

**A COMMENTARY OR EXPOSITION
UPON THE FOLLOWING BOOKS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE:
EZRA, NEHEMIAH, ESTHER, JOB, AND PSALMS**

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.

TO THE WORSHIPFUL HIS MUCH HONOURED FRIEND,
EDWARD LEIGH
OF RUSHIL-HALL, IN STAFFORDSHIRE, ESQUIRE,
MASTER OF ARTS, OF BOTH UNIVERSITIES.

HONOURED SIR,

Besides the much help I confess, and not now the first time (see my Notes on the New Test., *passim*), to have had from your learned lucubrations already extant, those many real courtesies lately done me, a mere stranger, in mine eldest son, whom you have freely beneficed and fairly encouraged, call hard upon me for a grateful acknowledgment. And forasmuch, as like another Nicias (Stobaeus Serm. 117), you are known to be Φιλοβιβλος, yea, as that renowned Richard de Bury (Hic fuit episc. Dunelmensis, A.D. 1333), *Extatico quodam librorum amore potenter abreptus*, so that you may well say, as that emperor once did of himself (Julian ep. ad Eedieium), *Quidam equis, hi avibus, nonnulli feris delectantur; Ego vero inde usque a pueritia librorum cupiditate arsi*, I cannot bethink me of a fitter patron than your worthy self, nor yet of a better present than this of a book, beseeching you to own it and honour it with your kind acceptance, as a token of my true respects, and a testimony of my cordial thankfulness. I need not here, for an apology, tell you, Sir, what Seneca saith, There is no book so bad but some commodity may be gotten by it. Let it be, for me, a praise proper to Hippocrates, that in his Aphorisms there is ουδεν μικουν ουδεν καταφρονητεον. Let Scaliger say of Virgil (and Lipsius as much of Tacitus), *E cuius ore nil temere excidit*. Aristotle's Rhetoric, saith one, is sufficient to make both a scholar and an honest man. His Politie Cicero calleth *Aureum flumen orationis*, for the purity of the style and preciousness of the matter, Averroes admireth and extolleth him above measure, in whatsoever be hath written. And yet others, no less judicious, deem that his deep theorems of philosophy, as they make men learned, so seldom better, and oftentimes worse, mere atheists. Sure it is that, compared with the Holy Scriptures, they are but *straminea canticle*, a rush candle, that yieldeth but a small light, and is quickly out. "To the law, therefore, and to the testimony," saith that evangelical prophet, that is, to the Old

Testament and the New, as some sense it, "If any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"; as if any, either by speaking or writing, bring the least light to these sacred oracles, *Quae et latent et lucent*, they are not to be defrauded of their due commendation. This you have done, worthy Sir, in all your theological treatises, which are *auro contra non cari*, your elaborate annotations on the New Testament especially. On the Old Testament, also, we hope to see you shortly; and are so far from censuring you for thrusting your sickle into our harvest, that we all highly accept and applaud your learned labours; heartily wishing you length of days and help from heaven for the completing of so good a work. *Deus praecepit nobis, ut discamus non argutias Platonis, nec versutias Aristotelis, sed doctrinam Filii Dei* (Bernard). Hereunto, therefore, we do humbly crave and call for your utmost furtherance, which shall be nothing at all to your hindrance at the last; for, beside the reward of eternal life, assured you by Christ, our Εργοδιωκτης, *Scientiarum ea vis est ac natura, ut quo plus doceas, ac alteri de tuo largiare, eo ditior ac doctior fias* (Bodin. Theat. Nat. p. 9), there is no loss in laying out your talent. Your much desired Commentaries, now in the press (as is reported), and which you are yet further preparing for the public, will be most welcome to the world; and I wish they may take as well as did Aretius's Examen Theologicum, printed twelve times in three years. As for these, or any other of mine, let them veil and strike sail to yours, wherever they meet them, and let me be ever reckoned, among many others,

Sir,

An admirer of your indefatigable industry and rare abilities,
JOHN TRAPP.

Welford, Sept. 8th, 1656.

Ezra

Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **Now]** Heb. And; for the former history, recorded in the Chronicles, is continued by Ezra, that ready scribe, and perfect in the law, **#Ezr 7:6**. Yet not so prompt or perfect can I deem him, as that he should, by memory, restore the Bible that was burnt, together with the temple, by the Babylonians. And yet that was the opinion of many ancients, grounded upon some passages in that Apocryphal Esdras (Irenae., Tertull., Clem. Alex., Jerome, Aug., Euseb.). We read also of one Johannes Gatius Ciphaleditanus, who, out of the vain confidence of his learning and memory, was wont to give out, that if the Holy Scripture should be lost out of the world, he would not doubt, by God's grace, to restore it whole again. Of Cranmer indeed (a far better man, and a profounder divine) it is storied, that he had memorised most of the New Testament by heart. And of Beza, that, being more than eighty years of age, he could say perfectly, without the book, any Greek chapter in St Paul's Epistles (Mr Leigh, Annot. on **#Joh 5:39**).

In the first year] Heb. In the one year. The Hebrews oft use one for first. So do also the apostles in Greek, **#Mt 28:1 Joh 20:1,19 1Co 16:2 Re 6:1**; one being the first number; neither was it without a mystery that Pythagoras bade his scholars ever to have respect, εἰς μονάδα; as Moses also his, saying, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord," **#De 6:4**.

Of Cyrus] Heb. Coresh, so named by God more than a hundred years before he was born, **#Isa 40:28**, and so honoured by the Persians (as the founder of their monarchy) that they liked the better of all that were hawk-nosed, like unto him. See the like of Josiah, **#1Ki 13:2**. The Persian word signifieth a lord, or great prince, as Hen. Stephanus noteth; and thence the Greeks have their κυρος, authority, κυριος, lord; and we our word sir, as some will have it. Plutarch, in Artaxerxes, saith that the Persians call the sun Cyrus. And it may very well be so, for the Hebrews also call the sun כּהרֵס Cheres, from its glistening brightness.

King of Persia] So he had been more than twenty years before this, and done many great exploits; but this was the first year of his empire, of his cosmocracy {*Ruler of the world*}, of the monarchy translated from the Babylonians to the Persians. The greatest kingdoms have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin, when they shall live by fame only. Persia, having oft changed her masters since Cyrus, remaineth a flourishing kingdom to this day; but wholly Mahometan. Which abominable superstition the Turks received from them when, in the year 1030, they won that country under their Sultan Tangrolipix. Where it is hard to say, saith mine author, whether nation lost more, the Persians, by the loss of so great a kingdom, or the Turks, by embracing so great a vanity. To this day they acknowledge the Persians better Mahometans than themselves, which maketh the Turks far better soldiers upon the Christian than upon the Persian.

That the word of the Lord] For it was he that spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, **#Lu 1:70**, and his word cannot be broken, **#Joh 10:35**, for he is the God of Amen, as the prophet David calleth him, **#Ps 31:5**; and all his promises are the issue of a most faithful and right will, void of all insincerity and falsehood, **#Pr 8:8**.

By the mouth of Jeremiah] That admirable preacher (as Keckerman calleth him), that most eminent prophet (as another), with whose writings, about this very restoration, Daniel consulted, and therehence collected, that the time was come, **#Da 9:2**, which put him upon that heavenly prayer; for he knew that God's promises must be put in suit; and it was to him that the angel afterwards said, I came for thy word, **#Da 10:14**. God will come, according to his promise, but he will have his people's prayers lead him. This liberty here granted to the Jews, after so long captivity, was the fruit of many prayers, founded upon the promise, **#Jer 25:12 29:10**.

Might be fulfilled] As indeed it was exactly by the death of Belshazzar, slain by Cyrus, who succeeded him: **#Da 5:30**, "In that night was Belshazzar slain," because then exactly the seventy years were ended. So, for the same reason it is noted, **#Ex 12:40,41**, that at midnight the firstborn of Egypt were slain, because just then the four hundred or four hundred and thirty years foretold were expired.

So punctual is God in keeping his word. It is not here, as with men, A day breaketh no square, &c., for he never faileth at his time.

The Lord stirred up the spirit] It was the mighty and immediate work of God (in whose hand are the hearts of all, both kings and captives, lords and lowlies) to bring this wise and great prince, in the very first entrance into his monarchy, before things were fully settled, to dismiss so great and so united a people, in respect of their custom and religion, and so given to insurrection (as was generally held) into their own country, with such a fair and full patent. This was the Lord's own work, and it was justly marvellous in the eyes of his people; who could hardly believe their own eyes, but were for a while like those who dream. Then was their mouth filled with laughter, and their tongue with singing, &c., #Ps 126:1,2. Then was the great power and goodness of God, in stirring up Cyrus to do this, acknowledged. Then also was the king's clemency and courtesy no less cried up and magnified than was that of Flaminius, the Roman general, at Athens, where, for delivering them from servitude, he was little less than deified; or that of our Queen Elizabeth, who, for her merciful returning home certain Italians that were taken prisoners in the eighty-eight invasion, was termed St. Elizabeth by some at Venice; whereof one told the Lord Carleton (afterwards Viscount Dorchester), being there ambassador, that although he was a Papist, yet he would never pray to any other saint but that St. Elizabeth.

That he made proclamation] Heb. He caused a voice to pass, *sc.* by his messengers and ministers. The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, #Es 3:15, even those Angarii. The Lord Christ also proclaiming liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, #Isa 61:1, causeth his word to run and to be glorified, to spread like a sunbeam, as Eusebius saith the gospel did at first; to be carried as on eagles' wings, or on angels' wings, as it was through all Christendom, when Luther first sent forth his book, *De Captivitate Babylonica*, of the Babylonish Captivity.

And put it also in writing] That it might be posted up, and everywhere published. *Vox audita perit: littera scripta manet.*

Christ hath written for us also the great things of his law; and should they, then, be counted a strange thing? #Ho 8:12. {See Trapp on "Ho 8:12"} His Gospel likewise he hath written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, #1Jo 5:13, and ponder his passion especially, which is, therefore, so particularly set down by four faithful witnesses, that men may get it written, not on the nails of their hands (as one once did), but upon the tables of their hearts, there to abide as a perpetual picture; *Non scripta solum, sed et sculpta*, as he said; that we therein beholding, as in a glass, the love of our Lord, might be changed into the same image, till our hearts became a very lump of love to him who "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father," #Re 1:5,6.

Ver. 2. **The Lord God of heaven hath given me]** This good language Cyrus might well learn of Daniel, who flourished under his reign, #Da 5:28, and probably acquainted him with the prophecies that went before of him, #Isa 44:28 45:1. Jaddeus, the high priest, did the like, many years after, to Alexander the Great; who not only thereupon spared the Jews, but highly honoured them, as Josephus relateth. Here, then, we see this potentate of the earth giveth unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, #Ps 29:1,2, acknowledging him the blessed and only potentate, #1Ti 6:16. One that both is in the heavens, and also doeth whatsoever he pleaseth, both in heaven and in earth, #Ps 115:3 135:6. The God of heaven, saith he, hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth. This was far better than that of Alexander the Great, whom, when Lysippus had pictured looking up to heaven with this posy, *Iupiter asserui terrain mihi, tu asserere ccelum, &c.*, Alexander was so delighted with it, that he proclaimed that none should take his picture but Lysippus (Plin. lib. 6, cap. 16).

All the kingdoms of the earth] *i.e.* Many of them, so that he was Αυτοκρατωρ, a mighty monarch, an absolute emperor. But to be κοσμοκρατωρ, sole lord of the whole world, was never yet granted to any; though the great Cham of Cataia is reported to cause his trumpets to be sounded every day as soon as he hath dined, in token that he giveth leave to other princes of the earth (whom he supposeth to be his vassals) to go to dinner. And the proud Spaniard, who affecteth to be catholic monarch, was well laughed at by Sir Francis Drake and his company, for his device of a Pegasus, flying

out of a globe of the earth set up in the Indies with this motto—*totus non sufficit orbis*. But he affecteth a universal monarchy; and so perhaps did Cyrus, which maketh him here speak so largely

And he hath charged me] *Et ipse commisit mihi*, so Junius rendereth it. The word signifieth to visit one, either for the better or the worse. But according to the Chaldee and Syriac use, it signifieth to charge or command, as it is here, and #2Ch 36:22, fitly rendered. But how knew Cyrus this charge of Almighty God, otherwise than by books? Like as Daniel (who probably showed him those prophecies of Isaiah concerning him) understood by #Jer 25:12 29:10, that the seventy years' captivity were accomplished; and by #Eze 31:1-3, &c. (which he had read, likely, and revolved) he was the better able to give a right interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, #Da 4:19-27.

To build him an house at Jerusalem] *i.e.* To rebuild that which had been once built by Solomon (whence Hegesippus, not having the Hebrew tongue, will have Jerusalem so named; quasi *ἱερος Σολομωντος*, Solomon's temple), a stately house indeed, and one of the seven wonders of the world. For albeit it was but one hundred and twenty feet long, and forty feet broad, whereas the temple at Ephesus was two hundred forty and five feet long, and two hundred and twenty feet broad; yet for costly and choice materials, for intricate and exact workmanship, for spiritual employment, and for mystical signification, never was there the like edifice in the world. And happy had it been for Cyrus, it, laying aside all his warlike expeditions and achievements, he had wholly applied himself to the building of his holy house, and to the study of those things that there he might have learned for his soul's health.

Jerusalem, which is in Judah] Jerusalem was part of it in Judah, and part in the tribe of Benjamin. The house here mentioned, viz. the temple, stood in Benjamin, as was foretold it should by Moses, four hundred and forty years before it was first built by Solomon, #De 33:12, "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord," that is, Benjamin, his darling, "shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders," that is, betwixt those two mountains, Moriah and Sion,

wherein the temple was built. Now because Benjamin was the least of all the tribes of Israel, and because so much of it as lay within Judah {#Jos 19:1,9} was comprised under Judah, {#IKi 11:13} therefore is the temple here said to be in "Jerusalem, which is in Judah." Hereby also this Jerusalem in Judah is distinguished from any other Jerusalem, if there were any place in the world so called besides. We read of Pope Sylvester II. (who sold his soul to the devil for the popedom), that, saying mass in a certain church in Rome, called Jerusalem, he fell suddenly into a fever, whereof he died, the devil claiming his own; for the bargain between them was, that he should continue pope till he sang mass in Jerusalem: and now *intellexit se a Diabolo amphibolia vocis circumventum*: little dreamed the pope of any other Jerusalem but this in Judah, and this cost him his life, A.D. 1003. Eusebius telleth us (Lib. 5, cap. 17) that Montanus, the haeresiarch, called his Pepuza and Tymium (two pelting parishes in Phrygia) Jerusalem; as if they had been the only churches in the world. Hofman, the Anabaptist, had the like conceit of Strasburg, in Germany, and Becold, of Munster; both which places they called the new Jerusalem.

Ver. 3. **Who is there among you of all his people?**] Many there were among them that affirmed deeply of being the people of God, who yet (*tanquam monstra marina*) passed by this proclamation with a deaf ear; and preferring *haram domesticam arae dominicae*, a swine sty before a sanctuary, chose rather to abide in Babylon, and there to dwell amongst plants and hedges, #1Ch 4:23, making pots for the king's garden, than to go up to Jerusalem. So that, besides this O yes, by the king, God was fain to cry, "Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north." "Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon," #Zec 2:6,7. "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction," #Mic 2:10. Look how the eagle hath much ado to get her young ones out of the nest, pricking and beating them with her wings and talons; so was it here: and neither so could the Lord prevail with the most of them, being as loth to depart as Lot was out of Sodom, *vel canis ab uncto corio*, or a dog from a fat morsel.

His God be with him] And then he needs no better company, no greater happiness; for he is sure of a confluence of all comforts, of

all that heart can wish or need require. *Tua praesentia, Domine, Laurentio ipsam craticulam fecit dulcem*, saith an ancient, Thy presence sweeteneth all our occurrences (Aug.). This was, therefore, a good wish of King Cyrus; neither did he therein any disservice to himself; for God hath promised to bless those that bless any of his, #Ge 12:3, and not to let a good wish to such go unrewarded, #2Co 13:9.

Let him go up and build, &c.] As God had charged him, #Ezr 1:2, so doth he them. And it is as if he should have said with that father (Bernard), Unless I stir up your hearts, as the Lord hath done mine, unless I lay God's charge upon you to set strenuously upon this service of his, *Vobis erit damnosum, mihi periculosum. Timeo itaque damnum vestrum, timeo damnationem meam, si tacuero.* If now you go not up upon so great encouragement, God will surely meet with you.

He is the God] The only true God, #Joh 17:3, none like him, #Mic 7:18. "The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible," #De 10:17. Is it not fit, therefore, that he have a temple, a place of Divine worship, which the heathens deny not to their dunghill deities?

Which is in Jerusalem] The city of the great King, where he kept his court, and afforded his special presence, not of grace only in his ordinances, but of glory also sometimes in his holy temple, #2Ch 5:14, as in another heaven.

Ver. 4. **And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth]** Heb. Gershom. A name that Moses gave his eldest son born in his banishment; for he said, "I have been a stranger in a strange land," #Ex 2:22. These poor captives had been longer so than Moses in Midian, and met with more hard measure, #Ps 137:1,8. But as those who are born in hell know no other heaven (as the proverb is), so fared it not with a few of these; loth to be at the pains and run the hazard of a voyage to the Holy Land. A little with ease is held best. Let us, who are strangers here, haste homeward, heavenward. Some of these poor Jews had a mind to return, but wanted means. For these necessitous people the king takes care and course here, that they be supplied and set forward on their journey,

after a godly sort, or worthy of God, as St John phraseth it, **#3Jo 1:6**, who else will require it.

Let the men of his place] Whether Jews or proselytes, brethren by race, grace, or place only.

Help him with silver] Heb. Give him a lift out of the dust, as Job's friends did him off the dunghill; as Joseph did his brethren when he filled their bags, and returned them their moneys; and as all Christians are bound and bid to support or shore up their weaker brethren, **#1Th 5:14** (*Αντεχεσθε των ασθενων*).

With silver, and with gold] These are notable good levers at a dead lift in this present world where money bears the mastery, and answereth all things, **#Ec 10:14**, a satisfactory answer it giveth to whatsoever is desired or demanded. He that helpeth a man, therefore, in his necessity with silver and gold is a friend indeed. Let a man make God his friend, and then (saith Eliphaz) the Almighty shall be his gold, and he shall have plenty of silver, **#Job 22:25**; Jacob shall be sure of so much as shall bring him to his journey's end, a sufficiency, if not a superfluity, of all things needful to life and godliness.

And with goods] Heb. Recush (whence haply our English words riches and cash), chattels, movables, gathered substance, as the word signifieth, which whosoever he was that first called substance was utterly mistaken; sith wisdom only (that is, godliness) is durable substance, **#Pr 8:21**. Wealth is but a semblance, **#Pr 23:5 1Co 7:31** And he that first called riches goods was a better husband than divine. But it may be thought the most are such husbands; since the common cry is, Who will show us any good? a good booty, a good bargain, a good beast? &c., **#Ps 4:6**. That one thing necessary, that is both *Bonum hominis*, the good of man, **#Mic 6:8**, and *Totum hominis*, the whole of man, **#Ec 12:13**, lieth wholly neglected by the most.

And with beasts] Those most serviceable creatures, both *ad esum* and *ad usum*, for food and other uses, as sheep, horses, camels, dromedaries, swift, patient, painful.

Besides the freewill offering] Which the king presumeth all God's free-hearted people (volunteers, every soul of them, #Ps 110:3) will be most forward unto in so good a work, so acceptable a service. See #Le 5:6,12 14:10,21,30. God straineth upon no man, #Ex 25:2 35:5. *Lex quaerit voluntarios*, The law calleth for volunteers, saith Ambrose, see #Isa 56:6 2Co 8:12 9:7, and learn to come off roundly and readily in works of piety and charity; for else all is lost; since *Virtus nolentium nulla est*, unwilling service is nothing set by.

That is in Jerusalem] This city he so often nameth, that he may seem delighted with the very mention of it; and to be of the same mind with those pious captives that vowed to prefer Jerusalem (that joy of the whole earth) before their chief joy, to make it ascend above the head of their joy, as the Hebrew hath it, #Ps 137:6. How then should it cheer up our hearts to think of heaven, and that we are written among the living in Jerusalem, #Isa 4:3; fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of heaven, #Eph 2:19.

Ver. 5. **Then rose up the chief of the fathers]** Those, who are therefore crowned and chronicled in the next chapter. Those *magnates magnites*, that drew on others by their example. Those *Viri gregis*, he-goats before the flocks, men of public places and authority, active for reformation, who hearkened to that divine call, #Jer 50:8, "Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks." These nobles arose, being roused and raised by that noble spirit of God, #Ps 51:12, that kingly spirit, the Chaldee rendereth it; such as was found in Araunah, that famous Jebusite, #2Sa 24:23 Zec 9:7; and is a quickening spirit in every good soul, causing them to make riddance, as Baruch did, #Ne 3:20, and to take long strides toward heaven, as Jacob did toward Padanaram, #Ge 28:5 for, *Nescit tarda molimina spiritus sancti gratia*, The spirit of grace knoweth no slow paces, but is quick of despatch (Ambrose). Up get these chieftains when once they hear, *Surge, age, Summe Pater*; as one said once to the bishop of Rome, exciting him to make war upon the Turk.

And the priests, and the Levites] Fit it was that these should be of the first and most forward at temple work; whose proper employment it was to teach Jacob God's judgments, and to put

incense before him continually, **#De 33:10**, to wait at the altar, and to be partakers with the altar, **#1Co 9:13**.

With all them whose spirit God had raised up] Not of Judah and Benjamin only (those best of the tribes, and truest to their princes and principles), but also of Ephraim and Manasseh, **#1Ch 9:3**, with **#Eze 37:16,17,21,22**, even as many of the Israelites as were acted by God's spirit of judgment and of burning, **#Isa 4:4**, firing them up to a holy contention in so noble and necessary a business, and leading them into the land of uprightness, **#Ps 143:10**. The fruit of this good spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, **#Eph 5:9**; the work of it upon the sons of God who are led by it, **#Ro 8:14**, is not only an external invitation by the word and sacraments, or a mere moral persuasion (Cyrus's proclamation here would have availed but little with this people, if God had not moved their hearts), but an effectual drawing of the heart, whereby operating irresistibly, the sinner is converted; and whereby co-operating infallibly, he persevereth in grace unto the very end, **#Joh 6:44**. This conduct of the Holy Spirit we must both earnestly beg with David, **#Ps 143:10**, and as carefully observe and obey his motions as ever David did the out goings of God in the tops of the mulberry trees, **#1Ch 14:15**, for these are the sound of his goings, and the footsteps of his anointed, **#Ps 89:51**.

To build the house of the Lord] This was what they aimed at, rather than their own liberty. Choice and excellent spirits can easily drown all self respects in the glory of God. It was the care of those good people in Joel's days, that there might be a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord their God, whatever became of their own carcasses, **#Joe 2:14**. And when the daily sacrifice ceased by the tyranny of Antiochus, they looked upon it as an abomination of desolation, **#Da 9:27**. The Jews at this day are very earnest to be rebuilding the destroyed temple at Jerusalem, out of their blind zeal; but they have neither any Cyrus to encourage them (Julian the apostate once did, in spite to the Christians, but it came to nothing) nor the Spirit of God to excite them to such an unwarrantable work. Ver. 6. **And all they that were about them]** Both their countrymen the Jews (that thought not good to themselves or not yet, till they should see further: there is none so wise as the sluggard, **#Pr 26:16**),

and others of the neighbourhood: for the Egyptians may lend jewels to the Israelites, dogs may lick Lazarus's ulcers, and the earth may help the woman, by opening her mouth, and swallowing up the flood cast out after her by the dragon to drown her, #Re 12:16.

Strengthened their hands] Which else, for want of such support, would have hung down, and their feeble knees buckled under them, ere they had come to their own country; neither could they without such supplies have so comfortably carried on the work they went about. For, if wisdom be a defence, or a shadow, to those that have seen the sun (as in the former verse) and are scorched with the heat of it, so is money too, saith Solomon, #Ec 7:12; and though wisdom without wealth is good, yet it is better with inheritance, #Ezr 1:11, which is not only an ornament, but an instrument of virtue. When men go on *Virtute dace, comite fortuna*, then it is well with them as it was with good Josiah, #Jer 22:15,16. But Agur would not be poor, lest he should be put upon ill courses, #Pr 30:9, put to his shifts. Poor Hagar, when the water was spent in the bottle, cast the child under the shrubs, #Ge 21:15.

With vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts] See the note on #Ezr 1:4. These are things that men do not usually so easily part with to others till they needs must. Euclio in the comedian sits abroad upon his heaps and hoards, and will not be drawn off. Shall Nabal take his bread and his flesh, and give it to those he knows not? #1Sa 25:23-31 Misers will as soon part with their blood as their gold; whence the Chaldees call their money *dam*, that is, *blood*. Many a man shows himself like the Cornish crow, which will steal a piece of money, and hiding it in some hole, will never help herself or any other with it afterwards. Hermocrates, being loth that any man should enjoy his goods after him, made himself, by his will, heir of his own goods. Athenaeus telleth of one, that at his death devoured many pieces of gold, and sewed the rest in his coat, commanding that they should be all buried with him. But these in the text seem to have been of the race of those Persians spoken of, #1Sa 13:17, which regarded not silver, and as for gold, they cared not much for it. Or if they were proselytes to the Church, then they had learned (with Tyrus, now also converted) to give over heaping and hoarding of wealth, and therewith to feed and clothe

God's poor saints; and so to furnish them for their journey to their Father's house, that they may eat sufficiently, and have durable clothing, **#Isa 23:18**. This was God's work upon their hearts; and *Quando Christus magister, quam cito discitur quod decatur?* (Augustin.) Whereunto may be added, that Cyrus, who set forth this edict, as he was an absolute sovereign (and so his word went for a law), so he was a gracious and courteous prince, *ita ut Patris nomen meruerit*, so that he merited the name and title of Father of his Country, and might command anything of them.

And with precious things] Even the very best of the best they had. The word signifieth *praestantissimum et pretiosissimum in quocunque genere fructuum, metallorum, gemmarum, vestium*, the choicest and chiefest of all kind of commodities. Such as Eliezer gave to Rebekah and her brother, **#Ge 24:53**, and as Jehoshaphat gave his younger son, **#2Ch 21:3**. For the purchase of the pearl of price, the wise merchant makes a thorough sale of all. Barnabas parteth with his lands, Zaccheus with his goods, Matthew with his meat, the centurion with his money, to build those synagogues that wicked Antiochus had thrown down; and these in the text, with their most precious things, to refurnish that temple that Nebuchadnezzar had burnt.

Beside all that was willingly offered] A freewill offering then there was **{#Ezr 1:4}** brought in by God's willing people, **#Ps 110:3**, that wait for God's law, as **#Isa 42:8,9**, and hold with that ancient, that it is *nimis augusta innocentia ad legem bonum esse*, to do no more service to God than needs must, to get so much grace only as will keep life and soul together (that is, soul and hell asunder), this they judge to be a low and unworthy strain of some good people. David voweth freewill offerings often, and could betem God a great deal more love and service than he is able to perform to him, **#Ps 5:6** **1Ch 29:8,9**. Those good souls, **#Zec 8:21**, call upon themselves and one another to be continually going before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I (saith each for himself) will go also. Hannah went up with her husband every year to the feast, **#1Sa 1:4,21**; so did the Virgin Mary to the passover with her son Jesus, **#Lu 2:41,42**; yet none were expressly commanded so to do but males, and those also nothing under twenty years of age, as fit to be numbered, **#Ex 30:14**.

So those among us that hear weekday sermons, as Mary did, **#Lu 10:42**, and many other good people in our Saviour's days, **#Lu 19:47,48 21:37,38**. Hereby we shall show our love, and do a service highly accepted in heaven.

Ver. 7. **Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels]** For example to others, *et iussit, et gessit*, he did himself what he commanded to be done, and so became a living law, a walking statute. So Justinian would not put the vessels of the Temple (taken by Titus, and recovered from Gensericus) into the public treasury, but restored them.

Which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth] With profane and sacrilegious hands some of these sacred vessels and utensils of the Temple he had cut in pieces, **#2Ki 24:13**, and others he carried away, **#2Ch 36:7**, whole and entire. This he did out of covetousness (that *auri sacra fames*) and in scorn of all religion (rather than hatred of the Jewish superstition, or to avenge the quarrel of God's covenant), like as for the same reason his successor Cambyses destroyed the Egyptian idols, **#Isa 10:26**.

And had put them] There was a sweet providence in that; to the end that being there reserved, they might in due time be restored (as here they are) to the house of God at Jerusalem. And although that was a most unfit place to keep them in (for "what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" **#2Co 6:16**), and Belshazzar most profanely abused them, **#Da 5:2**, in that drunken feast of his (hence he is called the festival king, **#Eze 21:5,6**), yet being sanctified again, and dedicated to the true and first owner, the God of Israel, they might lawfully be made use of. Not only things indifferent abused may yet be used in the service of God (as those six waterpots were by our Saviour **#Joh 2:6,7**, though they had been superstitiously abused for private purification), but also idolatrous things and places. As Gideon took the bullock appointed for Baal and the grove, and offered the bullock with that wood in sacrifice to the Lord, **#Jud 6:26**. The like the Bethshemites did by the Philistines' cart and kine. The Mount of Olives was shamefully abused to idolatry by Solomon and others, so that it was called the mount of corruption, **#2Ki 23:13**, and yet was it our Saviour's usual oratory or place of prayer.

In the house of his gods] Bel and Nebo, **#Isa 46:1**. These were Babylon's chief gods. The original of Bel is said to be this: Ninus having made an image of his father Belus, all that came to see it were pardoned for all their offences; whence in time that image came to be worshipped, and then afterwards a multitude more; insomuch as that in Hesiod's time the number of heathenish gods was grown to thirty thousand, *πρις γαρ μυριοι εισιν*. And in China at this day some tell us that there are no fewer than a hundred thousand idols.

“ O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!”

Gods these idols are called here, not because they were so (for there is one God only, said Pythagoras, and other heathens, *Εις μονος εστι θεος*, &c.), but because Nebuchadnezzar falsely held them so. Like as elsewhere the gods of Damascus are said to have smitten Ahaz, who therefore sacrificed to them, **#2Ch 28:23**, not as if those idols were anything in the world, or could do anything at all to him, **#Jer 10:5 1Co 8:4**; but only that he conceited so, and that the devil (who is *ειδωλοχαρης*, as Synesius truly saith) abused his credulity.

Ver. 8. **Even those did Cyrus king of Persia]** So styled, because, though he was monarch of many countries, yet Persia was his hereditary kingdom, and Persepolis the place of his residence; which great city was afterwards burnt by Alexander the Great, at the motion and by the request of a base harlot.

By the hand of Mithredath the treasurer] Heb. Gizhar; Inde Gasper, saith one. Mithridates, king of Pontus, was famous in later ages, or, rather infamous, for his craft in saving himself, and his cruelty to the Roman merchants, trading through his territories, killing eighty thousand of them with one letter (Val. Max.).

And numbered them unto Sheshbazzar] Joy in tribulation, this is the signification of the word; a fit name for a prince, who should be *Deliciae orbis*, as Titus the emperor, of whom it is said, that he never sent away any suitor sad or discontented, *Neminem a se dimisit tristem* (Sueton.); and remembering on a day that he had not done any poor man good, he cried out to his friends, *Hodie non*

regnativimus: Amici, diem perdidit, accounting that day lost wherein he had not showed some man courtesy. Such a gracious prince was Job, **#Job 29:12**, "I delivered the poor that cried," saith he, "and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him." The Great Turk styleth himself, The world's refuge; professing that all that lament unto him shall have redress and help. James V of Scotland was called "The poor man's king," for his readiness to right and relieve the afflicted. Zerubbabel, however he came by this name Sheshbazzar for that he was the man I take for granted, **#Ezr 5:16 3:8 Zec 4:9**, though Junius thinks otherwise), he deserved it doubtless; and of him it might well be said, as the historian Vopiscus doth of Probus the emperor, *Si probi nomen non haberet, habere cognomen posset*, pity he had been called anything but Probus, so honest a prince he was: think the like here. The parliament here held A.D. 1376 was called The Good Parliament; and another not long after *Parlamentum benedictum*, The Blessed Parliament. God grant us such a one next (this was written, May 18, 1653); for at present we are without any, but not without cause to cry out, as those in **#Jer 8:20,22**, The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not helped. "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" **#Jer 8:15**

Ver. 9. **And this is the number of them]** Had they not been things of great price and use, they would not have been numbered: **#So 6:8**, the queens and concubines are numbered how many; but not the virgins, that bring not forth fruit to God. Men use not to count how many pebbles they have in their yard, or piles of grass in their field, as they do how many pence in their purse, or sheep in their fold. When the Great God shall count his people's flittings, bottle up their tears (as sweet water), book up their sighs (as memorable matters), **#Ps 56:8**, shall we not say of them as the Jews did of Lazarus, when Jesus wept, Behold, how he loves them? When the very hairs of their head are all numbered, **#Mt 10:30**, so that not one of them falleth to the ground without their heavenly Father's knowledge, what store, think we, setteth he by their persons, by their performances? I know thy work, and thy labour, **#Re 2:19**. I pity this people, they have been with me now three days, and fasting they are, and far from home, and faint they may, if sent away empty, **#Mt**

15:32. Lo, is not this a wonderful condescension, that Christ should consider *tantos tantillos et tales*, and reckon every circumstance of their service so particularly and punctually, that he might give to every man according to his works? Oh, his jewels, his book of remembrance, &c., #**Mal 3:16,17**; {*See Trapp on "Mal 3:16"*} {*See Trapp on "Mal 3:17"*}

Thirty chargers] Serving to hold such parts of the sacrifices as were to be eaten by the priests and others.

Nine and twenty knives] Sacrificing knives, richly hafted.

Ver. 10. **Thirty basons of gold]** These were to hold the sprinkling water, or blood.

And other vessels] Of sundry sorts, whereof see #**1Ki 7:50**.

Ver. 11. **All the vessels of gold and of silver]** Those best of metals, and therefore fittest for his use and service who is good, #**Ps 106:1**, better, #**Ps 108:9**, best, #**Php 1:23**, goodness itself, #**Mt 19:17**. Whose great purse is the earth, with all that is either on it or in it, #**Ps 24:1**; whose great storehouse are the stars and planets, the sun especially making these metals, and causing plenty, #**De 28:12**. Let us lavish out of the bag, and when we have honoured the Lord with the best of our best, cry out with David, Of thine own, Lord, have we given thee, #**1Ch 29:16**; and with Justinian, dedicating a very rich communion table, *τα σα εκ των σων σοι προσφερομεν οι δαυλοι σου*, & c.

Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Now these are the children of the province]** That is, of Judaea, now a province, though formerly a princess; now solitary and tributary that was once populous and great among the nations, #**La 1:1**. *Medinah*, the word here rendered province, sometimes signifieth Metropolis, *aliius ius dicens*, a place that giveth laws to other places, and so Judaea in her flourish had been. See #**Ezr 4:20**. But now it was otherwise, and so it is at this day, not only with Judaea, but with other renowned empires and kingdoms not a few, all which (together with most of those Churches and places so much mentioned in Scripture) are swallowed up in, the greatness of

Turkish Empire. That Medina, a city in Arabia (where Mahomet lieth buried, and where his sepulchre is no less visited than is Christ's sepulchre at Jerusalem), holdeth this Medina in hard subjection; making her children pay for the very heads they wear; and so grievously afflicting them, that they have cause enough to take up anew Jeremiah's elegy over their doleful captivity.

That went up out of the captivity] That lifted themselves in Babylon, to go up. Which if any failed to do (as by comparing #Ezr 2:5 of this chapter with #Ne 7:10, it appeareth some did), it was because either they changed their minds or their lives before they came there. When that noble Marquis Galeacius Caracciolus set forward for Geneva, some of his most familiar friends promised and vowed to accompany him there (His Life by Crashaw); but various of them, when they came to the borders of Italy, turned back again, &c.; and so might many of these engagers, *magis amantes mundi delicias, quam Christi divitias, et graviorem ducentes iacturam regionis, quam religionis.*

Which had been carried away] But had God's promise that they should return, be built up, planted, and not rooted out, #Jer 24:6, and his command to marry and beget children, #Jer 29:6, which should inherit the promises: for they are good surehold.

Whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon] That *Metus Orbis, et Flagellum Dei*, as Attilas, king of Huns, proudly stiled himself, that is, the terror of the world, and scourge in God's hand. See #Isa 10:5. That *Ira Dei et Orbis Vastitas* as Tamerlane loved to be called: The wrath of God and ruin of the world (Bucholc.).

Had carried away unto Babylon] As to his lions' den, #Na 2:11, but God sent from heaven and saved them with such a mighty salvation, as eclipsed that deliverance out of Egypt, #Jer 23:7,8.

Every one unto his city] Appointed him by the present governors. For during their abode in Babylon Judaea lay utterly waste and uninhabited. The land kept her sabbaths, resting from tillage, and God, by a wonderful providence, kept the room empty till the return of the natives.

Ver 2. **That came with Zerubbabel]** That famous prince of Judah, #Ezr 1:8, governor of Judah, #Hag 1:1, who was born in Babylon, and accordingly had a Babylonian name. His hands laid the foundation of the second temple, his hands also finished, #Zec 4:9, whence some conclude that the Lord gave him a life much longer than ordinary. His children shall not to bed till their work be done.

Jeshua] This was that Jehoshuah the high priest, the great assistant of Zerubbabel in building the Temple, #Ezr 5:2 Hag 1:14. These were those faithful witnesses of God in their generation, as before them had been Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, and as after them Paul and Barnabas, Luther and Melancthon, Oecolampadius and Zwinglius, &c. Christ sent out his disciples by two and two: for two is better than one; and why? see #Ec 4:9-12.

Nehemiah, Saraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai] Not that famous Nehemiah nor that renowned Mordecai so much spoken of in the Book of Esther but others of the same name. Reasons see in Mr Pemble's Period of the Persian Monarchy, pp. 30, 31.

Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah] These were all of them guides and governors to the rest, eminent and eximious. To whom in Nehemiah is added a twelfth man, Nahumani by name, who better bethought himself belike; and having answered with that young man in the Gospel, and said, I will not, yet afterwards repented and went. *Nunquam sere, si serio.* This was better than those many that answered and said, We go, sir, and yet went not, #Mt 21:29,30.

The number of the men of the people of Israel] The former were names, men of renown in the congregation. {confer #Ac 1:15 Re 3:3} The rest that follow are but numbers, *Nos numeri sumus*, &c., men of common condition, the many, οἱ πολλοί, who are set down in the sequel of the chapter.

Ver. 3. **The children of Parosh]** Question is here made by some, whether this and other like chapters, that are nothing but names and numbers, should be read in course, since they may seem to be of no great use to us? To this Chrysostom answereth, *In sacris libris nihil contemnatur aut obiter praetereatur, etiamsi nomina recenseantur*, that is, let no part of the Holy Scripture be slighted or skipped over,

no, though we meet with nothing but names only. But forasmuch as there is never a leaf, nay, line, nay, letter in God's book, that is not pure, precious, and profitable, #Pr 30:5 Ps 12:6 2Ti 3:16 (the Rabbins have a saying that there is a mountain of sense hanging upon every apex or tittle of the word of God); therefore must we read all, in obedience to him, who hath written for us these excellent things in counsel and knowledge, #Pr 22:20, and if anything be yet hid, God shall reveal even this unto us, #Php 3:15. Joseph understood not his own dreams at first, till he saw his brethren prostrate before him; then Joseph remembered the dreams that he dreamed of them, #Ge 42:9. The disciples conceived not, believed not, many things done by and to their Master, till he was glorified, and they further enlightened, #Joh 2:22 12:6. Surely if Hippocrates could say of medicine, that there was nothing to be accounted little in it, nothing contemptible (ουδεν μικρον, ουδεν καταφρονητεον); how much more may we say the same of divinity and of the Scriptures!

Ver. 43. **The Nethinims]** *i.e. Deodati*, men given to God, devoted to the service of his house. These were those Gibeonites that, having saved their lives by a lie, were made drawers of water to the temple for a punishment. God made this cross a mercy: for the nearer they were to the Church the nearer to God. Their employment was to minister to the Levites, as the Levites did to the priests, #Jos 9:21; and this gave them occasion to partake of the things of God, and to behold his face in righteousness.

Ver. 55. **The children of Solomon's servants]** These also were strangers, that had been employed by Solomon, and becoming proselytes, were incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel. God is no respecter of persons, #Ac 10:34. He takes where he likes; strangers shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, when the children of the kingdom shall be cast out, #Mt 8:11,12; Solomon's servants may have a name and a nail in God's house, when his sons may be excluded; Jether, an Ishmaelite, #1Ch 7:38, may become an Israelite, #2Sa 17:25, and Araunah the Jebusite an exemplary proselyte, #Zec 9:7.

Ver. 59. **And these were they which went up from Telmelah, Telharsa, Cherub, &c.]** Places in Chaldaea where these Jews were scattered; as at this day their posterity are up and down in Turkey, and some parts of Christendom, a dejected and despised people.

Ver. 61. **And was called after their name]** After the name of his wife's father, that noble Gileadite; as holding it a greater honour to be allied to Barzillai than to be looked upon as a priest. It was therefore just upon such proud and insolent people, that as they had once scorned the priesthood, so the priesthood should now scorn them.

Ver. 62. **But they were not found]** They could not prove themselves to be of the seed of Aaron; and were therefore worthily turned off. So shall all be at the last day that are not written among the living in Jerusalem, that are not registered in the Lamb's book of life, that have been ashamed of Christ and of his words, #Mr 8:38.

Ver. 63. **And the Tirshatha said unto them]** *i.e.* Zerubbabel, the chief magistrate, a man of great power and no less courage, who would not be guilty of passive injustice.

That they should not eat of the most holy things] Make a gain of the priesthood, which they had slighted when nothing was to be obtained by it. Now they should neither do the work nor have the means. Caietan commenting upon Matthew, then when the French soldiers brake into Rome, and made a scorn and prey of the Popish clergy, acknowledged that it was a just hand of God upon them, because they were grown unsavoury salt, good for little else but to look after the rights and revenues of the Church.

Till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim] That is, never, or not in haste. Some faint hopes the governor might have that such an ephod with Urim and Thummim, as was now burnt or otherwise lost, might be had again, but it seemed not very likely. The great High Priest was now at hand, and the ceremonials to cease shortly.

Ver. 64. **Forty and two thousand]** Ten or twelve thousand whereof seem to be of the ten tribes that were first carried captive, and, together with Judah and Benjamin, made up that Δωδεκαφυλον St Paul speaketh of, #Ac 26:7.

Ver. 65. **Beside their servants, &c.]** Their masters' necessary instruments, και ολωσ εκεινων, saith Aristotle, and wholly at their command. See #Pr 12:9.

Two hundred singing men and singing women.] That sang at feasts and funerals. See #Ec 2:8. These perhaps might have been as well spared. *Nam ad quod prosunt eiusmodi artes (saith one), et quis eiusmodi hominum eas profitentium usus, nisi ut aliis sint oneri, et cibum potumque egenorum, sicut locustae, praerodant atque consumant?* (Funccius).

Ver. 68. **And some of the chief]** And but some. All were not alike enlarged or enabled.

Ver. 69. **They gave after their ability]** Men must take heed they stretch not beyond the staple, and so mar all. But few are herein faulty; few Macedonians, that, to their power and beyond, are willing of themselves, &c., #2Co 8:8. *Rari quippe boni.*

Threescore and one thousand drams of gold] That is, nineteen thousand sixty-two pounds ten shillings.

And five thousand pound of silver] *i.e.* Fifteen thousand pounds sterling. These sums of money, together with the costly priests' garments, though they fall far short of what was provided and given in David's days, #1Ch 22 1Ch 29, towards the building of the first temple; yet, considering the mind of this poor people, and their small ability, this gift was as great in God's account. See #Lu 21:1,2. The widow's mite was beyond the rich man's magnificence, because it came out of a richer mind.

Ver. 70. **And some of the people]** For not half of them, as may be probably thought, returned; but condemned the rest of rashness and weakness, to their no small prejudice.

Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **And when the seventh month was come]** Heb. And the seventh month approached; a month of many festivities, #Le 23:24,27,34 1Ki 8:2, and so, to the good, a foretaste of eternal life, where it shall be holiday every day, where they have no rest, #Re 4:8 (and yet no unrest), praising the God of heaven, for heaven's happiness, #Ps 136:1-3,26 (the same that these good souls sang together, #Ezr 3:11 of this chapter). God is praised five and twenty times for his mercies; but the conclusion is, "O give thanks unto the God of heaven," &c. Christ hath cast up such a causeway to it, that

we may well travel thither from all coasts, as these Jews did to Jerusalem from all their cities.

As one man to Jerusalem] There to serve the Lord with one shoulder, **#Zep 3:9**. Neither counted they it any trouble to travel thither, though they were scarce yet warm in their nests, as we say.

Ver. 2. **Then stood up Jeshua]** Ministers, of all others, should be most forward and forth putting, ready prest and prepared to every good work, as patterns to the people, who are led more by their eyes than by their ears, &c.

And Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel] These two ever went hand in hand; and hence the work so prospered in their hand. It must needs be so (said Queen Elizabeth once to the Suffolk gentlemen who came to meet her with their ministers by their sides) where the word and the sword go together.

And builded the altar of the God of Israel] Which therefore, in their father Jacob's sense, **#Ge 33:20**, they might safely have called El, Elohe-Israel, that is, God, the God of Israel, putting the sign for the thing signified. Thus also the ark is called God's face, **#Ps 105:4**; yea, even God himself, **#Ps 132:5**.

As it is written in the law of Moses] This was the rule they wrought by. God requireth to have a reasonable service, **#Ro 12:1**, such as whereof we can render a reason out of his word; he hateth a Samaritan service, **#Joh 4:22**, and will not endure Popish will-worship. Who requireth these things at their hands, their altars, crucifixes, penances, pilgrimages, &c.? The whole number of the beast is but the number of a man, **#Re 13:18**. Men will have it so, and this is the sum of all Popish religion. All their superstructions are human inventions.

Moses, the man of God] The prophet, the lawgiver, a man of much communion with God above any other, **#Nu 12:8**. One calleth him heaven's chancellor.

Ver. 3. **And they set the altar upon his bases]** Upon the old foundation in the priests' court, being glad of any place where to worship God jointly and publicly; for temple, as yet, there was none.

Our worship-scorners are rightly styled by one, The last brood of Beelzebub.

For fear was upon them] Though that was a lewd speech of the poet Statius, *Primus in orbe Deos fecit Timor*; It was timorousness that first made men religious; yet there's no question but fear of danger driveth men to God, as it did these here. Their malignant neighbours, bandying and bending their forces against them, make them hasten up an altar, that they might get God on their side, and run to him reconciled, whatever evil should befall them. Be not thou a terror to me, Lord, saith holy Jeremiah, **#Jer 17:17**, and then I fear no creature. Let us sing the forty-sixth Psalm (said Luther once in a great strait), and then let the devil do his worst. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee," **#Ps 56:3**. Some read the text thus, Though fear was upon them, yet that hindered not their setting up God's altar; but they brake through all discouragements, and did their duty. It is well observed that the very light of nature taught heathens, that the services they performed to their gods with peril and hazard to themselves were best accepted. Caius Fabius ventured through the enemies' camp to offer a solemn anniversary sacrifice, and returned in safety *satis sperans* (saith the historian) *propitios fore Deos, quorum culture ne mortis quidem metu prohibitus intermisisset*, trusting that in such a case his gods would secure him. When Numa, the second king of the Romans, heard, as he was sacrificing, that the enemies were coming, he made this answer, *At ego rem divinam facio*, Εγω δε θυω (Plut.); "if God be for us, who shall be against us?"

And they offered burnt offerings thereon] That their sins might be expiated, and their persons protected. The ceremonial law was Christ in figure, it was their gospel.

Ver. 4. **They kept also the feast of tabernacles]** Or booths, built of boughs or branches of thick trees, **#Ne 8:15**, in a grateful memorial of God's gracious preservation of them in the wilderness, where they dwelt in tents or tabernacles. It signified also (the prophet Zechariah being interpreter, **#Zec 14:16-19**) that the remembrance of our redemption by Christ should be perpetuated with all spiritual gladness.

by number, according to the custom] There is an elegance in the original. The book of God hath many such, as I have elsewhere noted.

As the duty of every day required] Heb. The matter of the day in his day. Here we are all travellers, having no certain habitation, **#Heb 11:1 3**, *αστατουμεν*, **#1Co 4:11**. Let us account duty a debt, and be daily doing at it. Let us keep holy day, keep the feast, *εορταζωμεν*, **#1Co 5:8**. Let us be "in the fear of the Lord all the day long." **#Pr 23:17**

Ver. 5. **And afterward offered]** Finding a float of holy affections in their hearts, they passed from one good exercise to another, and were indefatigable in the Lord's work. David, finding such a heat and height in his people, prays God to "keep it ever in the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts," which he knew well to be fickle and false, **#1Ch 29:18**.

Both of the new moons] Kept in thankfulness to God for their time renewed upon them, from month to month, and his mercies every morning and moment.

And of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated] By a holy resting, both from corporal labour and from spiritual idleness.

A freewill offering] {*See Trapp on "Ezr 1:4"*}

Ver. 6. **From the first day of the seventh month]** Which was the feast of blowing of trumpets, signifying the just man's joyfulness, and serving to put life and spirit into them.

Began they to offer] And so held on: for this month had as many feasts in it as were celebrated in all the year besides: so, as the Sabbath was the queen of days (*Regina dierum*), so was this of months. {*See Trapp on "Ezr 3:1"*}

But the foundation of the temple] Heb. of the kingly palace, *aula basilica*, used here and elsewhere for the place where God's honour dwelleth. God is a great King, **#Mal 1:14**, and requires to be served like himself.

Was not yet laid] Heb. Was not yet founded. Nevertheless they would be worshipping God as they could at an altar till they had a temple. All the power of Persia could not keep God and Daniel asunder, **#Da 6:10**; the trade of godliness never standeth still. Demosthenes (Contra Arist.) could say that a heart beautified with piety, justice, and modesty is the best temple, and to God most acceptable.

Ver. 7. **They gave money also unto the masons and carpenters]** Who usually get it and eat it, laying up little; their life is called the life of their hands, because maintained by the labour of their hands, **#Isa 57:10,14**; day wages they must have, or they cannot subsist; and these good Jews spared for no cost, but gave money out of the bag freely to these workmen. Idolaters care not what cost they cast away upon their dumb idols: *Drum alienum dotant*, so some read that text, **#Ps 16:4**. The Turkish stately mosques, and Popish Basilicae, stuffed with vowed presents and memories, as they call them, are things known to all. When the famous artificer 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, this they abhorred, and bade him say no more of such a matter.

And meat, and drink, and oil] More prized by the Tyrians and Sidonians than money, because their country was nourished by this country, **#Ac 12:20**, as being barren, and not bringing forth provision enough for themselves. Diogenes deeply taxed the folly of his Athenians, that prized money so much and bread grain so little; when as the life of man could be without that, but not without the other.

To bring cedar trees] Smooth and durable, and every way fit for fair buildings; and, therefore, made choice of by God himself, **#2Sa 7:7**, by Solomon for the first temple, **#1Ki 5:6**, and by these Jews for the second. The temple of Diana at Ephesus was likewise built of cedar; as the devil affecteth to be God's ape.

To the sea of Joppa] This was a harbour, **#Jos 19:46 Ac 9:43 Jon 1:3**, and hath its name, a *pulchritudine et elegantia*, from its beauty and bravery, such as draweth love and liking. It might have been

called The Fair Havens, as well as that place nigh unto the city of Lasea, #Ac 27:8, which retaineth the same name unto this day.

According to the grant] Or licence, which they took in the largest extent, as we also ought to do God's gracious promises. *Promissa sunt amplianda;* and we must labour to see our own names written in them.

Ver. 8. **To set forward the work]** To urge the continuance of it to the end, as the word signifieth; to encourage and call upon the workmen to hasten and go through; to be as so many Εργοδιωκται, that the business might go on end, and come to a good upshot.

Ver. 9. **Then stood Jeshua]** Not the high priest, but another, a Levite.

The sons of Henadad, with their sons] A generation of godly and active men in the things of God, see #Ne 3:18,24 10:9. Grace is not hereditary, the white halcyons hatch black young ones, *Heroum filii noxae*. Nevertheless, nurture helpeth nature; and good men strive to mend that by education which they have marred by propagation. They cocker not, but correct their children; they pray for them, and drop good principles into them; they smooth them as arrows, #Ps 128:3,4, getting off the knottiness of their nature; and leave not till they see them the work of God's hands, so as to sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and to fear the God of Israel, #Isa 29:23. These sons of Henadad, as they attended upon the temple work, so themselves were as the polished corners of the temple, #Ps 144:12.

Ver. 10. **With trumpets]** These were used on all occasions of rejoicing.

With cymbals] Instruments of a shrill sound used also by the heathens at offering of their sacrifices (Aelian.). So, in imitation of the Urim and Thummim, #Ex 28:30, the Egyptian high priest wore about his neck a sapphire stone which was called Αληθεια. *Satan Dei Mimus ut et Momus*. See before, #Ezr 3:7.

After the ordinance of David] He very much added to the Church music. He likewise anticipated the age of the priests, entering into their service five years earlier than the Mosaical appointment.

Ver. 11. **And they sang together by course]** *Amant alterna Camaenae*. Antiphonies are of ancient use.

In praising and giving thanks] Men praise God for his excellencies, thank him for his benefits.

Because he is good] So they sang David's Psalms, a good warrant for us so to do. Heretofore happy were they held that could sound out *aliquid Davidicum* :now some have found out new inventions.

Ver. 12. **Who were ancient men]** From seventy years of age and upwards; for it was but seventy years before this that the temple was burnt.

Wept with a loud voice] Considering the disproportion. Let us do the like when we compare our state of creation with our state of corruption.

Ver. 13. **The noise of the shout of joy from the noise, &c.]** *Nam partim iubilabant, partim eiulabant*. Our joys, while we are here, will be mixed joys. Let those that would have joys unspeakable stir up sighs unutterable.

Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **Now when the adversaries of Judah]** Aroused by those loud acclamations and outcries, **#Ezr 3:12,13**. These adversaries were those Samaritans, **#Ezr 4:3**, the kind of mongrels who wore religion as a cloak, which they either put on or threw off at pleasure, and as occasion required. Satan, saith one, doth not always appear in one and the same fashion; but hath as many several shapes as Proteus among the poets. Here he pretends devotion to his mischievous designs, but was frustrated.

That the children of the captivity] *Istos deportatos*, by way of contempt, as Junius rendereth it; as if the Jews were, therefore, hated of God because they had been transported, captivated. Cicero passeth the same censure of them in his oration, pro L. Flacco: *Ista gens quam chara diis immortalibus esset docuit, quod est victa, quod elocata, quod servata*. It appears how dear to God they be by their frequent captivities.

Ver. 2. **Let us build with you]** Craftily and treacherously do they offer their cost and pains, *ut illis intermixti personas committerent, atque ita opus interverterent*, saith one well; that, mingling with them, they might set them together by the ears, and so put a stop to the work. Thus Julian, to spite the Christians, first set the Jews to work to rebuild their temple; and when that would not be, he called home the Arian bishops out of banishment, to breed new broils in the Church. The Jesuits have a practice at this day of running over to the Lutheran Church, pretending to be converts, and to build with them; but it is only to keep up that bitter contention that is between the Calvinists and the Lutherans. And what ill offices they do among us at this day to heighten our divisions, and hinder the Reformation (by their wiles, much ensnared and hindered), good men are very sensible of. The Lord detect and defeat them.

For we seek your God, as ye do] Nay, not as ye do. See #2Ki 17:32-34, they feared the Lord, not filially, but for his lions; as the old Romans worshipped their Veiones, lest they should hurt them; and as the Caffrani (a people in India) worship devils in most terrible figure, that they may not punish them.

Since the days of Esarhaddon] Son and successor to Sennacherib, #2Ki 19:37, grandson to Salmaneser; after whom, it seems, he brought a new colony into the land of Samaria, who proved deadly enemies to God's people.

Ver. 3. **But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua]** Jeshua would be one to keep them out, though they slighted him in their application to Zerubbabel and the chief of the fathers, #Ezr 4:2.

Ye have nothing to do with us] You shall neither conquer us nor compound with us. This was right Roman resolution. They were wont to say of cowards in Rome, that there was nothing Roman in them. I can never sufficiently admire, saith one, the speech of blessed Luther, who, though he was very earnest to have the communion administered in both kinds, contrary to the doctrine and custom of Rome, yet he professes, if the pope, as pope, commanded him to receive in both kinds, he would receive but in one kind, lest he should seem to receive the mark of the beast. As for these reconcilers and moderators, saith another learned man, were they the

wisest under heaven, and should live to the world's end, they would be brought to their wit's end before they could accomplish this work's end, to make a reconciliation between Rome and us. They have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God. From such stand off, saith the apostle, #1Ti 6:5. Say to them, when they offer their cost and service, as here, *Pura Deus mens est: procul, o procul este profani*. This was one of those ancient laws of the twelve tables among the Romans, *Impius ne audeto placare donis iram deorum*, Let no profane person presume to think to pacify the gods with their pains or presents.

But we ourselves together will build, &c.] This the adversaries call combination, conspiracy, faction, sedition, &c., see #Ezr 4:13. But what saith Tertullian? *Cum boni, cum probi coeunt non est factio dicenda, sed curia. Et e contra, illis nomen factionis accommodandum est, qui in odium piorum et proborum conspirant* (Apol. advers, gent. num. 520). When good men get together, and hold together, it is not to be called a faction, but a court. As on the other side, they are to be counted factious, who conspire against the godly, as these malignants in the text did.

As king Cyrus, &c.] They had good authority for what they did, and they hold them to it.

Ver. 4. **Then the people of the land]** Who the nearer they came unto a conjunction with the Jews in matters of religion the deeper hatred they bare them. Thus at this day, a Jew hates a Christian worse than he doth a Pagan; so doth a Turk hate a Persian worse than he doth a Christian; a Papist, a Protestant worse than he doth a Turk; a formalist, a Puritan worse than he doth a Papist, *Odia Theologica sunt acerbissima*. Religious hatred is most shep.

Weakened the hands of the people of Judah] Discouraged them all they could, endeavouring to transfuse, as it were, a dead palsy into their fingers, that they might surcease, or, at least, slack their pains. Well might Solomon say, Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous: but who can stand before envy? surely the venom of all vices is found in this sharp fanged malignity.

And troubled them in building] Heb. Kept ado about them, and terrified them. This was to do the work of their father, the devil, that troubler of God's Israel (*ad iniuriam inferendam totus comparatus*, ο πονηρος), set upon it to vex such as begin but to build the tower of godliness, and to hinder them to the utmost.

Ver. 5. **And hired counsellors against them]** But good counsellors would not have been hired, either to bolster out a bad cause, or to outface a good; to justify the wicked for a reward, or to take away the righteousness of the righteous from him. There is a notable instance of this in Papinian, a Pagan counsellor. Thou mayest (said he to Antoninus, the fratricide) command my neck to the block, but not my tongue to the bar. I prize not my life to the pleading of an ill cause. These *sordida poscinumia* in the text were none such. Some think they were courtiers and counsellors to the king; such as by whom the king was even bought and sold, as Aurelian, the good emperor was, who might know nothing but as his counsellors informed him. This made Alphonsus, king of Aragon, say, that kings were herein most miserable, that whereas they abounded with all things else, the truth of matters they could seldom come by.

All the days of Cyrus king of Persia] Who, warring abroad, committed the government of his kingdom to his son Cambyses, a light and lewd lowly, easily prevailed with to hinder so good a work.

Even until the reign of Darius] *i.e.* Of Darius Nothus, say some, the son of Artaxerxes Longimanus, {*named #Ezr 4:7*} the father of Artaxerxes Mnemon. But they do better, in my opinion, that understand the text of Darius Hystaspis, who succeeded Cambyses, and married his sister; seeking to ingratiate with the people by ratifying whatsoever Cyrus had decreed, and this of the temple among the rest, see **#Ezr 6:1**.

Ver. 6. **And in the reign of Ahasuerus]** That is, of Cambyses, who is also called Artaxerxes in the next verse; for these two names were given to many kings of Persia; like as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt, as a title of honour. Ahasuerus signifieth a hereditary prince. Daniel calleth him the prince of the kingdom of Persia, **#Da 10:13**, because he was viceroy in his father's absence. Infamous he is for many lewd pranks (as that he killed his brother, and then his own sister, after he had first married her, and made a law that any man

might do the like), yet was he not so ungracious a son to Cyrus as our Henry II's eldest son was; whom he not only crowned king during his own life, but also, to do him honour at his coronation, renounced the name of a king for that day, and, as sewer, served at the table. For which he was thus requited, My father, said he, is not dishonoured by attending on me; for I am both a king's and a queen's son, and so is not he.

In the beginning of his reign] As loth to lose time (Esau began in the very womb to persecute Jacob), and as taking their fittest season for granting of suits.

Wrote they an accusation] Heb. a Satanical suggestion, a diabolical accusation, hatched in hell, and dictated by the devil. He it is that acteth and agitateth the saints' adversaries and accusers; sitting upon their tongues and pens, and setting an edge on them.

Ver. 7. **And in the days of Artaxerxes]** This seems to be Cambyses' Persian name, as Ahasuerus was his Chaldee name. It is as much as *Bellator egregius*, an excellent warrior. So Scipio was called *Fulmen belli*, the lightening bolt of war; Bajazet, the Great Turk, *Gilderun*, or lightning; Albert, Marquis of Brandenburg, was called *Achilles Teutonicus* (Bucholc.). Our Black Prince was so named, not of his colour, but of his courage, and of his dreaded acts in battle; for he assailed no nation which he overcame not, he besieged no city which he took not (Speed). Cambyses had great success in his wars, and added Egypt, and other countries, to the Persian monarchy.

Wrote Bishlam, Mithredath] These were the king of Persia's toparchs or deputies, beyond the river Euphrates.

Written in the Syrian tongue] Called also the Chaldee, Babylonish, and Assyrian; commonly spoken by the Jews, who, in the seventy years' captivity, lost the purity of their own language; like as the Latins also did, when the Goths, Vandals, and other barbarous nations overran them, and mingled with them.

And interpreted in the Syrian tongue] *i.e.* With Syrian characters, *Et Scriptura et lingua erat Syriaca, ut sine interprete in aula regis*

intelligeretur; saith Shindler. It was so written that it might be understood at court without an interpreter.

Ver. 8. **Rehum the chancellor**] Or, president of the council. It is of the Chaldee termination; the whole history also following to #Ezr 6:19, is Chaldee, transcribed, as some think, out of the rolls and registers of the Chaldees, and here inserted.

Ver. 9. **The Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites**] This was not unity, but conspiracy, of a rabble of rebels against God and his people. So #Ps 83:5,6, &c., "They have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: the tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes," &c. A whole legion of devils could agree to enter into one poor man, to vex him; and to act as one in that possession.

Ver. 10. **The great and noble Asnapper**] Some great commander under the Assyrian monarch. There is, they say, a greatness belluine, and a greatness genuine. Asnapper, notwithstanding his big-swollen titles, might be rather great than good; and more notable than noble, *Nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus* (Juvenal).

On this side the river] That ancient river, the river Euphrates, which the more I see the more I admire, saith one.

Ver. 11. **Thy servants**] Not thy subjects only, but thine officers.

Ver. 12. **The rebellious and the bad city**] After so many years doth Jerusalem rue one perfidious act of Zedekiah; and, having once been treacherous, it still hears, "The rebellious and bad city," as if it had been a very *πονηροπολις*, a professed sanctuary of roguery (as the Jesuits say of Geneva), and as Florus saith of the temple at Jerusalem, that it was *impiae gentis arcanum*.

And have set up the walls thereof] This was no less false than scandalous. But malice careth not how true the accusation is, but how mischievous.

And joined the foundations] Chald. sewed together. Or, rather these false informers had sewed a lie together with great art, that it might seem a truth, #Ps 119:69. The proud have forged a lie against me, *assuunt mendacium mendacio*, they have taught their tongues to speak lies, #Jer 9:5, and are artists at it.

Ver. 13. **Be it known now unto the king]** *q.d.* This is no light business, but of greatest importance; and, therefore, fit to be noted and noticed.

Then will they not pay toll, tribute, &c.] This is an old device of the devil and his imps, to represent God's people to the world as anti-magistratical, and disturbers of the public peace. Thus they dealt by the primitive Christians, who were the emperors' best subjects, and yielded them greatest respect and profit. Thus Francis, king of France, pretended and professed to the princes of Germany, whose friendship he desired, that he pursued the Lutherans with fire and sword, for no other cause but for that they were levellers, and enemies to civil government. This drew from Calvin, who was then but twenty-five years of age, that golden book of his, *Institutions of Christian Religion*, to free the Reformed Churches of that slur and slander. The like was suggested by the Arminians in the Low Countries, and by the Episcopal party here. It was in Tacitus's time, *unum crimen eorum qui crimine vacabant*, the only fault of such as were indeed without fault.

And so thou shalt endamage the revenue] Diminish the annual revenues of the crown, which are well called the king's strength here, because if these fail little good can be done, either at home or abroad, Henry, king of Navarre (afterwards king of France), was wont to say, that he was a husband without a wife, a soldier without money, and a king without a kingdom. What would the king of Spain's greatness soon come to were it not for his yearly incomes, his mines of America?

Ver. 14. **Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace]** Chaldee, are salted with the salt of the palace, *Salarium de regis palatio pereipimus*, have our salary from the court, as Junius rendereth it. The great use of salt makes it here put for all kind of commodity; like as bread is called pants, as if it were $\tau\omicron\ \pi\alpha\nu$, the all and whole of our sustenance, **#De 8:3.**

And it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour] Chaldee, nakedness, privities, which uncovered, cause contempt, as it befell Noah in his drunkenness; and the king of Spain, when by Queen Elizabeth proclaimed bankrupt.

Therefore have we sent and certified the king] As knowing that *Beneficium postulat officium*, Bounty commands duty. Ingratitude is a monster in nature, a solecism in good manners, &c. Lycurgus would make no law against it, because he held that none could be so unreasonable as to be guilty of it. Yet Alphonsus complained of his ungrateful courtiers; and so did Frederick III, emperor of Germany. Queen Elizabeth also said, that in trust she had oft found treason. That traitor Parry had vowed her death, although he had been condemned for burglary, and saved by her pardon (Speed).

Ver. 15. **In the book of the records]** Chaldee, of the remembrances, that is, the chronicles usual in all kingdoms.

And know that this city is a rebellious city] {*See Trapp on "Ezr 4:1"*} {*See Trapp on "Ezr 4:2"*} Learn, that fidelity to governors is ever both safe and honourable. Zedekiah's falsifying his oath to the king of Babylon, was the overthrow of that commonwealth. See what God himself saith, not without great indignation, #**Eze 17:18**, "Seeing he" (Zedekiah) "despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape."

Ver. 16. **We certify the king]** They doubt not of audience, while they sang a song of *Utile*, which therefore they thus set on with more confidence than charity.

Ver. 17. **Peace, and at such a time]** As the Latins saluting say, *Ave*, or *Salve*, the Greeks *χαίρει*, so the Hebrews and Syrians say, *Shalom lach*, that is, Peace be to thee (Hieron.). The Turks' salutation at this day also is, *Salaam aleek*, the reply, *Aleek Salaam*, peace is a complexive blessing (Blount).

Ver. 18. **Hath been plainly read before us]** This in the general was commendable; but he should have reserved (as Alexander used to do) *οὐς ἀδιαβλητον*, one ear free, and have heard both parties.

Ver. 19. **Hath made insurrection against kings]** Chaldee, lift up itself against kings. Pride is painted with a triple crown on her head; upon the first whereof is written *Transcendo*; , I ascend; upon the second, *Non obedio*; , I disobey; upon the third, *Perturbo*. , I throw into confusion; Wat Tyler the rebel dared to say, that all the laws of England should come out of his mouth.

Ver. 20. **Beyond the river]** Euphrates, the boundary of Solomon's empire, #1Ki 4:21,24, as it was also promised, #Ge 15:18 Ex 23:31 De 11:24 Jos 1:4.

Ver. 21. **Give you now commandment]** Chaldee, Make a decree; which yet did but carry on God's decree; for while persecutors sit backward to his command, they row forwards to his decree.

Ver. 22. **Take heed now that ye fail not]** This was to spur a free horse; like as letters were sent from King Philip and Queen Mary to Bishop Bonner, complaining that heretics were not so reformed as they should be, and exhorting him to more diligence.

Why should damage grow] Take heed of that howsoever. *Multi reges graviorem ducunt iacturam regionis, quam religionis, &c.* (Bucholcer). Many kings consider it more serious to about to be thrown out of their kingdom than of their religion.

Ver. 23. **They went up in haste]** *Perurgente diabolo*, the devil driving them, and their own malicious dispositions egging them thereunto (Bern.). So, when Queen Mary lay a dying, Harpsfeld, arch-deacon of Canterbury, being at London, made all post-haste home to dispatch those martyrs whom he had then in his cruel custody (Acts and Mon. 1562). So ambitious are wicked men of hell, they take long strides, and mend their pace, as if they feared lest it should be taken up before they come thither.

Ver. 24. **Then ceased the work of the house of God]** And now the adversaries have got the ball on the foot, thinking to carry the game before them; but "the triumphing of the wicked is short," #Job 20:5, and that they prosper at all in their designs it is *non ad exitium, sed ad exercitium Sanctorum*, not for the ruin of the Church, but for the exercise of the faith and patience of God's people.

Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Then the prophets]** He that is now called a prophet was previously called a seer, #1Sa 9:9, because his eyes were enlightened, #Nu 24:3, and he saw visions of God, #Eze 1:1 Da 1:17, prophets they were afterwards called, that is, interpreters of God's will by his command: #Ex 7:1, "Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet," that is, thine interpreter. By the mouth of these holy prophets God spake to his people in all ages, #Lu 1:70. Yet not without some intermissions of prophecy, as the Church complaineth,

#Ps 74:9, till that *Cathimath Chazon* (as the Jews call it), the sealing up of prophecy, which they place between the prophet Malachi and John Baptist, who was more than a prophet. The original word, *Nabi*, signifieth one that, from the inward counsel of God, uttereth oracles.

Haggai the prophet] Who was not an angel incarnate, as Origen and Jerome held; but a young saint (as Epiphanius describeth him), and might therefore well be an old angel, if he lived to be old: *Iuvenis admodum ex Babylone profectus est Hierosolymam, &c.* An exceedingly young man left from Babylon for Jerusalem. (Epiph. lib. de Proph. Vit.). See more of him, **#Hag 1:1**. {*See Trapp on "Hag 1:1"*}

And Zechariah the son of Iddo] That is, of "Berechiah the son of Iddo," **#Zec 1:1**, {*See Trapp on "Zec 1:1"*} These two God sent within two months of each other, in the eighteenth year of the people's return out of Babylon; which happened to be in the second year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes, in 520 BC. according to Ussher's Chronology. Christ usually sent his prophets and apostles by couples, for mutual comfort, and greater confirmation.

Prophesied unto the Jews] Who had brought a judgment of sore famine upon themselves by their slackness and backwardness to rebuild the house of God, **#Hag 1:4,6**; {*See Trapp on "Hag 1:4"*} {*See Trapp on "Hag 1:6"*} and learn, of the heathen historian, to prefer God's interest before thine own, or else to look for his curse, *τα του Θεου πρεσβυτερα η τα των ανθρωπων* (Herodot.). For he is a great King, and stands upon his seniority, **#Mal 1:14**; he will have us first to seek his kingdom, **#Mt 6:33**, and to give unto God the things that are God's, or we shall hear of him, to our small comfort, **#Mt 22:21**.

In the name of the God of Israel] Who both authorized and enabled them. God sendeth none whom he gifteth not. The apostles also were ambassadors in the same name, **#2Co 5:20**, and so colleagues to the prophets, **#Lu 10:16**, see **#1Pe 1:12**; angels admiring the matter of their embassy, and their happy harmony.

Even unto them] Who yet were very little amended by their seventy years' captivity. Afflictions (God's hammers) had but beaten upon cold iron (as it were), as appears by this history, and by the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah; whom, for his labour and love to their souls, they afterwards slew between the temple and the altar, **#Mt 23:35**, serving him as Hercules did his tutor Linus, whom, for a few sharp words given him, he knocked on the head, *Hoc ictu ceu didactro accepto Linus mortuus est* (Buchol.). Or, as their ancestors did the prophet Isaiah, whom they sawed asunder (saith Jerome out of the Rabbis), because he had called them princes of Sodom and people of Gomorrah, **#Isa 1:10**. This is the world's wages to faithful ministers.

Ver. 2. **Then rose up Zerubbabel]** Called before Sheshbazzar, the Tirshata. Philo calleth him Barachias. Men in those days had sundry names; which must be noted, or else confusion will not be avoided; according to the notation of Zerubbabel's name, *Alienus a confusione, ut quidam perhibent*. It is said of him, that he brought back some of the people in the seventeenth year of his age; that he continued governor fifty-eight years (some say many more), and that he began to make use of the ministry of these prophets in the thirty-fourth year of his life. His rising up here implieth his forwardness, speed, and diligence in the work.

And Jeshua the son of Jozadak] Colleague to Zerubbabel and συμπαραστατης, as Aaron was to Moses. This Johoshua or Jeshua began his office of high priest in 536 BC, and held it thirty-six years, eight whereof were spent in an embassy to Darius, king of Persia, say historians.

And began to build the house of God] *i. e.* They went on with the building begun before, **#Ezr 3:10**, and not forbidden by the king of Persia to be finished; only he commanded them to desist from building the city, **#Ezr 4:12,21**. It was therefore the people's sloth and self-seeking that kept back the work. See the notes on **#Hag 1:2,4**. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:2"} {See Trapp on "Hag 1:4"}

And with them were the prophets of God helping them] *Verbo et opere*, saith Junius; both by word and deed. "The words of the wise are as goads," **#Ec 12:11**, pricking men forward to duty; and

especially when themselves set sides and shoulders to the work, as haply these prophets did, for the people's greater encouragement, *Exemplis sciola hac aetate magis aedificant ministri, quam concionibus.*

Ver. 3. **At the same time]** So soon as ever they began but to build God's house they meet with opposition; which is still *Evangelii Genius*, guardian spirit of the truth, saith Calvin, the bad angel that haunts the cause of God, and dogs it at the heels. Satan, out of his inveterate envy and enmity, can in no wise brook the propagation of the truth and dilatation of Christ's curtains. No sooner is Israel out of Egypt, but Pharaoh pursueth them. No sooner had Hezekiah kept that solemn passover, but Sennacherib comes up against him. Esau began to jostle Jacob in the womb, that no time might be lost; and when he set his face homewards, Laban follows him with one troop, Esau meets him with another; both with hostile intentions. Dream not of a delicacy in God's ways, but suffer hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

And their companions] *Cum collegio suo* (Junius), a company of captives combined to do mischief. See **#Ezr 4:9**. {*See Trapp on "Ezr 4:9"*}

Who hath commanded you to build this house?] Their own houses they built, and were never once questioned. All the while our Saviour lay in his father's shop, and meddled only with carpenter's chips, the devil and his imps never troubled him; but when he was entering upon his ministry he is sharply assaulted in the wilderness. And when he took upon him to purge the temple, and better inform the people, presently the leaders came upon him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" **#Mt 21:23**. Like unto these were the questions put by the Papists to those noble reformers, Luther, Zuinglius, &c. Farellus was at his first coming to Geneva more harshly handled, and by the bishop and his clerks thus accosted: *Quid tu, diabole nequissime, ad hanc civitatem perturbendam accessisti?* What a devil makest thou here to make this disturbance &c., and so was driven out of the city, where afterwards he wrought a glorious reformation (Scultet. Annal.).

Ver. 4. **Then said we unto them]** We (Tatnai, Shetherboznai, and their companions) thus said, and thus inquired; see #Ezr 5:16, and be sensible how wicked men conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity, "and their belly prepareth deceit," #Job 15:35. Not their heads only are hammering it, but their bellies are hatching it; they take a kind of contemplative kind of pleasure in their wily projects, as the epicure doth in his dainties; he delights to be acting them over beforehand.

What are the names of the men] They that are minded to do mischief unto others will do what they can to know their names. I have heard of one (saith Master Fox) who being sent to the Christian congregation in Queen Mary's days in London to take their names, and to espy their doings, yet in being among them was converted, and cried them all mercy (Acts and Mon. fol. 1881). Tremellius readeth this text otherwise. Then answered we them thus, and *told them* what were the names of the men who built this building. He means, as I conceive, We were not ashamed or afraid to make them around and ready answer; and to give them the names of our chieftains, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Haggai, Zechariah, &c. This was better than that of those cold friends to religion, #1Ki 18:11, who (when the prophet had said, If the Lord be God, follow him) held their peace, and thought it good policy to reserve themselves. Better also than that of the bondslaves of Antichrist, who receive his mark in their hand, the which they may, as occasion serveth, cover or discover, #Re 13:16. The servants of the God of heaven and earth (such as were these in this chapter, #Ezr 5:11) receive his mark in their foreheads, where it may be seen and read of all, #Re 7:3. The primitive Christians were called in derision Confitentes; and Chrysostom saith of them, that they would not be kept from visiting the martyrs in prison, *tametsi multis terroribus, &c.*, though they were much threatened, and punished for so doing (Hom. de 2 Martyr.).

Ver. 5. **But the eye of their God was upon the elders]** Not the eye of his general providence only (which like unto a well drawn picture vieweth every one that cometh into a room), but the eye of his special grace and favour, #Ps 34:15. He looked upon them; as afterwards the Son of man stood and looked upon St Stephen combating with his cruel persecutors, and clapt him on the

shoulders, as it were, saying, Cheer up, *Vincenti dabo*, &c., #Ac 7:56. They also looked up to him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed, #Ps 34:5. Yea, they were steeled, as it were, and made more mettlesome; like as Moses and Micaiah, when they had once seen God in his favour, they cared not for the menaces of angry monarchs.

That they could not cause them to cease] Saints dare undertake and undergo anything for the glory of their God. The heavens shall sooner fall than I will go against my conscience, said that martyr. In nothing be terrified by your adversaries, #Php 1:28.

Till the matter came to Darius] Nor then neither; for he encouraged and furthered them, #Ezr 6:1-15

And then they returned answer] Or, Then answer was returned from the court, and the Jews had a sufficient authority for what they did.

Ver. 6. **The Apharsachites]** That is, Persians, sent as deputies by the king of Persia, to see the peace kept, and good orders observed.

Ver. 7. **All peace]** {See Trapp on "Ezr 4:17"} Peace is a complexive mercy—*Pacem te poscimus omnes*. It is well with bees when they make a noise in their hive; but with men when they are at quiet in their hearts, in their houses, and in the public.

Ver. 8. **To the house of the great God]** So they style him, because the Jews called and counted him so. The Lord your God, saith Moses, is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, &c., #De 10:17. He is *Fortissimus Maximus*, Most strong and most great. as Tremelius there renders it: yea, he is a degree above the superlative. Not only is God great, as here; greater, #Job 33:12; greatest, #Ps 95:3; but greatness itself, #Ps 145:3, and to him all other gods (whether deputed or reputed) are but *deastri, deunculi, dii minorum gentium*, petty deities, poor businesses.

Ver. 9. **Who commanded you?]** Chaldee, Who hath made you a decree? {See Trapp on "Ezr 5:3"}

Ver. 10. **We asked their names also]** See #Ezr 5:4.

That were the chief of them] For the rude multitude follow as they are led. And as in a beast, the whole body goeth after the head, so do most people after their rulers and ringleaders; hence that severity of God, #Nu 25:4, "Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun."

Ver. 11. **We are the servants of the God of heaven]** And in that respect, higher than all the kings on the earth, #Ps 89:27 (for all his servants are sons, heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, #Ro 8:17), who have held it no small honour to be called his vassals. See how bold these brave men bear themselves upon this relation to the God of heaven and earth, and how courageously they stand to their work, and stout it out with their adversaries. {See Trapp on "Pr 28:1"}

These many years ago] Five hundred at least.

Ver. 12. **But after that our fathers had provoked]** Sin is the breeder of dissention that sets heaven and earth at odds, and hurleth confusion over the whole creation, #Isa 59:2 Nu 11:31. There were more remarkable expressions of God's anger upon man's sin in the dead body of a man than of a beast: one made unclean but till the evening; the other, for seven days.

He gave them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar] This is still the property of sin unpardoned, to raise the *Posse comitatus*, all the armies of God against the sinner.

Ver. 13. **But in the first year of Cyrus]** {See Trapp on "Ezr 1:1"}

Ver. 14. **The temple of Babylon]** For there also was a temple built for Bel. *Faciunt et vespae favos: simiae imitantur homines*. The devil will needs be God's ape, and affects to be semblably worshipped.

Ver. 15. **Take these vessels, go, carry them]** Go thyself in person, and see that all things be well carried there. This pleased Zerubbabel well; it confined him to live in that element where he would live; as if one should be confined to paradise.

Ver. 16. **Then came the same Sheshbazzar]** All this is truly and fairly related (as was likewise that of Doeg to Saul, against Ahimelech), but with no good intent. Now to speak the truth not for any love to the truth, nor for respect to justice, nor for the bettering of the hearer or of the offender, but only to incense the one and prejudice the other, this is plain slandering.

And yet it is not finished] And all by reason of such ill conditioned persons as yourselves, who retarded it.

Ver. 17. **Now, therefore, if it seem good]** *Verba byssina.* Flaxen words.

Whether it be so] They supposed it was nothing so, and hoped that these Jews would he found falsaries, but it fell out far otherwise; like as St Paul's persecutions at Rome fell out "rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" than else, **#Php 1:12.**

Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **Then Darius the king]** DARIUS HYSTASPES, who succeeded Cambyses, being chosen by the princes of the Persians, as saith Herodotus. Plato commendeth him for a restorer of the Persian monarchy, much defaced under Cambyses. Howbeit he discommends him for this, that he bred not his son Xerxes so well as he might have done, and further testifieth, that to him it might be said: O Darius, how little care hast thou taken to shun Cyrus's slackness! for thou hast bred Xerxes every whit as ill as he did Cambyses, Ω Δαρειε ως του Κυρου κακον ουκ εμα- Θεσ..

In the house of the rolls] So called, because rolled up together, volumes rolled up, like the web upon the pin.

Ver. 2. **And there was found at Achmetha]** Or Ecbatana. This was occasioned by the malice of the Jews' adversaries, and proved a great furtherance to the finishing of the temple. *Sic canes lingunt ulcera Lazari.* So dogs licked the sores of Lazarus. All things work together for good to them that love God, **#Ro 8:28.** *Venenum aliquando pro remedio fuit,* At length a poison will be for a medicine. saith Seneca.

Ver. 3. **The height thereof threescore cubits]** Yet was it less than Solomon's temple, **#Hag 2:3 Ezr 3:12.** Solomon's cubits therefore were longer (likely) than these here mentioned.

Ver. 4. **Out of the king's house]** i.e. Out of the royal revenue in those parts, **#Ezr 7:20.** Herodotus testifieth that Cyrus and Darius (who married his daughter Atossa, and made him his pattern for imitation) were highly honoured among the Persians for their kingly munificence; God hath threatened that the nation and kingdom that

will not serve the Church shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted, **#Isa 60:12 Ezr 6:12**.

Ver. 5. **And also let the golden and silver vessels]** This was decreed, and this was done accordingly, **#Ezr 1:7,8**. Let good resolutions be put in execution; purpose without performance is like a cloud without rain; and not unlike Hercules's club in the tragedy, of a great bulk, but stuffed with moss and rubbish.

Ver. 6. **Be ye far from thence]** *i.e.* Come not at them, to hinder them at all. Thus, though the Church's enemies bandy together and bend all their forces against her; yet are they bounded by Almighty God (who saith unto them, Be ye far from thence), as is the raging sea, **#Jer 5:22**. Surely, saith the psalmist, the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain, Heb. gird, that is, keep it within compass, as with a girdle. The Septuagint render it thus, The remnant of wrath shall keep holy day to thee, that is, it shall rest from working, or acting, how restless soever it be within.

Ver. 7. **Let the work of this house of God alone]** Meddle not, make no disturbance; this was doubtless a hard task to them, for their spirits were irked, as Moab, **#Nu 22:3**, and their fingers even itched at these builders. They sleep not, except they may do mischief, **#Pr 4:16**.

Ver. 8. **Moreover I make a decree]** So did some of the heathen emperors for the persecuted Christians, Charles V for the Lutherans (at the motion of Albertus, archbishop of Mentz, and Ludovicus, palatine of Rhine), and Henry III of France for the Protestants; which yet was but sorrily observed though sworn to. It is written by an Italian (no stranger to the court of Rome) that their proverb is, *Mercatorum est, non regum stare iuramentis*, that it is for merchants, and not for kings, to keep to their oaths.

Ver. 9. **Of the God of heaven]** Heathens have this notion by nature, that God is the God of heaven, and that there he is, as in his place; howbeit we must not conceive that God is commensurable by any place, since he filleth all places, and is everywhere all-present, totally present wheresoever present; but in heaven is his glory most manifested, and on earth is he alone to be worshipped.

Ver. 10. **That they may pray for the life of the king]** For God, at his pleasure, cutteth off the spirits of princes, **#Ps 76:12**, he crops them off with ease, as one would do a flower; slips them off, as one would do a bunch of grapes; as he dealt by Alexander the Great,

Attila, that terror of the world, and King Henry II of France, who upon the marriage of his sister to the king of Spain, was so puffed up, that he called himself by a new title, *Tres-heureuse Roy*, the thrice happy king. But, to confute him, in solemnizing that marriage, he was slain at tilt, by the captain of his guard (though against his will, but not without God's determinate counsel), in the very beginning of his supposed happiness. Death is the only king against whom there is no rising up. The mortal scythe is master of the royal sceptre, saith one, and it moweth down the lilies of the crown as well as the grass of the field; pray, therefore, for the life of the king, saith this king here; let the priests shout and say, Let the king live for ever, #Ne 2:3.

And of his sons] Some of whom had soon died, say some: he therefore calleth for prayers for the preservation of the rest.

Ver. 11. **Let timber be pulled down from his house]** 1. Let his house be pulled down for a penalty. The Popish Council of Toulouse called together against the Albigenes (those ancient Protestants) made this cruel constitution, We decree that that house, wherein is found a heretic, be pulled down to the ground. 2. Let that timber be set up for a gibbet, and *let him be hanged thereon* Chaldee, destroyed. Compare that of the apostle, #1Co 3:17, If any man destroy the temple of God (which temple ye are), him shall God destroy; and let those look to it who turn it into a den of thieves, into a brothel house, slaughter house, pest house of noisome lusts, *qui podicem ex ore faciunt*, by their unsavoury speeches, and spoil themselves worse than by tumbling in an out house.

Ver. 12. **And the God that hath caused his name]** *i. e.* His word and true worship, #Ac 9:15 Ps 138:2 Mic 4:5 1Ki 5:3,5.

Destroy all kings and people] A dreadful curse, and such as God saith Amen to. Let all persecutors and church robbers look to themselves. God's hand hath ever been very heavy upon such and their posterity. See #Pr 20:25, with the note.

Let it be done with speed] It hath been too much retarded and delayed already; let it now be expedited. David made haste, and delayed not to keep God's commandments, #Ps 119:60. And Austin crieth out, *Nimis sere te amavi, Domine*. Too late I loved you, God.

It was a great burden to his good soul that he began no sooner to love God. He resolveth therefore to redeem time, and to redouble his diligence; not leaving till his soul was turned into a lump of love. *Morus novissime omnium germinat; et tamen parit inter primas;* the mulberry tree buds last, but fruits with the first.

Ver. 13. **So they did speedily]** This they did, because they durst do no otherwise; their obedience was wrung out of them, as sour juice is out of a crab, or as distilled water is forced out by the heat of the fire. Thus some perform duties, and yet hate them; part with sins, and yet love them. Show the malefactor the rack, and he will say or do anything. This is to fear God for his lions, as those mongrels did, **#2Ki 17:33,34**, *timore servili, non amicali*, fearing slavery not God, which yet may *addere alas*, add to their strength, lest they fall under the lash, the correction of the law, for refusing the direction thereof (Beda).

Ver. 14. **And Artaxerxes]** This is Xerxes (called also Ahasuerus, husband of Esther), or, as some think, Artaxerxes Longimanus, the son of Xerxes by Esther; by whom the temple, finished before, might be much beautified, and, haply, enlarged also.

Ver. 15. **And this house was finished]** About fifteen years after that the foundation had been laid, or twenty at most. The Jews therefore either were out in their account, **#Joh 2:20**, Forty and six years was this temple in building; or else they meant it of Herod's temple, which was long in building and beautifying, whereby he sought to ingratiate with the Jews, which yet he could never do.

Ver. 16. **Kept the dedication...with joy]** So they did at the dedication of the first temple, **#2Ch 7:10**. God had required all his worships to be celebrated with joy, **#De 12:7**, and made it a condition of an acceptable service, **#De 26:14**. Sacrifices offered with mourning were abomination, **#Ho 9:4**, yea, accursed by God, **#De 28:47**. What a general joy was there at Samaria when Christ first was preached and believed on among them, **#Ac 8:8**, when they first became God's building, **#1Co 3:9**, a temple for God to dwell in and walk in, **#2Co 6:16**! The like was at Bern, at Geneva, at Zurich, when the reformed religion was first received among them. They caused (for joy thereof) the day and year to be engraven in a pillar in letters of gold, for a perpetual memory to all posterity. Like as at Heidelberg, A.D. 1617, on the first of November, they kept, for three

days time, an evangelical Jubilee, for joy of the Reformation begun by Luther, a hundred years before (Vita Parei, operib, praefix.).

Ver. 17. **An hundred bullocks, &c.**] This little (in comparison of what was done at Solomon's dedication, #1Ki 8:63) was highly accepted in heaven: as was likewise Noah's sacrifice, which yet could not be great: because that after a great trial of affliction, "the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality," #2Co 8:2; which, saith Aristotle, is not to be measured by the worth of the gift, but by the will of the giver, Ου τω πληθει των διδομενων, αλλα τη του διδοντος εξει (Arist. Ethic. lib. 4). {See Trapp on "Ezr 2:6"}

Twelve he-goats] A fit creature for a sin offering, because nasty, unruly, &c.

According to the number of the tribes of Israel] All whom (wheresoever dispersed) they remember in their prayers; as we should likewise do all the Israel of God, in all places.

Ver. 18. **For the service of God**] According to that, #Ex 12:25, Ye shall keep this service, where the same word (Gnabhodah) is used that elsewhere serveth to set forth their servile service, their bondage in Egypt. God lets them know that they must serve still, though another master, and after another manner. So Christ calleth upon his, to take his yoke upon them: free though they be, yet they must not look to be yokeless, lawless, aweless, but to serve God with reverence and godly fear, #Heb 12:28.

As it is written in the book of Moses] Moses then was the penman of the Pentateuch, and not Ezra, as some have said; grounding upon that Apocryphal Esdras.

Ver. 19. **And the children of the captivity**] So the returned captives are called, first, to keep still afoot the remembrance of their late misery, lest they should despise the chastening of the Lord, #Heb 12:5. Secondly, to remind them of that signal mercy of their return to their own country. Hence doth the evangelist Matthew so oft mention their transportation to Babylon, and rings it in the ears of his ungrateful countrymen, #Mt 1:11,12,17.

Kept the passover] In remembrance, that the punishing angel passed over their ancestors in Egypt, **#Ex 12:12-14**, and for confirmation of their faith in Christ, the true paschal Lamb. Hast thou escaped a danger? offer a passover. Hath Christ delivered thee from the wrath to come? keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth **#1Co 5:8**.

Upon the fourteenth day of the first month] See **#Ex 12:2**, with the note.

Ver. 20. **Were purified together]** Misery had framed them to unanimity. See **#2Ch 29:34**.

All of them were pure] Ritually at least, if not really.

And killed the passover] *i.e.* The paschal lamb, whereof see **#Ex 12** with the notes.

For all the children] {*See Trapp on "Ezr 6:1"*}

And for themselves] For they also were sinners, and needed a Saviour, **#Heb 7:27**. That Popish expositor was utterly out when, from **#Ex 30:31,32**, he will needs infer that priests, when once anointed with the holy oil, were thenceforth angels, spirits, not having human flesh, or infirmities.

Ver. 21. **And the children of Israel]** The whole community, of what tribe soever.

And all such as had separated themselves] Who were the better to like, because not prosperity proselytes, such as came in (not a few) in Solomon's time; but the Jews were very careful how they received them, as Josephus relateth.

From the filthiness of the heathen] Who had filled the land from one end to the other with their uncleannesses, **#Ezr 9:11**. Great sins do greatly pollute.

To seek the Lord God of Israel] To seek not his omnipresence (for that none need to do, since he is not far from any one of us, #Ac 17:27), but his gracious presence. And such a seeker is every good soul: #Ps 24:6, This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, that is, Jacob.

Did eat] *Edebant, id est, credebant,* They were eating, it is, they were believing, for even Christ their passover was sacrificed for them, #1Co 5:7.

Ver. 22. **And kept the feast of unleavened bread]** See #1Co 7:8 Ex 12:35, with the notes.

Seven days] This began on the fifteenth day, and lasted till the one and twentieth day, #Nu 28:16,17 Ex 34:25.

With joy] {*See Trapp on "Ezr 6:16"*}

For the Lord had made them joyful] Given them cause of joy, and a heart enlarged accordingly, a mind right set for the purpose. St James's word, εὐθυμεῖν, #Jas 5:13, shows that all true mirth is from the rectitude of a man's mind, which God only giveth.

And turned the heart of the king] It is he alone that gives favour, that frameth men's opinions and affections, that maketh a good man's enemies to be at peace with him.

To strengthen their hands] As #Ezr 6:8. And this did more ennoble him than all his warlike achievements.

Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **Now after these things]** After that Zerubbabel had done his part in building the altar and temple, Ezra (according to the notation of his name) began his, and became a singular helper of the afflicted Church of God, as appeareth in this chapter, and those that follow.

In the reign of Arlaxerxes] *sc.* Longimanus, Esther's son, and the same that thirteen years after sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem, #Ne 2:1,11, while Ezra was yet alive, #Ne 8:1.

Ezra the son of Seraiah] That is, the grandson: for Seraiah was slain when Jerusalem was last taken, #2Ki 25:18,21.

Ver. 2. **The son of Shallum]** See #1Ch 6:7-10. Of those two Books of Chronicles this same Ezra is held to be the penman: and it is not improbable.

Ver. 3. **The son of Meraioth]** Here is a great leap: six of Ezra's ancestors (likely for brevity sake) being overskipped.

Ver. 4. **The son of Zerariah, &c.]** These might be (as one saith of Jesse the father of David) *Viri boni et honesti, minus tamen clari*, good men, but obscure.

Ver. 5. **The son of Aaron the chief priest]** Ezra then was *ex genere pontificio* (as those, #Ac 4:5) *non tamen pontifex*. The title of chief priest is never given unto him.

Ver. 6. **This Ezra went up from Babylon]** Together with many others, who were moved thereunto by his example and authority. He was (as one saith of Tiberius) *imperio magnus, exemplo maior*. Great men are looking glasses, according to which most men dress themselves; let them look to it, therefore, and shine as lamps.

And he was a ready scribe] Or a nimble textman: his office was to write out copies of the law, and to interpret it. He wrote (say some) the Hebrew Bible out in Chaldee letters (the same that we now call Hebrew, the ancient Hebrew characters remained with the Samaritans) for the use of his countrymen returned out of Chaldea. He first ordained (say others) the vowels, accents, and Masoreth. A great scholar he was, and excellently well seen in the learning of Scripture: to which all other skill is but *straminea candela*, a rush candle, a small light, that serveth but to light men into utter darkness. Be wise be learned, saith the Psalmist; but in addition serve the Lord with fear, kiss the Son, &c., #Ps 2:12 otherwise ye may be as learned as Varro, that general scholar; as Albertus Magnus, *quem nihil penitus fugit, omnia perfecte novit*, who knew whatsoever was knowable, as one saith of him or as Tostatus (otherwise called Abulensis), *qui omnium scientiarum doctrinarumque arca fuit et emporium*, saith Bonosius, that writes his life who was a living library; and yet ye may perish everlastingly. The Jews called their learned men Scribes, as the Persians did theirs Magi the French, Druids; the Indians, Brahmans

&c. But he that is not a scribe instructed, and instructing others, to the kingdom of heaven #Mt 13:52, shall hear, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?" #1Co 1:20, *Sapientes sapienter in infernum descendent* The wise, wisely descend into hell. (Aug.).

Which the Lord God of Israel had given] The moral law, with his own immediate mouth (so that he might say with Joseph, #Ge 45:12, "Behold, your eyes see, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you"), the other laws he ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator, *i.e.* of Moses, #Ga 3:19. Hence Josephus calleth the Jewish polity a theocracy; and Prosper thinketh that they were called Judaei, because they received *ius Dei*, the Law from God. But we can give a better derivation from the Hebrew, *viz.* Jews, *i.e.* confessors, such as were those above, #Ezr 5:11.

