Mithridates, such as maliciously persecuted virtue forsaken of fortune. Think the same of God. He weareth his rod to the stumps, and then throws it into the fire. He sets his horseleeches to his people (when he finds them sick of a plethora of pride, when fulness hath bred forgetfulness, satirity security), and suffereth them to suck till they burst; and then treads them under his feet, and puts them away as dross, #Ps 119:118,119.

Ver. 16. **Therefore thus saith the Lord]** Thus, one deep calleth another, #Ps 42:7; the lower deep of our misery, the higher deep of God's mercy. As Croesus' dumb son burst out into, Kill not King Croesus; so, when enemies are ready to devour the Church, God's bowels work; he can hold no longer, but cries, Save my child, handle the young man gently for my sake: see #Jer 31:20 Isa 57:16 "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me," &c.; when the child swoons in the whipping God lets fall the rod, and falls a kissing it, to fetch life into it again. A physician, in some cases, purgeth his patient till nothing be left almost but skin and bone; or bloodeth him, *ad deliquium animae*, till he faint and sink, but yet his care is still to maintain nature; so this heavenly Father and Physician is careful to keep up the spirits of his suffering saints by comforts and cordials, as here:

**I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies]** *Miserationibus visceralibus*, with multitudes of tender mercies that flow from the inwards, from the bowels, from the bosom and bottom of the heart; and that of a parent, nay, of a mother toward her child in an extremity, as #1Ki 3:26. And here observe how fully and sweetly the angel's prayer {#Zec 1:12} is answered, even *ad cardinem desiderii*. God not only grants him according to his own heart, but fulfils all his counsel, as it is, #Ps 20:4. Let it be to him even as he will, nay, gives him an enlarged answer, presseth upon him, as Naaman did upon Gehazi two talents when he desired but one. How long wilt thou not be merciful to Jerusalem? saith he.

**Behold, I am returned to Jerusalem with many mercies, saith God]** I went away and hid me from it in my anger, #Ho 5:15, but am come again with many comforts to relieve it. As all light is from the sun, and all waters from the sea; so is all comfort from God. In thy light shall we see light; but "thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled," #Ps 30:7: as when the sun is eclipsed all creatures here flag and hang the head, there is a drooping in the whole frame of nature; and when the extracting force of the sun leaves the vapours that are drawn up, they fall down again to the earth; so fares it with the Church: if God withdraw she lies all amort, yea, she lieth open to all sorts of evils and enemies; for her shadow is departed from her. But he cannot be long absent, such is his love; he will repent for his

people when he seeth their power is gone, #De 32:36, when there is *a dignus vindice nodus*, an extremity fit for Divine power to interpose; when misery weighs down, and nothing but mercy turns the scale, then at furthest in the very turning and critical point. He will return to Jerusalem with mercies. He will return to her, not as the winter sun, that casts a goodly countenance when it shines, but gives little comfort and heat; but with a cornucopia of all manner of blessings will he come.

**My house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem]** That is, both Church and State shall flourish. God will both do good in his good pleasure unto Zion; he will also build the walls of Jerusalem, #Ps 51:18; but mark that he saith in his good pleasure, as here in tender mercies; to teach us that all the good we enjoy is merely of mercy, it is all of free grace; for otherwise there should not be so much as any face of Church or commonwealth, as we see in the Jews at this day; a miserable dejected people, because Loruhamah, such as have not obtained mercy, #Ho 1:8. Their ancestors acknowledged, with all thankfulness for so undeserved a favour, that except the Lord of hosts had left unto them a very small remnant, they should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah, #Isa 1:9. Had not the angels laid hold upon Lot's hand and the good Lord been merciful unto him, #Ge 19:16, he also had perished among those sinners against their own souls. Joshua was "a brand plucked out of the fire," #Zec 3:2. And when one said to Mr Bradford the martyr, God hath done much for you since I first knew you, and hath wrought wondrously in you to his glory; he thus answered, Truth it is, for he hath dealt favourably with me, in that he hath not punished me according to my sins, but hath suffered me to live that I might seek repentance (Acts and Mon. 1473). "Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve," saith Ezra, #Ezr 9:13. And "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed," saith the Church, "because his compassions fail not," #La 3:22.

Ver. 17. **Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities]** Here are four "yets" in this one verse, and all very gracious ones; to break their hard hearts, and to raise their faith in his promised mercies. For it is as if God should say, Though I was sore displeased with your fathers, and ye are risen up in their rooms a very race of

rebels, so that I have had indignation against you full seventy years, **#Zec 1:12**, yet I do you to know, and by my prophet I proclaim, with great earnestness and evidence of truth, that I do yet own you my cities, so that ye are not discovenanted, and will yet prosper you (so that it shall no more be said, This is Zion whom no man careth for, **#Jer 30:17**; for you shall have plentiful increase of men, cattle, and all manner of fruits of the earth, as **#Zec 2:4**), yea, you shall have a fulness of all things, not only repletive, but diffusive, not only of abundance, but of redundancy too; your cup shall overflow into the lesser vessals of others.

**My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad]** *Diffundentur; diffiuent nut effluent.* You shall have not for necessity only, but for lawful delight and honest affluence.

**And the Lord shall yet comfort Zion]** *sc.* With spiritual comforts, taking her into his winecellar, Cant. ii., yea, into the wilderness, and there speaking to her heart, **#Ho 2:13**.

**And shall yet choose Jerusalem]** That is, settle her in the sound assurance of her election and adoption, whereof those outward blessings are both fruits and pledges. Hence David doubts not to conclude his spiritual good estate and hopes of eternal happiness from his external enjoyments, **#Ps 23:5,6** "Thou preparest a table before me, thou anointest mine head, my cup runneth over." Hence he infers, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." In all that is here said we may see that Scripture fully made good, **#Jer 51:5** "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel." And herein God dealt with his people according to his prerogative, and not according to his ordinary course. When the cursed Canaanites had filled their land from corner to corner with their uncleannesses they were devoted to destruction, **#Ezr 9:11**. When the Edomites grew insolent and ripe for ruin they were called the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord had indignation for ever, **#Mal 1:4**. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:4"}

Ver. 18. **Then I lift up mine eyes, and saw]** That is, I gave good heed to this second vision also; which was added purposely for



confirmation of the former promises; which should be certainly accomplished to the Church, notwithstanding her many and mighty enemies. Horns they are called for their might and mischievousness; by a metaphor, *a feris cornupetis*, from fierce beasts, whose strength and wrath lie in their horns; or else from warriors, who wore iron horns upon their helmets.

**And behold four horns]** Not the four monarchies, for the Grecians and Romans were not yet; and this is spoken here for the present comfort of the afflicted Church, but the enemies of Israel from all the four parts of the world, see **#Ps 107:2,3**, for they were surrounded: on the north were the Syrians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. (*Ab Aquilone nihil boni*, **#Jer 4:6 6:1**). On the east the Ammonites and Moabites. On the south the Edomites and Egyptians. On the west the Philistines, as may be gathered out of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Geneva is at this day a small people, environed with enemies, French, Spanish, Savoy, Pope; and barred out from all aid of neighbours, cities, and churches; yet, by the mighty arm of God, strangely and strongly upheld and defended. This Mr Beza represented in a most elegant emblem of a city depainted as hanged by a twined thread; sustained and maintained by the mighty hand of God alone. Would any man take the Church's picture? saith Luther; then let him paint a silly poor maid, sitting in a wood or wilderness, compassed about with hungry wolves, lions, boars, and bears, and with all manner of cruel and hurtful beasts; and in the midst of a great many furious men assaulting her every moment and minute; for this is her condition in the world.

Ver. 19. **And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these?]** Though the vision be dark and mysterious, yet the prophet despaireth not of a right understanding, neither doth he waywardly reject it with a *Quod non vult intelligi, vult negligi*; but wanting wisdom, he asketh it of God, as St James also adviseth us to do, **#Jas 1:5**, and as David practised: "Teach me good judgment and knowledge," saith he, "give me understanding and I shall observe thy law." Thus Daniel prayed, and had an angel sent to inform him not once, but often, in friendly and familiar manner, **#Da 9:21 10:11 11:2,3**. So had Joseph, Cornelius, Paul, &c. And although angels are not so ready now, or appear not, at least, so visibly to tell us the mind of God; yet he will not be wanting to his willing servants; but

in the use of means they shall be all taught of God; as David was by repairing to the sanctuary, #Ps 73:13, and as the eunuch was by Philip, #Ac 8:26-30.

**These are the horns which have scattered]** Heb. tossed them up in the air, as furious beasts do with their horns, and sorely bruised them. *Nam non modo dispersionem significat quae sit per modum ventilationis, sed etiam quae sit per modum allisionis et contritionis* (Lud. de Dieu in #Mt 22:44). See #Ho 10:14 13:16.

Ver. 20. **And the Lord showed me four carpenters]** He that before was called an angel is here called Jehovah, this shows him to be Christ, who is God blessed for ever. In respect of his eternal essence he is called the Lord; in respect of his office or mediatorship, an angel.

**Four carpenters]** Or smiths; so many horns, so many artificers to batter and break them. God wants not ways and means to help his own at a dead lift; he knows how to deliver, saith Peter, #2Pe 2:9, and herein usually he goeth a way by himself. Many times he setteth the enemies together by the ears among themselves; while that I withal escape, saith David, #Ps 141:9. Thus by Nebuchadnezzar, as by a club or beetle, he brake the rest of those horrible horns; as at this day the Pope by the Turk, and Spaniard by the French, and that the Church may have her halcyons. No marvel I slept so soundly seeing Antipater was by and watched, said Philip of Macedon. We may better say of Antipater, our gracious Father and guardian, the keeper of his Israel.

Ver. 21. **What come these to do?]** He asketh not what they were? for by their tools or weapons he perceived they were carpenters or smiths (as some think), with iron instruments to break these iron horns; confer #1Ki 22:11. He inquireth, therefore, of their employment only. Futilous and foolish questions should be avoided, #Tit 3:9.

**So that no man did lift up his head]** Turn head, or look cheerfully, as #Lu 21:28.

**But these are come to fray them]** *Deterere*, saith the Vulgate; better *deterere*, to frighten them, now that they had pushed Israel to the Lord.

**To cast out, &c.]** Thus *Omne sub regno graviore regnum est*. See #Ec 5:7. {See Trapp on "Ec 5:7"}

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked]** *i.e.* I looked wistfully, not sluggishly, as between sleeping and waking, as #Zec 4:1. I saw further by the spirit than common sense could have carried me. I beheld Jerusalem in her future glory, I looked intently, I took aim, not by the things which are seen, but by the things which are not seen, #2Co 4:18 Heb 11:27 Ga 4:26.

**And behold a man]** The man Christ Jesus, as his mother is called a virgin, #Isa 7:14, the virgin, that famous virgin that conceived and bare a son, that got a man from the Lord, #Ge 4:1. This man (called before and after an angel, as appearing in human shape) is here seen and set forth as an architect or master builder, going to take the plot of his Church, see #Re 21:15; and observe, by the way, how in that book the Holy Ghost borrows the allegories and elegancies of the Old Testament to set out the story of the New in succeeding ages.

Ver. 2. **Whither goest thou?]** This was great boldness; but the prophet understood himself well enough; and Christ approves and assents to it in a gracious answer here, and especially #Zec 2:4. Great is the confidence of a good conscience toward God, #1Pe 3:21. See #Isa 63:16,17 Hab 1:12. We may come boldly to the throne of grace, #Heb 4:16.

**To measure Jerusalem]** This had been promised before, #Zec 1:16. But for their further confirmation, who saw a little likelihood of such a rebuilding and re peopling, it is repeated. Thus the Lord, tending our infirmity, seals to us again and again in the holy sacrament, what he had said and sworn to us in his word.

Ver. 3. **And behold the angel]** Zechariah's angel, as one calleth him.

**Went forth]** to take direction from Christ, and to give the prophet further information. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:9"}

**And another angel went out to meet him]** So ready is Christ to answer prayers and to satisfy his weak but willing people, that draw near unto him with a true heart, **#Heb 10:22**. If any such ask and miss it is because they ask amiss, **#Jas 4:3**.

Ver. 4. **Run, speak to this young man]** Not go, but run; yea, fly swiftly, with weariness of flight, as **#Da 9:21**. Christ thinks it long ere his praying people hear from him. Only he will be inquired of by them, **#Eze 36:37**. Zechariah seems to have been a young prophet, and Christ remembered the kindness of his youth, and became a wonderful counsellor to him; he gave to this young man (or greenbeaded stripling) knowledge and discretion, **#Pr 1:4**. Epiphanius saith he was an old man; and that he is called a young man because a client and disciple of the angel that communed with him. Where angels are called men it was no disparagement to Zechariah to call himself a lad, or servant, considering his distance. Thus Abraham's servant, though old, is called his boy, **#Ge 24:52**, by a catachresis. That is a good note that Mr Potable gives here, that the angel tells the prophet, but the prophet must tell the people; God using not the ministry of angels, but men earthen vessels, to bear his name to his people, **#Ac 8:27 9:6 16:9**.

**Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls]** Or shall dwell in towns without walls viz. in the suburbs or villages, there being not room enough within the walls to receive them. This seemed an incredible thing to this poor remnant now returned from Babylon. But it is the property and duty of believers to trust God upon his bare word; and that against sense in things visible, and against reason in things improbable.

**For the multitude of men and cattle therein]** That is, saith Augustine, of spiritual and carnal persons in the Church Catholic.

Ver. 5. **For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire]** *Ignes qui et cominus arceat et eminus terreat* (Theodor.). The Church (Christ's garden) may seem to lie open to all incursions and disadvantages; but as it hath a well within it, **#So 4:15**, so it hath a wall without it, yea, round about it, better and stronger than that about Babylon, or Susa in Persia; the stones whereof were joined together with gold, as Cassiodorus testifieth. The Lacedaemonians

were forbidden to wall in their city of Sparta; as being sufficiently fortified by the valour of the inhabitants. The Hollanders will not wall the Hague, though it have 2000 households in it; as desirous to have it counted rather the principal village of Europe than a lesser city. China is said to be surrounded with a strong wall of stone; and England with walls of wood, *sc.* a powerful navy. But what is all this (either for defence or offence) to a wall of fire? who dare venture to scale such a wall? It is not valour, but madness, to fight with a flame. Fire is terrible to the fiercest creatures, as lions, leopards. Shepherds and travellers were used to guard themselves by making great fires round about their night lodgings to keep off wild beasts. Some think the prophet alludeth to that custom; others, to the angels guarding of Paradise with a flaming sword, that is, saith Lactantius, with a wall of fire (Instit. lib. 2, cap. 13.) The Church may sit and sing, "We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks," **#Isa 26:1**. He "maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flame of fire," **#Heb 1:7**. These met and ministered unto Jacob at Mahanaim, making a lane for him, as the word importeth, **#Ge 32:1**. These fiery chariots and horsemen appeared for Elisha by whole legions, **#2Ki 6:17**, and do still pitch their camp round about the godly, **#Ps 34:7**. (These are the watchmen over the walls of the new Jerusalem, and of the mountains about the same, **#Isa 62:6**) Who, therefore, cannot but be safe, as being guarded by the peace of God within them, and by the power of God without them, through faith unto salvation.

**And will be the glory in the midst of her]** God is the Church's both bulwark and beauty; her muniment and ornament. His presence, his worship, his grace, his protection, is that tower in the midst of her, **#Isa 5:2**, that golden head of the picture, that tower of the flock, and stronghold of the daughter of God's people, **#Mic 4:8**. Hence the ark is called the glory, **#Ro 9:4,5**, and all comforts without it but Ichabods, **#1Sa 4:20**. Hence Judea is called the glorious land; and heathens are brought in saying, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law?" **#De 4:6-8**. Surely as Samson's strength and glory lay in his hair, so

doth the strength and glory of our land consist in the true religion, and God's sincere service; which if it should be shaved and deprived of, though every shower were a shower of gold, saith a divine, every stone in the land a pearl, every beggar an honourable senator, every fool as wise as Solomon, every weakling as strong as Samson; yet our wealth, honour, strength, wisdom, and glory are gone, and we shall sing a doleful *Miserere* ditty with Phineas's wife, Ichabod, The glory of England is gone; for religion is gone.

**Ver. 6. Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north]** A proclamation to those in Babylon to make haste home, and come away for shame; now they had so fair a way made, and such free liberty given them to return. A man would wonder they should be so backward to a business of this nature. But they that were born in hell know no other heaven, as the proverb is. There they had lived a long season in peace and safety in a rich and fat though a foreign country. There they were at quiet, enjoyed their religion and customs, gotten wealth, had favourites at court; and what should they trouble themselves to remove into a country where they were sure to meet with many bitter enemies, the Samaritans and others? And who can tell whether this proclamation of King Darius be not a design to try their affection to their country, and so to fall upon such as did offer to return thither? Thus by casting perils, distrusting promises, and listening to that *Improba Siren Desidia*, wicked idolent Siren, they stayed half of them at least behind, whatever Josephus hath falsely storied of 4,628,000 that returned; the contrary whereto, see **#Ezr 2:64**.

**For I have spread you abroad into the four winds]** And do now offer to recollect and reduce you to your own country. See that ye shift not off me that speak from heaven. See that ye neglect not so great salvation, **#Heb 12:25 2:3**. How often is the Lord even fain to smoke us, and so force us out of our clay cottages, toward our heavenly home. And what a shame is it to us that a heathen should say *Fugiendum est ad clarissimam patriam; ibi pater, ibi omnia*. We should even flee apace to our own country that is above; since there is our Father, there is all that heart can wish or need require.

**Ver. 7. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon]** *q.d.* Is Babylon a fit place for thee to abide in? what comfort canst thou take in such lewd company? Save thyself from

this untoward generation, #Ac 2:40 "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense," #Jer 51:6,7. Shortly after this exhortation to the sons of Zion Babylon revolted from the Persians, and was taken and sacked by Darius in the fourth year of his reign (that is, two years after this prophecy was uttered) by the help of his friend Zopyrus. Two things should prevail with the people of God to shun the society of the ungodly. 1. Infection of sin, which is more contagious and catching than the plague. Though Lot learned not the evil manners of Sodom, yet his daughters did. 2. Infliction of punishment, #Zec 9:2,4. Hamath lay so nigh Damascus in places that she fared the worse for her neighbourhood. See for both these, #Re 18:4, and say, if at any time forced to be in bad company, "Oh that I had wings of a dove: for then would I flee away, and be at rest," #Ps 55:6. Or, if this "Oh" will not set thee at liberty, take up that "Woe" to express thy misery, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech."

Ver. 8. **For thus saith the Lord of hosts]** Sanchez referreth these words to those aforegoing, *q.d.* "Deliver thyself," &c. for so the Lord commandeth. But herein he stands alone, the current of interpreters carrying it against him. This preface seems prefixed for procuring more authority to the ensuing promise, which to the poor Jews might seem incredible. If Jehovah speaketh it, and he that hath all power in his hand to effect what he speaketh, why should any one doubt, or despair?

**After this glory]** i.e. These glimmerings of glory, these outgoings of grace begun among you, and by degrees to be finished.

**Hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you]** Or, against the nations, for it is a sending in judgment; and perhaps against either the Chaldeans, destroyed by the Persians, {*See Trapp on "Zec 2:7"*} or the Persians, afterwards destroyed by the Grecians and by Alexander the Great, see #Isa 33:1. Now, whereas some object that Christ is here said to be sent by his Father, and this seems to import an inferiority; it is answered: First, that two equals by mutual consent may send one another. Mission doth not always import inequality. *Secondly*, one may be inferior to another, either by nature, and so

Christ is not; or by condition, as he is the Mediator, and as he did voluntarily abase himself; and so he is, **#Php 2:7**.

**For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye]** The little man, that is, in the eye (as *pupilla* of *pupa*), or, the black of the eye (*Ishon*, of *Ish*. It is here called Bath, the daughter of the eye; because it is as dear to a man as an only daughter). God, who at first drew light out of darkness, doth, by an admirable work, draw the light of the body out of the black apple of the eye. Philosophers call it, the crystalline humour. It is the tenderest piece of the tenderest part; to express the inexpressible tenderness of God's love, saith Salvian. The eye is kept most diligently, and strongly guarded by nature with tunicles. A man can better bear a thultch on the back than a touch on the eye. *Siquis digitum meum mordent, siquis pungat brachium et crura, siquis etiam duriter vulneret, &c.*, saith Calvin here. If one bite my finger, prick my leg or arm, yea, slash and wound me, I can better bear it than if he thrust his finger in my eyes. Amida, son of Mulasses, King of Tunis, cruelly put out his father's eyes, by holding hot burning basins before them. Robert de Behasme, Earl of Shrewsbury, A.D. 1111, playing with his own child, for a pastime, put his thumb in the boy's eyes, and thrust out the balls thereof. We use to say, *Oculus et fama non patiunfur iocos*, The eye and the good name will endure no jests. Let persecutors take heed how they meddle with God's eyes. "He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against God and prospered?" **#Job 9:4**. Some read the text thus; He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his own eye, that is, he very grievously hurteth himself, as procuring and pulling down upon his own head the sharp wrath and vengeance of God. But the former is the better.

Ver. 9. **For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them]** Kings, they say, have long hands; and can easily reach those that are far distant. This is much more true of the King immortal; who can quickly crumble to crackle the mightiest monarchs; he cuts off the spirit of princes, **#Ps 76:12**, he slips them off (so the Hebrew there imports), as one would slip off a flower between one's fingers, or as one should slip off a bunch of grapes. If the Lord do no more but arise, his enemies shall be scattered, **#Ps 68:1**. If he do but show himself in the field (as Xerxes used to pitch his tent on high, and stand looking on his army when in fight), the Philistines will be



heard to cry out, "God is come into the camp. Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods?" **#1Sa 4:8**. But if he once shake his hand (that mighty hand, as St James calleth it, that spanneth the heavens and shaketh the foundations of the earth), how much more if he smite with the hand and stamp with the foot (as the prophet in another case, **#Eze 6:11**; and as Pompey vainly vaunted, that with a stamp on the ground of Italy he could raise an army), the sinners against Zion are soon afraid; fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrites. Woe unto us, say they, for we are spoiled, **#Isa 33:14 Jer 4:13**. The very shaking of his hand at them shall make their hearts ache, shake, and fall asunder in their bosoms, as drops of water.

**And they shall be a spoil to their servants]** *i.e.* To the Jews, whom they lately spoiled and enslaved. This was fulfilled in Esther's days; and afterwards in the time of the Maccabees. Besides what is yet expected to be done by the nation of the Jews; when, at their glorious conversion, Christ shall dwell among them, **#Zec 2:10**, and the multitude of nations shall join themselves to Christ, **#Zec 2:11**, the Jews inhabiting in their own land, **#Zec 2:12**, to the silencing, amusing, and amazing of all flesh, **#Zec 2:13**; while the enemies of the Church by them subdued, **#Zec 10:11**, and possessed, **#Isa 14:2 Ob 17,19**, shall willingly, or perforce, come under Christ's obedience. The conversion of the Gentiles (saith a learned author) is many times intimated by the Israelites mastering of them, spoiling them, possessing them for servants and for handmaids, as **#Isa 14:2 Am 9:11 Ob 19**, and here, which is not meant so much of a temporal subduing as of a spiritual joining with them in seeking of the Lord; yet so as the chief sovereignty and stroke of keeping men within the lists of their subjection and obedience unto Christ, shall remain among the Jews (The Calling of the Jews, by Sir H. Finch). And so St James teacheth us to expound those phrases, **#Ac 15:17**, where that which Amos saith, that the Israelites may possess the remnant of Edom, James rendereth, that the residue of men may seek after the Lord. The enemy whom, indeed, the Jews shall spoil, root out, and destroy, after they have groaned long under his hard yoke and bondage, is Gog and Magog, that is to say, the Turk, **#Eze 38 Eze 39**, with whom they shall have a marvellous conflict, as it may seem in their own country, **#Eze 39:2,4 Da 11:44,45**, and over

whom they shall obtain a noble victory (God from heaven miraculously fighting for them, #Eze 38:18,19, &c.; #Zec 14:3-5) at, or near Jerusalem, #Joe 3:2 Eze 39:16. This enemy is not always represented by one and the same name; but sometimes he is called Moab, Edom, Rabbah, Ashur, Javan; haply because those that inhabit the seat of these people shall join hands with the Turk, and fall in the same destruction. Sometimes he is called leviathan, from his quality; sometimes Gog and Magog, from his country; sometimes the king of the north, from his territory, #Isa 27:1 Eze 38:2 Da 11:40. But by all these names one and the same enemy is understood, which marvellously cleareth the place in Ezekiel, #Eze 38:17, where the Lord by his prophet speaketh to Gog in this wise: "Art thou he of whom I have spoken in ancient time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in these days and years?" He cannot mean himself, nor Daniel, which was but his contemporary, much less Zechariah, that came after; but he meaneth the ancient prophets long before, who spake of the same person, though not by the same name.

**And ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me]** You shall subscribe to the truth of these promises, which now you can very hardly be brought to believe; when God shall have fulfilled with his hand that which he hath spoken with his mouth, as Solomon's phrase is, #1Ki 8:15.

Ver. 10. **Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come]** After a long absence, as it may seem, and great expectation, I come, not to lodge for a night, but to dwell and make mine abode in the midst of thee; partly in my newly built temple, but principally in the temple of my body, #Joh 2:21 "For the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," #Joh 1:14. Lo here is *habitatio Dei cum carne*, God dwelling with men, which the magicians held impossible, #Da 2:11. And for this the Church here, though at a great under, is commanded to sing and shout, notwithstanding her present pressures. This might seem to her an unseasonable discourse; which, saith Siracides, is as music in mourning, #/RIPC Sir 22:6. But when is medicine more seasonable than in time of sickness? And when have the saints more need of cheering up than when they are pressed down with heaviest crosses? And what greater comfort to a good soul than Christ Jesus our joy? *Christus lecythos habet in*

*malis*: his comforts are such as the world can neither give nor take away; such as no good thing can match, no evil thing overmatch.

Ver. 11. **And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day**] *{See Trapp on "Zec 2:9"}* And further observe; that albeit the thorough coming in of the Gentiles, for all nations with one consent to receive Christ, be put off till the Jews' famous conversion; yet that nothing hindereth but that this, and such like places that speak of the same, may well serve to warrant the first inceptions of their calling. And so doth St James cite them, **#Ac 15:16,17**, out of **#Am 9:11,12**, and Paul, **#Ro 9:25,26**, out of **#Ho 1:10**.

**And I will dwell in the midst of thee**] *{See Trapp on "Zec 2:10"}*

**And thou shalt know, &c.**] *{See Trapp on "Zec 2:9"}*

Ver. 12. **And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion**] Or his enclosure, his several, divided from the rest of the world by a wonderful separation, as the Hebrew word signifieth, **#Ex 33:16**. And though there were some interruption in showing favour for a time; yet was there no intercession and utter breach of covenant; nor is to this time, as the apostle showeth, **#Ro 11:28,29**. About the time when the Turkish tyranny shall have lasted 350 years (saith my former author out of **#Da 7:25 12:7,11 Re 9:15**), the Jews shall repair toward their own country, **#Isa 11:15,16 51:10,11 Jer 3:18 Ho 1:11**, where they shall have a great conflict with the Turk, **#Eze 38**, and be in great distress for a time, **#Da 12:1**, but at length prevail, to the utter ruin of the Grand Seignior himself, and the overthrow of his army; perhaps not far from the sea of Gennesaret, otherwise called the lake of Tiberias, **#Eze 39:11**. After which they shall dwell in their own country, **#Jer 3:18 23:8 Eze 37:21,22 Am 9:14,15**. They shall inhabit all the parts of the land as before, **#Ob 15,19,20 Jer 31:38-40 Isa 27:12 65:10**. The land shall be more fertile than ever it was, **#Eze 36:8-15 Ho 2:21,22 Joe 3:18 Am 9:13 Zec 14:10**. The country more populous than before, **#Isa 49:19-21 Eze 34:31 36:37,38**. There shall be no separation of the ten tribes from the other two; but all make one entire kingdom, **#Eze 37:22,24 Ho 1:11**, and a most flourishing commonwealth, **#Da 7:27**, together with a Church most glorious, both for outward beauty, **#Zec 14:6,7 Isa 60:20 62:1-3**, and inward purity in doctrine, **#Eze 37:23 Zec**

**13:2,3**; in discipline, all profane purged out, **#Joe 3:17 Zec 14:8**, abundance of spiritual graces, **#Isa 25:6-8**, safety, **#Zec 10:12 14:11**, prosperity, **#Isa 25:8 51:13**, and stability, **#Isa 26:1 33:16 Jer 30:20**, &c., perpetuity, **#Isa 60:21 Joe 3:20**.

Ver. 13. **Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord]** Heb. **הָשָׁב** Peace and be still, as our Saviour once said to the raging sea, **#Mr 4:39**, whereupon the wind ceased (which before had blown and blustered till it was weary again, as the Greek word there importeth) and there was a great calm, all was suddenly hushed, and silent (**εκοπασεν**). The enemies of the Church are no less brutish and boisterous than the fierce winds and waves (**αγπια κυματα**), **#Ps 107:25-27**. But God, who sets a bound to the mighty waters which they may not pass, **#Ps 104:9**, he also restraineth the remainder of man's wrath, **#Ps 76:10**. If he do but (as the Roman tribune was wont to do) interpose his veto. If he do but say (st) Be silent, O all flesh, **σιγα λαος**, plot not, prate not, practise not against my people, who dare quatch in his presence, or gainstand his commands ( **הָשָׁב ησυχασαετε**)? Who art thou, O man, that chattest against God? saith Paul, **#Ro 9:20** "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without wisdom?" saith God to Job, **#Job 38:2**. How now? Let all flesh be silent. Let God be justified, and every mouth stopped. Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not arrogance come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked (whether they will or no) shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them," saith holy Hannah, **#1Sa 2:3,9,10**. And then they shall be glad to be quiet, and to save themselves as they can; like as the worms when it thunders wriggle into the corners of the earth; and as Caligula (that bold miscreant that dared his Jove to a duel), when it thundered, covered his eyes with his cap, running under the bed, or any bench hole (Sueton.).

**O all flesh]** Frail and foolish, weak and worthless men, who may not compare their wisdom or oppose their strength to God's; before whom they can no more stand than a glass bottle can before a cannon-shot. They should, therefore, do well to meddle with their match; and not "contend with him that is mightier than they," **#Ec**

**6:10.** The Church is called Jehovahshammah, or, The Lord is there, **#Eze 48:35**, and although she be but a virgin, yet she hath a thrice puissant champion, even the Holy One of Israel, **#Isa 22:23**.

**Who is now also already raised up]** Or aroused, awakened as a man out of sleep, **#Ps 44:23**, or as a giant that shouteth by reason of wine, **#Ps 78:65**.

**Out of his holy habitation]** That is, out of heaven, **#De 26:15**, where he hath bathed his sword, **#Isa 34:5**, and bent his bow and made it ready, **#Ps 50:12**. Or out of his temple, which was likewise God's habitation, **#1Sa 2:20**, and thence God would help his people, as they once said to David at Mahanaim, **#2Sa 18:3**, Therefore now it is better that thou help us, or cause us to be helped, out of the city. Remarkable is that of the psalmist, "In Salem is God's tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah." **#Ps 76:2,3**. There? where? In the tabernacle, in the assemblies of God's saints. By all flesh here may also be meant the unbelieving Jews, who are enjoined silence and submission; they are styled here, as the Levites styled the people, saying, "Hold your peace," **#Ne 8:11**; dispute not, doubt not, distrust not God's promises, seem they never so improbable or impossible to be effected; hearken not to the murmurings of your own misgiving hearts, but silence your reason, exalt your faith.

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **And he showed me Joshua the high priest]** In a vision doubtless; and that for this end, that both the prophet, and by him the people also, might be advertised that they wrestle not against flesh and blood, men like themselves, but against spiritual wickednesses, or wicked spirits, who did act them and agitate them against the Church; ride them and spur them to do mischief; as he did that bloody Farnesius, one of the Pope's champions, who, coming with an army into Germany, swore that he would ride his horse up to the spurs in the blood of Protestants, *Scito persecutorem tuum ab ascensore daemone pernrgeri* (Bern.). It was the devil that stirred up the spirit of Tatnai, Shether-Boznai, Sanballat, &c., to hinder the good work now in hand; like as he did Eckius, Cajetan, Cochlaeus,

Catharinus, and many other great scholars (besides the two kings of England and Hungary), to write against the Reformation begun by Luther, and Charles V with all the strength of the empire to withstand and hinder it. But all in vain. Here he bends his accusation chiefly against the chief priest; but, through his sides, he strikes at the welfare of the whole Church. Ministers are the main object of his malice; a special spite he bears to such; singling them out and sifting them to the bran, as he desired to do Peter; stirring up unreasonable and wicked men against them, as he dealt by Paul when he fought with beasts at Ephesus, with breathing devils wherever he came, being in deaths often. When the viper hung upon his hand, **#Ac 28:3**, the devil doubtless thought to have dispatched him, but he was deceived. So he is ever; when he attempts as an accuser of the brethren, he is sure to be non-suited, and his plea to be cast out of the court by our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who appears for us (as he did here for Joshua) to put away sin, **#Heb 9:24,26**, and to take away the iniquities of their most holy things.

**Standing before the angel of the Lord]** *i.e.* Before Christ, his best friend, and doing his office as a high priest. Such is Satan's malice and impudence (saith an interpreter here) to hurt and hinder us most in our best employments; and to accuse the saints even to their best friend, Christ Jesus. He knows well, that as Samson's strength lay in his hair, so doth a Christian's strength lie in his holy performances: perfumed and presented by Christ. Hence his restlessness in seeking to set a difference, and to breed hate. Hence also, as the fowls seized upon Abraham's sacrifice, and as the Pythoness interrupted Paul and his company when they were praying and well-doing, **#Ac 16:16,17**, so deals he still by God's best servants and that sometimes so, that if, after duty, they should put that question to their own heart, as God did to Satan, *Unde venis?* Whence comes thou? it would return Satan's answer, From compassing the earth.

**And Satan]** That adversary, the devil, as St. Peter calleth him; the accuser of the brethren **#Re 12:9**, that trots between heaven and earth as a teaser, and makes a trade of it. Once the name Satan is applied to a holy angel going forth as an adversary to wicked Balaam, Satan spelman, as one calleth him.

**Standing at his right hand]** Why there? Be cause, say some, the accusation was as true: vehement; and so Satan had the upper hand For Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, #Zec 3:3, and there was cause enough why his own clothes should abhor him, as Job hath it, #Job 9:31; what his particular sin objected to him by Satan was is hard to say. Some will have it to be one thing, some another. It is plain by #Ezr 10:18, that some of his sons and allies had taken strange wives, which he might have hindered; but that himself had taken a harlot to wife, as Justin Martyr affirmeth, is no way likely. I should sooner believe, with Theodoret and Sanchez, that the sins here alleged by Satan against Joshua and laid to his charge were, not so much his own personal sins as the sins of the whole people: *quodammodo enim totus populus est in sacerdote, et in sacerdote peccat*: for the whole people is, after a sort, in the priest.

**To resist him]** Heb. To Satan yet against him, to do his kind, by frustrating his prayers and intercessions for the people, by laying his and their sins in his dish, and by laying claim to them for his. Carried on still by like hellish hatred of God and his people, he sins that sin against the Holy Ghost every moment: as Pliny speaks of the scorpion, that there is not one minute wherein it doth not put forth the sting. Our comfort is, that, 1. "We have an Advocate with the Father," &c., and "he is the propitiation for our sins," the patron as well as judge of his saints. 2. That as Satan stands at our right hand to molest us in holy duties, so do the holy angels stand there to withstand him, #Lu 1:11, whence it was that the curtains of the tabernacle were wrought full of cherubins within and without. 3. That if we resist the devil, steadfast in the faith, and strong in the Lord, he will flee from us, #Jas 4:7. For this old serpent, having his head already bruised and crushed by Christ, cannot so easily thrust in his mortal sting, unless we daily with him; and so lay open ourselves unto him. He shall in vain strike fire if we deny tinder. He may knock at the door, but if we answer him not at the window he cannot get in.

Ver. 2. **And the Lord said unto Satan]** The Lord Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who, then, shall condemn us? who shall lay aught to our charge? who shall separate us from the love of Christ? #Ro 8:33-35. Satan may attempt it, but can never

effect it. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not," *sc.* unto death; "but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself" (*sc.* "in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," #**Jude 21**), "and that wicked one," or that troubler of the saints, "toucheth him not," viz. with a deadly touch, so as to poison him and undo him, #**1Jo 5:18**. *Christus nobiscum, state.* Christ, stand with us. The Prince of Persia cannot stand before Michael, the King of saints, #**Da 10:13,21**.

**The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord]** Christ argueth not the case with Satan, but cuts him off short with a vehement check and reproof; turns him over to his Father, to give him his due, *Inhonestum enim est* (saith Chrysostom), *honestam matronam cum meretrice litigare*, It is not fit for a matron to scold with a strumpet. Admit the accusation were true, yet it was maliciously and unreasonably urged. Doeg spoke nothing but truth against David and Ahimelech; yet he heareth, "What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty," that pierce deep, wound deadly; "with coals of juniper," that shall burn fierce in respect of thyself, and sweet in regard of others; for men are wondrous well pleased when such ill members are punished, #**Ps 120:3,4**.

**Even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem]** He chose her for his loves; and now loves her for his choice. He loveth her and washeth her with his blood, that he may present her to himself holy and without blemish, #**Eph 5:26,27**. The Persian maids were first purified and perfumed before Ahasuerus made his choice, #**Es 2:12-14** Not so here: A fountain of free grace is opened for sin and for uncleanness to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem #**Zec 13:1**. And Uranople, or the New Jerusalem, hath its foundation garnished with all manner of precious stones, #**Re 21:19-21** Now the foundation of God standeth sure, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. Satan must know that God hath chosen Jerusalem and will not cast away his people which he foreknew, #**Ro 11:2**.

**Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?]** *Titio ex igne ereptus?* newly snatched out of the Babylonish furnace: where they have long



lain among the pots, where they have been not only sullied, but scorched and half burnt, **#Ps 68:13**: should they then be cruelly cast again into the flames, which they have strangely escaped, like as the barbarous persecutors ran Polycarp through the bowels with a sword when the beasts would not devour him, nor the fire burn him. Or as the bloody Papists, in Queen Mary's days, cast the woman of Guernsey's babe again into the fire, that sprang and sprawled out of his mother's womb as she was in burning. This was clean contrary to that apostolical precept, "Of some have compassion, pulling them out of the fire," **#Jude 22**. And far short of Nebuchadnezzar's practices, who taking the three worthies out of the burning fiery furnace, promoted them to great honour and offices, **#Da 3:30**.

Ver. 3. **Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments**] The tattered rags of the old Adam, the nasty filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness that yet remained in him (though in part regenerate), and intermingled with his best works. Sin is the devil's excrement; it defiles the soul worse than any jakes can do the body (as the Hebrew word here signifieth, and as our Saviour shows, **#Mr 7:20**), or than the sanies of plague sore doth a garment. Hence that of the Church, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," **#Isa 64:6**. And that of Job, "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean, shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall make me to be abhorred," **#Job 9:30,31**. This is the same in effect with that of Paul, "I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord," **#1Co 4:5**; who, when he comes to turn up the bottom of the bag, as the steward did Benjamin's (*Sacco solute apparuit argentum*. Ambr.), he will manifest the hidden things of darkness, find out our thefts that we dream not of, open all fardles on that great fair day, the day of judgment. As in the mean while, should the Lord but break open that filthy sink of sin that is in the very best of us, we should not only be loathsome to God, **#Zec 11:8**, and to good men, **#Pr 29:27**, but even to our own selves also, as Job was, **#Job 42:6**. Judas was not able to abide his own stench, **#Mt 27:4,5**. Yea, and some holy men (as Mr Lever, for one), when they have desired to see their utmost uncleanness, their corruptions in the most ugly colours, God hath heard them. But yet his hand therewith was so heavy upon them, that they went always mourning to their graves; and thought it fitter to leave it to God's wisdom to give them

a sight of their sins, and to mingle the potion of sorrow, than to be their own choosers. See that excellent text, **#Job 15:14-16**, and then stand aloof with the leper and say, I am unclean, I am unclean: yet, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.

**And stood before the angel]** His filthy garments notwithstanding: though we cannot say our hearts are pure, and our performances perfect; yet if we wallow not in sin, allow it not; if, with the daughters of Zion, we look upon our former neatness as nastiness, and fineness as filthiness; if we be in any measure purged from the love and liking of sin by the "spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning," **#Isa 4:4**, Christ will neither abhor our presence nor reject our services. Aaron was to bear the iniquity of the holy offerings, **#Ex 28:38**. Christ is this Aaron. And though there be an inequality of expressions in duty, *quoad nos*, in us; yet there is a constancy of intercession by Christ, *propter nos*, for us.

Ver. 4. **And he answered and spake to those that stood before him]** *i.e.* To the angels that waited upon him. *Est autem hoc humanitus dictum*, saith Junius. This is spoken after the manner of men; for properly men are washed, justified, and sanctified by the merit and Spirit of Christ alone, **#1Co 6:11**. But the Lord Christ speaketh thus to the created angels, his ministers; to show that he who only hath power to forgive sins doth yet therein employ the holy ministry for an instrument. See **#1Co 9:18 Job 33:23,24**.

**Take away the filthy garments]** Those symbols of his sinfulness, *{See Trapp on "Zec 3:8"}* so his sins were pardoned in heaven. But because it is small comfort to a condemned person to have a pardon granted him unless he know it, and be assured of it, thereof it followeth,

**And unto him he said, Behold]** By what thou hast seen in the angel's stripping of thee,

**I have caused thine iniquities to pass from thee]** *Transtuli peccatum*, as he once said to David, I have taken away thy sin, I have transferred it upon myself: speaking to my Father for thee, as once Paul did to Philemon for his son Onesimus, "if he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account, I will repay it," **#Phm 18,19**. This is the greatest happiness that can befall

a man in this world, #Ps 32:1,2, and could not but be a singular comfort to these poor Jews, priest and people, amidst their manifold afflictions. A man that hath gotten his pardon is not troubled though he lose his glove, or handkerchief, nor though it should prove a rainy day. "Being justified by faith we glory in tribulation," #Ro 5:1,3. *Feri, Domino, feri nam a peccatis absolutus sum*, saith Luther: Strike, Lord, strike, while thou wilt; my sins are pardoned. I thank thee, O Lord (said another, in his great extremity), for all my pain; and I beseech thee, if thou think good, to add to it a hundred fold. But behold a further honour; as mercies seldom come single.

**And I will clothe thee with change of raiment]** *i.e.* I will change thy rags into robes, thy stained clouts into clean clothing. Thou shalt be arrayed with the righteousness of the saints, #Re 19:8, that twofold righteousness, imputed and imparted; that of justification, and this other of sanctification; that as an undercoat, this as an upper; that clean and pure, this white and bright: both must be had from Christ, who is made unto us of God not only wisdom, but righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, #1Co 1:30 2Co 5:19. Surely as our apparel is not bred of us, neither grows out of our bodies, so neither does this change of raiment in the text. But the blessed Lamb of God clotheth us with his own fleece, which is long enough and large enough to cover all our defects and deformities, and to set us forth to the admiration of angels. As he taketh upon him our sins, so he putteth upon us his righteousness. This is a blessed exchange indeed, a sure pledge of our peace with him, and with God by him. We read in our own chronicles that Edward, surnamed Ironside (in whom England was lost), and Canute, the first Danish king, after many encounters and equal fights, at length embraced a present agreement; which was made by parting England between them two, and confirmed by oath and sacrament, putting on each other's apparel and arms, as a ceremony to express the atonement of their minds, as if they had made transaction of their persons each to other; Canute became Edmund, and Edmund Canute. Even such an exchange I may say of apparel is between Christ and the pardoned sinner, &c. Christ puts upon his Church his own comeliness, decks his spouse with his own jewels, as Isaac did Rebecca; clothes her with needlework, and makes her more glorious within than Esther ever was in all her beauty and bravery.; rejoiceth

over her, as the bridegroom over his bride; yea, is ravished in his love to her, with one of her eyes lifted up to him in prayer or meditation, with one chain of her neck, that chain of his own graces in her, **#So 4:9**.

Ver. 5. **And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head]** Who said this? The prophet, grounding his speech on the last precious words of the angel, taketh the boldness to interpose his request for the bestowing of the priestly ornaments upon Joshua, and accordingly it is done. This the prophet knew would be a comfort to the whole people, and a confirmation to Joshua's faith, for the pardon of his sins; like as it was to Peter and the rest of the apostles, that Christ after his resurrection restored them to their office, after they had all shamefully forsaken him, **#Mt 28:19 Joh 20:21**.

**Let them set a fair mitre upon his head]** Not a diadem, as the old translation hath it (that is for a king's head), much less a triple crown with the word Mystery (Babylon's motto, **#Re 17:5**) engraven in it, as Brocard and many other eyewitnesses affirm of the Pope's crown, but a mitre or tiara. It hath its name from compassing about, because it environed the high priest's head. It had a holy crown with it, **#Ex 29:6**, signifying the Deity and dignity of Christ. It had also upon the forefront of it a plate of pure gold with this caelature, Holiness to the Lord. Hence it was not lawful for the high priest (say the Jews) to put off his mitre to whomsoever he met, were he never so great a man; lest the name and glory of God (whose person he sustained) should seem to submit to any living. With this mysterious mitre upon his head, with other priestly ornaments and vestments, it was that Alexander the Great met the high priest Jaddus (nephew and successor to Joshua in the text) as he was marching against Jerusalem with hostile intent; and adoring that God whose name was seen written on the golden plate of his mitre, he entered the city peaceably, offered sacrifice in the temple, as the priests directed him, and having seen there the prophecy of Daniel concerning himself, he granted the Jews many immunities and privileges, and so departed, **#Da 8:7,20,21 11:13**. Parmenion, one of his favourites, asked him the reason of his friendly dealing with the Jews, who, by denying him help and tribute, had highly displeased him. He answered, that while he was yet in Macedonia, and but thinking of the conquest of Asia a certain man appeared unto him in the clothes of that high

priest, encouraging him to set upon the work, and assuring him of good success therein.

**And the angel of the Lord]** That is, Christ, the master of these ceremonies, the effect of this Levitical office.

Ver. 6. **And the angel of the Lord protested]** Either with an oath or some deep asseveration, or both as **#1Sa 25:26** "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth," &c. The former is an oath, the latter an asseveration or obtestation only, conjoined with that oath. Among the heathens *Ex animo seu sententia* was instead of an oath; and, rather than swear or say more, in a matter of no great moment, Chinias, the Pythagorean, would undergo a mulct of three talents. Others render it testified, or called witness upon his words, the angels and the prophet there present, for the more assurance. Thus, though Christ's word be sufficient (for he is Amen, the faithful and true witness, **#Re 3:14**), yet, for his servants' better settlement, he hath bound his promises to them with an oath, and taken heaven and earth to witness; which is *dignatio stupenda*, a wonderful condescension.

Ver. 7. **If thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my charge]** That is, if thou wilt walk in all the commandments (moral) and ordinances (Levitical) blameless, as holy Zacharias did, **#Lu 1:6**, and so approve thyself righteous before God, by taking heed to thyself first, and then to all thy flock, which is thy charge, the Holy Ghost's *depositum*, and the purchase of Christ's own blood, **#Ac 20:28**. Godliness is the highway to happiness; the good old way that hath been ever beaten by all those saints that now find rest to their souls. The very first steps in this way are repentance from dead works, and faith toward God in Christ Jesus. By these, men return to God from whom they have departed; are brought near to him, and set in the way of his steps, **#Ps 85:13** "We are his workmanship," saith the apostle, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," **#Eph 2:10**, not without good advice and due direction, **#Eph 5:15**. Walk circumspectly, walk by rule and by line, **#Ga 6:16**. Lift not up one foot till you find sure footing for the other, as those, **#Ps 35:6**. Christians (and especially ministers) are *funambulones*, saith Tertullian; if they tread but one step awry they are gone, and may draw many with them.

**Then thou shalt judge mine house, and shalt also keep my courts]** *i.e.* Thou shalt rule in my temple, and wait at mine altar. The Pope and his prelates catch at the former, but let go the latter; where Christ saith, "feed my sheep," Bellarmine saith the meaning is, Rule like a king; Barenius, Take to thyself the supreme government of the Church. But a preaching bishop is a just wonder among them, a *Vir portenti*, as those priests in the next verse are called.

**And I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by]** *i.e.* Among the seraphims (as the Chaldee here interprets it), thou shalt walk arm in arm (as it were) with angels, **#Mt 22:30 Heb 12:22**. He seems to allude to the walks and galleries that were about the temple. Heaven is the reward of walking in the way that is called holy; the end of men's faith, the salvation of their souls. Christ tells us that in his Father's house are many mansions for us, **#Joh 14:2** (such as have far better gardens and galleries than Mahomet fondly promiseth his sword-men in his fool's-paradise), and it is a part of his joy that we shall be one day where he is, attended with innumerable angels, **#Joh 17:24**, who will be glad of our company. How much better cause have we than that heathen to cry out, *O praeclarum diem, cum ad illud animorum concilium coetumque proficisear: et eum ex hac turba et colluvione discedam* (Cic. de Senectute). Oh what a brave and bright day will be that day when we shall go to that congregation house of blessed spirits; and walk no longer in the way of this world, which is (like the land of Chabul) dirty and dangerous, like the vale of Siddim, **#Ge 14:10**, slimy and slippery, full of lime pits and pitfalls, snares and stumblingblocks, laid by Satan to maim or mischief us! Oh happy they that walk humbly with God, who keepeth the feet of his saints, and hath charged his angels to bear them up in their hands, lest they dash their feet against a stone! **#Ps 90:12**. This while they are here; and when they go hence, to convey them through the air, whereof the devil is the prince, as through the enemies' country, into the heavenly habitations; and there to entertain and welcome them with sweetest varieties, felicities, eternities, fitter to be believed than possible to be expressed.

Ver. 8. **Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest]** Hear a sermon of Christ, the fountain of all this mercy bestowed upon thee, and yet

further promised unto thee. Hear for thyself, hear for thy whole society. Thou and thy fellows, thy fellow friends, the rest of the priests, thy fellows in service, though inferior in office (for there was a subordination of priests, both before the temple, #Nu 3:6-10 1Ch 23:4,5, and under the temple, #2Ch 35:8,9), types also of Christ, and partakers of the benefit, #1Ti 6:2.

**For they are men wondered at]** *Erant omnibus probrosi*, saith Calvin, They departed from evil, and thereby made themselves a prey, #Isa 59:15, they were for signs and for wonders in Israel, #Isa 8:18, hissed and hooted at, #Ps 71:7, as those that affected to be singular and seraphical. They think it strange, saith St. Peter, to his holy converts, that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, #1Pe 4:4; speaking evil of you, as if you were no better than madmen, #Isa 59:15, robbed of your right minds, as the word signifieth. It is a French proverb, He that would have his neighbour's dog hanged gives out that he is mad. The primitive persecutors used to put Christians into bears' and dogs' skins, or ugly creatures, and then bait them; so graceless persons put the saints of God into ugly conceits, look upon them as strange creatures, and then speak and act against them. In our wretched days, as the Turks count all fools to be saints, so people account all saints to be fools; and the more zealous among them monsters and miscreants. As for Athanasius and Marcellus, who have impiously blasphemed against God, and have lived as wicked miscreants, and are thereupon cast out of the Church, and condemned, we cannot receive them to the honour of episcopacy, said those fourscore bishops in the mock synod of Sardis. And Bede testifieth of the ancient Britons immediately before their destruction by the Saxons, that they were come to that height of wickedness, as to cast reproach upon the professors of religion, as upon the worst of men. Doth not St Paul say as much, #1Co 4:9, We are made a theatre, or are set upon the stage for a laughing stock unto the world, and to angels, and to men?

**For behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH]** The same that grew out of the root of Jesse, when that goodly family was sunk so low, as from David the king to Joseph the carpenter. See #Isa 4:2 11:1 45:8 53:1 Jer 33:15, where the Chaldee for Branch

rendereth it Messiah, as here also he doth; and some have observed that *themagh*, a branch, is, by transposition of letters, the same with *Masciach*, Messias; *Samech* and *tsadde* being near akin, and of the same sound almost. A servant Christ is called by reason of his mediatorship, taking upon him the form of a servant; yea, of a faulty servant that was to be beaten; yea, that being cruelly beaten, was brought forth to the people with an *Ecce homo*, "Behold the man," #Joh 19:5 "Behold," saith God here, "I will bring forth my servant the Branch"; bring him forth out of the bosom of his Father, out of the womb of his mother, out of the types of the law.

Ver. 9. **For behold the stone, &c.**] Another title given to Christ, who is the foundation and chief corner stone of his Church; and another "behold," prefixed as a starry note, or a hand pointing to a remarkable matter. All the prophets pointed to Christ, who is therefore called the branch, the stone, that in these creatures (everywhere obvious), as in so many opticglasses, we may see him, and be put in continual remembrance of him: It being as necessary to remember Christ as to breathe, saith a father. See #Ps 118:22 Isa 28:16 1Pe 2:6-8.

**That I have laid, and that I will engrave]** The Church is God's building, and we are his workmanship, {ποιημα, #Eph 2:10}; his artificial manufacture, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; there being not so much of the glory of God in all his works of creation and providence, as in one gracious action that a Christian performeth. As for the glorious work of our redemption by Christ, it was a plot of God's own contriving, a fabric of God's own erecting; it was the Lord's own doing, and it is justly marvellous in our eyes.

**Upon one stone shall be seven eyes]** That is, Christ shall draw all eyes and hearts to him; as the stones of the temple did the disciples' eyes, #Mt 24:2 Mr 13:1 "Master," say they to Christ, "see what manner of stones and what buildings are here." Thus some sense it. I should rather by these seven eyes understand the Spirit in his various operations upon Christ, as #Isa 11:2, for he received not the Spirit by measure, as others; but had as much of it as a creature could possibly have. See Trapp on "Re 1:4" where the Holy Ghost, for his manifold good gifts and perfect givings, is called The seven Spirits; like as he is also styled the seven golden pipes, #Zec 4:2,3.



There are those who by these seven eyes upon one stone understand the providence and wisdom of Christ in the government of his Church. He is indeed, as one saith, *πλοφθαλμος*, All-eye. *Sic spectat universos quasi singulos; sic singulos quasi solos*: like a well drawn picture he eyeth all. Christ as he is a living, so he is also a looking stone; he looketh at the miseries and matters of his Church, and saith, as once, I have seen, I have seen the afflictions of my people in Egypt, #Ex 3:7.

**Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof]** *Hae coelaturae dona et stigmata Christi repraesentant*, saith a Lapidist. These gravings represent the gifts and wounds of Christ, in allusion to the polished corners of the temple. *Caelum dictum eat quod caelatum, id est signatum sideribus*, saith Varro. Heaven hath its name in Latin from its being enamelled and bespangled with glistering stars, as with curious workmanship, or costly furniture. Of the third heaven, the habitation of saints and angels, God is said to be by a specialty the builder and maker, or (as the Greek hath it) the cunning artificer, and public architect, #Heb 11:10. A great deal of skill and workmanship he laid out upon it; but nothing so much as upon the human nature of Christ, wherein, as in a temple, dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, that is, personally, by virtue of the hypostatical union, #Col 2:9 "For the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth," #Joh 1:14; full, full to the very brim, full with a double fulness, *vasis et fontis*, of the vessel, and of the fountain. Hence, he was fairer, much fairer, double fairer (as the original importeth) than the sons of men, *sc.* with the beauty of wisdom and holiness: grace was poured into his lips, God had anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows, #Ps 45:2,7. The priests in the law were consecrated first with oil, compounded and confected of divers precious spices; so was Christ with gifts and graces of the Spirit, #Ac 10:38 4:27 Isa 61:1; not by measure, as we are, #Eph 4:7, but without measure, as much as a finite nature was capable of; particularly, he was furnished and polished with wisdom, as a prophet, against our ignorance; with holiness, as a priest, against our guilt; and with power, as a king, against our corruptions; these and all other endowments, he had, well heaped, pressed down, and running over, poured into his bosom. Next, as the priests under

the law were also consecrated with blood, so was the Lord Christ with his own blood, when his Father engraved him with graving; or, as the Hebrew hath it here, opened him with opening in his bloody passion, baptized him in his own blood, stewed him in his own broth, as it were; when in a cold winter's night he sweat great clots of blood, which through clothes and all fell to the very ground. When after this they digged his hands and his feet, #Ps 22:16, and made his heart melt in the midst of his bowels, #Ps 22:14. Wounded he was in the head, to cure our vile imaginations; in the hands, to expiate our evil actions; in the heart and feet, for our base affections and unworthy walkings. Tormented he was for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, *tanquam pulcherrima corporis caelatura*, and by his stripes, or bloody weals, we were healed, #Isa 53:5. Adam signifieth man red-earth, or bloody. Christ was man in his incarnation, and bloody all over in his passion. This death of Christ, therefore, look on (saith Master Bradford, martyr) as the very pledge of God's dear love towards thee; see the very heart of it as in an anatomy. See, God's hands are nailed, they cannot strike thee; his feet also, he cannot run from thee; his arms are wide open to embrace thee; his head hangs down to kiss thee; his very heart is open, so that therein look, nay, even spy, and thou shalt see nothing therein but love, love, love to thee, &c.

“ *Cernis ut in toto corpore sculptus amor.*”

**And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day]** "I will remove," *i.e.* remit and pardon the iniquity, both guilt and punishment. "O that land," *i.e.* of the Church, that pleasant land, more dear to God than all the earth besides. "In one day," *i.e.* together and at once suddenly and in an instant. See #Isa 66:8.

Ver. 10. **In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call, &c.]** *i.e.* Ye shall have peace *regionis et religionis*, of country and of conscience. *Christus auferet iniquitatem, affere pacem.* Christ, as he saveth his people from their sins, so from the hands of them that hate them. When this Prince of peace was born, in the days of Augustus, *Universa gentium era aut pax, aut pactio*; there was a general either peace or truce among all nations. "And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into the land...thus shall he deliver us

from the Assyrian," #Mic 5:5,6. But behold a better thing. This Shiloh, this Tranquillator, Pacificator, by removing iniquity createth peace of conscience; like as after Jonah was cast overboard the sea became calm. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, #Isa 9:7. Where Christ ruleth there is peace, peace, #Isa 26:3 that is, perfect, sheer, pure peace, with God, ourselves, and others; and the more Christ's government increaseth in the soul the more is peace renewed, continued, multiplied. "Great peace have all they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them," saith David, #Ps 119:165 "And thou hast been a strength to the poor, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat," &c., #Isa 25:4, better than that of the broad leaved vine and fig tree, very cooling and comfortable in those hot countries. See this in righteous Noah; who being justified by faith, had peace with God, and therefore was *mediis tranquillus in undis*, in the midst of a calm in the waves. How securely doth he ride out that uproar of heaven, earth, and waters! He hears the pouring down of rain above his head, the shrieking of men, the bellowing of beasts on both sides him, the raging and threats of the waves under him. He saw the miserable shifts of distressed unbelievers, and in the mean time sits quietly in his dry cabin, not feeling nor fearing evil. How happy a thing is pardon of sin and peace with God! what a quiet safety, what a heavenly calm doth it lodge in the soul! what earnest pantings and strong affections to the salvation of others! "Ye shall call," &c.

## Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **And the angel that talked with me]** {See Trapp on "Zec 1:9"}

**Came again]** After some absence, as it may seem; and a new vision or revelation received from God to be imparted to the prophet.

**And waked me, as a man that is wakened, &c.]** It fared with the prophet (notwithstanding the former visions) as with a drowsy person; who though awakened and set to work, is ready to fall asleep at it. So Peter, James, and John (those pillars, as they are called, #Ga 2:9), fell asleep at their very prayers, #Mt 26:40, such dull metal are the best men made of; and so weak is the flesh, be the spirit never so willing; so ill disposed is our most noble and immortal part, the soul, to supernal and supernatural employments. Meditation and prayer

are the creatures of the Holy Ghost, #**Jude 20**; and that we may not run out into extravagancies, or put up yawning petitions, we must watch and pray, #**Mt 26:41**, yea, watch while we are praying, meditating, &c., against corruption within (the sin that doth so easily beset us, #**Heb 12:1**) and temptations without, whether from the world, the things whereof are so near us and so natural to us, or from the devil, who is ever busiest with the best, as flies are with sweetmeats, and with the best part of their best performances, as in the end of their prayers, when the heart should close up itself with most comfort.

Ver. 2. **What seest thou?**] The sight was already in sight; but the prophet had not seen it, or noted it, if the angel had not stirred him up to it. If the Lord give us not sight as well as light, if he enlighten not both organ and object too, if he shine not into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of himself in the face of Jesus Christ, #**2Co 4:5**, seeing we shall see, but not perceive; with Hagar, we shall not be able to discern the fountain that is just before us.

**I have looked**] Carefully viewed the sight. It is expected *ut acti agamus*; that having a talent of grace we trade with it; that our will, which at first conversion was merely passive, should be afterward active; that we, which once were darkness, but now are light in the Lord, shall walk as children of light, #**Eph 5:8**.

**Behold a candlestick**] That is, the Church, as #**Re 1:20**.

**All of gold**] Pure gold as the candlestick in the tabernacle, #**Ex 25:31**, which is therefore called the pure candlestick, #**Le 24:4 Ex 31:8**, noting out the Church's purity in doctrine and manners. Chrysostom, that golden preacher, testifieth of some saints in his time, that they were *puriores caelo*, purer than the visible heaven. "Her Nazarites were purer than the driven snow, whiter than milk, ruddier than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire," #**La 4:7**.

**With a bowl**] Heb. *gullah*, an oil glass or oil cruse; a hollow round vessel, *quod pariter Latine recte gulam appellas*, saith a Lapide; which you may not unfitly call a gullet, or throat; for as the throat receiveth the food and transmitteth it to the stomach, so did this vessel receive the oil to be transmitted to the lamps. It figured

Christ, in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, **#Col 1:19**, for the Church's use, **#Joh 1:16 3:34**.

**And his seven lamps thereon]** Signifying the manifold graces and diversity of gifts in the Church by the same Spirit of Christ, **#1Co 12:4,6** "For of his fulness we all receive grace for grace," **#Joh 1:16**.

**And seven pipes to the seven lamps]** Heb. seven and seven, that is, seven, I say seven, by the figure *anadiplosis*, a repetition of the same word, saith Sanetius. This is a better gloss than that of those that say the Hebrew text is corrupted; as having two sevens for one. These seven pipes you must imagine to be in the bottom of the bowl, to distribute the oil to each lamp; the grace of Jesus Christ to each Christian, that he may shine as a lamp or luminary in the world, holding forth the word of life, **#Php 2:15,16**, as the hand doth the torch, or the watch tower the light, and so the haven, to weather beaten mariners.

Ver. 3. **And two olive trees by it]** The two chief branches whereof through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves, **#Zec 4:12**, that is, the Spirit of grace infuseth all precious graces (much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried in the fire) into the Church. Hence grace is called the fruits of the Spirit, **#Ga 5:22**, yea, Spirit, **#Ga 5:25**. Danaeus's note here is, though from these two olive trees there was continual oil poured into that burning candlestick that it should never dry up or be put out, yet are not these olives said to be pressed by any man, which notwithstanding, among us, must needs after an ordinary manner be done, that the oil may flow or run from them. Neither is this oil said to flow, nor with toil and labour to be carried from one part or place into another, that there may be always oil for the candlestick; but there stand these olive trees growing, and dropping down oil into the bowl, and this of themselves, without the help or service of any men or oil mills; to show, saith another interpreter, that God's grace only is sufficient for his Church, to repair and maintain the same without all other means, against all opposition of man; and this is the scope of this vision.

Ver. 4. **What are these, my lord?]** Or, Sir; which English word comes from Cyrus, the Persian word for a lord or great prince, as H. Stephanus will have it; others fetch it from *κυρος*, authority, or

κυριος, a lord, and so the word *Adoni* in the text is usually rendered. Others think our word Sir comes from the French Sieur, whence Monsieur, my lord; as the word Lord from the old Saxon Laford, which cometh of *Laef*, to sustain; like as the Hebrew *Adonai*, from Eden, a foundation or pillar, that sustaineth the whole building. It is written sometimes with Camets, or long *a*, in the end, and then it is proper to God (as having the vowels of Jehovah), and is given to him 134 times in the Old Testament. Sometimes it is written with Pathach, or short *a*, and then it is applied to the creatures, as here to the angel: *Hinc Hispanorum Don*, saith Drusius.

**What are these]** The prophet had been before warned by the angel to behold and heed the vision. This he had done, and yet was to seek of the sense and meaning of it; as a man may look on a trade and never see the mystery of it; or look on the hand dial, and never understand the curious clock works within. None can understand the mystery of Christ but such as have the mind of Christ, **#1Co 2:7,11,16**, such as are spiritually rational and rationally spiritual; such as are taught of God, and conducted by his Spirit into all truth, **#Joh 16:13**. No understanding God's riddles but by ploughing with his heifer, as I may say. This the prophet here knew; and therefore applies himself to the angel for information; so did Daniel, **#Da 8:15 9:22**.

Ver. 5. **Knowest thou not what these be?]** Thus preparation is made to the ensuing interpretation of the vision by this dialogue; that we might give better heed to that manifold wisdom of God made known to and by the Church; wherein the very angels themselves are great students and daily proficient, **#Eph 3:10**. *Docent proficiendo, et docendo proficiunt*. The best of men know not so much as they might have known. "Are ye also ignorant of these things" (saith our Saviour to the twelve)? "are ye also without understanding?" **#Mt 15:16**: what? know you not, six different times in one chapter, **#1Co 6:2,3,9,15,16,19** And how doth the apostle disgrace and shame his Hebrews for their dulness and doltishness, **#Heb 5:12**. It was expected, it seems, by the angel here, that Zechariah, a master in Israel, should have known more than he did of the meaning of this candlestick, by Moses's ancient candlestick. For the godly of those times did not believe those rites and ceremonies of the law did of themselves please God, or that they

were dumb shows and insignificant, #**Heb 9:1-13**, but they acknowledged them to be figures; the truth and signification whereof was to be sought in Christ. The ceremonial law was indeed their gospel.

**And I said, No, my lord]** An ingenuous confession of his ignorance; and this was far better than to plead for it (as many today), or to pretend more skill than he had; that he at least might seem to be somebody. *Ignorantiam meam non ignoro*, saith Origen. Though I know little else, yet this I know, that it is but little that I know. And not only in innumerable other things am I ignorant, saith Austin; but even in the very Scriptures also, my chief study, *multo plura nescio quam scio*, I am to seek many more things than I understand. Surely, saith Agur, I am more brutish than any man, and yet he had commerce with Ithiel and Ucal; #**Pr 30:1**, and have not the understanding of a man, *sc.* of a man in Christ. I neither learned wisdom (though taught it) nor have the knowledge of the holy, that is, of the angels, as #**Da 4:13,17 8:13**. Zechariah here saw himself far short of the holy angel that talked with him; and therefore desireth to be taught by him.

**Ver. 6. This is the word of the Lord]** That is, this hieroglyphic contains the mind of God in it. This is the interpretation of the vision, neither so concise nor obscure, *ut Oedipode sit opus* (as a Lapid after Ribera here saith), that it can hardly be understood. For who seeth not by the opposition here made between human help and divine, that in building and beautifying his Church with safety and salvation God will make bare his own holy arm; and do the work alone, or by the weakest means against the strongest resistance? Thus, then, have we (saith Mr Pemble) in three words the scope of this whole vision. That as the making and maintaining of this candlestick and his lamps was without the art and cunning of man, by means supernatural; so God's Spirit, without and above all human helps, should suffice for the rebuilding and preservation of the material temple and true Church.

**Unto Zerubbabel]** The Tirshatha, or chief magistrate, #**Ezr 2:63**, called also, as it is thought, Sheshbazzar, #**Ezr 1:8**. He was a type of Christ; to whom also God the Father here speaketh concerning his Church to be gathered by the preaching of the gospel.

**Not by might, nor by strength]** As Mahomet in the East and the Spaniard in the Indies; but by the power of his Spirit, that great wonder worker, whereby the people fall under him, #Ps 45:5, and strongholds are cast down before him, #2Co 10:4, as once the walls of Jericho. Thus he unwall'd all the children of Sheth, #Nu 24:17, viz. by the foolishness of preaching; and thus he still rideth upon his white horses, his ministers, conquering and to conquer, #Re 6:2. *Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca Christo subdita sunt* (Tertull.). The Romans could never subdue this nation, but Christ could. The Germans and other western people embraced the Christian religion in the year 772, when the Mahometan impiety wasted the East. God's Spirit is irresistible, compared to the wind, #Joh 3:8, to a mighty rushing wind, #Ac 2:2, that bears all before it, therefore called a spirit of power, #2Ti 1:7, of counsel and of might, #Isa 11:2, and therefore here fitly opposed to an army, and to the arm of flesh, to all human power and policy whatsoever, though the gates of hell come to their help.

**Not by might, nor by strength, &c.]** These two words some take to be synonymous; Mercer saith that the former signifieth stout and noble acts, the latter importeth power and faculty of doing those acts; and is the same as δυναμις in Greek. By the spirit of God we are to understand his power, providence, and grace, #2Th 2:8 **Isa 11:4-9**, whereby he helpeth his people with a little help, #Da 11:34, that through weaker means they may see his greater strength. Thus he helped David against Goliath, and the Israelites against the Philistines often; but especially then, when unarmed they marched with their slings and plow staves and hooks and forks, and other instruments of their husbandry, against a mighty and well furnished enemy, and returned laden both with arms and victory. Sometimes, again, God helpeth his without any visible help, as when he destroyed Sennacherib's army by an angel, swept away Sisera's army by the river Kishon, and the Saracens and Persians by the river Euphrates, in the days of Theodosius (smitten with a panic terror, they ran headlong into the river, and were drowned, to the number of 100,000), for whom also the winds fought in that famous battle against Maximus; as both winds and waves did for us against the invincible navy. The Church alone deserveth to be styled invincible,



that hath the Lord of hosts to be her champion, who hath armies above and armies beneath (as the Rabbis well observe). 2. General troops, as his horse and foot soldiers, ready pressed; legions of angels, millions of other creatures. The curtains of the tabernacle embroidered with Cherubims signified the service and protection of the Church by the angels. Let the Pope be the sun and the emperor the moon (as the canonists style them), yet the sun must not smite the Church by day nor the moon by night; but the stars in their courses must fight against Sisera, and both the Pope's bull and the emperor's thunderbolt tend exceedingly to the furtherance of the Reformation begun by Luther. Whereupon Scultetus makes this observation, *Ecce tibi adimpletum Psalmicum illud, #Ps 54:3*. Behold that of the psalmist made good. "He shall send from heaven and save us from the reproach of him that would swallow us up. Selah." God shall send forth his mercy and his truth. He shall; but when will he? may some say. *First*, when his people in distress cry aloud, I came for thy word, *#Da 10:12*. He will come, but he will have his people's prayers lead him. *Secondly*, when his enemies blaspheme and insult, saying, Where is now their God? when Rabshakeh (a renegade Jew, as the Rabbis report him) shall jeer at Hezekiah's prayers as an empty business, an airy nothing, as words of the lips only; whereas counsel and strength are for the war (thus some read that text, *#Isa 36:5*). *Thirdly*, when the Church is at lowest, and all seems lost and desperate; when the enemy is above fear, and the Church below hope; when she is talking of her grave, like Israel at the Red sea; then is God's season to set in; it is his glory to help at a dead-lift, to begin where we have given over, to relieve those that are forsaken of their hopes, to come when we can scarcely find faith upon the earth. God sees when the mercy will be in season. When his people are low enough, and the enemy high enough, then usually appears the Church's morning star; then Christ came leaping and skipping over the mountains of Bether, all impediments that might seem to hinder (as sins of his people, oppositions of his enemies), and make the Church's mountain to be exalted above all mountains, mole hills in comparison to her.

Ver. 7. **Who art thou, O great mountain?**] So the enemies seemed to themselves set aloft, and overtopping the low and poor estate of those feeble Jews, as they called them, *#Ne 4:2*. But the virgin, daughter of Zion, despiseth them here, and laugheth them to scorn;

she shaketh her head at them, and saith, Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? #**Isa 37:22**. It is good for thee to meddle with thy match, and not to exalt thyself against the Holy One of Israel, who is more "glorious and excellent than those mountains of prey. The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep" (such as Sisera did): "and none of the men of might have found their hands," #**Ps 76:4,5**, when once they fell into the punishing hands of the living God. He will soon level these lofty mountains, #**Jer 51:25**. Babylon is called a destroying mountain seated upon a rock; yet God will level, and lay it low enough.

**They shall become a plain]** A champaign, that before seemed impossible, inaccessible. Christ's enemies shall be in that place that is fittest for them, the lowest, that is, the footstool of Christ; when the Church, as it is the highest in God's love and favour, so shall it be highest in itself. *Gaudeo quod Christus Dominus est; alioqui totus desperassem*, writes Miconius to Calvin upon the view of the Church's enemies. Glad I am that Christ reigns; for else I had been utterly hopeless (Melch. Ad.). O pray, pray, saith another saint; for the Pope of Rome and his conventicle of Trent are hatching strange business. The comfort is that he that sitteth in heaven seeth them; the Lord above them hath them in derision. For in the thing wherein they deal proudly, God is above them; and his will shall stand when they shall dung the earth with their dead carcasses. *Sciat Celsitudo Tun, &c.* Let your Highness know (saith Luther in a letter to the Duke of Saxony) that things are otherwise ordered in heaven than they are at Augsbourg; where the Emperor Charles V had made a decree to root out the reformed religion out of Germany. But soon after the Turk broke into Hungary and the borders of Germany; so the Caesar had somewhat else to do than to persecute the Protestants. So the primitive persecutors fondly inscribed upon the public pillars, *Deleto Christianorum nomine*, that they had blotted out the name of Christ and his religion from under heaven; but this they could never effect with all the power of the whole empire. They found and complained that the Church might be shaken and not shivered; *concuti non excuti*, as #**2Co 4:8,9**. *Facundi sunt Martyrum cineres*, the very ashes of the martyrs were fruitful, and their blood prolific. The Church conquers even when she is conquered; Christ overcame as much by patience as by power. The

people of Rome (saith one), *saepe proelio victus, nunquam belle*, they lost many battles, but were never overcome in a set war; at the long run they crushed all their enemies. Bellarmine somewhat boasteth the like of the Church of Rome, that she was never worsted in any set battle by the Protestants. But if he had lived till these late years he would have known it otherwise, and indeed he could not be ignorant of that famous *Bellum Hussiticum*, as they called it in Germany, and the many fields fought and won by the Huguenots in France, &c. And if at any time the Church lose the day, *Victa tamen vincet*. conquered yet conquerors, Christ hath his stratagems, as Joshua had at Ai; he seems sometimes to retire, that he may return with greater advantage. Certain it is, he will thresh the mountains and beat them small before his Zerubbabels; he will make the hills as chaff, **#Isa 41:15**.

**And he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, saying, Grace, grace unto it]** *i.e.* He shall hold out to lay the very last stone of this new building with joy, and with general acclamations and well wishes. There was a promise for it long before, **#Isa 44:28**. This Zerubbabel was not ignorant of; as neither of that which followeth, **#Isa 45:1,2**, that, for the effecting of that promise, God would go before him to make the crooked place straight, to break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron, *i.e.* to take away all rubs and impediments. There is the like promise in the New Testament, and it may be a singular encouragement to those that go on to build the tower of godliness, to prepare a tabernacle in their hearts for the Holy One of Israel, that he may dwell in them and walk in them, the gates of hell shall never prevail against them, since Christ, as another Samson, hath flung them off their hinges, hath destroyed the devil's works, and laid the top stone of his spiritual temple with shouting, saying, Grace, grace unto it. The meaning is, saith an interpreter, that the angels, the faithful, and all creatures, rejoicing at Christ's kingdom established in the world, shall desire God the Father to heap all manner of blessing and happiness upon it, see **#Ps 118:26** (Diodati). Or, they shall acknowledge and preach, that the Father hath laid up in him all the treasures of his grace and gifts of his Spirit. It is the observation of another reverend man, preaching upon this text, that when we preach human wisdom and foresight we should fall down and cry (as

we are here taught), Grace, grace unto it; we are not to cry up Zerubbabal, Zerubbabel, any man or means whatever; but to exalt the free grace of God, the work of which alone it is and hath been. Zerubbabel should bring forth the head stone (as master builders used to do the first and last stone), and the people should magnify God's mere free grace; and acknowledge that he was marvellous in their eyes. Thus that learned preacher (Mr Thomas Goodwin, Fast sermon before Parliament Apr. 27, 1642); who also by the lighted candlestick here understandeth full perfecting and finishing of the temple, and restoring the worship of God within it unto its full perfection of beauty and brightness. By the two olive trees, Zerubbabel with the elders, and Joshua, high priest, with the other priests that sat before him, as #Zec 3:8 cf. Ezr 6:14 cf. Ps 52:8. These are said to empty golden oil, that is, their estates and pains for the finishing of costly work; and likewise because it was done in sincerity of heart, therefore it is called golden or pure oil. Further, these eminent ranks and sorts of persons that should give their assistance to this work are called sons of oil, #Zec 4:14 marg., as being fruitful and affording plenty of it. Thus, #Isa 5:1, a fruitful hill and fertile soil is in the original (as here) called a son of oil.

Ver. 8. **Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying]** This is a confirmation of the former comfort and a seal of the former promise; all which was but little enough by reason of the people's distrust and infidelity. Against which the prophet here produceth his warrant, God's own word; *q.d.* "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." "This is a pillar and ground of truth." {See Trapp on "1Ti 3:15"}

Ver. 9. **The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands]** Here the scope of this stately vision is plainly held forth, and without a parable. What the Scripture speaketh darkly in one place it speaks plainly in another. The Rabbis have a saying, that there is a mountain of sense hanging upon every apex of the word of God. They have also another saying, *Nulla est obiectio in lege, quae non habet solutionem in latere, i.e.* there is not any doubt in the law, but may be resolved out of the law. Zerubbabel is both founder and finisher of the temple. Those that will have it not to be finished till about the sixth year of Darius Nothus make him to be very long lived; and tell us that God granteth to one a longer life than ordinary, because he hath something to be done by them

(Pemble, of the Persian Monarchy). The distrustful Jews began to despise those small beginnings of a building; and to despair of ever seeing it perfected, by reason of those mountains of opposition they met with, and thought they should never dig down or get over. The work shall be done, saith God, and Zerubbabel, how unlikely soever, shall do it. Believe the prophets and ye shall prosper. It shall never be said of Zerubbabel, as of the foolish builder, "This man began, but could not finish," #Lu 14:30; or, as a foreigner, seeing Christ Church in Oxford, said to it, *Egregium opus; Cardinalis iste instituit collegium, et absolvit culinam*. A pretty piece of work! A college begun, and a kitchen finished. It was God that set Zerubbabel to work; and he doth not use do things to halves. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginner and ender, the author and finisher, #Heb 12:2 "I am confident of this very thing," saith Paul, "that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it," #Php 1:6. And, "faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it," #1Th 5:24. And, "the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me" (saith David); "forsake not the work of thine own hands," #Ps 138:8. Look upon the wounds of thine hands, and despise not the works of thine hands, said Queen Elizabeth. Thus if men pray in the Holy Ghost, keep themselves in the love of God, and look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life; they shall be builded up in their most holy faith, whereby Christ shall dwell in their hearts, as in his holy temple, #Jude 20,21.

**And thou shalt know]** Thou, Zechariah, shalt know, that the

**Lord of hosts hath sent me]** His angel, as his *internuncio*, see #Lu 1:19. Or, thou Zerubbabel shalt know, that I, Zechariah, come not to thee of mine own mind, but on God's message, and am therefore to be believed. When Ehud told Eglon he had a message from God, though he were a heathen and a fat unwieldy man, he stood up to receive it, #Jud 3:20, though that message was a messenger of death, a dagger. in his bowels. Should not we hearken to the Father of spirits, and live? #Heb 12:9; should the consolations of God be small with us? #Job 15:11. Should we, instead of wrestling with God by prayer (so putting his promises in suit), wrangle with him, by cavilling objections? *Ipsa dixit* it spoke for itself, among Pythagoras' scholars went current; if their master said it it was

enough; and shall we that are taught of God not give the like credit to our Master in heaven? shall we not yield him the obedience of faith?

Ver. 10. **For who hath despised the day of small things?**] Nay, who had not? The generality of the Jews were clearly guilty, **#Ezr 8:13**, and are therefore here justly, reprov'd. As Naaman once looked on God's Jordan with Syrian eyes, and so slighted the notion of washing therein; so these distrustful Jews despised the small beginnings of this great work, and the little likelihood of ever bringing it to any good upshot. "Is it not in your eyes as nothing?" saith Haggai, **#Hag 2:3**. They seem'd only to grieve at it; but God construeth it for a downright contempt; for he judgeth otherwise of our carnal affections than we ourselves, and will have us to know that his thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways, **#Isa 55:8**. Out of meanest principles he many times raiseth matters of greatest moment; that his own immediate hand may the more appear. The kingdom of heaven was at first but as "a grain of mustard seed," **#Mt 13:32**. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, as if it had dropped out, or been blown down thence, became a mountain, and filled the whole earth, **#Da 2:34,35**. The cloud that rose as little as a man's hand, soon after muffled the whole heaven. God put little thoughts into the heart of Ahasuerus concerning Mordecai, but for great purposes. Who would ever have thought, that out of Abraham, now as good as dead, should have come the Messiah? or that out of the dry root of Jesse should come the Branch spoken of in the former chapter? Who would have imagined that going forth only with his bow, **#Re 6:2**, and arrows, **#Ps 45:5**, the foolishness of preaching, he could conquer in three hundred years the whole Roman empire? that by Huss, a goose, and Luther, a swan, such strange things should have been done in Bohemia and Germany? that by a scruple cast into Henry VIII's mind about his marriage with Catharine of Spain by the French ambassador (who came to consult with him of a marriage between the Lady Mary and the Duke of Orleans, second son to the King of France), whether Mary were legitimate, &c., the Pope should be cast off here, and reformation wought by so weak and simple means, yea, by casual and cross means? this, saith one, is that miracle which we are in these times to look for.

**For they shall rejoice]** Or, but they shall rejoice, or, nay, they shall rejoice, nay, they shall see, viz. that which they despaired of ever seeing, and were therefore much cast down about the perfection of the work, and its glorious accomplishment. And this shall be surely effected by God's powerful and watchful providence, called here those

**seven eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth]** Called elsewhere the seven Spirits of God, **#Re 5:6 1:4**, and God's Spirit here, **#Zec 4:6**, so guiding and managing all affairs and occurrences that all the rays and beams of providence issuing from those eyes might be seen to meet in the accomplishment of this, as their ultimate aim and scope. {See Trapp on "Zec 3:9"}

Ver. 11. **Then answered I, and said unto him]** No mean measure of understanding would content the prophet; but he is still inquiring and encroaching upon the angel. So doth Moses upon God, **#Ex 33:18-23** He had not been long out of the mount, but he is asking God to show him his glory; which when he had seen, yet he resteth not satisfied, but must have more, and yet more: so David, though deep learned, is ever and anon at it, Teach me thy statutes. Spiritual learning is infused by degrees; our hearts are as narrow mouthed vessels, and God delights often to hear us. Whither I go thou canst not come now; but thou shalt afterwards, **#Joh 13:7**. Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know, **#Ho 6:3**; provided that ye beg and dig, **#Pr 2:3-5**, and beat, as the fowl doth the shell to get out the fish; and be discontentedly contented till ye come to see as ye are seen, *a spe ad speciem*, &c. from faith to sight.

Ver. 12. **What be these two olive branches, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Zec 4:3"}  
{See Trapp on "Zec 4:7"}

Ver. 13. **Knowest thou not what, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Zec 4:5"}

Ver. 14. **These are the two anointed ones]** Heb. sons of oil. {See Trapp on "Zec 4:7"}

**That stand by the Lord of the whole earth]** Because by the candlestick and utensils of the temple and type of the Church, which is at Christ's right hand, **#Ps 45:4**. as he at his Father's right hand, **#Ro 8:34**. He is with all his to the end of the world; and it is a part of his joy that we shall be one day where he is. This Lord of the

whole earth, sovereign over all; but takes delight only in such as (Esther like) he purifies and perfumes for royal use; and these he loveth so affectionately as never any Lord did his subjects, #Zec 3:1-7 "He loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob," #Ps 87:2.

## Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Then I turned me, and lifted up mine eyes]** *i.e.* I prepared me to the receiving of a new vision; nothing so comfortable as the former, but no less necessary; that the people, by sense of sin and fear of wrath, might be taken off their wicked practices, redeem their own sorrows, and be accounted worthy to escape all those things that should (otherwise) come to pass, as #Zec 5:11, and to stand before the Son of man at that dreadful day, #Lu 21:36. This seemeth to be the mind of the Holy Ghost, in these two visions here recorded; which while some interpreters attend not, *in toto vaticinio neque coelum, neque terrain attingunt*, saith Calvin, they are utterly out.

**And behold a flying roll]** Or, volume, as #Ps 40:7, or scroll of paper, or parchment, usually rolled up, like the web upon the pin, *uti convolvuntur nostrae Mappae Geographicae*, as our maps are rolled up, saith a Lapide; and as in the public library at Oxford the book or roll of Esther (a Hebrew manuscript) is at this day to be seen; but here flying, *Volans velocissimum ultionis incursum significat* (Chrysost.). Not only because spread wide open, as Rabshakeh's letter, #2Ki 19:14, and as that book of the prophet Isaiah, #Lu 4:17, but also as fleeting along swiftly, like a bird ready to seize on her prey. *Nemo scelus gerit in pectore, qui non idem Nemesin in tergo*. No man bears evil in his heart who does not show the same revenge on the outside. The heathens named Nemesis (their goddess of revenge, to take punishment of offenders) Ἀδραστεια, because no man can possibly escape her, *οτι ουκ αν τις αυτην αποδρασαιτο*. They tell us also that their Jupiter writeth down all the sins of all men in a book, or scroll, made of a goat's pelt, which they call *διφθερα*; the very word whereby Aquila and Theodotion (two Greek translators) do render the Hebrew of this text. {#Da 7:18 Re 20:12} Symmachus turns it *Κεφαλις*, a chapter, or abstract of a larger book, full of sins and woes; and yet it is of an



unheard of size, #Zec 5:2, and of very sad contents, like that book of Ezekiel, #Eze 2:9,10, lamentation, and mourning, and woe; or the first leaf of Bishop Babington's book (which he turned over every morning), all black; to remind him of hell and God's judgments due unto him for his sins.

Ver. 2. **What seest thou?**] *q.d.* Mark it well, and let thine eye affect thine heart; let these things be *oculis commissa fidelibus*.

**I see a flying book**] {*See Trapp on "Zec 5:1"*} Some read it, A double book (according to the Chaldaic signification of the word), as containing double, that is, manifold, menaces and punishments of sin. But the Chaldee paraphrast, Septuagint, and others, render it flying; as hastening and hovering over the heads of wicked persons.

**The length thereof is twenty cubits, &c.**] Ten yards long, and five broad. Neither let men say that words are but wind, as they did, #Jer 5:13. For, 1. Even wind, when gotten into the bowels of the earth, may cause an earthquake; as when into the bowels of the body a heartquake. 2. God threateneth those scoffers, #Jer 5:14, that he will make that word, which they termed wind, to become fire, and themselves fuel to feed it. And as fire grows quickly upon fuel fully dried, #Na 1:10, and consumeth it in an instant, so God's flying roll will lick up the evildoers, no otherwise than the fire from heaven after it had consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the dust, licked up also the water that was in the trench, #1Ki 18:38. The threatenings of God's law (the same with this roll) are (as Erasmus saith of #Eze 3:18) *fulmina non verba*, lightbolts rather than words; or if words, yet they are (as one saith) *verba non legenda sed vivenda*, words not to be read only, but lived; at least, not to be read as men do the old stories of foreign wars, wherein they are nothing concerned (but as threatening themselves in every threat, cursing themselves in every curse, &c.), nor as they read the predictions of an almanack for wind and weather, which they think may come to pass, and it may be not; but be confident of this very thing, that God who hath denounced it will surely do it, and that he will execute the judgment written in this roll, #Ps 149:9, yea, every sickness and every plague which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord cause to descend upon the disobedient, until they be destroyed, #De 28:61.