And the king granted him all his request] Giving him more and greater things than he dared desire. So great facility and flexibleness found he in this king, that he needed only to ask, and give thanks; as it is said of Tiberius, that he never denied his favourite Sejanus anything; but often prevented his request, and avowed that he deserved much more.

According to the hand of the Lord his God upon him] *i.e.* His sweet and singular providence, ever watching over, and working for those that are good, #2Ch 19:11. Such may well sit and sing as one did once,

Una est in trepida mihi re medicina, Iehovae

Cor patrium, Os verax, omnipotensque Manus.

Ver. 7. **And there went up some of the children of Israel]** And but some; for many chose rather to continue in the land of their captivity, though God by his prophets, and the king by his proclamation, had cried out, "Ho, ho, come forth," &c. "Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon," #Zec 2:6,7; {See Trapp on "Zec 2:6"} {see Trapp on "Zec 2:7"}

And the Nethinims] {See Trapp on "Ezr 2:43"}

Ver. 8. **And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month]** So that they were four months in coming; and that which upheld them was, that they should shortly see the face of God in Zion, #Ps 84:7. Popish pilgrims, though they have many a weary step, and meet with much hardship, besides loss of their estates, yet satisfy themselves in this, We have what we came for, viz. the sight of some dumb idol. What then should not we do or suffer to see God in his ordinances, in holy assemblies!

Ver. 9. **According to the good hand of his God upon him]** {See *Trapp on "Ezr 7:6"*} In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths, #Pr 3:6. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also upon him, and he shall bring it to pass, #Ps 37:5. Holy Ezra had experimented all this (as also had Eliezer, #Ge 24:56), and therefore ascribeth his good success to God's good providence.

Ver. 10. **For Ezra had prepared his heart]** Which, without due preparation, would not have been drawn to any good. See #1Sa 7:3 **Job 11:13 Am 4:12.** An instrument must be tuned ere it can be played upon; sour wines need good sweetening.

To seek the law of the Lord] To dive into the very bosom and bottom of it. *Qui nucleum vult, nucem frangat.* The Rabbis have a saying, that there is a mountain of sense hanging upon every tittle of God's law.

And to do it] His knowledge and practice ran parallel, and mutually transfused warmth into one another. He was not of those orators blamed by Diogenes, for that they studied *bene dicere, non bene facere*, to speak commendably, but not to live accordingly. He knew well that his forefathers (the high priests) had pomegranates for savour as well as bells for sound.

And to teach in Israel] He knew the truth of that Hebrew proverb, *Lilmod Lelammed*, Men must therefore learn, that they may teach others, and not bury their talents, lest the canker of their great skill prove a swift witness one day against them.

Ver. 11. **Even a scribe of the words of the commandments]** This showeth Ezra was not an ordinary scribe (called a scribe of the people), nor a public notary, or king's secretary, such as were called for, #Es 3:13, but *Scriba sacer, legis peritus, et interpres*, a teacher

of the words of the commandments of the Lord and his statutes to Israel. This is a high and honourable employment.

Ver. 12. **Artaxerxes, king of kings**] This is a very high style for any mortal wight; yet ambitiously assumed by monarchs and emperors. It is indeed the proper title of Jesus Christ, who hath upon his vesture and upon his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords; kings and captives, lords and lowlies, are all his underlings and vassals, as those good emperors, Constantine, Theodosius, and Valentinian usually called themselves (Socrates). This name of the Lord Christ is said to be written, 1. On his vesture, that all may see it and submit to it. 2. On his thigh, where hangs his sword, to show his absolute and unlimited empire, got out of the hands of his enemies with his sword and with his bow, **#Ps 45:5**. "By me king's reign," saith he, **#Pr 8:15**. And Nebuchadnezzar is made to know as much, **#Da 4:35**, who once vain gloriously vaunted that his princes were altogether kings, **#Isa 10:8**. Maximilian, emperor of Germany, also said of himself, that he was a king of kings, but in another sense; for every one of my subjects (quoth he) will be a king; and say I what I can, they will do what they wish (Johan. Manl. loc. com. p. 586).

Of the God of heaven {*See Trapp on "Ezr 5:11"*}

Ver. 13. **And of his priests**] *sc.* The God of heaven's priests, **#Ezr 7:12**, and therefore honoured and respected by this great monarch; so was Samuel by Saul, Jaddus by Alexander the Great; the Bards (anciently) here in Albion by the greatest commanders.

Which are minded of their own freewill] He would compel none; neither doth Almighty God. His people are all volunteers, **#Ps 110:3** **Isa 56:6**; he finds them not so, but makes them so; and accounts that *Virtus nolentium nulla est. Lex voluntaries quaerit* The courage of the unwilling is nothing. The law seeks volunteers. (Ambrose in **#Ps 1**). God accepts a freewill offering, and commands us to come off roundly and readily in his service.

Ver. 14. **And of his seven counsellors**] Without whom the king did nothing of moment. This king was better affected to his council than his father Xerxes had been, of whom it is storied, that in his expedition against Greece he called his princes together, as if he would have been advised by them, but spoke to them to this purpose: Lest, saith he, I should seem to follow mine own counsel, I

have assembled you. And now do you remember, that it becomes you rather to obey than advise. {*Valerius Maximus, l. 9. c. 5. ext. 2. 2:339*}

To inquire concerniny Judah] So St Paul sent to inquire what was yet lacking in the faith of the Churches.

According to the law of thy God] Which is not only *recta*, but *regula*, the rule and rudder. Those that walked by this rule Ezra was to cherish, and to punish such as did otherwise, being *custos utriusque tabulae*

Which is in thine hand] Which thou art singularly skilled in, and much exercised about it; that thou mayest both observe it thyself, and also preserve it from other men's violations.

Ver. 15. **Which the king and his counsellors have freely offered]** This king, as he had been well bred by his mother, Queen Esther, so he had likely been well instructed by Ezra in the knowledge of the God of heaven (as he calleth him), whose service he thus promoteth. So Origen wrought much upon Alexander Severus the emperor, by his sound doctrine and holy conversation; but especially upon his mother, Mammaea, who became a great friend to the persecuted Christians.

Ver. 16. **And all the silver and gold that thou canst find]** And gold thirsty Babylon was not without great store of both, could the owners but find in their hearts to part with it to so pious a use: some did, and the rather because the king and his council began to them.

With the freewill offering of the people] God's select people, of whom Moses singeth, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people!" #De 33:29.

Ver. 17. **That thou mayest buy speedily]** *Illico*. immediately, God is himself a pure act, and hateth dulness in duty. What thou doest, do quickly, said Christ, even to the very traitor that did seek and suck his blood.

Ver. 18. **And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, &c.]** The king knew them to be faithful and wise stewards (such as Hanani was, #Ne 7:2), and, therefore, leaveth much of the money to be bestowed as they pleased.

Ver. 19. **The vessels also, &c.**] How naturally seemeth this king to care for the service of God! and what pity is it that he should so oft call him your God, and thy God, and not own him for his! So hard a thing it is to relinquish that vain conversation that people have received by tradition from their fathers. I will never forsake the religion that I have received from my forefathers, said Cicero. And the monarch of Moroccho told the English ambassador that he had lately read St Paul's Epistles, and liked them so well, that were he now 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.

Ver. 20. **And whatsoever more, &c.**] What could this king say more to seal up his good affection to the work in hand? Shall not this liberal heathen rise up in judgment and condemn such hold fasts among us, such miserly money hoarders, as have no quick silver, no current money for God or any good uses; but are, the richer the harder, as Dives?

Ver. 21. **Let it be done speedily**] Without shucking and bucking, without delays and consults: I, even I will have it so, saith the great king; dispute not, therefore, but despatch: *Quod ego volo, pro canone sit*, because I wish, let him be for the writing, as Constantius the emperor said to Paulinus, Lucifer, and other dissenting bishops.

Ver. 22. **Unto an hundred talents of silver**] This was no small sum. How chargeable was the service of God heretofore to what it is now! and yet how heavily do men come off when to expend though but a very small sum that way! *Ad quid perditio haec?* To what end is this waste? is the common cry in this case. Surely Pagans and Papagans who lavish money out of the bag without measure, *dotantque Deos alienos* (as some read that text, #Ps 16:3), shall have an easier judgment than such pinch penny professors.

Ver. 23. **For why should there be wrath**] Heb. Boiling or foaming anger, great indignation, as it is rendered, and made the utmost degree of the Divine displeasure, #De 29:28. Of all things God cannot endure to be slighted, and to have his service neglected; this blind nature saw, and was, therefore, sedulous herein to prevent wrath. Aristotle hath this divine precept, Πρωτα περι θειων επιμελει, Make religion thy first and chief care, that thou mayest prosper, &c. (Arist. Polit. l. 7. c. 8). Let our worship scorners look to it: Do they

provoke the Lord to wrath? Are they stronger than he? Will they bring God's vengeance upon us all?

Against the realm of the king and his sons] For God is higher than the highest, and will rain down indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, or that neglecteth to do good, #Ro 2:8,9; for not serving of God, not sacrificing, is a sin, #Mal 3:18 Ec 9:2. And sin doth as naturally draw and suck judgments to it, both personal and public, as the lodestone doth iron, or turpentine fire.

Ver. 24. **And also we certify you, that touching any of the priests]** These he taketh special order for, that they be freed from public payments; and the like care was taken by our ancestors for the ministers of the Church of England, as appeareth by Magna Charta, chpat. 14. Their maintenance is of the law of nature, #Ge 47:22. Jezebel provided for her priests; idolatrous Micah for his Levite; the Papists for their shavelings, granting them many and great immunities, and being so free to them, that there was need of a statute of Mortmain providing that men should give no more to the Church. But *tempera mutantur*; & c. Seasons be changed.

Ver. 25. **And thou, Ezra]** *Qui monet ut facias*, who warned you to do this, &c.

After the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand] That is, in thine heart and life, *Sapientia est vel codicibus vel cordibus*. Wisdom is either from the books or the heart. Ezra had both these, being a thorough wise man.

All such as know the laws of thy God] Else how shall they see them duly executed? How shall they be as so many living laws, walking statuted? How shall they teach in the cities of Judah, as Jehoshaphat's judges did, #2Ch 17:7,9, and as it followeth here, "And teach ye them that know them not"; how can the people perform their duty, which they are ignorant of?

Ver. 26. **And whosoever will not do the law of thy God]** In the first place, and then the king's law, as it is subordinate and subservient to God's. *Obediemus Atridis honesta mandantibus, non aliter*; saith he in Euripides (in Iphigenia), If the king command honest things, we will obey him; otherwise not.

Let judgment be executed speedily upon him] Let this be noted against those that hold that magistrates have nothing to do with men in matters of religion. Artaxerxes here interposed, and Ezra blesseth God for it. See #Da 3:29 De 13:6 Ro 13:4 1Pe 2:13,14.

Ver. 27. **Blessed be the Lord God]** *Deo gratias* to the God of graces, is ever in a good man's mouth. The Jews at this day are bound to say a hundred benedictions every day; and more as occasion requires (Leo Modena).

Ver. 28. **And hath extended mercy unto me]** *sc.* By making use of my service for the promoting of his. Any employment about God is a high preferment, and so to be esteemed; yea, it is a mercy, and sealeth up further mercy.

Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **These are now the chief of their fathers]** The chieftains of those that went up with Ezra, beside those that went up at first with Zerubbabel.

Ver. 2. **Of the sons of Phinehas]** The son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, that renowned zealot, with whom, and his seed after him, God gave a covenant of peace, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, #Nu 25:12,13.

Daniel] Not the prophet Daniel, God's darling, #Da 9:23, but another of the same name, which might be some help to him.

Of the sons of David] *sc.* Of David the king. See #1Ch 3:22.

Ver. 3. **Of the males an hundred and fifty]** Great account was made of males under the law, more than of the females; and so there is to this day among the Jews, who hold women to be of a lower creation, made only for the propagation and pleasure of man, &c. (Blount's Voyage). This their conceit is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings. He did better who stiled woman the second edition of the epitome of the whole world. Sure it is, that souls have no sexes; and in Christ there is no respect had more to the male than female, #Ga 3:28.

Ver. 4. **Of the sons of Pahathmoab]** Haply so called, because some of his progenitors had dwelt in Moab. He was a covenanter, #Ne 10:14.

Ver. 5. **The son of Jahaziel**] The father is named, but not the son: but why, who can tell? *Et patet et lucet pagina sacra*. He is both well know and conspicuous by the sacred page.

Ver. 6. **Of the sons also of Adin**] A covenanter too, **#Ne 10:6**.

Ver. 7. **Jeshaiah**] Of the same name, but not the same man that is mentioned, **#Ezr 8:19**.

Ver. 8. **The son of Michael**] A name afterwards given to Jesus Christ, **#Da 10:13 Re 12:7**, signifying, Who is as God. Hence some conceive that it is not so fit to call a child Michael, Emmanuel, &c.

Ver. 9. **Obadiah the son of Jehiel**] This Obadiah (as also Zechariah, **#Ezr 8:11**, and Azgad, **#Ezr 8:12**) sealed the covenant, **#Ne 10:1,5**, not without oath and execration. It is both lawful, and in some cases needful, for good people solemnly to bind themselves to bounden duties. Hereby, saith a grave divine, as true intention, earnest desire, prudent jealousy, and holy zeal are manifested, so is a dull spirit much quickened, and the weak, wayward, revolting flesh bridled and curbed; yea, and bound to her good behaviour.

Ver. 10. **The son of Josiphiah**] See **#Ezr 8:5**.

Ver. 11. **Zechariah the son of Bebai**] See **#Ezr 8:9**.

Ver. 12. **And the sons of Azgad**] See **#Ezr 8:9**.

Ver. 13. **And of the sons of Adonikam**] Some of his sons went up before with Zerubbabel, **#Ezr 2:13**. These not till now, together with Ezra. They might want either age or hearts to go at first with their brethren, *E posteris posterioribus* (Tremell.). Second thoughts are best many times; and *Nunquam sero, si serio*. Never sorry if cultivated. That son, in the Gospel, who, being bidden go work to-day in the vineyard, answered and said, I will not, but afterwards repented and went, wanted not his commendation, **#Mt 21:29**. A learned man notes thus upon this text: The lot of Adonikam was below his brethren, because he was the last that set foot forward toward their return.

Ver. 14. **And with them seventy males**] The whole company consisted of one thousand four hundred ninety and six males: a good addition to those that went up before with Zerubbabel; yet nothing so many as might have been, but that they wanted hearts.

Rari quippe boni, numero vix sunt totidem, quot

Thebarum portae, vel divitis ostia Nili (Juvenal, Sat. 13).

Ver. 15. **And I gathered them together to the river]** There was their first rendezvous, at the meeting of two rivers; whereof that country was full, #Ps 137:1, and therefore fertile as the garden of the Lord, whereof it was a part, as most geographers are of opinion.

And there abode we in tents] Glad we had our faces set toward Zion (going weeping, &c., #Jer 50:4,5), and our backs upon Babylon; of which we might well say, as the philosopher afterwards did of Athens, that it was a pleasant place to travel through, but not safe to dwell in.

And found there none of the sons of Levi] None but what he afterwards sent for, no volunteers; this was lamentable, that Levites should be so backward to so good a business. Here was *nomen inane, crimen immane*. missing name, enormous crime.

Ver. 16. **Men of understanding]** Of special note for their wisdom and eloquence; such as could present to the people good matter well habited, and could well express their expositions of the law, being themselves wise, and willing to wise others, as the Hebrew word signifieth, #Da 12:3. Men of understanding, and ready to instruct many, #Da 11:33. Such a man as this is worth his weight in gold,

Ver. 17. **At the place Casiphia]** Where it may seem that there was a college of Levites, and Iddo was their president.

And to his brethren the Nethinims] Who were now become men of mark, brethren to Iddo, and much sought for by Ezra, #Ezr 2:43, for the service they did about God's house.

Ver. 18. **And by the good hand of God upon us]** God was in all this good man's thoughts: he set upon every passage, as the ancients upon every special piece of work they did, Θεος, Θεος (Pausanias). This was the only way to make his journey comfortable, thus to converse with God all along, *et Paradisum mente deambulare*, and let your mind walk in paradise, as Jerome counselled the young hermit, assuring him that so long as he had paradise in his mind, and God in his apprehensions, *tamdiu in eremo non esset*, so long he should not be in a desert.

They brought us a man of understanding] The Hebrew word Shacal signifieth three things: 1. To understand. 2. To instruct. 3. To prosper. Those that understand themselves, and teach others, shall do much good to themselves and others; see the note on **#Ezr 8:16**. This *egregie cordatus homo* exceptional sweet hearted man, was Sherebiah, as it followeth here, and Sherebiah, or, even Sherebiah; confer **#Ne 8:7 9:4,5**.

Ver. 19. **And Hashabiah]** A man ready to every good work, **#Ne 3:17 10:11**; and that is no small commendation.

Ver. 20. **Whom David and the princes had appointed]** *i.e.* Continued, confirmed, and ordered them; for they were first appointed and designed to that service by Joshua; and thence called Nethinims.

All of them were expressed by name] *Verbis non solum disertis, sed et exsertis.* Words not only skilfully expressed, but even uncovered.

Ver. 21. **Then I proclaimed a fast there]** A day of restraint from food, fine clothes, and other delights of life. There is a threefold fast, saith one, from meat, from mirth, and from sin; this last crowns all. Unless God sees turning, he sees no work in a fast, saith another, explaining that text, **#Jon 3:10**, "God saw their works, that they turned." Of a fast, **See Trapp on "Joe 2:12"**.

That we might afflict ourselves before our God] Not outwardly only (that is but the shell, **#Isa 58:3**), but inwardly also, for that is the kernel of this exercise, **#Jer 16:19**, which else is but bodily, and profiteth little; something it may, as it did Ahab; but if rightly performed, though it weakeneth the body, yet it strengtheneth the spirit, making it vigorous and victorious.

To seek of him a right way for us] To edge our prayers and give wings to them; for fasting inflameth prayer, and prayer sanctifieth fasting; hence they go coupled for the most part, **#Lu 2:37 Mt 17:21 1Co 7:5**. And surely, if with fasting and prayer we can seek of God direction and protection, as here, we shall speed of both.

And for our little ones] These should be a main part of our care, to lay up prayers for them, to commend them to God's safe keeping,

forasmuch as *puerilitas est periculorum pelagus*, Little ones are liable to a thousand deaths and dangers.

And for all our substance] Our stock and our store, all the goods that we have got and gathered together. Our English word Riches answereth to the Hebrew *Recush*.

Ver. 22. **For I was ashamed]** Heb. I blushed and was abashed, I knew not how to put on the face to do it, neither could I bring my mind to crave a convoy, though it might have been of great use to us; lest the name of God should thereby be dishonoured, and his excellencies questioned. It is the ingenuity of saints to study God's ends more than their own, and to be far more troubled when anything crosseth him than when themselves are crossed or disappointed. *Propter te, Domine, propter te*, Because of you, God, because of you, is the good man's motto. Choice and excellent spirits are all for God, whatever becometh of themselves.

Because we had spoken unto the king, saying] They had spoken good of God's name, and amply set forth his power, providence, goodness, and other attributes, being no whit ashamed so to do before kings, as **#Ps 119:46**: so did Chrysostom, Basil, Latimer, Lambert, John Colet, Dean of Paul's, and founder of the free school there. He, for the bold and faithful discharge of his duty, in a sermon before Henry VIII, at the siege of Tournay, was called to his trial by the king's counsellors; but the issue proved happy; for he gave so great content to the king, that he, taking a cup of wine, said, Dean, I drink to you; let every one take whom he will for his confessor, you shall be my doctor (Mr Clark in his Life). Holy Ezra found no less favour with this mighty monarch, whom he had well informed in the manifold excellencies of God, as appeareth by this and sundry other preceding passages.

The hand of our God is upon all them, &c.] To hide them in the hollow of it till the indignation be overpast; to hold them by their right hand, and so to guide them by his counsel, that he may afterwards take them to his glory, **#Ps 73:23,24**.

But his power and his wrath] *Id est*, His powerful wrath, his anger armed with power, for *vanae sine viribus irae*; but who

knoweth the power of thine anger, saith Moses? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath, **#Ps 90:11**. Let him fear thee never so much, he is sure to feel thee more, if once he fall into thy fingers, into that mighty hand of thine (as St James styleth it, **#Jas 4:10**), before which ten thousand kings cannot stand. Let God forsakers therefore do as those elders of Israel did, **#2Ki 10:3-5**.

Is against all them that forsake him] Such are all they, 1. That forsake not their sins, **#Job 20:17 Isa 55:7**. 2. That know not God, **#Isa 1:3,4 Eph 4:18**. 3. That trust to idols, or creature comforts, arm of flesh, **#1Ki 9:9 Jos 24:20 Jer 2:13**. 4. Church-forsakers, and apostates, **#Heb 10:25,38**. God is against all these, and will consume them, after that he hath done them good, **#Jos 24:20 Ps 73:27 1Ch 28:9 Jon 2:8 Jer 17:13 De 31:16 2Ch 12:5 15:2 24:20**. Ver. 23. **So we fasted]** They put their holy resolution into execution: purpose without practice is like Rachel, beautiful, but barren.

And besought our God for this] And they had it, **#Ezr 8:31**. For fasting and prayer are like Jonathan's bow and Saul's sword, that never turned back or returned empty, **#2Sa 1:22**. God is a liberal rewarder of all such as in this sort diligently seek him, **#Heb 11:6 2Ch 15:2**. he will turn their fasting into feasting, their prayers into praises, **#Eze 36:37 Zec 8:19**. They shall have out their prayers either in money or money's worth; either in the very thing they desired, or at least strength to stay themselves upon God, with good assurance that his grace shall be sufficient for them, and that he will be their shield, and their exceeding great reward.

Ver. 24. **Then I separated twelve]** I singled them and set them apart for this great trust, *vide cui fidus*. See the faith of these.

Sherebiah, Hashabiah] Heb. With Sherebiah, Hashabiah (men of known integrity, **#Ezr 8:18,19**),

and ten of their brethren with them] twenty-four in all, a complete company of faithful trustees.

Ver. 25. **And weighed unto them]** Heb. I scaled it out unto them; Cyrus counted it out to Zerubbabel, **#Ezr 1:1,9**, &c.

And his lords] Called mighty princes, **#Ezr 7:28**; see **#Isa 10:8**.

And all Israel there present] Heb. There found at that time, or that had found in their purses, found in their hearts.

Ver. 26. **Six hundred and fifty talents of silver]** That is, 243,750 pounds sterling.

An hundred talents] That is, 37,500 pounds sterling.

Ver. 27. **Of a thousand drachms]** 312 pounds 10 shillings. The Hebrew (or rather Chaldee) word here rendered a drachm seems to be taken from the Greek word Δραχμή.

And two vessels of fine copper] *Ex orichalco praestante*, Of some choice mixed metal, *Auro contra non caro*. Overlaid with gold without no dross.

Ver. 28. **We are holy unto the Lord]** Heb. Ye are holiness unto the Lord; and must sanctify the holy God in righteousness, **#Isa 5:16**.

The vessels are holy also] *Id est*, That is, Set apart to sacred uses, and therefore to be kept carefully, used respectfully. The Turks spare and keep better than ordinary those very asses of theirs that have been used for carriage to Mecca, where their Mahomet lieth buried; neither will they put paper to any base use, because that both the name of God and the Mahometan law are written upon the like.

Ver. 29. **Watch ye]** With utmost care and solicitude, as the word signifieth. How much more should we watch and treble watch, {*as #Lu 12:37,38,43*} to keep our vessels (bodies) in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, &c.! especially since *Adversus maiora vigilantibus quaedam incautis minutiora surrepant*, and Satan worketh strongest on the fancy when the soul is sleepy, or a little drowsy (Aug.). Watch ye therefore and keep. This lesson had need to be often rung in our ears.

Ver. 30. **So took the priests and the Levites]** The great charge committed to them, and laid upon them, did not weaken, but waken, their heroic spirits.

Tu ne crede malis, sed contra audentior ito.

Ver. 31. **And of such as lay in wait by the way]** Enemies they had not a few, (when was it otherwise?) but some that purposely waylaid them; but were defeated by a gracious providence. So were the

Manichees, who lay in wait for Austin; and those that pursued Jewel, about the beginning of Queen Mary's reign, as he was going from Oxford to London. Both these had been caught, and made a prey to their enemies, but that they lost their way. What saith the prophet? As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem (like as when the young are in danger of the kite, the bird flies to save them); defending also, he will deliver it, and passing over, he will preserve it.

Ver. 32. **And abode there three days]** For necessary refreshment, after so long a journey. The body is the soul's servant, and must therefore be kindly and fairly dealt with, *ut sit par negotio*, that it may be neither above nor below its business; but even with it, meet for it, *Corpus sive corpor, quasi cordis por, id est, puer, sive famulus*.

Ver. 33. **Now on the fourth day]** viz. Of their fifth month. After a short repose, they set close to work. To recreations God allows men to stoop for their bodies' sake, as the eagle to the prey; or as Gideon's soldiers to sup their handful, not to swill their belly full.

Ver. 34. **By number and by weight, &c.]** In reference to this text, let thy confession be full, saith a reverend man; bring out thy sins as those in Ezra did the vessels of the temple, by number and by weight. 1. By number, **#Le 16:21**. Aaron was to confess over the scape-goat all the iniquities of the children of Israel 2. By weight he was to confess all their transgressions in all their sins; that is, laying open how many transgressions were wrapped up in their various sins and their circumstances.

Ver. 35. **Also the children of those that had been]** In token of presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God their deliverer, **#Ro 12:1**. Let us that are freed from sin's slavery become the servants of righteousness, **#Ro 6:18**; and being delivered from the hands of our enemies, serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives, **#Lu 1:74,75**.

Ver. 36. **And they furthered the people]** Heb. They gave them a lift, lent them a helping hand; not out of love to the work, but for fear of the king, and in pursuance of his commands and commissions. Thus the devil and his imps sometimes do God's will, though with an ill will, **#Ps 109:31**. They continue this day according to thine ordinances; for all are thy servants. How much better were it to work from a right principle, not by constraint, but

willingly; not for fear of wrath, but of a ready mind, #1Pe 5:2; to love to be God's servants, taking hold of his covenant, #Isa 56:6, and saying to him, as the people did to Joshua, #Jos 1:16, or as the rulers and elders to Jehu, #2Ki 10:5, "We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us."

Chapter 9

Ver. 1. **Now when these things were done]** Here are post *maxima gaudia luctus*, Heaven's joys are without measure or mixture; but this present life is overspread with sins and miseries, as with a filthy morphew. Of good Ezra, we may say as Pliny doth of Metellus, *Metellus infelix dici non debet, felix non potest*. Unhappy we may not call him, happy we cannot; witness the doleful discourse of this chapter.

The princes came to me] The better sort of them, that were sensible of the abuses, crept in, and desired a reformation. For some of the princes also and rulers had their hands elbow deep in the wickedness complained of, #Ezr 9:2.

The people of Israel] The many, the common sort, that shallow-brained but many headed beast, that loves to follow the herd and do as the most do, though thereby they be utterly undone for ever.

And the priests, and the Levites] This was much; for these knew the law, and made their boast of it, #Ro 2:18,23. They could not be ignorant of the unlawfulness of this mixing themselves in marriage with heathens not proselyted. Now sins against knowledge and conscience are of a double dye, of a crimson colour; and make a great breach, a deep gash in a man's spirit, #Isa 59:11,12. What was it that brought such roarings and troubles on them, and that when salvation was looked for? Our iniquities testify to our faces, and we know them.

Have not separated themselves] The separation of the saints from the wicked is a wonderful separation, #Ex 33:16, such as was that of light from darkness in the creation. God hath brought them out of darkness into his marvellous light, #1Pe 2:9. Why then should they

be unequally yoked together with unbelievers? what communion hath light with darkness? &c., #2Co 6:14.

Doing according to their abominations] How should they choose but do so when so matched and married? What is the reason the pope will not dispense in Spain or Italy, if a Papist marry a Protestant? yet here they will, but in hope thereby to draw more to them. The brown bread in the oven will be sure to fleece from the white; not that from it. So in married couples: seldom is the worse bettered by the good, but the contrary. See #Ne 13:26.

Ver. 2. **For they have taken of their daughters]** Taken them for wives: which was flatly forbidden, #De 7:3, and a reason given, #Ezr 9:4, from the evil effect of such unblest marriages. This abuse Malachi complaineth of, #Mal 2:11,13, whom some make to be the same man with Ezra.

For themselves, and for their sons] Whom they herein helped to a cold armful (as Lycephron calleth a bad wife, ψυχρον παρακαλισμα), or rather to an unnatural heat, worse than that of a quartan ague, as said Simonides; as bad as that of an evil spirit, said another heathen.

So that the holy seed] i.e. The children of Israel, who were all federally holy at least, #De 7:6, as are also all the children of Christian parents, #1Co 7:14.

Hath been chief in this trespass] Which they think audaciously to bear out with their big looks, to obtrude and justify to the world this most malapert misdemeanour, because it is *facinus maioris abollae*, the fact of a great one (Juvenal).

Ver. 3. **I rent my garment and my mantle]** In token of his deep and downright humiliation, indignation, detestation of their dealing therein.

And plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard] To show how passionately grieved and offended he was. The raging Turk did the like at the last assault of Scodra; being extremely vexed at the dishonour and loss he had received there. But what followed? In his choler and frantic rage he most horribly blasphemed God; whereas

holy Ezra, though he sat astonished till the evening sacrifice, yet then he poureth forth his soul in a heavenly prayer, **#Ezr 9:5,6**.

And sat down astonished] As one that hath neither life nor soul (as we say), that can neither say nor do for himself, being wonderfully amazed, astonished, or desolate, as David had been, **#Ps 143:4**. The true zealot, as his love is fervent, his desires eager, his delights ravishing, his hopes longing; so his hatred is deadly, his anger fierce, his grief deep, his fear terrible, &c. Zeal is an extreme heat of all the affections, **#Ro 12:11**, boiling hot, hissing hot, as the Greek importeth (ζέοντες).

Ver. 4. **Then were assembled unto me]** It was soon noised and noticed among the godly party how exceedingly Ezra was troubled; they therefore trouble themselves, as our Saviour is said to have done, **#Joh 11:33**, and as Paul felt twinges when others were hurt. "Who is offended," saith he, "and I burn not?" **#2Co 11:29**. Sheep, when frightened, will get together; swine, when lugged, will grunt together. What should saints do (in case of national sins or judgments) but assemble and tremble together, as here; but vow and perform reformation to the Lord their God, as in the next chapter.

Every one that trembled at the words] At the judgments of God whilst they yet hang in the threatenings. To such looketh the Lord with special intimations of his love, **#Isa 66:2**. When as those that tremble not in hearing shall be crushed to pieces in feeling, said Mr Bradford the martyr.

That had been carried away] But had not learned by the things that they had suffered, were as bad as before, if not worse, having lost the fruit of their afflictions, παθηματα μαθηματα. This is fearful; a bad sign of an incorrigible castaway, **#Jer 6:30**.

Until the evening sacrifice] This time of the day good people usually took to pray at; that, together with the sacrifice, their prayers might come up for a memorial before God in those pillars of smoke, **#So 3:6 Ac 10:4**. See **#Lu 1:10 Ac 3:11**.

Ver. 5. **I arose up from my heaviness]** In affliction, *sc.* of spirit, wherewith his heart was leavened and soured, as David's was, **#Ps 73:21**; embittered, as Peter's, **#Mt 26:75**; poured out upon him, as

Job's, #Job 30:16. He did really afflict himself with voluntary sorrows for the transgressions of his people.

And having rent, &c.] See #Ezr 9:3.

I fell upon my knees] This gesture did both evidence and increase the ardency of his affection.

And spread out my hands] With the palms open toward heaven, in a having, craving way, as beggars. This was the Jewish manner of praying, and it was very becoming.

Ver. 6. **And said, O my God]** This was a prayer of faith, and founded upon the covenant, that beehive of heavenly honey, as one well calleth it.

I am ashamed and blush] Sin is a blushful thing, and hales shame at the heels of it, #Re 3:17. Therefore when a man hath committed a sin, he blusheth; the blood, as it were, would cover the sin. But he is past grace that is past shame, and can blush no more than a sackbut, *Illum ego periisse dico cui periit pudor* (Sallust).

For our iniquities] He maketh himself a party, because he was one of the same community with them that had done that evil. He also knew himself to have a hand, if not upon the great cart ropes, set upon the lesser cords that might draw down divine vengeance upon the land. Hence he includeth himself after the example of Daniel, #Da 9:5.

Are increased over our head] As an overwhelming flood, #Ps 38:4. That threateneth to go over our souls too, #Ps 124:4, and to sink them in the bottomless lake, that lower most part of hell imported by that ך locale (as Hebricians note), #Ps 9:17. {*Hebrew Text Note*}

And our trespass is grown up unto the heavens] So great is our guilt, that it is gotten as high as heaven, that is, as high as may be. For beyond the moveable heavens, Aristotle (nature's best secretary) saith there is neither body, nor time, nor place, nor vacuum. See #Re 18:5. {*See Trapp on "Re 18:5"*}

visible heavens; which must therefore be purged with the fire of the last day. Yea, it pierceth into the heaven of heavens, and maketh a loud outcry in God's ears for vengeance, #Ge 4:10 18:20.

Ver. 7. **Since the days of our fathers**] Confession with aggravation is that happy sponge that wipeth out all the blots and blurs of our lives; for, if we confess our sins, and therein lay load enough upon ourselves, as Ezra here, and Daniel doth, #Da 9:5 (mark how full in the mouth these good men are, out of the abundant hatred of sin in their hearts), "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," &c., #1Jo 1:9. But in confession we must not extenuate or excuse; every sin must swell as a toad in our eyes, and we must spit it out of our mouths with utmost indignation; showing the Lord the iniquity of our sin, the filthiness of our lewdness, the abomination of our provocations, #Ro 7:13. Thus if we weigh our sins in a true balance, and put in so many weights as to bring to a just humiliation, to a godly sorrow; then it will prove a right apology, the same that the apostle maketh a fruit and sign of sound repentance, #2Co 7:11, *quae magis deprecatione constat, quam depulsione criminum*, such an apology as consisteth rather in deprecating than defending (Chemnit. Exam.).

Have we been in a great trespass unto this day] And so there hath been a concatenation, a continued series of our sins from one generation to another. We are a race of rebels, a seed of serpents, &c.

And for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests] Our national sins have produced national plagues; which yet we have not improved to a public or personal reformation. Many hands have drawn the cable with greatest violence; the leprosy hath overrun the whole body; there is (as physicians say of some diseases) *corruptio totius substantiae*, a general defection, a conjuncture of all persons, in all sins and miseries, which, like clouds, cluster together, and no clearing up by repentance.

And to confusion of face] So that we are a scorn to our enemies and a terror to ourselves; in a low and lamentable condition.

Ver. 8. **And now for a little space**] Heb. point, or moment of time. God let loose his hand for a while, and gave them some little liberty,

to make them instances of his mercy who had been objects of his wrath; but nothing would mend them and make them better.

And to give us a nail] That is, some settlement, some subject of hope, and support of faith. He seemeth to allude to such nails as wherewith they fastened their tents to the ground (Jael drove one of those tent nails through Sisera's temples, and laid him safe enough), or else to those nails that, driven into pales, do fasten them to their rails.

That our God may lighten our eyes] i.e. cheer up our hearts, and so clear up our eyesight; which, when the spirit is dejected, grows dim, for want of spirits. *Profecto oculis animus inhabitat*, saith Pliny (lib. ii. cap. 32); truly so it is, that the heart dwelleth in the eye; there it sitteth and showeth itself pleased or displeased with whatsoever occurrences. And as a looking-glass is the eye of art; so is the eye the looking-glass of nature.

And give us a little reviving in our bondage] Not light only, but heat also, by the beams of his pleased countenance, which is better than life. The life of some kind of creatures is merely in the sun; in winter they lie for dead; in summer they revive. So it is with the saints; all their comfort consists in God's grace and favour. They look unto him and are lightened, **#Ps 34:5**; he hideth his face, and they are troubled; their breath is taken away, they die and return to their dust, **#Ps 104:29**. These captives in Babylon lay for that time as dead and buried, **#Isa 26:19**. God opened their graves, and caused them to come up out of their graves, and brought them to the land of Israel, **#Eze 37:13**. For his favour is no empty favour; it is not like the winter sun, that casts a goodly countenance when it shineth, but gives little comfort and heat. He is the Father of lights, and the God of all grace and consolation, &c., he gives all things needful to life and godliness, so that to have sinned against so good a God, to kick against such tender bowels, was a further aggravation of their sin; and so it is here used and urged.

Ver. 9. **For we were bondmen]** Heb. servants; and so wholly and only at the pleasure of another; for a servant is not *αυτοματος*, saith Aristotle, one that moveth absolutely of himself; but he is the master's underling and instrument, *και ολωσ εκεινου*, wholly at his

disposal. The saints may say all as much, We were bondmen, slaves to sin, drudges to the devil, driven about by him at his pleasure, having as many lords as lusts, #Tit 3:3, and thereby exposed to a thousand mischiefs and miseries; the heathens' Pistrinum, the Turk's galleys, Bajazet's iron cage, the Indian mines, are nothing to it. This we should frequently recognize; and remembering that our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but brought us from darkness to light, "and from the power of Satan unto God, that we might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified," #Ac 26:18; we should blush and bleed in the sense of our unthankfulness, saying, as #Ezr 9:14, Should we again break thy commandments, &c.

Yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage] As he may seem to do his prisoners of hope, when he leaves them in the enemy's hand, or under some pressing affliction, and seems to forget them, that they may the better remember themselves. But God had remembered these returned captives "in their low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever." And had "redeemed them from their enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever," #Ps 136:23,24. Their sin therefore was the greater, since against so much mercy; and God might justly have said unto them, as #Eze 22:20, "I will gather you in my anger and in my fury, and will leave you there." A grievous judgment indeed! for woe be unto you when I forsake you, #Ho 9:12. Lord, leave us not, #Jer 17:17. Forsake us not utterly, #Ps 119:8.

To give us a reviving] See #Ezr 9:8.

To set up the house of our God, and to repair, &c.] He reciteth and celebrateth God's favours to that people, not in the lump only and by wholesale, as we say; but entereth into particulars, and reckoneth them up one by one. So doth Moses, #Ex 18:8. So doth David, #Ps 136 So must we, that we may shame and shent ourselves, as here, for our unthankfulness: and be inrited and incited thereby to better obedience. God, for this cause, crumbleth his mercies unto us (saith one): we have his blessings by retail, that we may make our utmost of them.

And to give us a wall] Protection and safeguard, as the walls of Sparta was their militia, and the walls of England is our navy. They had the fence of the king of Persia's favour. They had also God's providence, as a hedge or wall of fire round about them, #Zec 2:5. {See Trapp on "Zec 2:5"}

Ver. 10. **And now, O our God, what shall we say after this?**] *q.d.* We have nothing to say for ourselves, wherever thou shouldst not presently pronounce against us, and execute upon us the sentence of utter rejection. We are even speechless, excuseless, and must needs conclude, It is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, that we are at all on this side of hell it is because his compassions fail not, #La 3:32.

For we have forsaken thy commandments] Better than this Ezra could not have said for himself and his people, whilst he thus confesseth sin, and putteth himself into the hands of justice, in hope of mercy. In the courts of men it is safest to say, *Non feci*, I did it not (saith Quintilian). But in our addresses unto God it is best to say, *Ego feci, miserere*, I did it, Oh be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me. *Per miserere mei, tollitur ira Dei.*

Ver. 11. **Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets]** Whose office it was to expound the law to us, and to apply it to our consciences. This, although they have done daily and duly, yet we have not been kept within the bounds of obedience, but have flown against the lights (as bats use to do), and sinned presumptuously. Thus he aggravateth their sin by every circumstance. And this is right confession, such as the schoolmen have set forth in this tetrastic.

*Sit simplex, humilis confessio, pura, fidelis,
Atque frequens, nuda et discreta, lubens, verecunda,
Integra, cordata, et lachrymabilis, accelerata,
Fortis et accusans, et se punire parata.*

Is an unclean land] *Because inhabited by an unclean people, who are acted and agitated by an unclean spirit, and do miserably moil themselves in the filthiness of lewdness, which defileth a man worse than any leprosy, than any out-house, #Mr 7:23. Mr Aseham (schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth) did thank God that he was but*

nine days in Italy, wherein he saw, in that one city of Venice, more uncleanness and licentiousness than in London he ever heard of in nine years.

With the filthiness of the people of the lands] *Those Canaanites were very Borborites, shameless sinners before the Lord; who therefore rooted them out, and caused their land, when it could bear them no longer, to spue them out. Sin is filthiness (ρυπαρια) in the abstract. St James calleth it the stinking filth of a pestilent ulcer, and the superfluity or garbage of naughtiness, #Jas 1:21. It is no better than the devil's excrement; it sets his limbs in us, and draws his picture upon us; for malice is the devil's eye, oppression is his hand, hypocrisy is his cloven foot, &c. Great sins do greatly pollute.*

Which have filled it from one end to another] *Hath overspread it as a deluge, overrun it, as the Jerusalem artichoke doth the ground wherein it is planted; turned it into the same nature with itself, as coppers, which will turn milk into ink; or leaven, which turneth a very passover into pollution. See #Mic 1:5, {See Trapp on "Mic 1:5"}*

Ver. 12. Now therefore give not your daughters] *Unless ye have a mind to pitch them into the mouth of hell. See #Ezr 9:2. {See Trapp on "Ezr 9:2"}*

Nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever] *For they were devoted by God to utter destruction; and therefore Israel might have no intercourse with them. The Jews at this day count and call us Canaanites, Edomites, &c., and hold it an almsdeed to knock us on the head. The best among the Gentiles, say they, is worthy *cui caput conteratur tanquam serpenti*, to be killed up as a serpent. Tacitus long since observed of them, that as they were very kind to their own, so to all others they bare a deadly hatred. Thrice a day in their prayers they curse us Christians, and in Polony (where they have a toleration) they print base and blasphemous things against Christ and religion (Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 5).*

That ye may be strong] *viz. By my presence amongst you and providence over you; for *cui adhaereo, praeest*, as Queen Elizabeth*

could write; how much more may God Almighty, he whom I favour is sure to prevail.

And eat the good of the land] The best of the best, the finest wheat, the choicest fruit, and those a pledge and foretaste of the happiness of heaven, where there is *nec fames, nec fastidium* (as one saith), neither lack nor loathing, neither measure nor mixture, but sweetest varieties, felicities, eternities.

And leave it for an inheritance] Personal goodness is profitable to posterity: the righteous shall leave inheritance to his children's children, **#Pr 13:22**. God never casteth out his good tenants, nor leaveth his servants unprovided for. See **#Ps 103:17 112:1,2**.

Ver. 13. **And after all that is come upon us]** Affliction, like foul weather, cometh before it is sent for; yet not but of God's sending; and then it is ever either probational, as Job's; or cautional, as Paul's prick in the flesh; or penal, for chastisement of some way of wickedness, as here.

For our evil deeds] These he thanketh (as well be might) for all their sufferings: sin is the mother of misery, and hales hell at the heels of it.

Seeing that thou our God] Our God still, and this is the sixth time that he hath so styled him in this holy prayer, besides three times My God. These are speeches of faith, and refer to the covenant, that *pabulum fidei*, food of faith. When ye stand and pray, believe; when ye humble and tremble before God, keep up your faith still. *Nihil retinet qui fidem amisit*, lose that and lose all (Seneca). Take away the iniquity of thy servants, saith David, **#2Sa 24:10**. It is as if he should say, I am thy servant, Lord, still, though an unworthy one. And to prove himself so, he addeth, for I have done very foolishly. I confess it, Lord, that thou mayest cover it. *Homo agnoscit, Deus ignoscit*. This he believes, and speeds: when Judas confessing (but in addition despairing) misses of mercy.

Hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve] Heb. Hast withheld beneath our iniquities. The just hire of the least sin is death in the largest sense, **#Ro 6:23**. What then might God do to us for our

many and mighty sins, or rather, what might he not do, and that most justly! How great is his mercy which maketh him say, Jerusalem hath received at God's hand double for all her sins, **#Isa 40:1,2**. Too much, saith God there; too little, saith Ezra here; and yet how sweetly and beautifully doth this kind of contradiction become both!

And hast given us such deliverance as this] A fruit of free mercy, and calls hard for duty. God's blessings are binders; and every new deliverance calls for new obedience, *Servati sumus ut serviamus*. We have been served so that we may serve.

Ver. 14. **Should we again break thy commandments]** There is so much unthankfulness and disingenuity in such an entertainment of mercy, that holy Ezra here thinks that heaven and earth would be ashamed of it.

And join in affinity with the people of these abominations?] Especially when we may hear God himself screeching out as it were those words of his, Oh, do not this abominable thing! Save yourselves from this untoward generation, &c.

Wouldest thou not be angry with us?] i.e. Chide us, smite us, and so set it on, as no creature should be able to take it off? Sin may move God, when we ask bread and fish to feed us, to answer us with a stone to bruise us or a serpent to bite us. Shun it therefore as a serpent in your way, or as poison in your meats. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way," **#Ps 2:12**.

So that there should be no remnant] So that our late preservation should prove but a reservation to further mischief; as was Sodom's, Sennacberib's, Pharaoh's.

Ver. 15. **O Lord God of Israel]** So called, because he is their portion, they his, **#De 32:9**. He had avouched them for his; and they him interchangeably, **#De 26:17,18**. Seneca could say that the basest people (meaning the Jews) gave laws unto all the world; that is, had the true God, creator of all, for their God.

Thou art righteous] In all thy judgments inflicted upon us; or, thou art faithful and true in thy promises: but we have forfeited thy favour, and deserved destruction.

Behold, we are before thee in our trespasses] Or guiltiness, which is that iniquity of sin (as David calleth it, **#Ps 32:5**) whereby the sinner is bound over to condign punishment.

For we cannot stand before thee] But must needs *causa cadere*, drop our case, being self-condemned; and such as must needs subscribe to thy perfect justice in our own utter destruction.

Chapter 10

Ver. 1. **Now when Ezra had prayed]** Had presented himself as a suppliant (Hithpallel), and opened his cause to God the Judge, appealing to him, that he might determine.

And when he had confessed] And begged pardon; deprecating the Divine displeasure, as the word signifieth.

Weeping] Of this we read not in the former chapter, but of other effects of his passion, as rending his garments, tearing off the hair of his head and beard, &c. His sorrow at first might be above tears, which afterwards came gushing out amain, as the blood doth out of a wound, but not till it hath first run back to the heart, to bear the news to it, as I may so say. 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. May we not say the same of this good man?

And casting himself down before the house of God] Where all might see him, that their eyes might affect their hearts, and contribute some tears of compunction and compassion towards the filling of God's bottle, as they had done sins toward the filling of his bag.

Of men, women, and children] Anashim, Venashim, &c. A woman is a man, cut short by the head, **#1Co 11:3**. Here was a general meeting of all sexes and sizes joined together, to cut sin's cart ropes.

For the people wept very sore] They could not wash their hands in innocency, they, therefore, washed them in tears; they knew that as the sins of the old world, so of this little world, needeth a deluge.

Their sins, therefore, are as so many Hazael's to them; their hearts as so many Hadadrimmons, the place they made to become a very Bochim; they wept with a great weeping, and so vented their sins at their eyes, as sick people do their ill-humours at the pores of their bodies.

Ver. 2. **And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel]** *Egregie cordatus homo*
A prudent and a pious man, one that had feeding lips, and a healing tongue, one that knew how to time a word, and to set it upon the wheels, #**Isa 50:4 Pr 25:11**.

Answered and said unto Ezra] Such words as were uttered more from the bowels than the brain, and thereby proved so effectual.

We have trespassed against our God] His father Jehiel had taken a strange wife, #**Ezr 10:18,26**, so perhaps had he himself; or if not, yet he might fear wrath, because of the same body politic with those sinners against their own souls. God, he knew, might well draw blood of the arm for the cure of the head; as Theodoret saith he did when he slew Pharaoh's first-born.

Yet now there is hope in Israel, &c.] Hope that the people will repent, and hope that God will have mercy, upon their repentance. *Superest sperare salutem*, He survives to hope for health. If it were not for hope the heart would break. God, having opened a door of hope, let us go boldly to the throne of grace; what should hinder?

“ *Qui nil sperare potest, desperet nihil.*”

Who is able to hope for nothing, gives up hope for nothing. Cast not away your confidence, which hath so great recompence of reward; but cast anchor within the veil, and wait for day, as Paul did in the shipwreck. See #**Isa 50:10**.

Ver. 3. **Now therefore let us make a covenant]** And so tie ourselves thereby to the better abearance; that we slip not collar, that we detract not the yoke of God's obedience, #**De 10:20**. Cleaving to God with full purpose of heart will require swearing. Broken bones must have strong bands to close them. Tottering houses must be cramped with iron bars, or they will soon fall down. If the vows of God be upon us, if we are covenanters, it will help against the

fickleness of our false hearts; which cannot but know that if God shall be all-sufficient to us, we must be altogether his, #So 2:16. His is a covenant of mercy, even the sure mercies of David; ours is a covenant of obedience to him, in every part and point of duty.

To put away all the wives] This Jews might do in this, and some other cases. So did Romans also with this only bill of divorce, *Res tuas tibi habeto*, Take what is thine own, and be packing. But Christians may not do thus because of difference in religion, #1Co 7:12, whatever some late upstarts have printed and practised to the contrary.

And such as are born of them] The children of those strange wives, persisting in their Paganism. These children, though disinherited, yet were not to be altogether deserted; but nourished and nurtured also in the fear and admonition of the Lord, #Eph 6:4. Proving if, peradventure, God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, &c., #2Ti 2:25.

According to the counsel of my lord] Terms full of hearty respect and humble submission. He calls Ezra My lord, as Hannah did Eli, with an eye to his dignity, and authority, both as a priest and as a commissioner from the king of Persia. At Venice every ordinary mechanic is called Magnifico. At Vicenza, in Italy, the common title to a common gentleman is Signor Conte, as much as my lord earl. But Ezra was every way honourable and deserving; titles of honour were not worthy of him.

And of those that tremble at the commandment of our God] A periphrasis of a truly pious person, *sc.* such a one as feareth God and keepeth his commandments. And this is the man alone that is fit to judge the cases of conscience, and to comfort the feeble-minded. Now, although the comfort given by God's ministers, such as Ezra was, be ordinarily most effectual (as is the blessing of parents, who are in God's room), yet others also, that are conscientious and experienced persons, that tremble at the commandment of God, as here, may give excellent counsel and comfort in such a case. But how like the motion of a puppet, the language of a parrot, is the best discourse, in this subject of conscience, of the uninterested man.

And let it be done accordiny to the law] Which, though it take no direct and express order in this case, yet by due deduction and just inference it was determined both here and in **#Ne 9:2**, that those strange wives should be put away.

Ver. 4. **Arise]** *Surge, age, Summe Pater*; Arise, act, most high father, said Mantuan to the pope, exciting him to take arms against the Turk: to the same sense Shechaniah here to Ezra; or rather as Jehovah to Joshua, **#Jos 7:10**, Get thee up: why liest thou here on thy face?

For this matter belongeth unto thee] Who hast both a heart to do it, as appears by thine humiliation, and also power in thine hand, as witnesseth thy commission.

We also will be with thee] Every man must show himself forward to further the work of reformation, moving regularly within his own sphere, and trading every talent for that end and purpose.

Be of good courage, and do it] These were *verba non inflantia, sed inflammantia*. Not words, spoken but inflamed. And thus may one, by his hearty good counsel, become an angel, nay, a god, to another. Senarclaeus, in an epistle to Bucer, telling how John Diazius, the martyr, discoursed unto him the night before he was butchered by the appointment of his own brother Alphonsus, hath this notable expression, *Ego vero illius oratione sic incendebam, &c.*, I was so inflamed with his words, as if I had heard the Holy Ghost himself speaking unto me.

Ver. 5. **Then arose Ezra]** According to the counsel of Shechaniah, **#Ezr 10:4**. "How forcible are right words!" **#Job 6:25**. One seasonable speech, falling upon a prepared heart, hath oft a strong and sweet operation; as that similitude used by Peter Martyr, reading upon the First to the Corinthians, had upon Galeacius Caracciolus, that noble Italian convert; and as some speeches of Staupicius had upon Luther, who was likewise much confirmed and cheered up by conference with an old priest at Erfurt, who largely discoursed about justification by faith, and explained the articles of the Creed to him (Life of Luther, by Mr Clark).

And made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel] Ὀρκος, ἔρκος. An oath is a fence; and, added to a vow or covenant, it doth notably conduce (as a holy exorcism) to conjure down our rebellious wills, and, as cords or chains, to hamper our treacherous hearts, that they backslide not, like backsliding heifers. Moist bodies, as water, must be put into close vessels; so must man's heart be bound together by strongest helps and resolutions. Neither cast we any new snare hereby upon ourselves, **#1Co 7:35**, but rather a new provocation to the payment of an old debt we owe to God. Such was that of Jacob, **#Ge 28:20 31:13**; of David **#Ps 119:106**; of the Nazarites, **#Nu 6:2,3** Rechabites, **#Jer 35:6**. This shows a very earnest desire to obey; it sharpeneth also our prayers, and disheartens the devil; who, seeing us thus peremptory and resolute, will despair, and depart.

Ver. 6. **Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God]** Where God had promised to hear prayers for Christ's sake, whereof that house was a type. See **#Ezr 10:1**.

And went into the chamber of Johanan] As a fit meeting place, where they might consider, consult, and give counsel. Over the council chamber at Venice is written, Let nothing be done here against the public welfare. A professor of the Turks' law proclaimeth before they advise or attempt aught, That nothing be done against religion. Over the townhall in Zant are set these two verses in letters of gold:

*“ Hic locus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, iura, bonos.”*

Think the same we must needs of this holy conclave or council chamber, where the Sanhedrim was present, and Ezra president.

He did eat no bread, nor drink water] *Though fasting and faint with much mourning, yet no food would down with him till he had gone thorough stitch with the work. It was his food and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father. So it was good Job's, **#Job 23:12**, and our Saviour's, **#Mt 21:17,23**. It was then, when disappointed of a breakfast at the barren fig tree, and coming hungry into the city, he went not into an eating house nor into a friend's house to refresh*

himself; but into God's house, where he continued teaching the people all that day.

For he mourned because of the transgression] *It was not then a natural abstinence, arising from sickness, nor a civil, for health's sake, or for some other worldly respect; but a religious fast, which is usually to be held out a whole day, usque dum stellae in caelo appareant (as an old canon hath it), till the stars appear in the sky; yet so as that nature be chastised, not disabled for duty.*

Ver. 7. And they made proclamation] Heb. They caused a voice to pass, viz. by a herald or crier.

That they should gather themselves together] And so the guilty might be brought to their answer, in that general assembly.

Ver. 8. And that whosoever would not come, &c.] Laws, if they be not penal and compulsory, will soon be slighted by lawless, aweless persons. Howbeit, flies must not be killed upon men's brows with beetles; peccadillos must not be punished as heinous crimes. Draco made it a capital offence to be idle, to steal pot herbs, &c. Of his laws Aristotle saith that they were not worthy of remembrance, but only for their too great severity; Ezra's laws were more mild.

All his substance shall be forfeited] This, to men of their metal, was a forcible motive. When some have a loss in their riches, it is, as it were, raked out of their bellies; a piece of their very heart goes with it, #**Job 20:15**, and they are filled with unmedicinable sorrows, #**Ec 5:12**.

And himself separated from the congregation] Banished the land, or at least cast out of the Church. Woe be to those that separate themselves, #**Jude 19**, Cainites you may call them, #**Ge 4:16**; our church forsakers, worship scorners, that last brood of Beelzebub.

Ver. 9. Within three days] They durst not outstand their time, because their estates were at stake. Why is there not the like care taken and speed used to make peace with God, since for aught we know it is now or never, today or not at all? Is it nothing to lose an immortal soul? why, then, cry we, *Cras, Domine?* Tomorrow, Lord? why stand we trifling and baffling from day to day, till it be all too late? Remember the foolish virgins, and be wiser.

It was the ninth month] Which was the month of May, saith Diodati; counting September for the first, after the manner of the Persians, #Es 2:16; and this great rain, being out of the accustomed season, was somewhat prodigious, and seemed to portend God's wrath, as #1Sa 12:17. Others make it to be in December, the deep of winter; which, though it be an ordinary time of rain (whence in Greek also it hath its name χεῖμα, and in Latin *hyems*), yet these showers were extraordinary, more like spouts than showers; and thence the people's fear much increased by their guilt; for as no body is without its shadow, so is no sin without its fear, *quia nec sine conscientia sui*, because it cannot shake off conscience (Tertul.).

Ver. 10. **We have transgressed]** We have disloyally, or rather sacrilegiously, trespassed, by transgressing the covenant. Other men's sins are rebellious against God, but the saints' sins are treacheries. Let the Philistines bind Samson, it wilt be nothing so grievous to him as that his brethren should do it. Men's offences are much increased by their obligations.

To increase the trespass of Israel] To add to the heap which thereby is grown as high as heaven, #Ezr 9:6, and calls hard for fire from thence, #Ps 11:6, to revenge the quarrel of the covenant. Draw water, therefore, before the Lord, as those did, #1Sa 7:6. Yea, pour out your hearts before him. God is a refuge for us, #Ps 62:7.

Ver. 11. **Now therefore make confession]** This is the soul's vomit, *Vomitus sordium animae* (Naz.) which is the hardest kind of medicine, but most healthy. This the devil knows, viz. that there is no way to purge the sick soul but upwards, by casting out the vicious humour wherewith it is clogged; and, therefore, he holds the lips close, that the heart may not disburden itself by so wholesome evacuation. Confession must follow upon conviction, as here; and be followed by reformation.

And do his pleasure: and separate, &c.] For they that confess and forsake not their sins are only dog sick. When they have disgorged their stomachs, and got a little ease, they will be as bad as before. Wicked people make account of confession as drunkards do of vomiting; that they may add drunkenness to thirst. But the man that

shall have mercy must both confess and forsake, #Pr 28:13. Open a vein, and let out his bad blood.

Ver. 12. **Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice]** But not with a true heart, #Heb 10:22. For within a few years they returned to their vomit again.

As thou hast said, so must we do] These were good words, and not unlike those of Laelius, in Lucan, spoken to Caesar:

Iussa sequi tam velle mihi, quam posse, necesse est.

But many of these fair promisers turned back, and dealt unfaithfully, like their fathers; they were turned aside like a deceitful bow, #Ps 78:57. Look how a rotten bow, though otherwise fair, when an arrow is drawn to the head, and both eye and arrow is levelled to the mark, yet it miscarrieth; so do the desires, purposes, and promises that unsound hearts conceive in their afflictions, and under just convictions.

Ver. 13. **Neither is this work of one day or two]** No more is repentance, that first and continual work of every Christian. This made Tertullian say, that he was born for nothing else but for repentance, *Nulli rei natus nisi poenitentiae*. Surely, as in a ship there is continual pumping; and as in a beggar's coat continual piecing; so in the best soul there wants not matter of daily repenting: this house must be every day swept; this candlestick every day scoured. Besides, some sins are past in time that are not past in deed, if we dwell not in the undoing and reversing of them. The best of these hereafter mentioned were to begin anew their repentance, because they had not considered their marrying strange wives.

For we are many that have transgressed] Heb. We have multiplied to transgress. The comfort is, that God will in like sort multiply to pardon, if we return unto him; that is the expression, #Isa 55:7.

Ver. 14. **Let now our rulers of all the congregation]** Our sanhedrim or seventy seniors, see #De 17:9. Let there be a matrimonial consistory erected, and matters in question orderly heard and determined.

Until the fierce wrath of God] We must not think that he will cease pursuing us till the traitor's head be thrown over the wall, till there be a thorough reformation. One Abimelech, left alive, may be the death of Gideon's 70 sons; so may one sin favoured be thine utter undoing.

Ver. 15. **Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah]** These two priests only, of all the company, had kept themselves unspotted, and so were fit to be employed in the work in hand. *Diaconos paucitas honorabiles fecit*, saith Jerome, of his times. The paucity of good deacons hath rendered them honourable. And I do not think, saith Chrysostom, that among the clergy there are many that shall be saved. *Clerus Britannicus stupor mahdi* (Dr Hall); and yet there never wanted among us those *dehonestamenta Cleri*, that might give some occasion to black-mouthed Campian to tell the world, *Ministris eorum nihil vilius*, Many of their ministers are most base.

Ver. 16. **And the children of the captivity did so]** Appointed such a course should be taken. And so it was a plain *Plebiscitum*, resolution of the people, and accordingly executed.

Ver. 17. **By the first day of the first month]** So that it was not the work of one day or two, as #Ezr 10:13, but of full three months; and yet they were not slothful in that business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. In the work of repentance take time enough, dig deep enough by thorough humiliation; lest the fall of the house be great. The English are not sick soon enough, saith one, and they are well too soon; this is true of their minds, as well as of their bodies.

Ver. 18. **And among the sons of the priests, &c.]** What a shame was this, and a stain to their cloth! These men's white ephods covered foul sins; whereas they should have been careful to have kept all clean; as that Eleazar was of whom it is told, that he would not do anything that might seem to be sinful, because he would not spot his white head.

Of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak] This good high priest had sons none of the best. White halcyons hatch black young ones. *Caligula fuit optimi viri Germanici filius*. Caligula will be the son of the best man, Germanicus. Eli's sons were sons of Belial. Samuel's were little better; and yet it is not likely that he was faulty in that indulgence for which his own mouth had denounced God's judgments against Eli. When Caesar Borgia, duke of Valence,

invited his nobility to a feast, and after dinner cut off their heads, Pope Alexander (who was his father) hearing of it, smiled and said, his son had served them a Spanish trick. When Petro Alingi Farnesis had committed an unspeakable violence on the person of Cosmus Cherius, bishop of Fanum, and then poisoned him, he received no other chastisement of his father, Pope Paul III, than *Haec vitia me non commonstratore didicit*, he never learned these faults of his father. Good Jeshua had better bred his children than thus to break out into an open violation of that law, which they could not but know, and should have observed. But God will show, that grace is by gift, not inheritance; and men will show that though nurture may somewhat amend nature, yet it is grace alone that can keep us within the bounds of obedience.

Ver. 19. **And they gave their hands]** i.e. They plighted their troth, and assured the assent of their hearts, #2Ki 10:15.

That they would put away their wives] Though as dear to them, haply, as was George Carpenter's (martyr), burnt at Munchen, in Bavaria; My wife and children, said he, are so dear unto me, that they cannot be bought from me for all the riches and possessions of the duke of Bavaria: but for the love of my Lord God I will willingly forsake them. Let us do so by our *dilecta delicta*, our dearest and most delicious sins.

They offered a ram of the flock] This shows that they sinned against knowledge; for a sin of ignorance the oblation was not a ram, but a goat.

Ver. 44. **And some of them had wives by whom they had children]** Who yet for all that were put away together with their children, #Ezr 10:3. The Hebrew hath it thus, and there were of them women, and they had put forth sons, or exposed their sons to do as they might, or to be disposed of by the judges; as that good woman who told Bonner, that if he burnt her, she hoped he would keep Faith, Hope, and Charity (those were the names of her three daughters). No, by my truth will not I, quoth the bishop; I will meddle with none of them (Acts and Mon.).

Nehemiah

Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **The words of Nehemiah]** Or, the deeds, for he was good at both; and so a singular comfort to his countrymen, according to the notation of his name Nehemiah, i.e. The comfort or rest of the Lord. Here hence also some infer, that Nehemiah himself was the penman of this book (and not Ezra, as the vulgar Latin and many ancients would have it), like as Julius Caesar wrote his own acts (so did Alexander Severus and M. Aurelius, emperors), and by a more modest name, called his book Commentaries, and not Histories; yet did it so well, *ut praerepta non praebita facultas scriptoribus videatur*; said Aulus Hirtius, that historians had their work done to their hands; he wrote with the same spirit he fought, saith Quintilian, *Eodem animo dixit, quo bellavit*, lib. 10.

And it came to pass] This book then is a continuation of the former; Nehemiah being a third instrument of procuring this people's good, after Zerubbabel and Ezra; and deservedly counted and called a third founder of that commonwealth, after Joshua and David.

In the month Chisleu] In the deep of winter: then it was that Hanani and his brethren undertook their journey into Persia, for the good of the Church.

In the twentieth year] *sc.* Of Artaxerxes Longimanus, thirteen years after Ezra and his company first came to Jerusalem, **#Ezr 7:8**, with **#Ne 2:1**.

I was in Shushan the palace] i.e. In the palace of the city Susan; this Susan signifieth a lily, and was so called, likely, for the beauty and delectable site. Now it is called Vahdac of the poverty of the place. Here was Nehemiah waiting upon his office, and promoting the good of his people. Strabo and others say, that the inhabitants of Susia were quiet and peaceable; and were therefore the better beloved by the kings of Persia, Cyrus being the first that made his chief abode there, in winter especially; and that this city was long, and in compass fifteen miles about.

Ver. 2. **That Hanani]** A gracious man, according to his name (*Nomine tu, quin sis natura Gratus, ac te Gratus hoc Christi gratia praestet, Amen*), and zealous for his country; which indeed is a man's self; and therefore when our Saviour used that proverb, Physician, heal thyself, the sense is, heal thy country, #**Lu 4:23**.

One of my brethren] Not by race, perhaps, but surely by grace and place; a Jew, and that inwardly, and therefore intrusted, after this, by Nehemiah with a great charge, #**Ne 7:2**.

Came, he and certain men of Judah] Upon some great suit, likely, for their country; because they took so long and troublesome a journey in the winter, not without that Roman resolution of Pompey in like case, *Necesse est ut eam, non ut vivam*. It is necessary that I go not that I live. Whatever their business was, these men had better success than afterwards Philo the Jew and his colleagues had in their embassy to Caligula the emperor; who cast them out with contempt, and would not hear their apology against Appion of Alexandria, their deadly enemy.

And I asked them concerning the Jews] The Church was his care; neither could he enjoy aught so long as it went ill with Zion. He was even sick of the affliction of Joseph; and glad he had got any of whom to inquire; he asked them, not out of an itch after news; but of an earnest desire to know how it fared with God's poor people, that he might *cum singulis pectus suum copulate*, with singleness of purpose, having bound him, as Cyprian speaketh, rejoice with them that rejoiced, and weep with those that wept, #**Ro 12:15**, a sure sign of a sound member.

Which were left of the captivity] One of whom he well knew to be more worth than a rabble of rebels, a world of wicked persons; as the Jews rise to say of those seventy souls that went down with Jacob into Egypt, that they were better worth than all the seventy nations of the world besides.

Ver. 3. **Are in great affliction and reproach]** The Church is heir of the cross, saith Luther, *Ecclesia est haeres crucis*, and it was ever the portion of God's people to be reproached, as David was by Doeg

with devouring words, **#Ps 52:1**. Their breath as fire shall devour you, **#Isa 33:11**.

The wall of Jerusalem also is broken down] So that thieves and murderers came in, in the night, saith Comestor here, and slew many of them.

And the gates thereof are burnt with fire] They were burnt by the Chaldeans, and never yet repaired. And to keep a continual great watch was too great a charge and trouble.

Ver. 4. **And it came to pass when I heard]** It was not without a special providence that these good men thus met, and by mutual conference kindled one another; and that thereby God provided a remedy. Things fall not out by haphazard, but by God's most wise dispose and appointment.

That I sat down and wept] He was even pressed down with the greatness of his grief, whereto he gave vent by his eyes, **#Zep 3:17,18**, *Expletur lachrymis, egeriturque dolor* (Ovid) He was filled with tears and grief was shown. God promises much mercy to such to whom the reproach of the solemn assemblies was a burden. Nehemiah cannot stand under it, but sits down and weeps.

And mourned certain days] viz. For three months' time; for so long he was preparing himself to petition the king, **#Ne 1:1 2:1**.

And fasted, and prayed] This was a sure course, and never miscarried, as hath been noted, **#Ezr 9**.

Before the God of heaven] With face turned toward his holy temple, **#1Ki 8:44,48**, with heart lifted up to the highest heavens, those hills whence should come his help.

Ver. 5. **I beseech thee, O Lord]** Annah Jehovah; an insinuating preface; whereby he seeketh first to get in with God speaking him fair; as doth likewise David, in a real and heavenly compliment, **#Ps 116:16**. *Obsecro Iehovah*, I beseech, O Lord (I am thy servant, I am thy servant, the son of thine handmaid), break thou my bands. So the Church, **#Isa 64:9**, "Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people."

The great and terrible God] A great King above all gods, #Ex 15:11. Αξιοματικωτατς εστιν ο βασιλευς ημων, saith a Greek father: "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders," saith Moses in one place; as in another, "The Lord our God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible," #De 10:17. *Vere verendus et venerandus.* Truly reverence and will worship. Thus Nehemiah begins his prayer, and counts it a great mercy that he may creep in at a corner, and present himself before this most majestic Monarch of the world with greatest self-abasement.

That keepeth covenant and mercy] That he may at once both tremble before him and trust upon him; he describeth God by his goodness as well as by greatness, and so helpeth his own faith by contemplating God's faithfulness and lovingkindness. God hath hitherto kept covenant with heaven and earth, with nights and days, #Jer 33:20,25, that one shall succeed the other; and shall he break with his people? no, verily. Be sure to keep faith in heart, or you will pray but poorly. And for this, learn in the preface to your prayers to propound God to yourselves in such notions, and under such terms and titles, as may most conduce thereunto, pleading the covenant.

That love him and observe his commandments] That love to be his servants, #Isa 56:6, that wait for his law, #Isa 42:4, that think upon his commandments to do them, #Ps 103:18.

Ver. 6. **Let thine ears now be attentive, and thine eyes open]** Should not God see as well as hear (saith a divine), his children should want many things. We apprehend not all our wants; and so cannot pray for relief of all. He of his own accord, without any monitor, is wont to aid us. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous; and his ears are open to their prayer," #Ps 33:15.

That thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant] If not *secundum voluntatem*, yet *ad utilitatem* (Aug. Confess. 1. 5, c. 8), but usually God answereth his servants' prayers, fitting his mercy *ad cardinem desiderii*, to a longing heart, as here; and letting it be unto them even as they will.

Which I pray before thee now, day and night] Christ requireth his servants and suppliants to pray and not faint, #**Lu 18:1**. Ordinarily, morning and evening without fail; extraordinarily, oftener. The Jews divide their day into prayer, work, and repast; neither will they omit prayer for their meat or labour. The Mahometans, what occasion soever they have, either by profit or pleasure, to divert them, will pray five times every day; and upon the Friday (which is their sabbath) six times. *Vae torpori nostro!* woe our numbness, how few and feeble are our prayers for ourselves and for brethren in distress; who have for that cause an unanswerable action against us!

And confess the sins of the children of Israel] This he did more fully and at large than is here set down; and he fitly beginneth with confession; that having gotten off the guilt of sin, he might with more courage and comfort deprecate wrath, and beg mercy.

Which we have sinned against thee] There lay the pinch of his grief, that they sinned against so good a God.

Both I and my father's house have sinned] *Hic igitur Lyra deliravit,* Lyra is incorrect when he saith here, that Nehemiah confessed his own sins, but only as a member of the same body, he himself being innocent. Comparatively innocent he was, doubtless; but that he was not without sin, and such sin as he had cause to confess to be God provoking sins, is clear by this very text. He was sensible of his own sins, and of other men's sins too. The sins of our ancestors not bewailed and disclaimed, are set upon our score, #**Da 5:22**.

Ver. 7. **We have dealt very corruptly]** Heb. Corrupting, we have corrupted ourselves against thee. Or, We have bound ourselves unto thee to be punished for our sins. Of confessing with utmost aggravation, and laying load upon ourselves, see the notes on Ezr 9. {*See Trapp on "Ezr 9:1"*} &c.

And have not kept the commandments, nor statutes, nor judgments] i.e. Neither the laws moral, ceremonial, nor judicial. We have broken all thy bonds, and cast thy cords from us.

Ver. 8. **Remember, I beseech thee, the word]** It befalleth not the Lord to forget or remember (to speak properly), for all things are

present with him. Nevertheless metaphorically God is said to do both; as when, being provoked by the horrid sins of the Jews, he so punished them as if he had forgotten that they were his people, or that he had ever made them any promises. And in this case God gives his prophets and praying people leave to be his remembrancers, **#Isa 62:6,7**. Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. This Nehemiah doth here most vigorously, and sped accordingly; let us do likewise. Cast the labouring Church into God's everlasting arms, and remind him of his promises burden him with them, as that martyr said; put them into suit, they are nigh the Lord day and night, **#1Ki 8:59**. Say, remember thy word unto thy servant, whereupon thou hast caused me to trust, **#Ps 119:49**. And in the want of other rhetoric urge this, with repetition, Lord, thou hast promised, thou hast promised, &c. He loves to be urged with his word, to be used upon his bond, &c.

The word that thou commandest, &c.] The threatening is also to be acknowledged God's word, as well as the promise; and the uprightness of our hearts is, to be approving by believing the one as well as the other. Sour and sweet make the best sauce; promises and menaces mingled serve to keep the heart in the best temper, as Nehemiah's was.

Ver. 9. But if ye turn unto me] By sin men do wickedly depart from God; as by repentance they return unto him, and close with him.

And keep my commandments] Evangelically keep them; for with a legal obedience none can: our short legs and pury hearts cannot hold out here.

And do them] Or at least, be doing at them, do them as we can; *si praecepta faciamus, etiamsi non perficiamus, sufficit*.

Unto the uttermost part of the heaven] That is, of the earth, which seems to our eye terminated with the heaven, and covered as with a half globe. Jews are a dejected people to this present; and a fearful instance of God's heavy indignation against sin. Josephus saith, that in his time they were grown so wicked, that if the Romans had not

destroyed and dispersed them, without doubt either the earth would have swallowed them up, or fire from heaven have consumed them.

Yet will I gather them from thence] Else not. God's promises are with a condition, which is as an oar in a boat, and stern of a ship; and turns the promise another way.

Ver. 10. Now these are thy servants and thy people] And therefore thou art concerned, in point of honour, to see to them, and to work for them, as every master will do for his servants, and king for his subjects. Otherwise, the neighbouring nations our enemies may possibly say as Aigoland, king of Saragossa, in Aragon, did; of whom it is reported, that he long time made Charlemagne believe that he would be baptized. And when he came for that purpose to the French court, and saw many diseased and poor people expecting alms from the emperor's table, he asking what they were? was answered, that they were the servants and people of God. On these words he speedily returned, desperately protesting that he would not serve that God which could keep his servants no better.

Whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power] And wilt thou part with thy purchase, or obscure the glory of thy conquest over the gods and people of Egypt, by leaving this thy people destitute?

Ver. 11. O Lord, I beseech thee] He ends as he began, see **#Ne 1:5**, praying in the Holy Ghost, whose creature prayer is.

And to the prayer of thy servants] Whose necessities prick them on to prayer in all places; and who pray for the peace of Jerusalem incessantly, **#Ps 137**.

Who desire to fear thy name] The whole life of a true Christian is nothing else but *sanctum desiderium*, saith Austin, a holy desire. "Willing to live honestly," **#Heb 13:18**, wishing well to an exact keeping of God's commandments, **#Ps 119:4,5**, affecting that perfection which yet we cannot effect.

Prosper, I pray thee] Prosperity given in as an answer to prayer is very sweet; as the cipher, when it followeth the figure, adds to the number, though it be nothing in itself.

For I was the king's cupbearer] And so might take *mollissima fandi tempora*, my fittest opportunity to help my people.

Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **And it came to pass in the month Nisan]** Time and place is to be registered of special mercies received. "This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord," #Ps 102:18.

In the twentieth year of Artaxerxes] Surnamed Longhand, as our Edward I was called Longshanks, and another Longespee, or Longsword. This Longhand is renowned for the fairest among men in that age, Μακροχειρ, *Omnium hominum puleherrimus* (Aemil. Prob.); of all men most handsome; and no wonder, if he were (as is generally thought) the son of that fairest Esther.

That wine was before him] There was a feast, as #Ne 2:6. Not by chance, but by God's providence; who of small occasions worketh greatest matters many times, as he put small thoughts into the heart of Ahasuerus for great purposes, #Es 6:1.

And I took up the wine, &c.] As Esther was come to the kingdom, so Nehemiah to this office, for such a time as this, #Es 4:14. Though he were a prisoner, a stranger, one of another religion, yet is he the king's cupbearer and taster; and once of great trust and credit. This was a strange work of God, to cause heathen princes thus to favour the religion that they knew not, and to defend that people which their subjects hated.

Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence] Princes are usually set upon the merry pin; and all devices are used, by jesters and otherwise, to make them merry; no mourner might be seen in Ahasuerus's court, #Es 4:4. But good Nehemiah had been, for certain months' time, afflicting his soul and macerating his body, as in the former chapter: hence his present sadness, which the king (being a wise man and a loving master) soon observed.

Ver. 2. **Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad?]** Some would have chided him, and bid him be packing, for

they liked not his looks, there might be treason hatching in his heart; he was a man of an ill aspect. But love thinks no evil.

Seeing thou art not sick?] Sickness will cause sadness in the best. Those stoics that said a wise man must be merry, though sick, when sickness came, were convinced, *se magnificentius locutos esse quam verius*, that they spake rather bravely than truly. And therefore Cicero to a merry life requireth three things: 1. To enjoy health. 2. To possess honour. 3. Not to suffer necessity. Faith in Christ is more to the purpose than any or all of these.

This is nothing else but sorrow of heart] The heart commonly sitteth in the countenance, and there showeth how it stands affected. Momus needeth not carp at man's make, and wish a window in his breast, that his thoughts might be seen; for, "a merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken," **#Pr 15:13**. The Hebrews say that a man's inside is turned out and discovered, *in oculis, in loculis, in poculis*, in his eyes, purse, and cup.

Then I was very sore afraid] Grieved before, now afraid. Thus, *aliud ex alio malum: fluctus fluctum trudit*, One sorrow followeth another, and a Christian's faith and patience is continually exercised. But in the multitude of Nehemiah's perplexed thoughts within him, God's comforts refreshed his soul, **#Ps 94:19**. He casts his suit or his burden upon the Lord, **#Ps 55:22**, and doubteth not but he will effect his desire.

Ver. 3. **And I said unto the king**] After he had pulled up his best heart, and recovered his spirits, he declareth unto the king the cause of his sadness. How ready should our tongues be to lay open our cares to the God of all comfort, when we see Nehemiah so quick in the expressions of his sorrow to an uncertain ear.

Let the king live for ever] i.e. Very long. Let him not suspect, by my sadness, that I have any evil intent or treasonable design against him; for I heartily wish his welfare. It was not court holy water (as they call it) wherewith he here besprinkles his prince; it was not counterfeit courtesy; such as was that of Squier the traitor, A.D. 1597, sent by Walpole the Jesuit, to poison the pummel of Queen

Elizabeth's saddle, when she was to ride abroad; which also he did (but without effect), saying cheerfully at the same time, God save the Queen. *Saluta libenter* greet gladly, is by many practised, from the teeth outward; but by Nehemiah, heartily.

Why should not my countenance be sad?] In time of common calamities there is just cause of a general sadness, "should we then make mirth?" #Eze 21:10. The Romans severely punished one that showed himself out of a window with a garland on his head in the time of the Punic war, when it went ill with the commonwealth. Justinus, the good emperor of Constantinople, took the downfall of the city of Antioch by an earthquake so much to heart, that it caused him a grievous fit of sickness, A.D. 527. When Pope Clement and his cardinals were imprisoned by the duke of Bourbon's men in St Angelo, Caesar in Spain forbade all interludes to be played, &c. In France, the duke of Bourbon was condemned of treason, his name and memorial were accursed, his arms pulled down, his lands and goods confiscated. In England, King Henry was extremely displeased. Cardinal Wolsey wept tenderly, and emptied the land of 288,000 pounds to relieve and ransom the distressed pope.

When the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres] A good argument to a heathen, who set great store by (as now the Papists keep great stir about) their burial places; as if one place were holier than another for that purpose: a mere device to pick poor men's purses.

And the gates thereof are consumed with fire] The Jews at this day, when they build a house, they are, say the Rabbis, to leave one part of it unfinished, and lying rude, in remembrance that Jerusalem and the temple are, at present, desolate (Hist. of Rites of Jews, by Leo Moden.). At least, they use to leave about a yard square of the house unplastered, on which they write in great letters that of the Psalmist, If I forget Jerusalem, then let my right hand forget her cunning, #Ps 137:5, or else these words, *Zecher Lechorbon*, The memory of the desolation.

Ver. 4. **Then the king said unto me**] Some think that Nehemiah looked thus sad before the king on purpose, to make way to this his request.

For what dost thou make request?] Not for any other honour or great office about the court or in the country; not for any private friend, or the like, but the good of the Church. Thus Nebridius, in Jerome, though a courtier and nephew to the empress, yet never made suit but for the relief of the poor afflicted. Thus Terence, that noble general under Valens, the emperor, being bidden to ask what he would, asked nothing but that the Church might be rid of Arians. And when the emperor, being himself an Arian, tore his petition, he said he would never ask anything for himself if he might not prevail for the Church (Theodoret).

So I prayed to the God of heaven] Darting up an ejaculation, a sudden and secret desire to God, to order and speed his petition. Begin all with prayer, and then expect a blessing. Call in the Divine help, if it be but by darting out our desires to God. Thus Moses cried to God, yet said nothing, **#Ex 14:15**. Hannah was not heard, and yet she prayed. Austin reports the custom of the Egyptian Churches, to pray frequently and fervently, but briefly, and by way of ejaculation, *ne fervor languesceret*, lest their heat should abate, *Crebras habere orationes, sed brevissimas et raptim eiaculatas*.

Ver. 5. **If it please the king]** Silken words must be given to kings, as the mother of Darius said (η διστα, η ηκιστα); neither must they be rudely and roughly dealt with, as Joab dealt with David, **#2Sa 19:5**, who, therefore, could never well brook him afterward, but set another in his place.

And if thy servant have found favour] Pellican observeth here, that Nehemiah was a great favourite of this king's; as appeared in that having so many nobles, he chose him to this office, rather than any of them. He, therefore, pleads it as a pledge of further favour; so may we with God, as being no small favourites in the beloved one, **#Eph 1:5**.

That thou wouldest send me unto Judah] Not only give me leave to go, but also send me with a commission to be governor. This was a bold request, but modestly proposed, and easily obtained. The king is not he that can deny you anything, **#Jer 38:5**. Love is liberal, charity is no churl.

Ver. 6. **And the king said unto me]** He yields for the thing, only indents for the time; as being loth to deny Nehemiah his suit, and yet as loth to forego so faithful a servant. *Ipsæ aspectus viri boni delectat* (Seneca).

The queen also sitting by him] And assisting his cause likely. Some think this was Esther, the queen mother. But the Hebrew word here is, wife: now the kings of Persia were noted for uxorious.

For how long, &c.] The departure of a dear friend is so grievous, that death itself is called by that name.

So it pleased the king to send me] As a governor, #Ne 5:14. This was the fruit of prayer, and, therefore, so much the sweeter.

And I set him a time] *sc.* Twelve years, #Ne 5:14. But more probably a shorter time at first.

Ver. 7. **Moreover I said unto the king]** He taketh further boldness upon the former encouragement; so may we with Almighty God, the Sun of our righteousness, the Sea of our salvation. Conclude as she did, A company comes. God never left bating till Abraham left begging.

Let letters be given me to the governors] Those nearest neighbours, but greatest enemies.

That they may convey me over] He committed himself to God, and yet petitions the king for a convoy. In all our enterprises God is so to be trusted as if we had used no means; and yet the means is so to be used as if we had no God to trust in.

Ver. 8. **Keeper of the king's forest]** Heb. Paradise; probably so called for the pleasantness of it. Tho French Protestants called their temple or church at Lyons, Paradise, David's delight, #Ps 27 Ps 84.

Of the palace that appertained to the house] *i.e.*, to the Temple, which is called the house, by an excellency; as the Scriptures are called the Bible, that is, the Book, as being the only best book, in

comparison whereof all other books in the world are no better than waste paper.

And for the house that I shall enter into] *i.e.*, A dwelling house for myself, when once the public is served. Junius understands it of a common hall or shire house, wherein he might sit and judge causes brought before him.

And the king granted me] It was but ask and have, and so it is between God and his people. When there was a speech among some holy men, what was the best trade? one answered, beggary; it is the hardest and richest trade. Common beggary is indeed the poorest and easiest; but prayer he meant. A courtier gets more by one suit oft than a tradesman or merchant haply with twenty years' labour; so doth a faithful prayer, &c.

According to the good hand] He calleth him his God, as if he loved or cared more for him than for the rest of the world. It is the property of true faith, ιδιοποιεσθαι, to make all its own that it can lay hold upon. {*See Trapp on "Ezr 7:6"*}

Ver. 9. **Then I came to the governors]** Josephus saith that the next day he took his journey and delivered his letters to Saddeus, governor of Syria, Phoenicia, and Samaria. A strange example, saith one, to see a courtier leave that wealth, ease, and authority that he was in, and go dwell so far from court in an old, torn, and decayed city, among a rude poor people, where he should not live quietly, but toil and drudge like a day labourer, in dread and danger of his life. But this is the case of earnest and zealous men in religion, &c.

Now the king had sent captains] This was more than Nehemiah had desired; and as much as he could have done for the greatest lord in the land. God is likewise usually better to his people than their prayers; and when they ask but one talent, he, Naaman like, will force them to take two.

10. **When Sanballat the Horonite]** That is, the Moabite, #**Isa 15:4 Jer 48:3,5,34**. His name signifieth, saith one, a pure enemy; he was come of that spiteful people, who were anciently irked because of Israel, #**Nu 22:3,4**, or did inwardly fret and vex at them, as #**Ex 1:12**, who yet were

allied unto them, and did them no harm in their passage by them, yea, had done them good by the slaughter of the Amorites, their encroaching neighbours.

And Tobiah the servant] A servant or bondsman once he had been, though now a Toparch, a lieutenant to the king of Persia. Now such are most troublesome, #Pr 30:22.

Asperlus nihil est humili, cum surgit in altum.

Αφορητος εστιν ευτυχων μαστιγιας.

Heard it] As they might soon do by means of their wives, who were Jewesses. And the Jews to this day are generally found the most nimble and mercurial wits in the world. Every vizier and bashaw of state among the Turks useth to keep a Jew of 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 puts in execution against us.

It grieved them exceedingly] Heb. It seemed to them an evil, a great evil; it displeased them sore, and vexed them at the very heart, such was their spleen and spite. Envy is a deadly mischief; and because it cannot feed upon other men's hearts, it feedeth upon its own, drinking up the most part of its own venom. The envious man is not like the maid in Avicen, who, feeding upon poison, was herself healthy, yet infected others with her venomous breath; but like the serpent Porphyrius, which is full of poison, but, wanting teeth, hurteth none but himself; or as the hill Aetna, &c.

That there was come a man to seek the welfare, &c.] This they looked upon with an evil eye, and were vexed, *Invidia Siculi, &c.* Who can stand before envy? #Pr 27:4. It espieth with great grief the smallest things the good man doth or hath, and is, therefore, absolutely the best thing to clear the eyesight, said Actius Sincerus, a nobleman, to King Frederick.

Ver. 11. **So I came to Jerusalem]** Thither God brought him, as on eagles' wings, maugre the malice of his enemies. The Jews had great reason to rejoice, and to welcome him with great solemnity; which yet they did not, for aught we read; but that he taketh not for any

discouragement; his reward was with God. He was of another spirit than his countrymen, who were all for their own ends and interests, and little cared for the public.

And was there three days] Resting his body, *Quod caret alterna requie* (Ovid). {*See Trapp on "Ezr 8:32"*} but casting about in his mind how best to effect that he came for, and to persuade with others to join with him. And now he found that he was come from the court to the cart, from a pleasant life to a careful and cumbersome.

Ver. 12. **And I arose in the night]** His cares would not suffer him to sleep, Ου χρη παννυχιον (Homer), but up he gets, and about the walls; taking the night, as fittest for secrecy and safety.

I and some few men with me] He went not alone, lest he should fall into some danger of life, *Vae soli*; alas alone, nor yet with many, lest he should make a disturbance, and betray his counsel. "Be wise as serpents," #Mt 10:16.

Neither told I any man what God had put into my heart] That the thing was of God he nothing doubted; hence his fervour in following it; he knew there was a curse to those that do the Lord's work negligently. That he might not be defeated from his purpose, he tells no man. He that would have his counsel kept, let him keep it to himself. Hardly shall a man meet with such a counsel keeper as he was, who, being upbraided with his stinking breath, answered, that he had kept his friends' secrets committed to him so long in his breast that there they rotted; and thence was the unsavouriness of his breath.

Si sapis, arcane vina reconde cado.

Qui sapit, arcano gaudeat ipse sinu.

Neither was there any beast] *For the avoiding of noise.*

Ver. 13. **By the gate of the valley]** By which men went into the valley of Jehoshaphat, #Joe 3:2,12. The Septuagint call it Portam Galilae, the gate of dead men's skulls; because that way they went out to Golgotha.

Even before the dragon well] So called, either because some venomous serpent had been found there; or because the waters ran out of the mouth of a brazen serpent; or because they ran creepingly, softly, as the waters of Shiloah, **#Isa 8:6**.

And to the dung port] Where was their common dunghill, a sewer to the city; near whereunto ran the brook Kidron, or the town sewer.

And viewed the wall of Jerusalem] Junius rendereth it, *Ubi effringebam de muris*, Where I broke off a piece of the wall; *sc.* that I might try the soundness or unsoundness of that which remaineth of it, that I might know whether it needed to be all pulled down, or whether it might be built upon. Our translators read it, *sober*; not *shober*; and thence the different interpretation.

Which were broken down] *Asher hem perutsim: Hem*, with an open *Mem*, which is not usual ($\eta\sigma$ pro $\eta\mu$); to set forth, as some think, the rupture and openness of the walls, so much bewailed by this good man in this chapter. The final form for the μ was not used. *{Hebrew Text Note}*

Ver. 14. **Then I went to the gate of the fountain]** Or well-gate; where was great plenty of water ponds, watering places, &c. Junius saith it was that whereby men went out to the pool of Siloah and Rogel.

And to the king's pool] The water course made, or repaired, at least, by King Hezekiah, **#2Ki 20:20**.

But there was no place for the beast, &c.] There was so much rubbish, and such ruins. This was the fruit of sin, which makes of a city a heap, as the prophet speaks, and hurls such confusion over the world, that had not Christ, our true Nehemiah, undertaken the shattered condition thereof to uphold it, it had surely fallen about Adam's ears.

Ver. 15. **Then went I up in the night]** *sc.* By moonlight; for the moon is mistress of the night, **#Ps 136:9**, by the brightness she borroweth from the body of the sun, which the moon receiveth and reflecteth, like a lookingglass.

And viewed the wall] That which was left of it, τα λειψανα, as Scaliger's epitaph is, *Scaligeri quod reliquum est*, Scaliger's relics.

And entered by the gate of the valley] Where he first went out; so he walked the round, not caring to observe that rule of Pythagoras, *Eadem via qua progressus fueris ne regrediare*, Go not back the same way you came out.

Ver. 16. **And the rulers knew not whither I went]** Taciturnity, in some cases, is a virtue; and everything is beautiful in its season. There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak, #Ec 3:7. And he is a truly wise man that can discern his season for both. *Discamus prius non loqui*, saith Jerome, Let us first learn not to speak, that we may afterwards open our mouths and minds with discretion. Silence is by Solomon first set before speaking; and first takes its time and turn, as it did here in Nehemiah, the prudent. {*See Trapp on "Ne 2:12"*} The word here rendered rulers is rather Chaldee than Hebrew.

Nor to the nobles] Heb. White ones. Among the Jews great men affected to go in white; as among the Romans in purple or scarlet. Hence Pilate's soldiers clad Christ in purple; Herod's, in white, #Lu 23:11 Mt 27:28.

Nor to the rest, &c.] So, as to ask their advice.

Ver. 17. **Then said I unto them]** Then, when I saw it a fit season to say it. It is an excellent skill to time a word, #Isa 50:4. To circumstantiate it aright, #Pr 25:11. That it may run as upon wheels: Nehemiah's words do so, notably. *Verba prius ad limam revocata, quam ad linguam*, words well weighed ere uttered. *Nescit paenitenda loqui qui proferenda prius sue tradidit examini*, He cannot but speak wisely who speaketh warily.

Jerusalem lieth waste] *i.e.*, open to the spoiler; as the pope made account this land was in Henry VIII's time, when he had given it *primo occupaturo*, to him that should first invade and seize it.

Come, and let us build, &c.] With forces united, with one shoulder, *Multorum manibus grande levatur onus*.

That we be no more a reproach] *Quam multa quam paucis!* How much in a little! said Cicero of Brutus's laconical epistle; and the like may we say of this pithy and pathetic speech. Those that love to hear themselves talk, saith Bishop Pilkington upon this text, and with many words to colour their ill meaning, may here learn how a simple truth, plainly told in few words, worketh more in good men's hearts than a painted tale that hath little truth and less good meaning in it. An honest matter speaketh for itself, and needeth no colouring; and he that useth most flattering and subtle words maketh wise men mistrust the matter to be ill. A few words well placed are much better than a long unsavoury tale. Thus he.

Ver. 18. **Then I told them of the hand of my God]** *i.e.*, of his gracious providence in prospering me in all.

As also the king's words] Which were likewise very gracious and comfortable. Now he that hath both God and the king on his side, what would he have more?

And they said, Let us rise up and build] So forcible are right words, delivered in a mild and moderate manner, as here. Let us rise, say they. Let us linger no longer, but speedily fall to labour; and recover that with our diligence that our fathers lost by their disobedience.

So they strengthened their hands for this good work] They took courage, and went an end with it. So much good may one man of place, power, and zeal do for the Church, by stirring up to love and good works. It is said of the precious stone Pyrites, that it puts not forth its fiery power till well rubbed; and then it is so hot that it burneth one's fingers.

Ver. 19. **But when Sanballat the Horonite, &c.]** At first these men were sad, but now mad with malice. Wicked men grow worse and worse, in *peius proficiunt*, but they shall proceed no further: for their madness shall appear to all men.

And Geshem the Arabian] Lieutenant of Arabia for the king of Persia. He also joins himself to the two former to hinder the work in hand. Such opposition met Luther with, when he began to reform.

The pope excommunicated him; the emperor proscribed him; Henry, king of England, and Lewis, king of Hungary, wrote against him; but the work went on, nevertheless, because it was of God.

They laughed us to scorn and despised us] As a company of fools, that could never effect what we attempted. So Erasmus and Sir Thomas More thought to have mocked the Lutherans out of their religion, *Notum est Erasmi diciturum, Qualem a se decimum Capito fore sperat?* &c. This the Scripture calleth cruel mocking, #**Heb 11:36**; and ranks it with bloody persecution. Indeed, the favourablest persecution, saith one, of any good cause is the lash of lewd tongues; whether by bitter taunts or scurrilous invectives; which it is as impossible to avoid as necessary to condemn, &c. Bravely condemn, saith another worthy, all contumelies and contempts for thy conscience; taking them as crowns and confirmations of thy conformity to Christ.

And said, What is this thing that ye do?] Scoffingly they said it; like as Pilate said to our Saviour, What is truth? Oh how easy is it to wag a wicked tongue! *Nihil tam volucre quam maledictum, nihil facilius emittitur* (Cicero). One while they charge this people with folly; another while with treachery. If to accuse a man only were sufficient to make him guilty, none should be innocent.

Will ye rebel against the king?] This was ever, saith Lipsius, *Unicum crimen eorum, qui crimine vacabant*, the only and ordinary charge laid upon the most innocent. Elias is a troubler, Jeremiah a traitor, Paul a pest, Luther a trumpet of rebellion, all the orthodox antimagistratical. To colour the massacre of Paris, and to accuse it to the world, there was coin stamped in the forepart, whereof (together with the king's picture) was this inscription: *Virtus in Rebelles*, Valour against the rebels; and on the other side, *Pietas excitavit iustitiam*, Piety hath excited justice.

Ver. 20. **Then answered I them, and said unto them]** He would not honour them so far as to tell them of the king's licence; but shapes them a sharp answer, and shakes them up as having nothing there to do. This was true Christian courage; this was right, and much better than railing for railing; for that were but *lutum lute purgare*, to wash off one dirt with another.

The God of heaven] Who does whatsoever he pleases in heaven and earth; who looks and laughs at your malice.

He will prosper us] He will break his heavens, and come down amongst us, and give good success. Oh the force of a heroic faith! Though Sense says, It will not be, Reason, it cannot be; yet Faith gets above and says, It shall be; God will prosper us. It eats its way through the alps of whatsoever difficulties.

But ye have no portion] Nothing to do here, neither ought you to interpose *in aliena republica*, in a foreign land, as busy braggers and quarrellers; meddle where you have command.

Nor right] *sc.* Of interest or any good desert.

Nor memorial] Or enrolment there, as free denizens; therefore we neither accept you as friends nor fear you as enemies, &c.

Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Then Eliashib the high priest rose up]** He was first, as fit he should, for example's sake; ministers must be patterns of piety; they have many eyes upon them, and everything in their practice should be worthy imitation. This Eliashib was grandchild to Jeshua, #Ne 12:10.

With his brethren the priests] Who were before fearful, or forgetful; till reminded and excited by Nehemiah; who, as a lion, became captain to this hosts of harts, and achieved great matters. So strong and so sweet an operation hath a seasonable exhortation, when it falleth on a prepared heart, and is set on by God.