Ver. 3. **This is the curse]** Or oath, with execration and cursing. Cursing men are cursed men, and God hath sworn that swearers shall not enter into his rest. {#Nu 5:21. אָרַךְ, ut et apa. Graece, iuramentum et execrationem significat. Mercer}

**That goeth forth]** Yea, flieth, #Zec 5:2, more swiftly than an eagle, an arrow, a flash of lightning. Or, if not, yet

“ *Poena venit gravior, quo mage sera venit.*”

**Over the face of the whole earth]** Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil; but of the Jew first ( *Ingentia beneficia flagitia, supplicia*), who is therefore the worse, because he ought to have been better; and then of the Gentile also, #Ro 2:9. Theodoret, Lyra, and Vatablus think that Judaea is hinted in the measure of the book (twenty cubits long, and ten broad) as being twice so long (and somewhat more) as it is broad: witness Jerome in his epistle to Dardanus (Epist. 129). But let the whole earth here be taken in its utmost latitude, since the Gentiles that sin without the law are yet liable to the punishments of the law. And some of them by the light of nature saw the evil of swearing; but all generally of stealing; but especially of perjury and sacrilege, here principally meant. Confer #Mal 3:8 Ne 13:10.

**For every one that stealeth shall be cut off]** By stealing understand all sins against the second table; as by swearing, all against the first; and so the sense is the same with that of the apostle, "Every transgression and disobedience receiveth a just recompence of reward," #Heb 2:2. And "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," #Ga 3:10. Howbeit because these two sins were more frequently and more impudently committed in those days, therefore are they, by a speciality, instanced. The Jews, coming poor out of Babylon, held it no great sin to steal for supply of their necessities; and then to forswear themselves for the better hiding of their theft. "Give me not poverty," said holy Agur, "lest, being poor, I steal, and" (as one sin draws on another) "I take the name of my God in vain," #Pr 30:9. {See Trapp on "Pr 30:9"} Hunger is an evil counsellor, necessity a hard weapon, a sore temptation, when it comes to this, Either I must steal

or starve. But then to this must be opposed that of the law, Thou shalt in no case steal. Thou must rather die than do wickedly. *Aut faciendum aut patiendum*, Either obey the law or suffer the curse.

**As on this side according to it]** *i.e.* According to the curse, described in the roll, the thief shall be cut off as well as the swearer; they shall speed alike. The tares shall be bound up in bundles, thieves with thieves, and swearers with swearers, and burnt in the fire, **#Mt 13:30,40**. According to the prediction shall be the execution. Whether on this side, that is, in Judaea (so some sense it), or on that side, in other parts of the world, such persons appear, they shall have their payment.

**And every one that sweareth]** Not only falsely, as **#Zec 5:4**, but lightly, vainly, causelessly, in jest and not in judgment; whether by God, or by creatures and qualities; *Iudaeis et Pharisaeis vulgare vitium*, saith Paraeus on **#Jas 5:12**, a common fault among the Jews and Pharisees, **#Mt 5:34,35 23:16,18**. {See Trapp on "Mt 5:34"} {See Trapp on "Mt 5:35"} {See Trapp on "Mt 23:16"} {See Trapp on "Mt 23:18"} Among the Christians in Chrysostom's time, as appears by his many sermons against it at Antioch; and in these days, if ever, because of oaths the land mourneth, God hath a controversy, **#Ho 4:1,2**. We have lived to see iniquity in the fulness of oaths and blasphemies unparalleled darted with hellish mouths against God and our Saviour so ordinarily and openly, that some of them are become very interjections of speech to the common people, and other some mere phrases of gallantry to the bravo. I knew a great swearer, saith a great divine (Mr Bolton), who, coming to his death bed, Satan so filled his heart with a maddened and enraged greediness after that most gainless and pleasureless sin, that though himself swore as fast and as furiously as he could, yet, as though he had been already among the bannings and blasphemies of hell, he desperately desired the bystanders to help him with oaths, and to swear for him.

Ver. 4. **I will bring it forth]** *sc.* Out of my treasuries or storehouses of plagues and punishments, **#De 32:34**. Or, That which thou hast seen in vision I will put in action; I will produce it into the open light, into the theatre of the world; their faults shall be written in their foreheads, their sins shall go before to judgment, my visible vengeance shall overtake them.

**And it shall enter into the house of the thief]** Which he calleth his castle; and where he thinks himself most secure, as out of the reach of God's rod; as if he could mote himself up against God's fire. But what saith Bildad? "His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors. It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation," **#Job 18:14,15**, so that if the fire of God's wrath do but touch it, all is on a light flame. He will unkennel these foxes; and drag Cacus out of his den, to his deserved punishment. Dioclesian, the persecutor (one of those *Latrones publici*, public robbers, as Cato called them), giving over his empire, after he had sufficiently feathered his nest, decreed to lead the rest of his life quietly. But he escaped not so; for after that his house was wholly consumed with lightning and a flame of fire that fell from heaven, he, hiding himself, for fear of the lightning, died within a while after.

**And into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name]** Hence Ribera gathereth that by the whole earth in the former verse is meant Judaea only: because none but Jews swore by the name of the true God, who is indeed the proper object of an oath, **#Isa 65:16 Jer 12:6**. Howbeit in lawful contracts with an infidel or idolater oaths by false gods may be admitted, and are binding. As for perjury, it is a provoking sin; as containing three great evils. 1. The uttering or upholding of a lie. 2. The calling upon God to testify and justify a lie. 3. The praying for a curse upon a man's self; and beseeching God to be a swift witness against him, **#Mal 3:1-7**; as he was indeed against Zedekiah, Narcissus in the ecclesiastical history, Earl Godwin in Polydor, Virgil, Rodulphus, Duke of Suevia, Ladislaus, King of Hungary, Dr London (Act. and Mon. fol. 1114), Richard Long, a soldier at Calais in King Henry VIII's days; who, deposing falsely against William Smith, curate of Calais shortly after, upon a displeasure of his wife, desperately drowned himself. And within the memory of man, Feb. 11, A. D. 1574, Anne Averies forswore herself at a shop in Wood Street, London; praying God she might sink where she stood if she had not paid for the wares she took. Hereupon she fell down presently speechless, and with horrible stench died.

**And it shall remain in the midst of his house]** And be a troublesome inmate with him, such as he cannot rid his hands of though never so fain; there it shall roost and rest, in despite of him. If it distaste not his dough or empty his basket, yet will it fill his store with strife, or mix the wrath of God with his sweet morsels; his meat shall be sauced, his drink spiced, as **#Job 20:23**. It is a moth in his wardrobe, murrain among his cattle, mildew in his field, rot among his sheep, and often times maketh the fruit of his loins his greatest heartbreak.

**With the timber thereof and the stones thereof]** As in case of treason or other horrible crimes, the very houses of the offenders were pulled down and made a dunghill, **#Da 2:5 3:29**. The Popish Council of Toulouse, gathered together against those ancient Protestants, the Albigenses, made a decree that the very house wherein a heretic was found should be pulled down, *Illam domum in qua fuerit inventus haereticus diruendam decernimus*. The manor house of Milcot, in Warwickshire, built by Lodovike Greevil, deeply guilty of these two grand evils mentioned in the text, and lately burnt to the ground, is commonly looked upon as a speaking monument of God's just judgment against sacrilege and perjury, whether men personally commit these sins or love them in others, **#Zec 1:17 Re 22:15**.

Ver. 5. **Lift up now thine eyes and see]** No doubt. saith Calvin here, the prophet was frightened at the sight of the flying roll, full of curses "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee," saith David, "and I am afraid of thy judgments," **#Ps 119:120**. And Habakkuk, when he considered the cursed condition of the Church's enemies, "my belly trembled," said he, "when I heard it: nay lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones," **#Hab 3:16**. Daniel was more afflicted and troubled for Nebuchadnezzar's calamity than himself was, **#Da 4:19**. Here therefore the angel encourageth the prophet: and biddeth him look up and see a further vision; and not through dulness or dejectedness to let pass without due observation the notable works and witnesses of God's providence and power. Curious artisans, when they set forth some special piece to public view, they take it ill when notice is not taken of it; so here. {See Trapp on "Zec 5:1"}

Ver. 6. **And I said, What is it?**] *i.e.* What meaneth it? for the vision is very hard and mysterious lest (saith one) the plain denunciation of the second overthrow of temple and state might discourage them too much to go forward in the present restoration of both. Hugh Broughton, on **#Da 2:4**, observeth that while the visions are general, and cause the Jews no danger, so far Daniel writeth in the Syriac tongue, general over the East. But when the oppressors be named, and the Jews plainly described the people whom God defendeth, then the eighth chapter and all after he writes in Hebrew (a tongue less known and studied), and hath commandment to keep close the plain exposition **#Da 12:4**. There is a great deal of wisdom required of those that are intrusted with the dispensation of divine truths. Our Saviour spake as the people could hear, and not as he could have spoken. See **#Heb 5:11,12**.

**This is an ephah that goeth forth]** The ephah was the greatest and most common measure among the Jews; and is therefore generally put for any measure whatsoever, **#De 25:14**. By false measures (one kind of theft) they had sinned (whence the Chaldee here, *Isti sunt populi qui aceipiebant, et dabant mensura falsa*, These are the people that bought and sold by false measures), by the same, therefore, their punishment is set forth and signified: a piece of their punishment it was that they were bounded and limited; that wickedness was confined and kept within her ephah. The Vulgate translates it *amphora*, a pitcher; which, when it is once filled with the bitter waters of wickedness, will soon sink to the bottom. Sinners, as they are stinted, so, when they have filled up their measure, they are sure to be punished; when they are ripe in the field God will come with his sickle; when their grapes of Sodom are full ready he will cast them into the winepress of his wrath, **#Re 14:19 Ge 15:16 Mt 23:32**.

**This is their resemblance through all the earth]** Heb. their eye, their aspect, their colour. This, that is, this ephah, is their resemblance; *sc.* that when they have filled up their sins they shall have their fill of punishment. Or this, meaning some apparition representing God's providence showed by the angel to the prophet, is their eye, that is, the eye of the three persons in Trinity, God's universal providence, which presideth over his judgments, **#Zec 3:9**

**4:10 9:1.** Or thus: This ephah or measure of their punishment, proportionate to their sin, in killing Christ especially, **#Mt 23:32**, shall be their eye through all the earth, *i.e.* shall be conspicuous and apparent to all sorts; so that all men shall hate them, and hoot at them for a company of kill-Christ, shall look upon them as a people of God's curse. Thus the Chaldee here, Behold, they are made manifest before all the inhabitants of the earth; for all men shall be witnesses of their horrible both sins and plagues.

Ver. 7. **And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead]** A lump of lead, the weightiest metal; noting the immoveable and immutable decree of God for the punishment of the wicked. Say to the wicked, tell him so from me, it shall go ill with him, **#Isa 3:11**; iniquity shall be his ruin. This lump of lead is first lifted up, and then let down upon the ephah as an adequate covering; and betokeneth the grievousness and long continuance of the Jews' punishment and banishment for their parricide, or rather deicide, in crucifying the Lord of glory. A day of grace they had, but they knew it not; therefore is wrath come upon them to the utmost, or, until the end, or finally, so as it shall never be removed; so some interpret it (εἰς τέλος, **#1Th 2:16**).

**And this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah]** *In medio modii*: and so she went forth or moved forward with an open face, and upper parts appearing, as not ashamed; the show of her countenance witnessed against her, she declared her sin as Sodom, **#Isa 3:9**, and as Lot's daughters, who savoured too much of Sodom when, glorying in their shame, they called their incestuous brats Moab, that is, the begotten of my father, and Benammi, which sounds to the same sense. This woman is also said to sit, as resolved of her course. Confer **#Ps 1:1 50:20**: the Jews are still a stubborn and refractory people. *Antiquum obtinent*: "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" &c., **#Ps 14:7**. *Deus nos dignabitur clarissima visione cum reducet Zion*, saith Jachiades, one of their Rabbis. I add, *Fiat, Fiat*. Do it, do it.

Ver. 8. **And he said, This is wickedness]** viz. This woman, a figure of the whole sinful nation of the Jews; as were Aholah and Aholibah, **#Eze 23:36,44**, and Babylon the Great, the mother of fornications and abominations, **#Re 17:5**, to whom I may add that grand-

daughter of hers, Katherine de Medicis, Queen mother; who by her wickedness wonderfully troubled all France for thirty years together.

**And he cast it into the midst of the ephah]** The angel, as an executioner of Divine justice, throws her down who before sat perking and priding herself; and claps her up close prisoner as it were in the ephah.

**Casting the weight of lead into the mouth thereof]** That is, of the ephah, or of the woman, according to that, **#Ps 107:42** "The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth." Montanus, one of the Talmud, addeth, that this woman is compelled to take this lead into her mouth; that molten lead was poured down her throat, for a punishment of her frauds and thefts, **#Zec 5:3**. But the wicked shall not be so excused; for upon them God shall rain snares, fire, brimstone, and a burning tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup, **#Ps 11:6**, and this is far worse than molten lead, or burning bell metal. Compare with this text **#Jer 51:64 Re 18:21** cf. 20:1. An angel, a strong angel, for better assurance of Rome's irreparable ruin, taketh a stone, a great stone, which he throweth, and with force thrusteth into the bottom of the sea, whence it cannot be buoyed up, whence nothing ordinarily is recovered, much less a millstone thrust from such a hand with such a force. "What do ye imagine against the Lord?" saith Nahum; "he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time," **#Na 1:9**; that is, the wicked shall be totally and finally consumed at once; neither will God make another doing of it. "I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah," **#Am 4:11**: wickedness is here crushed together, as it were, in a narrow vessel, covered with lead, and carried into a strange country.

**Ver. 9. Behold, there came out two women]** Winged women, and carried through the air with a pleasant wind, to note their ready and speedy obedience, prompt and present. Women they are said to be, to keep proportion with the present vision; lest the meeting and mixing together of men and women in the same matter might minister occasion to some impure surmisings. But that they were men, and not women, that are here meant is agreed upon by all. These were Ezra and Nehemiah (saith Willet on Lev. 11., after Junius and Piscator on the text), those great reformers of the Jewish



Church. But this stands not with the last verse. I rather subscribe to those that expound the text of the Romans, who with great celerity and violence destroyed the Jews' state; and so, that which they feared befell them, #Joh 11:48. The Romans, said they, shall come to take away both our place and our nation; and within a few years it proved accordingly; as if God had taken them at their word, as he did those murmuring miscreants, #Nu 14:28 "As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do unto you." Hereunto the Chaldee paraphrast consenteth, when by these two women thus described he understandeth, *populos leves et expeditos*, such agents and instruments as God would employ in the speedy execution of his wrath upon the Jewish nation; such as were Titus, Vespasian, and Aelius Adrian. Diodati maketh these two women a figure of God, two properties, namely, mercy towards his elect, and justice towards his enemies, wherewith he transports upon these last the judgments by which he had punished his own people; which is done with admirable celerity. Thus he. Danaeus makes those two women to be the anger and justice of God, which do always follow and wait upon one another, and take vengeance on men's wickedness. *Iudicium sit penes lectorem.*

**And the wind was in their wings]** A masculine affix referred to a feminine noun: to intimate that these women were indeed types of men, saith Mr Pemble. The Romans were men every inch of them, as the proverb is; and therefore of cowards they were wont to say that they had nothing Roman in them; and of Brutus, that he was the last of the Romans.

**And they lift up the ephah between the earth and the heaven]** This betokeneth a deportation and dissection of the Jewish nation; being tossed as a tennis ball into all nations, and scattered into the four winds, as #Jer 49:36. Rupertus hence concludeth them rejected of both earth and heaven. Out of the earth they are as it were banished, by a common consent of nations; and heaven admitteth them not, as those that please not God, and are contrary to all men, #1Th 2:15. And as their guide Judas, when they took Jesus, was hanged between heaven and earth, being *coelo terraeque perosus*; so fares it with that wretched people, and will do till God shall call

them a people which were not a people, and her beloved which was not beloved, #Ro 9:25.

Ver. 10. **Whither do these bear the ephah?**] That is, saith Ribera, *Quamdiu duratura est populi huius impietas?* How long shall this people's wickedness last? like as #Isa 6:10,11, when the prophet had heard, "make the heart of this people fat, and shut their eyes," &c., he cries out, "How long, Lord?" the answer whereunto is the same in effect with this of the angel; until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate; and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

Ver. 11. **To build it an house in the land of Shinar**] That is, of Babylon, #Ge 10:10 11:2, where various of the Jews still remained in wilful exile, as loth to leave their houses and gardens, which they had builded and planted there, #Jer 29:5, preferring captivity before liberty, see #1Ch 4:22,23. Hence, upon their final dispersion by the Romans, various of them resorted there for entertainment. There Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, had collected an elected Church, #1Pe 5:13, and thence he writeth his epistle to the sojourning Jews scattered through those eastern parts, #1Pe 1:1, from whence also those kings of the east, #Re 16:12, the converted Jews (as some expound it), are expected. And who can tell whether this land of Shinar be not the same with that land of Sinim? #Isa 49:12; confer #Isa 11:16 Zec 10:11. Or, by the land of Shinar here, may be meant *exilium totius orbis*, their general rejection by all nations; the whole world being to them Shinar, that is, a land of excussion.

**And it shall be established, &c.]** This denoteth the diuturnity or perpetuity of their punishment.

## Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **And I turned, and lift up mine eyes]** *i.e.* I passed on to another vision; and I lifted up the eyes of my mind, higher to heaven, saith Jerome, to receive a further revelation from God. And whereas he saith, I turned, he declareth, that God from on every side giveth his Church clear testimonies of his care of her so that she will give heed unto them, and lift up her eyes.

**There came four chariots out]** *i.e.* Four squadrons of angels, God's warriors, and ministers of his manifold decrees, which are here set forth by the name of brazen mountains, see **#Zec 1:8**, {*See Trapp on "Zec 1:8"*} Chariots the angels are called in many places, **#2Ki 2:11 6:17 Hab 3:8**, but especially **#Ps 68:17**. The chariots of God (in the Hebrew it is chariot, in the singular, to note the joint service of all the angels) are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels (of cheerful ones, so the Septuagint: εὐθυμούντων, of such as serve the Lord readily and freely, with joy and tranquillity, and so do quiet his spirit, as it is said here, **#Zec 6:8**, give him full satisfaction). The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place; that is, the angels by their swiftness and warlike prowess make Zion, the Church, as dreadful to all her enemies (did not one of them so to Sennacherib?) as those angels made Sinai, at the delivery of the law, which was given in fire, **#De 33:2**. God rideth upon the heavens for Israel's help, *i.e.* upon the angels. Heb. the word rendered angels, in the above cited **#Ps 68:17** (and so the Chaldee plainly expresseth it), is by some (who derive it from *Shaan*, to sharpen) referred to chariots; to note a kind of chariots armed with sharp hooks, used in wars, as many humane writers record. And so it maketh something to the confirmation of this interpretation, concerning angels, rather than the four monarchies. But the angel himself is our best interpreter, **#Zec 6:5**, where, being asked by Zechariah what these chariots were? he answereth, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth, for a plain periphrase of the angels, **#Zec 1:10**. {*See Trapp on "Zec 1:10"*}

**From between two mountains]** *Tanquam e carceribus*, as designed by God's all-disposing providence and power, and ready pressed at his appointment and pleasure to run their race, do their office, execute God's judgments, which are both unsearchable and inevitable; and this the poets hammered at in their *ineluctabile Fatum*, unescapable destiny, as they called it. God's decrees lie hidden under mountains of brass, as it were, till they come to execution; they run as a river underground, till they break out and show themselves. When he hath once signified his will then we understand it, which before lay hidden from us; that is, when these chariots come out from between the mountains of brass, when the event declareth what was the immutable decree of God. Hence the

Psalmist, "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep"; this for the decree. And for the execution, "Thou preservest man and beast," {#Ps 36:6} but by such means and in such manner as to thee seemeth best. It is our part to say Amen to his Amen, and to put our *Fiat* and *Placet* to his. "The will of the Lord be done," said those primitive Christians, #Ac 21:14 "Here am I, send me," #Isa 6:8.

Ver. 2. **In the first chariot were red horses, &c.]** These various colours seem to set forth the various administrations of the angels, deputed to various employments. The black colour betokeneth sorrowful occurrences and revolutions. The white, joyful. The red, bloody. The grizzled, various and mixed matters, partly joyful and partly sorrowful. But I easily subscribe to him that said, We must be content to be ignorant of the full meaning of this vision. *Tanta est profunditas Christianarum literarum*, saith Austin so great is the depth of divine learning that there is no fathoming of it. Prophecy is pictured like a matron, with her eyes covered, for the difficulty. For which cause Paulinus Nolanus would never be drawn to write commentaries; and Psellus in Theodoret asketh pardon for expounding the Canticles of Solomon.

Ver. 4. **What are these, my lord?]** Difficulty doth but whet desire in heroic spirits; the harder the vision the more earnest was the prophet's inquisition: he was restless till better resolved; and therefore applieth himself again to his angel tutor, rather than Tutelar, whom, for honour's sake, he called My lord; {See Trapp on "Zec 4:5"} and take notice of the truth of St Peter's assertion concerning the prophetic scrutiny, {#1Pe 1:11} with greatest sagacity and sedulity.

Ver. 5. **These are the four spirits of the heavens]** Angels are spirits, #Heb 1:7,14, and spirits of heaven, #Mt 24:36 Ga 1:8, resembling their creator, as Children do their Father (hence they are called sons of God, #Job 1:6 38:7), both in their substance, which is incorporeal, and in their excellent properties, life and immortality, blessedness and glory; a part whereof is their just lordship and command over inferior creatures. For like as ministering spirits they stand before the Lord of the whole earth, who sends them out at his pleasure, to serve his providence; so, they have, as his agents and instruments, no small stroke in the ordering and managing of natural and civil affairs, as may be seen in the first of Ezekiel. The wheels, that is, the events of things, have eyes, that is, something that might

show the reason of their turnings, if we could see it. And they are stirred but as the living creatures, that is, the angels, stirred them; and both the wheels and living creatures were acted and guided by God's Spirit as the principal and supreme cause of all, the Lord of the whole earth, as he is here called.

**That stand before, &c.]** As waiting his commands, and ready to run on his errand, #Mt 18:10 Da 7:10. Jacob at Bethel saw them, 1. Ascending, *sc.* to contemplate and praise God, and to minister to him. 2. Descending, *sc.* to execute God's will upon men, for mercy, or for judgment, #Ps 103:20. For which purpose, Ezekiel tells us that they have four faces, to look every way, when as God's watchmen they stand sentinel in heaven's turret. And that the sole of their feet is like the sole of calves' feet, round, and ready to go either forward or backward with greatest facility; that as they see every way, so they are apt to go every way for the dispensing of God's benefits, and executing of his chastisements toward the elect, and vengeance on the reprobates, #2Sa 24:17 2Ki 19:35 Ge 19:1,11 Ac 12:23 Re 16:12,16. All this they do justly, diligently, and purely, with faith in receiving God's commands, #Re 15:6, clothed in pure white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. Let us labour to obey God, as angels do; else we may be angels for gifts, and yet go to hell.

Ver. 6. **The black horses which are therein, &c.]** These angels are appointed to several countries. The black horses to Babylon (which lay north from Judea) to inflict vengeance. The white horses are sent with them, to deliver the Church out of Babylon; and to bring their brethren for an offering unto the Lord, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts to God's holy mountain Jerusalem, #Isa 66:20.

**And the grizzled go forth toward the south country]** To show that the punishments of Egypt and Arabia (which lay southward from Judea) should be somewhat mixed and mitigated; they should be in better case than Babylon; yet not so good as that the Jews should dream of a happy estate in those countries; but rather repair to Judea, and there keep them; since those that are out of God's precincts are out of his protection, #Ps 91:9-12.

Ver. 7. **And the bay went forth, &c.**] Junius reads it, And the strong, or confirmed ones; that is, the angels, armed with power and authority from God for the execution of his will: **#Isa 10:34** "Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one," that is, by an angel. **#2Th 1:7**, they are called the angels of God's power; and elsewhere, principalities and powers.

**And sought to go, that they might walk to and fro through the earth]** Not only toward the south, as **#Zec 6:6**. This doth not teach that the angels are more careful of this world than God is, of whom they desired it. But *first*, that they can do nothing without commission from him *Secondly*, that they are ever ready to offer their service and to yield obedience, upon the least intimation of the Divine pleasure.

Ver. 8. **Then cried he upon me]** That I might the better observe it, since he spake it with such great vehemence.

**Have pacified my spirit]** *i.e.* *Perfecerunt voluntatem meam*, as the Chaldee here hath it, they have done my work thoroughly, to my great contentment. When the Church's enemies are slaughtered God inviteth the birds and beasts to a feast, as it were for joy; and taketh as much delight in their just punishment as any man can do in a cup of generous wine; whence it is called the wine of God's wrath, **#Re 14:10**; see **#De 28:63**.

Ver. 9. **And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying]**. This second part of the chapter is not a vision, but a sermon, or a historical prediction of what was really to be done. For as God's Spirit was quieted, and, as it were, comforted, by the angels' faithful execution of their offices; so he seeks, by this prophecy, to quiet and comfort the spirits of his people the Jews, that were returned out of Babylon. For these finding themselves beset with enemies and exigencies, might possibly despair of ever seeing the accomplishment of those promises and prophecies of the kingdom restored to the house of David, and of the great glory of the second temple above the first. To keep up their hearts, therefore, is this declaration made them of the kingdom and priesthood of Christ, under the typical coronation of Joshua the high priest.

Ver. 10. **Take of them of the captivity]** *i.e.* Of the returned captives,

**even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah]** Men famous in the congregation, men of renown, **#Nu 16:2**. That these four mentioned here (taking in Josiah, who is also called Hen, **#Zec 6:14**), were ambassadors from the godly Jews in Babylon, and brought their gifts, as Junius thinketh, I cannot affirm; but that they were the same with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, as the Jews and Jerome tell us, I do not believe. Josiah seemeth to be the host to the other three; as Gaius was to St Paul, and other good people; though some think, rather, he was either treasurer for the temple, or else a goldsmith, and one that could make crowns. Calvin conjectures from **#Zec 6:14** (where it is said, that the crown shall be to these men for a memorial), that being men of authority, they were deeply guilty of infidelity and impatience, because they saw not a present performance of the promises; they were discontented themselves, and discouraged others, "Ye have need of patience," saith the apostle to those short spirited Hebrews, **#Heb 10:36**, who found it more easy to suffer evil than to wait for the promised good.

**And come thou the same day]** Either the same day these men came from Babylon, or the selfsame day that the Lord spake to the prophet, is he commanded to go, not to put it off a day longer; for the people needed a speedy and hasty comfort. No sooner had God prepared the people, but the thing was done suddenly, as **#2Ch 29:36**. No sooner were they ripe, but he was ready. He is a God of judgment, a wise God, that knows when to deal forth his favours; as till then he waits to be gracious, **#Isa 30:18**. His fingers itch to be doing good in his good pleasure to Zion; as the mother's breasts ache when now it is time the child had suck. He exalteth the lowly, he filleth the hungry with good things. When once David is poor and needy God will make no tarriance, **#Ps 40:17**; when his soul is even as a weaned child, then he shall have the kingdom, **#Ps 131:2**.

Ver. 11. **Make crowns]** Two, saith Piscator; one of gold, for the kingly dignity, another of silver, for the priesthood. Three, saith a Lapide, who makes it a type, as of Christ's threefold office, so of the Pope's triple crown; which latter relateth rather to Pride's picture drawn by the old Romans, with three crowns on her head: on the first whereof was inscribed *Transcendo*; I pass on, on the second *Non obedio*; I disobey, the third *Perturbo*. I throw into confusion, Danaeus thinks it likely, by **#Zec 6:14**, that here were four crowns

made, according to the number of the four persons here mentioned, that brought in the gold and silver. Ribera will have it to be all but one crown made of both metals, and called crowns for the greatness of it; as wisdoms, for singular wisdom, #Pr 1:20 marg; Behemoth, beasts, for a huge beast, #Job 40:15. The verb singular, *tihieh*, #Zec 6:14, seems most to favour this conceit of his. But in Hebrew the singular is often put for the plural (Chald. *vertit Facies coronam magnam*).

Ver. 12. **And spake unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying]** That is, confidently and constantly affirm and aver it; that, notwithstanding all unlikelihood and unbelief on the people's part, Almighty God will surely bring it to pass; this heap of words importeth so much; for "do ye think the Scripture speaketh in vain?" saith St James, not without some holy indignation, #Jas 4:5.

**Behold the man whose name is The Branch]** The man Christ Jesus, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, #Ro 1:3; and as a Branch grew out of his roots, #Isa 11:1. {See Trapp on "Zec 3:4"} Joshua, that he might not be exalted above measure with the abundance of this new honour, or think of himself more highly than he ought to think, #2Co 12:7 Ro 12:3, is given to understand that he is crowned for no other cause than this, that the Jews might understand that there should One arise that should be both a king and a priest also for ever, after the order of Melchisedec; and his name should be the Branch, not only because when he was a child he grew in age and in wisdom, and in grace with God and men (which is Vatablus' reason), but because he is the root, fountain, and foundation of all the faithful, who do grow up and increase in him, with the increase of God: hence it followeth,

**He shall grow up out of his place, and shall build the temple of God]** That is, the Church, which at all times hath been gathered together by Christ, through the preaching of the gospel.

**And he shall grow up out of his place]** Or he (the Branch) shall branch up *de sub se*, from under himself; he shall be born of himself, as it were, of poor parentage; for this Branch grew out of the root of Jesse, when that goodly family was sunk so low, as from David the king to Joseph the carpenter. He that writeth the life of



King Edward VI saith of his tutors, Dr Cox and Mr John Cheek, that they were men of mean birth; but so well esteemed for virtue and learning, that they might well be said to be born of themselves (Sir John Heywood).

**And he shall build the temple of the Lord]** *i.e.* The spiritual temple, that temple, the Church, the glory whereof was far greater than the glory of the former, **#Hag 2:9.** {*See Trapp on "Hag 2:9"*} And this he should do in the quality of a king, and with royal magnificence. "Ye also, as lively stones, elect and precious, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood," &c., **#1Pe 2:5.**

Ver. 13. **Even he shall build the temple of the Lord]** The same again, for greater assurance; as Pharaoh's dream was doubled. Or, Even he shall build it, that is, he shall both begin and finish it (it is the same word again, but in the future tense). Christ is called the author and finisher of our faith, **#Heb 12:2.**

**And he shall bear the glory]** Jesus shall, not thou, Joshua (in Greek Jesus), though now thou bear the crown. All thy glory is but figurative of his. Thus saith the Lord, Remove the diadem (or mitre), take off the crown: this shall not be the same. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him, that is, Christ, the king and priest of his Church. Particularly for his kingly office, he shall sit and rule upon his throne, as a sovereign Lord of all. And for his priestly office,

**He shall be a priest upon his throne likewise]** For the Church also hath her throne and jurisdiction, though distinct and severed from the civil.

**And the counsel of peace shall be between them both]** *i.e.* There shall be no clashing between these two offices in Christ; as there was sometimes between the kings and the priests of former ages, but they should, as it were, take sweet counsel together for the good of the Church; Christ having purchased all peace to his people by his priesthood, and maintaining and defending it by his kingdom.

Ver. 14. **And the crowns shall be to Helem...for a memorial]** Or monument of their incredulity, saith Calvin, and for their full

conviction. {See Trapp on "Zec 6:10"} Or their liberality, say others, and peradventure with some inscription or remembrance of their names (here recorded) for honour's sake. But best of all those that say these duties were for a memorial in the temple of the Messiah that was shortly to be expected, and was presently promised. The poor Jews at this day are said to have a crown hanging in their synagogues, against the coming of their long-looked-for Messiah. And that he comes not all this while they say it is for their sins, which are many and bony, or mighty (σοφον φαρμακον). But now seeing he stays so long, he shall be, say they, a forerunner of the end of the world, and shall gather by his power all nations into one fold, according to that which here followeth.

Ver. 15. **And they that are far off]** This was fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles, who, together with the Christian Jews, grew up into a holy temple in the Lord, #**Eph 2:19**, &c. It was also in some sense fulfilled in Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, Herod, who were at great charge for the temple work. See #**Ezr 7:15,16**, the king and his council, the Babylonians and Jews, make a contribution to the work.

**And ye shall know]** *sc.* By the event, and by your own experience.

**If you will diligently obey the voice]** That is, If by faith ye receive Christ held forth in the promise: and then persist in the obedience of faith unto the end.

## **Chapter 7**

Ver. 1. **In the fourth year of king Darius]** Two years and a month after the former sermon. The word of the Lord was precious in those days. "The Lord gave the word": but it cannot be said that "great was the company of those that preached it," #**Ps 68:11**; during the captivity they complained that there was no more any prophets; neither any among them that knew how long their misery should last. Soon after their return God stirred them up Haggai and Zechariah; and after that Malachi; and then there was *Chathimath chazon*, as the Jews phrase it, a sealing up or end of prophecy. Only they had *Bath-col*, as they call it, a voice from heaven, sometimes, as #**Mt 3:17 Joh 12:28**. This and the pool of Bethesda only were left them as extraordinary signs of God's love to that people. But for a

punishment of their killing the prophets (as they did this Zechariah between the porch and the altar, #Mt 23:37) and stoning those that were sent unto them (as they did the other Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada), they had no more prophets till the arch-prophet and his forerunner, the Baptist, came. And now also by this long vacation of two years and a month, it appeareth that preachers were rare, and that sermons they had but seldom. Neither was it otherwise here in England at the first reformation; for to many churches (for want of preachers) readers were sent. Whence one of the martyrs wished that every able minister might have ten congregations committed to his charge till further provision could be made.

**The word of the Lord came unto Zechariah]** The Lord is said to come to Balaam, Abimelech, Laban, &c. But he never entrusted his word to these profane persons; as he did to the holy prophets, of whom it is said, as here, "The word of the Lord came unto them."

**In the fourth day of the ninth month]** Which answereth to our November. Why the precise time of the prophecies is set down—*{See Trapp on "Hag 1:1"}*

Ver. 2. **When they had sent]** They? who? Not the princes of Persia, that were now proselyted, as the vain glorious Jews (and after them Haymo and Hugo) would have it, for the honour of their nation, nor the Samaritans (as some in Theodoret held), as seeming to Judaize in part, to join Jewish ceremonies with heathenish rites; but either the Jews yet remaining in Babylon, as Calvin conceiveth (blaming them for their sloth in not returning when they might, and yet commending them for this, that they had not cast off all care of God's sincere service), or else the whole body of the Jews returned, as Junius determineth; or, lastly, some particular man not named, who is brought in, #Zec 7:3, saying, "Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself," &c. But that may be an ordinary analogy, the singular for the plural; especially since the embassy was sent in the name of the whole congregation.

**Unto the house of God]** Not to Bethel, as the Septuagint translatheth here, nor from Bethel (as the Chaldee), though that is better than the former, and more likely; but, to the house of God, that is, to the



**Should I weep]** That is, fast, which was ever with weeping, see #**Joe 2:15-17**, and affliction of the soul, #**Le 16:31 23:27**; which indeed is the soul of a fast, and without the which it is but as a brainless head, or a lifeless carcase. What is a humble day (saith one) without a humble heart? not only an irreligious incongruity, but a high provocation; like Zimri's act when all the congregation were weeping before the door of the tabernacle?

**In the fifth month]** Wherein the temple was consumed to ashes, #**Jer 52:12**. In a sad remembrance whereof the Jews took up that tenth day of the fifth month for a solemn fast every year, till now.

**Separating myself]** Heb. Nazariting myself that is, abridging myself of meats, drinks, and delights. Hence a fasting day is called a day of restraint, #**Joe 2:15**. Hence it hath its hand both in Hebrew and Greek, *Tsom*, Νηστειο Hence also it is spoken of as a foul fault, #**Isa 58:3** "Behold in the day of your fast ye find your pleasure." The Popish fast is a mere mock fast; for they separate themselves from some kind of meats only; it is not a total abstinence. And herein they come short of the very Turks, who upon their fasting days will not so much as taste a cup of water, or wash their mouths with water all the day long, before the stars appear in the sky; and then they make all the cheer and joy they can devise. Like as the Attic dames in their Thesmophoria (a feast of Ceres) prepared themselves with fasting, but after that laid the reins on the neck, and ran riot.

**As I have done these so many years?]** Seventy at least. But they seem to reckon up upon so many as was scarce to be told; and that therefore God was deep in their debt. Is it not time now to give over, since the temple was almost rebuilt? This was the great case propounded by these Questionists. Hereunto an answer is made by the prophet in the two following chapters, and this answer is partly reprehensory, #**Zec 7**, partly consolatory, #**Zec 8**. The Sun of righteousness loves not to set in a cloud.

Ver. 4. **Then came the word of the Lord of hosts]** This is often prefaced, for authority's sake; and to procure audience and reverence. The Lord God hath spoken, who can but be affected? See that ye despise not him that speaketh from heaven. The angel, #**Mt**

**28:7**, useth no other argument to assure the women of the truth of what he had told them but this, "Lo, I have told you."

Ver. 5. **Speak unto all the people of the land]**, Not to the ambassadors only: as the cause is common, so let the answer be public; for they were all too well conceited of their external services, bodily exercises, and made much ado about a trifle, a practice of their own devising, neglecting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, **#Mt 23:23**.

**And to the priests]** Who themselves were to seek belike; and having been the authors and observers of these customs, were backward to abolish them, as those that rested in them without true repentance, faith, and new obedience.

**When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month]** *sc.* For the slaughter of Gedaliah and the sad consequence thereof, **#2Ki 25:22 Jer 41:1**.

**Even those seventy years]** Wherein ye have lost full seven score fasts; and were not a bit the better for them, because they fasted rather to get off their chains than their sins; they rested in their fasts, in the work done, neither regarding how nor why they should fast. Now God weighs men's actions by their aims. And with him, though a good aim doth not make a bad action good (as we see in the case of Uzzah), yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, as in Jehu's reformation. He had a squint eye to his own ends in all (as the eagle hath an eye upon her prey when she flies highest), and so consulted ruin to his own house.

**Did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?]** Did you propound me to yourselves? Or gat I anything by the hand? Did you serve me? and not yourselves rather upon me? Was it not sinful self-love and base self-seeking that put you upon these practices? looked you any higher therein than only to the satisfying of your own carnal humours? God was not in all your thoughts. This Daniel saw and acknowledged with grief and shame, **#Da 9:13** "All this is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand thy truth: therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil and brought it upon us," &c.

The Jews no doubt had prayed much and often during that seventy years' captivity; yet Daniel denies that they had prayed to any purpose; because they had failed both *quoad fontem et quoad finem*, they had acted from evil principles, and had been carried on by self-respects. They had not that true heart spoken of by the apostle, **#Heb 10:22**, but that wicked mind mentioned by the wise man, **#Pr 21:27**. The sacrifice of the wicked is abominable; how much more when he brings it with a wicked mind; either as thinking to deceive the God of heaven, or at least to stop his judgments, and still the noise of his own conscience by his external services. Thus Ephraim bore fruit to himself, but proved an empty vine, **#Ho 10:1**; when as the spouse (that fruitful vine on Christ's house side) kept her fruit for her beloved, **#So 5:4**; who therefore fed heartily upon it; and not upon her vine only, but her milk too; not upon her honey only, her finer and sweeter services, but upon her honeycomb too, that had much wax in it, meaning her more worse and coarser performances. If the heart be upright all is well between Christ and his people. O labour for that truth in the inward parts, that we may be, with "Apelles, approved in Christ," **#Ro 16:10**; that he may say of us, as once he did of Nathaniel, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Great virtues not sweetened with sincerity are no ornaments unto us, and great infirmities not soured with hypocrisy are no great deformities. Those God acknowledgeth not, these he imputeth not.

Ver. 6. **And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink]** *q.d.* In all your actions, natural, civil, recreative, religious, you should have sought, served, and set up me, you should have done all to the glory of God, as saith the apostle; you should have eaten, drank, and slept eternal life, as it was said of a certain Scotch divine. "The way of life is above to the wise," **#Pr 15:24**, he goes a higher way than his neighbour, who contents himself with a natural use of the creature, but he can extract a spiritual. Grace is called the divine nature, as that which, elixir-like, by contraction turns all into the same property with itself. Meat makes us not acceptable to God, **#1Co 8:8**. The kingdom of God consists not in meats and drinks, **#Ro 14:17**. Howbeit the Israelites were commanded, as to fast, so to feast before the Lord; that is, in faith and obedience; and to do everything from the heart, as unto him. This these Jews did not; and are therefore worthily blamed. From their feeding themselves without fear of God is concluded their no respect to him in their fasts and holy services:

since true goodness is ever like itself, and carries a uniformity in all proceedings.

Ver. 7. **Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried]** *q.d.* Hath he not spoken loud enough, long enough? Hath he not sufficiently declared his will concerning these external actions, and especially concerning a fast profaned through wickedness, **#Isa 58:8,4 Jer 14:12**, and elsewhere. *Sed surdo fabulam;* But a story falling on deaf ears. All hath been but as a trumpet sounded in a dead man's ear; you are altogether uncounsellable, untractable; and all that hath been spoken hath even been spilt upon you.

**Should ye not the words]** So the original runs, by a concise and short kind of speaking, well befitting a sharp reproof. Should ye not hear them and heed them? which, if you had done, you might have spared that labour of coming to us; and out of the former prophecies have resolved yourselves.

**When Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity]** But then their hearts were fat as grease, and the prosperity of those fools destroyed them; who, if they had hearkened to wisdom, had dwelt safely; and lived quietly from the fear of evil, **#Pr 1:32,33**. Surely as those that lie on downy pillows cannot hear well; so such as be at ease in Sion cannot profit by good counsel. It is by correction that God openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instructions, **#Job 33:16**.

**When men inhabited the south and the plain]** Heb. the south of the plain, that is, the bounds and borders, that part of the country that lieth most open to the inroads of the enemy, and hath most of all felt the desolations of war. See **#Jer 17:26 32:44**.

Ver. 8. **And the word]** {See Trapp on "Zec 7:4"}

Ver. 9. **Execute true judgment]** According to **#De 1:17**. See the note there. The prophet having here to do with hypocrites, who boast much of their piety with neglect of charity, and seem to be strict in the service of God, but make overly bold with men, presseth them to duties of the second table, which yet he would have exercised in the first table; for not only the second is included in the first, but in the very first commandment of the law the observation of the rest is commanded, as Luther well observeth.



**And show mercy]** Or bountifulness, kindness, favourable dealing.

**And compassions]** Heb. bowels, *q.d.* Do it out of deep pity from the heart root. Draw out, not your sheaf only, but your soul to the hungry, **#Isa 58:10**, this way the poorest may exercise his charity; though he cannot show mercy, yet he may love it, **#Mic 6:8**, he may wish well to it, as these poor wretches, that were willing indeed, but never, alas, able to relieve the necessitous, **#Mt 25:35**: we usually call such poor men, poor souls; but in the bowels of compassion a poor soul may be a rich Christian; and a rich man may have a poor soul.

Ver. 10. **And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless]** Widows and orphans are God's clients, taken into his special protection.

**The stranger]** Whose right is so sacred, saith one, that there was never nation so barbarous that would violate the same.

**Nor the poor]** Whose misery moves compassion without an orator. In the Low Countries they may not beg, but only look pitifully. To grind the faces of such is barbarous cruelty; to wrong them, or but wrangle with them, is called man-eating, **#Ps 14:4**.

**And let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart]** For though you never act it, yet *Fecit quisque quantum voluit*, He does anything whatever he wished, saith Seneca. It is said, **#Jos 24:9** "Balak arose and fought with Israel," and yet the story saith nothing so. *Sed fieri dicitur quod tentatur aut intenditur*, saith Ribera upon **#Am 9:5**. He did not, because he dared not; yet he is said to have done it because he had a mind to do it. A man may die of an inward bleeding; so of heart sins, which are *maioris reatus*, greater guilt, as we see in devils, though outward sins are *maioris infamiae*, greater dishonour, as the schools well observe.

Ver. 11. **But they refused to hearken]** Being a nation void of counsel, **#De 32:28**, not willing to know what they should do, lest they should do what they would not. Nay (said they once, when they had nothing else to say), but we will have a king.

**And pulled away the shoulder]** As untamed heifers do from the yoke, or untoward porters from the burden. The Vulgate rendereth it:

*Averterunt scapulam recedentem*, making it a metaphor from those that scornfully turn their backs upon their betters when they like not their commands; as the Earl of Essex did once upon Queen Elizabeth; whereat she, waxing impatient, gave him a cuff on the ear, bidding him be gone with a mischief. Sides and shoulders should be set to God's work, **#Zep 3:9**.

**And stopped their ears]** Heb. They made heavy their ears. See here how they proceeded by fit degrees from bad to worse (for *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*), noted in the many "ands" here used. There is a concatenation of vices as well as of graces; and he that is one step down the ladder of hell knoweth not where he shall stop, till he break his neck at the very bottom. Wherefore *principiis obsta*. Meddle not with sin; it is modest and maidenlike at first, but who knows what it may come to? We have heard of virgins so modest at first as to blush at the motions of an honest love, who, being once corrupt and debauched, have grown boldly lascivious so as to solicit others, so as to prostitute themselves to all comers. Keep thee, therefore, far from an evil matter, **#Ex 23:7**; have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness, **#Eph 5:11**. *Circa serpentis antrum positus non eris diu illaesus* (Isidore). He that plays upon the hole of the asp may be suddenly stung.

Ver. 12. **Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant]** That hardest of stones, harder than the flint, **#Eze 3:9**, than the nether millstone, **#Job 41:24**. Pliny saith of it, *Durities eius est inenarrabilis, et simul ignium victrix natura et nunquam incalescens*. The hardness of this stone is unspeakable: the fire cannot burn it, nor so much as heat it through; the hammer cannot break it; and therefore the Greeks call it an adamant, from its untameableness. *Hircino tamen rumpitur sanguine*, saith the same author. Howbeit this hardest stone, soaked for a while in goat's blood, may be dissolved and broken in pieces. So may the hardest heart by the blood of Christ (the true scape goat) applied by faith. "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn" (οψονται κωπονται, **#Re 1:7**). He shall look again upon them, and they shall melt much more. A stroke from guilt broke Judas's heart into despair; but a look from Christ broke Peter's heart into tears. Now till the heart be thus graciously mollified instructions glide off it, as rain falling upon a rock: afflictions, God's hammers, do not but beat upon an adamant, *qui*

*respuit scalptra et malleos, quin at ipsos dirampit*, which will sooner break them than be broken by them. "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye," #Ac 7:51. How their fathers did appears by this text and #Ne 9:29. They had not only sinews of iron, a natural hereditary hardness (whereby all men are born averse from, yea, adverse to, the motions of the Spirit: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"), but also brows of brass, #Isa 48:4, a habitual, voluntary, adventitious, wilful hardness; refusing to be reformed, hating to be healed: such a desperate hardness, as neither ministry, nor misery, nor miracle, nor mercy could possibly mollify.

**By the former prophets]** Heb. the hand of the former prophets, that is, by their mouth and ministry (*Manus enim, est organon organon*. Arist.), but to as little purpose, through their singular obstinace, as when Bede preached to a heap of stones.

**Therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts]** Which argues that they were great sinners before the Lord, as #Ge 13:13; for he doth not use to kill flies upon men's brows with beetles.

Ver. 13. **Therefore it is come to pass]** By a most just and equal retaliation. Distributive justice requireth that men should be punished according to the nature and kind of their offences. "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," #Pr 14:14. As he makes a match with mischief, so he shall have his belly full of it; he hath sold himself to do wickedness, and he shall be sure to have his payment. With the froward God will show himself froward, #Ps 18:26, he will be as cross as they are, for the hearts of them. If they turn the deaf ear to him, he will do as much for them another time. They shall call and cry for help till their hearts and sides ache, but all in vain; he will not come at them. If they pull away the shoulder, he will pull away their supporters, and they shall be "overthrown in stony places," #Ps 141:6. If they harden their hearts he will harden his hand, and hasten their destruction. This shall they have of God's hand, they "shall lie down in sorrow," #Isa 50:11.

Ver. 14. **But I scattered them with a whirlwind]** This is the second part of their punishment. The first was no audience or help from heaven at their greatest need, #Zec 7:13. This was the curse of Saul, #1Sa 28:15; of Moab, #Isa 16:12; of David's enemies, #Ps 18:41.

The next now is, they were dejected and dissipated, as the dust of the mountains before a whirlwind; cast out of their native soil, and carried, they knew not whither, with a great and fearful dispersion and discerption of the same body and nation.

**Thus the land was desolate after them]** This is the third degree of their grievous punishment, their land laid utterly waste and desolate; according to that, "God turneth a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," **#Ps 107:34**. Here a learned expositor observeth a wonderful providence, that this pleasant country, left thus destitute of inhabitants, and compassed about with warlike nations, was not invaded and replanted by foreigners for seventy years' time; but enjoyed her sabbaths, resting from tillage and all other employments.

**For they laid the pleasant land desolate]** They, by their sins, rather than the Babylonians by their armies, did all this spoil, as Daniel also confesseth, **#Da 9:16**, and Nehemiah, **#Ne 1:8**. Sin is the great mischief-maker, hell-hag, *{a}* trouble maker, that hurled confusion over the world at first, and brings desolation still to pleasant countries. Palestine was very pleasant, not more by the nature of the soil than by God's special blessing; a land that he had espied out for them, flowing with milk and honey, which was the glory of all lands, **#Eze 20:6**. This land they had laid desolate, or for an astonishment, as some render it; or for an *In qua quid?* as Montanus reads it, What is here? Nothing of its old pleasantness.

*{a}* A diabolical or vile woman. (ED)

## Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **Again the word of the Lord of hosts]** As for reprehension in the former chapter, so for consolation in this; that they might not be discouraged, or say, as once they did, There is no hope; but lifting up the hands which hung down, and the feeble knees, they might go on to lay the last stone with joy. To which end also no less then eighteen different times in this one chapter God is styled the Lord of hosts; that, resting upon God's power and goodness (whereof they are assured by many precious promises), as upon the Jachin and Boaz,

the two main pillars of a Christian's faith, they might have strong consolation.

**Came to me]** {See Trapp on "Zec 7:8"}

Ver. 2. **I was jealous for Zion]** {See Trapp on "Zec 1:14"} Jealous as a husband, zealous as a loving father; for, *Non amat qui non zelat*, He does not love who does not ardently love, saith Augustine; and a father being rebuked by some for his exceeding forwardness for his friend, answered, *Ego aliter amare non didici*, I know not how to love any otherwise than earnestly. God, therefore, to ascertain his people of the truth of the ensuing promises, and to cure their unbelief, lets them know that all this he will do for them of his free grace without their having deserved it. As at first he loved them merely because he loved them, **#De 7:7,8**; so, out of the same love, he will bestow upon them all the good things here mentioned. See the like **#Isa 9:6,7**, where, after a sweet description of Christ, his kingdom and benefits, he concludes all with "The zeal" (that is, the tender love and free grace) "of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Fear ye not." So **#2Sa 7:21** "For thy word's sake," that is, for thy Christ's sake, "and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things" which thou hadst promised. "According to thine own heart," that is, *ex mero motu*, out of pure and unexcited love, or zeal, which is the top of all the affections and the heat of the heart.

Ver. 3. **I am returned unto Zion]** After a long absence, as it may seem by the late troubles, and that dismal dispersion, **#Zec 7:14**. God was gone aside and returned to his place, till they should acknowledge their offence and seek his face: In their affliction, said he, they will seek me early. Neither was he frustrated, as appeareth, **#Ho 5:15 cf. 6:1**. Come, and let us return unto the Lord, say they. Do so, and then I will come again unto you as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth, with a cornucopia of peace, plenty, and prosperity. Neither this only will I do as a stranger in the land, or as a wayfaring man, that tarrieth for a night,

**But I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem]** My shechinah, or settled habitation, shall be in the midst of it, *sc.* in my temple there situated, **#Jer 14:8**. Maimonides saith, that the Hebrew word here used signifieth *continuationem stationis*, a sure and settled abode; such as was that of the Godhead of Christ in his manhood. "For the

Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," εσκηνωσεν. The word seems to be made of this *Shacan* in the text.

**And Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth]** A faithful city, **#Isa 1:26**. A Verona rightly so called; a place where the sincere service of the true God is set up and practised; in opposition to other cities (such as Athens was, wholly given to idolatry, **#Ac 17:16**, κατειδωλον), that went a whoring after lying vanities, and so forsook their own mercies, **#Job 2:8**.

**And the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain]** This and the former clause may safely and fitly be extended to the holy Catholic Church of the New Testament also; whereof Jerusalem and the mount Moriah, whereon the temple stood, were figures. The Rabbis themselves expect the good things here promised to be performed when their Messiah shall come, *quem tantis ululatibus exposcunt*.

Ver. 4. **There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem]** Because the "Ancient of days, the just Lord, is in the midst thereof," **#Zep 3:5**, and he will give every "good gift and perfect giving," **#Jas 1:17**, that is, both temporal and spiritual. The Father of lights will be to his both a sun and a shield; and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, **#Ps 84:11**. Godliness hath the promises of both lives, **#1Ti 4:8**. Christ is heir of all, **#Heb 1:2**, and the saints are his coheirs, **#Ro 8:17**. He is the "everlasting Father," and also the "Prince of peace," **#Isa 9:6**; his children and subjects shall have both the upper and nether springs, both the blessing of the right hand (spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus), and also of the left; riches and honour, delight and pleasure, life and length of days, peace and prosperity, &c., **#Pr 3:16,17 8:18 Ps 112:2,3 De 28:2-6**.

**And every man with his staff in his hand]** His third leg, as they call it; *q.d.* they shall live so long that they shall need a staff, a servant or a son (such as Scipio was to his old decrepit father) to lean upon; because the strong men, the legs, shall bow themselves, that is, bend and buckle under their burden, **#Ec 12:3**. They shall not be cut off by the devouring sword of war, that slaughter-man of

mankind that lays heaps upon heaps, and by chain bullets cuts its way through a heap of men at once, without respect of old or young.

Ver. 5. **And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls]** Lads and lasses (as the Hebrew seems to sound), that mind little else but play as if, with leviathan, they had been made to sport, or as those people of Tombutum, in Africa, who are said to spend their whole time in singing and dancing. But this they could not do if the times were troublesome, and the soldier at his bloody play, according to that of Abner, **#2Sa 2:14** "Let the young men now arise and play before us," that is, thrust their swords in their fellows' sides, **#2Sa 2:16**.

Ver. 6. **If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people]** Here the Lord graciously answereth the secret objection of these Jews' unbelieving and misgiving hearts. It is impossible, thought they, that these promises should ever have their performance; they are sure too good to be true. This is the voice of carnal reason; it usually tells a story of impossibilities, and judgeth according to sense, looketh upon God's Jordan (as Naaman did) with Syrian eyes. But faith can mount higher and see further; as a lark, with a little eye, getting aloft, can see that which an ox, with a bigger eye, but being below on the ground, cannot. It is the nature of faith to look upon all things seizable. I can do all things, saith she, through Christ that strengtheneth me. Is there anything too hard for the Almighty? was not that an absurd question of these men's ancestors, "Can he prepare a table for us in the wilderness?" God can do much more than he will do; but whatsoever he willeth that he doth both in heaven and earth. And if faith have but a promise to fasten upon, she can believe God upon his bare word, without a pawn; and that both against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible.

**Should it also be marvellous in mine eyes]** *q.d.* Will ye measure me by yourselves, and make my thoughts to be as your thoughts, my ways as your ways? there is no comparison. Abraham cared not for the deadness of his own body or his wife's, but was strong in faith, and gave God the glory of his power, **#Ro 4:20**. This was it indeed that God himself minded him of when he said unto him, **#Ge 17:1**, I am God Almighty, walk before me and be upright: *q.d.* Thou wilt never do the latter unless thou believe the former.

Ver. 7. **Behold, I will save my people from the east]** This was in part, no doubt, literally meant to be the scattered Jews; and fulfilled also in those 500 years' time between the captivity and Christ, though stories tell us not when and how; and shall be much more at their much desired conversion. For this is laid down for a general rule, that all evangelical promises made to the Jews, seeing they neither at first received the gospel, nor ever hitherto enjoyed that peace, plenty, and prosperity which these and such like promises do purport, cannot but aim at somewhat that is yet to come. Albeit it cannot be denied but that the great and glorious things which in the height and excellence thereof are spoken particularly to them, do in their measure and degree appertain in common to all the faithful; and so in the New Testament are ordinarily applied.

Ver. 8. **And I will bring them]** And then they are sure to be brought. For who hath resisted his will? he will breathe life into those dead bones, and flesh shall cover them; he will make up those two sticks into one, and David his servant shall be king over them for ever, **#Eze 37:24.**

**And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem]** They shall, they shall. Oh the rhetoric of God! Oh the certainty of the promises! what a monstrous sin is unbelief!

**And they shall be my people, and I will be their God]** This is a short gospel; this is the sum of the covenant of grace. *Brevis et longa, planeque aurea est haec clausula,* as Pareus somewhere speaks of another text. This is a long, and yet a short clause; short in sound, long in sense, but golden all over.

**In truth and righteousness]** I will be their God.

**in truth]** That is, in an assured performance of promise.

**And they shall be my people in righteousness]** That is, in obedience to my commandments. So here is the covenant renewed in a mutual stipulation.

Ver. 9. **Let your hands be strong]** Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us take heart of grace against all occasions of distrust and fear, **#2Co 7:1;** let us up and be doing, that the Lord



may be with us; let us fear lest, such a promise being left us, yea, such a bundle of promises as are contained in the new covenant, any of you, by shrinking from the service, should seem to come short of it, **#Heb 4:1**; or by faintly forwarding the temple work, should lose the things that he hath wrought, "but that ye receive a full reward," **#2Jo 8** "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees," **#Isa 35:3,4**. Say to them of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not, &c. Say the same every man to himself. Encourage yourselves in the Lord your God, as David did, **#1Sa 30:6**. Believe the prophets and ye shall prosper, **#2Ch 20:20**.

**Do ye not hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets?**] Myself and Haggai? And should the consolation of God be small unto you? **#Job 15:11**; will you not trust us whom you have already tried? and take comfort by our words now, whom you have formerly found no liars?

Ver. 10. **For before these days]** *sc.* During those forty and four years, wherein they ceased from the work, minding only their own houses and managing their own affairs, their labour was unprofitable, their state unquiet through foreign foragers and homebred malcontents.

**There was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast]** *Nulla emolumenta laborum.* Both man and beast did their parts, but to little purpose.

“ *Ludit qui sterili semina mandat humo*” (Ovid).

They sowed much, and brought in little; they earned money, but put it into a bottomless bag, **#Hag 1:6**; {*See Trapp on "Heb 1:6"*} the gains did not countervail the pains, the wages the work.

**Neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in]** Whether a man were within doors or without, he was in danger of the enemy (see the like **#2Ch 15:5**), he did eat the bread of his soul in the peril of his life, being wholly at the enemy's mercy, which is mere cruelty. "For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go away?" said Saul, **#1Sa 24:19**; I think not, till he have his pennyworth of him; as that monster of Milan, as the bloody Papists

in the massacre of Paris, as the merciless Spaniards on the harmless Indians (50,000,000 of whom they have murdered in 42 years, as Acosta, the Jesuit, testifieth), as Ptolemy Lathurus, King of Egypt, on these poor Jews, 30,000 of whom he cruelly killed, and compelled the living to feed upon the flesh of the dead; and, lastly, as the Jews themselves, of whom Tacitus takes notice, and gives them this character, that there was *misericordia in promptu apud suos, sed contra omnes alios hostile odium*, that they were kind enough to their own, but cruel to all others, whom they look upon as idolaters, and therefore think they may safely kill, as they did the Cyprians and Cyrenians in Trajan's time to the number of 240,000; and as they still do Christians where they can without danger of being discovered; whom also they curse in their daily prayers with a *Maledic Domine Nazaraeis*; and by whom they are everywhere so contemned and hated, that they are exiled out of the world, cast out of many countries, and where they are suffered (as in Turkey) they are at every Easter in danger of death. For Biddulph telleth us that if they stir out of doors between Maundy Thursday at noon and Easter eve at night, the Christians among whom they dwell will stone them; because at that time they crucified our Saviour, derided and buffeted him.

**For I set all men, every one against his neighbour]** And I set, *emisi* or *commisi*, not *permisi* or *dimisi*, as the Vulgate hath it: I set on or sent out, not I let or suffered all men. God's holy hand hath a special stroke in the Church's afflictions, whosoever be the instrument. Herein his all disposing Providence is not only permissive, but active. "I make peace, and create evil," that is, war and contention, **#Isa 45:7**; which is called evil by a specialty, as including all evils.

“ *Omega nostrorum Mars est, Mars Alpha malorum.*”

But is there evil in a city, and I have not done it? **#Am 3:6**. He (for a punishment) sent an evil spirit of division and discord between Abimelech and the men of Shechem, **#Jud 9:23**, not by instilling any evil motions into their minds, but in a way of just revenge for their treachery and cruelty to Gideon's family. This God doth, 1. By letting loose Satan upon them (that great coal kindler and mischief

maker of the world) to raise jealousies, heart burnings, and discontents between them. 2. By giving them up to the lusts and corruptions of their own wicked hearts. 3. By giving occasions of enraging them more and more one against another. And here the wickedness of these factions and fallings out is wholly from their lusts that war in their members, **#Jas 4:1**, and not at all of God, though his Providence do concur, like as the stench of the dunghill riseth not from the sun, though the sunshine upon it be the occasion of it.

**Every one against his neighbour]** A sad case, that common misery should not breed unity among them; that necessity had not made them lay down their private enmities; that being vexed so by the common adversary, they should yet vex and tear one another. Blows enough were not dealt by the Samaritans, Ammonites, and other malignants; but their own must add to the violence. Still Satan is thus busy, and Christians are thus malicious; that they must needs fall out by the way home, and give bloody noses, too, sometimes. St James, **#Jas 4:1,7**, calls upon such to "resist the devil," that is, their unruly passions of rage and revenge, wherewith the devil empestereth and embroileth their spirits; and, like your cockmasters, sets one to kill another, that at night he may feed upon both.

Ver. 11. **But now I will not be unto the residue, &c.]** Now that the temple is well nigh perfected, and so the cause of my displeasure removed; the matter you see is already well amended, and shall be yet better; for there is a series, a concatenation of God's mercies, like the links in a chain, every former draws on a future, if we break not the chain by our unthankfulness. The right hand of the Lord shall change all this, saith Hope, when it is at worst, **#Ps 118:16**.

*"FleBILE PRINCIPIMUM MELIOR FORTUNA SEQUETUR."*

As, when it is in better case, it saith, "Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." It is well for the present, and yet it will be better hereafter. Fury is not in God; or, if at any time it seem to be, yet he will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever, **#Ps 103:9**. It is with God in some sort as it was with David, whose soul longed to go forth unto Absalom; for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead, **#2Sa**

**13:39.** Let the Lord but see the rainbow of repentance appearing in our hearts, and he will presently be pacified; well he may wash us, but he will never drown us.

Ver. 12. **For the seed shall be prosperous]** Or, full and perfect, as the Chaldee hath it; it shall be fruitful and yield a plentiful crop, such as shall every way answer the desire of the husbandman. Instead of your recent scarcity (whereof see **#Hag 1:9**, with the notes) you shall abound with plenty of all things, feeding of the fat, and drinking of the sweet, and having your heart filled with food and gladness, **#Ac 14:17**. More particularly:

**The vine shall give her fruit]** So that ye shall swim in wine.

**And the ground shall give her increase]** Her full burden of the best; so that your floors shall swell, and your tables sweat with sweetest varieties.

**And the heavens shall give their dew]** That womb of the morning wherein the fruits are conceived.

**And I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things]** Whereas people are apt to attribute too much to means and second causes of plenty and prosperity, God assumes the honour of all to himself. Rain and fruitful seasons are his gift, **#Ac 14:17**. And, **#Ho 2:22**, he resolveth the genealogy of grain and wine into himself: I will hear the heaven, and the heaven shall hear the earth, &c. And, both here and elsewhere he giveth us to know that the reward of religion is abundance of outward blessings; which yet are not always entailed to godliness (whatever Jesuits tell us of the Church's prosperity and plenty, fetching her mark from the market), to the end that it may be admired for itself, and not for these transitory trappings.

Ver. 13. **As ye were a curse among the heathen]** The people of God's wrath, and of his curse, **#Isa 34:5**, abhorred and accursed by all nations, **#Jer 24:9**; lastly, a proverb and a pattern for any fearful imprecation, **#Eze 14:8**, as those that had the bloody weals of God's visible vengeance on their backs, and, Cain-like, had his manifest mark upon their persons and proceedings. The Turks at this day so

hate the Jews for crucifying Christ, that they use to say, in detestation of a thing, I would I might die a Jew, then; Let me be a Jew if I defraud thee, &c. Such a taunt and a curse this wretched people are still. As they curse Christ and his followers continually every day, so it comes into their heart like water, and like oil into their bones, **#Ps 109:18**.

**O house of Judah, and house of Israel]** *i.e.* Besides the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, many of the ten tribes that revolted, for religion's sake, unto Judah were carried captive with them, and afterwards returned out of captivity also in their company. To them, therefore, as well as to the house of Judah, is made the promise. Twelve thousand of these ten tribes returning are found by computation in that *summa totalis* set down **#Ezr 2:64**, as the Jewish doctors have concluded. There are those who understand the words of the general conversion of all the Jews in the time of the gospel; and this may very well be, for aught that I see to the contrary.

**So will I save you]** Lest you should say, in the language of Ashdod, It is a chance, I will do it, saith God, **#1Sa 6:9**.

**And ye shall be a blessing]** Not only a name and a praise, as **#Zep 3:20**, but a form to be used in blessing of others; such as was that, **#Ru 4:11,12**. And not altogether unlike is that prayer of David, **#Ps 119:132** "Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name."

**Fear not, but let your hands be strong]** Be not diffident, but diligent in well doing: in due season you shall reap, if you faint not, **#Ga 6:9**. {See Trapp on "Zec 8:9"} Base fear expectorates and unmans us; banish it, therefore, or ye will be betrayed by it.

Ver. 14. **As I thought to punish you]** He had promised to make them of a curse a blessing, and here he shows them the cause of this change, namely, God's better thoughts of them, and toward them, upon their return unto him. And because they might haply think that their fathers had hard measure, he tells them that their punishment was the fruit of their provocations. And whereas they might expect that God should repent and relent toward them, he shows here that

he had repented so long, that he was even weary with repenting, #Jer 15:6; and that he, therefore, was implacable because he found them incurable. Hence he resolved, as #Eze 24:13, and would not be altered, *Crudelem medicum intemperans aeger facit* A headstrong patient makes a cruel doctor. (Mimus). Lo, thus far these Jews had found and felt God's fingers; and that in his menaces he had been as good as his word.

Ver. 15. **So again have I thought]** *Sic conversus sum*. This change was not in God, but in the people, to whom he is now resolved to show mercy, and that from a gracious purpose and determination, such as altereth not.

**Fear ye not]** Faith quelleth and killeth distrustful fear; but awful dread breedeth it, feedeth, fostereth, and cherisheth.

Ver. 16. **These are the things that ye shall do]** Heb. These are the words. God will not so do all good for his people, but that they should reciprocate and do something for him by way of thankfulness. Particularly; these are the words, or commands, that ye shall not only know, but do. They are *verba vivenda non legenda*; word to live by not to be read, as lessons of music must be practised, and a copy not read only, but written after.

**Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour]** Let your words be few and ponderous. Lie not in jest, lest ye go to hell in earnest. Let Socrates be your friend, and Plato; but the truth much more. Rather die than lie for any cause.

**Execute the judgment of truth and peace]** That is, upright judgment pronounced or delivered with a calm and quiet mind; not angry, nor partial, nor of any distempered or troubled affection; such as hatred, fear, favour, *Iudicium pacis, id est, placidum et rite compositum* (Calv.). All that savours of self should be strained out, and justice, justice (as Moses speaketh), that is, pure justice without mud, should run down as a river, #De 16:20. That magistrate hath too impotent a spirit whose services, like the dial, must be set only by the sun of self and sinister respects. He should have, as nothing to lose, so nothing to get; he should be above all price or sale, and "neither respect persons, nor receive gifts," #2Ch 19:7.

Ver. 17. **And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts]** [*See Trapp on "Zec 7:10"*] Take notice here, that as conversing with evil imaginations and inward lusts proves one to be carnal, **#Eph 2:3**, so the law is spiritual, **#Ro 7:14**, and takes hold of the root of bitterness, **#De 29:18**, lie it never so low and close covered. There is something in it, that men are here forbidden to imagine evil (in their hearts). This particule, in their hearts, may seem superfluous; but it holds forth, that for the most secret sins that lie couched in the bottom of the heart, in the hidden man of the heart, and never show themselves to the world, men shall be accountable: see **#Heb 4:12 Ec 12:14 Jer 6:19 Re 2:23**. The very want of good thoughts is a sin against that first and great commandment, **#Mr 12:30**, and concupiscence, even before it come to consent, is a sin against the last commandment, **#Ro 7:7**. But evil thoughts allowed and wallowed in is a fiat breach of every commandment; so vain is their plea that say, Thought is free, and do thereupon lay the reins on the neck, and run riot in vain and vile imaginations. O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, if thou meanest to be saved, **#Jer 4:14**. How many, alas, have we that profess large hopes of heaven, whose hearts are no better than dens of darkness, dungeons of filthiness, cages of unclean birds, brothel houses, slaughter houses, pesthouses of malicious motions, devilish deceits, atheistical, proud, covetous, malicious, and fraudulent projects, which they are continually hammering, and wherewith their wretched hearts are day and night haunted and pestered! Contrariwise, a godly man is said to have right thoughts, **#Pr 12:5**, holy imaginations, **#Pr 12:20**, and that his desires are only good, **#Pr 11:23**; or, if worse crowd in (as they will), he rids them out again, and will not let them lodge there, **#Jer 4:14**, he boils out that filthy scum, **#Eze 24:6**, and purifieth himself of all pollutions of flesh and spirit, **#2Co 7:1**; he both hateth them, **#Ps 119:113**, and forsaketh them, **#Isa 55:7**.

**And love no false oath]** As not only he that maketh a lie is shut out of heaven, but he that loves it (though made by another), takes it up and divulgeth it, **#Re 22:15**. So not only he that taketh a false oath, but he that persuadeth another to it, or that abhorreth it not in whomsoever (for here is a meiosis, less is spoken, and more understood), is the object of God's just hatred.

**For all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord]** And as the next effect of hatred is revenge, he will not fail to punish such sinners against their own souls.

Ver. 18. **And the word]** {See Trapp on "Zec 8:1"}

Ver. 19. **The fast of the fourth month]** Wherein the city was taken, #2Ki 25:3.

**And the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh]** See #Zec 7:3,5.

**And the fast of the tenth]** Wherein Jerusalem was first beleaguered, #2Ki 25:1. This last mentioned was first taken up, upon a like occasion, as the Emperor of Constantinople (when the city was besieged by the Turk's army) being certainly advertised of the enemies' purpose for a general assault shortly to be given, first commended the defence of himself and the city to the Almighty God by general fasting and prayer; and afterwards appointed every captain and commander to some certain place of the wall for defence thereof.

**Shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness]** God promiseth to turn their fasting into feasting, all their sadness into gladness, all their sighing into singing, all their tears into triumphs; and so gives a short but sweet answer to their demand about fasting after a larger and most excellent preface tending to Christian practice, and making much more to their benefit and comfort than the final decision of the main question proposed by them to the prophet. Finally, for a perclose, he leaves this with them by way of injunction.

**Therefore love the truth and peace]** *q.d.* Since your fasts are now abrogated, and the ceremonious observation thereof (the bodily exercise, the external abstinence, wherein ye placed so much holiness) abolished. Therefore love the truth, the substance of religion, the duties of piety and charity. Let go these needless ceremonies, taken up by yourselves; and though of a good intent, yet of an evil event; for you have made too much ado about them, with neglect of the one thing necessary. And now learn and labour to receive the love of the truth, that ye may be saved, #2Th 2:10, to



speak the truth in love, #Eph 4:15, to do the truth, #1Jo 1:6 *ne dicta factis deficientibus ernbescant*, lest your lives give your lips the lie. So will God say, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he will be your Saviour," #Isa 63:8. So shall there be peace and truth in your days. Should we have peace upon any terms, peace without truth, it would be but like those short interims between the Egyptian plagues. Peace we may want and have truth; yea, peace we may have to buy truth; but we may not give truth to buy peace. He purchaseth peace at too dear a rate that pays his integrity to get it. "If it be possible, as much as in you lies, have peace with all men," #Ro 12:18. But if you cannot compass it but with loss of truth and shipwreck of conscience, let it go; and ere long the fruit of righteousness shall be peace, God will make thine enemies to be at peace with thee, #Isa 32:17. The historian tells us, that Numa's temple of old had this inscription, *πιστεως και ειρηνης ειπον*. The temple of faith and peace; but faith first, and then peace. Keep in with God, that he be not a terror to thee (as Jeremiah prays), and then seek peace with men and ensue it, #1Pe 3:10,11, as ever thou desirest long life, and good days, cheerful feasts, as here in the text (called good days, #Es 8:17), as ever thou hopest to have the calendar of thy life crowned with many festivals.

Ver. 20. **It shall yet come to pass that there shall come people]** The prophet cannot shut up with the former corollary; but further comforts the Jews with a promise of the conversion and conflux of the Gentiles to the Church; yea, Christ's people shall be willing in the day of his power, #Ps 110:3; they are like the isles that wait for his law, #Isa 42:4; they are set upon it to come for an offering to the Lord upon horses, in chariots, and in litters, #Isa 66:20, to make any shift rather than not come, in litters rather than not at all. The kingdom of heaven shall suffer violence, and the violent take it by force, #Mt 11:12.

Ver. 21. **And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another]** Not only come upon them when they light on them, and they have a fit opportunity, but they shall go on purpose, one city to another, to gain them to Christ. *Propriissimum opus viventis est generare sibi simile*, saith the philosopher, It is the most proper work of every living creature to propagate his own kind. The divine saith the same. Grace is communicative, charity is no churl. Birds, when they come to a full heap of grain, will chirp and call in for their fellows.

**Let us go speedily]** As so many heavenly cherubims, winged creatures, as the doves to their windows with weariness of flight, as counting him happiest that is first there. Many among us fail publicly and shamefully in want of care to come time enough to God's service. It will be long enough ere such men beg David's office of doorkeeper out of his hand; for the doorkeeper of God's house was to be first in and last out; but these clean contrary. Mr Fox, speaking of our godly ancestors at "the beginning of the Reformation here: To see," saith he, "their travels, earnest seekings, burning zeal, readings, watchings, sweet assemblies, resort of one neighbour to another for conference and mutual confirmation, may make us now, in these our days of free profession, to blush for shame."

**To pray before the Lord]** To see his face in Zion, to partake of his ordinances. What gadding is there by Popish pilgrims to Hull, Loretto, &c. *Sic videmus in Italia integros pagos et oppida turmatim Lauretum confluere, ac se invicem cohortari ad visitandam et venerandam*, saith a Lapid on this text. *i.e.* So we see whole towns and villages to flock together, and to call one upon another to visit the lady of Loretto, and to stuff her churches with vowed presents and memories; though all the thank they have for the same from God is, who required these things at your hands? Bring no more vain oblations.

**And to seek the Lord of hosts]** Chald. to seek doctrine from the Lord, to be informed of the right way and means to worship, him. Praying and hearing are instanced as principal parts of God's public worship.

**I will go also]** Have after (said Latimer to Ridley going to the stake) as fast as my old legs will carry me. Caesar never said to his soldiers, *Ite*, but *Eamus*, Go ye, but Go we. The Pharisees are justly taxed for this, that they could load others with duty, but themselves would do nothing, #Mt 23:4. Not so these good souls in the text; every of whom was as forward for himself as zealous for another. There are those who make these to be the words of the well affected

in answer to the former invitation. Let us go speedily, say some citizens: Agreed, say the other, I will go also.

Ver. 22. **Yea, many people and strong nations, &c.**] The most populous and potent people subdued by Christ (not by any army, nor by power, but by God's Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind, #2Ti 1:7), shall send a lamb to the Lord of the whole earth, submit to the sceptre and laws of Christ's kingdom, yield the obedience of faith, and be proselyted to the Church, #Isa 16:1.

**And to pray before the Lord]** Heb. To entreat his face, which they behold in his ordinances, those visible signs of his presence. Popish pilgrims, though they are used hardly, and lose much of their estates, yet satisfy themselves in this, I have that which I came for, viz. the sight of a dumb idol. What, then, should not men do or suffer to see God in his ordinances?

Ver. 23. **Ten men shall take hold out of all languages]** Ten, that is, many, "out of all languages," therefore not by compact, or fraudulent convention; for they were far asunder and of diverse languages (*nam quisquo aliis barbarus*, saith Calvin).

**Of the nations]** For God manifested in the flesh was preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, &c., #1Ti 3:16.

**Shall take hold, even take hold]** As children do on their mother's garments.

**Of him that is a Jew]** Who shall not shake them off, as bastard Gentiles, worthy (even the very best of them) to have their heads bruised with the serpent, as the modern Jews say of us. "Come unto me," saith Christ. "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved," saith Paul, #Php 4:1.

**We will go with you]** Be of your religion; not for fear, or any other ulterior motive, as those Persians, #Es 8:17. Josephus relates of the Jews, that they were very careful how they received proselytes in Solomon's time (because then their state flourished), but out of sound conviction, and good affection.

**For we have heard]** And by hearing tasted, **#1Pe 2:3**.

**That God is with you]** "Of a truth," as that plain Corinthian confesseth, **#1Co 14:25**.

## **Chapter 9**

Ver. 1. **The burden]** *i.e.* The bitter and burdensome prophecy. {*See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"*}

**In the land of Hadrach]** Better, on the land of Hadrach; because Messiah is *chad*, sharp, to the nations, but *rach*, gentle, to the Israelites; whereby is meant, not thy land, O Immanuel, or O Messiah (as Jerome, after Rabbi Benaiah), nor a country that is near or lying round about another country, as Junius and Danaeus expound the Syrian word; but either a province or a city of some note in Syria, not far from Damascus. Diodati maketh it to be an idol of the Syrians, which represented the sun; from which the country took its name, as **#Isa 8:8 Jer 48:46 Ho 10:5**.

**And Damacus]** The metropolis of Syria, built, say some, in the place where Cain slew Abel; and there hence called Damesech, or a bag of blood; a great scourge to Israel; chiefly famous for Saint Paul's conversion there, and his rapture into the third heaven, during that three days' darkness, **#Ac 9:9 cf. 2Co 12:2**.

**Shall be the rest thereof]** *sc.* Of that bitter burden which shall here abide, and be set upon its own base, as **#Zec 5:11**. See a like expression **#Joh 3:36**, the wrath of God abideth upon an unbeliever, *tanquam trabali clavo fixa*; he can neither avert nor avoid it.

**When the eyes of man, &c.]** That is, of other men, the Gentiles also, who as yet are carnal, and walk as men, shall be toward the Lord, lifted up in prayer and confident expectation of mercy. See **#Ps 122:2**.

Ver. 2. **And Hamath also shall border thereby]** *i.e.* Shall share in the same punishment with Damascus, and fare the worse for its neighbourhood.

**Though it be very wise]** And think to outwit the enemy, to be too hard for him that way, as Midian was for Israel, by his wiles rather than by his wars, #Nu 25:18. God taketh these wizards in their own craft, δρασσομενος, #1Co 3:19, πανουργια, as beasts in a toil, and makes very fools of them, notwithstanding their many fetches; specially when they boast of their wit, as Tyre did, #Eze 28:3,4, &c., and trust in it, #Pr 3:5. The Phoenicians and Tyrians were wont to boast that they first found out the use of letters, &c. Sure it is that by much trading by sea they were growing cunning and crafty merchants, to defraud others; and this they coloured with the name of wisdom. Wise they were in their generation, #Lu 16:8; but so is the fox, the serpent, and the devil; who when he was but young outwitted our first parents. And we are still sensible of his sleights, and not ignorant of his wiles, his methods, and his stratagems.

Ver. 3. **And Tyrus did build herself a stronghold]** Thor did build herself *Matsor*; an elegance not to be translated (such as are many in the Old Testament, but especially in Isaiah). It is as if it should be said, A stronghold (such as Tyre, which was naturally fortified) did build itself a stronghold, *sc.* by the industry and diligence of men; so that she might seem impregnable; yet all should not do. Alexander, after seven months' siege, took it, and destroyed it.

**And heaped up silver as dust]** *Pulverizavit argentum quasi pulverem.* She had money enough (by means of her long and great trade with all the world, #Eze 27), and so might hire what soldiers she pleased for her defence. The sinews of war were not wanting to her. She heaped up her hoards as it were to heaven; her magazines were full fraught. The word here rendered heaped up signifieth to comport and gather in money, as men do grain into barns and granaries, #Ex 8:10 Ps 39:7. But riches avail not in the day of wrath. And Tyre converted, leaves laying up and treasuring, and falls to feeding and clothing God's saints, #Isa 23:18.

Ver. 4. **Behold, the Lord will cast her out]** Or, impoverish her, as some render it; that is, for her money. God can soon let her blood in the *vena cava*, cavities of her veins, called *Marsupium*; and make her *nudam tanquam ex mari.* bare just as out of the sea, And then for her munitions,

**He will smite her power in the sea]** She was seated in an island, upon munitions of rocks; the sea was to her instead of a threefold wall and ditch. She was better fortified than Venice is; which yet hath flourished above nine hundred years, and was never in the enemy's hands; whence she hath for her motto, *Intacta manet*. It remains intact. But Tyre was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, as his wages; and afterwards by Alexander, who never held anything impossible that he undertook, however unlikely it were to be effected. He found means to fill up the sea with stones, trees, and rubbish, where it divided Tyre from the continent; and made himself master of it.

**And she shall be devoured with fire]** Though seated in the heart of the sea, #Eze 28:2, and had motted up herself against God's fire. Nothing shall quench the fire that he kindleth.

Ver. 5. **Ashkelon shall see it and fear]** For, *iam proximus ardet Ucalegon*, her next neighbour's house was now on fire; and she might well fear she should be dashed at least with the tail of that overflowing storm that had swept away Tyre. The sword was now in commission; it was riding circuit, #Eze 14:17, and God had given it a special charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore; there he had appointed it, #Jer 47:6,7. Now Ashkelon, Gaza, and Ekron were situated all along the sea coast, southward of Tyre and Sidon. All these were bitter enemies to the Church; and were therefore destroyed by Alexander the Great, that man of God's hand.

**Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful]** Like a travailing woman, as #Isa 26:17,18, where the same word is used; her heart shall ache and quake within her; she shall have sore throes and throbs.

**And Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed]** Her hope hath abused her, her confidence is cut off, her countenance is covered with confusion. She looked that Tyre should have been a bulwark to her: or at least a refuge, if need were, but now she seeth her expectation shamed: "The expectation of the wicked shall perish." They look out of the window with Sisera's mother, and say, "Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey," &c.? But what saith the Church? "So let thine enemies perish, O Lord," #Jud 5:30,31.

**And the king shall perish from Gaza]** *Rex, id est, Regulus;* The King, it is Regulus. for there were five princes of the Philistines; each great city having a prince over it. The Prince of Gaza that is here designed to destruction may very well be that Betis, whom Darius, the last King of Persia, had set over Gaza. He having kept out Alexander for two months, was at length taken up by him together with the city, and put to a cruel death, as Curtius testifieth.

**And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited]** It was so wasted by war and depopulated that it became cottages for shepherds and folds for sheep. See #Zep 2:4,6. Howbeit after this it was reinhabited; for that bloody Herod that slew the infants was born there, being surnamed Ascalonita; and at this day it is a strong garrison of the Saracens. Saladin pulled down the walls of it; but our Richard I set them up again, as Adrichomius telleth us out of Gul. Tyrius.

Ver. 6. **But a bastard shall dwell at Ashdod]** Perhaps he meaneth Alexander; who was a bastard, by his mother Olympia's confession. The Greek here hath *αλλογενης*, a stranger, an alien, or one of another generation, as the Greeks under Alexander, and afterwards the Jews under the Maccabees. Whence the Chaldee turns this text thus; The house of Israel shall dwell in Ashdod, and shall be there as strangers which have no father. In the Acts we find that the Jews were scattered up and down Palestine, and some found at Azotus, or Ashdod, #Ac 8:40.

**And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines]** That is, their wealth, strength, and whatsoever else they gloried in, and grew insolent, and injurious to the Church.

Ver. 7. **And I will take away his blood out of his mouth]** That is, his bloody prey (for, saith Aben Ezra, these Philistines did, according to the savage custom of those times, eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the slain enemies), and I will keep them from devouring my people any more.

**And his abomination]** *Hoc est, praedas abominabiles,* saith Calvin, his abominable spoils, his bloody robberies and pillages.

**And he that remaineth]** The small remnant of Jews not yet altogether devoured by these cruel cannibals, the Babylonians, Philistines, and other enemies.

**Even he shall be for our God]** Though they be but a he, a small poor company of them; yet God will both own them and honour them.

**And he shall be as a governor in Judah]** They shall all be *Magnificos*, little princes, of high rank and dignity; even as governors in Judah; God will honour them in the hearts of all men. See **#Zec 12:8**.

**And Ekron as a Jebusite]** *i.e.* Either slain or a slave and tributary. I know this text is otherwise expounded by Junius and others; but I now like this interpretation, as most proper.

Ver. 8. **And I will encamp about mine house]** Though it be otherwise but ill fenced and fortified; yet I will see it safeguarded and secured from the inroads and incursions of enemies, who are ranging up and down, and not only robbing, but ravishing, **#Ps 10:9**. For what was Alexander but an arch-pirate, a strong thief, as the pirate whom he had taken told him to his teeth? And whether here be intimated by these words,

**because of him that passeth by, and him that returneth]** something of Alexander's voyages, who passed by Judaea into Egypt, and to Ammon's oracle with his army, and thence returned to Persia by the same way, not hurting the Jews, or something about the many expeditions of the Seleucidae and Lagedae to and fro from Egypt to Syria, and back again, among which hurly burly the Jews' state stood fast, though sometime a little shaken; I dare not say (saith a learned interpreter), it may be both those and all other the like dangers are here generally comprised.

**And no oppressor shall pass through them any more]** Chald. *No sultan*; not the Turkish tyrant, Lord of Greece, as **#Zec 9:13**, say those that take the text of the Jews' glorious state at last. Calvin thinks that by this clause be only expounds what he had figuratively said before. Danaeus takes it of violence and oppression among



themselves, or of wringing and vexing by their own rulers; they shall be free from violence both abroad and at home.

**For now have I seen with mine eyes]** *i.e.* I have taken good notice of it, I have seen, I have seen, as **#Ex 3:7**, and mine eye hath affected mine heart. I have well observed that the enemy is grown unsufferably insolent, and am therefore come to rescue and relieve my people. The Chaldee hath it thus, I have now revealed my power to do them good; Aben Ezra makes these to be the prophet's words of himself, *q.d.* I have seen all this in a manifest vision. But this is *frigidum imo insulsum*, saith Calvin, an odd conceit; unless we refer it (with Montanus) to the following words, and make this the sense (which yet I like not so well), Behold, I see in the spirit, with the eyes of my mind, the Lord Christ coming and entering, with state, the city and temple.

Ver. 9. **Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion]** Draw all thy waters with joy out of this well spring of salvation. Lo, here is the sum of all the good news in the world; and that which should make the saints everlastingly merry, even to shouting and singing in the height of Zion, that their king cometh, **#Jer 31:12**. This should swallow up all discontents, and make them sing, "Hosanna in the highest; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

**Behold, thy King cometh]** Not Zerubbabel, or Judas Maccabeus, as some Jews interpret it; nor yet Alexander the Great (as some others); but a greater than he, even Messiah the prince, as Christ is styled, **#Da 9:25**, who shall cut off the chariot, &c., as it followeth in the next verse, yea, all the four chariots or monarchies, as some expound **#Zec 6**: how much more Tyre, Gaza, Ekron, Damascus, &c., of which he spake before in this chapter.

**Unto thee]** *i.e.* Merely for thy behoof and benefit, and not for his own. Other kings are much for their own profit, pleasures, pomp, &c.; Christ emptied himself of all his excellencies that we might be filled with his fulness.

**He is just and having salvation]** That he may justify thee by his righteousness, and save thee by his merit and Spirit. The Vulgate rendereth it, Just and a Saviour; so doth the Chaldee. Salvation

properly denotes the negative part of man's happiness, freedom from all evils and enemies; but it is usually taken for the positive part also, viz. fruition of all good; because it is easier to tell from what than unto what we are saved by Jehovah our righteousness.

**Lowly]** Or poor, afflicted, abject. See them set together, **#Zep 3:12** **Php 4:12**. I have learned to want and to be abased. Poverty rendereth a man contemptible and ridiculous. *Pauper ubique iacet*, men go over the hedge where it is lowest; the poor are trampled upon, and despised, as **#Lu 16:30**. This thy son, he scorned to call him brother, because he was poor. Now Christ became poor to make us rich, **#2Co 8:9**; a worm and no man ( *nullificamen populi*, as Tertullian phraseth it), that we might be advanced to glory and honour and immortality, **#Ro 2:7**. Neither was he more low and mean in his estate than lowly and meek in mind; as far from pride and stateliness as his state was from pomp and magnificence.

**Riding upon an ass]** A poor silly beast, used by the meaner sort of people.

**Yea, upon a colt the foal of an ass]** Heb. Asses, because the colt whereon Christ rode ran after two asses coupled together in one yoke, whereof one was his dam, **#Mt 21:5**. {*See Trapp on "Mt 21; 5"*} These asses used to the yoke Hesiod calleth *ταλαιπωρους*, wretched, or enduring great toil and labour. That Christ should ride upon the foal of such a hard labouring ass, a young wild colt, not yet ready tamed and trained to the saddle, as it shows his humility, so also his power over the creature ( *Clarescente gloria inter humilem simplicitatem*), and his peaceableness too, as Kimchi thinks from that in the next verse, that the Israelites under Christ's government should have no need of horses and chariots. All this description of Christ's person and kingdom we know was punctually fulfilled in our Saviour, according to **#Mt 21:4-11** **Mr 11:7-10** **Lu 19:35-38** **Joh 12:12-16**, four sufficient witnesses. The old Rabbis, and with them R. Solomon (though a sworn enemy to Christians), take the text of the promised Messiah's solemn entrance into Jerusalem: of Jesus, the crucified son of Mary, they will not yield, because they stumble at his poverty and expect pomp. But if they had consulted their own prophets, they would have found that Messiah was foretold as despicable, **#Isa**

**53:2**; poor, as here; crucified, **#Da 9:26 Nu 22:9**; among malefactors, **#Isa 53:9**; nailed, **#Ps 22:16**; pierced, **#Zec 12:10**; mocked, **#Ps 69:7**. And that their very rejection of him for his meanness and meekness proveth him to be Christ, **#Ps 118:22 Ac 4:11**. It is reported of Agesilaus, that, coming to help the King of Egypt in his distress, he was despised by the Egyptians because of the plainness of his person and the homeliness of his attire, for they thought that they should see the King of Sparta such a one as the King of Persia was bravely clothed and pompously attended. Likewise the Jews expect a Christ like to one of the mighty monarchs of the earth; and they are strongly possessed with the fond conceit of an earthly kingdom. Hence, when they saw Mahomet arising in such power, they were straight ready to cry him up for their Messiah. "The rich hath many friends," saith Solomon but "the poor is hated," or slighted, "even of his own neighbour," **#Pr 14:20**. Christ came to his own; but his own received him not. When it was sometime disputed among the Romans in the council, using to deify great men, whether Christ, having done many wonderful works, should be received into the number of the gods? the historian saith, that they would not therefore receive him, because he preached poverty and made choice of poor men to follow him, whom the world careth not for.

Ver. 10. **And I will cut off the chariot, &c.**] This is the same in effect with that of **#Isa 9:7** "Of the increase of Christ's government and peace there shall be no end"; and **#Isa 2:4** "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Christ was born in the reign of Augustus Caesar, then when having vanquished Lepidus, Antony, and the rest of his enemies both at home and abroad, he set open the gates of Janus in token of a universal peace, and reigned as lord and monarch of the Roman world Polydor Virgil out of Orosius tells us that the self-same day wherein Christ was born Augustus Caesar made proclamation that no man should thenceforth give him the title of Lord, *manifesto praesagio maioris dominatus qui tum in terris ortus est*, saith he, not without a manifest presage of a greater lord than himself then born into the world; greater, 1. Both for the peaceableness of his government, as here; no use of weapons or warlike engines. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but

spiritual," #2Co 10:4. Christ shall bring both to Jews and Gentiles the gospel of peace and the peace of the gospel:

**He shall speak peace unto the heathen]** Peace of country and peace of conscience too: and, 2. For the extent of his government it should be as large as the world, a Catholic kingdom.

**His dominion shall be from sea to sea]** From the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, or the Sea of Palestine; for these two seas were the bounds of the land of Canaan, #Nu 34:6,12, for the Jews scarcely knew any other sea but these two. And the prophet here alludeth to the times of Solomon's reign, as appears by #Ps 72:8 "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"; that is, from Euphrates to the utmost bounds of the Holy Land, which by a common custom of speech are put for the utmost quarters of the world.

Ver. 11. **As for thee also]** O daughter of Sion, O my Church; not, O Christ, the King of the Church, as the Greek and Latin Fathers, and after them the Popish commentators, will needs have it, the better to establish their chimera <sup>{a}</sup> of *Limbus Patrum*, Christ here, by an *aposiopesis* (an ordinary figure), or keeping back something unspoken through earnestness of affection, bespeaks his people in this sort; *Etiam tu*, As for thee also, I will surely impart unto thee the benefits of that of my kingdom, as I have already begun to do in delivering you out of that waterless pit, that dirty dungeon of the Babylonish thralldom.

**By the blood of thy covenant]** By the blood of Christ figured, by the blood that was sprinkled upon the people, #Ex 24:8 Ps 74:20 Heb 13:20; and by virtue of the government confirmed thereby.

**I have sent forth thy prisoners]** I have enlarged thy captives.

**Out of the pit wherein is no water]** But mud only, as in Joseph's pit and Jeremiah's dungeon, #Ge 37:24 Jer 38:6. The saints have temporal deliverances also by virtue of the covenant; and if any of Christ's subjects fall into desperate distresses and deadly danger, yet they are prisoners of hope, and may look for deliverance by the blood of the covenant.

{a} A fabled fire-breathing monster of Greek mythology, with a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail (or according to others with the heads of a lion, a goat, and a serpent), killed by Bellerophon. (ED)

Ver. 12. **Turn ye to the strong hold]** *i.e.* To Christ, the Rock of Ages, **#Isa 26:4**; the hope of Israel, **#Jer 17:13**; the expectation of all the ends of the earth, **#Lu 2:25,38**. Or to the promise, that strong tower, whereunto the righteous run and are safe; that are *Christi munitissima*, the strongest defence of Christ, as Cyril here saith, strong hold of Christ. "Thou art my shield," saith David, "I trust in thy word," **#Ps 119:114**. And again, "Remember thy word to thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to trust," **#Ps 119:49**. When young Joash was sought for to the shambles by his murderous grandmother, Athaliah, he was hidden in the house of the Lord for six years. But whence was this safety? Even from the faithful promise of God, **#2Ch 23:3** "Behold, the king's son must reign, as the Lord had said of the sons of David," that he should never want a man to reign after him. Hence, **#Ps 91:4**, his faithfulness and his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Under this shield, and within this strong hold of the promises God had made them in the foregoing verses, these prisoners of hope, these heirs of the promises, were to shroud and secure themselves amidst those dangers and distresses as encompassed them on every side. And that they might know that "the needy should not always be forgotten, the expectation of the poor should not perish for ever," **#Ps 9:18**, here is precious promise of present comfort.

**Even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee]** Though you be now at never so great an under, yet I do make an open promise unto you, *verbis non solum disertis sed et exertis*, I do assure you, in the word of truth, that I will render unto thee, thou poor soul, that liest panting under the present pressure, double, that is, life and liberty, saith Theodoret; grace and glory, saith Lyra. Or double to what thou hopest; I will be better to thee than thy hopes, saith Jerome; or double, that is, multiplied mercy; but especially Christ, who is called "the gift of God," by an excellence, **#Joh 4:10** "the benefit," **#1Ti 6:2**, that which shall abundantly countervail all crosses and miseries, **#Mr 10:30**. Job had all double to him. Valentinian had the empire, Queen Elizabeth the crown. God will be to his Hannahs better than ten children.

Ver. 13. **When I have bent Judah for me]** God himself did the work, though by the sons of Zion, as his instruments whom he used, and prospered against the sons of Greece, that is, the successors of Alexander the Great, who led them out of Greece against the power of Persia, and who, seizing upon Egypt and Syria, crushed and ground the poor Jews between them, as between two millstones. This prophecy was fulfilled in the Maccabees; but may have an eye to the apostles, who were some of them of Judah, some of Ephraim; that is, of the ten tribes, as of Zebulun, Naphthali. These Christ used as bows and arrows in the hand of a mighty man, whereby the people fell under him, **#Ps 45:5**; the sons of Greece especially, where so many famous churches were planted, as appears by the Acts and the Revelation. See **#Re 6:2**. {See Trapp on "Re 6:2"}

**And make thee as the sword of a mighty man]** Given thee both arms and an arm to wield them. For it is God that strengtheneth and weakeneth the arms of either party in battle, **#Eze 30:24**. It is he also that rendereth the weapons vain or prosperous, **#Isa 54:17 Jer 50:9**. This Judas Maccabeus well understood, and therefore had his name from the capital letters of this motto written in his ensign, *Mi camoca belohim Iehovah*, Who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods? St Paul also, that conquered so many countries, and brought in the spoils of so many souls to God (whence the change of his name from Saul to Paul, as some think, from Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, whom he converted to the faith, **#Ac 13:9**). "The weapons of our warfare," saith he, "are mighty through God to the casting down of strong holds." "Not I, but the grace of God that is with me," **#2Co 10:4 1Co 15:10**. And, "Ye men of Israel, why look ye so earnestly upon us," saith Peter, "as if by our own power or holiness," &c., **#Ac 3:12**.

Ver. 14. **And the Lord shall be seen over them]** Shall be conspicuous among them; he shall appear for them in the high places of the field, he shall make bare his arm, and bathe his sword in blood. How many do you reckon me at? said Antigonus to his soldier's, when they feared the multitudes of their enemies. May not God say so much more to his? Hath ever any waxed fierce against him and prospered? If he but arise only, his enemies shall be scattered, and those that hate him shall flee before him, **#Ps 68:1**.

**His arrow shall go forth with the lightning]** Here the former matter is illustrated by many lofty tropes and allusions either to those ancient deliverances at the Red Sea, and against the Canaanites and Philistines, by thunders, lightning, and tempest, or else, as Calvin rather thinks, to the terrible delivery of the Law, with thunderings and lightnings, and sound of trumpets, to the great amazement of the people, insomuch as Moses himself said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." He confers #**Hab 3:3-5**, and further allegeth that Teman, here rendered the South, was the same with Sinai, and lies south from Judaea. Lightning, thunder, and whirlwinds are a part of God's armies, which he can draw forth at his pleasure against his enemies. Such things as these happened often times in the wars of the Maccabees. And how the Lord mightily assisted his apostles, whose arrows went forth as the lightning, swiftly, suddenly, irresistibly, and whose thunder gave a loud alarm to all nations, I need not relate, *Paulum quotiescunque lego, non verba mihi audire videor sod tonitrua.*

Ver. 15. **The Lord of hosts shall defend them]** Heb. Shall hold his buckler over them, which none can strike through.

**And they shall devour]** *sc.* Their enemies, that till then did eat up God's people as they eat bread, #**Ps 14:5**.

**And subdue with sling stones]** With weak means, as David did Goliath.

**And they shall drink and make a noise]** *Tumultuabuntur quasi temulenti.* It is a catechresis signifying the very great destruction of their enemies; so that they might be even drunk with their blood if they had any mind to it; the tongues of their dogs should be dipped therein, as #**Ps 68:23,24**.

**And they shall be filled like bowls, &c.]** That held the blood of the sacrifices.

**And as the corners of the altar]** Which were all besprinkled with the blood of the sacrifices. A Lapidie applies all this to those

heavenly conquerors, and more, that is, triumphers, the apostles and martyrs.

Ver. 16. **And the Lord their God shall save them]** Not defend them only, as Lord of hosts, **#Zec 9:15**, but as a further favour, save them as their God in covenant with them.

**As the flock of his people]** Rescuing them, as David did his lamb from the lion and bear, and tending them continually.

**As the stones of a crown]** Costly and precious, or monumental stones, with crowns on the top, and set up for trophies.

Ver. 17. **For how great is his goodness]** He shuts up all with this sweet epiphonema or exclamation, admiring the singular goodness of God to his people in all the former particulars; and yet promising them abundance of outward necessities, even to an honest affluence; they should have store of corn and wine; so much as should make them succulent and vigorous, full of sap and good humours, provided, that first they content not themselves with the natural use of the creature, but taste how good the Lord is, and next, that they put this promise into suit by their prayers, as **#Zec 10:1**.

## **Chapter 10**

Ver. 1. **Ask you of the Lord rain]** Ask it and have it; open your mouths wide, and he will fill them. "Seek ye the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you," **#Ho 10:12**. Surely as the sun draws up vapours from the earth and sea, not to retain them, but to return them; and as thin vapours come down again in thick showers of rain; so God calls for our prayers, for our profit; and does for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," **#Eph 3:20**. Ask we must, **#Eze 36:37**. Prayer is an indispensable duty. Our Saviour taught his disciples to pray. He himself was to ask of his Father, and then he should have the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, **#Ps 2:8**. He could have had presently twelve legions of angels to rescue him; but then he was to send to heaven for them by prayer, **#Mt 26:53** "I came for thy words," that is, for thy prayers' sake, saith the angel to Daniel. As well as God loved him, he looked to hear from him, **#Da 10:11,12** for he will grace his own ordinances, and make his people know both their distance and dependence.



**Rain in the time of the latter rain]** Rain is the flux of a moist cloud; which, being dissolved by little and little by the heat of the sun, lets down rain by drops out of the middle region of the air. This, if it come right in due time and measure, it maketh much for the fattening of the earth, **#Ps 65:11**, allaying the heat, nourishing the herb and tree, **#Isa 44:14**, refreshing all creatures, grass, fruits, **#Le 26:4 Jas 5:18 Isa 30:23**. So, if otherwise, it proves a great punishment, **#Joe 1:10,11,17,19**. Great expectation there was in Judaea and those Eastern parts of the former and the latter rain. That fell in the seedtime about autumn; this in the spring time, causing the grain to ear, and kernel before harvest. Both were to be sought of God alone. For are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heaven give showers? No, no; these come by a devine decree, **#Job 28:26**. God prepares rain, **#Ps 147:8**, he dispenseth it in number weight, and measure, **#Job 28:25**, not a drop falls in vain, or in a wrong place: he also withholds it when and where he thinks good, **#Am 4:7**. The Egyptians used, in a profane mockery, to tell other nations that if God should forget to rain they might all chance to starve for it. The rain they thought was of God, but not their river; which therefore God threateneth to dry up, **#Eze 29:3,9 Isa 19:5,6**, as also he did, as both Seneca and Ovid testify, in the reign of Cleopatra. The creatures at best are but broken cisterns, **#Jer 2:13**. Not fountains, but cisterns only; and those broken too; there is no trusting to them; they were never true to those that trusted them.

**So the Lord shall make bright clouds]** *Nubes cursitantes*, thin clouds, that fly swiftly in the air, most commonly before and after very rainy weather. R. Solomon interprets the word here used not lightnings, which yet are signs and forerunners of rain, **#Ps 135:7 Jer 10:13**, but clouds bringing rain. Clouds are nothing else but vapours thickened in the middle region of the air, by the cold environing and driving them together; that they may be as so many heavenly bottles holding water, to be seasonably distilled. How they are upheld, and why they fall here, and now, and by drops, not by spouts (since they are vessels as thin as the liquor contained in them) we know not, and wonder.

**And give them showers of rain]** Heb. Rain, rain, that is, plentiful rain upon his inheritance: the clouds shall return after the rain, **#Ec 12:2**, and as one shower is unburdened another shall be brewed. God scorns to say to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain," **#Isa 45:19**, or that any of his suitors should go sad away for want of an answer. David asked him for life; and God gave him more, even length of days for ever and ever, **#Ps 21:4**. Many came to Christ for cure of their bodies, he cured them on both sides; and was better to them than their prayers. Gehazi asked Naaman for a talent of silver. Nay, take two, said he; and he pressed it upon him. So saith God to his, Ask and spare not, that your joy may be full. Ye are not straitened in me, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Ye have not because ye ask not; and he is worthy to want it that may have it for asking only.

**To every one grass]** Grass for the cattle, and corn for the food of man, as the Chaldee expounds it.

Ver. 2. **For the idols have spoken vanity]** *q.d.* Therefore ask good things at God's hands, as rain, food, and all necessary provision; because idols and soothsayers cannot help you to these things. If they promise you (as they will), believe them not; for they lie as fast as once Rabshakeh did for his master, when he promised the people a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, **#Isa 36:17**. And they will finally serve you as Absalom's mule served her master; whom she left at his greatest need, to hang between heaven and earth, as rejected of both. Lo such are all creature comforts, golden delusions, lying vanities, apples of Sodom, *nec vera, nec vestra*, neither true nor yours, the fashion of this world, saith Paul, **#1Co 7:31**; the fantasies of men's brain, saith Luke, **#Ac 25:23**, the semblances and empty shows of good, without any reality or solid consistency, saith Solomon often. They are, saith our prophet here, a wicked deceit and fraudulence. An arrant lie, a false dream, a vain or empty comfort, that utterly deceiveth a man's confidence, and maketh him, in the fulness of his conceited sufficiency, to be in straits. These here for instance; viz. the Jews that had been carried captives as a flock without a guide, sheep without a shepherd, and yet had not (till after some while at least) renounced their idols, **#Jer 44:22 Eze 8:10**

**Therefore they went their way as a flock]** Driven by the butcher to the slaughter house. Idolatry is a land desolating sin; as besides these Jews (the more ingenuous of them at this day confess that in all their punishments there is still an ounce of the golden calf made by them in the wilderness) the Greek Church was undone by it. The worshipping of images they defended with tooth and nail (as they say), and established it in the second Council of Nice; not long before the Turk took Nice, and made it the seat of his empire, in opposition to Constantinople, which at length he took also; and brought in Mahometanism, that foul impiety, which quickly overspread the whole East and South, like as Popish idolatry did the West and North. But this iniquity will be their ruin. Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen (επεσεν, επεσεν). She hath fallen culpably, she shall therefore fall penally. And why? She is become the habitation of devils, that is, of idols. See **#Re 9:20 1Co 10:20**.

Ver. 3. **Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds]** *Pastores Impostores*; the greedy priests and false prophets, main causes of the captivity; because through their default there was no knowledge nor fear of God in the land, **#Isa 5:13 Ho 4:6,7 Jer 23:1 Eze 34:1**.

**And I punished the goats]** The grandees and governors, temporal and ecclesiastical, see **#Eze 34:17**. They should have been as the he goats before the flock, **#Jer 50:8**, worthy guides to God. But they were goats in another sense, unruly, and nasty, and lascivious (as those two filthy fellows, for instance, whom for their adultery the King of Babylon roasted in the fire, **#Jer 29:22**), and such as begat kids of their own kind, men of their own make, and went before them in wickedness, as the goats lead the flocks.

**For the Lord of hosts]** Better to read it, but the Lord of hosts, &c. And this is spoken for the comfort of those that called upon God, and abhorred idols, and idol shepherds, that were in special covenant with him, and therefore owned by him, as his flock, or peculiar charge. Now to such he promiseth to feed them as his sheep, and to furnish them as his horse for service, his goodly war horse, mainly respected by his master, as Bucephalus was by Alexander. This may in part be understood of the Maccabees' victories; but principally of the apostles, those white horses, upon which they rode through the world, conquering and to conquer, **#Re 6:2**. St Paul is fitly

compared to that war horse in #Job 39:20, whose neck is clothed with thunder, and the glory of his nostrils is terrible. He mocketh at fear, and turneth not back from the sword. He goeth on to meet the armed man, and swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage.

Ver. 4. **Out of him came forth the corner]** *Angulus*, not *Angelus*, as some Vulgate Latin translations have it: and a Lapidist justly finds fault with it. A like fault Surius and Caranza (his fellow popelings) are content to wink at, nay, to defend in the Laodicean Council, because it makes for their angel worship. For whereas the Council truly saith, ου δει χριστιανους αγγελουσ ονομαζειν, Christians must not pray to angels. They make the words to be *Non oportet Christianos ad angulos congregationes facere*. Christians ought not to hold their meetings in corners; and they make the title say the same thing. But is this fair dealing thus to falsify antiquity for their own ends, and to maintain their own errors? As for the text,

**Out of him came forth, &c.]** That is, Out of Judah shall be had all things necessary, both at home (and here the prophet proceeds from the foundation to the nails, or fastening of the house together) and abroad; both for the mastering of the enemy by the battle bow, &c., and the making of him tributary: for

**Out of him shall come every exactor]** *sc.* Of homage and tribute, as the fruit of their victory. Danaeus senseth it thus. Out of Judah shall go every oppressor which did vex his people before, God driving him forth.

Ver. 5. **And they shall be as mighty men]** Or, as giants, as Gabriels, they shall be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, they shall do worthily in Ephrath, and be famous in Bethlehem, #Ru 4:11 "their bow shall abide in strength, and the arms of their hands be made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel," #Ge 49:24. If it could be said of Mithridates, a mere atheist, that he never wanted any courage nor counsel; how much more of God's warriors, such as Judas Maccabeus, especially Messiah, the Prince, who treads down his enemies as the mire of the streets, setting his feet in their necks and making them to be found liars unto him, that is, to yield him at least a forced and feigned subjection.

**And they shall fight because the Lord is with them]** This is enough to make them fight up to the knees in blood, that they have God to stand by them; not only as a spectator, or Agonotheta (though that is somewhat; dogs and other baser creatures will fight lustily when their masters are by, and do set them on), but as a Captain of the Lord's hosts, as Christ is called, and a coadjutor, a champion, man of war, **#Ex 15:3**. Yea, he alone is whole army of men, he is Van and Rear both **#Isa 52:12**. The shields of the earth belong to him, the militia of the world is his, **#Ps 47:9**, he hath *magnleh cheloth* and *matteh cheloth* as the Rabbis well observe, armies both above and beneath, as his horse and foot to fight for his people.

**And the riders on horses shall be confounded]** As they were in the conquest of Canaan, where the enemies had horses and chariots, when the Israelites had neither, as Origen observeth and as they were all in David's wars, and the rest of the victorious kings of Israel, who, according to the law, **#De 17:16**, made no use of horses (but said, A horse is but a vain thing for battle, &c. God takes no delight in the strength of a horse), and ever fought on foot with singular success. So did the Maccabees, Zisca, and after him the Bohemians, the English in France at the battle of Spurs (so the battle of Terwin was called in Henry VIII's time, from the French fleeing away to save their lives).

Ver. 6. **And I will strengthen the house of Judah]** *Robustos, ac quasi Gabrieles efficiam* (a Lapide). See **#Zec 12:8 Isa 10:34 Zec 10:5**. The saints shall be strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, **#Col 1:11**, at the resurrection especially when Christ shall change their vile bodies, and make them like unto his glorious body, in strength, agility, beauty. The bodies of the saints, saith Luther, shall have that power as to toss the greatest mountains in the world like a ball. Anselm saith, such as they shall be able to shake the whole earth at their pleasure Our Saviour saith that they shall be as the angels of God, **#Lu 20:36**, more like spirits, than bodies, while they are here. In quiet and confidence is their strength, **#Isa 30:15**; and again in the same chapter, **#Zec 10:7**, their strength is to sit still. They expected much strength from Egypt; but the prophet tells them that by sitting still and waiting for the salvation of God by faith they shall have an Egypt; and better, out of weakness they should be made strong, wax valiant in fight, turn to flight the armies

of the aliens, #**Heb 11:34**, as the Maccabees did, and as Michael and his angels, #**Re 12:7-9**, the noble army of the apostles, who were more than conquerors; and martyrs, who tired their tormentors and laughed at their cruelty the valour of the patients, the savageness of the persecutors strove together; till both exceeding nature and belief, bred wonder and astonishment in beholders and readers. These were those lion-like men of the tribe of Judah that took the kingdom by violence. Judah, which signifieth the confessor, had the kingdom, as Levi had the priesthood, both forfeited by Reuben, who was weak as water, #**Ge 49:4**.

**And I will save the house of Joseph]** That is, Ephraim, put for the ten tribes, whom God here promiseth to save, not to bring back, {*See Geneva on "Zec 10:9"*} But others there are that gather from these words and those that follow that God will not only preserve them, but reduce and re-settle them in their own country, yea, and multiply them so abundantly, as that their country shall not be able to hold them, #**Zec 10:10**. Whence cometh Asshur's and Egypt's subjection to Christ; that is, all the tract of the east and of the south, #**Zec 10:11**, and their perpetual establishment in the faith.

**And I will bring them again to place them]** I will place them in their houses, as #**Ho 11:11**. The Sept. render it, I will cause them to dwell. The Chaldee, I will gather together their captivity. Some special mercy is assured them by this special word of a mixed conjugation, *compos*, בּוֹשׁ et מִיחֻכְשׁוּהָ.

**For I have mercy upon them]** Here is a double cause alleged, of these so great and gracious promises; and both excluding works. First, God's mere mercy. Secondly, his election of grace, for "I am the Lord their God." This latter is the cause of the former; for God chose his people for his love, and then loveth them for his choice. The effects of which love are here set down: 1. That he heareth their prayers, "I will hear them." 2. That he re-accepteth and restoreth them in Christ, as if they had never offended against him, "They shall be as though I had not cast them off." That was a cutting speech, and far worse than their captivity, #**Jer 16:13**, when God not only threateneth to cast them out of their country into a strange land, but that there "he would show them no favour." Here he promiseth

to pity them; and then they must needs think deliverance was at next door by.

**And they shall be as though I had not cast them off]** And this the sooner and the rather because they called them outcasts, saying, "This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after," #Jer 30:17. The Jewish nation, saith Cicero, show how God regards them that have been so often overcome, viz. by Nebuchadnezzar, Pompey, &c. God therefore promiseth to provide for his own great name, by being fully reconciled to his poor people, whom the world looked upon as objects.

**For I am the Lord their God]** And if I should not see to their safety, it would much reflect upon me. This David well knew; and therefore prays thus, "I am thine, Lord, save me," #Ps 119:94.

**And will hear them, or, I will speak with them]** Speak to their hearts. It is no more, saith one, than if a man were in a fair dining room with much good company, and there is some special friend whom he loveth dearly that calleth him aside to speak in private of business that nearly concerneth him; and though he go into a worse room, yet he is well enough pleased. So if God, in loss of friends, houses, country, comforts whatsoever, will speak with us, will answer us, the loss will be easily made up. Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, being a long time prisoner under Charles V, was demanded what upheld him all that time? He answered, that he had felt the favour of God, and the Divine consolations of the martyrs. There are Divine comforts that are felt only under the cross. I will bring her into the wilderness, and there speak to her heart, #Ho 2:14. Israel was never so royally provided for with manna, quails, and other cares as when they were in the wilderness. The cross is anointed with comfort, which makes it not only light, but sweet; not only not troublesome and importable, but desirable and delightful, saith Bernard. Thy presence, O Lord, made the very gridiron sweet to Laurence, saith another. How easily can God make up our losses and breaches?

Ver. 7. **And they of Ephraim shall be as a mighty man]** The same again, and in the same words, for more assurance; because the return of the ten tribes might seem a thing more incredible, *Erant enim*

*quasi putridum cadaver*; saith Calvin here: they were as rotten carcasses, and they had *obiter* in passing only heard of these promises; as if some grain of seed should be dropped by the highwayside: for they were now as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

**And their heart shall rejoice as through wine]** Which naturally exhilarateth, **#Ps 104:15**, and is called by Plato one of the mitigators. (μαλακτικά) of human misery. See **#Pr 31:6**. {See Trapp on "Pr 31:6"} Some nations use to drink wine freely before they enter the battle, to make them undaunted. Some think here may be an allusion to such a custom. I should rather understand it of that generous wine of the Spirit, **#Eph 5:18**.

**Yea, their children shall see it]** Therefore they were not to antedate the promises, but to wait the accomplishment which should certainly be, if not to them, yet to theirs after them, even a full restoration in due season.

Ver. 8. **I will hiss for them and gather them]** As a shepherd hisseth or whistleth for his flock. See **#Jud 5:16**, where it should not be translated the bleatings of the flocks, but the hissings or whistlings of the shepherds to their flocks, when they would get them together. God, who hath all creatures at his beck and call, can easily bring back his banished, gather together his dispersed with a turn of a hand, **#Zec 13:7**, with a blast of his mouth, as here; as if any offer to oppose him herein, he can blow them to destruction, **#Job 4:9**. He can frown them to death, **#Ps 80:16**. He can crush them between his fingers, as men do a moth, **#Ps 39:11**, and crumble them to crattle, **#Ps 146:4** "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling," **#Ps 49:14**.

**For I have redeemed them]** I have in part, and that is a pledge of the whole; my hands also shall finish it, as **#Zec 4:9**. God doth not his work to the halves, neither must we; but if he shall be All in All unto us, we must be altogether his, **#So 2:16**. His is a covenant of mercy, ours of obedience; which must be therefore full and final, as



Christ hath obtained for us an entire and everlasting redemption, **#Heb 9:12**.

**And they shall increase as they have increased]** By virtue of that promise to Abraham, **#Ge 13:16**. I will multiply thy seed as the dust of the earth, and **#Ge 15:5**, as the stars of heaven. This promise was not presently fulfilled; for when they came into Egypt they were but seventy souls of them. But under the Egyptian servitude they increased abundantly, **#Ex 1:7**, they spawned (as the word signifies), and bred swiftly; so that they went thence 600,000 strong, **#Ex 12:37**; so that they soon became a mighty and populous nation, **#De 26:5**. Judea was not moer than 200 miles long and 50 miles broad, not near the half of England by much; yet what huge armies had they, when the two tribes and the other ten met in the field, one against another! And even at this day (whatever is become of the ten tribes, whether they are in China or America) the Jews are a very great and numerous people. It is thought that there is not any one nation under heaven so great in number as that is, if the dispersed Jews might all be gathered together into one place. And who knows what we may (some of us) yet live to see? The late Clavis Apocalyptica promiseth great matters to occur within these three or four years.

Ver. 9. **And I will sow them among the people]** Scatter them indeed, but for an excellent purpose, that they may bring forth fruit to God; and be a blessed means of bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles' harvest. Some kind of the knowledge of God was diffused by the Jews wherever they came, and when at length the gospel was preached by the apostles, they first dealt with the Jews (who had their synagogues in all places) as it was necessary, **#Ac 13:46** that as they had been the only people of God, so now they might be the first invited guests. This invitation when they put from them and so judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, what remained but that the halt and the blind Gentiles should be fetched in from the highways and hedges, that so God s house might be full. So then their dispersion was a semination; and their exile opened a gate for the gospel. Hence also it is called διασπορα, a dissemination or scattering; as when a man soweth seed abroad, **#1Pe 1:1 Jas 1:1**.

**And they shall remember me in far countries]** Saint Paul testifieth that the twelve tribes instantly served God day and night, **#Ac 26:7**, a great deal better, doubtless, than they do at this day; being as reverend in their synagogues as grammar boys are at school when their master is absent, saith an eyewitness.

**And they shall live with their children, and turn again]** They or their posterity shall. God's promises bear a long date many times, and the believing Hebrews are told that they had need of patience or tolerance (*υπομονη*), that, after they had done the will of God and suffered it too, if need be, they might receive the promise, **#Heb 10:36**. And they are further exhorted to run with patience the race that is set before them, **#Heb 12:1**, wherein he that believeth maketh not haste, but can wait and wait for what he wisheth, till God please: being desirous rather that God may be glorified than himself gratified, if both may not stand together.

Ver. 10. **I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt]** Whither they fled for fear of the Babylonians, **#Jer 44:12**, and where it seems they became a mighty people, if that be true which Josephus writeth, viz. that Ptolemy Philadelphus sent back a hundred and twenty thousand of them into Judea, and by that royal beneficence obtained the seventy seniors to be sent by Eleazar, the high priest, for the translating of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. His successor, Ptolemy Lathurus, was nothing so courteous; for he slew thirty thousand of them with unheard of cruelty and made the living devour the dead.

**And gather them out of Assyria]** Whither the ten tribes were carried captive, and scattered all abroad through the one hundred twenty and seven provinces, as Haman suggested to the king, **#Es 3:8**.

**And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon]** That is, into Judea (the bound whereof were Libanus and Gilead), a figure of the Church, that land of delights. See **#So 4:1,8**. God's Hephzibah, **#Isa 62:4**. *O praeclaram illam dieculam?* when shall it once be? The comfort is, God can make a nation conceive and bring forth both in one day, **#Isa 66:8**. O pray, pray, pray, as **#Ps 14:7**, and

as the poor Jews pray at this day, "Let thy kingdom come speedily, and even in our days" (*Bimherah bejamenu*).

Ver. 11. **And he shall pass through the sea, &c.**] Who shall? The people, for want of room saith Junius; they shall enlarge their quarter into Egypt, Assyria and other nations subduing them to Christ. God shall (say others and I think better), he shall fright the sea, and miraculously deliver his people, as once he did at the Red Sea, which threatened to swallow them, but God made it to preserve them. He will remove all rubs and *remoras*, all obstacles and impediments; neither Egypt nor Assyria shall be able to hinder what God will have done. See **#Isa 11:15**. The misunderstanding of this and the like texts to this might haply occasion that unhappiness that befell the Jews in Crete, A. D. 434. The devil, under the name of Moses (whom he impersonated), persuaded those poor creatures that he was sent from God, to bring them home again to their own country. This they soon believed (as they are wondrously apt to work themselves into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage), and, leaving all their goods to others, followed this seducer (who spent a whole year in travelling over the country for the purpose), together with their wives and children, to the top of a steep rock that hung over the sea. Thither when they were come, this mock-Moses commanded them to wrap their heads in their upper garments, and so to throw themselves from the rock toward the sea, assuring them of a safe passage. They readily obeyed him; and in that way perished a great many of them. And more had followed, but that (as God would have it) some Christian fishermen, being there at that instant, took up some of them as they were floating upon the waves and ready to perish; who afterwards returning to the rest of the Jews, told them how they had been cheated, and how narrowly they had escaped; whereupon they being all enraged (as they had reason), sought for this seducer to put him to death. But when he could not possibly be found anywhere, they soon concluded that it was the very devil, that old manslayer; and many of them, moved by this calamity, became Christians. The Jews generally believe that their Messiah when he cometh shall do such miracles as Moses wrought at the Red Sea. They tell us also that in the time of the Maccabees many Jews that had fled into Greece passed through the narrow sea of Propontis, that runs between Chalcedon and Constantinople, to go back into their own country.

**And all the deeps of the rivers shall dry up]** As once Jordan did before Joshua and the people; and as, **#Re 16:12**, Euphrates shall do before those kings of the east, which some make to be the eastern Jews; and the drying up of Euphrates to be the downfall of the Turkish empire. Event will be the best interpreter when all is done.

Ver. 12. **And I will strengthen them in the Lord]** That is, in Christ, the head of the Churches; "for by his own strength shall no man prevail," saith holy Hannah, **#1Sa 2:9**, and "without me ye can do nothing," saith Christ, the true vine, **#Joh 15:5**, from whom we have both the bud of good desires, the blossom of good resolutions, and the fruit of good actions. Only we must fetch our strength by faith from Christ; and pray, as **#Isa 51:9** "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord."

**And they shall walk in his name]** *i.e.* In his strength and to his glory. See that sweet promise, **#Isa 40:29-31**. {See Trapp on "Zec 10:6"}

## Chapter 11

Ver. 1. **Open thy doors, O Lebanon]** This chapter is no less comminatory than the two former had been consolatory. The tartness of the threatening maketh men best taste the sweetness of the promise. Sour and sweet make the best sauce; promises and threatenings mingled serve to keep the heart in the best temper. Hypocrites catch at the promises, as children do at deserts; and stuff themselves therewith a pillow as it were, that they may sin more securely. Here therefore they are given to understand, that God will so be merciful to the penitent, as that he will by no means clear the guilty. That is the last letter in God's name, **#Ex 34:7**, and must never be forgotten. It is fitting that the wicked should be forewarned of their danger; and the godly forearmed. This chapter hangs over Jerusalem as that blazing star in the form of a bloody sword is said to have done for a whole year's time, a little before that last destruction of it, that is here foretold five hundred years before it happened.

**Open thy doors, O Lebanon]** *i.e.* Lay open thou thyself to utter ruin; for it is determined, and cannot be avoided. Lebanon was the confine of the country on that side, whereby the Romans made their

first irruption, as by an inlet. Doors or gates are attributed to this forest; because against Libanus is set Antilibanus, another mountain; which is joined into it as it were with a certain wall; so that these were and are narrow passages and gates, kept sometimes by the kings of Persia by a special officer, #Ne 2:8, and fortified by nature; yet not so strongly but that the Romans broke in this way, and much wasted the forest, employing the trees for the besieging of Jerusalem, as #Isa 14:8. (Hence it is here called the forest of the vintage, or the defenced forest, #Zec 11:2 marg.) The Chaldee paraphrast by Lebanon here understandeth the temple, which was built by the cedars of Lebanon; and #Eze 17:3, Lebanon is put for Jerusalem; which also had in it that house of the forest of Lebanon built by Solomon, #1Ki 7:2, wherein he had both his throne of judgment, #1Ki 7:7, and his armoury, #1Ki 10:17. So that by Lebanon may be very well meant the whole country of Judea; but especially the city and temple, the iron gates whereof opened themselves of their own accord, that had not been open in seven years before, and could scarcely be shut by twenty men, saith Josephus (Lib. vii. de Bell. Jud. cap. 12). This happened not long before the city was taken by Titus, whereupon Rabbi Jonathan, the son of Zechariah, cried out, *En vaticinium Zechariae*, Behold the prophecy of Zechariah fulfilled; for he foretold this, that this temple should be burned, and that the gates thereof should first be opened.

**That the fire may devour thy cedars]** War is as a fire, that feedeth upon the people, #Isa 9:19, or like as a hungry man snatcheth, &c., #Isa 9:20, there is in war no measure or satiety of blood. The Greek word Πολεμος, for war, signifieth much blood. The Hebrew word, מלחמה devouring and eating of men, as they eat bread. The Latin *Bellum, a belluis.* destruction from wild beasts. It destroys the lord as well as the losel, the cedar as well as the shrub. Tamerlane's coach horses were conquered kings. Adonibezek's dogs, seventy kings gathering crumbs under his table. "Let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon," #Jud 9:15, that is, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, #Jud 9:20.

Ver. 2. **Howl, fir tree]** That is, ye of lower rank, or ye meaner cities, those daughters of Jerusalem, that felt the Roman's force; howl, take up a loud outcry, a doleful ditty, after the manner of those that are

carried captive by the enemy, #Ps 137:3. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us, *qui contumulabant nos*, that threw us on heaps (so Tremellius rendereth it, confer #Isa 25:2), or those that made us howl, *ululatores nostri* (so Schindler), required of us mirth.

**Because all the mighty are spoiled]** The magnificos, the men of power, as they are called, #Ps 76:5, stout-hearted and every way able for strength, courage, and riches; which often take away the life of the owners, #Pr 1:19, and expose them to spoil; as every man desireth to lop the tree that hath thick and large boughs and branches.

**Howl, O ye oaks of Bashan]** Og's country, who only remained of the remnant of giants, #De 3:11. The Jews fable that he escaped in the flood by riding astride on the ark. By the oaks of his country understand the strong and eminent. The Chaldee rendereth it, *Satrapae provinciarum*, ye provincial governors.

**For the forest of the vintage]** Or, the defenced forest, viz. of Lebanon, *i.e.* Jerusalem, that seemed impregnable, but at length came down, *ruit alto a culmine*, as a cedar that is felled by a mighty one, #Isa 10:34. Death hewed its way through a wood or forest of men in a minute of time from the mouth of a murdering piece, or some such warlike engine. When the sword is once sharpened it makes a sore slaughter; "it contemneth the rod," #Eze 21:10; *q.d.* what does this silly rod do here? these lesser and lighter judgments? let me come, I will make work among them; down with these oaks, down with this defenced forest, &c.

Ver. 3. **There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds]** *Potentes potenter torquebuntur*. "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day," #Isa 2:17. The shepherds were grown foolish, #Zec 11:15, idol shepherds, #Zec 11:17, they cared for no other instruments but *forcipes et mulctram*, the shears and the milk pail; they were become "greedy dogs, which could never have enough," #Isa 56:11 (they were sick of the bulimy, or *appetitus caninus* a greedy dog), yea, they were so many young lions, ramping and ravening, as it is here and #Eze 19:2,3. Both princes and priests

were turned tyrants, and instead of feeding the people in the integrity of their hearts, and guiding them with the skilfulness of their hands, #Ps 78:72, preyed upon them, and "plucked the skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones," #Mic 3:2.

**For the pride of Jordan is spoiled]** The swelling of Jordan dried up by the Romans, as Jerome interprets it; or, the proud and stately palaces and possessions that the great ones had gotten upon the banks of Jordan for fruitfulness and pleasance, as a Lapide; or the numerous and proud nation of the Jews likened to the yearly overflowing of Jordan, whereof see #Jos 3:15 Jer 49:19, as Diodati. Ver. 4. **Thus saith the Lord my God; Feed the flock of slaughter]** So lately pulled out of the jaws of those lions, #Zec 11:3 cf. #Am 3:12, and yet destined to destruction by the Romans, those *Raptores Orbis* robbers of the world, (their former preservation being but a reservation to future mischief), for their desperate obstinace and incorrigibility.

**Feed them]** Saith God to the prophets; for their ordinary shepherds have cast off all care of their good. Tell them what evil will betide them unless they repent; forewarn them "to flee from the wrath to come," #Mt 3:7; to take course that they may "escape all these things that shall come to pass," #Lu 21:36. Oh the goodness of God to a nation so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked! Besides himself, the Shepherd of Israel, that led Joseph like a flock, #Ps 80:1, and neglected no good office of seeking and feeding them, of handling and healing them, of washing them and watching over them, &c., how careful was he ever to raise them up "seven shepherds, and eight principal men," #Mic 5:5, till at length he sent the man Christ Jesus, who is the chief of ten thousand, the "chief Shepherd," as St Peter calls him, #1Pe 5:4, that one and only Shepherd, as Solomon, #Ec 12:11, that great Shepherd of the sheep, as Paul, #Heb 13:20, who came to look up the lost sheep of the house of Israel, whom (to move compassion and affection) he here calleth the sheep of slaughter, until the time prefixed for their total dispersion, by reason of their ingratitude.

Ver. 5. **Whose possessors slay them]** Flaying their skin from off them, eating their flesh, breaking their bones, &c., #Mic 3:3; feeding themselves, and not the flock of God, #Eze 34:2, as if they

had been "lords over God's heritage," #1Pe 5:3. Owners and possessors, as here, *vel pretio vel paemio*; and as the Pope and his, *Curia Romana quae non vult ovem sine lana*, The papal court which did not want the as the sheep without the fleece, old proverb was.

**And hold themselves not guilty]** *Non peccant*. They fault not themselves; they are not found guilty by others. Such an unlimited power over God's people they have usurped, as if they might use them at their pleasure, and never be once questioned or punished for the same; but escape scot free. This was the extremity of tyranny; such as the cruel Spaniards exercise over the poor Indians: they suppose they show the wretches great favour, when they do not, for their pleasures, whip them with cords, and day by day drop their naked bodies with burning bacon; which is one of the least cruelties they inflict upon them.

**And they that sell them]** Sell them for slaves (whom they ought to redeem rather with their own blood), and grow rich by them; being greedy of filthy lucre, not without foul blasphemy against God, whom they entitle to their riches sacrilegiously and most thievishly gotten; while they say,

**Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich]** *Deo gratias*, blessed be God is a very good saying, and was much in Austin's mouth. But as the fountain of goodness will not be laden at with unwashed hands; so fair words from a foul mouth are infinitely displeasing to him that "inhabiteth the praises of Israel," #Ps 22:3. Hypocrites are not unfitly compared to monkeys, that have the gravest countenances of all creatures, but are incessantly doing mischief; or to the harpies, <sup>{a}</sup> that are said to have virgins' faces, vultures' talons. *Mel in ore, verba lactis; Fel in corde, fraus in factis*. Words of milk are honey in the mouth; gall in the heart is fraud in the making. Pharisees, under pretence of long prayers, devoured widows' houses, #Mt 23:14; while their lips seemed to pray or praise God, they were but chewing and champing some sweet morsel snatched from the flock, but sauced with the wrath of God, #Job 20:15. See how our Saviour sets them out in their colours, #Mt 23:15,16,23. Such fair professors but foul sinners were their predecessors, #Isa 66:5, who, when they had done evil as they could, thought to salve all by saying, Let the Lord



be glorified. And such also are their successors, the Pope and his followers. *Verba tua Dei plane sunt, facta vero diaboli* (said one once to Pope Innocent III, preaching peace but sowing discord), you speak like a God, but do like a devil; wherefore you shall receive the greater damnation. When one of our persecuting bishops read the sentence of excommunication against a certain martyr, and began, as the usual form was, In the name of God, Amen, the martyr cried out, You begin in a wrong name. And it grew to a common proverb, *In nomine Dei incipit omne malum*. All mischief begins on that manner. Gentilis, that impious anti-trinitarian, gave out that he suffered for the glory of the most high God. Becket, the arch-traitor, pretended to submit to his sovereign, but with this false reserve, *Salvo honore Dei*. I am saved by the honour of God. The Swenckfeldians entitled themselves the confessors of the glory of Christ. And Conradus Vorstius's late monster hath *De Deo* concerning God in the front, and atheism and blasphemy in the text.

**And their own shepherds pity them not]** Which yet they ought to have done, had they had never so much right and reason to destroy them. A shepherd hath his name from friendly feeding; in Greek, from earnest desire and love to the sheep. David, when he was hunted from Samuel the prophet, he fleeth to Ahimelech the priest; as one that knew justice and compassion should dwell in those breasts that are consecrated to God and his people. But these shepherds, through want of God's holy fear, **#Job 6:14**, had brawny breasts, horny heart strings; their hearts, first turned into earth and mud, did afterwards freeze into steel and adamant; cursed children they were, having their hearts exercised with covetousness and cruelty, **#2Pe 2:14**.

{a} A fabulous monster, rapacious and filthy, having a woman's face and body and a bird's wings and claws, and supposed to act as a minister of divine vengeance. (ED)

Ver. 6. **For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land]** Or, surely I will no more, &c. A fearful sentence, written in blood, and breathing out nothing but utter destruction. David knew what he did when he chose rather to fall into the hand of the Lord than of men. For his mercies are many, and it soon repents him concerning his servants; "but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," **#Pr 12:10**. Those shepherds in the former verse were grievous wolves,

**#Ac 20:29**; what wonder therefore that they spared not the flock? But yet while God pitied them there was "hope in Israel concerning this thing," as he said, **#Ezr 10:2**; whereas now that God's soul is disjointed from them, and his bowels shut up, desolation must needs be at next door, by **#Jer 6:8** "Be not thou a terror unto me, O Lord," said that prophet, **#Jer 17:17**, and then I care not though all the world frown upon me and set against me. But woe be to Loruamah, the people of God's wrath and of his curse. I have noted before, out of **#Jer 16:13**, that God's I will show you no favour was worse than I will cast you out of this land.

**I will deliver the men]** Heb. I will make them to be found, pulling them out of their starting holes and lurking places. "Evil shall hunt the violent man to destroy him," **#Ps 140:11**.

**Every one into his neighbour's hand]** As into the hangman's hand. This was fulfilled, especially during the siege by the seditious within the walls of Jerusalem, one man proving a wolf, nay, a devil to another.

**And into the hand of his king]** The Roman emperor, who disclaimed indeed the name of a king to avoid the hatred of the people, and yet exercised the full power of kings both at home and abroad. These Jews, first subdued by the Romans and reduced into a province, did afterwards rebel (though they had once, in opposition to Christ, cried out, We have no king but Caesar), and were, therefore, after five months' siege, utterly ruined: for what with extremity of famine and what with the fury of the sword, there perished in Jerusalem, and in the province adjoining, as Eusebius affirms, about 60,000 able men to bear arms. Or, as Josephus holds, who was an eyewitness, and present in the war, there died 1,100,000, besides others taken captive, to the number of 97,000.

**And I will smite the land]** So that it hath lain as it were, bedridden ever since.

Ver. 7. **And will I feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock]** Or, as Montanus readeth it, for you, for your sakes, O poor of the flock, *i.e.* O ye that are poor in spirit, pure in heart, my little flock, as our Saviour's expression is in Luke. Even for your

sakes will I yet for a time spare the reprobate goats, feeding them by my prophets, and provoking them to repentance. The word and sacraments, and all God's common temporal favours, are, in respect of external participation, communicated to reprobates by way of concomitancy only; because they are intermixed with the elect. Thus tares, mingled among wheat, partake of the fat of the land and moisture of the manure, which was not intended for them.

**And I took unto me two staves]** viz. That I might therewith do the office of a shepherd; and yet in more than an ordinary manner. For shepherds commonly carry but one staff or crook; or, at most, but a staff on their shoulders and a rod in their hands, as David shows in his pastoral, **#Ps 23:3**. But here are two staves taken; to show, saith Calvin, that God would surpass all the care and pains of men in governing that people.

**The one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands]** What these two should mean much ado is made among intrepeters. Some are for the two Covenants; others for the two Testaments; others for the order of Christ's preaching, sweet and mild at first, terrible and full of threatenings at last, as appeareth in **#Mt 24:24,25**. But what a wild conceit was that of Anthony, Archbishop of Florence, who understood the word of Dominic and his order; construing them thus: I, that is, God, took unto me two staves, viz. Beauty, that is, the order of Preachers, and Bands, that is, the order of Minorites, who are girt with a cord? The sounder sort of expositors make it to be a figure of the two ways which Christ useth at all times in the feeding of his Church; the one by love, guiding them by his word and Spirit; the other by severity, punishing them by the cruel hand of their enemies. See **#Isa 10:5**. Thus Vatablus, Diodati, &c. And that this is the true sense, saith a Lapide, it appeareth: First, because this oracle of the prophet is of the time to come, and not of the time past. Secondly, the event (that best interpreter of prophecies) maketh for it. For first God's government of the commonwealth of Israel was beautiful and gentle, in the time of the Maccabees and of Christ; and then terrible and destructory, in the time of the Romans, of Nero, Vespasian, Adrian, &c. Thirdly, because a little after the prophet saith that he brake both the staves, that is, he utterly rejected the Jews, and brought his wrath upon them to the utmost, which cannot

be meant by any other time than that of Christ, and of Titus. Especially since (in the fourth place) the prophet declareth, **#Zec 11:13**, that the staff of Beauty was broken at the death of Christ, for their unworthy selling and slaughtering of him, as if he had been some slave or base person.

**And I fed the flock]** *q.d.* I did my part by them. Thy destruction, therefore, is of thyself, O Israel. England is a mighty animal, saith a politician, which can never die except it kill itself. The same might be much more said of the Jewish commonwealth, which Josephus truly and trimly calleth a *Theocratia*, or a God government, for the form and first constitution of it; and Moses, in this respect, magnifieth that nation above all other, **#De 4:6,7**.

**Ver. 8. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month]** That is, in a short time I took away and displaced, even by the heathen princes, many proud princes and priests; such as were Menelaus, Jason, the Aristobuli, Hircani, Annas, Caiaphas, and others: or, I removed those three sorts of shepherds of the old law, viz. princes, prophets, and priests. Thus Theodoret and Vatablus. Diodati understands the text of the three chief empires that had tyrannized over the people, **#Zec 11:6,3,12,10**. Namely, the Chaldean, Persian, and Grecian empire, which were destroyed by the Son of God, **#Da 2:45**. But they do best, in mine opinion, that by these three shepherds understand those three sects among the Jews at Christ's coming in the flesh, viz. Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes; whereof, though the Pharisees were the best, and most exact for the outward observation of the law, yet are they in the Gospel, for their putid hypocrisy, first sharply taxed by our Saviour (after the Baptist), and then plainly rejected, and even sent to hell by a chain shot of eight links of woes, **#Mt 23:13-16,23,25,27,29**

**And my soul loathed them]** Or, was taken off from them, or, was straitened for them; because I saw that they received my grace in vain, and considered not my care for their good. Theodotion and Symmachus render it, *Anima mea exanimata est*, I am dispirited, as it were, and even disheartened to do any more for them.

**And their soul also abhorred me]** And so they became God haters (*θεοστυγεις*), as **#Ro 1:30**, and therefore hateful to God (*στυγητοι*),

**#Tit 3:3**, hateful as hell (so the word imports), yea, more and worse, for hell is but an effect of God's justice, but wickedness is a breach of his law. The prophet here seemeth to allude to those murmurers in the wilderness, that disdainfully cried out, Our soul loatheth this light bread, **#Nu 21:5**. Let God's servants take heed how they hang loose toward him; and lest, by disuse and discontinuance of a duty, there grow upon them an alienation of affection, a secret disrelishing and nauseating at that which we ought most deeply to affect and duly to perform. Surely, as loathing of meat and difficulty of breathing are two symptoms of a sick body, so are carelessness of hearing and irksomeness of praying two sure signs of a sick soul.

Ver. 9. **Then said I, I will not feed you]** Now the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, so that there was no remedy, as **#2Ch 36:16**. Now his decree brought forth, **#Zep 2:2**. Now he grows implacable, inexorable, peremptory. Wherein nevertheless the Lord might very well break forth into that speech of the heathen emperor, when he was to pass sentence upon a malefactor, *Non nisi coactus*, I would not do this if I could do otherwise. Christ could not tell Jerusalem without tears that her day of grace was expired, that her destruction was determined. As a woman brings not forth without pain; as a bee stings not till provoked; so neither doth God proceed against a sinful people or person till there be an absolute necessity; lest his truth and justice should be questioned and slighted. See **#Eze 12:22-25**. Fury is not in God, till our sins put thunderbolts into his hands; and then, "who knoweth the power of his anger?" **#Ps 90:11** "who can abide with everlasting burnings?" **#Isa 33:14**. If he but cast a man off, as here, and relinquish the care of him, he is utterly undone. Saul found it so, and complains dolefully (but without pity) that God had forsaken him, and the Philistines were upon him, **#1Sa 28:15**; all miseries and mischief came rushing in to him, as by a sluice. Let us so carry matters that God may not abandon us; that he may not refuse to feed us, and take the charge of us as a shepherd. He yet offereth us this mercy, as Alexander did those he warred against, while the lamp burned.

**That that dieth, let it die]** viz. Of the murrain, or pestilence, for man being in honour, if God but blow upon him, abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish, *pecoribus morticinis*, saith Tremellius, the beasts that die of the murrain. Vatablus thinks pestilence, sword,

and famine are here threatened under the names of death, of cutting off, and of devouring one another. All which befell the refractory Jews in the last siege; the history whereof will make any man's heart bleed within him that hath but the least spark of grace or good nature. It went hard with them, when the rest, that the pestilence and sword had left, fell to eating the flesh one of another; when the mother killed and boiled the dead body of her harmless suckling, and, eating the one half, reserved the other for another time. "Behold, O Lord, and consider to whom thou hast done this?" saith the prophet: "Shall the women eat their fruit, and children of a span long?" #La 2:20. Oh the misery, or rather mock of man's life! And oh the venomous nature of sin, that moves God (who is not μισανθρωπος, a man hater, but delights in mercy) to deal so severely with his poor creature.

Ver. 10. **And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder]** In token that he had cast off his office of shepherd, he breaks his staff, the ensign and instrument of his office; and this in token that he had broke

**his covenant which he had made with all the people]** *i.e.* with all the tribes of Israel, which were as so many different peoples, over whom God had reigned (but now rejected), and in whom he delighted more than in all the nations of the world besides. The saints are called all things, #Col 1:20, because they are of more worth than a world of wicked men, #Heb 11:38. And the Jews have a saying, that those 70 souls that went with Jacob into Egypt were as much as all the 70 nations in the world. What great account God once made of them above others, see #Isa 43:3,4 De 33:29. But now, behold, they are discarded and discovenanted:

**I have broken my covenant,]** and in #Zec 11:11 *it was broken in that day* that is, in the day that they put themselves out of my precincts, I put them out of my protection. That peace that I had granted to my people, that they should be no more molested by any strange nation (which was verified from the time of the Maccabees till a little before the coming of Christ), shall now be forfeited. The glory is departed, the Beauty broken in pieces, the golden head of the picture, religion, defaced, and good order banished; all things out of order both in Church and State (for so they were at the time when

Christ "came to his own, and his own received him not": he found them in Dothan, that is, in defection, as Joseph found his brethren); therefore he now disowns and disavows them as much as once he did when they had made a golden calf. "Thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves," saith God to Moses, #Ex 32:7, upon whom he now fathereth them, as if he had never been in covenant with them. Danaeus upon this text concludeth that the Jews are now strangers from the covenant of God; and that this is hereby confirmed, for that they are without baptism, the seal of the covenant.

Ver. 11. **And it was broken in that day]** When they filled up the measure of their fathers' sins, and added this to all their other evils, that they crucified the Lord of glory, the Mediator of the new covenant, #Heb 12:24. Now they were, by an irrevocable decree, to bear their iniquities, and to know God's breach of promise, as once was threatened to their faithless fathers, #Nu 14:24.

**And so the poor of the flock]** *i.e.* The lowly and meek, the apostles and other of Wisdom's children, these all justified her, #Mt 11:19, and glorified God when they saw his severity against their refractory countrymen, and themselves sweetly secured and provided for at Pella. {See Trapp on "Zec 11:7"}

**That waited upon me]** Heb. That observed me, by obeying my precepts. Pagnine rendereth it, *qui custodiunt me*, *sc.* as their most precious treasure, wherein they hold themselves very happy and wealthy, though otherwise poor and indigent.

**Knew that it was the word of the Lord]** Were sensible of God's heavy displeasure upon the land; which others passed by as a common occurrence, or a chance of war. The elect made benefit of that general visitation; and acknowledged that the wars moved by the Romans were the effects of God's providence, according to the ancient prophecies. This the rich and noble (whose hearts were fat as grease, #Ps 119:70. *Qui animas etiam incarnaverunt*, who were desperately hard and brutish) took no notice of.

Ver. 12. **If ye think good, give me my price]** Pay me for my pains, lay me down my shepherd's wages. Is not the labourer worthy of his hire? Shall I be forced to say of you, as my servant David of Nabal,

that unthankful churl, "Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow had in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good," #1Sa 25:21. If God will be David's shepherd, David will dwell in God's house to all perpetuity, #Ps 23:1,6. If the Lord deal bountifully with him, he will sit down and bethink himself what to render unto the Lord for all his benefits, #Ps 116:7,12. A Christian counts all that he can do for God, by way of retribution, but a little of that much he could betoem him; and thinks nothing more unbeseeming himself than to receive the grace of God in vain. His two mites of thankfulness and obedience he daily presents; and then cries out, as the poor Grecian did to the emperor, If I had a better present thou shouldst be sure of it (Εἰ πλεον εἶχον πλεον εδίδου). But ingratitude is a grave, which receives all the bodies (the benefits) that are put into it; but will render none up again without a miracle. Hence that passionate expostulation, #De 32:6 "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O ye foolish people and unwise?" *Sic etiam stomachose loquitur Deus hoe loeo*, saith Calvin upon this text: *i.e.* So likewise doth the Lord here in high displeasure and with great animosity or stomach, bespeak his people, Give me my wages howsoever; or, if not, forbear till I fetch it, till I recover it; you shall be sure to pay then, not the debt only, but the charges likewise; I will be paid both for my pains and patience too. In the mean space I need you not, nor care for your wages; for I am no hireling, &c.

**So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver]** That is, thirty shekels, or shillings. The price of a slain servant's life, #Ex 21:32. This they weighed, as the manner of paying money then was, #Ge 23:16 Jer 32:9. But they heaved their hands very high, it seems, when they valued the Lord Christ at so vile a rate. See #Mt 26:15.

{See Trapp on "Mt 26:15"}

Ver. 13. **Cast it unto the potter]** *q.d.* Do they deal with me as with some sordid swineherd? Do they award me less than carters' wages? Throw it away, let the potter take it; and let us see how many tiles he can afford us for it, to repair the roof of the temple. Their undervaluing and despising of me in this sort is not only injurious, but contumelious; it is to turn my glory into shame; to spit in my face; or to use me as homely as Rachel did her father's gods, which she laid among the litter, and sat upon.



**A goodly price that I was valued at of them]** So he calleth it by an irony, or a holy jeer. Poor Joseph was sold for less; for twenty pieces of silver, **#Ge 37:28** "They sold the just one for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes," **#Am 2:6**. The Hebrews tell us, that of those twenty shekels every one of the ten brethren had two to buy shoes for his feet. The Jews that bought Christ for thirty pieces of silver (this goodly price) of the traitor that sold him, were themselves afterwards (by a just hand of God upon them) bought and sold thirty of them for a penny by the Romans, *ad illudendum*, saith mine author, for a scorn to their nation. God loves to retaliate, and to set the scales even; men's cruelty in the one, and their reward in the other. If we be at any time underrated by the world (as we are sure to be; for the world knows us not, **#1Jo 3:2**), what so great matter is it, since Christ himself was no more set by? We must be content to pass to heaven (as he did) as concealed men. It must suffice us that our precious faith shall be found to praise, honour, and glory, at that great fair day, **#1Pe 1:7**, when all fardles *{little bundles}* shall be opened, and our best wares exposed to public view.

**And cast them to the potter]** "I gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me," saith the evangelist, **#Mt 27:10**, expounding the prophet, and applying the words to Christ, who is hereby also proved to be God. So true is that observation of divines, that the Old Testament is both explained and fulfilled in the New, by a happy harmony.

**In the house of the Lord]** That thereby he might the more sharply prick the priests; whose care it ought to have been that God should be better prized by the people, and his service better observed.

Ver. 14. **Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands]** Or, binders; the bond of unity, say some; by sending a spirit of perversities among them, such as that was which made way for the ruin of Egypt, **#Isa 19:14,16,17**. But see for the sense hereof what is noted. *{See Trapp on "Zec 11:7"}* God seems to say that he will now no more govern this people in mildness and clemency; nor yet exercise his shepherdly severity in saving corrections and visitations, as formerly he had done; but utterly reject and disject them.

**That I might break the brotherhood]** *Germanitatem*, saith the Vulgate. *Mala quaedam olitores Germanitatis vocant, semper cohaerentia, semper gemella, nunquam singula in foetu.* Such were Judah and Israel till the ten tribes revolted from the house of David. After which, many of the better affected Israelites went over to Rehoboam; besides those of the ten tribes that returned with them out of Babylon, twelve thousand at least, as may be gathered out of **#Ezr 2:64 1Ch 9:3**. And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh; and between them there grew a brotherly conjunction and consociation, a league of love, as the Septuagint render it, or a national covenant (διαθηκην). This God threateneth here to dissolve and disannul; so that Ephraim shall be against Manasseh, and Manasseh against Ephraim, and both against Judah, **#Isa 9:21**. Not many years before Christ's coming in the flesh those two brethren, Hircanus and Aristobulus, disagreed about the government and high priesthood; and called in Pompey, who subdued the country, and reduced it into a province. And not many years after Christ's passion Titus, the Roman emperor, utterly broke the brotherhood between Judah and Israel; and so scattered them, that like those priests in Ezra, they have utterly lost their pedigree, know not one another by their tribe or family, nor yet agree within themselves, **#Ezr 2:62**. Those of them that were in Spain, and are now banished into the East (A.D. 1492), they hold to be of the tribe of Judah; and the other, in Germany and Italy, to be of the tribe of Benjamin; who in honour of the more noble tribe, and to correspond with them the better, do learn the Spanish tongue, which those still retain.

**Ver. 15. Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd]** And so represent in a type, or figure, the wicked and depraved government, that, for a just punishment of their frowardness and unthankfulness, I shall set up among this people. "The instruments of a foolish shepherd," that is, of an oppressive and self-seeking magistrate, are not *virga et pedum*, a rod and a staff, but *forcipes et mulctra*, shears to clip them and a milk pail to drain them. *Lac et lana* Milk and fleece are all they look after. Now it is threatened as a heavy curse, **#Le 26:17**, They that hate you shall reign over you; mischievous, malignant princes, such as are described in the next verse. England was once called the Pope's ass, for bearing his

burdens and impositions. An Emperor of Germany said, for the like reason, that the king of France was king of asses, rather than of men (*Rex hominum Hispanus, asinorum Gallus, Regum ego, dixit Maximil.*). King John of England's exactors received from his subjects no less sums of curses than of coin, saith our chronicler. He gathered money, the sinews of war; but lost their affections, the joints of peace. A taxation by the poll, first granted to Edward III, became a precedent to the next reign; and caused therein the first and greatest popular insurrection that ever was seen in this kingdom, saith another of our historians. And what sad effects poll money, ship money, coat and conduct money, and other oppressive practices have lately produced among us, is well known to all. But what a cruel shepherd was that prince mentioned by Melancthon, that when he wanted money would send for such and such a rich subject of his, and require of him what he pleased. If the man denied to bring it, he would knock out first one of his teeth, and then another, threatening to do the like by all the rest, in case the money were not brought in by such a time! Was not this one of those foolish, or rather furious shepherds in the next verse, who do eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces? that shall eat thy fruit, and drink thy milk, as another prophet phraseth it, **#Eze 25:4**. *Fisco potius apud multos consulitur quam Christo; attonsioni potius gregis quam attentioni*, as Bishop Andrews truly complaineth. And no less justly Mr Bolton. Some follow the administration of justice as a trade only; with an unquenchable and unconscionable desire of gain; which justifieth the common resemblance of ill governors to the bush, whereto while the sheep fleeth for defence in weather, he is sure to lose a good part of his fleece. Hence many that seek to courts of justice to be righted, are so ill handled, that they come to be of Themistocles' mind; who professed, that if two ways were shown to him, one to hell and the other to the bar, he would choose that which went to hell, and forsake the other.

Ver. 16. **For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land]** Evil shepherds (that is, rulers in State and Church, see **#Jer 6:3 Na 3:18 Isa 44:28**) are set up by God for a punishment of a sinful people. {See Trapp on "Zec 11:15"} The evil shepherd here meant was Antiochus Epiphanes, saith Theodoret; Herod, the infanticide, saith Montanus; Titus and the Romans, saith a Castro; all the perverse priests and princes that ruled over the Jews, after the time of this prophecy, saith

a Lapid; as Jason, Menelaus, #RAPC 2Ma 4:1-5:27, Herod, Pilate, Annas and Caiaphas, the Scribes and Pharisees; but especially antichrist (according to #Joh 5:43), whose forerunners all the former were. Of one Pope it is said, by those of his own side, that he entered upon the government of the Church as a fox, reigned as a wolf, died as a dog; and it is true enough of all the rest, and to them the following words do most fitly agree.

**Who shall not visit those that be cut off]** Or, look for the thing that is lost. *Illos qui erraverunt, non quaerent*, saith the Chaldee: the word signifieth such as are hidden in thickets, hung among thorns and briars, and there likely to perish without help.

**Neither shall seek the young one]** The tender lambs of Christ, which Peter was doubly charged to feed. *Stolidam non requirit*, saith the Tigurine translation. Lambs are silly things, very apt to straggle; and least able of any creature to find their way home again.

**Nor heal that that is broken]** David, by leaping over the pale, as it were, of God's precepts, brake his bones, #Ps 51:8, and felt the fall the longest day of his life; so may any of Christ's flock. The good Shepherd, therefore, *in pera gestat unguentum*, hath his medicines ready in scrip, to apply as need requireth. Not so the idol shepherd, who will rather break the sound than bind up the broken.

**Nor feed that that standeth still]** Or, that is well underlaid, and is full of vigour. Vatablus rendereth it, *Eam quae restitat, non portabit*. He will not carry that which can go no further. Hitherto the negligence of these evil shepherds. Followeth next their cruelty, and that is more than bestial. For the ravening beasts lightly leave some foot or bone undevoured, #Am 3:12; but these do not only eat the flesh of the flock, and suck the fat, but barbarously tear the claws also in pieces, exercise utmost immunity; as it is here graphically and gallantly described.

Ver. 17. **Woe to the idol shepherd]** The Vulgate hath, *O pastor et idolum*, O thou shepherd and idol; thou that hast the show only and semblance of a shepherd, the name, but not the thing; thou that art the ape of a shepherd, *non verus sed vanus, non virus sed pictus et fictus pastor*; that art cleped a shepherd, as an idol is a god; but

shouldest be called rather a dumb dog, a greedy dog; a shepherd that cannot understand, **#Isa 56:10,11**, a foolish shepherd, as **#Zec 11:15**, an ουτιδανος, one that hath nothing in him of any true worth, but art vain and vile, and of no value, as this word is rendered, **#Job 13:4 11:17** ( לִילָא *Per agnominationem alludit ad* through an alteriteration with לֹכָא **#Zec 11:15**). *Vae, vae, vae, tibi.* Alas, alas, alas to you, Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, will surely pull off thy vizor, wash off thy varnish with rivers of brimstone, brand thee for a hireling,

**that leaveth the flock]** to shift as it can, among thieves and wolves, **#Joh 10:13**. {See Trap on "Joh 10:13"}

**The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye]** *i.e.* The curse of God shall light upon his power and policy, both which shall be blasted.

**His arm shall be clean dried up]** As a keck, or stick.

**And his right eye shall be utterly darkened]** Or, shrivelled up, wrinkled and dusk; as in old bisons. The idle and evil servant had his talent taken from him, and worthily, **#Mt 25:28**. The barren fig tree was cut down from cumbering, **#Lu 13:7**. God will recover his gifts from those that misuse or but disuse them, **#Ho 2:9**. Away they go, as strength went from Samson, wisdom from Solomon: they cry unto God under our abuse, who thereupon gives them the wings of an eagle, and lays aside their owner, as so many broken vessels; causing them to be even forgotten as dead men out of mind, **#Ps 31:12**. This is now especially fulfilled among the Jews, who for a long season have been "without God, without a teaching priest, and without law," **#2Ch 15:3**.

## Chapter 12

Ver. 1. **The burden of the word of the Lord]** That is, a declaration of his mind and counsel for Israel's comfort and his enemies' confusion. To the Israel of God it is *onus sine onere*, such a burden as the wings are to the bird, a burdenless burden. To the enemies, a burdensome stone, **#Zec 12:3**, heavier than the sand of the sea, **#Job 6:3**.

**For Israel]** Not against Israel, though Calvin so taketh it; and by Israel understandeth the ten tribes, and those other captives that, loth to leave those houses they had built and those gardens they had planted in Babylon, **#Jer 29:5**, neglected to return to Jerusalem for fear of the Samaritans and other ill neighbours; whose ruin is therefore here foretold by three excellent similitudes, after a stately preamble, drawn, 1. From the power of God, whereby he stretcheth forth the heavens, **#Job 37:18 26:7**, that huge expanse, as a curtain, or as a molten looking glass. 2. From the wisdom of God, in laying the foundation of the earth, and hanging it, by geometry, as we say, in the midst of heaven, like Archimedes' pigeon, equally poised with its own weight.

*“ Terra pilae similis, nullo fulcimine nixa,  
Acre subiecto tam grave pendet onus.”*  
(Ovid. *Fast.* l. 6.)

3. *From the goodness of God,*

*who formeth the spirit of man within him]* Who hath made us these souls, **#Isa 57:16**, which he doth daily create and infuse into men's bodies; yea, and that alone, without any help of their parents: hence he is called "the Father of spirits," **#Heb 12:9**, and the spirit of a dying man is said to return to God that gave it, **#Ec 12:7**. This last text convinced Augustine (who held sometime, with Origen, that the soul as well as the body was begotten by the parents) far more than the peremptory rashness of Vincentius Victor; who censured boldly the father's unresolvedness (when he doubted concerning the original of a rational soul), and vaunted that he would prove by demonstration that souls are created *de novo*, by God. Aristotle, Nature's chief secretary, was much puzzled about this point of the soul; which, indeed, cannot fully be conceived of nor defined by man. Only this we can say, that the soul, as it comes from God, so it is like him; viz. one immaterial, immortal, understanding spirit; distinguished into three powers, which all make up one spirit.

Ver. 2. **Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling]** Or, slumber, or poison. A metaphor taken from a cup of generous wine, but empoisoned; so that those that drink of it do presently tremble,

grow giddy, sleepy, sick as hear can hold. Poison in wine works more furiously. Thou hast made us to drink the wine of giddiness, saith the Church, **#Ps 60:3**. In the hand of the Lord is a cup, and the wine is red, it is full mixed, &c. The prophet here seems to allude to **#Jer 25:15 Isa 29:8 Jer 51:7**. Ovid saith of the river Gallus, that whoso drinketh of it runneth mad immediately. Jerome telleth of a lake, near Naples, whereinto, if a dog be thrown, he presently dieth. The like is reported, by Josephus, of the Lake Asphaltites. Jerusalem shall be a murdering morsel to those that swallow it. His meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him. He hath swallowed down her spoil, and he shall vomit it up again: God shall rake it out of his belly, **#Job 20:14,15**: he shall have as little joy of his tid bits, of his sweet draughts, as Jonathan had of his honey; whereof he had no sooner tasted but his head was forfeited. Pliny speaketh of a kind of honey that poisoneth; because it is sucked out of poisonous flowers. Our chronicler telleth us that at Alvelana, three miles from Lisbon, many of our English soldiers, under the Earl of Essex, perished by eating of honey, purposely left in the houses, and spiced with poison. The enemies of the Church make a dangerous adventure, they are even ambitious of destruction; they run to meet their bane, as did those Philistines at Mizpeh, **#1Sa 7:7**. And had they but so much wit as Pilate's wife, in a dream, they would take heed of having anything to do with those just men, of eating up God's people as they eat bread, **#Ps 14:4**, of boozing in the bowls of the sanctuary with Belshazzar, who fell thereupon into a trembling, so that his loins were loosed, and his knees knocked one against another, **#Da 5:6**.

**When they shall be in the siege]** And so about to do their last and worst against the Church. The people of Rome was *saepe praelio victus, nunquam bello*, saith Florus; they lost many battles, but were never overcome in a set war; at the last, at the long run, as they say, they crushed all their enemies; so doth the Church. See **#Ps 129**, throughout; and the story of the Maccabees.

Ver. 3. **I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone]** Such a stone as that wherewith the woman brake Abimelech's brain pan, at the tower of Thebez, **#Jud 9:53**. He had slain all his brethren upon one stone, **#Jud 9:5**, he receives, therefore, his death's wound by a stone; and that by the hand of a woman, which was his greatest

grief. The like death befell Pyrrhus, King of Epirotes, slain at the siege of Argos, with a tile thrown by a woman from the wall. So was Earl Simon Mountfort, that bloody persecutor of the Albigenses in France. A woman discharged an engine at him from the walls of Toulouse, and by a stone parted his head from his shoulders. The virgin daughter of Zion shall do as much as all this comes to for her besiegers, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against her. For what reason? she hath a strong champion; that, in maintaining her quarrel, will dash them to pieces, and grind them to powder, **#Lu 20:18**. They are no more able to stand before him than a glass bottle before a cannon shot. Hence her confidence, her laughing and shaking her head by way of derision at her stoutest enemies, **#Isa 37:22**. She knows that all that burden themselves with her shall be cut in pieces. Haman's wife could tell so much. If Mordecai, said she, be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him, **#Es 6:13**. A Jew may fall before a Persian, and get up and prevail; but if a Persian, or whosoever of the Gentiles, begin to fall before a Jew, he can neither stay nor rise. There is an invisible hand of omnipotence that strikes in for his own, and confounds their opposites. That little stone, cut out without hands (Christ's human nature is called a tabernacle not made with hands, not of this building, **#Heb 9:11**, that is, not by an ordinary course of generation), smiteth the four mighty monarchies, and crumbleth them to crattle, **#Da 2:34**. Jerome upon this text (and after him other interpreters, both ancient and modern) tell us that the Holy Ghost here alludeth to a certain exercise or game used much among the Jews, namely, to take up a great round stone for the trial of a man's strength; lifting it up from the ground, sometimes to the knees, sometimes to their navels, sometimes to their breasts, and sometimes as high as their heads, or above their heads. At which sport many times they did grievously hurt themselves, or, at least, make cuts and scars in their flesh. See **#Le 21:5**, where the same word is used. The Church's enemies shall strive, and try who shall do her most harm; but the stoutest of them all shall be fooled and foiled in the end. The irreparable ruin of Rome is graphically described and even set forth to the eye **{#Re 18:21}** by a notable gradation. An angel, a mighty angel, taketh a stone, a great stone, which he not only casteth, but thrusteth into the bottom of the sea, whence it cannot be buoyed up. This



angel might well be Luther (with his book *de Captivitate Babylonica*; confer **#Jer 51:63**), whom God strangely preserved from the rage of Rome and hell; like as he did from that deadly danger by the fall of a stone, whereof Mr Fox writeth thus: "Upon a time," saith he, "when Luther was sitting in a certain place upon a stool studying, a great stone there was in the vault over his head where he sat; which being staid miraculously so long as he was sitting, as soon as he was up immediately fell upon the place where he sat, able to have crushed him in pieces, if it had lit upon him." But no malice of man or devil could antedate his end a minute, while his Master had work for him to do; as the two witnesses could not be killed till their business was despatched, **#Re 11:7**.

Ver. 4. **I will smite every horse with astonishment]** Great is the strength of the horse and the rage of his rider: Jehu marched furiously; Bajazet, the Great Turk, of his fierce and furious riding was surnamed Gilderun, or Lightning; but God can make the Egyptians to appear men, and not gods, and their horses flesh, and not spirit; "When the Lord shall but stretch out his hand" (and that is no hard matter of motion), "both he that helpeth shall fall and he that is helped shall fall down, and they shall all fail together," **#Isa 31:8**. See **#Ps 76:5,6** "An horse is a vain thing for safety," **#Ps 33:17**, though a warlike creature full of terror; but safety or victory is of the Lord, **#Pr 21:31** "In nothing be terrified," saith the apostle, **#Php 1:28**. The Greek word is a metaphor from horses when they tremble and are sore frightened; as it happened in the Philistines' army, when the angels made a bustle among the mulberry trees, **#2Sa 5:24**; in the Syrians' army, when the angels likewise made a hurrying noise in the air, of chariots, of horses, and of a great host, **#2Ki 7:6**; in the army of Sennacherib, when at God's sole rebuke "both the chariot and horse were cast into a dead sleep," **#Ps 76:6**. Lastly, in the German wars against Zisca and the Hussites in Bohemia, where God smote every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness; such a panic terror seized upon the enemies of the truth, though they came in with three potent armies at once, that they fled before ever they looked the enemy in the face. How this prophecy was literally fulfilled to the Maccabees, see **#RAPC 2Ma 10:30**.

**And I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah]** Who before seemed to wink, or to be asleep. Now will I awake, saith the Lord,

Now will I arise, now will I lift up myself, #Isa 33:10, for the relief and rescue of my poor people; and that because they called them outcasts, saying, "This is Zion, whom no man looketh after," #Jer 33:17.

Ver. 5. **And the governors of Judah]** The dukes or chieftains ( אֲלָפִים); meaning the Maccabees, who wear not any kingly crown, but were only governors, rulers, commanders-in-chief, such as went before others; like as in the alphabet Aleph is the first letter; so,

*“ Omega nostrorum Mors est, Mars Alpha malorum,”*

saith the poet wittily.

**Shall say in their hearts]** *i.e.* Shall say heartily, from the root of the heart, and not from the roof of the mouth only. Profession of the truth and prayer (for so some make this verse to be) are not a labour of the lips, but a travail of the heart. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet as that which comes from the depth of the breast. As in instrument music, the deeper and hollower the belly of the lute or viol, the pleasanter is the sound; the fleeter, the more grating and harsh in our ears.

**The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength]** Though now there be few found in it; yet it shall be much repeopled and fortified; so that, under God, it shall be a fortress to the whole country; and the governors shall so take it to be: or thus,

**There is strength to me and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the Lord of hosts their God]** Every governor shall say so for his own particular (and this seems to me to be the better reading). The Maccabees did so, as appeared by their posy (whereof before), their prayers, and their singular success, as appears by their history and by Josephus. *Deo confisi, nunquam confusi*, They that trust in God shall never be confounded. "Our fathers trusted in thee, and they were delivered. O trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Look not down on the rushing and roaring streams, lest ye grow giddy; but look up to the heavens from whence comes your help, and fasten by faith on God's power and promises. Faith unfeigned breeds hope unfailable, such as never

miscarrieth. "O trust in him at all times, ye people," #Ps 62:8, for with God is wisdom and strength, #Job 12:13. Plutarch saith of the Scythians that they have neither wine nor music; but they have gods. Say that the saints have neither power nor policy as their enemies, yet they have all in God, who is more than all.

Ver. 6. **In that day will I make the governors, &c.]** This is the third similitude, whereof the Scripture is full; according to that, I will open my mouth in parables. These are of excellent use to adorn and explain; and yet they are evermore inferior to the matter in hand. They are borrowed from things well known and easy to be conceived; as here from a hearth of fire among wood; now we can all tell how great a matter (or wood) a little fire kindleth, #Jas 3:5. When Nero, for his pleasure's sake, set Rome on fire, among other stately buildings that were quickly burnt down, the circus or race yard was one, being about half a mile in length, of an oval form, with rows of seats one above another, capable of at least 150,000 spectators, without uncivil shoulderings. "As the fire burneth a wood; and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm," saith the Church, #Ps 83:14,15. Thus they prayed, and thus it is here promised; and was accordingly performed in those first wars of the Maccabees; as appeareth in the first book of their story, and in Josephus. Diodati and others understand this text to be the apostles and evangelists, who should fill the world with wars and dissensions by preaching the gospel, #Lu 12:49, whereby the enemies should be ruined and the Church re-established, #Ob 18, through the spirit of judgment and of burning, #Isa 4:4. To which purpose Chrysostem saith, that Peter was a man made of fire walking among stubble. Basil was compared to a pillar of fire. John Baptist is by our Saviour said to be a burning and a shining lamp. And Elijah (in whose spirit the Baptist came) was a man of that transcendent zeal, that to heighten the expression thereof some have legended of him, that when he drew his mother's breasts he was seen to suck in fire.

**And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place]** *sc.* Where she was built at first, and not in another near place, as Tyre was; and Rome is at this day quite off her old seven hills; so that a man may look for Rome in Rome. And Jerusalem that now is hath Mount Calvary in the very midst of it (which was anciently without

the city), and not one hundred families of Jews are therein to be found. That they shall one day cast out therehence Gog and Magog, inhabit it in the old place, and have excellent strength and valour ministered by God to them, all equally for their common defence, none lifting up themselves above another, but all alike ascribing the glory unto God, is concluded by some and those not inconsiderable divines out of this and the following verses.

Ver. 7. **The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first]** Or, as at first, *sc.* when they came out of Egypt, and had no strongholds to take to for their defence. "Lord" (saith Moses), "thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," #Ps 90:1. He was so of old, and ever will be; the faith whereof made the fathers well content to dwell in tents, #Heb 11:13, and those holy Rochabites, #Jer 35:7,8, till Nebuchadnezzar came up into the land, #Zec 12:11. But here God promiseth to deliver those Jews that dwelt in the open fields, without the city; and then afterwards to deliver Jerusalem itself from the rage of the Antiochi: and so he did (1 Maccab.) in a wonderful manner; they were helped indeed with a little help, #Da 11:34, to take away boasting; as it followeth.

**That the glory of the house of David, &c.]** That is, the glorious house of David, and the glorious inhabitants of Jerusalem, by an hypallage. {a} *Non est gloriosior populus sub caelo, quam Iudaicus.* There is not a more vain glorious people under heaven than the Jews are, saith Alsted. They were so of old, #Joh 8:33 Mt 3:9. Spaniards are said to be impudent braggers, and extremely proud in the lowest ebb of fortune; so are the Jews. But God will teach them better things, and make him that glorieth glory in the Lord, #1Co 1:31.

{a} A figure of speech in which there is an interchange of two elements of a proposition, the natural relations of these being reversed. (ED)

Ver. 8. **In that day shall the Lord defend, &c.]** *Prosequitur eandem sententiam,* saith Calvin. He proceeds in the former argument to assure the feeble Jews (as Sanballat, that proud haughty scorner, called them, #Ne 4:2 Pr 21:24) of safety and protection. God will bless the righteous; with favour will he compass them as with a shield, #Ps 5:12. Now there is no coming at the body but through the shield, if well handled; no coming at the saints but through God's own sides, as I may say. He beareth his people as on

eagles' wings, #Ex 19:4 De 32:11. Now the eagle carries her young upon her wings (and not between her talons, as other birds do), so that they cannot be shot but through the body of the old one. Oh the dignity and safety of a saint! Well might Moses sing, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places," #De 33:29. Let all that would be safe indeed, as in a tower of brass or town of war, labour to be found written among the living in Jerusalem, #Isa 4:3, to be of the Church of the firstborn which are enrolled in heaven, #Heb 12:23, like as in Jerusalem were records kept of the names of all the citizens, #Ps 48:3. Get under God's wing, and nothing can annoy thee. As if he be angry, where shall a man shelter? Brass and iron can fence him against a bullet or a sword; but if he be cast into a furnace of fire, it would help to torment him; if into a pit of water, to sink him. Now "our God is a consuming fire," #Heb 12:29, and his breath a stream of brimstone, #Isa 30:33. To run from him to other refuge is but for a man to run his head into a barrel of gunpowder for a shelter against the force of a fire kindled over him.

**And he that is feeble among them]** So that he cannot stand, but stagger (as the word importeth), as did Miles Cobelite, a Christian soldier, sore wounded, so that he reeled like a drunken man, and fell down many times, for want of strength. This man, drawing nigh to Amurath, the third King of the Turks, as he was viewing the dead bodies after a bloody fight, making as if he would have craved his life of him, suddenly stabbed him in the bottom of his belly with a short dagger which he had under his soldier's coat; of which wound that great king and conqueror presently died.

**Shall be as David]** Who was a mighty man of valour (as Hushai told Absalom, and bid him beware, #2Sa 17:8), and had such a band of worthies about him as were not to be matched, #2Sa 23:8. These had a house by themselves to dwell and exercise feats of arms; as Lyra gathereth out of #Ne 3:16, where mention is made of the house of the mighty. The Maccabees, slighted as abjects, did greater exploits and got greater victories than David had done; and the condition of this poor people was to be shortly after (*sc.* under the

preaching of Christ's gospel) far better and happier than ever it had been under the rich and flourishing kingdom of David; for then they should be able to say, God's grace is sufficient for me; his strength is made perfect in my weakness. I will glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me; for when I am weak, then I am strong. I can do all things, suffer all things, through Christ, that strengtheneth me. The weak shall say, I am strong, **#Joe 3:10**. And, indeed, how can they be otherwise, that have a mighty strong God, **#Isa 9:6**; a strong word, the Lord's own arm, the power of God to salvation, **#Ro 1:16 Ac 20:32**; a strong spirit, **#2Ti 1:7**; strong consolations, **#Heb 6:18**; strong armour, both offensive and defensive, **#Eph 6:18**; and the name of the Lord as a strong tower, whereunto the righteous run and are safe, and where, waiting upon the Lord, they renew their strength, they mount up with wings as eagles, or rather as angels, **#Pr 18:10 Isa 40:31**.

**For the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them]** *i.e.* As Christ, the angel of God's presence, and that went before the people in the wilderness. Such were those of the blood royal, and that succeeded David in the government; but especially such were the apostles, Christ's mighties, who should be endued with so many graces in majesty, authority, strength, and truth, that men should receive them, Cornelius-like, as so many angels of God, yea, even as Christ Jesus, **#Ga 4:14**.

Ver. 9. **I will seek to destroy]** I will make inquisition and diligent scrutiny; I will draw them out of their lurking places to execution; as Saul went to seek David upon the rocks of the wild goats, **#1Sa 24:2**; those high, steep, and craggy rocks, which could not but be very tedious both to himself and to his soldiers to march in; but he was set upon it, and would leave no place unsearched. See his charge to the Ziphites to take knowledge of all the lurking holes where he hid himself, and to bring him word that he might seek him through all the thousands of Judah, **#1Sa 23:23**. The Lord need not do so to find out his enemies; for in him they live, move, and subsist, **#Col 1:17**, they are ever under his view, and within his reach. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, **#Isa 40:22**, and can easily shake them out of it, as by a canvas. Yea, he sits in the height of heaven, and wherein they deal proudly, he is above them, **#Ex**

**18:11**, disclosing their cabinet counsels, as he did Benhadad's, and blasting their designs.

**To destroy all nations]** God stands not upon multitudes; he takes not the tenth man, but destroys all nations, be they never so many of them that come against Jerusalem, that oppose or affront his people, either with their virulent tongues or violent hands. When a rabble of rebels shall set themselves against the Lord, and against his Christ, his mystical Christ, the Church, he will utterly destroy them; the word signifieth he will destroy them, *ut nihil reliquum maneat*, that there shall be no remainder of them. Woe, therefore, to the Church's enemies; for their destruction ever goes with the saints' salvation, **#Php 1:28,29 Isa 8:9 Pr 11:8**. God's jealousy, **#Zec 1:14**, and justice, **#2Th 1:6**, will effect it surely, severely, suddenly.