And they built the sheep gate] And reason it was, saith an interpreter (Bishop Pilkington), that as they were shepherds to the people, so they should build the sheep gate, which was at the east end of the city where the Temple was, where the sheep came in that were offered in sacrifice, and whereof they had their parts, according to the law. This gate may well be compared to Christ Jesus, who sought the lost sheep, and was sacrificed as a lamb, and is the gate

whereby only we enter, and his shepherds must be the builders of it, and bring the people into the fold.

They sanctified it] *i.e.*, beautified it, and then consecrated it by their prayers and devotions. This was priest like; and probably hereupon followed that miracle of an angel's descending, at their several solemn feasts, into the pool of Bethesda (which was near to this gate, and where they washed their sacrifices), and healing all diseases, **#Joh 5:4.**

Even unto the tower of Meah] Or the centenary tower, so called for its hundred pinnacles, haply; or, because a hundred cubits high.

Ver. 2. And next unto him builded the men of Jericho] And are thereby here eternalized for their forwardness.

Claros inter, habent nomina clara, vires.

They have fame among men of fame. Though they dwelt farthest off, yet they were of the first that came to work. Jericho was the first city that Joshua overthrew for their wickedness, and cursed him that should rebuild it. Now it is the first that comes to help forward this city of God. So great is the change when God turneth people's hearts. Our fathers were as barbarous and brutish as the very Scythians; their religion was a mere irreligion and worse till Christ came among us, and gave us the pre-eminence. For besides that England was the first of all the provinces that publicly received the gospel (as saith Sabellicus), our Constantine hath been reckoned the first Christian emperor, our Lucius the first christened king, and our Henry VIII the first that brake the neck of the pope's usurped authority. As we were the first that submitted to that man of sin, so were we among the first that cast him off again; and although we are *penitus toto divisi orbe Britanni* (Lucan.), yet we have been hitherto famous all the world over for our faith and forwardness in God's service; though of late we have run retrograde, to the reproach of our nation. Diogenes in a great assembly going backward on purpose, and seeing every one laughing him to scorn, asked them aloud, if they were not ashamed so to do: since he went backwards but once, when they did so continually. Oh, let it not be said of us, as once of Jerusalem, that we are "slidden back by a perpetual backsliding, that

we hold fast deceit, and refuse to return," #Jer 8:5. This is to be worse than wicked Jericho, &c.

Builed Zaccur] Whose memory therefore is blessed, when "the name of the wicked shall rot," #Pr 10:7.

Ver. 3. **But the fish gate]** That stood toward the sea, and let in fishermen, as the men of Tyre, #Ne 13:16,19.

Did the sons of Hassenaah build] Whether this Hassenaah were a man or a city it appeareth not.

Ver. 4. **Meshullam the son of Berechiah]** This Meshullam was one of those men of understanding and made use of by Ezra, #Ezr 8:16.

Ver. 5. **The Tekoites repaired]** The common sort of them; for the nobles refused. The lesser fishes bite best; the poor are gospelized, #Mt 11:5, destined to the diadem, #Jas 2:5.

But their nobles put not their necks] So haughty they were and high minded, they thought it a business below their greatness; somewhat of that profane earl of Westmoreland's mind, who said that he had no need to pray to God, for he had tenants enough to pray for him. "Not many mighty, not many noble," saith the apostle, #1Co 1:26; well if any. The lion and eagle were not for sacrifice, as the lamb and dove were. Yet the old nobility of Israel were forward with their staves of honour, and are therefore famous, #Nu 21:18.

To the work of the Lord] Though they knew him to be Lord of lords, who are all his vassals and underlings; and, by special relation, their Lord, so avouched by these his holy day servants; yet so stiffnecked were they, that they would not stoop to his service; but cried out, as the Popish clergy do, *Domine, nos sumus exempti*, we may not work, we will not contribute.

Ver. 6. **Moreover the old gate]** Famous only for its antiquity; like as many old books are *monumenta adorandae robiginis*, of more antiquity than authority; and as that image at Ephesus, that was said, but falsely, to have fallen down from Jupiter (Διοπετες), so the covetous priests persuaded the credulous people, #Ac 19:35. The Rabbis say, that this was a gate ever since the time that David took Zion from the Jebusites, *Quis hoc credat, nisi sit pro teste vetustas?* Who would believe this unless he witnessed it?

Ver. 7. **Unto the throne of the governor]** *i.e.* Of the king of Persia's viceroy, who had there his throne, or tribunal. But to what a height of pride were the bishops grown, that sat in thrones, and from on high despised their fellow servants! this was their ruin, God putts down the mighty from their throne, and exalts them of low degree, #Lu 1:52.

Ver. 8. **Of the goldsmiths...the son of one of the apothecaries]** These were ever thriving trades; they both had wealth, and hearts to part with it, upon so good a work. *Difficile est animos opibus non tradere, &c.* It is not difficult that their spirits deliver help. (Martial).

Unto the broad wall] Which, haply for the thickness of it, was left undemolished by the Chaldeans.

Ver. 9. **Ruler of the half part of Jerusalem]** Which, being part in Judah and part in Benjamin, had two general rulers. See #Ne 3:12.

Ver. 10. **Even over against his house]** Thither he was assigned, probably, because there he would build the stronger, for his own security.

Ver. 11. **The son of Pahathmoab]** This man might be a Moabite by stock or descent, and an Israelite by religion; like as Jether was by nature an Ishmaelite, #1Ch 2:17, but by his faith an Israelite, #1Ch 7:38.

And the tower of the furnaces] That had furnaces or ovens under it; like as the library at Bonony hath an eating house and a wine cellar. In commendation of which situation Cardinal Bobba conceited that he had very wittily (indeed wickedly) applied that text, #Pr 9:1,2, Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath also mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table.

Ver. 12. **Shallum the son of Haloesh]** Some read it, the son of an enchanter, or conjurer; and tells us that conjuring was a common thing among the Jews, as, #Ac 13:8 Elymas, and elsewhere the sons of Sceva, &c. But Shallum (if ever any such) forsook that science (as did afterwards also Cyprian) to become a Christian.

He and his daughters] Either finishing what their father (now dead) had begun; or parting with their portions toward the repair of the wall; and haply laying their own hands to the Lord's work.

Ver. 13. **The valley gate]** See #Ne 2:13.

And the inhabitants of Zanoah] Together with Hanun, their governor. Not priests and Levites only, but the great men in every country, yea, and the country people too, must work at God's building. Every one must be active in his own sphere; not live to himself, but help to bear the burdens of Church and commonwealth, *toti natum se credere mundo*, as Cato did (Lucan).

Ver. 14. **But the dung gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab]** That is, of the noble family of the Rechabites. A ruler he was, and yet disdaineth not to repair the dung gate. All God's work is honourable. Angels are God's executioners, as at Sodom. Magistrates and ministers must do their utmost, by discipline and otherwise, to cause the false prophets (that filth) and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land, as by a dung gate, **#Zec 13:2**. Every man must sweep his own door, that we may have a clean street.

Ver. 15. **He built it, and covered it]** A Chaldee word. This people, in their captivity, though they had not lost the use of their native tongue, yet they had got a tincture of the Chaldee; and of the Hebrew and Chaldee came the Syriac, the mother tongue in Christ's time, as appears by *Talitha cumi*, and other like passages.

And unto the stairs] By these David descended into the lower city, and suitors ascended to his palace. This is allegorically applied by some to Christ (the true Jacob's ladder, **#Joh 1:51**), who came down and humbled himself to the utmost; that we by him might have access, with success, in all our suits.

Ver. 16. **Over against the sepulchres of David]** His burying place. The Jews had their sepulchres ready made, as the old prophet, **#1Ki 13:30**, Joseph of Arimathaea, &c. So had the emperors of Constantinople their tombstone presented them on their coronation day. Charles V, emperor of Germany, five years before his death caused his sepulchre to be made, with all things appertaining to it necessary for his burial. Another great prince began his tomb, and left it imperfect; commanding a servant once every day to remind him of finishing it. The Thebans had a law, that no man should set up a house for himself to dwell in, but he should first make his grave. David, it seems, had his choice of sepulchres, not far from the wall of the city of David.

And to the pool that was made] With great art and cost, by King Hezekiah, #2Ki 20:20.

And unto the house of the mighty] Where David's mighties, or the watchmen of his city, lodged; or where youth were trained up and taught to handle their arms.

Ver. 17. **After him repaired the Levites]** Who therefore were not beggarly (as many would make ministers in our days, if they might have their will), but had somewhat to spare for pious uses. For when they are said to repair, the meaning is, they bore the charge of the work, and took care that it was done.

18. **The ruler of the half part of Keilah]** This was that city rescued by David from the Philistines, and yet false to him, #1Sa 23:12.

Ver. 19. **Another piece]** Or, a second measure; that is, he repaired two parts, saith Pellican. Lyra and others think it to be meant of the second ward and wall, which was called *Secunda*, where the Levites, prophets, and students dwelt; their college or school is called Mishne, or a second part, #2Ki 22:14, which the Targum interpreteth a house of learning, *Domus doctrinae*.

Ver. 20. **Earnestly repaired the other piece]** Or a second piece, as #Ne 3:19. He did two pieces while others were about one. A ready heart makes riddance of God's work. He burst out in a heat (so the Heb.), being angry both at himself and others that had done no more; and, in a holy fume, finished quickly, kindling himself from other men's coldness, and quickening himself from their slothfulness, *Se accendit*.

— *Sic Caesar in omnia praeceps
Nil actum credens, dum quid superesset agendum,
Fertur atrox* -(Lucan).

Ver. 21. **Even to the end of the house of Eliashib]** A small praise, saith one, if the house were not of some greatness. Eliashib was high priest, and dwelt, like himself, in a fair large house.

Ver. 22. **The men of the plain]** Of the plain of Jordan, saith the Vulgar; but better understand it of the plain country round about Jerusalem, as #Ne 12:28.

Ver. 23. **Over against their house]** {*See Trapp on "Ne 3:10"*}

Ver. 24. **Unto the turning of the wall]** Namely, from the south side to the east; which turning came with the corner inwards into the city, according to the natural situation of the rock and the valley.

Ver. 25. **Over against the turning]** Of these turnings there were many, as appeareth above.

The king's high house] In Spain, not only doth the king dwell in a stately high palace, but also the highest room in every great house is his, and he must be paid for it.

That was by the court of the prison] Here Jeremiah was prisoner more than once, #Jer 32:2 38:7,13. And therefore other good people that came after him thither might be as well apaid as Dr Taylor, martyr, who blessed God that ever he was fellow-prisoner to that earthly angel (as he called him), John Bradford; or, as that other good woman, who rejoiced that she might have her foot in the hole of the stocks in which Mr Philpot had been before her.

Ver. 26. **Moreover the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel]** Of Nethinims see #Ezr 2:43. Their work was to carry wood and water to the Temple; therefore they dwelt near the water gate, for their own convenience.

Ver. 27. **After them the Tekoites]** The people whereof had repaired before, #Ne 3:5, now also the priests, but not the nobles: they continued still stout and stiffnecked, as #Ne 3:5.

Ver. 28. **From above the horse gate]** So called, say some, because there they were wont to dismount, leaving their horses. When the king himself came, he must alight, and go afoot into the Temple. The Great Turk at this day, when he entereth into his mosque for devotion sake, alights and lays aside all his state, and goes in alone.

Ver. 29. **Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah]** *Egregie cordatus homo*, #Ezr 8:16.

Ver. 30. **After him repaired Hananiah]** Or, After me. Nehemiah, doubtless, did his part, and a large one too, see #Ne 4:16, but he omitteth, out of his modesty, to set down how much. In the Hebrew text it is, After me; but in the margin, After him. The reason is given by some to be this, that Nehemiah might most covertly set forth his own work, to avoid all show of vain glory.

And Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph] Not the eldest, but the best of all the brethren. There must be no straining courtesy who shall begin; nor must men fear for their forwardness to be styled seraphical and singular. If Hanun were alone, it was a shame for his brethren to suffer him to be so.

Ver. 31. **After him]** Or, After me. See **#Ne 3:30**.

Over against the gate Miphkad] The judicial gate, saith the Vulgate; the gate of commandment, saith Junius; probably where the Sanhedrim sat.

Ver. 32. **Unto the sheep gate]** Here they began and here they end, having repaired round, and thereby obtained a good report, being here registered and renowned. Those that have a hand in building the spiritual Jerusalem shall be surely crowned and chronicled. Their names shall be written in the book of life, where no devil can scrape them out. Up, therefore, and be doing worthily in Ephratah, that ye may be famous in Bethlehem, **#Ru 4:11**. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, shall be eternal life," **#Ro 2:7**.

Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **But it came to pass]** The devil and his imps have ever been utter enemies to reformation. So do savage beasts bristle up themselves, and make the most fierce assaults, when they are in danger of losing the prey which they had once seized on. Jabeshgilead would send in none to help the Lord against the mighty, **#Jud 21:9**. No more would Meroz, **#Jud 5:23**. Josiah met with much opposition; so did St Paul wherever he came, to set up evangelical and spiritual worship; which is called a reformation, **#Heb 9:10**. All the world was against Athanasius in his generation, and Luther in his; rejecting what they attempted, with scorn and slander. Here it is quarrel enough to Nehemiah and his Jews, that they would be no longer miserable. They were not more busy in building than the enemies active in deriding, conspiring, practising to hinder and overthrow them. A double derision is here recorded; and both as full of mischief as profane wit or rancoured malice could make them.

He was wroth] Heb. He was enkindled, and all on a light fire; he was as hot as Nebuchadnezzar's oven, very hot, he took great indignation, and was so unreasonably enraged, as if he would have fallen forthwith into a frenzy or apoplexy; as that Roman emperor did, by raging at his servant. He was grieved before, #Ne 2:1, but now he was maddened.

And mocked the Jews] By word and gesture, fleeing and jeering, flouting and scoffing at them, as the Pharisees also did at our Saviour, #Lu 16:14; David's enemies at him, upon their ale bench; Sir Thomas More and other learned Papists, at the new gospellers. See #Ne 2:19. This might have dismayed these poor Jews, and put them out of countenance: for our nature is most impatient with reproaches; there being none so mean but thinks himself worthy of some regard: and a reproachful scorn (such as these here) shows an utter disrespect, which issueth from the very superfluity of malice. If God had not strengthened them, saith one, it would have made them leave their work, and run away.

Ver. 2. **And he spake before his brethren]** *i.e.*, before his companions and accomplices, who would second him and say the same, his *Aiones* and *Negones*, as one calleth such.

And the army of Samaria] The garrison soldiers; or those that lay there billeted, to observe the people.

What do these feeble Jews?] These beggarly shiftless fellows, these *Asinari* (as Molon and Appion of Alexandria disgracefully called the Jews); like as Tertullian tells us that the Pagans painted the God of the Christians with an ass's head and a book in his hand; to note that they were silly and despicable people. Bishop Jewell, in a sermon of his, citeth this out of Tertullian, and addeth, Do not our adversaries the like at this day against all that profess the gospel?

Will they fortify themselves?] Heb. Will they leave to themselves, *sc.* anything to trust unto? Junius renders *An sinerent eos?* should they (*sc.* the officers and soldiers) suffer them thus to do?

Will they sacrifice?] *sc.* at the dedication of their new walls? Will they do this all at once? and think they, without more ado, to have the liberty of their sanctuary?

Will they make an end in a day?] It should seem so by their *Cito, Cito*, quick despatch of their parts and task, &c.

Praecipita tempus; mors atra impendet agenti (Sil. Ital.).

Will they revive the stones, &c.] Stones they lack for their new wall: where will they have them? will they glue together the old stones, and revive them out of the rubbish? will they do this? or, what will they do?

Ver. 3. **Now Tobiah the Ammonite]** This was one of Sanballat's good brethren, #Ne 4:2. A bird of the same feather, a loaf of the same leaven, his fellow scoffer, and so *homine peior*, saith Chrysostom, worse than a man; as the scoffer that beareth it well, is Angelis par, saith he, an angel's peer.

Even that which they build, if a fox go up, &c.] It was some such bitter jeer that Remus uttered in contempt of Romulus's new wall, and was knocked on the head for it. *Hae sannae leniter volant, non leniter violant.*

Ver. 4. **Hear, O our God]** These mocks and menaces lay so heavy upon Nehemiah's spirit, that he could not ease himself but by breathing heavenward; and turning them over to God to take an order with them. His prayer is not long, but full. A child may not chat in his father's presence: his words must be humble, earnest, direct to the point, avoiding vain babblings and tedious drawn out affairs.

For we are despised] Heb. We are contempt in the abstract. Not vilified we are only, but nullified, as a company of ουτιδανοι, no bodies. So Paul (the most precious man upon earth) and his companions (the glory of Christ, and a royal diadem in the hand of Jehovah, #Isa 62:3) were looked upon as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things, #1Co 4:13. What matter is it, then, what becometh of us? We have a God to turn us to, and Demetrius

hath testimony of the truth; that is enough, let Diotrephes prate what he pleaseth, #3Jo 9.

And turn their reproach upon their own heads] Surely God scorneth these scorers, saith Solomon, #Pr 3:34; that is, saith Rabbi Levi upon that text, he casts them into some calamity, and so makes them a laughing stock to those whom they have laughed at. God loves to retaliate, to pay men home in their own coin. Thus he dealt by Appion of Alexandria; who, scoffing at religion (and especially at circumcision), had an ulcer the same time and in the same place (Josephus). The like ill end befell Julian the apostate, whose daily practice was to scoff at Christ and his people. Dioclesian the emperor (as Volaterran writes) had a jester called Genesius, who used to make him merry at meals, and, among their devices, would scoff and squib at Christians; but God plagued him, for example to others. And the like he did to Morgan, that mocking bishop of St David's; to John Apowel, who derided William Mauldon for his devotion; and lastly, to one Lever, of Brightwell, in Berkshire, who said that he saw that ill-favoured knave Latimer when he was burned at Oxford, and that he had teeth like a horse. But the Lord suffered not this scorn and contempt of his servant to pass unpunished; for that very day, and about the same hour, that Lever spake these words, his son wickedly hanged himself, saith mine author. *Lege, cave.* Read and take note!

And give them for a prey, &c.] A heavy curse, and, as not causeless (against implacable enemies to God and goodness), so nor fruitless. Woe be to such as against whom the saints, moved with a zeal of God, shall imprecate vengeance. God usually inflicts what they denounce against his and their irreconcilable adversaries. Fire proceeds out of their mouths, &c., #Re 11:5.

Ver 5. **And cover not their iniquity.]** O fearful imprecation! Surely if they only are blessed whose sin is covered, #Ps 32:1, what shall become of those that are in a contrary condition? If pardon of sin be such a voluminous mercy, as having many other mercies bound up with it, think what a misery it is to have sin imputed; and get a cover speedily, for that abominable filth, and to God himself an eye sore.

For they have provoked thee to anger, &c.] This was it that Nehemiah so stomached; and that drew from him these dreadful imprecations, viz. God's glory, and not any self-concern: he hated and cursed *non virum, sed virium, &c.*

Ver. 6. **So built we the wall]** This followed upon his prayer, as a gracious answer to it; the people were encouraged, and the wall finished. Faithful prayer is never ineffectual. Reproaching is a heart breaking, #Ps 66:20, but so long as a Christian can pray he is not without his cordial. "I came for thy prayer," #Da 10:12.

And all the wall was joined together] Not with gold indeed (as Cassiodorus saith the walls of Susa in Persia were), but with that which was better than gold, faith in God's goodness and zeal of his glory.

Unto the half thereof] Unto half the height, for they could not do all at once: neither can we in the spiritual building; but grow up and increase with the increase of God, #Col 2:19.

For the people had a mind to work] And the more mind because they met with so much opposition. A free spirit is most seen, saith one, when there be most rubs in the way; when he that moves by outward poises will stick and be dull: as when a bowl runs up a hill, every bounce slows it; but when downhill, a bounce quickeneth it.

Ver. 7. **And the Arabians' and the Ammonites]** A rabble of malignants meet and make head. Sanballat, by the help of Tobiah, had now gotten a great band of soldiers, and specially of Arabians, Ammonites, and Ashdodites, to fight for him against this feeble folk, but yet armed with God, and that had him for their champion. So we may see how readily one wicked man will be drawn to help another; and how the wickedness of one will infect another that will give ear to it. Read #Ps 83:6-8 Re 16:16,17, &c.

Heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up] Heb. That health (or as the old translation hath it, a salve) ascended upon the walls. A metaphor from surgeons, who when they heal wounds by salves or plasters, join the flesh together again which before was cut in sunder: so the breaches of the walls, which afore lay gaping open, were joined together, and made sound, as though it were one entire

wall, *et quasi tota moles in tantam magnitudinem ex unico ingenti lapide tam magnifice consurgeret.*

Then they were very wroth] That old enmity, #Ge 3:15, stirred in them, and they were soon kindled; Satan being the *boute-feu*, or kindle coal. See #Ne 4:1.

Ver. 8. **And conspired all of them together]** All of them, and together; and yet this was not unity, but conspiracy; such as is that among devils, #Mr 5:9, among Antichristians, #Re 17:13, among Turks, who have as little dissension in their religion as any. But well may that garment have no seam that hath no shape. The army of Nineveh was quiet, #Na 1:12, no falling out nor complaining in their hosts; hence their king marched on, passed through. But so did not these conspirators, because they met with those that were no less well combined and far better resolved than themselves. The Thebans had a band of men they called *Sacra Cohors*, sacred cohorts, *ἱερός λοχος* (Athen. 1.3), consisting of such only as were joined in the bonds of love, and resolved to live and die together. These Jews under the command of Nehemiah were none other, and were therefore insuperable.

To come and to fight] To turn their works into knocks.

And to hinder it] Heb. To make an error in it. The Hebrew word is used both of the error of the heart and of the foot, #Isa 63:17 Ps 119:176. It may be rendered here, to hinder him, to make an error in him; to make Nehemiah at a stand, or rather to run away, to creep into corners, and give over the work.

Ver. 9. **Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God]** Who is the saints' sanctuary of safety, their present help in time of trouble. Prayer to him is an anchor in all storms and a salve for all sores; yea, it healeth not only body and soul, but even hard stony walls, #Ne 4:7, provided that we judge ourselves in prayer, and commit our cause to God to be judged by him, as the Hebrew word *ללפניה* here importeth. Thus did the children of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, when to fight against the Hagarenes. Thus did Jabiz, and Jehoshaphat, and Constantine, and Theodosius, and that late victorious king of Sweden, of whom it is storied in his Life (Mr Clark), that he would pray ashipboard, ashore, in the field, in the

midst of a battle; as if prayer alone were the surest piece of his whole armour.

And set a watch] According to that of our Saviour, "Watch and pray," #Lu 21:36, and that of the heathen, *Admota manu invocanda est Minerva. Ora et labora*, pray, and then use best policy; first conquer heaven, and then presume of earth's conquest.

Against them] Or, beside them, at the workmen's elbows, and in the face of the enemies.

Ver. 10. **And Judah said]** Here was *επεμβολη*, *impedimenti domestici; aliud ex alio malum*, a worse discouragement than the former. Judah (the chief labourers) begins to murmur and mutiny, to faint and fall off. A perilous practice in such a dangerous time, and enough to have undone all; as one coward in an army, breaking the array and running away, may set the rest a running, and the day be thereby lost. Lo, this was Judah, whose escutcheon was a lion; but here unlike himself.

The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed] Very specious reasons they allege; their shoulders ached, their strength was gone, there was no end of their painstaking, their work grew upon them, &c. The truth was, *deerat ignis, deerat animus*, they were weary of well doing, and not valiant for the truth, #Jer 9:3. More like they were to those fugitives of Ephraim, #Jud 12:4, than the lions of the tribe of Judah. Nehemiah therefore might well have said to them, as Alexander once did to a faint hearted soldier of his, that was of his own name, Either give up the name of Alexander, or be valiant. So, either hold out, and bear up under your burdens, or be Judah no more.

So that we are not able] Never was anything too hard for Alexander; because he never held anything impossible to be effected.

Ver. 11. **And our adversaries said]** But their plot was some way discovered, and so prevented. *Detexit facinus fatuus et non implevit*, saith Tacitus of one in his time. So the gunpowder traitors betrayed themselves; and all came to light, though they had dug as low as hell to hide their counsels from the Lord.

They shall not know, neither see] But what shall he do who is omniscient and ολοφθαλμος, all-eye? whose providence is like a well drawn picture that vieweth all that comes into a room.

Till we come in the midst among them] Either in the night undiscerned; or by day, but unarmed, and not as enemies: for the Florentine secretary, though not yet (nor of many ages later) born into the world; yet the good of this world was as great a master then as afterwards.

And slay them, and cause the work to cease] The craft of the Church's adversaries is never but accompanied with cruelty; and their cruelty is seldom without craft. The devil lends them his seven heads to plot, and his ten horns to push; but in the thing wherein they deal proudly, God is above these cruel crafties.

Ver. 12. **And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came]** Their brethren from abroad gave the workmen intelligence; and this was a friendly office; for *praemonitus praemunitus*, premonition is the best means of prevention. It is the property of a brother, though at other times not so kind, yet in affliction and extremity to find nature working in him, and to do his best. See #Pr 17:17. {See Trapp on "Pr 17:17"}

They said unto us ten times] *i.e.* Oftentimes, #Ge 31:41 Nu 14:22. The Lord knoweth how to deliver his, as he did David from Saul, Peter from the Jews, #Ac 12:7-12, Paul from those conspirators, #Ac 23:12-23, and this sinful nation oft from the blood thirsty Papists. Masses were said in Rome for the good success of the Catholic design (the gunpowder plot); but no prayers in England, for our deliverance: and yet they were defeated (*Sorex sue periti indicio*), and we delivered. Admirable mercy.

From all places whence ye shall return, &c.] Some read it thus, And it came to pass, when the Jews which dwelt beside them, came and told us of their practices ten times out of all places, whence they came unto us, I set in the low places, &c. And here, I cannot tell, saith one, whether these intelligencers be worthy more praise or condemnation. It was their duty to have come home, stood in

storms, and help to build Jerusalem. But God, which turneth our intelligence and foolishness to the setting forth of his wisdom and goodness, gave them a good will and boldness to further that building as they might. Thus God useth the service of all men and creatures to the comfort of his people.

Ver. 13. **Therefore set I in the lower places]** I took them off their work, and appointed them to stand upon their guard; appointing them their stations, and giving them orders.

I even set the people after their families] Or, according to their kindreds; for he knew that nature will move one kinsman to be truer to another in all dangers than a stranger; and that one kinsman will open his grief to his friend and take comfort at his hand, rather than to him whom he knoweth not. Hence Nehemiah in policy sorted his soldiers after this sort.

With their swords, their spears, and their bows] These were the ancient weapons of war; neither had death yet learned to cut his way through a wood of men out of the mouth of a murdering piece. Whether the Emperor Wenceslaus did well or ill in executing Barthold Swartz for inventing gunpowder, A. D. 1378, I determine not.

Ver. 14. **And I looked, and rose up]** *Et vidi, et surrexi, et dixi*, so the original runs. He saw the enemy a-coming, he started up, and he made this excellent exhortation; which puts me in mind of that which one once said of Julius Caesar, If you had never known him to have been a soldier, yet hear him but speak only, and you will conclude him to be one, *Si acta eius penitus ignorasses, per linguam tanten militem esse diceres*.

And said unto the nobles] In a short but pithy oration; such as was that of Joab, #2Sa 10:12, of which Pellican saith, *Non potuit vex duce dignior cogitari*, as brave a speech as a man could make; or that of Hunniades, about to join battle with the Turks (see Turk. Hist. fol. 272); or, lastly, that of the Prince of Orange at the battle of Newport; where they had the sea on one side and the Spaniards on the other. If, said he, you will live, you must either eat up these Spaniards or drink up this sea. So here, Either you must fight lustily, or all you have is forfeited assuredly.

Be not ye afraid of them] Away with that cowardly passion, which unmans a man, *et rectum tollit de cardine mentem*, robs him of all power and policy.

Remember the Lord] Whom he that feareth needs fear none else. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower," &c.

Who is great and terrible] For the defence of his people, and offence of his enemies. The Lord is a man of war, #Ex 15:3. Yea, he alone is a whole army of men, van and rear both, #Isa 52:12; and may better say to his soldiers than Antigonus did to his, when they were afraid of the enemy's numbers, How many do ye reckon me for?

And fight for your brethren] Whether by race, or religion.

Your sons, and your daughters] Those φίλτατα, as the Greeks call them; *Charissimi*, as the Latins; dearest pledges.

Your wives, and your houses] In the last commandment houses are set first before wives, because a house is to be first provided; neither will a wise man take a wife before he hath a house. Here wives are set before houses; because far more precious, and a main part of a man's self, #Eph 5:28. House and riches are the inheritance of the fathers, but a prudent wife is of the Lord, #Pr 19:14. She was one of the first real and royal gifts bestowed by God upon Adam. By the way note, that if men may fight for their civil right to their houses and lands, have they not as good warrant to fight for their religion, especially since they have the laws of the land for it; and, besides, a civil right at least to the outward peaceable profession and practice of it? The Athenians themselves, though their religion was no better than superstition, #Ac 17:22, yet they bound themselves, by a public and solemn oath, to defend it to the utmost. The words of the oath were these: I will fight for the temples and holy rites, both alone and with others, Αμυνω δε και υπεο ιεωων και υπερ οσιων και μονος και μετα πολλων..

Ver. 15. **And it came to pass, when our enemies heard]** This rumour was enough to frighten these no less now timorous than

before temerarious Samaritans; great brags they made at first what they would do, but now that they see they are defeated of their purpose, they are crest fallen, and have no mind at all to advance. So that to these may be fitly applied that which Guicciardine saith of Charles VIII, king of France, in his expedition against Naples, that he came into the field like thunder and lightning, but went out like a snuff; more than a man at first, and less than a woman at last.

And God had brought their counsel to nought] According to that of the psalmist, "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations," #Ps 33:10,11. Here good men may learn, saith one, not to go nakedly, without weapons for their own necessary defence; and much less, said I, without their spiritual weapons, whether defensive, as the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, &c., or offensive, as the sword of the Spirit, the word, and the darts of prayer, lest they be surprised and subjugated by that old manslayer, #Eph 6:13-18.

That we returned all of us to the wall] Not to the tavern, to toss pots, saith one, and boast of their great victory; but in the fear of God they return to the walls, and every man falleth to his work again. All histories declare that the greatest kingdoms, when they fell to idleness and luxury, then they lost their former glory faster than they won it. The Turkish Empire is thought to be on the declining hand, because their late emperors do far degenerate from their warlike progenitors, their soldiers generally give themselves to unwonted pleasures, their ancient discipline of war is neglected, rebellions raised, &c.

Ver. 16. **And it came to pass from that time forth]** As it is told of that peerless Queen Elizabeth, that in times of greatest peace she ever made preparation for war; so did this incomparable Nehemiah; still fearing some new practice, and not knowing what those restless cads were even now a hammering.

That the half of my servants wrought in the work] No servants they were for Nehemiah, if they would not work. He was an active man himself, trading every talent; and those about him must all be

active. One would wonder how this courtier should become on the sudden so cunning a soldier, and should marshal his men so skilfully, setting the younger before to bear the brunt of the battle, and the elders behind to direct and encourage, according to that of the poet,

Εογα νεων, βουλαι τ ανδρων, ευχαι τε γεροντων.

But it was his God that instructed him to this discretion, and taught him, #Isa 28:26, and he might well break out and sing, with David, "Blessed be the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight," #Ps 144:1. *Quando Christus Magister, quam cito dicitur quod docetur?* saith Austin. God's scholars must needs be exact in a short space.

And the habergeons] These were armour for back and breast. In the Christian armour there is no mention of armour for the back, though there is for the breast, because a Christian soldier should never flee, but be like Androclid, whom, when one derided, because, being lame, he went into the war, he answered merrily, that he came thither to fight, not to run away.

Ver. 17. **They which builded on the wall]** The master masons, and they that bare burdens, Bajuli, labourers and porters, who bear upon their shoulders as much as they can stand under, yet go singing oft under their burdens: the reason whereof Alexander Aphrodisaeus saith is this, that their minds being delighted with the sweetness of the music, the body may be the less sensible of the weight they carry. But these burden bearers had little mind to sing, their lives being in suspense. And yet, as worthy workmen, they went on with the wall.

Every one with one of his hands wrought, and in the other hand had a weapon] *i.e.*, When they were busiest in building they had their weapons in a readiness to resist. What a goodly sight was this, saith one, to see every one so full of courage, that they feared not the enemy; and so willing to work, that they would not be weary. Let Christian men look into this notable example, and be ashamed of their slothfulness, &c.

Ver. 18. **For the builders every one had his sword girded by his side]** Heb. on his loins; that is the place for the sword to hang on: **#Ps 45:3**, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty." And **#Re 19:16**, Christ's name is written upon his vesture, that all may see it, and upon his thigh, where his sword hangs, to show that he won it by his valour. Among the Turks at this day, as the right hand is held uppermost for a scholar, so the left for a soldier; because it gives a man possession of his companion's sword; though the Turks seldom bear weapons but in travel; and then some of them seem no less like a walking, than these builders did like a working, armoury.

Ver. 19. **And I said unto the nobles, &c.]** Nehemiah, the more a man observeth him the more he shall admire him. Surely he was (as Velleius saith of Cato Major) *homo virtuti simillimus*, a man as like virtue as might be; he was (as Pliny saith of the same Cato) *optimus Orator; optimus Imperator; optimus Senator; omniumque bonarum artium Magister*, an excellent orator, an excellent general, an excellent statesman, a master of all good arts whatsoever. He had cropped off the very tops of all virtues, as Pindarus saith of Jerome (*δρεπων κορυφας αρετων απο πασων*), and as Melancthon saith of Frederick, the elector of Saxony. From the builders here he turneth him to the nobles and rulers, &c., whom he would not have to be carpet knights, fitter for a canopy than a camp, for language than a lance, &c., but active in their orb, and ready pressed to serve in watching, warding, and preparing things necessary for the workmen.

The work is great and large] The compass of the walls at this time is thought by good writers to be certain miles about; and yet was enlarged as much afterwards by Herod.

And we are separated upon the wall] According to our divisions, noted **#Ne 3:1**, &c., and this is a weapon in the hand of our enemies; for *dum pugnamus singuli, vincimur universi*, being dispersed, we are much disadvantaged.

Ver. 20. **In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet]** Which, therefore, for the purpose he kept at his own elbow, **#Ne 4:18**, as a matter of trust and importance. Moses committed the blowing of the trumpets unto the sons of Aaron only, **#Nu 10:8**. "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" **#1Co 14:8**.

Resort you thither unto us] As to your rendezvous, that we may stand against the enemy in an entire body; meanwhile Nehemiah walketh the round, and watches the enemies' motions, so that of him might be said, as once was of *Hannibal*, *Nulla labore aut corpus fatigari, aut animus vinci poterat*, he was indefatigable, insuperable (Liv. decad. 3, lib. 1), or as of Fabius Maximus.

Hic patria est, murique urbis stant pectore in uno (Sil. Ital.).

Our God shall fight for us] Courage therefore my hearts, he is "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle," #Ps 24:8, and may far better say than Henry VIII did, *Cui adhaereo praeest*, he whom I fight for is sure to prevail.

Ver. 21. **So we laboured in the work]** Their fear of the enemy did not weaken them, but waken them rather to a redoubled diligence.

From the rising of the sun till the stars appeared] Time was precious; and they redeemed and improved it. The common complaint is, We want time; but the truth is, *Non parum habemus temporis, sed multum perdimus*. We do not so much want as waste it. The good man is *perdius et pernox*, night and day at his business; and his thoughts are the same with those of Rabbi Simeon, *Dies brevis est, et opus multum, et operarii pigri, et paterfamilias urger*, The time is short, the task large, the workmen dither, the master of the house urgent.

Ver. 22. **Likewise at the same time I said unto the people]** He had a saying to every one; and having ordered the work of the day, he appointeth a watch for the night season also; for they had many false friends within themselves too. Caesar's vigilancy did ever equal his valour; so did Nehemiah's.

Ver. 23. **So neither I]** He said not to his men, *Ite*, but *eamus*, as Caesar did; Go ye, but go we; and as Abimelech, #Jud 9:48, What ye see me do, make haste and do accordingly. Velleius flattered when he said, *Tiberius imperio maximus, exemplo maior*. Nehemiah was so in very deed.

Saving that every one put them off for washing] To keep themselves clean, and from being nasty; or otherwise, to wash themselves from legal pollutions.

Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **And there was a great cry]** Such as seditious ones use to set up in their outrageous uproars; or such as is the expression of great grief and anguish of heart.

Of the people] The ignoble common people, a most dangerous and heady water, when once it is out.

And of their wives] Who being pinched with penury, made piteous outcries. *Invalidum omne, natura querulum. Significat clamorem vel querulum, vel imperiosum, iracundum, minacem* (Seneca).

Against their brethren the Jews] The richer sort, who oppressed them and drew them before the judgment seats, as St James hath it of the Jews of his time; for they were no changelings. Let the Philistines bind Samson, and he can bear it; but do not you lay hands on me, saith he to his countrymen. Scipio had rather Hannibal should eat his heart with salt than Laelius give him a cross word. Had it been mine enemy, saith David, I could have digested it. So could these poor creatures far better have borne the insolencies of strangers than the oppressions of fellow brethren. Tacitus tells us, that in his time the Jews were very merciful to those of their own nation, and cruel to all others, *Misericordia in promptu apud suos, &c.* But here their own complain, and this was doubtless a great grief to good Nehemiah.

Ver. 2. **We, our sons, and our daughters are many]** That is a mercy, had we but keeping for them. Their wives were very fruitful; *sed luctuosa faecunditate* (as Jerome saith of Laeta); for they had more mouths than meat for them. Tho young children asked for bread, and no man brake it unto them, #**La 4:4.**

Therefore we take up corn for them] Grain upon use, to keep us from starving; and that by pawning or selling our dear children to the rich creditors for servants; till we can redeem them, which we are never like to do, #**Ne 5:5.**

That we may eat and live] Merely to keep us alive; for else we would never have made our poor children bondslaves. But *Necessitas durum telum*, hunger is so pinching a pain, that a woman will eat her own child, as in the siege of Jerusalem, Samaria, Saguntum; yea, a man his own flesh, rather than die with hunger. Hitherto the poorest sort. Follows now another cry.

Ver. 3. **We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, &c.]** Lands they had, but were little the better for them. Husbandry they had neglected to give attendance upon buildings; neither were they able to stock and store their grounds, and so are forced to part with them at an underrate price. This is many a poor man's case among us, who yet are little pitied, or relieved, unless it be with a little mouth mercy, as in St James's days, #**Jas 2:15,16**. Oppressors will be but as friends at a sneeze; the most you can get of them is, God bless you; like they are (many of them) to Darius, who prayed God to help Daniel, but sent him to the lions' den.

Ver. 4. **There were also that said]** Here was a third complaint to good Nehemiah; to whom whosoever lamented were sure to have redress and remedy, he did not serve these poor people as that merciless bishop of Mentz, in Germany, did; who, to rid his hands of them in a time of famine, *in horreo conclusos iussit concremari*, shut them up all together in a barn, and there burnt them (Hatto, Archiep. Mogunt. A. D. 923). He was afterwards eaten to death by rats, *non sine maxima divinae vindictae suspicione*, saith mine author, by a just hand of God upon him for his cruelty to those poor, whom he would not relieve with his grain, but let the rats eat it; and of whom he said, when they were burning in his barn, that they cried like a company of rats.

We have borrowed money for the king's tribute] They did not deny payment, and rise up in arms, making poverty their captain, as the Suffolk men did here in Henry VIII's time. Neither did they answer the king of Persia's officers, as the men of Andros once did Themistocles. He, being sent by the Athenians to them for tribute, told them that he came unto them on that errand, accompanied with two goddesses, Eloquence, to persuade, and Violence, to enforce them. Their answer was, that they also had on their side two goddesses as strong; Necessity, for they had it not, and Impossibility,

for they knew not how to raise it (Plutarch). These men pawn their lands to pay tribute; but it went to their hearts, and caused this complaint.

Ver. 5. **Yet our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren]** *i.e.* Nevertheless we are men as well as they, though poor men, and therefore slighted (but why should they hide their eyes from their own flesh? #Isa 58:7. "Have we not all one Father?" #Mal 2:10). Yea, we are men of Israel, such as fear God, #Ac 13:16. Hewn out of the same rock, digged out of the same pit, #Isa 51:1, cut out of the same cloth, the shears only going between. What if God have given them more wealth (as the shepherd bestows a bell upon his bellwether), should they therefore insult and domineer over us, as if not worthy to breathe in the same air?

Our children as their children] viz. As dear to us, and as freeborn every way as theirs are; why then should their unmerciful dealing enslave them? He that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker; but he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the poor, #Pr 15:31. There is a writ in England which beareth this name, *Ne iniuste vexes*, Vex not any man unjustly; but law without execution is like a bell without a clapper. It was done directly against law that is here complained of. See #Le 25:39, and therefore there is an *Ecce* Behold set upon it in the next words; And (lo) we bring into bondage, &c. These cruel cormorants thought to bear out and justify the most monstrous misdemeanor, because it was the fact of a noble, who could as easily break through the lattice of the laws as the bigger flies do through a spider web; as Anacharsis once said concerning his Scythians.

We bring into bondage our sons and our daughters] This went to the hearts of them, and well it might. For, 1. Our children are a chief part of ourselves, even the seed; as though now there were nothing left in us but the chaff. 2. Bondage is very grievous, as liberty exceeding sweet. Did we but live a while in Turkey (saith one), in Persia., yea, or but in France, a dram of that liberty we yet enjoy would be as precious to us as a drop of cold water would have been to the rich man in hell, when he lay broiling in those flames. 3. They were necessitated to do this with their own hands, We bring into bondage, &c., hard hunger driving us thereunto, though as ill-willing

thereunto as ever Jacob was to part with his Benjamin into Egypt; he would not do it till there was no remedy. 4. They sold them for slaves, not to strangers, but to their own friends and countrymen, where we looked for more courtesy. But a man had as good a deal with a Cossack or Cannibal as with a truly covetous captive, and as much favour and fair dealing he shall find. For such a one respecteth neither friend nor foe; nor regards at all how he cometh by it, by hook or by crook, by right or by wrong, be it short or long.

And some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already] So that our complaints are neither false nor causeless; for that weaker sex is every way subject to more abuse, their chastity (which is their honour) was much hazarded, *Custus, quasi, καστος ornatus*.

Neither is it in our power to redeem them] Would we never so fain. What would not a tender hearted father give or do for the redemption of his dear child? To let go many other examples, Fredericus Barbarossa, emperor of Germany (when as in the wars between the pope and himself, his youngest son was taken prisoner by the Venetian fleet), *Vehementi amore commotus erga filium captum*, saith mine author, through an earnest desire of getting his son's liberty, he concluded a peace upon most unequal terms, viz. that he should come in person to Venice, and there, prostrate at the pope's feet (who trod upon the emperor's neck), he should beg pardon; and then having settled peace in Italy, led his army into Asia against the Turk. All this he did for his son's liberty.

For other men have our lands and vineyards] Even those men that so lately came out of captivity themselves, and know the misery of want and slavery. Those that partake now of so much liberty and liberality from the kings of Persia, and yet, behold, they pull up the bridge before us that themselves have gone over. Surely there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land, **#Ho 4:1**. Lo this was *Vox oppressorum mercesque retenta laborum*.

Ver. 6. **And I was very angry]** Red-hot with anger, and not without cause. To be angry without cause is to be guilty of judgment, **#Mt 5:22**, but in case of God's dishonour, and public prejudice, moderation is mopishness, toleration cowardice, &c. Nehemiah was

a magistrate, that is, a mortal god; as God is an immortal magistrate. Therefore as God is angry at the oppressions of poor people (Lactantius hath written a book *De Ira Dei*), so should his lieutenants; and this holy anger should be *cos fortitudinis*, a means to encourage, or rather to enrage them against oppressors, who grind the faces of the poor, and take from them burdens of wheat, **#Am 5:11**. Yea, lands and vineyards, as here, eating bread baked with the tears of men, coining their money on their skins, and wringing their sponges into their own purses.

When I heard their cry] His anger then was mixed with grief, as was our Saviour's, **#Mr 3:5**: it was pure zeal, which is nothing else but an extreme (but regular) heat of all the affections.

Ver. 7. **Then I consulted with myself]** As reason required; he was very angry, but yet he keeps within compass, and practiseth that rule, Be angry, and sin not: which, saith one, is the easiest charge under the hardest condition that can be. He who will be angry and not sin, let him be angry at nothing but at sin; and then see to it also that it become not a sin, by abandoning right reason, Nehemiah was not so angry but that he could consult with himself, and deliberate what was best to be done: his heart consulted within him, or wisely overruled him: so the Hebrew.

And I rebuked the nobles and the elders] Not in his passion, but upon serious deliberation; and having put himself into a fit frame, that he might neither over nor under do. *Valete, quoniam vobis irascor*; said Archytas to his servants that had offended him, I have nothing to say to you till mine anger is over (Plutarch).

And said unto them, Ye exact usury] This reproof was, as it should be, warm but not scalding. Words of reviling and disgrace do scald as it were. But words that tend to stir up the conscience to a due consideration of the fault these are duly warm, and tend to make the medicine work more kindly.

Every one of his brother] This was a presumptuous violation of the law, **#Ex 22:25 Le 25:36,37**, and a sin that they had soundly smarted for, **#Eze 22:12**. Usurers are men eaters, **#Ps 14:4**, like pickerels in a pond, or sharks in the sea, that devour the lesser

fishes. A.D. 1235, there were spread through England certain Roman usurers, called *Coursini* (*quasi capientes ursi*, devouring bears, quoth Matthew Paris), who had entangled the king, nobles, and all others that had to deal in the court of Rome, in their cunning snares, under colour of supplying with money such as wanted present pay to the pope: so these, to the king of Persia.

And I set a great assembly against them] *i.e.* I reprov'd them, first privately, and then publicly: and he doth it severe *et ad vivum*, roughly and roundly, not going about the bush with them, though they were nobles and rulers. *Reprehensiones personatae frigent*; cooling rebuking the persons, such as was that of Jehoshaphat to Ahab, "Let not the king say so," #1Ki 22:8. This is to do more harm than good.

8. **And I said unto them, We after our ability]** This he speaketh, not in a vain glorious vaunting way, or to curry favour with the people; but to convince the contrary minded of their inhumanity to their poor brethren. Good works, saith Chrysostom, are unanswerable syllogisms, invincible demonstrations to confute and convert those that do otherwise. "Let your works so shine before men," &c.

Which were sold unto the heathen] This they did in obedience to the law, #De 28:47,48.

And will ye even sell your brethren?] There was no resisting of such a rational reproof, no whit embittered (as the manner is) with wrath or spite; but carried on with so much modesty and moderation.

Or shall they be sold unto us?] He makes himself a party, because of the same body politic.

Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer] Such is the majesty of a reproof rightly administered; it even gags the offender, as #Mt 22:12, and renders him self condemned, #Tit 3:11. Scipio, with his countenance only, quelled and quieted his seditious soldiers. Alexander the Great, and after him Augustus Caesar, and

Severus the emperor, did the same, with a few quick words. Adrianus Boxsehafius, preacher of the word at Antwerp, hearing a certain monk railing at Luther out of the pulpit, Tell me, said he, thou perverse monk, and that openly before all this people, where, and when, and in what points Luther hath erred? The monk thus accosted, answered not a word, but got out of the pulpit, and fled away as fast as he could, and never came again into that country (Sculdet. Annal.).

Ver. 9. **Also I said, It is not good that ye do** No oratory is so powerful as that of mildness. The drops that fall easily upon the corn ripen and fill the ear; when hasty showers lay all flat to the earth, without hope of recovery. Gregory hath observed, that they that could not be cured with strong potions have been recovered with warm water. Reprovers of others must deal warily, as bone-setters; and as we take a mote out of one's eye.

Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God] Which would have reined you in, and restrained you from such exorbitancies. **#Ge 42:18**, You need not fear me, said Joseph to his brethren, for I fear God, and therefore dare do you no hurt. Ye shall not oppress one another; "but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the Lord your God," **#Le 25:17**. And "will ye not tremble at my presence?" saith the Lord, **#Jer 5:22**. "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob," **#Ps 114:7**. Oppressors are called Canaanites, **#Ho 12:7**. He is Canaan that is a mere natural man, utterly void of God's holy fear, **#Eze 16:3**, the balances of deceit are in his hand; he loveth to oppress. To him that is afflicted pity should be showed from his friend (as it should have been to these poor Jews from their hard-hearted countrymen and kinsmen), but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty, and is therefore merciless.

Because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?] Who watch for our halting more earnestly than a dog doth for a bone, and will be glad of any occasion to speak evil of us and of our religion, with, These are your professors, &c. You see what tyrants and tigers they are one to another. Hereby the banks of blasphemy will be broken down in them, to speak evil with open mouth of the name of God. And will ye trample upon that dear and dread name?

Ver. 10. **I likewise, and my brethren...might exact money]** To wit, for money we have lent them; or as a recompense of our public employments. But *posse et nolle, nobile est* to be able and willing is noble. (Seneca).

I pray you, leave off this usury] Who can resist this sweet and sovereign admonition? See #Ne 5:9. They had somewhat to say, no doubt, in defence of their usury; as also many have at this day. But let them consider, that usury is here and elsewhere cried down without distinction, #Ps 15:5 Eze 18:8,13. That the lender dealeth not as he would be dealt withal; that St Luke maketh him worse than other sinners, when he saith, Sinners lend to sinners to receive the like, but these to receive more, #Lu 6:34. That heathens condemned usury, as Aristotle in his Ethics, and Agis, the general of the Athenians, Agesilaus, king of Spartans; who, when he saw the usurers' bills and bonds set on fire by Agis, said, That he never saw a clearer fire burn (Plut. in Solone). And lastly, that at Rome itself usurers are excommunicated monthly.

Ver. 11. **Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day]** While you are in a melting temper, and in a good mind, make restitution. Say not, This is a hard saying, who can brook it? But say rather, as the civilian saith, *Perquam durum est; sed ita lex scripta est*, 'Tis hard to be done, but the law will have it so done; *Aut faciendam, aut patiendum* (Ulpian.). Either we must do it, or do worse. The law for restitution, see #Le 6:1,4 Nu 5:6,7, &c. The wrong-doer must not only confess, but restore. The transgression was against God, but the trespass against man; and he must be satisfied, if the sin shall be pardoned. Samuel proffered to restore, if it might appear that he had wronged any, #1Sa 12:3. Micah, though an idolater did so, #Jud 17:2,3. So did Queen Mary she restored again all ecclesiastical livings asstoned to the crown. Her grandfather, Henry VII, in his last will and testament, devised and willed restitution should be forthwith made of all such monies as had been unjustly levied by the officers. Selimus, the Great Turk, did the like upon his death bed; so great is the force of natural conscience. Gravel in the kidneys will not grate so much as a little guilt in this kind. Restore your evil gotten goods, saith father Latimer, or else you will cough in hell, and the devils will laugh at you. He set this point so well home, that he wrought upon many; and particularly upon Master Bradford. Austin

saith, that if a man be able to make actual restitution, and do it not, *poenitentia non agitur, sed fingitur*; his repentance is not right; if he have wasted all, and is not able to restore, he must desire pardon very humbly, and water the earth with his tears.

Also the hundredth part of the money] That is, all that they had received for interest, whether money, or else. It appeareth, by this text, that they took twelve in the hundred (for so much the hundredth part monthly amounteth to), as at this day in Italy, and elsewhere, the Jews are permitted to strain up their usury to eighteen in the hundred upon the Christian (for among themselves they now use it not), which causeth many of those Pseudo-Christians to use those Jews underhand, in improving their lawful rents to the utmost proportion. (Sandys' Survey.)

Ver. 12. **Then said they, We will restore them]** This was well said; and Nehemiah took course it should be as well done, *ne dicta factis erubescerent*, as Tertullian phraseth it; that their saying and doing might be alike.

And will require nothing of them] But be of those that lend, looking for nothing again, no, not the principal, #Lu 6:35.

So will we do as thou sayest] Denying ourselves, and all worldly lusts, that we may get and keep a good conscience, that most precious jewel that ever the heart of man was acquainted with.

Then I called the priests] As fittest to tender so solemn an oath, and to bear witness in a case of that nature.

And took an oath of them] That is, of them that had promised restitution; that they might not start back, nor repent them of their good resolutions. Our hearts are deceitful, and must be by all good means held up to duty, *Quo teneas vultus mutantem Protea nodo?* else they will slip collar, as those slippery Jews, #Jer 34:10,11, retracted and repealed their vow. It was therefore well and wisely done of Nehemiah to bind them thus to the good behavior; as Asa and Josiah had done before him. An oath is a hedge which a man may not break; which yet that great deviate of Rome maketh a sport of. For when the cardinals meet to choose a new pope, they make

him swear to certain articles. And Sleydan saith, that no sooner is he 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 in heaven and earth. Is not this that $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$, that lawless, yokeless, masterless monster St Paul speaketh of; #2Th 2:8.

Ver. 13. **Also I shook my lap]** By this rite (running into their senses) this holy man runs with terrors into the eyes and hearts of all that should perfidiously forswear themselves, by a direful denunciation of divine vengeance, in all lawful oaths there is an imprecation, though it be not always expressed, #Ge 14:23; Heb. iii.

So God cast out every man from his house] See #Zec 5:4,5, with the note.

And from his labour] *i.e.* From his laying up (the fruit of his labour), his lands and estate, got by a diligent hand. The Hebrew word signifieth labour even to lassitude and fainting.

And all the congregation said, Amen] In token of hearty assent and assurance.

And praised the Lord] There was a general joy, and many a humble, cheerful, and thankful heart lifted up to God for sin so redressed, and poor people relieved.

And the people did according to this promise] This was real thankfulness. It is not the fumbling out of a few good words (as, God, I thank thee, praised be God, &c.) that will pass. Thanksdoing is the proof of thanksgiving; and the good life of the thankful is the life of thankfulness. "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High," #Ps 50:14.

Ver. 14. **From the time that I was appointed to be their governor]** He was not ambitious of the office, nor usurped it; but was commanded to it (as the word signifieth) by the king of Persia, and clearly called to it by God Almighty. Otherwise he could have shrouded himself in willing secrecy, as good corn lieth in the bottom of the heap, and as good balsam sinketh to the bottom of the vessel.

I and my brethren have not eaten the bread, &c.] Rulers, as they are nursing fathers to the people, #Isa 49:23, so by them they are to be nourished, and their state maintained. See #1Ki 4:7. It is also observed, that although our Saviour Christ wrought many miracles; yet he never wrought any about honour or money, but that about tribute; rather than that should go undischarged, he commanded a fish to pay it. Hence also he saith not *Date*, Give, but *Reddite*; Give back, Give, but "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," #Mt 22:21. And St Paul saith, ye pay tribute, as being a due debt, #Ro 13:6. Nevertheless, in this great necessity Nehemiah lets go his own right, and leaveth it to others; like as the eagle is said, when she seeketh her prey, to leave a good part thereof to the birds that follow her, for the same end (Tostat. ex Plin.).

Ver. 15. **But the former governors]** Those that had been between Zerubbabel and Nehemiah; Ezra was no governor. These had been strict in exacting their five pounds a day; or, for the head of every family, so much; besides bread for necessity, and wine for delight. Not so Nehemiah, he would not use his power to over burden those poor whom these usurers oppressed. This he here instanceth for their further conviction.

Yea, even their servants bear rule over the people] Exacting what they please of them. This their masters should have seen to, and not suffered, for the servant's sin is the master's reproach. When Charles V resolved to lay down the empire, some of his courtiers and counsellors advised him to retain still the name and authority of emperor, and to govern the kingdom by his junior officers. His answer to them was, *Ah, me praesente ita res administratis, &c.*, Alas, now that I am among you, things are so ill carried, that ye are complained of by all; what then would you do, if I should not have an eye upon you? and how would you domineer like so many Sultans (the word here used), and follow the administration of justice as a trade only, with an unquenchable and unconscionable desire of gain?

But so did not I, because of the fear of God] The best retentive from sin certainly; a spur to good, a curb from evil. Hence David calleth it a clean fear, #Ps 19:9; and the fear of the Lord is, to depart from evil, saith Solomon. And Aristotle hath this problem, Why are

men credited more than other creatures? The answer is, οτι θεους νομιζειν μονον, because man alone holdeth and feareth God; therefore you may trust him. But where this fear is not, no good is to be expected, but the contrary, #Ge 20:11. {See Trapp on "Ne 5:9"} Ver. 16. **Yea, also I continued in the work**] He meaneth, saith Lyra, that he wrought with his own hands to draw on others the more, when they should see their governor himself so intent to the work. He was constant at it, and held out till all was finished. And this he recordeth, not out of ostentation, but to show that the love and fear of God constrained him; as it did afterwards Paul, that spiritual builder, who laboured more than they all, and denied himself to bring others to heaven, as himself setteth forth, #2Co 11. In praising ourselves, our end must be, that our light may be seen, not ourselves seen, #Mt 5:16. Men's praise may be sought, *modo tibi non quaeras, sed Christo*, Seek not for yourself, but Christ. saith Aretius, so that Christ be thereby set up and served.

Neither bought we any land] As easily we might have done with the surpluse of our revenue; especially if we had exacted the utmost of our right. But public spirits mind not their own interests. Joshua divided the land to Israel, and left none to himself; and that portion that was given him, and he content with, was but a poor one in the barren mountains, as Jerome observes. The late victorious king of Sweden (a second Joshua), in his reprehensory speech to the German plunderers, hath this passage: I protest, before God, that I have not by all this war enriched myself so far as a pair of boots cometh to; yea, I had rather ride without boots than in the least degree enrich myself by the damage of poor people (Mr Clark, in his Life).

Ver. 17. **Moreover there were at my table, &c.**] He did not eat his morsels alone, as that Pamphagus Nabal; and as many misers today, who, like little children, though they have their hands full and their mouths full, yet will part with none.

Ecce Deo similis vir dapsilis, atque benignus -Palingen.

Beside those that came unto me from among the heathen] Either as state agents, or upon other occasions. Nehemiah entertained them, that they might not lie upon the public charge. And herein he trod in

the footsteps of hospitable Abraham, whom Synesius calleth θεου εστιατορα, God's host. The primitive Christians likewise won much upon the heathens by their hospitality towards all, as Julian, the apostate, confessed: all that he could say against them for it was, that they did it all in hypocrisy and vain glory; which was an envious and false charge (πεπλασμενην κατα Ανδρονικ. Chrysost. in Joan. Epist.).

Ver. 18. **Now that which was prepared for me daily]** A very great table he kept, at his own charge all, yet nothing so great as Solomon, #1Ki 4:22,23, or as once Cardinal Wolsey here; who, besides all strangers that came, had four hundred of family, whereof one was an earl, nine barons, very many knights and esquires. But then he had more yearly revenue than all the bishops and deans in the land had, take them all together.

And once in ten days] Then he kept an extraordinary table, inviting guests, for whom he had store of the best wines. The Turkish bashaws feast foreign ambassadors with rice, and mutton, and fair water out of the river: wine is a forbidden ware with them; Mahomet, their prophet, having told them that in every grape there dwelt a devil.

Yet for all this I required not] This he did, and this he here recordeth; not for a name (as Crates, the philosopher, did, when he cast his goods into the sea merely to be talked of,) and is, therefore, worthily called by Jerome (Epist. ad Julian), *gloriae animal, popularis aurae vile mancipium*, a base slave to vain glory, but for better and higher ends. See #Ne 5:16.

Ver. 19. **Think upon me, my God, for good]** *i.e.* Both of grace and glory, saith Lyra; a confluence of all comforts and contentments, especially spiritual blessings in heavenly things, #Eph 1:3. He that first called riches goods was surely a better husband than divine, saith one. *Ostendam tibi omne bonum*, I will show thee all good, said God to Moses, when he gave him a glimpse of himself. *Nil bonum absque summo Bone*, saith Austin, There is no good without the chief Good. Say, therefore, with the Church, #Ho 14:2, Take away all iniquity, and do good; and as here, Remember me, O my God, for good.

According to all that I have done for this people] Here is nothing for merit mongers. It is mercy in God to set his love on them that keep his commandments, #Ex 20:6, to reward every man according to his works, #Ps 62:12. A poor gardener, presenting a ripe root, being the best gift he had at hand, to the duke of Burgundy, was by him bountifully rewarded. His steward, observing this, and hoping for the like recompense, presented him with a very fair horse. The duke (*ut perspicaci erat ingenio*, saith mine author, being a witty man) perceived the craft; and, therefore, thought good to receive the horse, and to give him nothing again. Let those that dream of merit expect the like disappointment; and let them learn from Nehemiah, #Ne 13:22 (the best gloss upon this text), to urge, not their merits, with the Pharisee, but their miseries, with the publican, for obtaining mercy. So #Ps 25:11.

Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **Now it came to pass]** Lo, here another let to the good work in hand. That in the fourth chapter was external only; that in the fifth internal only; this here is mixed, that is, partly cast in by the enemies without (those cruel crafties), and partly helped on by the perfidious prophets and ignobles within, conspiring with the enemy against the good of their own country. Thus *fluctus fluctum trudit*. Disorder creates disorder.

And the rest of our enemies] The Church's enemies are not a few, #1Co 16:9. She is like unto a silly poor maid, saith Luther, sitting in a wood or wilderness, compassed about with hungry wolves, lions, boars, bears, assaulting her every moment and minute. The ground of all is that old enmity, #Ge 3:15.

That I had builded the wall] This wall made Nehemiah, as Winchester tower at Windsor made William Wickham, that is, raised and renowned him; and in a like sense as God is said to have made Moses and Aaron, #1Sa 12:6, that is, to have advanced them in the hearts of his people.

And that there was no breach left therein] It had been but half-built, #Ne 4:6, and the breaches but began to be stopped, #Ne 6:6,15, yet now all is finished, amidst much opposition; so shall the

work of grace be in our hearts. But whilst here a Christian hath his *Ulterius* More, still (which was Charles V's motto), his *Superius*, Greatest, as the guest in the Gospel that was bid to sit higher, &c., something is yet wanting to his full and final salvation, which he is still to work out, #**Php 2:12**, like as here, the doors were not yet upon their hinges.

Ver. 2. **That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me**] As if solicitous of my safety, and careful of the common good. He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him. When he speaketh fair believe him not; for there are seven abominations in his heart, #**Pr 26:24,25**. Nehemiah well knew that all this pretended courtesy was but dross upon dirt, #**Ne 6:13**, a fair glove drawn upon a foul hand, a cunning collusion to undo him. He therefore keeps aloof: *quia me vestigia terrent, &c.*

Come, let us meet together] Thus they called him to conference and consultation whiles the doors were not yet upon the gates; purposely to take him off the work; as the fox diverts the huntsman from following the hare; and as our deceitful hearts do too often draw us away from the prosecution of good purposes, by casting many other odd impertinent matters an our way.

In the plain of Ono] Which was in the tribe of Benjamin, #**Ne 11:30,31**, near to Jerusalem; that he might the sooner come, and be the more secure; so the Papists appointed Trent for their conventicle, as near to the Reformed Churches; inviting their divines thereunto *sub fide publica*; under public trust, but that that council was carried by the pope and his complices, with such infinite guile and craft, without any sincerity, upright dealing, and truth, as that the Protestants, Calvin, Buret, &c., kept off; as seeing that it was to no purpose to come among them.

But they thought to do me mischief] To kill me, or, at least, to captivate me.

Ver. 3. **And I sent messengers unto them**] He went not, but sent. This was to be wise as a serpent, #**Mt 10:16**. God calleth us not to a weak simplicity, but alloweth us as much of the serpent as of the dove, and telleth us that a serpent's eye in a dove's head is a singular accomplishment. Beware of men, #**Ne 6:18**, brutish persons, skilful

to destroy, #Eze 21:31. Bless yourselves from Machiavellians (those matchless villainies), and pray, with David, to be delivered from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue, #Ps 120:2. The Cardinal of Lorraine (the chief engineer of the French Massacre) sent to Christopher, Duke of Wirttemberg, a prudent and a valiant prince, that he and his brethren, the Guises, would embrace the Protestant religion, and desired to be enrolled in the number of the Protestant princes; but they knew him too well to trust him.

I am doiny a great work, so that I cannot come down] I cannot intend it, as having my hands more full of employment than that I can give heed to your compliments. There is a curse to him that doth the work of the Lord negligently or deceitfully. And *lata negligentia dolus est*, saith the Civilian, Remissness is a kind of perfidiousness.

Why should the work cease?] As it would, or at least go but slowly on, in his absence; he was *εργοδιωκτης*, the driver on of the business; as was likewise Boaz, who, therefore, followed it so closely himself, #Ru 2:4; his eyes were upon the servants, reapers, gleaners; he lodged in the midst of his husbandry. Let the tempter ever find us busy, and he will depart discouraged, as Cupid is said to do from the muses, whom he could never take idle. Standing water soon stinks, empty stomachs draw the humour that is next it; so doth the idle heart evil motions. An industrious Nehemiah is not at leisure to parley with Sanballat; lest if he let any water go beside the mill, he should be a great loser by it. His employment is as a guard or good angel, to keep him both right and safe.

Ver. 4. **Yet they sent unto me four times]** As thinking to prevail by their importunity. This wicked men have learned from their master Beelzebub, the lord of flies, as the name (*απομυιος*) signifieth, or master fly, that will not off the bait till beaten, and hardly then. Sin hath painted an impudency in some men's faces; and it appears they are past all grace, because shameless, *Et pudet non esse impudentes*, it is not shameful to be impudent. saith Austin.

And I answered them after the same manner] Nehemiah stood immoveable as a rock; he was *homo quadratus*, man, four-square, not to be altered, but firm to his principles, resolute in his holy

purposes. We may style him (as Theodoret doth Athanasius) the bulwark of truth (προβολον της αληθειας), the Church's champion. *Nec tremere, nec timide*, may seem to have been his motto, neither temerarious nor timorous.

Ver. 5. Then sent Sanballat...the fifth time] So restless are wicked persons; their souls are violently tossed about, as in a sling, **#1Sa 25:29**, *Etsi non aliqua docuissent, &c.* although they would not be taught by anything, Satan, their taskmaster, urgeth them; and when thou seest them most importunate and outrageous, *Scito quia ab accensore suo daemone perurgentur*, saith Bernard, know thou that the devil pricks them, and kicks them on to it.

With an open letter in his hand] Not sealed, as the manner is, for secrecy' sake. The Jews use to write upon the back of their letters *Nun, Cheth, Shin*; that is, *Niddui, Cherem*, and *Shammatha*, all sorts of excommunication to him that shall open them. But this letter was purposely sent open, that whoso would might read it ere it came to Nehemiah's hand, and be warned of having a hand in the pretended treason.

Ver. 6. It is reported among the heathen] And must, therefore, needs be true, like as the common sort of Turks think that whatsoever is written in their tongue must of necessity be believed for truth. But who knows not that rumour is a loud liar; and that every public person needeth carry a spare handkerchief to wipe off dirt cast upon him by disaffected persons, that seek to soil their reputation, and to deprave their best actions.

And Gashmu saith so] Geshmu, *alias* Geshem, the Arabian, **#Ne 6:1,2**, a worthy wight, a credible witness. Nehemiah might well have replied, as Seneca did in like case, *Male de me loquuntur, sed mali*. Gashmu's tongue was no slander; for he was known to be *mendaeiorum artifex*, one that had taught his tongue the art of lying, **#Jer 9:3,5**, and had taken fast hold of deceit, **#Jer 8:5**. Such of late time were those loud and lewd liars, Genebrard, Scioppus, Baldwin, and Bolsecus, who, being requested by the Popish side to write the lives of Calvin and Beza, is in all their writings alleged as canonical, though they know him to be (according to the old proverb) a friar, a liar.

That thou and the Jews think to rebel] A likely matter; but that matters not. Any author serves Sanballat's turn, who for a need could have sucked such an accusation as this out of his own fingers. See #Ezr 4:13.

For which cause thou buildest the wall] This was *calumniari audacter*; slander boldly, to as Machiavel taught, *aliquid saltem adhaerebit*. But if dirt will stick to a mud wall, yet to marble it will not. Nehemiah hath the *Euge* good of a clear conscience, and no wise man will believe this black-mouthed Blabberer. N. D., author of the three conversions, hath made Sir John Oldcastle, the martyr, a ruffian, a robber, and a rebel. His authority is taken from the stage-players, of like conscience for lies, as all men know.

That thou mayest be their king] King of the Jews, as they called our Saviour, #Joh 19:12. And as some think the ground of this report, if any there were, concerning Nehemiah's practising to be king, were the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah concerning the near approach of Christ's kingdom.

Nihil est, quin male narrando possit depravarier (Terent.).

According to these words] According to this report, or somewhat to the same sense.

Ver. 7. **And thou hast also appointed prophets, &c.]** That the thing might seem to be of God; as the beast hath his false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, #Re 19:20; as Mahomet had his prophets; and John of Leyden had his, to cry him up king of Munster, the New Jerusalem, as they called it, yea, of all nations, to rule them with a rod of iron.

And now shall it be reported to the king] Who must needs be highly displeased, and wilt as little endure it as the heaven two suns. *Sol quasi solus; sic monarcha*. Marriage and monarchy will not do away with co-rivals. *Romanos geminos unum non caperet Regnum, quos unum uteri ceperat hospitium* (Cyprian).

Come now, therefore, and let us take counsel] *In commune consulere*, lest we all suffer for your fault. But neither was good

Nehemiah in any fault; neither was their drift any other but this, to draw him out of the city, that they might mischief him; like as Dr Bristow advises his Catholics to get the Protestants out of their stronghold of the Scriptures into the open field of fathers and councils; and then they might do what they would with us.

Ver. 8. **There are no such things done as thou sayest**] Nehemiah is not too careful to clear himself. This was so transparent a lie, that a man might see through it, and was, therefore, best answered with a neglective denial. It falls out often that plain dealing puts craft out of countenance. *Animus recti conscius obiecta probra ut visus nocturnos et vanas somniorum imagines digno supplicio punit, festivo scilicet contemptu, et oblivione: vel, si tanti est, misericordia elevat* (John Wower).

Ver. 9. **For they all made us afraid**] This they aimed at; but could not attain unto; for faith quelleth and killeth distrustful fear, **#Ps 46:1,2**. *Audacia est pro muro*, saith Sallust. Let the wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous will be bold as as lion, **#Pr 28:1**.

Saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work] So measuring them by themselves, as if they would have been soon scared and discouraged. But they knew not the *Aes triplex*, the power of the Spirit, that spirit of power (opposed to the spirit of fear), of love, and of a sound mind, **#2Ti 1:7**. They knew not the privy armour of proof that these good Jews had about their hearts.

Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands] He acknowledgeth himself to be in the condition of a poor garrison soldier, that hath no help or supplies but from the Captain of his salvation which, therefore, he thus humbly calleth in and craveth. Of ejaculations, see **#Ne 2:4**. This here is despatched in four words.

Ver. 10. **Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah**] Perhaps the same that is mentioned **#Ezr 8:16**, but now fallen, as a star from heaven. Blazing stars were never but meteors. Demas not only forsook Paul, but became a priest in an idol's temple at Thessalonica, if Dorotheus may be believed. A priest Shemaiah was, and would seem to be a prophet; but he proved not right, **#1Ch 24:6**. All is not gold that glitters. It was Tobiah's gold that made him a prophet, as Philip's gold made the oracle of Apollo give what

answer he pleased. A house he had in the temple; and there he had secluded and shut up himself, that he might seem some singular devotee, expecting a revelation from heaven; or as one who sequestered himself from the company of others, with a stand further off; come not near, for I am holier than thou; or, lastly, to persuade people that there was a necessity of securing themselves from the night inroads of the enemy. Whatever it was that he was thus, anchoret-like, pent-up, or locked-up, or detained (as Junius rendereth it; see the like said of Doeg, that bloody Edomite, #**1Sa 21:7**), Nehemiah went to his house to know what was the matter; supposing him to be a friend but finding him bribed by the enemy.

Let us meet together in the house of God] Famous for sanctity and safety: being within God's precincts, we shall surely be under his protection.

And let us shut the doors of the temple] Immure ourselves, and keep out the enemy. But this had been the ready way to invite them, seeing his cowardice; for maximum his *periculum qui maxime timent* the danger which they fear the most, (saith Sallust), nothing betrays a man sooner than his causeless fear. God helpeth the valiant. Besides, Shemaiah and his false complices, having got Nehemiah to them from his friends and followers, might have done what they pleased with him, as the Romans did by Caesar, in the Senate house.

For they will come to slay thee] And Nehemiah must be made believe that Shemaiah, as a special friend, wished no long life, and was zealous for it; whence he so doubleth his prediction of the danger. O deep dissimulation!

Ver. 11. **And I said, Should such a man as I flee?]** To the dishonour of God, and the discouraging of the people? to the scandal of the weak, and the scorn of the wicked? *Et Turnum fugientem haec terra videbit?* There is a *To πρεπον*, a comeliness, a seemliness, a suitableness, appertains to every calling and condition of life; and nature hath taught heathens themselves to argue from dignity to duty, and to scorn to do anything unworthy of themselves. Scipio, when a harlot was offered him, answered, *Vellem, si non essem Imperator;* I would, were I not a general. Antigonus being

invited to a feast where a notable harlot was to be present, asked counsel of Menedemus, what he should do? No more but this, said he, remember that thou art a king's son. Themistocles once, after a victory, viewing the spoils and pillage of the field, said to his friend that bare him company, Take thou these rich spoils to thyself; for thou art not Themistocles; it is below me to stoop to them, *Ανελου σεαυτω συ γαρ ουκ ει Θεμιστοκλης*. When Pompey had Caesar and Antony in a ship together, it was suggested to him by Metrodorus, to revenge himself for the death of his father and brother. To whom he replied, that so to do might happily befit Metrodorus, but in no wise Pompey. It is not for you to be fishing for small fish, but for towns, forts, and castles, said Cleopatra to Mark Antony. It is not for God's saints to walk as men; since they are children of the kingdom, and must therefore *regnum in pectore gerere*, carry themselves accordingly. We usually say, such a man understands himself well; that is, he knows his place, his dignity, and walks accordingly. It is a pusillanimity to do otherwise; Nehemiah will never do it, to die for it.

And who is there, that, being as I am] So greatly beloved of God, #Da 9:23, so highly favoured of the king, #Ne 2:2,4, so protected hitherto, so prospered, so intrusted with the government and safety of this people, more dear to me than my very life.

Would go into the temple] As a malefactor, to take sanctuary there; or as a coward, to save mine own life with the loss of the lives of many of the precious sons of life.

I will not go in] The heavens shall sooner fall than I will forsake the truth, said that martyr, William Flower (Acts & Mon. 1430). *Omnia de me praesumas praeter fugam et palinodiam*, said Luther to Staupicius, I will rather die than fly; burn than turn. Latimer was wondrous bold and stout in his dealing with Henry VIII, both before and after he was a bishop. So were Athanasius, Ambrose, Basil, the primitive confessors. This courage in Christians the heathen persecutors called obstinacy, and not faith. *Sed pro hac obstinatione fidei morimur*, saith Tertullian in his Apology, for this obstinacy of faith we gladly die; neither can we die otherwise; for the love of

Christ constraineth us. Life in God's displeasure is worse than death; as death in his true favour is true life; as Bradford told Gardiner.

Ver. 12. **And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him]** By my spiritual sagacity I smelt him out; as having my inward senses habitually exercised to discern good and evil, #**Heb 5:14**. Doth not the ear try words, as the mouth tasteth meat? #**Job 12:11**. What though we have not received the spirit of the world (we cannot cog and comply as they can, yet), we have received a better thing, the Spirit of God, the mind of Christ, #**1Co 2:1 2,16**.

But that he pronounced this prophecy against me] To make my righteous soul sad with his lies, #**Eze 13:22**, and to bring me to disgrace and danger. Luther was wont to advise preachers to see that these three dogs did not follow them into the pulpit: pride, covetousness, and envy.

For Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him] A mere mercenary he was then, and had *Lingua Venalem*; he could call good evil, and evil good, justify the wicked for a reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him, #**Isa 5:20**. Such false prophets were Dr Shaw and friar Pinket in Richard III's time, who made use of them as his studdes to obtrude bastardy on his brother, King Edward IV, and so to disable his children for the crown, that he might settle it upon his own head (Dan. Hist.). What became of Pinker I know not, but Shaw (as ashamed of his sermon at Paul's Cross) disconsolately departed, and never after that was publicly seen. Like unto these were Bishop Bourn and Cardinal Pole in Queen Mary's days. The cardinal, hired with the archbishopric of Canterbury, took for his text, #**Isa 66:8**, and applied it to England, as then happily reduced to the pope's obedience. Bourn, for the bishopric of Bath, preached such stuff at Paul's Cross, that the people were ready to tear him in pieces. They flung a dagger at him in the pulpit. Phlugius and Sidonius, authors of the Popish book published in Germany by the name of *Interim, Chrisma et oleum pontificium defendebant, ut ipsi discederent unctiores*, defended chrism and extreme unction, as being liquored in the fists, and promoted to fat bishoprics (Melch. Adam). But a minister, as he should have nothing to lose, so he should have as little to get; he

should be above all price or sale. *Nec prece, nec pretio*, neither request nor reward, should be his motto.

Ver. 13. **Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid]** But they were much mistaken in their aims: this matter was not malleable. Nehemiah was a man of another spirit, of a Caleb-like spirit; he was *fide armatus, Deo armatus*, soldier by faith and for God, and therefore undaunted; he was full of spiritual mettle, for he knew whom he had trusted.

And do so, and sin] Nehemiah feared nothing but sin, and the fruit thereof, shame and reproach, so great was his spirit, so right set were both his judgment and affections. But if anything would have drawn him aside from the straight ways of the Lord, base fear was the likeliest; as we see in David at Gath, and Peter in the high priest's hall. See #Zep 3:13, {*See Trapp on "Zep 3:13"*} *Pessimus in dubiis augur Timor*.

And that they might have matter for an evil report] This wicked men watch for, as a dog doth for a bone; and if they get but the least hint, oh how happy do they hold themselves! what wide mouths do they open! &c. It is our part, therefore (by a Nehemiah-like conversation), to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, who, like blackamoors, despise beauty; like dogs, bark at the shining of the moon. Of Luther it was said by Erasmus, *Nec hostes reperiant quod calumnientur*. Of Bishop Hooper it is said, that his life was so good that no kind of slander (although divers went about to reprove it) could fasten any fault upon him (Act. and Mon. 1366). The like is reported of Bradford and Bucer. We should so carry ourselves, *ut nemo de nobis maleloqui absque mendacio possit*, as Jerome hath it, that none might speak evil of us without a manifest lie.

Ver. 14. **My God, think upon Tobiah and Sanballat]** Heb. Remember, to be revenged on them, *q.d.* I cannot deal with them, but do thou do it. He doth himself no disservice (saith one) who when no law will relieve him, maketh God his chancellor. It is a fearful thing to be put over into his punishing hands by the saints, as Joab and Shimei were unto Solomon's hands by dying David. If men, in their best estate, are so weak that they are crushed before the moth, how shall they stand before this great God?

According to these their works] *Qualia quisque tacit, talia quisque luat*, Let them drink as they have brewed.

And on the prophetess Noadiah] Who joined with Shemaiah in this dissimulation, and was of his counsel. *Omne malum ex gynaeicio*. False prophets and seducers are seldom without their women. Simon Magus had his Helena, Carpocrates his Marcellina, Apelles his Philumena, Montanus his Priscilla and Maximilla, &c.

And the rest of the prophets] Improperly so called, but so they pretended to be; and here they had conspired, a great sort of them, to do evil.

That would have put me in fear] By their concurrent prophecies, purposely to disgrace and endanger me. *Suffragia non sunt numeranda, sed expendenda*. Multitude and antiquity are but ciphers in divinity.

Ver. 15. **So the wall was finished]** Though with much ado, and maugre the malice of all foreign and internal enemies. So shall the work of grace in men's hearts: it is perfected there by opposition, and grows gradually, but constantly and infallibly.

In the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul] Which was their sixth month, answering, mostly, to our August. This (saith Beda) answered both unto the six days of God's working to make the world, after which a rest followed, and to the everlasting rest in heaven after six ages of the world, spent in toil and labour!

In fifty and two days] A very short time for the despatch of so great a work. But *nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia*. God was much seen herein; and the enemies' courage much quailed. But what meant Josephus to say, that the wall was in building two years and three months? It appeareth hereby, and by many other passages in his Jewish Antiquities, that he had not much read, or at least minded, the Holy Scriptures. Of this short time spent in building the wall, Daniel seemeth to prophesy, saith an interpreter, when he saith, that it should be built again *in angustiis temporum*, in the straits of time, **#Da 9:25**; neither hold we so much strange at it, since the hands at it were many and those were *motitantes*, nimble and

cheerful, and the princes were present to prick them on, and they repaired only and built upon the old foundation; and lastly the very enemies were convinced that the work was wrought of God, #Ne 6:16; what marvel, therefore, that it went so on end?

Ver. 16. **When all our enemies heard thereof]** So famous a matter could not be concealed from them who listened with the left ear, and readily received these βλαβαι ποδωκεις, as the Greeks call, galling reports.

Saw these things] For they ran to the sight of it, as to a miracle; they looked also upon it with an evil and envious eye; like as the Papists do upon the Reformation.

They were much cast down in their own eyes] They were crest fallen, and dejected from the high tops of their proud hopes and designs. See what biles and ulcers the antichristian rout are vexed with, and how they are scorched with the sunshine of the gospel, #Re 16:2,11. What moan Babel's merchants make to see her ruin and the rise of the new Jerusalem, #Re 18:11. Envy is *vitium Diabolicum*, the devil's disease, saith Austin, in #Ps 139; and those that are troubled with it can never want woe.

For they perceived that this work was wrought of our God] With such incredible swiftness was it carried on and accomplished, that they could not but say among the heathen, "The Lord hath done great things for them; God is with them of a truth."

Ver. 17. **Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah]** Heb. The white ones; either, because they went in white garments, as Joseph, Mordecai, &c., or because they were illustrious and famous for wisdom and virtue. But in these nobles of Judah was *nomen inane, crimen immune*. Here was *sedes prima, vita ima, dignitas in indigno; hoc est, ornamentum in lute*, white garments they might have, but with sooty souls, and black manners.

Sent many letters unto Tobiah] Heb. Multiplied their letters (or packets), walking to Tobiah, with whom thereby they held correspondency; as at this day they do with the Turkish viziers and bashaws of state, giving them continual intelligence of the affairs of

Christendom, and advising most of that mischief which the Turk puts in execution against us.

Ver. 18. **For there were many in Judah sworn unto him]** Besides that intercourse of letters aforementioned, Tobiah had his pensioners among the Jews, who were his sworn servants, and had taken oath, or (as the Hebrew hath it) they were lords of an oath to him. In the year 1583, Girald, earl of Desmond's, men had barbarously vowed to forswear God, before they would forsake him. I know not what these Jews had sworn to Tobiah (to be true to him likely, and to prosecute his designs), but those of them at this day living are great swearers (they were so in St James's time, #**Jas 5:12**), but they keep no oath unless they swear upon their own Torah or book of the law, brought out of their synagogues (Weemse).

Because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah] One of those corrupt nobles, #**Ne 6:17**, and Meshullam was another, who also helped to build the wall, #**Ne 3:4**, and seemed forward, but now shows himself in his colours. Thou mayest be the lead horse in the team (saith one), a ring leader of good exercises, as Joash, #**2Ch 24:4-6**. Thou mayest flock after zealous preachers, as those did after John Baptist, #**Mt 3:5**. Yea, stand out in persecution, and not shrink in the wetting, as the thorny ground did not; and yet be no better than a very painted hypocrite.

Ver. 19. **Also they reported his good deeds before me]** Heb. His goodness, as if he had been another Phocion, who was surnamed the Good. But this was but in their opinion only, who had little enough goodness, and skill to judge it. Or if there were any good in him, yet *Sunt bona mista malis* and of him might be said, as once of Sfortz, duke of Milan, that he was a very monster, made up and compact of virtue and vice (Folieta Galeazo).

Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **When the wall was built]** For better defence of the city. *Moenia a munienda urbo dicuntur.*

And I had set up the doors] We may not take this expression for a vain glorious *haec ego feci*, I have made this, such as was that of Nebuchadnezzar, #**Da 4:30**, boasting as if he (and not Ninus) had built Babel, when he enlarged it only, and built the palace; or that of

Augustus, *Urbem ego lateritiam inveni, marmoream reliqui*. I found the city of clay but I left it of marble. We read of one Lampadius, a nobleman in Rome, who *per omnia civitatis membra*, through all parts of the city, where other great men had bestowed cost in building, he would set up his own name (not as a repairer of the work either, but) as the chief builder. Trajan the emperor also is said to have been sick of this disease; and was therefore called by way of jeer, Wallweed, *Herba parietina*. But good Nehemiah was none such; he was *humiliter sublimis, et sublimiter humilis*, as Cyprian phraseth it; that is, humbly lofty, and loftily humble; humble in heart, and yet high in worth and works, as Nazianzen saith of Athanasius, *υψηλος τοις εργασις, ταπεινος δε τω φρονηματι*.

And the Levites were appointed] viz. To their several services in the temple (as David had distributed them), after that they had been otherwise employed about the building.

Ver. 2. **That I gave my brother Hanani]** Of whom see #Ne 1:2 Ezr 10:20.

And Hananiah the ruler of the palace] The second person next to the governor; commanding in his name within his court.

Charge over Jerusalem] Thus he that is faithful in a little shall be made master of much, #Mt 25:31.

For he was a faithful man] Heb. A man of truth, faithfulness, or firmness; a sure man, and such as one might safely confide in.

And feared God] No wonder therefore though faithful to men. See #Ne 5:15. God's holy fear is the ground of all goodness and fidelity. Hence Jethro, in his well-qualified ruler, places the fear of God in the midst of the other graces, 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. Most sure it is, that nothing maketh a man so good a patriot as the true fear of God. On the other side, *Pietate sublata fides tollitur*; take away piety, and fidelity is gone; as is to be seen in the unrighteous judge, #Lu 18:2, and as Constantius Chlorus, father of Constantine the Great, did well experience in 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 foundation of all true fidelity and loyalty to king and country. Hence that close connection, Fear God, honour the king, #1Pe 2:17. And hence that saying of Bernard, If all the world should conspire to make me complot against my prince, yet I would fear God, and honour the king.

Above many] This is a singular praise, and by every man to be sought after—it was Cicero's posy and practice,

Αιεν αριστευειν, και υπειροχον εμμεναι αλλων,

to be the best at every good thing, to excel and exceed others, -to be eminent and exemplary, taller than the rest by the head and shoulders, full of all goodness, filled with all knowledge, #Ro 15:14, able and active in every good word and work. That is a low and unworthy strain in some, to labour after no more grace than will keep life and soul together, that is, soul and hell asunder. God would have his people to be discontentedly contented with the measures they have received, and to be still adding, #2Pe 1:5, and advancing, #Php 3:14, aspiring to perfection, till they "come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," #Eph 4:13.

Ver. 3. **Until the sun be hot]** The sun hath one of his names, in Hebrew, *a calefaciendo*, from heating, פֶּחַח, #Job 30:28, there is nothing hid from the heat thereof, #Ps 19:6. The name here given to the sun signifieth a minister, or servant; because it is the common servant of the world, whereby God ministereth light, heat, and precious fruits to all people, #De 4:19 33:14. It whirleth about the world with incredible swiftness; and is up in a morning before most people. Therefore till the sun be risen the gates must be kept shut, to keep out the enemy, who watcheth his opportunity.

And while they stand by] To see it done as it ought to be; lest, by the treachery or carelessness of under-officers, it should either be undone or ill-done. Let them feel with their hands, so some render it, *etiam tractate* (Junius), whether the gates are made fast or not.

And appoint watches] Heb. Set thou watches. He speaketh to the two Hananis, and bids each of them, whose turn it was, see to the well-doing of it. Xenophon saith of Cyrus, that when he gave anything in command he never said, Let some one do this, but, Do thou this, *Hoc tu facias* (Cyropaed.).

Ver. 4. **Now the city was large]** Heb. Broad in spans or spaces.

And great] Yet nothing so great as Nineveh was of old; or Babylon then; or Alcair and Quinsay at this day. Of the former Bunting saith, that it is sixty miles in compass. Of the latter, Paulus Venetus (who himself dwelt therein about the year 1260) writeth, that it is a hundred miles about, being of all the cities in the world the greatest. Jerusalem was a great city and spacious, though it fell far short of these.

And the people were few therein] But how exceedingly they multiplied afterwards appeareth by those many thousands of persons there destroyed and carried away by the Romans at the last desolation; as testifieth Josephus, an eyewitness, *quem lege, et luge*, what he collected and lamented. For present, they were so few that they were not able, without help, to defend the walls in so large a circuit.

And the houses were not builded] All could not be done in a day. But some ceiled houses there were, #**Hag 1:4**, and Nehemiah was all his time busy in building the old waste places, and raising up the foundations of many generations; so that he was worthily called, "The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in," #**Isa 58:12**. Eusebius saith, Nehemiah was twelve years in building the walls; he should have said, the city. Jerome likewise saith, that he came to Jerusalem in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, and made an end of building the wall and city in the two and thirtieth year; so that, during the whole twelve years of his government, he was in action.

Ver. 5. **And my God put into my heart]** Seeing how thinly the city was inhabited, and casting in his mind what evil might come of it, he bethinks himself (by a motion from heaven) how to set things to rights; that the city might be better peopled, and so preserved. This to do, God put into his heart by his Holy Spirit (the sweet motions

whereof are the sound of his goings, the footsteps of his anointed, **#Ps 89:51**). We are not sufficient of ourselves (saith that great apostle) to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God, **#2Co 3:5**. *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit*, saith Cicero; no man ever grew to be greatly good without a Divine instinct.

To gather together the nobles, and the rulers, &c.] That out of them a tenth man might be taken to furnish out the city, **#Ne 11:1**, after that they had been first prepared by the hearing of the law, **#Ne 8:2**.

That they might be reckoned by their genealogy] And so, Jerusalem be inhabited again, in her own place, even in Jerusalem, **#Zec 12:6**.

Ver. 6. **These are the children, &c.]** See **#Ezr 2:1-3**, &c., with the notes. Some small differences there are in names and numbers between this catalogue and that; not by the negligence of the scribes who wrote out this register, as Pellican would have it, but by other means, as is above noted.

Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **As one man]** See **#Ezr 3:1**, and remember that *Omne simile non est idem*; this is a distinct history from that.

Into the street] Or, open place, the meeting place of the water gate. See **#Ne 3:26**. Right over against this gate was the court of the people, saith Lyra. See **#Ezr 10:9**.

And they spake unto Ezra the scribe] The people may, if need be, say to Archippus, Look to thy ministry, &c., **#Col 4:17**. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all is theirs (the gifts and abilities of all good ministers), and they may call for them, **#1Co 3:22**.

To bring the book of the law of Moses] Wherein he was no less able than apt to impart, **#1Ti 3:2**, διδακτικός. He knew that the best had need hear the law, *he spiritum sessorem excutiant*, that they might be kept within the bounds of obedience. Not the unruly colt only, but the horse that is broken, hath a bit and bridle also.

Ver. 2. **And Ezra the priest brought the law]** The commandment (he knew well) was a lamp, and the law a light; and reproofs of instruction the way of life, **#Pr 6:23**. The Greeks call the law νομον, *quasi* θεου νοον μενοντα, the standing mind of God (Plato in Cratylus). And if Demosthenes could say of men's laws, that they were the invention of God; if Xenophon could say of the Persian laws, that they kept the people even from coveting any wickedness; if Cicero durst say of the Roman laws, that they far excelled and exceeded all the learned libraries of the philosophers, both in weight and worth; how much more may all this and more be said of this perfect law of God, the book whereof was here brought forth by Ezra, and read and expounded in the ears of all the people! μη τοιουτους εσεσθαι τους πολιτας, ωστε πονηρου τινος εργου εφιεσθαι..

Before the congregation both of men and women] Heb. From man to woman; for souls have no sexes; and in Christ there is no difference, **#Ga 4:28**. The Jews at this day little regard their women; not suffering them to come within their synagogue. And the Turkish women never go to their mosques; neither is there any heed taken or reckoning made of their religion at all. The Papists say that a distaff is fitter for a woman than a Bible.

And all that can hear with understanding] *i.e.* Children also, that were of any growth. Little pitchers have ears, and little children will understand much, if well principled.

Upon the first day of the seventh month] A month of more solemnities than any other. This first day was a double holy day, **#Le 23:24**. See **#De 31:11**.

Ver. 3. **And he read therein]** As a scribe, he wrote the law; and as a priest, he read and expounded it. This was Christ's own custom, **#Lu 4:16**, and the Jews', **#Ac 13:15, 27 15:21**, and is still to this day; one lesson is ever read out of the law in their public meetings; and another out of the prophets correspondent to the former in argument. The Holy Scripture is called Mikre, the reading of **#Ne 8:9**, because it ought to be read to all; and the word, as if all the use of our ears were to hear this word.

From the morning until midday] This was a great while; five or six hours together they spent in holy duties, whereas the most amongst us think long of an hour; they sit as it were in the stocks whiles they are hearing the word read or preached, and come out of the church when the tedious sermon runneth somewhat beyond the glass, like prisoners out of a jail.

And the ears of the people were attentive to the book] Heb. Were to the book of the law; which phrase importeth both their attention and affection to what they heard delivered. They drew up the ears of their souls to the ears of their bodies; and so one sound pierced both. See the like #Lu 19:48, they hung upon Christ's holy lips, as loth to lose any part of that precious language. The Jews at this day, though they give very great outward respect to their Torah, or book of the law (carrying it about their synagogue at the end of service in procession, and the like), yet for any show of attention or elevation of spirit I could never discern (saith one that had been much amongst them), but they are as reverend in their synagogues as grammar boys are at school when their master is absent.

Ver. 4. **And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood]** Heb. A tower of wood, because high and round, as ours are. The Capuchins and other Popish preachers are said to have long pulpits, wherein they may walk and act, as upon a stage, in Lent especially; at which time it is the custom of Italy for the same man to preach six days in the week upon the gospel of the days, and on the Saturday in honour and praise of the Virgin Mary.

And beside him stood Mattithiah, &c.] For greater authority' sake, as concurring with Ezra, and ready in their turn to perform the work. *Praedicationis officium suscipit quisquis ad sacerdotium accedit*, said Gregory long since, No preacher is no minister.

Ver. 5. **And Ezra opened the book]** God's Book; not Aristotle's Ethics, as Melancthon saith he heard some Popish priests preaching upon texts thence taken. And Carolostadius was eight years a doctor before he first opened the Bible; and yet at the taking of his degree he had been pronounced *Sufficientissimus* Most adequate.

For he was above all the people] Both in place and office; as representing the person of God, and bearing his name unto his people.

All the people stood up] For reverence' sake. So did Eglon, that fat king of Moab, when he heard of a message from God, **#Jud 3:20**. Balaam, being to utter his parable, bids Balak arise up and hear him. Our Saviour stood up to read his text, **#Lu 4:16**. Constantine the Great and our King Edward VI would not hear a sermon but standing. The modern Jews show their reverence to their law by a like gesture; and their adoration is by bowing forward with their bodies; for kneeling they use none, neither stir they their bonnets in their synagogues, but remain still covered.

Ver. 6. **And Ezra blessed the Lord]** *i.e.* He called upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, **#Ps 18:3**. He prayed before he read and preached. So ought we to do by his example, as Lyra well noteth; and as is commonly done by all our ministers. Luther's usual prayer before sermon was this, Confirm, O God, in us what thou hast wrought; and perfect the work that thou hast begun to thy glory. Lord, open our eyes, that we may see the wonders of thy law, &c. Zuinglius began his public lectures thus, O Almighty, everlasting, and merciful God, whose Word is a light to our feet, and a lantern to our paths, open and enlighten our minds, that we may piously and holily understand thine oracles, and be so transformed thereinto, that we may not in anything displease thy majesty, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. The Platonists could say, that the light of our minds whereby we learn all things is no other but God himself, the same that made all things. This made Ezra here bless the Lord, that is, say, with David, **#Ps 119:12**, Blessed be thou, O Lord: teach us thy statutes.

The great God] The true *Trismegist*, the *Fortissimus Maximus*, *Opt. Max.* All whose attributes are in the highest degree, yea, in a degree beyond any superlative.

And all the people answered, Amen, Amen] This word is Hebrew; but used in all languages, in the close of prayers. The doubling of it here importeth their assent, and their assurance. It is the voice of one that believeth and expecteth that he shall have his prayers granted.

The Septuagint render it, so be it; or, so it is. The apostle reckoneth it for a great loss when people either say not Amen to public prayers, or not heartily and affectionately, as here, #1Co 14:16, "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say, Amen?" The Turks also, when their priest hath said his litany, such as it is, make answer in manner of a shout, *Homin*, that is, Amen.

With lifting up their hands] And with their hearts, unto God in the heavens, #La 3:41. This Nazianzen judgeth to be *optimum opus manuum*, the best work of the hands, *sc. in caelos eas extendere, ad precesque expandere*, to stretch them towards heaven, and to hold them out in prayer. This way David ennobled his tongue (therefore called his glory), and so men may their hands.

And they bowed their heads] In token of the lowliness of their hearts. These outward gestures, as they issue from the fervency of a good heart, so they reflect upon the affections, and do further inflame them. Only note, that these bodily exercises are not always or absolutely necessary in Divine worship. God looks chiefly at the heart, and hateth all outside service and heartless devotion, #Isa 1:11-23 66:3, and such as is that of the Jews at this day. Their holiness, saith one, is the outward work itself, being a brainless head and soulless body. And the like may be said of the Papist, and of the common Protestant, whoso body is prostrate, but his soul bolt upright within him.

Ver. 7. **Also Jeshua, and Bani, &c., caused the people to understand the law]** As the audience was great, so, great was the company of preachers, #Ps 68:11. The people were too many to be taught by one; therefore they made sundry companies and congregations, and had several teachers; as had likewise those primitive Christians, #Ac 6:1, when once they grew numerous.

And the people stood in their places] Heb. And the people upon their stand; they kept their stations according to their divisions; not shuffling or shifting from preacher to preacher, but abiding and attending with utmost intention and retention.

Ver. 8. **So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly]** *Exposite, clare, vel cum expositione* (Explanate, Junius). They read

aloud, and so treatably and plainly, that all might know what they read. Some stumble over the chapter so fast that few are little the better.

And gave the sense] viz. By comparing place with place, and interpreting one Scripture by another. See the like done by St Paul at Damascus, **#Ac 9:22**; he laid one text to another (συμβιβάζων), as artificers do the several pieces of their work, that they may perfectly agree the one with the other.

Causing the people to understand the reading] *Dabant intelligentiam per scripturam ipsam*, They gave the meaning though the scriptures themselves. so Tremellias rendereth it. Of the law it may be said, *Et latet, et lucet*. Both obscure and clear. The prophets are as so many expositors and explainers thereof; they do excellently unfold and draw out that arras {*A rich tapestry fabric, in which figures and scenes are woven in colours*} which was folded together before; they give us Moses unveiled. Search the Scriptures, therefore, and compare them. Parallel texts, like glasses, set one against another, do cast a mutual light; like the sun, the Scriptures show other things, and themselves too.

Ver. 9. **And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha]** Or governor. See **#Ezr 2:63**. He had Jovianus, the emperor's, wished happiness, which was, that he might govern wise men, and that wise men might govern him.

And Ezra the priest and scribe] See **#Ne 8:3**.

And the Levites that taught the people] That numerus *nominum*, *id est, hominum*, of names that is of men, mentioned **#Ne 8:7**, men most happy in such melting hearers. We in this day do prevail as little as Bede did when he preached to a heap of stones.

This day is holy unto the Lord your God] Your mourning, therefore, now is as much out of season as Samson's wife's weeping was at her wedding. All God's worships were to be celebrated with joy, **#De 12:7**, and sacrifices offered in mourning were abomination, **#Ho 9:4**. See **#Mal 2:13**. {*See Trapp on "Mal 2:13"*}

Mourn not, nor weep] *sc.* Under sense of sin, and fear of wrath. This they were called to at another time, **#Isa 22:12 Jas 4:9,10**; but everything is beautiful in its season, **#Ec 3:11**.

For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law] For like cause as Josiah did, **#2Ki 22:11,19**. His tender heart was troubled and terrified by the menaces of God's mouth uttered against his and the people's sins. Hence some infer that it was the decalogue, together with the malediction, that was now read and applied; and that made them weep so fast. Get thee God's law, saith holy Bradford, as a glass to look in, so shall you see your face foul arrayed, and so shameful, mangy, pockey, and scabbed, that you cannot but be sorry at the contemplation thereof, especially if you look to the tag tied to God's law; which is such as cannot but make us 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! &c. (Serm. of Rep.).

Ver. 10. **Then he said unto them, Go your way]** A friendly dismissal. We must so reprove or admonish others, as that we ever preserve in them an opinion of our good will unto them; for this is that sugar that sweeteneth all such tartar pills.

Go your way, eat, &c.] One being asked whether a good man might not feed upon sweet and delicate meat; eat the fat, and drink the sweet, even the choicest wines and chiefest viands? answered, Yes; except God made bees only for fools. God freely permitteth to his best children the use of his best creatures, even to an honest affluence (on thanksgiving days), especially provided that they feed with fear, and keep within the bounds of sobriety.

And send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared] That is, to the poor, the fatherless, and the widows, **#De 16:14**, who have not their set meals, nor certain dishes; but as hard fare for their holy day cheer, as Christ's disciples had once for their Sabbath day's dinner, **#Mt 12:1**.

For this day is holy unto the Lord] A holy convocation, **#Le 23:24**, a day of blowing trumpets, a feast day: see **#Zec 8:19**. {*See Trapp on "Zec 8:19"*} A more liberal use of the creature dilateth

and exhilarateth the heart, and so disposeth it to thankfulness, #Jas 5:13 Ps 92:2,3. Eat, that thy soul may bless me, #Ge 27:19. The idolatrous Israelites sat down to eat and drink, and then rose up to play. God's people should much more rejoice in the Lord, when refreshed by the creatures, speaking good of his name, and serving him with cheerfulness in the abundance of all things, #De 28:47.

Neither be ye sorry] No, not for your sins now, lest it prove a sinful sorrow, see #Ne 8:9.

For the joy of the Lord is your strength] Or, your fortification and place of defence against sin, and all the ill fruits of it. *Laeti igitur sitis, sed non securi: gaudeatis in Domino, sed caveatis a recidivo* Let us be joyful, but not untroubled, let us rejoice in God, but let us beware of backsliding. (Bernard). "A merry heart," grounded upon a good conscience, "doeth good like a medicine," #Pr 17:22. It is as marrow to the bones; as oil to the wheels; as a bait by the way to a generous horse; as a back of steel to a bended bow, &c. Surely, as true gold strengtheneth the heart (that alchemy-gold doth not), so doth spiritual joy much more; making a man insuperable under sufferings, and unsatisfiable in performance of duties. It is such a precious commodity, as that no good can match it, no evil too powerful for it. It beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, as St Paul saith of charity, #1Co 13:7. And as a man that hath plenty of good blood and fresh spirits in his body, being well-lined within, as we say, can better endure heat and cold, &c., than another that hath not so; in like sort, he that hath his heart full of heaven, his conscience full of comfort, is in case to do and suffer much for and from God and men. The peace of his conscience will appear in his countenance, as Stephen's did; and as the martyrs in Severus the emperor's days, who, being released for a time, seemed to come, *e myrotheca, non ergastulo*, out of a perfumed palace, and not out of a stinking prison, looking more like angels of heaven than men on earth, as Eusebius relateth, *Divinum nescio quid in vultibus ipsis praeferentes* I do not know the god who wants to hide himself. (Euseb. lib. 5, cap. 12). The cross to such is anointed, as Bernard hath it; and by the joy of the Lord, that oil of gladness, it is made not only light, but sweet; not only tolerable, but desirable, and delectable.

Ver. 11. **So the Levites stilled all the people]** Made them hold their tongues, and forbear their groans and moans, the expressions of their great grief conceived for their sins, making a wailing like the dragons, mourning as the owls, and saying, "Look away from me; I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me," &c., #**Mic 1:8 Isa 22:4**. But these holy Levites did comfort them, and quiet them.

Saying, Hold your peace] Or, Sit; peace, and be still.

For the day is holy] And God loves not the bread of mourners for a sacrifice, is like as none might come into the court of Persia in mourning weeds, #**Es 4:4**. See #**Ne 8:9**.

Neither be ye grieved] It seems their hearts were even leavened and soured with sorrow, as David's was, #**Ps 73:21**.

Ver. 12. **And all the people went their way to eat]** To do all that they were directed to do. They had been in the furnace of mortification; and now they were willing to be cast into the mould of God's word, and to be whatsoever the Lord would have them to be. They were only his clay and wax, a willing people, waiting for his law.

And to make great mirth] *i.e.* All kind of honest jollity; for the better exciting their hearts to true thankfulness.

Because they had understood the words] Not the threatenings only to the refractory, but the promises also to the penitent and obedient. The Levites had taught them, doubtless, as the truth is in Jesus, that God therefore threateneth that he may not punish, and desireth to be disarmed, #**Am 4:12**; that he giveth to do what he commandeth to be done; that his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him, to them that keep his covenant, and that think upon his commandments to do them, *qui faciunt praecepta, etsi non perficiant*, that are doing at it, though they are far from perfection, #**Ps 103:18**. This was very comfortable; this put into them that joy of the Lord which was their strength; this more cheered them than all their good cheer of their peace offerings.

Ver. 13. **And on the second day]** The next day after they had heard the law expounded, but were not so well satisfied in some points or

cases: they "follow on to know the Lord," #Ho 6:3. Divine knowledge is as a great lady, that will not easily be acquainted with us but upon further suit, #Pr 2:3,4.

Were gathered together the chief of the fathers, &c.] Aeneas Sylvius was wont to say of knowledge, Popular men should esteem it as silver, noblemen as gold, princes prize it as pearls.

The priests, and Levites] These teachers of others took no scorn to learn from Ezra, that perfect scribe. The wisest here know but in part; because we prophesy but in part, #1Co 13:9; that is, we are taught but imperfectly, and those that should show us the way are themselves to seek; to teach us to run to Ithiel, the arch-prophet, as that great wise man did, #Pr 30:1. The greatest part of those things which we know is the least part of the things which we know not, as that father saith.

Unto Ezra the scribe] Who was well instructed to the kingdom of God; and no less ready to throw out of his treasury, &c., #Mt 13:52. It is said of Tacitus, that he knew all that he should know of the affairs of the world; and that he was *primus in Historia*; first in history, and that *ex eius ore nil temere excidit* he cut up nothing rashly from his mouth. (Scalig.). Think the same of Ezra, and much more; he was an able teacher of the ablest teachers, a sacred oracle, a living library, the argutest and accuratest of men after the prophets; as Austin is said to have been after the apostles, in contemplation and disputation.

Even to understand the words of the law] Which he had the day before expounded; and in some passages whereof they had a desire to be better resolved and satisfied. No man can possibly speak all at once, or deliver the mind of God so clearly and fully, but that there may be place left for cases and queries.

Ver. 14. **And they found written in the law]** And therefore in nowise to be neglected, since there God had written for them great things, #Ho 8:12; excellent things, #Pr 22:20; marvellous things, #Ps 119:18. There is a mountain of sense hanging upon every apex or tittle of it, say the Rabbis; who do, therefore, prescribe to their disciples not to write any letter of it but by a copy; not to read it but

in a clean place; not to touch it but with the right hand; not to carry it about him but next his heart, &c. (Schickard).

That the children of Israel should dwell in booths] See #Ezr 3:4, {*See Trapp on "Ezr 3:4"*} For this the law was dear, #Le 23:34 De 16:13. But this they had not so fully observed, *sc.* by dwelling in booths, till now that they were returned from Babylon, where they had been lately, and for a long time, strangers. This to profess and set forth was the intent of that least, and of this rite of it, of dwelling in booths or bowers. This is intimated in #Ne 8:1.

Ver. 15. **And that they should publish and proclaim]** Heb. Make a voice to pass, *viz.* for better preparation and greater solemnity. God will not take up with a careless and slubbered service; he is a great King, and stands greatly upon his seniority, #Mal 1:14.

Go forth unto the mount] Which is covered with all sorts of trees; and nothing like the country Axylus, which is so called, because no trees grow in it, no, not so much as thorns, or any kind of fuel. Through this country marched Manlius, the Roman general, when he went against the Gallograeci (Liv. lib. 38).

And fetch olive branches, and pine branches, &c.] Fit for shelter and shadow against the weather. That is very strange that yet is reported by authors of good note, concerning certain trees in Brazil of that size that whole families live in an arm of one of them, every tree being as populous as many of our villages.

And branches of thick trees] Tied together with willows of the brook, #Le 23:40.

Ver. 16. **So the people went forth, and brought them]** They had kept the feast of trumpets on the first day of this month. And although no mention be here made of the feast of expiation, a day of humiliation to be kept for ever upon the tenth day, yet it is to be presumed that they kept it, having so good a guide as Ezra. Now also, as not weary of well-doing, they do most solemnly celebrate the feast of tabernacles, making themselves booths of boughs in every street throughout the whole city.

Ver. 17. **Made booths, and sat under the booths]** See #Ne 8:14-16. They that turn this history into mystery make an allusion of it, 1. To

Christ, as dwelling in our flesh. 2. To Christians, as travelling toward heaven, and having here no settled habitation, #Heb 11:13.

For since the days of Jeshua] Moses is not mentioned; because during his days, till Jeshua brought them into the promised land, they kept not this feast, likely.

Had not the children of Israel done so] Kept this feast they had, but not so kept it; viz, with that devotion, solemnity, and great gladness, being in so poor a case, and yet so unanimous in the work, as one man. But one would wonder that all along during the reign of David and Solomon (who gave the pattern of, and built the temple), and all those succeeding reformers, there should something be omitted about the feast of tabernacles (kept, as it is thought, by Solomon, #2Ch 7:8) till their return from Babylon; yet so it was.

Ver. 18. **Also day by day]** Not only on the first and last day ("that great day of the feast," #Joh 7:37), but every day, this good man was at it, being *insatiabilis Dei cultor* (as Chrysostom saith of St Paul), an insatiable worshipper of God; and accounting *quod nimis augusta pietas est, ad legem bonum esse*, to do nothing for God more than needs must was too little.

And they kept the feast seven days] The people were as willing to hear (and do other holy duties) as Ezra was to preach. So were Chrysostom's hearers, who were wont to say that they could better be without the sunlight than Chrysostom's daily sermons. So likewise were Calvin's hearers at Geneva, where he preached every day in the week for the most part, and had a constant audience that even too admired (some of them at least) his most excellent pains and parts; as Zanchy shows and complains in the Epistle Dedicatory set before his Miscellanies; taxing them of *ανθρωπολατρεια*, man worship.

And on the eighth day was a solemn assembly] Heb. A restraint, viz. from servile works; or a retention, viz. a holding of the congregation together for holy uses. Tremellius rendereth it *diem interdicti* forbidden day, the Vulgate Latin of Lyra thus, They made a gathering, *sc.* for necessities about the Temple. This eighth day thus

kept might prefigure the Christian sabbath, that first day of the week.

Chapter 9

Ver. 1. **Now in the twenty and fourth day]** A day after the feast of tabernacles, they keep a solemn fast:

Usque adeo nihil est, ex omni parte, beatum.

There is in this present life an interchange of all things, a succession of feasting and fasting. Of the best, while here it may be said, as Pliny doth of Metellus, *Infelix dici non debet, felix non potest*; unhappy you cannot call him, happy you may not (lib. vii. cap. 47). One compareth him to the Ark, which was ever transported, till settled in Solomon's Temple; another to quicksilver, which hath in itself a principle of motion, but not of rest.

The children of Israel were assembled with fasting] As Epaminondas walked heavily the day after his triumph. Deadness of spirit is apt to follow our liveliest joys; but that must be looked to, and security prevented, which is wont to seize upon men after holy duties; like as worms and wasps eat the sweetest fruits. These fasters had wept at the hearing of the law, and were stilled by the Levites, **#Ne 8:11**, because it was unseasonable. Now the feast being over, and their hearts yet full of grief for their great sin in taking strange wives (not yet put away, though they had vowed to do it, **#Ezr 10:3**, &c.), they first put away those wives on the twenty-third day, and then humble themselves by fasting and prayer on this twenty-fourth day; being wrought thereunto by the reading of the law, as is implied in the next verse.

And with sackcloth] As acknowledging themselves unworthy of the coarsest clothing; and that, but for shame, they would have stripped themselves naked.

And earth upon them] As those that had forfeited all, and deserved to be as far underground as now they were above.

Ver. 2. **And the seed of Israel]** Called Israelites (not Abrahamites) from their wrestling with God by prayer and tears, and prevailing.

Called also Jews from Judah, which signifieth the confessor. Here it is said of them that,

They stood and confessed their sins] All their sins, either actually committed, or habitually comprised in their body of sin. This whoso doth in due manner shall have mercy, **#Pr 28:13**. Yea, he shall have heaven. Israel had power with God as a prince. Judah, the confessor, got the kingdom from Reuben. Confession is the way to the kingdom; walk in it; only it must be joined with confusion of sin, as here. They separated themselves from all strangers, they abandoned their *peccatum in deliciis*, their darling sin, they kept themselves from their iniquity. **#Ps 18:23**. *Hoc non sit verbis, Marce: ut ameris, ama* Let this not be by words so that you may be loved and love. (Martial).

And the iniquities of their fathers] *i.e.* Of their progenitors; which are owned, if not bewailed, disclaimed.

Ver. 3. **And they stood up in their place]** The people stood, for reverence' sake, to the word read. See **#Ne 8:5**. Or the ministers stood up in their pulpits, where they represent God himself as his ambassadors; and should therefore lay down all self-respects and aims at the pulpit door; and be fully of his mind, who said, I would not be found speaking or doing aught that I thought Christ would not approve of, if he were corporally present. (Ecolamp.)

And read in the book] Giving the sense of that they read; and applying it close to men's consciences. This was preaching indeed; for as every sound is not music, so neither is every pulpit discourse preaching. *Cura pastoralis est ars artium et scientia scientiarum*, saith one, It is a matter of great skill to divide the word aright. See **#Ne 8:8**.

One fourth part of the day] *i.e.* For three hours: from nine o'clock to twelve. This warranteth our preaching fast sermons; though prayer be the chief business of such a day. See **#Jer 36:6,7**.

And another fourth part] *sc.* From twelve to three: thus besides the ordinary morning and evening sacrifices, they divided the day between preaching and prayer, as those did, **#Ac 6:4**. And as the

priests of old taught Jacob God's judgments, and put incense before the Lord, #De 33:10. The Jews at this day boast that they divide the day (even the working day) into three parts; the first, *ad Tephillah*, they spend in prayer; the second, *ad Torah*, in reading the law; the third, *ad Malachah*, in their worldly business. But you are not bound herein to believe them.

They confessed] Not without supplication for pardon, and power to do better.

And worshipped the Lord their God] Inwardly and outwardly, giving him his due glory, and resting upon him by a lively faith in the gracious promises; being fully persuaded of this, that, together with the forgiveness of sin, they should have those particular blessings which they sued for, so far as might stand with God's glory and the good of their souls.

Ver. 4. **Then stood up]** Each of these eight in his turn, or each in his own proper place; the people being, for more convenience sake, divided into eight several congregations.

And cried with a loud voice] *Verbis non modo disertis, sed et exertis*, Words not only of eloquence but shouted out, of that God might hear (which yet he can do very well without any audible voice, #Ex 14:15 1Ki 22:32), and all the people might hear, and join in prayer.

Unto the Lord their God] As being in covenant with them. This shows their faith, as the former their fervency. Faith is the foundation of prayer; and prayer is the fervency of faith.

Ver. 5. **Then the Levites, Jeshua, &c., said, Stand up]** Gird yourselves, and serve the Lord, as #Lu 17:8. Be instant, or stand close to the work, *επιστηθι*, #2Ti 4:2; set sides and shoulders to it; rouse up yourselves, and wrestle with God. *Hoc agite*, Do this, said the Roman priest to the people at their sacrifices. And *Sacerdos parat fratrum mentes dicendo, Sursum corda*, saith Cyprian, In the primitive times the ministers prepared the people to serve God, by saying, Lift up your hearts (*De Oratione*).

And bless the Lord your God for ever] Give him immortal thanks, all possible praise, *amore more, ore*, glorify him doingly, **#1Co 10:30,31 Eph 1:11,12**. Think of the multitude, seasonableness, suitableness, constancy, &c., of God's favours; and then give him the glory due unto his name; which yet we can never do, because his name is exalted above all blessing and praise (as it followeth here), so that if we should do nothing else all our days, yea, as long as the days of heaven shall last (said that martyr), but kneel upon our knees and sing over David's Psalms to God's praise, yet should we fall far short of what we owe to the Lord, who is most worthy to be praised.

And blessed be thy glorious name] These holy Levites, having called upon the people to bless God, break forth into the performance of this divine duty themselves. So St Paul often, exhorting the saints to pray, falls a praying for them.

Which is exalted above all blessing and praise] So that when we have done our utmost herein, we can never out do. David is oft so transported, that he seems to forget himself, as a bird that hath got a note, records it over and over, as **#Ps 136**, "for his mercy endureth for ever." And **#Ps 150**, in six verses are twelve Hallelujahs. "Praise him," saith he, **#Ne 9:2**, "according to his excellent greatness," "for great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised," **#Ps 145:3**; and **#Ne 9:5**, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord," or, Let every breath praise the Lord. As oft as we breathe we are to breathe out the praises of God, and to make our breath like the perfumed smoke of the Tabernacle.

Ver. 6. **Thou, even thou, art Lord alone]** Jehovah is God's incommunicable name; that holy and reverend name of his which Jews pronounce not, we too oft profane, at least by not considering the import of it; which is enough to answer all our doubts, and to fill us with strong consolation, had we but skill to spell all the letters in it.

Thou hast made heaven] With great skill and artifice thou hast made it, three stories high, **#2Co 12:2 Heb 11:10**.

The heaven of heavens] Called the highest, **#Lu 2:14**, and the third heaven, **#2Co 12:2**. Of this heaven no natural knowledge can be

had, nor any help by human arts, geometry, optics, &c.; for it is neither aspectable nor movable.

With all their host] *i.e.* Their furniture: angels, those heavenly courtiers, sun, moon, and stars, &c., which are all God's servants, **#Ps 119:91**, and do, in their way, worship him.

The earth, and all things that are therein] God may be read in the great book of nature, which hath three leaves, heaven, earth, and sea. Heaven is all that is above earth. Earth is an element of cold and dry nature, thick, solid, heavy, placed in the midst of the world as the foundation thereof, and therefore unmovable, though round (and in that respect naturally apt for motion), and though founded, not upon solid rocks, but fluid waters. This Aristotle himself wondered at, Lib. ii. de Caelo, cap. 13.

And all things that are thereon] Either therein, as metals and minerals; or thereon, as men, beasts, creeping things, &c.

The seas, and all that are therein] As, There is that leviathan, and creeping things innumerable. God's handiwork all of them.

And thou preservest them all] Givest them ζωην και πνοην, **#Ac 17:25**, life and breath motion and maintenance; thou upholdest the whole creation by the word of thy power, and all things subsist by thy upholding, **#Heb 1:3**. God doth not cast off the care of his works that he hath made (as doth the carpenter, or shipwright), but being perpetually present with them, ruleth, disposeth, and ordereth all by a certain counsel, to his own ends, and at length to his own glory.

And the host of heaven worshipping thee] Angels and saints especially; who the more they know of God the more they love him and honour him; making their addresses to him with greatest self-abasement, considering their distance and disproportion. Thus angels: as for saints: "All thy works praise thee, O God," saith David, that is, they give matter and occasion; "but thy saints bless thee," **#Ps 145:10**. How they do this, see **#Re 5:11,12**.

Ver. 7. **Thou art the Lord the God]** Heb. That Lord, with an emphasis, with an accent; and besides thee there is none other. See

#Ne 9:6. This is proved by his free favours to Israel, and patient bearing with their evil manners in the wilderness; there being not any God like unto our God, for pardoning of sin, and passing by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage, **#Mic 7:18.**

Who didst choose Abram] God first chose him for his love, and then loved him for his choice.

And broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees] Pulling him as a brand out of that fire, where, till then, he had lived (and might else have died) an idolater, **#Jos 24:2.**

And gavest him the name of Abraham] {*See Trapp on "Ge 17:5"*}

Ver. 8. **And foundest his heart faithful]** He must needs find it so who had made it so. Otherwise Abraham, as well as any other, might well say, *Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut meus sim* (Bern.). The natural heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, &c., a bundle of sin (folly is bound up, &c.), a treasury of sin (an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, &c.), a raging sea of sin, **#Isa 57:20**, a world of wickedness, **#Jas 3:6**, If any good be in it, it is but as a drop of rose water in a bowl of poison; where falling, it is presently corrupted.

And madest a covenant with him] To be his God, and the God of his seed. This was *divini mellis alveare*, the beehive of heavenly honey; this was more than to be made monarch of the whole world. See **#Ge 17:20,21.**

To give the land of the Canaanites, &c.] Who had filled that good land from one end to the other with their uncleanness, **#Ezr 9:11**, and were therefore worthily rooted out of it. So Josephus reports that in his time these Jews were grown so wicked, that if the Romans had not destroyed them, without doubt either the earth would have swallowed them up, or fire from heaven have consumed them. Bede saith of the ancient Britons (immediately before their destruction by the Saxons) that they were come to a very great height of

wickedness; so as to shame the counsel of the poor, because the Lord was his refuge, #Ps 14:6.

And hast performed thy words] Of many promisers it may be said, as Tertullian of the peacock, all in changeable colours: as oft changed as moved. Sertorius paid his promises with fair words. Antiochus was surnamed *Doson*, because he oft said, I will give you this, or that, but never did. God is none such.

For thou art righteous] That is, faithful: for there is a twofold justice of God; 1. Of equity: 2. Of fidelity. See #1Jo 1:9 Re 10:1, where Christ is said to have a rainbow on his head; to show that he is faithful and constant in his promises.

Ver. 9. **And didst see the affliction]** The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, as well as his ears open to their prayers; he knoweth their soul in adversity, *et de remedio prospicit*, he is solicitous of their safety.

And heardest their cry by the Red Sea] Though mixed with much murmuring, #Ex 14:10. So he heard that pitiful poor prayer of David, #Ps 31:22, "I said in mine haste, I am cut off from thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications, when I cried unto thee." God heareth the young ravens, #Ps 147:9, though they have but a hoarse and harsh note, make no melody to move pity, and cry but by implication only, and not directly unto him.

Ver. 10. **And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh]** That sturdy rebel, whom neither ministry, nor misery, nor miracle, nor mercy could possibly mollify. This was worse than any or all those ten plagues sent upon him, whereof see #Ex 3:19. {*See Trapp on "Ex 3:19"*}

For thou knewest that they dealt proudly, &c.] This the just and jealous God could not away with, #Ex 18:11. His work in heaven is (said that heathen) to cast down the lofty, and to lift up the lowly, τα μεν υψηλα ταπεινουν, &c. (Aesop. Chilon).

So didst thou get thee a name] *i.e.* A great fame of thy power and justice, to the conversion of some (as Jethro, #Ex 18:1) and conviction of others, as #De 32:31 Jos 2:10 1Sam 4:8.

Ver. 11. **And thou didst divide the sea before them]** That which threatened to swallow them preserved them. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him," #Ps 32:6.

As a stone into the mighty waters] As lead, #Ex 15:10. So shall Rome (that spiritual Egypt) once sink into the bottom of the sea, as a millstone thrust into it by a mighty angel, with a most impetuous force, #Re 18:21.

Ver. 12. **Moreover thou leddest them by day, &c.]** This pillar of a cloud was miraculously moved with such variation as God thought fit, for the guiding of their journeys; much better than did or could Vibilia, that heathen fiction.

And in the night by a pillar of fire] Though they did not usually journey in the night, yet sometimes they did; and then this pillar of fire was their guide. God is with his at all assays, and is all in all unto them, #Ps 121:4; see #Isa 4:5,6.

Ver. 13. **Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai]** A place of many bushes and briars. The law there delivered, pricketh and pierceth the consciences of evildoers. Thither God came with ten thousands of his saints, as Moses (who climbed up that hill, and alone saw it) saith, #De 33:2.

And spakest with them from heaven] He came down upon Sinai, and yet spake from heaven. See a like text, #Joh 3:13. There he spake also with us, #Ho 12:4. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh from heaven, see that ye shift him not off, much less turn away from him, #Heb 12:25.

And gavest them right judgments, &c.] All these high praises are far below the worth and excellency of God's holy laws. They were given in the wilderness, because (saith Philo) they are to be learnt in a wilderness; seeing there we cannot be hindered by the multitude. But this is no way solid, as one hath well observed.

Good statutes and commandments] Good they are in respect, 1. Of the author; 2. Of the matter; 3. Of the effect: for they make those

good that observe them. This is true of the moral law; as for the judicial, it was fitted to the Jews, and best for them: but Carolostadius did ill to seek to force it, as needful for all Christian commonwealths. Solon being asked whether he had given the best laws to the Athenians? answered, the best for them, the best that they could suffer. So here.

Ver. 14. **And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath]** Not then first known to the Church; but of old observed, even from the beginning, #Ge 2:3, about 2514 years before it was made known in such a solemn sort at Sinai; as having been much neglected and forgotten during the Egyptian servitude. So it was by the German Churches, till God awakened them by the loss of Prague (that first blow given them), and that upon the Sabbath day, which they kept not otherwise than if it had been *Dies daemonicus*, the devil's day, and not *Dominicus* the Lord's day, (as their countryman Alsted complaineth), and as if it had been called Sabbath, from Sabbos, a name of Bacchus, as Plutarch dreamed.

And commandedst them precepts] {See Trapp on "Ne 9:13"}

Ver. 15. **And gavest them bread from heaven]** *Pluviam escatilem, et petrum aquatilem*, as Tertullian phraseth it. God rained down angel's food, and set the flint abroad; and this he did for their hunger, for their thirst, fitting his favours *ad cardinem desiderii*, from the desire of their heart, according to their need and request. Besides that, their bread was sacramental, whereof they communicated everyday. Their drink also was sacramental, that this ancient Church might give no warrant of a dry communion: for they did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, the same that we do at the Lord's supper, #1Co 10:3,4.

And promisedst them that they should go in, &c.] And the like promise he hath made of heaven to all his people. "Let us therefore fear," &c., #Heb 4:1. Let us therefore cleanse ourselves, &c., #2Co 6:1. Let us haste away in our affections, #Col 3:2.

Which thou hast sworn] So he hath to give us heaven (because he knows how backward we are to believe him, with such a pawn), that by two immutable things, God's word and God's oath (which

maketh his word not more true, but yet more credible), we might have strong consolation, **#Heb 6:18**, and more abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, **#2Pe 1:11**.

Ver. 16. **But they and our fathers]** God's mercies have been hitherto mentioned, that their sins might thereby be aggravated; for good turns aggravate unkindness; and men's sins are much increased by their obligations. It is charged upon Solomon as a foul fault, that he departed from the Lord, who had appeared unto him twice, **#1Ki 11:9**.

Dealt proudly] Pride is the master pock of the soul, and the root of rebellion against God, **#Ps 119:21**.

And hardened their necks] As unruly beasts, that will not bear the yoke; lawless and aweless persons, that refuse to be reformed, hate to be healed.

And hearkened not to thy commandments] But rather to the devil's whistle, calling them off from better practices.

Ver. 17. **And refused to obey]** Heb. To hearken. They not only not hearkened, but refused to hear reasons why they should; as having made their conclusion, and being as good as ever they meant to be. This is to add rebellion to sin; this is that stubbornness that Ahaz is taxed of and branded for, **#2Ch 28:25**.

Neither were mindful of thy wonders] These soon grew stale to them, as the Psalmist proves by their wicked practices, **#Ps 106:13**. And truly who that looketh upon our lives would ever think that God had done any wonders for us of this nation, either by sea or land, either against fireworks or water works formerly; or against a viperous brood among ourselves, here of late?

And in their rebellion appointed a captain] They once talked (in their mad mood) of doing such a thing, and therefore they are here said to have done it, **#Nu 14:4**; like as **#Jos 24:9**, it is said that Balak arose and fought with Israel; and yet the story saith no such matter. But if he did not, yet because he thought and talked of such a matter, it was a done thing before the Lord!

But thou art a God ready to pardon] Heb. A God of pardons. One that hast set up a pardon office; where pardons for penitents lie ready sealed, that the sinner may not be to seek, that he may not perish in his sins while the plaster is in providing. It is our comfort that we have to do with a forgiving, sin-pardoning God, that doth it naturally, **#Ex 34:6**, plentifully, **#Isa 55:7**, constantly, **#Ps 130:4**. This should be as a perpetual picture in our hearts.

Gracious] Doing all for us gratis, *et ex mero motu*, out of his free and unexcited love.

And merciful] All-heart; whereby he is inclined to succour them that are in misery, notwithstanding their sins. See his *non obstante* , **#Ps 106:8**.

Longsuffering] Heb. Long of anger, that is, long ere he will be angry; not hasty of spirit, as **#Pr 14:17,29**, but wondrous patient, amidst a world of provocations.

And of great kindness] Of exceeding propensity to communicate good. The Hebrew word signifies a large quantity either continued (that is, magnitude or greatness), **#Ps 48:2**, or discrete (that is, multitude), **#Ps 2:1,2**.

And forsookest them not] That is, not utterly, as David prayeth, **#Ps 119:8**, and after him Solomon, **#1Ki 8:57**. When God forsaketh a people or person, woe be to them, **#Ho 9:12**. What a terrible text is that, **#Eze 22:20**, "I will gather you in mine anger, and my fury, and I will leave you there!" and that other, **#Jer 16:13**, "I will cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not... where I will not show you favour!" This last was worse than all the rest. This the prophet well knew, and therefore cried out, Lord, leave us not, **#Jer 17:17**.

Extingui lucem ne patiare tuam.

Or if thou desert us for a time, yet do not disinherit us for ever. If thy dereliction of us be penal, yet let it not be perpetual (Mos. Gerundin).

Ver. 18. **Yea, when they had made them a golden calf]** An ounce whereof the Jews say is still to this day in all the punishments that befall them; though some of their Rabbis have the face to excuse this gross idolatry of their forefathers, #Ne 9:18, εμοσχοποτησαν, *Vitulificarunt* (Piscat.).

And said, This is thy God] #Ex 32:4. These be thy gods. It was the serpent's grammar that first taught men to decline God in the plural number: Ye shall be as Gods, #Ge 3:5

That brought thee up out of Egypt] Some of them, then, did mean to worship the true God, in this false manner; hence #Ex 32:5, there is proclaimed a feast (not to the golden calf, but) to Jehovah. Here, then, falls to the ground the Papists' plea for their image worship.

And had wrought great provocations] Or, blasphemies, #2Ki 19:3. Idolatry is no better. Jerome, as oft as he meeteth with this Hebrew word in the Book of Psalms (and that is five several times), he translateth it, to blaspheme.

Ver. 19. **Yet thou in thy manifold mercies]** Nothing else could have kept him from turning them off, and saying to them, as once Jephthah did, #Jud 11:7, "Behold, ye have thrust me out; and do ye come unto me in your distress? Go, cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation," #Jud 10:14

Forsookest them not in the wilderness] And yet he was near the matter when he would own them no longer, but even fathered them upon Moses, saying, #Ex 32:7, "Thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves."

The pillar of cloud departed not] It is sad with a people when God sends for his love tokens (his ordinances); when they have sinned away their light, and so wiped off all their comfortables.

Ver. 20. **Thou gavest also thy good spirit]** viz. To their governors and teachers, #Nu 11:16,17,25,26. Yea, to every good soul, that they

might be all taught of God, led into all truth and holiness, **#Eph 5:9**. For which end God hath promised to pour his Spirit upon all flesh, that is, the best thing upon the basest, **#Joe 2:28**. Next to the sending of his Son in the flesh (which is called the gift, **#Joh 4:10**, and the benefit, **#1Ti 6:2**), what can God do more for his people than to give them his good spirit? this is to give them all good things in one, **#Mt 7:11 Lu 11:13**.

And withheldest not thy manna] See **#Ne 9:15**. It is twice mentioned, as a singular and signal mercy. And it is well observed by a reverend writer, that this manna and water from the rock (which was Christ in the gospel) were given this people before the law, the sacraments of grace before the legal covenant. The grace of God preventeth our obedience; therefore shall we keep the law of God, because we have a Saviour.

Ver. 21. **Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them]** Sustain them? this is a mere Meiosis, since never was prince so served in his greatest pomp as these rebellious Israelites were in the wilderness: they had their quails and their manna, and the rock to follow them, &c.

So that they lacked nothing] Nor more shall they that seek the Lord lack any good thing, **#Ps 34:10 84:11**. God will not be a wilderness to them, or a land of darkness, **#Jer 2:31**. A sufficiency they shall be sure of, if not a superfluity; yea, in the midst of straits they shall be in a sufficiency, **#1Ti 6:6**. The ungodly are not so, **#Job 20:22**.

Their clothes waxed not old] They wore not in the wearing. This was wonderful; these men lived in an age of miracles; here was no need of, What shall we put on? For the clothes they had of their own, and that which they borrowed from the Egyptians decayed not; but, as some think, grew up with their persons. See **#De 8:4 29:5**.

And their feet swelled not] Nor did any other disease annoy them, while they were in the wilderness. There was not one feeble person among them: this was a sweet mercy. *Non est vivere, sed valere, vita; si vales, bene est.* Vincentio Pestiom, an Italian gentleman, being asked how old he was? answered, that he was in health. And

to another that asked how rich he was? answered, that he was not in debt. This was the happiness of these Israelites in the wilderness.

Ver. 22. **Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations]** God gave them all; for he is the true proprietary, he pulleth down one, and setteth up another. This Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged (after he had been turned a grazing), and Charles V, emperor of Germany, who in twenty-eight battles in America, waged by Cortez and Pizarro, won twenty-eight kingdoms. And what a world of nations are swallowed up in the greatness of the Turkish empire! America hath the happiness to be out of their reach.

So they possessed the land of Sihon] God's favours must not be mentioned in the lump only, and by wholesale; but particularly enumerated and celebrated.

Ver. 23. **Their children also multipliedst thou]** Judaea was not above two hundred miles long and fifty miles broad (not near the half of England by much), yet what a numerous people they were! what huge armies they had!

And broughtest them into the land] Not the nearest way, but the best for them; that he might humble them, and try them, and do them good in the latter end. If God will bring us to heaven at length (as Israel in the wilderness, so) must we follow him and the line of his law, though it seem to lead us in and out, backward and forward, as if we were treading a maze.

Concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers] And they disposed of it by will to their posterity, as if they had been in present possession. God's promises are good surehold: the patriarchs would be buried there, though they died in Egypt, and keep possession, as they could; for they knew that all was their own.

Ver. 24. **So the children went in]** After that they had been held a long while under the Egyptian servitude. God knows how to commend his favours to us, which *cito data cito vilescunt*, lightly come by, are lightly set by.

And thou subduest before them...the Canaanites] There is an elegance in the original, Thou bowedst or pressedst down those crooked or depressed ones, the Canaanites, who had their very name

(portending their condition) from bowing down, as born to be servants of servants, according to Noah's curse, **#Ge 9:25 Ro 11:16**.

And gavest them into their hands] If any were unsubdued, it was through their own sloth, for which they are reprov'd, and by which they afterwards smarted. It is the observation of a good divine, that as seven tribes are justly taxed by Joshua for their negligence and sloth in not seeking speedily to possess the land God had offer'd them, **#Jos 18:2**, so may the most of us be justly rebuked for grievous security about the heavenly Canaan. Various of the better sort have but a title; and therefore it justly falleth out that these are buffeted by Christ, as those were disgrac'd by Joshua.

That they might do with them as they would] Save or slay whom they pleas'd; yet not forget the laws of humanity; as the bloody Spaniards have done among the miserable Indians; causing them to cry out, that it had been far better that the Indies had been given to the devils of hell than to them, and that if the Spaniards go to heaven when they die, themselves will never come there, though they might. Ver. 25. **And they took strong cities]** With no great ado: like as towns are said to come in to Timotheus' (the Athenian general's) toils while he slept. This he ascrib'd to his own prowess and policy (Plut. in Sulla), often interlacing this proud speech, Herein fortune had no part; and from thenceforth never prospered in anything he undertook.

And a fat land] Flowing with plenty of dainties; though Strabo spitefully slandered it as craggy and barren.

And possessed houses full of all goods] Of all pleasant and precious substance; for the Canaanites were great merchants, **#Isa 23:8 Ho 12:7 Eze 17:4**.

Wells digg'd] A great commodity in that hot country.

Vineyards, and oliveyards] A singular help to housekeeping.

So they did eat, and were filled] They had enough of everything, and did eat while eating was good; as they say Queen Elizabeth did seldom eat but one dish, rose ever with an appetite, and lived about seventy years. King Edward VI was wont to call her his sweet sister Temperance.

And delighted themselves in thy great goodness] They lived in God's good land, but not by God's good laws; the refreshing they found by his best creatures was none other but such as his, who "warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire," **#Isa 44:16.**

Ver. 26. **Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled]** See how full in the mouth these holy Levites were in aggravating their own and their forefathers' sins, which swelled as so many toads in their eyes; neither could they ever sufficiently disgrace them. This is the property and practice of the true penitentiary.

They cast thy law behind their backs] That is, they vilipended and undervalued it. God drew them by the cords of a man (so the cords of kindness are called, **#Ho 11:4**, because befitting the nature of a man, and likeliest to prevail with rational people), but they, like men (or rather like beasts), transgressed the covenant; and, as if God had even hired them to be wicked, so did they abuse all his benefits to his greatest dishonour; being therefore the worse, because in reason they ought to have been better.

And slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee] This was the worst they did to them, and that for which they received *mercedem mundi*, the wages of the mad world, ever beside itself in point of salvation, and falling foul upon such as seek its good. This is that sin that brings ruin without remedy, **#2Ch 36:16 Pr 29:1** for, "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," **#Ps 116:15.**

And they wrought great provocations] Or, blasphemies. See **#Ne 9:18.**

Ver. 27. **Therefore thou deliveredst them]** *Flagitium et flagellum, sicut acus et filum.* Sin and punishment are tied together with chains of adamant.

Who vexed them] Heb. Put them to straits; so that they had not what shift to make or how to help themselves.

And in the time of their trouble] *Vexatio dedit intellectum.* The time of affliction is the time of supplication. When out of the depths God's people cry unto him, they may have anything, **#Zec 13:9**, speedy audience, unmiscarrying returns of their prayers.

Thou gavest them saviours] *i.e.* Deliverers, such as the judges were, **#Jud 3:9**, and such as Flaminius the Roman was to the poor Argives; who therefore called him Saviour, Saviour, and that with such a courage, *ut corvi fortuito supervolantes, in stadium deciderent*, that the birds fell to the earth amazed with that outcry; the air was so dissipated with their acclamations (Plut. in Flam.).

Ver. 28. **But after they had rest, they did evil again]** As standing pools breed vermin; as sedentary lives are subject to diseases. If men be not poured out from vessel to vessel, they will soon settle upon their lees. "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God," **#Ps 55:19**, saith David, of the wicked; and **#Ps 30**, David himself was afflicted, delivered, and then grew wanton. Then troubled again, **#Ne 9:7**, cries again, **#Ne 9:8,9**. God turns his mourning to joy again; whereof if he surfeited not, it was well bestowed on him. But *rarae fumant felicibus arae*. We are commonly best when worst: and Pliny told his friend, that the best way to live well, was to be as good in health as we promise to be when we are sick.

Therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies] Who can do us no harm, but by Divine permission; though they bandy together, and bend all their forces to harm the Church, yet are they bounded by God, and can do nothing till he leave his people in their hands.

Had the dominion over them] Ruled them with rigour.

And many times didst thou deliver them] Even *toties quoties*: for as the eye is not weary with seeing, nor the ear with hearing; so neither is God with showing mercy. But as the sun shineth after it

hath shone, and as the spring runneth after it hath run; so doth the Lord proceed to do good to his in their necessity; and that according to his mercies, which never fail, #**La 3:22**.

Ver. 29. **And testifiedst against them]** Toldest them of their sins, foretoldst them of their dangers, didst all that could be done to do them good; but nothing would do.

Yet they dealt proudly] See #**Ne 9:16**.

And hearkened not] *intus existens prohibuit alienum*, Hear, and give ear, be not proud, #**Jer 13:15**.

But sinned against thy judgments] *i.e.* Thy statutes, though made with so much reason and respect to our good, that if God did not command them, yet were it every way our best way to practise them: #**Isa 48:17**, "I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way which thou shouldest go." As who should say, It is for thy profit that I command thee this or that, and not for mine own.

Which if a man do] But that, as now, he cannot do, and, therefore, not be saved by the law, #**Ro 10:5**. Our Saviour indeed said to that young justiciary, "This do, and thou shalt live," #**Lu 10:28**. But that was all one, saith Luther, as if Christ had said unto him, *Vade et morere*, Go upon thy death; for do this of thyself, and live thereby, thou art never able.

And withdrew the shoulder] When called to take up Christ's yoke, or to bear his cross. See the note on #**Zec 7:11**.

And hardened their neck] To sinews of iron they added brows of brass.

Ver. 30. **Yet many years didst thou forbear them]** Heb. Protract over them; or, draw out thy lovingkindness toward them to the utmost.

And testifiedst against them] As **#Ne 9:29**. They wanted not for warnings or woings, with, Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?

Yet would they not hear] But as sea monsters or catadupes, or men born in a mill, or as one that is running a race; give him never so good counsel, he cannot stay to hear it.

Therefore gavest thou them] As uncounselable incorrigible.

Ver. 31. **Nevertheless for thy great mercies' sake]** Man's perverseness cannot interrupt the course of God's goodness. In the midst of judgment he remembereth mercy, which beareth the same proportion to his judgment which seven (a complete number) hath to a unity.

Thou didst not utterly consume them] God will repent for his people, when he seeth their power is gone, **#De 32:36**, and be jealous with a great jealousy when the enemy goes beyond his commission, **#Zec 1:14,15**.

For thou art a gracious and merciful God] And this is most seen when misery weighs down, and nothing but mercy turneth the scale.

Ver. 32. **Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty]** It is a high point of heavenly wisdom, in the beginning of our petitions, to propound God to ourselves under such holy notions and fit expressions, as wherein we may see an answer to our prayers, as here. See **#Ne 1:5**.

Let not all the trouble] Heb. The wearying, the lassitude. Afflictions are not joyous, but grievous to the flesh, which doth soon flag, and even sink under the burden, if not supported by the hand of Heaven.

Seem little before thee] As if we had not yet suffered enough, but, as if we wanted weight, must be made yet heavier by an addition of new afflictions, **#1Pe 1:6**. God is apt to think a little enough, and spare, **#Isa 40:1**, and to take care that the spirit fail not before him, that his children swoon not in the whipping, **#Isa 57:16**. He knows that every child of affliction hath not the strength to cry out, as

Luther did, *Feri Domine, feri*, Smite on, Lord, smite on, for I am absolved from my sins; or as another did, I thank thee, O Lord, for all mine extremity; and I beseech thee, if thou think it good, to add to it a hundredfold more, &c.

That hath come upon us] As foul weather comes before it is sent for. Heb. Hath found us; for we sought it not, but would gladly have shunned it.

Since the time of the kings of Assyria] Who yet were their most favourable enemies; and are, therefore, compared to a golden head in Nebuchadnezzar's image; but any servitude is grievous; and among the Greeks, after that they were delivered from the tyranny of the Macedonians and Spartans, the error at the Nemaean games was forced to pronounce the word, Liberty, *iterumque iterumque*, again and again. And how earnest are God's people here in deprecating another captivity. He heareth them; and for their late seventy years' captivity, granteth them seven seventies of years (Daniel's weeks) for the enjoyment of their own country.

Ver. 33. **Howbeit thou art just]** So Mauricius, the emperor, justified God, when he saw his wife and children butchered before his eyes by the traitor Phocas, and knew that himself should be soon after stewed in his own broth; he cried out, Just art thou, O Lord, and just are all thy judgments. So did the noble Du Plessy, when he heard of the death of his only son slain in Holland; which so grieved his mother, that soon after she died.

Ver. 34. **Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, &c.]** But as there hath been a general defection, so a well-deserved desolation, wherein we have all justly shared.

Nor hearkened to thy commandments] And that because they testified against their contrary practices. This wicked men cannot away with, they hate him that reproveth in the gate, as Ahab did Micaiah. None but the gracious can say, Let the righteous smite me, be the reproof never so well tempered. No sugar can bereave a pill of its bitterness. Now the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meats, **#Job 12:11**. And ungodly men (as they write of some creatures) have *fel in aure*, and must get their ears cured ere they can be in case to hear God's commandments and his testimonies. It

is said of Gerson, that he loved a friendly reprove; and of Queen Anne Bullen, that she not only was willing to be admonished, but also required her chaplains freely and plainly to tell her of whatsoever was amiss. *Scilicet Christus voluit aliquando etiam reginam in coelum vehere*, as Luther once said of Elizabeth, queen of Denmark. These kings and princes of Israel were nonsuch.

Ver. 35. **For they have not served thee in their kingdom]** As David did, who held it his highest honour to be the servant of the Lord, **#Ps 36**; and as those three famous Christian emperors, Constantine, Valentinian, and Theodosius, who styled themselves The vassals of Jesus Christ (Socrat.).

And in thy great goodness that thou gavest them] In the abundance of all things, **#De 28:47**, they should have considered, the more wages the more work; and that thus to requite the Lord was to come under the censure of a foolish people and unwise, **#De 32:6**, yea, of idle and evil servants, **#Mt 25:26**.

And in the large and fat land] "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked"; fulness bred forgetfulness; saturity, security, **#De 32:15**; therefore he was worthily pent up and pined in a strange land, where he had liberty little enough, and prisoner's pittance.

Neither turned they from their wicked works] They quarrel not with their faults, but with their friends that reprove them; they turn not to him from whom they had deeply revolted. Their impenitence maketh their sins mortal, says St John, **#1Jo 5:16**; immortal, saith St Paul, **#Ro 2:5**; they die in their sins, as did those Jews in the Gospel, and perish for ever, **#Joh 8:21**.

Ver. 36. **Behold, we are servants this day]** This is twice here bewailed, as a singular unhappiness. They that live under the Turkish slavery feel it so. Poor Greece, that was once *Sol et sal gentium, terrarum flos, et fons literarum*, the sun and salt of the nations, the flower of countries, and the font of literature, is now—*vel Priamo miseranda manus even is become* the wretched hand to Priam.

Princess of nations, queen of provinces

She was, that now thus tributary is, **#La 1:1**.

Out of Greece and other countries that had sometime received the faith of Christ, the Turkish tyrants draw with them to the wars great multitudes of wretched people, whom they call Asape. These carry all the baggage; these carry wood and water for other soldiers of better account; these serve instead of pioneers to cast up trenches, and raise bulwarks; and when battle is to be given, if it be in a plain field, these have then weapons put into their hands, and are thrust into the forefront of the battle, to blunt the enemy's swords: but if a city is to be besieged, these serve as fit matter to fill the ditches with their dead bodies, or to make bridges for other soldiers to pass over upon. And if they shrink to attempt anything they are commanded, then are they more cruelly used by their commanders than by their enemies. And this the Ottoman kings count good policy.

Ver. 37. **And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings]** As this land once did unto the king of locusts; when it was styled the pope's *hortus deliciarum*, garden of delights, out of which he could fetch what money or anything else he pleased, so long as he could hold a pen in his hand. In the year 720, John, king of West Saxons, caused in all his dominion, in every house having a chimney, a penny to be collected and paid to the bishop of Rome, in the name of St Peter; and thereof were they called Peter pence. These continued till Henry VIII's time; who, in his protestation against the pope, speaketh thus: England is no more a babe; there is no man here but now he knows that they do foolishly that give gold for lead, more weight of that than they receive of this, &c.

Also they have dominion] {*See Trapp on "Ne 9:30"*}

At their pleasure] Their will was a law; which to argue or debate was high misdemeanour; to detract or disobey, present death.

Ver. 38. **And because of all this]** Our sin and misery.

We make a sure covenant] See #Ezr 10:3.

And write it] *Littera scripta manet*, A written letter abides.

And our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it] In the room and name of all the rest, who have sworn and will perform it, that we will keep thy righteous judgments.

Chapter 10

Ver. 1. **Now those that sealed were, Nehemiah, the Tirshatha]** He is first mentioned, not as a priest, but as a provost; and one that held it an honour to be first in so good a matter; as Caesar never said to his soldiers, *Ite*, but *Venite*, Go, but, Come along, I will lead you; and as Abimelech said, What ye have seen me do, make haste and do accordingly. So should all superiors say to their inferiors. *Vita principis censura est, imo cynosura*, The life of the prince is the loede star of the people, upon which most men fix their eyes and shape their courses. *Magnates sunt Magnetes*, Great men draw many by their examples, they are as looking glasses by which others dress themselves. And hence Nehemiah's forwardness here to seal first. There follow in their order priests, Levites, princes, and people, solemnly sealing a sure covenant. God had caused them to pass under the rod, and now he is bringing them into the bond of the covenant, that he may purge out the rebels from amongst them, **#Eze 20:37,38.**

Ver. 28. **That had separated themselves]** In St Paul's sense, **#2Co 6:17**, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," &c., from such stand off; stand up from the dead; save yourselves from this untoward generation, shun their sins, lest ye share in their plagues. These holy separates, or proselytes, sealed the covenant, and became free denizens of the commonwealth of Israel; having right to all God's ordinances, **#Ex 12:48**. Such were Araunah, the Jebusite, **#2Sa 24:18-25**; Jether, the Ishmaelite, **#1Ch 7:17**, with **#2Sa 17:25**; those, **#Ac 2:10**; the Jews called them *Advenas Iustitiae*. Newcomers of justice. Diodati interpreteth this text of such Jews as were come again out of Babylon, to serve the Lord, according to his law. Others of such as had separated themselves from their heathen wives and children.

Their wives, their sons, and their daughters] These also were then, and still may be, covenanters, as partakers of the benefit, **#1Ti 6:2** and heirs together of the grace of life, **#1Pe 3:7**.

Every one having knowledge] Of their own misery by sin, and of the great mystery of godliness.

Ver. 29. **They clave to their brethren]** Heb. They laid fast hold on them, viz. by taking hold of the covenant, to keep the Sabbath from polluting it, and choosing the things that please God, as **#Isa 56:4,6**.

And entered into a curse] The more to confirm the oath, and to keep their deceitful hearts close to God. See **#De 29:12,21**. This is called the oath of God, **#Ec 7:2**. Confer **#Isa 19:18 44:5 2Ch 15:12,14 34:31**.

To walk in God's law] *Ex gnomone et canone decalogi*, to walk accurately and exactly by line and by rule (Aug. in Exod.). "In all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," **#Lu 1:6**, so far as by his grace he should vouchsafe to assist them. For *lex iubet, gratia iuvat*. The law orders, grace assists. The bowls of the candlestick have no oil but what droppeth from the olive branches. David can wish well to the keeping of God's commandments diligently, **#Ps 119:4,5**, but promise no further than God shall please to enlarge his heart, **#Ne 10:32**. Vows and covenants indefinitely and absolutely made (as that of Jephthah, **#Jud 11:31**) prove a snare. Condition with the Lord for his strength and grace; rely not on thine own sufficiency, lest it repent thee of thy rashness and self-confidence, as it befell Peter. Consider that thou art but a poor garrison soldier; and without supplies of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **#Php 1:19**, thou canst do nothing. David knew this, and therefore called earnestly for help from heaven, **#Ps 51:13-15 119:106,107**.

Ver. 30. **And that we would not give our daughters]** This is the first particular branch of the covenant, that they would make no inter-marriages with the heathen; as knowing the snare that herein Satan laid for their souls. In the first sentence against man, this cause is expressed, Because you obeyed the voice of your wife, &c. By the rib, as by a ladder, Satan oft climbs to the heart, and corrupts it, as Gregory hath it. O wives (saith another)! the most sweet poison, the most desired evil in the world, &c. Make a wise choice, therefore. The heathen well saith, that every man, when he marrieth, brings either a good or an evil spirit into his house, and so makes it either a heaven or a hell.

Ver. 31. **And if the people of the land bring any ware]** As they might without the Jews' leave; and did, #Ne 13:16, and some of those Jews, forgetting their covenant, bought of them too; even the children of Judah in Jerusalem, ib., as if they had been of her religion in the tragedy, who said,

η γλωττ ομωμοχ η δε φοην ανωμοτος.

that is, I swore with my tongue, but not with my heart. But shall they thus escape by iniquity? Be not deceived, God is not mocked; a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he, #De 32:4.

That we would not buy it of them] Lest we should trouble and disquiet that holy rest; and God should sue us upon an action of waste; "For the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God," #Ex 20:10 Jer 17:12.

Or on the holy day] Now abrogated, #Col 2:16.

And that we would leave the seventh year] That Sabbatical year, prefiguring the year of grace, the kingdom of Christ, *Qui noxas et nexas omnes solveret*, who giveth his people a general release, #De 15:2, and comes not over them again with a later reckoning, *Peccata non redeunt*. The land also was to rest from tillage this year, #Ex 23:11.

And the exaction of every debt] For that year, at least, and the next too, if the debtor were not able to pay; the lender was to expect a recompense from God, #De 15:6.

Ver. 32. **To charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel]** Beside the poll money, the half shekel required, #Ex 38:26. The third part of a shekel was no great sum, yet somewhat more than what Saul and his servant presented the seer with, whom they could not but know to be the judge of Israel, #1Sa 9:8. These had learned that thankfulness was measured, both by God and good men, not by the weight, but by the will of the retributor. God doth highly accept the small offerings of his weak servants when he seeth them to proceed from great love.

Ver. 33. **For the shewbread]** Here are recited the several uses whereunto that tribute or impost was put; the half shekel enjoined by the law being not enough, by reason the people were as yet so few. This, though Junius denieth, yet the Hebrews all consent about it.

To make an atonement] That is, an agreement; Heb. To cover or expiate; to purge away, or take away uncleanness; to satisfy for sin, and to pacify wrath. By the priests making atonement legally was typified Christ's making reconciliation between God and man; for he alone is the propitiation for our sins, **#1Jo 2:2**. But how much mistaken were our ancestors in times of Popery, who built religions houses, and gave large maintenance to them to buy off their sins, to deliver their souls from hell, to fetch their friends out of purgatory! &c.

Ver. 34. **And we cast lots...for the wood offering]** Heb. Kurban, or Korban, as the Gospel calleth it, because by offerings they came near to God. This wood offering we read not of till now: the prophet Isaiah telleth us, that if we should sacrifice unto God according to his excellent greatness, Lebanon would not be sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering, **#Isa 40:16**. There was much use of fuel about the temple; and it was formerly provided out of the public treasury. But that now failing, they take another order, as here; that God might not be unserved, and the daily sacrifice neglected, which they held and called, The abomination of desolation.

Ver. 35. **And to bring the firstfruits of our ground]** Heb. The firstborn. These firstfruits were the fiftieth part; and if any would be more liberal in paying, the fortieth; or, being poorer, the sixtieth part.

And the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees] God required to be honoured with the firstlings of all; to show how he sets by our young services. We prize nettle buds when they first put forth; so doth God remember and regard the kindness of our youth, **#Jer 2:1**.

Ver. 36. **Also the firstborn of our sons]** These God claimed as his due, **#Ex 12:2 22:29 Nu 3:13**, and called for, as best beloved of the parents; that, together with them, he might draw men's best affections to himself. They were to be redeemed, as were also the firstlings of all beasts not fit for sacrifice, **#Ex 13:13**, and the

redemption money brought to the priests (who were God's receivers), that they might be the better encouraged in the law of the Lord, as Hezekiah phraseth it, #2Ch 31:4.

To bring to the house of our God, unto the priests] No man might offer his own sacrifice, though it were never so good, but present it to the priest, #Le 17:5, who was to offer as well the poor man's lamb as the rich man's ox. It is by Christ alone that we must draw nigh to God, &c.

Ver. 37. **And that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough]** As oft as they baked they gave cake unto the priests, where they dwelled throughout the tribes; for they were dispersed all abroad the land for instruction of the people, and exhortation to obedience to the law of God. See #Nu 15:20,21.

And the tithes of our ground unto the Levites] All the tithes were paid to the Levites, not to the priests; and out of them the Levites paid a tenth to the priests.

In all the cities of our tillage] No places were tithed free.

Ver. 38. **And the priest the son of Aaron]** That son of Aaron by an eminency, the high priest.

Shall be with the Levites] To see that right be done, and to make an equal distribution.

When the Levites take tithes] As their due, and not as a benevolence from the people. Melchizedeck tithed Abraham, #Heb 7:6. It is your reward or wages which you dearly earn, and may justly call for, #Nu 10:31,32. The chief of the Levites demanded their due, when they were not thought of; but, by great oversight, were passed over in the division, #Jos 21:1.

And the Levites shall bring up] {See Trapp on "Ne 10:37"}

Ver. 39. **And we will not forsake the house of God]** But frequent it ourselves, and see that the priests that minister, the porters and singers, forsake it not, for want of necessary maintenance; as they

were shortly after this forced to do, and to flee every one to his field, #Ne 13:10, for a subsistence.

Chapter 11

Ver. 1. **And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem]** This city, being before repaired, beginneth now to be re-peopled. See #Ne 7:4. The rulers there took up their seat (as was fit, and as in all chief cities is usual), so that thither the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, &c. And there were set the thrones of judgment, #Ps 122:5.

The rest of the people also cast lots] The dispose whereof is wholly of the Lord; and therefore none could reasonably repine.

To bring one of ten] This shadowed out the paucity of those that shall inhabit the heavenly Jerusalem; according to #Isa 6:13 Jer 3:14. Christ at the last day will do as Joshua did (saith a divine) to find out who had stolen the Babylonish garment: there were many brought together, and all to find out one, #Jos 7:21. So all shall then appear; out of them a final number seduced, that have heard of Christ; out of them those that have professed him; and out of them, those that have professed in sincerity; and these,

— *Numero vix sunt totidem, quot*

Thebarum portae, vel divitis ostia Nili. (Juvenal, Sat. 13.)

How many, think you, shall be saved in this city? (said Chrysostom to the people of Antioch, where he had long preached, and was much admired). It will be a hard speech to 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 doubt of them too; for what villany is there in youth! what sloth in old age! and so he goes on.

The holy city] *Jerusalem is so called, because God had chosen it to set his name there. The heathen God haters had always an edge against it, and this made people so unwilling to inhabit it. Our Edward I had too high a conceit of it, when he charged his son upon his death bed to carry his heart there, and left 32,000 pounds for that purpose.*

Ver. 2. **And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves]** All the volunteers, those *Liberi et libentes*, free willing ones, that, moved with a zeal for God and his service, seated themselves at Jerusalem, though it were little for their safety or profit. Sincerity is an enemy to sinisterity; it strains out self-respects, and procures a man great respect in the hearts of good people, who are ready to commend them and pray for them, as here.

Ver. 3. **Now these are the chief of the province]** So Judea is called, because now subject and tributary to the king of Babylon; as afterwards it was to the Romans (and is therefore called a province, #Ac 25:1), and is now to the Turk. How then could those Jews in the Gospel say, We are Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; but that they cared not what they said in a bravado? Spaniards are said to be impudent braggers, and extremely proud in the lowest ebb of fortune. These Jews were so certainly; and so they continue.

Ver. 4. **Certain of the children of Judah, &c.]** Yea, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh too, #1Ch 9:3; where the same is set down as here, but the number is greater. And why? Here only those are reckoned who inhabited Jerusalem by lot; but there the volunteers also. See #Ne 11:2.

Ver. 5. **And Maaseiah the son of Baruch]** {See Trapp on "Ezr 2:3"}

Ver. 6. **Valiant men]** Heb. Men of ability and activity. It comprehendeth all the four cardinal virtues.

Ver. 7,8. Little Benjamin, the smallest of the tribes of Israel, #1Sa 9:21, yields more by half than Judah. Jerusalem stood in both these tribes.

Ver. 9. **Their overseer]** Or commissary.

Ver. 11. **Ruler of the house of God]** One of the high priest's great deputies. See #Nu 3:32 1Ch 9:11 2Ch 19:11.

Ver. 12-24.] In all 1192. The total of priests and Levites 1476, and of Judah and Benjamin 1396. So that there were more priests and Levites than of the lay people; which argues their zeal to be greatest. There were also 172 porters, who were all Levites.

Ver. 17. **To begin the thanksgiving in prayer]** To set tunes to psalms of praise, and to begin those tunes, as *precentor*, chief chanter.

Ver. 18, 19. See #Ne 11:12,13.

Ver. 20. **Were in all the cities]** Dispersed abroad to instruct the people, and to be as the salt of the earth, to keep it from putrifying.

Ver. 21. **Dwelt in Ophel]** See #Ne 3:26. Some will have it to be not a tower, but a village, near to Jerusalem.

Ver. 22. **The overseer]** The Vulgate has it, the bishop.

Ver. 23. **The king's]** viz. Of Persia, #Ezr 6:8,9 7:2,24.

Ver. 24. **At the king's hand]** Was his plenipotentiary. {*Invested with full power, esp. as the deputy, representative, or envoy of a sovereign ruler; exercising absolute power or authority.*}

Ver. 25. **In the villages thereof]** Heb. In the daughters: for villages seem to be so to the greater cities.

Chapter 12

Ver. 1. **Now these are the priests and the Levites]** Ancestors to those that dedicated the walls; and here registered, as for honour's sake to themselves, so to show that their successors, now employed in this work, were true priests and Levites of a right descent and alloy.

That went up with Zerubbabel] Together with those that came afterwards with Ezra, #Ezr 8:2,3,18,19.

Ver. 2. **Amariah, Malluch]** {*See Trapp on "Ezr 2:3"*}

Ver. 8. **Which was over the thanksgiving]** *Praefectus Musicus*, before doing the music. See #Ne 11:17.

Ver. 9. **In the watches]** In the order of their functions, taking their turns.

Ver. 10. **Joiakim begat Eliashib]** Who proved a very wicked priest, #Ne 13:4,5, and his son Joiada was little better, being allied to Sanballat, #Ne 13:28.

Ver. 11. **And Jonathan begat Jaddua]** Who was high priest in Alexander the Great's time; and meeting him, in his formalities, prevailed with him to spare the city of Jerusalem, and to confirm the privileges thereof, as Josephus reports.

Ver. 22. **To the reign of Darius the Persian]** viz. Darius Codomannus, the last Persian king.

Ver. 23. **In the book of the chronicles]** *sc.* #1Ch 9:10, &c.

Johanah the son of Eliashib] That is, Jonathan, the grandchild of Eliashib, and the son of Joiada.

Ver. 27. **And at the dedication of the wall]** To set down which is the main scope of this whole chapter.

Ver. 30. **Purified themselves, and purified the people]** But first themselves; because whoso would reform others must begin with himself, as Lyra here notes.

Ver. 34. **Judah, and Benjamin]** *i.e.* Men so called.

Ver. 36. **And Ezra before them]** Before the first company, as Nehemiah came after the second, #Ne 12:4. As the first went round from the west southward till they came to the east; so the second company went from the west northward, till they came to the east, where they both met at length in the Temple, #Ne 12:41. Praising God with all sorts of music, vocal and instrumental. This was a most solemn and sacred procession, far different from those of the Papists. The French historian telleth us of their Henry, that going in procession together with his cardinal, they had in the middle between them *Morionem, nugas et ineptias agentem*, a jester to make them sport; here was good devotion therewith. The philosopher told the fiddlers, he could be merry without them. And Aristotle being asked what he thought of music? answered, *Iovem nec canere, neque cytharam pulsare*, Jupiter neither sings nor plays on an instrument. But though God needeth it not, careth not for it; yet so far as it might excite and further devotion, these holy priests and Levites made use of the musical instruments of David (called musical instruments of God, #1Ch 16:42), and Ezra before them, as a guide; they also sang aloud, and so generally rejoiced, that their joy was heard even afar off, #Ne 12:42,43. This was right.

Ver. 39. **And from above the gate of Ephraim]** Much mention is here made of the several gates and towers; because God was much seen in helping them so soon to build such; and, by the sight of them, they were much excited to praise the Lord.

Ver. 43. **For God had made them rejoice with great joy]** By giving them both matter of joy, and hearts to do it aright. *Crede mihi res severa est verum gaudium*, saith Seneca, true joy is a severe business. *Quid nobis cum fabulis, cum risu?* saith Bernard. What have we to do with jesting and pastime, &c.? we have meat to eat, pleasure to take, that the world knows not of; we can let out our souls into God the fountain of all good, and rejoice in his word, as

one that findeth great spoil, wherein the pleasure is as much as the profit, #Ps 119:162.

Ver. 44. **For Judah rejoiced]** Heb. For the joy of Judah, the oil of spiritual gladness had so dilated their hearts, that they were most ready and willing to provide for the sacred ministers; and to pay them that which was appointed, as they had also newly covenanted to do.

For the priests and the Levites that waited] Heb. That stood, *sc.* before the Lord, and served in their courses. These they not only applauded, but liberally maintained. Today, ministers shall have hard work and good words, but slight wages. Men deal by them as carriers do by their horses, lay heavy burdens upon them, and then hang bells about their necks, &c.

Chapter 13

Ver. 1. **On that day]** That great fast day, #Ne 9:1,2, &c. Or, after Nehemiah's return from the court of Persia, #Ne 13:6, so the most expound it.

They read in the book of Moses] viz. In #De 23:3, called by the Rabbis *Sepher tochechoth*, the book of rebukes, or of instructions, upon conviction.

And therein was found written] *Perquam durum est* (so it might seem to Ammonites and Moabites), *sed ita lex scripta est*, The law was perpetual and indispensable; a sign of great wrath.

That the Ammonite and the Moabite] Lot's by-blows and the Church's constant enemies.

Into the congregation of God] *i.e.* Assemblies of God's people, whether sacred or civil, unless proselyted.

Ver. 2. **Because they met not the children of Israel]** A bare omission of observance subjected them to divine vengeance. As God requiteth the least courtesy done to his people, be it but a cup of cold water; so he repayeth the least discourtesy, or but neglect of them, to whom the glorious angels are ministering spirits, and may not think themselves too good to serve them, #Heb 1:14.

But hired Balaam against them] With the rewards of divination, #Nu 22:7, the wages of wickedness, #Jude 11 2Pe 2:15, which he greedily ran after; and not so much as roving at God, made the world his standing mark, till he had got a sword in his guts.

Howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing] So he did the pope's curse to Queen Elizabeth, and before her, to Luther. *Quo magis illi furunt, eo amplius precedo*, saith he in a certain epistle; the more they rage and ban me the more I proceed and prosper. The pope excommunicated him, the emperor proscribed him, &c. *Omnium animi tum erant arrecti, quid illa Caesaris et pontificis fulmina essent effectura*. All men's minds were then set an end, and stood on tip-toes, as it were, to see what would be the issue, saith mine author (Scultet. Annal.). A wonderful work of our God surely, and worthy to be chronicled! Luther is conveyed out of the way by the Elector of Saxony for ten months, till he would be hid no longer. Meanwhile Pope Leo dieth, the Emperor Charles V is first called into Spain to suppress seditions there, and afterwards is so busied in his wars with the French king, that he hath no leisure to look after Luther. After this, when the French king was beaten by the emperor, and carried prisoner into Spain, he was released and sent home again, upon the condition that the emperor and he should root out the Lutheran heresy, as they called it. But our God broke their designs, and turned this curse also into a blessing. For the French king returning home, and conceiving that the conditions that he had yielded unto, to get off, were unequal, entereth into a league with the pope and the State of Venice against the emperor. The pope, that he might cover his false dealing with the emperor, sends abroad his Bull and therein calleth knave first. The emperor, on the other side, complaineth of the pope's malice and double-dealing, exhorteth him to peace, and concludeth that it were fitter for them to unite against the Lutherans. And when he could prevail nothing by writing, he abolished his authority throughout all Spain, sends his armies against him under the duke of Bourbon, claps him up prisoner in St Angelo, proclaims open war against the French, &c. So that religion got ground, and all things fell out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel, #Php 1:12. Let them curse thy Church, Lord, but do thou bless; when they arise, let them ever be ashamed; but let thy servants

rejoice, and speed the better for their ill wishes. So be it, **#Ps 109:28**.

Ver. 3. **Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law]** And were transformed into the same image therewith, by the Spirit of grace, who had made their flinty hearts to become fleshy, &c. We used to say, As hard hearted as a Jew. But they that relent not, repent not at the hearing of the word, are worse than these Jews; and it may be feared that the Lord hath a purpose to destroy them. "The law of the Lord," when but read only, "is perfect, converting the soul," **#Ps 19:7**, but woe to the irreformable, **#2Co 4:4**.

That they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude] *Vulgus promiscuum*, the rabble of strangers, wherewith this people were haunted and pestered from the very first, **#Ex 12:38 Nu 11:4**. These, moved with miracles, removed with them out of Egypt, but for a mischief to them, for they drew them into sin then, as those here did also; and were, therefore, worthily put away, as the law required.

Ver. 4. **And before this]** Before the commandment came as a lamp, and the law a light, {*as #Pr 6:23*} causing a reformation. As toads and serpents grow in dark and dirty cellars, so do sinful disorders in ignorant places and persons.

Eliashib the priest] The high priest; but such a one as from whom profaneness went forth into all the land, **#Jer 23:15**. The sins of teachers are teachers of sins.

Having the oversight of the chamber] *i.e.* Of all the chambers of the temple, by virtue of his office; and, therefore, thought belike he might do what he wished with them (now in Nehemiah's absence) without control.

Was allied unto Tobiah] A bitter enemy to God's people, but sly and subtle, seeking to insinuate by alliance and letters of persuasion; such as Cardinal Sadolet wrote to the Genevenses, in Calvin's absence, and Cardinal Lorraine to the Protestant princes of Germany, that he and his brethren, the Guises (those sworn swordmen of the devil), would embrace the reformed religion.

Ver. 5. **And he had prepared for him a great chamber]** Called chambers, **#Ne 13:9**, for he had laid many chambers into one, saith

Junius, by taking down the partitions, and furnishing the same for his friend and ally Tobiah.

Ver. 6. **But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem]** And thence it was that things grew so far out of order. So when Moses was gone into the mount, the people set up the golden calf; they turned aside quickly, saith God, #Ex 32:8. So were the Corinthians and Galatians so soon as St Paul's back was but turned upon them, #Ga 1:6, *Levitate prorsus desultoria*. And so were these Jews, notwithstanding their better purposes, promises, covenants; yea, and beginnings of reformation. See #Ne 10:30.

And after certain days] Heb. At the end of days; that is, at a year's end, as Vatablus and Genebrard expound it. No longer than a year was Nehemiah away from his government (to show his dutiful respect to his master, the king of Persia, and to negotiate for his nation), but all things were out of frame, so well had the devil and his instruments bestirred them. But Junius rendereth the text, *exactis aliquot annis*, certain years being past; and Lyra thus, at the end of his days, or of his life, when he now waxed old, he had a desire to go and reform things amiss at Jerusalem, and to die and lay his bones there. So likewise Funccius, the eighth year after his return to Artaxerxes, which was also the last year of his reign. And indeed one would wonder how in less than one year's time things so well settled should be so far disjointed; but that the devil is οὐ πονηρός, the great troubler, and had by sin hurled, at first, confusion over the whole creation in an instant.

Ver. 7. **And I came to Jerusalem]** There was his heart before, *Animus est ubi amat, non ubi animat* (Aug. de Cir. Dei, 1.9, e. 16). No sooner, therefore, had he got his *conge d'aller* at court, but he flees to Jerusalem, as the doves do to their windows. *Fugiendum est ad clarissimam patriam; ibi pater, ibi omnia*, saith Plotinus, the philosopher: hasten we all to our heavenly home; there is all that heart can wish, &c. Nehemiah lacketh nothing, with Artaxerxes, Hadad with Pharaoh; yet, in any case, will go into his own country, #1Ki 11:22. Rivers run into the sea, whence they came; the dove resteth not but upon the ark. *Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos Ducit* -(Ovid).

And understood not of the evil that Eliashib did] As Joseph brought his brethren's evil report to their father, #Ge 37:2, as the household of Chloe declared unto St Paul the contentions at Corinth, #1Co 1:11, so did some good souls this high priest's miscarriages to Nehemiah, and that in an ordinance; not to disgrace him, but to reclaim him, and to free themselves from the guilt of a sinful silence.

Ver. 8. **And it grieved me sore]** Such was his zeal for God that he could not bear it; no more could Phineas those two naughty packs, nor Paul the idolatry of Athens, #Ac 17:16, his spirit was moved, he was in a fit, yea, almost besides himself, as the word *παωωξυνετο* signifieth. This the mad world counteth madness, #2Co 5:13, but madness in this case is better than mopishness, and the true zealot may answer his adversaries as David did Michal, #2Sa 6:21, or as Basil did the threatening prefect, who told him that he was mad, *Opto me in aeternum sic delirare*, I wish I may be so mad to my life's end.

Therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah] As a profane thing, not fit to be in so holy a place. True zeal, as fire, is active, and saith, Shall I budge, stop, or step back, because *hoc Ithacus velit?* remit my diligence for fear of a frown, loss, or mischief? Out of doors with this bondwoman and her son; down with this piece of grass, let Adonijah die, though Bathsheba intercede for him, &c.

Ver. 9. **Then I commanded]** This was governor like: and blessed be he that hath a stomach for God, and will do his utmost for him, as occasion requireth. Of Nehemiah it might well be said, as Chrysostom doth of Peter, that he was like a man made all of fire, walking among stubble; or like Basil, who was said to be a pillar of fire; he was of such a masculine, disengaged, courageous disposition.

And they cleansed the chamber] The Levites did, with their legal rites and purifications, according to their office, which Nehemiah would not invade.

And thither brought I again] And so set things to rights, as our late reformers began happily to do; but Satan hath hitherto hindered them.

Ver. 10. **And I perceived]** Heb. I took knowledge, and was soon sensible of it, as a great public mischief: for *ad tenuitatem beneficiorum necessario sequitur socordia sacerdotum*, lean benefits make leaden ministers (Panormit.). This the magistrate must look to, and provide that they may have the double honour that is due to them, of countenance and maintenance, #1Ti 5:17; or else religion will soon go to wreck.

That the portions of the Levites had not been given them] And why? because the high priest was so bad, and the Levites, therefore, thought to be little better. How apt are men to dispute God out of his own! How witty to save their purses! How ready to say, with William Rufus, The Church bread is sweet bread! and with Julian, the apostate, to take away the ministers' maintenance, pretending conscience; for that too much living would be a burden to them; and who knows how Eliashib and his Levites may misemploy it?

For the Levites and singers, that did the work] And are, therefore, worthy of their wages, must have their honorary stipends, or cannot subsist; are not of the chameleon kind, to live by air; but, as harvest labourers, must have that which is good; as oxen that tread out the corn must have more than straw allowed them.

Were fled every one to his field] For stark need, in the fail of temple maintenance; they were glad to do as they might, and let their charge lie. Though tithes were not paid, yet they had some glebe land {*A portion of land assigned to a clergyman as part of his benefice.*} to live upon.

Ver. 11. **Then contended I with the rulers]** Who had let loose the golden reins of authority, and, by a passive ministry at least, suffered this sacrilege, whilst they bare the sword in vain, if they were not chief actors in it; as Luther complaineth of the rulers of his time, *Nisi superesset spoliū Aegypti quod rapuimus Papae, &c.*, If we had not some of the spoils of Egypt, pulled from the pope, all we ministers of the gospel might be famished; and this little that is left us is violently taken from us by the civil magistrate. Parishes and

schools are polled and spoiled by them, as if they meant to starve us all. Thus Luther, and more to this purpose.

Why is the house of God forsaken?] By your slackness and covetousness, contrary to your covenant? #Ne 10:39.

And I gathered them together] *i.e.* The scattered Levites, that God's service might be no longer intermitted, and his wrath thereby provoked. Thus Nehemiah, whatever his hand found to do, did it with all his might, #Ec 8:10; as David danced, Baruch builded, &c., he went throughly about his work.

And set them in their place] Heb. Made them stand in their standing, as if *absque stationibus istis non staret mundus*, without those standings the world could not stand.

Ver. 12. **Then brought all Judah]** Then, when there was no other remedy. There must be a compulsory means, or ministers shall be poorly maintained. *Quod si sustentandi essent de contributione populi, misere profecto et duriter viverent*, saith Luther. If once they be brought to live upon the people's benevolence, they shall have a poor life of it. Once, in times of Popery, there was need of a statute of Mortmain, providing that they should give no more to the Church. But now it is otherwise; these last and worst times have seen the springs of bounty, like Jordan, turned back; which heretofore did run so fresh and fast into the Church. Our statesmen have ministers' maintenance now under debate; and much lifting there is by a levelling party (not without a Jesuit to help them) at tithes and college lands. The Lord direct our rulers; and preserve us out of the hands of those hateful harpies. {*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.*} (This was written July 30, A. D. 1653.)

Ver. 13. **And I made treasurers]** Nehemiah left nothing undone that might befit a vigilant and valiant governor. He was *omnibus numeris absolutus*, every way complete.

For they were counted faithful] A singular praise in persons intrusted, #1Co 4:2 Ne 7:2 Nu 12:7. Such men as these are now gone in pilgrimage (as one saith), and their return is altogether

uncertain. When one desired to see Alexander's treasures, he showed him not his wealth, but his friends. Nehemiah might have done the like by these faithful treasurers, precious pieces surely, rare and rich jewels.

And their office was] Heb. It was upon them. Duty is a debt, which, till it be discharged, a good heart cannot rest.

To distribute unto their brethren] To a treasure are required, 1. A laying in; 2. A lying hid; 3. A drawing out: so to a treasurer, that he receive readily, keep carefully, distribute prudently.
Ver. 14. **Remember me, O my God]** See #Ne 5:19.

And wipe not out my good deeds] Forget not my labour of love: God requireth us to be his remembrancers, who yet needeth it not, #Heb 6:10; there is a book of remembrance written before him, #Mal 3:16, and good Nehemiah would not be wiped out of that book, nor blotted out of the book of life, #Re 3:5. That wretched monk died blasphemously who said, *Redde mihi aeternam vitam quam debes*, Give me heaven which thou owest me.

That I have done] Sure it is, saith Austin, that we do what good we do; but it is God alone who causeth us so to do. Say, therefore, Not unto us, Lord, not to us; but to thy name be the praise.
Ver. 15. **In those days saw I in Judah]** He was *centoculus*, hundred eyed, and had his eye in every corner, to find out and redress abuses; wherein he was incessant and indefatigable. He chose rather to be counted a busy justice than a quiet gentleman.

Some treading winepresses on the sabbath day] These Jews were not so loose, but their posterity at this day are, in some respects, as much overstrict, as is elsewhere noted.

Dum vitant stulti vitium, in contraria currunt.

While they avoid foolish vices, they run in contrary ways.

And bringing in sheaves] As a work of necessity.

As also wine, grapes, and figs] As a work of mercy. So they would plead likely. Sin and shifting came into the world together, no evil wants its excuse; but the covering is too short, and God will wash off that varnish with rivers of brimstone.

And all manner of burdens] They did not so much as keep *Sabbatum Asinorum*, a sabbath of fools, a rest from servile employments. See **#Jer 17:21**.

And I testified against them] *i.e.* I challenged them as impious for so doing, and provokers of God's wrath, traitors to the state, **#Ne 13:18**. This should every man do in his place. A certain Indian coming by, and seeing one of the New English profaning the Lord's day by felling of a tree, said to him, Thou much mached man, that is, Thou very wicked man, What, break you God's day? knowest thou not that this is the Lord's day in Massachusetts? that is, in one of the English plantations so called.

In the day wherein they sold victuals] A practice too much in use in this nation, till keeping of markets and fairs on the Christian Sabbath was put down by authority; and especially by that late good act for the sanctification of the Lord's day, grossly broken in this kind, under many of the bishops' noses; yea, made a voider and dunghill, for all refuse businesses.

Ver. 16. **There dwelt men of Tyre also]** Phoenician merchants had their factors in Jerusalem.

And all manner of ware] Merchandise; for Tyre was a great market town, and famous for fishing, **#Eze 27**

And sold on the sabbath] Which they ought not to have done; for that was God's market day, and not man's.

Unto the children of Judah] Who were, therefore, worse than the Tyrians, because they ought to have been better; therefore wrath shall be upon the Jew first, and then upon the Gentile, **#Ro 2:10**

And in Jerusalem] This holy city was become a harlot. Filthiness in a stew is nothing so odious as in a virgin; a nettle in a wilderness is not so unsightly as in a garden. In a land of uprightness to do wickedly is an aggravating circumstance, **#Isa 26:10**.

Ver. 17. **Then contended I with the nobles]** Heb. With the white ones; that had white clothes, but black souls. The snow drift covers many a muck hill. See **#Ne 13:11**.

What evil thing is this that ye do] Or suffer others to do, at least, and are, therefore, worthily disgraced; as Moses also was for like cause, **#Ex 16:28**.

And profane the sabbath day?] As if it were a common day, and not God's enclosure, holy and honourable. Should men thus rob God of his right, unground his several, make false entry upon his freehold? Hath he not singled out this day for his own, as he did Israel out of all nations, the tree of knowledge out of all the trees of the garden, and out of all the world (which is his) the tenth? This is the day which the Lord hath made, &c., it is a day like that night, **#Ex 12:42**, to be kept holy unto the Lord; that day of the Lord which all his people must keep throughout their generations. To profane it or wound it is here called an evil thing with an accent, a wickedness with a witness.

Ver. 18. **Did not your fathers thus]** And will ye abet and add to their wicked practices? Will ye needs espouse their sins, as a seed of serpents?

And did not our God bring all this evil upon us?] And that justly, because, Belshazzar like, though we knew all this, yet we rifted up ourselves against the Lord of heaven, as the horse that casteth his rider, and riseth up against him, **#Da 5:22,23**. Hath ever any waxed fierce against God, and prospered? **#Job 9:4**. Was not he that but gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day paid home with stones? Was there not for this very sin a fire kindled in the gates of Jerusalem, that devoured the palaces thereof? **#Jer 17:27**. Justly is he made an

example that will not take example by others; and it is a sure both presage and desert of ruin not to be warned.

Yet ye bring more wrath] As if ye had a mind to wrestle a fall with the Almighty, and to try for mastery. But do ye provoke the Lord to anger? are ye stronger than he?

Ver. 19. When the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark] As it did early, because the mountains were around Jerusalem, #Ps 125:2.

Before the sabbath] That there might be a due preparation without interruption. At this day, in many cities where the Jews reside there is one goes about and proclaims the approaching of the Sabbath about half-an-hour before sunset the day before, that they may set all aside to sanctify it.

I commanded that the gates should be shut] And thereby all such occasions of profaning shut out.

And charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath] So King Edgar ordained that Sunday should be solemnized from Saturday, nine of the clock, till Monday morning here in this land, that God might surely have his due. The Jews of Tiberias began the Sabbath sooner than others. Those at Tsepphore continued it longer, adding *de profane ad sacrum*. of common to sacred time. Hence R. Jose wished that his portion might be with those of Tiberius, and ended it with those of Tsepphore (Buxtorf).

And some of my servants set I at the gates] To keep them carefully, and to prevent profanations. How the Athenians amerced those that came not to the assemblies on holy days, hurdling up all the streets, except them that led to the ecclesia, taking away all their saleable wares, &c., see Rous's Archaeolog. Attic. p. 103.

Ver. 20. So the merchants...lodged without Jerusalem] They would not easily be said, or take an answer, so desirous they were of some takings from the Jews. There is nothing in the world that is more pertinacious, and that cleaveth closer to a man, than a strong lust; say it be covetousness, wantonness, passionateness, or any the like, entreat it to be gone, as Naomi did Ruth, threaten it, as Abner

did Asahel, or as Nehemiah did these merchants, you prevail nothing, till God comes and strikes a parting blow, &c.

Ver. 21. **Why lodge ye about the wall?**] His care was also lest God should be dishonoured in the suburbs. A little fire warms but a little way off, when a great one casteth about its heat far and near. He feared also lest those within the walls, seeing them, might be tempted to wish themselves with them; as when Sulla, the Roman, lay before the walls of Athens, the citizens' minds were with him, though their bodies were kept from him.

I will lay hands on you] I will lay you fast enough: be packing, therefore. The best way to be rid of sin is to threaten it, punish it, by the practice of mortification, to handle it roughly. We are not debtors to the flesh, **#Ro 8:12**. We owe it nothing but stripes, nothing but the blue eye St Paul gave it, **#1Co 9:27**, *υποπιαζω*.

Ver. 22. **And I commanded the Levites]** He might do it, as their governor. How then can Popish priests exempt themselves from the power of the civil magistrate? and say, as those shavelings did to our Henry II, when they lashed him on the bare till the blood followed, *Domine, noli minari; nos enim de tali curia sumus, quae consuevit imperare regibus, et imperatoribus;* that is, Sir, spare your threats; for we are of that high court of Rome which is wont to lord it over kings and emperors? Might he not have well replied, Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi; or rather, ye limbs of Antichrist?

Come and keep the gates] The temple gates, with— *Procul hinc, procul este profani*. Far off fro here, far off is to be the profane. In Greece the priest, at their solemn sacrifices, was wont to ask, *τις τηδε*, Who's there? and the people were to answer, *πολλοι τ αγαθοι τε παρεισι*, Here are many, and those also good men.

To sanctify the sabbath day] By severing the precious from the vile; and seeing that all things were rightly carried by themselves and the rest.

Remember me, &c.] See **#Ne 13:14**.

And spare me] *Meritum meum est misericordia Domini. Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut sim meus* My service is the mercy of God. I

shutter at whatever is from me, that is mine. (Bernard). Thomas Aquinas, lying on his death bed, and being about to receive the Lord's supper, besought the Lord with tears that he would spare him according to his abundant goodness; and snatching up the Bible, he hugged it, and said, I believe all the contents of this blessed book. The like is reported of William Wickham, founder of New College, Oxon, and of Charles V, emperor, and some other wiser Papists.

Ver. 23. **In those days saw I Jews]** Outwardly, at least (as the apostle distinguishes, #Ro 2:28), and that also was then a prerogative, #Ro 3:1, and shall appear to be so again, when their long looked for conversion day is come, #Ro 11:26.

That had married wives of Ashdod] Outlandish wives, and of another religion; and with these they cohabited, as the Hebrew word here importeth.

Ver. 24. **And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod]** They had a mixture of their mother's both speech and spirit: the birth followed the belly, the conclusion followed the weaker proposition.

And could not speak in the Jews' language] Though it were that of their fathers. Mothers are most about children, and have the greater advantage to perfume them, or poison them. But what mad fellows were those old Britons or Welshmen, who driven out of their own country by the Saxons, came into Little Britain in France; where, when they had married wives, they are said to have cut out their tongues, lest they should corrupt the language of their children! Hence the British or Welsh language remaineth still in that country.

Ver. 25. **And cursed them]** *i.e.* I denounced God's heavy curse and vengeance upon them (according to that themselves had wished and entered into, #Ne 10:30), in case they repented not. This is nothing, then, in favour of our cursing men who are cursed men, &c.

And smote certain of them] So far was his heart enraged with a holy hatred of their sin, that he could not forbear them. So when Charles V had heard that Farnesius (General of the pope's forces) had ravished certain ladies, he brake out into this speech (and was never in all his life observed to be more angry at anything), *Si*

adesset impurus ille Farnesius, manu mea confoderem. Oh, if I had here that filthy fellow, I would slay him with mine own hand.

And made them swear by God] So they had done before, #Ne 10:29,30. But now, alas, they were all gone aside, they were altogether become filthy, they stank above ground, #Ps 14:3. He takes therefore another oath of them, &c.

Ver. 26. **Did not Solomon, king of Israel, &c.]** Did not he deviate and prevaricate in his old age, shamefully turning from the Lord, who had appeared unto him twice? Did not his strange wives draw him to strange practices; insomuch as some have doubted about his salvation, and Bellarmine reckoneth him (but wrongfully) amongst reprobates?

Yet among many nations was there no king like him] For honour, pleasure, wisdom, and wealth, &c., the abundance he had of these drew out his spirits, and dissolved him. See #Mr 10:23,25 1Ti 6:9 Isa 39:1,2.

Who was beloved of his God] His *corculum*, his darling, his Jedidiah, #2Sa 12:25, but he did not reciprocate; his heart was disjointed and hung loose from the Lord, whom he grievously provoked by his sensuality and apostasy.

And God made him king over all Israel] Not by right of inheritance (for he was a younger brother), but by special designation. Yet he defied that throne whereunto God had so graciously advanced him; this was a great aggravation of his sin, #2Sa 12:7,8 De 32:12,19 Am 2:9.

Nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin] And that most shamefully. Never was there a wiser man than Solomon; and never any saint fell into more foolish lusts. Job, who had the greatest adversity that ever man felt, fell much; but Solomon, who had the greatest prosperity that ever man saw, fell more.

Ver. 27. **To do all this great evil]** Here are three articles in the Hebrew, importing the heinousness of this sin. See the like, #Ge 39:9.

To transgress against our God] No sin can be little, because it is a disloyalty (so the word signifieth) against so great a God, and his most holy law; a sacrilegious trespass.

Ver. 28. **And one of the sons of Joiada]** His grandson Manasses, brother to Jaddua the high priest, a vile apostate, and first author of that famous schism and deadly feud between the Samaritans and Jews, **#Joh 4:20** (Joseph. lib. xi.).

Was son-in-law to Sanballat] Who, to keep him to his wife, built a fair temple on Mount Gerizim, hard by the city of Sychem, and made Manasses chief priest thereof.

Therefore I chased him from me] I caused him to be excommunicated, and banished from amongst us.

Remember them, O my God] For evil, as me for good, **#Ne 13:31**, and in both remember the relation that is between thee and my soul. Woe be to those whom God's people do thus turn over to him to be punished.

Because they have defiled the priesthood] *Corruptio optimi pessima*: as sweetest wine makes the sourest vinegar. A wicked priest is the worst creature upon earth.

And the covenant, &c.] {*See Trapp on "Mal 2:4"*}

Ver. 30. **Thus cleansed I them from all strangers]** As from so much filth and rubbish. I made them either put away their strange wives, or quit their places. He did not raise a dust only, but not remove it, as Luther wittily saith of the cardinals and prelates, that met at Rome about reformation of the Church (Sleid. Com.). These he compared 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 all fell down again. Nehemiah made clean work, and so purged the priesthood, that he made it shine again, as the word here signifieth; the priests were (as Chrysostom saith all ministers should be), *puriore coelo*, clearer than the azured sky; and as those Nazarites, **#La 4:7**, purer than snow, whiter than milk, &c.

Ver. 31. **And for the wood offering]** See #Ne 10:34,35.

Remember me, O my God, for good] See #Ne 5:19 13:15,22. He brags not, but prays, producing his good deeds as testimonies of his sincerity, whereof he begs acceptance. And this is a sweet close of the Old Testament (say our last and largest annotations upon the Bible), for this was the last history and book thereof, though the Book of Esther be set after it. Malachi prophesied anon after the temple was built, as we see (saith Master Pemble) by his reprovng of that sin, in corrupting the holy seed by marrying strangers. Sixtus Senensis placeth him as low as about five hundred years before Christ. Many of the ancients make him to be the same with Ezra. Nehemiah then, as it may seem, hath the honour of putting a perclose to the Old Testament; and he doth it with this short but pithy prayer, which he uttereth (as Luther used to pray), *tanta reverentia, ut si Deo; et tanta fiducia, ut si amico;* with so great reverence, as to God; and yet with so great confidence, as to his God, a God in covenant with him. "Remember me, O my God, for good." *Fiat, Fiat.* Let him do, let him do.

Esther

Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus]** This book is in the Hebrew called Esther, because she is a chief party therein mentioned and memorized. The Rabbis call it Megillath Esther, that is, the volume of Esther; and further tell us that there be five such volumes of Scripture books; viz. Solomon's Song, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and this of Esther: which they use to read all over in their synagogues, five times a year. 1. Solomon's Song at the Passover; in remembrance of their one time deliverance out of Egypt, and their future salvation by the Messiah. 2. Ruth at Pentecost; because therein is set down the genealogy of David their first king. 3. The Lamentations of Jeremiah on the ninth day of the fifth month (that is, of August); in regard to the Babylonian captivity, and ruin of the Temple. 4. Ecclesiastes, at the feast of Tabernacles; in a thankful remembrance of the Divine providence asserted in that book; and exercised over them in a special manner, when they wandered in the wilderness. 5. Lastly, this of Esther, on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar, or February; and as often as they hear mention of Haman, they do, even to this day, with their fists and hammers beat upon the benches and boards, as if they did beat upon Haman's head (R. Abraham, Hispanus cognom, σοφος). They tell us that this book was written by Mordecai himself, an eyewitness and a main party, according to **#Es 9:20**, and have ever reckoned it among the Chetubin or Hagiographa, that is, the books of Holy Scripture. Indeed, because they find not the name of God or Lord in this whole book, they have a custom to cast it to the ground before they read it. But they need not; for as the ancient heathens used to write upon their books, Θεος, Θεος, God, God, so might the Jews upon this; there being nowhere in Scripture found more remarkable passages and acts of God's immediate providence for his calamitous people than in this. Surely (saith a great divine) like as a man by a chain made up of several links, some of gold, others of silver, some of brass, iron, or tin, may be drawn out of a pit; so (it may here be seen that) the Lord, by the concurrence of several subordinate things which have no manner of dependence or natural coincidence among themselves, hath

wonderfully wrought the deliverance of his Church; that it might appear to be the work of his own hand.

In the days of Ahasuerus] That is, of Xerxes, the terror of Greece, called Ahasuerosh, that is, a hereditary, begotten by king Darius, and born of a king's daughter, viz. Atossa, daughter to Cyrus, and heir of the kingdom by lineal descent. Such a hereditary prince was our Henry VIII. Greek authors also call Xerxes, Oxyastris, and his wife Amestris, which seemeth to be the same as Esther, who is called Amestris by a like composition, saith an interpreter, as Haman's father was called Ham-Adata, an honourable addition to a name among the Persians.