Ver. 10. **And I will pour upon the house of David]** Pour, as by whole pailfuls; God is no penny father; no small gifts fall from so great a hand; he gives liberally, **#Jas 1:15**, and is rich to all that call upon his name, **#Ro 10:12**; abundant in kindness, **#Ex 34:6**, plenteous in mercy, **#Ps 103:8**; the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ hath over abounded (*υπερεπλεονασε*), hath overflowed all the banks, **#ITi 1:14**, indeed, it hath neither bank nor bottom. Oh pray for that blissful sight, **#Eph 1:18 3:18,19**, that spirit of wisdom and revelation.

**Of grace and of supplications]** Or deprecations of that utter destruction that shall befall other nations. God will save his people, but so as by prayer, **#Ps 32:6 2Ch 7:14 Zec 13:9**, he will grace his own ordinance, draw many suitors, and derive many praises to himself. See **#Eze 36:37 Ps 50:15 116:2**. Some render it, a spirit of grace and of lamentations, *sc.* before the Lord, when they felt the nails, wherewith they had pierced Christ, pricking their own hearts, **#Ac 2:37**, punctually pricking and piercing them, *κατενυγησαν τη καρδια* (Bishop Andrews, 333).

**And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced]** Dacaru, whom they have daggered, or digged, as **#Ps 22:16**, him they shall look upon and lament, *οπονται, κωπονται*, their eye shall affect their heart, **#Re 1:7 La 3:51**; for the eye is the instrument both of sight and of sorrow; and what the eye never sees the heart never rues. The

sun looketh upon the earth, draweth up vapours thence, and distilleth them down again; so doth the sun of the understanding; which, till it be convinced, the heart cannot be compuncted. Sight of sin must precede sorrow for sin. The prodigal came to himself ere he repented of his loose practices; men must bethink themselves, or bring back to their hearts (as the Hebrew hath it, #1Ki 8:47), ere they will say, We have sinned and dealt perversely, we have committed wickedness; see #Jer 8:6 Ps 38:18. An infant in the womb cries not because he sees not; but as soon as it comes into the light he sets up his note. Get, therefore, your eyes anointed with eye salve, with this spirit of grace and supplications; so shall you soon see (saith Mr Bradford, martyr) your face foul arrayed, and so shameful, saucy, mangy, pocky, and scabbed, that you cannot but be sorry at the contemplation thereof. It is the Spirit that convinceth the world of sin; neither can the waters flow till his wind bloweth, #Ps 147:18. A sigh is not breathed out for sin till the Spirit imbreathes the same into us.

**And they shall mourn for him]** Or, for it, viz. for their crucifying the Lord of glory in their forefathers, and having a great hand in it themselves; since their and our sins were thorns and nails that pierced him, the lance that let out his heart blood, &c. We bound him with cords; we beat him with rods; buffeted him with fists, reviled him with our mouths, nodded at him with our heads, &c. We were the chief actors and principal causes that set to work Judas, Pilate, &c. Oh stand a while with the devout women, and see him bleeding, groaning, dying, by the wounds that we gave him; and mourn affectionately over him, as here.

**They shall mourn]** With such outward pomp and rites as are used at funerals; as wringing the hands, beating the breasts, shaking the head, and the like external gestures and expressions of heaviness.

**And shall be in bitterness]** By inwardness of extreme grief; as when David's heart was leavened with it, #Ps 73:21; it was soured with godly sorrow, and soursed in the tears of true repentance. So Peter went forth and wept bitterly, #Mt 26:15; waters of Marah flowed from Mary Magdalen's eyes, which were as a fountain for Christ's feet: here sorrow was deep and downright, producing



repentance never to be repented of. The sorrow we conceive for an unkindness offered to Christ must not be slight and sudden, but sad and soaking; like that of the Israelites met at Mizpeh, when they drew water before the Lord, **#1Sa 7:6**, whereunto the prophet Jeremiah seemeth to allude when he seriously wisheth that his head were waters, **#Jer 9:1**, and David, with his river of tears, **#Ps 119:136**. His heart was soft and soluble. Now softness of heart discovers sin; as the blots run abroad and seem biggest in wet paper; and as when the cockatrice egg is crushed it breaks forth into a viper, **#Isa 59:5**. Now to make and keep the heart soft and tender, the consideration of Christ's dolorous passion must needs be of singular use and efficacy; as the sight of Caesar's bloody robes brought forth greatly affected the people of Rome, and edged them to revenge. The hardest heart, soundly soaked in the blood of Christ, the true scape goat, cannot but relent and repent for such a horrid villany.

**As one that mourneth for his only son...for his firstborn]** *sc.* With a funeral sorrow; such as was that of the Shunammite, of the widow of Nain, and of Rachel, who refused to be comforted. There is an ocean of love in a father's heart; as we see in Jacob towards Joseph, in David towards Absalom, in the father of the prodigal, &c. Christ was God's only Son in respect of his Divine nature; he was also the firstborn among many brethren. And yet "God so loved the world," &c. So? how? So as I cannot tell how; for this is a *Sic* So, without a *Sicut*: In the same way, even so should our sorrow be, for having a wicked hand in his dolorous death. The prophet here seems to be at a stand, as it were, whence to borrow comparisons to shadow it out by. Great is the grief of children for their deceased parents, as of Joseph for Jacob, **#Ge 50:1**, he fell upon his father's face, as willing to have wept him alive again if possible. So our Edward I, returning from the wars in Palestine, rested himself in Sicily; where the death of his son and heir coming first to his ear, and afterwards of the king, his father, he much more sorrowed his father's departure than his son's; whereat King Charles, of Sicily, greatly marvelled, and, demanding the reason, had of him this answer: The loss of sons is but light, because they are multiplied every day; but the death of parents is irremediable, because they can never be had again. Thus he. Howbeit, love rather descendeth than

ascendeth, and Abraham could better part with his father, Torah, than with his son, his only son Isaac, whom he loved, #Ge 22:2. Before he had him, Lord God, said Abraham, what wilt thou give me so long as I go childless? #Ge 15:2. His mouth was so out of taste with the sense of his want, that he could relish no comfort. But now to be bereft of him, and that in such a manner, as he might conceive by that probatory precept, #Ge 22:2, this must needs go to the very heart of him, for though he had put on grace, yet he had not put off nature. Both Jacob and Jacob's father (as Junius understandeth that passage, #Ge 37:35) wept savourly for Joseph, and would go down into the grave unto their son mourning. True it is, that the loss of some wife may be greater than the loss of some son (Abraham came from his own tent to Sarah's tent to mourn for her, #Ge 22:2, and she was the first that we read of in Scripture mourned for), but the prophet here speaketh of the mourning of husband and wife together; and they can lose no greater outward blessing than their firstborn, if an only one especially.

Ver. 11. **In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem]** *Magnificabitur luctus* (so the Hebrew hath it), their mourning shall be greatened, their heaviness heightened, they shall rise in their repentance above all that is ordinary. The casuists and schoolmen affirm sorrow for sin to be the greatest of all sorrows. 1. *In conatu*: in the effort, the whole soul seems to send springs into it, out of every faculty. 2. *In extensione*: in the strain, it is a spring which in this life more or less is continually dropping; neither would God have the wounds of godly sorrow to be so dosed up at all, as not to bleed afresh upon every good occasion. 3. *In appreciatione*: In understanding, the true penitentiary doth ever judge that a good God offended, a Saviour crucified, should be the primo cause of greatest grief. 4. *In intensione*: in aim, for intention of displicence in the will; there being no other things with which, or for which, the will is more displeased with itself than for sinning against God. There is more cause of grief, say they, for sinning than for the death of Christ; because therein was *aliquid placens*, pleasing anyone but sin is *simpliciter displicens*, simply displeasing. But is it not godly mourning, may some say, unless it be so great? I answer, that other mourning may make more noise, like a dashing shower of rain, or a land flood that by a small shallow channel comes down from a hill. When a man mourns for his only son, or the like, this comes from

God as a judgment; it comes downhill, as it were, hath nature to work with it, and nothing to hinder it; but this mourning and melting over Christ is as a stream that goeth uphill, and through many reeds and flags, as Mr Cotton expresseth it.

**As the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo]**

Where good Josiah was slain, and where the people saw, to their unspeakable grief and heart break, family, Church, and commonwealth plucked up by the roots in the loss of that one man, who was the very breath of all their nostrils, as Jeremiah sadly acknowledgeth in his Lamentations, composed on that very occasion, and when he died, all their prosperity here died with him; and themselves were no better than living ghosts, walking sepulchres of themselves; a being they had, but not a life; those that before seemed to touch heaven with their finger, fell down to the earth as if they had been planet-struck, as Budaeus speaketh of the French courtiers at the death of Louis XII— *nunc humi derepente serpere sideratos esse diceres*. When Augustus died, *orbis ruinam timueramus*, saith Paterculus, we thought all had been lost, and that the world would have fallen about our ears. When our Edward VI (that second Josiah) was taken away, Cardan sung this sorrowful Epicedion;

“ *Flete nefas magnum, sed tote flebitis orbe*

*Mortales; vestrum corrui omnis honos.* ”

Ver. 12. **And the land shall mourn]** Not the generality of the Jews (unless it be at their last general conversion, that resurrection from the dead, as it is called, #Ro 11:15), but the elect according to grace, who are here called the land, because more esteemed by God than all the other Jews besides; for he reckoneth of men by their righteousness, as he did of Lot at Sodom.

**Every family apart]** To show the soundness of their sorrow, the sincerity by the secrecy; for *Ille dolor vere qui sine teste dolor*. He grieves with a witness that grieves without a witness. There is a worldly sorrow that hardeneth the heart, and indisposeth it for repentance; as did that of Nabal. There is also a hellish sorrow, a desperate grief for sin, *poenitentia Iscariotica*, as was that of Judas. There is no birth without travail; but some children die in the birth,

are killed with the pains of the labour. Lastly, there is a sorrow according to God (η κατα Θεον λυπη, #2Co 7:10), whereby we weep kindly after God, inquiring the way to Zion, with our faces set thitherward, and renewing our covenant, #Jer 50:4,5 "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned," saith David, #Ps 51:4. Lo, there lay this pinch of his grief, that he had offended so good a God. It was the myrrh and its scent that Christ had dropped on the bars of the door, that waked the drowsy spouse, and made her bowels fret, Cant. v. This made her first weep in secret, and then seek out after him whom her soul loved. She first went to inquire of the Lord, as Rebecca did, #Ge 25:22, and then she hears from him those sweet words, #So 2:14 "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rocks," that hast wrought thyself a burrow, a receptacle of rest in the Rock of Ages, "in the secret places of the stairs," whither thou art retired, as for security so for secrecy, to mourn as a dove, and to pray for pardon. Show me thy face, which now appeareth most orientally beautiful, because most instamped with sorrow for sin; "let me hear thy voice," which never sounds so melodiously as when thy heart is broken most penitentially; "for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely."

**And their wives apart]** Sarah had her peculiar tent, #Ge 24:67, wherein she dwelt, #Ge 18:6, and died, #Ge 23:2. Rebecca, likewise, had her retiring room, whither she went to inquire of the Lord, #Ge 25:22. Rachel and Leah had their several tents, apart from Jacob's, #Ge 31:33. Miriam and her women do apart by themselves praise God for deliverance, #Ex 15:20 "I and my maidens will fast likewise," saith Esther, #Es 4:16. In a time of solemn humiliation, "let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet," #Joe 2:16. See #1Co 7:5. Among both Jews, Greeks, and Romans, the women were separated from the men in public acts and assemblies, in times of common calamity especially, as may be gathered out of Plutarch, Athenaeus, Virgil, Livy. *Stratae passim Matres crinibus Templa verrentes, veniam irarum coelestium exposcant*, saith he; The men by themselves, and the women by themselves, sought to appease the angry gods— *ad templum non aequae Palladis ibant Iliades* -(Virg.). Here they are severed, to show that they wept not for company, *sed sponte et proprio affectu*, as Calvin hath it, but of their own accord, and out of

pure affection; they freely lamented, not so much for Christ's dolorous death, as for that themselves had a chief hand in it, and were the principal causes of it. The best kind of humiliation is to love and weep, as that woman did, #Lu 7:38, who made her eyes a fountain to wash Christ's feet in, and had his side opened for a fountain to wash her soul in, as it is #Zec 13:1.

Ver. 14. **All the families that remain]** Out of every family of this people God will have some converts, "A remnant according to the election of grace," #Ro 11:5. A thing so incredible, that to persuade it the prophet may here seem to some profane person to use more words than needeth.

### Chapter 13

Ver. 1. **In that day there shall be a fountain opened]** *Nunc fructum poenitentiae adiungit*, saith Calvin here. This is the fruit of their repentance. No sooner mourn they over Christ, but they are received to mercy. "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord: and" (or ever I can do it) "thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," #Ps 32:5; that is, both the sting and stain of it, the guilt and the filth, the crime and the curse. Repent, and your sins shall be blotted out, saith Peter to those nefarious kill-Christes, #Ac 3:19. God will cross the black lines of your sins with the red lines of his Son's blood, #1Jo 1:6. A fountain shall be opened; not a cistern, but a spring; a pool better than that of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent, #Joh 9:7, and so a type of Christ, who "loved us, and washed us from our sins with his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen," #Re 1:5,6. To seal up this matchless mercy to us, he sent first, by the hand of his forerunner, and baptized those that repented for the remission of sins, #Mt 3:2 Ac 2:38, and afterwards he set wide open this blessed fountain, this laver of "regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," #Tit 3:5. Saying by his ministers to every believer, as once to Paul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," #Ac 22:16; whereunto salvation is promised, #Ro 10:18 Joe 2:22. Baptism also is said to save us, #1Pe 3:21, *sc.* sacramentally, for it sealeth up salvation to the believer, #Mr 16:16, and is of perpetual and permanent use to him, for that purpose, his whole life throughout, *ut scaturigo semper ebulliens*, as a fountain bubbling

up to eternal life. Here then the sacrament of baptism is prophesied and promised. And hence, haply, the baptism of John is said to have been from heaven, **#Mt 21:25**. All the Levitical purifications pointed to this king's bath of Christ's meritorious blood, this everflowing and overflowing fountain, for the grace of our Lord Jesus hath abounded to flowing over (as St Paul's expression is) with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Neither can it ever be dried up, as was the river Cherith, the brooks of Tema, &c., but is an inexhausted fountain, a fresh running spring, for all that have but a mind to make toward it. *Tam recens mihi nunc Christus est, ac si hac hora fudisset sanguinem*, saith Luther; Christ is still as fresh and sovereign to me as if this very hour he had shed his blood. He was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world; and shall be so to the end thereof. *Cruci haeremus, sanguinem sugimus, et intra ipsa Redemptoris nostri vulnera figimus linguam*, saith Cyprian of the Lord's Supper; *i.e.* We cleave to the cross at this holy ordinance; we suck Christ's blood, we thrust our tongues into the very wounds of our Redeemer, and are hereby purged from all pollutions of flesh and spirit.

**To the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem] i.e.** To all sorts and sexes of penitents, be they noble or ignoble, strong Christians or weak, **{#Zec 12:8}** none shall be secluded from this fountain, thus opened or exposed to all, not sealed and shut up, as that **#So 4:12** "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," **#Ac 10:34,35**.

**For sin and for uncleanness] i.e.** For all sorts of sins, though they be such as in their desert do separate us from communion with God and company of men, **{#Le 12 Le 15}** render us worthy to be excommunicated, proscribed, and banished out of the world, as pests and botches of human society, by a common consent of nations; as the obstinate Jews are at this day for their inexpiable guilt in crucifying Christ. The Vulgate here hath it, *Ad ablutionem peccatoris et menstruatae*, For washing clean the sinner and the menstruous woman; alluding (as doth also the Chaldee) to the waters of expiation made of the ashes of a red cow, **#Nu 19:11,17**; see the note there; and importing the purging both of he-sinners and

she-sinners; or, as some will have it, both of actual and original sin. Lo, this is the virtue of Christ's merit and spirit, #1Co 6:10,11, far beyond that of Abanah and Pharpar, of Jordan and Siloam, which yet are said not only to wash and scour, but also to heal and cure. The Saracens naturally stink like goats; but by washing themselves and their children in the pool of Siloam they become sweeter. The Turks make use of it to sharpen their eyesight. At Cyzicum there is a well called Cupid's well, the water whereof is said to quench the fire of lust. This is better yet than those baths of Rome, concerning which Seneca no less wittily than truly complained, *Postquam munda balnea inventa sunt, spurciores sunt qui lavant;* or those wanton baths of upper Baden, in Helvetia, much frequented, yet not so much for health as filthy pleasure. "They that are in Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," #Ga 5:24; they are not only washed from their wickedness, #Jer 4:14, but bereft of their swinish natures, *ne tanquam sus ad volutabrum,* not as a pig returning to his watering hole. #2Pe 2:22.

Ver. 2. **I will cut off the names of the idols]** Heb. of the fray bugs, *gnatsabim terricorum*, scarecrows (as they are likewise called, #1Sa 31:9 1Ch 10:9 Ps 115:4; in contempt, as Priapus in Horace—*furum aviumque, Maxima formido* —), or, grievous idols, as #Ps 16:4, because they tormented the minds of the superstitious, and put them to great pains to no purpose; as is to be seen in Popish pilgrims, who though used hardly, and lose much of their estates and other comforts, yet satisfy themselves in this, I have that I came for, viz. the sight of a dumb idol, as Calvin noteth on that place, Seek ye my face. Now of these idols and monuments of idolatry, these Balaam's blocks, the Lord here promiseth to rid the land, as he did under the Maccabees. And as in the primitive Church he did by the Christian emperors, styled therefore by the superstitious *Iconomachi and Iconoclastae;* and of late, by the renowned reformers, as at Geneva, Bern, Basle (where they were burnt all together on an Ash Wednesday of God's own making), and here in England by the command of King Edward VI; who the self-same day obtained a signal victory at Mussleborough Field.

**And they shall no more be remembered]** Unless it be with shame and detestation, as #Eze 16:61 Ps 16:4 Ho 14:8. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? He shall pollute the idols

which he once perfumed, and say unto them, "Get you hence," **#Isa 30:22**. I was an obstinate Papist (saith Latimer of himself) as any was in England, and a gross idolater, &c. But after that he came to a sight of his error, he so far forth abhorred idols, that being brought forth after he was condemned to die to see a procession, he ran as fast as his old bones would carry him to one Spencer's shop near Carfax, in Oxford, and would not once look toward it (Act. and Mon. fol. 1230).

**And also I will cause the prophets]** So they will needs be called and counted; when as they are no better than unclean spirits, {See Geneva on "Zec 13:2"} or at least are acted and set on work by that unclean spirit, the devil, {#Mt 12:43 Mr 1:26 Joh 8:44 Re 16:13} {See Trapp on "Mt 12:43"} {See Trapp on "Mr 1:26"} {See Trapp on "Joh 8:44"} {See Trapp on "Re 16:13"} indeed, they are false prophets, **#Mt 7:15**, false teachers, "who privily bring in damnable heresies," **#2Pe 2:1**, *vanae orationis, cui nulla veritatis vel virtutis ratio subest, sunt artifices stulte loquaces et garruli*, saith Montanus; they are loud and lewd liars, inspired by that unclean spirit, the father of lies, *ut impurati impurent alios et seducant seducti* (Junius in loc.), that being themselves defiled and seduced, they may defile and seduce others. For by corrupt teachers Satan catcheth men; as a cunning fisher by one fish catcheth another, that he may feed upon both.

**And the unclean spirit to pass out of the land]** This connection is worthy to be noted, saith reverend Calvin here, because it shows us the source of all errors, viz. the letting loose the reins to perverse teachers. I confess, saith he, we are apt enough of ourselves to run after falsities, such is the corruption of our natures. *Sed interea ubi grassatur licentia quidvis docendi, necesse est corrumpi totam pietatem, et sic misceri omnia ut nihil differat lux a tenebris, &c.* But where in matters of religion every man may think what he lists, and utter what he thinks, and defend what he utters, and publish what he defends, and gather disciples to what he publisheth, this *libertas prophetandi*, this liberty, or licentiousness, rather, of prophesying (alas, poor England!) must needs bane the Church, and bring in confusion. God therefore here gives us to know that a Church cannot stand unless false teachers be forbidden to turn the truth into a lie, and to prate at their pleasure against the word of



God; and this, saith he, is diligently to be noted. *Videmus enim ut hodie nebulones quidam, &c.*; For we see how at this day certain vile persons take it up for a principle that the Church is not free unless every man may be suffered to preach or broach what he pleaseth; and that it is greatest cruelty to punish a heretic, and not to give him leave to blaspheme the truth. But the prophet here showeth that the Church of God cannot be kept in pure state, nor stand entire and safe, unless the rashness and impudence of such be restrained as dare pervert sound and sincere doctrine. Thus he.

Ver. 3. **And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy]** Here the prophet showeth how God will effect the former promise. He will first give unto his people a spirit of judgment, and then a spirit of burning, as **#Isa 4:4**, so that they shall be able to discern both good and evil, and not be led away with the error of the wicked, to fall from their own steadfastness, **#Heb 5:14 2Pe 2:17**. They shall also be *adeo perciti zelo*, so carried on by zeal of God's glory, and so blessedly blown up, as I may so say, in his cause, that they shall fall upon their dearest relations in this case, and labour to bring their own children to condign punishment, according to the law of God in that behalf provided, **#De 13:8,9**. Neither let any object here, that this is Old Testament: we find no such thing in the gospel, for the prophet here speaketh of the times of the gospel (*#Zec 12:10*); and of the kingdom of Christ. *Sequitur ergo*, saith Mr Calvin here well and worthily, *non mode legem illam fuisse Iudaeis positam, quemadmodum nugantur fanatici homines, qui vellent hodie sibi permitti orbis, turbandi licentiam; sed extenditur ad nos etiam eadem lex*. It followeth, therefore, that that law, **#De 13:9**, was not made for the Jews only (as some brain sick people conceit it, who would fain get leave to trouble the world with their fopperies), but the same law extendeth itself even to us; for if at this day thieves, and witches, and adulterers, &c., are held worthy of punishment, how much more are heretics, seducers, blasphemers, who poison men's souls, rob God of his glory, confound the whole order of the Church, &c. See **#Ro 13:4 1Pe 2:13,14**, and hold to that old rule, *Non distinguendum, ubi scriptura non distinguit*, Men must not distinguish where the Scripture doth not.

**That his father]** In whose heart there is naturally an ocean of love to his own child, as we see in David toward Absalom, in old

Andronicus, the Greek emperor, in our William the Conqueror, and Maud, his wife, toward their unnatural son, Robert Curtuoise, whom she maintained out of her own coffers in his quarrel for Normandy; which the king her husband knew, and took as a cause rather of displeasure than of hatred, as proceeding from motherly indulgence for advancing their son.

**That begat him]** This is twice here repeated, for honour's sake, to these zealots, who had forgotten all natural and carnal respects for the vindication of God's glory and his sincere service. See **#Mt 10:37**. {See Trapp on "Mt 10:37"}

**Thou shalt not live]** *sc.* To do more mischief, and to draw more souls to the devil. *Non Catilinae te genui sed partita*, said Aulus Fulvius, when he slew his own son taken in Catiline's conspiracy; I begat thee not for Catiline, but for thy country. More to be commended a great deal than Philip II, that bloody King of Spain, who said openly, that he had rather have no subjects than Lutheran subjects; that he would not leave a Lutheran in his dominions; that if he thought his shirt smelt of that heresy, he would tear it from his own back; and out of a blind zeal he suffered his oldest son, Charles, to be murdered by the cruel Inquisition, because he seemed to favour our profession. For which noble exploit that mouth of blasphemy, the Pope, gave him this commendation, *Non pepercit filio suo, sed dedit pro nobis*: He spared not his own son, but gave him up for us. Oh horrible!

**For thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord]** Lies in hypocrisy, **#1Ti 4:12 Re 2:24**, doctrines of devils, depths of Satan, that artificer of lies, and father of them, **#Joh 8:44**, which yet he would fain father and fasten upon the God of Amen, or of truth, as he is called, **#Ps 31:5**; like as varletesses <sup>{a}</sup> beget bastards, and lay them at honest men's doors to be kept: "Thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord." This is to substitute the devil in the place of God, or to transform God, so as that he should nothing differ from the devil. No wonder, therefore, though he that break the least commandment, and teach men so, be called least in the kingdom of heaven, **#Mt 5:19**, especially if he pretend God's authority for it, as the false prophets of old, and the Swenckfeldian heretics slate entitle themselves, The

confessors of the glory of Christ; for this is the highest indignity, or rather contumely, that can be put upon God; it is a more detestable evil than to kill an innocent man; yea, to commit parricide, or treason. *Imo quaecunque poterunt numerate scelera non pervenient ad hoc crimen*, saith Calvin upon the text. Let sectaries and seducers look to it, those harmless, hornless creatures, as they would be accounted.

**Shall thrust him through when he prophesieth]** As Phineas did that stinking couple in the flagrancy of their lust, #Nu 25:8, and as Levi, in like case, consecrated himself to the Lord, even every man upon his son and upon his brother, #Ex 32:29. He said unto his father and mother (when God's glory required it), I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren nor know his own children, #De 33:9. All natural relations and self-respects should be drowned in the glory of God and the good of our own and other men's souls. They should be even swallowed up thereby, as the fuel is by the fire, and as the sorcerer's serpents were by Moses' serpent, or the fat kine by the lean.

{a} A person of a low, mean, or knavish disposition; a knave, rogue, rascal. (ED)

Ver. 4. **The prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision]** Of their Midianitish dreams, which they had first dreamed, and then told it for gospel to their fond neighbours. They shall be so clearly convinced, that they shall blush and bleed to think how they have been besotted, how many souls they have murdered, how often they have even straddled over hell's mouth, and yet have been preserved, #2Th 2:10,12; {See Trapp on "2Th 2:10"} {See Trapp on "2Th 2:10"} This makes them shame and shent {disgrace} themselves in the presence of God and his people, saying, "O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our guilt is grown up to the heavens," #Ezr 9:6. This was fulfilled in those scribes and Pharisees that afterwards became believers, and said, with Saint Paul, "Beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," #Php 3:2,3. Luther revolted from the Popish religion which he had held and maintained, taking it for an honour to be called apostate by them; that is, as he interpreted it, one that had fallen from the devil,

*Qui fidem diabolo datam non servavit.* Bugenhagenius, when he first read Luther's book *de Captivitate Babylonica*, pronounced it to be the most pestilent piece that ever was published; but afterwards, when he had better considered, he grew ashamed of that rash censure, and protested that Luther only was in the right, and all that held not the same that he did were utterly deceived. Latimer was of the like mind after that he had once heard Bilney's confession. Vergerius, after he had read Luther's books with purpose to confute them, Denckius and Hetserus, two great Anabaptists in Germany, retracted their former false doctrines, and repented of their licentious and abominable practices (Scultet. Annul.). The former of them, being converted by Oecolampadius, grew ashamed of his pretended visions, and died piously at Basle. The latter was beheaded at Constance for his multiplied adulteries: which first he sought to defend by Scripture, but afterwards died very penitently, confessing his former filthinesses, giving glory to God, and taking shame to himself. These two were learned men, well skilled in the Hebrew; and had joined their forces in translating the prophets into the Dutch tongue. But oh how few such as these and of that sort of people shall a man meet with today! Copp, indeed, that arch-ranter, *Venerus ille furcifer, et Cleri dehonestamentum*, is said to have newly set forth his recantation, which I have not yet seen, and therefore cannot tell what to say to it. Only I wish he deal not as Bernard Rotman, that first Anabaptist, and Islebius Agricola, that first Antinomian, did in Germany; who both of them, having condemned their own errors, and recanted them in a public auditory, printing their revocation, yet afterwards they relapsed into the same errors, and stoutly stood to them, when Luther was dead and more liberty was afforded, so hard a thing it is to get poison out when once swallowed down; and having once said yea to the devil, though but in a little, to say him nay again, when a man pleaseth; such a man especially, *quem puduit non fuisse impudentem* (Augustin), who had gloried in his shame and taken pleasure in his unrighteousness, #2Th 2:12 *qui noluit solita peccare*, who not wishing to become accustomed to sinning, as Seneca saith of some in his time, that is, none of the ordinary sort of sinners, but hath sought to out sin others, as unhappy boys strive who shall go furthest in the dirt.

I will not say but such, by the Almighty power of God, may be reclaimed, and made to see that there is no fruit to be had of those errors and enormities whereof they are now ashamed, since the end of those things (in the desert of them) is death, #Ro 6:21,22; but now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, they will have very great cause to be thankful to God for the cure; sith jealousy, frenzy, and heresy are held hardly curable, the leprosy in the head concludes a man utterly unclean, and excludes him the camp. Heresy is by the apostle compared to a precipice, vortex, or whirlpool, that first turns a man round, and then sucks him in, περιφερεσθε, #Heb 12:9, and by others to the Syren's banks, covered with dead men's bones, to Goodwin's Sands, that swallow up all ships that come near them, or to the harlot's house, whence few or none return alive, #Pr 7:26,27.

Ver. 5. **But he shall say, I am no prophet]** Ουκ εμι μοναχος, I am no monk, no clerk, I am not book learned, was the ignorant man's plea in Chrysostom's time, and so it is still to this day; though it serves not his turn. But here the like speech is taken up for a better purpose. *Hoc etenim principium est resipiscentiae*, saith Calvin here. Here begins their repentance, viz. in a free acknowledgment of their ignorance and utter unfitness for the office they had usurped.

**I am no prophet]** As for self-respects, that my belly might be filled and my back fitted, *Si ventri bene, si lateri* (Horat.), I sinfully took upon me to be one, but I am a husbandman, and can better hold the plough than handle a text; feed and follow a flock of sheep than feed the flock of God (that have golden fleeces, precious souls), taking the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. #1Pe 5:2

**For man taught me to keep cattle from my youth]** *q.d.* Shepherdy and husbandry I have been ever trained up to, and can better therefore skill of than of preaching, which is certainly *Ars artium et scientia scientiarum*, the art of arts, the science of sciences, as one said; whereunto Melancthon addeth that it is the misery of miseries. And of the same mind was his colleague, Luther, when he said, A householder's pains is great, a magistrate's greater, but a minister's greatest of all; and afterward added, that if it were lawful to him to leave his calling, he could with more ease and pleasure dig for his

living, or do any other hard labour, than undergo a pastoral charge. The mystery thereof is not an idle man's occupation, an easy trade, as some fondly conceit. The sweat of the brow is nothing to that of the brain; besides dangers on every hand for the work's sake, and armies of cares, that give neither rest nor respite, but are ready to overwhelm a man, *επισυστασις*, **#2Co 11:28**, *agmen subinde irruens* (Illyr.). This made Luther affirm that a minister labours more in a day many times than a husbandman doth in a month. Let no man, therefore, in taking up the ministry, dream of a delicacy; neither let slow bellies either invade it or hold it (as Popish asses and some impudent Alastores today do) to pick a living out of it. It was an honest complaint of a Popish writer, We, saith he, handle the Scripture, *tantum ut nos pascat et vestiati*, only that it may feed us and clothe us. And Cardinal Cajetan, not without cause, cries out, that those among them that should have been the salt of the earth had lost their savour; and were good for little else but looking after the rites and revenues of the Church (Com. in **#Mt 5**). Now for such as these that serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, that, like body lice, live upon other men's sweat, or, like rats and mice, do no more but devour victuals and run squeaking up and down, good is the counsel of the apostle, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," **#Eph 4:28**; let him earn it before he eat it, **#2Th 3:10**. This is hard to persuade those abbey lubbers, that live at ease in cloisters, feeding on the fat and drinking of the sweet; and those idol shepherds, that feed themselves and not the flock. *O Monachi vestri stomachi*. Erasmus truly told the Elector of Saxony that Luther, by meddling with the Pope's triple crown and with the monks' fat paunches, had procured himself so great ill-will among them. One of them brake out in a sermon into these angry words: If I had Luther here I would tear out his throat with my teeth; and then make no doubt with the same bloody teeth to eat my maker at the Eucharist. How much better were it for such false prophets with "quietness to work and eat their own bread," **#2Th 3:14**, than to drink the blood of other men with their lives (as David spake in another case, **#1Ch 11:19**), yea, with their souls, which perish by their insufficiency and gastrimargy! *Sed venter non habet aures*. But the belly hath no ears. Ease slayeth the foolish. *Non minus difficulter a deliciis*

*abstrahimur, quam canis ab uncto corio*, among other scandals and lets of the Jews' conversion this is not the least, that they must quit their goods to the Christian. And the reason is, for that in baptism they renounce the devil and all his works, part whereof (say the Papists among whom they live) are the Jews' goods; being gotten either of themselves or of their ancestors by usury. Now this is such cold comfort to men of their metal, that they have little mind to turn Christian; and as little doubtless have such as, with these in the text, have got their living by lying; and through covetousness with feigned words made merchandise or prize of men's precious souls, to return to the hard labour of husbandry or any other lawful but painful employment; yet this was done both in Wycliffe's days by many friars that fell to him, and embraced his opinions, and in the reformation by Luther, many monks and nuns betook themselves to honest trades, renouncing their Popish vows and orders; yea, Scultetus reporteth that at Augsburg, in Germany, by the powerful preaching of Dr John Speiser, A. D. 1523, some harlots forsook the public stews, and married to honest men, lived chastely, and were great painstaking persons.

Ver. 6. **And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands?]** Jerome here supposeth the false prophet crucified for his false doctrine, and thereupon thus questioned. This is better than that of the Popish interpreters, who will needs have it to be meant of Christ, and of his wounds on the cross, as a deceiver of the people, *Οπλανος*, #Mt 27:63, that deceiver to our very faces (Eustath.). Lucian the atheist villanously termeth him *εσκολοπισμενον σοφιστην*, the crucified deceiver; but the text is clear that the person here spoken to, and returning an answer, is the false prophet, now a true convert; as appeareth by his fruits, which he bears quick and thick; being like Aaron's rod, soon changed from a withered stick into a flourishing tree. Ashamed he is at heart of his former falsities; and as in heart, so in habit he is altered; for he will no longer wear a rough garment, the garb of prophets in those days, to deceive, as the Capuchins and other orders of friars, or rather liars, at this day, #2Ki 1:8 Isa 20:2 Mt 3:4. He abrenounceth and abjureth, *quasi conceptis verbis*, his former profession of a prophet or chief speaker among others.

**I am no prophet]** But a plain husbandman, or a shepherd; that is all I can truly pretend to. And lastly, in this verse, having passed through the Church's discipline as a seducer, he shall do as Joshua advised Achan, Give glory to the Lord my son, and confess thy sin, #**Jos 7:19**; he shall approve of the Church's severity used for his correction, though he should go maimed or marked for it to his dying day. In point of seducement (saith Mr Cotton, descanting upon this text), if a man upon conviction shall see the wickedness of his way, and humble his soul before God, and give satisfaction to the Church and State where he shall be convinced, on such conviction and repentance we find liberty to pardon, but yet stigmatize him. But what reason had the convocation held at Oxford to set a brand of ignominy upon the cheeks of those outlandish divines that came to assist them, because they pleased them not in the point of priests' marriage, which they defended? Or Bishop Laud for his *Stigmata Landis* on renowned Mr Prinne, for his constancy to the truth? How much better his predecessors, Stephen Langton, who crucified that pseudo Christ, who showed marks of wounds in his hands, feet, and sides, A.D. 1206, and Odo Severus, who burnt King Edwin's concubine (whom he most doted on) in the forehead with a hot iron, and banished her into Ireland, A. D. 934.

Ver. 7. **Awake, O sword, against my shepherd]** A powerful expression, containing a commission given out to the sword by way of apostrophe.

**Awake]** Or, up, as the Septuagint; up and about, thou that hast long lain locked up in the scabbard. Thus the sword is of God's sending; it is "bathed in heaven," #**Isa 34:5 Eze 14:17 Jer 47:6,7**. It is he that awakes it and sets it on work; he commands it, #**Am 9:4**, and ordereth it, #**Jer 50:25**. Let this patient us under it, as it did Job, #**Job 1:15,17,21**. Among philosophies the most noted sect for patience was that of the Stoics, who ascribed all to destiny.

**O sword]** *Framea*, which seems to come of ρομφαία (the Septuagint's word here), by putting φ before ρ; or *Gladie*, which comes *a clade*, from destruction; like as the Hebrew word *Chereb*, from desolating and laying waste. Hence the sword is said to "contemn the rod," #**Eze 21:10,13**, that is, all lighter and lesser judgments, which are but its forerunners, and whereof it seems to



say, What does this silly rod do here? Will not men stoop? Let me come: I will make them either bend or break; either yield, or I will have their blood.

**Against my shepherd]** *i.e.* Saith Calvin, against magistrates and ministers, God's under shepherds and associates in feeding the flock, labourers together with him, **#1Co 3:9**. But because Christ is the great Shepherd, **#Heb 13:20**, and "the good Shepherd," **#Joh 10:11**, *Optimus maximus*, that is, God's fellow companion, and yet, suspending his glory, became a man, to seek him out a flock in the wilderness; and afterwards laid down his life for his sheep, **#Joh 10:11**, underwent the deadly dint of God's devouring sword put into the hands of those men of God's hand, **#Ps 17:13**, who put him to many a little death all his life long, and at length to that cursed and cruel death of the cross: at which time the Shepherd was smitten and the sheep scattered, as this text is most fitly applied, **#Mt 26:31**; therefore I understand it chiefly of Christ, the chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, who "was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities," &c., **#Isa 53:5**. And this not by chance, or malice of his enemies only (though they laid upon him without mercy, nailing him to the tree in the hands and feet, which in all men are the most sensitive parts of the body, as being fullest of nerves and sinews, but in him much more as being of the finest temperature and most exquisite sense), but by the determinate counsel of God, as St Peter shows those kill-Christes, **#Ac 2:28**, and according to the Scriptures, that went before of him, and foretold all his passion, even to the casting of the dice upon his clothes, **#Ps 22 Isa 53**, by the reading of which lively description of Christ's sufferings in that chapter, Johannes Isaac, a Jew, confesseth that he was converted to the faith of Christ, *Hoc ego ingenue confiteor; ait ille, caput illud ad fidem Christi me adduxisse*. He is called God's Shepherd, because God anointed and appointed him to that office, putting a charge into his hands, **#Joh 10:1-18 17:13-21**, that he might tend them and tender them, and at length return them up again to his heavenly Father, without loss of any one. He is also called the Man by an excellence, that matchless man the chief of ten thousand; as his mother is called *hagnalma*, that famous virgin, whom all generations are bound to call blessed. He is Man God, both in one; and is therefore also called God's fellow, or mate, as being consubstantial

to the Father according to the Godhead, and very near akin to him according to the manhood, by reason of the hypostatical union of both natures into one person; the man Christ Jesus.

**Smite the shepherd]** That that blessed fountain of his blood {mentioned #Zec 13:1} may be opened, and the flock of God washed and healed and satiated, as the people were at the time when the rock was smitten and so set abroach; and as when God clave a hollow place in the jaw bone of the ass, so that there came water thereout, Samson drank and was revived, **#Jud 15:19**; and as when the alabaster box of ointment was broken all the house was filled with a sweet savour.

**And the sheep shall be scattered]** Scattered and scattered; shifting for themselves, and leaving Christ to the mercy of his enemies, who seized upon him, as so many carrion kites {a} upon a silly dove. Thomas (who once said, Come, lest us go die with him) disappears and is lost; Peter follows aloof off, but better he had been further off; John (if at least it were he) flees away stark naked for haste; Judas comes nearer to him, but to betray him with a kiss. But is this thy kindness to thy friend? Christ had indented with the enemy beforehand for their security, **#Joh 18:8**, so that they needed not have retreated so disorderly, and scattered as they did. But "the fear of man bringeth a snare," **#Pr 29:25**. Howbeit, man's badness cannot break off the course of Christ's goodness. For though they thus unworthily forsake him, and leave him at the worst (as they say), yet I will turn my hand, saith he, upon the little ones, *i.e.* I will recollect my dispersed flock (how little soever either for number, or respect in the world) and bring back my banished. So soon doth it repent the good Lord concerning his servants. He remembereth not iniquity for ever, saith the prophet, because mercy pleaseth him; and again, "He remembereth us in our low estates; for his mercy endureth for ever," **#Mic 7:18 Ps 136:23**. He looked back upon Peter when his mouth was now big swollen with oaths and execrations, and set him a weeping bitterly. He called for Thomas after his resurrection, and confirmed his weak faith by a wonderful condescension. He sealed up his love to them all again, restoring them to their ministerial employment; and not so much as once upbraiding them with their base dereliction but only with their unbelief. Lyra and other sense the text thus: I will turn my hand

upon the little ones, that is, I will so smite the Shepherd Christ, that not only the sheep shall be scattered, but the little lambs also, even the least and lowest Christians, shall have their share of sufferings, shall feel the weight of my hand, shall pledge the Lord Christ in that cup of afflictions that I have put into his hand shall be conformed to the lineage of God's Son as his co-sufferers, that he may be the firstborn among many brethren, **#Ro 8:29**. And this was fulfilled in the persecutions that followed soon after our Saviour's death. *Eccllesia haeres crucis*, saith Luther; and Persecution *est Evangelii genius*, saith Calvin. Persecution is the black angel that dogs the Church, the red horse that follows the white at the heels. And the comfort is, that God's holy hand hath special stroke in all those afflictions, that are laid upon his faithful people, "I will turn mine hand."

{a} A bird of prey of the family *Falconidae* and subfamily *Milvinae*, having long wings, tail usually forked, and no tooth in the bill. ÆD

Ver. 8. **Two parts therein shall be cut off and die]** *q.d.* They shall, they shall, however strange or incredible this sad tidings seems to you; it shall be even so, take my word for it. "Behold the severity of God," **#Ro 11:22**. In the Greek it is the resection, or, cutting off (*αποτομιαν*), as a surgeon cutteth off proud and dead flesh. "The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity," &c., **#Zep 3:5**. *Fiat iustitia, ruat coelum*, Let justice be done, let the heavens be destroyed, may seem to be his motto. In point of justice he stands not upon multitudes, **#Ps 9:17**. It is all one to him "whether against a nation or against a man only," **#Job 34:29**. National sins bring national plagues; heinous sins heavy punishments. In the universal deluge God swept away all, as if he had blotted out that part of his title, "The Lord, the Lord, gracious, merciful," &c., and had taken up that of Attilas, *Orbis flagellum*, the world's scourge. Sodom's sins were multiplied above measure; "therefore God took them away as he saw good," **#Eze 16:49,50**; and hath thrown them out (*προκεινται*), as St Jude speaketh, for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Herodotus, a heathen historian, saith the very same of the destruction of Troy, viz. that the ruins and rubbish thereof are set forth for an example of that noted rule, that God greatly punisheth great offences, and that heinous sins bring hideous plagues. Here we have two parts of three cut off in the land of Judea;

as it happened at the last destruction thereof by the Romans; at which time more than a million of men perished, see #Mt 24:21. {See Trapp on "Mt 24:21"}; And what think we shall become of Babylon the Great? Her sins reach up to heaven, whereunto they are even glued and fastened, as the word *εκολληθησαν* signifies, #Re 18:5, therefore she shall be brought down to hell with Capernaum (for *flagitium et flagellum sicut acus et filium*), therefore shall her plagues come in one day to confute their fond conceit of an eternal empire, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly overthrown with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her, full able to effect it, seem it to Babel's brats never so improbable or impossible, #Re 18:18. It was never besieged since it became Papal, but it was taken; whereas before it was held invincible. Sin that lieth at the bottom will easily undermine and overturn the walls, though never so strong built; as the voice from heaven told Phocas the murderer. The blood of that innocent Lamb of God lies heavily upon the whole nation of the Jews to this day. Their last devastation and present dismal dispersion is such, as that one of their own Rabbis concludes from thence that their Messiah must needs be come; and they must needs suffer so much for killing him.

**But the third shall be left therein]** A holy remnant kept for a reserve. Good husbands cast out all their grain into the oven, but keep some for seed. "But yet in it shall be a tenth," saith another prophet, #Isa 6:13: there shall be "two or three berries in the top of a tree, four or five in the outmost branches," #Isa 17:6. God's elect are so very few, that the world shall wonder, #Isa 8:18, and even hoot to see Christ's flock so very little, little, as our Saviour speaks, #Lu 12:22, as Israel stood like two little flocks of kids, when the Syrians filled the country, #1Ki 20:27. There were but a few names in Sardis; and many bad in the best Churches; as at Philippi, #Php 3:18. Christ wondered at one good Nathanael, as *rara avis in terris*; a rare bird in the earth, and when he comes, shall he find faith? How many, think you, shall be saved in this city? saith Chrysostom, in his fourth sermon to the people at Antioch. It will be a hard speech to you, but I will speak it: Though there be so many thousands, yet there cannot be found a hundred that shall be saved. And I doubt about them, too. And again, in his third sermon upon the Acts, he breaks out into this speech, *Non arbitror inter sacerdotes multos*

*esse qui salvi fiant*, I do not think that there are many, no, not among the ministry, that can be saved, since many are called, but few are chosen; like as all the people were called together by Samuel, but Saul only was chosen king. Only the called according to purpose are elected, and shall be glorified, **#Ro 8:28,29**. Christ at the last day will do as Joshua did to find out who had stolen the Babylonish garment; there were many brought together, and all to find out one, **#Jos 7:16-21** So, all shall then appear; out of them a small number deducted, that have heard of Christ. Out of them, those that have professed him, and out of them, those that have professed him in sincerity, and these will be *Mithe mispar*, a small few indeed. Hence they are called pearls, which are but few to the number of pebbles; jewels, which are but little to the lumber; strangers, that are nothing so many as homedwellers; sons of God, and of the royal blood; and of such there are but a few to common subjects. They are as a fold in a wide field; as a garden in a wild waste. *Rari quippe boni*, saith the poet (Juvenal). And *Pauci sunt qui philosophantur*, few there are who philosophize, saith Ulpian, the lawyer.

Ver. 9. **And I will bring the third part through the fire]** Few they were, but not faultless; they must, therefore, go through the fire, that there they may leave their dregs and dross behind them. For *Quod ignis est auro, lima ferro, ventilabrum tritico, lixivium panno, sal carni, hoc tribulatio est viro iusto*, saith Corn. a Lapide upon this text; that is, what the fire is to the gold, the file to iron, the fan to wheat, the soap to clothes, the salt to flesh, that is tribulation sanctified to a righteous man. God is said to have his "fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem," **#Isa 31:9**, to carry his through fire and through water, **#Ps 66:12**, from above to send fire into their bones, **#La 1:13**, to put them to the fiery trial, **#1Pe 4:12**; yea, he himself is a refiner's fire unto them, and fullers' soap. **#Mal 3:2** {See Trapp on "*Mal 3:2*"}; He knows them to be right gold, which will endure the seventh fire (alchemy gold will not so), and, therefore, he puts them to it; "that the trial of their faith, being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, though tried in the fire, may be found to praise and honour and glory," **#1Pe 1:7**; himself, meanwhile, goeth with them into the fire and pulleth them out as a brand, **#Zec 3:2** *Non sic impii*, not so the ungodly, **#Ps 1:4**. True it is, the trial of their works also shall be by fire, **#1Co 3:13**, and they shall give an account one day with all the world on a light flame

about their ears, #2Pe 3:12. Then shall they find that the law they are judged by is a fiery law, the tribunal is of fire, #Eze 1:27, the judge a consuming fire, #Heb 12:29, his attendants seraphims, that is, flaming creatures, #Heb 1:7, his pleading with sinners in fire of flame (εν πυρι φλογος), #2Th 1:8, the place of punishment a lake of fire fed with a river of brimstone, #Isa 30:33, a formidable fire it is, fed with tormenting temper, and kindled by God's own breath instead of bellows. Bellarmine is of the opinion that one glimpse of this fearful fire were enough to make a man not only turn Christian and sober, but hermit and monk, and to live after the strictest order that can be. Pope Clement V, upon the death of a nephew of his, and one of his catamites, <sup>{a}</sup> sent his chaplain to a conjuror, to inquire how it fared with him in the other world. The conjuror showed him to the chaplain, lying in a bed of fire in hell. This news so affected the wretched Pope, that he never held up his head, but, Nabal-like, died within a few days after it. But oh what a dreadful shriek gave his guilty soul, to see itself launching into an infinite ocean of scalding lead, and to think that it must swim naked therein for ever.

**And will refine them as silver is refined]** This is all the hurt he doth them by the fire; he hides pride from them, #Job 33:19, &c., and divides between the sin which he hates and the son whom he loves. For by this the iniquity of Jacob shall be purged; and this is all the fruit, the taking away of their sin, #Isa 27:9, which they may very well spare, and never hurt themselves. Surely, as one poison is antidotary to another, so is affliction to sin; when sanctified, it is no more penal, but medicinal; not a curse, but a cure: as oil of scorpions is good against the biting of scorpions; as the wine wherein a viper hath been drowned cureth a leprosy; as the juice of hemlock (a deadly plant) heals hot corroding ulcers, and assuageth the inflammation of the eyes; or as rhubarb, though full of choler, doth mightily purge choler. Moses neglected to circumcise his child (as we do our hearts, it is such a bloody work) till God met him and would have killed him. David could never see the benefit of affliction till God, by those sharp waters, had cleared up his eyesight. Gehazi's leprosy cured him; his white forehead made him have a whiter soul. Surely, as the refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, so is affliction to the soul. Corrections of instruction are the way of life, #Pr 6:23, but "he that refuseth

correction despiseth his own soul," **#Pr 15:32**. Winds and thunder clear the air (whereof they are the besoms, saith Rupertus), so do crosses the soul. If the outward man decay, the inward is thereby renewed, **#2Co 4:16**; and the winter of the one is the spring of the other. As the viper, when he is lashed, casteth up his poison; so doth the good soul, when afflicted, purge itself from all filth of flesh and spirit, striving to perfect holiness in the fear of God. These Jews, after they had been in the Babylonish furnace for idolatry, hated and feared that sin as much as the burnt child dreads the fire. They would die any death rather than admit an idol. Josephus tells how stoutly they opposed Pilate and Petronius, that would have set up Caesar's statue in their temples, offering their throats to the swords of the soldiers rather than they would endure that idol in God's house. What God is now doing with them, and for them, in this long time of their sad desolation and dispersion, who can tell? There are those who think that, after much purging and proving, as here, God will gather a Church of them to himself; according to that which followeth; "They shall call upon my name, and I will hear them: I will say, it is my people," &c. And that upon their profession of Christ shall come the sorest time of affliction that ever was, **#Zec 14:1,2**, when Gog and Magog, with all his troops and armies, shall compass the beloved city, **#Re 20:8,9**. But the Jews shall get a glorious conquest; for God himself from heaven will miraculously fight for them, **#Zec 14:3-5**, together with all the holy angels, the ministers of his judgments, **#Zec 14:5**. Sure it is, that the Turks fear some such thing as this; and therefore they cannot abide that any Jew among them should turn Christian. In the year 1528 a certain Jew, dwelling in Constantinople, became a good Christian, and was baptized; which the Turks understanding, were vehemently exasperated against him for it; fearing lest his conversion should prove prejudicial to their Mahometan religion, and, therefore, they apprehended and cruelly murdered him.

**And try them as gold is tried]** viz. That when I have tried them they may come forth as gold, **#Job 33:10**. Hence God's people fall into manifold temptations, **#Jas 1:2**; they fall, they go not into them step by step, but are precipitated, plunged into them; and not into one of them, or a few, but into manifold temptations, or trials; yea, fiery trials, so afflictions are called, because thereby God proves

what is in his people, **#De 8:16 Re 2:10**. Not to better his own knowledge of them either; for he knows all things, and is *intimo nostro intimior nobis*, **#Joh 2:25 Ac 1:24 Heb 4:12**. Artificers perfectly know the nature and properties of their own works, and shall not God see? **#Ps 94:9,10**. But *tentat ut sciat, hoc est, ut seire nos faciat* (August.), he trieth us, 1. That he may make discoveries of himself unto us, especially of his power and goodness; and so get him a name, as **#Isa 63:11-13 2Co 12:9**. Elijah would have water poured upon the sacrifices, yea, the altar covered therewith, that God's power might the more appear, in consuming it with fire from heaven, and the people thereupon might cry, Jehovah, he is God! Jehovah, he is God! **#1Ki 18:39**: think the same here. 2. That he may make discoveries of us to ourselves, and to others; who are apt to misjudge and undervalue us; as not only Satan did, **#Job 1:9**, but even Elihu also (though otherwise a good man, and the best of his friends), xxxiv. 36. But when they see our holy carriage under the cross, they can say of us, as that centurion did of our Saviour, **#Lu 23** "Verily, this was the Son of God"; and as one Culocerus, in the Church-history, when he saw the piety and constancy of the martyrs, he cried out, *Vere magnus est Deus Christianorum*, The Christian's God is a great God indeed. But as by afflictions we are made known to others, so to ourselves much more. We are apt either to overvalue or else to undervalue ourselves, till put to the trial; as is to be seen in the history of Saunders and Pendleton. Hard weather tries what health; wind and storms what sap; withered leaves soon fall off. Rotten boughs with heavy weights quickly break. Wooden vessels, set empty to the fire, soon break and leak; not so vessels of gold and silver. The best divination what men are is at the parting-way, as **#Eze 21:21**. When the fire comes to green wood it will appear what is within; when the pond is empty, what is in the bottom. It is not known what corn will yield

**And will refine them as silver is refined]** This is all the hurt he doth them by the fire; he hides pride from them, **#Job 33:19**, &c., and divides between the sin which he hates and the son whom he loves. For by this the iniquity of Jacob shall be purged; and this is all the fruit, the taking away of their sin, **#Isa 27:9**, which they may very well spare, and never hurt themselves. Surely, as one poison is antidotary to another, so is affliction to sin; when sanctified, it is no



more penal, but medicinal; not a curse, but a cure: as oil of scorpions is good against the biting of scorpions; as the wine wherein a viper hath been drowned cureth a leprosy; as the juice of hemlock (a deadly plant) heals hot corroding ulcers, and assuageth the inflammation of the eyes; or as rhubarb, though full of choler, doth mightily purge choler. Moses neglected to circumcise his child (as we do our hearts, it is such a bloody work) till God met him and would have killed him. David could never see the benefit of affliction till God, by those sharp waters, had cleared up his eyesight. Gehazi's leprosy cured him; his white forehead made him have a whiter soul. Surely, as the fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, so is affliction to the soul. Corrections of instruction are the way of life, **#Pr 6:23**, but "he that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul," **#Pr 15:32**. Winds and thunder clear the air (whereof they are the besoms, saith Rupertus), so do crosses the soul. If the outward man decay, the inward is thereby renewed, **#2Co 4:16**; and the winter of the one is the spring of the other. As the viper, when he is lashed, casteth up his poison; so doth the good soul, when afflicted, purge itself from all filth of flesh and spirit, striving to perfect holiness in the fear of God. These Jews, after they had been in the Babylonish furnace for idolatry, hated and feared that sin as much as the burnt child dreads the fire. They would die any death rather than admit an idol. Josephus tells how stoutly they opposed Pilate and Petronius, that would have set up Caesar's statue in their temples, offering their throats to the swords of the soldiers rather than they would endure that idol in God's house. What God is now doing with them, and for them, in this long time of their sad desolation and dispersion, who can tell? There are those who think that, after much purging and proving, as here, God will gather a Church of them to himself; according to that which followeth; "They shall call upon my name, and I will hear them: I will say, it is my people," &c. And that upon their profession of Christ shall come the sorest time of affliction that ever was, **#Zec 14:1,2**, when Gog and Magog, with all his troops and armies, shall compass the beloved city, **#Re 20:8,9**. But the Jews shall get a glorious conquest; for God himself from heaven will miraculously fight for them, **#Zec 13:3-5**, together with all the holy angels, the ministers of his judgments, **#Zec 13:5**. Sure it is, that the Turks fear some such thing as this; and therefore they cannot abide that any

Jew among them should turn Christian. In the year 1528 a certain Jew, dwelling in Constantinople, became a good Christian, and was baptized; which the Turks understanding, were vehemently exasperated against him for it; fearing lest his conversion should prove prejudicial to their Mahometan religion, and, therefore, they apprehended and cruelly murdered him.

**And try them as gold is tried]** viz. That when I have tried them they may come forth as gold, **#Job 23:10**. Hence God's people fall into manifold temptations, **#Jas 1:2**; they fall, they go not into them step by step, but are precipitated, plunged into them; and not into one of them, or a few, but into manifold temptations, or trials; yea, fiery trials, so afflictions are called, because thereby God proves what is in his people, **#De 8:16 Re 2:10**. Not to better his own knowledge of them either; for he knows all things, and is *intimo nostro intimior nobis*, **#Joh 2:25 Ac 1:24 Heb 4:12**. Artificers perfectly know the nature and properties of their own works, and shall not God see? **#Ps 94:9,10**. But *tentat ut sciat, hoc est, ut scire nos faciat* (August.), he trieth us, 1. That he may make discoveries of himself unto us, especially of his power and goodness; and so get him a name, as **#Isa 63:11-13 2Co 12:9**. Elijah would have water poured upon the sacrifices, yea, the altar covered therewith, that God's power might the more appear, in consuming it with fire from heaven, and the people thereupon might cry, Jehovah, he is God! Jehovah, he is God! **#1Ki 18:39**: think the same here. 2. That he may make discoveries of us to ourselves, and to others; who are apt to misjudge and undervalue us; as not only Satan did, **#Job 1:9**, but even Elihu also (though otherwise a good man, and the best of his friends), **#Job 34:36**. But when they see our holy carriage under the cross, they can say of us, as that centurion did of our Saviour, **#Lu 23:47** "Verily, this was the Son of God"; and as one Culocerus, in the Church history, when he saw the piety and constancy of the martyrs, he cried out, *Vere magnus est Deus Christianorum*, The Christian's God is a great God indeed. But as by afflictions we are made known to others, so to ourselves much more. We are apt either to overvalue or else to undervalue ourselves, till put to the trial; as is to be seen in the history of Saunders and Pendleton. Hard weather tries what health; wind and storms sap the strength; withered leaves soon fall off. Rotten boughs with heavy weights quickly break.

Wooden vessels, set empty in the fire, soon break and leak; not so vessels of gold and silver. The best divination what men are is at the parting way, as **#Eze 21:21**. When the fire comes to green wood it will appear what is within; when the pond is empty, what is in the bottom. It is not known what grain will yield till it come to the flail; nor what grapes, till it come to the press. Grace is like the stone chrysolampis, *quem lux celat prodit obscurum*, which shines brightest in the dark (Solinus). The skill of a pilot is unknown but in a tempest; the valour of a captain but in a battle; the faithfulness of a wife but in an assault. The wicked tried are found to be but reprobate silver; or, at best, but alchemy gold, that endureth not the seventh fire. They are ἀμφίβοιοι, as crocodiles, chameleons, bats, sponges, &c. They murmur when tried, as **#Ps 78:40,41**; or curse, as Micah's mother, **#Jud 17:2**; or fret, and howl upward, as wolves when hungry, **#Isa 8:21**; or faint in the day of affliction, as Saul, who lay upon the ground like a beast, **#1Sa 28:20**, or Nabal, who lay in his bed like a block; or desert God and his cause, as those renegades, **#Da 11:32**, and those in the Palatinate, who defected to Popery as fast as leaves fall off the trees in autumn. Many titular Christians among us were, in times of peace, but as wolves in a cage, but as lions tamed by art; they wanted nothing but liberty and opportunity to show their wolvisish and worrying natures, which now these late shedding and discriminating times have sufficiently discovered. "Have all these workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up God's people as they eat bread, and call not upon God," **#Ps 14:4**. They shall call upon my name, and I will hear them. No time for hearing of prayers and obtaining of suits like that of affliction. Those are *mollissima fandi tempera*, the time of affliction is the very time of supplication; then our hearts are largest, then God's ear is most open. Then the saints may have anything for asking, **#Ps 50:15 91:15**. Thus Lot had Zoar at his request, **#Ge 19:18-23**. Paul had all the souls in the ship given him, **#Ac 27:22-25** Jacob, greatly fearing to be bereft of his Benjamin, prayed, God give you bowels of mercy before the man, **#Ge 43:14**. He prayed it, and he had it, **#Ge 43:30** "For Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother," &c. God reserves his best comforts for the worst times; as the feast maker kept his best wine till the last, **#Joh 2:10**; as the mother brings forth her conserves and cordials when the child is the most sick. Israel was never so royally provided for as in the wilderness. I

will bring her into the wilderness and speak to her heart, **#Ho 2:14**. As a bone, once broken, is stronger after setting, and as lovers are never greater friends than after falling out; so is it between God and his people. Affliction exciteth devotion, as the bellows do the fire, and excited devotion prevaieth much, **#Jas 5:16**.

**I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God]** By a gracious compliance they shall, with highest estimations, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours, bestow themselves upon that God that hath so far owned and honoured them as to strike a covenant with them; the fruits whereof are sure mercies, compassions that fail not, all the blessings of this and a better life. A covenant is the collection of many promises, as a constellation is the collection of many stars; and though it be (in sum) but one promise, "I will be thy God," yet it is such a one as comprehends all, and is therefore fifteen times, at least, mentioned in Scripture. It is the substance of the covenant of grace, saith Junius; the soul of it, saith Pareus; the head or top of it, saith Musculus; *Deus meus et omnia*, saith Luther, God is mine, all is therefore mine. But then, as God must be our All-sufficient, so we must be his altogether; and when he cries out, Who is on my side, who? "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel," **#Isa 44:5**. Oh it is a blessed sign that God hath chosen us first, **#1Jo 4:19**, when we choose God, as **#Ps 73:25**, sincerely avouching him for our God. Sincerity (or evangelical perfection) is the only absolute condition of the covenant of grace, **#Ge 17:1**. God and the saints have ever judged of men by this: "Judge me, O Lord, according to mine integrity," saith David. The promises are made to it, **#Ps 119:1 Mt 5:8**. God's eye is upon it, as in David the man after God's own heart. He blesseth the little that such have, as in Nathanael, Cornelius, the eunuch. He passeth by their infirmities, as in Asa, **#1Ki 15:14**, and accepteth their services nevertheless, as **#2Ch 30:19,20**.

{a} A boy kept for unnatural purposes. (ED

## Chapter 14

Ver. 1. **Behold, the day of the Lord cometh]** Jerusalem had her day, and knew it not, #Lu 19:42 (Jerusalem was not Jerusalem, the vision of peace saw not the things that belonged to her peace); God therefore will have his day of vengeance, as she had of visitation. He hath his season, his harvest for judgment, #Mt 13:30; and when wickedness is ripe in the field he will allow it to grow no longer, lest it shed and spread, but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance. These Jews were by their own confession the children of them which had killed the prophets, #Ac 2:23; and, by killing the Lord Christ with wicked hands, they had filled up the measure of their fathers, #Mt 23:31,32; what could therefore the Lord do less to a nation so incorrigibly flagitious than bring wrath upon them to the utmost, #1Th 2:16 "than send forth his armies and destroy those murderers, and burn up their cities?" #Mt 22:7. When God did this execution here mentioned is hard to say: whether by Antiochus Epiphanes, or rather Epimanes, as some truly called him, for that, being exceedingly mad against the Jews, he "persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it," #Ac 26:11 Ga 1:13. Or by the Roman spoilers at that last devastation under the command of Titus. Or by Cosroes, the Persian, and Homer, the Arabian, who successively harassed and razed Jerusalem, rifling the houses, ravishing the women, killing whom they pleased, and making the rest pay dearly for the very heads they wore; which servitude lasted till Godfrey of Bullin set them at liberty, so the Gloss here senseth it. Or lastly, by Gog and Magog, that is, by the Great Turk (for Magog is the Scythian nation, from whom came the Turks, lords of Meshec and Tubal, that is, of Cappadocia and Iberia; where they first began to reign), as is before hinted, I take not upon me to determine. Most comentators understand it to be the last overthrow of the Romans. The Spirit might have an eye to the Anti-Christian persecutions of the orthodox professors of the Romish Edomites.

**And thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee]** Freely and fearlessly, none rising up to make them afraid, the vanquished shall be so disabled and dispirited. Thus the silly doves are glad to save themselves by flight, not fight; sometimes they sit in their dove cots, and see their nests destroyed, and young ones killed, not daring once to rescue or revenge.

Ver. 2. **For I will gather all nations]** The Romans, that styled and held themselves lords of all nations, and who had levied a mighty army out of all nations to fight against Jerusalem. See Joseph. B. J. III 1, 3. Or Gog and Magog, with all his armies and associates, **#Eze 37:4-6**, shall compass the beloved city, **#Re 20:8,9**. See **#Zec 14:1**. {See Trapp on "Zec 14:1"} Would any man take the Church's picture? then let him, saith Luther, paint a silly poor maid sitting in a wood or wilderness, and compassed about with hungry lions, wolves, boars, and bears, &c., and in the midst of a great many furious men assaulting her every moment; let him give her, say I, that of Martial for her motto,

“ *In me omnis terraeque, aviumque, marisque rapina est.*”

**And the city shall be taken]** *Non tamen ad exitium, sed ad exercitium.* Not yet for destruction but for a lesson. I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage (saith the Lord, **#Jer 12:7**). I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies. At which times there is usually, as at Athens when taken by Sulla, ἀνελενης σφαγη, a bloody butchery.

**And the houses rifled]** As at the sack of Constantinople by the Turks; where the soldiers are said to have divided money among themselves by whole hatfulls; and were therewith so enriched, that it is a proverb among them to this day, if any grow suddenly rich, to say, he hath been at the sacking of Constantinople. The Emperor had in vain many times with tears requested to have borrowed money of his covetous subjects, to have been employed in the defence of the city; but they would still swear that they had it not, as men grown poor for want of trade; which, in few days after, their enemies found in such abundance, that they wondered at their wealth, and derided their folly, that possessing so much, they would bestow so little in the defence of themselves and their country.

**And the women ravished]** These are the common calamities of war; in the lawless violence whereof those three commandments, "Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal," as they are ranked together in the law, so they are usually violated together; hence **#Isa 13:16** "Their children also shall be

dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished." The Irish rebels bound the husband to the bedpost while they abused his wife before his face. In the time of King Edward III the French soldiers at Winchelsea, in Sussex, took their lustful turns upon a beautiful woman in the Church, and at the time of divine service, until they had turned her out of the world, as a learned man phraseth it, *Donec mulier fatigata spiritum exhalaret* While a weary woman to breath out her life. (Walsing.).

**And half of the city shall go forth into captivity]** An evil, an only evil, threatened **#De 28:15-68**, and fulfilled to the utmost upon this nation, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked, as can hardly be peered or paralleled. I have noted before, that this their last captivity and dispersion is such, as that one of their own Rabbis concludeth from thence that their Messiah must needs be come, and they must needs suffer so much for killing him. They used to say that there is still an ounce of the golden calf in all their public calamities. There is another thing lieth more heavily upon them to this day, were they but sensible of it. Let us be sending up, and sighing out for them that of the Psalmist, "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad," **#Ps 14:7**.

**And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city]** A remnant shall be reserved, as it were for royal use; whether a third part, as **#Zec 13:8**, or a half, as here, it is not much material; *in numeris non est anxie laboremum*, saith Calvin here; for the direct number it is neither here nor there, as we say. God shall reserve unto himself a set and select number. He who comforteth those that are cast down speaketh this to his, for encouragement. The Church may be shaken, not shivered; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed, **#2Co 4:9**.

Ver. 3. **Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations]** Some read it, among those nations; he shall be the Archistrategus, the commander-in-chief of those armies, which he hath brought together against Jerusalem, to revenge upon her the quarrel of his covenant. But I like the other way better; because it is purposely spoken for the comfort of saints in evil times. When therefore there is *dignus vindice nodus, et periculum par animo*

*Alexandri*, as he was wont to say, when it is time for God to arise, that his enemies may be scattered, and those that hate him flee before him; he will arise and have mercy upon Zion; he will awake, as in the days of old; he will come forth from his holy place to the rescue of his praying people. "There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah," #Ps 76:3. There he appeared "more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey." There he did, and there he will; for this is a common and current Scriptural medium. God shall fight against those nations, the very rod of his wrath, #Isa 10:9; which, after he hath worn to the stump, he will cast it into the fire. The wicked are called God's sword, #Ps 17:13. But it will fall out with them as with that sword which Hector gave Ajax: which as long as he used it against his enemies it served for help and defence; but after he began to abase it to the harm of harmless beasts it turned into his own bowels.

**As when he fought in the day of battle]** With his own bare hand, as it were, #Isa 52:10, and in a miraculous manner, as he did for Israel at the Red Sea, for Joshua, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, &c., and as he shall do at that last great battle against Antichrist and his adherents, #Re 20:8-10, which is here haply pointed at. Let the Lord but arise only and his enemies shall be scattered; but if he once take hold of shield and buckler for defence, draw out the spear and sword, these weapons of offence, and appear as a man of war, #Ex 15:3, or as a Lord and victor of wars (so the Chaldee there hath it), he will charge through and through, he will "burn them together," #Isa 27:4, and in the same place, #2Sa 23:7.

Ver. 4. **And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives]** That is, he shall so put forth his power for the defence of his people, as if he did visibly appear among them, and beheld the fight from the top of a mountain; like as Xerxes used to pitch his tent on high, and stand looking on his army when in fight, to encourage them, and to send out orders. From this mount it was that God departed, after many former departures, from Jerusalem, #Eze 11:23. And what wonder, when as *Har Hamischa*, the mount of unction, was become *Har Hamaschith*, the mount of corruption, #2Ki 23:13? the bold Jews having set up their idol in this mount Olivet, even in the sight of the Lord; so that he never looked out of the sanctuary but he beheld the vile hill of abominations. From this



mount it was that our Lord Christ ascended into heaven, **#Ac 1:11,12**. There he was apprehended by the Jews, **#Joh 18:1 Mt 26:30**; there therefore it is prophesied that he shall stand against them by the Romans, say some, out of Joseph. B. J. vi. 3, and that when these things should come to pass the Jews might know that their utter destruction was near at hand. So God showed unto the Ninevites on what side their city should be taken; and what at that time should be the power and the attempts of the enemy against them, **#Na 2:1-3:19**, and yet neither of these repented for all this. Others, more probably, hold that here is promised such a powerful presence of God for the relief of his people as shall far exceed the glory that appeared the promulgation of the law, when the mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs, **#Ps 114:6**; so terrible also was the sight, that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake," **#Heb 12:21**. I also see and tremble at the resemblance (said a holy man) between that giving of the law and the requiring of it at the last day. In the one mount Sinai only was on a flame; all the world shall be so in the other. To the one Moses (that climbed up that hill, and alone saw it) says, "God came with ten thousand of his saints"; in the other, thousand thousands shall minister to him, and ten thousand thousands shall stand before him. Hereunto some refer that obscure passage in the next verse, "The Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee," and that at the day of judgment Christ shall descend with all his angels into mount Olivet, which hangs over the valley of Jehoshaphat, that there he may plead with all nations, for his people, and for his heritage Israel, whom they have scattered, and parted their land, **#Joe 3:2**. Further they say, that mount Olivet shall then be shaken with a very great earthquake; so that it shall cleave in the midst, and leave a very great valley; it shall enlarge the valley of Jehoshaphat, that it may be able to receive those that are there to be judged by Christ. Thus Lessius, Sa, a Costa, a Lapide, who also citeth for his purpose, Clemens Remarius, lib. vii. Constit. Ap. cap. 33, speaking thus, *Mons ipse Oliveti gloriae venientis cedit et in quatuor partes dissectus longissime diffugiet, ut tribunali iudicis theatrum totius orbis assistat, i.e.* Mount Olivet shall give place to the glory of Christ when he cometh; and being cleft into four parts, it shall fly far asunder, to the end that the theatre of the whole world may stand before the tribunal of the judge. Thus he, and surely the following **#Zec 14:6-8**, &c.,

seem to favour this interpretation, and to have relation to the last day. But in prophecies not yet fulfilled, as this may be one, it is better and more sure to expect and stay for the explication by the event than to give it without any certain ground.

Ver. 5. **And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains]** Or, ye shall flee the valley of the mountains, *sc.* of mount Olivet, made by God, {#Zec 14:4} by whom the Romans were set to work to garrison mount Olivet against the Jews; and, by digging down a great part of it, to fill up the brook Kidron, or the town ditch, and to bring a wall (wherewith they compassed about the whole city) through the midst of this mount; whereby the city was greatly pressed, and much annoyed. This mountain ye shall flee (as many of you as are *Azal*; that is, separated: confer #Ex 24:11 Isa 43:4), and repair to Pella, a place of rest provided for you. Not without some perturbation of spirit (though causeless), as in common calamities it happens; and the like shall befall the very elect also at the last day, till they have recollected themselves, till they remember that now their redemption draweth nigh.

**And ye shall flee]** *sc.* With utmost haste and fright; death being that terrible of terribles, as the philosopher calleth it, Nature's slaughterman, hell's purveyor.

**Like as ye fled from before the earthquake]** Which might be as sad and as sudden at that at Pleures, in Rhetia, A.D. 1618, Aug. 25, the whole town was overcovered with a mountain, which, with its most swift motion, buried 1500 people (Alst. Chronol.).

**In the days of Uzziah king of Judah]** Whether this earthquake occurred just at that instant time when Uzziah offered incense, and was therefore smitten with leprosy (as the Jewish doctors affirm), I have not to say. But of the horror of it, besides #Am 1:1, Josephus relateth, that a mountain towards the west cleft in sunder and removed from its proper place the space of four furlongs, or half a mile; and farther it had proceeded, had not a great mountain towards the east stayed its course. Camden reporteth the like hereunto to have happened in Herefordshire, A. D. 1571, Cal. Martij 12; about six o'clock in the evening, a great hill lifted up itself with a huge noise, and ascending into a higher place, carried along with it trees,

flocks of cattle, sheep cotes, walked about from Saturday night till Monday noon, overturned a certain chapel that stood in its way. This kind of earthquake philosophers call *Brasmatia*, shaking of the earth.

**And the Lord my God shall come]** *q.d.* Let scoffers doubt and deride, saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" My God will effect with his hand what he hath spoken with his mouth, he will, he will, #**Hab 2:8**. There is an emphasis in the word "my" (*q.d.* The God whose I am, yea, ολωσ εκεινος, wholly his, as Aristotle saith of a servant), and another in the following apostrophe.

**And all the saints with thee]** The prophet, in a holy indignation at his hearers' obstinacy and untractableness, turns him thus to God; like as doth old Jacob, #**Ge 49:18**; and our blessed Saviour cried out with the people's perverseness, #**Mt 11:25,26**. {See Trapp on "Ge 49:18"} {See Trapp on "Mt 11:25"} {See Trapp on "Mt 11:26"}

Ver. 6. **And it shall come to pass in that day]** That is, saith Diodati, after the destruction of antichrist, shall the Son of God come in, who shall bring the Church into its glory; where without any vicissitude or variation of day and night, of calamity and prosperity, of knowledge and ignorance, it shall enjoy eternal light by the sight of God, #**Isa 60:19,20 Re 21:23 22:5**. Thus he. Between this fall of antichrist and the consummation of all some place the full and final restoration of the Jews, and make this a description of that glorious Church they shall then erect. There shall be no darkness, but perpetual light. It shall not be, saith our prophet here, sometimes clear, sometimes misty, (variable and uncertain weather, now fair, now foul), but one day, not of day and night; for in the evening, when night is wont to come, it shall be light; as if he should say, it shall be always day and no night, ανεσπερος ημερα, a nightless day, a morning without clouds, a clear shining after rain, as David in another case, #**2Sa 22:4**, and as with the Hyperboreans, the whole half year is said to be but one continuous day; so that they sow and reap in a day.

Ver. 7. **Which shall be known to the Lord]** And that should suffice us, without further curious inquiries, *de re nobis et toti mundo abscondita* (Calvin), concerning the set times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power, #**Ac 1:7**. The Muscovites use

to say in a dark point, in a difficult question, God and our great duke know all this; and in other talk, all we enjoy health, and life, and all from our great duke; therefore let us leave all to him. Should not we much more to God? Time hath already confuted those learned men, who from **#Da 12:11** pitched their calculation for the Jews' restoration upon the year 1650. Those that shall live a few years longer shall see what will become of their confidence, who have undertaken to prove, out of Daniel and the Revelation, that the prophetic numbers come to an end with the year of our Lord 1655, because then the seventh trumpet shall sound; and then the six thousand years from the creation of the world do expire, as they compute.

Ver. 8. **Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem]** *i.e.* Abundance of spiritual graces, frequently in Scripture compared to waters, for their cooling, cleansing, quickening property, **#Isa 44:3 Eze 36:25 47:1 Joh 7:38**. And of these waters, without all doubt, our baptism, ordained of God, is a figure and sacrament. "Living waters" they are called; that is, running, as a spring, not standing, as a pool. The godly esteem of life by that stirring they find in their souls, **#Isa 38:15,16** "In all these things is the life of my spirit"; else they lament as over a dead soul. O live, live (saith a reverend man, Dr Harris), live quickly, live much, live long. Many live more in a day than others in a year; for life consisteth in action; and so much every man liveth as he acteth graciously. Up, therefore, and be doing something of worth; whereof ye may testify that ye have lived. And for this, get a principle of life, the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, and then, if ye live in the Spirit, ye shall also walk in the Spirit, **#Ga 5:25**, and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, **#Zec 14:16**. The waters of the sea, though by their natural course they follow the centre, yet, by obedience to the moon, they are subject to her motion; and so turn, and return, ebb and flow, and are kept in continual motion, to keep them from corruption; so those that are spiritual, though naturally they are carried downward, and the best that of themselves they can do is but dead work; yet, so far as they are spiritualized, heavenlized, they are acting for God, and all their deeds are wrought in him, **#Joh 3:21**. It is their great care to wear out, not rust out; to burn out, not to be blown out; yea, to flame out, not to smother out; to serve out their generation, as David did, not to

idle it out; to live their utmost, and not (as #Job 27:15,23) to be buried, before half dead.

**In summer and winter shall it be]** Such is the perennity and perpetuity of true grace; it ever flows—more *perennis aquae*, perpetual waters. As it is not like the river Araris, of which Caesar saith that it cannot with eyes be discerned whether it flows forward or backward, so slow and still is its motion; so neither is it like the brook Cherith, that dried up before the prophet, because there had been no rain in the land, #1Ki 17:7; or like the river Novanus, in Lombardy, which (saith Pliny) at every midsummer solstice swelleth and runneth over the banks; but at midwinter is clean dry; but as the waters of the sanctuary, #Eze 47:4,5, &c.; and as the pool of Siloam, which served all Jerusalem, and was for every use to the citizens; or Hezekiah's water courses, #2Ki 20:20 Ne 3:15,16, whereunto some think that the prophet here alludeth. "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spake," saith the evangelist, "of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive," #Joh 7:38,39.

Ver. 9. **And the Lord shall be king over all the earth]** At the sounding of the seventh angel the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and over, #Re 11:15,17. Cosmographers tell us that if we divide all the known world into 30 parts, the heathen's part is as 19 of this 30; the Mahometans' as six, the Christians' as five only. And of those that profess the name of Christ, three parts, at least, of those five are possessed by idolatrous Papists; who say they believe in one only true God, but indeed set up many he saints and she saints, whom they adore with divine worship; and therein are no better than Pagans. Hence they are called Gentiles, #Re 11:2, and are said to worship devils, #Re 9:20 cf. 1Co 10:20. Cardinal Bembus saith of their St Francis, that he was *in numerum Deorum ab Ecclesia Rom. relatus*. At Rureround, in Gelderland, a play was acted by the Jesuits, A. D. 1622, under the title of the apotheosis of St Ignatius, the founder of that order. In the year 610 Boniface IV ordained the feast of All-saints, after that he had obtained of the emperor the idol temple at Rome, called the Pantheon; wherein he placed the Virgin Mary in the place of Cybele, the mother of the heathen gods. Now the time is yet to come (and oh that it were

come!) that, all false worship laid aside and abandoned, the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in; and from the Jews, as some gather from this text compared with others, shall the gospel go out to all nations of the world, **#Isa 2:3**, who with one consent shall submit themselves to Christ. Asshur and Egypt, all those large and vast countries, the whole tract of the east and of the south, shall embrace the faith of Christ and be converted, **#Isa 19:23-25 27:12,13 Mic 7:11,12 Ps 68:31 72:9-11 Re 21:14**. *O dieculam illam!* O for a short time. Neither need we think it incredible; God can hiss for them and fetch them in suddenly; he can cause a nation to conceive and bring forth in one day, **#Isa 66:8,9**. A text that Cardinal Pole, in a letter to Pope Julius III, abused, by applying it to the bringing in of Popery again so umversally and suddenly in Queen Mary's days.

**Shall there be one Lord]** Be the gods of the heathen good fellows, saith one, the true God is a jealous God, and will not share his glory with another. Be it that to Pagans and Papagans <sup>{a}</sup> there are gods many and lords many; to us there is but one God, and but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. As for all others, say we of them, as that heathen once did, *Contemno minutos istos Deos modo Iovem propitium habeam*, I care not for those petty deities, so long as Jehovah favoureth me. Hear, O Israel, saith Moses, **#De 6:4**, Jehovah, thy God, Jehovah is one. The Hebrew word there used for one hath *Daleth*, the last letter, which also stands in number for four, extraordinary great in the original; <sup>{Hebrew Text Note}</sup> to signify, say the Jewish doctors, that this one God shall be worshipped in the four corners of the earth.

**And his name one]** That is, one way of worship; all superstitions being abolished, see **#Mic 4:5**. Or, "his name," that is, his glory, as **#Ps 8:1**, his transcendant excellency shall be super eminent; he shall have a name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee may bow. Thus the word "name" is used both in divine and human authors, **#Ge 6:1-4**. Men of name, that is, of renown; so **#Nu 1:16 16:2 Ac 1:15**, the number of names, that is, of the chieftains that were fit to act in the election. Contrary whereunto is men without name, **#Job 30:8**, men written in the earth, **#Jer 17:13**, shrouded in the sheet of shame, and whose happiness it is to be forgotten in the

city, #Ec 8:10.— *ingloria vita recedit*. So the poets call eminent and famous men *Nomina*, as *Ovid doth Augustus*:

“ *Vive tibi, et longe Nomina magna fuge.*”

And speaking of some famous person, he

saith,

“ *Claros inter habens nomina clara viros.*”

{a} A hostile formation:= Papist, Popish (with allusion to *pagan*). (ED

Ver. 10. **All the land shall be turned as a plain**] Or, shall be compassed about as a plain, *ut aequore plano*, so the Tigurine translation. God shall enlarge the bounds of his Church; he shall lay all level, that people may come in amain from all parts. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways smooth, #Lu 3:5 "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellence of our God," #Isa 35:1,2. The prophet here showeth that all the land shall be inhabited, from one end unto another; from Geba, the northern confines, to Rimmon, the southborder, #Jos 15:32,57. And from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first (or old) gate, #Ne 3:6, which stood westward, unto the corner gate, {see #2Ch 26:9 25:28} or the gate that looketh eastward. The limits of the Church shall be greatly enlarged; the rough and rugged mountains being made as the smooth and pleasant champaigns. The faithful shall pass from Geba to Rimmon, from the mountains of myrrh and hills of frankincense, #So 4:6, to the pomegranates, for so Rimmon signifieth, and from the plenty of that fruit there this place seemeth to have taken its name (Masius in #Jos 19:18); that is, from humiliation and supplication for pardon and power against corruption, to love and good works, looking up and pressing hard toward, the high prize proposed unto them; as the many grains within the case of the

pomegranate do point, and, as it were, all look up together, unto the crown or circle that is without, upon the head of it.

**To the king's winepresses]** Which were on the west side, where the former two half-compasses did meet to make up a whole compass. Certain it is, that Jerusalem was a very large and spacious city, comprehending almost four miles, at least, say those that have written of it. There was in it the upper and the nether town, whence it is called, Je-rushalaim in the dual. There was afterwards the old town and the new, called Boretha, or Caenopolis. But, **#Eze 40:41-49**, God showeth the prophet a new temple, larger than all the old Jerusalem put all together; and a new Jerusalem, larger than all the land of Canaan; by these very dimensions showing that these things cannot be understood but spiritually. And the new Jerusalem in the Revelation, as it lieth foursquare, looking every way to the four corners of the earth (like as Constantinople doth, which is, therefore, said to be a city fatally founded to command), so the measure of it is twelve thousand furlongs, **#Re 21:16**; which, according to some, make no less than 1500 miles.

Ver. 11. **And men shall dwell in it]** Heb. They shall dwell in it, *sc.* Multitudes of men. The new Jerusalem, the Church, gathered by the preaching of the gospel, shall not be thinly inhabited, as the wilderness of Judaea was; it shall not lie waste for want of people, as divers parts of Turkey do. It shall not need to call in the country, as in Nehemiah's days, to replenish it, **#Ne 11:7**; but it shall be fully thrust as a hive is with bees, where they hang out on heaps through want of room within; or as Jerusalem was wont to be at the three solemn feasts; or, lastly, as the temple was at those feasts where the people were so crowded that they were glad to stand and pray, for kneel or bow they could not. See **#Isa 51:3 Jer 31:38-40 Ob 19,20**.

**And there shall be no more utter destruction]** Heb. *Cherem*, which the Vulgate interpreted rendereth, *Anathema*; There shall be no more curse, no execrable or accursed thing; no casting out by excommunication; no cause to do so. See the same **#Re 22:3**. No Canaanite in the Lord's house, as **#Zec 14:21**. Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no stranger pass through her any more, **#Joe 3:17**, such shall be her sanctity. Others expound it of her safety and security, as in the following words, Jerusalem shall be safely



inhabited. See the like **#Jer 23:6 33:16** "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, *Jehovah Tsidkenu*, The Lord our righteousness." A stately name indeed, and that which carries safety in the front of it. In Ezekiel the Church is called *Jehovah Shammah* The Lord is there; and the Psalmist gives the notation, and this note upon it, "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early" (*ακινητος και ακινητος*). But the Lord our righteousness is a more august name. It is Christ's own name; and imports that Christ will save his people from their sins (which would lay them naked to the wrath of God and rage of enemies), he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities, and then he need not fear what man can do unto him, **#Mt 1:21 Ps 130:8**. It was said of Achilles, that he was *Styge armatus*; but every child of the Church is *Coelo, Christo, Deo armatus* he hath the peace of God within him and the power of God without him; and, therefore, cannot but be safe as in a tower of brass, or town of war **#Ps 90:1**.

Ver. 12. **And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite, &c.**] The precedent promises that were so great and glorious, the prophet doth now further enlarge and illustrate in the following verses; and, first, the conquest of the enemies, **#Zec 14:12-15**; next, the profession of Christ among all nations of the world, **#Zec 14:16-19**; and lastly, the sanctity of the Church, **#Zec 14:20,21**. The conquest of the enemies is set forth, first, by God's strange judgments upon them, **#Zec 14:12**; secondly, by the means, both they shall despatch one another; and Judah shall fight bravely against them, **#Zec 14:13,14**; thirdly, their wealth and substance shall become a prey, **#Zec 14:14**; fourthly, their horses of service, and all the beasts they bring with them, shall be as strangely plagued as the men themselves, **#Zec 14:15**.

**That have fought against Jerusalem]** God will go forth and fight against them, **#Zec 14:3**, so that they shall wish they had never meddled. *Haec erit plaga qua plagabit*. God hath a mighty hand, **#Jas 4:9**, and it is a fearful thing to fall into it, **#Heb 10:31**, for who knoweth the power of his wrath? **#Ps 90:11**. One stroke of this hard and heavy hand broke the angels' backs, and cast them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment, **#2Pe 2:4**. Job felt but his little finger, as it were, and yet cries out for help. "Have pity upon

me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me," #**Job 19:21**. It had but lightly touched him, and yet he was hardly able to endure it. Oh the bloody welts that God's hand hath left upon the backs of his best children! Woe, then, to his enemies when he comes forth to fight against them.

**Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet]** They shall pine away in their iniquities, #**Le 26:30**; their beauty shall consume away like a moth, #**Ps 39:11**; they shall melt as wax before the sun, or as the fat of lambs before the fire. God, if he be not unto them as a lion to tear the caul of their hearts in sunder, yet he will be as a moth, and as a worm, insensibly to consume them, #**Ho 5:12,14**. If he break not their teeth in their mouths, by smiting them upon the cheekbone, yet he will make them to melt away as waters which run continually; as a snail which melteth, and as the untimely birth of a woman that never seeth the sun, #**Ps 58:6-8**. God hath secret ways to waste his enemies, and to bring them on their knees when they are best underset. He can trip up their heels when they are standing upon their feet, and lay them low enough in the slimy valley where are many already like them, and more shall come after them, #**Job 21:31,32**. God hath a Marasmus, an evil messenger for a malicious persecutor; as he had for Antiochus Epiphanes, #/**RAPC 1Ma 6:8-13**; for both the Herods; for Maximius, the tyrant; for Philip II of Spain, Charles IX of France, Queen Mary of England, Stephen Gardiner, Archbishop Arundel, Nestorius, Arius, and other odious heretics and enemies of the Church; among whom a Lapede, the Jesuit, reckons here Calvin, and saith, That like another Herod, he died a lousy loathsome death; and for his authority thinks it enough to say, *uti refert Bolsecus in eius Vita*. as Bolsecus reports in his history. But it must be understood that the lives of Calvin and Beza were spitefully written by this Bolsecus, their sworn enemy, that twice banished and thrice renegade friar (liar I might have said) and physician; for those names his often changes and hard chances have given him. This man, being requested by the Popish side, and it is likely hired by them, to write thus, is in all their writings alleged as canonical.

**And their eyes shall consume away in their holes]** Physicians tell us of 2000 diseases that annoy man's body, 200 whereof affect the

eyes. All these are part of God's hosts, which are as much at God's command as the centurion's servants and soldiers were at his, when he said but Go, or Come, and they did accordingly, #Mt 8:9. He can make men's eyes drop and cease not, without any intermission, as #La 3:49, till they melt out, as the Hebrew here hath it; even the very same word as before. He can smite men with sudden blindness (as he did the sinful Sodomites, that had eyes full of adultery), such as tormented their eyes, as if they had been pricked with thorns, as the Hebrew word signifieth, #Ge 19:11. Failing of eyes and sorrow of mind is threatened as a judgment, #De 28:65; yea, thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes, which thou shalt see in another piece of the curse, #De 28:34. See #1Sa 2:33.

**And their tongue shall consume away in their mouth]** As did the tongue of Nestorius, the heresiarch, eaten out of his mouth with worms. Tho. Arundel and Stephen Gardiner, two bloody persecutors, died of a like disease. Diodati understands all this to be a description of hell torments. Their flesh shall consume, yet never be consumed; for they still stand upon their feet, or subsist, that they may still suffer; having no end, that their pain may be endless. "Their eyes shall consume," that is, saith he, though they be alive and can see, yet shall they be deprived of light in infernal darkness; having neither eyes nor understanding, but only to see and judge of their extreme misery. "Their tongue shall consume away," &c., as did the rich glutton's, #Lu 16:24. Mr Calvin observeth here, that all is delivered in the singular number: his flesh shall consume; his eyes shall melt; his tongue, &c. (for so runs the original); to note that every one of Jerusalem's enemies shall taste of God's wrath, though some of them may haply hold themselves out of the reach of his rod. And, secondly, that God can as easily destroy them all as if he had to do but with one single man.

Ver. 13. **A great tumult from the Lord shall be among them]** He shall frighten them, as he did the Philistines, by a sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, #2Sa 5:24, and the Syrians by a marching noise in the air, causing a panic terror, #2Ki 7:6. Therefore some render it, *Erit strepitus vel fragor Domini magnus in eis*, so #1Sa 7:10 cf. 2:10. Or, he shall exasperate and embitter them one against another; as he did Abimelech and the men of Shechem, by sending an evil spirit between them, #Jud 9:23, that is, by letting

loose Satan upon them, that old manslayer, that coal kindler and mischief-maker of the world; and this in a way of just revenge for their treacherous conspiracy against the house of Gideon. Thus God first divided, and then destroyed, the Midianites, by setting every one's sword against his fellow, #Jud 7:23. So he dealt by the Philistines, #1Sa 14:15,20. So the kings of Syria and Egypt, that succeeded Alexander, and were enemies to the Jews, destroyed one another; so did the primitive persecutors, the Turk and the Persian, the Spaniard and the French. In the year 1526 Charles V, emperor of Germany, set at liberty his prisoner Francis, King of France, upon this condition, among others, that they should join their forces and do their utmost to suppress and root out the Lutheran heresy; that is, the truth of the gospel, out of both their dominions (Scultet. Annal.). But soon after they fell at variance among themselves (the Pope blowing the bellows), whereby the Church had her halcyons, *sic canes lingunt ulcera Lazari*. so the dogs licked the sore of Lazarus.

**Shall take the hand of his neighbour]** As those younkens {a} of Helcath-hazzurim did, that sheathed their swords in their fellows' bowels. #2Sa 2:16

{a} A young man generally, in early use *esp.* a gay or fashionable young man (ED)

Ver. 14. **And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem]** Shall fight like a lion, and do great exploits for his country; as Judas Maccabeus did; as Hunniades, that club of the Turks, and Scanderbeg, who killed 800 Turks with his own hand, and fought so earnestly sometimes, that the very blood burst out at his lips. So did Zisca, and the rest of Christ's worthy warriors, who, by faith (and yet by force of arms too), waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, subdued kingdoms, fought the Lord's battles, #Heb 11:32,34. They saw, by faith, what is on the other side of the shore of this mortality; and that put mettle into them. The valour of the Gauls was admired by the Romans; it proceeded from that instruction they had from their Druids, of the immortality of the soul. The Swedes upon the same ground showed incredible courage in the late German wars; running into apparent danger, like flies into the candle (saith one), as if they had not seen it (The Life of the King of Sweden, by Mr Clark). Faith fears no colours. What brave spirits hath God raised up among us of late, fighting, as it were, in blood to the knees for

religion and liberty, resolved either to vanquish or die, as the Black Prince, η ταν η πι ταν, with that Lacedemonian, either to live with the gospel or die for it! And how valiant the restored Jews shall once be upon their enemies, the Turks, who now hold their country till their iniquities be full, who can tell? Sure it is that Israel, after their victory over Gog, shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God, #Eze 39:10. And then perhaps it is, that

**the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together,]** as a prize or booty,

**gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance]** Look how Abraham stripped the four kings of their plunder, #Ge 14:16, Gideon the Midianites, Judg. viii., David the Amalekites, #1Sa 30:18, Jehoshaphat the Ammonites (they were three days in gathering the spoil, it was so much, #2Ch 20:25), so it may happen one day with their posterity. The Jewish doctors, have a saying, that whatsoever befell unto the fathers is a sign unto the children; so of Abraham's victory over the four kings, they write, that it befell unto him to teach that four kingdoms, those kingdoms spoken of in Daniel, should stand up to rule over the world; and that in the end his children should rule over them, and they should all fall by their hand, and they should bring again all their captives, and all their substance (R. Menachem on #Ge 14).

Ver. 15. **And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel]** All the beasts of service, made use of by the enemy, shall consume in like sort as their masters. *First*, for a punishment to their owners, who must needs suffer loss thereby: hence Saul was so sedulous in seeking the lost asses. *Secondly*, to show how God is displeased with, and will severely punish, all that are instrumental to the Church's calamities or serviceable to their sin. The serpent is cursed, cut shorter by the feet, and made to wriggle upon his belly, yea, confined to the dust for his diet. So God curseth and abhorreth all instruments of idolatry, #Isa 30:22 Nu 31:22,23 De 7:25 "The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire"; the very visible heavens, because defiled with man's sin, are to be purged by the fire of the last day.

Ver. 16. **Every one that is left of all the nations]** *i.e.* That hath escaped the plague, **#Zec 14:12**, and is beaten into a better mind, as those Huns, that, vanquished by the Christians, concluded that Christ was the true God, and became his subjects. God had promised before to subvert the Church's enemies, but here to convert them, which is far better. And it shall appear to be so, as conversion cannot be hidden: you cannot turn a bell but it will make a sound, and report its own motion. See **#Ga 1:23**.

**For they shall even go up]** *sc.* To the temple, which stood upon mount Moriah.

**To worship the King, the Lord of hosts]** To send a lamb (or a homage penny) to the Lord of the whole earth, **#Isa 16:1**.

**And to keep the feast of tabernacles]** In a due manner, which had not been rightly done (a marvellous thing) all along during the reign of David, Solomon, and all those succeeding reformers, till about these times, as appears, **#Ne 8:16-18**. The sense of this text is, that the converted Gentiles shall join with the Jews in the sincere service of God, according to his will, and not according to their own brains and fancies; that they shall worship him with the same rites, in the same places and assemblies which they do; that Jehovah may be one, and his name one among them, as **#Zec 14:9**, that there may be no more Jew and Gentile, Barbarian or Scythian, bond or free, but Christ may be all, and in all, **#Col 3:11**. That those two sticks being joined into one, **#Eze 37:16**, all Israel may be saved, **#Ro 11:26**, and raised as from the dead, **#Zec 14:16**, the Gentiles also may have their part in the same resurrection. All this is here set forth in such terms and under such types as were then most in request; as of going up to the temple, keeping the feast of tabernacles, &c., all which expressions are parabolic, symbolic, and enigmatic; framed to the capacity of the Jews, much addicted to these legal rites and shadows, then in use, but now done away, **#Col 2:17 Heb 10:1**; whatever the Jews conclude from this text for their continuance under Messiah's kingdom. Christians have their feasts on holy days too, **#1Co 5:8**, yea, their feast of tabernacles in a mystical sense, **#1Pe 2:11 Heb 11:1,9**.

Ver. 17. **Even upon them shall be no rain]** *i.e.* *Nullam misericordiam assequentur*, saith Theodoret; They shall get no good at God's hand. Judea was *sumen totius orbis*, bread basket of the whole world, as one saith, a very fat and fertile country; but yet so as that her fruitfulness depended much upon seasonable showers, the former and latter rain; and the prophet seemeth here to allude to that of Moses, **#De 11:10,11**, &c. If God did not hear the heaven, and the heaven the earth, the earth could not hear the grain, wine, and oil, nor those hear Jezreel, **#Ho 2:22**. Judea was not like that country in Pliny, *ubi siccitas dat lutum, imbres pulverem*, where drought made dirt, rain made dust; but if the heaven were iron over them, the earth would soon be brass under them, and not yield her increase, {**#Ps 65:9 Isa 30:23**} and then where would they be quickly? since *animantis cuiusque vita in fuga est*, life would be lost if not maintained by daily food. Rain is in Scripture put, 1. Properly, for water coming out of the clouds, **#De 11:11 Pr 16:15**, nourishing the herbs and trees. 2. Metaphorically, for Christ, his gospel and his graces, wherewith the souls of men are made fruitful in good works, **#Isa 45:8 De 32:2 Ho 6:3**. The want of rain is, on the contrary, made here and **#Re 11:5** a sign of a curse. It waiteth not for the sons of men, **#Mic 5:7**, but it accomplisheth what God appointeth, **#Isa 55:10,11**. Why it falleth here and now we know not, and wonder.

Ver. 18. **And if the family of Egypt]** So called from one Aiguptos, a king there. In the Hebrew it is called mostly Mizraim, from one of that name, **#Ge 10:6**; sometimes, for its power and pride, it is called Rahab, **#Ps 87:4 89:11 Isa 51:9**. The family of Egypt is here put for the whole nation (see the like **#Am 3:1**), because, after the confusion of tongues especially, nations took their origin and denomination from the head of some family; as did the Egyptians from Mizraim, Shem's second son.

**Go not up, and come not]** But they did receive the Christian religion with the first; had Christian schools, doctors, and professors, alter that St. Mark had there planted a Church at Alexandria, now called Scanderoon. This was before prophesied **#Isa 19:21** "The Lord shall be known to Egypt," &c. "And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it," &c., he shall cause them to pass under the rod, and so bring them into the bond of the covenant, as it is **#Eze 20:37**.

**That have no rain]** Others read it thus, It shall not rain upon them. For they also needed rain in some measure, as well as other nations, see **#Ps 105:32**, though not so much, by reason of the overflowings of the river Nile, which, if it rise to a just height, *sc.* of fifteen or sixteen cubits, as Pliny tells us, it makes the land very fruitful: so that they do but throw in the seed, and have four rich harvests in less than four months. Indeed, where the Nile arrives not there is nothing, they say, in Egypt, but a whitish sand, bearing no grass, but two little weeds, called Suhit and Gazul; which, burnt to ashes, and conveyed to Venice, makes the finest crystal glasses. The Chaldee renders it, *Non crescet eius Nile*. God loves to confute men in their confidences, to dry up their Nile, {see #Eze 29:3,9 Isa 19:5,6} as he did for two years together in the time of Cleopatra, a little before Christ's birth, and once before for nine years' time (Sen. Nat. Quaest. 1. xiv. c. 2).

**There shall be the plague]** *q.d.* If they escape the forethreatened evil a worse thing abides them: their preservation from famine is but a reservation to those everlasting burnings, **#Zec 14:12**. And though here they abound even to satiety and surfeit (the Egyptians were wont to boast that they could feed all men, and feast all the gods, without any sensible diminution of their provision), yet at the last day they shall be cut short enough, eat fire, drink brimstone, God himself uttering those or the like words, **#Isa 65:13** "Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit."

Ver. 19. **This shall be the punishment of Eyypt, and the punishment]** Or sin; indeed, the sin of sins, to slight God's ordinances and offers of grace; and to neglect so great salvation as is tendered by Christ. This very sin is its own punishment. This is condemnation, or hell beforehand, **#Joh 3:19**. This brought Capernaum down from heaven to hell, **#Mt 11:23**. Pagans that never heard of Christ shall have an easier judgment than such, **#Mt 11:24**, for they shall have a double condemnation. One from the law, which they had broken, wherein Christ found them; another from the



gospel, for rejecting Christ and the bath of his blood, to the which even princes of Sodom are invited, #**Isa 1:10**. See #**Joh 12:48 Mt 21:44**. It is with such as with a malefactor, that being dead in law, doth yet refuse a pardon. Danaeus observeth here that mention is made of the feast of Tabernacles especially, 1. Because this feast was now most solemnly kept among the Jews, #**Neh 8:16-18**, and *secondly*, Because it was a most evident testimony of the first gathering together of the people of Israel, that is, of a free ordained Church; therefore it was better liked of the people, and a more evident sign of their uniting or knitting together within themselves, as is unto us the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 20. **In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses]** Hanged upon their heads, or about their necks, as #**Jud 8:26**: the Midianitish camels had rich collars and chains about their necks, for ornament' sake. It was a witty conceit of a modern divine (Dr Stoughton) that many deal with their ministers as carriers do with their horses, lay heavy burdens upon them, and then hang bells about their necks: they shall have hard work and great commendations, but easy commons; good words, but slight wages. This was better than that bald conceit of Theodoret and others, that this prophecy was then fulfilled, when as Constantine the Great (or his mother, Helen, for him) caused the bits of his horse bridle to be made of the nails of the cross of Christ. I confess the word is by some rendered bridles, by others trappings, frontals, collars. It is *απαξ λεγομενον*, read only here; and hence this variety of interpretations. Calvin renders it stables of horses; which, although they are but contemptible places, and usually stink; yet the prophet saith, they shall be holy to the Lord. Hereby the prophet teacheth, saith he, that God shall so be King of the world, as that all things shall be applied to his worship neither shall anything be of so common and ordinary use that shall not change its nature, and be sanctified to God's service. The comparison here is made between things profane and the inscription on the high priest's mitre, which was holiness to the Lord. This is a manifest testimony of a godly mind, when godliness runs through a man's whole life, as the woof doth through the web; when ordinary actions are done from a right principle and to a right purpose; according to that old and good rule, *Quicquid agas, propter Deum agas*, "Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," #**1Co 10:31**. Receive

every creature with thanksgiving, #1Ti 4:14; in serving men, serve the Lord Christ; exercise your general calling in your particular; do earthly business with heavenly minds; content not yourself with a natural use of the creature, as brute beasts do, but taste the sweetness of God in all; and in all thy ways acknowledge him, depending upon him for direction and success, consulting with him, and approving thine heart and life unto him. Holiness must be written upon our bridles when we war, upon our caps when we drink (Dr Harris). This is to go the upper way, #Pr 15:24, which indeed is both cleaner, shorter, and safer. This is to be of that royal priesthood, that hath for its posy, Holiness to the Lord. This is to be harmless and blameless, the sons of God; known by their holiness, as David's children were by their garments of various colours: for as he that hath called them is holy, so are they also holy, and that in all manner of conversation and communion too, even when they deal with carnal men and in common matters.

**And the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar]** All this must be understood as the spiritual service, which should be in the Christian Church; described by the ancient ceremonial service, as #Isa 60:7 66:23 Mal 1:11. And it is to show that the efficacy, force, and operation of the Holy Ghost shall be far more plentiful, through Christ, in the Church of the gospel, than it was in times past, under the law. See #Heb 8:6 Eph 3:5 Isa 44:3,4. Ver. 21. **Yea, every pot in Jerusalem, &c.]** That is, saith Danaeus, God shall as Godlike be worshipped of every faithful person in his own house, as he was of old in his temple by the Jews. Calvin adds, *ut quicquid aggrediantur homines sit sacrificium*, so that whatsoever good men enterprise shall be a sacrifice. God shall smell a savour of rest from them, they of life and peace from him.

**There shall be no more the Canaanite]** The merchant, saith the Vulgate, after Aquila and the Chaldee; that is, the Simoniac, the Churchchopper, such money-merchants as Christ whipped out of the temple, #Mt 21:12 Joh 2:15. But better render it Canaanite, who were indeed great merchants, #Ho 12:7 Eze 17:4 (the Phenicians, those great merchants, were Canaanites), but here it stands for a wicked man, a hypocrite, that botch of Christian society. *Pura erit Ecclesia ab omnibus inquinamentis*, saith Calvin; the Church shall

be purged of all such pests, see **#Re 22:2-7**, no such owls shall be seen flying in the Church's welkin. God will, by the due exercise of discipline and otherwise, be daily purging out all scandals, as such men are called, **#Mt 13:41**, and causing the unclean spirit to pass out of the land, **#Zec 13:2**. I conclude, with Theodoret, *Dominus Omnipotens hanc vocem veram esse hoc tempore praestet, &c.* God Almighty make good this promise unto us at this time: that there may be no cursed Canaanite found among us; but that we may all live according to the doctrine of the gospel, and expect that blessed hope and coming of the great God our Saviour Jesus; to whom with the Father and Holy Spirit be glory for ever. Amen.

# Malachi

## Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The burden**] That is, the burdenous prophecy (as Tremellius renders it): a burden, as, 1. Enjoined and imposed upon the prophet to utter, to cry aloud and not spare, to lift up his voice as a trumpet, &c., straining every vein in his heart to do it; declaiming lustily against sin and sinners, and proclaiming hell-fire for them in case they amend not. This is a business of some burden, *onus ipsis etiam Angelis tremendum*. This was typified in the staffings that were made to continue upon the ark; the Kohathites' shoulders felt wherefore. If God had not helped those Levites they could never have borne the ark, **#1Ch 15:26**. St Paul was very sensible of the ministerial burden rolling upon him daily, **#2Co 11:28**. And Latimer leaped when lighted of his bishopric. 2. As burdening the people with their sins, and breathing out threatenings for the same; for sin (how lightly soever accounted of) hales hell at the heels of it, and procures Divine vengeance, which is a burden unsupportable. It brake the angels' backs, and made the Son of God groan piteously then when he "bare our sins in his body on the tree," **#1Pe 2:24**. His soul was heavy therewith even to death; and had he not had the better shoulders, had not God laid help on one that was mighty (even the mighty strong God, as he is styled, **#Isa 6:6**), he had fainted and failed under his burden. David complains that his sins were gone over his head, and, like a sore burden, were too heavy for him to bear, **#Ps 38:4**. That which comforted him was, that no sooner he had said *Peccavi*, I have sinned, but the prophet Nathan said, *Transtulit Deus peccatum tuum*, **#2Sa 12:13**, God hath translated thy sin upon Christ, hath caused thy sin to pass over to him, and (as it were) by a writ of removal, hath cast thy burden upon his shoulders. And this incomparable mercy David afterwards celebrateth, **#Ps 32:4,5** "For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me"; the guilt of sin and sense of wrath quelled him and killed him almost; for his natural moisture was turned into drought of summer; he was turned into a very skeleton, or a bag of bones, a bottle of smoke, woefully waned he was, and wasted. But for remedy, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee," I fled by faith to the true scape goat, Christ Jesus, on whom was laid as a burden the iniquity of us all, **#Isa 53:6 Ro 5:8**, and thou presently forgavest the iniquity of my sin, that is, the guilt

of it, that till then lay like a load upon my conscience, and, as an obligation, bound me over to condign punishment. Cain, for want of this comfort, ran roaring up and down, my sin, that is, my punishment "is greater than I can bear," **#Ge 4:13**. And a far better man than Cain (even holy Job, with whom God was but in jest, as it were) cries out that his calamity was "heavier than the sand of the sea," **#Job 6:3**, and that "yet his stroke was heavier than his groaning," **#Job 23:2**. Those that have ever felt the masery of a laden conscience can tell what an evil and bitter thing sin is, **#Jer 2:19**. Those that now run away with it, and make as light of it as Samson did of the gate of Gaza, shall one day groan out, woe and alas, when God shall set himself to load them with tortures in hell who do now load him with their sins, and weary him out with their iniquities, **#Isa 43:24**. For prevention, oh that they would be persuaded to believe the prophets, that their souls might prosper; to be sensible of sin's burden, that Christ might ease them; to take upon them his burden, which is *onus sine onere*, and would be no more burden to them than the wings are to the bird, whereby he is borne aloft; that they would imitate porters, who being called and offered money to bear a burden, will poise it and weigh it in their hands first, which when they see they are not able to stand under, no gain will entice them to undertake it. Do we provoke the Lord to anger? are we stronger than he? Is it not a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God? **#Heb 10:31**. Is the wrath of a king as the roaring of a lion, as the messengers of death? surely they that tremble not in hearing shall be crushed in pieces in feeling, as that martyr (Bradford) said, and let all those scoffers that make children's play of God's dreadful menaces, (as St Peter's word *εμπαικται*, **#2Pe 3:3**, importeth), that, leviathan-like, esteem God's iron as straw, **#Job 41:27**; that read his prophetic burdens as they do the old stories of foreign wars, or as they behold the wounds and blood in picture or piece of arras, <sup>{a}</sup> which never makes them smart or fear; let all these, I say, read and ruminat that flaming place, **#Jer 23:33,37**, and let them know, that if they belong to God he will cripple their iron sinews by the sense of their many and massy or bony sins, **#Am 5:12**. As if otherwise, he will fall upon them with his full weight, and grind them to powder, **#Mt 21:24**. *Cavete; cavebitis autem si pavebitis*. Beware, you shall beware if you are terrified.

**To Israel]** The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with those few of the ten tribes that returned among them from the Babylonish captivity: These, though we never find them again going a whoring after idols, the sin that they had paid so dear for, and had now bought their wit, yet forgetful of former both beatings and benefits, as children are, they soon returned to their old flagitious practices of polygamy, blasphemy, sacrilege, defilement of divine worship, unlawful marriages; and so had lost in a manner the fruit of their sufferings, putting God to his old complaint, Why should ye be smitten any more, &c., and causing him to sigh out, as even sick of them, "Ah, sinful nation," "Reprobate silver shall men call them," **#Isa 1:4 Jer 6:30.**

**By Malachi]** Heb. By the hand of Malachi, *i.e.* by his mouth and ministry. Hand is put for mouth by a catachresis; <sup>{b}</sup> because the hand is the instrument of instruments, as saith the philosopher, *οργανον οργανων*. See the like **#Ex 9:35 Nu 4:37,45 Isa 8:11**. One expositor noteth here, that this expression, by the hand, is used to teach us that prophets and ministers must preach not with their tongues only, but with their hands too; lest they be found in number of those Pharisees that say, but do not, that bind heavy burdens, and hard to be borne, upon other men's shoulders, but they themselves touch them not with one of their fingers, **#Mt 23:3,4**. Let our hands also preach as well as our tongues, *ne dico factis deficientibus erubescant*, as Tertullian speaketh, lest talking by the talent and working by the ounce, our hands give our tongues the lie.

**By Malachi]** *i.e.* Mine angel, or, an angelic man. Not a heavenly angel, as Origen held; nor as told and taught by an angel how to deliver and deport himself in his office; like as when the Bathcol, or voice from heaven, came to Christ, **#Joh 12:28**, the people that stood by and heard it said that it thundered, others said, an angel spake to him, **#Joh 12:29**. But either he was so called by his parents at his birth and circumcision (as Angelus Politianus and others), or else so surnamed by the good people of those times; as whose disposition, communication, conversation, countenance, and whole carriage were angelic. Chrysostom, for like cause, calleth Paul *Angelum terrestrem*, an earthly angel. And the author to the

Hebrews, speaking of those faithful martyrs that lived and suffered soon after Malachi's time, he saith, "Of whom the world was not worthy," **#Heb 11:38**, meaning that they were fitter to be set as angels in heaven, to be fixed in the region of happiness, to shine full fair upon the celestial shelf (as that martyr said), than to abide here among sinners. Chrysostom, in his 55th Homily upon Matthew, calleth certain religious men of his time angels, for their sanctimony and celestial conversation. And Dr Taylor, martyr, blessed God that ever he came in company with that angel of God, John Bradford.

{a} A rich tapestry fabric, in which figures and scenes are woven in colours. CED

{b} Improper use of words; application of a term to a thing which it does not properly denote; abuse or perversion of a trope or metaphor. CED

Ver. 2. **I have loved you, saith the Lord]** Thou hast loved us (might they reply) while we were willing and obedient. Thou lovest them that love thee, **#Pr 8:17** "and showeth mercy to thousands of them that love thee, and keep thy commandments," **#Ex 20:6**; but now "thou hast utterly rejected us: thou art very wroth against us," **#La 5:22**. Nay, saith God, I do love you, so Tremellius renders this text: I am Jehovah, "I change not," **#Mal 3:6**. I do rest in my love, and will seek no further, **#Zep 3:17**. Surely "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts: though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel," **#Jer 51:5**. Thus it was before the captivity. But how after? See **#Zec 1:17**. The Lord had professed before that he had been sore displeased with their fathers, **#Zec 1:2**, and it appears, **#Zec 1:3,4**, they were no better than their fathers; all which notwithstanding, see a sweet promise, **#Zec 1:17** "Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." There are four "yets" in the text, and all very gracious ones; to show that the fulness of sin in us doth not abate the fulness of love in God towards his people. And the same in effect is thankfully acknowledged by those holy Levites at their solemn fast, held much about the time of our prophet Malachi, Nehemiah, where they make a catalogue of the many fruits and expressions of God's love to themselves and their fathers. Besides extraordinary favours not a few, he gave them good laws, **#Ne 9:13**, good sabbaths, **#Ne 9:14**, his good spirit to instruct them, **#Ne 9:20**. He forsook them not when they dealt proudly against him,

**#Ne 9:16,17**, but crowned them with outward comforts, **#Ne 9:21,25**, afflicted them when they provoked him, **#Ne 9:26,27**, sent them saviours when they cried to him, **#Ne 9:27**, after often revolts was often entreated, **#Ne 9:28**, withheld his worst and consuming judgments for a long time, **#Ne 9:30,31**. And was there not love in all this? Might not God well say, I have loved you? Ribera thinks there is an aposiopesis <sup>{a}</sup> in the words, as if God would have said more; but very grief breaks off his speech, out of a deep sense of their detestable ingratitude. David hath such an abrupt expression, **#Ps 116:1**, I love, because the Lord hath heard my voice. Such a pang, such a passion he felt, that he was not able to say, I love the Lord, but I love, and so breaks off abruptly. The like whereunto may here be conceived of God; who cannot endure to have his love lost, his grace undervalued, as it was by these obstreperous questionists, who put him to his proof, as those did **#Jer 2:25**.

**Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?]** Their recent captivity and calamity so stuck still in their stomachs, that they could not see wherein he had showed them any love. But had they considered Daniel's weeks they might have known that (besides their free election, all blessings flowing therefrom, as **#Da 9:3-5**), for their seventy years' captivity, they had seven seventies of years granted them afterwards for the comfortable enjoyment of their own country. *Sed ingrato quod donatur, perditur*, But for ingratitude which was forgiven, he is utterly destroyed, saith Seneca. And *Amare non redamantem est amoris impendia perdere*, saith Jerome. All is lost that is laid out upon an unthankful people, who devour God's best blessings as brute beasts their prey, haunch them up and swallow them, as swine do swill; bury them, as the barren earth doth the seed; use them as homely as Rachel did her father's gods, which she laid among the litter, and sat upon; yea, fighting against God with his own weapons (mercies, I mean), as Jehu did against Jehoram with his own messengers, as David did against Goliath with his own sword, as Benhadad against Ahab with that life that he had given him; as if God had hired them to be wicked, &c.

**Was not Esau Jacob's brother?]** Did they not both tumble in a belly? were they not both dug out of the same pit, hewn out of the same rock? **#Isa 51:1**; and yet, as the Great Turk and his brethren,



born of the same parents, the eldest is destined to a diadem, the rest to a halter, so here Esau, though the elder and heir, was rejected, at least he was less loved (for so the word hated is to be taken, **#Ge 29:31 Lu 14:20 Mt 10:37**). Jacob, though the younger and weaker (for Esau was born a manly child, born with a beard, as some think, and was therefore called Esau, that is, *Factus et perfectus pilis*, a man already, rather than a babe), yet was God's beloved one. And so were his posterity too the people of God's choice, above the Edomites; who were now left in captivity at Babylon, when as the Jews were returned into their own country; yea, for the Jews' sakes and as a testimony of God's love to them, were these Edomites still held captives, and their land irreparably ruined because they showed themselves merciless and bloody in the day of Jerusalem's calamity, **#Ob 10,11 Ps 137:7**. God had charged the Israelites, saying, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother," **#De 23:7**; but as Esau began betime to persecute Jacob, bristling at him, and bruising him in their mother's womb, **#Ge 25:22**, so his posterity were bitter enemies to the Church, joying in her misery, and joining with her enemies, wherefore thus saith the Lord God, "I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it," **#Eze 25:13,14**.

**Yet I loved Jacob]** And preordained him to a crown that never fadeth, as Paul expoundeth this text, **#Ro 9:13**, of election to eternal life, which is the sweetest and surest seal of God's love. Let us secure our election, and so God's special love to our souls, by those infallible marks, **#2Th 2:13**. *First*, belief of the truth, that articularity and propriety of assurance *Secondly*, sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience of truth. And as God loved Jacob's person, so he loved his posterity, the Israelites, above all other people; not because they were more in number, or better in disposition, *ex meliore luto, &c.*; out of better clay, but "because the Lord loved you, therefore he set his love upon you, and chose you," saith Moses, **#De 7:7,8**: the ground of his love was wholly in himself; there being nothing in man, nothing out of God's self, that can primarily move and incline the eternal, immutable, and omnipotent will of God. The true original and first motive of his love to his creature is the good pleasure of his will. See **#Eph 1:5**, where all the four causes of election are showed to be without us.

{a} A rhetorical artifice, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed.

(ED)

Ver. 3. **And I hated Esau]** *i.e.* I loved him not as I did Jacob; I passed him by, and let him alone, to perish in his corruption and for his sin. And for his posterity, whereas they were carried captives by Nebuchadnezzar (as Israel also was), I have not turned again their captivity, but laid their land desolate; rased and harassed their cities and castles, made them a habitation of dragons and devils; and all this as an argument of my deep hatred and utter detestation of them. True it is, that Judea lay utterly waste during the seventy years of their captivity; the land kept her sabbaths, resting from tillage. Upon the slaughter of Gedaliah all the Jews that were left in the land fled to Egypt: and God kept the place empty, and free from the invasion of foreigners, until the return of the natives out of Babylon. Now it was far otherwise with Idumea, the desolation whereof is here described to be both total and perpetual, according to that foretold by **#Eze 35:7,15**, O mount Seir, I will make thee to be most desolate, or (as the Hebrew hath it, emphatically and eloquently) wasteness, and wasteness extreme and irrecoverable. A *πανολεθρια*, or utter, ruin, befell that country, being part of Arabia Petrea (hence mention of their mountains), and abounding naturally with serpents, or dragons; it being in the wilderness of this country of Edom where the Israelites were so stung with these fiery serpents, **#Nu 21:6**: hence it became afterwards a very den of dragons lurking there.

Ver. 4. **Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished]** Or, thrust out of house and home, and reduced to extreme indigence; yet we will return, and build the desolate places. We will do it all, despite *di Deo* (as that profane pope said), if it be but to cross God's prediction, and to withstand his power and providence. Thus these earthen pots will be dashing themselves against the rocks, against those mountains of brass (so God's immutable decrees are called, **#Zec 6:1**). Thus Lamech will have the odds of God seventy to seven (so Junius interprets it), **#Ge 4:24**. Thus, when God had threatened to root out Ahab and his posterity, he would try that; and to prevent it, took more wives, and so followed the work of generation, that he left seventy sons behind him, **#2Ki 10:1**. Thus Pharaoh (that sturdy rebel) holds out against God to the utmost, and sends away his servant Moses, threatening death to him, even then when he was

compassed on all hands with that palpable darkness. Thus the Philistine princes (while sore plagued) gather themselves together again against the humbling Israelites at Mizpeh; and so run to meet their bane, #1Sa 7:10. Thus the proud Ephraimites, #Isa 9:10. The bricks indeed, say they, are fallen down, but we will build it again with hewn stones. The wild fig trees are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. Thus the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, #Lu 7:30, yea, would needs be found fighters against God, as Gamaliel truly told them, #Ac 5:39. Thus those primitive persecutors would needs attempt to root our Christian religion; the Jews, by the leave and help of Julian, to despite the Christians, would rebuild their city and temple, but were hindered from heaven. Otho, the Emperor, would make the city of Rome his imperial seat (which was long before pointed and painted out for the nest of antichrist), but could not effect it. The Jesuits would fain heal the beast's wounded head, and re-establish their kingdom of idolatry, but this they must never look for. Christ shall reign, and all his foes shall be his footstool: the Romish Edomites shall come to ruin.

**Thus saith the Lord, They shall build, but I will throw down]** *Ruit alto a culmine Roma*, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen"; her downfall is sure, sore, and sudden; *Versa eris in cineres quasi nunquam Roma fuisses*, said Sibylla of old. And there was something surely in that which we have read, that when the wars began in Germany, A. D. 1610, a great brass image of the apostle Peter (that had *Tu es Petrus, &c.*, fairly imbossed upon it) standing in St Peter's church at Rome, there was a great and massive stone fell down upon it, and so shattered it to pieces, that not a letter of all that sentence (whereon Rome founds her claim) was left whole so as to be read; saving that one piece of that sentence, *Aedificabo Ecclesiam meam*, I will build my Church, which was left fair and entire. Surely when Popish mountains and monasteries shall be desolated and demolished, when the Pope (who was wont to say that he could never want money as long as he was able to hold a pen in his hand) shall be miserably impoverished, and his Euphrates of revenues dried up, #Re 16:12, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be set above all the mountains, and the Lord Christ alone shall reign in glory; he shall "overturn, overturn, overturn," all anti-

christian power and policy, #Eze 21:27, he will utterly destroy those crows' nests (as Henry VIII called the religious houses that he pulled down), *ne iterum ad cohabitandum convolent*, lest those unclean birds should build again (Sanderus).

**They shall build, but I will destroy]** It is the Lord, then, that both plants and pulls up kingdoms, nations, and peoples; that makes and destroys states, public or private, at his pleasure: they are all in his hand and done by him, and fall not out by any fortune, or fatal revolution and vicissitude, #Da 2:21 Lu 1:52.

**And they shall call them, The border of wickedness]** Chiefly for their insulting over the people of God in their affliction, #Ob 10. That wicked one, the Pope, is grossly guilty of this Edomitish inhumanity. What feasting and sending of gifts was there when the two witnesses were slain! What joy and jollity when the Waldenses (those ancient Protestants) were worsted in battle! What processions and bonfires at Rome upon the news of the Parisian massacre! Thuanus tells us, that the Pope caused it to be painted in his palace; and that the Cardinal of Lorraine gave him that brought the first tidings of it to Rome thirty thousand crowns for a reward. I do rather parallel the Edomites and Romists, because the Rabbis usually by Edom understand Rome, and the Thargum renders "O daughter of Edom," #La 4:21, thus: *Romi Reshignah*, O wicked Rome, which is answerable to this in the text, The border of wickedness, that is, the land of wickedness, haply called the border, or limit, as the *non ultra* of impiety, of unparalleled impiety: or else because men shall only come to the bounds and borders; and standing there aloof off, as abhorring to go farther, shall as it were point and say, Ah, wicked, Ah, wicked place, *Terra de diables*, as the Spaniards call one country in America, or the mouth of hell, as another place is named. Philip of Macedonia assembled all the infamous and wicked persons into a certain city of Thracia, and then called it Poneropolis. Italy is at this day little better: a second Sodom. M. Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's tutor, was but seven days in Venice, but he saw more wickedness there than he had seen in seven years in London. As for Rome (that *Radix omnium malorum*), that once faithful city is now become a harlot; yea, the great harlot, #Re 17:5, yea, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, #Re

**17:5**, *tota est iam Roma lupanar* (Petrarch), it is turned into a great brothel house, the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, **#Re 18:2**. Bethel is become Bethaven; the house of God, the border of wickedness; *Har-hamishcah* is become *Har-hamaschith*, the mount of unction, the mount of corruption, **#2Ki 23:13** "What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?" **#Mic 1:5**.

**And, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation]** The people of God's wrath, **#Isa 10:6**, and of his curse (so Idumea is called), **#Isa 34:5**. And such a people was Amalek, with whom God (laid his hand upon his throne, and) swore that he would have perpetual war for their ill usage of his Israel, **#Ex 17:16**. He charged also his people never to forget them, **#De 25:19**. Neither did they: Saul was sent to make an utter end of them, **#1Sa 15:1-3**. And wherein he failed in doing it, God stirred up the Simeonites in Hezekiah's days to smite the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, **#1Ch 4:42,43**. The like judgment whereunto is befallen the Edomites long since: their very name is extinct, no memory of them being in posterity. The destiny of Doeg, their countryman, is come upon them, **#Ps 52:5**, God hath beaten them down for ever: he hath taken them away, and plucked them out of their dwellingplace, and rooted them out of the land of the living. Selah. It is ill angering the Ancient of days. His wrath lasts longer than the coals of juniper, **#Ps 120:4**; his judgments are severe and durable, as we use to say of winter; they never rot in the sky, but shall fall; if late, yet surely, yet seasonably. He that saith, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," repayeth often times when we have forgiven, when we have forgotten; and calls to reckoning after our discharges, as he did Nabal. It is dangerous offending any favourite of him who can have (as here) indignation for ever; whose wrath and revenge is (as that of the Athenians is said to be) *αειμνηστος*, everlasting, whose destructions are perpetual.

Ver. 5. **And your eyes shall see]** "The righteous shall see and fear, and shall laugh at him," and say, "Lo, this is the man," &c., said David of Doeg the Edomite, **#Ps 52:7**. And the same is here promised by God to his people as a pledge of his love, and a special privilege: others should hiss at Edom, and say by way of byword, "This is the border of wickedness," &c., but the saints should make

more of it (a bee can suck honey out of a flower, so cannot a fly), they should busy their eyes, and regard the work of the Lord; yea, they should so consider the operation of his hand, as to say sensibly, "Let the Lord be magnified. Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place," #Isa 5:12 Ps 35:27 Eze 3:12. God hath delivered me out of all trouble, saith David, and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies. The Edomites stood looking on and laughing at the Israelites' destruction, #Ob 12,13. God saw this, and it displeased him (as he is wondrously sensible of the least indignity done to his people); he therefore pays them home in their own coin, and promiseth his Israel that they shall rejoice when they see the vengeance, they shall wash their feet in the blood of these wicked ones; become more cautious by their just destruction, #Ps 58:10. Learn we hence, *First*, to have our eyes open upon the judgments of God, whether general or personal; that nothing of this nature pass our observation, lest we incur the curse denounced, #Isa 5:12, and be made examples to others, because we would not be warned by the example of others. *Lege historiam ne fiat historia*. Sodom and Gomorrah are thrown forth (as St Jude hath it) for an example; suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. And Herodotus saith, that the ruins and rubbish of Troy are set forth for an example of this rule, that national sins bring national plagues, and that God greatly punisheth great offences. *Ingentia, beneficia, flagitia, supplicia*. Let him that looketh upon me learn to fear God. Εμε τις ορεων ευσεβης εστω. These words were engraven upon the standing picture of Sennacherib (after that God had by an angel slain his army, and sent him back with shame to his own country), as the same Herodotus testifieth.

*Secondly*, learn we how far forth we may look upon the overthrow of the wicked with delight: viz. not as our own private, but as God's professed enemies; not simply as their ruin, but as it is a clearing of God's glory, and of our integrity, #Ps 9:16 1Sa 25:39; not out of private revenge, but pure zeal for God and his cause. I say pure zeal; for it is difficult to kindle and keep quick the fire of zeal without all smoke of sinister and self-respect.

**And ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified, &c.]** Or, The Lord hath magnified himself, *i.e.* hath declared himself mightily to be a

great King above all gods, by executing judgment upon these grandees of the earth, and making out, that "In the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them," #Ex 18:11. Hence it is that "praise waiteth for God in Zion, his name is great in Israel." He is sent unto (as sometime Joab sent to David, #2Sa 12:28, to come and take the city of Rabbah), to take the glory of all their deliverances and victories. Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, say they, but to thy name be the praise. Hunniades would not own or accept the people's applauses and acclamations, but ascribed all to God. So did our Henry V at the battle of Agincourt, where he won the day. He would not admit his broken crown or bruised armour to be borne before him in show (which are the usual ensign of warlike triumphs). He also gave strait order that no ballad or song should be made or sung, more than of thanksgiving to the Lord for his happy victory and safe return, &c. So our Edward III after his victory at Poitiers, (where he took the French king prisoner, A. D. 1356), took speedy order by Simon, Archbishop of Canterbury, that eight days together should be spent in magnifying the Lord from the border of England.

**From the borders of Israel]** Or, from beyond the borders of Israel; viz., throughout the wide world. The saints have large hearts, and could give the Lord much more praise and service than they have for him. They would praise him infinitely, and according to his excellent greatness; filling up the distance, as it were, and calling in all the help they can get, of angels, men, unreasonable and insensible creatures, as David did, #Ps 145:2 48:10 103:20.

Ver. 6. **A son honoureth his father]** Heb. Will honour his father. Nature teacheth him this lesson, to reverence his father. *Pater est, si pater non esset*, said the young man in Terence; It is my father, I must not cross him. Our parents are our household gods, said another heathen, Θεοι εφεστιοι (Hierocl.), and to have all possible respect from us. To God and our parents, saith Aristotle, we can never make recompense. There is no nation so barbarous that acknowledgeth not this natural axiom, A son must honour his father, and a servant his master; as Eliezar did Abraham; the centurion's servants him, by being at his beck and call in all things. *Servus est nomen officii*, A servant is not one who moveth absolutely of himself; but he is the master's instrument, and wholly his, saith Aristotle, και ολος αυτου, and therefore oweth him all love,

reverence, and obedience, as if he were many masters in one: the word here used for master is plural. Now from this principle in nature thus laid down, the Lord tacitly accuseth them:

*First*, Of ingratitude for his great love to them, evinced and evidenced in the former verses.

*Secondly*, Of contempt cast upon him and his service; as appeareth, first by the application of that natural law confirmed by the custom of all countries.

**If then I be a father, &c.]** As you commonly call me, and claim me, **#Jer 3:4 Joh 8:41** "We have one Father, even God." And you have been long since taught so to do by Moses, and told by what right I come to be your Father, though with an exprobration of your detestable undutifulness, **#De 32:6** "Do ye thus requite the Lord?" Is not he thy father (and is not he by the same right and reason thy master too?) that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established or preserved thee? Hath he not (more than all that) adopted and accepted thee so for his child; begetting thee again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **#1Pe 1:3**, unless thou be still in thy sins, than the which thou canst not choose unto thyself a worse condition? All which considered, what more equal than that I should have both love from thee as a father and fear as a master? A mixture of both is required of all God's children and servants, that they yield unto him an amicable fear and a reverent love, that they look at once upon his bounty and severity, **#Ro 11:11**, and so call God Father, that they spend the whole time of their sojourning here in fear, **#1Pe 1:17**; that they fear God and his goodness, and Jacob-like, when they see nothing but visions of love and mercy, as he did at Bethel, yet then to cry out, "How dreadful is this place! There is mercy with thee, that then mayest be feared," **#Ps 130:4**.

**Unto you, O priests]** Whom I look upon as the chief of my children, given me in lieu of Israel's firstborn, the lot of mine own inheritance, that stand ever before me, and should by soundness of doctrine and holiness of life vindicate my name from contempt, and get me honour before the people. Singular holiness is required of



ministers above others; a double spirit they had need to wish for, as Elisha. Things in the sanctuary were double to those that were common; as the shekel, cubit, &c. Ministers are called angels, and they must walk as angels, *ne sit nomen inane crimen immane*, lest God renew his old complaint, "The leaders of his people have caused them to err," #**Isa 9:16**. It was the complaint of Pope Pius II that there was no notorious wickedness committed in the Catholic Church, *cuius prima origo a sacerdotibus non dependet*, the first beginning whereof arose not from churchmen. John Huss cries out of the priests of his time, *Multa quae illi ordinem dicunt, &c.* Many of these things that they call by the name of order have brought all things in Christendom out of order. Cornelius a Lapide, upon this text, in his Popish way, bewaileth it, that the ignorance and profaneness of many of their priests had given occasion to Luther's heresy to spread the further. We also have no less cause to complain that the insufficiency and impiety of some of our ministry hath opened the black mouth of Campian and his Popish accomplices, to bark out, *Ministris eorum nihil villus*, their ministers are very base. For prevention, let the souls of ministers be purer than the sunbeams, as Chrysostom saith they should be; and let their lives be so unblameable that no man may speak the least evil of them without a manifest lie, &c.

**That despise my name]** This is the crime they are directly and expressly charged with. They had not honoured God as a father, feared him as a master; therefore they had despised and slighted him. Not to do God right is to do him wrong; not to reverence him is to rob him; not to bless him is to blaspheme him, #**Job 1:5**. That is an excellent saying of Fulgentius, *Deum si quis parum metuit, valde contemnit; huius, qui non memorat beneficentiam, auget iniuriam; i.e.* whoso feareth God but a little slightes him overmuch; and he that maketh not honourable mention of his bounty doth him a great deal of injury. The very not serving of God, the not sacrificing to him, is a crime, #**Mal 3:18 Ec 9:2**. How much more, then, a slubbered service, a corrupt sacrifice! There is a contempt in this latter which is worse than a bare neglect; and displeasing service is double dishonour. Hence the present contest with those greasy priests that despised God's name: the Septuagint hath it, *Ye that esteem my name at a low rate, οι φαυλιζοντις το ονομα μου*, that misprise it (as

the French translatheth it), that have base and bald conceits of me and of my *nomen maiestativum*, majestic name (as Tertullian termeth it), that take me not into your hearts under the name and notion of an infinite highness, the great and mighty Maker and Monarch of the whole world. Our safest eloquence concerning God is our silence, saith Hooker. But if we take in hand to say anything of him, *Nullis vocibus tam plene Deum significamus* (saith learned Scaliger), *quam iis quae ignorantiam nostrum praetendunt*, we can set forth God so fully by no words as by those that set forth our ignorance of his excellence. The very heathens, when they would swear by their Jupiter, out of the mere dread and reverence of his name, forbare to mention him. The Jews would not pronounce the name Jehovah, here used in the text. The first among the Christians that pronounced Jehovah was Petrus Galatinus, following the pronounciation of the Syriacs and Greeks. If at any time we take God's holy and reverend name into our thoughts, **#Ps 111:9** (and truly we should think of him almost at every breath we draw, according to that "Let every breath praise the Lord," **#Ps 150:6**), remember to think of God as of one at all to be thought of; as one whose wisdom is his justice, whose justice is his power, whose power is his mercy, and all himself, good without quality, great without quantity, everlasting without time, omnipresent without place, containing all things without extent, &c. This is to magnify God, to make room for him in our hearts, and the contrary is to despise his name.

**And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?]** Lo, the impudence of these frontless hypocrites. They traverse their accusation, stand upon their justification, and put God to his proofs. How ordinary is it with people still to palliate their sins and plead their innocence! **#Ho 12:8** "In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin," that were a foul businness. But men have learned to draw a fair gloss upon a foul hand, to cast a colour, as the calf fish doth, to deceive the fisherman; to hide their sins, as Adam, **#Job 31:33**, by downright denial, as did Cain, Gehazi, Ananias, and Sapphira, **#Ge 4:9 2Ki 5:25 Ac 5:8**; or else by excusing and extenuating, as Saul, **#1Sa 15:20,21**; or at least by a senseless silence, not acknowledging their sins, or being affected with them; but rather outfacing, as Judas, **#Joh 13:21 cf. Mt 26:23**. Sin and shifting came into the world together, and so they continue.

Satan knows there is no way to purge the sick soul but upwards; therefore he holds the lips close, that the heart may not disburden itself, and have ease, **#Pr 28:13**.

Ver. 7. **Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar]** Bread, that is, sacrifices and oblations (so Rabbi David expounds it out of **#Le 21:6 3:3 Nu 28:2**); for the Hebrews call all kind of meat by the name of bread, though it be flesh of ox, lamb, or goat, offered in sacrifice to God, whom they made account that they feasted in their sacrifices. Hence that of the Psalmist in the person of God, "Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" **#Ps 50:13**. Now the bread was reckoned polluted when it was neither lawful nor acceptable, but prohibited, and therefore abhorred, as much, every whit, as Ezekiel's bread prepared with man's dung, **#Eze 4:13**, of which he saith, **#Eze 4:14** "Ah Lord God! behold, my soul hath not been polluted; neither ever came there abominable flesh into my mouth." What sacrifices God had flatly forbidden, see **#Le 22:20-22**, &c. Take we heed that we despite not the Lord with seeming honours: we pollute him with our sacrifices, while either for the matter for them we resent him with will worship; as those of old that sacrificed their children (in a foolish imitation of Abraham's offering his son Isaac), and the Papists at this day in their unbloody sacrifice for the living and the dead, and many other unwarranted fopperies. Or else, when for the manner devotion is placed more in the massy materiality of the outward works than purity of the heart, from which they proceed. This made God complain, Isaiah that all his five senses, nay, his very soul, was offended and vexed at their hypocritical performances, **#Isa 1:11-15**, their very incense, that precious perfume, that was made up of so many sweet spices and pure frankincense, stank in his nostrils. God's sharp nose easily discerns, and is offended with the stinking breath of the hypocrite's rotten lungs, though his words be never so scented, and perfumed with shows of holiness. Never did the five cities of the plain send up such poisonous vapours to God as the prayers and other performances of a corrupt and carnal person. And God, not able to abide these ill scents, sends down upon such a counterpoison of fire and brimstone. Good actions from bad men displease: as a man may speak good words, but we cannot hear them, because of his stinking breath; sad as we abhor to taste of a dainty dish if brought to table by a foul nasty sloven, that hath been tumbling in a jakes or

wallowing in a quagmire. The very heathens, as they were very curious in the choice of their sacrifices, that they were every way sound and of the best, so they carefully shut out all profane persons; *Procul hinc este profani*, the priest cried out τις τηδε, who is here. those that were present at the sacrifice answered, πολλοι αγαθοι τε παρεισι, here are many, and those all good men. And hence it was that Jehu sees and searches that no servant of Jehovah be crept into the throng of Baal's worshippers. Well might this search have bred suspicion, were it not that in all those idolatrous sacrifices the first care was to avoid the profane. Even Baal will admit no mixture: how should the true God abide it? Let all Cainists take heed how they draw nigh to him: so Luther calleth *offerentes non personam, sed opus personae*, all those that offer to God the work done, but do not offer themselves withal. We may fitly call those also Cainists that offer polluted bread, as if God's table were contemptible; that think anything good enough for God that comes next hand, as Cain did, when Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and so offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, God testifying of his gifts, **#Ge 4:4 Heb 11:4**; as likewise Christ did of Mary's spikenard of great price, defending her against Judas, the thief, that held it waste; whereas he secretly taxeth those rich wretches of baseness, who cast their brass money into the treasury χαλκον, **#Mr 12:41**, as holding the worst piece they had good enough for God and his poor. Surely Papists, with their vowed presents for the very best they have to their he-saints and she-saints; and Turks, with their mosques or temples stately built, when their private houses are low and homely; shall rise up in judgment and condemn such sordid Christians, as cannot give God the best of the best. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, appointed that their sacrifices should be chosen and selected εκκριτα ειπεια, that the sacrificers should purify themselves some days before, and that none should serve God *obiter*; in passing, slightly and slenderly, but in all best manner, and with the best preparation they could make beforehand, οικαθεν παρασκευασμενοι. Numa Pompilius, King of the Romans would not have them worship their gods, παρεργη και αμελως, for fashion and dissolutely; but freed from all other cares and cumbers, σχολην αγωντας απο των αλλων: in the time of Divine service the priests, to prevent distraction, cried out often to the people, *Hoc agite*, mind the business you are about. So in the primitive times of the Church, the deacons called often

upon the people, *Sursum corda*, Lift up your hearts. And again, *Oremus, attendamus*, Let us pray, let us attend. For what reason? Prayer without attention and hearing without attention is as a body without a soul. This sentence is written in Hebrew upon the walls of the Jewish synagogues, *et si nullibi minus intentionis sit quam in ipsorum precibus, &c.*, saith mine author, though there is as little true devotion to be seen among them in their services as among any people, unless it be among the Papists, of whom perhaps they learned it, whose devotions are prized more by tale than by weight of zeal, whose holiness is the very outward mark itself, being a brainless head and soulless body. In the isle of Sardinia, as they give way, in the very time of their mass, to vain talking and toying and tumults, so after mass done, they fall to dancing in the midst of the Church, singing in the mean time songs too immodest for an ale house. Henry III, King of France, *processiones religiosas non intermittit, at tepidius celebrat*, saith the Chronicler, would not neglect their religious processions, but showed little devotion at them. For between him and his cardinal there went at the same time a jester, whose work was to make sport then, when the business required greater seriousness. How much better the Great Turk, who, when he comes into his temple, lays aside all his state, and hath none to attend him but a professor of their law, whose office is to proclaim, before they begin, that nothing be done against religion!

**And ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee?**] They well understood that by offering polluted sacrifices they polluted God himself (as much as in them lay), and that the dishonour done to God's service reflected upon himself, and was a despising of his name, **#Mal 1:6**, whereof his true worship is a part, **#Mic 4:5 1Ki 5:3,5**. Hence they say not, wherein have we polluted thine altar? but "wherein have we polluted thee?" This is much more done under the New Testament by all unworthy communicants, and unhallowed worshippers, that present the great God with dough baked duties, slubbered services, careless and customary performances which they turn over as a task, holding a certain daily stint of them, as malt horses do their pace: or mill horses their round, merely out of form and for fashion' sake. These do enough to pollute the God of purity, and to cast contempt upon him from the sons of men; who will be apt to conclude that he is a contemptible God, since he will be

content to take up with such contemptible sacrifices and services. But more especially those that come hand over head and without due preparation to the Lord's supper are guilty of polluting God's holy things, and of crucifying afresh the Lord of glory, putting him to an open shame. *Dum enim sacramenta violantur, ipse cuius sunt Sacramenta, violatur* said Jerome. When the sacraments are violated he also, whose the sacraments are, is no less violated. And as these in the text are said to pollute God, in that they offered polluted sacrifices, though they never touched God himself so unworthy receivers are guilty of the Lord's body and blood, #1Co 11:27, although they never touched either his body or blood with their impure mouths. They are as very kill Christs as Judas was in a proportion; and look whatsoever blasphemies, irrisions, scorns, contumelies, reproaches, the miscreant Jews belched forth and practised corporally against Christ the same are spiritually repeated and reiterated by the unworthy receiver; who polluteth the very outward elements that he toucheth, and so offereth indignity to Christ, whom they represent. Like as he that doth rend, deface, trample under foot and villanously abuse the image, seal, or letter patent of a prince or state, is guilty of high treason; so is it here. The Donatists that cast the holy elements to dogs, did it to the disgrace of Christ; and by a just judgment from him were themselves afterwards devoured of dogs Dr Morton reports a story of his own knowledge of one Booth, a Bachelor of Arts, in St John's College in Cambridge, who, being Popishly affected, at the time of the communion took the consecrated bread, and forbearing to eat it, conveyed and kept it closely for a time, and afterwards threw it over the college wall. But a short time after, not enduring the torment of his guilty conscience, he threw himself headlong over the battlements of the chapel; and some few hours after ended his life. God seemeth to say of every one that cometh to the supper of his Son, as sometimes Solomon said of Adonijah, "If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth; but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die," #1Ki 1:52.

**In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible]** God's infinite patience in vouchsafing not only to reply to these malapert priests, but thus to rejoin, and to approve the assumption of the last syllogism, which they so shamelessly denied, is much to be admired.

How justly might he have answered them with blows instead of arguments; and have dealt with them as he did with Pharaoh, that sturdy rebel, that proudly asked, "Who is the Lord?" Hereunto God made a large reply by a great many plagues, one after another, till Pharaoh was forced to answer himself, "The Lord is righteous, but I and my people are wicked." And as God's patience appeareth in his proceeding with these priests in the text, so his wisdom too, in his thus instancing in particulars of their sins, that he might the sooner evict them, and bring them to a saving sense and sight thereof. Thus he dealt by our first parents in Paradise; and afterwards by Cain. Whereas, without any more ado, the Lord God said unto the serpent, "Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou," &c., #Ge 3:14. He was not so much as questioned, or convinced, because God meant him no mercy; but presently doomed, because of mere malice he had offended.

**Ye have said]** *i.e.* Ye have thought, as #Ps 32:5 30:7; and as good ye might have spoken out; for I hear the language of your hearts; I understand your thoughts long before, or at a great distance, #Ps 139:2.

**The table of the Lord]** That is, the altar of burnt offerings, see #Eze 41:22, which is therefore called a table, because by their sacrifices God did as it were feast the Lord, as is above noted. And as God prepared the Israelites a "table in the wilderness," so they also in a sense prepared him a table: hence Moses tells Pharaoh, that they must go to keep a feast to the Lord, #Ex 5:1. And how God accepted of their kindness, see #Ho 9:10. I found Israel, saith he, like grapes in the wilderness; which, to a wearied, parched traveller, how welcome are they! And how the good soul still entertaineth her Christ, as Esther once did Ahasuerus at the banquet of wine, is sweetly set forth in many passages of Solomon's Song. See #Mal 1:12. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:12"}

**Is contemptible]** Or, lightly set by. Some are poor, and cannot; others are profane, and care not to cover God's altar with their sacrifices. Hence the whole ministry is slighted, because impoverished. For *ad tenuitatem beneficiorum, necessario sequitur contemptus sacerdotum*, Lean benefices make contemptible

incumbents; and *Nil habet infelix paupertas, &c.* (Horat.), Poverty rendereth men ridiculous. Or thus, The table of the Lord is contemptible, so they esteemed it, because the fat and blood poured upon the altar were things but base and despicable in themselves; and they considered not for what end God had appointed these sacrifices, and how they were to be led to Christ by them. For the ceremonial law was or ought to have been their gospel, it was Christ in figure. And this, if these buzzards had seen, they would never have counted the "table of the Lord contemptible"; as holding forth the Lord Christ unto them, that pearl of price, who is better than rubies; and the altar or table, that typified him, or presented him to his people, was not an oysterboard, as the Papists in King Edward VI's time scornfully termed our communion table; but far more precious than either that rich table sent by Ptolemy Philadelphus to Eleazar, the Jews' high priest, or that costly communion table, that had in it all the riches of land and sea, offered up by Justinian, in the temple of Sophia, in Constantinople.

Ver. 8. **And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, &c.]** Their profaneness in polluting God's altar is here further evinced and evidenced: 1. By the illegality of their practice, while they offered the blind and lame as good enough for such a contemptible altar. 2. By the incivility and indecency thereof; while they presented that to the Emperor of the world, that they would have been ashamed or afraid to present to some petty prince, that had any power to punish such an affront. The law for sacrifices see **#Le 22:20 De 15:21**. A blind sacrifice he offereth who worshippeth he knoweth not what, **#Joh 4:22**, that is, to seek, and grope in the dark, **#Ac 17:27**, when they yield not the obedience of faith, bring not to God an intelligible, reasonable service, such as whereof they can render a sound reason out of the word of God, **#Ro 12:1**; who binds us not to any blind obedience, as the Popish padres do their novices. And yet the most people are to this day woefully to seek for the warrant for their worships; resting on that old Popish rule, to follow the drove, and believe as the Church believes. As at Ephesus, so in our Church assemblies, "the more part knew not wherefore they were come together," **#Ac 19:32**. They will say in general, to serve God. But who he is, how to be served, wherein and in whom to be served, they know not. There is in a printed sermon a memorable story of an old man, over sixty, who lived and died in a parish where there had



been preaching almost all his time. This man was a constant hearer as any might be, and seemed forward in the love of the word. On his death bed, being questioned by a minister touching his faith and hope in God, he made these strange answers. Being demanded what he thought of God? he answered that he was a good old man. And what of Christ? that he was a towardly young youth. And of his soul, that it was a great bone in his body. And what should become of his soul after he was dead? That if he had done well, he should be put into a pleasant green meadow. These answers astonished those that were present to think how it were possible for a man of good understanding, and one that in his days had heard at the least two or three thousand sermons; yet upon his death bed in serious manner thus to deliver his opinion, in such main points of religion, which infants and sucklings should not be ignorant of. But we may be sure this man is not alone; there be many hundreds whose grey hairs show they have had time enough to learn more wit, who yet are in case to be set to their A B C again for their admirable simplicity in matters of religion. Blind they are, and blind sacrifices they offer; never once opening their eyes till death, if then, as Pliny reporteth of the mole; but always rooting and digging in the earth, as if through the bowels of it they would dig themselves a new way to hell.

**Is it not evil?**] Or, as some read it, It is not evil, *q.d.* it is good enough, and may serve turn well enough. Or thus, It is not evil in your opinion, who, rather than you would lose any gain, say, *Melius est illi quam Nil* (it is Osiander's rhyme), better that which is ill and bad than nothing at all. But they which count all good fish that comes to not, will in the end catch the devil and all. The sense is much clearer in the interrogative, "Is it not evil?" It is, it is; and therefore studiously to be declined and avoided as poison in your food, or a serpent in your way. "Abstain from all appearance of evil!," saith that great apostle, **#1Th 5:22**; how much more from all apparent evils, such as stare you in the face, and are so directly contrary to the plain word of God! Such are sins with an accent, wickedness with a witness, great transgressions, **#Ps 19:13**.

**And if ye offer the lame and languishing]** He offers the lame that brings his sacrifice with a wicked mind, **#Pr 21:27**, as Balak and Balaam did, **#Nu 23:1,2**; that walks not evenly before the Lord, and

with an upright foot, **#Ge 17:1**; that halts between two opinions, as the people did, **#1Ki 18:21**, *inter coelum terramque penduli*, hanging between heaven and earth, as meteors, uncertain whether to hang or fall. Such were Ecebolus, Baldwin, Spalatensis, Erasmus ἀμφίβιος. Cyprian calleth such *incipites, palpatores temporum, in levitate tantum constantes*, doubtful minded men. St James, **#Jas 1:8**, calleth them "double minded men, unstable in all their ways," as he is that stands on one leg, or as a bowl upon a smooth table. But what said that martyr? If God be God, follow him; if the mass be God, let him that will see it hear it, and be present at it, and go to the devil with it, but let him do what he doth with all his heart. God cannot abide these neuter passives ("I would thou wert either hot or cold," **#Re 3:15**). He requires to be served truly, that there be no halting, and totally, that there be no halving. To halt between two opinions, to hang in suspense, to be in religion as idle beggars are in their way, ready to go which way soever the staff falleth, how hateful is it! When some took Christ for John Baptist, some for Elias, some for Jeremiah, "But whom say you that I am?" said our Saviour; to teach us that Christ hates to have men stand doubtful and adhere to nothing certainly; to have them as mills, fit to be driven about by the devil with every wind of doctrine; or, as hunting dogs between two hares, running as soon after this, as soon after that; and so losing both. This for point of judgment; and, for matter of practice, the soul is well carried when neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet tossed with tempests to move disorderly. A wise man's course is of one colour, like itself; he is *homo quadratus*, a square stone set into the spiritual building, **#1Pe 2:7**; he is *semper idem*, as Joseph was; no changeling, but one and the same at all places and estates of life: his feet stand in an even place (as David's did, **#Ps 26:12**), that is, in an equal tenor. Uniformity and ubiquity of obedience are sure signs of his sincerity; when godliness runs through his whole life, as the woof runs through the warp. But "the legs of the lame are not equal," saith Solomon, **#Pr 26:7**. The hypocrite's life is a crooked life, he turneth aside to his crooked ways, saith David, **#Ps 125:5**, as the crab fish goes backwards; or, as the planets, though hurried from east to west, yet, by a retrograde motion of their own, steal their passage from west to east. It is a crooked life when all the parts of the line of a man's life be not straight before God; when he lifteth not "up the

hands that hang down, and the feeble knees; and maketh straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; and not rather healed," and rectified: or set to rights, as the apostle's word signifieth **#Heb 12:12,13**, ἀνορθώσατε. That is a sick soul that is not right set for heaven; and that is a gasping devotion, a languishing sacrifice that leaneth not upon Christ, and that is not quickened by his spirit, fitly called by the apostle, a spirit "of power, and of love, and of sound mind," **#2Ti 1:7**. Surely as a rotten rag hath no strength, so an unsound mind hath no power to do aught that may please God *Frustra nititur qui Christo non innititur*; saith a father. He loseth his labour that leaneth not upon Christ (who is the power of God and the wisdom of God), that leaneth not wholly upon him, but will needs have one leg upon the earth and the other upon the water, as that angel in the Revelation; one foot upon the solid ground and the other upon a quagmire; that rest upon Christ but as a part Saviour, as Papists; or trust to him, as the apricot tree that leaneth against the wall, but it is fast rooted in the earth; so some seem to lean upon Christ in their performances, but are rooted, meanwhile, in the world, in pride, filthiness. Or, lastly, as the ivy, which though it clasp about the oak and draweth much from it, yet brings forth all its berries by virtue of its own root. Thus hypocrites also offer sacrifice, but it is a sick sacrifice, because it is from themselves and in themselves; they do all in their own strength, that is, in their own weakness. For our "strength is to sit still," **#Isa 30:7**, and to work ourselves into the Rock of ages. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," **#Isa 26:4**. The blind and the lame Jebusites, when they had secured themselves in the stronghold of Zion, insulted over David, as if he could not come in thither, though he did his utmost to get in to them; the very blind and lame there enclosed should be able to withstand him. But both their hold and their hope deceived them. "Nevertheless," saith the text, "David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David," **#2Sa 5:6,7**. But they that get into the rock Christ Jesus shall never be visited by evil, nor disappointed in their hopes ( *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*); but of weak they shall be made strong, **#Heb 11:34**, able to present their bodies a lively, not a languishing, sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, **#Ro 12:16**; they shall do all things through Christ which strengtheneth them, **#Php 4:13**.

**Offer it now unto thy governor]** Be it but some petty provincial president, some duke of Venice, or despot of Servia. Jacob can tell that the lord of Egypt will look for a present; and therefore biddeth his sons take of the best in the land in their vessels, and carry the man a present, a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds, of every good thing somewhat, though it were the less, **#Ge 43:11**; for to do much it was not in the power of their hands; but see that it be of the best, saith he. The poor Persian that met Artaxerxes with a handful of water out of the river Cyrus, went away well rewarded. So did the gardener that presented the Duke of Burgundy with a rape-root, because it was the best they were able to do. Likewise, the Almighty takes anything well aworth from those that are willing indeed, but, alas, not able to bring a better present. Vow and perform (saith he) unto the Lord your God: bring presents unto him, that ought to be feared, **#Ps 76:11**. Say not, I fear to present, because I have nothing worthy of him. Send a lamb to the ruler of the earth, **#Isa 16:1**. Or, if thou hast not a lamb, offer a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons; but see they be young, and that thy lamb be the best in thy fold, and it shall be accepted. Every man cannot do as Solomon did, at the dedication of the temple; when he offered twenty-two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep, **#1Ki 8:63**; or as great Alexander, whom Pliny reporteth, that in his childhood, when he threw incense upon the altar in great plenty, his schoolmaster checked him for so doing; and bade him sacrifice on that sort when he had conquered the incense bearing countries, and not till then. Alexander, when he had subdued Arabia, remembered his schoolmaster, and presented him with a ship laden with frankincense; largely exhorting him to spare for no cost when he sacrificed to the gods. But no man must come before the Lord empty handed; if it be but a handful or two of flour, or a grain or two of salt, **#Le 5:6,11,12 14:30,31**. So the Athenians thought the gods would be well pleased with a poor man, if he offered but meal; especially if he could mingle it with oil and wine; for they held that every man was bound to bring his best, and not to be base in saving charges in this case. Hence it was that when the famous artificer Phidias advised them to make the statue of Minerva rather of marble than of ivory, 1. Because it was more durable: this passed with allowance. 2. Because less chargeable: at the mention hereof with infinite indignation they commanded him silence. Their

meat offerings were to be sound and without blemish, whether it were an ox, sheep, goat, swine, calf. The more wealthy did cast frankincense on the altars; and, in their blind devotion, thought they could hardly over do in honour of their dunghill deities. What, then, shall become of those base wretches among us, that think everything too good for God, too much for his ministers? that study to beat down the price of heaven, and will not deal except they may have it underfoot?

**Will he be pleased with thee]** I think not. The Vulgate renders it, *Si placuerit, &c.* If it please him, or if he accept thy person: *q.d.* then let me never be believed. But the other reading is better, and more agreeable to the original.

**Or accept thy person?]** Heb. Accept thy face, that whore's forehead of thine, hatched with so much impudence, that thou darest bring him a worse present, when thou hast a better at hand, but holdest it too good for him. Araunah, though a subject, yet, as a king, he gave unto the king oxen for sacrifice, and threshing instruments for wood, **#2Sa 24:23**. And although David accepted his courtesy, but not his cost, yet God hath crowned him and chronicled him for his munificence, **#Zec 9:7**. Ekron, that is, the barbarous people of Palestine, shall be as the Jebusite, that is, as this famous Jebusite Araunah, a proselyte, a true convert, as appeared by his ready parting with his freehold to God, and the best that he had to his prince. Let all those that look for acceptance in heaven honour the Lord with the prime of their age, with the choice of their days (as the Hebrew hath it, **#Ec 12:1**), with the primrose of their childhood, with the best of their time, and of their talents; and not unworthily and woefully waste and cast away the fat and marrow, the flower of their age, the strength of their bodies, the vigour of their spirits, in sinful pleasures and sensual delights, in pursuing their fleshly lusts that hale hell at the heels of them. Will they give the devil the best, and then think to serve God with the dregs, the bottom, the snuff, the very last sands, their extreme dotage, that themselves and their friends are weary of? Surely, God takes no pleasure to pledge the devil, or drink the snuffs that he hath left. If men reserve the dregs of their days for him, he will likewise reserve the dregs of his wrath for them. He will put them over to the gods whom they had chosen, as

**#Jud 10:14**, and make them to know the worth of his good acceptance by the want of it. He that should set before his prince a dish of meat that had been half eaten before by hogs or dogs, would he not be punished with all severity? What, then, shall become of those that serve God with the devil's leavings? that sacrifice to themselves, as Sejanus did (Dio in Tiberio); that serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, as those seducers, **#Ro 16:17,18**; that say to God, Depart from us, and to the devil, Reign thou over us, that are serious at his work, Mighty in God's?

Ver. 9. **And now I pray you, beseech God]** Heb. Weary God with your prayers, press him till he be even sick of you; improve your uttermost interest in him, if, at least, you have any. Pray hard, if ye can, at least; for all men cannot pray; wicked men are gagged by the devil; and their character is, They call not upon God. They may cant or chatter out a charm when God's chastening is upon them, yea, be with child, as it were, of a prayer, and yet bring forth nothing better than wind, **#Isa 26:16-18**. In prosperity they may have some few short winded wishes, as Balaam (Satan's boggie man) had; yea, they may by strength of wit or memory devise a handsome prayer, and seem to set it forth with much life, that they may pass for men of parts and gifts: but will the hypocrite pray always? **#Job 27:10**; will he persevere in prayer when God seems to cast out his prayers, and to multiply his crosses? will he not rather curse in that case, as Job's wife, and Micah's mother? will he not howl against heaven, as the wolf when hunger bitten? and as the parrot, when beaten, leave imitating man, and turn to his own natural harsh voice? But say that wicked men do (Joab-like) run to the horns of God's altar when in distress or danger; say they roar out a confession when they are upon the rack (as Pharaoh), and call for good prayers; say they seek him with their sacrifices, as Israel did,—when he slew them, then they sought unto him, **#Ho 6:6 Ps 78:34**, and made their voices to be heard on high, as the prisoner at the bar, as the hog under the knife, as a bull in a net; say they weary out God with their many words, as those sacrificing Sodomites, **#Isa 1:11**, and those hypocrites in the Gospel, that hoped to be heard for their much babbling, **#Mt 6:7**; yet all this is but the prayer of the flesh for ease, and not of the spirit for grace; it is but the fruit of sinful self-love, to rid themselves of God's rod, or to still the noise of their consciences, or out of a vain hope to stop God's judgments. And hence it is that

they miscarry, that they pray to so little purpose (as here is hinted), and that they are not a button the better for all their long prayers. For either God answers them not at all, he hath no respect to their sacrifices (which was Cain's and Saul's unhappiness. The Philistines were upon him, and God was departed from him), or else he answers them according to the idols of their hearts, bitter answers; or, if better, it is but as he answered the Israelites' importunity for a king, for a scourge to them and for quails to choke them: *Deus saepe dat iratus quod negat propitius*, God often gives that in anger which he denies in mercy. If it were otherwise, the devil should have received mercy from God, when, upon his suit, he was suffered to enter into the swine. Let our chief and constant petition, therefore, be in all our addresses to God, that

**he would be gracious unto us]** that he would cast a loving aspect upon us, that whatever else he deny us, grain, wine, yet that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon us. This David preferred before his crown and sceptre. He had a crown of gold, but he valued not that in comparison of that other crown, **#Ps 103:4** "he crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." Hence St Paul, having himself obtained mercy, beginneth and concludeth all his epistles with wishes of grace, mercy, and peace; as not knowing what better to wish those whom he wished best unto. This was Abraham's prayer for Ishmael, Oh that he might live in thy sight, that is, be joint-heir of the promise of grace with Isaac. God answers, several dukes shall come of Ishmael, but with Isaac (as a token of special grace) will I make my covenant. This was also Joseph's prayer for Benjamin, **#Ge 43:29** "God be gracious unto thee, my son." This the priests were appointed to pray for, as a blessing upon the people, **#Nu 6:24,25** "The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee." And hereunto the prophet seems to allude in this text, *q.d.* you are the Lord's priests, and your office is to preach and pray, **#De 33:10** "They shall teach Jacob, they shall put incense before thee." Show now what ye can do in a time of necessity: Beseech the Lord that he would be gracious unto us. This is the main, the mother blessing, that comprehends all the rest. Every man seeks the face of the ruler, **#Pr 29:26** "I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king"; *q.d.* that is better to me than all the land thou hast given me, said that

crafty flatterer Ziba, #2Sa 16:4. How much more is the grace of God to be preferred before all outward blessings whatsoever! "The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion," saith the Psalmist, #Ps 134:3, intimating that blessings out of Zion are above all the blessings beside that heaven and earth can yield us. What is the air without light? What was Haman the better for all his honours, when the king frowned upon him? How can a wicked man be happy, though wealthy, so long as God is his enemy? As that father speaks of Ahab; he describes him sitting in his ivory palace in the time of the three years' famine in Samaria; he had gold, silver, and jewels in every place; but what good did all that when the heaven was brass above, and the earth iron beneath? Cry, therefore, as those in Zechariah, Grace, grace unto us; pray for ourselves and others, as David did for Ittai the Gittite, mercy and truth be with thee, #2Sa 15:20. Stir we up ourselves to take hold of God, and to get of him Gaius's prosperity, *dona throni*, soul blessings, and such as accompany salvation. Jesus Christ, when he came into the world, brought grace and truth with him, #Joh 1:17. And God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing our sins, but stretching out to us the golden sceptre of his grace. Get in to him, therefore: till this be done, though thou shouldst spend thy time in gathering up pearls and jewels, thou art an undone creature.

**This hath been by your means]** Heb. From your hand, *q.d.* You priests have effected it, and are in fault about it. It is long of you that I and my service are so slighted, as hath been before demonstrated, you have caused the people to abhor the offering, #1Sa 2:17; you should have better instructed the people in their duties, and not have suffered them so to pollute mine altar with their carrion sacrifices; and if God reject your prayers, as here, and even curse your blessings, as #Mal 2:2, and curse your seed, #Mal 1:3, you have to thank yourselves. All this is by your means. Accept, therefore, of the chastisement of your iniquity, leave quarrelling, and lay the blame of all where it should be; wash you, make you clean, &c. For till then will he regard your persons? will he receive you to favour, and hear your prayer? or will he think the better of you for your office and dignity of priesthood? No, sure, but the worse; for, *sedes prima et vita ima*, the highest place and the basest life agree not. *Dignitas in indigno est ornamentum in luto*, even royalty without righteousness



is but eminent dishonour; and men of mark are therefore the worse, because they should have been better. Height of place ever adds two wings to sin, example and scandal, whereby it soars higher, and flies much further. If the sun be eclipsed and obscured, a thousand eyes gaze upon it; a lesser star may be darkened, and none take notice. A small flaw is noticed and noted in a jewel; a small spot in a swan; not so in a swine. One fly may corrupt a box of precious ointment; when a hundred flies in a tar barrel do no harm to it.

Ver. 10. **Who is there among you that would shut the doors]** To be a doorkeeper in God's house, to have any the lowest employment about him, David (though destined to a diadem) looked upon as a high preferment. Those Nethinims, mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah, were none other but the Gibeonites, who were made drawers of water to the temple, as a kind of punishment. God, who is a liberal paymaster, made this cross a mercy. Their employment, so near the house of God, gave them fit occasion to be partakers of the things of God. The Lord did wonderfully both reward and honour them. So he did all others, though but porters, that had any office about his house. "Know ye not," saith Paul, "that they which minister about holy things live with the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar" (though but to kindle a fire upon it) "are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel," **#1Co 9:18,14**; should have, if not tithes, as they had, yet honorary stipends, double honour, **#1Ti 5:17**, *duplex, id est, multiplex* (Calvin), as **#Isa 40:1,2 Jer 17:18**. Or, double, comparatively, to that of widows indeed, **#1Ti 5:3**, which yet was honourable maintenance, *Et ex publico alebantur*. The priests of the Old Testament were plentifully provided for by tithes and other revenues appointed them by God. True it is, that in the captivity little commodity was made of the priesthood; whereupon some priests, who had married themselves into the noble family of Barzillai, took scorn to be in the priest's register, but called themselves after the family of their wives. Now after the return to Babylon the priesthood grew into some gain and grace again; and then those degenerate priests would fain have thrust in among the priests of the Lord; but the Tirshatha would not suffer them, **#Ezr 2:62**. Howbeit, those priests that had stuck to their offices, and been faithful in them, did not serve God on freecost; neither was he behindhand or in arrears with any of them, as appears

by this text; but as they did their work, so they had their wages. God put into the heart of good Nehemiah to take order that these tithes were duly paid in to the treasurers for that purpose appointed, **#Ne 13:10,11**. What reason had these priests, therefore, to be so gripple and greedy of filthy lucre, as to take such lame and lean sacrifices of the people, for if fat and good, to change them for the worse ones among their own, as holding anything good enough for God? which, because they did,

**I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hands]** I care not for your persons, I respect not your performances. The Lord had respect, first to Abel, and then to his offering, **#Ge 4:4 Ps 4:3** "But know" (saith David, to those that abused him) "that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself"; and this he makes the ground why his prayer should be heard. The blood of a swine may look better and brighter than the blood of a sheep; yet might it not be offered unto the Lord, because it was of a swine. *Sordet in conspectu iudicis, quod fulget in conspectu operantis*. A piece of wood may shine in the night from its rottenness; and that be fair in the sight of men that is abomination before God, **#Lu 16:15**. The swan was rejected for sacrifice because of his black skin, notwithstanding his fair feather, **#Le 11:18**. The wicked man's incense stinks of the hand that offereth it; and all his devotion is but a beautiful abomination. There is in Lombard this sentence quoted out of Augustine, *Omnis vita infidelium peccatum est: et nihil bonum sine summo bono* The whole life of unbelievers is sin, neither is there any good without the chiefest good. Ambrose Spiera, the expositor, saith, *Crudelis est illa sententia*, This is a cruel sentence. But saith not the holy Scripture the very same in effect? **#Pr 15:8 Heb 11:6 Joh 15:5**. What though Papists talk much of *Opus operatum*? and teach that good works, by whomsoever performed, are accepted of the Lord, as justice in an atheist is a good and acceptable work to him? St James assures us that it is "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man" only, and of one reconciled to God, that "availeth much," **#Jas 5:16**. And, "for this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee," saith David, **#Ps 32:6**. The leper's lips should be covered, according to the law. And to the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do?" &c., **#Ps 50:16**. It is said of witches and their good prayers (as they call them), *Si magicæ*,

*Deus non vult tales: si piaae, non per tales,* If those prayers be abused to witchcraft, God will have none of them; and if they be never so good, God will not have them from such kind of people. Before they pray men should see whether they are persons fit to pray; for God accepts not a good motion from an ill mouth, **#Jer 11:10,11 Joh 9:31 1Jo 3:22 Ps 66:16**. A wicked man lacks contrition, humility, faith, hope, feeling, fervency; he hath not a spirit of grace and supplication to indite his prayers; he hath not an intercessor in heaven to present and perfume his prayers. The breath wherein our prayers ascend should be like pillars of smoke perfumed with Christ's myrrh and incense. Otherwise our words will be like the Egyptian pots, reeking out the strong smelling onions and garlic of our own corruption, such as God can take no pleasure in, neither will he accept such an offering at our hands.

Ver. 11. **For from the rising of the sun, &c.**] Whereas they might object, if you will not have service from us, you can have none at all; for other people walk every one in the name of his god, **#Mic 4:5**, and the Gentiles have their vanities, and doctrines of vanities, **#Jer 14:22 10:8**, wherewith they are wholly taken up. Take you no care for that, saith God here.

**For from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles]** I will provide for mine own great name, that is, for my glory (for so God's name is used in that sense, **#Ex 9:16 Ps 8:1**). I will be no loser by your rejection; for I have other people that will more reverence me, and do me better service; so that I need not be beholden to you. I have from east to west those that will make hard shift but I shall have service done me. I can "set a sign, and send to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud," &c., "that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles," **#Isa 66:19,20**. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, &c., that though sick, weakly, and unfit for travel, yet they shall come on end; and rather in litters than not at all; they shall be content to suffer any hardship for heaven, as the stone will fall down to come to its own centre, though it break itself in a hundred pieces. The Gentiles once converted shall fly as a cloud, **#Isa 60:8**, that is, with greatest perniciousness and swiftness; yea, they shall in such flocks come to the

Church, as if a whole flight of doves, driven by some hawk or tempest, should scour into the columbary, and rush into the windows. There are those who have observed, that the name of God in all the maternal languages consisteth of four letters ( יהוה, Θεος, *Deus*, Dieu, Gott), to intimate that he hath his people in all the four quarters of the earth, out of all countries, nations, and languages. **#De 6:4** "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." In the original the last letter of the word hear is greater than the rest, as calling for all possible heed and attention. So likewise is the last letter in the word one, which being *Daleth*, and standing usually for four (as a numeral letter), signifieth, say the Hebrew doctors, that this one God shall be worshipped in all the four corners of the earth.

*{Hebrew Text Note}* This Cyprian hath also gathered from the Greek letters of the name Adam; which do severally signify the four quarters of the world, east, west, north, and south: to teach that Christ, the second Adam, will fetch his people from all parts (Α Ανατολη, Δ Δυσις, Α Αρκτος, Μ Μεσημβρια), and hath therefore built his Church, his New Jerusalem, four square, **#Re 21:16**, and placed on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates, **#Re 21:13**, that all from all parts may have free and open access unto him. Babylon was in like manner built four square, as Herodotus testifieth; and Constantinople is so situated between Europe and Asia, as if it were fatally founded to command both. This is much more true of Uranople, the city of the great king, open to all comers, as the Aedilis, or chamberlain's house in Rome was. "O thou that hearest prayers, to thee shall all flesh come" (saith the Psalmist, **#Ps 65:2**), come with a courage, since they are sure as of access, so of success in all their suits through Christ the Mediator, "who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles," **#Eph 2:14**. This the perverse Jews could never abide to hear of; nor can they to this day. And therehence is it that they have in their expositions basely depraved this text, and corrupted the true sense of it, as is to be seen in the Chaldee Paraphrast and David Kimchi; calling us still *Gel Mamzer*; bastard Gentiles, and cursing us in their daily prayers, which are not (sure) that pure offering mentioned in this verse, and interpreted by them of the prayers of the holy Jews everywhere dispersed. The rejection of the Jews and acceptation of the Gentiles into grace and favour is a

hidden mystery; such as maketh the apostle of the Gentiles cry out, "O the depth!" #Ro 11:33; yea, it is a part of that great "mystery of godliness," #1Ti 3:16, that "God manifested in the flesh should be preached unto the Gentiles, and believed on in the world." Let us pity the poor hardened Jews; and pray the rending of the veil that is yet spread over them; that the rebuke of God's people may be taken away from off all the earth, #Isa 25:7,8. Let us also praise God, who hath made us Gentiles meet "to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," #Col 1:12. And take heed that we sin not away our light, and cause God to take his kingdom from us, giving it to a nation that will bring him better fruit, #Mt 21:43. We have a fair warning given us by the example of the Jews, #Ro 11:11. Seest thou another shipwreck? look to thy tackling.

**From the rising of the sun]** From the east of Judaea the sun of Christ's gospel passed by the south of Greece, to the west of the Latin Church, and these islands of ours that lie in the sea, into which the sun is said to go down, or to lie down, as in its tabernacle of rest (which is an expression of the old Greek poets, and the original word here used agreeth to it). All the danger is, lest the gospel, in this its solar motion, be travelling for the west of that other world, the American parts; and quitting its present places of residence and unworthy possessors; and then farewell England. Oh, let us pray that that dismal day may never arise wherein it shall be said, that the glory is departed from our English Israel.

**My name shall be great]** Name for fame, as #Ex 34:5,6 Php 2:9 Ge 11:4. Renowned men are called men of name, #Ge 6:4, and base men are called men of no name, #Job 30:8.

**Shall be great]** Not that God is great, or less. *Magnum et parvum sunt ex iis, quae sunt ad aliquid*, saith Aristotle. But God's name is said to be great when he is declared or acknowledged to be great, as the word sanctified is used, #Mt 6:9, and the word justified, #Mt 11:19 Jas 2:21. God's fame and glory is as himself, eternal and infinite; and so abides in itself, not capable of our addition or detraction. As the sun which would shine in its own brightness and glory, though all the world were blind, and did wilfully wink. Howbeit, to try how we prize his name, and how industrious we will

be to magnify and exalt it, he hath declared that he esteems himself made glorious; and accounts that he hath received, as it were, a new being by those inward conceptions we have of his glory, and those outward honours we do to his name.

**And in every place incense shall be offered]** Not at Jerusalem only, as the Jews held; nor in mount Gerizim, as the Samaritans, **#Joh 4:20,21**; but any place without difference, be it but a chimney, might make a goodly oratory, **#1Ti 2:8**. All religious differences of places was taken away by Christ's death. Therefore as soon as he had said, **#Joh 19:30** "It is finished," he gave up the ghost, and presently the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, **#Mt 27:51**. And from that hour there was no more holiness in the temple than in any other place. Though till then the temple was so holy a place, and such religious reverence did God's people bear to it, that after the Chaldeans had burnt it they honoured the very place where it had stood, and esteemed it holier than any other. This appears by those eighty persons whom Ishmael murdered, **#Jer 41:5**, and by Daniel's opening his windows toward Jerusalem, when he prayed, **#Da 6:10**.