This is Ahasuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia] viz. Inclusive, *ut loquuntur*. This must needs be Xerxes; for he subdued Ethiopia, and thereupon made this great feast. He was lord, we see, of a very great part of the habitable world; as is now the Great Turk, not inferior in greatness and strength, to the mightiest monarchs that ever yet were upon the face of the earth. No part of the world is left untouched by him but America only; not more fortunate, saith one, with her rich mines, than in that she is so far from so great and dangerous an enemy. Nevertheless of all this greatness (belluine rather than genuine), what saith Luther? *Turcicum imperium quantum quantum est, &c.* The Turkish empire in its utmost extent is but a crust cast to his dogs, by the great housekeeper of the world. The inheritance he reserves for his children; who though held here to strait allowance, yet are far dearer to him than the world's greatest darlings; as the poor captive Jews were, than this great emperor. Those that seek a mystery in this history tell us, that Ahasuerus typically representeth God the Father ruling over all kingdoms and creatures on earth; choosing some to be heirs of heaven, and purifying them for that purpose. Mordecai (signifying bitter and contrite) setteth forth Christ, say they, broken for our sins, and suffering the bitter wrath of God. Esther (being the same with Alma, #Isa 7:14, a pure virgin, secreted and secured from defilement) is a lively image of the Church, unspotted by the world, and provided for by her Mordecai. The disdainful Vashti (taking her name from Shatha, to drink) is a fit effigy of the world, proud and luxurious, and therefore excluded heaven. Haman (signifying a

tumultuous and obstreperous person) represents the devil, restless and rageful, but to his own utter ruin, &c. These are pretty things, but not so proper. The Popish commentators are full of them.

Over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces] Seven more than were in Darius the Mede's time, #Da 6:1. Monarchs will be still adding; and although a man were monarch of the whole world, yea, had the command of moon and stars, yet would he still be peeping beyond them for more, more. Herodotus reckons up sundry satrapies under the king of Persia, out of which he received, yearly, fourteen thousand five hundred and threescore Euboian talents: so that this monarchy is fitly compared (in Daniel) to the silver breast and arms in Nebuchadnezzar's image.

Ver. 2. **When the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne]** Having peace with all men, being quiet and secure; though this lasted not long; for he was shamefully foiled by the Grecians (against whom he led an army of two millions of men), and forced to flee back again over Hellespont, in a poor fisher's boat; which being overloaded, had sunk all, if the Persians by the casting away of themselves had not saved the life of their king. *Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo, &c.*

Which was in Shushan the palace] See #Ne 1:1. Ptolemy, Strabo, and Pliny tell us, that in this city (situated upon the river Choaspes) was that famous palace of Cyrus, which was adorned with marble walls, golden pillars, and a great store of precious stones; shining as so many stars from the roof and sides of it, to the dazzling of the eyes of the beholders (Ptol. 1. 6, c. 3; Strab. lib. 15; Plin. 1. 6, c. 27; Herod. 1. 5; Athen. 1. 12, c. 3). Here it was, likely, that the kings of Persia sat to hear causes under a vine of gold, set with smaragds, as with so many clusters of grapes.

Ver. 3. **In the third year of his reign he made a feast]** Such a feast, as that all other feasts were but hunger to it, whether we regard the number of guests, the greatness of preparation, or the continuance of time; yet it had an end. But so hath not the feast of a good conscience, #Pr 15:15. {See Trapp on "Pr 15:15"}

Unto all his princes and his servants] To gratify them for their former valour and victory; and to inflame them to a new expedition,

viz. against Greece; for the conquest whereof he was now addressing himself; as also that his glory and wealth appearing herein, might make them all the more willing to live in subjection to him, so royal and munificent a prince.

The power of Persia] Or to the army of Persia and Media.

The nobles] Satrapis, παραταμοπις, of which the word Parthemim is made, as some think. Others derive it of Perath, *quasi principes Euphrataei*, the princes that were beyond the river Euphrates (Kimchi Arias.).

Ver. 4. **When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom]** Or, that he might show, &c. There were other ends of this feast, as was before noted; but this is instanced by the Holy Ghost, to set forth the pride and vanity of this great monarch, abusing God's gifts to his own ambition, and priding himself in that wealth which had been gotten by the hard labour of his poor subjects; from whom haply his exactors had received no less sums of curses than of coin. *O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!* O the concerns of men, O how great it is in vain things.

And the honour of his excellent majesty] *Atqui virtute, non vanitate acquirenda est gloria*, saith the orator, glory is to be gotten by virtue, and not by these like vanities, Hezekiah smarted for his folly in this kind; Nebuchadnezzar much more. This great potentate was shortly after brought low enough.

*Desinat elatis quisquam confidere rebus;
Magna repente ruunt, summa cadunt subito (Claudian).*

Let him cease from burying whoever is to divided by things, They suddenly destroy great things, the greatest things perish suddenly.

Many days, even an hundred and fourscore days] *A hundred, fourscore, and five days, saith Joseph Ben Gorion. So long lasted the first feast; though Lyra will have it, that so long they were in preparing, but the feasting was not till after these days expired; and that then both prince and people were feasted together seven days. Of the Sybarites indeed we read, that when they made great feasts,*

they invited their women twelve months before, that they might come the more richly and luxuriously attired, and might be the more sumptuously entertained. But the text plainly shows that Lyra here did delirare, is crazy, miss the meaning; for after that, the princes, from sundry parts, had been half a year in feasting.

Ver. 5. **The king made a feast unto all the people]** This was not amiss, so that care were taken that no *irregulares gulares* unsatisfied appetites, were found among them; for kings should carry themselves toward their people as kindly as parents do toward their children, and shepherds toward their sheep. Are they not therefore called *patres patriae*, fathers of their country, and shepherds of their people? ποιμενες λαων. David and Cyrus were taken from the sheepfolds to feed men, #Ps 78:70.

Both unto great and small] Pell-mell, one with another, to show his liberality; which yet he might better have bestowed in another way, than in belly cheer, and such open housekeeping to all comers without difference; since this is rather prodigality than bounty.

Seven days] Too long together to be a feasting; since at such times men are so apt to exceed and lash out; eating that on earth that they must digest in hell; and drowning both bodies and souls in wine and strong drink, as Richard III did his brother Clarence in a butt {*A cask for wine or ale, of capacity varying from 108 to 140 gallons.*} of Malmsey.

In the court of the garden] In the banqueting house, or *sub dio*, in the open air in the garden, where they had elbow room, and all manner of delights, fit to have been seasoned and allayed with the sight of a sepulchre (the Jews built their tombs beforehand in their gardens), or else of a death's head (as was the manner of the Egyptians at their great feasts), to keep them from surfeiting.

Ver. 6. **Where were white, green, and blue hangings]** Rich and royal tapestry, set forth with variety of colours, pleasant to the eye.

Fastened with cords of fine linen] More precious than silk.

And pillars of marble] To bear up the hangings, that the guests might the better behold them, and be defended by them from wind, dust, and heat.

The beds] Whereon they sat at meat (which was the manner of all those Eastern parts), their bodies so composed, as that the upper part thereof being somewhat bent and bowed, the rest lay along.

Were of gold and silver] The bedsteads were. See #Am 6:4 2:8 Jer 23:40.

Upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble] Or, porphyry or crystal. All very costly and stately; and these are those things that made us desirous to live longer here, as Charles V told the duke of Venice; who had showed him his fair palace richly furnished, *Haec sunt quae nos faciunt invito mori*. These are what they make for us, *who are* unwilling to die. But what said Nugas, the Scythian prince, to certain ambassadors who brought him brave and rich presents? Will these save a man from sickness? Will they stave off death? Do not these outward gauds {festivities} and gaieties carry away the heart from the love and care of better things? (Val. Max. Christian). Solomon saith as much in his sacred retractations; and Charles V (who besides other territories and dominions, had twenty-eight kingdoms) voluntarily gave over the empire as a burden; and cursing his honours in his old age, his trophies, riches, royalties, said to them all, *Abite hinc, abite longe*, Be gone, all of you; get you hence. *Abi perdita bestia quae me perdidisti*, as Cornelius Agrippa said on his death bed, to his familiar devil, Be packing, thou wretched beast, that hast undone me for ever.

Ver. 7. **And they gave them drink]** Think the same of food also; but the whole feast hath its denomination in the original from drinking; because at such times they drank freely, and many times more than did them good, *Quia in conviviis largiter bibi solet* (Corn. Nepos in Vit. Alcibiad.). The Persians are infamous for their intemperance, though they had laws to the contrary; and Xenophon tells us that of old they were otherwise. Only once a year their king had licence to be drunk, viz. when they sacrificed to the sun (Athenaeus).

In vessels of gold] Beset with precious stones (as Josephus addeth), *ad delectationem et spectaculum*. to pleasure and show.

The vessels being diverse one from another] To show the king's store of them, that there was not *curta supellex*, sparse provision, but great plenty and variety of dishes and dainties.

And royal wine] Choice wine, and fit for a king's palate. *Vinum Cos*, Wine of Cos, as they call it merrily at Lovain and Paris, *id est, coloris, odoris, saporis optimi*, of the best colour, smell, and taste (Beehive of Rome, Pref.).

In abundance] They swam in wine, and the tables did even sweat with a variety of dishes; *quicquid avium volitabat, quicquid piscium natabat, quicquid ferarum discurrebat, &c.*, whatever of the birds were flying, whatever of the fish were swimming, whatever of the wild beasts were wandering about. to use Seneca's expression.

According to the state of the king] For whom it was not unlawful to feast, so to show his liberality toward his peers, and courtesy to his people. But that which was blameworthy in him, was, 1. His vain glory. 2. His prodigality. 3. His wasting of time. 4. His neglect of business. 5. His contempt of the true God, not once acknowledged by him or his guests. Lastly, their profane mirth and jollity, without the least note of sanctity or respect to God's glory (Merlin. in loc.).

Ver. 8. **And the drinking was according to the law]** Prescribed by the king, and it was but needful, lest men should make his house a school of intemperance; and lest shameful spueing should be on his glory, #Hab 2:15. And, inasmuch as of evil manners come good laws, it appeareth by this edict of the king, that the Persians were now degenerated from their ancient sobriety and moderation in meats and drinks. So likewise were the Cretans when Minos made a law that men should not drink one to another, εἰς μεθην, unto drunkenness; and the same we may well think of the inhabitants of this land, when King Edgar made an ordinance for putting pins in cups, to stint men how thr they should drink, and that none should quaff whole ones.

Quinetian Spartae mos est laudabilis ille,

Ut bibat arbitrio pocula quisque suo.

Quinetian of Sparta habit is that praiseworthy, that he toasts everyone with his choice cup.

***None did compel]** Domitius, the father of Nero, slew Liberius, an honest Roman, because he refused to drink so much as he commanded him (Sueton.). Tiberius, for his drunkenness called Caldius Biberius Mero, instead of Claudius Tiberius Nero, made Novellus Tricongius proconsul, for that he could drink three bottles of wine together with one breath. He preferred also Lord Piso to the government of the city of Rome, because he could sit drinking with him continually for two whole days and nights together. Lyra upon this text decries this detestable healthing and carousing too common in all parts of Christendom; and saith that it was brought up first by the barbarians in Normandy, who came and depopulated that country. And what a lamentable thing is it that to this day, in such a state as ours, the civil, sober, and temperate man shall be urged, and it may be forced, to swallow down needless draughts, as a horse doth a drench, by domineering drunkards. The late good act against drunkenness, if well executed, will be some curb to our roaring boys; so they will needs be called by a woeful prolepsis, here for hereafter. Oh that we could persuade such as Mahomet did his followers, that in every grape there dwelt a devil; or, that fire and brimstone storm and tempest, this shall be the portion of the drunkard's cup.*

***For so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house]** He had appointed, Heb. he had founded or established it for an inviolable decree and officers on purpose (controllers of his house) to see it executed. #**Joh 2:8**, we read of a governor of the feast. The Jews had such officers or moderators at their merry meetings (called the eyes and overseers of the feast), that took care that none should drink too much himself, Praefecti morum, governor of manners, Οἰνοπται οφθαλμοι. The Latins also had such, calling them dictators. The Greeks had their symposiarchs; but among these their power extended no further than to see that the feasters drank small draughts only at first; which by degrees they increased till they came to the height of intemperance. But these should have considered that*

which Anacharsis had told them, that the vine beareth three grapes; the first of pleasure, the second of drunkenness, and the third of misery and mischief.

That they should do according to every man's pleasure] Drink what they thought good, without stint or force. It is reported of Romulus, that being once invited to supper, he drank not much, because he had weighty business to do on the morrow after. And when one said unto him, Sir, if all men should drink as you do, wine would be far cheaper; nay, it would be dearer, said he, if every man should drink as I have done; that is, as much as he pleaseth to drink. *Nam ego bibi quantum volui* (Gell. lib. xi. cap. 14).

Ver. 9. **Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women]** Heb. A feast, or a comotation of women. This was better yet than Heliogabalus's senate of women, with their ordinances correspondent; as what attire each woman should use, how they should take place, when salute, &c. The Romans decreed in senate that no women should drink wine. What Vashti's practice was I know not; but by her name she should be a *meribibula*, a wine bibber, as was noted, **#Es 1:1**.

Conveniunt rebus nomina saepe suis.

The notables came together often with their own matters. Josephus, and after him Lyra, give her the commendation of a modest woman. 'Tis probable she had the king's consent to feast the women, because it was in the royal house; and it added much to the king's munificence. But then she should have subdued her husband by obeying him, as Livia (as great an empress) did Augustus. Dio reporteth of her, that being asked how she got such a power over her husband, she answered, *Multa modestia*, By my much modesty (Dio in Tiberio). It is remarkable in this third feast, that, first, the women feasted within doors, not in the open court, as their husbands did, and, next, apart from the men. Which whether it were of pride, because Vashti would keep state by herself; or, of necessity, because either the custom of the country or the king's jealousy would not allow her presence among so many of the other sex, yet surely this may condemn (as one well saith) our most lascivious mingling of both sexes together in dancing, and such like meetings; where

nothing is more usual than lustful looks, filthy speeches, unclean touches. *Apoge omnem hanc impudentiam*, shun all occasions of sin that doth so easily beset us. Lot, feasting and drinking wine with his own daughters, fell into the sin of incest. The Israelites doing the like with the daughters of Moab, were ensnared, and subverted. The dancing damsel so inflamed that old goat Herod, that, like a mad man, he sweareth to give her her desire to the half of his kingdom. In all mixed meetings of both sexes, let the husband's eyes be eyes of adamant, which will turn only to one point; lest some Circe {a} enchant him, having faculty attractive with the jet, and retentive with the adamant. Let the wives also be like that Persian lady, who being at the marriage of Cyrus, and asked how she liked the bridegroom? How? saith she; I know not; I saw nobody but my husband.

{a} In Greek and Latin mythology the name of an enchantress who dwelt in the island of Aea, and transformed all who drank of her cup into swine; often used allusively.

Ver. 10. **On the seventh day]** Here we have *Luxuriosi convivii luctuosum exitum*, a sad end of a luxurious feast. Sin usually endeth tragically. On the six former days of the feast, having forced his body with good cheer like a woolsack, and inflamed it with wine wherein was excess, he bethinks himself of other pleasures. *Vina parant animos Veneri* (Ovid). Aristophanes calleth wine the milk of Venus and fuel of lust. Ambrose saith that lust is fed with feasts, nourished with delicacies, kindled with wine, set on flame with drunkenness (lib. i. de Paenit. c. 4). A belly filled with wine foameth out filthiness, saith Jerome.

When the heart of the king was merry with wine] The property whereof is to exhilarate the heart of man, as the Scripture speaketh, **#Jud 9:13 Ps 104:15**. Pluto calleth wine the mitigator of man's misery. Euripides saith, *Qui non hilaescit bibendo, nihil sapit*. He who is not gladdened by drinking, understands nothing. But Ahasuerus's heart was too merry; the wine was so in, that the wit was out; drunkenness had bereft this Polyphemus of his eye of right reason. This is a vice hateful in all, but in a ruler most of all. See **#Pr 31:4**, {See Trapp on "Pr 31:4"} What mad work made Alexander the Great many times in his drunkenness, killing those

then whom he would afterwards have revived, if he could, with his own heart blood! Therefore it was that the Carthaginians forbade their magistrates all use of wine. Solon punished drunkenness in a ruler with death. And Ferdinand I, emperor of Germany, sharply reproved the ambassadors of the electors and princes sent to an imperial diet, for their quaffing and careless performance of their trust, saying, *Abstinete a maledicta ebrietate, &c.*, Abstain, for shame, from this cursed drunkenness (which is neither good for body nor soul), and look better to your offices.

He commanded Mehuman] These should have advised him better (for now drunkenness had robbed him of himself, and laid a fool in his room, wine had overshadowed his wisdom, *vine sapientia obumbratur*; as Pliny phraseth it), and not have been so ready to execute his unreasonable and illegal commands. For the Persians had a law (Josephus saith, lib. xi. Antiq. cap. 6) that matrons should not be seen at feasts among men; though harlots might. But kings are never without their court parasites, who will humour them in anything, and whose song is, *Mihi placet quicquid regi placet*, That which pleaseth the king pleaseth me, howsoever.

Ver. 11. **To bring Vashti the queen before the king]** This was their errand, and they went readily about it (though it beseemed not their state, as being chief about the king), whether they envied the queen, and so sought occasion against her (as the bishops did against Queen Catharine Parr), or were in the king's predicament, and therefore desired fuel to their fire.

With the crown royal] In all her best, that nest of pride, as one calleth it, and incentive of lust.

To shew the princes and the people her beauty] And thereby to show them all his own imprudence and impudence; this he would not have done, if sober, for any good. *Quid non ebrietas designat?* "Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging." Could he not consider what he had oft read befell Candaules, king of the Sardians, for showing his fair wife to Gyges in a vain glorious humour? (Herodot., Justin.) Knew he not that those well whittled courtiers would soon be inflamed with the sight of such a peerless beauty, and that her gay attire would not make her more comely than common?

For she was fair to look on] Xenophon testifieth of the Persian and Median women, that they are proper and beautiful beyond all other nations. Vashti, we must needs think, then, was a choice beauty; and if she were (as Aspasia Milesia, wife to king Cyrus) fair and wise, it was no small commendation, καλλει τας γυναικας απασας υπερβαλλουσα (Joseph.); καλη και σοφη (Aelian.). But if (as Aurelia Orestilla in Sallust) she had nothing in her praise worthy but her beauty, it was ill bestowed on her. The Jews give a very ill character of her. They say she was daughter to Belshazzar (that notable quaffer, who might therefore call her Vashti, that is, a drinker), that she hated the Jews extremely, and abused various of their daughters (her slaves), making them work on the sabbath day, and putting them every day to the basest offices, not affording them rags to hide their nakedness, &c. This perhaps is but a Jewish fable.

Ver. 12. **But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment]** She peremptorily and contumaciously refused, ουκ ηθελεν (Septuag.), though sent for again and again (as Josephus hath it), by her lord and husband, who had in his cups boasted of his wife's beauty, courtesy, and obedience, whereof he would now make proof to the company, sending for her by such an honourable convoy; yet she would not, that she would not, as the Hebrew word signifieth, but carried herself as if she had been his mistress, and not his wife, to his great grief, and the marring of all their mirth. What if the king were not so well advised? what if he were in his cups? what though she had the law on her side and a pretence of modesty, and lest she could, by coming, occasion the king's jealousy, &c.? yet Vashti was to have submitted herself unto her own husband (such a husband especially), as it was fit in the Lord, **#Col 3:18**, to yield obedience to all his lawful commands and restraints, seem they never so unreasonable. If woman were given to man for a comforter, and in some cases for a counsellor, yet in no case for a controller, as they are apt to be that are fair (*fastus inest formae*), rich (*argentum accepi, dote imperium vendidi*, saith he in Plautus), better descended, &c., *si vis nubere, nube pari*. An insolent wife is an insufferable evil; and he hath lost half the comfort of his life who is married to such a one.

Therefore was the king very wroth] He even foamed at the mouth like a wild boar, and frothed as the raging sea, as the word importeth. The Persian kings were noted by some for uxorious; such, as though they commanded the whole world, yet were commanded by their wives and concubines, *Captivarum suarum captivi* Enslaved by their captives! (Plut.). But here it proved otherwise. This mighty monarch could not bear such a public affront and scorn as he construed it; but rageth beyond reason (whereof his wine for the time had bereft him), and resolveth upon revenge. How much better our William the Conqueror, who though he knew that Maud, his wife, maintained her son, Robert Curtoise, in his quarrel for Normandy, and out of her own coffers paid the charge of that war against his father, and her own husband, yet because it proceeded but from a motherly indulgence for advancing her son, he took for a cause rather of displeasure than of hatred. He loved her while alive, often lamented her death with tears, and most honourably interred her (Speed).

And his anger burned in him] As Nebuchadnezzar also did upon a like occasion, hotter than his seven times heated oven, or than the mountain Etna doth. Moses's anger waxed hot in him, #Ex 32:19, so that he knew not well what he did in it, it raised such a smoke. Jonah was ready to burst with anger, #Jon 4:9, his blood boiled at his heart, as brimstone doth at the match: therefore is the heart set so near the lungs, that when it is heated with anger, it may be allayed and cooled by the blast and moisture thereof. Josephus saith that he brake off the feast upon this occasion.

Ver. 13. **Then the king said to the wise men]** What a sudden change is here! *Ex conviviis fiunt comitia, imo et convitia*, saith an interpreter. The enraged king forgets all his old love to Vashti, and breathes nothing else but reparation of his own lost honour, and revenge upon his peerless paragon. Howbeit herein he is to be commended, that he sent not for her forthwith by force, that he might dispatch her with his own hands; as Alexander did his friend Clitus and others in his cups and choler; neither ran he raging into her chamber, and kicked her out of the world, as Nero did his wife Octavia, for a less matter (Sueton. Ner.). He knew that anger is an evil counsellor.

— *qui non moderabitur irae,
Infectum velit esse dolor quod suaserit et mens (Horat.).*

He that reineth not in his anger, shall do that in his haste whereof it shall repent him by leisure, and could eat his nails to have it undone again. Ahasuerus therefore calleth for his judges and counsellors, skilful in state matters.

Which knew the times] *And what was best to be done in them. This skill they had gotten by much reading of politics and histories, and long observation. The men of Issachar were such, #1Ch 12:32. Such a one was Croesus to Cyrus, Polybius to Scipio, Agrippa to Augustus, Anaxagoras to Themistocles, &c. Xerxes here had seven such to advise with as his privy counsellors; Iudices Regios, the king's judges, Herodotus calleth them, and further saith, that they held their places for their lives, unless they very much misbehaved themselves.*

For so was the king's manner] *sc. To advise with them in matters of moment, but not always to take their advice. The manner was, and the fundamental laws of the land took order, for prevention of tyranny, that the kings of Persia should be ruled by this grave senate of the kingdom, and not bring in an arbitrary government. But Xerxes (who is this Ahasuerus) once at least (if not oftener), viz. in his expedition against Greece, which was not long after this great feast, called his seven princes together, and spake to them after this manner; lest, said he, I should seem to follow mine own counsel, I have assembled you, and now do you remember, that it becomes you rather to obey than advise (Val. Max. lib. 9, cap. 5).*

Toward all that knew law and judgment] *Of these Persian privy counsellors it is said, 1. That they were wise men. Now those only are wise quibus res sapiunt prout sunt. 2. They were skilful in the times, that is, well versed in histories, and well furnished with experiences. 3. That they knew the laws, which they had ready, and at their fingers' ends, as we say. They knew also judgment, that is, equity and moderation, without which utmost right might be utmost wrong: as indeed it proved in the case in hand. Memucan not only accuseth the queen, but aggravateth her offence, and instead of*

healing the wound, maketh it far wider. This might become a mercenary orator, but not a grave counsellor. The business was this; the king was angry, and he meant to set him going: the queen was an eyesore, and she must be removed. Such slaves are ambitious statists to their own and their princes' lusts, but especially when their own plough is driven forward with.

Ver. 14. **And the next unto him was Carshena, &c.**] These were his trusty and well-beloved cousins, and counsellors, *primi et proximi*, first in the kingdom, and next unto the king, without whom he was to have done no business of importance. But it is recorded in story that they had no freedom nor liberty of council: for every one of them had a plate or tile of gold to stand upon in the council house; and if he gave counsel that the king thought well of; the plate of gold was given him for a reward; but if he delivered anything contrary to the king's mind, *flagris caedebatur*; he was beaten with stripes. Lo, this was the manner of the Persian monarchs.

The seven princes] See #Ezr 7:14.

Which saw the king's face] That came at pleasure into the presence, as they call it. It was a piece of the silly glory of these kings of Persia to secrete themselves from their subjects. No man might see the king uncalled for on pain of death, *cum eius persona sub specie maiestatis occuleretur*; saith Justin. Only these seven might ordinarily take the boldness to see his face; which lest Haman should do, they covered his face.

And which sat the first in the kingdom] Xenophon tells us that Cyrus, the first Persian monarch, ordained that the nobles should sit before the king every man according to his degree and dignity. Aben Ezra upon this text saith the same.

Ver. 15. **What shall we do]** Saith the king; who changeth the scene suddenly, the banqueting house into a council chamber, the merry meeting into a most difficult consultation, what to do with the queen, and how to repair the king's honour so much impaired by her. How easily can the Lord stain the pride of all glory, #Isa 23:9, cross the world's greatest darlings, give an unsavoury verdure to their sweetest morsels, and make their very felicity miserable!

Unto the queen Vashti] You should determine nothing rashly against her, but accept of her lawful excuse, hear her plea, remember that she is your companion, and the wife of your covenant, #**Mal 2:14**, your fellow, and not your footstool; a yoke fellow standing on even ground with you, though drawing on the left side, &c. This you should do to the queen Vashti. But Plutarch notes of the Persians, that they were none of the kindest of husbands, but harsh and jealous. And Athenaeus saith the kings of Persia lord it over their wives, as if they were their handmaids, *αγριοι φουσει και χαλεποι* (Plut.); *ως δεσποτης αρχει της γαμετης ο βασιλευς*~ (Athen. lib. 13).

According to law] This you should do; retain the decency and gravity of the law, which is never angry with any man (*Lex non irascitur; sed constituit*, saith Seneca), no more must those that administer it. The angry man cannot easily keep a level keel. This Archytas the Tarentine knew, and therefore being displeased with his servants for their sloth, he flung from them, saying, Farewell, I have nothing to say to you, because I am angry at you.

Because she hath not performed the commandment, &c.] This was a fault, no doubt; but not so heinous as was made of it. The faults of his wife a man must either *tollere* or *tolerare*, cure or cover, and not go about to kill a fly upon her forehead with a beetle, as they say. But God had a provident hand in it for the good of his Church.

Ver. 16. **And Memucan answered before the king]** Heb. Mumchan; the junior likely, and therefore spake first, the rest concurred, #**Es 1:21**. A bold man he was surely (whatever else he was) that durst deliver his mind so freely of such a business, and in such a presence, &c. What if the king and queen should have grown friends again, where had Memucan been? If his cause and his conscience had been as good as his courage was great, all had been as it ought to be.

And the princes] *Inter pocula de rebus arduis consultabant*, saith Herodotus concerning the Persian princes. In the midst of their cups they use to consult of the greatest affairs. Here they accuse and condemn the queen unheard and unconvicted, which was against all law, divine and human. King Henry VIII, though a boisterous man,

dealt more civilly with his first wife, Catherine of Spain, when he had a mind to rid his hands of her; her cause was heard before the two cardinals, Wolsey and Campaine, ere the divorce was pronounced, and she sent out of the kingdom.

Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only] That she had done wrong or dealt perversely against the king, he taketh for granted; because the king's commandment was not obeyed. But was that a sufficient reason? Was the king's bare word a law, or rule of right? and is not a wife in case of sin commanded by her husband, rather to obey God than men? Or say she had done wrong, must it needs be out of perverseness? might it not be out of fear, modesty, or for some other civil reason which she might allege for herself, if called to her trial? But, here you may see (saith one) when flattery and malice gives information, shadows are made substances, and improbabilities necessities; so deceitful is flattery, malice so unreasonable. And yet herein also the Lord is exceeding righteous, who meets hereby with other sins of this insolent queen; that whereas (no doubt) she was an example of pride and vanity more generally to other women than she was likely to be in this point, therefore is she hereby found out in her sin, and by this unlikely accusation, condemned of a true fault.

But also to all the princes, and to all the people] Against the king she had offended by her disobedience, against all others by her example. And indeed the sins of great ones fly far upon those two wings, scandal and example; they prove both patterns and privileges to their interiors, for the like. Howbeit we must necessarily distinguish between scandal given and scandal taken only; neither may we judge of a thing by the ill consequences that biassed and disaffected persons can draw from it; there being nothing so well carried, but that it may be liable to some men's exceptions.

Ver. 17. **For this deed of the queen shall come abroad]** The least aberration in a star is soon observed; so the miscarriages of great ones are quickly both noted and noticed. Public persons are by Plutarch compared to mirrors, according to which others dress themselves; to pictures in a glass window, wherein every blemish is soon seen; to common wells, which if they be poisoned, many are

destroyed. The common people commonly are like a flock of cranes; as the first flies, all follow.

So that they shall despise their husbands] Which indeed ought not to be, no, not in their hearts. Let the wife see that she reverence her husband, #**Eph 5:33**. God hath a barren womb for mocking Michel; when Sarah is crowned and chronicled for this, that she obeyed her husband, calling him Lord. It is here taken for confessed, that Vashti despised her husband; and that others would thereby take heart to do the like, is therehence inferred. But doth that necessarily follow? and must the queen therefore be presently deposed, yea, put to death, as the Jew doctors tell us she was? King Asa deposed his grandmother, Maacha; but that was for idolatry. Our Henry VIII beheaded his wife, Anne Bullen, but that was for (supposed, and but supposed) adultery. Queen Elizabeth narrowly escaped with her life, because she was accused (but falsely) of conspiracy against the queen, her sister. But what had Vashti done? Condemned she is without reprivall; and the country must come in (but was never called) to give in evidence against her, that haply never saw her, nor heard of her offence. Is this fair dealing?

Ver. 18. **Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say]** Say what? We will not do as our lords command us. Like enough all this; for their tongues were their own, and their wills no less. That free will (about which there is so much ado made) when men once lost, the women caught it up; and hence they are so wedded to their own will, saith one merrily. *Quicquid volunt, valde volunt*, what they will do they will do *contra gentes*, saith another. And for talking and telling their minds, the rabbis have a proverb, that ten kabs (measures) of speech descended into the world, and the women took away nine of them. These ladies of Persia and Media were feasting with the queen when the king sent for her, *ubi quid factum est? garritur, potitur, saltitur*, saith an interpreter, at which time they were chatting, and bibbing, and dancing, and (when their mirth was marred) they would not spare to speak their minds and ease their stomachs, whatever came of it. We read in our own chronicles of the Lady de Breuse, that by her railing and intemperate tongue she had so exasperated King John (whom she reviled as a tyrant and a murderer), that he would not be pacified by her strange present (four

hundred cows, and one bull, all milk-white, except only the ears, which were red) sent unto the queen (Speed. 572).

Then shall there arise too much contempt and wrath] Contempt on the wives' part, and wrath on the husbands'; wives shall slight their husbands, and they again shall fall foul upon their wives; so that *coniugium* marriage, shall become *coniurgium*; a dispute, and the house they dwell together in shall be no better than a fencing school, wherein the two sexes seem to have met together for nothing but to play their prizes, and to try masteries. This made Sulla say, I had been happy if I had never been married.

Ver. 19. **If it please the king]** Courtier-like; lest he should seem to prescribe to the king, or to prejudice the rest of the royal counsellors, he thus modestly preface to his ensuing harsh and hard sentence. He knew well enough it would please the king at present, in the mind he now was in; and to prevent any alteration, he moves to have it made sure by an irrevocable law, that he might not hereafter be censured for this his immoderate and unmerciful censure, but be sure to save one howsoever.

Let it be written, saith he, among the laws of the Persians] Which the king himself could not repeal, #Da 6:8,15, but once passed and registered, they remained binding for ever. I have read of a people among whom the laws they had lasted in force but for three days at utmost. This was a fault in the other extreme. Laws are to be made with due deliberation, *Legem dicimus*, νομον, *quasi μενοντα* νοον (Plato), and then to be established, and not altered without very great reason, as sometimes there is, since

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus] But be absolutely deposed and divorced. Here was no proportion between the offence and the sentence. This judgment was like the laws of Draco; of which Aristotle saith, that they were not worth remembrance, but only for their great severity; as being written not with black, but with blood.

And let the king give her royal estate unto another] The more to vex her. Surely such an exauthoration of so great a personage, with so great disgrace and ignominy, could not but be very grievous, yea, worse than death. High seats, as they are never but uneasy; so the fall from them must needs be dangerous and dismal. How well might holy Esther sing with the Virgin Mary, God putteth down the mighty from their thrones, and exalteth them of low degree, #**Lu 1:52**.

Ver. 20. **And when the king's decree that he shall make shall be published]** But why should any such thing be published at all, unless the king be ambitious of his own utter dishonour? Is there none wiser than other, but that the king must betray his own nest, tell all the empire that he was drunk, or little better, and did in his drink determine that against his fair queen that he so soon after repented? He should have done in this case as a man doth, that having a secret sore, clappeth on a plaster, and then covereth it with his hand, that it may stick the faster, work the better. Had Ahasuerus been wise, the world had been never the wiser for anything that Vashti had done, &c. But Memucan hath some colour for his bad counsel, a goodly veil to cast over it.

All the wives shall give to their husbands honour] They shall not dare to do otherwise, unless they mean to be likewise divorced. But will terror breed true honour? is soothing right submission? *Quem metuunt oderunt*, fear makes hatred; and people honour none (to speak properly) but whom they love sincerely. Those lordly husbands that domineer over their wives as if they were their slaves, and carry themselves like lions in their houses, must not look for any great respect there. This man promised himself great matters when he thus said, The wives shall give *iittenu* in the masculine gender, to signify the wives' voluntary subjection and obedience; but that he never had, nor any other that took the like course. Those husbands that will be honoured indeed by their wives must give honour to them as to the weaker vessels, as being heirs together of the grace of life, #**1Pe 3:7**.

Ver. 21. **And the saying pleased the king]** Pity but itching ears should have clawing counsellors. Memucan was a fit helve for such a hatchet; and his advice fit lettuce for such lips. What marvel that

such a smooth counsellor pleased the king, when as he had before given place to two such bad counsellors—Wine and Anger?

And the princes] Who perceived very likely by the king's looks and gestures, that he was much taken and tickled with Memucan's counsel; which they therefore second and subscribe to. How rare a jewel in a prince's ear is a faithful counsellor, that will deliver himself freely, *non ad gratiam, sed ad veritatem*; not to please, but to profit. Such a one was Agrippa to Augustus, Polybius to Scipio, Latimer to Edward VI, &c. There is safety in the multitude of counsellors, *modo audeant quae sentiant*, as the orator saith (Cic. pro Milone), so they dare speak out, and will not spare to do it.

And the king did according to the word of Memucan] *Dicto citius*, it was forthwith done. Vashti is all on the sudden divorced, and the foolish king publicly shamed. But all this was of the Lord, that Esther might be advanced, and the Church relieved. So there was a wheel within a wheel, which the wicked discern not, nor the saints consider. God oft wraps himself in a cloud, and will not be seen till afterwards. All God's dealings will appear beautiful in their seasons; though for the present we see not the contiguity and concatenation of one thing with another.

Ver. 22. **That every man should have rule in his own house]** *Aequum sane edictum, modo moderatum*, A righteous decree, had it been but rightly made use of, and not abused to tyranny and rough dealing. Aristotle saith, that the husband ought to have a civil power over his wife, as being her better in honour, speech, gravity, and dignity. Menander and Euripides say the same, holding it unfit that the hen should crow, that the woman should usurp authority over the man; this nature and Scripture do both condemn. But why should these Persian princes at this time send forth such an edict as this? Was it because this good law of nature began to be depraved and obliterated among them, as it was among the Egyptians, where the queen is more honoured than the king, and in private houses the wife than the husband, as Diodorus Siculus reporteth? Or had they a mind to divulge their own shame, and to tell the world that they were least masters at home, and must therefore have a law made to force obedience? Or was it not, lastly, to countenance the king's rash and unlawful putting away of his wife, for so light a cause; like as

Cambyzes, their recent king, having a mind to marry his own sister, made a law, that any man should have liberty to do the like? Whatever it was that moved them to send forth this decree, surely there was little need to excite men to use their authority over their wives, since they are apt enough to do so without bidding. Therefore St Paul, after, wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, doth not say, and subjoin, husbands rule over your wives, but, husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them, #Col 3:19.

And that it should be published according to the language of every people] That so being particularly understood, it might appear more authentic and weighty, and so take away the hatred from the lawgivers for the wrong they had done the queen. Some render it thus, that he should speak according to the language of his own people, that is, say they, that each man should keep and observe the liberty of his own nation, by commanding his people, and governing his own family, without any contradiction.

Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **After these things]** After the wine was out, the fuel of his anger spent, and the lust thereof satisfied.

When the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased] There is nothing that a man is more ready to keep than his wrath; therefore the Hebrews put *servare* for *servare iram*, to keep for to keep his anger, as #Jer 3:5 Ps 103:9 Le 19:18. Ahasuerus, by invading Greece, had so incensed them, that their wrath *αειμνηστος*, unappeasable, for they thenceforth hated all barbarians for the Persians' sake, and forbade them their sacrifices, as they used to do murderers. But Ahasuerus's wrath against Vashti was after a time assuaged.

He remembered Vashti] Not without some remorse, but without all true repentance. He forsook not his rash anger as a sin, but regretted it for a time, and laid it asleep, to be raked up again upon as slight an occasion. In graceless persons *vitia raduntur; non eradicantur; absconduntur saepius, non excinduntur;* vices may be barbed or benumbed, not mastered and mortified. A merchant may part with his goods, and yet not hate them. A man may part with his sins for

self-respects, and yet retain his affection to them; as Phaltiel did to Michal, when he went weeping after her afar off. He may remember his Vashti, his bosom sins from which he seemeth divorced, and by such a sinful remembering of them, recommit them. See #Eze 23:21 compared with #Es 2:8.

And what was decreed against her] But whose fault was that? Wine and anger are the worst of all counsellors, say the ancients? and Ahasuerus found it so; as did also Alexander the Great, and many others, but all too late. Hence they came in afterwards with their *Non putaram*, Had I known; which Scipio said should never be heard out of a great man's mouth (Plutarch). Augustus also was wont to say, that nothing doth so ill become a commander as hastiness and rashness (Sueton.). Cicero taxeth him for a fool, *qui eundem laedit et laudat*, who first wrongeth a man, and then commendeth him.

Ver. 2. **Then said the king's servants]** His friends, saith Josephus, to whom he had opened his mind; the young courtiers, say others (green wood is ever shrinking and warping), but most probably those seven chief counsellors, #Es 1:14, who had persuaded him to cast off Vashti, and now feared, lest if not some way diverted, he should fall as foul upon them as his predecessor Darius did upon those claw backs, #Da 6:24 or as the Athenians did upon Timagoras, Demagores, and Euagoras, whom they condemned to die, for flattering Darius Hystaspes, the father of this Ahasuerus.

Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king] They knew him to be a sensualist and effeminate; they therefore agree to feed his humour, to drown him again in pleasure, so to drive away his melancholy. Such miserable comforters are carnal physicians; so wretched is our nature, to endure no other medicine; so justly doth God fit the physician to the patient, the helve to the hatchet; so do the wicked help each other forward to their deserved destruction. Ahasuerus's courtiers and counsellors become brokers to his lusts; neither is this anything unusual with such. *Lenocinantur, produnt, blasphemant, peierant, toxica miscent, &c.*, saith an expositor here. What is it that such parasites and sycophants will not do to ingratiate with great ones? It was not therefore without good cause, that the primitive Christians prayed hard for the emperor, as Tertullian

testifieth, that God would send him *Senatum fidelem*, a faithful council, and free him from flatterers.

Ver. 3. **And let the king appoint officers]** *Praeficiat praefectos*. Costly counsel. This could not be done without much trouble and charge to the king. Two or three years are spent in gathering, purifying, and preparing these choice virgins for the impure bed of this heathen prince, while he is following the chase of his ambition, in the wars of Greece.

In all the provinces of his kingdom] A large commission they must have, the whole kingdom is their circuit; and note that they went not to foreigners; which those princes that do, while thereby they seek for greatness, they many times miss goodness; while they labour to be strong abroad (and so to have a stake in store, as they say, however the dice chance to turn), they weaken themselves at home, and while by foreign matches they intend unity, it proves an occasion both of civil and foreign dissensions. We of this nation have had sad experience of these mischiefs.

That they may gather together] This could not be done without the great grief and general discontent of the king's best subjects (*nimum serviliter huic hirco subiectorum*, as one hath it), thus bereft and despoiled of their dearest daughters, the staves of their age.

All the fair young virgins] Beauty (the best pearl in a carnal eye) is all that is here looked after, *quae plerumque virtute et pudicitia caret*, which is oft without virtue and common honesty, as, where they meet, it is a rare mixture. The heathen man saith, *Non est formosa mulier cuius crus laudatur aut brachium, sed illa cuius universa facies admirationem singulis partibus abstulit*. Now if this be true, long enough might these commissioned officers look for fair young virgins, truly so called, there being very few that are not *peccant* in some *minnum*, some tittle of beauty, or other. It is a praise peculiar to the virgin daughter of Zion to be all fair, #So 4:7, to be ἀμωμος, #Eph 5:26, such as in whom even Momus himself could find no error.

Unto Shushan the palace] In which one place there might have been found choice enough, without speaking further; but that lust is unsatisfiable. The eye is not satisfied with seeing; and in such a multitude how could it be but that the king's mind must needs be distracted, which one to make choice of?

To the house of the women] Such as is now the Turk's Seraglio. See the description of the Grand Signior's Seraglio, by Master John Greanes, chap. iv.

Unto the custody of Hege] Who was their keeper, or rather their jailer. For what was this house of women but a perpetual prison to them, clapped under hatches, as it were, and, haply, held in as great servitude as those in Barbary are at this day; where it is death for any man to see one of the Xeriff's concubines; and for them too, it, when they see a man, though but through a casement, they do not suddenly screek out.

And let their things for purification] *σμηγματα*, their cleansing, to dry up the filth of the flesh, and to cleanse nature's infirmities, that they might be six months purified with oil of myrrh, and six other months perfumed with sweet odours, as **#Es 2:12**. Here the maids were first purified before the king chose one. But Christ first chooseth his spouse, and then purifieth her, **#Eph 5:26**.

Ver. 4. **And let the maiden]** Herein unhappy that she got her honour with the loss of her honesty; and that so many maids are made miserable for her sake.

That pleaseth the king] Heb. That is good in his eyes. The eye is the lamp and ornament of the whole body; and yet that most lightsome part doth oftentimes draw the soul into utter darkness; while by those windows of wickedness and loopholes of lust Satan windeth himself into the heart, and maketh it *impudicitiae cloacam* (as Venus's temple on the top of Lebanon is called by Eusebius), a very sink and sewer of all lewdness and abomination.

Be queen instead of Vashti] This was held a great business, and a sufficient recompense. The bramble held it a goodly thing to reign over the trees: not so the vine and fig tree, **#Jud 9:15**.

The son of Jair] Happy father in such a son; much more joy might he well be to his parents than Epaminondas was to his: and of him it might be sung,

Τοις μακαρες τε κασιγνητοι τε, κασιγνηται τε (Homer).

The son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite] He descended, then, either from some other son of Kish, the father of Saul, or else from Jonathan, Saul's son; for he only, of all the sons of Saul, left issue behind him. But the Kish here mentioned, though of his line, lived many years after Saul's father.

Ver. 6. **Who had been carried away from Jerusalem]** Kish had, not Mordecai; unless it were in the loins of his great grandfather. Kish and his posterity were of those good figs mentioned in Jeremiah; but goodness is no target against affliction.

*- nec te tua plurima Pentheu
Labentem textit pietas (Virg.).*

With the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah] The good figs were carried away at the same time with the bad, but in several baskets, **#Jer 34:1**. Kish, and others like him, as Daniel, Ezekiel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, &c., were not only good men, but very good, like the figs that are first ripe, **#Jer 24:2**, such as God's soul desireth, **#Mic 7:1**, and yet they were carried away with Jeconiah and the rest that were nought, stark nought, **#Jer 24:2**. The best may have their share in a common calamity; but God will not fail even then to set his eyes upon them for good, **#Jer 24:6**. The husbandman cutteth down his corn and weeds together, but for different purpose. Excellently Austin, *Una eademque vis irruens bonos probat, purificat, eliquat; malos damnat, vastat, exterminat*: One and the same common calamity proveth, melteth, purifieth the good; damneth, wasteth, destroyeth the evil (De Civit. Dei, lib. 1, cap. 8): these have an evil, an only evil, **#Eze 6:5**, without mixture of mercy; and that because they are nought, very nought, figs that cannot be eaten, they are so nought, **#Jer 24:2**.

Whom Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had carried away] Lo, here the rod in God's hand for the chastisement of his children; that,

being chastened of the Lord, they may not be condemned with the world, #1Co 11:32. This rod, when he had worn to the stumps, he cast into the fire.

Ver. 7. **And he brought up]** He both nourished and nurtured her in the true religion and admonition of the Lord, #Eph 6:4, he was her foster-father and her instructor.

Hadassah] Not the same with Atossa, as Tremellius would have it. Hadassah was the name given her by her parents, and it signifieth a myrtle tree, which loveth to grow in a bottom; whence the Church is compared to it for her lowly mindedness, #Zec 1:8. {*See Trapp on "Zec 1:8"*}

That is, Esther] This was her Persian name, say some: in heathen histories she is called Amestris (Herod. lib. 7, Sealig.).

His uncle's daughter] Not his brother's daughter, as the Vulgate rendereth it, after Josephus and Aben Ezra. She was his first cousin, and this was one reason that moved him to adopt her, viz. the bond of nature.

For she had neither father nor mother] A poor orphan she was; but Christ left her not comfortless, #Joh 14:18. He had provided and enabled Mordecai, to feed her and raise her; to train her up in the fear of God, and to defend her chastity from the rage of lust; besides that her head was by him destined to a diadem; Esther the captive shall be Esther the queen; Esther, the fatherless and motherless, shall be a nursing mother to the Church; and meanwhile meet with a merciful guardian, Mordecai. Why, then, should we not trust God with ourselves and our children?

And the maid was fair and beautiful] {*See Trapp on "Es 2:3"*} *Gratior est pulchro, &c.* For her beauty she was brought to the king; and not without some respect to this it was that she was raised by Mordecai. This beauty was a privilege of nature; and because of the forcible battery that would be laid to it, God gives her a guarding. Esther was now in the flower of her age, and her beauty was the flower of her virtue, as Chrysippus called it.

Whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead] And so she might have been put to seek her bread in desolate places, being left to the wide world, as they say; but the Lord was her reward, **#Isa 58:8**, he took her up, **#Ps 27:10**, as the gathering army or rear guard did the lame, feeble, and sick Israelites, **#Jos 6:9**. In the civil law provision is made for orphans, and such as were cast out; some hospitals to entertain them, some liberties to comfort and compensate their troubles. Among us also, besides harbours and hospitals for such, to the great commendation of the founders, very good provision is made by the laws, and many lives thereby preserved. God oft professes himself the pupils' patron; gives great charge to all not to hurt them, and menaces the Jews for their hardheartedness toward them. Let, therefore, the dying parents of such (though they have as little to leave them as Esther's had) cast them by faith into God's everlasting arms, who hath charged his angels with them, and hath promised heaven to them; commanding his best creatures to cater for them, **#Ho 2:21,22**.

Took for his own daughter] He hid not his eyes from his own flesh, **#Isa 58:7**, as some unnatural ostrich or sea monster; he made not, as many do, tuition a broker for private gain; he made not instead of a daughter a slave, or sponge, of his pupil; he devoured her not under pretence of devotion; but freely took her for his child, and bred her in the best manner. Now the Jews at this very day account a child's tutor or monitor worthy of more respect than his father; for he, say they, hath given him only his being, but the other his well-being (Leo. Mod.).

Ver. 8. When the king's commandment and decree was heard] *Percrebuisset*; his officers, herein too officious, had soon set it abroad, and put it in execution; the Persians also (*homines ad servitutem parati*, as Tiberius said of the Romans), those servile souls, deny not to prostitute their daughters, but proffer them rather, and hold them happy if they may be admitted. Not so Mordecai and his Esther, *Vis maior cam abtulit*. She was carried away by force, it is like; or, if otherwise, it might be a fault in her and her guardian, unless we shall say they did it by an extraordinary instinct. Probably there was a sad parting, and many prayers put up by them both for Divine direction and protection; and they were heard accordingly.

And when many maidens were gathered together] Four hundred, saith Josephus (lib. xi, cap. 5). *Sed quid attinebat tot puellas huic cani constuprandas offerre?* saith Feuardentius, Why should this dog deflour so many maidens? Proculus Caesar boasted that in fifteen days' time he got with child twenty virgins: a fair commendation (Plin.).

Unto Shushan the palace] Answerable to the seraglio, {*The part of a Muslim dwelling-house (esp. of the palace of a sovereign or great noble) in which the women are secluded; the apartments reserved for wives and concubines; a harem.*} where those that are kept up for their beauties are all young virgins taken and stolen from foreign nations; where, after they have been instructed in good behaviour, and can play upon instruments, sing, dance, and sew curiously, they are given to the Grand Signior as presents of great value. They live just as nuns do in great nunneries.

That Esther was brought also] In the general survey she was taken among the rest and brought to the court; an ill air for piety to breathe in— *exeat aula Qui vult esse plus. Fraus sublimi regnat in aula* (Sen.). But necessity is a hard weapon. As the Turks at this day, so the Persian kings then, took all their subjects to be their slaves, holding not only their estates, but their lives and all they have, at their disposal, without respect either to the cause or manner.

To the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women] Clapped up, as it were, in a glorious prison, being not to come abroad but when the king calls, nor to frequent any society but such as is appointed her for her necessary attendance and comfort. See the like in the description of the Grand Signior's Seraglio, chap. iv.

Ver. 9. **And the maiden pleased him]** Hegai cast his favour upon her; not because she was the fairest, noblest, most industrious, most courtly, &c., but because God wrought his heart to it; as he did Potiphar's and Pharaoh's to Joseph, Jonathan's to David, Darius's to Daniel, &c. It is the Lord that gives favour, and fashioneth men's opinions of us. He gave Solomon honour; and Paul prays to him that his service may be accepted of the saints, **#Ro 15:31.**

And she obtained kindness of him] His favour was not empty favour, professional only, as that of courtiers.

And he speedily gave her, &c.] As resolving shortly to recommend her to the king, who, he knew, would be much ruled by him in his choice. Here were shadows of many excellent virtues in a blind ethnic; who may in some sort teach true kindness, and doth condemn those that boast of false liberality. He dealt not basely, but bountifully, with Esther.

Her things for purification] See #Es 2:3,12.

With such things as belonged to her] Heb. Her portions or allowances of food, raiment, &c., which this faithful officer interverted not for his own private gain, but rather enlarged himself in the true bestowing thereof.

And seven maidens] When he might have put her off with one; he enlargeth himself, and even stretcheth his authority, that he might, by these maids of honour attending her, set her forth as a queen beforehand.

Which were meet to be given her] Or, which were very comely, *speciosae, vel spectatae*.

And he preferred] Heb. He changed her, *sc.* for the better, as God doth his people, when he taketh them to heaven, where they change place, but not company (as that good man, Dr Preston, saith upon his death bed), and are brought from the jaws of death to the joys of eternal life; from shadows to substances, from misery to majesty, &c., a greater change than that of Queen Elizabeth, from a prisoner to a princess; or that of our Henry IV, who was crowned the very same day that the year before he had been banished the realm. The Latins call prosperous things *Res secundas*, secondary things, because they are to be had hereafter; they are not the first things.

Unto the best place of the house of the women] Or, Unto the best condition. God's best children shall have the best of the best, fat

things full of marrow, wines on the lees well refined, #Isa 25:6. Jacob and his family had the best of the land of Egypt, that granary of the world, as one calleth it. His posterity had a land that flowed with milk and honey. What countries comparable to those that profess the gospel? "Godliness is profitable to all things," having the promises of both lives, &c.

Ver. 10. **Esther had not shewed her people]** Because the Jews were slighted as captives and forlorn (how dear to the gods that nation is, saith Cicero, it appeareth, *quod est victa, quod elocata, quod servata*, in that they are conquered, captivated, and not utterly destroyed by us), they were also generally hated, as different in religion, and would not so much as drink with heathens, lest they should drink things sacrificed to idols. They held it meritorious in later times to kill an idolater, as Tacitus testifieth; and at this day they say, *Optimus inter gentes, &c.*, The very best among the Gentiles is worthy to have his head bruised as a serpent. A nasty people they are still, and blood thirsty, odious, and sordid. A historian telleth us of an emperor, travelling into Egypt, and there meeting with certain Jews, he was so annoyed with the stench of them, that he cried out, *O Marcomanni, O Quadi, O Sarmatae, tandem alios vobis deteriores inveni* (Ammian. lib. 2), This is the basest and most contemptible people that ever I lighted upon. The Romans would not own them, when they had conquered them, as they did other nations, though they complied never so much, and were their servants (Aug. in #Ps 58). The Turks so hate them for crucifying Christ, that they use to say, in detestation of a thing, I would I might die a Jew, then; as when they would assure anything, *in execrationibus dicunt Iudaeus sim, si fallo*, they curse themselves, and say, Let me be held a Jew if I deceive thee (Sanctius in #Zec 8:13). This lieth upon them as a punishment for their unexpiable guilt in putting to death the Lord of life. But in Esther's time they were hated chiefly for their religion. In prudence, therefore, she concealeth her kindred, as being not called to give an account of her faith; and, living private, might well perform her devotions, and yet not thrust herself into observation.

For Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it] Lest she should be cashiered the court for a Jewess, which was then held crime enough, as afterwards it was, in Nero's days, to be a Christian;

and this *haud perinde in crimine, quam odio humani generis*, as Tacitus hath it, not for any great fault so much, as by the hatred of mankind, incensed and set on work by the devil, doubtless, to root out the true religion, and to set up himself in the hearts of men as god of this present world. Hence those complaints of Tertullian and Justin Martyr, in their Apologies for Christians, that their name, and not their crimes, was hated and hissed out of all companies. *Odio publico est confessio nominis, non examinatio criminis. Solius hominis crimea est, &c.* (Tert. Apol. c. 1-3; Just. Apol. 2). Wisely, therefore, did Mordecai charge Esther to conceal herself for present; so long as it might be done without prejudice to the truth, and scandal to her profession. Worthily also did holy Esther, in obeying Mordecai, her faithful foster father, in ruling her tongue, that unruly member; and in that, although she had changed her keeper, yet she had not let go her integrity, but held with that good woman, in Jerome, who cried out, *Non ideo fateri volo, ne peream: sed ideo mentiri nolo, ne peccem.*

Ver. 11. **And Mordecai walked every day]** What marvel that Esther was so obedient to Mordecai when he was so solicitous of her welfare? These mutual respects draw on one another. The centurion in the Gospel had dutiful servants (Do this, said he, and they did it), for he was a most kind master, and minded their good.

Before the court of the women's house] The Turks wonder to see a man walk to and fro, and use to ask such a one what he meaneth? and whether he be out of his way, or out of his wits? But the Persians and Greeks were great walkers. Jesus also walked in Solomon's porch, **#Joh 10:23**, &c.

To know how Esther did] Heb. The peace of Esther, *Omnis in Ascanio, &c.* (Virg.). He had taken her for his child, and was curious of her welfare, though she were now grown up, and preferred at court. The court, he knew, was an ill air for godliness to breathe in. His care was, therefore, that she might have Gaius's prosperity, even *mentem sanam in corpore sano*, a sound mind in a sound body. And although he trusted God with his niece, yet he knew that an honest care of her might well stand with faith in God's providence. God must be trusted, but not tempted, by the neglect of lawful means, **#Mt 4:7**.

Ver. 12. **Now when every maid's turn was come]** Their turns then they took, and held it their happiness to lose that which was their honour. See #1Th 4:4, {See Trapp on "1Th 4:4"} their bodies were first adulterated, and then vitiated. This was abominable.

After that she had been twelve months] Time spent without spare, and woefully wasted in making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof; which the prophet Amos rightly calleth a thing of nought, #Am 6:13 4:5,6. Is time no better worth than to be thus rioted out in vanity? doth not eternity depend upon it, even the heaviest weights upon the weakest wires? It is therefore a good rule that one giveth,

Corrige praeteritum, rege praesens, cerne futurum.

According to the manner of the women] Who of themselves are apt enough (without an order to do so, as here) to cast away too much time and cost in tricking and trimming their bodies (those painted sheaths), as the comedians have tartly taxed them. *Negotii quantum in muliere una est!* saith Plautus. What a deal of do is there with one woman in this kind! And *Nosti mores mulierum,* saith Terence, *dum moliuntur; dum comuntur, annus est.* And as for the Persian women, Aelian saith that they were above all others most addicted to this vanity (Lib. xii. cap. 1); and yet the haughty daughters of Zion are deeply censured, and heavily threatened, #Isa 3:18, where the prophet gives us an inventory of those ladies' gallantry, and tells them that their fineness shall be turned into filthiness, their neatness become nastiness.

For so were the days of their purification accomplished] What strange preparation was here for the impure bed of a heathen! Every virgin must be six months purified, and six months perfumed. O God, saith one, what care and cost is requisite to that soul which should be addressed a fit bride for thy holy and glorious Majesty!

To wit, six months with oil of myrrh] To cleanse them, and to clear up their countenances.

And six months with sweet odours] Of these there is a lawful use (why else were they created?), to please the sense, refresh the spirits, comfort the brain, &c. But the excess and abuse of them is utterly unlawful, and was justly punished in Darius, the last Persian monarch, and Muleasses, king of Tunis, who so far affected sweet odours, that he could not be without them while he was in the field against his enemy, thereby it came to pass, that being overcome in battle by his own son Amidas (another Absalom), and pursued among the rest that fled, he was found and known who he was by the perfumes that he had about him, though to prevent it he had besmeared himself with blood and dust. Martial, writing to his sweet friend, saith,

Posthume, non bene olet, qui bene semper olet.

And another saith, That woman smells best who smells of nothing. *Spires autem foemina Christum*, saith Clement of Alexandria, Let women learn and labour to smell of Christ, who is the royal unction, and let them ever be anointed with chastity, that chiefest ointment (Paedag. lib. 2, cap. 8).

And with other things for the purifying of women] Here was no end of excess and of expense; and all to satisfy the lust of this impure prince. Silver is lavished out of the bag, and much wealth cast away upon these minions, who had nothing else to do but to exercise their wits in devising ornaments and artifices, whereby they might get the king's favour, and attain to the queendom. Cicero telleth us that it was ordinary with the kings of Persia to bestow upon their women such a city to buy them bracelets, and such a city for head-tires, &c., *Haec in collum, haec in crines* (Orat. 5, in Verr.). This was *luxus plane monstrosissimus et prodigalissimus*, as one saith, most prodigious and prodigal luxury. So eagerly are the wicked bent upon the satisfying of their lusts, that they care not what cost they cast away upon them. Ask me never so much dowry, saith that Amouretto, #Ge 34:11,12. Judah let go his signet, bracelets, and staff, to the harlot. Josephus reports of one Decius Mundus (Immundus rather), a nobleman, that to one Paulina, a lady in Rome, he offered as much as came to six thousand pounds to satisfy his lusts but one night, and yet he could not bring her to his lure by such

a large offer; though afterwards (under the mask of Anubis, to which dog's head she was devoted) he found means to abuse her; which was the destruction both of those bawdy priests and their temple.

Ver. 13. **Then thus came every maiden to the king]** Thus prepared, anointed, appointed, &c., rejoicing in that whereof they had reason rather to repent, as too many do now-a-days, while they go dancing to hell in their bolts.

Whatsoever she desired was given her] *Omne quod dicebat,* was but ask and have; so lavish is lust, and so foolish are men to bestow cost upon so hard a reckoning.

Unto the king's house] *Ad regis cubiculum,* saith the old interpreter, to the king's bed chamber.

Ver. 14. **In the evening she went]** As the fittest time for a work of darkness.

And on the morrow she returned] So short is the pleasure of sin. *Laura venire Venus, tristis abire solet.*

Into the second house of the women] That having made sale of her honesty, she might converse with such as had likewise left their honesties behind them; companions in evil, and miserable comforters, with whom they might make up their measure, and God's power on his.

She came in unto the king no more] But must burn in lust, without means of allayment; being scalded, as it were, in her own grease, frying within and freezing without. *Sed βορβορουμεθα παντα λεγοντες,* as Cyril saith in a like case, We do but rake a dunghill in a discourse of this nature. Let us therefore stay here no longer (as Merlin hath it) in setting forth the filthiness of this heathen prince, who yet hath too many among us that imitate his uncleanness and intemperance.

Ver. 15. **Now when the turn of Esther, &c.]** Then, and not till then. So when Joseph was sufficiently humbled, the king sent and loosed him; the ruler of the people let him go free, #Ps 105:20. When David was become weaned from the world, as a child from the breasts, when his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty, &c., then

was he advanced to the kingdom, #Ps 131:1 He that believeth maketh not haste. God's time is best; and as he seldom cometh at our time, so he never faileth at his own.

The daughter of Abihail] The seed of the righteous, and so an heiress of that precious promise: His seed shall be mighty upon earth, #Ps 112:2 She was also a daughter of Israel, and therefore God's firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth, #Ps 89:27.

Who had taken her for his daughter] This good work was so well pleasing to God, that it is once again recited, and honourably mentioned. What shall the Lord Christ then do at the last day for his people who are full of mercy and good fruits? If now he doth not only make mention of us, but mediation for us at the throne of glory; surely then he will much more make our faith, which worketh by love, to be "found unto praise and honour and glory," #1Pe 1:7.

She required nothing] As other maids had done to set out their beauty, but contenting herself with her native comeliness, and that wisdom that made her face to shine; she humbly taketh what Hegai directed her to, and wholly resteth upon the Divine providence.

And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all] By her comely countenance and gracious deportment. Plutarch speaks of a Spartan woman, that when her neighbours were showing their apparel and jewels, she brought out her children virtuous and well taught, saying, These are my ornaments and accoutrements. Esther did the like by her virtues, which drew all hearts unto her; like as fair flowers in the spring do the passengers eyes. She had decked herself with the white of simplicity, with the red of modesty, with the silk of piety, with the satin of sanctity, with the purple of chastity, as Tertullian expresseth it; *taliter pigmentatae Deum habebitis amatorem*, saith he, and being thus adorned and beautified, women shall have God himself to be their suitor, and all godly men their admirers (Tert. de Cult. Foem.). Whereas on the other side (Plant. Mastell. Act. i., Scen. 3),

*Nequaquam ornata est bene, quae morata est male.
Pulchrum ornatum turpes mores peius coeno collinunt.*

Ver. 16. **So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus]** And so that sweet promise was fulfilled and exemplified in her: "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold," #Ps 68:13. God raised up this poor orphan, this despicable exile out of the dust, and lifted this needy one out of the dunghill, that he may set her with princes, even with the princes of the people, #Ps 113:7,8. Thus he raised Moses and Joseph, David and Daniel, &c.

Into his house royal] A place of rest and honour. Thus

Flebile principium melior fortuna secuta est.

In the tenth month] Not in the twelfth month, as Josephus hath it falsely; and yet the Papists tell us, that the common people may well want the historical part of the Bible, and for it read Josephus's Jewish Antiquities (Barclai).

In the seventh year of his reign] Four or five years before Haman's advancement. This was a sweet providence, that God should set up one to be a deliverer to his Church so long before the danger grew on. So Joseph was sent down to Egypt before; Moses was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians, and afterwards sent to Midian, that he might be fitted to be king in Jeshurun, &c. Oh how unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out Oh the depth, &c.! Latimer's three last petitions were granted.

Ver. 17. **And the king loved Esther]** This was the Lord's own work, who regarded the low estate of his handmaid, #Lu 1:48, and framed the king's heart to affect her. Let all such maids as desire loving husbands, and all such wives as would have their husbands loyal and loving to them, get God's favour, and adorn themselves with humility and modesty, as Esther did. Let Christian husbands also learn (for shame) of this barbarian, to love their wives above all women, with a conjugal, chaste, and fast affection: not lusting and hankering after strange flesh. It is remarkable, that after Solomon had said, "Rejoice in the wife of thy youth, ... be thou ravished always with her love; ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?" #Pr 5:19,20.

She obtained grace and favour in his sight] Surely as meat pleaseth better in a clean dish, so virtue in comely persons is more amiable, saith Hugo. Beauty of itself is a greater commendation, saith Aristotle, than all letters testimonial.

So that he set the royal crown upon her head] For queens also had their crowns, and did shine with the beams of their husbands; saying, as once those Roman ladies, *Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia*, Wheresoever thou art king I also am queen. Severus here saith, that the king clothed Esther with a purple robe, to show that he shared the kingdom with her, but the text holdeth forth no such matter; indeed, he made her queen instead of Vashti, he made also a great wedding feast, and gave a release to the provinces, and gifts to his grandees, as it followeth.

Ver. 18. **Then the king made a great feast]** Feasts are never more in season than at the recovery of the lost rib. {*See Trapp on "Ge 29:22"*}

Unto all his princes and his servants] So did Mauritius, the emperor of Greece, when he married Constantina (Niceph. 1. 18, c. 8), and Henry III, emperor of Germany, when he married Agnes, daughter to the prince of Pictavia, at Ingelheim; whither when a great sort of players, fiddlers, jesters, and jugglers resorted, he not only sent them away without reward, but also without meat and drink, which he liberally bestowed upon the poor. Funcc. ad annum 1044.

Even Esther's feast] So he called it, to testify his great affection and respect toward his spouse. This is no warrant for that Popish custom, of dedicating feasts to the honour of saints; or for that heathenish practice, in some places amongst us, of keeping wakes.

And he made a release to the provinces] That is, he caused it to be kept holiday, as Josephus hath it. Or rather he granted to his subjects a relaxation, or freedom from their taxes, tributes, and public payments, for a time at least, that thereby the new queen might get favour and authority among them, and all men might wish them much joy and happiness, that the loins of the people might bless

their prince and his marriage for this breathing and intermission; when as formerly his exactors received from his subjects no less sums of curses than of coin, to maintain his luxury.

And gave gifts] Such as Xenophon reckoneth up, bracelets, chains of gold, garments, horses with rich trappings, dishes from his own table, &c. (Cyropaed. 1. 8). This was kingly, this was god-like, **#Jas 1:5**. His son, Artaxerxes Longimarius, was wont to say, that he had therefore one hand longer than another (μακροχειρ), that he might be readier to give than to receive. Of Cyrus it is said, that he took more content in giving than receiving, Διδους μαλλον η κτωμενος ηδετο (Xenoph.). Of Stephen, king of Hungary, and of Oswald, king of England, that their right hands did not rot off for a long while after they were dead, because oft stretched out in giving gifts, and dealing alms. Christ received that he might give, **#Ps 68:18 Eph 4:8**. And held it more blessed to give than to receive, **#Ac 20:35**. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings, &c.; by your bounty and liberality the people shall be obliged, the state fenced, virtue encouraged, misery relieved: that you have secured. For,

*Extra fortunam est quicquid donatur amicis:
Quas dederis solas, semper habebis opes (Martial).*

According to the state of the king] Not pinchingly and sparingly, but bountifully, and as became a king; as Alexander the Great, when he sent his tutor a ship full of frankincense; and when a poor man asked him for an alms, he gave him a city, which when the poor man started at and made strange of, Alexander said unto him, *Non quaero quid te accipere decent, sed quid me dare*. The question is not what thou shouldest receive, but what it beseemeth me to give (Sen. de Benef. 1. 2, c. 16). And thus is the marriage of Esther solemnized with state and pomp suitable; thus is God's promise made by Jeremiah fulfilled, that if Jechoniah would not stand out against Nebuchadnezzar, but yield up the city, and go into captivity, it should be well with him and the people in the land of their captivity. It was so with him, **#Jer 52:31**; it was so likewise with Esther, Daniel, and many others by their means. And why? God will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor alter the word that is gone out of his mouth, **#Ps 89:33**.

Ver. 19. **And when the virgins were gathered together, &c.]** For a new supply of the king's insatiable lust, say some, this affection soon growing cold to Esther. So unreasonable is lust, so inconstant carnal affection, so lawless are the wicked, so short is any happiness of perfection in this life. The Septuagint leave out this word *the second time*, but the Hebrew version hath it. Others say, the second time, signifieth into the second house of the women. For they went not each to their own homes, because the king was now fully satisfied in his choice, as Tremellius and Junius conceive, but they remained in the custody of Shaazgar, keeper of the king's concubines, not suffered to converse with any man ever after, as Aben Ezra observeth. Therefore they were twice gathered together. Once, when they were brought to Hegai the eunuch, and again, when, from the king's house, they met all together in the second house of the women, under the government of Shaazgar.

Then Mordecai sat in the king's gate] As porter or other officer, saith Severus; and he attended still upon his office, not fawning on Esther, nor prowling for preferment. His ambition was to be quiet, and to do his own business, *intra pelliculam suam se continere, Negotiorum familiarium curator*: #1Th 4:11, φιλοτιμεισθαι ησυχάζεν, high seats he knew were never but uneasy, and long robes cannot but contract much soil. In the place he now holdeth he can hear how it goeth with his Esther, and do the king good service, as #Es 2:21.

Ver. 20. **Esther had not yet shewed her kindred]** Taciturnity is sometimes a virtue, and Tacitus the best historian. Queen Elizabeth's motto was, *Video, taceo*, I see, and say nothing. Sophocles saith, nothing better becometh a woman than silence. Euripides also saith, that silence, and modesty, and keeping at home, are the greatest commendation to a woman that can be. Curtius telleth us, that the Persians never trust one whom they find to be talkative, *Cui tacere grave sit* (Curt. 1. 4). Why Esther concealed her kindred, see the note, {*See Trapp on "Es 2:11"*}, and know that this is no warrant for Popish equivocation; a device of the Jesuits, for the comfort of afflicted Catholics (as Blackwell and Garnet profess), and for the instruction of all the godly.

For Esther did the commandment of Mordecai] Her honours had not altered her manners. She was *semper eadem*, always the same, as obsequious and observant of Mordecai still as ever. So was Joseph, David, Solomon, Epaminondas, and others, of their old and poorer parents. Pope Benedict, a Lombard, A.D. 1303, a shepherd's son, would not acknowledge his poor mother when she came to him lady like, but caused her to put on her shepherdess apparel, and then did her all the honour that might be. Sir Thomas Moore would in Westminster Hall beg his father's blessing on his knees. Mordecai was Esther's foster father, and had given her, though not her being, yet her well being; and hence she so respects him, and is so ruled by him. She had gotten from him that nurture and admonition in the Lord that was better to her than the crown of the kingdom; for what is unsanctified greatness but eminent dishonour? and what is *dignitas in indigno* but *ornamentum in luto*? (Salvian). If any parents find disobedient children, let them consider whether, Eli-like, they have not honoured (I mean cockered) their sons too much, **#1Sa 2:29**, which is the reason they honour them now so little. Will they keep meat well savoured, yet never salt it? will they have sprigs sprout right, yet never lop them? Our Henry II so cockered his eldest son, Henry, that he crowned him while himself was yet alive, which made his ambition quite turn off his obedience, to his father's great heart break.

Ver. 21. **In those days]** While the king was drowning himself in pleasure, and dreadeth no danger; while he was ravishing and deflowering virgins, and bragging, perhaps, as Proculus, the emperor, did, that when he made war upon the Sarmatians, in fifteen days he got with child a hundred virgins of that country, there taken prisoners; while this voluptuous prince was in the glut of his carnal delights, in the flagrancy of his sinful lusts, his life is sought for, and hell gapes for him: so slippery places are great ones set in; so doth the Lord sauce their greatest prosperity with sudden and unexpected dangers. Thus Attilas, king of Huns, was hanged up in gibbets, as it were, by God's own hand, in the midst of his nuptials. Thus King Henry of France, upon the marriage of his sister to the king of Spain, was so overjoyed, that he called himself by a new title, *Tres heureux Roy*, The thrice happy king. But, to confute him, in solemnizing that marriage, he was slain, at tilt, by Montgomery, captain of his guard, though against his will, &c.

Ad generum Cereris sine caede et sanguine pauci

Descendant reges, et sicca morte tyranni. (Juvenal.)

While Mordecai sat in the king's gate] See #Es 2:19.

Two of the king's chamberlains] *In trust I have found treason, said Queen Elizabeth. So, before her, did David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Joash, Amaziah, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and who not almost? Hence some great princes have wished never to have meddled with government; as Augustus, Adrian (felix si non imperitasset), Pertinax, who used to say that he never in all his life committed the like fault as when he accepted the empire; and many times he motioned to leave the same, and to return unto his house. Dioclesian and Maximian did so; for they found that quot servi, tot hostes; quot custodes, tot carnifices; they could not be safe from their own servants; but, Damocles-like, they sat eating with a drawn sword hanging by a twined thread over their necks. Hence Dionysius durst not trust his own daughter to barber him. And Massinissa, king of Numidia, committed his safe keeping to a guard of dogs; for men he durst not trust.*

Of those which kept the door] *sc. Of the king's bedchamber. Some render it, which kept the household stuff. Men they were much intrusted, and, therefore, the more to be abhorred. Metuendum est esse sine custode, sed multo magis a custode metuendum est, said Augustus concerning his guard, whom he suspected of treachery (Dio Cass.). All or most of his successors, till Constantine, died unnatural deaths. Let great ones, therefore, commit themselves to God in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

Were wroth] What the occasion of their discontent was is uncertain. The Greek and Chaldee say it was because Mordecai was so promoted. Others, because Vashti was deposed, and Esther advanced to her royal state. Others say that they desired the kingdom, as the Magi had done not long before. Some, again, that they were not well paid their arrears. Sure it is that ambition, envy, covetousness, all or some of these, stirred them up to this treasonable attempt.

Whatsoever the sire was, the bastard is anger; and rage, likely, is the mother of treason, because it banisheth reason, and so gives way to all unruliness, so it ends in malice, and malice will have blood.

And sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus] Kings are fair marks for traitors to shoot at. In which regard

*- Miser atque infelix est etiam Rex
Nec quenquam (mihi crede) facit diadema beatum.*

Most of the Caesars got nothing by their adoption or designation to the empire, nisi ut citius interficerentur, but to be slain so much the sooner. Treasons there were so many plotted and practised against that incomparable Queen Elizabeth, that she said in Parliament, she rather marvelled that she was than mused that she should not be, were it not that God's holy hand had protected her beyond expectation. Henry IV, of France, was first stabbed in the mouth, and after that in the heart, by those false Jesuits, whom he had admitted into his very bosom, and used with marvellous respect. But it would not serve his turn to save his life. His countryman, Cominaeus, telleth us that if he should write of all the princes which he knew in his time that, in the judgment of men, seemed to live in great felicity, and yet, to those that knew them familiarly, lived in a miserable estate, that matter alone would require a reasonable volume.

Ver. 22. **And the thing was known to Mordecai]** How he came to know it is uncertain. Josephus saith that it was revealed to him by one Barnabazus, a Jew, who was servant to one of the conspirators. R. Solomon saith that the eunuchs talked of the plot before Mordecai in the language of Tarsus, supposing that he had not understood them; and so it came forth. Others conceive that they solicited him, being one of the keepers of the king's door, also to join with them. Howsoever it was that he got inkling and intelligence of their bloody purpose, God was in it, and good men are of his privy council; "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," **#Ps 25:14**. Their apprehensions of things are deep, and their observations right, their knowledge rare to bolt out mischiefs, their experience leads them oft to guess shrewdly at men's purposes by their looks and gestures. "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence" (or subtilty), "and find out knowledge of witty inventions," **#Pr 8:12**.

Who told it unto Esther the queen] Haply, as holding himself a mean man, unworthy and unfit to speak to the king. Or, as fearing lest he should not be believed, or should be outfaced by the traitor, or, as conceiving that it would be better taken from Esther, whom the king so dearly loved; and might prove a good means to win her further into his favour. Yea, Mordecai himself, saith an interpreter, might safely have also a further reach herein, namely, to try the sincere affection of Esther towards him, whether she would make this an occasion to his good and preferment, or rather take the glory thereof unto herself.

And Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name] She doth not conceal the treason, or further it, as some ambitious Semiramis would have done, or adulterous Livia. For although she was wont to boast that she ruled her husband Augustus by obeying him, yet Pliny and Tacitus tell us that she was overly familiar with Eudemus, her physician. And whereas Augustus's last words to her were, O Livia, remember our marriage; and, Adieu. She did so, and, it is thought, had a hand in setting him going. And the like is reported of Clytemnestra, Olympias, Queen Isabel, wife to our Edward II. But holy Esther was none such; she, as a loyal and faithful wife, revealed to the king the danger he was in, and so saved his life. So did Michal, David's wife, though she had no great goodness in her. The like is reported of Cleopatra, daughter to Antiochus the Great, who gave her in marriage to Ptolemaeus Epiphanes, thinking by her to destroy him, but he was deceived, according to **#Da 11:17**. Valerius Maximus and Fulgosius speak much in the commendation of Thuria, Sulpitia, Chilonia, Antonia, Egnatia, &c., for loving and faithful wives. Valerius Maximus Christianus also, for like cause, celebrateth Irene, wife to Philip, the emperor; and Mary, wife to Sigismund, king of Bohemia and Hungary, &c.

*Verum haec (Esther) tantum alias inter caput extulit omnes,
Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.*

Ver. 23. **And when inquisition was made of the matter]** The king neither slighted this accusation, nor too hastily believed it. Not this, lest he should discover a needless fear, or precipitate a wrong

sentence. Not that, lest he should betray his own life, and put all into a confusion, as Gedaliah did, #Jer 40:13-41:3, and as he in the history did, who, being forewarned by a letter of a dangerous plot laid for his life, laid aside the letter with these words, εἰς αὐριον τὰ σπουδαία, Tomorrow we will mind these serious businesses, but ere the morrow he was despatched. The matter was here inquired into, saith the text, lest haply it might be misreported, and so the innocent be punished. Or, if not innocent, yet doth our law condemn any before his cause be heard? Surely Pilate and Festus were far better judges than Caiaphas and Lysias, for they would execute a man in the morning, and then sit upon him in the afternoon. Aeneas Sylvius, in his twentieth chapter of Europe, tells of some places, wherein, if anyone be suspected of theft, he is forthwith taken and trussed up. Three days after they judge the suspicion; and if they find the man guilty, they let his carcase hang till it rot; as if otherwise, they take it down, and bury it honourably at the public charge. This is preposterous justice, judgment turned into gall, and righteousness into hemlock.

It was found out] As treason usually is, and strangely: witness those in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and the gunpowder plotters. Creighton, the Jesuit, a Scot, falling into Scotland, and being taken by certain Netherland pirates, had torn certain papers in pieces; but the torn pieces, being thrown out of the ship, were blown back again by the wind, and cast by a providence into the ship, not without a miracle, as Creighton said himself; which, being set together, by Wade, with much labour and singular cunning, discovered new designs of the pope and his agents here against England, A.D. 1585 (Cared. Eliz.). *Detexit facinus fatuus et non implevit*, saith Tacitus of one about his time. Either the traitor's own tongue shall betray him (as it befell those two sent by Mahomet to kill Scanderbeg), or the fowls of heaven shall reveal the mischief, and that which hath wing shall tell the matter, #Ec 10:20 (it was a piece of a wing, a quill, that discovered that hellish gunpowder plot), or some other way it shall be found out, as here, and the conspirators brought to condign punishment.

Therefore they were both hanged on a tree] Traitors, like bells, will be never well tuned till well hanged, till they have worn a

Tyburn tippet, as father Latimer phrased it. Campian, that spider, was swept down by the hand of justice, and drew his last thread in the triangle of Tyburn. His words in his epistle to the honourable counsellors of Queen Elizabeth were these, *Quamdiu vel unus quispiam e nobis supererit qui Tyburno vestro fruatur, &c.*, As long as there is any one of us left to enjoy your Tyburn, &c. Much joy may they have of it, since it is their ambition, and may their quarters be set as high as that false Edric's head once was by King Canute, viz. upon the highest part of the tower of London, therein performing his promise to a traitor, of advancing him above any lord of the land.

And it was written in the book of the chronicles] Heb. In the book of the words of days, in the diary of the kings, or in the book of remembrance. As the Jews, so the Persians, had their chronicles or public commentaries, wherein all memorable acts were recorded, and scribes or historiographers for that purpose appointed and maintained. Plutarch writeth, that at that great naval battle between Themistocles and the Persians, Xerxes sat in a throne of gold, and saw the conflict, having many scribes about him, whose office was to set down all that was done that day. This was a commendable custom, and might be a motive to their kings and great ones to take heed of doing aught that they would not have registered and read by succeeding ages. Suetonius telleth us that Augustus upon this account forbade his daughter and nieces to say or do anything that they would not have to be chronicled (Suet. in August.).

Before the king] Perhaps in his presence, and for his special use. though Mordecai's good service was soon forgotten, God forgat not to recompense Ahasuerus's love to Esther and courtesy to her people, by detecting and defeating those conspirators that sought his life. But he soon forgets Mordecai, God's instrument for his deliverance, though the matter were written in a book before him; hence he goes noted with a black coal for his ingratitude. Tamerlane had a catalogue of the names of such as had best deserved of him, which he daily perused, oftentimes saying that day to be lost wherein he had not given them something. There was a providence in it that nothing was yet done for Mordecai. God's time is the best, and we shall one day say so; neither is there anything lost by waiting

his leisure, he bottles up our tears, he books up our sighs, he writes down all we say or do in his roll of remembrance, #**Mal 3:6,16**. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:6"} {See Trapp on "Mal 3:16"}

Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **After these things did Ahasuerus promote Haman]** Four years after his marriage with Esther, or near upon, did Ahasuerus magnify and exalt Haman, *Hominem profanum et sceleratum*, as one saith, a profane wicked person; merely for his mind sake, to show his sovereignty, and that he would, like some petty god upon earth, set up whom he would, and whom he would, put down, #**Da 4:19**. Alexander the Great made Abdolominus, a poor gardener, king of Sidon. Whether it were also by flattery or sycophancy, or some new projects for establishing his tyranny, and increasing his tributes, that Haman had insinuated himself into this king's favour, it is uncertain. Sure it is that Mordecai, a better man, lay yet unlooked upon; like good corn he lay in the bottom of the heap, when this vilest of men was exalted, #**Ps 12:8**. Thus oft empty vessels swim aloft, rotten posts are gilt with adulterate gold, the worst weeds spring up bravest; and when the twins strove in Rebekah's womb, profane Esau comes forth first, and is the firstborn, #**Ge 25:25**. But while they seek the greatest dignities, they mostly meet with the greatest shame; like apes, while they be climbing, they the more show their deformities. They are lifted up also, *ut lapsu graviore ruant*, that they may come down again with the greater poise. It was, therefore, well and wisely spoken by Alvarez de Luna, when he told them who admired his fortune and favour with the king of Castile, You do wrong to commend the building before it be finished, and until you see how it will stand.

The son of Hammedatha the Ayagite] *i.e.* The Amalekite, of the stock royal; so that Haman was the natural enemy of the Jews, like as Hannibal was of the Romans. An old grudge there was, an inveterate hatred; Amalek was Esau's grandchild, and the enmity between these two peoples was, as we say of runnet, the older the stronger.

And advanced him] Set him aloft upon the pinnacle of highest preferment; as Tiberius did Sejanus; as Louis XI of France did his

barber; as our Henry VIII did Wolsey; and our recent kings, Buckingham. But princes' favourites should consider with themselves that honour is but a blast, a *magnum nihil*, a glorious fancy, a rattle to still men's ambition; and that as the passenger looketh no longer upon the dial than the sun shineth upon it, so it is here.

And set his seat above all the princes] This cup of honour his weak head could not bear; this blast so blew up the bubble that it burst again. Sejanus-like, he now began to sacrifice to himself, little thinking of that utter ruin to which he was hastening. Physicians used to say, that *ultimus sanitatis gradus est morbo vicinus*. Sure it is, that when the wicked are near unto misery, they have greatest preferment and prosperity. When Tiberius was desirous to rid his hands of Sejanus, he made him his colleague in the consulship, and set him above all his courtiers. Ahasuerus intended not any harm to Haman when he raised him to this pitch of preferment; but it puffed him up, and proved his bane. None are in so great danger as those that walk upon pinnacles; even height itself makes men's brains to swim. Every man is not a Joseph, or a Daniel. They were set above all the princes, and could not only bear it, but improve it for the glory of God, and the good of his people. *Sed o quam hoc non est omnium!* High seats are not only uneasy, but dangerous, and how few are there that do not (as Isis' ass) think themselves worshipful for the burden they bear! (*Honus onus*).

Ver. 2. **And all the kiny's servants]** His courtiers and others; not his menial servants only.

That were in the king's gate] Where the courtiers used to walk, that they might be on call; and where others attended that had business at the court.

Bowed, and revered Haman] Not with so much readiness and diligence as impudence and baseness; for should men bow to a molten calf, because made up of golden earrings? Many of these cringing courtiers could not but hate Haman in their hearts, and were as ready to wish him hanged, and to tell the king shortly after where he might have a fit gallows for him. So Sejanus's greatest friends, who had deified him before, when once he fell out of the emperor's

favour, showed themselves most passionate against him, saying, that if Caesar had clemency, he ought to reserve it for men, not use it toward monsters.

For the king had so commanded concerning him] And if the king had commanded these servile souls to worship a dog or a cat, as the Egyptians did, a golden image, as Nebuchadnezzar's subjects did, to turn the glory of the incorruptible God into the similitude of a corruptible man, of four-footed beasts or creeping things, as **#Ro 1:23**, they would have done it. Most people are of King Henry's religion, as the proverb is, resolving to do as the most do, though thereby they be undone for ever. This is to be worse than some heathens. {*See Trapp on "Ac 4:19"*} But why should Ahasuerus be so hasty to heap such honours upon so worthless and wicked a person, but that he had a mind to proclaim his own folly to all his kingdom?

But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence] He did not, he durst not, though pressed and urged to it with greatest importunity. And why? not because Haman wore a picture openly in his bosom, as the Chaldee paraphrast and Aben Ezra give the reason; not merely (if at all, which some doubt of) because he was a cursed Amalekite; but because the Persian kings required, that themselves and their chief favourites (such as proud Haman was) should be revered with a kind of divine honour, more than was due to any man. This the Jews were flatly forbidden by their law to do. The Lacedaemonians also were resolute against it, as Herodotus in his seventh book relateth. Pelopidas the Theban would not be drawn to worship the Persian monarch in this sort. No more would Conon the Athenian general. And when Timagoras did, the Athenians condemned him to die for it. It was not therefore pride or self-willedness that made Mordecai so stiff in the legs that he would not bend to Haman, but fear of sin, and conscience of duty. He knew that he had better offend all the world than God and his own conscience: *Nihil praeter peccatum timeo* I fear nothing before sin. (Basil).

Ver. 3. **Then the king's servants, &c.]** See **#Es 3:2**.

Said unto Mordecai] Tempting his piety and constancy not once, but often, alleging the king's commandment, together with his aloneness in refusing to obey it, Haman's power, displeasure, &c. Thus they presented to Mordecai both *irritamenta* and *terriculamenta*, i.e. allurements and frightenments, according to that of the apostle, **#Heb 11:37**, they were tempted on both hands, but all in vain. *Sapientis virtus, per ea quibus petitur, illustratur.* The virtue of wisdom is shown by means of desiring these things. This constancy wicked men call obstinacy, but they speak evil of what they know not, viz. the power of the Spirit, and the privy armour of proof, that the saints have about their hearts.

Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?] Right or wrong, it matters not with many, if the king or state have commanded a thing, done it must be. But what said that martyr to the Popish bishop, pressing him with this argument, and affirming that the king's laws must be obeyed, whether they agree with the word of God or not, yea, though the king were an infidel? If Shadrach, Mesheeh, and Abednego had been of your mind, my lord (said Roger Coe, martyr), Nebuchadnezzar had not confessed the living God. True it is that we must give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. But in addition, we must see to it that we give unto God the things that are God's, **#Mt 22:21**, where the three articles used in the original are very emphatical, *τα του Θρου του Θεου*. And it is a saying of Chrysostom, If Caesar will take to himself God's part, by commanding that which is sinful, to pay him such a tribute is not *tributum Caesaris*, but *servitium diaboli*, an observing of Caesar, but a serving of the devil.

Ver. 4. **Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him]** This, if they did of good-will (as at first perhaps they did), it was a friendly office, and may shame many of us who are so backward to Christian admonition (see my common-places), that spiritual alms, that we are bound freely to distribute, **#Jude 22,23**. But it; as is likely, at length at least they did it to ingratiate with Haman, and out of envy to Mordecai, because he did not comply and comport with them, what did they else but act the devil's part, and the rather, because they were importunate and impudent as not to take an answer?

And he hearkened not unto them] They did but *surdo fabulam* (as they say), beat upon cold iron; this matter was not malleable, this man not to be prevailed with, to do aught against his conscience. The heavens shall sooner fall than I will alter mine opinion, said that martyr. This the persecutors called obstinacy; *seal pro hac obstinatione fidei morimur*; saith Tertullian, but for this obstinacy of faith we gladly die; and the stronger any are in faith the more resolute in warrantable purposes. The strength of Israel repenteth not, **#1Sa 15:29**. Inconstancy comes from weakness.

That they told Haman] Purposely to pick a thank and curry favour. Go not about as a tale bearer, **#Le 19:16**. The word signifieth as a pedlar, that first filleth his pack with tales and slanders, and then venteth them to the hurt of others. Such are fitly joined with flatterers, **#Pr 20:19**, and with murderers, **#Eze 22:9**. Such a wretched pedlar was Doeg, and such were these evil instruments in the text, whose tongues were as sharp as the quills of a porcupine, the poison of asps was under their lips. And although it was truth they told Haman, yet because they did it not for any love to the truth, nor for respect to justice, nor for the bettering of either party, but only to undo the one, and to incense the other, they were no better than slanderers.

To see whether Mordecai's matters would stand] Whether he would stick to his principles, and not start aside for any terror, **#Php 1:28**.

For he had told them that he was a Jew] That is, by interpretation, a confessor; yea, more, he was a stout professor of the truth; and though he had hitherto concealed himself, yet now (since they will needs have it so) he plainly tells them his country, and his conscience, the true cause of his peremptoriness, which they held and called pride and stubbornness.

Ver. 5. **And when Haman saw]** Stirred up by these pestilent flatterer, *qui crabronem furiosum magis irritaverant*, as one saith, he took special notice of Mordecai's irreverence, which with more discretion he might have dissembled. When an inconsiderate fellow had stricken Cato in the bath, and afterwards cried him mercy, he replied, I remember not that thou didst strike me. It is a sign of

weakness to be too soft and sensible of an indignity; "I was as a deaf man that heard not, and as one dumb, in whose mouth is no reproof," #Ps 38:13,14. The best apology to words and carriages of scorn and petulance is that of Isaac to Ishmael, viz. patience and silence.

That Mordecai bowed not, &c.] A great business to enrage him so much, but that he was set on by that old man slayer.

Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avarum

Subruit, aut reficit —

So trivial, so small is it, the spirit because greedy of praise, will be undermined or restored. A small wind raiseth a bubble, ambition rideth without reins, and hath inhabitatorem Dracohere Apostatam, the devil at inn with it.

Then was Haman full of wrath] He swelled like a toad, glowed like a devil; being transformed as it were into a breathing devil, he seeks the utter extirpation of that people, of whom, concerning the flesh, Christ was to come, #Ro 9:5, wishing the same to them which Caligula in a rage did to the people of Rome, I would ye had all but one neck, that I might cut you all off at one blow, Εἶθ' ενα αυχενα ειχετε. Josephus tells us, that he brake out into this blustering speech, *Liberi Persae me adorant. Hic autem, servus cum sit, tamen hoc facere dedignatur:* The Persians, though free men, reverence me, and yet this slave thinks himself too good to do it. This he uttered no doubt with a very harsh and hateful intention of the voice, such as was that of the two brethren in evil, whose anger was fierce and their wrath cruel, when, #Ge 34:31, they answered their aggrieved father, Should he deal with our sister as a harlot? #Ge 49:5,7; where the word Zonah (harlot) hath a great letter, to note their vehemency, rage, and rudeness.

Ver. 6. **And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone]** He thought it a small matter, saith Josephus, μικρον ηγησατο, a thing below him, too little for his revenge, which, like fire, burneth all it can lay hold upon, especially when as here it ariseth from ambition, which, like choler adust, if constructed and stopped in its course, is a dangerous passion, and endeth in burning fevers and madness.

Haman thought scorn, *contempsit in oculis suis*, contempt in his eyes, so the Hebrew, to foul his fingers with Mordecai alone, the whole nation must perish, and all the children of God that were scattered abroad, as he once said, **#Joh 11:50,52**. In like manner, *nostri temporis Hamanus*, saith Merlin upon this text, the Haman of our time (meaning the duke of Guise, as I suppose), when as by the king's favour he was promoted, and promised himself the crown, there being but one family only that stood in his way, he desired together with it to overturn all the Reformed religion and to root out all the remembrance of the Churches in France. Hence the Parisian Massacre, wherein Merlin had his part, being household chaplain to the admiral, and by a miracle of God's mercy escaping those hellish cut throats. The first occasion of that bloody massacre, I have somewhere read, was this (Other things I know were pretended, as if the Protestants had plotted and practised against the king, queen mother, and the princes of the blood, and coin stamped with this inscription, *Virtus in rebelles*, &c. Courage in rebellion). The pope sent to the cardinal of Lorraine, brother to the duke of Guise, a table, wherein was painted our lady with a little child in her arms, by the most excellent painter in Christendom, and consecrated with his own hands, and enclosed it in a case of silk, and a letter with it, giving him high commendation and thanks for his zeal against the Huguenots. The messenger that carried the present fell sick by the way, and finding one going into France, entreated him to deliver the present to the cardinal. The cardinal read the letter, and laid the table on his bed, for he would not open it, till he might do it with greater solemnity. For this purpose he invited the duke of Guise to dinner with many other great personages. In the meanwhile one that liked not the cardinal, found means to change the table, &c. At dinner the letter was read, and the table taken out of the case in the sight of the cardinal and all his guests, wherein was painted in place of our lady and her child, the cardinal of Lorraine stark naked, the queen mother, the young Queen of Scots, and the old duchess of Guise naked also, hanging about the cardinal's neck, and their legs wrapped between his legs. I cannot say much for the man that did this prank; but that the cardinal and his complices should thereupon design all the French Protestants to destruction, should butcher thirty thousand of them in a month, one hundred thousand of them in one year, some say three hundred thousand; that upon the news of it the

pope should proclaim a jubilee for joy, and the cardinal of Lorraine give the messenger a thousand crowns, &c. This was matchless atrocious savagery, this was Haman-like hatred, this was cruelty beyond that of Simeon and Levi, which made good Jacob, in a deep detestation of that dreadfulness, cry out, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret," &c, #Ge 49:6.

For they had showed him the people of Mordecai] viz. That he was a Jew. Josephus's note upon this text is: Haman naturally hated the Jews, as those that had anciently destroyed the Amalekites' countrymen, he might easily call to mind what Saul had done to them, and David, and, lastly, the tribe of Simeon. God had sentenced them long since to utter destruction; and yet deferred the first execution for about four hundred years' time; and now again, after more than five hundred years, Haman, the Agagite, is thus exalted, but for a mischief, as the eagle carrieth the tortoise on high in her talons, that she may break it in the fall, and feed upon it.

Patientia laesa fit furor.

Wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews] *Ut sanguineam*

famem expleret; as a wolf, breaking into the fold, kills all the flock; as fowlers take away the young and the dams together, putting

both into the bag (which God forbade, #De 22:6); as Esau, that rough man, came with four hundred cut-throats at his heels, to destroy the mother with the children, #Ge 32:11; as Uladus, prince of Wallachia, was wont, together with the offender, to execute

the whole family, yea, sometimes the whole kindred; as Selilnus, the Great Turk, in revenge of the loss he received at the battle of

Lepanto, resolved to put to death all the Christians in his dominions, in number infinite; as Philip of Spain sailed out of the Low Countries homewards, vowing to root out all the Lutherans there,

and protesting that he had rather have no subjects than such (Hist. of Count. of Trent, 417); as cruel Dr Story, a great persecutor in

Queen Mary's reign, and hanged for a traitor in Queen Elizabeth's, whose death he had conspired, cursing her daily in his grace at meals, and greatly repenting that he and others had laboured only about the young sprigs and twigs, as he phrased it, while they should have stricken at the root, and clean rooted it out (A.D. 1571, Camd. Eliz.); lastly, as the gunpowder Papists, who had prepared by proclamations to further that horrid plot (if it had taken effect) upon the Puritans, and under that name to have murdered all those that had but looked toward religion.