**Incense shall be offered, and a pure offering]** *Insigne testimonium pro sacrificio Missae*, saith Bellarmine. This text is a notable testimony for the sacrificing of the mass, which Papists will needlessly have to be the sacrifice here meant and mentioned. Much like that Sorbonist, that finding it written at the end of St Paul's Epistles, *Missa est, &c.*, bragged he had found the mass in his Bible: so another, reading **#Joh 1:4**, *Invenimus Messiam*, made the same conclusion (Beehive of Rome, fol. 93). We shall waive their arguments as sufficiently answered by others; and take the meaning of the Holy Ghost here to be of such spiritual sacrifices of the New Testament as all Christians, even the whole royal priesthood, are bound to offer up to God. These are called incense and offering by analogy, **#1Pe 2:5**, the type for the thing thereby shadowed, as Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Augustine interpret the text, **#Re 5:8 8:3,4**. This incense is prayer and praise, **#Ps 141:2 Heb 13:15 Ho 14:4 Ps 51:19**. This pure offering is every faithful Christian, together with all the good things that he hath or can do. It is *simplex oratio de conscientia pura*, saith Tertullian. Thus those good Macedonians

gave themselves to the Lord, saith St Paul, "and unto us by the will of God," **#2Co 8:5**. Thus the Romans had delivered themselves up to the form of doctrine that had been delivered unto them, **#Ro 6:17**, and are yet further exhorted to exhibit, present, make tender, yield up, and offer, as spiritual priests, their bodies (and much more their souls), to God, as a living sacrifice, **#Ro 12:1**, by a willingness to do what he requireth, **#Ps 40:6 Ro 15:16**, and to die for his sake if called thereunto, **#Php 2:17 2Ti 4:6**. Swenkfeldians took away all external service, saith Zanchy. Libertines say, it is sufficient that we sacrifice to God the hidden man of the heart. The Pope saith to his vassals, My son, give me thy heart; be a Papist in heart, and then go to church, dissemble, do what ye will; but God requires to be glorified with our spirits and bodies both, because both are his, **#1Co 6:20**. The very Manichees, that denied God to be the author of the body, fasted on Sundays, and in fasting exercised a humiliation of the body. But (2.) as the true Christian sacrificeth himself to God, so all that he hath or can; and is ready to say, as that Grecian did to the Emperor, If I had more, more I would bring thee (*Εἰ πλεον εἶχον, πλεον εἰδούν*). It comforts him to consider, that "if there be a willing mind, God accepts according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not," **#2Co 8:12**. Noah's sacrifice could not be great, yet was it greatly accepted, because of clean beasts, and offered in faith. It is the godly man's care that his offering, though it be poor, yet may be a pure offering, proceeding from a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, **#1Ti 1:5**; and then he is sure it is pure, by divine acceptation through Christ, **#1Pe 2:5**. In confidence whereof he lifts, up holy hands, **#1Ti 2:8**. And although, sensible of his impurities and imperfections, his heart misgives him sometimes, as Jacob's did, lest his father should discern him; yet when he remembereth that he is clothed, as Jacob was, with the garment of his elder brother, the robe of Christ's righteousness (which is not a scant garment, as Bernard saith, but reaching to the heels, and covering all the parts of the soul), he goeth boldly to the throne of grace, and covers God's altar with his evangelical sacrifices; such as are contrition and self-denial, **#Ps 51:17**; confidence in God, **#Ps 4:6**; obedience to the preaching of the gospel, **#Ro 15:16**; beneficence to the poor, **#Php 4:8**; &c. In all which his aim and endeavour is to worship God in spirit, and to do all more out of thankfulness, and less out of constraint of

conscience. For he knows that as the greatest growth of sinners is in spiritual wickedness (as in those that sin against the Holy Ghost), so the greatest growth of grace is in spiritual holiness, in worshipping God more in spirit and truth.

Ver. 12. **But ye have profaned it]** Ye Jews, in general, though my peculiar people, and called by my name. You that quarter arms with me, as it were, and should, therefore, lift up my name as an ensign; that you should use me thus coarsely, and cast dirt upon my name by your irreligion, this moves me not a little; so that I cannot but once and again complain of it. Had it been an enemy I should better have borne it. But it was thou, my familiar, &c. What, thou, my son Brutus? Και συ τεκνον βρουτε. Friend, betrayest thou the Son of man, and that with a kiss? Scipio had rather Hannibal should eat his heart with salt, than Laelius, his friend, do him the least discourtesy. God will take that from a profane person that he will not take from a professor. Philistines may cart the ark, and escape scotfree; but if David does it, God will punish him in the death of Uzzah. Augustus Caesar may send forth a decree that all the (Roman) world should be taxed or numbered, #**Lu 2:1**; but if David number his people God will make bloody welts upon his back; and if he make God's name to stink among the heathen, God will scour out that blemish cast upon his name with David's tears and blood. See #**Eze 36:21 39:7 Am 2:7 Le 10:3**; I will be sanctified in all them that draw near unto me. Sanctified he will be, either actively or passively; either in the sincerity of their conversation or else in the severity of their condemnation. If Solomon forsake the Lord, that appeared unto him twice, God will chastise him with the rods of men, at least. If Israel profess God's name, and yet profane it, God will cast them off, and turn to the Gentiles. And, indeed, what could he do less to a nation so incorrigibly flagitious, a nation so unthankful for mercies, so impatient of remedies, so incapable of repentance, so obliged, so warned, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked?

**The table of the Lord]** That is, the altar; see #**Mal 1:7**.

**And the fruit thereof]** Or the revenue, the income of it: it is a base allowance that the priests have; prisoner's pittance; they live, that is all. Or thus, The table of the Lord is polluted, &c. That is, it is no better worth than to be polluted; neither do his priests deserve either



countenance or maintenance. So many wretched people in these days think there is more ado made than needs in the worship and service of God, *Colo Deum, ut par est*. Whereas, indeed, we that have received so many mercies, and have lived in such an age of miracles, should not only *servire Deo, sed et adulari*, as Tertullian phraseth it, serve God, but be unsatisfiable in serving him. And as God's service is slighted, so his ministers are well nigh starved in many places; the common people holding the ministry no better than an idle, useless trade, taken up to make a living. How shamefully are God's ablest servants defrauded, mocked, misused! A sad prognostic of a dying state, #2Ch 36:16.

Ver. 13. **And ye have said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, &c.**] At what? At the chiding you have had for your lame and lean sacrifices. A little offensive breath hath blown you up into rage. This is a kind of blasphemy, #Eze 20:27, when graceless men fall into a fustian fume, as they say, by hearing of their faults; and bristle against a reproof, though never so just. Or thus, Ye have puffed and blown, as almost breathless, by carrying some carrion sheep for a sacrifice; as if it were so fat and full of flesh that you could hardly bring it without breaking your wind; whereas ye might have blown it away, it is so thin and light. Hateful hypocrisy! And it sped accordingly. For should I accept this at your hand? No, no: *Sapiens nummularius est Deus: nummum fictum non recipiet* (Bernard). God is a wise mint man; he will take no counterfeit coin. He not only detects the deceiver, and detests him, as here, but curseth him bitterly in the next verse. He rejects the hypocrite's sacrifice, and plagueth such Prometheuses; when as he wipes not out any of the good services of his sincere people, #Ne 13:4, but abundantly blesseth them.

Labour, therefore, for that "truth in the inward parts," #Ps 51:6, that we may be with "Apelles approved in Christ," #Ro 16:10, and with Nathanael, "an Israelite indeed," #Joh 1:47. Be we the same that we would seem to be; and if not, as the windows of the temple were, wider within than without, yet to be no more in show than we are in truth. It stands us in hand when to deal with God to have the greater part of our ware in the inner part of the shop, and not all on the foreshide, on the board or stall; and to see, that though our work be but mean, yet it may be clean; though not fine, yet not foul, soiled

and slubbered with the slur of a rotten heart. Sweet powders can make even leather an ornament, when the sanies of a plaguesore will render a rich robe loathsome and infectious.

Ver. 14. **But cursed be that deceiver]** Cursed with a curse both verbal and penal; temporal and spiritual, **#Mal 3:9**. These last light heavy, such as are hardness of heart and horror of conscience, though less observed; because they come into the deceiver's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones; they soak and sink into his soul insensibly, **#Ro 1:28 Mt 27:5 Ps 109:18**. He hath his death about him (as we say of one that hath drunk poison, or eaten an Italian fig), though he fall not down dead immediately. He is accursed, and he shall be so, as, in a contrary sense, Isaac said of his son Jacob, He is blessed, and he shall be blessed. But usually the visible vengeance of God dogs the deceiver at the heels; his sin finds him out, and lays him open to others, as an accursed person. This was Cain's case and curse, **#Ge 4:15**. God sets a mark upon him; probably it was the perpetual trembling of his hands and whole body, through the horror of his conscience. So, not long before, when Adam had played the deceiver, and hearkened to that old impostor, the subtle serpent, God spared him, but cursed the ground (as the Persians, when their noblemen's sons had made a fault, hanged up their coats and whipped them in their presence): "Cursed is the ground for thy sake: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth," **#Ge 3:17**. And the truth is, it was never beautiful nor cheerful since that curse inflicted; but lies bedridden, waiting for the coming of the second Adam to free it from that heavy curse, **#Ro 8:20**. The barren fig tree felt the power of Christ's curse even to admiration, **#Mt 21:20** "For when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!" They might marvel well enough; for the fig tree is the most juicy of any tree, and bears the brunt of winter-blasts without withering. But the blasts of Christ's mouth are more powerful. He can blow men to destruction, **#Job 4:9**, as so many dust-heaps; yea, frown, not some single fig tree only, but the whole vineyard to desolation. "It is burnt with fire, it is consumed: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance," **#Ps 80:16**. Men may curse, and no hurt follow; "the curse causeless shall not come," **#Pr 26:2**. Micah's mother cursed when she lost her money, **#Jud 17:2**; but who cared or fared the worse for that? And the like may be said of Julius Palmer the martyr's mother, when he craved

her blessing upon his knees, she drove him out of doors for a heretic, and said, God's curse and mine go with thee.

What was David the worse for Shimei's cursing of him, or Jeremiah for the people's, #Jer 15:10, or the reformed Churches for the Pope's? The silly people in Italy are made to believe that ever since the Pope excommunicated Queen Elizabeth the people of England are all as black as devils. The Pope is like a wasp, no sooner angered but out comes a sting; which, being out, is like a fool's dagger rattling and snapping without an edge. We may say of his curses (with bell, book, and candle), as Vogetius saith of chariots armed with scythes and hooks, that at first they were a terror, and after a scorn, lib. 1, cap. 24. But God's curses are terrible, and light heavy. Together with word there goes forth a power (as it is said in another case), and what he speaketh with his mouth he maketh good with his hand. And it is a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God: those that have felt his finger will say so. This the deceiver is sure to do if timely course be not taken. *Currat ergo poenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia.*

**That deceiver]** That fraudulent fellow, that crafty companion, that fraud, quadruplator, machinator, that dealeth subtilly with the Lord, as the Egyptians did with his people, and thinks to outwit him, as the Midianites did the Israelites, {see #Nu 25:18 Ps 10:18, in both which places the same word is used as here} that casteth and fetcheth about (*versutulus et versatilis*), how to deceive both God and man with shows of devotion; not afraid to be damned, so he may seem to be saved, and seeking so long to deceive others, that in fine he deceiveth his own soul (which is the worst kind of deceit, as self-murder is the worst sort of murder), winding himself into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage, and that in matters of greatest consequence and concern. *Imposturam faciunt et patiuntur*; as that emperor said of them that sold glass for pearl; they mock and are mocked, deceiving or being deceived, as Paul saith; like some drunken stage-player, they have acted a king's part so long, that now they begin to think themselves kings indeed; and, like sleeping Sisera, they dream of a kingdom, when as Jael's nail is nearer his temples than a crown. A curse he is sure of, set on by God (who then shall take it off?), and seconded by men, yea, by men that were without God in the world. Witness that

law of the twelve tables in Rome, *Sacrum, sacrove commendatum qui clepserit rapseritve, parricide este*. Let him be punished for a parricide that shall commit sacrilege of any sort. Now, a hypocrite is by Basil rightly called ιεροσυλος, a sacrilegious church-robber; because he steals from God το του θεου αναθημα, himself dedicated to God by profession of Christianity; and so becomes Αναθημα, accursed, yea, Anathema, Maran-atha, double accursed, and put over to God to punish; who hath prepared the hottest fire in hell for such, because their sin is increased by their knowledge; as the sin of Solomon in honouring idols, which he knew to be no gods, was far greater than that of his wives', which believed them to be gods, as Tostatus truly observeth.

**Which hath in his flock a male]** A flock he hath then, and is a sheep-master; able, perhaps, to say, as he in the poet— *mille meis errant in montibus agni*. Were he a poor man he might be the better excused; from a little God accepts a little. Again, he hath a male in his flock, a sound, tidy, fat lamb, or ram; and, reserving that for his own use, though he had voluntarily vowed it to God, he brings a corrupt carrion, or a lean starveling, for a sacrifice. This deceitful dealing is his sin, that subjects him to the curse. This was the sin (and became the calamity) of those in #**Jer 4:22**, that served not God with the best of their understanding; of those in #**Hag 1:4**, that dwelt in their ceiled houses, and let the Lord's house lie waste; of Solomon (some think), that bestowed twice as much time in building his own house as God's house; of all those that seek not God's kingdom in the first place, that give not God the best of the best, the primrose of their age, the first thoughts in the morning, the fittest and freest times of the day for prayer, &c. Scipio went first to the Capitol every day, and then to the Senate House. David prevented the night watches to pray. Christ was at it a great while before day, #**Mr 1:35**. Of Charles the Great it is reported, that he spoke and conversed more with God than with men. Our King Alfred cast the natural day into three parts: eight hours he spent in prayer, study, and writing; eight in the service of his body; and eight in the affairs of his state. The Jews divided the business of the day into three parts: the first, *ad Tephilla*, that is, for prayer; the second, *ad Torah*, for the study of the law; the third, *ad Malchah*, for work; this they did on working days; besides their weekly sabbath and other holy

days strictly observed, which made Seneca (that profane heathen) say of them, that they lost more than a seventh part of their time. How much better might he have bewailed his own loss of time, and neglect of the one thing necessary, in the words of Bernard, *Totum vitae meae tempus perdidi, quia perdere vixi*, I have lost my whole life, because I have lived without God in the world! What a happiness had it been to him if he had observed Aristotle's rule, and Thales' examples, viz. that a philosopher may get riches, but that is not their main business (*αλλ ου τουτ εστι περι ου σπουδαζουσι*, Arist. Polit. lib. 1, cap. ult.). Many are so busied in the world, that they think not of God's kingdom (which yet they vowed to do when they were baptized), as the Duke of Alva told the King of France, who asked him whether he had observed the late great eclipse? No, said he, I have so much to do upon earth, that I have no leisure to behold the heaven. How much better Anaxagoras, the philosopher, who, being asked why he came into the world? answered, *Ut coelum contempler*; that I may contemplate heaven! Men should certainly mind heaven most and first; and not suffer the lean kine to eat up the fat, the thin ears of corn the good; but honour God with the best of their substance and with the best of their abilities (if they stand bound by vow especially, if they have vowed a male to God). Let it not be according to the Italian proverb with us, *Sciapat il morbo fraudato il Santo*, when the danger is escaped the vow is neglected, lest else God curse them, as here, for a company of defrauders; and make them know and rue his breach of promise, **#Nu 14:34**. Surely if Jacob was afraid when he went about to seek a blessing, lest his blind father should discern him, and his deceit in dealing with him, and so he might get a curse instead of a blessing, **#Ge 26:12**, how ought men to take heed and fear to dissemble or deal deceitfully with the all-seeing God! especially since he is so great a God (see him set forth in his greatness, **#De 10:17**), and, therefore, less patient with affronts and indignities; he looks to be served like himself, and according to his excellent greatness.

**For I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts]** Yea, a great King, because Lord of hosts. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:17"} παντοκρατωρ, παμβασιλευς, Αυτοκρατωρ. He is absolute monarch of the whole world; and by him it is that all other kings reign and princes rule, **#Pr 8:15**. All other sovereigns are but his substitutes, his viceroys;

he makes them and unmakes them at his pleasure, as proud Nebuchadnezzar was forced to acknowledge, **#Da 4:37**. Hence he is rightly styled a great King (a title anciently given to the kings of Persia, and now to the Grand Signior), yea, he is King of kings and Lord of lords, in another sense than Maximilian, the Emperor of Germany, said that he was, because the princes and cities of the empire were free states, and yielded him little obedience. God hath all the kings of the earth at his beck and check: Constantine the Great, Valentinian, and Theodosius, three emperors, called themselves *Vasallos Christi*, the vassals of Christ, as Socrates reporteth. And well they might; inasmuch as all nations (taken together) are, in comparison to him, but as a drop of a bucket, and as the dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing, as one would take up a feather at his foot. And if a sacrifice fitting for him should be prepared, Lebanon would not be sufficient to burn, nor all the beasts thereof for a burnt offering. All nations to him are as nothing, **#Isa 40:15,16**. Simon Magus gave out that he was some great matter; and the world hath been troubled with Alexander the Great, and Pompey the Great. But what is now become of all these grandees, with their swelling titles and loud brags? Hath not God long since cut off the spirits of these petty princes, and become terrible to the kings of the earth? **#Ps 76:12**; where the word rendered cut off signifieth that he slips them off, as one would slip a flower between one's fingers, or a bunch of grapes off the vine. The kings of Persia were wont to give laws to their people sitting in a chair of state, under a vine tree of gold, that had, as it were, bunches of grapes made up of *smaragdites*, or emeralds, and other stones of greatest price. The King of heaven sits upon a throne far more costly and stately; as may be seen, **#Eze 1:26 Isa 6:1-4 Da 7:13,14** *Omnino igitur oportet nos, orationis tempore, curium intrare coelestem, in qua Rex Regum stellato sedet solio, &c.*, as Bernard excellently inferreth, it behoveth us, therefore, at prayer time, to enter into the court of heaven, where the King of kings sits in his starry and stately throne, environed with an innumerable number of glorious angels and crowned saints; with how great reverence, therefore, with how great fears, with how great humility, ought a poor base toad, creeping and crawling out of his ditch, to approach so dreadful a presence!

**And my name is dreadful among the heathen]** It was ever so from the very distinction of men into Hebrews and heathens. At the first, before the covenant made with Abraham, all nations were alike before the Lord. But as soon as it was said, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee, the Church was evidently divided from the world, as light was from darkness at the first creation. The heathens God suffered to walk in their own ways. "Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness," #Ac 14:16,17; but his name was ever terrible and tremendous among them. The Hittites honoured Abraham as a prince of God; Pharaoh was raised up on purpose, that on him God might get him a name throughout all the earth, #Ex 9:16. Jethro heard of his doings in Egypt, and became a proselyte. The hearts of the Canaanites melted, and they were made to say, "The Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath," #Jos 2:11. The Philistines were woe begone when they beheld the ark of the God of Israel brought into the field; and were ready, as worms, to wriggle into their holes. The King of Babylon sent ambassadors and a present to Hezekiah, because he had heard that for his sake God had caused the sun to go back. Daniel records what a name God had gotten him in his days all the world over. And after the captivity, near Malachi's time, the famous victories gotten by the Maccabees were far and near discoursed of. Judas Maccabaeus had his name from the capital letters of this motto written in his ensign, *Mi camocha Elohim Iehovah*, who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? But, besides, and above all this, God's name is dreadful among the heathen in a special manner now; since the calling of the Gentiles, and the conversion of so many nations to the faith of Jesus Christ, defy the malice of earth and of hell. This made Calocerius, a heathen, say, *Vere magnus est Deus Christianorum*, the God of the Christians is a great God indeed. And another, Αξιωματικωτατος εστιν ο Θεος υμων, your God is a most majestic God. What a mouth of blasphemy then opened that desperate Papist, John Hunt, in his humble appeal to King James! The God of the Protestants, saith he (whom he knows to be the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), is the most uncivil and evil mannered God of all those who have borne the name of gods upon the earth; yea, worse than Pan, God of the clowns, which can endure no ceremonies nor good manners at all. True it is, that human inventions in his service, and Popish will worships, our God will not

away with. Such strange fire if any presume to bring before him, they may look to speed as Nadab and Abihu, Core and his complices, did; but he expects and requires that all his worshippers should come before him with reverence and godly fear: "For even our God" (no less than the Jews' God) "is a consuming fire," **#Heb 12:28**. He is terrible out of his holy places, **#Ps 68:35**. And albeit he loves to be acquainted with his people in the walks of their obedience; yet, as a great King, he takes state upon him in his ordinances, and will be trembled at in his word and sacraments. Hence Chrysostom calls the Lord's table that dreadful table (φορικωδης); and other ancients call sacraments τα φορικτα μυστηρια, terrible mysteries. He that comes to this table without his wedding garment may look to be taken from the table to the tormentor. That is a remarkable text, **#Ex 34:10,11**, upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. So dreadful is God, and so infinite is the distance between him and the greatest noble that comes to his table, that it is an honour they may be suffered to live in his sight; how much more, then, to partake of his ordinances! Kings and judges are instructed to serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoice before him with trembling, **#Ps 2:10,11**. This is *horror sacer*, holy awe, saith a Lapide upon this text, descanting upon their Vulgate interpreter, who rendereth the word dreadful horrible, *Et nomen meum horribile*. But what an odd conceit was that of a certain sophister at Paris, who would needs be called the horrible sophister, *non minorem eam appellationem ratus quam Africani aut Asiatici*, saith Vives. Perhaps he had read this text in the Vulgate translation. Unless they had the same law at Paris that they had in Italy, that none should read the Bible lest they should thereby be made heretics; but rather study Aristotle (whom Peter Lombard had brought into more request than St Paul, as the Sorbon at Paris complained), or the Canon Law, whereof Carolostadius had been eight years a doctor before he began to read the Scripture; and yet at the taking of his degree had been pronounced, *Sufficientissimus*.

## Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **And now, O ye priests, &c.**] Now, that is, Now again, I must have the other bout with you, besides what I had, **#Mal 1:6-11**, for as once from the prophets, so now from the priests, in Jerusalem



profaneness is gone forth into all the land, #Jer 23:15. Their white ephods covered many foul sins; and their evil example proved a public mischief. Hence the prophet is so round with them; for he knew that a wicked priest is the worst creature upon earth. Unsavoury salt is fit for no place; no, not for the dunghill. It is an old proverb, that hell is paved with the shaven crowns of evil priests. The word priest is never used by the apostles for a minister of the gospel; no, not by the most ancient fathers, as Bellarmine himself confesseth. Indeed in Chrysostom I find this piercing passage; *Non arbitror inter sacerdotes multos esse qui salvi fiant*, I do not think, saith he, that among all our priests, there be many that shall be saved. Bernard comes after him, and complains that in the court of Rome good men failed, bad men grew plentiful; and that the bishops of his time were not doctors, but seducers; not pastors, but impostors; not prelates, but Pilates. Yea, Pope Pius II hath left it in writing, that no villanous act had been for a long time committed in the Catholic Church the first beginning whereof proceeded not from the priests. Cornelius a Lapide, upon this chapter, cries out of the ignorance and wickedness of the Popish clergy as the cause of the contempt cast by us upon them. And I would we had not cause to say, that many of our ministers neither feed liberally by charity, nor soundly by doctrine, nor religiously by life; which opened once the mouth of that dead dog Campian maliciously to bark out, *Ministris eorum nihil vilius*, Their ministers are most vile and vicious.

**This commandment is for you]** *i.e.* That curse, #Mal 1:14 implying a commandment; that if you desire to escape that heavy curse you forthwith obey this commandment ( *Aut faciendum enim aut patiendum*) to procure the purity and integrity of my worships, and to see that there be a present reformation of religion. Reformation is a work that hath ever gone heavily on, and hath met with much opposition. As that made by Elijah, by Josiah, by Nehemiah, and by Hezekiah, who found the priests and Levites very backward; which the good king perceiving, began first himself, and awaked those sluggards with these words. Oh, be not deceived, my sons: God hath chosen you for this service, #2Ch 29:11. The like backwardness was found in the Popish clergy to a general Council, so much urged and called for by the Bohemians, Germans, and other nations, that groaned under the yoke of Papal tyranny. Luther truly

and trimly compareth the cardinals and prelates that met at Rome about reformation of the Church, to foxes, that came to sweep a house full of dust with their tails; and instead of sweeping it out, swept it all about the house, and made a great smoke for the while; but when they were gone the dust fell all down again (Sleidan Comment.). When nothing could be obtained of the Pope, Luther began to reform in Germany, where he had a great door open, but many adversaries, and none more violent than the Pope, whose triple crown, and the monks, whose fat paunches, he so nearly touched, as Erasmus merrily told the Elector of Saxony. Bucer and Melancthon framed a form of reformation with approbation of the peers and states. But the clergy of Collen rejected it with scorn and slander, saying that they would rather submit to the government of the Great Turk than to a magistrate that followed or furthered such a reformation. Here in England something began to be done in the time of Henry VIII, but it was so envied and opposed by the Churchmen that little could be done to what was expected. There are many (said he, sitting in parliament) that are too busy with their new *Sumpsimus*, <sup>{a}</sup> and others that dote too much upon their old *Mumpsimus*. <sup>{b}</sup> The new religion, though true, he and his clergy envied; the old, though his own, he despised. Magistrates are to have the main stroke in reformation of religion (though Papists would utterly exclude them from having to do in matters ecclesiastical), but ministers also must move in their own orb, and do their part too (why else are the priests here commanded and menaced?). 1. By teaching. 2. By exercising discipline. And here magistrates must hem ministers in with boards of cedar, **#So 8:9**, provide for their security while they do their duty, that they may be without fear among them, as Timothy, **#1Co 16:10**. Envied they must look to be, and hated for their zeal to God's house, which they seek to purge. But public respects must (like the rapid motion) carry our hearts contrary to the ways of our own private respects or concerns; and consider, that as it is not the tossing in a ship but the stomach, that causeth sickness; the choler within, and not the waves without; so the frowardness of men, that quarrel with reformation, and not the work itself, which is God's commandment, as here the prophet calls it.

{a} A correct expression taking the place of an incorrect but popular one (*mumpsimus*). (ED)

{b} One who obstinately adheres to old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that they are wrong; an ignorant and bigoted opponent of reform (ED)

Ver. 2. **If ye will not hear]** That your souls may live, **#Isa 55:3**, but forbear, and so show yourselves a rebellious house, **#Eze 2:8**, so adding rebellion to your sin. If you will needs resemble the deaf adder, which, although by spitting out his poison he might renew his age, stoppeth his ears by applying one to the earth, and covering the other with his tail, lest he should hear the voice of the charmer. Or, if ye do hear with that gristle that grows upon your head only,

**And will not lay it to heart]** Heb. Upon your heart, as a weight to keep it down from rising in rebellion against the Lord. If you esteem my command a light matter, and, instead of pondering it in your hearts with Mary, cast it behind your backs, **#Ps 51:17**, or suffer it to run through you as water runs through a riven vessel, **#Heb 2:4**. If, thirdly, you will not give glory unto my name, by confessing your sins, **#Jos 8:19** (so submitting to my justice, and imploring my mercy, which will make much to my glory), and redressing your ways, **#Ps 50:23**, by breaking off your sins, and bearing much fruit, **#Joh 15:8**, studying mine ends more than your own, and drowning all self-respects in my glory. If you will not observe and fulfil these three afore mentioned conditions of exemption,

**I will even send a curse upon you]** That evil angel of mine, that shall bring with him fierceness of anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, **#Ps 78:49**. The Vulgate translation renders it, I will even send poverty upon you; a curse well suiting with their covetousness, and agreeable to that threatened by another prophet: "As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right" (as these priests had done), "shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end be a fool," **#Jer 17:11**. A poor fool God will soon make of the covetous wretch, and reduce him to extreme want; than the which he knows no greater hell, no curse comparable. But the original is more general, I will execrate you, or pronounce a curse against you. Howbeit, *non nisi coactus*, no otherwise than as compelled to it; as that emperor said, laying his hand upon his mouth for a good while before he would pronounce sentence of death upon one that had deserved it. Histories tell us of Augustus, that it went as much against the heart with him as it did

against the hair with the malefactor, when he adjudged him to condign punishment. Vespasian wept over those he sentenced. Nero, in his first five years, being to sign a warrant for execution of certain malefactors, said, *O utinam literas nescirem*, O that I could not write! Our King Edward VI could not be persuaded by all his Council to put his hand to a warrant for the burning of one Joan Butcher, that had well deserved it. Our gracious God might well say, As I live, I delight not in the death of sinners, but rather would they should convert and live, **#Eze 33:11**; why else doth he here, in threatening a curse, interpose a condition for repentance? why doth he warn before he wound, and pre-admonish before he punish? Well might the heathen historian say, God loves to forewarn, φιλει ο θεος, προσημαινειν (Herodot.). Well might that father say, *Minatur Deus ut non puniat*: God therefore menaceth misery that he may not inflict it. And another, *Ideo prolata est sententia, ut non fiat*: The sentence is therefore pronounced that it may not be executed. Witness that we read **#Am 4:12** "Therefore thus will I do unto thee." Thus? how? He nameth not how, that they may fear the utmost, as Ribera noteth, and yet he addeth, "Because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" Surely, as a woman brings not forth without pain; and as a bee, usually, stings not till much provoked; so neither doth God curse his creature till there be no other remedy, **#2Ch 36:16**. And then, *Patientia laesa fit furor*; abused mercy turns into fury. If men will not accept the conditions of peace, though never so fair and reasonable, as here, but pervert his mercies to wantonness, his patience to presumption, he will not always bear with their evil manners; but, repenting him of his kindness so cast away upon those that prized it not, as David repented of the good he had done unworthy Nabal, he will make them know the worth of his blessings by the want of them, **#1Sa 25:21**.

**I will curse your blessings]** Saith he here; I will recover mine own and be gone, as **#Ho 2:9**. I will cut off the meat from their mouths, and blast all your hopes of abundance, and destroy you after that I had done you good, **#Jos 24:20**. Thus God dealt by his unfruitful vineyard, **#Isa 5:5**, he pulled up the hedges and let in the wild boar. Thus also he dealt by the unprofitable servant; he took away his talent, and turned him over to the tormentor. And thus he deals by

many today, in whom it is no hard matter to observe a wane and decay of their gifts and abilities, upon their disuse or misuse thereof. How many have we that are woefully fallen from the affections of prayer they were wont to find and express! how many idle and therefore evil ministers, rejected by God, and laid aside, as so many broken vessels; while he causeth the night to come upon their divination, puts out their right eyes and dries up their right arms, **#Zec 11:17**; till at length they may say, with Zedekiah. When did the spirit depart from me? "Woe to me, for I am spoiled," **#Jer 4:13**. And in very deed what should a prince do but take a sword away from a rebel? what should a mother do, but snatch away the meat from the child that mars it? And what can God do less than take away his grain, wine, and wool, from those that not only own him to it, but go after other sweethearts with it? **#Ho 2:5,9**.

**Yea, I have cursed them already]** For a pledge of more malediction. For as in blessings, every former is a pledge of a future; so in curses. As one cloud follows another till the sun disperse them; so doth one curse succeed another till repentance remove them. No sooner doth that rainbow appear in our hearts, but God, remembering his covenant, clears up our coasts, and lifteth up the light of his countenance upon us. Take the bark from the tree, and the sap can never find its way to the branches. Take sin from the soul, and God will soon be reconciled. But if ye walk contrary unto me, I will punish you yet seven times more, and seven times, and seven to that, **#Le 26:24**, till I have dashed you in pieces; as Dagon never left falling before the ark till his neck was broken. Sin doth as naturally draw and suck curses to it as the loadstone doth iron, or turpentine fire. The Chaldee and the Vulgate make these words but a repetition of the former; for they read the text thus: I will curse your blessings, and I will curse them; to intimate his peremptoriness in the thing, and that he was unchangeably resolved upon it. Now when God will do a thing, who shall hinder it? Nature may be resisted and hindered in its course; when the fire burnt not the three worthies, when the sun stood still in heaven, yea, went backwards. Men and devils, though never so potent, may want of their will, and be crossed in their designs and desires. But if God will have this or that to be done, there is no gainstanding him. If he have a mind to bless his people, they shall be blessed. If he will have pity for his own

name's sake, which the house of Israel had profaned, **#Eze 36:21**; if he will come in with his *Non obstante*, Nevertheless he saved them, &c., and dealt with his servants not according to his ordinary rule, but according to his prerogative, who shall contradict him? In like sort, if he will redouble his strokes upon his enemies, and not only curse them, but curse them bitterly, as the angel did Meroz, who can hinder or object against his proceeding in that behalf? **#Jud 5:23**. His judgments are sometimes secret, but always just; and if he once say, I will curse, yea, that I will, there is as little hope of altering him as there was of Pilate, when he had once pronounced, what I have written I have written, it shall surely stand.

**Because ye do not lay it to heart]** As he had repeated their curse, so he doth here their sin; instancing in that branch of it that most offended him; and that was their stupidity and senselessness, either of their sin or danger. This is a God provoking evil, often complained about, but especially when it proceeds from presumption, as **#De 29:19 Isa 22:12-14 Eze 24:13**. The Lord cannot satisfy himself in threatening such; as if the very naming of it had enraged his jealousy; neither is he more absolute in threatening than he will be resolute in punishing.

Ver. 3. **Behold, I will corrupt your seed]** And so mar your hopes of a harvest; I will bring famine upon you, that sore judgment, worse than that of the sword, **#La 4:9**, which yet is the slaughter house of mankind, and the very hell of this present world. By this scourge God will tame his prodigals, and starve their bodies; who, by the contempt of his ordinances, starve their own souls, **#Hag 1:4**. Either by immoderate drought God can cause a famine, **#Joe 1:10**, or by immoderate moisture, **#Joe 1:17** "The seed rotting under the clods," &c., to revenge the quarrel of his covenant. Israel was plagued with famine for breaking their faith with the Gibeonites, **#2Sa 21:1**. What may they expect that keep not in touch with God? David knew that the natural cause of that famine was drought; but he inquired (though it were long first) after the supernatural. As Jacob inquired who stood on the top of the ladder and sent the angels to and fro? **#Ge 28:13**; so must we, in case of public calamities, ascend to the top of them, and see who sends them, and what is the cause of them, that we may cast the traitor's head over the wall, and he may return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him. For till then we may

look that he should cut off our provision and victuals, as wise princes use to do from their rebels whom they have gotten up into a walled town.

**And spread dung upon your faces]** Cast contempt upon you, and cover you with confusion; make you to stink above ground, so that men shall shun and abhor your company. This is another fruit of sin, and piece of the curse; and many wicked men are more afraid of it than of the sin that causeth it; as Chaereas, in Terence, not ashamed to deflower a virgin, was yet ashamed to be seen in a eunuch's clothes, the sign of that sin. True it is, that the best may have dung cast into their faces, as St Paul and his precious companions had, **#1Co 4:13** "We are," saith he, "the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things" (περιψημα). The latter word signifieth the dung cart, that goes through the city, into which every one brings and casts his filth; to note that every fool had some filth to cast upon those worthies of whom the world was not worthy. And truly, all public persons that are faithful to their trust had need carry a spare handkerchief to wipe off dirt and drivel; which yet many times will hardly stick, as dirt will not upon marble, though it will upon a mud wall. "The wise shall inherit glory: when shame shall be the promotion of fools," **#Pr 3:35**. A fair promotion; but good enough for them, unless they were better. If "the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, be at any time esteemed as earthen pitchers," as **#La 4:2**, or trodden in the dirt by the fat bulls of Bashan, God will in due time make all his, that have lain sullied and slurred among the pots, to become as "the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with pure gold," **#Ps 68:13**. In the meanwhile, they have the commendation of a good conscience, which is better than the world's applause. But profane and profligate persons, with their spiritual nastiness and superfluity of naughtiness, stink worse than these cities of the plain in the nostrils of God and all good men, while they live (according to that, "The name of the wicked shall rot," and again, "He that perverteth his ways shall be known," **#Pr 10:7,9**). And when they die they shall be carried through the dung gate of death, to the town ditch of utter destruction. At which time that in Job shall be verified of them, "Though his excellence mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung; they

which have seen him" (in his flourish) "shall say, Where is he?" **#Job 20:6,7**. Let those *dehonestamenta Cleri* disgraceful clergy look to this; all idle and evil ministers, who, as unsavoury salt, are fit for no place but the dunghill, even to be buried in a dunghill, as Bishop Bonner was, and meanwhile to be trodden underfoot, which is a thing not only calamitous, but extremely ignominious, **#Mt 5:13**.

**Even the dung of your solemn feasts]** *i.e.* For the iniquity of your most solemn services, which you have slubbered over, and made to stink, I will make you also abject and abominable; as the dung of sacrifices, offered in great number on festival days, was carried into some bycorner, and set out of sight. And here it is remarkable that God calleth the solemn feasts their solemn feasts, as if they had been none of his; he would not own them. So **#Jer 7:21**, in scorn he calls their sacrifices flesh, ordinary flesh, such as was bought and sold in the meat markets. And **#Ho 9:4**, he calleth the same sacrifices "their bread for their soul," or for their natural sustenance, and saith, "it shall not come into his house." And yet he speaks there of that meat offering, **#Le 2:5**, appointed by God himself for a spiritual use, which is nevertheless called the bread for their life, or livelihood; because God esteemed it none other than common meat. In a like sense it was, that after the people of Israel had set up the golden calf, God would own them no longer, but fathers them upon Moses: Behold thy people, saith he to Moses, whom thou broughtest out of Egypt, &c., **#Ex 32:7**. David, also, when he had sinned in numbering the people, was counted and called but plain David "Go and say to David," &c., **#2Sa 24:12** whereas before that, when he purposed to build the Lord a temple, &c., then it was, "Go tell my servant David," &c., **#2Sa 7:5**. The saints themselves, when they sin against God, are in a sort suspended from the covenant. Therefore it is usual with them, when they seek the Lord for any special mercy, to begin with humbling themselves, and taking pains with their own hearts, as David, Daniel, Ezra.

Ver. 4. **And ye shall know that I have sent, &c.]** That is, ye shall know by woeful experience, your punishment shall advertise you; the curse appendant to the commandment shall teach you, as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, *sc.* with thorns and briers of the wilderness, **#Jud 8:16**; and as David taught the children of Ammon



better behaviour by making them pass through the brickkiln, **#2Sa 12:31**; and as the Phrygians wax not wise unless they be beaten to it. When God's "judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness," **#Isa 26:9**. Smart makes wit, and vexation giveth understanding. Ehud's dagger was a message from God, **#Jud 3:20,21**; who, as he is said to hold his peace when he punisheth not, **#Ps 50:21 Isa 42:14**, so to preach and teach when he doth, **#Isa 28:19**; his scourges are men's school masters, διδασκαλοι αμισθοι, one calls them, God's free school masters, cursed and crabbed enough, but such as whereby he "openeth men's ears to discipline, and commandeth them to return from iniquity. Then he showed them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded," **#Job 36:8-10**; that they have slighted the commandment which he had sent them, and that now he would plead with them another way, *sc.* with patience and with blood, **#Eze 38:22**, and so would cause them to pass under the rod, that thereby he might bring them into the bond of the covenant, purging out the rebels, and them that transgress, **#Eze 20:37,38**. God should have no tribute from men, as those malignants suggested against the returned captives, **#Ezr 4:13**, if he did not make them know his breach of promise, **#Nu 14:34**, if he did not break covenant with them that first play false with him, and keep no condition on their part required. See **#2Ch 15:2**. And when thou art making a covenant with sin, say to thy soul, as Boaz said to his kinsman, **#Ru 4:5** "At what time thou buyest it, thou must have Ruth with it." If thou wilt have the pleasure of sin, the wages of wickedness, thou must also have the curse, &c.; and let thy soul answer, as he there doth, No, I may not do it, I shall mar and spoil a better inheritance. Polanus and others dislike the reading of this text in the future tense, "Ye shall know that I have sent this commandment," and tell us that the scope of the prophecy requires that it be read in the present tense, thus, *Nam scitis*, For ye do know that I have sent, &c. You know your dignity and duty as priests, *Vos probe cognitum habetis* (Polan.); and yet ye wilfully cross your own knowledge and conscience. Knowledge is a divine gift; it is the great talent of all other; there is a (much) set upon it, **#Lu 12:48**, there is a special depositum in it, as the word παρεθεντο, there used, importeth. To know heavenly things is to ascend into heaven, saith Agur, **#Pr 30:4**. But as the devil, that knowing creature (ο δαμων quasi δαμων), that hath his name in Greek from the largeness of his

objective knowledge, was once an angel of light till he fell from his dignity, **#Jude 6**, so those that corrupt themselves in that they know, **#Jude 10**; that imprison the light they have (as a prophet from God) in unrighteousness; that know the commandment sent from God, as here, and yet after that they have known the way of righteousness, do turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; the latter end will be worse with those men than the beginning, **#2Pe 2:20,21**; they have but aspired to a higher pitch, that their fall might be the more desperate. *Neronis illud, Quantus artifex pereo quadrabit in te peritum et periturum*, saith one. Thou dost but carry Uriah's letters about thee to thine own utter destruction. Thou mayest go to hell with much knowledge in thy head; as a bull with a coronet and garland goes to the slaughter. Thou mayest also, for this one fault, meet with a hell beforehand in thine own conscience, as Spira did; crying out to those about him, to learn from him to take heed of severing knowledge and practice. What else was it that brought such roaring and troubles both inward and outward on those, **#Isa 59:11,12**, and that when salvation was looked for? Our iniquities, say they, testify to our faces, and we know them. All sins offend conscience; but sins against knowledge waste and destroy it. A dangerous degree, drawing near that sin to which sacrifice is denied. For sins against the law, though against knowledge, there was an atonement, **#Le 6:1-8**, and he instanceth in perjury. But to persecute the known truth with malice, for this there is no sacrifice, **#Heb 10:26**.

**That my covenant might be with Levi]** Levi did not thrust himself into the priesthood; but was taken by God into special covenant. See **#Nu 8:13,14 1Sa 2:28 Heb 5:4** "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Or if he do he shall smoke and smart for it, as Saul, Uzziah, and others. No man might come uncalled to the King of Persia, upon pain of death: much less to the King of heaven, as Korah and his complices, whom God hath hanged up in gibbets, as it were, for an example to all bold intruders upon that tremendous function of the ministry. Men out of office are not sent of God, therefore they may not preach, though gifted men, **#Ro 10:15** cf. **#Isa 52:8**. All that are in office to preach are apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, or teachers, **#Eph 4:11**. Elders only may preach, **#Tit 1:5**. And the contrary would prevent,

the apostle willeth that in the Church all things be done "decently and in order," #1Co 14:4, which could not be if all were teachers; for then there would be no distinction of ministers and people. But "Are all teachers?" saith the apostle, #1Co 12:29, and he answers himself, No, but only those whom God did set, #1Co 12:13, like as he set apart the tribe of Levi to execute the priest's office; which, while Korah, Dathan, and Abiram sought to impugn and level, they went quick into the pit, #Nu 16:30. Meddle not, therefore, without a calling; that in the day of God's displeasure you may appeal unto him, with Jeremiah, and say, "As for me, I have not hastened or thrust in myself for a pastor after thee: neither have I desired the woeful day, thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee," #Jer 17:16. And being able safely to say this thou mayest bind upon it, that God, who is in covenant with all his Levis, his faithful ministers, will be their shield and their exceeding great reward, however the world deal with them.

Ver. 5. **My covenant was with him of life and peace**] Now God's covenant (saith an expositor here) is of four sorts: 1. General, made with all creatures, #Ge 9:2 2. With the Church in general, #Ge 17:2 3. With the Church of the elect, #Jer 32:33 4. With some particulars of some special graces, as here with Levi, of "life and peace." So then to ministers, above others, hath the Lord bound himself by special covenant to be their mighty protector and rewarder; to give them *life and peace* that is, long life and prosperous. See #Nu 25:12,13. Life of itself, though pestered with many miseries, is a sweet mercy, and highly to be prized. "Better is a living dog than a dead lion," #Ec 9:4 "And why is a living man sorrowful, a man for the punishment of his sins?" #La 3:39. As who should say, let a man suffer never so much, yet if he be suffered to live he hath cause to be contented. It is the Lord's mercy he is not consumed. When Baruk sought great things for himself, Jeremiah tells him he may be glad (in those dear years of life, when the arrows of death came so thick whisking by him) that he had his "life for a prey," #Jer 45:5. Jacob took more comfort of his son Joseph's life than of his honour. "Joseph is yet alive," &c., #Ge 45:26. *Quis vitam non vult?* saith Austin, Who is it that desires not life? When David moveth the question, "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?" Austin brings in every man answering I do, and I do. Long, life and happy days is every man's desire. If God

give these blessings to those that are graceless, it is by virtue of a providence only, and not of a promise, and that is nothing so comfortable. Life in God's displeasure is worse than death, said that martyr. If wicked men live long, it is that they may make up the measure of their sins; and by heaping up sin, increase their torment. If godly men die soon, God taketh them away from the evil to come: as when there is a fire in a house or town men secure their jewels: and though they fall in wars, yet they die in peace, as good Josiah did, **#2Ch 34:28**, who also *in brevi vitro spatio tempora virtutum multa replevit*, lived quickly, lived apace, lived long in a little time (Hieron.). For life consists in action, **#Isa 38:15,16**. The Hebrews call running water living water. Now God's faithful ministers, if they work hard, and so wear out themselves to do good to others (as a lamp wasteth itself to give light, or as that herb mentioned by Pliny, that cures the patient but rots the hand that administereth it), like clouds, they sweat themselves to death to bring souls to God, yet shall they be sure to find it a blessed way of dying: they shall, *mori vitaliter*, die to live for ever. God will not send any of his own to bed till they have done their work. The two witnesses could not be slain till their testimony was finished. No malice of man can antedate their ends a minute. "The days of mourning for my father will come," said Esau, "and then I will kill my brother Jacob," **#Ge 27:41**. Here Esau, that rough reprobate, threateneth his father also, as Luther conceiveth. For it is as if he should have said, I will be avenged by being the death of my brother; though it be to the breaking of my father's heart. But what is the proverb? Threatened folk live long; for even Isaac, who died sooner, lived over forty years, beyond, this. "My times are in thy hand," saith David; and that is a safe hand. And blessed be God that Christ liveth and reigneth, *alioqui totus desperassem*, or else I had been in ill case, said Miconius in a letter of his to Calvin. Ministers are stars in Christ's right hand, and it will be hard pulling them thence. They must carry their lives in their hands, and be ready to lay them down when it may be for the glory of their Master, but they shall be sure not to die (whether by a natural or by a violent death) till the best time; not till that time when, if they were but rightly informed, they would desire to die. But whether their death be a burnt offering of martyrdom or a peace offering (whether they die in their beds, as Elisha, or be carried to heaven in a fiery chariot, as Elijah), let it be a

freewill offering, and then it shall be a sweet sacrifice to him who hath covenanted with them for life and peace. They shall by death, as by a door of hope, enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, **#Isa 57:2**, yea, in Abraham's bosom: and as "the sleep of the labouring man is sweet unto him, whether he eat little or much," **#Ec 5:12**; so heaven shall be so much the more heaven to such as have here had their purgatory. Mark the upright man, saith holy David, and behold the just, for how troublesome soever his beginning and middle is, "the end of that man is peace," **#Ps 37:37**.

**And I gave them to him]** Here is the performance of God's covenant to Levi and his posterity. God doth not pay his promises with fair words only, as Sertorius is said to do neither is he like Antigonus Δωσων, (ignominiously so called, because) forward in promising, slack in performing. But as he hath hitherto kept promise with nights and days, **#Jer 33:20,25**, that one should succeed the other, so much more doth he keep promise with his people; for as his love moved him to promise, so his truth bindeth him to perform. See both, these together, **#2Sa 7:21** "For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things." "According to thine own heart," that is, of thine own mere motion; out of pure and unexcited love thou didst give thy word and promise; and "for thy word's sake hast thou performed it." There was nothing in Aaron or his seed that God should make his special covenant with him of life and peace. His rod was as dry and dead as any of the rest till God made it to blossom. But when God once passed his promise, and so made himself a voluntary debtor, he failed not to perform it to him and his. Aaron himself lived one hundred and three years, Phinehas three hundred, as it is thought, and as some chronologers do observe. Joshua, the son of Josedech, lived, according to Helvius, one hundred and ten years in the office of the high priesthood.

To these and others was expressly fulfilled a covenant of life and peace; and God would have been ready to have performed it to these to whom Malachi prophesieth, had not themselves hindered. For "they like men," or like Adam, "transgressed the covenant," **#Ho 6:7**; or (as Junius and Tremellius read it), not *tanquam homines*, but *tanquam hominis*, they made no more of breaking it than if they had had to do with dust and ashes like themselves, and not with the great

God. "Remember them, O my God," saith good Nehemiah concerning these covenant breakers, "because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites," **#Ne 13:29**.

**For the fear wherewith he feared me, &c.]** That is, the good priests did so, the bad did otherwise; but God reckons of men by their righteousness, and this was the restipulation, or the condition on the priest's part performed; for in a covenant both parties undertake to do somewhat. As in the general covenant of grace, God promiseth to be the God of his people, that is, a universal good, all-sufficient, satisfactory, and every way proportionable and fitting to their souls. And they (interchangeably) promise to be his people; that is, to bestow themselves wholly upon him with highest estimation, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours, giving up their names and hearts to the profession of his truth. So that when he cries out, Who is on my side? Who? one says, I am the Lord's; another calls himself by the name of Jacob, another subscribes, &c., **#Isa 44:5**. Likewise in this particular covenant with the tribe of Levi, God promised them life and peace; and they assured him of fear and humility. Fear is an affection of the soul shrinking in itself from some imminent evil. Hereof there three sorts, natural, carnal, and spiritual.

The first is not to be disliked, if it do not degenerate into the second. The next is a bast fear of the creature more than of the Creator, who is God blessed for ever. The third is nothing else but an awful respect to the Divine majesty. Spiritual fear we called it in respect, 1. Of the author of it, God's Holy Spirit, called therefore, A Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. 2. Of the object of it, The Father of Spirits, who is therefore, by an appellative proper, called fear, **#Ps 76:11** 3. Of the effect, which is to spiritualize both us and our services; and was therefore fitly vowed to God by those of the spirituality that stood before him continually, and were to be exact in their whole deppartment, at their peril; God is of purer eyes than to behold evil. He cannot look on iniquity in any, **#Hab 1:13**. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name: They called upon the Lord, and he answered them; he forgave their iniquities; howbeit he took vengeance on their

inventions, #Ps 99:8. He met Moses in the inn, and had much ado to forbear killing him, #Ex 4:24. And for Aaron, when (together with Miriam) he murmured against Moses, and Miriam was thereupon smitten with leprosy, Aaron was spared, not so much for the honour of the priesthood, Δια το της ιεροσυνης αξιωμα, as Chrysostom gives the reason, but because of the fear wherewith he feared the Lord, and his humiliation that followed upon that fear.

**For he was afraid before God's name]** Or, as others better render this text, *Propter nomen meum humiliatus est*, He was amazed, frightened, *conterebatur, consternebatur*, humbled because of my name, he withdrew himself (so some render it), or, threw himself out of doors, as Peter did into a lone place, where he might souse himself in the salt tears of godly sorrow, επιβαλων, #Mr 14:72. Or, he shrunk and shrivelled up, and so testifieth the trouble of his mind by the horror of his body. *Horripilatus est*, his heart fell down, his hair stood upright. See #Ps 119:53 120:1-7. His humiliation was deep and downright, soaking and sorrowing his heart, #Ps 73:21. The word here used is passive, but Levi's humiliation was active; he was not humbled only, but humble; low, but lowly; he knew that no sacrifice could be accepted but that which was laid on the low altar of a contrite heart, which sanctifies the sacrifice.

Ver. 6. **The law of truth was in his mouth]** Hitherto hath been set forth what the priests of old were for their own particular, and as private persons; they were not high minded, but feared God. Now as pulpit men and public teachers, they have a four fold commendation. And first, that truth was their study and trade; they were expert in it, and had an excellent faculty in communicating their conceptions of it to others; so that if they did but open their mouths almost, it was a sermon; they had a ready and easy way of discourse, a holy volubility and dexterity of delivering themselves to the benefit of others; as the law of God was in their hearts, so their mouths spake wisdom, and their tongues talked of judgment, #Ps 37:30,31. Out of the good treasure of their hearts they could throw forth at pleasure good things, for the edification of others; yea, like full clouds, they willingly distilled, and like full paps, they were in pain till eased of their milk. Neither meddled they only with toothless truths, lest themselves should be left toothless (as one said, truth is a good mistress, but he that followeth her too close at heels shall have his

teeth struck out), as Balak bade Balaam neither curse nor bless at all; and as the Papists were wont to say, *Missa non mordet*, The mass biteth no man: but they held that truth must be spoken, however it be taken; and abhorred, to be looked upon as the devil's dirt daubers and upholsterers, to daub with untempered mortar, or to sew pillars under their elbows, **#Eze 13:10**. They affected rather to be styled (as Arrianus the historian was) φιλαληθεις, lovers of truth, plain dealers; and, as it is reported of Suetonius, they took the same liberty to cry down sin that men did to commit it. *Ea libertate scripsit Imperatorum vitas qua ipsi vixerunt*. Aelian tells us that the high priest among the Egyptians wore about his neck a sapphire stone, which was called Αληθεις, truth. This was but an apish imitation of Aaron's Urim and Thummim, *i.e.* light of truth and integrity of life, **#Ex 28:30**. Mercury's priests were wont to feed upon figs, and then to say, γλυκεια η αληθεια, truth is sweet. It is so indeed to those that "have their senses exercised to discern good and evil," **#Heb 5:14**. But most men cannot brook downright truth: the hearing of it galls them, as they write of some creatures, that they have *fel in aure*, their gall in their ears. Hence truth breeds hatred, and plain dealing is generally disgusting; it is bitter in the stomachs of those that hear it, though sweet in the mouth of those that utter it. **#Re 10:9**. Micah would not budge, or be base in his errand to Ahab, though he were sure to kiss the stocks for his stoutness. Azariah, the high priest, withstood King Uzziah to his face, and put him out of the temple. Which while Uriah did not, but wickedly complied with idolatrous Ahaz, in making and setting up the altar of Damascus, **#2Ki 16:11,16**, he is branded with a black coal for a court parasite, and shall be infamous to all posterity. His contemporary, Isaiah, was of another spirit, and fulfilled after God (as it is said of Caleb, *Implevit post me*, **#Nu 14:24**). He kept the law of truth in his mouth, and rolled it as sugar under his tongue, though he suffered for it. For (as Jerome tells us) he was sawn asunder by his wicked countrymen, for two causes. First, because he said he had seen the Lord. Secondly, because he called the great ones of Judah, princes of Sodom and rulers of Gomorrah. Quintilian saith of Vespasian the emperor, that he was *patientissimus veri*, very patient of truth, though it never so much touched him. But not many such to be met with. Asa, though otherwise a good prince, yet fell out grievously with God's prophet, for his plain dealing, and laid him by the heels. Queen Elizabeth



dealt little better with a bishop that had in a zealous sermon admonished her to think on her last end, by reason of her great age, which few princes had attained unto, and of the climacterical year of her life, which happened at that time. The bishop had the queen's disapproval, but God's approval. And so shall all truth's chaplains have, however the world entertain them. Wisdom shall be justified of her children, and God will see to their safety, *modo audeant quae sentiunt*, so they show men all the counsel of God, and keep back nothing that they have in charge to deliver, #Ac 20:26,27.

**And iniquity was not found in his lips]** Heb. Crossness, or crookedness; Chaldee, No falseness. He did not preach distorted doctrines, that produce convulsions of conscience, as those seducers did, #Ac 20:30. He did not handle the word of God deceitfully, or fraudulently, as those deceitful workers did, #2Co 11:13. Neither did he broach errors, and writhe from the right way for self-respects, setting his dial by that sun, #1Th 2:3. But being of a most masculine, disengaged, and noble spirit, that bath received the truth in the love of it; he will not be drawn to falsity or faulter, to huckster the word, or handle it craftily and covetously; "but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God," #2Co 2:17; without mixture of errors or human inventions. Let Pharisees sour men's souls with their leaven of false doctrine. Let those inhabitants of the sea (as they are called, #Re 12:12), Popish Padres, set abroach gross, troubled, brackish tenets, which rather bring barrenness to their hearers and gnaw their bowels, than either quench thirst or yield good fruit. He that fears God can pity poor souls made prize of by sectaries and seducers, #Col 2:8; and knowing that he that breaketh the least of God's commandments and teacheth men so, shall be least in the kingdom of heaven, #Mt 5:19 (that is, nothing at all there, #Mt 20:16), he hateth every false way, with David; and takes care that no iniquity be found in his lips, #Ps 19:13.

**He walked with me in peace and equity]** *i.e.* He kept constant correspondence and communion with me, so that we never disagreed or differed. For can two walk together, and they not agreed? He was like minded to me in all things, and observed my law in every point and part thereof. A high commendation and a necessary qualification in a minister, that he not only talk of God,

but walk with him; and that not loosely and at all adventures, but strictly and exactly, as a pattern of the rule, as a transcript of his own sermon, *ne verba factis deficientibus erubescant*, lest his words blush for want of deeds accordingly (Tertull.); *ne virtutis stragulum pudefaciat*, lest he put honesty to an open shame, as Antipater did, when, being vicious, he wore a white cloak, the ensign of innocence; lest his life gives his lips the lie, as it fared with those Pharisees that said and did not, #Mt 22:3. The foolish virgins were found with their *Sic dicentes*, so saying, but the faithful servants shall be found with their *Sic facientes*, so doing. And when men come to give account, it shall be inquired, *non quid legerint, sed quid egerint, non quid dixerint, sed quomodo vixerint*, not what they have taught others, but what they have practised themselves. Origen's preaching and living were said to be both one; *Quod iussit et gessit*. because he ordered and he did. So did Mr. Bacer, whom his friends could never sufficiently praise, nor his foes in any point find fault with his singular life and sincere doctrine.

**And did turn away many from iniquity]** The effect of his unspeakable labours and unblameable life was conversion of souls, and those not a few. God sometimes gives a pastor after his own heart to such places, where he takes but one of a city, or two of a family, #Jer 3:14,15. *Quod si decimus quisque, si unus persuasus fuerit*, saith Chrysostom. If one in ten be gained, nay, if one of ten thousand be turned from iniquity, it is a great mercy. Nay, saith he, say that none be converted, the faithful minister that endeavours their conversion, though he effect it not, *non minus praemii*, shall have no less reward than if he had prevailed for their conversion. Some good divines think he shall have more than those that do convert; because they have *praemium ante praemium*, a reward before the reward, that which may encourage them in God's work, but he does his utmost amidst all discouragement. Well may Ephraim love to tread out the grain, because, while he treads, he feeds on the grain, #Ho 10:11; but to bear and draw, to plough and work, where no refreshing was to be had till the work was done, this that delicate heifer cared not to do. But he is a happy man that hath any hand in turning men from iniquity, though fruit, for present, appear not. The new birth of some is like the birth of the elephant, fourteen years after the seed injected into the womb. And that divine

proverb is not seldom verified, "One soweth, and another reapeth," #Joh 4:37. The ministry is God's arm to gather people into his bosom; and the "weapons of our warfare are mighty through God," #2Co 10:4. Surely "as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven," &c., #Isa 55:10,11, and as the rain from heaven hath fatness with it, and a special influence more than standing water; so hath preaching more than reading. Howbeit there may be fruit and yet invisible, as in Elijah's time. And that which doth not yet appear, may hereafter, when the day of visitation comes; see #Job 33:14. God may have much people in the city, and Paul, for the present, not know so much, #Ac 18:10. A master doth not use to set up a light but there is some work to be done by it; and seldom doth he send his servants afield with their scythes to mow thistles only. Let God's faithful witnesses prophesy out their 1260 days, #Re 11:3; bending themselves to that office incessantly, being instant in season and out of season, and turning themselves, as it were, into all shapes and fashions, both of speech and of spirit, to turn people from iniquity; and then God will be with the good, as that prophet speaks in another case, #2Ch 19:11 "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise," #Pr 11:30. Say he cannot win as he would, but labour all night and take nothing, yet he shall be paid for his pains; as the physician is, though the patient die. *Curare exigeris, non curationem*, saith Bern. It is the care, not the cure, of your charge that is charged upon you. You may speak persuasively, but it is God only that can persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem. Paul may plant, &c., but God only giveth the increase. You shall be held wise, and shine as stars in heaven, whether you win souls or not. As there are diversity of gifts, so of operations, #1Co 12:6, and the Holy Ghost may and doth work when and how he pleaseth; but usually he delights to honour those of most sincerity with most success, as #1Co 15:10.

Ver. 7. **For the priest's lips should keep knowledge]** How else should he be instant in lip feeding? how should his lips present it unless they preserve it? How should he make others wise, unless he be wise himself? #Da 12:3. The Pope brags of an infallibility, and pleads this text for it; avouching that he knows all things knowable, and hath all wisdom and skill locked up *in scrinio pectoris*, in the cabinet of his breast. But what will they say of sundry of their popes that have been manifest heretics? John XXIII was accused, in the

Council of Constance, for denying the resurrection of the body and everlasting life. And of all their popes we may safely say, as the Venetian ambassadors did; when the Pope laid his hand upon his breast and said, *Hic est arca Noae*, Lo, here is Noah's ark (meaning that he was the Church virtual, and was enriched in all knowledge and in all utterance), one of them presently replied, that in Noah's ark there were unclean beasts as well as clean; and so left him further to apply. The priest's lips indeed should keep knowledge. But those of Malachi's times had forsaken the way, and caused many to stumble, **#Mal 2:8**. How this was we shall see when we come to it. Meanwhile, we may take notice, that *non libro sacerdotis, sed labro; non codice, sed corde, conservatur scientia*; knowledge should be kept, not in the priest's book, but in his bosom, as a storehouse; neither should it lie low or long there, but sit upon his lips, that all may have benefit by it. For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit also, **#1Co 12:7**. And it was death for the priest to enter into the sanctuary without his golden bells about him, that he might be heard by all. A minister must be both able and apt to teach (*διδασκτικός*, Greg. Pastor.). *Praedicationis officium suscipit quisquis ad sacerdotium accedit*, saith Gregory. He is no minister that is no preacher. Nor can he be a preacher that is not stored with knowledge of God's will and people's duty. See **#Mt 13:32**. {See Trapp on "Mt 13:32"} Walter, surnamed Malclerk, was surely no fit man to be Bishop of Carlisle; as he was by evil and corrupt means, A. D. 1223. "If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch," **#Mt 15:14**; but the blind guides will lie lowermost, and have the worst of it. Varro complained of the Roman priests, that they were ignorant of many things about their own rites and religions. Mucius Scaevola (being their high priest) derived Pontifex of *Posse* and *facere* to be able to do. This derivation pleased not Varro; but it intimated that such should both be able and active to teach the people knowledge. It was a witty observation of a bishop, who was called in his time the gulf of learning, that *Doceo*, to teach, governs two accusative cases; according to that **#Isa 28:9** "Whom shall I teach knowledge?" Ministers, saith he, must have whom to teach and what to teach, viz. knowledge; and must, therefore, give attendance to reading, that they may the better to exhortation and doctrine, **#1Ti 4:13**, that they may feed the people with knowledge and understanding, **#Jer 3:15**.

**And they should seek the law at his mouth]** As at an oracle; they should depend upon the ministry, as the people hung upon our Saviour's lips, #Lu 19:48; as David went into the sanctuary to be resolved of his doubt, #Ps 73:17, though himself were a prophet; and as Cornelius was appointed by the angel to send for Peter for further information. But what must men seek at the minister's mouth? The law, the sincere milk of God's word, the mind of Christ, the testimony of Jesus, #1Pe 2:2 1Co 2:16 *non nugas et fabulas*, saith Bernard, not trifles and fables, not strong lines and strains of wit, but the simple and plain words of God. *Non Oratorum filii sumus sed Piscatorum*, We are not speakers to men but fishermen, said Nazianzen. Ministers are not to study so much to please as to profit, to tickle men's ears as to work upon their hearts. They must not so paint the window, as to keep out the light; nor so put the sword of the Spirit into a velvet scabbard, that it cannot prick and pierce the heart. Let them handle and set out the law as skilfully and adornedly as they can; but still remember that it must be dispensed, *sancte magis quam scite, solide potius quam floride*, with fear and reverence, rather than with wit and dalliance. If in King Edward IV's days a citizen in Cheapside was executed as a traitor for saying he would make his son heir to the crown (though he only meant his own house, having a crown for the sign), more dangerous it must needs be to wit wanton it with the majesty of God. *Loquamur verba scripturae, utamur sermone Spiritus Sancti, &c.* Let us speak Scripture language, let us use the speech of the Holy Spirit, and not go about to correct the Divine wisdom and eloquence with our sophistry and vain babbling. To the ears of that which St Peter calls the hidden man of the heart, the plain song always makes the best music, #1Pe 3:4. If heaven's door may be opened to it by a key of iron, it cares not for a key of gold. A sermon works not upon the heart as it is thus elegant or admirable, but as well fraught with testimonies of Holy Scripture (that most powerful rhetoric), it is an instrument of God appointed to such an end. Let the people hear often, This is the law, this is *ipsum Dei verbum*, the very word of God; show Scripture for what you deliver, and that will carry it. But *ut drachmam auri sine imagine principis, sic verba hortantis sine autoritate Dei contemnunt homines* (Lipsius). The law carrieth a majesty in it; and if Cicero dares to say that the law of the twelve

tables did exceed all the libraries of philosophers, both in weight of authority and worth of matter, how much rather is this true of the law of God! Wherefore as Aeschines said of an orator's, so let a minister's discourse and the law be unisons; and let the people ask the priests concerning the law, as they did, **#Hag 2:11**, and not be like tidlings, *{a}* that will not eat their milk unless it be in a silver dish; but account it a singular happiness to live under those lips (however thick, a thin lip is a sign of eloquence, **#Job 12:20**), which both keep knowledge and utter it (*χρη το αυτο φθειγεσθαι τον ρητορα και τον νομον*).

**For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts]** Heb. the angel, *{See Trapp on "Mal 1:1"}* and so the Septuagint and Vulgate render it. His office is as to stand before God and praise him, so to carry messages from him to his people, and to be in his stead, **#2Co 5:20**. Knowest thou not, saith Chrysostom, who the minister is? He is God's angel; he speaketh not of himself; if thou despisest, thou despisest not him, but God that sent him. And to the same purpose Ambrose: The minister is God's angel, to set forth the kingdom of Christ and eternal life: *non specie tibi aestimandus sed munere*; he is not, therefore, to be judged of by his outside, but by his office. Those Sodomites that sought to abuse the angels are thrown forth for an example (*προκεινται*), suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, **#Jude 7**. Behold, Christ himself hath assured us that Sodomy itself is not a heavier sin, nor more severely punished in hell, than the despising or abusing of a minister in the faithful discharge of his duty. We should, therefore, welcome such with trembling, as the men of Bethlehem did Samuel, and as Cornelius did Peter. "Comest thou peaceably?" said the Bethlemites, as suspecting the purpose of some judgment. "Now therefore are we all here present before God" (not only before thee, said Cornelius), "to hear all things that are commanded thee of God," **#Ac 10:33**. If Ahab had been like well affected as these good souls, he would never have asked Elijah that absurd question, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? Alas, what had the righteous prophet done more than what by his office (as God's ambassador or messenger) he was bound to do? he taxed their sin, he foretold the judgment; he deserved it not, he inflicted it not; yet he smarts, and they are guilty. As if some fond people should accuse the herald or the trumpet as the cause of their war; or as some ignorant peasant,

when he sees his fowls bathing in his pond, should cry out of them, as the causes of foul weather. Saith a divine, It is a good thing to stand in awe of God's angels, and with reverence to receive their message, howsoever distasteful unto us; considering they are but messengers.

{a} A pampered or spoiled child; a darling, pet; a young, delicate, or puny child or animal, needing special care; a weakling, 'dilling'. (ED)

Ver. 8. **But ye are departed out of the way]** Heb. From that way, viz. that good old way of your progenitors: you are nothing like Levi, but are woefully degenerated from the practice of your predecessors, and have swerved from your fathers' footsteps, though ye have the same place, and enjoy the same privileges. This is a foul fault, and condemned even by the heathen sages. Seneca tells us, with indignation, that Socrates' sons were more like their mother, a froward woman, than their father, the wisest of men; according to that saying, *Partus sequitur ventrem*, the birth follows the belly. Young Cicero was, for his intemperance and excess in drinking, surnamed *Tricongius*. Caligula, that monster, was the son of noble Germanicus (*Heroum filii noxae*). But we have Scriptural instances not a few. Not to speak of Eli's sons, and of Samuel's, Solomon degenerates from his father David, who had carefully taught him better, **#Pr 4:4**, and so had his mother, **#Pr 31:1** (which one calls Bathsheba's catechism; another Lemuel's lesson). Jehoram is taxed for his not walking in the ways of his father Jehoshaphat and his grandfather Asa, as if there had been no intervention of a Hezekiah. "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh," that idolatrous priest, mentioned **#Jud 18:30**, is thought to have been the grandson of Moses; so the Hebrews tell us; and that therefore the Nun in Manasseh is suspended above the rest of the letters. {*Hebrew Text Note*} Certain it is that Nabal, the fool, was of the line of faithful Caleb, **#1Sa 25:3**, to teach us that virtue is not, as lands, inheritable. All that is traduced with the seed is either evil, or not good. Grace is by gift, and not by descent. Hence that prayer of David's courtiers, **#1Ki 1:47**, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name. Agreeable whereunto is Hector's prayer in Homer, for his son—*πατρος δ ογε πολλον αμεινων*, I wish he may be a better man than his father. And that of Juvenal,

“ *Male pater tibi sit Thersites, dummodo tu sis*

*Aeacidæ similis, Vulcaniaque arma capessas,  
Quam te Thersitæ similem producat Achilles.*”

*Ye have caused many to stumble at the law] Which is a very dangerous thing; like as it is to stumble on a bridge. A bridge is made to give us a safe passage over a dangerous river; but he who stumbles on the bridge is in no small danger to fall into the river. The word is given as a means to carry us over hell unto heaven; but he who stumbles at this means (as by snuffing at it, #Mal 1:13, chatting against it and contesting with it, as often in this prophecy, casting reproaches upon it, #Jer 20:8,9, gathering odious consequences from it, #Ro 3:8-18) shall fall in thither, from whence otherwise he had been delivered by it. This mischief many fell into, in Malachi's days, by the means of those ungodly priests, who either taught them not better, or otherwise drew them into sinful courses by their corrupt losses or lewd practices. Evil examples of ministers have a strong influence upon their people; and the sins of teachers are the teachers of sins: The leaders of this people have made them to err, #Isa 9:16. Corruption commonly (as in a fish) begins at the head; neque solum obsunt principes, quod illi ipsi corrumpuntur, sed etiam quod corrumpunt: plusquam exemplo quam peccato nocent, saith Cicero: they that are in office do a great deal of mischief by encouraging others in evil, through their evil example. Jupiter's adulteries drew the people to like wantonness. Magis intuentur quid fecerit Iupiter quam quid docuit Plato, saith Austin; They look more what Jupiter did than what Plato taught. I have read of a woman who, living in professed doubt of the Godhead, after better illumination and repentance, did often protest that the vicious life of a great scholar in that town did conjure up those damnable doubts in her soul. In the time of Pope Clement V the Church was so ill-governed, and things so corruptly carried at the court of Rome, that Frederick, King of Sicily, doubted much of the truth of the Christian religion; but was confirmed, and his mind better settled, by Arnoldus de Villa Nova, who showed him that "Offences must come, but woe be to them by whom they come." A scandalous priest is a singular mischief; for he falls not alone, but (as when a main stone in a building or a tall cedar falls) he draws many with him into fellowship of errors and enormities; as did Hymenæus and Philetus,*



#2Ti 2:17,18; and as the dragon, with his long and strong tail, drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth, #Re 13:4. When the pastors become brutish all the flocks are scattered, #Jer 10:21.

**Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi]** The covenant on God's part with Levi was a covenant of salt, and could not be corrupted, #Nu 18:19, *non computrescit vetustate*, saith Flaccius, it putrefieth not with age or long standing; as that pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned, and of which Josephus saith, that something of it was to be seen till his time. But these degenerate priests had abandoned God's holy fear, they did not humble themselves and tremble before his name, as Levi their father had done, #Mal 2:5; they had falsified with God, and so forfeited his favour. It was with them, as Cajetan complains and confesses of the Popish priests; that whereas by their places they should have been the salt of the earth, they had lost their savour, and were good for little else but looking after the rights and revenues of the Church; therefore God held himself disobliged, and resolved that they should bear the iniquity of their priesthood; #Le 19:8. that is, the punishment of their iniquity notwithstanding the priesthood. That should be no protection to them, but an aggravation; because they fell, as if they had not been anointed: and were, therefore, the worse, because they should have been better, *Ideo deteriores sumus quia meliores esse debemus* (Salvian.). God holds himself not bound to perform covenant with those who break with him; for why should he give the children's bread to dogs? why should he cast away his favours upon those that value them not? We have the covenant, the seals, the ministry (and this is a singular happiness: #Isa 19:25, Assyria is the work of God's hands, but Israel his inheritance). But, alas, are not these blessings among us as the ark was among the Philistines, rather as prisoners than as privileges? rather *in testimonium et ruinam quam in salutem* for a testimony against us, and for our further ruin, than for our safety here and salvation here after? Oh consider how God hath cast off the Israelites, notwithstanding his covenant with their fathers; and when in their necessity they would have forced acquaintance with him, he would not look upon them, #Jud 10:14. The sword hath broken in pieces those seven golden candlesticks in Asia, merely for their covenantbreaking. {See Trapp on "Mal 2:5"}

Ver. 9. **Therefore have I also made you contemptible, and base]** And so have cried quittance with you and returned you your own with usury. God loves to retaliate, and to proportion jealousy to jealousy, provocation to provocation, #De 32:21, frowardness to frowardness, #Ps 18:26, contrariety to contrariety, #Le 26:18,21, contempt to contempt, #1Sa 2:30, and here. How these unworthy priests had slighted God, and exposed his name and service to contempt and obloquy, hath been before set forth sufficiently. And now it is come home to them. It was threatened before, #Mal 2:3, {See Trapp on "Mat 2:3"} and now it is executed. Graceless men are apt to imagine that God threateneth *in terrorem* in fear only; and are ready, with those miscreants in the Gospel, to say, God forbid; we hope he will be better than his word, and not be so unmerciful as the preachers would make him. They believe the predictions of Scripture but as they believe the predictions of an almanack, which saith, such a day will be rain, and such a day wind; men think it may come to pass, and it may be not. But shall God say the word, and not see it fulfilled? Is not his *dicere* to say his *facere*? do do, his word his deed? Yea, doth be not sometimes, *dicto citius*, by saying more quickly, break out upon his enemies, as he did upon Nadab and Abihu, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, &c. God had poured contempt already upon these degenerate priests. And the like he had threatened to those, #Jer 23:40: see #Mic 3:7 Zec 13:4. Ribera upon this text bewails the business in their Romish clergy, now become despicable by reason of their evil manners. Petrarch complained long before that the stench of that sink, the court of Rome, was come up to heaven. Erasmus laid them open in their colours, and did them more mischief *iocando*, by his jeering and jesting at them, than Luther did *stomachando*, by dry blows and invectives, as one well observeth. He made the world look up that had been long lulled asleep, and take notice of the truth of that which Chrysostom had long before discovered and lamented: *Multi sacerdotes, et pauci sacerdotes; multi in nomine, pauci in opera*. There are many priests, and yet but few many so in name, few so indeed. Fie on such rascal ribalds, {a} said the excommunicated barons in King John's time (in their declaration), concerning the Pope and his Cardinals, and yet they were no Protestants. No more are the Venetians; and yet how they slight their Pope (who is now, like the cuckoo in June, heard, but not regarded, by them) is

sufficiently manifested by their manifestos to the Christian world. In Biscany (anciently Cantabria), a province of Spain, they admit no bishops to come among them; such a hatred they have taken against that order of men. And when King Ferdinand came in progress thither, accompanied, among others, by the Bishop of Pampeluna, the people arose in arms, drove back the bishop, and, gathering all the dust on the which they thought he had trodden, flung it into the sea. What our bishops did in Queen Mary's days we all know; that bloody Bonner especially, buried at length in a dunghill (too good a grave for him). Sure it was an unhappy proverb that was then learned, The bishop's foot hath trodden here. They are now utterly cashiered, and lie wrapped up in the sheet of shame for this sin (among others) here charged upon these priests, their dishonouring God's great name, his services and servants. For it was come to that height of wickedness among us, a little before the late troubles, as to cast *odium in religionis professores tanquam in adversaries*, an evil report upon the professors of religion, as so many adversaries, as Redo saith the ancient Britons did immediately before their destruction by the Saxons. He that would not be an Arminian was therefore accounted a practical Puritan. He that was not for the *iure divino* by divine law of episcopacy, was little better than a public enemy. If the ministry of England be under any abuses at present, as they are through the iniquity of the times, and the overflow of errors and atheism, let it serve to humble them for their desire of vain glory, and not seeking the honour that cometh from God only, **#Joh 5:44**; let it also work in them a greater care to approve themselves to God, that they may be glorious in his eyes and to his people, who dare not but honour such as fear the Lord, **#Ps 15:4**, and have his ministers in singular esteem for their work's sake, **#1Th 5:13**.

**According as ye have not kept my ways]** *q.d.* Your dignity is decayed, like as your duty hath been neglected; you are fallen out of the hearts of good people, and are aviled by all. Neither is it any wonder; for a vicious life breeds vileness of estimation; but virtue is a thousand escutcheons. Hence that close connection, "If there be any virtue, if any praise," **#Php 4:8**; this treads upon the heels of that, as it were; follows it as close as the shadow doth the body. When Adam stood in innocence the savage beasts did him reverence. And the same God which did at first put an awe of man in

the fiercest creatures, hath stamped in the cruelest hearts a reverent respect to his own image in his faithful ministers, as in Saul to Samuel, Herod to John Baptist, those gallants of Israel to that mad fellow, as they were pleased to call the prophet that came to anoint Jehu; upon whose words (as mad as they made of him) they will presently adventure their lives, and change the crown. God's image (as God's name, #Ps 111:9) is holy and reverend; and they that would have good repute and report among men must carefully keep (or, as the word here used may be rendered) watch God's ways. He shall have enough that will watch for his halting, and take any little occasion to revile him with open mouth, as Shimei did David, when he had declined God's ways. It is therefore excellent counsel that Solomon gives, and worthy of all acceptation, #Pr 4:25-27 "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." Lo, this is the ready road to honour and estimation. Do worthily in Ephrata, and so be famous in Bethlehem, #Ru 4:11. *Sic famam extendere factis, Hoc virtutis opus.* But those Balaams that, persuaded by their Balaks, seek for honour by evil doing, these seek the living among the dead, figs of thistles, heaven in hell, &c.

**But have been partial in the law]** Heb. Ye have accepted, or acknowledged, faces in the law, *i.e.* you accept persons; you deal partially in expounding and applying the law, making it pinch the poor and favour the rich. The Church hath ever been pestered with such *Aretalogi*, story tellers, such parasitic preachers, whose practice hath been, like Ahab's prophets, to speak *magis ad voluntatem quam ad veritatem*, more to please than to profit. And there is a very great sympathy between great ones that have first flattered themselves, and these false flatterers, who prove a fit helve for such hatchet, and meet lettuce for such lips. Such a one was Uriah, the high priest, to Ahaz, #2Ki 16:15,16. His motto seems to have been *Mihi placet quicquid regi placet*. It please me whatever pleases the king. Such were those dirt daubers for the devil in Ezekiel's days, #Eze 13:10,11, &c., the Herodians, the Arians, the Arminians, Utenbogardus, &c., the Queen of Navarre's preachers, who persuaded her, out of political respects, to consent to that unhappy match that gave opportunity for the Parisian massacre. The

apostle chargeth his son Timothy to do nothing of popularity or partiality, by tilting the balance on the one side, as the word signifieth; {#1Ti 5:21, κατα προσκλισιν} but as a just law is a heart without affection, an eye without lust, a mind without passion, a treasurer which keepeth for every man that he hath, and distributeth to every man that he ought to have; so should a minister be; remembering that of #Job 13:10 "He will surely reprove you, if you secretly accept persons," that is, he will chide you, smite you, curse you for it, and so set it on, as no creature shall be able to take it off. If you reprove meaner men, and wink at the faults of great ones, reproving he will reprove you, he will not do it to halves; no, he will rather do it double; you shall have it both surely and severely. Let your resolution, therefore, be that of Elihu, #Job 32:21,22, I will not now accept the person of any man, neither will I give flattering titles to man. For I may not give flattering titles, lest my Maker should suddenly take me away; lest my Master, whose steward I am, finding me unfaithful in the disposal of his mysteries, should confound me before you, #Jer 1:17. *Nisi fideliter dixerim, vobis erit damnosum, mihi periculosum*, If I should not deal faithfully and freely with you, it would be to your loss, but to mine utter undoing, *Timeo itaque damnum vestrum, timeo damnationem meam* (Bern.).

{a} A person of abandoned character; a wicked, dissolute, or licentious person. CED

Ver. 10. **Have we not all one father?**] Here begins a second contestation, viz. with the people (as the former was with the priests), for their unrighteous dealing; where we have so many words, so many arguments. *In brevitare verborum est luxuries rerum*. If shortness of words is the heart of the matter. How many ones are here, and all to persuade to unity. See the like #Eph 4:3-5. Let those that take upon them to persuade others to equity and unanimity learn to marshal their matter handsomely, and to fill their mouths with arguments, such as may fall thick, and prevail, being seconded and set on with intimation of heartiest affection, #Job 21:4. Oh that I could somewhere meet with you both together, said Austin to Jerome and Ruffinus (hearing of their differences), I would fall down at your feet with much love and many tears, I would beseech you, for God's sake, for your own sakes, for weak Christians' sakes, &c., not to suffer these dissensions to spread further, *Hei mihi qui vos alicubi invenire non possum, &c.* So Mr

Bradford, in a letter to a distressed gentlewoman that was in a despairing condition, I beseech you, saith he, I pray you, I desire you, I crave at your hands with all my very heart; I ask of you with hand, pen, tongue, and mind, in Christ, through Christ, for Christ, for his name, blood, mercy, power, and truth's sake, that you admit no doubting of God's final mercy toward you, howsoever you feel yourself. Oh that I could get words, said another holy man to his hearers, to gore your very hearts with smarting pain, that this doctrine might be written in your flesh! By this "one father" in the text is meant Adam, say the most interpreters, who was the common parent of us all, and the very stock and root from whence all mankind did spring. It is, therefore, a sin against nature itself and common humanity to deal treacherously against another, or to hide thyself from thine own flesh, **#Isa 58:7**. This is to be more unreasonable than beasts, birds, and fishes, which love their own kind; and those that feed on flesh will not eat the flesh of their own kind. But our age overly aboundeth with unnatural man eaters, that (not only like a pickerel in a pond, or shark in the sea, devour the lesser fishes of another alloy, but also) eat up God's people as they eat bread, **#Ps 14:5**, make no more conscience, nay, take as much content in undoing a poor brother as in eating a meal's meat when they are hungry; they make but a breakfast of a whole representative nation; as those gunpowder papists designed to do. How often are wicked oppressors compared to hunters, for their cruelty, and fowlers, for their craft! to show that they spare none that fall into their nets; young, old, male, female, all go together into the bag, **#Ps 10:9**. This raised a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren, those usurious Jews, that had both robbed and ravished them, **#Ne 5:1**. And what could they say for themselves, but the same in effect with this in the text, "Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children?" &c.

**Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?]** Here the prophet riseth higher, viz. from Adam to God, out of whose mint when man came first, he shone most glorious, for he was God's own workmanship, created unto love and good works, **#Eph 2:10**: yea, as iron put into fire seems to be nothing but fire; so Adam, come afresh out of God's hands, who is perfect love and goodness itself, was none other than a very lump of love to God and kindness to his

fellow creatures. But now, alas, we may sit and sing, *O quantum haec Niobe, &c.*, how strangely are we altered, and fallen from our first love! and what great cause have we, with those in Ezra, to think of this temple that was burnt, and lament! yea, write Lamentations, with Jeremiah, and say, as he; "They ravished the women in Zion, and the maids in the cities of Judah. Princes are hung up by the hand: the faces of the elders were not honoured," &c. #La 5:11,12 The wonder was the less, because these that did all this were of a different religion. But for those that serve the same true God, the Creator of all, to jar and war, as we, alas, do at this day, this is *lamentabile bellum*, doleful war, and speaks a great decay and defect of the power of godliness; true religion being of a uniting nature; and the strongest tie. *Sanatior sane est copula cordis quam corporis*. This Joseph's brethren knew, and, therefore, held it their best plea, #Ge 50:17 "And now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of thy father's God." They had one common father; but, as a better string to their bow, they had one common God. The very Turks are found to be much braver soldiers upon the Christian than upon the Persian, because they begin alate to be infected with Persianism, whom they acknowledge better Mahometans than themselves.

**Why do we deal treacherously]** Or, fraudulently. The prophet puts himself into the number, though innocent, that his reproof might the better take with them. That which he taxeth them for is their wrong dealing in general, one with another; whether it were by force or by fraud (*επιβολη επιβουλη*), by violence or cunning contrivance, which what is it else, but *crimen stellionatus*, the very sin of deception, and hath God for an avenger? #1Th 4:6. Now, it is dangerous offending him whose displeasure and revenge is everlasting, and who often calls to reckoning after our discharges. Take heed, therefore, of all sorts of injustice. Curse not the deaf, lay not a stumblingblock before the blind: but fear the Lord Jehovah, #Le 19:14. And considering that to deal treacherously with another, a brother especially, is a sin (as hath been above-said), both against nature and religion; both against race and grace, which teacheth righteousness as well as holiness, #Tit 2:12, and turning the leopard into the lamb, causeth that none do harm to, or destroy, another in all God's holy mountain, #Isa 11:6; let us so carry ourselves, as that,

with blessed Paul, we may glory, and say, "We have wronged no man, we have consumed no man, we have defrauded no man," &c., #2Co 7:2.

**By profaning the covenant of our fathers]** *i.e.* By degenerating from the promises and practices of our pious progenitors. Of this see #Mal 2:8. A certain popish prince said, It is not amiss to make covenants; but woe be to him that is necessitated to keep them. He had learned (much like Machiavel), *fidem tamdiu servandam esse quamdiu expediat*, that covenants are to be kept so long as a man shall see cause. That which was anciently said of the Thracians is now verified of the Papists, that they keep no covenants ( *eos foedera nescire*), with heretics especially. The Turks, taught by them, say, There is no faith to be kept with dogs, that is, with Christians. Their leagues, grounded upon the law of nations, and solemnly confirmed by oath, have with them no longer force than standeth with their own pleasure and profit. And if Turks and Papists only were truce breakers and perfidious, it were the better to be borne with. But what shall we say to those *Christiano categori* (as Bellarmine saith a certain sort of heretics were called of old), those blots and botches of Christian religion and holy society, that can say and unsay at pleasure, make vows to God in their distress, and break them as fast when delivered? Just like those Jews in #Jer 34:8-12, that set free their servants when the enemy lay before the walls; but reduced them into bondage when the siege was raised, though they had cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof; a most solemn way of sealing up covenants. So dealt their fathers before them, #Ps 78:34-37. And so dealt here their nephews after them. They profaned the covenant of obedience to God's commandments, that their fathers, for themselves and their successors, entered into. But should men thus play with covenants as children do with nuts? should they slip them at pleasure, as monkeys do their collars? should they snap them in sunder, as Samson did his cords? Had Shimei peace, that brake his oath to Solomon? or Zedekiah, that kept not touch with Nebuchadnezzar? &c.