That were throughout the whole kingdom] Herein he showed himself

a right Amalekite, Mali corvi malum ovum, dirt kneaded with blood

(Πηλος αιματι πεφουραμενος), as one said of Tiberius, He presumed he might have what he pleased of the king, and, therefore, made account to make but a breakfast of his enemies, the Jews, to whom he

said in his heart, as once Caligula did to the Roman consuls,

Rideo, quod uno nutu meo iugulare vos omnes possim, I cannot but

laugh to think that I can nod you all to death.

Even the people of Mordecai] Who were more renowned by him than

Co was by Hippocrates, Thebes by Epaininondas, Stagira by Aristotle,

Hippo by Augustine, &c.

Ver. 7. In the first month] The time is thus noted, *ad maiorem historiae fidem et lucern*, to give more credit to the history, and to lend some light to it.

That is, the month Nisan] The Chaldees call it Abib, from the new fruits or ears of grain then first appearing. It was the first month unto Israel, in respect of sacred, not civil, affairs, because of their coming out of Egypt therein. It answereth to part of March with us, and part of April.

In the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus] When Esther had now been queen for over four years, and, being greatly beloved, was in a capacity to do her people good. This was a sweet providence, the remedy was ready before the disease broke out. No country hath more venomous creatures than Egypt, none more antidotes. So godliness hath many troubles, and as many helps against trouble.

They cast Pur, that is, the lot] The old interpreter addeth *in urnam*, into the pitcher. And the new annotations tell us that, about casting lots, there was a pitcher into which papers, with names of the several months written on them, and rolled up, were cast; yea, also papers with the names of every day and of every month were cast in; then one, blindfolded, put in his hand and pulled out a paper, and according to the marks which they had set down, such a month proved lucky, and such a day in the month; and, by God's providence, it so fell out that their supposed lucky day was on the twelfth month, whereby it came to pass that their plot was defeated before the time of accomplishing thereof, **#Es 9:1-11**.

From day to day, &c.] This is not to be taken as if they had continued twelve months about in casting of these lots; but as in the note next above.

That is, the month Adar] In all which time that wicked Haman might have bethought himself (as one noteth), and returned to a better mind toward God's people. But he, after the hardness of his heart, that could not repent, treasured up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, &c., **#Ro 2:5**.

Ver. 8. **And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus]** After that, by sortilegy (or sorcery, for it is no better, as the very name showeth, and Varro affirmeth), he had light upon a lucky day, wherein to speak to the king, and a black day, wherein to do execution, he taketh the boldness to move the king in it. Now Mr Perkins affirmeth, that, as men do put confidence in lot sorcery, or the like diabolical divinations, or else they cannot attain to any foreknowledge by them; so therein, explicitly or implicitly, they have confederacy with the devil. Oh that this were well considered!

There is a certain people] Not worth the naming.

Scattered abroad] But was that their fault? was it not their misery rather, that God had threatened them, **#De 3:2**, and were they not, therefore, to be pitied, and not preyed upon? It is said of Queen Elizabeth, that she hated, no less than did Mithridates, such as maliciously persecuted virtue forsaken of fortune (Camd. Eliz. 531).

And dispersed among the people] And, therefore, the more dangerous, since every sect strives to spread their opinions, and these, being antimagistratical, may do much harm, and draw many from their obedience, prove seedsmen of sedition. It may very well be that the sect of the Essenes were now beginning among the Jews, who taught that God alone, and no mortal man, was to be acknowledged for Lord and Prince (Joseph. l. 18, c. 2). Hence they were called Esseni, or Hashoni, that is, rebels, and for their sakes the whole nation might be the worse thought of (as if they were all such), like as the Protestants were in France, for the Anabaptists' sake, in the reign of King Francis (Scultet. An. 454).

In all the provinces of thy kingdom] *Quarum proventu gaudet, alitur, insolescit.* Where they do no good, but devour grain, as vermin, as excrements in human society, and deserve to be knocked on the head, which may easily be done, because they are dejected, and not able to make headway against an adversary.

And their laws are diverse from all people] So they were, and better, their enemies themselves being judges, **#De 4:6-8**. Prosper's conceit was, that they were called *Iudaei*, because they received *Ius Dei*, their laws from God, who might say to them, as once Joseph did to his brethren, **#Ge 45:12**, Behold, your eyes see, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And, therefore, if Demosthenes could say of laws in general, that they were the invention of Almighty God (*εὐρημα τοῦ θεοῦ*); and if Cicero could say of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome, that they far exceeded and excelled all the libraries of all the philosophers, how much more true was all this of the laws of the Jews, given by God, and ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator, Moses! Seneca, though he jeered the Jews for their weekly Sabbath as those that lost the seventh part

of their time, yet he could not but say that, being the basest people, they had the best laws, and gave laws unto all the world. Those holy Levites, #Ne 9:13, acknowledge, with all thankfulness, that God had given them right judgments, true laws, good statutes and commandments, whereby he severed them from all other people, as his own peculiar, and this was their glory wherever they came, though the sycophant in the text turneth their glory into shame, as one that loved vanity, and sought after leasing, #Ps 4:2.

Neither keep they the king's laws] Mordecai indeed would not do him reverence, because it went against his conscience; no more would others of them keep the king's laws in like case, but obey God rather than man, where they could not do both. Otherwise they were charged, #Jer 29:7, to seek the peace of the cities where they abode, and to submit to their civil and municipal laws; and so they did, doubtless, for the generality of them. But this impudent liar represents them to the king as refractories and rebels, &c. The devil began his kingdom by a lie, and by lies he upholdeth it. He was a liar and a murderer from the beginning; but first a liar, and thereby a murderer. He cannot handsomely murder, except he slander first, #So 5:6; the credit of the Church must first be taken away, and then she is wounded; traduced she must be, and thence persecuted. Thus David is believed to seek Saul's life; Elijah is the troubler of Israel; Jeremiah, the trumpet of rebellion; the Baptist, a stirrer up of sedition; Christ, an enemy to Caesar; Paul, a pestilent incendiary; the primitive Christians, a public mischief; the Reformed Churches, antimagistratical; this colour of right, yea, of piety, was laid upon the French Massacre, and by edicts a fair cloak sought to cover that impious fraud, as if there had been some horrid treason hatched by the Huguenots (Camd. Eliz.). The primitive persecutors used to put Christians into bears' and dogs' skins, or other ugly creatures, and then bait them; so wicked men put religion and its professors into ugly conceits and reports, and then speak and act against them.

Therefore it is not for the king's profit] Heb. It is not meet, equal, or profitable to the king to suffer them, *ut insolescat per licentiam*, so the Vulgate Latin rendereth it, but without warrant from the Orig. See how this sycophant fills his mouth with arguments, the better to achieve his desire. An elaborate set speech he maketh, neither is

there a word in it but what might seem to have weight. He pretends the king's profit and the public good, concealing and dissembling his ambition, avarice, envy, malignity, that set him awork. Politicians, when they soar highest, are like the eagle, which, while aloft, hath her eye still upon the prey, which by this means she spies sooner, and seizes upon better. *In parabola ovis capras suas quaerunt*, as the proverb hath it. Haman holds it not fit there should be more religions than one in a kingdom, for preventing of troubles. Nebuchadnezzar was of the same mind when he commanded all men to worship his golden image. But must all, therefore, die that will not do it? and is it for the king's profit that the righteous be rooted out? Is not *semen sanctum statumen terrae*? the holy seed the stay of the State? #Isa 6:13, the beauty and bulwark of the nation? See #Jer 5:1 Eze 2:2-10, *Absque stationibus non staret mundus*.

Ver. 9. **If it please the king]** Here he showeth himself a smooth courtier, and speaketh silken words, the sooner to insinuate. But if Solomon had been by he would have said, "When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart," #Pr 26:25.

Let it be written that they may be destroyed] As Mithridates, king of Pontus, by writing one bloody letter only, destroyed eighty thousand citizens of Rome, dispersed up and down Asia for traffic's sake (Val. Max.). That was bad, but this was worse that Haman motioned, and well near effected. And surely never did the old red dragon, saith Rupertus, lift up his head so fiercely and furiously against the woman, that is, against the Church of God, as in this place. Therefore is Haman to be reckoned among those cruel enemies, who said, Come, and let us destroy them from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more remembered, #Ps 83:4. But let them rage and kill up the saints as much as they can, the sheep will still be more in number than the wolves, the doves than the hawks. *Plures effcimur quoties metimur*, saith Tertullian, the more you crop us the faster we grow.

And I shall pay ten thousand talents of silver] A vast sum, three thousand seven hundred fifty thousand pounds sterling. At so great charge would this butcher be, to satisfy his lust, and to have his

pennyworths upon God's poor people. So, in the gunpowder treason (besides their pains, digging like moles in their vault of villany), Digby offered to bring in fifteen hundred pounds, Tresham two thousand, Piercy four thousand, out of the earl of Northumberland's rents; besides ten swift horses to steed them when the blow was past. But where should Haman have all this money, may some say? I answer, First, if he were of the seed royal of Amalek, as it is thought, he might have much left him by his ancestors. Secondly, being so great a favourite to the king of Persia, he had, doubtless, many profitable offices, and so might lay up gold as dust, and silver as the stones of the brooks, #Job 22:24. Did not Wolsey so here in Henry VIII's time? Thirdly, he had already devoured in his hopes the goods and spoils of all the slain Jews, which he doubted not but the king would bestow upon him for his good service. Like as Henry II of France gave his mistress, Diana Valentina, all the confiscations of goods made in the kingdom for cause of heresy. Hereupon many good men were burned for religion, as it was said, but, indeed, it was to satiate her covetousness (Hist. of Counc. of Trent, 387).

To the hands of those, &c.] Vulg. *Arcariis gazae tuae.*

To bring it into the king's treasuries] That he might not be damnified in the tributes formerly paid by the Jews for their liberty of conscience. Kings use to take care that their incomes and revenues be not impaired or diminished. It is said of Soliman, the Great Turk, that, seeing a company of many thousands of his Christian subjects fall down before him, and hold up the forefinger, as their manner of conversion to the Turkish religion is, he asked what moved them to turn? they replied, it was to be eased of their heavy taxations. He, not willing to lose in tribute for an unsound accession in religion, rejected their conversion, and doubled their taxations.

Ver. 10. **And the king took his ring from his hand]** And thereby gave him power to do what he pleased, #Ge 41:42 1Ki 21:8, *En regis huius inertiam et impritiam.* How weak (weak as water, #Ge 49:4) was the heart of this brutish barbarian, skilful to destroy! #Eze 21:31, seeing he did all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman, #Eze 16:30, rather than of an able man, such as every magistrate should be, #Ex 18:21, just, and ruling in the fear of

God, #2Sa 23:3. In the case of Vashti he could refer the matter to the consideration of a council. In the case of the two eunuchs that had conspired against his life he made inquisition of the matter, and did all things deliberately. In the case of Haman after this, though deeply displeased, yet he did nothing rashly, till he had gone into the palace garden, and considered with himself what was best to be done. But here upon the very first motion (without hearing them speak for themselves, or admonishing them to do their duty better, &c.) he gives order for the slaying of so many thousand innocents, never considering that every drop of their blood had a voice in it to cry for vengeance against him and his, #Ge 4:10 Mt 22:7. And when the king heard it; for blood cries aloud to God; #2Ki 9:26, "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth." Murder ever bleeds fresh in the eye of Almighty God. To him many years, yea, that eternity that is past, is but yesterday. He will give such blood again to drink, for they are worthy, #Re 16:6. Dealt he not so by Herod, Julian, Attilas, Felix of Wurtemberg, Farnesius, Minerius, Charles IX, king of France, who died by exceeding bleeding at sundry parts of his body, soon after the Parisian Massacre, whereof he was the author, giving as large and as bloody a commission to the duke of Guise to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all the French Protestants, as Ahasuerus did here to Haman? Neither was he slack to execute it with greatest inhumanity, crying out to those of his party (after that he had slain the admiral), Courage, my fellows, fall on, the king commands it, it is his express pleasure, he commands it (The Hist. of French Mass., by Mr Clark). But what followed shortly after?

*Quem sitiit vivens scelerata mente cruorem,
Perfidus hunc moriens Carolus ore vomit.
Ergo Dei tandem verbo subscribite, Reges;
Ne rapiant Stygiae vos Acherontis aquae.*

And gave it unto Haman] Who now being his favourite, might have anything of him, like as it is said of Sejanus, that in all his designs he found in Tiberius the emperor so great facility and affection to his desire, that he needed only to ask and give thanks. He never denied him anything, and oftentimes anticipated his request, and avowed that he deserved much more. It was not, therefore, without cause that the primitive Christians prayed so hard for the emperor,

that God would send him good counsellors, and deliver him from flatterers and slanderers, those pests of the court (Tertull. Apol.).

The Jews' enemy] That was his style, or rather his brand and mark of ignominy, worse than that of Cain, #Ge 4:15, that of Dathan, #Nu 26:9, of Ahaz, #2Ch 28:22. It may be he affected this title, and gloried in it; as we read of John Oneal, father to the earl of Tyrone, that rebel 1598, that he inscribed himself in all places, I, great John Oneal, cousin to Christ, friend to the queen of England, and foe to all the world besides (Camden).

Ver. 11. **And the king said unto Haman]** Whom he looked upon as an honest, prudent, public spirited man, and therefore so easily empowered him to do what he would.

O vanas hominum mentes! O pectora caeca!

The silver is given unto thee] *i.e.* The ten thousand talents that thou hast proffered, and which Haman likely purposed to raise out of the spoil of the Jews; all this is remitted, and returned to Haman as a gift again. *Sic ex alieno corie gigantes isti latissimas corrigias secant,* saith an interpreter here, Such large thongs cut these giants out of other men's hides. But what meant they thus to sell the hide before they had taken the beast? He that sat in heaven (and had otherwise determined it) laughed at them, the Lord had them in derision, #Ps 2:4. "With him" (alone) "is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools. He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty," #Job 12:16,17,19.

The people also, to do with them] Here Haman was made, here he had more than heart could wish, as #Ps 73:7, and holdeth himself, therefore, no doubt, the happiest man under heaven. But *nihil sane infelicius est felicitate peccantium,* saith Jerome, There cannot befall a man a greater misery than to prosper in sin: for such a one is ripening for ruin, as fattening cattle are fitting for the butcher. They prosper and live at ease, saith God, yet I am extremely displeased with them, #Zec 1:15. As they say of the metal they make glass of, it is nearest melting when it shineth brightest; so are the wicked nearest destruction when at greatest lustre. Meanwhile see here

what, many times, is the condition of God's dearest children, viz. to fall into the power and paws of lions, leopards, boars, bears, tigers; of men more savage than any of these, whose tender mercies are mere cruelties. Poor blind men they are that offer violence to the saints, as Samson laid bands upon the pillars, to pluck the house upon their own heads.

To do with them as it seemeth good to thee] Oh bloody sentence! Such words as these *Leniter volant, sed non leniter violant*. So Dioclesian gave leave to people to kill up Christians, without more ado, wherever they met them; the like was done by authority in the French Massacre; but though tyrants restrain not their agents, yet God will, **#Ps 76:10**. And though they bandy together and bend all their forces to root out true religion; yet are they bounded by him, and shall not do what themselves please, but what he hath appointed. My times are in thine hand, saith David; and Pilate had no more power to crucify Christ than what was given him from above, **#Joh 19:11**.

Ver. 12. **Then were the king's scribes called]** Then, presently upon it, so soon as the word was out of the king's mouth, *licet quod libet*, the scribes were called, and all things despatched with all possible haste, art, and industry. So Judas, what he did, did quickly; he was up and at it, when Peter and the rest of the apostles were found asleep. The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light; for why? they have the devil to help them, and to prick them on; and hence their restlessness.

On the thirteenth day of the first month] Soon after they had begun to cast lots, **#Es 3:7**.

And there was written according to all that Haman had commanded] Right or wrong, that was never once questioned by these overly officious officers. If the king commanded it, and Haman will have it so, the secretaries and rulers (those servile souls) are ready to say, as Tiberius once did to Justinus, *Si tu volueris, ego sum; si tu non vis, ego non sum*. If you are willing, so am I, if you are not willing, so am I. Or as he in Lucan did to Caesar,

Iussa sequi, tam velle mihi, quam posse, necesse.

We are wholly at your devotion and dispose. We are only your clay and wax, &c. It is not for us to take upon us as counsellors, but only to write what is dictated unto us, &c. But this was no sufficient excuse for them before God; as neither was it for Doeg, that he was commanded to slay all the Lord's priests, which Abner and others of Saul's servants rightly and stoutly refused to do, #1Sa 22:18. A warrant once came down under seal for Lady Elizabeth's execution, while she was prisoner at Woodstock; Stephen Gardiner, like another Haman, being the chief engineer. But Mr. Bridges, her keeper, mistrusting false play, presently made haste to the queen, who renounced and reversed it. So might Ahasuerus haply have done this bloody edict, had his officers showed him the iniquity of it. But they took not this to be any part of their business; or if any one of them should be more conscientious, yet he might be surprised by a sudden onset, as the Lord Cromwell, when, by the instigation of Gardiner, he was commanded by King Henry VIII to read the sentence of death against Lambert the martyr, whereof he repented afterwards, sending for Lambert, and asking him forgiveness, as Mr Fox relateth.

And to every people after their language] See #Es 1:22.

In the name of the king Ahasuerus] For more authority' sake, and that Haman's malice and cruelty might lie hid under the king's cloak. So Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name against Naboth; so the Egyptians oppressed the Israelites in the name of their king; the Jews pretended to be all for Caesar, when they sought and sucked our Saviour's blood. The Popish persecutors here did all in Queen Mary's name, when as it might be said to her, as Josephus doth of Queen Alexandra among the Jews, *Ipsa solum nomen regium ferebat, &c.*, She had the name only of queen, but the Pharisees ruled the kingdom; so did the bishops in those days; and some of them would have done the like in ours, and that was their downfall; after that, as rotten teeth, they had put the king and kingdom to a great deal of misery.

And sealed with the king's ring] Lest it should by any means be reversed, #Da 6:8,12,13. Of the right antiquity, use, and matter of

rings let them that will, read Plin. lib. 33, cap. 1; 37, 1; Macrobi. lib. 1; Saturn. cap. 13; Alexand. ab Alex. lib. 2. genial dier.; Rhodig. lib. 6, cap. 12.

Ver. 13. **And the letters were sent by posts]** These the Persians called Angari, or (as Ruffin writeth it) Aggari. But why was this done in such post haste, so long before the day of execution? was it not to hold them all that while on the rack, and so to kill them piecemeal (as Tiberius used to do by his enemies), while, through fear of death, and expectation of that doleful day, they were all their lifetime subject to bondage? **#Heb 2:15.**

To destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish] Words written not with black, but with blood; and therefore multiplied in this sort, to show that it mattered not how, so they were made away by any means, and the world well rid of them. Read the history of the French Massacre; and hear reverend Merlin (who narrowly, and indeed miraculously, escaped those bloody villains, as being chaplain to the admiral, and praying with him in his chamber a little before he was murdered), hear him, I say, commenting upon this text; *Sic nostro saeculo, si scribenda fuerint edicta adversus religionem, non potuerunt sibi scribae satisfacere in excogitandis verbis significantibus, quibus atrociora et magis sanguinaria redderentur, &c.*; that is, in our age also if any edicts are to be written against religion, the secretaries cannot satisfy themselves in devising significant words, whereby those edicts may be rendered the more cruel and sanguinary.

All Jews, both young and old, little children and women] All ages, sizes, and sexes. What could the devil himself have added to this abhorred cruelty, if it had gone on? Such a slaughter made Doeg at Nob; the Sicilians at their bloody vespers; the king of France with the Templars throughout his kingdom; Minerius, the pope's champion, with the Protestants of Merindol and Chabriers (besides that of the Parisian Massacre before mentioned, and by Merlin upon this verse graphically described, like as that of Babylon is by Jeremiah, **#Jer 51:34**). What a woeful slaughter had here been made had Fawkes but fired the powder! What an Aceldama had this whole land been turned into in a few days' time! *Necdum interiit saevus Hamani animus.* Neither yet is Haman dead, but reviveth daily in his bloody and blasphemous successors. That like as Bucholcer saith of

Cain, the devil's patriarch, there are not a few that still carry about, adore, and worship as a sacred thing, Cain's club red with the blood of Abel; so it is here.

Even upon the thirteenth day] That it was to be no sooner done was by a special providence of God, that ere that time came it might be happily prevented, as was before noted. See #Es 3:7. Haman's folly also was not a little seen in deferring the execution so long; for how knew he what a day might bring forth? it was indeed *mirabile simulque miserabile dictu*, as one saith, a wonderful and in addition a miserable thing, that none should be found among the Persians, Medes, and Chaldees to pity this poor people, and to intercede for them. To have spoken to Haman for them might likely have been as bootless as once it was to Minerius in the behalf of the Merindolians. Of whom when a few had escaped his all-devouring sword, and he was entreated to give them quarter for their lives, he sternly answered, I know what I have to do, not one of them shall escape my hands; I will send them to dwell in hell among the devils. But if Haman resolved no better, yet what knew he, but that in time the king might relent and repent of that rash and wretched edict, as he did.

Nam faciles motus mens generosa capit (Ovid).

We read in our Chronicles, that when King Henry III had given commandment for the apprehending of Hubert de Burgo, earl of Kent, he fled into a church in Essex. They to whom the business was committed, finding him upon his knees before the high altar, with the sacrament in one hand and a cross in the other, carried him away nevertheless unto the Tower of London. The bishop taking this to be a great violence and wrong to the Church, would never leave the king until he had caused the earl to be carried to the place whence he was fetched. This was done; and although order was taken he should not escape thence, yet it gave the king's wrath a time to cool, and himself leisure to make proof of his innocence; by reason whereof he was afterwards restored to the king's favour and former places of honour. And the like befell these Jews, ere the thirteenth of Adar; but Haman, blinded with pride and superstition, could not foresee it.

And to take the spoil of them for a prey] To be sure that none should escape, the goods of the slain are proposed for a reward to them that should slay them, and how far that would prevail with many covetous wretches who knoweth not? Covetousness is daring and desperate (*Δεινος και παντολμος*, Isid.), how much more when it is encouraged, as here, by a permission, nay, a precept, from the king and his chief favourite! where we may be sure, the wealthier any man was the sooner he should have been sent out of the world, as a tree with thick and large boughs is most likely to be lopped. Trithemius telleth us, that the Templars mentioned above were massacred by Philip the Fair, king of France, upon pretext of heresy; but indeed because they were rich, and Philip sore longed after their possessions. The Cyprians for their great wealth became a spoil to the Romans.

- *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra fames?*

Ver. 14. **The copy of the writing...was published]** *Phathsegin*, a Syriac word, saith R. David, and not found but in the books about the captivity. The Vulgate rendereth it *Summa*, highest, R. Nathan *τυπος*, to the same sense. Transcripts of the original were sent to all places, that none might be ignorant or negligent in doing execution. But why did not the Jews upon such notice save themselves by flight, may some say? Alas, whither should the poor souls flee with their families? being compassed about with so many deadly enemies, having none that durst own them in that distress? It was a just wonder, and a special work of God, that their enemies forbore to fall upon them before the black day came, if but for the sake of spoil. We read, **#Es 9:1,5-11** that notwithstanding the known favour of the king, the patronage of Mordecai, and the hanging up of Haman, &c., the thirteenth of Adar is still meant to be a bloody day. Haman's abettors join together to perform that sentence, whereof the author repented, &c. But God was seen in the mount; he loveth to help those that are forsaken from their hopes, as he did these poor prisoners then, when it might seem that there was neither left unto them hope of better or place of worse. Who would not therefore trust in God? *Deo confisi nunquam confusi?* Trust in God will surely triumph.

That they should be ready against that day] That long looked for day by Haman and his party, wherein they meant to roll themselves, and wallow in the blood of those Jews, and to say, as Hannibal did, when he saw a ditch filled with man's blood, *O iucundum spectaculum!* O pleasant sight! Or as Valesus, when he had slain three hundred, *O rem regiam!* O kingly act! Or as that queen, who, when she saw some of her Protestant subjects lying dead and stripped upon the earth, cried out, the godliest tapestry that ever she beheld! Are not such blood suckers of the vulturine kind spoken of in Job, whose young ones glut-glut blood (the original word seemeth made from the sound), "and where the slain are there is she," **#Job 39:30**.

Ver. 15. **The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment]** As if the enemy had been at the gates, and his crown had hanged on the one side of his head; he could not have been more earnest and diligent in such a case than he now is. So much set upon it are God's enemies, to bring their evil purposes to pass that till then neither themselves nor others can be suffered to rest for them. *Quicquid volunt, valde volunt*, bearing down with crest and breast whatsoever stands in the way of their sinful lusts. What a shame is it, then, for saints not to be zealous of good works, valiant for the truth, and violent for the kingdom.

And the decree was given in Shushan the palace] *Pependit*, saith the Vulgate, it hung up upon the posts to be read by all, the king not shaming to have his privities seen (as the phrase is, **#Ezr 4:14**), to traduce himself (as it were) in a public theatre, for a foolish and oppressive prince; neither caring what might be the evil consequents thereof, so that he may satisfy his own lust, and gratify his minion.

And the king and Haman sat down to drink] So to drown the noise of conscience (if not altogether dead and dedolent), and so to nourish their hearts as in a day of slaughter. Thus Joseph's brethren, when they had cast him into the pit, sat down to eat bread, **#Ge 37:25**, when it had been better for them to have wept for their wickedness. So did the Israelites when they had made them a golden calf, **#Ex 32:6**. Herod feasteth when he had cast the Baptist into prison, **#Mt 14:6**. The antichristian rout, revel, and riot, when they had slain the two witnesses, **#Re 11:10**. The pope proclaimed a

jubilee upon the Parisian Massacre. The king of France swore that he never smelled anything more sweet than the admiral's carcase, when it stank with long lying. As for his head, he sent it for a present to the queen mother. And she, embalming it, sent it to her holy father the pope for an assurance of the death of his most capital enemy. Thuanus writeth that the pope caused that massacre to be painted in his palace. Had the gunpowder plot succeeded it should have been portrayed, surely, in his chapel or oratory. Fawkes was to get into the fields to see the sport; for they made no other reckoning, but that all was their own. No more did the king and Haman here, and hence their jollity, but it proved somewhat otherwise. God oft suffereth his enemies to have the ball on the foot till they come to the very goal, and yet then to make them to miss the game. He loveth to make fools of them, to let them go to the utmost of their tedder, and then to pull them back with shame to their task.

But the city Shushan was perplexed] That is, the Jews that dwelt there; together with the rest that loved them, and wished well to them. These wept, saith the Vulgate Latin; were in heaviness, say others; they were intricated, ensnared, at their wit's end, so that they knew not what to do (as the word here signifieth), only their eyes were toward the hills, from whence should come their help. Their comfort was to consider, that *melior est tristitia iniqua patientis, quam laetitia iniqua facientis* (August.). Better is the perplexity of him that suffereth evil than the jollity of him that doth evil. Deliverance would come, they believed, #Es 4:14, but whence they knew not. Hard things may be mollified, crooked things straightened. *Non omnium dierum sol occidit*, While there is a sun to set I will not despair of a good issue, as Queen Elizabeth said when she was most perplexed, as being to be sent prisoner to the Tower, than the which never went anything nearer to her heart.

Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **When Mordecai perceived all that was done]** Μαθων το γινόμενον, saith Josephus, when he had learned or fully informed himself, so that he knew it to be so, as the Hebrew text hath it (Jadang.). Solicitous he was of the Church's welfare, and sat listening, as Eli did once, what would become of the ark, #1Sa 3:13. Now therefore, as ill news is swift of foot, saith Sophocles, αἰ

βλαβαι ποδωκεις, and comes like ill weather, before it be sent for, Mordecai taketh knowledge of that bloody decree, though Esther and those about her had not heard of it, #Es 4:4,5. Neither sitteth he still at home, as desponding and despairing, or seeketh by sinister practices to help himself and his people, but applieth himself, first, to God, by hearty humiliation and prayer; and then to the king, by the intercession of Esther. A carnal heart would have taken other shifting courses, like as a dog that hath lost his master will follow after any other for relief.

Mordecai rent his clothes] To show that his very heart was rent with sorrow for Sion. This custom of rending their clothes in time and in token of greatest grief, was in use not among the Jews only, but Persians also, and other nations, as is noted by Herodotus and Curtius.

And put on sackcloth] The coarsest clothing he could get; as holding any clothes too good for so vile a captive, and showing that but for shame he would have worn none. So the *Nine vites* sat in sackcloth and ashes, for more humiliation. See #Ex 33:4, &c.

And ashes] He put on ashes or dust, that is, a dusty garment sprinkled with ashes, saith Drusius, putting his mouth in the dust, as #La 3:29, acknowledging himself to be of the earth earthy, and fit fuel for hell fire, *Non e foco, sed e terra desumptum pulverem notat* (Merlin).

And went out into the midst of the city] That he might be a pattern to others. *Si vis me flere, &c.*

And cried with a loud and a bitter cry] More barbarico, after the manner of that country; but there was more in it than so. It was not his own danger that so much affected him (how gladly could he have wished, with Ambrose, that God would please to turn all the adversaries from the Church upon himself, and let them satisfy their thirst with his blood? Οτι μηδεν αδικησον εθνος αναρειται, Joseph.) as that so many innocent people should perish. This made him lift up his voice unto God on high.

Ver. 2. **And came even before the king's gate]** Which should have been always open to poor petitioners (as the gate of the Roman Aedilis was), but was now shut against such mourners as Mordecai. A night cap was an ill sight at Court; jolly spirits cannot endure sadness; so great enemies they are to it, that they banish all seriousness; like as the Nicopolites so hated the braying of an ass, that for that cause they would not abide to hear the sound of a trumpet.

For none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth] Behold, they that wear softs are in king's houses, #Mt 11:8, and those that are altogether set upon the merry pin. Jannes and Jambres, those jugglers, are gracious with Pharaoh when Moses and Aaron are frowned upon. Baal's prophets are fed at Jezebel's table when Elias is almost pined in the desert. The dancing damsel trippeth on the toe, Ωρχησατο, #Mt 14:6, and triumpheth in Herod's hall, when the rough coated Baptist lieth in cold irons; and Christ's company there is neither cared for, nor called for, unless it be to show tricks, and do miracles for a pastime, #Lu 23:8. The kings and courtiers of Persia must see no sad sight, lest their mirth should be marred, and themselves surprised with heaviness and horror. But if mourners might not be suffered to come to court, why did those proud princes so seclude up themselves, and not appear abroad for the relief of the poor oppressed? How much better the modern kings of Persia, whom I have seen, saith a certain traveller, to alight from their horses, to do justice to a poor body! How much better the Great Turk, who, whensoever he goeth forth by land, doth always ride on horseback, upon the Friday especially, which is their Sabbath, when he goeth to the temple. At which times they that go along by his stirrup have charge to take all petitions that are preferred to his Majesty, and many poor men, who dare not presume by reason of their ragged apparel to approach near, stand afar off with fire upon their heads, holding up their petitions in their hands; the which the Grand Signor seeing, who never despiseth, but rather encourageth the poor, sends immediately to take the petitions, and being returned home into his *seraglio*, harem and reads them all, and then gives order for redress as he thinks fit. By reason of which complaints, the king oftentimes taketh occasion suddenly to punish his greatest officers, either with death or loss of place, which maketh the

bashaws and other great officers that they care not how seldom the Grand Signor stirs abroad in public, for fear lest in that manner their bribery and injustice should come to his ears. It is probable that Haman had got this also to be decreed, that none should enter into the king's gate clothed in sackcloth; lest passion might be moved thereby in any of the courtiers, or that be a means to make a complaint to the king of his cruelty.

Ver. 3. **And in every province]** Heb. In every province, and province, &c., not only in Shushan, which, say the Hebrews, was called Elam Hammedina, but throughout the king's dominions.

Whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree] The latter was irrevocable, and therefore more dreadful.

There was great mourning among the Jews] Not murmuring or mutinying, or meditating revenge against the king and Haman. Not casting away their confidence in God, or committing all to fate and blind fortune. Not crying out of religion, as unhappy, to the professors, (ω τλημων αρετη, said he in the story. Oh miserable virtue! Oh practice of no profit! &c., Brutus apud Dion). Not taking up arms or betaking themselves to flight; (how should poor galley slaves at this day flee out of the middle of Turkey?) prayers and tears were the weapons of these condemned captives and prisoners. It troubled them exceedingly (as well it might), that through fearfulness and negligence they had not, before this, gone back to their own country, with Zerubbabel or some other, when they had good leave to have gone with their brethren; and God himself cried out unto them, "Ho, ho, come forth," &c., #Zec 2:6. "Arise, depart; this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction," #Mic 2:10. This was now a bodkin at their hearts; like as it shall be one day to those in hell, to think, we might have been delivered.

And fasting] The word signifieth an abstinence from food and sustenance, either *a toto*, totally, as #2Sa 12:16, or at least *a tanto eta tali*, partially, as #Da 10:2,3. Hence, it is called a day of restraint, Νηστεια, #Joe 2:15. Hence, #Zec 8:19, they separated themselves, viz. from work, food, and delights, for the furtherance of their repentance, and the enforcing of their prayers. *Preces nobis*

ieiuniis alendum, et quasi saginandum, saith one, our prayers must be pampered and grain fed with fasting. A practice in use, not among Jews and Christians only, but among Egyptian priests, Persian magi, and Indian wizards of old, and Turks to this day when they are in any great fear of pressure.

And weeping, and wailing] This was the way to get in with God, though they might not come crying to the court. Oh the divine rhetoric and omnipotent efficacy of penitent tears! **#Ps 6:8**, Weeping hath a voice. Christ turned to the weeping women, when going to his cross, and comforted them. He showed great respects to Mary Magdalene, that weeping vine; she had the first sight of the revived Phoenix (though so bleared that she could scarce discern him), and held him fast by those feet which she had once washed with her tears, and wherewith he had lately trod upon the lion and adder, **#Ps 91:13**.

And many lay in sackcloth and ashes] As many as were more deeply affected with their sins, and the sad consequents thereof. David lay on the bare ground, *χαμαικοιτης*, **#2Sa 12:16**; these, and those **#Joe 1:13**, lodged in sackcloth and ashes, that they might watch as well as fast. See how they go linked together, **#Mr 13:33**. See **#Es 4:16**.

Ver. 4. **So Esther's maids came and told it her]** She herself (say interpreters) was kept in a closer place than they, not having the liberty of going abroad, as others had; because the Persians that were of highest quality used so to keep in their wives; and if they went forth at any time, they were carried in a close chariot, so as that none could see them.

Then was the queen exceedingly grieved] *Dolens exhorruit.* So Tremellius. The Hebrew is, She grieved herself, scil. for Mordecai's heaviness; as our Saviour, when he heard of the death of his friend Lazarus, groaned in spirit, and troubled himself, **#Joh 11:33**. And here we see that of Plautus disproved,

Mulier nulla cordicitus dolet ex animo,

that is, No woman can grieve heartily for anything. Holy Esther is here sick at heart of grief, as the word importeth; and yet (as one saith of the Lady Jane Grey) she made grief itself amiable; her night clothes becoming her as well as her day dressings, by reason of her gracious deportment.

And she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai] That he might be fit to come unto her, and make known the cause of his grief, for she yet knew nothing of the public calamity. And although she was so highly advanced above Mordecai, yet she condoleth with him, and honoureth him as much as ever. This was true friendship. *Ego aliter amare non didici*, said Basil, to one that disliked him for stooping so low to an old friend.

And to take away his sackcloth, &c.] To change his *saccum in sericum*, sackcloth into satin, &c. See #Es 4:2.

But he received it not] Such was the greatness of his grief which he could not dissemble; such was his care of community, that he could not mind his own private concerns while it went ill with the public. Such also was his patient continuance in well doing, #Ro 2:7, that he would not give over asking of God till he had received, seeking till he had found, knocking till the gate of grace was open. His clothes were good enough, unless his condition were more comfortable.

Ver. 5. **Then called Esther for Hatach]** She snuffeth not at Mordecai's refusal of her courtesy. She saith not, Let him choose, the next offer shall be worse, *Rerum suarum satagat, si velit, et valeat, &c.* Solomon reckoneth among those four things that the earth cannot bear, a handmaid advanced to the state and place of a mistress, #Pr 30:23. But Esther was none such. In her you might have seen *magnitudinem cum mansuetudine*, as Seneca hath it, singular humility in height of honours. She calleth here for Hatach, a faithful servant, and perhaps a Jew, a Jew inwardly. Honesty flows from piety.

One of the king's chamberlains] Heb. Eunuchs, or gelded men, such as used to keep their women in king's courts. The Chaldees call them *rabrebanim*, that is, nobles. The Persians call them *spadones*,

saith Stephanus. The Greeks, *eunuchs*; either because they were princes' chamberlains, and had the custody of their beds: or because they were *egregie cordati homines*, well-minded men (Παρα το ευνην εχειν παρα το ευ νουν εχειν): for they generally proved (as likewise now they do among the Turks) subjects, though not of great courage, yet of the greatest judgment and fidelity, their minds being set on business rather than on pleasure.

Whom he had appointed to attend upon her] Heb. Whom he had set before her, *in obsequium et servitium*, to be at her beck and obedience: probably he was happy in such a service, for goodness is communicative, and of a spreading nature. Plutarch saith of the neighbour villages of Rome in Numa's time, that sucking in the air of that city, they breathed δικαιοσυνη, righteousness and devotion; so it might very well be here. It was so with Abraham's servants, and Solomon's, and Cornelius's, **#Ac 10:7**. Nero complained (and no wonder) that he could never find a faithful servant. What could they learn from him but villany and cruelty?

And gave him a commandment to Mordecai] *i.e.* She commanded him to deliver her mind to Mordecai. A servant is not to be inquisitive, {**#Joh 15:15**, *he knoweth not what his Lord doth*} but executive, ready to do what is required of him. He is the master's instrument, and wholly his, Ολωσ εκεινου, saith Aristotle. The hands must take counsel of the head, and bestir them.

To know what it was, and why it was] Some great matter she well knew it must needs be that put him to those loud laments. Wise men cry not till they are sorely hurt. Job's stroke was heavier than his groaning, **#Job 23:2**. He was not of those that are ever whining: like some men's flesh, if their skin be but razed with a pin, it presently rankleth and festereth; or like rotten boughs, if a light weight be but hung on them, they presently creak and break. Mordecai she knew was none such. She therefore sendeth to see what was the matter, that she might help him, if possible. The tears and moans of men in misery are not to be slighted, as if they were nothing to us. Who is afflicted, and I burn not? saith Paul, **#2Co 11:29**. Weep with those that weep, else you add to their grief, **#Ro 12:15**, as the priest and Levite did, by passing by the wounded man. Is it nothing to you, O

ye that pass by the way? #La 1:12. Are not ye also in the body, #Heb 13:3, that is, in the body of flesh and frailty, subject to like afflictions? And may not your sins procure their sufferings, as a vein is opened in the arm to ease the pain of the head?

Ver. 6. **So Hatach went forth to Mordecai]** He was obedient to his queen mistress, pleasing her in all things, not answering again, #Tit 2:10, unless it were, I will, or the like. *Servus sit monosyllabum Domino.* Let the servant be the word of his master. Apelles painted a servant with hinds' feet, to run on his master's errands; with ass's ears, and with his mouth made fast with two locks, to signify that he should be swift to hear, slow to speak.

Unto the street of the city] The broad street, as the word signifieth; *Rechob, πλαταια*: there Mordecai kept him, and might not come nearer the court, because a mourner. See #Es 4:2. Tiberius the emperor, counterfeiting grief at the funeral of Drusus, there was a veil laid between the dead and him, because being high priest forsooth, he might not see any mournful object. The statues of the gods were transported or covered (for like cause) in those places where any punishment was inflicted. But what saith the wise man? "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning" (whereby we must understand any place or object which occasioneth mourning), "but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth," #Ec 7:4.

Ver. 7. **And Mordecai told him all that had happened unto him]** Not by fate or blind fortune, *κατα συγκυριαν* (and yet time and chance happeneth to all, #Ec 9:11, and it was by chance to the wounded man, that the priest and the Levite came down that way, #Lu 10:31), but by the providence of God, which hath a hand in ordering the most casual and fortuitous events, to the execution of his righteous counsels; neither is there ever a providence but we shall once see a wonder or a mercy wrapt up in it.

And of the sum of money] See #Es 3:9. Money is the monarch of this present world. Money is to many dearer than their heart blood, yet, to gratify their lusts, they lavish silver out of the bag, and care not to purchase revenge or sensual delights with misery, beggary, discredit, damnation.

Ver. 8. **Also he gave him the copy of the writing]** That she might see it, and rest assured that it was even so, and no otherwise; and

that therefore now or never she must bestir herself for the labouring Church.

That was given at Shushan] Which if ever it were full of judgment, and white as a lily (according to the name), is now stained with blood of innocents; if ever righteousness did lodge in it, yet now murderers, as **#Isa 1:21**.

To show it unto Esther] That her eye might affect her heart, **#La 3:51**, and her heart set all awork for her people; that is, herself, according to that, "Physician, heal thyself"; that is, thine own countrymen, **#Lu 4:23**.

And to declare it unto her] In the cause, viz. his refusing to bow to Haman against his conscience (whereof it no whit repented him); and in the several circumstances laid forth in the liveliest colours, for her thorough information.

And to charge her that she should go in unto the king] *Hoc perquam durum est, sed ita lex scripta est*, This was extremely hard, but so the law was written, saith the civilian. This Mordecai knew would hardly be done; he, therefore, makes use of his ancient authority, and sets it on with greatest earnestness. So St Paul, "I charge you by the Lord," **#1Th 5:27**. And, again, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ," &c., **#2Ti 4:1**. So St Austin to his hearers, *Per tremendum Dei iudicium vos adiuro*, I require and charge you by that dreadful day of judgment, when that doom's day book shall be opened, &c. It is a weakness to be hot in a cold matter, but it is a wickedness to be cold in a hot matter. He that is earnest in good, though he may carry some things indiscreetly, yet is he far better than a time server, and a cold friend to the truth; like as in falling forward is nothing so much danger as in falling backward. Eli was to blame with his—Do no more so, my sons. And so was Jehoshaphat with his—Let not the king say so. And the people in Ahab's time, who, when they were pressed to express whom they were for, God or Baal? they answered not a word, **#1Ki 18:21**. And yet how many such cold friends hath the truth today! lukewarm Laodiceans, neuter passive Christians! &c. When Callidus once declared against Gallus with a faint and languishing voice, Oh, saith

Cicero, *Tu nisi fingeres, sic ageres?* Wouldest thou plead on that manner if thou wert in good earnest? Men's faint appearing for God's cause shows they do but feign; their coldness probably concludeth they do but counterfeit. Mordecai plays the man, and chargeth Esther to improve her interest in the king, her husband, for the Church's deliverance. See here how he turneth every stone, tradeth every talent, leaveth no means unused, no course unattempted for the saints' safety. And this the Spirit of God hath purposely recorded, that all may learn to lay out themselves to the utmost for the public; to be most zealous for the conservation and defence of the Church when it is afflicted and opposed by persecutors; seeing they cannot be saved unless she be in safety; neither can they have God for their Father unless they love and observe this their dear mother. *Utinam, iterum autem utinam diligentius a cunctis ordinibus haec hodie considerarentur,* saith one. Oh that these things were duly considered by all sorts today!

To make supplication unto him] Heb. To deprecate displeasure and mischief, as #1Ki 8:28 Zec 12:10.

And to make request before him] *Ad quaerendum a facie eius;* so Pagnine from the Hebrew, to seek for good from his face, an effectual smile, a gracious aspect, that they may live in his sight. For, "in the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain," #Pr 16:15. The ancient Persian kings were most fond of their wives, doing them all the honour possible in court, as partakers of all their fortunes, and carried them and their children into their farthest wars; by the presence of so dear pledges, the more to encourage their minds in time of battle. Now, therefore, Esther (whom Herodotus also witnesseth to have been Xerxes' best beloved) is to try what she can do with him for her people, who were haply grown too secure upon Esther's preferment; as the French Churches also were upon the queen of Navarre's greatness, and the promise of peace by that match. God, therefore, shortly after shook them up, not by shaking his rod only at them, as here at these Jews, but by permitting that bloody massacre.

Ver. 9. **And Hatach came and told Esther]** He acted the part of a faithful messenger: so must ministers, those servants of the Churches, declare unto the people all the mind of God, #Ac 20:27,

and not steal God's word every one from his neighbour, **#Jer 23:30**, not deal deceitfully with it, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, let them speak in Christ; and let them speak out, not fearing any colours. He that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully, saith God, **#Jer 23:28**. Aaron's bells were all of gold; the trumpets of the sanctuary were of pure silver; they did not (as those inverse trumpets of Furius Fulvius) sound a retreat, when they should have sounded an alarm; no more must God's messengers. Whatsoever the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak, saith Micaiah. Paul, as he received what he delivered, so he delivered whatsoever he received, **#1Co 11:23**. Moses was faithful in all God's house, &c., **#Heb 3:5**.

Ver. 10. **Again Esther spake unto Hatack]** Having before found him a fit and faithful messenger, she further employeth him; so those that minister well do purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus, **#1Ti 3:13**, when others shall be laid by as broken vessels, whereof there is not left a sheard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water with it from the pit, as the prophet hath it, **#Isa 30:14**.

Ver. 11. **All the king's servants]** His courtiers and counsellors, who haply were as very slaves to him, as now the greatest lords of the court are to the Great Turk; no man having any power over himself, much less is he master of the house wherein he dwelleth, or of the land which he tilleth, but is in danger of being whipped upon the least displeasure of the tyrant, especially if he be not a natural Turk born.

And the people of the king's provinces, do know] *i.e.* All, both far and near: this shows that the law here mentioned was no new law procured by Haman, to prevent Jewish suppliants, as Lyra would have it, but long since made, and known to all the king's subjects.

That whosoever, whether man or woman] Yea, though she be his dearest consort, who should cohabit with him, and not be sundered for a season but by consent, **#1Co 7:5**.

Shall come unto the king] The Persians usually hid their king, *tanquam aliquod sacrum mysterium*, as some precious business, and that for two reasons. First, for state and authority, lest familiarity

with their subjects should breed contempt, and make them too cheap. Philip II, King of Spain, was of the same mind and practice. For, after that he had gotten into his hands the kingdom of Portugal, and therewith the wealth of the Indies, *inclusit se in Curiali*, he shut up and immured himself in his court, and was seldom seen of any, though never so great a man, but upon long suit, and as a singular favour. This made him to be adored as a demi-god. Secondly, for security and safety, lest, if all should be suffered to come that would, the king should be assassinated and made away, as Eglon was by Ehud; Ishbosheth, by Baanah and Rechab; Gedaliah, by Ishmael; and many kings of Israel and emperors of Rome were by their own servants. The Turks at this day allow no stranger to come into the presence of their emperor, but first they search him that he have no weapon; and so, clasping him by the arms, under colour of doing him honour, dissemblingly they bereave him of the use of his hands, lest he should offer him any violence; yet hath he alway, as he sitteth in his throne, lying at hand ready by him, a target, a scimitar, an iron mace, with bow and arrows.

- *Sors ista tyrannis*
Muniti ut gladiis vivant, cinctique venenis.

How much better Agesilaus, king of Spartans, who walked daily among his subjects, doing justice, and is, therefore, by Xenophon worthily preferred before this stately king of Persia! How much better Queen Elizabeth, who often showed herself to her people, and cheerfully received bouquets, flowers, rosemary, from lowly persons. She got the heart of her subjects (which Philip of Spain, her stately contemporary, never could do), by coupling mildness with majesty, and stooping, yet in a stately manner, to those of low condition. So reserved she was, that all about her stood in a reverent awe of her very presence and aspect, but much more of her least frown or check; wherewith some of them, who thought they might presume of her favour, have been so suddenly daunted and planet-stricken, {to strike as a malignant influence, to blast} that they could not lay down the grief thereof but in their graves (Speed, 1235).

There is one law of his] A wretched law it was, written not with black, but with blood, and condemned by very heathens for

barbarous and pernicious to the public. For if the king may not be come at, but upon pain of death, what shall become of the poor oppressed? and how shall he ever hear of the rapines and other miscarriages of his favourites and junior officers, by whom he shall be even bought and sold, and himself never the wiser, as Aurelian, the emperor, complained. Orpheus, that oldest of poets, feigneth, that Litae (or petitions) are Jove's daughters, and ever conversant about his throne. David heard the woman of Tekoa; Solomon the two harlots; and King Joram the affamished woman that called to him for justice with, Help, O king; Philip, of Macedon, righted the old wife that checked him for his neglect of her; and Trajan, the widow that would not be put off till another time (Plutarch). This was king-like; his office is to judge the people with righteousness, and the poor with judgment. He shall judge the poor of the people... and break in pieces the oppressor, #Ps 72:2,4.

To put him to death] Θανατος η ζημια (Athenaeus). No such danger in approaching God's presence: he soliciteth suitors, and seeketh such as may come before him, #Joh 4:23. This was anciently figured by the door of the tabernacle, not made of any hard or debarring matter, but of a veil easily penetrable; which also now is rent, to show our easy access to him, who heareth prayers, and willeth that all flesh come unto him, lifting up in all places pure hands, without wrath, and without doubting, #Ps 65:2 1Ti 2:8.

Except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre] In token that he called for them. Thus whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, as #Da 5:19. But Esther should (as afterwards she did) have trusted God with her life; and with a Roman resolution have said, *Necesse est ut eam, non ut vivam*: It is necessary that I venture, not that I live. That she was fearful when her life lay upon it, we may impute to the weakness of her sex, or rather of her faith; against which sense fights sore when it is upon its own dunghill; I mean, in a sensible danger. Nature's retraction of itself, from a visible fear, may cause the pulse of a Christian, that beats truly and strongly in the main point (the state of the soul), to intermit and falter at such a time. Abraham showed some trepidation, and Peter much more.

But I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days] There was hot love the while; his concubines, perhaps, had engrossed him. Doves are said to draw the chariot of Venus; and those neither change their mates nor forsake their company. Haman was all the doer now about the king, as our King Richard II's favourites, knights of Venus rather than Bellona, saith the chronicler, conversing with the king, not without suspicion of foul familiarity, as Walsingham writeth. *Sodomitica labe infecti fere omnes*, saith another (Speed. 746).

Ver. 12. **And they told to Mordecai Esther's words]** {*See Trapp on "Es 4:9"*} She would have been her own messenger, but might not. The greatest are not always the happiest. The Lady Elizabeth once wished herself a merry milk maid.

Ver. 13. **Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther]** He would not take her excuse, but seems to say unto her, as one once did to a philosopher (Aul. Gell.), that in a great tempest at sea asked many trifling questions: Are we perishing, and doest thou trifle? *Ημεῖς ἀπολλυμεθα, και συ παίζεις*. So, dost thou cast off the care of community, and provide for no more than thine own safety?

Think not with thyself, that thou shalt escape in the king's house] Any more than Serena, that Christian empress, wife to Dioclesian, did, or Elizabeth, queen of Denmark, glad to flee for her life, because a Lutheran; or Queen Catharine Parr, who hardly escaped the fire by the favour of her husband, Henry VIII. Sure it is, that the fear of man bringeth a snare (as fearful birds and beasts fall into the hunter's toil), "but he that trusteth in the Lord" (as good Mordecai did, and as he would have Esther to do), "shall be safe," **#Pr 29:25**, or shall be set on high, out of harm's way; his place of defence shall be munitions of rocks, **#Isa 33:16**. Like as the coney, that weak but wise creature, **#Pr 30:24,26**, flees to the holes in the rocks, and doth easily avoid the dogs that pursue her; when the hare, that trusteth to the swiftness of her legs, is at length overtaken, and torn in pieces.

More than all the Jews] The law was general and irreversible. Darius sought to deliver Daniel, and could not. And Haman's (as once Medina's here in 1588) sword knew no difference, nor would make any in that general massacre; like as in that at Paris, they

poisoned the queen of Navarre, murdered the most part of the peerless nobility in France, their wives and children, with a great sort of the common people.

Ver. 14. **But if thou altogether boldest thy peace]** And so make thyself guilty of a sinful silence, nay, of the death of so many innocents; for not to do good when it is in the power of a man's hand is to do evil, and not to save is to destroy, as our Saviour showeth, **#Mr 3:14.** *Qui non cum potest, servat; occidit.* Passive wickedness is deeply taxed in some of those seven Churches, Rev. ii., iii. In a storm at sea it is a shame to sit still, or to be asleep, with Jonah, in the sides of the ship, when it is in danger of drowning. Every man cannot sit at the stern; but then he may handle the ropes, or manage the oars, &c. The self-seeker, the private spirited man, may he be but warm in his own feathers, regards not the danger of the house; he is *totus in se*, entirely in himself, like the snail, still within doors and at home; like the squirrel, he ever digs his hole towards the sunrising; his care is to keep on the warm side of the hedge, to sleep in a whole skin, to save one, whatever become of the many. From doing thus, Mordecai deterreth Esther by a heap of holy arguments; discovering a heroic faith and a well-knit resolution.

At this time] There is indeed a time to keep silence, and a time to speak, **#Ec 3:7.** But if ever a man will speak, let him do it when the enemies are ready to devour the Church: as Croesus's dumb son burst out into, Kill not King Croesus. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest," &c., **#Isa 62:1.** "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," &c., **#Ps 137:5,6.** That noble Terentius (general to Valens the emperor) being bidden to ask what he would, asked nothing, but that the Church might be freed from Arians; and when the emperor, upon a defeat by the Goths, upbraided him with cowardice and sloth as the causes of the overthrow, he boldly replied, Yourself have lost the day, by your warring against God, and persecuting his people (Niceph.).

Then shall their enlargement] Heb. Respiration, a day of refreshing should come from the presence of the Lord. Confer **#Job 9:18.** At present they could hardly breathe, for bitterness of spirit.

And deliverance arise] Heb. stand up, as on its basis or bottom, so as none shall be able to withstand. This, Mordecai speaketh, not by a spirit of prophecy, but by the force of his faith, grounded upon the promises of God's defending his Church, hearing the cries of his afflicted, arising to their relief and succour, &c. *Mira profecto ac omnibus linguis, saeculis, locisque commendabilis fides*, saith one. A notable faith indeed, and worthy of highest commendation. Through the perspective of the promises (those *pabulum fidei*, food of faith) a believer may see deliverance at a great distance (*Ἀσπασαμενοι*); see it and embrace it, as those did, **#Heb 11:13**. What though Sense saith, it will not be; Reason, it cannot be; yet Faith gets above, and says, it shall be, I spy land.

Italiam, Italiam laeto clamore salutat (Virg.).

But thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed] Here he thundereth and threateneth her, if to save herself she shall desert the Church. Mordecai's message, like David's ditty, is composed of discords. Sour and sweet make the best sauce; promises and menaces mixed will soonest work, **#Ps 101:1**. God told Abraham, that for the love he bare him, he would bless those that blessed him, and curse such as cursed him, **#Ge 12:3**. Their sin should find them out, and they should rue it in their posterity. As one fire, so one fear, should drive out another.

And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom] There is often a wheel within a wheel, **#Eze 1:16**. God may have an end and an aim in businesses that we wot not of nor can see into, till event hath explained it. Let us lay forth ourselves for him, and labour to be public spirited, standing on tiptoes, {*Ἀποκαρδοκία*, **#Php 1:20**} as St Paul did, to see which way we may most glorify God, and gratify our brethren.

Ver. 15. **Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer]** A sweet answer, and such as fully satisfied him. No man's labour can be in vain in the Lord. Good therefore and worthy of all acceptance is the wise man's counsel: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good,"

#Ec 11:6. Mordecai had filled his mouth with arguments, and now God filled his heart with comfort. Esther yielded, and resolves to obey him, whatever come of it; only she will go the wisest way to work, first seeking God, and then casting herself upon the king, *Ora et labora*. Words and works. God hath all hearts in his hand, and will grant good success to his suppliants.

Ver. 16. **Go, gather together all the Jews]** Great is the power of joint prayer, it stirs heaven, and works wonders. Oh, when a Church full of good people shall set sides and shoulders to work, when they shall rouse up themselves and wrestle with God, when their pillars of incense shall come up into his presence, and their voices be heard as the voices of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, **#Re 14:2**, what may not such thundering legions have at God's hands? Have it? they will have it: *Caelum tundimus, preces fundimus, misericordiam extorquemus*, said those primitive prayer-makers. **#Re 9:13**, the prayers of the saints from the four corners of the earth sound, and do great things in the world, they make it ring. It was the speech of a learned man, if there be but one sigh come from a gracious heart (how much more, then, a volley of sighs from many good hearts together!) it filleth the ears of God, so that God heareth nothing else.

And fast ye for me] Who am now upon my life, and, for aught I know, am shortly to appear before the Lord (who requireth to be sanctified in all them that draw near unto him), and wherein I may not look to have leave to err twice, *Non licet in belle bis errare*. Point, therefore, your prayers for me with holy fastings, that they may pierce heaven and prevail. Abstinence meriteth not, saith a grave divine (Dr Hall), for religion consisteth not in the belly, either full or empty; (What are meats or drinks to the kingdom of God, which is, like himself, spiritual?) but it prepareth best for good duties. Full bellies are fitter for rest. Not the body so much as the soul is more active with emptiness; hence solemn prayer taketh ever fasting to attend it; and so much the rather speedeth in heaven, when it is so accompanied. It is good so to diet the body, that the soul may be fattened.

And neither eat nor drink three days, &c.] That is, saith Drusius, two whole nights, one whole day, and part of two other days. See the

like expression, #Mt 12:40. Others say, that in those hot countries they might fast three days as well as we two in these cold climates. Tully in one of his epistles telleth us, that he fasted two days together, without so much as tasting a little water. For the Romans, also, and Grecians had their fasts private and public, whether it were by a secret instinct of nature, or by an imitation of the Hebrews, *Faciunt et vespae favos*. The Turks likewise at this day precisely observe their fasts, and 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, be the days never so long and hot. The Hollanders and French fast, but had need, saith one, to send for those mourning women, #Jer 9:17, by their cunning to teach them to mourn. The English are not sick soon enough, saith another, and they are well too soon: this is true of their minds as well as of their bodies. *Currat ergo poenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia;* and let our fasts be either from morning till evening, #Jud 20:26 2Sa 3:35, or from evening till evening, #Le 23:32, or longer, as here, and #Ac 9:9, as the hand and wrath of God doth more or less threaten us, or lie upon us. There is an old Canon that defineth their continuance, till stars appear in the sky, *Usque dum stellae in caelo appareant*.

I also and my maids will fast] She herself would be in the head of them, as Queen Elizabeth also told her soldiers at Tilbury camp for their comfort; and as Caesar used to say to his soldiers, Go we, and not Go ye, *Non ite, sed eamus;* and as Joshua said, I and my house will serve Jehovah, #Jos 24:15. Esther's maids must fast and pray, or they are no maids for her.

And so will I go unto the king] It is said of Achilles, that he was *Styge armatus;* but he that fasteth, prayeth, believeth, *Est caelo, Christo, Deo armatus,* armed with an undaunted resolution to obey God whatever come of it.

Which is not according to the law] She slights not the law, but waves it, to obey God's law, and save her people.

And if I perish, I perish] This she speaketh not rashly or desperately, as prodigal of her life, but as sacrificing the same to God and his cause, through the obedience of faith, and saying, as

that martyr, Can I die but once for Christ? See the like phrase, **#Ge 43:14**, {*See Trapp on "Ge 43:14"*} Better do worthily, and perish for a kingdom, than unworthily, and perish with a kingdom.

Ver. 17. **So Mordecai went his way, and did according, &c.**] As he had put her upon a dangerous, but, as the cause stood, necessary, exploit (nature will venture its own particular good for the general, as heavy things will ascend to keep our vacuity, and preserve the universe); so he is ruled by her (though a woman, and once his pupil) when he perceived her counsel was good. Abraham must hear Sarah, and David Abigail, and Apollos Priscilla, when they speak reason. It is foretold of a man in Christ, that a little child shall lead him, **#Isa 11:6**.

Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Now it came to pass on the third day]** That is, on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, as the Hebrew annals say. *Cum adhuc ferverent popularium suorum preces*, whiles the prayers of her countrymen (like those of Cornelius, **#Ac 10:4**), were come up for a memorial before God, she takes her opportunity and speeds accordingly. She knew that sweet passage, **#Ps 145:18**, "The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them," &c. This she could afterwards seal to and say, This poor soul cried, and the Lord heard her, and saved her out of all her troubles, **#Ps 34:6**. Luther's widow confessed that she never understood many of David's Psalms till she was in deep affliction.

That Esther put on her royal apparel] She knew that

Hanc homines decorant, quam vestimenta decorant,

Men glorify her as than they glorify her clothes. People are usually regarded as they are habited, and good clothes conduce much to the setting forth of beauty to the best. Like a right daughter of Sarah, **#1Pe 3:3,5**, she knew that the outward adorning, by plaiting the hair, wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel, would not at all commend her to God (in obedience to whom she had wanzed her face with fasting, and trusted that he would put upon her his

comeliness), but considering that the king, her husband, looked much at such things, she laid aside her fasting weeds, and put on her best. *Induit se regno* (so the original runs), she clothed herself in rich and royal array; as Queen Mary of England did on her coronation day: her head was so laden with precious stones, that she could hardly hold it up, saith the story; and all things else were according. Whether Esther came to the king, leaning upon one maid, and having another to hold up her train, as Josephus hath it, is uncertain. It is likely she left her attendants outside, lest she should draw them into danger; and contented herself (when she went in to the king) with those faithful companions, Faith, Hope, and Charity, who brought her off also with safety, according to #Pr 18:10 14:26.

And stood in the inner court of the king's house] A bold adventure questionless, but the fruit of the prayer of faith; this was it that put spirit and mettle into her. What if she were queen? so had Vashti been, and yet discarded for her disobedience. Besides, how could she tell, either, what the king's mind towards her was; (he had not seen her of a month, and if Haman knew her to be a Jewess, what would not he suggest against her?) or, what was the mind of God, till he had signified it by the event. It was therefore a heroic courage in Esther, proceeding from her faith, which, when it is driven to work alone without sense, then God thinks it lieth upon his credit to show mercy.

Over against the king's house] Where she might see him, and be seen by him. This she did, *Nec temere, nec timide*, Neither rashly nor fearfully, which, saith one, is the Christian's motto.

And the king sat upon his royal throne] Royal indeed, as Athenaeus describeth it. But yet short of Solomon's, #1Ki 10:18, much more of the Lord Christ's, supported and surrounded with an innumerable company of angels. It should be our earnest desire to see this King of glory upon his throne; to see him and enjoy him. Austin wished that he might have seen three things: 1. *Romam in flore*; 2. *Paulum in ore*; 3. *Christum in corpore*. Rome in the flourish, Paul in the pulpit, Christ in the flesh. Venerable Bode cometh after, and correcting this last wish, saith, *Imo vero Christum in solio sedentem*, Let me see Christ upon his throne royal rather.

Isaiah saw him so, **#Isa 6:1**, and took far more delight therein than the merry Greeks did or could do at their Olympic games, celebrated at the same time, in 760-759 BC, 1590 years after the flood, in the 14th Jubilee, according to Ussher.

Ver. 2. **And it was so]** God, the great heart disposer, so ordered it.

That when the king saw Esther the queen, &c.] Beautified by God in a special manner, as was Moses, *αστειος τω θεω*, **#Ac 7:20**, Stephen, **#Ac 6:15**, &c. And some faces we know do appear most orientally fair when they are most instamped with sorrow.

That she obtained favour in his sight] Josephus saith, that at first the king frowned upon her, so that she fell into a swoon before him. *Rex autem, voluntate arbitror Dei, mentem mutavit,* i.e. but the king, as God would have it, changed his mind, and cheered her up. How true this is I know not; but this I know, that the wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion, which is so terrible, that it astonieth all that hear it, and that *omne trahit secum Caesaris ira malum*. All drag the evil wrath with Caesar himself. Sir Christopher Hatton, being checked and threatened by Queen Elizabeth, died soon after; neither could the queen, having once cast him down with her word only, raise him up again, though she visited him, and comforted him. Esther here was soon raised and relieved.

*Deiecit ut relevet, premit ut solaria praestet;
Enecat, ut possit vivificare Deus.*

And the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre] *He did not kick her out of his presence, as some Cambyses would have done, neither did he command her to the block, as Henry VIII did his Anne Bullen upon a mere pretence of disloyalty; neither yet did he cashier her, as he had done Vashti for a less offence: but, by holding out his sceptre, shows his gracious respects unto her. This was the Lord's own work, as was likewise that of old, that Laban should leave Jacob with a kiss, #Ge 31:55 Esau meet him with a kiss, #Ge 33:4, where the word kissed hath a prick over each letter in the original, to show the wonder of God's work in changing Esau's heart from his former hatred. {Hebrew Text Note} Let a man's ways please the Lord, and men shall quickly befriend him. This is*

compendiosissima hominum gratiam consequendi via, saith Lavater here, the readiest way to win favour with all others. When David was once a man after God's heart, whatsoever he did pleased the people.

So Esther drew near, and touched the top of his sceptre] With her hand, saith the Chaldee; with her mouth, saith the Vulgate translation. This she did, either in token of submission, or for the avoiding of danger; for, as Josephus saith, He that touched the king's sceptre was out of the reach of evil, Ο απομεινος, ακινδυνος. Wives should submit themselves to their own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Submission includeth reverence (in heart, speeches, gestures) and obedience to all their husband's lawful commands and restraints. This is no more than is meet, saith the apostle, **#Col 3:19**. Ver. 3. **Then said the king unto her]** He perceived both by this her bold adventure, and also by her countenance and habit, that she had some very great suit to him. He therefore accosteth her (as the Lord did the angel, **#Zec 1:13**) with good words and comfortable words. And this way one man may be an angel, nay, a god, to another, **#Ge 33:10**. Indeed, it is God that comforteth by the creature, as by a conduit-pipe. The air yieldeth light as an instrument; the water may heat, but not of itself. The Lord put it into the heart of Ahasuerus to cheer up Esther in this sort; wherein also he did but his duty, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: so ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself, **#Eph 5:28,29**.

What wilt thou, queen Esther?] That he called her by her name, and with such an honourable attribution, was a sign of no small favour. The hearts of Joseph's brethren were so big swollen with spite and spleen, that they could not call him by his name, but said, "Behold, this dreamer," **#Ge 37:19**. So the Pharisees called our Saviour, This fellow, Εκεινος, **#Joh 7:11**. And the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? they could not find in their hearts to say, Where is Jesus? So Saul asked not for David, much less for his son-in-law David, but for the son of Jesse, by way of contempt. Christ tells his disciples that their enemies shall cast out their names

for naught, #Lu 6:22, and chargeth them courteously to salute their enemies, calling them friendly by their names, #Mt 5:47.

And what is thy request?] *q.d.* Fear not to utter it, I am very earnest to know it, and fully resolved to grant it. It was more troublesome to Severus the emperor to be asked nothing than to give much. When any of his courtiers had not made bold with him, he would call him and say, *Quid est cur nihil petes?* What meanest thou to ask me nothing? Hitherto ye have asked me nothing (saith the King of saints to his beloved Esther); ask, that your joy may be full, #Joh 16:24. He is worthily miserable that will not make himself happy by asking.

It shall be given thee to the half of the kingdom] A proverbial rather than a prodigal speech, and much in this king's mouth. If some ambitious Semiramis had had such an offer, what ill use might she soon have made of it! The dancing damsel made no good use of the like from Herod. But a bee can suck honey out of a flower, that a fly has not the skill to do. Esther prudently and modestly improveth the immoderate offer of the king, and conceiveth good hope. How much more may we (upon those exceeding great and precious promises given us by God) of an exuberancy of love, and a confluence of all comforts for this life and a better! especially since God doth not pay his promises with words, as Sertorius is said to have done; neither is he off and on with his people (*nec mutatur, nec mentitur*), but performeth all with the better, as Naaman pressed the prophet's man to take two talents when he asked but one. The widow of Sarepta had more than she could tell what to do with; her cruse never ceased running till she had no room. The Shunammite would ask nothing of the prophet, nor make use of his offered courtesy. He sends for her again, and makes her a free promise of that which she most wanted and desired, a son, #2Ki 4:16. God's kindness is beyond all this. He giveth his servants what they forget or presume to ask; and sends his Spirit to help them, and to form their prayers for them, and thereby to seal them up to the day of redemption, to assure them of the kingdom.

Ver. 4. **And Esther answered]** She did not presently pour forth her whole heart into the king's bosom, rail against Haman, beg for her people, &c., but prudently reserveth herself till a fitter opportunity.

Unadvised open-heartedness is a fruit of fool-hardiness, #Pr 29:11: "A fool uttereth all his mind" (ye shall have it presently, so near his mouth doth it lie, that all will out suddenly): "but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards," or, in an inner room (*in ulteriori animi recessu*), as the word may be rendered, till he see his time to produce it.

If it seem good to the king] Princes must have silken words given them, as the mother of Artaxerxes (perhaps Esther) told one. The rule of old was η ηκιστα, η ηδιστα, short or sweet.

Let the king and Haman come this day to the banquet] She knew that the king loved Haman's company, and especially at a banquet. It was policy in Rebecca to provide such savoury meat as the old man loved; so here. Be wise as serpents. David is commended for his prudent (and thereby prosperous) deporting himself in Saul's house, #1Sa 18:14 God gave Solomon politic wisdom exceeding much. Who is a faithful and a wise servant? saith our Saviour, &c., #Mt 24:45. And "who is a wise man and endued with knowledge (saith St James) amongst you? let him show out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom," #Jas 3:13. But if it were policy in Esther to invite Haman, whom she hated, was it likewise piety? did she not dissemble? R. Solomon saith, she invited Haman alone with the king, that other courtiers might envy him, and so undermine him. But that is but a sorry excuse, neither doth Lyra's allegation of her good intention much mend the matter. They answer better, who say, that she invited him, that she might accuse him to his face; and so cut off all matter of his excuse or escape. Hereby also she would show, saith Lavater, that she accused him, not out of wrath or revenge; but that she was drawn to it, and, as it were, driven by mere necessity.

Ver. 5. **Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste]** Heb. Accelerate or hasten Haman, *sc.* to an ill bargain, as it proved the very next day. Look how thunder commonly happens when the sky seemeth most clear; so Haman saw himself enveloped with a storm in one of the fairest days of his fortune. 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.

So the king and Haman came to the banquet] Who but the king and Haman? So Tiberius called Sejanus, My Sejanus, partaker of all my cares and counsels, &c., and made him his colleague in the empire, Σιανον τον εμου, κοιωνιον φροντιδων (Dio). But he soon cast him from supreme honour to extreme ignominy, so that the same senator who accompanied him to the senate conducted him to prison; they which sacrificed unto him as to their god, which kneeled down to him to adore him, scoffed at him, and loaded him with contempt and contumelies. So Caesar Borgia, that restless ambitionist, who, emulating Julius Caesar, would needs be *aut Caesar, aut nullus*, either Caesar or nothing, was shortly after *et Caesar, et nullus*, both Caesar and nothing, being slain in the kingdom of Navarre.

Ver. 6. **And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine]** Which seemeth to have been after the other banquet of dainties and sweetmeats, during which they drank water. Only the king had *aurum potabile*, a golden water prepared, which he and his eldest son alone might drink; and none else might taste of it on pain of death, των δε αλλων εαν τις πη θανατον η ζημια (Athenaeus). At this latter banquet they drank wine freely one to another; and, *inter poculorum laetitiam*, as Josephus hath it, Εν τω πατω, *Inter pocula*, when his heart was now merry within him, after he had drunk wine abundantly, as the Latin hath it, the king said unto Esther,

What is thy petition? to the half of the kingdom] The promise the king reneweth, as supposing that Esther durst not propose her request because of the greatness of the matter; and assuring her that she should have it, though never so great. And saith not the God of heaven as much to his servants and suppliants? **#Isa 45:11 Jer 33:3**. Why, then, stand they off in a sinful shamefacedness, and improve not to the utmost this divine indulgence, this precious privilege? why say they not with Luther (who well understood the latitude of this royal charter), *Fiat mea voluntas*, Let my will be done: my will, I say, because the same with thine, Lord? why do they not grow upon God, and work upon his promise (which is so exceeding broad, **#Ps 119:96**), as David did? **#1Ch 17:23-25**; he goes over it again, and yet still encroacheth, **#1Ch 17:26**; he presseth and oppresseth it, till he hath expressed the sweetness out of it, and so we have all

good leave to do, #Isa 66:11, even to suck and be satisfied by those full-strutting breasts of divine consolation. But what mean those foul great babies, the Papists, to pray the Virgin Mary to exhibit unto them the breasts of her grace? &c. And what frontless blasphemers are they to say, that God the Father hath shared his kingdom with her; keeping his justice to himself, and giving his mercy to her to dispose of? And this, say they, that they may not seem to be mad without reason, was prefigured by Ahasuerus's saying to Esther, I will grant thy request to the half of my kingdom.

Ver. 7. **My petition and my request is]** She speaks to the king in his own very words: and so must we if we mean to speed in heaven. Take unto you words, and say, Take away all iniquity, and give good, &c. Produce God's own words in prayer, and say, as she did to Judah, "Whose are these?" #Ge 38:25. He loves to be set upon in his own words, to be pressed with his promise, to be sued upon his bond. This David knew, and therefore cries, #Ps 86:11, "Unite my heart to fear thy name": it is as if he should say, Thou hast promised, Lord, to give me one heart, #Eze 11:19; behold, I find mine heart divided, my thoughts dissipated, and myself disabled for duty (for *Anima dispersa fit minor*), Unite it, I beseech thee, &c. This is the way to make our prayers to be nigh the Lord day and night, as Solomon phraseth it, #1Ki 8:59.

Ver. 8. **If I have found favour in the sight of the king]** As she had, not so much by her beauty and bravery (wherein Vashti perhaps might easily have compared with her), but by the finger of God, who tames for his elect the fiercest creatures (as he did the lions to Daniel, and other savage beasts to the martyrs, whom they would not meddle with), and turneth the king's heart, as the rivers of water, into what channel soever he pleaseth to put it, #Pr 21:1, as the ploughman doth the watercourse with his paddle, or the gardener with his hand.

And if it please the king] See #Es 5:4, and submit to God, #Jas 4:7.

And I will do tomorrow as the king hath said] She had learned to prefer opportunity before time. There might be some by at this first banquet whose company she liked not; or she might not yet have so clear an answer in her own heart to her former prayers, and therefore

desireth some further time that night to seek God: whatever the reason of her putting it off till next day was, God's holy hand was in it, that Mordecai might be first so greatly honoured, and Haman's high gallows prepared: *Illum utique magis securum, Regem autem magis benevolum magisque fecit attentum*, saith Rupertus. Hereby she made Haman more secure, and the king more kind and attentive. Ver. 9. **Then went Haman forth that day joyful]** *Saeculi laetitia est impunita nequitia*, saith an ancient. He looked upon himself now as no less favoured by the queen than by the king, and was puffed up with this new honour, as a bubble is with a child's blast in a walnut shell with a little soap, but it shortly after falls down again into his eyes and vexeth him.

And with a glad heart] But he rejoiced, as many more do, in a thing of nought, **#Am 6:13**. And the end of his mirth was heaviness, **#Pr 14:13**. It was *risus Sardonius*, mirth of Sardonius, like that of those, who being stung with the Tarantula (a viper in Italy), die laughing and capering. Or as the dolphin, that sporteth most before a storm. Or as the little fishes, that swimming merrily down the silver stream of Jordan, fall shortly after into the Dead Sea. Haman doubtless held himself now the happiest man alive; as having the royalty, not of the king's ear only, but of the queen's too, as he foolishly fancied. This wicked one boasted of his heart's desire, and as for all his enemies, he puffed at them, **#Ps 10:8,5,6**. He said in his heart, I shall not be moved, I shall never be in adversity. Herodotus saith of Apries, king of Egypt (Pharaoh-Hophrah, Jeremiah calleth him, **#Jer 43:9**), that he conceited and bragged that his kingdom was better settled to him than that any, either God or man, could remove him; yet was he afterwards taken and hanged by his own subjects. Aelian tells us, that Dionysius, the tyrant, thought it impossible that he should have been cast out of Sicily, but it proved otherwise. How suddenly were Alexander, the great conqueror, and Julius Caesar, the perpetual dictator, cut off, and quenched, as the fire of thorns! **#Ps 118:12**. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. So passes the glory of the world. The world's greatest darlings are in no better condition than the bull that goes to be sacrificed with garlands on his head and music before him, but suddenly feels the stroke of the murdering axe.

But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate] There he sat, and would not stir an inch, for Haman's greatness; as resolute he remained, notwithstanding the bloody edict now published, as was Rawlins White, the martyr, in Queen Mary's days. The bishop of Llandaff pretended to pray for his conversion; after which he said, Now, Rawlins, how is it with thee? Wilt thou revoke thine opinions or no? Surely, said he, my lord, Rawlins you left me, and Rawlins you find me, and Rawlins, by God's grace, I will continue. The heavens shall as soon fall, said another, as I will recant. This the mad world styles stiffness, self-willedness, fool-hardiness, &c., as was before noted; but the saints do it out of Christian courage, an invincible faith, and zeal for God's cause and kingdom.

That he stood not up, nor moved for him] No, not he, *ne minimo quidem obsequiolo*, he neither moved nor muted. For he looked upon him, first, as a vile person, and therefore fit to be slighted, #Ps 15:4. Next, as an utter enemy to God and his people, a sworn swordman to the devil. Lastly, Mordecai herein showed himself constant to his principles, and to his former practice, which a good man may not easily alter, lest all be questioned. Besides, should he but have any whit yielded, Haman would have been thereby hardened, and his pride heightened. He therefore very honestly persisteth in his purpose, and giveth that wretch less respect than ever.

He was full of indignation against Mordecai] Full, as heart could hold, of hot wrath; so that he gloweth like a fire coal, *Et fere crepat medius*. So unsatisfiable is ambition, so restless, and so vindictive. Ver. 10. **Nevertheless Haman refrained himself]** Much ado he had to forbear mischieving him; he was fain to force himself thereunto, as the word signifieth; for his fingers even itched to be having him by the ears, or to be bathing in his blood. This he did not, haply because he dared not, because Mordecai was the king's servant, his doorkeeper, as it is thought, and so went under his protection. It would therefore have reflected upon the king himself, if he should lay violent hands on him. Most sure it is, that God held his hands, and preserved Mordecai for further good to his Church. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints; neither will he send them to bed till they have done their work.

And when he came home, he sent and called for his friends] This had been a wise man's part, if he had done it for any good purpose. But as he was in an ill case to consult, as being full of rage, so he minded nothing but revenge, and therefore advised with none but such as would say with him, and thereby hasten his downfall.

And Zeresh his wife] *Ut consiliariornm primam et praecipuam.* That she was wise above her sex, see **#Es 6:13**. But had she been as wise as Pilate's wife was she would not have given here such pestilent counsel, but have warned her husband of meddling with just men. Have these workers of iniquity no knowledge, that they eat up God's people as they eat bread? that they make account to make but a breakfast of them? **#Ps 14:4**.

Ver. 11. **And Haman told them of the glory of his riches]** Favourites, observing their *mollissima fandi tempora*, get many times much wealth under princes; as did Sejanus under Tiberius; Seneca under Nero; that rich and wretched Cardinal, Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, and chancellor of England, in the reign of Henry VI; Cardinal Wolsey, under Henry VIII. That Haman had feathered his nest well appears by his large offer to the king of ten thousand talents of silver, &c. Now riches render a man glorious in the world's eye; hence they go coupled together, **#Pr 3:16 8:18**. Hence that of Laban's grumbling sons, **#Ge 31:1**, "Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's" (nay, not all, but as avarice made Sejanus think all which he acquired not, to be lost, *Quicquid non acquiritur damnum est* (Sen.), so did these lowlies): "and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory." But what were all this glory of his riches if, for want of children Haman should leave it to those, *Quos vel nescit vel nolit*, as Austin hath it, to strangers or enemies? He tells them, therefore,

Of the multitude of his children] His sons and his successors like to be. I say, likely to be, not sure to be, for

Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo.

God gave Leda, *Luctuosam faecunditatem*, as Jerome saith of her, a sorrowful fruitfulness, because she lived to bury her many children.

There were twenty-two children and children's children of the house of Portugal, between Philip II of Spain and that crown; and yet he outlived them all, as histories show, and his successors held that kingdom till within these few years. It is but a vain thing, therefore, for a man to boast of the multitude of children, since he may either lose them, or live to wish, as Augustus the emperor did, Oh that I had either lived a bachelor or died childless! *Utinam aut caelebs vixissem, aut orbus perissem.*

And all the things wherein the king had promoted him] Wherein, but wherefore he showeth not. Dignity should wait upon desert; but many times we see it otherwise, and it was of old complained of, **#Ps 12:8.** He telleth what the king had done for him, but not a tittle what God. God was not in all his thoughts. He might justly have been twitted, as once that pope was pithily, when he had engraven upon the gates of his newly built college: Utrecht (where he was born) planted me; Lovain (where he was bred) watered me; but Caesar (who had promoted him to the popedom) gave increase: a merry passenger wrote below, *Hic Deus nihil fecit*, Here God did nothing. God had done much for him, but for a mischief to him; as he once gave the Israelites quails to choke them, and a king to vex them; as Saul gave Michal to David to be a snare to him; and as our Saviour gave Judas the bag, to discover the rottenness of his heart. This Bernard calleth, *Misericordiam omni indignatione crudeliorem.* God gives outward blessings to wicked persons to furnish their indictment out of them; as Joseph put a cup into his brethren's sack to pick a quarrel with them, and lay theft to their charge.

And how he had advanced him above the princes] What an impudent Thraso was this Haman! this odious bragging of his Gregory referreth to that third kind of pride, such as God's soul abhorreth, and surely punisheth; as he did in the prince of Tyre, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus, Herod, whose hearts were lifted up with their estates, as a boat, that riseth with the rising of the water; whose bloods and goods rose together.

Corde stat inflato pauper honore dato.

But as the peacock so delighteth to be seen, and to behold his own tail, that he exposes his filthy parts behind, so do vain-glorious braggards. It is, therefore, very good counsel that a grave divine giveth to such as are advanced above others. Carry humble hearts, and add grace and virtue to your places, else they shall prove but as a high gibbet to bring you to more disgrace in this world, and torment in the next (Whateley's Archetype). That of the poet also is very savoury and sovereign,

Desinat elatis quisquam confidere rebus:

Magna repente ruunt, summa cadunt subito. (Claudian.)

Ver. 12. **Haman said moreover**] He makes no end of vaunting and vapouring; and all to aggravate the indignity done him by Mordecai, in not stooping to so great a personage.

Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in...but myself] This he mistaketh for a special favour, when as Esther's banquet proved no better to him than Semiramis's tomb did to them that rifled it; they expected to find treasure, but met with a deadly poison.

And tomorrow am I invited, &c.] Where thou shalt (as hypocrites do at the Lord's table) eat thy bane, and drink thy poison; yet art thou over joyed as if highly favoured. A temporary may receive both the word audible and the word visible (the sacrament) with much seeming joy; which yet is but only as the commotion of the affections in a dream: it fareth with such in the end as with one that, sleeping on the top of a steep rock, dreameth of great matters befallen him, but, starting suddenly through joy thereof, tumbleth headlong into the sea, and breaketh his neck at the bottom.

Ver. 13. **Yet all this availeth me nothing**] It is seldom seen, saith a right reverend interpreter here, that God allows unto the greatest darlings of the world a perfect contentment. Something they must have to complain of that shall give an unsavoury verdure to their sweetest morsels, and make their felicity miserable. *Totum hoc non est utile mihi*, I enjoy nothing of all this. No more did Ahab, when sick of Naboth's vineyard, #**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.

So long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate] So full of torment is envy, if it cannot come at another man's harm, it will feed upon its own. Who would ever set by the profits, pleasures, and preferments of this present life, that yield so little sound and sincere contentment to those that have most of them? In the very pursuit of them is much anguish, many grievances, fears, jealousies, disgraces, interruptions, &c., and after the unsanctified enjoyment of them (if any such thing there be, for even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, #Pr 14:13, and there is a snare, or a cord, in the sin of the wicked, #Pr 29:6, to strangle their joy with) followeth the sting of conscience, that will inexpressibly torment the soul throughout all eternity; besides the vexation of it, to see such as Mordecai, the Jew, whom they once would not have set with the dogs of their flocks, sitting, not at the king's gate, but on Christ's own throne, #Re 3:21, as partakers of all his glory.

Ver. 14. **Then said Zeresh his wife]** Thrasos shall never want for Gnathos. Such as have first flattered themselves shall have others enough to soothe them, and to say with them. Zeresh sets the motion of revenge on foot, she was a fit helve for such a hatchet, wittily wicked. The wit of women hath wont to be noted for more sudden and more shrewd.

And all his friends unto him] Indeed, no friends, because flatterers and furtherers in evil *Sed divitibus ideo amicus deest, quia nihil deest.* The rich hath many friends, saith Solomon, seeming friends, but true enemies, parasites, brokers coal carters, good to scour a hot oven with. Such a one was that Adullamite to Judah, #Ge 38:20; Jonadab to Amnon, #2Sa 13:3,8; those green headed counsellors to Rehoboam, &c. Haman should have made a better choice, and have come more calm to counsel. It is not good sowing in a tempest, nor taking medicine in a fit. These friends of Haman deserved to speed as ill as those of Sejanus did, who were executed with him, because they served his lust, and added fuel to his flame.

Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high] A cubit was half a yard at least. In those parts they had trees very tall, or they might piece one to another. But why so high a gallows, but for the greater disgrace to Mordecai, and terror to all that should slight the king's favourite? So Canute, the first Danish king of England, caused the

false Edric's head to be set upon the highest part of the Tower of London. And our gunpowder traitors were served in like manner.

And tomorrow] But why so soon, since in case of life, *Nulla cunctatio satis diuturna esse possit?* were it not fit that he were tried first? Haman's malice will bear no delays, he is in pain till the business be despatched; he cannot sleep till he have caused this innocent man to fall, #Pr 4:16, though he fall with him, as the dragon doth with the elephant, whose blood he sucketh out, and perisheth by his falling weight (Plin. 1. viii. c. 12).

Speak thou unto the king] It will be but *dictum, factum*, said and done, he will lightly say as Zedekiah did to his princes, requiring Jeremiah to the stocks. The king is not he that can deny you anything. How much better that Roman emperor, who being to subscribe a warrant for execution of a certain malefactor, cried out, *Non nisi coactus*, full sore against my will! and another, *Utinam literas nescirem*, I would I could not write my name. So when one Joan Butcher was to be burned for her deserts, all the Council could not prevail with our Edward VI for a long time to set to his hand. But these wicked friends of Haman question not the king's readiness to gratify him, though they could not but know that Mordecai had once at least saved the king's life, #Es 2:21-23, and what could they tell, but the king might now remember it? *Sed Deus quem destruit dementat*, when God has a mind to undo a man, he first infatuateth him.

That Mordecai may be hanged thereon] And that before Haman's door, that he may feed his eyes on that sweet spectacle, and say as that bloody Prince Charles IX of France did, when he saw the noble admiral's carcass hanging and stinking upon the gallows, *Quam suaviter olet cadaver inimici!* How sweetly smelleth the dead body of an enemy!

Then go thou in merrily with the king, &c.] They knew that he could not be heartily merry till then, and forced smiles are but as counterfeit complexion, the hypocrisy of mirth. So Richard III would not sit down to dinner till the Lord Hastings were beheaded; nor Stephen Gardiner, till he had the news brought him that the

bishops were burnt at Oxford. Oh that we could be as restless till the hindrances of our true spiritual joy were removed, I mean those stubborn corruptions that will not stoop to the power of grace.

And the thing pleased Haman] As being agreeable to his malicious humour, and that which he doubted not to be able to effect. Man purposeth, but God disposeth.

And he caused the gallows to be made] Little thought he for whom. *Aequum est ut faber quas fecit compedes ipse gestet.* So let thine enemies perish, O Lord.

Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **On that night]** That very night before Mordecai should have been hanged on the morrow morning, and so early that Esther could not have begged his life, would she never so fain. God will appear for his poor people, *εν τω καιρω*, in the nick and opportunity of time, #1Pe 5:6. He will be seen in the mount, he will come as out of an engine.

Could not the king sleep] Heb. the king's sleep fled away, and, like a shadow, it fled away so much the faster as it was more followed. Sleep is best solicited by neglect, and soonest found when we have forgotten to seek it. They are likeliest for it who, together with their clothes, can put off their cares, and say as Lord Burleigh did when he threw off his gown, Lie there, Lord Treasurer. This great Ahasuerus cannot do at present, for crowns also have their cares, thistles in their arms, and thorns in their sides. Lo, he that commanded one hundred and twenty-seven provinces cannot command an hour's sleep: how should he when as sleep is God's gift? #Ps 127:2. And it was he that at this time kept him awake for excellent ends, and put small thoughts into his heart for great purpose, like as he did into our Henry VIII, when the bishop of Baion (the French ambassador), coming to consult with him about a marriage between the lady Mary and the duke of Orleans, cast a scruple into his mind which rendered him restless, whether Mary were legitimate, &c. (Life and death of Card. Wolsey, 65). If it were his surfeiting and drunkenness the day before that hindered Ahasuerus from sleeping, *habent enim hoc ebrii, ut neque*

dormiant, neque vigilant (Plin.), They have this from drinking so that they are neither asleep nor awake. God's goodness appeareth the more, in turning his sin to the good of the Church. *Venenum aliquando pro remedio fuit*, saith Seneca, He can make of a poisonous viper a wholesome treacle; and by an almighty alchemy draw good out of evil.

And he commanded to bring the book of records] Perhaps some special notes or commentaries, written for the king's own use, as M. Aurelius had his *τα εις εμαυτον*. Julius Caesar had his commentaries written with his own hand, and for the help of his own memory, *υπομνηματα*. Tamerlane had the like book, wherein he read a great part of the night before the mortal battle between him and Bajazet (Turk. Hist.).

Of the chronicles] Perhaps, besides the former book of remembrances, or else the same, *Librum Commentariorum, Chronica*, as Tremellius rendereth it, the book of commentaries, even the chronicles, but the Vulgate and Tygurine make them different books.

And they were read before the king] Perhaps as a recipe, to bring on sleep, or at least to deceive the time; and yet it may be too for a better purpose, viz. to better his knowledge, and to stir up his memory, that dignity might wait upon desert; as it did in Tamerlane's time, who kept a catalogue of their names who had best deserved of him, which he daily perused, oftentimes saying, that day to be lost wherein he had not done something for them. This Ahasuerus had not yet done for Mordecai, who therefore haply held with the poet,

Omnia sunt ingrata nihil fecisse benigne est.

But God was not unrighteous to forget his work and labour of love, **#Heb 6:10**, though men were unthankful. *Vetus gratia dormit*. (Pindar). *Per raro grati reperiuntur* (Cicero).

Ver. 2. **And it was found written]** It was God who directed the reader to that very place; like as he did the eunuch to **#Isa 53:7,8**, where, reading of the meekness of Jesus Christ, he was transformed

into the same image; as was likewise Johannes Isaac, a Jew, converted by reading the same chapter. *Hoc ego ingenue profiteor*, saith he, *caput illud ad fidem Christi me adduxisse*: This I confess ingenuously, that lighting upon that chapter, I was brought thereby to the faith of Christ. Austin thought he heard a voice, saying, *Tolle, lege*, take up the Bible and read; accordingly he took it up, and opening it, fell upon that text in **#Ro 13:14**, which was the main means of his conversion.

That Mordecai had told of Bighana, &c.] See #Es 2:21-23.

Ver. 3. And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?] Lyra saith that he had waited six years for reward and had none. In princes' courts men are sure to meet with two evils, *Αναβολη* and *Μεταβολη*, not so in heaven. The butler forgot Joseph. Solomon speaketh of a poor wise man, who by his wisdom delivered the city, yet no man remembered that same poor man, **#Ec 9:15**. This is *merces mundi*, the world's wages. Mordecai had saved the king's life, and yet is unrewarded. The kings of Persia used to be very bountiful to those that had well deserved them, or of the commonwealth; calling such *Orosangae*, and setting down both their names and their acts in the Chronicles, as Herodotus testifieth. Among the rest he mentioned one Phylacus, *Qui inter bene de rege meritos ascriptus est, et multo tractu soli donatus*, who was put upon record for his good service to the king, and rewarded with a great deal of land given him. Others had great store of gold and silver, and a gallant house, as Democedes Crotoniates, the physician who cured Darius, had at Susis. It is well known out of Xenophon, what rich gifts Cyrus gave to his friends and followers, chains of gold, armlets, bridles embossed with gold, Persian stools, called *Dorophoricae*, &c. Herodotus telleth us, that this Ahasuerus, alias Xerxes, gave Megabyzus, for his good service at Babylon, a golden mill weighing six talents. Plutarch writeth, that he gave Themistocles over two hundred talents, and three cities besides, viz. Magnesia, Lampsacus, and Myuntis, to find him food, and for clothing and furniture two more, viz. Percos and Palaescepsis. How came it then to pass that good Mordecai was so forgotten? Surely it was a great fault in this ungrateful king, but God's holy hand was in it, that Mordecai should not have a present recompense, but that it should be deferred till a fitter opportunity, when God might be more

glorified in the preservation of his people and destruction of their enemies. Let us not therefore be weary of well doing; for (however men deal by us) we shall be sure to reap in due season if we faint not, #Ga 6:9. God best seeth when a mercy will be most sweet and seasonable. When his people are low enough, and the enemy high enough, then usually it appeareth that there is a God that judgeth in the earth, and a rich reward for the righteous. Men may neither remunerate nor remember the good turns we have done them; but there is a book of remembrance written before the Lord for all them that fear him, and that think upon his name, #Mal 3:16. See my treatise on that text, called, The Righteous Man's Recompense, annexed to my Comment upon the Small Prophets.

Then said the king's servants] The eunuchs or gentlemen of the bedchamber: ingenuous men they were, and not disaffected to Mordecai, whom yet they could not but know to be a great eyesore to Prince Haman. *Si iuvenes isti vulgari invidentiae morbo laborassent*, saith Lavater. If these young men had been sick of that common disease of envy, they would have extenuated his good service, and have said, Mordecai is a despised Jew, a stranger, a captive. If he revealed the conspiracy, he did but his duty, and provided thereby well for his own safety. Is it not reward enough that he lives, and at court, where he hath a place, an office, &c.? Courtiers, we know, love not to have others come over their heads, but think all lost which themselves acquire not, as Seneca saith Sejanus did, *Quicquid non acquiritur damnum est*. Whatever he did not own, was consumed. We know how it was in the courts of Pharaoh, Saul, Herod. That is a rare commendation that is given by Xenophon of Cyrus's courtiers, that though a man should seek or choose blindfold, he could not miss of a good man, *Ενθα καν μωων βαλη τις ουκ αν αμαρτοι ανδρος αγαθου* (Xen. Cyrop. 1. 8). David's court might very well be such, #Ps 101, and Queen Elizabeth's, and George's, prince of Anhalt, of whom Melancthon writeth, that his chamber was *Ecclesia, Academia, Curia*, a church, a university, and a court; *Palaestra pietatis et literarum*, as Tremellius saith of Cranmer's family, a school of piety and learning.

There is nothing done for him] And yet the Apocryphal additions, #/RApc Es 12:5,6, say otherwise.

Ver. 4. **And the king said, Who is in the court]** Josephus saith, that he first asked what time it was, and understanding that it was morning's light (for so long he had heard his servants read, and till then it was not that Mordecai's matter was mentioned, Haman being now ready to get a warrant for his execution), he asked, who is there without? as desirous to proceed by counsel in a business of that consequence.

Now Haman was come, &c.] He was early up (and at court for a mischief), but never the nearer, save only to his own utter ruin.

To speak to the king to hang Mordecai] Which till it were done, he could neither sleep in quiet nor eat with comfort. Little considered he how the gallows groaned for himself. "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead," #Pr 11:8.

*Vivit adhuc Christus, regnat, regnabit et usque:
Atque hostes omnes sub ditione premit.*

Ver. 5. **Behold, Haman standeth in the court]** For into the presence he might not come uncalled. And to be thus called in he held it no small happiness; but was soon confuted. He came into the room (as men come to a lottery) with his head full of hopes, but he went thence with his heart full of blanks.

And the king said, Let him come in] See here, saith Merlin, a sweet and special providence of God in this, that Ahasuerus should take advice about honouring Mordecai, and not of his servants that attended upon his person, but of Haman then present (though for another purpose), and concealing the man he means, should make Haman say what was fit to be done, and then do it accordingly. Neither the king nor his servants, likely, would ever have thought of doing Mordecai so great honour as Haman prescribed. See here, as in a mirror, how the Lord by a secret providence bringeth about and overruleth the wiles of men, their affairs, times, counsels, words, and speeches, to the fulfilling of his own will and decree; and this when they think least of doing God's will or serving his providence.

Ver. 6. **So Haman came in]** Merry and pleasant, but went out sad and heavy hearted. These hosts (profit, pleasure, and preferment),

though they welcome us into our inn with smiling countenances, yet, if we watch them not, they will cut our throats in our beds. It is observed of Edward III, that he had always fair weather at his passage into France, and foul upon his return. Pharaoh had fair weather till he was in the heart of the Red Sea. The sun shone fair upon the earth that morning that Lot came out of Sodom, but ere night there was a dismal change. He that lives in the height of the world's blandishments is not far from destruction.

And the king said unto him, What shall be done, &c.] Though the king knew of no difference between Haman and Mordecai (saith a grave interpreter, Mr Jackson), yet he suppresseth Mordecai's name: and thus the Lord by his providence brought it about, that even Haman himself should, to his greater vexation, appoint the honours that should be done to Mordecai, and that at a time when he was come to desire of the king that he might be hanged, and with full assurance that he should have obtained his desire.

Now Haman thought in his heart] Heb. Said in his heart; the language whereof God very well understood, and here uttereth, to the perpetual shame of this monstrous ambitionist.

To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?] Ambition (as they say of the crocodile) groweth as long as it liveth; and self-love, like to a good stomach, draws to itself what nourishment it liketh, and casts off that which offends it. It maketh men unreasonable, and teacheth them to turn the glass to see themselves bigger, others lesser, than they are. Herodotus reporteth, that after the Greeks had got the better of this Xerxes and his Persians, and came together to divide the spoil, when it was put to the question who of all the commanders had deserved the best and chief reward? none would yield to other, but every man thought himself best deserving, and second to none. In the battle at Belgrade, where Mahomet, the Great Turk, was beaten and driven out of the field, Capistranus and Huniades were the chieftains there. And whereas both of them wrote the relation of that day's work, neither of them so much as once mentioned the other (though both of them had done their parts gallantly), but each one took the whole praise of it to himself. Haman, though altogether unworthy of the least

respect, yet holds himself best worthy of the greatest honours, and therefore will be sure to be no niggard in advising those ceremonies of honour, which he presumes meant to his own person.

Ver. 7. **And Haman answered the king]** After a short pause, he had his answer ready; but making a bridge of his own shadow, he soon fell into the brook. Ambition rideth without reins, and like those horses, #Am 6:11 runneth upon the rocks, where first she breaks her hoofs, and then her neck. It seemeth, by that which followeth, that Haman aspired to the kingdom: why, else did he ask the crown royal, and the kings horse? &c. When David would declare Solomon his successor in the kingdom, he set him upon his own mule, #1Ki 1:33. But Haman little thought that his high hopes should end in a rope. So did Hanno's, the Carthaginian, and Roger Mortimer's in King Edward II's time, and the false Edric in King Canute's days; and lastly, Hadrian de Castello, an Italian legate, made by King Henry VII bishop of Hereford, who conspired with Alphonso Petruccio, and other sacred cardinals, to murder Pope Leo X, induced thereunto by the suggestion of a witch, who foretold to him, that one Hadrian, an old man of mean parentage, of great learning and wisdom, should succeed in the Papacy, the man, Haman-like, thought it must needs be himself; but another Hadrian, schoolmaster to Charles V, proved to be the man: and this our Hadrian lost by deprivation all his promotions whatsoever (for his life could not be come at) for his nefarious attempt (Paul Jovius).

For the man whom the king delighteth to honour] Heb. In whose honour the king delighteth. And what will not delight do, whether in good or evil? {See Trapp on "Mic 7:18"}

Ver. 8. **Let the royal apparel be brought, &c.]** This was very glorious and gorgeous; as is to be seen in Xenophon, Plutarch, Lucian, Dion, Chrysostom, and other good authors. The Persian kings wore on their heads an upright tiara or turban very sumptuous; a diadem also made of white and purple colour. On their bodies a rich purple stole, or robe of state, reaching down to the heels; this Curtius calleth *pallam Persicam*, a Persian pall, beset with gold and precious stones great store, and the pictures of wild creatures and fowls of the air. Curtius, describing Xerxes's royal apparel, saith that golden hawks, encountering one another with their beaks, adorned his robe made of cloth of gold. Besides, they wore a rich

cassock (called candy) bound to them with a golden belt, breeches also of scarlet, reaching to their knees; called therefore by the Greeks Περισκελης, as Jerome testifieth (Ep. ad Fabiol.).

And the horse that the king rideth upon] The king of Persia did always ride, either on horseback or in a chariot, and had one special horse proper to himself, as had also David, #1Ki 1:33, Alexander, Julius Caesar, &c. At this day the better sort in Persia fight, buy, sell, confer, and do all on horseback. The difference between the gentleman and the peasant is, that the peasant never rides, the gentleman never goes on foot.

And the crown royal which is set upon his head] This was monstrous ambition; appoint him the kingdom also, might Ahasuerus have said. Lyra noteth here, that Haman aspired to the kingdom, because none but the king could have the crown royal set upon his head; wherefore the king also in answering to the things propounded by him, saith, Take the robe and the horse, as thou hast said, but of the crown he maketh no mention. Some of the Hebrews by head here understand the horse's head; *Nam apud Persas solebat equus deferre diadema regni*, the king's horse was wont to carry the royal crown. Vatablus thinks this sense not unlikely, because the crown is not mentioned, #Es 6:11; and this might also peradventure be the custom and fashion of Persia, saith Diodati. Merlin noteth here, that Haman maketh no mention of rewards or gifts to be conferred upon him, because he had wealth enough already, and desired only more honours, instancing the uttermost that could be done to any subject, in seeking whereof he miserably failed.

Ver. 9. **And let this apparel and horse be delivered, &c.]** All must be done in amplest manner; and if it had been done to himself, as he desired, what had all that been but a *magnum nihil*, as one saith, a great nothing, a glorious fancy, a rattle, to still his ambition for a while? *Forte amplior fuisset, nisi veritas esset rem suspicione neutiquam carere* (Lavat.). He, simple man, had wrought himself into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage, like as the Spaniards have in their dream of a catholic monarchy, *divinitus debita*, saith one, *sed in Utopia*. They were laughed heartily at Captain Drake and his company, when they took Sancta Domingo, A.D. 1585, and in the town hall found the king of Spain's arms, and under them a

globe of the world, out of which arose a horse with his forefeet cast forth with this inscription, *Non sufficit orbis*, Not enough territory. Pyrrhus, that ambitious king of Epirotes, had the like thought; but was slain at last with a tilestone thrown upon his head by a woman. And a like evil end befell Caesar Borgia, who, in imitation of Julius Caesar, would needs be *aut Caesar; aut nullus*, either Caesar or nothing, and soon after proved to be *et Caesar; et nullus*, Both Caesar and nothing. Had Haman but contented himself with his present condition (too good for such a captive), he might have lived in the world's account happily, and have called himself, as that French king did *Tres heureuse*, thrice blessed; but that insatiable thirst after honour, that gluttonous, excessive desire after more and more greatness, undid him. So true is that proverb of the ancients, *Turdus ipse sibi malum cacat*, Of the blackbird's dung is made the lime wherewith he is taken; so out of the dung of men's sins doth God make his lime twigs of judgment to take them withal.

To one of the king's most noble princes] *Principibus maioribus paratimis*. This would be no small addition to the honour of the man and splendour of the day, like as it was here in England, when Henry II, at the coronation of his eldest son, renounced the name of a king for that day, and, as server, served at the table.

That they may array the man withal] Setting him forth to the greatest advantage, as our Henry VI did, when he crowned the Lord Beauchamp king of the Isle of Wight, and as Xerxes did Demaratus, when for honour's sake he granted him to enter into Sardis, the chief city of Asia, arrayed like himself, with a straight tiara upon his head, which none might wear but kings only (Sen. 1. 6, de Benef.).

Through the street of the city] Of Susa, that he might be seen and cried up by many, for *Honor est in honorante*. Honour is in honour. As the meteor liveth in the air, so doth honour in the breath of other men. Plato reckoneth it among those *dei ludibria quae sursum ac deorsum sub caelo feruntur*, like tennis-balls bandied up and down from one to another.

Ver. 10. **Then the king said to Haman]** The king had no intent herein to ensnare Haman, or cross his humour, but God had a hand in it for the effecting of his own ends, which cannot but be ever

exceeding good, since his will is not only *recta*, right but *regula* the rule.

Make haste, and take the apparel, and the horse, &c.] Here was no time left him of deliberation or liberty of contradiction; dispute he must not, but despatch what was given him in charge. Had he had but the least time, that, stepping out of the presence, he might have considered with himself or consulted with his friends, he would either have feigned himself sick, or found some other excuse, that he might not have done his enemy this honour. But God had so ordered it, and the king commanded it to be done forthwith; it was not, therefore, for Haman, *vel responsare, vel repugnare*, to chat or chaff, unless he would run the hazard of all; for, where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What dost thou?

And do even so to Mordecai the Jew] This word stabbed Haman to the heart, who had run many great hazards doubtless to domineer in his undeserved dignities; and now must perforce honour him whom he had hoped to have hanged; clothe him whom he hoped to have stripped; help him up to his horse, upon whose grave he hoped to have danced; prepare a triumph for him for whom he had prepared a tree; make proclamation before him as a crier, lead his horse as a lacquey, do all offices for him as a slave or underling; oh what a cut, what a cordolium was this to a man of his mettle and making! It was a wonder his heart burst not, as did Ahitophel's, for pride so swelleth the soul many times, that it breaketh the case, the body, I mean, and endeth the life; but this had been here to have saved the hangman a labour. But base spirits will buckle and fall down to rise, crouch and creep to mount, &c.

That sitteth at the king's gate] There you shall have him, and see that you mistake him not. Haman knew him well enough by his stiffness and stoutness, and wished him, of all the men in the world, out of the world.

Let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken] *Perquam hoc durum est, sed ita lex scripta est*, This is extremely hard, but so the law was written, saith the civil lawyer. This was a hard saying, and as hard meat to Haman's stomach, that would ill go down, but there

was no help for it, himself had advised it, and must therefore speedily execute it. *Lata negligentia dolus est*, This ignored is grief. says the lawyer; remissness is a kind of perfidiousness. Excuses would have been construed for refusals, delays for denials, &c.

Ver. 11. **Then took Haman the apparel, &c.]** Full sore against stomach be sure, but how could he help it? Thus God compelleth the devil and his limbs sometimes, though against their wills, to serve him as his servants. *Canes lingunt ulcers Lazari*. Dogs licked the sores of Lazarus, Saul pronounceth David more righteous than he. Judas and Pilate gave testimony to Christ's innocency. These are the servants of the High God, which show unto us the way of salvation, said the Pythoness concerning Paul and his companions, #Ac 16:17.

And arrayed Mordecai] Whose heart he could rather have torn out, and eaten it with salt. But courtiers are usually notable dissemblers, cunning politicians, &c. How busy is Haman now about Mordecai to array him, to mount him, and to attend upon him, whom yet he hated, and inwardly cursed to the pit of hell! *Cavete ab osculo Iscariotico, ab officio Hamanitico*. Beware of the eys of Judas and the office of hamen. Beware of men, #Mt 10:17 Josephus telleth us, that when Haman came to do those things to Mordecai, he (thinking that he had mocked him) answered with indignation, Thou most wicked man, dost thou thus insult over the miserable? But when he had told him, that indeed it was the king's pleasure, he suffered him to do it. But what shall we say to reconcile those cross passions in Ahasuerus? Before he signed that decree of killing all the Jews, he could not but know that a Jew had saved his life; and now, after that he had enacted the slaughter of all the Jews as rebels, he giveth order to honour a Jew as his preserver. It were strange (saith a right reverend writer hereupon, Dr Hall) if great persons, in the multitude of their distractions, should not let fall some incongruities.

And brought him on horseback] Whom before he could not endure to see sitting at the court's gate. A great trouble it was to Haman to lead Mordecai's horse, which another man would not have thought so: the moving of a straw troubleth proud flesh, &c.

Through the streets of the city] Where all men were now in an amazement at that sudden glory of Mordecai, and study how to reconcile this day with the thirteenth of Adar.

And proclaimed before him] Not without an honourable mention made of his loyalty and fidelity to the king, the cause of that great honour. This Haman was forced to proclaim, and that on foot, as a servant; when Mordecai, as a prince in his state, was on horseback. It is probable that Haman thought within himself that he should shortly have his penny worths of that vile varlet, whom now he thus far honoured, and that haply ere night yet, at the feast, he might prevail with the king to do by Mordecai as once Xerxes did by his steersman, when he came back with shame and loss from his wars with Greece. Xerxes was forced, saith the history, to flee back in a poor fisher's boat; which, being over loaded, had sunk all, if the Persians by casting away themselves had not saved the life of their king; the loss of which noble spirits so vexed him, that having given the steersman a golden coronet for preserving his own life, he commanded him to execution as a co-author of the death of his servants.

Ver. 12. **And Mordecai came again to the king's gate]** No whit overjoyed by his new honour, or thereby (as many would have been—a small wind bloweth up a bubble), only he conceiveth hope thereby for a better condition, and taketh every former mercy for a pledge of a future: this experience breedeth confidence. He doth not rush into the court at his return, and reach after a higher room, but came again to the king's gate, where his office was and his business lay; he took up also, as some think, his old habit again (the king's apparel and horse being restored to the right owner, he had as little delight in it as David once had of Saul's armour); but it is rather probable, saith an expositor, that he now left that off, being full of hope, that as God had heard his prayers, to bring him out of danger and to high honour; so he should now be able to help his brethren the Jews out of theirs also. Meanwhile, he doth not envy his superiors, insult over his inferiors, trouble his equals, threaten his enemies, &c., but committeth himself and all his affairs to God's good pleasure and providence; and this is the guise of a godly man, #Ps 131:1,2.

But Haman hasted to his house mourning] Or, vexed at heart, fretting within himself, that he was so very much disappointed. Merrily he made account to have gone to the queen's feast, when he had first trussed up Mordecai. Of which not only missing, but made to do him public honour in that sort, and that by his own direction, this galled him and grieved him above measure; so bladder-like is the soul of an unregenerate man, that filled with earthly vanities, though but wind, it grows great, and swells in pride; but if pricked with the least pin of piercing grief it shriveleth to nothing.

And having his head covered] With his cap pulled over his eyes, as ashamed to look any one in the face. See **#2Sa 15:30 Jer 14:4**.

Ver. 13. **And Haman told Zeresh his wife, and all his friends]** Expecting comfort and counsel from them; but they read him his destiny, and add to his grief and desperation; letting him know, that his state was such as that there was neither hope for better nor place for worse; a just hand of God upon such a hard-hearted wretch, that had plotted the ruin of so many innocents. And his wife and friends, had they done well should have reminded him of, and stirred him up to repent of his wickedness against God, the cause of his present wretchedness, to be reconciled to Mordecai, whom he and they plainly saw to be God's favourite, and now the king's also, to take down that ugly gallows, that there were no further notice taken of it, the evidence and ensign of his insufferable pride, and their unsavoury counsel, to get the decree for the Jews' massacre reversed or countermanded, &c. But not a word find we of anything this way tending. Graceless people neither have God in their heads, **#Ps 10:4**, nor hearts, **#Ps 14:1**, nor words, **#Ps 12:4**, nor ways, **#Tit 1:16**, but stand in a posture of distance, nay, defiance, walking contrary to him; and therefore he also, to cry quittance, walketh contrary to them, **#Le 16**, showing himself as froward as they for the hearts of them, **#Ps 18:26**.

Everything that had befallen him] The sad accidents of that day. Nothing now (as once, **#Es 5:11**) boasteth he to them of the glory of his riches and multitude of his children, and how the king had advanced him above all his other courtiers. Haman's crowing was now turned into crying, &c.

Then said his wise men] Wizards haply, such as he made use of when he cast Pur for a lucky day, and into whose mouths the devil might put this answer. It is his use to bring his imps into the briars, and there to leave them, as he did Saul (whose funeral sermon he preached), and Judas, Julian, Valens, and others.

And Zeresh his wife said unto him] She is noted for a prudent woman, but here she proves as cold a comforter as before she had been an evil counsellor.

If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews] A nation noted as dear to God, often delivered by him, and that had also the faculty for gaining the good will of princes, by their excellent virtues, as it had been seen in Daniel and his companions, in Jechoniah, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the whole nation, so graciously licensed by Cyrus to return into their own country. It is a good note that one gives here, 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, &c.

Thou shalt not prevail against him] But why did they not tell him this before, since they knew, as well as Haman, that Mordecai was of the seed of the Jews, and therefore advised him to prepare such a huge gallows? Surely, he that had so flattered himself deserved to be so flattered and undone by others; he that had given so evil counsel to the king against the Jews deserved by such evil counsellors to be cast into straits, and have no hand to help him out; they lead him to his bane, and there leave him, as familiars do their witches, when they have once brought them into fetters.

But shalt surely fall before him] Thus is Haman judged of all, condemned by all, and this with so great assurance of such an event, as if they had seen it. *Utique coram eo concides* Thou shalt surely fall before him, and that irrecoverably; as Eli fell, and as those idolaters are threatened, #Am 8:14. The Hebrew is, falling thou shalt fall, viz. to the lowest and utmost ebb of disgrace and misery, *προν τ αιχρισιν αλγεα πειση*.

Ver. 14. **And while they were yet talking with him]** But could not yield him one word of comfort. He hoped haply that they would

have found out for him some good occasion, some means of supplanting Mordecai, now his co-rival and counterfactionist, and of incensing the king against him, that he might build upon his ruins. But the hope of unjust men shall perish, **#Pr 11:7**, *Etiam spes valentissimo perit*, so some render it, and themselves with it. As Haman had not one to speak for him when the king frowned upon him; so here he hath not one to speak to his heart, or to shore him up, now that he is upon the fall. Those that before took crafty counsel against God's people, and consulted against his hidden ones, **#Ps 83:3**, are now at their wits' end, as seeing themselves taken as wild beasts in a snare, *δρασσομενος*, **#1Co 3:19**, "in their own craftiness," yea, they are mad for the sight of their eyes, which that day they should see, **#De 28:34**.

Came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman] Heb. and hurried and headlonged in a turbulent manner; for it may be the king and queen tarried for him. Could he have been any way excused, he had no such mind to have gone. For his stomach was full, and what if he should meet Mordecai, the new favourite, there, and see him set above him? But now it is no time to consult further with friends, or cast perils by himself. Harbonah hasteneth him, having first taken notice of the lofty gallows, and (as Josephus saith) asked of one of the servants of the house what it meant, and for whom it was prepared? See **#Es 7:9**.

Unto the banquet that Esther had prepared] That fatal feast, *Ubi manducaret quod apud inferos digereret* (August.), where his food in his bowels was turned, it became the gall of asps within him, **#Job 20:14**. Why then should any saint envy the wicked man his fed bits, his murdering morsels? is not his food sauced, his drink spiced, with the bitter wrath of God? Adonijah's feast ended in horror; the ears of his guests were filled (because their bellies had prepared deceit, **#Job 15:35**) with the sound of those trumpets, which at once proclaim Solomon's triumph and their confusion. Ever after the meal is ended comes the reckoning, but at this banquet of Esther it came before, **#Es 7:2**. And Haman sped not so well as Caesar Borgia's nobles, whom he invited to a feast, and after they had well dined, he cut off their heads.

Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **So the king and Haman came to the banquet]** Heb. To drink, for *multorum vivere est bibere*; of many, to live is to drink, and profane persons have a proverb, *Bibere et sudare est vita Cardiaci*. To drink and to sweat is the life of Cardiacus. Such are your chamber champions, whose teeth in a temperate air do beat in their heads at a cup of cold sack and sugar. Belshazzar's feast days were called *σακεαι ημεραι*, because he was quaffing in the bowls of the sanctuary, to the honour of Shac or Bacchus (Greg. Posthum.). Little did either he or Haman think, that in the fulness of their sufficiency they should be in such straits, and that every hand of the troublesome should come upon him; that when they were about to fill their bellies God should cast the fury of his wrath upon them, and rain it upon them while they were drinking, **#Job 20:22,23**. But this is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God, **#Job 20:29**. Why, then, should any saint be sick of the fret, at the prosperity of the ungodly? Surely as fishes are taken in an evil net, and as birds are caught in a snare, so are such snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them, **#Ec 9:12**. Of Esther's invitation Haman might have said, as he did of the gifts one sent him,

Munera magna quidem mittit, sed mittit in hamo. (Martial.)

But he knew not yet what evil was toward him; though I doubt not but his conscience (if not altogether dead and dedolent) began by this time to stare him in the face; his friends having already read his destiny.

Ver. 2. **And the king said again unto Esther]** He was very desirous to know what her suit was; and with thought thereof, as it may seem, could not rest the night before. He pursueth his desires, not a little edged by her delays; neither was he of those lusk, who

Remque aliquam exoptant, intahescuntque relieta.

His love to Esther made him ask again, What is thy petition, and what is thy request? &c. He presseth her to speak out; so doth God his suppliants: "Hitherto ye have asked nothing: ask, that your joy

may be full." Pray, that ye may joy; ye are not straitened in me, but in your own bowels; as if no water come by the conduit, it is not because there is none in the spring, but because the pipes are broken. {See Trapp on "Es 5:6"}

Ver. 3. **Then Esther the queen, &c.**] See #Es 5:7,8. As Abigail her family, and the woman of Abel the city, so doth Esther by her wisdom and humility deliver herself and her people, *ducem sequens lucem fidei*, a leader leading the light of faith, as one saith of her.

Let my life be given me at my petition] Heb. my soul. See how discreetly she marshalleth her words; setting these two great requests in the head of her petition, which is *simplex et non fucata*, plain and downright. Truth is like our first parents, most beautiful when naked. Our words in prayer must be *neque lecta, neque neglecta*, neither curious nor careless; but as the words of petitioners, plain and full and direct to the point. Esther reckoneth herself here among the rest of her poor countrymen, free among the dead, free of that company, and begs for her life and theirs together; because hers was even bound up in theirs. *Mortis habet vices quae trahitur vita genuitibus*; to live after their death would be a lifeless life; and hence her importunity for both together, since they were in her heart, *ad commoriendum et convivendum*, if they died she could not live. Good blood will not belie itself. Esther had not showed her kindred and people till now that she must appear for them. See the like in Moses, #Heb 11:25; in Nicodemus, that night-bird; #Joh 7:51, he speaks boldly, and silences the whole company; #Joh 19:39, he boldly beggeth the body of Jesus; neither could he any longer conceal himself. Surely, as Solomon by trial found out the true harlot mother, so doth God by hard times discover the affections of his people. Then, as Joseph could not refrain tears, so nor they the exercise of their faith and charity.

Ver. 4. **For we are sold]** *i.e.* Given up wholly into the power of the enemy, as that which a man hath bought with his money, is his own to dispose of. She refers, doubtless, to the sum proffered by Haman, #Es 3:9, not fearing the face of so potent an enemy, nor going behind his back to set him out in his colours; yea, though her discourse could not but somewhat reflect upon the king, who had given Haman his consent.

I, and my people] She makes it a common cause, and saith to her countrymen, as once David did to Abiathar, #1Sa 22:23, or as Charles V said to Julius Pestugius, who complained that he had been much wronged by the duke of Saxony, Have a little patience, thy cause shall be my cause, neither will I sit down till I have seen you some way righted. See #Es 7:3.

To be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish] These were the very words of that bloody decree which she purposely maketh use of, that he might be sensible of what he had consented to, and might see that she complained not without cause. But what a case was Haman in at the hearing of this! and how did he now repent him, but too late, of ever having a hand in so bloody a business! His iniquity was now full, and the bottle of his wickedness, filled up to the brim with those bitter waters, was even about to sink to the bottom. His gallows was finished last night, and now it groaned hard for him, that he might be destroyed, slain, and made to perish.

*- Neque enim lex iustior ulla est,
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.*

But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen] Though it had been a hard and sad condition for a queen, especially (which yet was Hecuba's case and Zenobia's), yet it would not be grievous to them to sacrifice their liberty to the service of their life: the Gibeonites were glad they might live upon any terms, #Jos 9:24,25. Masters might slay their bondservants, but that was counted a cruelty, and when one did it at Rome, he was amerced by the censor; many times they were manumitted for their good service, and came to great estates.

I had held my tongue] Silence is in some cases a crying sin. Taciturnity, I confess, is sometimes a virtue, but not at all where it tends to the betraying of a good cause, or the detriment of the labouring Church. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest," &c., #Isa 62:1. Terentius, that noble general, told Valens, the Arian emperor, that he had abandoned the victory and sent it to the enemy, by his persecuting God's people, and favouring heretics (Niceph. 1. 11, c. 40). That

was an excellent saying of Jerome to Vigilantius, *Meam iniuriam patienter tul/i, &c.*, while the wrong thou didst reach only to myself I took it patiently, but thy wickedness against God I cannot bear with; so was that of Oecolampadius to Servetus (blaming him for his sharpness to the self-same purpose). And, lastly, that of Luther in a letter to his friend Staupicius, *Inveniar sane superbus, &c.*, Let me be accounted proud, peremptory, passionate, or what men please, so that I be not found guilty of a sinful silence when called to speak for God.

Although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage] *q.d.* It is not his ten thousand talents, #Es 3:9, nor all that he is worth, and ten more such as he is, that can make up the loss that the king is sure to sustain by the slaughter of the Jews, a people painful and prayerful (this Daxius made high account of, #Ezr 6:16), useful and profitable, careful to maintain good works in St Paul's sense, #Tit 3:8, that is, such as were noted to exceed and excel others in witty inventions, to be their craftmasters, and faithful to their trust. Besides, if they be taken away, great damage shall redound to the king's revenue, by non-payment of toll, tribute, and custom, as those malignants could allege, #Ezr 4:12, a thing that princes usually are very sensible of. Or if there should be *lucrum in arca*, money in the box, yet there would be *damnum in conscientia*, damnation in the conscience, the foul blur of blood guiltiness would lie heavy, both upon the king's conscience, and his name among all nations. The Vulgate rendereth this text thus, *Nunc autem hostis noster est, cuius crudelitas reduadat in regem*. And now he is our enemy, whose cruelty reflecteth upon the king. Tremellius thus, *Sed non est hostis iste utilis, damnosus est regi*; but now this enemy is no way profitable, but to the king disadvantageous. This the king considers not, and the enemy cares not, so that he may serve his own turn, and satisfy his murderous mind.

Ver. 5. **Then the king Ahasuerus answered, &c.]** It seems he did not yet, by all that Esther had said, understand whom she meant; so high an opinion he had of Haman his minion, the only ornament and bulwark of the empire, the greatest *publicola*, and most esteemed patriot. The king, therefore, as not thinking him so near at hand, hastily asketh, He said and said (so the Heb. hath it) to the queen.

Who is he, and where is he] Who is that sirrah, he, and where is that sirrah, he? *Quis hic ipse, et ubi hic ille?* words of utmost indignation and readiness to be revenged; such as were those of Charles V emperor: If that villain were here (speaking of Farnesius, the pope's general, who had ravished certain ladies) I would kill him with mine own hand; or those of fiery Friar, who, openly in the pulpit at Antwerp, preaching to the people, wished that Luther were there, that he might tear him with his teeth (Paraei Medul. Hist. profan. Erasm. ep. 1. 16, ad obtrectat). But could this king possibly so soon forget what himself had not two months before granted to be done against Esther's people (which was with his right hand to cut off his left)? or did he not all this while know what countrywoman his beloved Esther was? and might he not expect that the Hamanists should come and take her forcibly from him to execution, by virtue of his own edict, as Daniel's adversaries had dealt by him, though Darius laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him, but could not? **#Da 6:14**; and as Stephen Gardiner and his complices attempted to do by Queen Catharine Parr, had not her husband, Henry VIII, rated them away, and graciously rescued her out of their bloody fingers?

That durst presume in his heart to do so?] Heb. Whose heart hath filled him to do so? *Cuius cor persuasit ipsi,* so Vatablus. Whose heart hath persuaded him thus to do. The devil had filled Haman's heart, sitting abroad thereon, and hatching there this horrid plot, **#Ac 5:3**. But (to do the devil right) Haman had suffered the sun (nay, many suns) to go down upon his wrath, and thereby given place to the devil, **#Eph 4:26,27**. *Nemo sibi de suo palpet* (saith an ancient), *quisque sibi Satan est*; Let no man deceive his own heart, each man is a Satan to himself; and though men bless themselves from having to do with the devil, and spit at his very name, yet they fetch not up their spittle low enough; they spit him out of their mouths, but not out of their hearts, as "being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity," **#Ro 1:29**. Haman's heart thus stuffed might well have said to him at the gallows, 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 cauldron, and that his heart spake to him out of the kettle, It is I that have

drawn thee to all this. Εγὼ σοὶ τούτων αἰτία. Those in hell cry so surely.

Ver. 6. **And Esther said]** Now she found her time to strike while the iron was hot; she therefore layeth hold upon the opportunity that God had even thrust into her hand, and laying aside all base fear, pointeth out the enemy present, and painteth him out in his proper colours. A well chosen season, saith one, is the greatest advantage of any action; which as it is seldom found in haste, so it is too often lost in delay. It is not for Queen Esther now to drive off any longer. The negligent spirit cries, *Cras, Domine*. Tomorrow thou shalt pray for me, said Pharaoh to Moses. Fools are ever futuring, *semper victuri*, as Seneca hath it, but "a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment," **#Ec 8:5**. The men of Issachar in David's days were in great account, because they had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do, and when to do it, **#1Ch 12:32**.

The adversary] Heb. The man adversary, the Lycanthropos, the man of might that distresseth us, *angustiator*; that is, our calamity; as the people of Rome once, by an elegant solecism, cried out, *Calamitas nostra Magnus est* Our distress is great, meaning of it Pompey, surnamed Magnus.

And enemy] That is, the utter enemy, that sworn swordman of Satan, the old manslayer, from whom Haman hath drawn this ancient enmity, **#Ge 3:15**.

Is this wicked Haman] *Pessimus iste*, such a most wicked one, this *homo hominum quantum est, pessimus, homo post homines natos nequissimus*, as wicked a man as goes on two legs, *Bipedum nequissimus, a merum scelus*, a man made up of mischief, a very breathing devil. Cicero telleth of one Tubulus, who was praetor a little before his time, so wicked a wretch, *ut eius nomen non hominis sed vitii esse videretur*; that his name seemed to be, not the name of a man, but of vice itself. And Josephus saith of Antipater, that his life was a very mystery of iniquity, Κακιας μυστηριον. Think the same of Haman, so portentously, so peerlessly wicked and malicious, that Esther can find no word bad enough for him, unless it be *Harang*, that naughtiest of all naughts; as St Paul could call sin no worse than by its own name, sinful sin, exceeding sinful, **#Ro**

7:13. Tiberius was rightly characterized by his tutor Theodorus Gadareus, dirt kneed with blood. Πηλος αιματι πεφυραμενος. Haman was such another, if not worse, and now he hears of it; for never till now did the man adversary hear his true title. Before some had styled him noble, others great; some magnificent, and some perhaps virtuous; only Esther gives him his own, wicked Haman. Ill deserving greatness doth in vain promise to itself a perpetuity of applause. There will be those that will deal plainly, and call a spade a spade. Thus Jeremiah dealt with Jehoiakim, and Ezekiel with Zedekiah, whom he calleth naught and polluted. Go, tell that fox, saith our Saviour, concerning Herod; and God shall smite thee, thou whited wall, saith Paul to Ananias. But what a courage had Esther to speak thus to the king, and of his favourite, and before his face! This was the work of her faith, and the fruit of her prayer.

Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen] He was amazed and amated, troubled and terrified.

Obstupuit, steteruntque comae, vox faucibus haesit (Virg.).

In the fulness of his sufficiency he fell into straits, **#Job 20:22**. So that being convinced in his own conscience that the queen's accusation was very true, and that the king knew it to be so, he had nothing to say for himself, he was even gagged, as it were, or muzzled, as **#Mt 22:12,13**, according to that of David, **#Ps 63:11**, "the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped." And again, **#Ps 12:3**, The Lord shall cut off lying lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things. Here we see how suddenly wicked ones may be cast down upon the discovery of their wickedness, in the height of their pride, in the ruff of their jollity, as was Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Herod, Haman. Surely as thunder commonly is heard when the sky seemeth most clear; so this man saw himself enveloped in a storm in one of the fairest days that ever befell him.

Ver. 7. And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath] As not able to abide the sight of such a wretch, he flings away in a chafe. This wrath of the king was to Haman a messenger of death; and so he apprehended it, as appears by that which followeth. Ashamed the king was, and vexed, that his favour and power had been so much abused, to the hazarding of the queen's

life, and the taking away of the lives of so many innocents. It troubled him also to consider how he had lost his love upon so unworthy a wretch, and trusted him with his secrets whom now he findeth treacherous, and all for his own ends. This king should first have fallen out with himself for his rashness, and then have said, as Alphonsus, that renowned king, did in a speech to the pope's ambassadors; he professed that he did not so much wonder at his courtiers' ingratitude to him, who had raised sundry of them from mean to great estates, as at his own to God. This one consideration would have cooled him better than the repeating of the Greek alphabet, or his taking a turn in the palace garden, before he passed sentence upon the delinquent. *Rex amici memor, paulisper cunctatur, deliberandique gratia modicum secessit*, saith Severus; that is, the king, mindful of the friendship that had been between him and Haman, maketh a pause, and retireth for a while, that he may deliberate with himself what to do. If these were the reasons, it was a piece of prudence in the king, for anger is known to be an evil counsellor, and as smoke in a man's eyes hindereth his sight, so doth rash anger the use of reason. Hence wise men have refrained the act when angry. Plutarch telleth of one Architas, that displeased with his servants for their sloth, he flung from them, saying, *Valete, quoniam vobis irascor* Farewell, for I am angry with you, and may not therefore meddle with you. *Vapulares, nisi irascerer*, I would pay thee, but that I am displeased at thee, said Plato to a servant of his. And of Alphonsus, king of Arragon, it is reported, that vexed at his cupbearer's stubbornness, he drew his dagger and ran after him; but before he came at him he threw away his dagger, *ne iam prehensum iratus feriret*, lest he should catch him and kill him in the heat of his anger (Val. Max. Christ. 1. 5, c. 20). This was better than Saul's casting a javelin at Jonathan, Alexander's killing of his friend Clitus and others in his drink, Herod's commanding the keepers of the prison to execution, #Ac 12:19. Whether Ahasuerus went into the garden (as Jonathan took his weapons and went into the field) to divert and mitigate his anger is uncertain. Possibly he might do that to edge and increase it. Of Tiberius it is said, that the more he meditated revenge the more did time and delay sharpen it; and the farther off he threatened, the heavier the stroke fell: *Lentus in meditando tristioribus dictis atrociora facta coniungebat* (Tacit.). Most certain it is, that Haman got little by the king's going into the

garden; for upon his return he was the more enraged, *Nempe impiis omnia ad malum cooperantur*, saith Lavater, to the wicked all things work together for the worse.

And Haman stood up to make request for his life] See what a strange turn of things here was all upon the sudden. He that was bowed unto by all men, is now upon his knees before a woman. He that was erst the professed enemy of the Jews, is suppliant to a Jewess. He that had contrived the death of that whole people, is now begging for his own life. He that had provided a gallows for Mordecai, fears nothing more now than that himself shall be hanged on it.

Discite iustitiam moniti, et non temnere sanctos.

Haman hoped that Esther would have interceded for him to the king, but there was little reason for it: a drowning man will catch hold on any twig. Esther knew him too well to befriend him so far. Let him have judgment without mercy, thinks she, who showed no mercy.

*Quisquam nec ipsum supplicem,
Quamvis iacentem sublevet. Psal. cix.*

Let him lie for me, and die according to his deserts. "A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him," #Pr 28:17; to mediate for such a one is no mercy; neither is it any alms deed, as we say; for, save a rogue from the gallows, and he will cut your throat if he can, as the proverb hath it, and experience hath confirmed it. Magnentius slew Constans, the emperor, A. D. 337, who had formerly saved his life from the soldiers' fury. Parry, the traitor, offered the like to Queen Elizabeth, who had pardoned him after that he had been condemned to die for burglary. Michael Balbus slew his master; Leo Armenius, the emperor, that same night that he had pardoned him, and released him out of prison. Those that are habituated and hardened in wickedness will not be mollified or mended by any kindness that is shown them.

For he saw that there was evil determined against him] *Vidit quod completum esset malum, rem ad restim rediisse,* he perceived himself to be altogether in as ill a condition as Judge Belknap in Richard II's time, who said there wanted but a hurdle, a horse, and a halter to have him to the place where he might have his due; where he might wear a Tyburn-tippet, as father Latimer afterwards phraseth it.

Ver. 8. **Then the king returned out of the palace garden]** Where he had either increased his choler, and cast on more fuel by plodding, or, as some think, strove to digest it, as horses do by biting on the bit.

Ut fragilis glacies occidit ira mora.

Unto the house of the banquet of wine] Called also by the Hebrew, *Bethmittoth*, the house of beds, *triclinium*; because at beds they used to sit, as we do at tables, to eat and drink. See #Es 1:6.

And Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was] He had stood up before (for he saw the queen took no felicity in his company) to make request for his life, which now was in suspense; here he falls down, either as swooning, or supplicating at the queen's feet, to beg her favour. But she very well knew that there is both a cruel mercy and a pious cruelty, and that although the sword of justice should be furbished with the oil of mercy, yet there are cases (and this was one) wherein severity ought to cast the scale; when there is no hope of curing, men must fall to cutting, *Immedicabile vulnus, &c.*

Then said the king, Will he force the queen also] Haman had little mind of any such matter, as being now in the hands of the king of terrors, and ready to be devoured by the firstborn of death, as Bildad hath it, #Job 18:13. But the angry king was willing to misinterpret him, and to take all things at the worst. It is an easy matter to find a club for a dog, to pick a quarrel where men intend a mischief. Ahasuerus was not unwilling to misconstrue the posture of Haman's body, while prostrate, he spread his arms in a vehement imploration up to the queen's bed. How oft might he have done so, and more, while he was in favour, uncensured? Actions are not the same when

the man alters. Men either judge or not judge, as their passions and affections carry them. See this #Ac 23:9. Before Paul had reveal himself to be a Pharisee, This man is not worthy to live, said they; but when he had cried out in the council, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, oh how finely do they mince the matter! Perhaps an angel hath revealed it to him, &c. Paul was an honest man then.

Impedit ira animum, ne possit cernere verum.

But though the king were unjust in judging thus amiss of Haman, yet God was righteous in measuring to him as he had meted to others, by belying and slandering so many innocents as he had designed to destruction. The devil was, and still is, first a liar, and then a murderer, he cannot murder without slandering first. But God loves to retaliate and proportion device to device, #Mic 2:1,3, frowardness to frowardness, #Ps 18:26, spoiling to spoiling, #Isa 33:1, tribulation to them that trouble his people, #2Th 1:6.

As the word went out of the king's mouth] Either the former words, or else some words of command not here related, such as are *Corripite, velate vultum*, Take him away, cover his face. And this word was to Haman the messenger of death, driving him from the light into darkness, and chasing him out of the world, #Job 18:18. Nay, worse. That Book of Job elegantly sets forth the misery of a wicked man dying, under the notion of one not only driven out of the light by devils, where he shall see nothing but his tormentors, but also made to stand upon snares or gins with iron teeth, ready to strike up and grind him to pieces, having gall poured down to his belly, with an instrument raking in his bowels, and the pains of a travailing woman upon him, and a hideous noise of horror in his ears, and a great giant with a spear running upon his neck, and a flame burning upon him round about, &c., and yet all this to hell itself is but as a prick with a pin, or a flea biting, #Job 18:18 20:15,24 15:20,21,26,30.

They covered Haman's face] In token of his irrevocable condition. See #Job 9:24 Isa 22:17. The Turks cast a black gown upon such, as they sit at supper with the Great Turk, and presently strangle them. Many of their viziers or greatest favourites die in this sort, which

makes them use this proverb, He that is greatest in office is but a statue of glass. Plutarch wittily compareth great men to counters, which now stand for a thousand pounds, and anon for a farthing.—*Sic transit gloria mundi.* so passes the glory of the world.

*Quem dies veniens vidit superbum,
Hunc dies abiens vidit iacentem.*

Haman, for instance, and so Sejanus; the same senators who accompanied him to the senate, conducted him to prison; they which sacrificed unto him as to their god, which kneeled down to adore him, scoffed at him, seeing him dragged from the temple to the jail, from supreme honour to extreme ignominy, Ludit in humanis divina potentia rebus (Pertinax Imp. fortunae pila dictus est). One reason why the king flung out of the room, and went into the palace garden, might be because he could not endure the sight of Haman any more. Wherefore upon his return they instantly covered his face. Some say the manner was, that when the king of Persia was most highly offended with any man, his face was immediately covered, to show that he was unworthy to see the sun, whom they counted their god; or to be an eye-sore to the displeased king, *Tanquam indignus qui regem oculis usurparet* just as great an indignity to see the king with their eyes. (Drus.). Among the Romans it was, *Maiestas laesa si exeunti Proconsuli meretrix non summovetur*, high treason for any strumpet to stand in the proconsuls way, whenever he came abroad. The statues of the gods were transported or covered in those places where any punishment was inflicted. That in Cicero and Livy is well known, *I lictor colliga manus, caput abnubito, arbori infelici suspendito*, Go, hangman, bind his hands, cover his face, hang him on the gallow-tree. This was their condemnatory sentence.

Ver. 9. **And Harbonah, one of the king's chamberlains, &c.]** See #Es 6:14. {See Trapp on "Es 6:14"}

Said before the king] Not a man opens his mouth to speak for Haman, but all against him. Had the cause been better, thus it would have been. Every cur is ready to fall upon the dog that he seeth worried; every man ready to pull a branch from the tree that is falling (δρυος πεσουσης πας ανηρ ξυλευεται). Cromwell had experience of this when once he fell into displeasure, by speaking

against the king's match with Lady Catherine Howard, in defence of Queen Anne, of Cleve, and discharge of his conscience, for the which he suffered death, Stephen Gardiner being the chief engineer. Had Haman's cause been like his, albeit he had found as few friends to intercede for him as Cromwell, yet he might have died with as much comfort as he did. But he died more like to the Lord Hungerford, of Hatesby, who was beheaded together with the noble Cromwell, but neither so Christianly suffering, nor so quietly dying for his offence committed against nature, viz. buggery. (sodemy?) Cromwell exhorted him to repent, and promised him mercy from God; but his heart was hardened, and so was this wicked Haman's. God, therefore, justly set off all hearts from him in his greatest necessity; and now, to add to his misery, brings another of his foul sins to light, that he might the more condignly be cut off.

Behold also the gallows, fifty cubits high] See #Es 5:14. This the queen knew not of when she petitioned against Haman. But now they all hear of it, for Haman's utter confusion.

Which he had prepared for Mordecai] At a time when the king had done him greatest honour, as preserver and near ally by marriage, as now it appeared. This must needs reflect upon the king, and be a reproach to him. Besides, the king looked upon him as one that went about either to throttle the queen (as some understand the words, #Es 7:8), or to ravish her; and this was just upon him, say some interpreters, *eo quo aliis virginibus et matronis vini intulisset*, because it was common with him to ravish other maids and matrons, and hence the king's suspicion and charge, whereof before.

Who had spoken good for the king] All is now for Mordecai, but not a word for Haman; the rising sun shall be sure to be adored. And the contrary, Sejanus's friends showed themselves most passionate against him when once the emperor frowned upon him, saying, that if Caesar had clemency, he ought to reserve it for men, and not use it towards monsters. This is courtiers' custom, *ad quamlibet auram sese inclinare*, to shift their sails to the sitting of every wind, to comply with the king which way soever he inclineth. It is better, therefore, to put trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes, #Ps

118:8,9. If Harbonah spake this out in hatred of Haman's insolence, and in favour of Mordecai's innocence and loyalty, he deserved commendation. However, God's holy hand was in it for the good of his people and overthrow of their enemy; and little did this night-sprung-mushroom Haman (that sucked the earth's fatness from far better plants than himself) take notice till now of the many hands ready to pluck him up by the roots, when the season should serve to clear the land of such weeds.

Standeth in the house of Haman] Or, by the house of Haman, that he might feed his eyes with that delightful sight, and cry out, as Hannibal did when he saw a ditch filled with man's blood, *O iucundum spectaculum*, O pleasant spectacle. The story of that king of France is well known, who vowed to see a certain martyr executed; but before that could be done had his eye put out at a joust, whereof not long after also he died. And that of Sir Ralph Ellerker, governor of Calais in King Henry VIII's time, who, at the death of Adam Damlip, martyr, called to the executioner, saying, Dispatch the knave, have done, I will not away before I see the traitor's heart out. But shortly after, in a skirmish between the French and us at Bullen, this knight was not only slain among others, but stripped, dismembered, and his heart ripped out, and so left a terrible example, saith Mr Fox, of God's justice to all bloody and merciless men. "Thou shouldest not have looked," &c., #Ob 12. See the note there.

Then the king said, Hang him thereon] The kings of Persia had absolute and unquestionable power to do whatsoever they wished, *Quicquid libuit, licuit*. All their subjects, except their queens, were no better than their slaves: whom they would they slew, and whom they would they kept alive; whom they would they set up, and whom they would they put down, #Da 5:19. Haman is here, without order of law, more than the king's command, adjudged to be hanged. The truth is, it was a clear case, and the malefactor was self condemned; hang him, therefore, saith the king; a short and just sentence, and soon executed.

10. **So they hanged Haman on the gallows]** Heb. tree. Neither hanged they him only to death; but crucified or nailed his dead body to the tree, for greater ignominy. So some gather

from **#Es 8:5**. The Septuagint also render it, So they crucified him. And here hanged the greatness of Haman, who now is fallen from the palace to the gallows, from the highest stage of honour to the lowest stair of disgrace, and lies wrapped up in the sheet of perpetual infamy. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord," &c. A like end befell Bonosus, the drunken emperor; Amasis, that insolent king of Egypt; Joan, that libidinous queen of Naples; our Roger Mortimer, that troubler of the realm, hanged at Tyburn; Oliver, that proud prefect, advanced to highest honours and offices by Louis, king of France, but hanged up by his son and successor upon a new and large gallows, set up for the purpose, and not without his desert. High places are not more uneasy than slippery. Even height itself maketh men's brains to swim, and when they fall they come down with a poise.

That he had prepared for Mordecai] Josephus hath here a very good note: *Undo mihi contigit mirari nomen Dei, et sapientiam et iustitiam eius agnoscere, &c.*, I cannot but admire the Lord's wisdom, and acknowledge his justice, in that he not only punished him for his malice to the Church, but by turning his own mischief upon himself, hath made him an example to all posterity, hanging him up in gibbets, that others may take warning. The like the Lord did by Adonibezek, Pharaoh, Goliath, Ahithophel, Absalom, Sennacherib, Maxentius, Valerianus, &c.

Quam bene dispositum terris, ut dignus iniqui

Fructus consilii primis authoribus instet, &c.

See those sacred similes to the same sense, #Ec 10:8,9 Pr 26:27 Ps 7:16, &c., and beware of making a match with mischief, lest ye have your belly full thereof, ος εν αυτω κακα τευχει ανηρ αλλω κακα τευχων (Hesiod). He that conceiveth with guile, shall (though he grow never so big) bring forth nothing but vanity and worse, #Job 15:35. As he hath sown the wind, so he shall reap the whirlwind, #Ho 8:6. {See Trapp on "Ho 8:6"} Diaboli servus et satelles praecipuus erat Haman, Haman was a servant of the devil and an accomplice in particular, saith Rupertus. Haman was a main stickler

for the devil, who had paid him accordingly: the wages of sin is death, and it may well be feared that Haman was killed with death, as Jezebel's children were, #Re 2:23. *Fuit enim homo dinae feritatis planeque αθεος*, for he was a most cruel wretch, and a plain atheist. I shall shut up the story of his life as Ambrose doth that of Ahab and Jezebel's fearful end: *Fuge ergo, dives eiusmodi exitum, &c.* Tremble at such ends, and be careful to avoid them. Such ends ye shall easily avoid if ye carefully flee such like foul and flagitious practices.

Then was the king's wrath pacified] Harbonah had helped to kindle it, #Es 7:9, and by executing Haman, whom he had accused, he now helpeth to quench it. For it was not unusual of old, that men of greatest rank and quality should execute malefactors; as Gideon did Zeba and Zalmunnah; as Samuel did Agag; as Benaiah did Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei, by the command of Solomon, *Sententiam ocyus dicto exequantur oculici* (Merl.). The holy angels delight in such an office, as at Sodom, and in Sennacherib's army; and how active shall they be at the last day, but chiefly against such as walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government, #2Pe 2:10. So shall God's wrath be pacified, as once it was at the time when Phineas, the high priest, had done execution upon that unclean couple. The saints have another way of pacifying him, of preventing his judgments, and disarming his indignation; and that is by remembering their sins, and being confounded in his presence, never opening their mouths any more, #Eze 16:63, unless it be in a humble confession, which is the Christian's best apology, as the apostle calleth it, #2Co 7:11. This will quiet God's Spirit (as the phrase is, #Zec 6:8), and cause him to say, as #Job 33:24, I have found a reconciliation. Surely, if we judge ourselves, he will not judge us, #1Co 11:31. God shall be prevented, and the accuser of the brethren put out of office; our Hamans also shall be hanged up before the sun, our sturdy corruptions crucified, and the Lord shall as little repent him of any good he hath done us as Ahasuerus did of gratifying his wife Esther, and kinsman Mordecai; who were now all the doers, seeking the wealth of Israel, and speaking peace to that whole people, as appeareth in the following chapters. As for the king, he never so much as once lamented the loss of Haman, nor said *se properantius quam prudentius egisse*, that he had been

more hasty than wise in doing him to death; but was very well pleased with what he had done; his wrath rested, saith the text, as the sea doth in a calm; it lay and slept, as the word signifieth; for anger is an eager desire of revenge, and rendereth a man restless till that be done, *Ira est libido puniendi eius qui videtur laesisse iniuria* (Cicero).

Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **On that day]** This was a festival and a good day, as **#Es 8:17**, *albo lapillo notandus*, for the many signal mercies that thereon came in together, viz. Esther's petition granted, Haman hanged, Mordecai advanced, the proscribed Jews relieved, &c. As crosses seldom come single (*Catenata piorum crux*), but trooping together commonly, and treading upon the heels of one another, like Job's messengers, **#Jas 1:2**; so do blessings from God: there is oft a continued series, a concatenation; there comes a troop, as she said, when her son Gad came, **#Ge 30:11**. God is rich in mercy, **#Ro 10:12**. Neither are we at any time constrained in him, but in our own heart.

Did the king Ahasuerus give] For into the king's hands was all Haman's estate forfeited. The Turks have a proverb, He that is greatest in office is but a statue of glass. Few of their viziers die in their beds, but are cut off at a short warning, and all they have is confiscated.

The house of Haman] *i.e.* His goods and chattels, all that glory of his riches, whereof he had so greatly boasted, **#Es 5:11**, and which he had been so many years heaping and hoarding. *Nemo confidat nimium secundis*.

The Jews' enemy] It is ill being the Church's enemy: she hath a champion that will stick to her, **#Isa 37:23**, so that her enemies shall all be found liars unto her, **#De 33:29**. Let them read their destiny in that cup of trembling, burdensome stone, hearth of fire, mentioned **#Zec 12:2,3,6**, and hear the Church's motto, *Nemo me impune lacessit*; no one provokes me with impunity, there cannot be a greater folly than to be her enemy, for she conquereth even when

conquered; as Christ overcame as well by patience as by power, *Victa tamen vinces, eversaue Troia resurges.*

Unto Esther the queen] So making good that of Solomon, **#Pr 13:22**. The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just. See **#Job 27:16,17**. Thus was that of the Canaanites for the Israelites, of Nabal for David, of the former tyrants and persecutors, for Constantine the Great, to whom the good God (saith Austin, De C. D. 1. v. c. 25) gave so much worldly wealth, *quantas optare nullus auderet*, as no man could ever have wished. That Haman was exceeding rich, appeareth by that large offer of his, **#Es 3:9**; who can tell but that he might have as much as Pope John XXII, in whose coffers were found by his heirs two hundred and fifty tons of gold, as Petrarch reporteth.

And Mordecai came before the king] As his continual attendant and special favourite, his cousin and counsellor; perhaps one of the seven mentioned **#Es 1:14**. He that hitherto sat as a servant before the king's gate is now grown so great a man all upon the sudden. It is the Lord that thus raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory, **#1Sa 2:8**. Promotion cometh neither from the east, west, nor south (where the warm sunshine is), but God is the judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another, **#Ps 75:6,7**. He advanced Jovinian and Valentinian, men of low birth, to the empire. In the year of grace 518 Justinus was first a swine herd, then a herdsman, then a carpenter, then a soldier, and lastly an emperor. Cromwell, a smith's son of Putney or thereabouts (whose mother married after to a sheerman), what a great man grew he here to be in King Henry VIII's time? Virtue exalteth the meanest, when villany tumbleth down the noblest.

For Esther had told what he was unto her] viz. Her first cousin and foster father, her friend that was as her own soul, as Moses phraseth it, **#De 13:6**, and preferreth him before brother, son, daughter, wife. His relation to Esther was as a stirrup to help him into the saddle of highest preferment.

Ver. 2. **And the king took off his ring]** As a sign of intimate friendship, and a bond of strictest league of love. That this was usual

among the Persians, is testified by Alexander. {*ab Alexandro, Lib. i. c. 26.*} Of Alexander the Great it is told, that when he died he left his ring to his dearest friend Perdiccas, but his dominions, τῷ κρατιστῷ, to the worthiest. This set up competitors, and bred much trouble. Ahasuerus knew that a worthier than Mordecai he could not easily find, and therefore besides that momentary honour he had newly done him, #Es 6:10, he now not only by this ring admitteth him into nearest friendship, but, as some think, advanceth him to be keeper of the seal, and lord chancellor of all the empire.

Which he had taken from Haman] And so degraded and exauthorized him before his execution: this is usual.

And gave it unto Mordecai] Acknowledging thereby his error in promoting so unworthy a man before; whom having punished for his deserts, he here pitcheth upon a better. *En Imperatorem valde terribilem nec minus clementem,* Behold the very emperor terrible and very little mercy, as Frederick, the elector of Saxony, said of Charles V. Let Ahasuerus be what he wishes, Almighty God is in this text set forth as bountiful to his people, and terrible to his enemies. See #Ps 34:15,16.

And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman] As her chief steward, to see that everything went right, and were put to the best. Haman's sons lived some months after this, but were outed of all. An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed, #Pr 20:21. He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor, #Pr 23:8. God will provide him both an executor and an overseer, as here he did Haman.

Ver. 3. **And Esther spake yet again]** Having sped so well before, she is encouraged to speak yet again. Heb. She added to speak before the king, *Nec his contenta Esther* (Vulg.). She had a further request, and having had so free access, and so good success, she takes the boldness to commence it. We should do so when we come before God. Prayer should be multiplied like those arrows of deliverance, #2Ki 13:18, and our suits reinforced while we speak yet again; as Abraham did in his intercession for Sodom. See, for

our encouragement, that fourfold comfortable, yet again uttered by the Lord, #Zec 1:17.

And fell down at his feet] This was a more humble posture than yet she had used; importing her lowly mind and most earnest desire, whereunto she added tears, these effectual orators (— *Nam lachrymae pondera vocis habent*) that prevail with the hardest hearts many times, and alter the strongest resolutions. Hereof we have an instance in our chronicles, which, because it somewhat suiteth with the case in this text, I will here relate: King Edward III, laying siege to Calais, they desired parley, and had this final sentence, that six of the chief burgesses should be sent to the king, bareheaded, barefooted, in their shirts, with halters about their necks, the keys of the town and castle in their hands, and submit themselves to the king's will; for the residue he was content to take to mercy. Those came, and the king commands them presently to be carried to execution, and would not on any suit be diverted, in regard, as he said of his oath, till the queen, great with child, fell on her knees before him, and with tears obtained their pardon, and had them given unto her. *Nescit Antipater?* said Alexander the Great. Knoweth not Antipater that one tear of my mother Olympias can easily wash off all his accusations of her to me?

To put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite] She doth not say to reverse the bloody decree of the king of Persia, for this might have irritated that waspish prince, and made him to have rejected her request as unreasonable, impossible. She therefore useth a great deal of commendable prudence ("I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions," #Pr 8:12), and picks out her best time, that she may set her words upon the wheels, as Solomon hath it, #Pr 25:11, and utter right words that may be forcible, #Job 6:25. Such another was Abigail, the woman of Tekoah, and the matron of Abel.

And his device that he had devised against the Jews] All the blame is laid upon Haman, who was indeed a man of wicked devices, and had taken counsel, both crafty and cruel, against God's people. Him, therefore, she maketh the only author and actor in this business, not once mentioning the king, who yet had ratified the

decree, but, by his late dealing with Haman, had sufficiently testified his utter dislike of his own act therein, and cried, Had I wist! οὐκ οὔμην.

Ver. 4. Then the king held out the golden sceptre] It appeareth by this, that she once more put her life in her hand; hazarding it for her people's safety (as Arsinoe interposed her own body between her children and the murderers sent to slay them), and so performing her promise made to Mordecai, **#Es 4:16**. God's children are all such as will not lie, **#Isa 63:8**; if they swear to their hurt, yet they dare not change, **#Ps 15:4**, dare not say and unsay, **#2Co 1:18,19**. Of many promises it may be said, as Tertullian doth to the peacock, that they are all in changeable colours; as often changed as moved. Holy Esther was none such; no more was that blessed martyr of Jesus Christ, Mr Hawkes, when in the flames remembering his promise to certain friends (to give them a sign whether the rage of the pain were tolerable), he reached up his hands burning on a light fire, and clapped them over his head three times together, to the great astonishment of the beholders, but especially to them who understood the matter.

So Esther arose, and stood before the king] Experience had bred confidence. They likewise that humble themselves under the mighty hand of God shall be exalted in due time, **#1Pe 5:6**. And as the lower the ebb the higher will be the tide; so the lower we descend in humiliation, the higher shall we ascend in exaltation.

Ver. 5. And said, If it please the king] See **#Es 5:8**. Thus, when we pray to God, we must take unto us words, and speak in a low language, as broken men. The poor speaketh supplications, **#Pr 19:28**.

And the thing seem right before the king] She taketh not upon her to prescribe, but is willing to subscribe to the king's good pleasure. Let us do so to the only wise God. **#Joh 2:8**, the mother of Christ doth not too earnestly in words press him to do that she desired, but only lays open the case, They have no wine, referring all to his discretion; so ought we in our prayers for temporal things. Socrates taught his scholars to ask no more of God but this, that he would do them good; but how, and how much, they should leave that to him, as best understanding what is best and fittest for us. Those in the

Gospel that would needs be at a certainty, and bargain with the Master of the vineyard for a penny a day, when they had their penny, they went grumbling away, that it was but a penny, #Mt 20:10-12.

And I be pleasing in his eyes] If my beauty please him, which is the best letter of recommendation to a prince, as the queen mother of France was wont to say.

Let it be written to reverse the letter] She did not request to rule the whole empire for three days, as Semiramis once did; nor to set Persepolis on fire, as Alexander the Great did, at the motion of his concubine; but that the king her husband would revoke and rescind the letters of Haman's device, that he would by new letters correct and over-rule (as the Vulgate Latin hath it) those formerly devised by Haman, that he would antiquate and abolish the plots and projects of that wicked man. And albeit this request of hers might seem to some uncivil and overly bold; yet in a case of such great consequence, wherein the glory of God, the preservation of his people, and the honour, of the king were so much concerned, she doubteth not to present and prosecute it. *Hinc igitur satis est conspicua Esterae sancta audacia*, therefore this is enough holy boldness in the eyes of Esther, saith an interpreter; such as was also that of Cranmer in the parliament house, when the Six Articles were in agitation; and that of George, marquis of Brandenburg, who professed at the imperial diet at Ausburg, *Malle se flexis ibi coram Caesare genibus, speculatori cervicem feriendam statim praebere*, that he would rather lose his head presently there in the presence of the emperor, than to yield his assent to the Popish Interim (Scultet. Annal.).

Ver. 6. **For how can I endure to see the evil, &c.]** She had her life already given her at her petition; but unless she might have her people at her request, who were sold as well as herself, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish, #Es 7:3,4, her life would be unto her a joyless, that is, a lifeless life, *Mortis enim habet vices quae trahitur vita gemitibus*. It is rather a death than a life that is spent in heaviness and horror. And this would be Esther's case if her people should be massacred, as was designed and decreed; such was her holy sympathy and endeared affection to her countrymen and

fellow citizens of heaven, that she could not live to behold such a sad and bloody spectacle:

Absit ut excisa possim super vivere Troia,

said Anchises to his son Æneas, that would have saved his life in that common destruction of his country: Far be it from me to outlive Troy. Curtius telleth us, that Alexander the Great, when he was extremely thirsty, and had water offered to him, he would not receive it, but put it by with this brave speech, *Nec solus bibere sustineo, nec tam exiguum dividere omnibus possum*, There is not enough for all my soldiers to share with me, and to drink it alone I cannot find in my heart, I will never do it. Compare herewith this speech of Esther, and you will find it far the better, as being full of those precious graces (whereunto Alexander was a perfect stranger), humility, prudence, faith, zeal toward God, and ardent love toward his people. Oh how great is the number of those today (saith Lavater here), *qui ne micam Spiritus Estherae habent*, who have not the least parcel of Esther's spirit, but are all for themselves, and for their own interests!

Or how can I endure to see] Heb. *Quomodo potero et videbo?* How can I? and shall I see? how should I do otherwise than sink at the sight (as she did in the Roman History, when her son was butchered; and as the Virgin Mary felt a sword at her heart when she beheld Christ crucified, #**Lu 2:35**). Melancthon said, that good Oecolampadius died of grief for the Church's calamities. Nehemiah was heart sick for the breaches of Joseph, #**Neh 2:3 Am 6:6**. Moses wished himself expunged, and Paul accursed, rather than it should go ill with God's people.

Ver. 7. **Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther, &c.]** Here Haman's letters of Mark are reversed by Ahasuerus, whose answer to Esther is full of gentleness and sweetness; but yet such as discovereth a mind perplexed, and cast into straits, as princes oftsoons are by the subtilties and malice of wicked counsellors, #**Da 6:15**, so that they cannot do as they would, unless they will bring all into a combustion; though usually where the word of a king is there is power, #**Ec 7:4**; and the old lord treasurer, Burleigh, was wont to say, that he knew not what an act of parliament could not do in

England; and King James, in his speech in the Star chamber, A.D. 1616, said as much.

Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman] *i.e.* I have done somewhat toward the performance of my promise made to Esther, #Es 7:2, and more I am willing to do, only I must observe good order, and do things with discretion. Behold, I give you *potestatem plenariam et omnimodam*, all the power I have, that therewith you may help yourselves, only my former decree I cannot reverse, but I shall stir up great garboils in the kingdom. Josephus indeed telleth us, that Ahasuerus did retract the edict procured by Haman, and further, gave power to the Jews, that if any withstood the king's will herein they should kill them, &c. But we are not bound to believe him in all things; as neither Herodotus, Livy, nor any of the historians (the sacred always excepted), for Vopiscus, who was one of them, confesseth, *neminem historicorum non aliquid esse mentiturn*, that there is none of them that hath not taken liberty to lie more or less (in Vita Aureliani), and it is manifest that Josephus's manner is to recite what he thinks likely to have been done, and what is fit to be written of such a business. *Baronius annales facit non scribit*, saith one: think the same of Josephus, he rather maketh a history, sometimes, than writeth it. And therefore that is but a sorry excuse that the Papists make for their sacrilegious forbidding the people to read the Scriptures, when they refer them to Josephus, as having the history of the Bible more largely and plainly described.

Because he laid his hand upon the Jews] He did it because he designed it. Like as Balak also arose and fought with Israel, #Jos 24:9, and yet the story saith nothing so. But that is in Scripture said to be done that is intended or attempted. And this the heathen also saw by the dim light of nature. Hence that of Seneca, *Fecit quisque quantum voluit*. He made anyone as great as he wished. And another saith,

Quae quia non licuit, non facit, illa facit.

Polybius attributeth the death of Antiochus to his sacrilege only in his purpose and will. This Josephus thinks could not be, *sc.* that a man having a purpose only to sin should be punished by God for it.

Hence he derideth Polybius for the forecited censure; but he had no cause so to do, for the heathens herein exceeded the Pharisees, who held thought free, and Josephus was soured with their leaven.

Ver. 8. Write ye also for the Jews] Here was one syngram, or authoritative writing, crossing another. What could the people think of this, but that crowns have their cares, and it were a wonder if great persons, in the multitude of their distractions, should not let fall some incongruities. We must not think, saith Lavater here, if princes or states command things different from one another, that it proceedeth from lightness of mind; but that they make laws and set forth edicts according to the state and necessity of the times, and as the public good requireth. In the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign here (when men's minds differed concerning religion, and reformation could not safely be wrought at once) it was by one and the same proclamation commanded, that no man should speak irreverently of the sacrament of the altar, and both kinds were permitted in the administration. Religion was changed without commotion by degrees; after that the Romish superstition had stood a whole month and more, after the death of Queen Mary, as afore. The sacrifice of the mass was not abolished till half a year later; nor images cast out of churches till two months after that. Here, then, let St James's counsel take place. "Be swift to hear, slow to speak"; to speak evil of governors when they answer not our expectations, but seem to command contradictories. There are certain *Arcana imperii*, secrets of state, that most men understand not; and must therefore dedicate them to victory, as the Romans did that lake the depth whereof they could not fathom nor find out. Besides, we must know that there will be faults so long as there be men, and faults will slip between the best men's fingers; as Bishop Jewel was wont to say. And as we endure with patience a barren year if it happen, and unseasonable weather; so must we tolerate the imperfections of rulers, and quietly expect either reformation or alteration.

As it liketh you] Having been so lately deceived in Haman, and by him miscarried to the ratifying of that bloody edict, he will no more trust his own judgment, but refers the managing of the Jews' deliverance (which now he greatly desired) to their prudence, discretion, and faithfulness. Few kings would have yielded to have retracted, lest they should thereby seem light and inconstant, and

confess themselves to have been in an error. Hence, right or wrong, their laws must stand; and if any demand a reason, *Sic volo, sic iubeo*, So I wish, so I order, must stop his mouth; and *Quod ego volo pro Canone sit*, Let my will be your reason and rule, as Constantius said to the orthodox bishops, refusing to communicate with the Arians. But God, who tameth the fiercest creatures, had, for his poor people's sake, brought Ahasuerus to a better bent; so that rather than contract the stain and sting of such barbarous cruelty, he will run the hazard of being accounted inconstant; and not care though a *Retraxit* Retraction be entered against him; as is usually against the plaintiff when he cometh into the court where his plea is, and saith he will not proceed.

In the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring] He was well persuaded of their fidelity, piety, and prudence. Otherwise it had been too great a weakness in this prince (who had been so lately abused by Haman) to have trusted his whole power in the hands of strangers. But natural conscience cannot but stoop to the image of God, wheresoever it meeteth therewith, and have high thoughts of such, as Pharaoh had of Joseph, Nebuchadnezzar of those three worthies, Darius of Daniel, &c. Surely, when men see in the saints that which is above ordinary, or beyond their expectations, they are afraid of the name of God which is called upon by them, **#De 28:10**, and will intrust them more than any other whatsoever. It is a problem in Aristotle, why man is credited more than other creatures? The answer is, *οτι θεους νομιζει μονον*, because he alone reverenceth God, therefore you may trust him: honesty floweth from piety.

For the writing which is written in the king's name, &c.] Therefore you must not take it amiss that I reverse not Haman's letters; for I also am under a law (whatever my predecessor Cambyses held to the contrary), neither need you doubt but that what you write in my name and sign with my seal will be authentic, and pass for a current countermand, fear it not.

Ver. 9. **Then were the king's scribes called]** This verse is noted to be the longest in all the Bible. It was Robert Stevens, the printer (I think), that first distinguished the chapters by verses; and this he hath done not so well in some places as were to be wished. These

scribes were as ready at Mordecai's call as before they had been at Haman's, #Es 3:12, neither cared they much what they wrote, so that they might be sure it was the king's pleasure they should do it. As for their religion, it may seem to be the same with that of Gallio, the proconsul, #Ac 18:17, a mere irreligion, their motto, *Mihi placet quicquid Regi placet*, Whatsoever pleaseth the king shall please me; and if their hearts could be ripped up, there would be found written therein, The god of this present world.

At that time] As soon as the word was out of the king's mouth; delay might have bred danger. *Habent aulae suum cito, cito.* Courtiers are quick of despatch, as they carefully observe their *mollissima fandi tempera*, so when once they have got a grant they lose no time, they know that opportunities are headlong, and once lost irrecoverable. Hannibal, when he could have taken Rome, would not; when he would, could not. *Vincere scis Hannibal victoria uti nescis*, said one to him (Plutarch). Mordecai made use of the present, the nick of time. Esther could tell him, by experience, that a well chosen season is the greatest advantage of an action, which, as it is seldom found in haste, so it is too often lost in delay. It is not for Mordecai to drive off any longer, the whole Church was in heaviness, and needed comfort; and some might be slain ere notice came to the contrary. *Ad opera brevis hora ferendam est* (Ovid. Metam. 1. 4).

In the third month] Two months and more the poor Jews lay under the sentence of death, in a forlorn condition. God loves to help such as are forsaken from their hopes, to help at a dead lift, to comfort the abject, #2Co 7:6. Though Jacob be a worm, yet God will not crush him, but cherish him. And "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion whom no man seeketh after," #Jer 30:17. The seasonableness of God's mercies doth much commend them. These poor wretches cried, and the Lord heard them, and saved them out of all their troubles, #Ps 34:6.

This is the month Sivan] That is, May, when all things are in their prime and pride, and the earth checkered and entrained with variety, of flowers, and God is seen to be *Magnus in minimis*, great in the

smallest creatures. Then did the Sun of righteousness arise to these afflicted exiles, with healing in his wings, #**Mal 4:2** like as the sunbeams did to the dry and cold earth, calling out the herbs and flowers, and healing those deformities that winter had brought upon it.

On the three and twentieth day thereof] The precise time is thus noted, not only to set forth the certainty and truth of the history, but also to let us see what was the present state of the Church, and what is God's usual dispensation and dealing with his people. For two months and more they were in a very low, and as it might seem, a lost condition. Now they have eight months' opportunity to breath and prepare themselves to their just and lawful defence yet they are not without various difficulties and discouragements, until God had given them a full and final victory over their enemies. The saints' prosperity here, like checker-work, is interwoven with fears and crosses. They must not look for a perpetual serenity till they come to heaven. I shall die in my nest, said Job; I shall never be moved, saith David. How apt are the holiest to be proud and secure, to settle upon their lees, unless God pour them from vessel to vessel! This the wise God well knoweth, and therefore exerciseth them with interchanges. See the circle that he goeth in with his Davids, #**Ps 30:5-10**, and reckon upon this, that if our sorrows be long, they are light, if sharper, the shorter; as thunder, the more violent, the less permanent.

FleBILE principium melior fortuna sequetur.

Tears first followed by better fortune.

And it was written according to all that Moredecai commanded] Had he not been a man of singular parts he had not been fit for such a service. It could not otherwise be, but that many eyes were upon him, and some evil eyes, that would more curiously pry into his proceedings than Laban once did into Jacob's stuff. It behoved him, therefore, to look to his behaviour, and to weigh well his words in dictating such a ticklish edict as this to the king's secretaries. But God, who had called him to this high employment, did likewise gift him for it. He was with his mouth (as once with Moses, #**Ex 4:11**),

and taught him what he should say. There is no mouth into which God cannot put fit words: and how oft doth he choose the weak and unwise to confound the learned and mighty, as he did Balaam's ass to convince his master!

Unto the Jews] To them first, because they were in their deepest dumps, and stood in need of comfort. Go, tell my disciples and Peter; let him know with the first that I am risen, for he is in greatest heaviness.

And to the lieutenants, and the deputies, &c.] That they might know that the king's mind was altered, and that the Jews were now to be favoured and furthered in their just and necessary defence. The equity of this edict, so opposite to the former, they were not to dispute but to despatch. To argue or debate the business were presumption, proud curiosity; to search the reason thereof, to detract or disobey, high offence, equal to rebellion.

Unto every province according to the writing thereof] In their several characters, and manner of writing. The China and Japan writing is from the right hand to the left, but with the lines down the leaf, not crossing, &c.

And unto every people after their language] The whole earth was once of one language, lip, and speech, **#Ge 11:1**. This was the Hebrew tongue, called the Jews' language here, and more plainly, **#Isa 36:11** (though some fond men have given the seniority to other languages, many ages younger than the Hebrew). Ever since the building of Babel languages were confounded, and thereby a great labour laid upon the sons of men. The Hebrew doctors say, that thenceforth for one tongue there were seventy-two languages. Others think there were as many tongues as several kindreds and families; and these have multiplied also since that time exceedingly. It was Mordecai's care here, that all nations under the Persian dominion might have the king's edict in their various dialects, that so none might plead ignorance. It should be the magistrate's care that their people have the law of God, the Holy Scriptures, in a known language, since the ignorance thereof is destructive to the soul. This the pope denieth to those misled and muzzled souls, that

are fast locked up in his dark dungeon; and giveth this bald reason, *Ne sacra verba vilescerent*, lest those holy words should be undervalued, and become too cheap. This is good Turkism; the Mahometans read their Koran (which is their Bible) in the Arabic (which is their learned) tongue, lest, if translated, it should be profaned by the vulgar.

Ver. 10. And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus's name] For he knew that "where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?" **#Ec 8:4**; see **#Da 5:19**. Mordecai, as he was careful not to abuse his authority, so he spareth not to improve it to the utmost for the Church's good. We may also lawfully and comfortably improve the benefits and privileges granted us by princes and other benefactors. Constantine's donation and Peter's patrimony is much boasted of by that antichrist of Rome. A mere fiction, as various learned men of their own side have proved (Cusanus, Ficinus, Volater, Otho Frising). But if it were never so true, what power had Constantine to give away and alienate such a considerable part of the empire (might he not well have been therefore called Pupillus, as he was in scorn by some heathen historians for his bounty to poor Christians)? or with what conscience could the bishop of Rome have accepted of such a gift, and left it to his successors. But it was neither so nor so. Not Constantine, but Pepin, enlarged the pope's territories; as not Peter, but Phocas, is the right craggy rock upon which is founded the pope's supremacy.

And sealed it with the king's ring] See **#Es 3:12**, and observe what a strange turn of things here was all on the sudden. Merlin from this clause gathereth, that the king perused and approved whatsoever the scribes wrote by the appointment of Mordecai, he saw it, and signed it.

And sent letters by posts] See **#Es 3:15**. That was a witty speech of him, who said of secretaries that pretend much to Scripture: they were like posts, that bring truth in their letters and lies in their mouths. And of another, that they do *angariare*, make posts of the Holy Scriptures; compelling them to go two miles, which of themselves would go but one.

And riders on mules] Which are counted swifter than horses, and yet a horse is so swift a creature, that the Argives consecrated a horse to the sun, as the swiftest beast to the swiftest planet, *Equitantes in equis angariis* riding on the public couriers horse (Tremel.), Ο ταχιστος τω ταχυτατω.

Camels] These were large strong beasts, that could endure long and hard travel. It is said of them, that they do drink, *in praesens et in posterum*, for the present and the future, and can hold out travelling three days together without food.

And young dromedaries] These were also swift beasts, #**Jer 2:23**, and therefore it is by antiphrasis that among us a slow person is called a dromedary, *Ut lucus a non lucendo, bellum quasi minime bellum*.

Ver. 11. **Wherein the king granted the Jews]** The slaughter, therefore, that they made of their enemies was not unlawful; because, 1. They were armed with authority. 2. In their own necessary defence.

To gather themselves together] Which till now they might not do, lest it should seem a riot or rebellion. Conquerors use to disarm and disperse those whom they have vanquished, *ut sit*

Una salus victis, nullam spirare salutem,

that they may not make headway and shake off the yoke.

And to stand for their life] Life is a precious mercy, such as all creatures make much of, from the highest angel to the lowest worm. See the sweetness of it, #**1Ki 20:32 Jer 39:18 45:5 Ec 9:4**

Job

2:4. *Quis vitam non vult? Who does not wish life? saith Austin.* Joseph is yet alive, saith Jacob, #**Ge 45:26**. This was more joy to

him than all his honour. A man is bound to sacrifice all he hath to the service of his life, and to die in the defence of it; to kill another rather than to be killed by another. If it be the defence of a man's own life which the king himself attempteth, violently and

iniuriously, to take away, in such a case ordinarily it shall be lawful for a subject to defend himself, although the death of the prince follow thereupon, saith Suarez. In the defence of himself and his friends, it may be lawful for a private person to lay hands upon his lawful prince that setteth upon him without cause, saith another casuist. Only such an act as this must not proceed out of hatred or desire of revenge, but out of right self-love and pure necessity; *adhibita magna inculpatæ tutelæ moderatione*, as the lawyers call it, using great moderation of harmless defence.

To destroy, and to slay, and to cause to perish] Mordecai maketh use of the selfsame terms that Haman had done, **#Es 3:13**, that all men might know that his commission was altogether as large as the others, and that they would *vim vi repellere*, force to repell force, stand upon their guard, slay all such as should seek their lives, and fight stoutly, *pro aris et soris*. for the altars and their limbs. This, saith Cicero, is *Lex non scripta sed nata; ad quam non docti, sed facti; non iustituti, sed imbuti sumus, &c.*, *Law is not written but born, at someone, not taught, but done, not established but absorbed, that which uncorrupted nature teacheth every man (Cic. pro Milone).*

Both little ones and women] *This seemeth spoken in terrorem*, in fear that the enemy might forbear to meddle, if not for their own sakes, yet for their wives and children, whom many hold more dear to themselves than their own lives. But the text may be better read thus: To destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish all the power of the people and province that would assault them, their little ones and women.

And to take the spoil of them for a prey] This also would work much with those that had estates to lose: for money is the monarch of this present world; and many had as leave part with their blood as their goods.

Ver. 12. **Upon one day in all the provinces, &c.]** That once fatal day, but henceforth (the brunt once past) festival. That long-looked-

for day, wherein the enemy hoped to revel in the Church's ruins; to frame comedies out of her tragedies; to wash their feet in her blood, yea, to ride their horses up to the saddle skirts therein, as Farnesius, the pope's champion, threatened to do in Germany, and Minerius in France, and the Papists here in England, at the death of Queen Elizabeth, and again upon the good success of the gunpowder plot, that great crack and black day, as they called it. For the speeding and furthering whereof, they had a devilish ditty, consisting of a seven-fold psalmody, which secretly they passed from hand to hand with tunes set to be sung for the cheering up of their wicked hearts with an expectation (as they called it) of their day of Jubilee. This is one passage therein, Confirm your hearts with hope, for the day of your redemption is not far off. The year of visitation draweth to an end, and jubilation is at hand, &c. (Spec. Bell. Sacr. xx. 2). The psalter is hard to be had, for they are taken up by the Papists, as other books be that discover their shame. But do what they can, shame shall be the promotion of fools (as it was of Haman), but the wise (as Mordecai) shall inherit glory, **#Pr 3:35**.

Ver. 13. **The copy of the writing**] Transcripts of the original were everywhere published and proclaimed, as the contrary edict had been before, **#Es 3:14**. This must needs amuse and amaze the people, but who durst say to their monarch, What doest thou? Is it safe to take a lion by the beard, or a bear by the tooth?

That the Jews should be ready against that day] God sometimes taketh notice (in his vindictive justice), as of the offending member, **#Jud 1:6,7 Lu 16:24**, so of the place where, **#1Ki 21:19** (Henry III of France was stabbed to death in that very chamber where he had contrived the Massacre of Paris), and of the time when, mischief should have been acted, to prevent and punish it, as **#Ex 15:9,10**. Ladislaus, king of Bohemia and Hungary, having conspired with other Popish princes to root out the true Christians in Bohemia, on such a day, on his marriage day, was immediately before, in the midst of his great, preparations, visited with a pestilent sore in his groin, whereof within thirty-six hours he died (Mr Clark's Examples). Henry II, king of France, the selfsame day that he had purposed to persecute the Church, and burn certain of his guard whom he had in prison for religion (at whose execution he had promised to have been himself in person), in the midst of his

triumph, at a tourney, was wounded so sore in the head with a spear, by one of his own subjects, that ere long he died (Acts & Mon. 1784). The duke of Guise threatened to destroy utterly the town of Orleans, but was himself slain that very evening. The constable of France made a vow, that as soon as he had taken St Quintons he would set upon Geneva; but sped as ill as Julian the apostate did, when going against the Persians, he swore that upon his return he would offer the blood of Christians. But the Galilean (as he called Christ in scorn) took an order with him ere that day came; the carpenter's son had made ready his coffin; as was foretold him by a Christian, in answer to that bitter jeer.

To avenge themselves on their enemies] This was no private revenge, but licensed by the chief magistrates, intrusted by God with the administration of his kingdom upon earth, by the exercise of vindictive and remunerative justice, **#Ro 13:4**. And here, *Bonis nocet qui malis parcit*. He wrongeth the good that punisheth not the bad. True it is, that private revenge is utterly unlawful unless it be in a man's own necessary defence, where the case is so sudden that a man cannot call in the help of the magistrate, but must either kill or be killed. Otherwise that of Lactantius holdeth true, *Non minus mali est iniuriam referre quam inferre*. It is no lesser evil to pay back a wrong than to inflict it. And that of Seneca, *immune verbum est ultio*, revenge is a cruel word, manhood some call it, but it is rather doghood. The manlier any man is the milder and more merciful, as David, **#2Sa 1:12**, and Julius Caesar, who when he had Pompey's head presented to him, wept and said, *Non mihi placet vindicta sed victoria*, I seek not revenge, but victory. The Jews here sought not revenge, but safety. If they had been sold for bondmen, they had borne it in silence and sufferance, the language of the lamb, dumb before the shearer, **#Es 7:4**.

Ver. 14. So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out] Thus God provided that his poor afflicted should be speedily comforted, and assured that their prayers were accepted; when this good news came flying toward them, as on the wings of the wind, over the mountains of Bether, all lets and impediments. Thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words, saith the angel to Daniel, **#Da 10:12**; yea, as these posts were hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment, so was the angel Gabriel caused to fly swiftly,

#Da 9:21, or as the Hebrew hath it, with weariness of flight, to bring the prophet an answer to his prayers. Who would not then pray to such a God as maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flame of fire, to convey seasonable relief to his poor suppliants?

being hastened] Heb. Frighted and head-longed, by a solicitous celerity, hasting and hurrying for life, as we say; being driven on to a despatch with utmost expedition, they threw themselves onward their way, as the second word here used importeth.

And the decree was given at Shushan the palace] So had the former decree against the Jews been, **#Es 3:15**; the post also hastened, as now. There is no doubt but many disaffected persons would jeer at this last decree, as extorted from the king by the queen's importunity; and would persuade themselves and others that the king was of the same mind as before, to have the Jews rooted out; only to give his wife content he had set forth this counter edict, which they would not take notice of. Thus those that are ripe for ruin harden their own hearts, and hasten their own destruction.

Ver. 15. **And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king]** Whither he went is not set down. It is probable he either went to Haman's house, the oversight whereof was committed to him by Esther, or that he went to some other parts of the city, upon the public employment, whereof now he had his hands full; and, therefore, all his faculties were in motion, and every motion seemed a well guided action, as one saith well of Queen Elizabeth, when she first came to the crown.

In royal apparel] Suitable to his new condition. This he might lawfully do, no doubt, as did Joseph, Daniel, Solomon. Generally those that are in king's houses are clothed in softs, and go gorgeously. There is indeed a blame worthy excess herein, **#Zep 1:8 Isa 3:18**. Alcisthenes's costly cloak, prized at one hundred and twenty talents; Demetrius, king of Macedonia's, robe of state, which none of his successors would wear, *propter invidiosam impendii magnificentiam* on account of their hatred of its expensive magnificance. (Athenaeus); Herod's cloth of silver, which, by refraction of the sunbeams upon it, gave such a splendour, that the foolish people for that, and for his speech, cried him up for a god.

Good Mordecai thought never a whit the better of himself for his gay clothing; neither did his heart rise with his clothes, as the boat doth with the water that carrieth it. He affecteth not this change, but rather accepteth it; he endureth it rather than desireth it. Sheep's russet {*A coarse homespun woollen cloth of a reddish-brown, grey or neutral colour, formerly used for the dress of peasants and country-folk*} would please him every whit as well as cloth of tissue, but that the king will have it so; and being now the second man in the kingdom, he must go accordingly, lest he should be slighted, as Agesilaus, king of Sparta, was by the Persians for his overly plain habit. *Vestis virum facit*, a man is esteemed as he is arrayed: *cultusque concessus atque magnificus*, comely and costly attire addeth authority, as Quintilian long since observed.

And with a great crown of gold] We read not that Haman had any such. It may be the king had bestowed it upon Mordecai as a special favour, for having saved his life, #Es 2:19-21. Sure it is that he gave it to him for a better cause than Alexander the Great did his crown of one hundred and eighty pounds, provided by him at a great supper, and promised to him that should drink most. Mordecai had his temporal crown upon far better terms, and yet looked for a more weighty one in heaven, #2Co 4:17, even such a weight of glory, as that if the body were not by the power of God upheld, it were impossible it should bear it.

And with a garment of fine linen] Or of silk, which was anciently sold for its weight in gold, as Pliny testifieth. This rich glutton is taxed for the too frequent use of it, #Lu 16:19. It was his every day's wear, as the Greek word importeth (*ενεδιδυσκετο*. Verb, *frequentativum*).

And purple] This was also much worn by great ones of old. Dives was daily clothed with it, and was so far from cloaking his pride, that he proclaimed it in his cloak. This purple colour was made, saith Lavater here, of the juice or blood of a certain shell-fish. Now, they say, there is no right purple. Perhaps, when the four monarchies ceased, purple ceased with them.

And the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad] At one time they were in perplexity, #Es 3:5, now in jollity. "Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." The joyful Jews there by way of antiphony answer, "The Lord hath indeed done great things for us; whereof we are glad," #Ps 126:2,3. Tremellius, after Eben Ezra, rendereth it, And the city of Shushan shone (*lucebat*); the lily was now most lovely and lightsome. The word signifieth properly *hinnivit*, neighed as a horse; which he doeth not but when he is well pleased. The whole city was well apaid, but the poor Jews were overjoyed; so that their mouth was filled with laughter and their tongue with singing; this is the import of the metaphor here used.

Ver. 16. **The Jews had light and gladness]** "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun," #Ec 11:7. Such as have been long shut up in a dark dungeon, as Joseph, will surely say so. These Jews had for two months and more lain buried alive, as it were, in heaviness and horror, they walked in the very vale of the shadow of death, the darkest side of death; death, in its most hideous and horrid representations, stared them in the face.

Luctus ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago (Virg.).

Their motto at the best was that of the city of Geneva out of Job, *Post tenebras spero lucem*, after darkness we have some faint hopes of life. But now it was otherwise with them. Light was risen to these righteous, and joy to these upright in heart. *Iudaeis fuit lux et laetitia* (or, as Tremellius rendereth it, *illustris laetitia*, famous gladness), *gaudium et gloria*, unspeakable joy and full of glory, as St Peter phraseth it, an exuberancy of spiritual joy and inward comfort, fitter to be believed than possible to be discoursed. For we may not think, that the joy and gladness here mentioned was no more than that of profane and carnal people, upon the receipt of some special mercy, or signal deliverance. They rejoice (harlot-like) in the gift, but not in the giver; they nibble upon the shell, but taste not of the kernel. The joy that these Jews had was the fruit of fasting and prayer, according to that of our Saviour, Ask, that your joy may be full; pray, that ye may joy. The fountain of it was the light of God's loving countenance; it was φεγγος σωτηριον, as Josephus hath it here, a salvifical light. The matter of it was the happy change

of their late lamentable condition; and this as a pledge of that light of life eternal, see **#Ps 23:5,6**, the end of it was a testification of their hearty thankfulness to God for his inconceivable loving kindness, a breaking forth into those or the like words of the psalmist, "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death," **#Ps 68:19,20**.

And gladness] Habitual joy, solid and substantial. *Crede mihi, res severa est, gaudium verum.* Believe me, saith Seneca, true joy is a severe and solid business, that few men are acquainted with. It is indeed the just man's jewel, such as the stranger may not meddle with, **#Pr 14:13**, he is flatly forbidden it, **#Ho 9:1**. The wicked man's joy is of another alloy than that of the righteous. The light of a candle is fed with stinking tallow, but the light of the sun hath influence from heaven to feed it, and therefore is not so soon blown out. Like as together with manna there fell a dew, so together with temporal mercies and deliverances there is a secret influence of God to a spiritual heart, as there was to these good Jews, and thence their so well-rooted gladness. It was such as did not only wet the mouth, but warm the heart, smooth the brow, but fill the breast; it was more inward, as the windows of Solomon's temple were wider within than without. Whereas, on the contrary, the wicked's joy is but in the face only, and not in the heart, **#2Co 5:12**, it is but the hypocrisy of mirth, like a counterfeit complexion. It is but a cold armful, *φυρρον παραγκυλισμα*, as Lycophron said of an ill wife; or, as Lamech's second wife's name was Zillah, that is, the shadow of a wife, so is this the shadow of gladness, the substance is wanting.

And honour] Heb. weight, account, esteem. The poor Jews, formerly slighted, were now highly honoured; *chari et rari*, as **#Isa 43:4**, bright and glorious, as the word signifieth, **#Job 31:26**, precious and ponderous, so that their name was much set by, as **#1Sa 18:30**. This was the Lord's own work, for it is he that gives credit, and fashioneth men's opinions; he, besides wisdom, gave Solomon honour.

Ver. 17. **And in every province, and in every city]** Not at Shushan only, where it began, but throughout the whole empire there was a

general joy among the Jews. For albeit the worst was not yet past with them, but the thirteenth of Adar is meant still by Haman's abettors to be a bloody day (and this the Jews knew well enough, and therefore prepared for the encounter, so that they could not be without their fears and anxieties), yet the joy of the Lord was their strength. "Their hopes and prayers were like those of David," #Ps 138:8, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth us: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the work of thine own hands."

The Jews had joy and gladness] *Gaudium in re, gaudium in spe; gaudium de possessione gaudium de promissione; gaudium de praesenti exhibitione, gaudium de futura expectatione* joy in matter, joy in hope, joy about the possession, joy about promise, joy in outworking of the present, joy about the future providence. (Bern.). The Persians might revel, but the Jews only rejoiced; {**See Trapp on "Es 8:16"**}

A feast and a good day] *Convivium et hilaria*, a comotation and a merry meeting, such as the saints have here, in their foretastes of eternal life, those sweetmeats of the feast of a good conscience (so Mr Latimer called the assurance of heaven), which they have here, before they come to that full feast above. This feast and good day here mentioned was but a preparation unto that in the following chapter, when the warfare was accomplished, and all fears removed, and God said, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, &c.

And many of the people of the land became Jews] That is, they were proselyted, professing the Jewish religion, and siding with them; some in sincerity, doubtless, and some out of sinisterity, and for self-respect, because they saw the king favoured them, the queen and Mordecai were altogether of them and for them, &c.

Mobile sic sequitur fortunae lumina vulgus (Ovid. Trist. 1. 1).

So the common people quickly follow the light of fortune. So that mixed multitude, #Ex 12:38, moved with miracles, removed out of Egypt with the Israelites, took hold of the skirts of these Jews, and said, "We will go with you," #Zec 8:23. So in David's days, while

he dealt prudently and prospered, so that he became the head of the heathen, a people whom he had not known offered him their service, and strangers feignedly submitted themselves unto him, #Ps 18:43,44. The like they did in Solomon's days, as Josephus relateth; as also, that the people then were very careful how they received such *Prosperity Proselytes*. So, many strangers followed the captives returning out of Babylon, under the conduct of Zorobabel; and many heathens joined themselves to the Christian congregations, under Constantine, the first Christian emperor. The Huns, well beaten by the Christians, concluded that their God was the true God, and received the gospel. Thus, whether it be "in pretence or in truth" (as St Paul hath it), that people come in, God is glorified and his Church amplified, and the saints therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice, #Php 1:18.

For the fear of the Jews fell upon them] So that either for love or fear they conformed to the Jewish way of worship, or at least they forbore to attempt against them, whom now they looked upon as heaven's darlings. Whether Ahasuerus himself were drawn by the faith and piety of Esther and Mordecai to embrace the true religion, is not expressed. It is hard for princes drowned in delights to deny themselves, and to yield the obedience of faith. The poor receive the gospel, #Mt 11:5, the smaller fishes bite soonest; the lamb and the dove were offered up in sacrifice, not the lion and the eagle; "Not many mighty, not many noble, are called," #1Co 1:26. That this king was not converted we know not. However, we have ground to beleive that Xerxes his son was not, when as, after this, we read that in his expedition into Greece, he was angry with mountains, winds, rivers, elements, no otherwise than as if they had been men, causing the sea to be beaten with three hundred stripes for battering his bridge of boats, and casting a pair of fetters into it, to make it know to whom it was subject. Let him be what he will, God made use of him for the good of his people, and so overawed the malignant Persians, that they had (very many of them) no mind to meddle.

Chapter 9

Ver. 1. **Now in the twelfth month, &c.]** That lucky time, as Haman had deemed it, but was deluded by the devil (the author of all such arts and lots of divination, to foretell future arbitrary events) *qui*

etsi semel videatur verax, millies est mendax, et semper fallax; who, if he sometimes hit upon the truth, yet usually cozeneth those that trust to him (Bucholcer). Thus he served Balaam the sorcerer, slain by the sword of Israel; Croesus, taken prisoner by Cyrus; Ahab, slain at Ramoth-Gilead; Julian the apostate, going against the Persians; Walter, earl of Athol, who murdered his master, James I., king of Scots, in hope to attain the crown. Crowned indeed he was, but not, as his witches and sorcerers had ambiguously insinuated, with the crown of that realm, but with a crown of red hot iron clapped upon his bead, being one of the tortures wherewith he ended at once his wicked days and desires (Hector. Boeth.). The pope, to honour and encourage the leaguers in France, sent them consecrated pictures and medals, promising them thereby good success against the Huguenots, but God confuted and defeated them all; as he did likewise Tyrone in Ireland, to whom, among other trinkets, the pope had sent a plume of Phoenix feathers (Carlt. Rem.), a mere collusion.

When the king's commandment and decree drew near, &c.] Both that for the Jews, and the other against them. This latter was not reversed, though the former was published. The king, it seemeth, greatly cared not for the lives of his subjects, since he would not so much as privately hint to them to be quiet, and to let the Jews alone. Such an intimation as this might have saved the lives of seventy-five thousand of them. But God had a holy hand in it, for the just punishment of those blood-thirsty Persians, confident in the good success of their sorceries; having made hell their refuge, but it failed them.

In the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped, &c.] But their hope ran aground, as they say; their lucky day deceived them. Wicked men's hope, when they most need it, will be as the giving up of the ghost, and that is but cold comfort, #Job 11:20, and as the spider's web, #Job 18:18,19, who gets to the top of the window, as high as she can, and then when she falls she fails to the bottom, for nothing stays her. From such high hopes fell our English Papists, first, when Queen Mary died. You hope and hope (said Dale the promoter to Julian Lining, whom he had apprehended), but your hope shall end in a rope; for though the queen fail, she that you hope

for shall never come at it; for there is my Lord Cardinal's grace and many more between her and it. Secondly, at Queen Elizabeth's death, that long looked for day, as they called it, triumphing before the victory, and selling the hide before they had taken the beast. This they had done before in 1588, when, in assurance of victory, they had styled their forces the Invincible Armada; and also afterwards, at the gunpowder plot, when they had presumptuously disposed of the chief offices, holds, and revenues of the land; like as before the Pharsalian field was fought, the Pompeians were in such miserable security, that some of them contended for the priesthood, which was Caesar's office; others disposed of the consulships and offices in Rome so at the battle of Agincourt in France, 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. A presumptuous confidence goes commonly bleeding home, when a humble fear returns in triumph.

Though it was turned to the contrary] By a sweet and gracious providence of God, whose glory it is to help at a pinch, to alter the scene suddenly, to begin where we have given over, and to cause a strange turn of things, according to that of the psalmist: God shall send from heaven and save me (when it might seem to some that salvation itself could not save me), he shall send forth his mercy and his truth, **#Ps 57:4**, and then what should hinder the Church's happiness.

That the Jews had rule over them that hated them] They domineered over their enemies as so many Sultans, וטל'שׁ So true is that of the preacher, "Man knoweth not his time; but 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 upon them," **#Ec 9:12**. Security is the certain usher of destruction, and God delighteth, by turning the scale, to retaliate, as he did upon the Egyptians at the Red Sea, the Philistines at Mizpeh, these Hamanists, and our gunpowder Papists. See **#Ps 7:16**.

Ver. 2. **The Jews gathered themselves together]** They were *laeti in Domino, sed non securi*, cheerful in God, but not free from care, as Bernard hath it. They had prayed, but yet provided for the thirteenth of Adar, which by many was meant still to be a bloody

day, notwithstanding the known favour of the king, and the patronage of Mordecai. The Hamanists would join together to perform that sentence, whereof the author repented and had rued it. (That old enmity, #Ge 3:15, will never out of the serpent's seed.) The Jews therefore well and wisely get together, and unite their forces, that they may make a powerful resistance. They are noted by Tacitus to be a nation at great unity among themselves, and to hate all others. One of the main scandals they do to this day take from Christians is their dissension, that mother of dissolution, as Nazianzen calleth it. The Turks pray to God to keep us still at variance, and say that their fingers shall sooner be all of one length than we be of one mind (Camer. Med. Histor. Cent. 2, c. 23). What a shame is this! If nothing else will, yet our common misery, and the hatred of our enemies, should unite us, as it did these exiles; and it was foretold by Jeremiah, #Jer 50:4, that Judah and Israel, that could not agree at other times, yet when they should be both in a weeping condition they should better agree. So did Basil and Eusebius against the Arians; Ridley and Hooper against the Papists, &c. And it is high time for us now to set aside our private emulations and exceptions; as the creatures in the ark laid by their antipathies within, because of the common danger of an inundation without.