Ver. 11. **Judah hath dealt treacherously]** Judah, the confessor, as his name imports; Judah, that once ruled with God, and was faithful with the saints, #Ho 11:12; Judah, in whom God was known, his name was great in Israel, #Ps 76:1. Prosper's conceit was that



*Iudaei* Judah were so called because they received *ius Dei*, the law from God's mouth; whence Josephus calls the commonwealth of Israel Θεοκρατειαν, a God government. For to them pertained (among sundry other precious privileges recited, #Ro 9:4,5) the covenants, that is, 1. The moral law in two tables. 2. The giving of the law, that is, the judicial law. 3. The service, that is, the ceremonial law, which was their gospel; whence Judaea is called the glorious land, #Da 11:41 (or the land of delights, or ornaments, as the Hebrew hath it), a pleasant land, or a land of desire, #Jer 3:19, because, as it is #Eze 20:6,15, it was the glory of all lands. Jerusalem, the metropolis, was not only the most famous of all the cities of the East, as Pliny confesseth it, but also of the whole world, *si insignia Dei spectemus beneficia*, as one saith, if we consider God's marvellous kindness showed to it in a strong city, as David hath it. But, as *ingentia beneficia, flagitia, supplicia*, the greater the privileges of any place or people are the more heinous are their offences, and the more hideous their punishments; so it happened with this nation, so advanced, so obliged, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked. They were but newly returned from captivity, scarce yet warm in their nests, when they fell afresh to their old trade of treachery, doing wickedly with both hands earnestly. Abomination was committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, even such as God's soul abhorred, and was ready to be loosened or disjoined from them, #Jer 6:8, because "in the land of uprightness they dealt unjustly, and would not behold the majesty of the Lord," #Isa 26:10. Judah had profaned the holiness of the Lord, which he loved, that is, the very place that he had espied out for himself, and that was dedicated to his name and service, the holy and separate land, the isle, as it is called, #Isa 20:6 (though part of the continent), because compassed about with God's favour as with a shield, #Ps 5:12. In such a consecrated country to act their villany was no small aggravation of their wickedness; this made it swell like a toad in the eyes of the Almighty, it was an abomination. Filthiness in a cook, in a strumpet, is nothing so odious as in a pretended virgin. A nettle on the waste is better borne with than in a garden. To see the devil in hell is no wonder; but what makes he in paradise? England was anciently called the kingdom of God; it may much better be so called now that the gospel of the kingdom is preached among us. It was also called *Albion, quasi Olbion* (happy or fortunate, the

fortunate island, say some), or *ab albis rupibus*, from the whiteness of the rocks. True it is, we were black all over with superstition; first Pagan, and then Papagan; but Christ hath made us white again as snow in Salmon. And do we again sully and soil ourselves with sin's filthiness, with that unclean kitchen stuff? do we profane the holiness of the Lord, which he loved, to drive him away from us by degrees, as those Jews did, #Eze 8:9-11; sin is the leaven that defiles our passover, and urgeth God to pass away and depart from us; sin is the snuff that dims our candlestick, and threatens the removal of it. Let those that live in God's good land, but not in God's good laws (as Aristotle complained of his Athenians to like purpose, and as Seneca said to the Romans, that they were become more filthy since they had baths to wash in), look forward to the following verse, and tremble at that utter destruction there threatened to such, *Disperdet Dominus, &c.* And thereunto St Paul seemeth to allude, #1Co 3:17 "If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy."

**And hath married the daughter of a strange god]** This is that particular sin whereby they had dealt treacherously against their brethren profaned the covenant, polluted the Church, and committed abomination in Israel; they had married with women of a strange worship, and joined in affinity with the people of those abominations, as holy Ezra phraseth it, #Ezr 9:14, and also setteth it forth for such a sin in those newly returned captives, as he thinks heaven and earth might well be ashamed of. A sin it is, flatly forbidden in both Testaments, #De 7:8 2Co 6:14; and reasons added: as, 1. Danger of defection, at least, from former forwardness; but most commonly of infection, as in Solomon, #1Ki 11:4 Ne 13:26. What is the reason the Pope will not dispense in Spain and Italy if a Papist marry a Protestant, yet here he will, but in hope to draw more to them. See #1Ki 12:25 2Ki 8:27 2. Great inconvenience: as, 1. Of grief to the godly parents, #Ge 26:35 27:36 2. Ill education of children, who commonly take after the mother (as did most of those idolatrous kings of Judah), and follow the worse of the two sides, though it be the weaker, as the conclusion in a syllogism follows the weaker proposition. The birth, we say, followeth the belly; and most men, we see, do *matrissare*, take after the mother in matters of religion. Hereunto might be added, that God's service must by these unequal matches necessarily be hindered, if not altogether omitted

(to gratify a froward Zipporah, or a mocking Michal), and the better party forced to see and hear that that cannot but grieve the Spirit of God. Besides danger of disloyalty, and a cursed posterity, as Edomites of the daughters of Heth. Here, then, I could join with that reverend contemplator in that holy wish of his (Dr Hall), that Manoaah could speak so loud that all our Israelites might hear him: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all God's people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" If religion be any other than a cipher, how dare we not regard it in our most important choices? how dare we yoke ourselves with any untamed heifer that beareth not Christ's yoke? What mad work made that noble pair of naughty packs, Jezebel and Athaliah, in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the latter beginning her reign in the same year that the former perished, as Bucholcer observeth! And who knoweth not what a deal of mischief was done to the poor people of God in France, by Katherine de Medicis, Queenmother, with the advice and assistance of the Cardinal of Lorraine? Concerning which two it was said,

“ *Non audent stygius Pluto tentare quod audent*

*Effraenis Monachus plenaque fraudis anus.*”

Ver. 12. **The Lord will cut off the man that doth this**] Though the magistrate be careless and corrupt; though he either cannot punish this evil, it being grown so universal, or will not (and so impunity in the magistrate maketh impenitence in the offenders), God will take the sword in hand, and cut off every mother's child that doth this, *nisi currat poenitentia*; as a surgeon cutteth off a rotten member, so will God destroy such for ever, *Metaphora est a Medicis ducta* (Polan.): he will take them away, and pluck them out of their dwellingplaces, and root them out of the land of the living, **#Ps 52:5**. Neither shall this be done to himself only, but to his wretched posterity (such a legacy, like Joab's leprosy, leaves every graceless man to his children), for so the Chaldee here rendereth and interpreteth that proverbial expression in the text, both the master and the scholar, *filium et filium filii*, his son, and his son's son, though he teach never so well by wholesome instruction, and political advisement, to prevent the mischief. Agreeably hereunto for sense Piscator rendereth this text thus, The Lord will cut off his children that doth thus, the children that he begets of the daughter of

a strange god. A heavy curse, surely, and frequently inflicted, as upon Ahab; though he, to avoid it, so followed the work of generation, that he left seventy sons behind him; which yet would not do.

**And him that offereth an offering, &c.]** That is, although he be a priest; or, although he seek to make peace with me by an offering; as hoping thereby to stop my mouth or stay my hand, to expiate his sin, or to purchase a dispensation, as those **#Mic 6:6,7 Isa 58:2,3**. Thus Saul sacrificeth; Ahab trembleth and humbleth; Jeroboam's wife goeth to the prophet; Joab taketh hold of the horns of the altar; the King of Persia, having lost some of his children by untimely death, as Ctesias reporteth, sends earnestly to the Jews for prayers for him and his, **#Ezr 6:10**. So did Maximinus in like case to the Christians. Cicero (de Nat. Deor.) tells us that they which prayed whole days together and offered sacrifice, *ut sui liberi superstites sibi essent*, that their children might outlive them, these were first called superstitious persons; afterwards the word was taken in a larger sense. But devotion without holy conversation avails nothing to avert God's judgments, **#Isa 1:12,15 66:3**. He that killeth an ox, unless he also kills his corruptions, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, unless by faith he lay hold upon the Lamb of God, is as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, &c. This men are hardly drawn to, viz. to part with their sins, to cast the traitor's head over the wall, to hang up the heads of the people before the sun. Sin, harboured in the soul, is like Achan in the army, or Jonah in the ship; much pains the mariners endured, and much loss too, to have saved Jonah from the sea; they ventured their own casting away ere they would cast him overboard; but there could be no calm till they had done it effectually. So it is here. Full fain men would keep their sins, and yet save their souls; but that is impossible. God will not be bribed, **#Ps 50:16-23**, nor brought to suffer sin unrepented to escape unpunished. Poor souls, when stung by the friars' sermons, they set them penances, pilgrimages, all sorts of good works, which stilled them a while; and for them they thought they should have pardon. So many run now among us to holy duties, but with the same opinion they did them as bribes for a pardon. These dig for pearls in their own dunghills, make the means

their mediators, think to save themselves by riding on horses, &c., **#Ho 14:3**.

Ver. 13. **And this have ye done again]** Or, in the second place: *q.d.* Not content to have married strange wives, ye have brought them in to your lawful wives, to their intolerable vexation; so adding this sin to the former, as a greater to the less. This is still the guise of graceless men, to add drunkenness to thirst, rebellion to sin, to amass and heap up one evil upon another, till wrath come upon them to the utmost. "For three transgressions, and for four, I will not turn away their punishment," **#Am 1:3**; that is, so long as the wicked commit one or two iniquities, I forbear them; but when it comes once to threes and fours (how much more to so many scores, hundreds, thousands, as one cipher added to a figure makes it so many tens, two so many hundreds, three so many thousands, &c.), God will bear with them no longer. Of those old Israelites it is demanded, not without great indignation on God's part, "How often did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert? Yea, they turned back and tempted God," &c. **#Ps 78:40,41**. Good men, if they fall once into foul practices, they fall not often. Of Judah it is expressly recorded that he knew Tamar no more. Lot indeed committed incest two nights together; but the orifice of his lust was not yet stopped by repentance. Think the same of Solomon, Samson, Jonah, &c., their acts were, as it were, continued acts; and, in the interim, little or no remorse or regret. Let us that have received mercy be admonished to sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto us, **#Joh 5:14**. There is a woe to such as draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope, **#Isa 5:18**. Babylon's sins in the Revelation reached up to heaven, or they were thwacked together thick and threefold one upon another, **#Re 18:5**, there was a concatenation or a continued series of them; therefore she fell surely and suddenly. When wickedness is once ripe in the field God will not let it shed to grow again; but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance.

**Covering the altar of the Lord with tears]** That is, You caused your poor wives, when they should have been cheerful in God's service, as **#1Sa 1:10**, and in many other places it was required of the Israelites to rejoice whensoever they appeared before the Lord. Earthly princes love not the company of mourners, **#Es 4:4**, to cover

the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, to throw themselves, blubbered and swollen with tears, upon the altar, which was a profanation of it; so that God regarded not the offering any more. It were happy if we could be so affected with our unkindness to Christ, our Husband, that we could cover his table, when we come to it, with our tears. How should the Lord regard our service so much the more! how should it be unto him as music upon the waters, far more harmonious! What a gracious respect had he to the weeping women that followed him to the cross! and what an honour was that to one of them (Mary Magdalene, I mean) that she had the first sight of the revived Phoenix, whom she held fast by those feet that she had once washed with her tears, and that had now lately trod upon the lion and adder **#Ps 91:13**. It was appointed by Moses' law that the bondwoman should bewail her father and mother a full month before she might become an Israelite's wife, **#De 21:13**. We, that are strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, as we cannot be presented a chaste virgin to Christ, but as weeping over him that bled over us, so we never please him better than when we weep over our tears (*Ipsae lachrymae sunt lachrymabiles*), sigh over our sobs, mourn over our griefs, as not proportionable to our miscarriages. But to return to the text; the Jews, as they are noted for a nation overmuch effeminate, and given to women, as they say, so, when they have satisfied their lust, and served their own turns, they are as willing to be rid of them as Amnon was of Tamar. Hence those many cautions in the law to put bounds to their petulance; and that political permission of a divorce, for the relief of the poor despised woman, lest she should come to a mischief, by the hatred of the churl her husband, **#De 22:18,14 24:3**. At this day they look upon women as not having so divine a soul as men, but are of a lower creation, made only for the propagation and pleasure of man. They use them as their drudges, lay upon them with their unmanly fists, are ready to cut out their tongues (as the Welshmen dealt by their French wives, lest they should corrupt the language of their children), put them away upon every slight occasion, covering that violence with the garment of the law, as **#Mal 2:16**. Or if they kept them, they took other wives to them, to vex them, and to make them to fret, **#1Sa 1:6**, or (as the word there signifies) to thunder; not only tabering upon their breasts, with the voice of doves (as Nahum's expression is, **#Na 2:7**), but filling the air, yea, covering the altar (as

it is here) with their laments and lowings, *flectu et mugitu* (so the Vulgate rendereth), for their husbands' harshness, and their concubines' insolencies and indignities: *Lamentis gemituque et foemineo ululatu Tecta fremunt* (Virg. Aeneid). Jerome tells us that these returned captives slighted their old wives brought with them from Babylon (as being by that tedious journey become infirm and deformed), and matched with strangers, who were fresh, fair, rich, &c.; this he gathers out of **#Ezr 9:1-10:44**, whereas they should rather have nourished and cherished them as their own flesh, **#Eph 5:29**, they should have handled them gently, because of their weakness, as so many crystal glasses. They should have given them all lawful content, as Abraham did Sarah, his faithful fellow traveller. They should have given all honour unto them, saith St Peter, **#1Pe 3:7**; and why? Mark his many reasons. 1. They are the weaker vessels, and are, therefore, to be handled with all tenderness. Some translate it the weaker instrument; and (as Luther speaks of it) as a knife with a tender edge men will not cut stones, brass, or iron with, so here. 2. They are heirs together of the grace of life, that is, of the life of grace, and of glory too; for souls have no sexes, and as every one is in Christ, all are equal, so that the husband is bound, in this respect, to make his wife's yoke as easy as may be, since she draws even with him, though on the left side. 3. That your prayers be not hindered, as they will be, where there is not so much *coniugium* wedlock as *coniurgium*. quarrelling. How can they pray together comfortably that live so discontentedly? How can they bring their gift to that altar that is covered with the tears and moans of their justly aggrieved and abused wives? Or, if they do, will God regard their offering any more, or receive it with good will at their hands? Will not the tears and groans of their distressed wives (who yet hold out their devotion, and will not be hindered by their just grief from praying to God and pouring out their souls before him) move God more than their sacrifices can do? Especially if they bring them with a wicked mind, as Solomon hath it, **#Pr 21:27**; and as Lyra maketh it to be the sense of this text; Ye have covered the altar of the Lord with tears, &c., but he regardeth not the offering any more, &c., that is (saith Lyra, and he hath it from Chrysostom), you are resolved to retain your idolatrous wives, though God have declared against it; and that ye may expiate this wickedness, and make amends by your good deeds for your bad, you run to the temple, and there, with

many tears and groans, you beg pardon. But all in vain, because you have no purpose at all to break off your sins, but will needs persist in your unlawful marriages. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:16"}

Ver. 14. **Yet ye say, Wherefore?**] A senseless question; but there is nothing more stupid and stubborn than a hypocrite; he will not yield, though never so clearly convinced, but will have still somewhat to say though to small purpose, as had Saul to Samuel, #1Sa 15:19-23, and these questionists here to God, whom, as before often and again after, they put to his proofs. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:2"} {See Trapp on "Mal 1:6"} His answer is ready:

**Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth]** The heathen could say,

*“ Maxima debetur pueris reverentia siquid  
Turpe paras:”*

*And again,*

*“ Turpe quid acturus tu, sine teste, time.”*

We should not do wickedly if but a child be by. And, when thou art about to do aught amiss, fear thine own conscience, which is a thousand witnesses. But if God be by as a witness, should not men fear to offend him? Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. He that dares sin, though he know God be an eye witness, is more impudent in sinning than was Absalom, when he spread a tent upon the top of the house, and went in to his father's concubines, in the sight of all Israel, and of the sun. These treacherous husbands could not but know that they had entered into a covenant of God, #Pr 2:17, when they married; that the bond was made to God, and that upon the violation of it he would be ready enough to take the forfeiture; for "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," #Heb 13:4. That God had been witness, or had protested (*Protestatus est*), so Montanus renders it, and withal had, by interposing of his own authority, confirmed the contract and compact, saying, *verbis conceptis*, as #Ho 3:3, Thou



shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee, and not for another woman, till God shall separate us by death. Indeed, if the husband or the wife is dead, the surviving party is at liberty to marry again, **#Ro 7:2**, whatsoever the Canonists say against bigamy. Jerome tells us of an old man in Rome that had buried twenty wives, which he had married one after the death of another; and that he had taken to wife the one-and-twentieth, who also had buried nineteen husbands. And that, burying that wife too, he followed the corpse to the church, so his neighbours would needs have it, with a garland of bays upon his head in manner of a triumpher. But against polygamy (which is, when a man or woman couples himself or herself in marriage to more than one) here are a heap of arguments in the text, which we shall take as they lie in order. Meanwhile it is worthy our observation, that the first author of polygamy was that Thrasonical Lamech, noted for a profane and wicked person; as was likewise Esau, another polygamist. Laban, though he had cheated Jacob into the having of his two daughters to wife, yet he could not but confess it to be a sin against the light of nature. Hence at parting he takes a solemn oath of Jacob, **#Ge 31:50** "If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness between me and thee." Some of the fathers were herein faulty, as Abraham, David, &c., and some say it was their privilege; but that is not likely. Rather it was their ignorance or incogitancy (they considered not that it was a breach of the first institution of marriage), or, as some conceive, it was their mere mistake of that text, **#Le 18:18** "Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her lifetime." Here they took the word (sister) for one so by blood, which was spoken of a sister by nation, **#Eze 16:46**, as those clauses to vex her, and during her life, do evince. One thing was, the commonness of the sin, and the long custom of it. So long had it continued, and was grown so fashionable, that it seemed to be no sin. But debt is debt, whether a man know of it or not; and sin, as a debt, may sleep a long time, and not be called out for many years, as Saul's sin in killing the Gibeonites slept forty years, and Joab's killing of Abner slept all David's days. Another thing that might cause desire of many wives, was want of love and chaste affection to the wife of their youth. Isaac is noted for a most loving husband to his Rebecca; and he never desired more wives than her. "Rejoice in

the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe." This will keep thee from being ravished with a strange woman, or embracing the bosom of a stranger, #Pr 5:18-20. The hind and the roe are most loving to their mates, and, therefore, most faithful to them. So, among birds, are the turtle dove and the stork. The former, they say, as he keeps close to his mate while she lives; so when she dies, he groans and moans continually, and never sits upon a green bough. The latter are chaste and severe in punishing those of the kind that are not. It is credibly reported by some that have seen it, that whole flocks of storks, meeting in a meadow, they have set in the midst of them two of their company that have been found disloyal, and, running upon them with main force, have killed them with their beaks. So that the company breaking up, and all the rest flying away, the two offending storks only have been found dead in the place.

**Against whom thou hast dealt treacherously]** viz. By superinducing another wife contrary to thy covenant. This is not a simple injury against thy lawful wife; but such as is joined with contumely, which the Greeks call υβρις; and the children that come of such copulation they call υβριδας, because they are subject to contumelies. The Hebrews call them brambles; Abimelech was such a one, #Jud 9:14, a right bramble indeed, who grew in the base hedge row of a concubine; and scratched and drew blood to purpose. Lo, this is the prophet's first argument against polygamy; it is treachery against both God, who is deeply interested in the marriage covenant, and against the true wife, who is hereby extremely defrauded and defeated, Follows now the second:

**Yet she is thy companion]** Thy companion, and co-partner, thy consort, and fellow friend, such another as thyself, so the woman is called, #Ge 2:18, a second self, a mate suitable for thee, a piece so just cut out for thee, as answereth thee rightly in every point, in every joint. A wife is not a slave, saith one, but a companion; a yoke fellow, standing on even ground with thee, though drawing on the left side. From the left side, say some, she was taken, where the heart is, to teach that hearty love should be between married couples. Made she was of a rib, a bone of the side; not of the head (the wife must not usurp authority over her husband), nor yet of the

foot, she may not be trampled upon or disregarded as an underling. A bone, not of any anterior part, she is not *praelata*, preferred before the man; neither yet of any hinder part; she is not *postposita*, set behind the man; but a bone of the side, of the middle of the indifferent part, to show that she is thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. A bone she is from under the arm; to put man in mind of protection and defence to the woman: a bone, not far from his heart; to put him in mind of dilection and love to the woman. Neither can the rib challenge any more of her than the earth can do of him. And as he was ignorant when himself was made, so he knew as little when his second self was made out of him; both that the comfort might be greater than was expected, as also that he might not upbraid his wife with any great dependance or obligation; he neither willing the work, nor suffering any pain to have it done. Shine she must with the beams of her husband; share she must with him in his masterly government of the family, as Sarah did with Abraham, by God's allowance, #Ge 16:1-6, and as the Roman ladies were wont to say to their husbands, *Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia*, where you are lord I am lady. That over lordly behavior of husbands towards their wives, and that usage of them as drudges, is condemned by the heathen philosophers, in the very Barbarians themselves, as a great *αταξια*, and disorder in the family.

**And the wife of thy covenant]** And is it nothing to be a covenant breaker with a wife; especially where God also is engaged, as above said? *Foedus παρα το πεποιθεναι πιστις, ab eadem radice*, perform your trust, make good the troth you have plighted. Otherwise, if the fruits of the flesh grow out of the trees of your hearts, surely, surely, saith master Bradford, martyr, the devil is at in with you; you are his birds, whom, when he hath well fed, he will broach you and eat you, chew you and champ you, world without end, in eternal woe and misery.

Ver. 15. **And did not he make one]** Another forcible argument against polygamy and adultery. See our Saviour's explanation of it, #Mt 19:4-6. {See Trapp on "Mt 19:4"} {See Trapp on "Mt 19:5"} {See Trapp on "Mt 19:6"} The only wise God made but one woman for one man at the first creation; and ordained that those two should be one flesh, two in one flesh, not three or four, or as many wives as a man is able to maintain, as among the Turks, who, as a just hand of God upon

them, are grievously vexed with jealousy, not suffering their women to go to church, nor so much as look out at their own windows; or, if they go abroad upon any occasion, they must go muffled, all but the eyes. Sardus tells us, that the old Britons would ten or twelve of them take one woman to wife. Likely, women were rare commodities, with them. As likewise men were in Judaea, when "seven women took hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach," #Isa 4:1: that is, we will maintain ourselves and thee; only be thou a husband to us, and let us have children by thee.

**Yet had he the residue of the spirit]** Or, breath; so that he could as easily have made more, and breathed into their faces the breath of life. And although it is not said of the woman, that God breathed into her the breath of life, as of Adam (whence Tertullian concludes, that she had both body and soul too from Adam), yet Austin rightly gathereth, that their souls were both alike imbreathed by God; otherwise, the Scripture would not have been silent in it, no more than it is in the new manner of the creation of her body. Thence also it is that Adam saith not, This is soul of my soul, but "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," #Ge 2:23. Souls are not propagated by the parents, but created of God, and joined to the body, by a hidden or secret operation. Augustine, following Origen, held the contrary for a long time. At length he began to doubt, and after a while changed his opinion; Jerome stoutly defending the contrary against him. Aristotle also understood the truth hereof, and concluded, that the soul was divine, and came from above; and though of nothing, yet is it made a matter more excellent than the matter of the heavens, in nature not inferior to the angels. Λειπεται δε τον νουν μονον θυραθεν επειστεναι και θειον ειναι μονον. Lib. 2, c. 9. An abridgment it is of the invisible world, as the body is of the visible. And why may we not say, that the soul, as it came from God, being *divinae particula aurm*, so it is like him? One immaterial, immortal, understanding spirit, distinguished into three powers, which all make up one spirit. In this respect it is said, #Ge 9:6, that in the image of God made he man. There is a double image of God in the soul. One, in the substance of it; this is never lost, and of this that text is to be understood. The other is the supernatural grace, which is

an image of the knowledge, holiness, and righteousness of God, and this is utterly lost, and must be recovered. This the ancient heathens hammered at when they feigned that the soul once had wings; but, those being broken, it fell headlong into the body; where when it hath recovered its wings, it flies up to heaven again. That was very good counsel given by a godly man to his friend, not to busy his brains so much in inquiring how the soul entered into the body as how it may depart comfortably out of the body. And seeing the soul is more excellent than the body (saith another grave divine), like as Jacob laid his right hand upon the younger, but his left upon the elder, so our best care, and the strength of our thoughts, should be for the soul, younger as much as it is than the body; they should be but left hand thoughts for the body.

**And wherefore one? that he might seek a godly seed]** Heb. a seed of God; not a bastardly brood, a spurious issue, a *mamzer*, as the Hebrews call such, that is, *labes aliens*, a strange blot, a "seed of the adulterer and the whore," #**Isa 57:3**; but such as God appointeth and approveth, such as may be holy, with a federal holiness at least, if not sanctified from the womb, as some have been, and are, #**1Co 7:14**; lastly, such as in and by whom the Church and religion may be propagated, and not idolatry spread and increased.

**Therefore take heed to your spirit]** That is, to your wife, which is the residue of your spirit; keep and cherish her; so Remigius and Lyra interpret it. But they do better that expound it by that of Solomon, "Keep thy heart with all diligence," #**Pr 4:23**, and by that of the apostle, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence," &c., #**Col 3:5**. These are those that defile the man, #**Mt 15:19,20**. These make his heart a filthy dunghill of all abominable lusts, and his life a long chain of sinful actions, a very continued web of wickedness; "therefore take heed to your spirits," that is, to your affections, keep those pure and chaste; abstain from fleshly lusts that fight against the soul. Take heed where you set gunpowder, since fire is in your heart. Austin thanks God that the heart and temptation did not meet together. Look well to the affections; for by those maids Satan woos the mistress. Look to the *cinque ports*, the five senses, shut those windows, that death enter

not in thereby. Take heed to thy fancy: we allow a horse to prance and skip in a pasture; which if he doth when backed by the rider, we count him an unruly and unbroken jade. So, howsoever in other creatures we deny them not liberty of fancy, yet we may not allow it in ourselves, to frisk and rove at pleasure, but by reason bridle them, and set them their bounds that they shall not pass. The Lord quieteth the sea, and turns the storm into a calm, #Ps 107:29. If then the voluptuous humours in our body (which is but as a cup made of the husk of an acorn in respect of the sea) will not be pacified when the Lord saith unto them, Be still, every drop of water in the sea will witness our rebellion and disobedience.

**And let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth]** He had convinced them of this sin before, #Mal 2:14. Now he admonisheth them to abrenounce and abandon it. Lo, this is the true method and manner of proceeding in administering admonitions. The judgment must be convinced ere the affections can be wrought to anything; like as in the law, the lamps were first lighted before the incense was burned. First know thine iniquity, and then turn from it, #Jer 3:13,14. Exhortation is the end of doctrine, science of conscience, reformation of information, conversion of conviction; and woe be to those that being convinced, or reprov'd, for their faults, get the bit between the teeth, as it were, and run away with their rider. When I would have healed Ephraim, then his iniquity brake out (as if it were to cross me) like the leprosy in his forehead, #Ho 7:1. What can such sturdy rebels expect better than that God should resolve, as #Eze 24:13, as if he should say, Thou shalt have thy will, but then I will have mine too; I shall take another course with thee, since thou refuseth to be reformed, hatest to be healed; thou shalt pine away in thine iniquities, #Le 26:39. Oh fearful!

Ver. 16. **For the Lord the God of Israel saith, that he hateth putting away]** Heb. Put away: *q.d.* God hates that "Put her away, put her away," that is, so much in your mouths. For, because you are justly reprov'd for polygamy, for keeping two wives, you think to mend that fault by putting away your old ones, and plead you may do it by a law, licensing divorces. But the Lord would ye should know that he hates such practices; and the rather because you maliciously abuse his law, as a cloak of your wickedness. Divorce is a thing that God's soul hateth, unless it be in case of adultery, which

breaks the marriage knot, and malicious perpetual desertion, #1Co 7:15. This last was the ease of that noble Italian convert, Galeacius Caracciolus, Marquis of Vico (as is to be seen in his Life, written by my muchhonoured brother, Mr Samuel Clark, in the second part of his Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, p. 101), who by the consent of Mr Calvin, Peter Martyr, and other learned divines, who met and seriously debated the case, sued out a divorce against his former wife, who had first maliciously deserted him, and had it legally by the magistrate at Geneva granted unto him; after which he married another, A.D. 1560. The civil law of the empire permitted divorce for divers other causes. And these Jews, for every light cause (if but a blemish in the body, or crookedness of manners), pretending to hate their wives, would write them a bill of divorce, and turn them off. Our Saviour deals against this, Matt. v.; xix; see the notes there. This sin was also rife among both the Athenians (who were wont to put away their wives upon discontent, or hope of greater portions, &c.), and the Romans, whose *Abscessionale*, or writ of divorce, was this only, *Res tuns tibi habeto*; Take what is thine, and be gone. It is ordinary also among the Mahometans. But the Lord God of Israel saith here, that he hateth it; and it appeareth so by his practice to his spouse, the Church. See #Jer 3:1 Joh 13:1, and then say, that God's mercy is matchless; and that he takes not advantages against his revolting people, but follows them with his favour; no otherwise than as when a man goes from the sun, yet the sunbeams follow him, shine upon him, warm him, &c. Zanchy (and some others) reads the text thus, If thou hatest her, put her away, in that discourse of divorces, which he wrote upon the occasion of Andreas Pixzardus's divorce, as indeed agreeing best with the matter he undertook to defend. But in another book of his he utterly disliketh the doings of Luther, and some other Dutch divines, who advised Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, to marry, *alteram, hoc est, adulteram*, his former lawful wife being yet alive. Archbishop Grindall, by cunning practices of his adversaries, Leicester and others, lost Queen Elizabeth's favour, as if he favoured prophesyings, &c., but in truth, because he had condemned an unlawful marriage of Julio, an Italian physician, with another man's wife, while Leicester in vain opposed against his proceedings therein. Archbishop Abbots also led in disgrace for opposing Somerset's abhorred match with the Countess of Essex.

**For one covereth violence with his garment]** This text had been easy had not commentators (the Hebrew doctors especially) made it knotty. Rabbi David, in opening it, *obscurior videtur, quam ipsa verba quae explicare conatur*, seems to be more obscure than the words themselves which he undertaketh to open, saith Figueir, who also reciteth the expositions of several rabbins. Concerning which, I may say, as one did once, when being asked by another whether he should read such a comment upon Aristotle? answered, Yes; when Aristotle is understood, then read the comment. The plain sense is this: These wicked Jews pretended the law of God, as a cloak and cover of their sin, that it might be no sin to them. And though the Lord had protested to hate their divorces, yet they pleaded I know not what liberty permitted them by Moses; but this was but a political coverture of iniquity, #Mt 18:8,9. The like whereunto was the sin of Saul, #1Sa 15:10-23; of Jezebel, #1Ki 21:13; of those Jews, #Joh 19:7; of those libertines, #2Pe 2:1-3 Jas 2:8,9; of all heretics, that plead Scripture for their heresies; and some others impudently impious, who, lest they should seem to be mad without reason, abuse God's holy word to the defence of their unreasonable and irreligious practices. These men's judgments now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation sleepeth not, #2Pe 2:3.

**Therefore take heed to your spirit]** A repetition of the dehortation; of which see #Mal 3:16. Good things must be often inculcated, #Php 3:1, one exhortation must peg in another, till they stick in our souls, as forked arrows in the flesh. Men do not use to lay ointments only upon their lame limbs, but rub them, and chafe them in; so here. Austin persuades the preacher so long to insist upon a necessary point till, by the gesture and countenance of the hearers, he perceiveth that they understand and relish it. Chrysostom, being asked by his people when he would stop preaching against swearing? answered, Never till you stop your swearing.

Ver. 17. **Ye have wearied the Lord with your words]** *Laborare fecistis Dominum*, so the Vulgate renders it. Ye have put the Lord to pain, as it were; ye have even tired out his patience, while ye have made him to serve with your sins, and have wearied him with your iniquities, #Isa 43:24 "I have long time held my peace; I have been still and refrained myself," saith the Lord: "now will I cry like a



travailing woman," that hath long time bitten in her pain, I will destroy and devour at once, **#Isa 42:14**. God can hear and forbear as well as any other: Who is a God like unto thee for this? saith Micah, **#Mic 7:17**. Were the most patient man upon earth in God's stead, but for a very short time, to see and hear the provocations and indignities daily done unto him by the sinful sons of men, he would soon be weary of it, he would quickly make a short work upon the earth, **#Ro 9:28**. It would trouble his patience to spread out his hands all day long to a rebellious people, **#Isa 65:2**, to give forty days' respite to Nineveh, that bloody city, full of lies and robbery, **#Na 3:1**, to be grieved forty years long with a perverse people, and to suffer their evil manners in the wilderness, **#Ac 13:18**, to bear four hundred years with those wretched Amorites, who had filled the land from one end to the other with their abominable uncleannesses, **#Ezr 9:11**. In the fourth chapter of Ezekiel God is brought in as lying upon his left side for three hundred and ninety years, **#Eze 4:5,6**; a long while to lie on one side, without turning on the other, and all to set forth his longsufferance. Our text tells us that he is patient, even *ad defatigationem usque*, up the point of being worn out toward the wicked; he bears till he can bear no longer. See the like **#Ro 9:22**, and the reason, **#Ro 2:4**, and the ill use that is made of it, **#Ec 8:11-13**, till they tire out him that is indefatigable, **#Jer 15:6**, and made him weary of repenting. But is this a safe course they take? Do they provoke the Lord to wrath? Are they stronger than he? **#1Co 10:22** "Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but ye will weary my God also?" **#Isa 7:13**. Will he not put an end to his abused patience, that justice, justice (as Moses hath it), actual and active justice, may take place? **#De 16:20**. God in Ezekiel is said to sit upon a throne, to show his slowness; but this throne hath wings, to show his swiftness to come, if need require. His patience passeth along as a pleasant river. But if men stop the course of it by their blasphemies and contumelies, as here, and press in with their provocations, as a cart that is leaden with sheaves, **#Am 2:13**, God will surely have his full blow at them, **#Na 1:2,6 Ro 2:4 Heb 12:29**.

**With your words]** That is, with your continual contentions and quibblings; or with those ensuing words, blasphemous enough, and

atheistic; together with your bold justification of them; "yet ye say, Wherein," &c.

**When ye say, Every one that doth evil, &c.]** As if they should say, God punisheth not, but prospereth the wicked; therefore he loveth and favoureth them above better men. Job, Jeremiah, and David were once, for a fit, in the same error, but soon recanted it when once the waters of the sanctuary had cured their eyesight, #Ps 73:17, for such are sand blind, and cannot see far off, #2Pe 1:9.

**Or, Where is the God of judgment]** *q.d.* Nowhere; either there is no God, or, at least, not a God of that exact, precise, impartial judgment, such an emphasis there is in the Heb. Diagoras turned atheist, because his adversary that had robbed him was not presently thunderstruck (Corn. a Lapide). The like is recorded of Porphyry, Lucian, Averroes, and others. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:14"} {See Trapp on "Mal 3:14"}

### Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Behold, I will send my messenger]** It is well observed by the learned, that this whole prophecy of Malachi, though distinguished, as now, into several chapters, yet is but one entire sermon, at once delivered. Those atheists that asked in the precedent verse (and they did it with an accent too, that they might not be slighted), "where is the God of judgment?" are here fully answered; and that they might the better attend, they have it with a note of pregnancy, "Behold, I will send," &c. *q.d. differtur quidem iudicium sed non aufertur. Tandem veniet, profecto veniet.* Judgment comes not as soon as you call for it; but come it will, be sure it will. For, behold, I send, in the present tense, my messenger, the Baptist, and, at his heels, as it were, Messiah, the Prince, who shall reform and rectify all disorders. "For judgment," saith he, "come I into the world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind," #Joh 9:39. And then, you that call for judgment shall have enough of it; when ye see my messenger, harbinger, or herald, know that I am hard at hand. "Behold": this is set here as the sound of a trumpet before some proclamation, to arouse men's attention.

**I will send]** Heb. I do send, or, am sending; though the thing was not done till four or five hundred years after; but in God's purpose and promise it was a done thing already. All things are present with him, for he is a pure act; his whole essence is wholly an eye, or a mind; he is all things eminently, exemplarily, and contains all things in himself. Hence he knoweth temporal things after an eternal manner, mutable things immutably, contingent things infallibly, future things presently. Hence he calleth things that yet are not, as if they were, **#Ro 4:17**; and this, as in the works of creation, renovation, resurrection, so in the accomplishment of his promises, which we must not antedate, as we are apt to do; but learn to live by faith, **#Hab 2:2**. Possibly the calendar of heaven hath a post-date to ours. Strive to be strong in faith, and glorify God.

**My messenger]** Not Christ, as Eusebius doted (lib. 5, de Demon. Evang. cap. 28), nor Messiah, the son of Joseph, that is, of the tribe of Joseph, as Rabbi Abraham would have it (for the Jews foolishly expect two Messiahs, one the son of David, and the other the son of Joseph), nor an angel of heaven, as Rabbi David interprets it, according to **#Ex 23:20**; but John Baptist, as our Savidur expounds himself **#Mt 11:10**, who is here called Christ's messenger, or angel, by reason of his office: one by whom he would manifest his mind to his people. "He was a burning and a shining light," **#Joh 5:35**, or lamp, and shone for a season, till the Sun of righteousness came in place: as lights and candles are of good use till the sun riseth. See **#1Sa 3:8**.

**And he shall prepare the way]** *Expurgabit, everret, emundabit*. He shall clear the way, sweep it, accoutre or dress it. He shall remove all *rubs* and *remoras* out of the way, he shall pare and pave a path for Christ into the soul, open those everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in; he shall make "ready a people for the Lord," **#Lu 1:17**. Man's heart is full of mountains and valleys, **#Lu 3:5**. These must be levelled ere Christ can be admitted: and that is not done but by repentance unto life. As John Baptist was Christ's forerunner into the world; so must repentance be his forerunner into the heart: for he that repenteth not, the kingdom of heaven is far from him; so that he cannot see it (as the Hebrew word here used

imports he must do), for his lusts that hang in his light, פתח *viam*  
*aperture et oculis intuentium conspicuam faciet.*

**And the Lord whom ye seek]** Dominator, that Lord paramount, of whom David speaketh, #Ps 110:1, and for whose sake Daniel desireth to be heard, #Da 9:17. Messiah the Prince, #Da 3:25, the Prince and Saviour, #Ac 5:31, Lord and Christ, #Ac 2:36, the God of judgment, whom they called for, #Mal 2:17, and whom they are said to seek for. As God, he is not very far from any of us, saith Paul, #Ac 17:27, not so far as the bark is from the tree; for in him we all live, and move, and subsist. And as Godman, he

**shall suddenly come to his temple]** Suddenly, that is, in the fulness of time (which is but a short time in respect to the long expectation of the patriarchs), and speedily after John Baptist's birth; suddenly also, because unexpectedly to the most, who stood amazed at his preaching, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter, &c.? To his temple he came, when presented there to be circumcised, #Lu 2:21-39, when he put forth a beam of his Divinity there, in his disputation with the doctors, #Lu 2:46-49. But especially when he purged the temple; 1. By his doctrine, #Mt 5:1-12 15:1-20; and 2. By his discipline, #Joh 2:14-16 12:12; at which time, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion," saith God, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass," #Mt 21:5; not upon a stately palfrey, <sup>{a}</sup> as an earthly potentate. And that was the very cause that these in the text, that are said to see him when they had him among them, could by no means think well of him, in respect of his mean and despicable condition. They had a certain notion of the Messiah, and were in expectation of him, and of temporal deliverance and felicity by him, of which, when disappointed, they were as blank as the time they saw the hoped issue of their late Jewish virgin turned to a daughter; or when they saw Mahomet eat of a camel; whom till then, when they saw him arising in such power, they were ready to cry up for their long looked for Messiah (Dr Hall's Peacemaker).

**Even the messenger of the covenant]** viz. Of the covenant of grace; for in Christ God reconciled the world to himself. And of this covenant Christ is the angel, or messenger, because, 1. He revealeth

it, and we must take heed how we slight it, **#Heb 2:3**, shift it, **#Heb 12:25** 2. He mediateth it, **#1Ti 2:5**, and in and by him it hath accomplishment, **#2Co 1:20**. Hence, **#Isa 9:6**, he is called the Prince of peace, and, according to the Septuagint there, the Angel of the great counsel: Μεγαλης της βουλης αγγελος. Let all that would receive mercy from God get into Christ, and so into covenant; for as the mercy seat was no larger than the ark, so neither is the grace of God than the covenant of grace; and as the ark and mercy seat were never separated, so neither are such from God as are found in Christ.

**Whom ye delight in]** They delighted in his day, the better sort of them, though afar off, **#Joh 8:56**; they anticipated him, and were recognised by him, **#Heb 11:13**. They promised themselves, through Christ, *malorum ademtionem, honorum adeptionem*, freedom from all evil, and fruition of all good. Hence he is called, "the desire of all nations," **#Hag 2:8**. The Church in the Canticles saith he is *totus desiderabilis*, altogether desirable, **#So 5:16**. The Church in Isaiah desires him with her whole soul, **#Isa 26:9 64:1**; as impatient of further delays, crieth out, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down, righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation," &c., **#Isa 45:8**. Lo, what earnest rantings and disquieting ways were in those ancient believers after Christ, what continual sallies, as it were, and egressions of affection.

**Behold, he shall come]** He shall, he shall; nay, he is even come already: for so the Hebrew hath it, *Hinneh ba*, behold, he is come; methinks I even see him. A like text there is **#Hab 2:3**. The duty required is, wait; the promise is delivered doubled and tripled: It shall speak, it will come, it will surely come. Nay, doubled again: It shall not lie, it will not tarry. It is as if God had said, Do but wait, and you shall be delivered, you shall be delivered, you shall be delivered; you shall, you shall. Oh the rhetoric of God! oh the certainty of the promises! A Lapide's note is not here to be passed by. This word "Behold" signifieth that this coming of Christ in the flesh should be, 1. New, admirable, and stupendous. 2. Sure and certain. 3. Desirable and joyful. 4. Famous and renowned.

**Saith the Lord of hosts]** And that is assurance good enough; for hath he said it, and shall he not do it? Here is firm footing for faith; and men are bound to rest in God's *Ipsa dixit*. He spoke for himself. Abraham did, and required no other evidence, **#Ro 4:16-22**. He cared not for the deadness of his own body or of his wife's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief. No more must we, if we will be heirs of the world, with faithful Abraham. God's truth and power are the Jachin and Boaz, the two pillars whereupon faith must repose; believing God upon his bare word, and that against sense, in things invisible, and against reason, in things incredible.

{a} A saddle-horse for ordinary riding as distinguished from a war-horse; *esp.* a small saddle-horse for ladies.

(ED

Ver. 2. **But who may abide the day of his coming?**] The prophet Isaiah asketh "Who shall declare his generation?" **#Isa 53:8**, that is, the mystery of his incarnation (that *habitatio Dei cum carne*, which the magicians held impossible, **#Da 2:11**); or the history of his birth, life, and death (as some sense it), whose tongue shall be able to speak it or pen to write it? Who can think of the day of his coming? so the Vulgate reads this text; viz. of all the glory, graces, benefits of that day? But the Hebrew word is the same as **#Pr 18:14** "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity"; and is so rendered here by the Chaldee and Kimchi. Who can sustain or abide the day of his coming, *sc.* in the flesh? What wicked man will be able to endure it? for, "he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth" (that is, the consciences of carnal men glued to the earth), "and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked," **#Isa 11:4**. And this is spoken of the Branch that grew out of the root of Jesse, **#Isa 11:1**, when that goodly family was sunk so low, as from David the king to Joseph the carpenter. With what terror struck he the hearts of Herod and all Jerusalem by the news of his nativity! **#Mt 2:3**. And *si praesepe vagientis Herodem tantum terruit, quid tribunal iudicantis?* If Christ in the cradle were so terrible, what will he be on the tribunal? The text that troubled those miscreants was **#Mic 5:2**, which some (taking *tsagnir* in the neuter gender) render thus: And thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, it is a small thing to be among the princes of Judah; out of thee shall come a ruler, &c. This Herod and his complices could not hear of without horror; as neither could that

other Herod, of the fame of Christ's mighty works, **#Mt 14:1,2**, such a glimpse of divine glory shone in them. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrites"; and they run as far and as fast as they can from Christ, with these frightful words in their mouths: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who shall abide with the everlasting burnings?" The ruffian soldiers were flung flat on their backs when he said no more but, "I am he," **#Joh 18:6**. *Quid autem Iudicaturus faciet, qui iudicandus hoc fecit?* What will he do when he comes to judgment, who was thus terrible now that he was to be judged? (August.). Oh that the terror of the Lord might persuade people to forsake their sins, and to kiss the Son, lest he be angry. Though a lamb, he can be terrible to the kings of the earth; and though he break not the bruised reed, **#Mt 12:20**, yet his enemies he will break with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, &c., **#Ps 2:9,10**. And as the sun, moon, and eleven stars in Joseph's vision did obeisance to him; so let our souls, bodies, all our temporal, natural, moral, and spiritual abilities, be subject and serviceable to Christ, as ever we hope to look him in the face with comfort.

**And who shall stand when he appeareth?**] Heb. at the sight of him. True it is that Christ, coming to help us in distress, for the want of external pomp in his ordinances, and worldly glory in his ministers and members, and splendour of human eloquence in his doctrines, is despised by those that form and frame to themselves a Christ like to the mighty monarchs of the earth; like as Agesilaus, King of Spartans, coming to help the King of Egypt, was slighted in that country for his lowly clothes and contemptible outside. But if the centurion were worthy of respect, because he loved the Jewish nation, and built them a synagogue; shall not Christ much more, even as prince of the kings of the earth, since he loved us, and washed us with his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, **#Re 1:5,6**; by whom also he is made unto us righteousness (imputatively), wisdom, sanctification, and redemption, effectively, by way of inherency and gracious operation? "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" as the men of Bethshemesh once said, **#1Sa 6:20**. Who would not fear this King of nations, saith Jeremiah, **#Jer 10:7**, this King of saints? saith John, **#Re 15:3,4**, for to him doth it appertain; since there is none

like unto him; neither can any stand before him when he appeareth, any more than a glass bottle can stand before a cannon shot. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before this Lord our maker, #Ps 95:6. If we harden our hearts he will harden his hand, and hasten our destruction. There is no standing before this lion, no bearing up sail in the tempest of his wrath: you must either be his subjects or his footstool; either vail to him or perish by him. "Thine arrows are in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee," #Ps 45:5. What a world of miseries have the refractory Jews suffered, and do yet, for rejecting the Lord Jesus! They might have known, out of their own cabalists (besides Daniel's seventy weeks, and other Scripture evidences), that the Messiah was among them; for it is there expressly recorded that Messias should come in the time of Hillel's disciples; one of whom was Simeon the Just, who embraced the child Jesus in his arms; who also foretold that that child was "set for the ruin and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which should be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed," #Lu 2:34,35; and to the same purpose, #1Pe 2:7,8. But before them both, our prophet here.

**For he is like a refiner's fire]** Intimating that the times of the Messiah would be discriminating, shedding times; and that he would separate the precious from the vile, the gold from the dross, the sheep from the goats: that Nabal should no more be called Nadib, the vile person liberal, the churl bountiful, #Isa 32:5; but that good people should be discerned and honoured; hypocrites detected and detested, as was Judas, Magus, Demas, &c., slit up and slain by Christ's two-edged sword, by his presence and preaching. Surely "his fan is in his hand," though the devil and his imps would fain wring it out, "and he will thoroughly purge his floor," *mali in area nobiscum esse possunt, in horreo non possunt* (Augustine), he will drive the chaff one way and the wheat another; for what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord, #Mt 3:12 Jer 23:20; he will purify the souls of his saints, "in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren," #1Pe 1:22. So that they shall be united to such, and separated from sinners. Fire, we know, *congregat homogenea, segregat heterogenea*; for what fellowship hath light with darkness? The spirit of Christ, called a spirit of judgment and of burning, washeth away (lo, here refiner's fire and



fuller's soap) the filth of the daughter of Zion, and purgeth the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, **#Isa 4:4**. By filth and blood understand their excessive bravery, mentioned **#Isa 3**, which now they had learned to call by another name, since their own names were written among the living in Jerusalem, **#Isa 4:3**. And here God made good to them that which he had promised, **#Isa 1:25**, that he would purely purge away their dross, and take away all their tin; and that though their sins were as scarlet, they should be white as snow; though red like crimson, they should be as wool, **#Isa 3:18**. Fuller's soap (or soap weed, *Saponaria*, as some render it) is of singular use to fetch out stains and spots, and to whiten wool: so much more is the blood and spirit of Christ to whiten sinful souls, and to make men his candidates, *ut fiant Candidati Dei*. Such were those Corinthians **#1Co 6:11** "Such were some of you" (that is, as bad as bad might be, lepers all over), "but ye are washed," *sc.* by that fuller of souls, Christ Jesus. And if any ask, How washed? It follows, "but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name," that is, by the merit of the Lord Jesus, "and by the spirit of our God." The Jews in their Talmud hammer at this, when they question, what is the name of Messiah? Their answer is, *Hhevara*, leprous (*sc.* by imputation, **#2Co 5:21 Isa 53:6**, whence also he is said by one to be *Maximus peccatorum*, the greatest of sinners), and he sitteth among the poor in the gates of Rome, carrying their sicknesses, according to that, "Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses." There are two things in guilt. 1. The merit and desert of it: this Christ took not. 2. The obligation to punishment: this he took, and so he became sin, that is, bound to the punishment of sin; which also he suffered, even to the effusion of his blood (that true *Pactolus*, agreement or rather Jordan), whereby he hath cleansed his people from sins, both guiltiness and filthiness. We have inveterate stains, which will hardly be got out till the cloth be almost rubbed to pieces: corruption cleaves so close to us, that fire and fuller's soap is but needful to fetch it off, **#Jer 13:23**. Nature and custom have made our spots like that of the leopard, which no art can cure, no water wash off; because they are not in the skin only, but in the flesh and bones, in the sinews and in the most inner parts. Hence David prayeth again and again to be washed thoroughly, to be purged with hyssop, to be washed and wrung in this fuller's soap of Christ's blood, and with the clean water of his Holy Spirit. This is the only true purgatory, the

king's bath, the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, **#Zec 13:1**. Here Christ washeth his, not only from outward defilements, but from their swinish nature; that when washed clean they may not (as else they would) wallow in the next guzzle. Here are those sovereign muddifying waters of the sanctuary, which so wash off the corruption of the ulcer, that they cool the heat, and stay the spread of the infection; and by degrees heal the same. Hither poor sinners need not come, as to the pool of Bethesda, one by one, but as Turks to their Mahomet, Papists to their Lady, by troops and caravans, true Christians to their All-sufficient Saviour, how much more! In that pool of Bethesda the priests used to wash their sacrifices; because no unclean thing might come within the temple. The water was of reddish colour, and ran into that place in great abundance; and therefore it was called, saith one, the house of effusion. This shadowed out that every one of Christ's sheep must be washed in the pool of his blood before they can be meet sacrifices, an offering unto the Lord in righteousness, as it is in the next verse. Other blood stains what is washed in it; this blood of the spotless Lamb whiteneth as fuller's soap, and purifieth from all pollution of flesh and spirit, **#Re 7:14** "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood," **#1Jo 5:6**. The priests of the old law were consecrated first with oil, and then with blood; so was Christ, first with the Spirit, **#Isa 61:1**, and then with his own blood, for our benefit.

Ver. 3. **And he shall sit as a refiner]** *i.e.* He shall stick to the work, and not start from it, "till he bring forth judgment to victory," **#Mt 12:20**, that is, till he have perfected the work of grace begun in his people (for he is "author and finisher of their faith," **#Heb 12:2**), and by patience made them "perfect and entire, wanting nothing," **#Jas 1:4**. Christ, who is the God of all grace, and hath called them to his eternal glory, will, after they have suffered awhile in his furnace, or refining pot, {#Pr 17:3} of afflictions, "make them perfect, establish, strengthen, settle them," **#1Pe 5:10**, yea, make all grace to abound toward them; "that they always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work," **#2Co 9:8**. For which holy purpose Christ, our refiner, hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem, **#Isa 31:9**, his conflataries and his crucibles, wherein his third part being brought through the fire, shall be refined as silver is refined, and tried as gold is tried, **#Zec 13:9** "that the trial of their

faith" (who have glorified him in the very fires, **#Isa 24:15**), "being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, may be found to praise and honour and glory," **#1Pe 1:7**. True gold will undergo the trial of the seventh fire, which alchemy gold will not. Christ Jesus, after that he hath been to his people as a refiner's fire and fuller's soap, that is, after that he hath justified and sanctified them also in some part, will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, that is, he will be serious, accurate, and assiduous in scouring them from corruption by correction, in purging out the remnants of sin by affliction sanctified. "For by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin," **#Isa 27:9**. Christ hath bought off all her corruptions, redeemed us from all iniquity, **#Tit 2:14**, and God will have the price of Christ's blood out; what the word purgeth not the rod must: like as what evil humours summer purgeth not out by sweating, winter concocts by driving in the heat. And as winter is of use for mellowing the ground, and for killing worms and weeds, &c., so is the cross sanctified for quelling and killing fleshly lusts that fight against the soul. He that holds the winds in his fist, stays his rough wind, **#Isa 27:8**, and lets out of his treasury such a wind as shall make his young plants fruitful, and blow away their unkindly blossoms and leaves. Black soap makes white clothes, if God set in and set it on with his battle door, as that martyr phrased it. Foul and stained garments are whitened and purified by laying abroad in cold frosty nights. Scouring and beating of them with a stick beats out the moths and the dust; so do afflictions corruptions from the heart. Aloes kills worms; so do bitter crosses crawling lusts. Rhubarb is full of choler, yet doth mightily purge choler. Hemlock is a deadly plant, yet the juice applied heals *ignis sacer* accursed fire, and hot corroding ulcers, and much assuageth the inflammation of the eyes. The sting of a scorpion, though arrant poison, yet is an antidote against poison. Nothing is better to cure a leprosy than the drinking of that wine wherein a viper hath been drowned. The viper (the head and tail being cut off) beaten and applied cures her own biting. Affliction is in itself an evil, a fruit of God's wrath, and a piece of the curse. Christ alters the property to his, and makes one poison antidotary to another, and cures security by misery; as physicians often cure a lethargy by a fever. Every affliction sanctified rubs off some rust, melts off some dross, empties and evacuates some

superfluity of naughtiness, strains out some corruption, **#Job 10:10**. Christ strains out our motes, while our hearts are poured out like milk, with grief and fear; he also keeps us from settling on the lees, by emptying us from vessel to vessel, **#Jer 48:11**: when the wicked have no changes, and therefore they fear not God; they come not in trouble like other men, therefore they face the heavens, and their tongues walk through the earth, **#Ps 73:5-9**. All that are Christ's people are sure of sore and sharp afflictions, fiery trials and tribulations, piercing and pressing crosses, **#Ps 34:19 Jas 1:2**. He will be sure to plough his own ground, whatsoever becomes of the waste; and to weed his own garden, though the rest of the world should be let alone to grow wild. He will cast his purest gold into the fire of affliction; but they shall lose nothing by it. Gold cast into the fire wasteth not, cast into the water rusteth not. No saint was ever the worse for his sufferings, but the better; the least that can come of it is to do good duties with greater zeal and larger affection, **#Isa 26:9**. Now, who would not fetch such gold out of a fiery crucible?

**And he shall purify the sons of Levi]** Whom he had before faulted, **#Mal 1:6-2:10**. Or he may mean the ministers of the gospel, called priests and Levites, **#Isa 66:21**. Or, rather, all the royal priesthood of God's people, whose office is to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, **#1Pe 2:5,9 Ro 12:1,2**. Now for these, Christ, 1. Of bad makes them good, as he did Joses the Levite, **#Ac 4:36**, and many priests, **#Ac 6:7**. He makes them pass under the rod, and so brings them into the bond of the covenant, **#Eze 20:37** 2. Of good he makes them better and brighter, he pours them forth as molten metal, so the Septuagint read this text. Gold that is melted in the furnace is not only purified, but also made malleable; yea, fit for the mould. Their hearts are brought down, they speak as out of the ground, **#Isa 29:4**, in a low language, and like broken men; they put their mouths in the dust, they lie low at Christ's feet, and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Thus haughty Hagar, humbled by affliction, hearkeneth to the angel, and submits to her mistress; that young gallant, that in the pride of his prosperity, in the ruff of his jollity, would not be warned; when his flesh and his body was consumed, when his bones clattered in his skin, and the mourners expected him at the doors, he is of another mind, and he may be talked with, **#Pr 5:11-13**; then, like the beaten viper, he

casteth up his poison both of high mindedness and of earthly mindedness, and if you have any good counsel to give him, he is ready to receive it. See the like, **#Job 33:19-21**, &c.

**And purge them as gold and silver]** *Colabit eos* , saith the Vulgate. He shall strain them, as some liquor or liquid matter; so that the purer part shall go through the strainer or colander, and the dregs may be left, *Sic Apuleius Neque illi, ait, norant colere arvom, vel colare aurum*. The same thing is again and again promised, as for more certainty sake, so to show that the purity should be very great in the days of the gospel. Howbeit for the comfort of his poor people, who are conscious of more dross than good ore, Christ hath promised that he will refine them, but not as silver, **#Isa 48:10**, he will not be overly exact with them, he will not mark all that is amiss, he will not contend very much, lest the choice spirits of his afflicted people should fail before him, **#Isa 57:16**: when the child swoons in the whipping Christ lets fall the rod, and falls a kissing it, to fetch life into it again. As it is a rule in medicine still to maintain nature; so God is careful still to keep up his people's spirits by cordials; though he purge them sometimes till he bring them almost to skin and bone, that there may be a spring of better blood and spirits.

**That they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness]** Or a right offering, a pure worship, holy duties from a right principle and to a right purpose. Two things make a good Christian, good actions and good aims. Though a good aim doth not make a bad action good (as we see in Uzza), yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, as we see in Jehu. If God's work be not duly done, we may meet with breaches instead of blessings, **#1Ch 15:17**. David failed but in a ceremony; yet God was angry. Jehu's zeal was rewarded in an act of justice, *quoad substantiam operis*, in regard of the substance of the work; and yet punished as an act of policy, *quoad modum*, for the perverse end. Let no man measure himself by the matter of things done; for there may be *malum opus in bona materia*, an evil work in a good matter: works materially good may never prove so formally and eventually. Religion is a curious clock work; if but one wheel be distempered, all may go wrong. David in numbering the people omitted that duty, **#Ex 30:12-15**, and thence the plague.

Ver. 4. **Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem]** That is, of the Latin Church, and of Rome, saith Ribera. A partial fancy of a Popish interpreter boldly propounded, barely proved; and therefore as he affirmeth without reason, so he may be dismissed without refutation. Understand it rather of the whole Church wheresoever, in cities or countries; and observe that neither Judah nor Jerusalem, however highly honoured or favoured otherwise, shall have their offerings accepted in heaven, unless their hearts be first purified by faith. Till then their sacrifices, **#Ro 12:1**, how specious soever, are neither living (but dead works, as the author to the Hebrews calls it) nor holy, that is, pure and unpolluted, **#1Co 7:34**, unless themselves be partakers of the grace of light, **#1Pe 3:7**, and can boldly say, with David, "Preserve my soul; for I am holy," or one whom thou favourest, **#Ps 86:2 cf. 4:3**, he makes this the ground of his hope, that his prayer should be heard, that the Lord looked upon him as a godly person. God regards not the prayer if the man be not right. The blood of a sheep and of a swine are like; yea, it may be the blood of a swine is better and sweeter than of a sheep, yet was it not to be offered, because of a swine, see **#Heb 13:10 Php 4:18 Joh 15:16 Ps 147:11 Isa 62:4 Heb 11:6**. Look how light, saith Chrysostom, maketh all things pleasing to men; so doth faith to God. True faith is like the salt that healed the waters, **#2Ki 2:21**. O pray Christ to cast in a cruseful of it into our hearts, or else we lose all our services; nay, we do worse than lose our labour, for displeasing service is double dishonour; we do but take pains to go to hell. *{See Trapp on "Mal 1:9"} {See Trapp on "Mal 1:10"}*

**As in the days of old, as in former years]** *i.e.* As the sacrifices of Abel, Abraham, Aaron, &c., as the prayers and holy performances of David, Elijah, Samuel (who is thought to be the same with Pethuel, **#Joe 1:1**, which signifieth a persuader of God, and that he was so called because he could have what he would of God), Cornelius, Paul, &c., were very effectual and available, and did wonders even to the opening and shutting of heaven, as Elihu to the opening of the doors of leviathan, **#Job 41:14**, as Jonah to the delivering even graves of their dead, as **#Heb 11:35**, &c., so they shall be still as effectual as those ancient saints: we "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," **#Heb 10:22**.

See **#Jas 5:16-18 Ho 12:4**. The prophet, speaking of Jacob's wrestling with God by weeping, and his prevailing by praying (so that he was knighted for his good service, and dubbed Israel, or a Prince of God), subjoins, for our comfort, God found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. So, then, what encouragement, access, and success Jacob had at Bethel, the same have we; provided that we so carry the matter that it may be said of us, as **#Ps 24:6**, This is the generation of them that seek him; of them that seek thy face: this is Jacob; provided that, as Jacob wrestled in the night, and alone, and when God was leaving him, and upon one leg; so do we, amidst all difficulties and discouragements.

Ver. 5. **And I will come near to you to judgment]** *q.d.* You conceit me a great way off, and put far from you the thoughts of my coming, having been so bold as to ask, "Where is the God of judgment?" &c. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me." Not, as you desired, to avenge you of your enemies, but, as justice requireth, to be avenged of you for your impieties which I have here billed up against you. And that ye may not think to escape, know that as I am a Judge at hand, so a present witness, *testis festinantissimus*, a most swift witness, to evict and punish you, for your most secret sins. So, then, however the Lord spare long, yet he will be at length both a hasty witness and a severe Judge against those that abuse his patience; he will not always stand them for a sinning stock, but pay them home for the new and the old, **#Jer 6:6 Mic 1:3**. God owned a revenge to the house of Eli; and yet, at length, by the dilation of Doeg, takes occasion to pay it. It is a vain hope that is raised from the delay of judgment; no time can be any prejudice to the Ancient of days. If his word sleep, it shall not die; but after long intermissions, breaks forth into those effects which men had forgotten to look for, and ceased to fear. The sleeping of vengeance causeth the overflow of sin, **#Ec 8:11**, and the overflow of sin causeth the awakening of vengeance, **#Ps 50:21**, so that sometimes he strikes before he gives any further warning; as Absalom, intending to kill Amnon, spake neither good nor evil to him. *Subito tollitur qui diu toleratur*. He was suddenly destroyed who was tolerated for a long time. Till the fiery serpents, God had ever consulted with Moses, and threatened before he punished. Now he strikes and says nothing. The anger is so much more by how much less notified. Still revenges are ever most dangerous and deadly,

when God is not heard before he is felt (as in hewing of wood the blow is not heard till the axe be seen to have struck); or if he be heard to say, as **#Ne 1:9**, what do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end affliction shall not arise up the second time; it is a sign he is implacably bent, and means to have but one blow. The wicked's happiness will take its end surely and swiftly. The end is come is come, is come, saith Ezekiel, **#Eze 7:2**. The Lord is come near to you to judgment, and he will be a speedy witness. Judge and witness both; which in men's courts cannot be; but God, being infinitely both wise and holy, may be and will be both witness and judge against the workers of iniquity; and when they are (as Adonijah's guests were, **#1Ki 1:41**) at the height of their joys and hopes, he confounds all their devices, and lays them open to the scorn of the world, to the anguish of their own guilty hearts and the dint of his own unsupportable displeasure which is such as none can avert or avoid.

*“ Ad poenam tardus Deus est, ad praemia velox,  
Sed pensare solet vi graviore moram.  
Poena venit gravior, quo mage sera venit. ”*

*Against the sorcerers] Or diviners, wizards, necromancers, &c. See the various sorts forbidden, and to be punished, **#De 18:10**. By God's law such might not be suffered to live **#Ex 22:18**, yet did this evil prevail in Israel **#2Ch 33:6 Jer 27:9**; and here, it was done by unlawful means, as Saul said to the witch, "Divine unto me by the familiar spirit," **#1Sa 28:8**; and it was a thing hateful to God even as high rebellion, **#1Sa 15:23**, since the ground of this familiarity is a diabolical contract overt or covert, explicit or implicit. It is fitly called the black art, for there is no true light in them that use it, **#Isa 8:19,20**, they depart from God and his testimony, *ib.*, and so tempt the devil to tempt them. This was Saul's sin, for which the Lord killed him, **#1Ch 10:13**, and hath threatened to cut off all from among his people that do inquire of such, **#Le 20:6**. Thou hast been partaker with the adulterer, **#Ps 50:18**; so are such with sorcerers. Surely the wounds of God are better than the salves of Satan; as Ahaziah found it. And they which in case of loss or sickness, &c., make hell their refuge, shall smoke and smart for it in the end. Satan seeks to them in his temptations, they in their consultations seek to*



him; and now that they have mutually found each other, if ever they part it is a miracle; he is an unspeakably proud spirit, and yet will stoop to the meanest man or woman to be at their command (the witch of Endor is twice in one verse, #**ISa 28:7**, called the mistress of the spirit, because in covenant with him), whereby he may cheat them and their clients of salvation. Every one that consults with him worships him, though he bow not, as Saul did; neither doth that old manslayer desire any other reverence than to be sought unto.

**And against the adulterers]** Sept. *The adulteresses. Adultrinum, quasi ad alterum, aut alterius torum*, going up to another man's bed, as Reuben did, and was severely sentenced for it, #**Ge 49:4**. It was to be punished with death, even by the law of nature; because the society and purity of posterity could not otherwise continue among men. Nebuchadnezzar roasted in the fire Zedekiah and Ahab, two false prophets of Judah, because they committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, #**Jer 29:22,23**. The Egyptians used to cut off the nose of the adulteress; the prophet alludes to this #**Eze 23:25**. The Athenians, Lacedaemonians, and Romans were very severe against this sin, as Plutarch recordeth in his Parallel Lives. The old French and Saxons also, as Tacitus tells us. By God's law they were to be stoned to death; and the high priest's daughter was to be burned for this fault, #**Le 21:9**, a peculiar punishment, and not to be paralleled in the whole law. If men fail to fall upon such (it is a heinous crime, saith holy Job, and an iniquity to be punished by the judges, #**Job 31:11**), God himself will do it, #**Heb 13:4**, and did it effectually, #**1Co 10:8**, and on the filthy Sodomites, #**Ge 19:24-28**, and on Charles II, King of Navarre, who was much addicted to this sin, which so wasted his spirits that in his old age he fell into a lethargy (*Venus ab antiquis, λυσιμελης, dicta*. See #**Pr 5:8**). To comfort his benumbed joints he was bound and sewn up in a sheet steeped in boiling *aqua vitae*. water of life (alcohol). The surgeon having made an end of sewing him, and wanting a knife to cut off his thread, took a wax candle that stood lighted by him; but the flame, running down by the thread, caught hold on the sheet, which, according to the nature of the *aqua vitae*, burned with that vehemence, that the miserable king ended his days in the fire. But say the adulterer be neither stoned nor burned, yet God usually stoneth such with a stony heart, #**Ho 4:11**, which is a most fearful judgment; and when they

die burneth them with the hottest fire in hell, #Pr 2:18; the whore's guests go down to the dead; Heb. *el Rephaim*, to the giants; to that part of hell where those damned monsters are. See #2Pe 2:4,10, and mark the word chiefly.

**And against false swearers]** A sin of a high nature, condemned by the height of nature, and punished by the heathens. *Periurii poena divina exitium; humana, dedecus;* this was one of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome. God punisheth perjury with destruction; men, with disgrace. Tissaphernes, the Persian general, being overcome by Agesilaus, King of Spartans, craved three months' truce, and had it; they both sware to be quiet on both sides. Tissaphernes soon broke his oath; but Agesilaus religiously kept it, saying, that gods and men would favour him for his fidelity, but curse and execrate the other for his perjury. God showed Zechariah a flying roll, long and large, ten yards long, and five broad, full of curses against the false swearer, with commission to rest upon his house, which he holds his castle, and where he thinks himself most secure, #Zec 5:3,4. Michael Paleologus, Emperor of Constantinople, made the Greek Church acknowledge the Pope's supremacy, and did many other things contrary to his oath; and, therefore, lieth obscurely buried, shrouded in the sheet of defamation, saith the historian. So doth Rodolphus, Duke of Sueveland, who, by the Pope's instigation, broke his oath of allegiance to Henry the emperor, and by the cutting off of his faithless right hand lost his life. So doth Sigismund, the emperor, for his false dealing with John Huss: Ladislaus, King of Hungary, for his perjurious setting upon Amurath, the Great Turk, at the battle of Varna, where he was deservedly defeated. What a blur was that to the old Romans, if true, that Mirchanes, the Persian general, should say of them, *Romanis promittere promptum est, &c.:* The Romans will promise anything, and swear to it, but perform nothing that makes against their profit. There were at Rome such as could lend an oath at need; and would not stick to swear that their friend or foe was at Rome and at Interamna both at once. How slippery the Papists are, and how bloody, both in their positions and dispositions, is well known to all. But God is the avenger of all such; because they call him to witness a falsehood; and dare him to his face to execute his vengeance, see #Zec 8:17.

**And against those that oppress, &c.]** Either by denying, diminishing, or delaying their wages. The Vulgate rendereth it, Who calumniate, or make cavils to detain wages, which is the poor hireling's livelihood, whereupon he setteth his heart, **#De 24:15**, and maintaineth his life; which is, therefore, called the life of his hands, because upheld by the labour of his hands, **#Isa 57:10**. He gets it, and eats it; and is in his house like a snail in his shell; crush that, and you kill him. This is a crying cruelty, **#Jas 5:4**, and hath a woe against it, **#Jer 22:13 Jas 2:13**. Laban is taxed for it, **#Ge 31:7**; and for those that are guilty, if they mend not, and make restitution, Master Latimer tells them they shall cough in hell.

**The widow]** A calamitous name: she is called in Hebrew, from her dumbness, *Almanan*; because death, having cut off her head, she hath lost her tongue, and hath none to speak for her. A vine whose root is uncovered thrives not; so a widow, the covering of whose eyes is taken away, joys not. God, therefore, pleads for such as his clients, and takes special care for them; the deacons were anciently ordained specially for their sakes, **#Ac 6:1 1Ti 5:3**; and Pharisees doomed to a deeper damnation for devouring widows' houses, **#Mt 23:14**; and magistrates charged to plead for the widow, **#Isa 1:17**, as judge Job did, **#Job 31:16**; and all sorts to make much of her, and communicate to her, **#De 24:19-21**.

**And the fatherless]** We are orphans and fatherless, saith the Church, **#La 5:3**. And we are all orphans, said Queen Elizabeth (in her speech to the children of Christ's Hospital); let me have your prayers, and you shall have my protection. That hospital was founded by her brother, King Edward VI, for the relief of fatherless children, after the example of the ancient Church, which had her *orphano trophi*, orphan breeders. With God the fatherless findeth mercy, **#Ho 14:3**, and all his vice-gods are commanded the like, **#Ps 82:1-4**, unless they will consult shame and misery to their own houses, and, Joab-like, leave the leprosy to their little ones for a legacy. Better leave them a wallet to beg from door to door than a cursed hoard of orphans' goods.

**And that turn aside the stranger]** The right of strangers is so holy (saith Master Fox) that there was never nation so barbarous that would violate the same. When Stephen Gardiner had in his power the renowned Peter Martyr, then teaching at Oxford, he would not keep him to punish him; but when he should go his way, gave him wherewith to bear his charges.

**And fear not me]** This is set last, as the source of all the former evils. See the like, **#Ro 3:18 Ps 14:1**, where atheism and irreligion is made the root of all the sin in the world. God's holy fear is to the soul as the banks are to the sea or the bridle to the horse; it was so to Isaac, who reigned in the reverent fear of God, when he saw that he had done unwilling justice, dared not reverse Jacob's blessing, though prompted to it by natural affection and Esau's howlings, **#Ge 27:33**. It was so to Job, Joseph, Nehemiah, Daniel, &c., who could easily have borne out their oppressions by their greatness. And indeed whereas other men have other bits and restraints, great men, if they fear not God, have nothing else to fear; but dare obtrude and justify to the world the most malapert misdemeanours, because it is *facinus maioris abollae* (Juvenal), the fact of a great one, who do many times as easily break through the lattice of the laws as the bigger flies do through a spider web, as Anacharsis was wont to say of his Scythians. Hence Jethro would have his justice of peace to be a man fearing God, **#Ex 18:21**; and this qualification he fitly placeth in the midst of the other graces requisite to him, as the heart in the body, for conveying life to all the parts, or as a dram of musk perfuming the whole box of ointment, **#Ex 18:21**. Nothing makes a man so good a patriot as the true fear of God's blessed name, and a zealous forwardness for his glory, goodness, and good causes. This, this alone is it that can truly beautify and adorn all other personal sufficiencies, and indeed sanctify and bless all public employments and services of state. Whereas, on the contrary, *sublata pietate, fides tollitur*; take away piety, and fidelity is gone; as we see in the unjust judge, **#Lu 18:2**, in Abraham's judgment of the Philistines, **#Ge 20:11**, and in Constantinus Chlorus's experiment of his counsellors and courtiers; whence that famous maxim of his, recorded by Eusebius, *He cannot be faithful to me that is unfaithful to God*; religion being the ground of all true fidelity and loyalty to king and country. Hence that close connection, "Fear God. Honour

the king"; and that again of Solomon, "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change," #Pr 24:21.

Ver. 6. **For I am the Lord, I change not]** I am Jehovah. This is God's proper and incommunicable name. It imports three things: 1. That God is of himself. This Plato acknowledged, calling God *το ον*, and *το ον οντως*. Julius Scaliger, by a wonderful word, calleth God *αυταυτον*, One that hath his being or existence of himself, before the world was, #Isa 44:6 2. That he giveth being to all things else, for in him they both are and consist. He sustains all, both in respect of being, excellences, and operations, #Heb 1:8. The greatest excellences in us do as much depend upon God as the effigies in the glass upon the presence of the face that causeth it. 3. That he giveth being to his word, effecting whatsoever he speaketh. Hence, when either some special mercy is promised, or some extraordinary judgment threatened, the name of Jehovah is affixed. See #Ex 6:3 Isa 45:2,3 Eze 5:17. The ancient Jewish doctors make this distinction between Elohim and Jehovah. By Elohim, say they, is signified *Middah din*, a quality or property of judgment. By Jehovah, *middath Rachamim*, a quality or property of mercy. And hereunto they apply that text, #Ps 56:10, In God (Elohim) I will praise the word, in Jehovah I will praise the word; that is, *sive iure agat mecum, sive ex aequo et bono*, whether he deal strictly with me, or graciously, I will praise him howsoever. But this distinction, as it holds not always; so not here. For, to show the certainty of the judgment denounced #Mal 3:5, is this subjoined, "I am Jehovah," &c. And if Jehovah come of *Hovah* (which signifies contrition or destruction), as Hieronymus from *Oleastro* will have it, what can be more suitable to the prophet's purpose? it is somewhat like that in #Isa 13:6, *Shod* shall come from *Shaddai*, destruction from the Almighty, or from the destroyer, as some interpret God's name, *Shaddai*.

**I change not]** I am neither false nor fickle, to say and unsay, to alter my mind, or to eat my word, #Ps 89:34. The eternity of Israel cannot lie, nor repent, said Samuel to Saul (and it was heavy tidings to him, as Ahijah said to Jeroboam's wife, I come unto thee with heavy tidings); for he is not a man that he should repent, #1Sa 15:29. Men are mutable, and there is no hold to be taken of what they say. Of

many it may be said, as Tertullian of the peacock, all in changeable colours; as often changed as moved. Italians all, as Aeneas Sylvius said of Italy, *Novitate quadam nihil habet stabile*, there is no taking their words. Of a certain pope and his nephew the story is told, that the one never spake as he thought, the other never performed what he spake. But God is not a man that he should repent; or if he do, it is after another manner than man repents. Repentance with man is the changing of his will; repentance with God is the willing of a change. It is *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus, facti non consilii*. God's repentance is not a change of his will, but of his work. It noteth only (saith Mr Perkins) the alteration of things and actions done by him, and no change of his purpose and secret decree, which is immutable. What he hath written he hath written (as Pilate said peremptorily), there is no removing of him. If the sentence be passed, if the decree be come forth, none can avert or avoid it, #Zep 3:3. *Currat ergo poenitentia ne praecurrat sententia* (Chrysolog.). Go quickly and make an atonement, as Moses said to Aaron, #Nu 16:46 "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," #Am 4:12. *Mitte preces et lachrymas cordis legatos*; meet him with entreaties of peace, agree with him quickly; who knows if he will return, and repent? "for he is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil," #Joe 2:13,14. It should seem so indeed by this text; for, even while he is threatening, and ratifying what he had threatened, his heart is turned within him, his repentings are kindled together, #Ho 11:8. And hence the following words,

**Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed]** A strange inference (considering the sense and occasion of the foregoing words, as hath been set forth), and not unlike that, #Ho 2:13,14 "I will visit upon her the days of Baalim...she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the Lord. Therefore" (mark that "Therefore"), "behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her. And I will give her," &c. So #Isa 57:17,18 "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly," &c. "I have seen his ways, and will heal him." Ways? what ways? his covetousness, frowardness, &c.; and yet I will heal him. I will deal with him not according to mine ordinary rule, but according to my prerogative. If God will

heal for his name's sake (and so come in with his *non obstante*, as he doth, #Ps 106:8), what people is there whom he may not heal? Well may these sinful sons of Jacob be unconsumed; well may they have for their seventy years' captivity seven seventies of years, according to Daniel's weeks, for the re-enjoying of their own country; and God's mercies shall bear the same proportion to his punishments, which seven, a complete number, hath to a unity, #Eze 20:8,14,22,44. Provided that they return to the Lord that smote them (as in the next verse), for else he will surely punish them seven times more, and seven times, and seven to that, #Le 26:21,23,27, &c.; three different times God raiseth his note of threatening, and he raised it by sevens, and those are discords in music. Such sayings will be heavy songs; and their execution heavy pangs to the impenitent.

Ver. 7. **Even from the days of your fathers, ye are gone away from mine ordinances]** The more to magnify his own mercy (by a miracle, whereof they had hitherto subsisted, by an extraordinary prop of his love, and longsuffering), God sets forth here their utter unworthiness of any such free favour, by a double aggravation of their sins. First, their long continuance therein, so that their sins were grown inveterate and ingrained, and themselves aged and even crooked therein, so that they could hardly ever be set straight again.

**From the days of your fathers, &c.]** *q.d.* *Non hoc nuper facitis: nec semel ut erroris mereamini veniam: sed haereditariam habetis impietatem, &c.*, as Jerome paraphraseth this text. You are no young sinners; it is not yesterday, or a few days since, you transgressed against me; you are a seed of serpents, a race of rebels; you are as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever your fathers were, #Ac 7:51. Secondly, their perversity and stiffness: they would not yield or be evicted. But ye say, wherein shall we return as if they were righteous, and needed no repentance. Still they put God to his proofs, as #Jer 2:35, and show themselves an unpersuadable and gainsaying people, #Isa 65:2; and this had "been their manner from their youth," #Jer 22:21, when they were in Egypt, they served idols there, #Eze 16:26. In the wilderness they tempted God ten times, and hearkened not to his voice, #Nu 14:22. Under their judges, and then their kings, they vexed him, and he bore with them "till there was no remedy," #2Ch 36:16. After the captivity they do *antiquum*

*obtinere*, and are found guilty here of various omissions and commissions, calling for "a just recompence of reward," #Heb 2:2. All which notwithstanding, *Deus redire eos sibi non perire desiderat* (Chrysolog.). God soliciteth their return unto him here by a precept and a promise, two effectual arguments, if anything will work; and ratifieth all with his own authority, which is most authentic, in these words, "saith the Lord of hosts." A style often given to God, as elsewhere in Scripture, so especially in these three last prophecies to the people returned from Babylon, because they had many enemies, and therefore had need of all encouragement. For God is called the Lord of hosts, *quod ille numine suo et nomine terreat terras, temperet tempera, exercitusque tam superiores quam inferiores gubernet*, to show that he hath all power in his hand, and doth whatsoever he pleaseth in heaven and earth (Alsted). {See Trapp on "Mal 3:17"}, doct. 1, and for the doctrine of returning to God (from whom we have deeply revolted) by repentance. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:3"}

**But ye said, Wherein shall we return?]** This was their pride, proceeding from ignorance; they were rich and righteous, as those Laodiceans #Re 3:17, not in truth, but in conceit, vainly puffed up by their carnal minds, drunk with self-dotage, as #Lu 16:15. Hence they stand upon their slippers, and none must say, Black is their eye. Sin is in them as in its proper element, and therefore weighs not (*Elementum in suo loco non ponderat*); till, by long trading in wickedness, they grow to that dead and dedolent disposition, #Eph 4:14, their heart fat as grease, their conscience cauterized, #1Ti 4:2, that is, so benumbed, blotted, senseless, filthy, and gangrenous, that it must be seared with a hot iron; whereupon it grows so crusty and brawny, that though cut or pierced with the sword of the Spirit, it doth neither bleed nor feel; and though handfulls of hell fire be flung in the face of it, yet it starts not, stirs not; but is deprived of all even passive power, and so satanized, that there is no help for them.

Ver. 8. **Will a man rob God?]** Adam pillage Elohim? frail weak man seek to supplant (so the Septuagint render it) the great and mighty God? Giant-like boldness! Cacus met with his match when he robbed Hercules. Mercury, say the poets, had a mind to steal Jupiter's thunderbolts, but dared not meddle, lest he should punish as Prometheus for stealing fire; or lest they should burn his fingers. The eagle in the fable, that stole a piece of flesh from the altar, and



carried it together with a live coal, that stuck to it, to his nest, set his young and all on fire. Dionysius, that robbed his god, was cast out of his kingdom, though he was wont to boast, that he had it bound to him with chains of adamant. Belshazzar paid dearly for his bousing in the bowels of the sanctuary. Cardinal Wolsey, and five of his servants, employed by him in embezzling consecrated goods, though perhaps to better purposes, came all to fearful ends, as Scultetus noteth, and thereupon wisheth, *Utinam his et similibus exemplis edocti discant homines res semel Deo consecratas timide attractare.* "It is a snare to the man that devoureth that which is holy," #Pr 20:25. They may be compared to those who, being of a cold and phlegmatic stomach, eat hard and choleric meats; well they may please their palates, but it cannot be for their health: no more can the murdering morsels of such sacrilegious persons, as, devouring holy things, have their meat sauced and their drink spiced with the bitter wrath of God. See #Job 20:23. Polanus reads the text thus, Will a man rob his gods? *q.d.* Will any heathen do so? did not they that worshipped idols abhor sacrilege? Was it not one of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome, *Sacrum sacrove commendatum qui clepserit rasperitque, parricida esto*, Let every sacrilegious person pass and be punished for a parricide? And doth not Cicero affirm those laws, that they did exceed all the libraries of the philosophers in weight and worth? Did not those old idolaters freely bestow their most precious things upon their idols, #Eze 16:16-19 Ex 32:3, yea, their very children in sacrifice to Moloch, or Saturn? #2Ki 16:3 17:17; being as mad upon their idols as ever was any wicked wanton upon his harlot, lavishing out of the bag? &c. And are not our modern idolaters and Papists as bountiful to their he saints and she saints? so that their churches are not able to hold their vowed presents and memories, but that in many places, as at Loretto, Sichem, &c., they are fain to hang their cloisters and churchyards with them? Shall they in their petitions to our parliaments plead for favour and forbearance upon this ground, because their ancestors, they say, bestowed so great cost upon this land for church maintenance; and shall it be said (now that they are worthily cast out), *Possidebunt Papistae, possident Rapistte*, Wicked Papists had them, ungodly Rapists have them; Impropropriaries, I mean, that hold by an improper title, and all others that appropriate that to them and theirs which the Almighty is invested in. This is here instanced as a capital

crime, and called robbing God, as well it may; forasmuch as ministers' maintenance (being tithes) is called the Lord's, and holy to the Lord, #Le 27:30, because separated from man and man's use, and therefore might not be altered, #Le 27:28. Or if any had a mind to redeem them, they were bound to add to the price every fifth penny above the true value, #Le 27:31. Let all those look to this, whether impropiators, false patrons ( *latrones* robbers rather), or others, that, either by force or fraud, rob God of his right ( *Nunquid homo fraudabit Deum? sic vertunt Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotion*); detaining part of the due at least, as Ananias and Sapphira did; God hath a *Quare Impedit* against them, which one day they must make answer to.

**Yet ye have robbed me]** Because ye have robbed my ministers, who are in my stead, #2Co 5:20, and in whom he receiveth tithes, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth, like as did Melchisedec, as a priest and tithe taker, and type of Christ #Heb 7:7-9. And as God is sensible of the least courtesy done to a prophet to reward it, even to a cup of cold water, #Mt 10:42 (so that he is a niggard to himself that scants his beneficence to a minister), so for those that wrong and rob them, that deny them that double honour of countenance and maintenance that he hath appointed them, and hold them to hard allowance; muzzling the ox, or giving him but straw at the best, for treading out the grain; they will dearly answer it before God, who holds all done to them as done to himself. Surely, as David could not but feel his own cheeks shaven and his own coat cut in his ambassadors; they did but carry his person to Hanun; so here. And as there was never any king so poor and weak but thought himself strong enough to revenge any wrong done or abuse offered to his ambassadors ( *Legati quod erant appellati superbius, Corinthum Patres vestri totius Graeciae lumen extinctum esse voluerunt. Cic. pro lege Man.*); so the king of heaven will not fail to curse with a curse whole nations that forget God and forsake his Levites, #De 12:19, it being all one to God to deal in this case against a nation or against a man only, #Job 34:29.

**In tithes and offerings]** He had told them before they had robbed him; or, as some read it, stabbed him as with a dagger. And here they should have confessed the action and craved pardon. But because

they did nothing less, standing upon their justification (as before often), God descends to the particular wherein they robbed him, "In tithes and offerings." The original hath it, Tithes and offerings, without the particle (*in*); and it is as if the Lord should say, you may easily know my meaning without so many words, but that you love to contest. You cannot be ignorant that the Levites, for want of maintenance, are fled every man to his field, and so my work and worship is left undone. Good Nehemiah was sensible of it, **#Ne 13:10**, and because he knew that by this means religion itself would be soon undermined and overturned, he contended with the rulers, and made all the people pay their tithes; and this he worthily reckons among his good deeds, praying God to remember him for it, and not wipe it out **#Ne 13:14**. Hezekiah, that great reformer showed the like zeal in commanding the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and Levites, that they might attend upon the law of the Lord (so the Vulgate), that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord, so we read, **#2Ch 31:4**; that is, that they might not follow their callings heavily for want of maintenance, but cheerfully bend themselves wholly to the service of the Lord. And here (as Ferus once wished for the Romish synagogue) I would we had some Moses, said he, to take away the evils of the times; *non enim unum tantum vitulum sed multos habemus*, for we have not one golden calf, but many; so have we of these times cause to wish we had some zealous Nehemiahs and Hezekiahs to stickle and stand for Christ's ministers, not defrauded of their due maintenance only (a sign of gasping devotion), but trampled upon by the foul feet of the basest of the people, as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things. Tithes, they say, are Jewish; but if Melchisedec tithed Abraham by the same right whereby he blessed him, **#Heb 7:6**, and if tithes by all laws of God, nature, nations, have been hallowed to God, as Junius and other modern divines allege and argue; and, lastly, if things consecrated to God's service may not be alienated, out of case of necessity, **#Pr 20:25 Ga 3:15**; it will appear to be otherwise. Or if tithes be Jewish, and yet ministers must have a maintenance (Christ having so ordained, **#1Co 9:14**), and that both honourable, **#1Ti 5:17,18**, and liberal, **#Ga 6:6**, how else shall they be given to hospitality? **#1Ti 3:2** (if they be not hospitable they will be despicable); how will men satisfy their consciences in the *quota pars*, the particular quantity they must bestow upon them? The

Scripture speaketh only of the tenth part. *Sed manum de tabula.* Enough of this, if not more than enough.

Ver. 9. **Ye are cursed with a curse]** Vulgate: Ye are cursed with penury and scarcity of victuals, according to **#De 28:23**, &c., and so great was this people's poverty, that they were forced for food to sell not their fields only, but their sons and daughters, **#Neh 5:1-5** They had pinched on God's side, and he had paid them home in the same kind; they thought in the famine to have kept the more to themselves, and they had the less for keeping from him that which was his. A just hand of God upon all church robbers; for the most part they are always in want and needy, their wealth melting away as snow before the sun, and their fields of blood, purchased with the spoils of Christ, proving as unfortunate and fatal to them as the gold of the temple of Tholose did to Scipio's soldiers, of which whoever carried any part away never prospered afterwards. What get men by such a detiny that shall prove their fatal destiny? Say they leave the gold behind them, yet they are likely to carry the guilt to hell with them, **#Jas 5:1,2**; yea, to cough in hell, as Latimer phrased it, unless they make restitution; to digest in hell, what they have devoured on earth, as Austin. Because Pharaoh saith, the river is mine own, therefore, saith God, I will dry up the river, **#Eze 29:3,9**. The merchant that denieth to pay his custom forfeits all his commodities: so here.

**For ye have robbed me]** And therefore I have cursed you. God never punisheth people but there is just cause for it, could they but see it; but that they are hardly drawn to, as here, and **#Isa 26:11**; the root of the matter is in themselves, as Job speaks in another case; the plague of their own hearts, **#1Ki 8:38**, procureth them all the mischief, and may say to them, as the heart of Apollodorus, the tyrant, seemed to say to him; who dreamed one night that he was flayed by the Scythians, and boiled in a caldron, and that his heart spake to him out of the kettle, it is I that have drawn thee to all this (Ἐγὼ σοὶ τούτων αἰτία). Let men, therefore, when under any misery, lay their hand upon their heart, thrust their hand into their bosom, with Moses, they shall be sure to bring it out leprous; let them turn short again upon themselves, and say every man, What have I done? what evil have I committed, or, at least, admitted? what good have I omitted, or intermitted? Profane Esau, beguiled of the

blessing, cries out of his father's store, of his brother's subtlety; not a word of his own profaneness in slighting and selling his birthright; he had forgot since he did eat and drink, and went his way, #Ge 25:34. The Jerusalem paraphrast adds, that he also despised his portion in the world to come, and denied the resurrection. But this he never taketh notice of. So Pompey, beaten by Caesar out of the field, blamed the Divine providence for his ill success, when he should rather have assaulted his own reckless security (that he never considered into what place he were best to retire if worsted), and especially his sacrilege not long before the defeat, when he sacked Jerusalem, and ransacked the temple, #/RAPC 1Ma 9:54-56 2Ma 3:24,25 4:39-42 5:15,16 13:4,8 15:30,34. He might have considered what became (a little before his time) for the same offence of Alcimus, Heliodorus, Lysimachus, Antiochus, Menelaus, and Nicanor, all notorious church robbers, and all hanged up in gibbets, as it were, for an example and admonition to all that should come after. Sacrilege is a snare (saith Solomon, #Pr 20:25), that, 1. catcheth suddenly; 2. holdeth surely; 3. destroyeth certainly. *Cavete.*

**Even this whole nation]** The disease was grown into an epidemic, like that which physicians call *corruptio totius substantiae*, the entire nature is diseased, or that which the prophet Isaiah also complaineth of, #Mal 1:5,6 "The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint," &c. This sin of sacrilege was grown national; there was a conjuncture of all sorts in this wickedness; a rabble of rebels they were, ripe for judgment; yea, though God's judgments were upon them, yet they persisted, #Ne 13:18, and increased wrath, #Ezr 10:14. God had smitten them, but they sorrowed not, #Jer 5:3; but to be revenged on him, as it were, for laying famine upon them, they took away his tithes.

Ver. 10. **Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse]** All, whether pecuniary or personal, all, and of every kind.

**Into the storehouse]** The standing place for tithes, as it is called, #Ne 13:11-13, the tithe barn, as the Vulgate hath it.

**That there may be meat in my house]** *Tereph* from whence Προφη, and the English, prey; that there may be maintenance for my

ministers; enough not for themselves only, but for to be distributed to those that are about them (*Cibus qui discerpi, dividi, distribuique potest*); that they may not eat their morsels alone, that they may not be slaves to others, servants to themselves; that they may not "bite with their teeth, and cry, peace," teach for hire, and divine for money, #**Mic 3:5,11**, that is, be fain to maintain themselves with sordid and unworthy flatteries. Balaam, the false prophet, rode with his two men, #**Nu 22:22**. God's Levite had one man, #**Jud 19:11**. Augustine lived neither like a lord, for he ate his meat in wooden and marble dishes; neither lived he like a beggar, for he used to eat with silver spoons. What pity was it that Luther was forced to cry out in his comment on #**Ge 47**, *Nisi superesset spoliū Aegypti quod rapuimus Papae, omnibus ministris verbi fame pereundum esset. Quod si sustentandi essent die contributione populi misere profecto et duriter viverent*. If it were not for the spoil of Egypt which we have snatched from the Pope, all the ministers of the word must have been famished. For if they should be put to live upon the free contribution of the people, they would certainly have a miserable hard living of it. *Alimur ergo, &c.* We are maintained then, as I said, of the spoils of Egypt; and yet that little that we have is preyed upon by the magistrates; for the parishes and schools are so spoiled and peeled, as if they meant to starve us all. Thus Luther. Melancthon comes after him and complains in the year 1550, *Principes favebant Luthero: sed iam iterum videtis ingratitude mundi erga ministros, &c.*: The princes did at first favour Luther; but now ye see again the unkindness of the world to the ministers of the word. Calvin was so ill dealt with at Geneva (together with other faithful ministers there), that he was forced once to say, *Certe si hominibus servivissem, &c.*, Truly if I had served men in my ministry I had been very ill requited. But it is well that I have served him who never fails his own; but faithfully performeth with the better whatsoever he hath promised them. Our Doctor Stoughton observed, that the manner of very many in the city was to deal with their ministers as carriers do with their horses, viz., to lay heavy burdens upon them, and then to hang bells about their necks; they shall have hard work and great commendations, but easy commons; be applauded for excellent preachers, have good words, but slight wages (Serm. on #**1Sa 2:30**). Thus in the city; but what measure meet men within the country! Hear it from a country minister's

mouth. How many thousands in this land (saith he) stand obnoxious in a high degree to the judgments of God for this sin of sacrilege, which is the bane of our people and blemish of our Church! Some there are who rob God of his main tithes, yet are content to leave him still the lesser; they pluck our fleeces, and leave us the taglocks, {a} poor vicarage tithes, while themselves and children are kept warm in our wool, the parsonage. And others, yet more injurious, who think that too much; would the law but allow them a pair of shears, they would clip the very taglocks off. These (with the deceitful tailor) are not content to shrink the whole and fair broad cloth to a dozen of buttons, but they must likewise take part of them away, and hem the very shreds, which only we have left. After they have fully gorged themselves with the parsonage grains they can find means, either by unconscionable leases or compositions, to pick the vicarage bones, &c. Thus he, and much more to the like purpose. Our blessings (saith another eminent divine, Dr Scletter) are more than those of old, our burden less. And yet how unwilling comes even a little to the most painfull minister! And those that, upon a kind of conscience, pay other duties, think all lost that goes to the maintenance of the ministry; and that with such repining, as if that were money of all other worst bestowed.

**And prove me now herewith]** *Dignatio stupenda*, A wonderful condescension, that God should call upon man to take experiment of him, to make but a trial, to put it to the proof whether he will not prosper the penitent. This is somewhat like that other passage, **#Ps 34:8** "O taste and see that the Lord is good," &c., or that, "Come, and let us reason together." Oh the never enough adored depth of God's goodness, that he should stoop so low to us clay and dirt, dung and worms' meat! He is so high, that he is said to humble himself to behold things done in heaven, **#Ps 113:6**. If he look at all out of himself, to see but what the angels do, he doth therein abase himself. That he will deal so familiarly with us (who are no better than so many walking dunghills) as to bid us prove him what he will do for us, this deserves acknowledgment and admiration in the highest degree. Should he have used martial law with these malapert miscreants in the text that had robbed him of his rights, and not only have reprov'd them and curs'd them with a curse of penury, but have (Draco-like) written his laws in blood upon them, he might

have justified his proceedings. But thus to commune with them, and not only to prescribe them a remedy for removal of the curse, Bring ye all the tithes, &c., but thus to persuade with them, and to permit them to prove his bountifulness in giving, and his faithfulness in keeping promise with them, and that with an oath, as some conceive, *Subest iurandi species* (Figuier).

**If I will not open the windows of heaven]** Then never believe me more. What a wonderful goodness was this! Surely we may well say of it, as Chrysostom doth of the happiness of heaven, *Sermo non valet exprimere: experimento opus est*; we can never sufficiently praise it, but must take the counsel he gives us, and prove it, "Prove me," &c. There is an unlawful and damnable proving or rather provoking of God, when men separate the means from the end, holiness from happiness, will needs live as they list, and yet presume they shall be saved by the unknown mercies of God. Such were those that "tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies," **#Ps 78:56**, like as before they had lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert, **#Ps 106:14**; while, bearing themselves overly bold upon their external privileges, they refused to observe his statutes and keep his laws. This sin, in the New Testament, is called "tempting the Spirit of the Lord," **#Ac 5:9**. Ananias and Sapphire did so, when by a cunning contrivance they would needs prove and make trial whether God could discover and would punish their hypocrisy; so did Judas the traitor, when he boldly demanded, "Is it I, Lord?" So do all gross hypocrites that present unto God a carcase of holiness, like Ham, or that cursed deceiver, **#Mal 1:14**. Such also as refuse Christ's offers of grace; and when he bids them, as here, prove him, if upon their obedience in the laws of his kingdom he will not open the windows of heaven and rain down righteousness upon them, even mercies without measure; and (for confirmation) wills them, as once he did wicked Ahaz, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, ask it either in the depth or height above"; they churlishly answer him in effect as he did, "I will not ask, neither will I try the Lord." Whereupon the prophet that made the motion, in a holy indignation, "Hear ye now," saith he, "ye house of David, Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" **#Isa 7:12,13**.



**If I will not open to you the windows of heaven]** Vulgate: the cataracts, or floodgates, or spouts of heaven; meaning the clouds, those bottles of rain, which God here promiseth to shower down abundantly, *tanta copia, impetu, et fragore, ut ruere potius quam fluere videatur* (Corn. a Lapide). A phrase noting great plenty, **#2Ki 7:2**, for in those hot countries drought ever made a dearth. Hence the proud Egyptians, whose land is watered and made fruitful by the overflow of the river Nile, were wont in mockery to tell the neighbouring nations, that if God should forget to rain they might chance to starve for it. They thought the rain was of God, but not the river. God therefore threateneth to dry it up, **#Eze 29:9 Isa 19:5,6**, and so he did (Ovid.):

*“ Creditur Aegyptus caruisse iuvantibus arva*

*Imbribus, atque annis sicca fuisse novem.”*

*To teach both them and us, that both plenty and scarcity, drought and rain, are his work; he carries the keys of the grave, of the heart, and of the windows of heaven, the clouds, under his own belt. Vessels they are as thin as the liquor which is contained in them. There they hang and move, though weighty with their burden. How they are upheld, and why they fall here and now, we know not, but wonder at it, as God's handiwork. In the island of St Thomas, on the backside of Africa, in the midst of it is a hill, and over that a continual cloud, wherewith the whole island is watered. In the middle region of the air, God hath made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky, **#Ps 18:11**. These he weighs by measure, so that not a drop falls in vain nor in a wrong place, **#Job 28:15** "When he uttereth his voice there is a multitude (or noise) of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain," &c., **#Jer 10:13**. A wonderful thing surely, that out of the midst of water God fetcheth fire, and hard stones out of the midst of thin vapours. This is the Lord's own doing, and it is (worthily) marvellous in our eyes. "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can give rain? or can the heavens give showers?" (so the naturalists will needs have it; but what saith the prophet?) "Art not thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things," **#Jer 14:22**. A pious*

resolution surely, and that which the Lord here would have this people to take up; viz. in the way of his judgments to wait upon him, #Isa 26:8, and walk before him, to honour him with their substance, and with the firstfruits of all their increase. So should their barns be filled with plenty, and their presses burst out with new wine, #Pr 3:9,10 "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself," #Pr 11:25.

**God will pour him out a blessing]** Because he is a soul of blessing, as the Hebrew hath it in that place of the Proverbs last cited, and he shall have rain enough, *Ipse pluvia erit*, as Kimchi rendereth the last words there. He shall be a sweet and seasonable shower to himself and others. "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all," #Jer 31:12. O precious promise, every syllable whereof drops myrrh and mercy! Abraham, that father of tithe paying (so we may call him, as the Hebrews call Jacob the father of vows, because he is the first we read of in Scripture that vowed a vow unto the Lord), had this promise of abundance plentifully performed unto him. So had Constantine, the first Christian emperor, the Church's great benefactor. *Bonus Deus*, saith Augustine, *Constantinum Magnum tantis terrenis implevit muneribus quanta optare nullus auderet*: The good Lord filled Constantine the Great with so many temporal blessings as never any man dared wish for (De Civ. Dei, l. v. c. 25.).

**There shall not be room enough to receive it]** *Ita ut dicatis satis est*, so that you shall say, It is enough: thus the Chaldee rendereth it. Rabbi Abraham, you shall have more than enough, as the Sareptan had, #2Ki 4:4, the cruse never ceased running till there was no room. Borrow of thy neighbours, saith the prophet, but shut the doors upon thee. It was time to shut the doors, saith one, when many greater vessels must be supplied from one little one. She had a prophet's reward with a witness, *Non tantum quod sufficiat, sed etiam quod supersit*. Rab. David. *Ultra sufficiens* (Montan.). And so had the Shunamite. Her table and bed and stool was well bestowed: that candlestick repaid her the light of her future life and condition;

that table the means of maintenance; that stool a seat of safe abode; that bed a quiet rest from the common calamities of her nation. So liberal a pay master is God: his rewards are more than bountiful; he will not be overcome by his creature in liberality, #Jas 1:5. They shall be sure to have their own again with usury, either in money or money's worth. What they want in temporals (a sufficiency whereof they shall be sure of, if not a superfluity) he will make up in spirituals, joy and peace through believing, as much or more than heart can hold. Some holy men have so overabounded exceedingly with joy, that they have been forced to cry out, Hold, Lord, stay thine hand, &c, their spirits were even ready to expire with an exuberance of spiritual ravishment; as the Church in the Canticles was sick of love, and therefore calls to the ministers, #So 2:5, to stay her from sinking and swooning, to bolster her up, being surprised with a love qualm; as the Queen of Sheba, rapt with admiration, had no more spirit in her; as Jacob's heart fainted when he heard the good news of Joseph alive. Bernard, for a certain time after his conversion, remained, as it were, deprived of his senses, by the excessive consolations he had from God. Cyprian and Austin testify the like of themselves.

{a} A matted lock of sheep's wool, esp. one of those about the hinder parts; CED

Ver. 11. **And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes]** Caterpillars, cankerworms, and such hurtful creatures. God's terrible army, as they are notably set forth in their march and mischief, #Joe 2:2-5 cf. 1:4, to tame his rebels, to ease him of his adversaries, and to avenge him of his enemies, #Isa 1:24. These he will rebuke (for every creature is at his beck and check), as he "rebuked the Red Sea and it was dried up," #Ps 106:9, and as he rebuked the winds, #Mt 8:26, the fever, #Lu 4:39, the devil, #Mt 7:18, he will say unto them, *Abite actutum hinc*, Get you hence, and that is enough, for they are all his servants, #Ps 119:91. He is the great Centurion, or rather Lord of hosts, that saith to this creature, "Go, and he goeth," and to another, "Come, and he cometh," &c. If he do but say, Who is on my side, who? all creatures look out at their windows, as ready prest to do his pleasure; neither is there any so mean among them, or so despicable, that cannot, if set on by him, make the proudest on earth stoop, and say, "This is the finger of God." But of this see more in the 1st Doct. on #Mal 3:18. Let all that look for God's

blessing, either upon their persons or possessions, make their peace with God (the genealogy of grain and wine is resolved into him, #Ho 2:22), and bring him all his tithes into the storehouse, &c., lest he blast their fair hopes, cut off the meat from their mouths, take his own and be gone, take away his grain in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof, &c., #Ho 2:9. The Jews in our Saviour's time, *suis malis edocti*, were punctual in paying their tithes, even to a pot herb, #Mt 23:23. And at this day, though not in their own country, nor have a Levitical priesthood, yet those of them that would be reputed religious do distribute, in lieu of tithes, the tenth of their increase unto the poor: being persuaded that God doth bless their increase the more: for their usual proverb is, *Decima ut dives fiat*, tithe and be rich. Of the young Lord Harrington (the last of that name) it is reported by Mr Stock, who preached his funeral, that he constantly gave the tenth of his yearly revenue to pious and charitable uses. And of reverend Mr. Whately, minister of Banbury, it is likewise recorded in his life, that he set apart and expended for many years before he died for good uses the tenth part of his yearly comings in, both out of his temporal and ecclesiastical means of maintenance; and that he never thrived in his outward estate till he took that course. Besides the sweet comfort that the spirits of his wealth thus distilled, as it were, brought to his conscience, both in life and at death; and the blessing of a good name left behind him, according to that which follows next in the text, "And all nations," &c.

Ver. 12. **And all nations shall call you blessed]** viz. For the abundance of outward comforts and commodities, by the which the nations measured man's happiness, saying, "Blessed is the people that is in such a case," #Ps 144:15. Cyprus was for this cause anciently called *Macaria*, that is, the blessed country, as having a sufficiency of all things within itself; and England was called *Regnum Dei*, the kingdom of God, or the Fortunate island, and Englishmen *Deires*, as that were set safe, *de ira Dei*, from the wrath of God. In the time of Pope Clement VI (as Robert of Avesbury testifieth), when Lewis of Spain was chosen prince of the Fortunate Islands, and for the conquest thereof was to raise an army in France and Italy; the English agent at Rome, together with his company, departed and got home, as conceiving that the prince was bound for England, than the which they thought there was not a

more fortunate island in the world. Of the island of Lycia, Solinus saith that all the day long the sky is never cloudy but that the sun may be seen there, *Lyciam Horatius claram dicit. Semper in sole sita est Rhodes*, The Rhodes is ever in the sunshine, saith Aeneas Sylvius. And of Alexandria in Egypt, Ammianus Marcellinus observeth, that once in the day the sun hath been seen to shine over it. I confess the same cannot be said of England. I remember also what I have read of a certain Frenchman, who returning home out of England, and being asked by a countryman of his that was bound for England, what service he would command him into this country? Nothing but this, said the other; when you see the sun have me commended to him; for I have been there two months and could never see him in all that time: *Per duos enim menses quibus ibi fui, Solem mihi videre non licuit* (*Garincieres de tabe Anglica*, p. 84). Likely he was here in the deep of winter. For at summer solstice Tacitus, in the Life of Agricola, hath observed that the sun shineth continually in Brittany, and neither setteth nor riseth there; but passeth so lightly by us by night that you can scarce say we have any night at all, *Ut finem atque initium lucis exiguo discrimine internoscas*. But if we speak of the sunshine of God's grace and favour, either for spirituals or temporals, as Delos is said by Solinus to have been the first country that had the sun shining upon it after the general deluge, and there hence to have had its name, *Nomenque ex eo sortitam* (Polyb. c. 17), so was England one of the first islands that both received Christ and that shook off Antichrist. And for temporal blessings, all nations shall call us blessed, and count us a delightsome land indeed, a land of desires, such as all men would desire to dwell in, for the exceeding fruitfulness and pleasantness of it; it being the court of Queen Ceres, the granary of the Western world, as foreign writers have termed it, the paradise of pleasure and garden of God, as our own chronicler. The truth is, we may well say of England, as the Italians do of Venice, by way of proverb: He that hath not seen it cannot believe what a dainty place it is, and he that hath not lived there some good time cannot understand the worth of it. Our Mr Ascham, schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth, had lived there some time, and had soon enough of it; for though he admired the place, he utterly disliked the people for their loose living. And the like, alas, may be too truly affirmed of us. We live in God's good land, but not by God's good laws; we eat the fat

and drink the sweet, but we sanctify not the Lord God in our hearts, we live not as becometh Christians. Our hearts, like our climate, have much more light than heat, light of knowledge than heat of zeal; our lukewarmness is like to be our bane, our sins our snuffs, that dim our candlestick, and threaten the removal of it. *O si fiat id in nobis* (saith one) *quod in sole videtur, qui quibus affulserit, iis etiam calorem et colorem impertire solet!* Oh that the Sun of righteousness would so shine upon us, as to warm us, and transform us into the same image from glory to glory, as by his Spirit! Oh that he would set up his own kingdom here more and more among us! Then should we be more happy than the Israelites were under the reign of King Solomon, or the Spaniards under their Ferdinand III, who reigned thirty-five years, in all which time there was neither famine nor pestilence in the land.

Ver. 13. **Your words have been stout against me]** Or, re-enforced, or strongly confirmed. *Superant me verba vestra*, so some have rendered it. By your hard and hateful words you have been too hard for me, as it were. And it is as if God should say, I have given you my best advice to break off your sins, and to bring me my tithes, that I might bless you both with store and honour. But I have lost my labour; I see well, my sweet words are worse than spilt upon you, who are so hardened in your error and blasphemy, that you are still clamouring and casting out odious words against me, **#Pr 23:8**. *Verba quid incassum non proficientia perdo?* Once before you had set your foul mouths against me, and, like so many wolves (that were wood), you held up your heads and howled out these ugly words, "Every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them," **#Mal 2:17**; was it possible that the wit of malice could devise so high a slander? And now you are at it again, creaking like doors that move upon rusty hinges, nay, clattering and blustering out such hellish and hideous blasphemies, as at the hearing whereof it is great wonder if the heavens sweat not, earth gape not, sea roar not, all creatures conspire not to be avenged upon you; as the very stones in the wall of Aphek turned executioners of those blasphemous Syrians, when as, being but ignorant pagans, their tongues might seem no slander.

**your words have been stout against me]** Yea, stouter and stouter; your wickedness frets like a canker, and increaseth still to more

ungodliness, #2Ti 2:17. Evil men and deceivers grow worse and worse, #2Ti 3:13, as being given up by God, #Ro 1:28, acted and agitated by the devil, #Eph 2:2, serving divers lusts and pleasures, #Tit 3:3, which to satisfy is an endless piece of business. Neither let any here say, they were but words that these are charged with, and words are but wind, &c., for words have their weight, and are marvellously provoking. *Leviter volant, sed non leviter violant.* The fly lightly but they do not outrage lightly. You shall find some, saith Erasmus, that if death be threatened, can despise it; but to be belied they cannot brook, nor from revenge contain themselves. "As a murdering weapon in my bones," saith David, "mine enemies reproach me," #Ps 42:10. Desperate speeches and blasphemies that impose upon the Lord anything unbecoming his majesty, a thing common among the Jews even to this day, he can by no means do away with. See how God stomacheth such proud contumelious language, #Ps 73:11 94:4-11 Zep 1:12 Eze 9:9. See how he punished it in him that bored through his great name, #Le 24:11. Ludovike, commonly called St Lewis, caused the lips of blasphemers to be scared with a hot iron. Philip, the French king, punished this sin with death, yea, though it were committed in a tavern. The very Turks have the Christians' blaspheming of Christ in execration; and will punish their prisoners sorely when as, through impatience or desperateness, they wound the ears of heaven: yea, the Jews, in their speculations of the causes of the strange success of the affairs of the world, assign the reason of the Turks prevailing so against the Christians to be their blasphemies; and among other scandals and lets of their conversion are all those stout words darted with hellish mouths against God in their hearing, so ordinarily and openly, by the Italians especially, who blaspheme oftener than swear, and murder more often than revile or slander. Andrew Musculus, in his discourse entitled The devil of blasphemy, hath a memorable story of a desperate dice player in Helvetia, A. D. 1553, at a town three miles distant from Lucerna; where, on a Lord's Day, three wretched fellows were playing at dice under the town wall. One of them, named Ulricus Schraeterus, having lost a great deal of money, swore that, if he lost the next cast, he would fling his dagger at the face of God. He lost it, and, in a rage, threw up his dagger with all his might toward heaven. The dagger vanished in the air, and was seen no more; five drops of blood fell down upon the table where

they were playing, which could never be washed out (part of it is still kept in that town for a monument); the blasphemer, to say the best of him, was fetched away presently body and soul by the devil, with such a horrible noise, as frightened the whole town. The other two came to a miserable end shortly after. The truth of this relation is further attested by Job Fincelius and Philip Lonicerus, Theat. Histor. p. 142.

**Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?]** Chald. What have we multiplied to speak before thee? As if they should say, It is not so much that we have spoken that thou shouldst make such a business of it. Nothing more ordinary with graceless men than to elevate and extenuate; great sins with them are small sins, and small sins no sins; when as every sin should swell like a toad in their eyes, and the abundant hatred thereof in their hearts should make them say all that can be said for the aggravation and detestation of it; since there is as much treason in coining pence as bigger pieces; because the supreme authority is as much violated in the one as in the other. But this sin of theirs was no peccadillo, as appeareth by the following instance:

Ver. 14. **Ye have said, It is vain to serve God]** Vulgate: He is vain that serves God. Ye are idle, ye are idle, said Pharaoh to the Israelites, when they would needs go sacrifice; and to Moses and Aaron, Ye let the people from their works. Anything seems due work to a carnal mind saving God's service; that is labour lost, time cast away, they think. But this is their want of spiritual judgment; they see not the beauty of holiness, they taste not how good the Lord is; they discern not things that are excellent; they measure all by present sight, sense, and taste, as do children, swine, and other brute creatures; and, therefore, they themselves are *vani et vanissimi*, as an expositor here speaketh, vain, and most vain, and that for two reasons, and in two respects. First, for that they take themselves to be servers of God. Secondly, they stick in the bark, serve him with the outside only, honour him with their lips, and not with their hearts; they bring him vain oblations, empty performances, serve him with shows and formalities which he delights not in, nay, he rejects them with infinite scorn, as he did the Pharisees' devotions, **#Lu 16:15**, because they were but skin deep, and not heart sprung; therefore they were not a button the better for them. God loves and



looks for truth in the inward parts, **#Ps 51:6**; he looks that men should do his will from the heart, **#Eph 6:6**, and serve him in their spirits, **#Ro 1:9**, in doing whereof there is great reward, **#Ps 19:11** *praemium ante praemium*, reward before the reward, that commendation of a good conscience; this the stranger meddles not with, conceives not, the wealth of God's pilgrims standing more in jewels and gold, things light of carnage, and well portable, than in house and land. His servants have that here that doth abundantly pay them for their pains beforehand; righteousness being its own reward; and they knowing within themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance, **#Heb 10:34**. But hereafter oh the rich recompense that God shall make them! oh the heaped up happiness of such at the last! when these vain talkers in the text, and all that are of their mind, shall roar out *Nos insensati*, We fools counted their lives madness; but now, &c. {See Trapp on "Mat 3:16"} doct. 5.

**What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?]** The Chaldee hath it, *Quod mammon adepti sumus?* what mammon or wealth have we gained? Mammonists are all for gain, their very godliness is gain, still they have an eagle's eye to the prey when they seem to fly highest toward heaven; if they may not get by God they soon grow weary of his work. Whatever shows they make of better, sure it is their belly is their god, they mind earthly things. These will follow the chase, as Jonathan, till they meet with the honeycomb; or as a cur follows his master till he meet with a carrion. These come to Christ (as that young Pharisee did) hastily, but they go away heavily; because they consider not that with the Lord are durable riches, **#Pr 8:18**; and that godliness, as it hath many crosses, so it hath many comforts against them (*Virtus lecythos habet in malis*); like as no country hath more venomous creatures than Egypt, none more antidotes. This these sensualists, having not the Spirit, understand not; and hence their complaint of a disappointment; casting a slur upon God's housekeeping, as those spies did upon the promised land, and ready to run back into Egypt to their flesh pots, garlic, and onions there, **#Nu 11:5 14:4**. Lo, this is the guise of graceless persons, with whom that is the best religion that brings greatest advantage in the things of this life. If the ark bring a blessing with it, as it did to Obed Edom, it shall be looked upon as worthy of

entertainment; but if a plague of poverty come with it these Philistines will be glad to rid their hands of it. The garishness of honour, wealth, and pleasures do so dazzle their eyes, that they think it the only happiness to have and to hold. Such fools they are, and such great beasts, if David may judge, **#Ps 73:22**, to fly a fool's pitch, and to go hawking after that which cannot be had, as Solomon saith, **#Pr 23:5**; or, if had, yet cannot be held, as being of swiftest wing, and as soon gone as a post that passeth by. Godliness hath the promise of both lives; and we read of some godly men in Scripture that were richer than any other. But God will have it sometimes to be otherwise, that godliness might be admired for itself; and to show that his people serve him not for commodity, **#Job 1:9**. But that none serve God for nought, no, not so much as shut a door or kindle a fire; see before, **#Mal 1:10**.

**That we have kept his ordinances]** Which if they had done indeed, they would never have thus bragged, much less blasphemed; they would have accused themselves, and not the Divine providence; they would have said, with holy Ezra, And this is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass; and thou, our God, hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve. Mightest thou not be justly angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? **#Ezr 9:13,14**. Thus the good wheat falls low at the feet of the farmer, when the chaff whiffles and flies at his face. Thus the sheep, when shorn, bleats and looks downward; whereas the hunger-bitten wolf looks up and howls against heaven. Hypocrites use to wrangle with God and expostulate the unkindness of his nonacceptance of their services, as **#Isa 58:8** "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?" God was, in their opinion, far too short and much behind with them; and, therefore, much to blame, and they must give him the telling of it: they do so; and they have their answer. So they shall have here in the following verses, and the next chapter, which ought not to be divided from this, as some conceive. They upbraid the Lord, as with their observances, so with their humiliations.

**And that we have walked mournfully]** Or, in black, the habit of mourners; whence that of the heathen orator, *Athenienses non nisi*

*atrati, &c.*; The Athenians are never so good as when they are all in black; that is, under some heavy affliction. And a great statesman of this kingdom had this verse written upon his study door,

“ *Anglica gens est optima flens et pessima ridens.*”

Great Britain, all in black, is in its best condition. But what is it to wear sackcloth, and walk softly, with Ahab, when he had sold himself to do wickedly? #1Ki 21:27; what is a humbling day without a humbled heart? not only an irreligious incongruity, but a high provocation; like Zimri's act, when all the congregation were weeping before the door of the tabernacle. Surely God may say to such pretenders, as Isaac did to his father, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a sacrifice?" or as Jacob did to his sons that brought him the bloody coat, Lo, here is the coat, but where is my child? your garments are black, but your hearts and lives are much blacker. Go, "cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, you doubleminded. Be afflicted," in good earnest, "and mourn" to some purpose, "and weep," soak and souse yourselves in tears of true repentance; let your sorrow for sin be deep and downright: "turn your laughter to mourning, and your joy to heaviness," #Jas 4:8,9. And then come, let us reason together, saith the Lord. All these unkind contestations shall cease, and all loving correspondencies shall pass between us. God had said so much as all this before to them, #Mal 3:7,10,11. *Sed surdo fabulam*, their adamant was too hard to be mollified. Their bulrushes, though bowed down for a day, while some storm of trouble was upon them, was now so perked up, as if it would threaten heaven: witness their continued contumacy, their robust language in the next verse also, stouting it out still with God.

Ver. 15. **And now we call the proud happy]** Such as, boiling and swelling with spite and spleen against God and his people, deal arrogantly and insolently, doing wickedly with hands earnestly, #Ex 18:11 21:11, and working their own ends confidently and daringly; these we call and count happy, because wealthy and well underlaid, as they say, because they live in the height of the world's blandishments. But the whole book of Ecclesiastes is a clear and full confutation of this fond conceit, had they but ever read or regarded it. How can the proud person be happy that hath God for his

professed enemy? what was all Haman's honour to him when the king frowned upon him? what was Ahab the better for his ivory palace, his gold, and his jewels in every place, when the heaven was brass above, the earth iron beneath? Surely God abhorreth pride as an abomination of desolation; and though he preserveth the faithful, yet sooner or later he plentifully rewardeth the proud doer, **#Ps 31:23**. Like metal in the fire, when they shine brightest they are nearest to melting; and, like a bulging wall, they will shortly fall. Swelling is a dangerous symptom in the body, so is pride in the soul. *Tolluntur in altum, ut lapsu graviore ruant*. Neither are they, therefore, to be reputed ever a whit the more happy because they come not in trouble like other men, but prosper in their wickedness. for God is never more angry with such than when he seems best pleased. Pharaoh had fair weather made him, till he was in the midst of the sea; fattening cattle are but fitting for the meat market. Never was Jerusalem's condition so desperate as when God said unto her, My fury shall depart from thee, I will be quiet and no more angry, **#Eze 16:42**. Nor Ephraim's, as when he said, "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom." And, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone," **#Ho 4:14,17**, *sc.* till I come and fetch my full blow at him. Clement of Alexandria cites Plato expressing himself thus: Although a righteous man be tormented, although his eyes be dug out, yet he remains a blessed man; and the contrary:

**They that work wickedness are set up]** Heb. They are built up, *sc.* in posterity, and prosperity of all sorts. The Psalmist expresseth it thus: "They are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes," **#Ps 17:14**. Thus God built the midwives houses, that is, he gave them children, for their mercy to these newborn babes, **#Ex 1:21**. Thus he builded David a house, **#2Sa 7:12,13**. And thus those that return to the Almighty have a gracious promise that they shall be built up, **#Job 22:23**. That these stout and stiff stigmatics were built up and prospered, though (after so sweet an invitation) they turned not to him that smote them, we need not wonder, since it is their portion, as David showeth, all they are like to have or must ever look for. Besides, is not God the true proprietary of all? Is not the earth the Lord's purse with the fulness thereof, and may he not do with his own as he pleaseth? **#Mt 20:15**. Add hereunto that what wicked men have, they have it with a curse, and for mischief; their

table is a snare to them; they are like to pay dearly for their sweet morsels, as Haman did for his wine at Esther's banquet. Bernard calls the wicked man's prosperity *miseriordiam omni indignatione crudeliorem*, a misery more cruel than any adversity, **#Ps 91:8**. Austin affirmeth, *Nullum mare tam profundum, quam est Dei cogitatio ut mali floreat, &c.*: No sea is so deep as the Divine dispensation that good men should suffer, bad men prosper. They are built up with blessings, as they say the Phoenix builds her nest with hot spices, wherein she is afterwards burned. They build as those at Babel, and feather their nests, as if their lives were riveted upon eternity; but as their foundation is laid upon kiln, so brimstone is scattered upon their habitations, **#Job 18:15**. If the fire of God's wrath but touch it, all will be quickly consumed. Dioclesian, that bloody persecutor, despairing of ever rooting out the Christian religion, as he had endeavoured to do, gave over his empire in a discontent, and decreed to lead the rest of his life quietly. But he could not escape so; for, after that, his house was wholly consumed with lightning, and a flame of fire that fell from heaven, he, hiding himself for fear of the lightning, died within a little after (Euseb. de Vita Constant. lib. 5). "Their inward thought is" (saith the Psalmist of such wicked atheists) "that their houses" (honours, riches, nephews) "shall continue for ever; and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their houses after their own names"; as Cain called his newly built city of Enoch, after the name of his son, that he might leave him Lord Enoch of Enoch. "Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish," **#Ps 49:11,12**. The use to be made hereof see **#Mal 3:16** "Be not thou afraid when" (a wicked) "one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased."

**Yea, they that tempt God are even delivered]** Still these miscreants are grunting out their grudges against God. What this sin here instanced, viz. of tempting God, is, hath been shown before. {See *Trapp on "Mal 3:10"*} Here it is to be taken for an audacious daring of God to take vengeance, as **#Nu 16:23-35**. These very worst sort of sinners are sometimes not only spared, but prospered, **#Jer 12:1**. Their ephah is not yet full, their iniquity not found to be hateful enough yet. But the wicked is kept (by the patience of God) unto the day of destruction; and shall be brought forth to the day of wrath, as

condemned malefactors are to execution, some by a back door and byways, others through the market place; so here. He that hath stolen a good horse rides gallantly mounted for present, till shortly after, followed close by hue and cry, he is soon apprehended, sentenced, and brought to condign punishment. And this is the very state of presumptuous sinners, and will be. I know well, that "because sentence is not presently executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are set in them to do wickedly," #Ec 8:11. *Felix scelus virtus vocatur* calls evil virtue (Cicero), as we see here, The proud are called happy, because, for present, in prosperity. See the like #Jer 44:11 Ge 30:18. Dionysius, after the spoil of an idol temple, finding the winds favourable in his navigation, Lo, said he, how the gods approve of sacrilege. But the weakness of this argument see set forth by Solomon, #Ec 9:1-3. {See Trapp on "Ec 9:1"} {See Trapp on "Ec 9:2"} {See Trapp on "Ec 9:3"} God gives outward things to the wicked no otherwise than as if a man should cast a purseful of gold into an outhouse. He gives them riches to furnish their indictment out of them; as Joseph put his cup into their sack to pick a quarrel with them and lay theft to their charge. The sunshine of prosperity ripens their sin apace, and so fits them for destruction. Let God, therefore, be justified, and every mouth stopped.

Ver. 16. **Then they that feared the Lord, &c.]** Then, when all flesh had corrupted their ways, #Ge 6:12, and the whole world turned atheists. Then, when there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land, none to speak of, but that it was even darkened with profaneness, #Ho 4:1; as Egypt was with those very grievous locusts that covered the eye thereof, #Ex 10:14,15. Then, when the faithful city was become a harlot, #Isa 1:21,22; her silver turned into dross, her wine mixed with water; her people not dilute only, but dissolute; herself *ex aurea facta est argentea, ex argentea ferrea, ex ferrea terrea*, as one once said of Rome, of gold become silver, of silver iron, of iron earth, or rather muck.

**Then they that feared the Lord]** Those few names that had not defiled their garments in so foul a season, #Re 3:4; but had kept themselves unspotted of the world, undefiled in the way; so as that wicked one had not touched them, #1Jo 5:18, had not thrust his deadly sting into them, had not transformed them into sin's image. These stood up to stickle for God, to stop the mouth of blasphemy,

and to stablish one another in persuasion of God's holy truth, and constant care of his dear children.

**Spake often one to another]** Montanus renders it, *Tunc vastati sunt timentes Dominum; sc. ab impiis et atheis impune eos invadentibus*; that is, Then were those that feared the Lord wasted and destroyed, viz. by those wicked atheists, who fell from fierce words to bloody blows; so the word is used, **#2Ch 22:10 Ps 2:5**. But this is far set, and nothing so agreeable to the mind of the Holy Ghost here, as our English, after other approved translations. It is the same word that is used **#Mal 3:13**. Those spoke not so much against God as these did for him, and about him to each other, for mutual confirmation, that that which was halting haply might not be turned out of the way, but healed rather, **#Heb 12:13**. Great is the benefit of Christian conference for strengthening the weak knees, and comforting the feeble-minded. "How forcible are right words!" **#Job 6:25**. One seasonable truth falling upon a prepared heart hath often a strong and sweet operation; as some speeches of Staupicius had upon Luther: of whom the story is told that he was much cheered up by conference with an old priest discoursing about justification by faith, and explaining the Articles of the Creed to him. Latimer, likewise, was much furthered by hearing Bilney's confession, and having frequent conference with him at Heretics' Hill, as the place where they most used to walk in the fields at Cambridge was called long after. Surely, as a little boat may land a man into a large continent; so may a few good words suggest matter sufficient for a whole life's meditation. This Satan well knows, and, therefore, as he did what he could to keep God and Daniel asunder, **#Da 6:7**, so he doth still to keep the saints one from another, that they may not build up themselves in their most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, pull one another out of the fire, **#Jude 20,23**. How were the apostles persecuted for their Christian meetings; the primitive Christians banished and confined to isles and mines, where they could not have access one to another, as Cyprian complains; the poor saints here in times of Popery, meeting as they could for mutual edification; and, therefore, accused of sedition; for prevention whereof it was ordained that, if men should flock secretly together above the number of six, they should be attached of treason; so the Protestants at Milcenburg, in Germany, were forbidden upon pain of death to

speak together of Scripture matters (Luth. Epist.). And at Nola, the Jesuits straitly charged the people not to talk of God, either in good sort or in bad. See more of this in my treatise on these words, called The Righteous Man's Recompence, chap. iv. doctrine 3, annexed to this commentary.

**And the Lord hearkened and heard]** He not only heard, but hearkened, or listened; *Gestus hic est diligenter auscultantis*, **#Isa 32:3**. It imports, not only attention of body, but intention of mind (as when a man listeneth as for life, and makes hard shift to hear all), and retention of memory. For which purpose also a book of remembrance is here said to be written before him, or by his appointment. *Liber monumenti*, A book of acts and monuments, in allusion to the custom of kings: see **#Es 2:23**. Tamerlane, that warlike Scythian, had always by him a catalogue of the names and good deeds of his servants, which he daily perused, and whom he duly rewarded; not needing by them, or any others in their behalf, to be put in remembrance. Much less doth the Lord, who bottles up the tears of his people, files up their prayers, puts all their holy speeches and practices on record, that he may make all honourable mention of them at the last day, in that great amphitheatre, that general assembly; not once remembering any of their misdeeds, **#Mt 25:35** **Heb 8:12**. See more of this in the Righteous Man's Recompence, chap. v., vi.

**And that thought upon his name]** That had God before their eyes, **#Ps 10:8**, that minded his glory, **#1Co 10:31**, that thought upon his commandments to do them, **#Ps 102:18**; that can truly say, with the Psalmist, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" **#Ps 139:17**. See more of this verse in my Righteous Man's Recompence, chap. vii. doct. 16.

Ver. 17. **And they shall be mine]** By peculiar right: *Et suum cuique pulchrum*: we all affect and admire our own things most. God chooseth them for his love; and loves them for his choice. I will be a Father unto them; and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, **#2Co 6:18**, which is all one with that here, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Concerning all which see my Righteous Man's Recompence, Part II chap. i. iii.



**In the day when I make up my jewels]** viz. From the world's malignities and misusages. They shall not plunder him of his jewels, rob him of his chief treasure. None shall take or pluck them out of Christ's hands, **#Joh 10:29**, they that attempt it shall find it a work not seizable. When one desired to see Great Alexander's treasure, he bade one of his servants show him not his gold and silver, but his friends. "Henceforth I call you not servants...but I have called you friends," **#Joh 15:15**. And a friend is as a man's own soul, **#De 13:6**. The Church is the dearly beloved of God's soul, **#Jer 12:7**, yea, his dearly beloved soul, as the Septuagint and Vulgate render it, &c. See my Righteous Man's Recompence, Part II chap. ii.

**And I will spare them]** Or, indulge them, as David did Mephibosheth, **#2Sa 21:7**. See my Righteous Man's Recompence, Part II. chap. iv., v.

Ver. 18. **Then shall ye return and discern]** You wicked blasphemers, that have slandered God's housekeeping, and brought up an evil report of his providence and justice; as if in managing the matters of the world he were less equal or less careful: you, I say, shall return, not to your right minds by a thorough conversion, by an entire change of the whole man, from evil to good (alas for your misery, it is past time of day with you for any such good works); but you shall alter your opinions when your eyes are once unsealed by the extremity of your sufferings (as the mole's eyes are said to be, when pangs of death are upon her), to see and acknowledge a sensible difference between the righteous (ever more "excellent than his neighbour," let him dwell where he will, **#Pr 12:26**, because "sealed up to the day of redemption" **#Eph 4:30**), and the wicked, who is but a vile person, an ουτος (let him be great as Antiochus Epiphanes the great King of Syria); between him that serveth God, accounting it the highest honour to be his vassal, as Constantine, Theodosius, and Valentinian (the emperors) called themselves **#Da 11:21**, *Vasallos Christi* representatives of Christ (Socrat.), and him that serveth him not, but casteth off the yoke of his obedience, being a son of Belial; and counteth it the only liberty to live as he wishes, and not to be ruled by God.

**Then shall ye return]** Then, when it is too late, when the day of grace is past, the gales of grace gone over, the gate shut, the

drawbridge taken up. Then shall ye, wretched lingerers and loiterers, Epimetheuses, experts in hindsight, wise after the fact, that come in at length with your fool's Had-I-know, return; not as the prodigal did, who seasonably and savingly came to himself, **#Lu 15:17**, having been before utterly bestraught, and quite beside himself, by the deceitfulness of sin, called foolishness of madness, **#Ec 7:25**; nor as those true converts mentioned in Solomon's prayer, that bethink themselves and repent, and make supplication to their judge, **#1Ki 8:47**; but as Judas, who, while he played alone, won all, but haunted with the furies of a guilty conscience, which would needs make one with him, he repented after a sort, with a *poenitentia sera Iscariotica*, as Pareus calleth it, had some after thoughts, but not to a transmentation; μεταμεληθεις, **#Mt 27:3**; some inward wamblings, but they boiled not up to the full height of a godly sorrow, and therefore came to nothing. Or, is James Abbes, with his hideous All too late, all too late; so these wicked ones in the text, when they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out; Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, and themselves in the burning lake; Christ's poor despised fellow sufferers shining "forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," and themselves cast out into outer darkness, **#Mt 13:43**; then shall they change both their mind and their note; then shall their odious blasphemies be driven back again down their throats, and then made to say, with Pharaoh, **#Ex 9:27** "The Lord is righteous," and so are all his people, **#Isa 60:21**, but I and mine associates are wicked, and therefore deservedly wretched. We once counted the proud happy, but now we see that of David verified which erst we believed not: "Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed," for that they "erred from thy commandments," **#Ps 119:21**. We looked upon the righteous as calamitous, as worms and no men; as the *nullificamen populi* (Tertullian's expression), fit to be set with the dogs of the flock, and as the offscouring of all things; but now we can vote with that man of God and say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thine excellency? and thine enemies are now found liars unto thee, for thou treadest upon their high places," when they are trodden underfoot as unsavoury salt, **#De 33:29**. Woe unto us spoilers! for now we are spoiled. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who can abide with everlasting burnings?" **#Isa**

**33:1,14 Jer 4:13.** Behold, the day is come that burneth as an oven, **#Mal 4:1**, and we are now "as stubble fully dried," that it may burn the better, **#Na 1:10**. We are put away (even all the wicked of the earth) like dross, **#Ps 119:119**, thrust away as thorns, **#2Sa 23:6**, placed as vile things under Christ's feet, **#Ps 110:1**. When the righteous shine as bright as silver upon the celestial shelf (as that martyr, John Careless, said), and surpass us as far as the lily doth the thorns, **#So 2:2**, or as the gold doth the coals in the goldsmith's shop; yea, they are the throne of Christ, **#Ex 17:16**, his jewels, **#Mal 3:17**, his ornament, the beauty of his ornament, and that set in majesty, **#Eze 7:20**, a royal diadem on the head of Jehovah, **#Isa 62:3**; and so they shall one day appear to be, though now they do not, **#1Jo 3:2**; it shall be no hard matter to discern them.

**Between the righteous and the wicked]** Here they are together in the Church militant, and ever have been. "Sinners in Zion," **#Isa 33:14** sacrificing Sodomites, **#Isa 1:10**, a devil in Christ's family, **#Joh 13:10**. All men have not faith, **#2Th 3:2**, all the Lord's people are not holy, **#Nu 16:3**, that any are it is a just wonder. "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" **#Job 15:14**. None are so but such as are arrayed with that fine white linen and shining, the righteousnesses of the saints, **#Re 19:8**, that twofold righteousness, imputed and imparted, of justification and of sanctification. See both, **#1Co 6:11**, and seek after both by Christ's merit and Spirit, by his value and virtue. He is Jehovah our righteousness, **#Jer 23:5**, and of his fulness ye all receive, **#Joh 1:16**. He it is that makes us to differ from the wicked of the world, that have hearts full of hell, and are ever either hatching cockatrice's eggs, or, at best, weaving spider's webs; vanity or villany is their whole practice. The best among them would serve God, and yet retain their lusts too; as Solomon thought he could follow sinful pleasures, and yet keep his wisdom. And with such we must converse while in this world. Tares will be with the wheat, goats among the sheep, righteous and wicked together. God permits it so to be for the glory of his free grace, and for the trial and exercise of his people. Our care must be the greater; for evil men endanger good men, as weeds do the corn, as bad humours the blood, or an infected house the neighbourhood. We must resolve, as Joshua, to serve the Lord, howsoever; because a difference shall be

one day set between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Where we see, that not serving of God, not sacrificing, is a sin, #**Ec 9:2**. Not robbing only, but the not relieving of the poor was the rich man's ruin. Not gluttony only, but overmuch abstinence may overthrow the body. Omission of diet breeds diseases; so doth omission of duties; and makes work for hell, or for the Physician of our souls. "Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear," #**Heb 12:28**. Serve him as old Zechariah in his canticle saith we should do, #**Lu 1:74,75**. First, out of sense of his dear love in our deliverance by Christ; whereinto the deeper we dive the sweeter. This will make us love to be his servants, #**Isa 56:7** "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," #**Ro 12:12**, *Servati sumus ut serviamus*. Secondly, serve him without fear, slavish fear; serve him with a holy security, in full assurance of his gracious assistance and acceptance; yea, though through infirmity we miss or mar his work, yet he will spare us, #**Mal 3:17**. Thirdly, serve him in holiness and righteousness, in all parts and points of duty; show your integrity both for subject and object; not picking or choosing your work, nor sticking at anything, but willing in all things to please God. He doth not God's, but his own will, that doth no more than himself will. Fourthly, serve him sincerely, in holiness and righteousness (before him, or, as in his presence). Set the Lord ever at your right hand; look him full in the face, approve your hearts and lives unto him, do him but eye service, and it sufficeth. Fifthly, serve him constantly, all the days of your lives, hire yourselves to him for term of life; why should you desire to shift or fleet? where can you mend yourselves, either for fairness of work or fulness of wages? "Can the son of Jesse give you vineyards," &c., said Saul to his servants; so may God say, Can the world do for you as I both can and will if you cleave to me with full purpose of heart? Sure it cannot, &c.

## Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **For, behold, the day cometh]** This chapter should not be divided from the former; for here God's different dealing with the righteous and the wicked, proposed in the former verse, is further amplified by various effects of Christ's coming in the flesh. And if any ask, saith an interpreter, how this was verified of that his first coming? we answer, It was an initial or incipient stage, and by way

of preparation, then; and shall be consummate in the day of the last judgment. This day comprehendeth all that time that is called by the apostle, "the ends of the world," #1Co 10:11, and "the world to come," #Heb 2:5; all the administrations of Christ's kingdom, from his incarnation to the end of all things, which also is at hand, and, as it were, under view already. "Behold, the day," that notable day, so long looked for by the Jews, who boasted of a Redeemer, and promised themselves all possible comforts then: *Tunc enim Deus nos dignabitur clarissima visione*, saith Jachiades on #Da 12:4, *tunc intelligemus res ipsas prout sunt*: Then shall we have a most clear vision of things as they are, &c. Lo, that day cometh; not such a day as you imagined, but like that in Amos, "A day of darkness, and not light: even very dark, and no brightness in it," #Am 5:20. A day that shall burn like an oven; Nebuchadnezzar's oven, seven times more heated than it was wont, #Da 3:19. This day is come, the end is come, it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come, #Eze 7:6. It was fulfilled in part upon this people at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and their miserable exile ever since for their unbelief. Howbeit, all these are but the beginning of sorrows; their present sorrows but a typical hell, "the pile whereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of fire, doth kindle it," #Isa 30:33. It is said to be "prepared for the devil and his angels," #Mt 25:41, as if the all-powerful wisdom did deliberate, and, as it were, sit down and devise most tormenting temper, for that most formidable fire. The fire of the last day shall surely be very terrible, when all the world shall be on ablaze with fire, and wicked men shall give account with flames about their ears, with the elements melting and falling like scalding lead or burning bell metal on their heads. But all this will be but a shadow or spark of that fire of hell, the smoke whereof ascendeth for ever and ever, #Re 19:3. Some have held the fire of hell to be no true material; and corporeal fire but metaphorical, of a type known to God. *qualem novit Deus*. The most conspire in the contrary tenet; because bodies are to be punished by it. How spirits are also thus tormented, as the rich glutton's, #Lu 16:24, Austin sits down and admires the mystery; he tells us that for vehemence of heat it exceeds our fire, as far as ours doth fire that is painted on a wall (De Civ. Dei, lib. 21, c. 10). I would we had not cause to complain that preaching of hell is but as the painting of fire; which men can look on and handle without harm

or fear. Surely he that observes the impiety of this age may say to us, as Cato did to Caesar, *Credo, quae de inferis dicuntur, falsa existimas*, I believe you think hell to be a very fable, *Esse aliquos manes nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum aere lavantur* (Juven.).

**And all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, &c.]** Those proud whom you pronounced happy, #**Mal 3:15**, because jolly, and full of worldly prosperity, rich and renowned; those workers of wickedness, whom you looked upon as set up, built upon a firm basis: God shall abase every one that is lifted up, he shall repay the wicked doer to his face, #**De 7:10**, and into his bosom, #**Isa 65:6**. Whatever arrows are in the bow string will one day fly and hit, and strike deep. They shall be as stubble, saith the text, as stubble that is fully dried, #**Na 1:10**, even when they be folden together as thorns. "Who would set these briers and thorns against me in battle?" saith the Lord: "I would go through them, I would burn them together," #**Isa 27:4**. Did he not deal so by Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Herod, the primitive persecutors? &c. Those mighty *Magnificos* that here seemed *fortes, ferrei, et aenei*, strong, and made up, as it were, of brass and iron, shall appear to be but as stubble, that cannot stand before God's fire.

**The day that cometh shall burn them up]** Heb. Shall so burn them *ut flamma ex ipsis excitetur*, as to set them aflame. Here Christ burns up his enemies with invisible judgments, inward terrors and torments, pangs and plunges, a very hell in their consciences, a foretaste of eternal torment (as was to be seen in Belshazzar, and our Richard III). But what will they do at the last day, when the law they shall be judged by is a fiery law, #**De 33:2**, the tribunal of fire, #**Eze 1:27**, the judge a consuming fire, #**Heb 12:29**, his attendants flaming seraphims, his pleading with sinners in flames of fire, #**2Th 1:7**, the place of punishment a lake of fire fed with a river of brimstone? #**Isa 30:33**; what can be the fruit of such a fiery proceeding but utter excision? Surely this fire will leave them neither root nor branch.

Ver. 2. **But unto you that fear my name]** What shall be the condition of graceless persons hath been said already. Now, for the righteous, that they have not served God in vain, it shall well appear by the many benefits they shall reap and receive by Christ; five

whereof are here recited. 1. Imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is compared to the enlightening of this lower world by the beams of the sun 2. Remission of sins, which is compared to the healing of diseases. 3. Regeneration, which is likened to a sick man's walking forth when he is somewhat recovered. 4. Spiritual growth as calves of the stall. 5. Victory over all enemies, corporal and spiritual, which shall be trodden under-foot, as ashes of the furnace, #**Mal 4:3**.

**Shall the Sun of righteousness arise]** So Christ is called (as by other prophets, #**Isa 60:1,2,19 Lu 1:78 Joh 8:12**), to signify the joy of God's elect at the sight of him, #**Ps 84:11**; as those that have long lain in darkness count it a pleasant thing to see the light. A "Sun of righteousness" he is said to be, 1. As asserting and vindicating the righteousness of God, called in question by those blasphemers. 2. As bestowing upon his people a double righteousness (imputed and imparted), as the sun doth his light, #**Joh 1:16**. It is further said here, that he shall arise, that is, he shall appear and show himself on earth, who now lieth hidden, as it were, in heaven; as the material sun doth under the horizon. God was manifested in the flesh, #**1Ti 3:16**. Manifested out of the bosom of his Father, out of the womb of his mother, out of the types of the law. In his nativity he came forth as the sun doth, as a bridegroom out of his chamber. In the whole course of his life he rejoiced as a giant to run his race. He enlightened and warmed the dark and dry hearts of men, he filled them with the fruits of righteousness, #**Joh 15:5**. He could not be stayed or stopped in his course; he made his gospel to run and be glorified. He was and is still in continual motion for the good of his Church; as the sun in heaven is for the good of the world. He went under a cloud in his passion, and brake forth again in his resurrection. From heaven he daily darts forth his beams of righteousness, and showers down all spiritual blessings in heavenly privileges, #**Eph 1:3**. The sun sucks up foul water from the earth, draws it up into the air, not to hold it there; but first purifies it, and then distils it down again with a fattening and fructifying property. Hereupon the thankful earth brings forth most fair and fragrant fruits and flowers, &c. Semblably, this "Sun of righteousness" took on him our sins and miseries, *sordes nostras induit*, assumed our human nature, not to retain it, and glorify it in himself alone, but that we

might be con-glorified, and, in the mean time, filled with those fruits of holiness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God, #**Php 1:10**. And as the sun, the nearer he runs to the earth the weaker he is in operation, as in winter time, but the higher in heaven the more effectual; so, while Christ was not yet ascended, the Holy Ghost and his graces were not in that full measure imparted, nor Churches gathered, as afterwards, #**Joh 7:39**. Lastly, at that last and great day he will show himself in special manner a "Sun of righteousness"; clearing all obscurities, bringing to light the hidden things of darkness, causing his people's most holy faith, that now lies hidden in great part, to be found to praise, honour, and glory, cheering up their spirits after manifold tribulations, healing all their spiritual maladies; for he comes *with healing under his wings* and making them as so many Samsons, whose name signifies a little sun, in the noon of their full strength, *Ipsa est ergo noster Apollo sanitatis praeses*. For the righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, Matt, xiii. I shall shut up this discourse with that observation of an ancient: When the Sun of righteousness was yet in his mother's womb, he might be said to be in Virgo; when on the cross, in Taurus; when he rose from death, in Leo; when he shall come again to judgment, in Libra. And as when the sun is in Libra the day is of an equal length; so, when Christ cometh, all shall be perfected.

**With healing in his wings]** That is, in his beams. This implies sickness in all to whom Christ comes; the world being, as it were, a great hospital or *Nosecomium* (though few feel it), and that true of every person that is spoken of the whole people, #**Isa 1:5** "The whole head is sick," &c. O my head, my head, said the Shunammite's son: my belly, my belly, saith the prophet, my leanness, my leanness, &c. And surely it were happy if men would be more sensible of their malady, and make out to this Jehovah Rophe, this Almighty Physician, that lacks neither will nor skill to cure all that come unto him, #**Ex 15:26**. See him hanging out his tables, as it were, and setting to sell his eye-salve, #**Re 3:18**, for there he begins the cure, #**Ac 26:18**. Hear him, 1. Complaining of our dulness, backwardness, frowardness, #**Jer 8:22 Eze 24:13 Ho 7:1 2**. Wishing we had more care of our poor souls. "Oh that this people were wise," &c. "Why will ye die?" 3. Threatening, #**Eze**



**24:13** 4. Promising, **#Ho 14:4 Mt 11:28** 5. Performing, **#Ps 103:3 2Ch 30:20**. Lastly, providing all sorts of physic for us; preventing, purging, restoring, corrosives of the law, lenitives of the gospel, plaisters of his own blood, for here *Sanguis medici est curatio phrenetici*; and requiring us no more but to come unto him, as they of old did to the brazen serpent, with sorrow for sin, and faith in his name, having a good opinion of our physician, and casting ourselves wholly upon him for cure; calling upon him, as blind Bartimaeus did, and crying out as that martyr did at the stake, Son of God, shine upon me; and immediately the sun shone out of a dark cloud so full in his face, that he was constrained to look another way. What shall I say more? this blessed "Sun of righteousness" must be sought in the west, if we will get the kingdom (as Statio's servant in Justin did by the advice of his master, whom he had preserved); upon the cross, I mean, and in the state of his abasement; so shall we be sure to find healing in his wings, that is, the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit conveying the virtue of Christ's blood to the conscience, as the beams of the sun do the heat and influence thereof to the earth; thereby calling out the herbs and flowers, and healing those deformities that winter had brought upon it.

**And ye shall go forth]** To show that yo are thoroughly healed, ye shall rise up and walk. Where the Spirit is, there is liberty, **#2Co 3:17**. Live things love to be stirring; and those that are restored to health after sickness are not satisfied till they can go about their business in their accustomed strength, *Quod sanitas in corpor, id sanctitas in corde*. Holiness is to the soul what health is to the body. Let men make it out that Christ Jesus hath wrought a cure upon their souls, by being active and abundant in his work. Life consists in action. **#Isa 38:16** "O Lord, by these things, and in all these things, is the life of my spirit," saith Hezekiah; and, if ye do my commandments ye shall live in them, saith the Lord; as the fish lives in his element, as the lamp lives in the oil, and as the creature by his food. Up, therefore, and be doing; live betime, live quickly, and apace. Some men live more in a day than others in a month; as wise men speak more in two words than a fool in two hundred; or as one piece of gold is more worth than twenty of brass. Devise what to do for God, as David did, **#Ps 116:2**; serve out your time as he, **#Ac 13:36**, do not idle it out wear out, do not waste out; flame out, do

not smother out; burn out, be not blown out. Be not buried alive, as **#Job 27:15**, hissed out of the world, **#Job 27:23**, as Vacia in Seneca (*Hic situs est Vacia*). Fall not from the tree of life as leaves in autumn, as that sapless fellow Nabal did; and as those withered trees in St. Jude, "Without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." God expects that, acted first by him, we should act as the inferiors do (*Ut acti agamus*), when moved by the superiors; that, when he hath infused sap, we should fructify; that, when he hath tuned us and doth touch us, we should make music; when he hath once made us willing, he requires that we both will and work that which is good in his sight. When we set victuals before a hungry man we expect he should eat it. Nature teacheth the sucking child to draw the breast when it is once put to the mouth; and to labour for its living, as we use to say (Aug.). He that made us without us doth not save us without us; but expects that our wills, which at first conversion were merely passive, should be afterwards active in adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, **#2Pe 1:5**, in working out our salvation with fear and trembling, **#Php 2:12**. Herein we work the work of him that sent us, as our Saviour did; we finish the work which he gave us to do, **#Joh 17:4**. This work is to magnify him with our bodies, whether it be by life or death, **#Php 1:19**; yea, to glorify him in our bodies, and in our spirits, which are his, **#1Co 6:20**. God sells us increase of grace for sweat, saith one. He gives it as Boaz gave Ruth grain, **#Mal 2:14-17**. He could have given her at first an ephah of barley, and it had been no more charge to him; but he will have her gather it, glean it, beat it out, use her endeavour, and that should be the price she should pay for it. So here God's people healed must go forth or leap about, use legs and have legs, &c. "This I had, because I kept thy precepts," **#Ps 119:56**. What had he? but an ability to keep God's law, **#Ps 119:55**; he kept it because he kept it; for every new act of obedience fits the soul for a following act, **#Ro 6:19**. And to you that hear shall be more given, **#Mr 4:24**.

**And grow up as calves of the stall]** Ye shall battle and thrive both in flesh and fat, as R. David expounds it; your souls shall be flourishing and fair liking; as waters of the sanctuary, they shall rise higher; as trees planted in God's paradise, they shall bring forth new fruit every month, **#Eze 47:12 Joh 15:2**; as the morning sun, they shall shine more and more unto the perfect day, **#Pr 4:18**, when the

wicked, by growing worse and worse, **#2Ti 3:13**, stumble in darkness, **#2Ti 3:1-9**, so that they lie down in sorrow, **#Isa 50:11**. The blessing on man in the first creation was Increase and multiply; in the second, Grow in grace, **#Isa 61:8,11**. A Christian hath his degrees of growth, and his several ages, of childhood, youth, or well grown age, full grown, and old age, **#1Jo 2:14**. These things write I unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye may believe in the name of the Son of God, saith the same apostle, **#1Jo 5:13**, that is, that ye may grow in that belief, as ye grow in days and years, proceeding from faith to faith, **#Php 3:14**; as the Church in the Canticles hath her first light like the day dawning, her second beauty like the moon, her third degree like the sun, **#So 6:10**. A Christian, though in some sense perfect, yet hath he still his *Plus ultra*, and may take for motto Charles V's *Ulterius*, Further yet; he must be still adding grace to grace, that he may have an entrance further and further into Christ's kingdom, **#2Pe 1:5,11**, as by steps and stairs they went up to Solomon's temple. And the apostle there gives us to understand that those that thus add not to their stock of grace shall have little comfort either from the time past, for they shall forget that they were purged from their sins; or from thoughts of the time to come, for they shall not be able to see things far off, **#2Pe 1:9**, because they delight not in high flying, as eagles; their wings, as the ostrich's, do little more than bear them above ground. Many care for no more grace than will keep life and soul together, that is, soul and hell asunder. This is a low and unworthy strain, and comes not near that of St Paul, who set up for his mark the resurrection of the dead, **#Php 3:10**, that is, that perfection of holiness that accompanieth the resurrection. To the attaining hereunto he followed hard on, reaching forth, and stretching out head, hands, and whole body, to lay hold on the high prize proposed unto him, **#Php 3:12-14**, and would have all men to be thus minded. Runners in a race look not how much they have run, but how much remaineth; and although moderate in the beginning (for hot at hand seldom holds out), yet the nearer they grow to the goal the Faster they speed their course; that their last days may be their best days; accounting that day lost wherein they have not some sensible comings in from Christ; like as good husbands, in dead times when stirrings fail, are discontented when they have had no takings.

Ver. 3. **And ye shall tread down the wicked]** Christ, the champion of his Church, hath already won the field, and will shortly set his people's feet upon the necks of all their enemies. The broken horns of Satan himself shall be the trumpets of their triumph and the cornets of their joy, **#Ro 16:20**. See what honour all the saints have in this respect, **#Ps 149:7-9**; see what comfort, **#Joh 16:33**; see what conquests, **#Ro 8:37**. How much more at the last day, when the thrones shall be set, &c., **#Mt 19:28**. Rabbi David Kimchi understands this text to be temporal victories only. And no wonder, as being a Jew, and minding earthly things, he ascends no higher. Such grasshoppers, if at any time they leap above the earth, they soon fall down to it again; and as they are of the earth, so they speak of the earth, and the earth hears them. Petrus a Figniero writing upon those words in the former chapter, **#Mal 3:12** "For ye shall be a delightsome land," *Nota modum loquendi*, saith he: mark that expression, He saith not your land shall be a delightsome land, but "ye shall be," &c. *Forte enim tacite Iudaeos percellit terrain eos vocando*. It may be the Lord hereby, closely meets with them for their earthly mindedness; as those that by promise of earthly blessings were soonest prevailed with to serve God, when as these should have been but as steps or stirrups to mount their hearts up to a desire of the things above. Victory in their sense is doubtless a special mercy; and is so promised to the obedient, **#De 28:13** "The Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and not beneath," &c. Hence the Israelites, delivered from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, sang, "The Lord is a man of war," **#Ex 15:3**; the Chaldee there hath it, The Lord and victor of wars. The Grecians delivered from the Persians (vanquished and driven out by Themistocles), called their Jupiter thereupon, *Ελευθεριος*, the deliverer. It was the thankful acknowledgment of generals, captains, and soldiers at Edge Hill fight, that the Lord was seen in the mount, never less of man in such a business, never more of God. But what shall it profit a man to conquer countries, and yet be vanquished of vices? to tread upon his enemies, and yet be taken captive by the devil at his pleasure? **#2Ti 2:26**, to command the whole world, as those Persian kings, and yet were commanded by their concubines, so by their base lusts, by yielding whereunto they give place unto the very devil, and receive them into their very bosoms, **#Eph 4:27**, who there hence leads them away naked and

barefoot, as the Assyrians did the Egyptians, #Isa 20:2. How much better Valentinian the emperor, who said upon his death-bed that among all his victories over his enemies this one only comforted him, viz. that by the grace and power of Christ Jesus he that got the better of his corruptions, and was now more than a conqueror, even a triumph.

**For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet]** Even the ashes of that stubble burnt in Christ's oven, #Mal 4:1. This shows their utter and ignominious destruction. And the like is foretold of mystical Babylon, #Re 18:17-19. *Tota eris in cineres quasi nunquam Roma fuisses*, sang Sibylla of old. *Fiat, Fiat*. Our corruptions also shall one day be incinerated (they are already buried, #Ro 6:4 Col 2:12), the fiery spirit of Christ will do with the body of sin, as the King of Moab did with the King of Edom, #Am 2:1, burn its bones into lime.

**In the day that I shall do this]** *sc.* Partly here, but perfectly at the last day. Meanwhile sin may rebel in God's people, but it cannot reign. Satan may nibble at their heel, but he cannot come at their head; the world may kill them, but cannot hurt them. "Be of good cheer," saith Christ, "I have overcome the world," #Joh 16:33. All evils and enemies shall co-operate for their good, #Ro 8:28.

**Saith the Lord of hosts]** Who hath also said, "Heaven and earth shall pass, but not one jot or tittle of my word," &c.

Ver. 4. **Remember ye the law of Moses]** viz. Now henceforth, in the end of prophecy, for Malachi knew that after him until the days of John Baptist no prophet should arise. Hence this exhortation, to read and remember the law, as leading them to Christ; the law, I say, in all the parts of it; not excluding the prophets, those interpreters of the law, and most excellent commentaries thereupon, with like reverence to be read and received. The Jews at this day read in their synagogues two lessons; one out of the law, by some chief person, another out of the prophets, correspondent to the former in argument, but is read by some boy, or lowly companion; for they will in no sort do that honour, neither attribute they that authority, to any part of the Bible, that they do to their law. But "this their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings," as the Psalmist

speaketh in another case, **#Ps 49:13**. Two things offer themselves to our observation from these first words. First, the little coherence that this verse hath with the former; the prophet choosing rather to fall abruptly upon his most needful, but too much neglected, duty of remembering the law, than not at all to mention it. See the like **#Ro 16:17**, where the apostle breaks off his salutations, to warn them of their danger by seducers; and that done, returns thereto again. Secondly, in the Hebrew word rendered remember, there is, in many Bibles, a great Zain; to show, as some think, the necessity and excellency of this duty of remembering the law of Moses (Buxtorf. in Comment. Maser. c. 14). *{Hebrew Text Note}* It is well enough known, that since the fall man's soul is like a filthy pond, wherein fish die soon and frogs live long; profane matters are remembered, pious passages forgotten. Our memories are like sieves, or nets, that retain chaff and palterment, let go the good grain, or clear water; God's word runs through us, as water runs through a riven vessel. And as hour glasses, which no sooner turned up and filled, but are presently running out again to the last sand, so is it here. And yet the promise of salvation is limited to the condition of keeping in memory what we have read or heard, **#1Co 15:2**. And David's character of a blessed man is, that he meditateth in the law day and night, **#Ps 1:2**.

*“ Hoc primum repetens opus, hoc postremus omittens ”* (Hor. Ep. 6).

Bishop Babington had a little book, containing three leaves only, which he turned over night and morning. The first leaf was black, to remind him of hell and God's judgments due to him for sin; the second red, to mind him of Christ and his passion; the third white, to set forth God's mercy to him through the merits of his Son, in his justification and sanctification. The law of the Lord, as it is perfect in itself, so it is right for all holy purposes, **#Ps 19:7,8**. It serves to reveal sin, **#Ro 3:20 7:9**, shows the punishment due to sin, **#Ga 3:10**, scourgeth men to Christ, **#Ga 3:24**; and is a perfect rule of obedience; it being so penned that every man may think it speaks *de se, in re sua*, as Athanasius saith of the book of Psalms; and must therefore be of all acknowledged to be Θεου ερημα, God's own invention (Demost.). Moses was but the penman only, though it be here called his law; because God gave him the moral law written with his own hand, **#De 10:2**, adding it to the promise made to

Abraham, that thereby guilt being discovered, &c., men might acknowledge the riches of free grace and mercy; and that they might walk, as Luther hath it, **#Ga 3:19**, in the heaven of the promise, but in the earth of the law (that, in respect of believing, this of obeying); that they might live as though there were no gospel, die as though there were no law; pass the time of this life in the wilderness of this world under the conduct of Moses, but let none but Joshua (Jesus) bring them over to Canaan the promised land. This the generality of the Jews could not skill of (though the moral law drove them to the ceremonial, which was then Christ in figure, as it doth now drive us to Christ in truth), they would needs have Moses for a saviour; and being ignorant of God's righteousness (wilfully ignorant), they go about to establish their own, **#Ro 10:3**, and so lose all. They jeer at an imputed righteousness; and say, That every fox must pay his own skin to the flayer. They blaspheme Jesus Christ, and curse him in a close abbreviature of his name; and call those among them that convert to Christianity, *Meshumadim*, that is, lost, or undone (Buxtorf. syn. Jud. cap. 5). Moses' law they extol without measure; it must not be written on any parchment but what is made of the skin of a clean beast; nor read but in a clean place. No man must touch it but with the right hand, and not without a kiss of reverence. They usually carry it in procession about their synagogue, with many ornaments of crowns and sceptres, the children kissing it as it passeth by them. No man must sit in the presence of it, nor so much as spit before it (Schicard. *de iure leg. Hebr.*). Whereas the gospel of grace they utterly reject and abominate, as a volume of vanity (*Evangelium Avan-gelaion*); that Italian translation that they had of the New Testament is called in, and taken from them, for their horrible abuse of it; this being still the twelfth article of their creed, I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Messiah is yet to come. No marvel if the apostle would not have us ignorant, "that blindness in part is happened to Israel," **#Ro 11:25**. That lesser part, or rather particle, of them that are proselyted to our religion, they pretend that they are none other than poor Christians hired to impersonate their part. And yet they give complete dispensation to counterfeit Christianity, even to the degree of priesthood. In the day of their expiation, their Rabbi doth absolve them from all their perjuries and deceits used against Christians. He also assures them they are not bound to keep any oath but what is sworn upon their own Torah, or

law of Moses, brought out of their synagogue; to the reading whereof they depute one third part of their day; and wherein they are generally so expert, that they have it as ready as their own names (*Facilius quam nomen suum recitati*. Joseph. Cont. Appio. lib. 2). The mischief of it is, that they are too much affixed to it, and will needs be saved by it; which the law cannot do for them, as being weak through the flesh, #Ro 8:3. The law is a yoke of bondage, as Jerome calleth it; and they who look for righteousness from hence are like oxen who toil and draw and when they have done their labour are fitted for slaughter. Luther fitly calleth such drudges the devil's martyrs; they suffer much and take much pains to go to hell. And in another place he saith, *Qui scit inter Legem et Evangelium distinguere, gratias agat Deo, et sciat se esse Theologum*. He that can rightly distinguish between law and gospel hath cause to praise God; and may well pass for a divine.

**Moses my servant]** A far higher title than son of Pharaoh's daughter; for this was to be Pharaoh's God, #Ex 7:1, and higher than the kings of the earth, #Ps 89:27. No marvel though Moses so esteemed it; when Numa, king of Romans, a heathen did; and Augustus the emperor, *cui gratius fuit nomen pietatis quam potestatis*, saith Tertullian, he preferred piety before monarchy (του θεου υπηρεσιον βασιλευειν ενομιζεν. Flat.); so did those succeeding emperors, Constantine, Valentinian, and Theodosius, who called themselves *Vassallos Christi*, the vassals of Christ, as Socrates reporteth. It was noted, as a great both presage and desert of Darius's ruin, when in his proud embassy to Alexander he called himself the king of kings, and cousin of the gods; but for Alexander, he called him his servant. That was worse in John Oneal, father to the Earl of Tirone, that rebel, A.D. 1598, who blasphemously inscribed himself in all places; I, great John Oncal, cousin to Christ, friend to the Queen of England, and foe to all the world, &c. What big bubbles of words were these, as Peter calls them. His pretended successor styleth himself the servant of God's servants; and one day in the year, in an apish imitation of our Saviour, washeth certain men's feet. But he acteth as *Dominus regnorum mundi*, Lord of the kings of the world, which is one of the devil's titles; and can endure to be called by his parasites *Dominus Deus noster Papa*; Our Lord God the Pope. Moses held it honour enough to be the servant of the



Lord, and yet he was *Vir Deo longe acceptissimus quo nihil habuit antiqua aetas, mitius, sapientius, sanctius*; highly accepted in heaven, and the most meek, wise, and holy man that antiquity ever had or mentioned, as Bellarmine himself acknowledgeth.

**Which I commanded him in Horeb]** Moses then was not the law maker, as Solon, Lycurgus, Zaleucus, &c., but only God's minister to utter what he would have him deliver; or, at utmost, a mediator, **#Ga 3:19**, not of expiation, for so Christ only, but of communication of the law to all Israel, **#Ex 20:19**, wherein he was faithful in all God's house as a servant, **#Heb 3:5** *famulus ingenuus*, a servant of the better sort, a man of worship, as the word there seemeth to import (Θεριτων *ex verbo* Θεραπευειν). The place where Moses received the law is mentioned, Horeb (the same with Sinai, **#Ac 7:30 Ex 19:1,18**), to remind them of the terror of the Lord on that mountain, when God came down upon it with ten thousand of his saints; "from his right hand went a fiery law for them," Heb. a fire of law, **#De 33:2**. And surely that fire wherein the law was given, and shall one day be required, is in it still, and will never out. Hence are those terrors, which it flasheth in every conscience that hath felt remorse of sin. Every man's heart is a Horeb; and resembleth to him both heaven and hell. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," **#1Co 15:56**.

**To all Israel]** And it is reckoned as a singular privilege to that people, **#Ne 9:14 Ro 9:4**. Prosper's conceit was, that *Iudaei* Jews were so called because they received *Ius Dei*, the law of God. Josephus calleth their commonwealth a theocracy, or God government. That of Philo is not so solid, that their law was given in a wilderness, because it is to be learned in a wilderness, seeing there we cannot be hindered by the multitude. But what a wretched conceit is that of the Jews at this day, that the law of nature shall bring to heaven those that observe it; but the Hebrews (unto whom the law of Moses was peculiarly given) by keeping it, shall have a prerogative of glory! How shall the lion of the tribe of Judah roar upon them at that day, and say, "Do not think that I will accuse you: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust," **#Joh 5:45**. Get you to him whom ye have chosen; but cold comfort ye are

like to have from him; a very froward generation he ever found you, children in whom is no faith, #De 33:20.

**With the statutes and judgments]** That is, with the ceremonial and judicial law. But what meant that false Rabbin to add to this text these following words, *Quamdiu non venit dies iudicii*, Till the day of judgment comes (R. David); as if men were bound till then to the observation of the ceremonial and judicial law? But it is ordinary with those Jewish doctors to corrupt the text for their own purpose; adding and altering at their pleasure. The judicial law was fitted to the Jews, and was the best that they could suffer, as Solon said of the Athenian laws. The ceremonial law was their gospel, pointing them to Christ; and therefore abolished by him, as having no use in the Church after his death, but by accident. As for the moral law (called here by an excellency the law of Moses), it is established for ever in heaven, #Ps 119:89; and albeit some duties of certain commandments shall cease when we come to heaven, yet the substance of every one remaineth. This perpetuity of the moral law was noted by engraving it in stone, #Ex 34:27 2Co 3:7. The Jews have a saying, That God hath more respect to the letters of the law than to the stars of heaven, and Christ either alludes to or confirms it in that saying of his, Heaven and earth shall pass before one jot or tittle of the law pass. Think not that I am come to destroy the law (viz. the moral law) or the prophets, who press moral duties, as explainers of the law; they do as it were unfold and draw out that arras which was folded together before, #Mt 5:17. These therefore, together with the law of Moses, must be daily and duly read and remembered. Jerome calls the books of Kings his own; because by the frequent use and reading of them, he had got them by heart, and as it were made them his own ( *Lege Melachim meum; meum, inquam meum: quicquid enim didicimus et tenemus nostrum est.* Prolog. in lib. Reg.). Of Paula he testifieth, that she had most of the Scriptures by heart ( *Scripturas sanctas memoiter tenebat*). Of Nepotian likewise, that with daily reading and continual meditation he had made his heart *Bibliothecam Christi*, the library of Christ. See my True Treasure, p. 315.

Ver. 5. **Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet]** Not Elijah the Tishbite, as the Septuagint corruptly read; and the Popish expositors make no small use of it, to prove that the Pope is not antichrist,

because Enoch and Elijah are not yet come, and yet are to come in his time, before the day of judgment (as they fondly fable), to preserve the elect in the faith of Christ, and to convert the Jews. But we have better interpreters of this text. 1. An angel, who applies it to John Baptist, #**Lu 1:17** 2. Christ, that angel of the covenant, #**Mt 17:10,11 11:14**. Hear ye him, against all antichrist's agitators. St Mark begins his Gospel with these very words of Malachi, to let us know that this Elias is the Baptist, who is called Elijah the prophet, because of the like gifts, calling, and ministry, office of reforming habit, people with whom they dealt, &c. The like almost may be said of Luther, a third Elias for boldness, courage, zeal, knowledge, success, &c. But yet we see no footing in this text for Lucas Osiander's conceit, viz. that the prophet here pointed at Luther as well as at John Baptist; and that men must receive his doctrine, or else look to be smitten with a curse. Howbeit this is more passable and possible than that of the Jesuits, who presume to control Christ's own exposition; and infer, that as the devil stirred up Luther to call the Pope antichrist, so God raised up them to resist Luther. But what a mad fellow was that Spaniard (of whom Severus Sulpitius writeth) that professed himself, first, to be the prophet Elias, and afterward, when he had gained authority, to be the Christ; carrying himself so cunningly in his collusion, that Bishop Ruffus was led away with the error, believing in him, and adoring him as God; for which he was justly deprived of his dignity! Had we not need receive the truth in the love of it, lest God give us up to the efficacy of error, #**2Th 2:10**? lest being first infatuated, we be seduced, and then being seduced, we be damned, as Austin glosseth on that text?

**Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord]** Great, in respect of the good, and dreadful, or horrible, in respect of the wicked, as Montanus interprets it, paralleling it with #**Mt 3:12**. Or great, because it shall be a beginning of great changes, both to the godly and the ungodly; and dreadful to the bad, yea, and to the best also at first, till they have recollected and better bethought themselves, as another senseth it; as taking it of the last day, which is the general mistake of Popish expositors, and that upon this ground, because Christ's first coming was an acceptable time, and a day of salvation. But though it be so to God's people, yet to others it was terrible, as hath been shown: {See Trapp on "Mal 3:2"} and is so

described, #**Lu 2:34 3:9,17 19:44 Mt 21:44 Isa 11:4**. He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with his two-edged sword he shall slay the wicked. See the like, #**Re 2:16**. And by his ministers he doth it still, #**2Th 2:8 2Co 2:15,16 2Co 10:6**. Vengeance is as ready in Christ's hand as in the minister's mouth, for the disobedient. Some read the words thus, Before the day of the great and dreadful Lord come: like as others read that, #**Jas 2:1**, Have not the glorious faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons. Both readings are good, and the text will bear both.

Ver. 6. **And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, &c.**] John Baptist's office and efficacy is here described; he shall, as a powerful instrument (by preaching repentance, #**Mt 3:2**, and prevailing, as he did, with all sorts, even to admiration; so that all men mused in their hearts, whether he were the Christ or not, #**Lu 3:10,12,14,15**), convert sinners from the errors of their way, reduce them to the faith of the old patriarchs, make them unanimous in the love of God and of one another, and tie them up together, as it were, by his baptism. For the multitude of believers "were of one heart and one soul," #**Ac 4:32** ( *animo animaque inter se miscebantur*, as Tertullian phraseth it), neither was there any controversy at all among them, as one ancient Greek copy subjoineth there. Controversies there were great store among the Jews, when the Baptist came. As Joseph found his brethren in Dothan, which signifieth defection, so did he. They were all gone out of the way; and, being led aside by the error of the wicked, they were fallen from their own steadfastness. Many strange opinions and dotages they had taken up, and were woefully divided; specially by those three different sects, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes; which the prophet Zechariah calleth three shepherds: that were to be destroyed in one month, at John's coming, #**Zec 11:8**. The Pharisees were held the best of those three, *si ad legem respexeris*, saith Tremellius, if you look to the law; and St Paul, who was once a Pharisee of Pharisees, calleth them the most strict sect of the Jewish religion, #**Ac 26:5** (like those *districtissimi Monachi* among the Papists); and yet there were seven sorts of Pharisees, as we find in their Talmud. Hence much alienation of affection among them, and great animosities; father hating son, and son father, for truth's sake, as #**Mt 10:35**. So powerful should John be in his ministry, that although the leprosy were gotten into their heads, and were therefore

held incurable, **#Le 13:44**, yet he should "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord," **#Lu 1:17**. All headstrong and brutish affections should be calmed and corrected, as **#Isa 11:6-8**, and the peaceable wisdom from above instilled, **#Jas 3:17**, so that they shall "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," **#Eph 4:8**. And albeit some jars may fall out (as between Paul and Barnabas), yet God's people can soon piece again, and reunite. *Ut aer percussus non laeditur, imo ne dividitur quidem, sed refundit sese, et spissior redit, &c.* As the air, divided by a stone or stroke, soon closeth and thickeneth the more. Certainly there is no such oneness and entireness anywhere as among the saints; their love is spiritual, **#So 6:9**. The very heathens acknowledged that no people in the world did hold together and love one another so as Christians did. Tacitus observeth of the Jews, that there was *miseriordia in promptu spud suos*, but *contra omnes alios hostile odium*, mercy enough for their own countrymen among them, but hostile hatred against all others: they used to say, that there is no Gentile but deserves to have his head bruised, &c. But John Baptist by his preaching made Jewish Pharisees and Roman soldiers (according to the phrase that Josephus useth of him), to convent, and knit together in baptism (*εν βαπτισμω συνιεναι*. Antiq. lib. 18, cap. 7).

**Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse]** That is, lest coming, I smite, &c. For there is no doubt to be made of his coming; and as little of his smiting, if men amend not. These words menace as many as resisted John's ministry with utter destruction; "whether it be done against the whole nation, or against a man only," **#Job 34:29**. The Romans came and took away both their place and their nation; not for letting Christ alone, as they feared, **#Joh 11:48**, but for laying wicked hands upon him, and putting to "death the Lord of life," **#Ac 2:28**. John also preached damnation to them, **#Mt 3:7-12**, and so did our Saviour, **#Mt 23:13-33**, whereby eight dreadful woes, as by so many links of an adamantine chain, he draws those irreformable hypocrites down to hell, their place; and then leaves them to be reserved unto judgment. St Jerome was called *Fulmen Ecclesiasticum*, the Church thunderbolt. Mr Perkins was a most earnest preacher, and would pronounce the word damn with such an

emphasis, as left a doleful echo in his auditors' ears a good while after. And when catechist of Christ's College, in expounding the commandments, he applied them so home, that he made his hearers hearts fall down, and their hairs to stand up straight almost. And surely this is the way to work upon hard hearted sinners; whence the apostle bids Titus rebuke with all authority; and then turning him to the people (as Calvin senseth it), chargeth them not to despise him for so doing, **#Tit 1:15**. The apostle knew well that men are, for the most part, of delicate ears; and can ill abide plain dealing. Ahab hates Micaiah, and hath him in prison, ever since that dreadful denunciation of displeasure and death, for dismissing Benhadad (for he was, probably, that disguised prophet), for which he was ever since fast in prison, deep in disgrace. But truth must be spoken, however it be taken; and those that will not be pricked at heart (*κατενυγησαν*), as **#Ac 2:37**, but take up bucklers to ward off the blow, must have the sword of the Spirit sheathed in their bowels, and bathed in their blood; for in all this we are a sweet savour unto God, **#2Co 2:15**, yea, though a "savour of death unto death." The barren earth must be smitten with cursing, and they that mind earthly things (*Terra autem sunt, qui terrena sapiunt*, saith Austin) have damnation for their end, so that St Paul cannot speak of them without tears of compassion, **#Php 3:18,19**. Oh that it might express from them tears of compunction! Oh that they would be forewarned to flee from the wrath to come! Oh that they would think upon eternity, and by breaking off their sins, disarm God's indignation justly conceived against them! He therefore threateneth that he may not smite; he proceeds not to punish till there be no remedy, **#2Ch 36:16**. *Crudelem medicum intemperans aeger facit*; an unruly patient makes a cruel physician. Oh that we could all resolve to deal by our sins as Lewis, King of France, did by the Pope's bulls, whereby he required the fruits of vacancies of all cathedral churches of France, about the year 1152; he cast them into the fire, saying, he had rather the Pope's bulls should roast in the fire than his own soul should fry in hell.

For a conclusion to all, take an observation of Amamas, and before him of Buxtorf; that in many Hebrew Bibles the last verse save one of this prophecy (as also of Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, and Lamentations) is repeated again in the end thereof, though without pricks, lest

anything should be thought added to God's word. *{Hebrew Text Note}*  
*Factum hoc ex Scribarum decreto, &c.* This the scribes thought fit to do, either for the dignity of those repeated verses, that the reader might again ruminare and remind them; or else, as some will have it, because all those books end in threatenings and sad speeches. And therefore, lest the Sun of righteousness should seem to set in a cloud, or not to shine upon the departing passenger, they thought fit to leave the verse before to be last; as being sweet and full of comfort, that the reader might, Samson-like, go his way, feeding on that honeycomb.

***Laus Deo in aeternum.***