To lay hand on such as sought their hurt] To repel force with force, to kill and spoil those that sought to do so to them. This nature promoted them to (as was forenoted), and they had also the king's warrant for it, and they kept themselves within compass thereof, by not meddling with any but only those that molested them. See #Es 8:11.

And no man could withstand them] *Tantum potest bona causa bonis usa consiliis et mediis*, saith an interpreter here. A good cause, a good conscience, and a good courage, what cannot these three do where they meet? How should any stand before those who are *Deo armati*, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? #Eph 6:10. Pilate's wife could warn him of meddling with such; and Haman's wife could tell him, that a Jew might fall before a Persian and get up again and prevail. But if a Persian, or whosoever of the Gentiles, begin to fall before a Jew, he can neither stand nor rise,

#Es 6:13. There is an invisible hand of omnipotency that striketh in for his own, and confounds their opposites.

For the fear of them fell upon all the people] This was the work, not of some *Pan Deus Arcadiae* (as the heathens fancied); but of God, the sole giver of victory, who, when he pleaseth, affrighteth the Church's enemies, as he promiseth to do in many places. See **#Ex 23:27 De 11:2,5 Jer 46:27,28**, &c. And as accordingly he did it on the Egyptians, Midianites, Philistines, Syrians, &c. And the like he did for Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, against the great caliph; for the Hussites, against all the force of Germany; for the Angrognians, against the pope's army that came against them. The soldiers told their captains they were so astonished they could not strike, and that the ministers, with their prayers, conjured and bewitched them (Acts and Men. 883). So at the siege of Mountabone, whensoever the people of God began to sing a psalm (as they usually did before their sallying forth) the enemies coming, acquainted with their practice, would so quake and tremble, crying, They come, they come, as though the wrath of God had been breaking out upon them (Spec. Bel. Sacr. 282). What was this handful of captives to the whole Persian empire, that they should now become no less formidable to them than not long after those few Grecians were to Xerxes? who, having covered the seas with his ships, and with a world of men passed over into Greece, was afterwards himself alone, in a small fishing boat, glad to get back into Asia, to save his own life (Herodotus).

Ver. 3. And all the rulers of the provinces...helped the Jews] Heb. Gave them a lift, sc. over the brook, the brake, or whatsoever lay in their way of deliverance. This they did out of their respect to the king, rather than for any great goodwill to the Jews, who were generally hated for their religion, and wished out of the world. *Sit divus mode non sit virus*, Let god be, only not let poison be, said the Roman emperor of his brother, whom he maliciously murdered.

, Because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them] But much more, because God himself overawed them, and dispirited them {**See Trapp on "Es 9:2"**} How else should he appear to be the God of the spirits of all flesh, and that in the thing wherein people deal proudly he was above them? **#Ex 18:11.** How should they come to know

themselves to be but men, #Ps 9:20, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit, &c., #Isa 31:3; if he did not otherwhiles make their hearts heartless, #Ho 7:11, their hands feeble, #Jer 6:24 Isa 13:7 Eze 21:7, their eyes fail, #De 28:28, their knees knock together, as Belshazzar's did, #Da 5:6. How else would they ever be brought to bring presents unto him that ought to be feared, #Ps 76:7,8, and to say unto him, Lord, be not thou a terror to me? &c., #Jer 17:17. If Mordecai be feared, it is because God hath put a majesty upon him, and made him dreadful, as Abraham likewise was to Abimelech, #Ge 21:22,23, David to Saul, #1Sa 18:29, the Baptist to Herod, our Saviour to the Pharisees, #Mr 11:18, Paul and Silas to their persecutors, #Ac 16:27, &c. And this the Lord still doth, that he may dwell upon earth, #Ps 68:18, sc. in his faithful worshippers, which wicked men would not suffer, if not thus reined in and restrained. And, secondly, that praise may wait for him in Zion, and unto him may the vow be performed, #Ps 65:1.

Ver. 4. **For Mordecai was great in the king's house]** So great a favourite, as that it was dangerous to displease him; and most men coveted his favour. It was now in the court and kingdom of Persia, as it was once at Rome when Sejanus ruled the roast under Tiberius. *Ut quisque Seiano intimus, ita ad Caesaris amicitiam validus. Contra quibus infensus esset, metu et sordibus conflictabantur* (Tacit.). His friends were Caesar's friends, and his enemies were in a very low and lamentable condition.

And his fame went throughout all the provinces] *Auditio eius*, the report of him went far and near. *Per ora hominum volitabat*, so the Vulgate Latin. He was

Claros inter habens nomina clara vires.

Famous among famous man who have a reputation. It was everywhere discoursed that Mordecai was the king's darling, kinsman, counsellor, that he had saved the king's life, and was therefore promoted to the highest dignity; that it were good getting in with him, who both could and would reciprocate and remunerate any that should well deserve him and his people. How thankful the Lord Cromwell was to those that had done him any courtesy. See Acts and Mon. fol. 1083. How ungrateful Bishop Banner was to the

same Lord Cromwell, who had been his great patron, railing at him as the rankest heretic that had ever lived, &c.; see in fol. 1087; but this was after his death; *Leoni mortuo vel mus insultat*. A dead lion or a leaping mouse.

For this man Mordecai] *Vir ille insignis*, that distinguished man, though he were but *novus homo et peregrinus*, a newly raised man, a stranger, and one that had brought in a strange alteration of things in the court and commonwealth; and therefore could not but be much envied and maligned, as far as men dared show themselves against him; yet

He waxed greater and greater] Heb. he was going (that is, growing) and greatening. See the like Hebraism, #Pr 4:18 Ge 8:5. For why? he did *gloria invidiam vincere*, conquer, envy, and dazzle her eyes with his lustre; which, saith Sallust, is the hardest thing that can be, *Difficillimum inter mortales*. For as the tallest trees are weakest at the tops; so doth envy always aim at the highest. But maugre malice itself, Mordecai was in the number of those few that lived and died with glory, gotten by his piety, zeal, and other virtues; neither had his adversaries anything to complain of him more than his greatness, as Camden saith of the old earl of Essex (Camd Eliz. fol. 532).

Ver. 5. **Thus the Jews smote all their enemies]** It was the Lord's work, and therefore to do it negligently, to keep back their swords from blood, had been to incur that curse, #Jer 48:10, as Saul did in sparing Agag, #1Sa 15:9; Ahab in showing mercy to Benhadad, whom God had destined to destruction, #1Ki 20:42. These Jews, as so many judges, were set up by God to do to death these desperate enemies; and since there was no hope of curing, to fall to cutting, *Immedicabile vulnus ense recidendum est*, Incurable wound inflicted by a sword, that others might hear and fear, and do no more so, but see and say with the psalmist, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

With the strokes of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction] Here then we see what punishments they deserve that are enemies to the Church, and sooner or later they shall be sure of. For as hard weather rotteth not in the air, so neither do the judgments against

persecutors. God himself hath against them, and will surely have his pennyworths of them; his hand that is lifted up in threatening, **#Isa 26:11**, will not fail to fall down in punishing; and the higher it is lifted the heavier it shall fall. *Subito tollitur qui diu toleratur*. Suddenly he was destroyed who for a long time was endured. "They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes," **#Ps 63:10**. The spoiler shall be spoiled, **#Isa 33:1**; and he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword, **#Re 13:10 2Th 1:6**.

And did what they would unto those that hated them] Where it is to be hoped, that they furbished the sword of justice with the oil of mercy, that they remembered that of the philosopher, *Posse et nolle nobile est*, to be able and unwilling is noble, that in some cases a man must not do all that he may do; as there be some, again, wherein severity ought to cast the scale. The Turks' severity I can by no means like, that will rather cut off two innocent persons than let one guilty man go free. Nor that of the Venetians, who punish with death such as steal from the State but one penny, if it be proved against them. Again, care must be taken that justice be not executed (whether in a civil or military way) with a vindictive mind, but all selfish actions carefully strained out. Private revenge leaveth a stain upon a man some ways innocent, witness Jehu; and puts an innocence upon the greatest offender, witness Abner.

Ver. 6. And in Shushan the palace] One would wonder that any here should offer to stir against the Jews, so much favoured by the king, patronized by Mordecai, and well appointed to withstand them. But they were mad with malice against God's people, and ambitious of their own destruction. Haman's death still sticks in their stomachs, and they resolve to be revenged, whatever it stands them in. With like stoutness of stomach it was that Jezebel painted her face, and tired her head, when Jehu was come to Jezreel, and looking out at a window, said, Had Zimri peace, &c. Herein certainly she showed her great stoutness, as if she would daunt Jehu, and out brave him in the midst of his pomp and triumph, **#2Ki 9:30,31**. Divine vengeance suffereth not wicked people to rest, and to keep in their malice and mischief; but that they must break out and run headlong, like wild beasts into the hunter's toil, or upon the spear's point, whereby they perish.

Ver. 7-9. **And Parshandatha, and Dalphon...and Vajezatha]** This Vajezatha was the youngest, but most malicious of them all against the Jews, as their doctors guess and gather from the little Zain and great Vau found in his name. {*Hebrew Text Note*}

Ver. 10. **The ten sons of Haman]** Of whom he had so boasted, **#Es 5:12**, and bore himself bold, as believing that being so full of children, he should leave the rest of his substance to his babes, **#Ps 17:14**. These ten likely were ringleaders to those Hamanists in Shushan, that durst appear in so bad a cause, being evil eggs of an evil bird. *Non enim fieri ullo modo potest, ut ex me et Agrippina vir bonus nascatur*; said Domitius, the father of Nero; It cannot be that of myself and Agrippina should come any good man. Κακὸν κορακοῦ κακῶν ὠόν (Dio. in Ner.). Haman brought up his sons to bring down his house; and was a parricide to them rather than a parent. His darling Vajezatha he corrected not, but cockered; no wonder, therefore, that he proved to be of a gastrill-kind (disquieting his own nest), of a viperous brood; and, therefore, though not hanged together with his father, and the whole family (as the Apocryphal additions of Esther, **#RApc Es 16:18**, tell us, but not truly), yet slain in this insurrection at Shushan, together with the rest of his brethren; the good people crying out, as once they did at Rome, when the son of Maximinus, the emperor, was put to death, *Ex pessimo genere ne catulum quidem habendum*, Let not one whelp be left of so evil a litter.

But on the spoil laid they not their hand] Lest the king should be damnified, or themselves justly taxed of covetousness and cruelty. "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God," **#1Co 10:32**. *Non semper omnia quae licent sunt facienda* Not everything which is permitted should be done. (Lavati.). This is oft repeated in this chapter, to their great commendation; that although, by the king's grant, they might have taken the spoil, **#Es 8:11**, yet they did it not: 1. To show that they were God's executioners, not thieves and robbers. 2. To gratify the king for his courtesy towards them, by leaving the spoil wholly to his treasury. 3. It is not unlikely, saith an interpreter (Fevard), that Mordecai and Esther had admonished them how ill Saul had sped with his spoils of the Amalekites, and Achan with his wedge of gold,

which served but to cleave his body and soul asunder, and his Babylonish garment, which proved to be his burial sheet.

Ver. 11. **On that day the number of those that were slain]** This was done, haply, by some malignants, that would thereby have incensed the king against the Jews. Or else the king (as became a good shepherd of his people) taketh an account of his slain subjects, by diligent inquiry made thereinto. *Similia sunt boni pastoris et boni regis opera* Similar are the works of good shepherds and good kings. (Cyr. 5, apud Xenoph.). Whereupon he might have repented him (now in cold blood) of his grant to Esther and the Jews, those foreigners, against his natural subjects, who had done nothing but by his command, &c. But God so ordered it that, all this notwithstanding, the king was well content with that which was done, as supposing that Haman's sons and complices would be seeking revenge, and plotting mischief, if left alive. He therefore goeth merrily in to the queen, acquainting her with the number of the slain, and giving her leave to ask of him whatever more she desired to be done. This was the Lord's doing all along.

Ver. 12. **And the king said unto Esther the queen]** He would needs be the messenger himself, as presuming the news would be most welcome to her, whom he desired to gratify, rather out of affection of love than desire of justice; else he would never have so little respected the slaughter of his subjects, armed by his own command.

What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces?] This he should have uttered with grief and regret; accounting the blood of his subjects dear and precious, and not making light of so many men's lives, lost by his default. But many kings make as little reckoning of their subjects' lives as Charles IX did of the Huguenots in the French Massacre; or as the Grand Signior doth of his Asapi, a kind of common soldiers, born for the most part of Christian parents, and used by him in his wars, for no other end but to blunt the swords of his enemies, or to abate the first fury, and thereby to give the easier victory to his janizaries and better soldiers. This the Turkish tyrants hold for good policy. How much better that Roman general, who said, that he had rather save one citizen than slay twenty enemies? and Edward the Confessor, who, when his captains promised, for his sake, they would not leave one Dane alive in his

land, thought it better to lead a private and unbloody life than to be a king by such bloody butcheries?

Now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee, &c.] An uxorious prince, not propitious only to his queen, but morigerous and obsequious. He was only her clay and wax; and had she been an Eve, a Jezebel, or an Eudoxia, what might she not have done with him or had of him? Our King Edward III was wholly possessed and ruled by his mistress, dame Alice Pierce, an impudent woman, who so wrought upon the king's impotencies, that she caused the speaker of the parliament to be committed to perpetual imprisonment at Nottingham. At length she grew so insolent, that she intermeddled with courts of justice, and other offices, where she herself would sit to effect her desires. But though holy Esther was none such; yet it behoveth kings to be less prodigal of their promises, and not to leave the lives and estates of their liege subjects to the lusts of that weaker sex especially; as having less of discretion and more of immoderation.

Ver. 13. **Then said Esther, If it please the king, &c.]** See #Es 5:4,8.

Let it be granted to the Jews, &c.] The enemies at Shushan could not be all caught the first day; lest therefore those that lurked should hereafter prove troublesome to the Church by hatching new plots, she begs that they also may receive condign punishment, and Haman's sons be hanged up for an example. This she requested not out of private and personal spleen to any, but for the glory of God and the Church's peace. Had her aims been otherwise than good, her good actions could not have showed her a good woman. For, though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, as we see in Uzzah; yet a bad aim maketh a good action bad, as we see in Jehu. Lavater's note may not here be let slip: the diligence that Esther used in rooting out her temporal enemies should quicken us to do the like to our spiritual, viz. those evil affections, motions, and passions, that war against the soul These be our Medes and Persians, with whom we must make no truce, but maintain a constant deadly feud, till we have mastered and mortified them all, #Col 3:5 Ro 8:13; for till that be done effectually we must never look to have true peace, either within ourselves or with others.

And let Haman's ten sons be hanged] Had Haman been now alive, himself by right should have been their hangman. There was a young man among the Switzers that went about to usurp the government, and alter their free state. Him they condemned to death, and appointed his father for executioner, as the cause of his evil education. But because Haman was hanged before, his sons (though dead) shall now hang with him. Neither was it cruelty or revenge in Esther, to crave this of the king, but zeal to God, and fervent love to his people, whose welfare she sought by all means possible to promote. As for herself, she could joyfully say of Haman, as David did of Doeg, "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness. But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever. I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints," #Ps 52:7-9.

Ver. 14. **And the king commanded it so to be done]** He feared not that thereupon the people would rise and call him tyrant to his teeth; as when Bajazet II had cast Achmetes Bassa into prison, the janizaries in an uproar insolently answered the Great Turk, that they would by and by teach him, as a drunkard, a beast, and a rascal, to use his great place and calling with more sobriety and discretion (Turk. Hist. fol. 444). Ahasuerus well enough knew his own power, and was therefore the more bold in disposing, after this manner, of the lives of his subjects, who were ready to say to him, as once Tiberius did to Justinus, *Si tu volueris, ego sum; si tu non vis, ego non sum;* If you are willing, I am, if you are not willing, I am not. I am wholly yours to command.

And the decree was given at Shushan] *Dictum, concessum, illico factum.* Spoken, agreed, immediately done. The king was not willing to cross Esther in anything, saith Josephus.

And they hanged Haman's ten sons] For greater ignominy and terror to others. Thus God commanded the heads of the twelve princes of Israel to be hanged up against the sun, #Nu 25:4. Joshua hanged the king of Ai upon a gallows until the evening, #Jos 8:29,

and after that the five kings of the Amorites, #**Jos 10:27** God hanged up Absalom with his own bare hand.

Absalon marte furens pensilis arbore obit.

Absalon died in a tree fighting punished for his rage.

Ver. 15. **For the Jews that were in Shushan]** They did not stand to cast perils or frame excuses, but with singular courage and constancy went an end with the work, whereunto they saw themselves to be rightly called by God and man, keeping themselves still within the compass of the king's edict, and so carrying the matter, that those that were slain were judged by their own fellow citizens to have deservedly perished.

And slew three hundred men at Shushan] Besides the former five hundred. All these, with Haman, their chieftain, might have lived long in honour and safety could they have kept them quiet. But, by the just and secret judgment of God, they kindled a fire with great force, that consumed themselves, according to that in the prophet Isaiah, #**Isa 33:10-12**, "Now will I rise, saith the Lord of recompenses; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire."

But on the prey they laid not, &c.] See #**Es 9:10**.

Ver. 16. **But the other Jews that were, &c.]** Though they were but a nation, scattered and peeled, a contemptible and feeble folk, lately destined to destruction; yet by faith they subdued kingdoms, escape the edge of the sword, out of weakness become strong, wax valiant in fight, turn to flight whole armies of the aliens, #**Heb 11:33,34**, prevail and prosper against all the malignant power of Persia: thus were they helped with a little help (as it is, #**Da 11:34**), that God might have a great deal of glory, as indeed he had.

Gathered themselves together] United their forces, as #**Es 9:2**, which while our ancestors (the old Britons) did not against the Romans who invaded them, they were easily and quickly conquered.

Et dum pugnabant singuli vincebantur universi, And while they fought by themselves, they were all conquered. saith Tacitus, who was here, with his father-in-law, Agricola, an eye-witness of what he writeth.

And stood for their lives] Not one whereof was lost in this hot encounter, in this sharp revenge they took off their avowed enemies. This was even a miracle of God'smercy: "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations," &c.

And had rest from their enemies] Or, That they might have rest from their enemies; who would not otherwise be quieted, but by the letting out of their life-blood; but would make an assault upon the harmless Jews, though it were to die for it; so that upon the matter they were their own deathsmen, besides the wilful loss of their immortal souls, which our Saviour showeth, **#Mt 16:26**, to be a loss, 1. Incomparable, 2. Irreparable.

And slew of their foes seventy and five thousand] Neither was it any dishonour to them to be God Almighty's slaughtermen. Even the good angels are executioners of God's righteous judgments, as they were at Sodom, in Sennacherib's army, and oft in the Revelation. There cannot be a better or more noble act than to do justice upon obstinate malefactors.

But they laid not their hands on the prey] They would not once foul their fingers therewith. No godly man in Scripture is taxed for covetousness, that sordid sin. {*See Trapp on "Es 9:10"*}
Ver. 17. **On the thirteenth day of the month Adar]** On this day they stood for their lives, that they might rest from their enemies. And accordingly

On the fourteenth day of the same, rested they] *i.e.* The very next day after their deliverance. They would not defer it a day longer, but kept a holy rest with psalms and sacrifices of praise (those calves of their lips), the very next day, while the deliverance was yet fresh, and of recent remembrance. This they knew well that God expected, **#De 23:21**, and that he construeth delays for denials, **#Hag 1:2,4**. He gave order that no part of the thank offering should be kept

unspent till the third day; to teach us to present our praises when benefits are newly received, which else would soon wax stale and putrefy, as fish. "I will pay my vows now, now," saith David, **#Ps 116:18**. Hezekiah wrote his song the third day after his recovery. Queen Elizabeth, when exalted from a prisoner to a princess, and from misery to majesty, before she would suffer herself to be mounted in her chariot, to pass from the Tower to Westminster, she very devoutly lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and gave God humble thanks for that remarkable change and turn of things.

And made it a day of feasting and gladness] Exhilarating and cheering up their good hearts (that had long lain low) with a more liberal use of the creatures, that they might the better preach his praises, and speak good of his name; and that, since they could not offer up unto him other sacrifices prescribed in the law, because they were far from the Temple, they might not be wanting with their sacrifice of thanksgiving, which God preferreth before an ox that hath horns and hoofs, saith the psalmist. Words may seem to be but a poor and slight recompense; but Christ, saith Nazianzen, calleth himself the Word; and this was all the fee that he looks for for his cures, Go and tell what God hath done for thee. With these calves of our lips let us cover God's altar; and we shall find, that although he will neither eat the flesh of bulls, nor drink the blood of goats, **#Ps 50:13,14**, yet if we offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay our vows unto the Most High, it will be looked upon as our reasonable service, **#Ro 12:1**.

Ver. 18. **On the thirteenth day thereof, and on the fourteenth]** What they could not do on one day they did it on another. Men must be sedulous and strenuous in God's work, doing it with all their might, and redeeming time for that purpose, **#Ec 9:10**.

On both these days they destroyed their enemies] They did their work thoroughly. Let us do so in slaying our spiritual enemies; not sparing any Agag, not reserving this Zoar or that Rimmon; but dealing by the whole body of sin as the king of Moab did with the king of Edom, **#Am 2:1**, burn the bones of it to lime; destroy it not to the halves, as Saul, but hew it in pieces before the Lord, as Samuel. As Joshua destroyed all the Canaanites he could lay hold on; as Asa spared not his own mother; as Solomon drew Joab from

the altar to the slaughter; and put to death Adonijah, the darling, so must we deal with our corruptions, ferreting and fetching them out of their lurking holes, as these Jews did their enemies on the fourteenth day, that had escaped the day before. Since we must either kill them up all, or be killed by them; for as that one bastard Abimelech slew all Gideon's sons upon one stone, so one lust left unmortified will undo the soul. And as one sinner, so one sin, may destroy much good, #Ec 9:18.

And on the fifteenth day of the month they rested] So shall the saints do after death, which will be the accomplishment of mortification, for he that is dead is freed from sin, #Ro 6:7, and filled with joy, #Isa 35:10. The ransomed of the Lord shall then return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Ver. 19. **Therefore the Jews of the villages, &c.]** *Pagani*. This is expounded in the next words.

That dwelt in the unwall'd towns] Such as is the Hague in Holland, that hath two thousand households in it; and chooseth rather to be counted the principal village of Europe than a lesser city.

Made the fourteenth day, &c.] See #Es 9:17, while the Jews in Shushan were destroying the remainder of their enemies. This day was afterwards called Mordecai's holiday, Η Μαρδοχαϊκη ημερα, #/RAPC 2Ma 15:36.

And of sending portions one to another] See #Ne 8:10. To the rich they sent in courtesy, to the poor in charity, and both these to testify their thankfulness to God for their lives, liberties, and estates, so lately and graciously restored unto them.

Ver. 20. **And Mordecai wrote these things]** He wrote with authority, as a magistrate (say some), that the Jews should keep these days with greatest solemnity. He wrote the relation of these things mentioned before, say others, as the ground of this annual festivity. Or else it may be meant more generally that Mordecai was the penman of the Holy Ghost, in writing this whole Book of Esther, as was before hinted.

And sent letters unto all the Jews.. both nigh and far] *Propinquis et longinquis*, near and far, that they might all agree together about the time and manner of praising God; and so sing the great Hallelujah. See **#2Co 1:11 2Ch 20:26-28 Ps 124:1,2 126:1 Ps 136**, penned for a recorded public form, to praise God among the multitude, **#Ps 109:30**, and in the great congregation, **#Ps 22:22,25**. David would go into the presses of people, and there praise the Lord, **#Ps 116:18,19**. This was to walk worthy of the Lord, **#Col 1:10**. This was to make a proportionable return, for we are God's soil, and our thanks his crop.

Ver. 21. **To establish this among them]** *sc.* By a law, that they should yearly on those two days rest, and repeat among themselves that signal deliverance, propagating the remembrance of it to all posterity. Mordecai well knew that eaten bread is soon forgotten, that deliverances are usually but nine days' wonderment, that it is easy and ordinary with people to rob God and wrong themselves by their unthankfulness, which forfeiteth former mercies and forestalleth future, he therefore settleth it upon them, saith the text, *statuendo eis ut facerent*, he exacteth it of them by virtue of his office.

That they should keep the fourteenth day, and the fifteenth day] Both days, *nam gaudet produci haec solennitas*, for he rejoices to promote these feasts, as Austin said of the feast of Pentecost, such a solemnity should be drawn out to the full length, as the silkworm stretcheth forth herself before she spinneth her finest thread. Jehoshaphat and his people showed themselves unsatisfiable in their praises, which they presented again and again, **#2Ch 20:26,27**. And good Hezekiah, when he observed in his subjects such a float of affections at the passover, and that they were in so good a frame, took counsel with them to keep other seven days, and they kept other seven days with gladness, **#2Ch 30:21-23**. See with what a flood of words holy David poureth forth his soul in prayer, **#Ps 145:1-8**, as if therewith he would even fill up the distance between God and himself. Sometimes he seemeth to forget himself in point of praising God; for he will, like a bird, having got a note, record it over and over, as **#Ps 136**. And in the last psalm there are but six verses yet twelve hallelujahs. He concludeth, Let everything that

hath breath, or, Let every breath praise the Lord, let it be as the smoke of the tabernacle, when peace offerings were offered. *Tam Dei meminisse opus est quam respirare*, saith Chrysostom, We have as much need to remember God as to take breath.

Ver. 22. **As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies]** And therefore they in thankfulness would consecrate the same as a holy rest unto the Lord, calling the fourteenth day, *Festum sortium minus*, the lesser festivity of lots; and the fifteenth day, *Festum sortium maius*, the greater festivity of lots, as Drusins telleth us.

And the month] They thought the better ever after of the month Adar, that magnificent month, wherein was that golden day of their deliverance. *O dieculam illam, &c., dexter sane prae laetitia mihi salit oculus*, said he. Oh that joyful day! Oh that the calendar of my life might be filled with such festivals!

Which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy] As God remembered poor Joseph, and turned his fetters into a chain of gold, his rags into robes, his stocks into a chariot, his prison into a palace, his brown bread and water into fine bread and wine; and as he had turned again the captivity of his people as the streams in the south, **#Ps 146:4**; so here he had made a great alteration, bringing them from the jaws of death to the joys of a glorious deliverance; turning their sadness into gladness, their sighing into singing, their musing into music, their tears into triumph, *luctum in laetitiam, saccum in sericum, ieiunium in epulum, manuum retortionem in applausum, &c.* And this is no new thing in the Church.

Ver. 28. **And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun]** Which yet they could not do unless God gave them a heart to do it. Holy David understood this, and therefore when he found that heat and height of good affections in his people, he prayed, "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee," **#1Ch 29:18**. And when he had at another time undertaken for himself, that if God would deliver him from blood guiltiness his tongue should sing aloud of God's righteousness, he subjoins (by way of correction, as if he were sensible that he had promised more than was in his power to perform), "O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise," **#Ps**

51:14,15. The Hebrew, or rather Chaldee, word here rendered undertook is of the singular number, to show that every particular Jew undertook for himself and for his posterity to all perpetuity. And indeed they keep this feast annually to this day, and exceedingly please themselves in the reading of this history, counting and calling all such princes and states as cross them Hamans, and wishing that they may be able one day to be avenged of them, as their fathers were of these Persians.

Ver. 24. **Because Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, &c.]** In detestation of whose wicked plot, the Jews at this day, when, at this feast of Purim, they read the Book of Esther in their synagogues, as oft as they hear mention of Haman they do with their fists and hammers beat upon the benches and boards, as if they did knock upon Haman's head (Anton. Meraanta. lib. de Jud. Cerem.). Lavater saith the Papists in some countries do the like on Good Friday, when, in reading the Gospel, mention is made of Judas the traitor. But as for Fawkes, Digby, Piercy, Catesby, and the rest of that hellish crew of Popish Hamans, treacherous Judases, these they have crowned with fresh eulogies, and little less than sainted. Garnet (that bou-te-feu) has his picture set among the rest of Rome's saints, in the Jesuits' Church at Rome, with this inscription, *Voluisse sat est*. To have been willing is enough. Prodigious impudency (Cornel. a Lapide in Apoc. vii. 8).

And had cast Pur] But found, to his cost, that "there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither any divination against Israel," but that, "according to this time it should be said of Jacob and Israel" (said by way of wonder at God's doing on their behalf), "What hath God wrought!" #Nu 23:23.

To consume them] Heb. to crush them, *ut contereret eos*, as a thing crushed to pieces, as the lesser beasts are crushed by the lion, or as things are broken with a wooden hammer.

Ver. 25. **But when Esther came]** Heb. when she came. This was the subject of the Jews' discourse upon those days, which they spent, not in idle chat, but in telling one another what great things the Lord had done for them; relating all the particulars. All honourable mention was then made of Esther and Mordecai; neither was Haman's malice instanced without utmost detestation. So true is that

of Solomon, #Pr 10:7, "The memory of the just is blessed (or, is with praises, μετ εγκωμιων, as the Septuagint there render it); but the name of the wicked shall rot," as now doth the name of the gunpowder plotters, of Bonner, Gardiner, and other Popish persecutors. *Memoria eius sicut vinum Libani*, The memory of him as is the wine of Lebanon, say the Jews of those they honour (Bud. Pand.).

Should return upon his own head] According to #Ps 7:17, and haply not without allusion to those *Piaculars et Abominales* among the Grecians, which were certain condemned persons, on whose heads they put the public guilt, and then tumbled them into the sea, Herod. 1. 2, or else to those expiatory sacrifices amongst the Egyptians, which were first cursed by them, and then cast into the river, or sold to the Grecian merchants, in an apish imitation of the Hebrews' scape-goat, and the day of atonement.

Ver. 26. **Wherefore they called these days Purim]** Thereby to perpetuate the memory of that mercy, worthy to be engraven in pillars of marble. This was a notable name; for it served to remind the Jews of all that God had done for them at this bout. As there is edification in the choice of fit psalms, #1Co 14:26, so in the imposing of fit names upon persons, things, and times. As the Christian Sabbath is to good purpose called the Lord's day; and those festivities of Easter and Whitsuntide were not so fitly called Pasch and Pentecost as the feast of the Lord's resurrection and of the sending of the Holy Ghost. It should certainly be the constant care of us all to set up marks and monuments of God's great mercies, so to preserve the memory of them, which else will be moth eaten. Such as were Abraham's Jehovahjireh, Jacob's stone at Bethel, Moses' Jehovahnissi, Aaron's rod and pot of manna, #Heb 9:4, the twelve stones pitched up in Jordan, the names of Gilgal, Ramath-Lehi, Aben Ezer; those plates nailed on the altar, #Nu 16:39. Hereby God shall be glorified, the Church's enemies convinced, our faith strengthened, our joy in the Lorcl heightened, our posterity helped, and Satan prevented, who seeketh to obliterate God's works of wonder; or at least to alienate them, and translate them upon himself, as he endeavoured to do that famous execution of Divine justice upon Sennacherib's army, by setting Herodotus awork to tell the world in print (Herod. 1. 2) that it was Sethon, king of Egypt,

and priest of Vulcan, who obtained of his god that Sennacherib's army, coming against Egypt, should be totally routed by reason of an innumerable company of rats, sent by Vulcan, which gnawed in pieces their bowstrings, quivers, bucklers, &c., and so made way for the Egyptians to vanquish them. Herodotus addeth that also in his time there was to be seen the statue of Sennacherib, holding a rat in his hand, in Vulcan's temple, and uttering these words, Let him that beholdeth me learn to fear God. Εμε τις εσορευων ευσεβης εστω. Lo, the god of this world hath his trophies erected, and shall the God of heaven and earth go without? Oh, let us (who have lived in an age of miracles, and seen the out goings of God for our good more than ever did any nation) offer unto him the ransom of our lives, as they did, #Ex 21:30 30:12, in token that they had and held all in mere courtesy from God. Let us leave some seal, some pawn of thankfulness for deliverance from so many deaths and dangers. Otherwise heathens will rise up and condemn us. They after a shipwreck would offer something; after a fit of sickness consecrate something to their gods; after a victory set up trophies of triumph, as the Philistines did to their Dagon, the Romans to their Jupiter Capitolinus.

Therefore for all the words of this letter] In obedience to Mordecai, their godly magistrate.

And of that which they had seen concerning this matter] And especially of God made visible all along in it, yea, palpable, so that they might feel him and find him, #Ac 17:27, though his name be not found in all this book.

And which had come unto them] so. By report and hearsay, but from such hands as that they were fully satisfied thereof, as Haman's lot casting, Esther's supplicating, the king's reading the chronicles, &c.

Ver. 27. **The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed]** See #Es 9:23. Here we have a repetition of what was before recited, and this is usual in Holy Scripture, as #Ge 2:1 Ex 15:19, that things of moment may take the deeper impression. That of Austin is here to be remembered, *Verba toties inculcata viva sunt, vera sunt, plana sunt, sana sunt.* The words are driven home so

many times afresh, are true, are plain, are sound. Let preachers do thus, and hearers be content to have it so. *Nunquam satis dicitur, quod nunquam satis discitur*. Never spoken enough because never learned enough. "To write to you the same things to me is not grievous, and for you it is safe," saith that great apostle, **#Php 3:1**.

And upon all such as should join themselves unto them] Those proselytes, **#Es 8:17**, or whatever hangs-on.

So as it should not fail] But stand as a law inviolable. And yet that *Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus*, the 88th year of the marvelous, and that never-to-be-forgotten fifth of November, are with us almost antiquated; little would one think that God had ever done anything for us, either by land or by sea, against either fireworks or waterworks, *Vae corpori nostro*. Alas our body.

That they would keep these two days] Keep them as before, by consecrating a rest, and feasting before the Lord; not by gormandizing and profane sports, nor by running up and down from house to house, as whiffiers and wassailers, as at this day the Jews' manner is; witness Antonius Margarita, a baptized Jew (L. de Cerem. Jud.).

According to their writing] i.e. Mordecai's order, by themselves subscribed and ratified.

Ver. 28. **And that these days should be remembered]** That the memory of them might be kept afoot in the Church to all perpetuity. Nothing is sooner forgotten than a good turn received. David found himself faulty this way, and, therefore, sets the thorn to the breast, **#Ps 103:2**. Other holy men kept catalogues (see one of God's own making, **#Jud 10:11,12**). They also had their *μνημοσυνα*, or memorials, as is before noted. The very heathens had their triumphal arches, pillars, trophies, tables, histories, annals, ephemerides, &c. A foul shame for us to fall short of them, and not to wish, as Job in another case, Oh that God's works of wonder for us were now written. "Oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" **#Job 19:23,24**. That famous fifth of November especially, which drowns in a manner the memory of all former deliverances; as the return out of Babylon did

the departure out of Egypt, #Jer 23:7. This happy day, too much slighted, alas, in many places already, should never be put out of the English calendar while the sun courseth about the earth; but be registered for the generation to come, that the people which shall be created may praise the Lord, #Ps 102:8. (This was written Nov. 5, 1653.)

Every family, every province, and every city] They should all recognize their late danger, and thereby the better relish their deliverance, as Samson did his honeycomb, which he found by turning aside to see the lion he had escaped. Every man was to consider his own share in the public safety, as the people did at Solomon's coronation, and to be particularly thankful. This would fortify his faith, feed his hope, nourish his joy, further his obedience. Ver. 29. **Then Esther the queen, &c.]** See #Es 2:15. Mordecai had written thus before; now, for more authority' sake, and to show her forwardness to further so good a work, Esther joineth with him, not for a name, or out of a humour of foolish forth-putting, but out of a holy zeal for God and a godly jealousy over her people, lest they should hereafter slight or slack this service. And, indeed, the Jews' chronicle (called by them Sedar olam Rabbah) telleth us, that this letter of Esther was not written till a year after Mordecai's first letter; when those days of Purim haply began to be neglected and intermitted, *Anno sequenti contigit quod scriptum est*, The next year it happened as it was written, #Es 9:29. She might, therefore, well say, as St Peter did afterwards, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," 2 Epist. iii. 1. True grace in the best heart is like unto a dull sea coal fire; which, if it be not sometimes righted up, will of itself go out, though there be fuel enough about it. This good queen was no less active in her generation than before had been Miriam, Deborah, Bathsheba, &c., and after her were Serena, the empress, Sophia, queen of Bohemia, a Hussite, Queen Catherine Parr, the doctress, as her husband merrily called her sometimes, and that matchless Queen Elizabeth, whose sunny days are not to be passed over slightly, saith one, without one touch upon that string, which so many years sounded so sweetly in our ears, without one sigh breathed forth in her sacred memory. Oh what a happy time of

life had that famous light of our Church, Mr William Perkins, who was born in the first year of her reign, and died in her last year.

And Mordecai the Jew] These two joined together to add the more force to the ordinance.

Wrote with all authority Heb. With all strength, viz. of spirit and of speech, of affection and expression.

To confirm the second letter] Lest, for fear of the friends of such as they had slain, the Jews should be slack in observing this feast of lots.

Ver. 30. **And he sent letters to all the Jews]** Tremellius readeth it, Which letters Mordecai sent to all the Jews, sc. as monitors and remembrancers.

To the hundred twenty and seven provinces] Among and above the rest, to Judea, which was one of that number.

With words of peace and truth] i.e. Premising words of prosperity and settlement, saith Tremellius, or promising them peaceable enjoyment of the true religion, liberty of conscience, rightly so called; or praying, that they may "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," **#Heb 12:14**. Or, he sent letters full of courtesy and truth, that is, of unfeigned courtesy, as Vatablus senseth it. For there is a cut-throat courtesy, such as was that of Joab to Amasa, of Judas to our Saviour, of Julian, the apostate, to Basil, when he wrote unto him, but not with words of peace and truth, φιλος φιλω και αδελφος αδελωω.

Ver. 31. **To confirm these days of Purim]** That they might by no manner of means be neglected, but that, renewing their resolutions and their reasons for the same, they might remain constant and firm and peremptory in well doing, cleaving to God with full purpose of heart, and sitting close unto the Lord without distraction, **#1Co 7:35**.

And as they had decreed for themselves] Heb. For their souls; for the soul is the man, and the greatest thing in the least compass is a good mind in a man's body.

The matters of the fastings and their cry] Heb. The words of fasting, &c., that is, the vows they then uttered when they fasted and cried; that, if God would hear and help them, they would not fail to praise him in all best manner. Now, therefore, sith the vows of God were upon them, they should by keeping these days offer unto him thanksgiving, and pay their vows unto the Most High. Some think that the fasting and crying here mentioned referreth to those in Zechariah, **#Zec 7:5**, in remembrance of the desolation of Jerusalem; that, as they fasted then, so they should feast now (Aben Ezra); God having fulfilled his promise there made, of turning their fasting into feasting, and added, "Therefore love the truth and peace," **#Zec 8:19**: confer Mordecai's words of peace and truth, supra, **#Es 9:30**.

Ver. 32. **And the decree of Esther confirmed, &c.]** *Dux femina facti*. Money was coined in the year 1588, in honour of Queen Elizabeth, with that posy inscribed. The like may be here said of Queen Esther, yea, we may add that in the Gospel, spoken concerning another: Wherever this history shall be read in all the world, this that she hath done shall be spoken of to her eternal commendation.

And it was written in the book] Tremellius rendereth it thus, When, therefore, the edict of Esther had confirmed these things, it was written in this book. Lyra and others thus, She requested the wise men of that age, that they would reckon this history for Holy Writ. If it be meant of any other public record, which the Jews then had, it is lost; as are likewise some other pieces which never were any part of the Holy Scriptures; for God, by his providence, ever took care and course that no one hair of that sacred head should fall to the ground. That unsound conceit of Pellican here is by no means to be admitted, viz. That this latter part of the chapter, from **#Es 9:25** to the end, came from the pen of some other man, not guided by the Spirit of God, and that because here is no mention made of praising God at this feast or stirring up one another to trust in him. For we know that all Scripture is of Divine inspiration, and it is to be presumed that those things were done at such solemnities, though it be not recorded in each particular.

Chapter 10

Ver. 1. **And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute, &c.**] An extraordinary tribute to maintain war against the Grecians, who, uniting together, were then grown potent and formidable. To enable himself, therefore, the better against them, he gathered money, the sinews of war, but lost the affections of his subjects, the joints of peace. He became hereby ill-beloved of all sorts, and far a less king, by striving to be more than he was. And hence haply one letter of his name is lost here, for the Masorites tell us that in the ancient copies he is written, not Ahasuerus, but Ahasres, without a Vau (Drus. in loc.). {*Hebrew Text Note*}

And upon the isles of the sea] Judaea was an isle, #**Isa 20:6** (but not of the sea, for it was part of the continent), because *media inseparabilis unda* separated from other countries, and encircled with God's powerful protection. It was, say some, by Mordecai's means exempted from this great taxation. Herodotus saith that a country near unto Arabia was exempted (Herod. 1. 3). He meaneth Judaea, saith Junius, though he name it not. It may be so. And it may be, saith an interpreter, that this is here inserted, as being intended only of the re-imposing of the tribute, whereof there was granted a release at Esther's marriage, #**Es 2:18**, yet it may be also added, to show how God punished the nations for their late greedy gaping after the lives and estates of God's people.

Ver. 2. **And all the acts of his power and his might**] Lyra and Rikelius observe that Ahasuerus had all this power and might given him by God, as a recompense of his courtesy to the Jews, and justice done upon their enemies. No man serveth God for nought. He is a liberal paymaster, #**Mal 1:10**. {*See Trapp on "Mal 1:10"*}

And the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai] Heb. The exposition. Many make large commentaries upon their own greatness, which a right exposition would show to be rather belluine than genuine. Great men are not always wise, saith Elihu, #**Job 32:9**. But Mordecai was a great wise man, every way accomplished, one of God's Rabbis, as Daniel calls them, fit to serve any prince in the world. "There is a spirit in man," a rational soul in an ordinary man; but "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," #**Job 32:8**.

Whereunto the king advanced him] Heb. Wherewith the king greatedened him; wherein he showed himself a wise and politic prince; as did likewise Pharaoh in advancing Joseph; Darius, Daniel; Constantius Chlorus, Christian officers; our Henry VIII, the Lord Cromwell, whom he made his vicar-general. Jovianus, the emperor, was wont to wish that he might govern wise men, and that wise men might govern him. Justin Martyr praiseth this sentence of divine Plato, Commonwealths will then be happy, when either philosophers reign or kings study philosophy (Justin. Apol. 1). Jethro's justitiary must be a wise man, fearing God, &c., #Ex 18:14-26, and that famous maxim of Constantius Chlorus, recorded by Eusebius, is very memorable: He cannot be faithful to me that is unfaithful to God, religion being the foundation of all true fidelity and loyalty to king and country.

Are they not written in the book of the chronicles] These chronicles of Media and Persia, if they were now to be had (as they are not), would far better acquaint us with the history of those times than the fragments of them, collected by Herodotus, Diodorus, Arrian, Justin, and Curtius. But better books than these chronicles are now wanting to the world; as the chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah, the book of the wars of the Lord, the book of Jasher, Origen's Octapla (the loss of which work, saith a learned man, *deplorare possumus, compensare non possumus*, bewail we may, but make up we cannot), Chrysostom upon Matthew (when promotions were offered Thomas Aquinas, his usual answer was, *Chrysostomi Commentarium in Matthaem malle*, I had rather have Chrysostom's commentary upon Matthew), and many other precious pieces, which learned men would gladly buy at as dear a rate as Plato did those three books that cost him thirty thousand florins. That we have the Holy Scriptures so perfect and entire, preserved safe from the injuries of time and rage of tyrants, who sought to burn them up and abolish them, is a sweet and singular providence; and must be so acknowledged.

Ver. 3. **For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus]** *Proximus a primo*, the king's second, as #2Ch 28:11, having the next chief seat to him, as Josephus expoundeth it, and set over all the princes of that monarchy (*Μετα βασιλεα εχων προεδριαν*); so that he

might well cry out, with that noble general Iphicrates, ἐξ οἴων εἰς οὐα, from what mean beginnings to how great an estate and dignity am I raised! How long he held it is not recorded; all the days of his life, it is likely, for the good and comfort of the Church, though not without the envy of many of the courtiers, which he overcame more by patience than pertinancy.

And great among the Jews] A kind of king in Jeshurun, as Moses, as great among them as if he had been their proper king. There is mention made of one Mordecai, #Ezr 2:2, who was of the first that went up with Zorobabel. Aben Ezra saith that this Mordecai was he; and that when he saw that the building of the city and temple went not on as was to be wished, he returned again out of Judea to Shushan, and lived about the king's court, being not known to be a Jew, till Haman was in his greatness; soon after which himself became much greater than Haman.

And accepted of the multitude of his brethren] He was their *Corculum*, sweet heart, as Scipio; their darling (*Orbis deliciae*), world of delight, as Titus; *Mundi Mirabilia*, wonder of the world, as Otho, the third emperor of Germany, was called. Of Mordecai it might be sung, as Cardanus did of our Edward VI,

Deliciae saecli et gloria gentis erat.

He was the delight of the generation and the glory of the nation.

Seeking the wealth of his people] Far more than his own private profit, glory, and dignity, labouring their good, both of soul and body, by all means possible, that they might have Gaius' prosperity, and be as happy as heart could wish.

And speaking peace] He was gentle and courteous to all, not like Polyphemus, who was

Nec visu facilis, nec dictu affabilis ulli.

Now affability and courtesy in high degree easily draweth men's minds, as fair flowers in the spring do passengers' eyes; Queen Elizabeth, If or instance, of whom before. Moreover, he spoke good of them, and for them, to the king, and promoted their prosperity to the utmost.

To all his seed] i.e. To all his countrymen, as if they had been his own children. And here that sweet promise of God, made to the good figs, was fulfilled. Jeremiah had persuaded Jehoiakim, and many others with him, to yield themselves up into the hands of the king of Assyria, assuring them that, so doing, they should fare far better than those that stood out. They did so, and Mordecai among the rest, as some will have it; and now see how well they speed, see the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promises; the reward of the righteous, the triumph of trust.

Again, to all his seed] That is, *posteris suis*, his posterity, so some sense it; he spoke peace to all his seed, that is, prosperity to all the Jews' posterity; providing for their future happiness also, and taking course, that after his death, too, the welfare of the Church might be continued, *Prolocutus est prosperitatem totius Iudaeorum posteritatis* He spoke for the prosperity of the entire posterity of the Jews. (Merlin). This was dying David's care, #1Ch 28:1,2, &c., and Paul's, #Ac 20:29, and Peter's, 2 Epist. i. 15, and Ambrose's, of whom Theodosius, speaking, said, *Dilexi virum*, I have loved the man. I could not but love the man exceedingly for this, that, when he died, he was more solicitous of the Church's than of his own dangers. So was Calvin, as is testified in his life. Nay, Cicero, as he could confidently sing,

O fortunatam natam me consule Romam.

Oh fortune that made me a consul of Rome. So he elsewhere professeth, that he was in no less care what the commonwealth would do when he was dead than whiles he was yet alive.

Soli Deo Gloria in aeternum.
Glory to God in eternity

Job

Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **There was a man]** A notable man, a man by an excellency, and with an accent (as it were), a man of high degree (*Animo virili praeditus*), as the word *Ish* signifieth, #Ps 49:2 62:9 (where it is opposed to Adam, *utpote quem ex meliore luto finxit Titan*), a manly man, every way excellent and eximious: *Magnus et admirabilis vir*, &c. A great and marvellous man, if it be fit to call him by the name of a man, as Chrysostom speaketh of Babylas the martyr. Basil, in his sermon of the forty martyrs, calleth them the stars of the world, and the flowers of the Churches, *αστερας της οικουμενης, ανθη των εκκλησιων*. Chrysostom, speaking of those that were praying for Peter, #Ac 12:12, saith that *Puriores caelo afflictione facti sunt*, by their afflictions they were become clearer than the azured sky; and elsewhere, falling into speech of some religious men of his time, he doubteth not, for their holy and heavenly conversation, to style them *Αγγελους*, angels. That Job deserved this high title, as well as the best of them, we have here, and otherwise, God's own testimony of him, and this whole Book, whereof he is the principal object, doth abundantly prove him a hero, *Daemonium hominis et miraculum naturae, ut de Scaligero non nemo dixit*, a supernatural man and of miraculous nature so that anyone said concerning Scaliger. *τρισμακαρες τε κασιγνητοι τε, κασιγνηται τε* (Hem. Odys.).

In the land of Uz] Which, what it was, and where situated, though our maps show us not, yet, by the consent of all, it was a country bordering upon Idumea in part, and part upon Arabia. See #La 4:21 Jer 25:20. Chrysostom testifieth that Job's sepulchre hath been showed in Arabia; which might well have been called happy, if but for having such an inhabitant. Ptolemy placeth the Hussites in Arabia.

Whose name was Job] It is, then, a true and real history that we here have of him, and not a fiction or a moral parable, as some have believed. See a double testimony for this, the one prophetical, #Eze 14:14, the other apostolical, #Jas 5:11, and such a well twined cord is not easily broken. What if Josephus make no mention in his history of such a man? it was beside his purpose to write anything

but what concerned the Jews. Aristeus in his History of the Jews maketh Job to be descended of Esau, and to dwell in Idumea. The Jewish doctors and some of the fathers of the Church make him to be that Jobab mentioned #Ge 36:33. True it is that the words differ much in the Hebrew writing; but for that, while he prospered, he might be called Jobab; when in distress (which lasted twelve months, say the Hebrews, seven years, saith Suidas) contracted into Job. See the like #Ru 1:20 Ge 17:5. Some make him to be much more ancient, viz. the same with that Jobab who was the son of Joktan, the nephew of Eber, #1Ch 1:25,26, and that himself was penman of this Book. He doth indeed wish that his words were written in a book; and haply he and his friends, laying their heads together, might write this history; and that in hexameters for most part, as Jerome thinketh. But that it was by inspiration of God is testified not only by the divine grandeur and majesty of the style, together with the intrinsical excellency and efficacy of the matter, but also by the concurrent testimony of not a few other Scriptures, sufficiently asserting the authenticity and authority of this Book. The common opinion is that it was written by Moses, while he abode as a stranger among the Midianites, for the comfort of his poor countrymen, groaning under the Egyptian servitude; or else, that this history, written at first by Job and his friends in prose, was afterwards by Moses put into verse, and embellished with the most rich ornaments, and the most glittering figures of poetry. Sure it is, saith Senault (Preface to his Paraphrase), that there is no book in the world where the manner of speaking is more noble, the conceits more generous, the descriptions more rich, and the comparisons more natural. Sometimes the author reasoneth like an excellent philosopher, oftentimes like a profound divine; but always like an orator, and his eloquence never leaveth him.

And that man was perfect] That is, upright (as it followeth next) and sincere, without guile or gall, a pattern of patience, a standing rule to all ages; and therefore (in God's acceptation and account) "perfect and entire, wanting nothing," #Jas 1:4, because in him patience had her perfect work, as much as mortality would afford, *Tamim de victimis perfectis et immaculatis dicitur*. The upright, it is said concerning perfect and spotless victim. It was but an unsavoury speech of him, who when he was persuaded to be patient as Job was,

replied, What tell you me of Job? Job never had any suits in Chancery. No, but he had far sharper trials; and if he had been judge in that court (as he was in his own country, #Job 29:12,17) he would have made as good despatch there as ever Sir Thomas More did, who calling once for the next cause, was answered, that there Was none.

And upright] More resembling Jacob, that plain hearted man, than Esau, his great grandfather. Of the word here used (Jesher) Israel was called Jeshurun, #De 32:15 33:5,26 Isa 44:2, because God requireth uprightness (which he calleth perfection, #De 18:13, and there is a great Tau in the word Tamim, {*Hebrew Text Note*} to show that an upright man keepeth the whole law from the first to the last letter thereof), and where he findeth it, reckoneth Jether, an Ishmaelite, #1Ch 7:38, to be a very good Israelite, #2Sa 17:25, and Job, the Idumean, a very good Christian; such a one as Apelles was, #Ro 16:10, approved in Christ (Buxtorf).

And one that feared God] With an amicable, not servile, fear, such as was that of those mongrels who feared him for his lions, and are therefore said not to have feared him, #2Ki 17:32-34. Job so lived with men as if God saw him, and so spake with God as if men overheard him *Sic vive cum hominibus, tanquam Deus videat. Sic loquere cum Deo, &c.* So live with men just as to see God. so to speak with God ...(Sen.). Thence it was that seldom or never did any man see him doing or hear him speaking but what was good and godly, as Xenophon saith of Socrates; thence it was that he never did well that he might appear to do so, *sed quia aliter facere non potuit* (as Velleius saith of Cato), but because, acting by this principle of God's fear, he could not do otherwise: for the fear of the Lord is pure, #Ps 19:9, and men do perfect holiness in the fear of God, #2Co 7:1.

And eschewed evil] He must needs do so that feareth God, the greatest good, since sin is the greatest evil, and stands in full opposition to him. Job, therefore, stands in awe, and sins not, he studiously declines evil, as he would do a serpent in his way, or poison in his food. And this he did, not in a land of uprightness, where the fear of God was in fashion; but among profane Esauites,

in the midst of a crooked and corrupt generation, as Noah in the old world, Lot in Sodom, Joseph in Egypt, Elijah amidst the Baalites, or as an orient star shining with fulness of heavenly light, and fixed in the region of happiness, though seen sometimes in a well, in a puddle, in a stinking ditch.

Ver. 2. **And there were born unto him seven sons]** This was a main part of his prosperity, to have such a numerous issue to build up his house and to heir his estate, though it proved to be *luctuosa fecunditas*, mournful fertility, as Jerome said Laeta's was, who lived to see her children buried before her. Job's children are spoken of before his wealth, because better valued; and yet after this fearing God and eschewing evil, to show (saith Fetus) that he was not like the men of these times, who, if they have many children, will take any evil course to get something for them, and think it a sufficient plea against works of piety or charity that they have many children to provide for. But such should know that not getting, but giving, is the way to thrive; neither can men better lay up for their children than by laying it out upon the backs and bellies of God's poor, to whom he that giveth shall not lack, **#Pr 28:27**, that is a bargain of God's own making; this the righteous knowing, "is merciful, and lendeth, and his seed is blessed," **#Ps 37:26**, when the wicked wretch's riches "perish by evil travail, and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand," **#Ec 5:14**. I read of a graceless son who, after his father's death, finding his hoard of money and evil gotten wealth, cried out, O faithful drudge! and he soon made a hand of it.

And three daughters] Hopeful and towardly; not like those of Augustus Caesar, whom, for the evil courses they took, he was wont to term them three pussful abscesses and ulcerous sores, wishing that either he had lived a bachelor or died childless, *Tres vomicas trio carcinomata* (Sueton.); but rather like those of Charles the Great, who so pleased him, that he could not at any time be well without their company, nor find in his heart to part with them, though it were to be well married.

Ver. 3. **His substance also]** Heb. His possession or acquisition, that stock and store which he had gotten, and was rightly possessed of, consisting very much in cattle, great and small (*Possessio maxime pecuaria. Nomen dictum est ab acquirendo*, Merc.), his possessions

were mostly in sheep. His name was said from acquiring. for money in was not then in so great request as now, when it is become the monarch, and bears the mastery, *Regina pecunia*, Queen of money, as he saith; *In precio precium nunc est*, saith another. We read not of Job's gold, silver, tapestry, rich furniture (saith Origen), and other accoutrements, now much used and valued, but not so of old. Heretofore in this island of ours (saith Hollingshed) 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 could show five shillings or a noble together in silver; and if the goodman of the house had a mattress or flock bed, and a sack of chaff to rest his head on, he thought himself as well lodged as the lord of the town, &c. Hollingshed further saith, that some old men he knew who told of such times in England, no longer ago.

Was seven thousand sheep] He had most of that most profitable creature, good both *ad esum* and *ad usum*; for eating and using; therefore also in sacrifices was no creature so frequently offered.

And three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen] sc. To carry his servants and his baggage, to export and import commodities; for

Nec vero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt.

And truly, the lands are not able to bear all his possessions.

And five hundred she asses] To plough his ground with, for great men were anciently much addicted to husbandry (as Uzziah, #2Ch 26:10), which Socrates called *Amaltheae cornu*, the horn of plenty; and the Romans reckoned, that grain was with them never so cheap as when men were fetched from the plough tail to govern the Commonwealth, *quasi gauderet terra laureato vomere, et aratro triumphali* (Plin.). But now the case is otherwise, as Beza upon this text complaineth; that husbandry and shepherdy are left for the basest and simplest men, and for such as all others might prey upon. And this bringeth into my mind, saith he, that which once I saw painted in a table, where the nobleman had this posy, By my sword I

defend you all; the clergyman, By my prayers I preserve you all; the countryman, I feed you all, lastly, the lawyer, I devour you all. Pellican noteth here, that Job had no horses, because he lived lovingly with his neighbours, not warring upon any: the horse is a warlike creature, prepared for the day of battle. But Beza noteth, that in that country they had little use of horses, as using camels to bear burdens, and asses to ride on. See #Jud 5:10 10:4.

And a very great household] Great store of servants he had about him, and himself was the greatest, according to that of the Greek poet (wherewith Luther was so taken, that he translated it in certain rhythms),

Εις εστι δουλος οικιας ο δεσποτης.

Some render it, He had very much husbandry; others, He had great doings in the world; the more was his trouble (it is not the great cage that maketh the bird sing; and abroad, she singeth not on the ground, but when got in the air, or on the top of trees; so is it with the saints), and the greater was his praise, that he could handle his thorns and not prick his fingers; have so much to do with the world, and yet not grow worldly-minded.

*Difficile est opibus non tradere mores,
Et cum tot Croesos viceris, esse Numam.*

It is difficult is not to surrender morals for wealth, and when so many Croesos' excel, to be a Numa. (Second king of Rome who reformed their society and religion.)

So that this man was the greatest, &c.] A king; some say, the first king of Edom, but that's uncertain; he might be a private man, and yet a very rich man; such as was Pythias, who was once able to entertain Xerxes and his two millions of men for three days, and yet died a beggar, and was famished. He was impoverished by his own folly and prodigality; but Job, by the immediate hand and good pleasure of God, for his trial, and for exercise of his patience. This commendeth unto us Job's constancy and magnanimity, which is so much the more wonderful, by how much this change was not only

not self acquired, but altogether unexpected; his sun went down suddenly, at high noon; and when he doubted least he was made a mirror of misfortune; as if God and men, heaven and earth, were set against him. In him it appeared that mortality was but the stage of mutability, and that,

*Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendencia filo;
Et subito casu, quae valere, ruunt.*

All things of men are hanging down on a feeble string; and suddenly overthrown, which to value is their ruin.

Ver. 4. **And his sons went and feasted in their houses]** They were of ripe years; and although unmarried, yet had they their several houses to dwell in. This declareth not only the wealthiness of the family, but also the good order and government thereof, as Beza observeth. Their orderly intercourse of friendly feasting one another shows their mutual love, concord, and agreement, by this means testified and increased. For wine hath (as one long since observed) ελκυστικον τι προς φιλιαν, an attractive power in it to make and keep friendship; and from the drinking of wine the word here used for a feast hath its denomination (משקה.) We may not think that they did thus every day, as that glutton the Gospel; or that in their banquets they used any excess, as the manner is of riotous and intemperate persons; for they had been better bred, and they observed this order with great modesty and discretion. They went and feasted; that is, they did it readily and cheerfully, that brotherly love might continue; for— *Fratrum quoque gratia rara est.* Favour has been rare between bothers. The devil doth what he can to cast a bone between brethren, to make those that should love most dearly to hate one another most deadly. See this exemplified in Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob, Joseph and his brethren, Joram and his, Romulus and Remus, Caracalla and Geta, Robert and Rufus, the two sons of William the Conqueror, Polynices and Eteocles, &c. And when such are once out, "A brother offended" (saith Solomon) "is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle," which, being strong, will neither bow nor yield, **#Pr 18:19.** All good means, therefore, must be used to prevent them, and to preserve that amity and unity which the psalmist doth so magnify, **#Ps 133:1-3,** and concludeth, that there God commandeth

the blessing, and life for evermore; that is, constant happiness perpetuated in and by a blessed posterity. The number of two hath been accounted accursed, because it was the first that departed from unity.

And sent and called for their three sisters] That their number and amity might be complete. This was no small joy to Job, that his children were so kind one to another. It is reckoned as a piece of his happiness; that which was denied to Abraham and Isaac (though fathers only of two children), to Jacob also, and Samuel, and David, Constantine the Great, and many others; whose children, through ambition, pride, covetousness, envy, evil surmises, &c., have been at odds, nay, at deadly feud among themselves. Beza upon these words observeth, that the sisters kept not with their brethren, but had their dwelling apart from them; which was both more seemly and more safe, as also more agreeing with maidenly shamefacedness. Neither is it said, that Job's sons sent for any other women; yea, the sisters came not over boldly to the banquets of their brethren, although they knew them to be men of a sober and honest disposition.

Ver. 5. And it was so, that when the days of their feasting were gone about] Such was his holy care of them, and jealousy over them, that he would defer the work no longer; as knowing that sin will rankle in the conscience, and harden the heart, like poison in the body, it must be quickly cast up, ere it get to the vitals.

That Job sent and sanctified them] Though they were grown up, yet he kept them in awe, as appears by his command to sanctify themselves against the sacrifice, *Ut se parent et purgent*. So he nourished and purified theme. So did not Eli, but honoured his untoward sons above God, even then when those lewd lowlies kicked at his sacrifice, and at his offering which he had commanded in his habitation, #**1Sa 2:29**. Job knew that he was bound as well to the preservation, as to the observation, of God's commandments, to see that others (those especially of his familiarity and family) keep them as well as himself. When, therefore, the circle of days and feasting was finished, he waited not till the eighth day came, but at the end of the seventh he summoneth all his children to come before the Lord in holy duties, with the best preparations they could make; to wash their hands in innocence before they compassed God's altar,

#Ps 26:6; to repent of their immoderations in mirth, or whatsoever other guilt they had any way contracted; lest he cast back their services as dirt upon their faces. The heathens, by the light of nature, saw that God was not to be served slightly and slubberingly. The Pythagoreans would not have men worship by the by, but make it their business, and prepare for it aforehand. And Numa Pompilius, second king of Rome, commanded that men should not worship God for fashion, carelessly, and as doing somewhat else; but freed from all other cares and cumbers, ουκ ες παραδω προσκυνειν, αλλα οικοθεν παρασκευασαμενοι. ουκ εν παρεργω και αμελως, &c. (Plut.). The Jews had their preparation and their forepreparation to the passover (παρασκευη, προπαρασκευη): and as any man measureth to God in preparation, God will measure to him again in blessing.

And rose up early in the morning] *Sanctificat, sanat, ditat quoque surgere mane.* Sanctify, heal, enrich also to rise in the morning. The morning is the best time for holy duties. God should have the first of everything; then, also, men are freshest and freest from worldly businesses. The Philistines arose early to do sacrifice to their Dagon, or Tritan, as other heathens called him. They generally took the top of the morning (*utpote quod παν εργον οφελλει*) to offer to their dung hill deities, as holding that then they sat in their temples, and took notice of morning salutations. Homer brings in Nestor sacrificing in the morning; so do the Roman historians their Potitii and Pinarii, offering to Hercules upon their greatest altar of all. Argonauts do the like in Apollonius; and the Persian magi were wont to worship the rising sun with their early hymns.

And offered burnt offerings] Whole burnt offerings, not sacrifice only (as the Greek interpreter hath it), nor peace offerings, whereof himself might have had part; but burnt offerings, that were offered in fire unto God, and that according to the number of his sons; not one general family sacrifice only, but for every one, one. It appeareth, then, that Job was no penny father, no niggard in God's service, but lavished money out of the bag, and thought all too little that way. So did Solomon in that greatest sacrifice that ever we read of, **#1Ki 8:63**, and his father David, when, out of his poverty, as he calleth it,

he had prepared for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver, &c., which Sir Walter Raleigh casteth up to be more than any king in the world is worth; this is check to our tenacity and baseness (Hist. of the World, Part II., cap. 17, sect. 9).

For Job said] viz. In his heart, for God understandeth the language of the heart also, **#Ps 139:1 Ge 20:11.**

It may be that my sons have sinned] Or, lest haply. He well knew the corruption of man's nature, wherein there is a *πανσπερμια*, seed place of all sins. He knew also how easily we overshoot ourselves at merry meetings, and give too much liberty to our tongues and appetites to run riot. He, therefore, seeks pardon for his children's suspected sins; he knew, besides unavoidable and involuntary infirmities (such as none are free from), they might be called to an account by a just and jealous God for their other men's sins, which they had not bewailed, **#1Co 5:2**, or not rebuked, at least by their countenance, as God doth, **#Ps 80:16**. Job was a man of a tender conscience, and therefore propounds to himself the worst; neither was it against charity in him to suspect ill of his children, while he intended their good, and turned his suspicion into a supplication. That his children were godly is put out of question, by his being at a question whether they had sinned. But how then doth it follow?

And cursed God in their hearts] And not blessed God, so Calvin rendereth it; not done him right, and therefore wrong, so Sanctius; they have not high and honourable conceptions of him, answerable to his excellent greatness; but, by base and bald thoughts, cast him, as it were, into a dishonourable mould, and not giving him the glory due to his name, that holy and reverend name, **#Ps 111:9**; great and dreadful among the heathen, **#Mal 1:14**. In the Hebrew it is, And blessed God, for cursed, by an euphemismus or antiphrasis; as when a harlot is called Kedesha, a holy woman, by contraries. So *auri sacra* (i.e. *execranda*) *fames*. sacrifice of gold (i.e. a curse) famine, The Hebrews so abhorred blasphemy against God, as they would not have the sound of it to be joined to the name of God, whom they commonly call Baruc-hu, the blessed one. So they would not take the name of leaven (that prohibited ware) into their mouths all the

time of the feast of the passover (Elias Thisb.). So in their common talk they call a sow *dabhar achar*; another thing, because they were forbidden to eat swine's flesh.

Thus did Job continually] Heb. all the days; that is, in the renewed seasons, he was not weary of well doing, but steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, always renewing his repentance, and faith in Christ, figured by those sacrifices; for the ceremonial law was their gospel.

Ver. 6. **Now there was a day]** Haply that day wherein Job's children were feasting their last. The Rabbis say the first day of the year, and some say the Sabbath day; but who told them so? This is to intrude into things which they have not seen, **#Col 2:18**, and whereof there is neither proof nor profit. Certain it is, that as God hath before all beginnings decreed all things, so he hath set and assigned the times or seasons which he hath put in his own power, **#Ac 1:7**, when everything shall come to pass as himself hath appointed. Now then, saith Beza, the time being come which he prefixed for the actual accomplishing of that he had decreed concerning Job, he revealed the same to Satan (being before altogether ignorant thereof), as whom he had appointed to be the chief instrument in executing his will and purpose.

The sons of God] *i.e.* The elect angels, called the sons of God here and elsewhere; not because they are so by eternal generation, as Christ alone; nor by adoption and regeneration, as the saints, **#Joh 1:12**; but by creation (as Adam is called the son of God, **#Lu 3:38**) and resemblance: for they are made in God's image, and are like him as his children, both in their substance, which is incorporeal, and in their excellent properties, which are life and immortality, blessedness and glory; wherein we shall one day be their equals, **#Lu 20:36**.

Came to present themselves] This is spoken in a low language, for our better apprehension, by allusion to the custom of earthly princes, and their attendants and officers coming to give an account, or receive directions. The angels are never absent from God, **#Lu 1:19**, but yet employed by him in governing the world, **#Eze 1.**, and guarding the saints, **#Heb 1:14**. This the heathens hammered at, for

both Plutarch and Proculus, the Platonist, say, that the angels do πορθμευειν, travel between heaven and earth, carrying the commands of God to men, and the desires of men to God, *Iussa divina ferentes ad homines, et hominum vota ad deos.*

And Satan came also among them] That old man slayer (envying Job's holiness and happiness, as much as the good angels rejoiced in it and promoted it; for he was seen of angels of both sorts) would needs make one among those sons of God, not without God's overruling power; although he regarded not so much God's authority as wanted an opportunity and licence to do mischief. In reference to this history, George Marsh, martyr, in a certain letter of his, writeth thus to his friend: The servants of God cannot at any time come and stand before God, that is, lead a godly life, and walk innocently, but Satan comes also among them; that is, he daily accuseth, findeth fault, vexeth, persecuteth, and troubleth the godly, &c. Yet unless God do permit him, he can do nothing at all, not so much as enter into a filthy hog. But we are more of price than many hogs before God (Acts and Mon. fol. 1423).

Before the Lord] Or by, or near, the Lord. But can Satan come into the presence of God? Surely no otherwise (saith Mr Caryl, a grave divine) than a blind man can come into the sun: he cometh into the sun, and the sun shineth upon him, but he sees not the sun. Satan comes so into the presence of God, that he is always seen of God; he is never so in the presence of God as to see God.

Ver. 7. **And the Lord said unto Satan]** Either by forming and creating a voice in the air, as #Mt 3:17 Job 12:25, or by an inward word, after an unspeakable manner; manifesting his will, as he willed, to Satan. The schoolmen have great disputes about the speech of spirits, but this they agree in, that the intention of one spirit is as plain an expression of his mind by another spirit (when he hath a will that the other should understand it) as the voice of one man is to another.

Whence comest thou?] This the Lord asketh not as if he were ignorant; for he knows all things, and that from eternity, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open before his eyes, #Heb 4:13; yea, in him all things

subsist, **#Col 1:17**, so that there can be no motion of the creature without his privity: God, therefore, thus interrogateth Satan, that he might show himself to be his judge, and that he might exact a confession out of his own mouth.

Then Satan answered the Lord] The word signifieth to speak in witness bearing, **#Ex 20:16**.

From going to and fro in the earth] He saith not, from instigating men to all manner of wickedness, from ranging up and down as a roaring lion, to devour souls, from sinning that sin against the Holy Ghost every moment, &c. All this he cunningly dissembleth, and saith, in effect, as once Gehazi did, Thy servant was nowhere, or for no hurt to any, when as he is never but doing mischief; as Pliny saith of the scorpion, that there is not one minute wherein it doth not put forth the sting. Is not the hand of Joab in this business? So, is not Satan in all the sins of the wicked, and in most of the troubles of the godly? *Heu quam furit Satan, et impellit securos homines ad horrenda flagitia!* &c., saith Luther. Oh how doth Satan range and rage, that he may glut himself with the blood of souls! In prosperity he makes men lay their hearts too near it, in adversity to lay it too near their hearts. Upon Job he tried both these stratagems.

And from walking up and down in it] A great peripatetic he is, and he walks the rounds; for he is yet a prisoner at large, only he hath his fetters upon his heels, **#Jude 6**, and in them he frisketh up and down, and fetcheth a circuit to spy faults, and to take advantages. Mr Broughton rendereth it, from searching to and fro in the earth, &c. *Non dormitat semper vigil ille synagogae suae Episcopus,* saith one, he is vigilant and diligent, restless and unquiet, as Cain (whom Amama calleth the devil's patriarch) could settle nowhere, but ran up and down as a fugitive and a vagabond, **#Ge 4:12**. It is said, **#Mt 12:45**, that this unclean spirit walketh in dry places seeking rest and finding none. Not but that dry and wet are all one with him, but it importeth his restlessness. See the like **#Jer 17:5**, to run to and fro is the condition and curse of those that are once departed from God. "Take heed, brethren," saith the apostle, "lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God," and wandering after worldly vanities, **#Heb 3:12**. Take heed of giving,

way to wilful distractions in holy duties. Men's hearts are oft so divided and dissipated, that if after any duty they should put this question that God doth here to Satan, Whence comest thou? the answer should be, From compassing the earth, &c.

Ver. 8. **Hast thou considered my servant Job**] Job then was in God's account a considerable person, and such a one as whose praise was not of men, but of God. Such are all godly people, but especially those that are eminent tall Christians; full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, as those Romans, **#Job 15:14**, men of choice spirits as Caleb, that walk up and down the world as so many conquerors, i **#Joh 5:4**, that are clothed with the sun, and tread upon the moon, **#Re 12:1**. These are men of mark, *et undique spectabiles*, worthy looking after. A man would have gone as far to have seen Luther as he in the story did to see Livy; or as the queen of Sheba did to see Solomon. A man would fetch such golden sentences as those he uttered upon his knees from Rome or Jerusalem, saith Mr Sam. Clark, that writeth his Life. "The tongue of the just is as choice silver: but the heart of the wicked is little worth," **#Pr 10:20**. Hence Antiochus is called a vile person, **#Da 11:21**, though a great potentate. And the prophet tells Joram, that wicked king of Israel, that but for Jehoshaphat's sake (a better man) he would not have looked toward him, nor have seen him, **#2Ki 3:14**. Job was a man of weight, and great worth, as were those precious sons of Zion, **#La 4:2**. Didst thou not therefore make a stand at his door, saith God? seest thou not how he stands as a standard bearer? shines as a great light? shows forth in his whole practice such a power of godliness, as is sufficient either to draw hearts, or to daunt them? hast thou met with such a man in all thy circuit, that can quit himself so well and wisely in all estates, like as gold is purged in the fire, shineth in the water? seest thou not how all his principles, practices, and aims, are supernal and supernatural?

That there is none like him in the earth] This was a high praise indeed; and yet no hyperbole; he was a giant to other good people, who were but dwarfs and zanies to him, for growth of grace and height of holiness. He was the paragon of his time; and of unparalleled piety. As Ahab was a very nonsuch for wickedness, **#1Ki 21:25**, so was Job for goodness. As Hezekiah outstripped all the kings of Judah for his trusting in the Lord, **#2Ki 18:5**, and Josiah

for his integrity, #2Ki 23:25, and the centurion for his heroic faith, Matt. viii., and Paul for his *plus ultra*, more in addition, #Php 3, and Ambrose, that, in Theodosius's account, he was the only bishop (Αμβροσιον οίδα μονον επισκοπον αξιωσ καλουμενον); so it was here, Job was above others, as Saul was above the people by the head and shoulders. As he was the greatest, so the best man of all the children of the East, not a man came near him, and yet they might be dear to God nevertheless. But it is with good people as with Jonathan's signal arrows; two fell short, and but one beyond the mark, &c. God hath his servants of all sorts and sizes; and *est aliquid prodire tenus*, &c.

A perfect and an upright man, &c.] A tough piece thou findest him, I suppose, and not easily malleable. Thou hast been doing at him, I doubt not, but canst do no good on it. Thou hast set thine heart upon him, and tried thine utmost skill to overturn him, but hast met with thy match, and been sent away without thine errand; thou hast but beat upon cold iron; thou hast struck fire, but without tinder; thou hast knocked at the door, but there was none within to open to thee. Thus God speaketh, to sting Satan; and (as it were) triumphing over his and Job's adversary.

Ver. 9. **Then Satan answered and said]** Satan and his imps will ever have somewhat to say against the clear truth; their wits will better serve them to elude or withstand it, than their pride and malice will suffer them once to yield and acknowledge it. But what said Austin of the heretics of his time? *Garriant illi, nos credamus*, Let them chatter, let us believe. Let them talk their fill, and think it a great matter to have the last word; let us hold to our principles, and count it enough, that, with Demetrius, we have good report of all men, (or if not so, yet) of the truth itself, #3Jo 12.

Doth Job fear God for nought?] *q.d.* No such matter. Is there not a cause? as they said once; hath he not wages of the best? and are not thy retributions more than bouutiful? He may serve thee well enough for such price and pay, as he daily receiveth; he may swim well enough, when so held up by the chin. But the truth is, Job is a mere mercenary, and serveth God for hire; he serveth not God, but himself upon God; in a word, he is an arrant hypocrite, and a self seeker, such a one as doth *in parabola ovis capras suas quaerere*,

to seek among his comparative sheep his nanny-goat, pretend piety to his own worldly respects, and serves God merely out of interest. A hypocrite indeed doth so, being therein 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 spieth sooner, and seizeth upon better. But how will Satan prove that Job is a hypocrite, since he cannot possibly know his heart? and did not the searcher of hearts acquit Job of this foul sin in Satan's hearing, when he pronounced him perfect and upright, &c.? How impudent then is this accuser of the brethren! The best is, that we have an advocate with the Father, who puts by and non-suits all Satan's accusations in the court of heaven, #**1Jo 2:2**. Yea, though Satan sometimes stand at the right hand of Joshua, #**Zec 3:1**, and may seem to have the better of him; yet here is the comfort, Jesus Christ our Advocate is also a propitiation for our sins, as it is in the same text. Who then shall lay anything to the charge of God's children? Or if any do, what need we care, when it is God that justifieth, and the saints as vanquishers shall come off as Job did, with great glory to themselves, and shame to the assailer.

Ver. 10. **Hast not thou made an hedge about him?**] Or, hast thou not trenched him in, and secured him with thine own bare hand, as in a town of war, or tower of brass? thou thyself either art the hedge, or makest it; and that not only about his person, but about his people, children, servants, &c., yea, about his whole estate, so that there is no coming at him: and this Satan seems to speak very angrily. {See Trapp on "Zec 2:5"}

On every side] *Per circuitum, circumcirca*. The devil could find never a gap, make never a breach. Oh the safety of a saint, that goes always under a double guard, the power of God without him, and the peace of God within him! The Lord himself is his keeper, the Lord his defence upon his right hand, #**Ps 121:5 Ps 91**; How miraculously hath Geneva been upheld, a small city environed with enemies, and barred out from help of other Churches! How well may we sit and sing, If the Lord had not been on our side, now may England say, if the Lord had not been on our side, when men (or rather devils in the shape of men) rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us, #**Ps 124:1,2**. They were not our wooden walls that saved us, &c., but thy right hand,

and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto us, #Ps 44:3. This was a better wall than that about China or Babylon, or that which David so soon leaped over by the help of his God, #Ps 18, who is *sic omnibus attentus ut non detentus a singulis*, so helpful to the whole community of his people, as that he neglecteth not any one that pertaineth unto him.

Thou hast blessed the work of his hands] So that he hath good success in all his business, all things thrive well under his hand; this the devil stomached; and, because he could not come at Job's heart, fed upon his own. Malice drinketh up the most part of its own venom. It pleaseth the Lord well that his people prosper, but the devil cannot endure it. Well might Austin say, *Invidia est vitium diabolicum*, envy is a devilish sin, for it transformeth men into so many breathing devils.

And his substance is increased in the land] Heb. Is broken forth; so that his house is too little to hold the precious and pleasant riches that are therein; his grounds cannot contain the increase of his cattle; *ruperunt herrea messes*. his barns overflow at harvest time. *In fine*, there is no end of his wealth.

Ver. 11. **But put forth thy hand]** Make Job feel the weight of it, as good people usually do more than others; yet not *ad exitium*, to destruction but *ad exercitium*, to their training, their crosses are not penal, but probational, and medicinal. The same holy hand of God that was put forth to protect and bless Job shall be put forth to afflict him. It must needs be therefore done in measure, and in mercy. If he smite Job, it shall be in the branches only, and not at the root, #Isa 27:8, for there is a blessing in it; his hand shall not be further put forth to smite than to save, #Isa 59:1 Ac 4:31 Ps 144:7. If Satan or his instruments over do, and offer to exceed their commission, he will never endure it, #Zec 1:15. This Satan knew very well, and therefore motioneth that God would put forth his hand and touch him; or, Put forth thy hand, I pray thee; or, Put forth thy hand a little (so some render it) and touch him; that is, lightly afflict him. Confer #Ge 26:11,19 Ps 105:15.

And touch all that he hath] Or, touch anything that he hath; so the word *Col* is used, #Job 8:12 Pr 1:17. And it is as if he should say,

Lay but some light loss upon him, and he will show his unsoundness; as if but light weights be hanged on rotten boughs, they will soon break; and as if wooden or earthen vessels be set empty to the fire, they will quickly crack.

And he will curse thee to thy face] Heb. If he do not curse thee, *q.d.* then I shall much marvel; or then say, I have no skill in him, if he will not thereupon bluster and blaspheme thee, and that openly, impudently, boldly, to thy very face, avowedly, as Caligula did; when he dared his Jove to a duel, with that hemistich in Homer, $\eta \mu \alpha \nu \alpha \epsilon \rho \eta \epsilon \gamma \omega \sigma \epsilon$; as Mahomet, the Grand Seignior, greatly grieved with the dishonour and loss he had at Scodra, most horribly brake out into blasphemous words not fit to be related; as that black mouthed pope with his *al despito di Dio*. They set their mouths against heaven, saith the psalmist, and let fly at God himself; they howl upwards with the wolf when hunger bit; they utter their own harsh voice, as the parrot when beaten; and like birds of prey that have been long kept in the dark, are out of measure fierce and furious when once they come abroad, so are ignorant and graceless persons: but Job was none such, whatever the devil deemed and averred of him. Pompey, when he had lost the field, might, for want of grace, say that there was a mist over the eye of Providence. Brutus, when overcome by his enemy, Antony, may say in a rage, that all things are carried by blind fortune, by hap hazard (*Dio.*). *Atque deos, atque astra vocat crudelia*. The gods as well as the stars he called crude. Those miscreants in Malachi may say, it is but lost labour to serve the Lord, #**Mal 3:14**; but Satan, suggesting that Job would do any such thing if crossed, did (as one speaketh) either lie knowingly, or at least guess ignorantly.

Ver. 12. **And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power]** Here God in appearance condescendeth to the devil's desires. But we must know, that God's end in this large grant was not to gratify the devil, but to glorify himself, by making Satan an instrument of his own shame and infamy, when, by all that he could do, Job would not be drawn to think or speak amiss of God; though Satan left him his wife (who was within his commission) to tempt him to it; and afterwards left him his tongue untouched (when all his body besides was smitten with sore boils), as hoping haply he would have cursed God therewith.

only upon himself put not forth, thy hand] Meddle not with his outward or reward man. He would fain have been doing with both, and had done it now, but for this merciful restriction, which to the devil was (no doubt) a very great vexation. But how could he help it, otherwise than as horses digest their choler by biting on the bridle? The will of the Lord must stand; and Job, though he shall have his back burden of crosses of all kinds, yet they shall not be laid upon him all at once, but piece meal, and at several times. *Fidelis est Deus*, God is faithful, saith the apostle (and father Latimer died in the flames with those sweet words in his mouth), God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, &c., but will surely proportion the burden to the back, and the stroke to the strength of them that shall bear it. See his gracious dealings with the apostles at their first setting forth into the world; and how by degrees he inured them to bear the cross of Christ, #Ac 2:1-13 4:5-22 5:17-42 12:1-19.

So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord] As thinking every hour two till he had sped his commission; the devil descended like lightning upon the earth, to search occasions to ruin Job, and to triumph over his patience, to touch all that he had, and to touch him to the very quick. This diligence of the devil in evil doing, how happy were it, saith Mr Beza, if we could imitate in doing well? But, behold, while Christ's enemies watch, and in the night set themselves in readiness to take him, his chief disciples do not only snort and sleep, but cannot so much as be awaked in the garden.

Ver. 13. **And there was a day]** A dismal day it proved to Job, "a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness," as #Zep 1:15. That subtle serpent set upon mischief, purposely picketh out such a time to do it as wherein such a sad and sudden change was least of all looked for; and then lays on amain (as if he were wood) with the hail shot, hell shot of sharpest afflictions. He knows well, that as mercies and deliverances, the more unexpected they are the more welcome, as Abraham's receiving his son Isaac after a sort from the dead; Israel's education out of Egypt, when they were forsaken by their hopes; Jonah's being drawn out of the belly of hell (as he phraseth it, #Jon 2:2); so crosses, the more suddenly they

befall men the more they amate them; and finding weak minds secure, they make them miserable, leave them desperate.

When his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine] Wherewith, if their hearts were overcharged (and what more easy? the devil foiled our first parents by inordinate appetite, and finding it then so successful a weapon, he maketh use of it still), that day might come upon them unawares, **#Lu 21:34**. That was Satan's drift surely, however it happened; and so to destroy body and soul together. But it is to be hoped that he was disappointed in his aim; and that death was sent in haste to Job's children, as an invitant to a better feast; and that they might do as our Saviour did, who being at a feast at Bethany, fell into a meditation and discourse of his death and burial, **#Joh 12:7,8**. Sure it is, that although the wicked may die sinning, and shall die in their sins, **#Joh 5:21**, and so be killed with death, as Jezebel's children were, **#Re 2:23**; yet God's children shall not die before their time, **#Ec 7:17**, or till the best time, till their work is done, **#Re 11:7**. No malice of man or devil can antedate my end a minute (saith one), while my Master hath work for me to do. It is the happiness of a saint, that he is sure not to die till that time, when as, if he were but rightly informed, he would even desire to die. Happy is he, that after due preparation is passed through the gates of death ere he be aware, as Job's children were.

Ver. 14. **And there came a messenger]** A sad relater, not a devil in the shape of a man, as the Rabbis would have it (let that pass for a Jewish fable), but one of Job's own servants, or some other eye witness, to make Job believe, belike, that, as an evil man, he only sought rebellion, since such cruel messengers were sent against him, **#Pr 17:11**.

The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding, &c.] *i.e.* We were none of us either idle, or ill-occupied; but taking pains, and tending our cattle, when this disaster befell us. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted," **#Ps 107:17**; they create themselves crosses, such as must therefore needs come with a sting in them, see **#Ge 42:21**. But Job's servants were honestly employed when plundered and assassinated; which showeth that his losses were not penal, but probational.

And the asses feeding beside them] Peter Martyr, upon the First of Samuel, wittily applieth this text to prelates and non-residents; who, when put in mind of their duty, would usually answer, that they had substitutes and curates to do their business for them, *Ita labor aliorum est, et proventus ipsorum*; so that others took the pains, and they the profit, saith he, and as it is in the Book of Job, The oxen plow, and the asses feed beside them.

Ver. 15. **And the Sabeans fell upon them]** *i.e.* The Arabians, a thievish people, that lived by rapine and robbery, *Sabaei apud poetas molles vocantur*; With the poets, the Sabeans were called effeminate, but Satan set them awork. They are at this day called Saracens, of Sarac, to rob; for they keep up their old trade, and are not all out so good as those Circassians, a kind of mongrel Christians who are said to divide their life between sin and devotion; dedicating their youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance.

Yea, they have slain the servants] Heb. The young men; for *εργα νεων, &c.*, *Iuniores ad labores*, junior men to work. It was happy, howsoever, that they were taken away when in their lawful calling, and about their honest employments. Elijah chose to be taken in such a posture; for he knew the very time; and yet when the chariots of heaven came to fetch him up he was going and talking to his scholar Elisha. The busy attendance on our holy vocation is no less pleasing to God, or safe for us to die upon, than an immediate devotion. Happy is that servant whom the Master, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

And I only am escaped alone to tell thee] For no other cause escaped this one, this single one, but to add to Job's affliction. There was no mercy in such a sparing; it was that Job might have the ill news brought him suddenly and certainly. That old manslayer had so contrived it for the greater mischief.

Ver. 16. **Whiles he was yet speaking]** See here, we may, that miseries many times stay not for a mannerly succession to each other, but, in a rude importunity, throng ill at once: *Fluctus fluctum trudit*, one deep calleth to another; and as one shower is unburdened, another is brewed, **#Ec 12:2**. It must not seem strange, but be joyous, to saints when they fall, or be precipitated, plunged,

into divers temptations, **#Jas 1:2**. For crosses seldom come single, *Aliud ex alio malum* (Terent.), *πονός πονῶ πονόν φέρει* (Aristoph.).

Then came also another, and said] Before Job could recollect and recover himself, or take breath: this was a sore trial. It is a mercy that we have some *lucida intervalla*, bright periods, that the rod of the wicked doth not always rest on the lot of the righteous; that there are any *interspiria*, periods of life any halcyons; since here they must have it, or nowhere, **#Re 21:4**.

The fire of God] This was more terrible than the former; because God seemed to fight against Job with his own bare hand, by fire from heaven, as once he did against Sodom. Be not thou a terror unto me, O Lord, saith Jeremiah, **#Jer 17:17**, and then I care not though all the world set against me. If mariners in a tempest have sea room enough, there is no fear; so, if men in afflictions can see and say, Yet God is good to Israel. To the pure in heart, there is comfort; and, on the contrary, it is fearful to fall into the hands of the living God! **#Heb 10:31**.

And hath burned up thy sheep] Wherewith Job was wont to offer sacrifice. It was great joy to those in Joel, that God, after a sore and long famine, would yet leave a blessing behind him; "even a meat offering and a drink offering," &c., **#Joe 2:14**.

And thy servants] Those souls of men, as they, are called, **#Re 18:13**. This was a worse loss than that of his sheep.

And I only, &c.] {See Trapp on "Job 1:15"}

Ver. 17. **While he was yet speaking]** See on **#Job 1:16**.

The Chaldeans] A base and obscure people from the beginning, subject to the Assyrians, but yet more potent than the Sabeans, as appeareth by the three bands they made out. The Sabeans are noted by Strabo to be an idle and effeminate people. The Chaldeans are set forth in the Scripture to be a bitter and hasty nation, terrible and dreadful, fiercer than the evening wolves, &c., **#Hab 1:6-8**. Satan proceeds by degrees to afflict Job, that he may at length overturn

him; but beyond expectation, he held out all assaults, *Instar rupia quae in mari vadoso horridi Iovis, et irati, ut ita dicam, Neptuni fervidis assultibus undique verberata non cedit aut minuitur; sed obtendit assuetum fluctibus latus, et firma duritie tumentis undae impetum sustinet ac frangit* (Joan. Wower Polymath).

Made out three bands] Which were marshalled and set in array by the devil, who was their commander-in-chief. *Sic saepe loricated incedit Satan, et cataphractus,* as Luther speaketh; he hath his legions among men also, who (like those vulturine eagles, **#Job 39:30**) do glut-glut blood, as the Hebrew word there soundeth and signifieth.

And fell upon the camels] Heb. Spread themselves over them, rushed and ran violently, making an impression upon the camels.

And have carried them away] Heb. Have taken them to themselves, though Job had never dealt discourteously with these Chaldeans, nor had his camels trespassed them, but were carefully kept by the servants. Innocence is no target against injury; neither doth victory always argue a just cause.

Yea, and slain the servants, &c.] {See Trapp on "Job 1:15"}

Ver. 18. **While he was yet speaking]** See **#Job 1:16**.

Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine] This was the last, but not the least, of Satan's assaults, reserved purposely to the last, to crush him quite, when he was now spent and spiritless, as he hoped. Let us look for like dealing, for a tough bout, at death howsoever; and be always ready prepared for another and a worse encounter. It is said of Caesar, that he sometimes put up, but seldom or never put off, his sword (Seneca). It is said of Queen Elizabeth, that, in the greatest calm, she provided for a storm. It is said of the bird onocrotalus, that she is so well practised to expect the hawk to grapple with her, that even when she shutteth her eyes she sleepeth with her beak exalted, as if she would contend with her adversary. Should not we stand constantly upon our guard, who have so restless and pitiless an enemy?

Thy sons and thy daughters, &c.] Men may die, then, with the meat in their mouths, and in the midst of their mirth and jollity; as did Amnon, Elah, Belshazzar. Whether, therefore, we eat or drink, &c., do all to the glory of God, **#1Co 10:31**. Let there be "holiness to the Lord" written upon our pots, **#Zec 14:21**. Let us eat, and drink, and sleep eternal life, as a reverend Scotch divine was said to do. Job's good heart ached and quaked, likely, at the hearing of this sad news, of so sudden a death of his children, amidst their merriments; for he used to say, when there was no such danger, It may be my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Methinks I hear him saying, or rather sighing, out those sorrowful words of Cratisilea, in Plutarch, when she saw her dear children slain before her, *Quo pueri estis profecti?* Poor souls, what is become of you? {See Trapp on "Job 1:13"}

Ver. 19. **And behold, there came a great wind]** The devil, doubtless, was in this wind (as he is, by Divine permission, "the prince of the power of the air," **#Eph 2:2**, and can thereby do much mischief); what wonder, then, though it were a great wind, since spirited by him, and came (*ventus a veniendo*), came on amain, and with a force, as being driven on by the devil. It was a wonderful wind (belike a whirlwind), and hath, therefore, a "behold" set upon it; such a wind as the relater had never known before; the Rabbis say, that he was so frightened with it, that no sooner had he made an end of his report of it to Job, but he fell down dead at his feet. Sure it is, that he relateth the matter punctually and graphically, with singular diligence, and without that moderation and making the best of things at first, as in such cases is usual, when parents are first made acquainted with the sudden death of their children, or other sad accidents that have befallen them. This messenger cluttereth out all at once, being thereunto set on and induced by Satan (as Lavater thinketh) to stir up Job's stomach, and to make him break off that so well twisted thread of his patience.

From the wilderness] Of Idumea, or Arabia, called Deserta. The devil, who haunteth dry and desert places, was the Aeolus that sent it. Let us bless that God (the maker and master of these meteors, and of all things else) who bindeth up such an enemy and boundeth such a power.

And smote the four corners of the house] This was extraordinary, and, therefore, the more dreadful; God seeming to fulfil upon Job and his children what he threateneth in the law, **#De 28:59**, I will make their plagues wonderful. But what saith Solomon, and that after long debate with himself about occurrents of this nature? "For all this I considered in mine heart, even to declare all this, that the righteous and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them," **#Ec 9:1,2** by externals we cannot judge aright of eternals. Let it be our care to "lay hold on eternal life"; and then sudden death can do us no hurt; no guest cometh unawares to him who keeps a constant table.

And it fell upon the young men, and they are dead] No doubt but they were miserably mauled and dismembered by the fall, so that they were pulled forth piece-meal, and it could hardly be known which was which, as we say. The like death befell Scopas, a rich and noble man of Thessaly, together with his guests, all crushed and killed together by the ruin of that room where they were feasting, and fearing no such danger, as Cicero telleth us: Simonides was at that feast, but was at that instant happily called out by two young men that came to speak with him (Cic. lib. 2, de Orator). Luther had the like deliverance, by a special providence, as Mr Fox relateth. But so had not those Londoners, in the reign of King William II, who perished by a terrible tempest, which blew down suddenly six hundred and six houses in that chief city (Acts and Mon. fol. 787. Stowe's Chron.). No more had those that died by the fall of part of a house in Blackfriars, where and while Drury, a Popish priest, was preaching, who, together with a hundred more Papists, his hearers, had there their passport: this happened in the year 1623. And the like we had lately at Witney, in Oxfordshire, where a scurrilous, blasphemous comedy was, by the fall of the room wherein it was noted, Feb. 3, 1652, turned into a tragedy, as ending with the deaths of six, and injuries of about sixty, who were bruised and maimed, and some, as it were, half dead, carried away by their friends. The narrative whereof, together with what was preached there in three sermons on that occasion from **#Ro 1:18**, is set forth by Mr John Rowe, lecturer in that town, in his book called Tragicomedia.

Ver. 20. **Then Job arose, and rent his mantle]** He stirred not at the three first doleful tidings, but this fourth startleth him; for he was neither a Stoic nor a stock. His strength was not the strength of stones, nor his flesh of brass, **#Job 6:12**, that he should bear blows, and never feel pain, or make moan; that he should be silent in darkness, **#1Sa 2:9**, and not cry when God bound him, **#Job 36:11**. This Stoical apathy or indolency (condemning all affections in that their wise man, who, as Cicero very well saith, as yet was never found) Jeremiah justly complaineth of, **#Jer 5:3**, and the Peripatetics utterly disliked; teaching, that wisdom doth not remove affections, but only reduce them to a mediocrity. Job kept the mean between despising the chastening of the Lord, and fainting when rebuked by him, **#Heb 12:5**. See my Love Tokens, pp. 37, 38, &c.

And shaved his head] In token of his very great sorrow. See **#Jer 7:29 Mic 1:16**, "Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle." *{See Trapp on "Mic 1:16"}* When Germanicus died, divers foreign princes shaved their beards, to show their grief (Sueton.). Plutarch telleth us that Alexander the Great, at the funeral of Hephestion, his favourite, not only shaved himself, but clipped his horses' and mules' hair; yea, he plucked down also the battlements of the walls of the city, that they might seem to mourn too; but this savoured of too much sullenness. How much better his Macedonians, who, being once 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. God calleth to baldness for sin, **#Isa 22:12**, which, in other cases, was forbidden, **#Le 19:27 21:5 De 14:1**. This Job performed here; for he knew that although God afflicteth sometimes for his own glory, **#Joh 9:3**, sometimes for trial or exercise of his people's graces, yet sin is ever at the bottom, as the meritorious cause of what they suffer; and if he did not duly consider it before, Zophar gave him to understand that God exacted of him less than his iniquity had deserved, **#Job 11:6**.

And fell down upon the ground] This shows that Job arose not before to this end, that, with a stout and stubborn gesture of the

body, he might withstand God; but rather, that he might, with greater lowliness and humility, submit to his justice, and implore his mercy: he fell down upon the ground and worshipped, saith the text; that is, he fell upon the ground to worship. He fell not all along on the earth, as Saul did, out of despondency and despair, after that he had heard the devil preaching his funeral; he lay like an ox on the earth, in the fulness of his stature, as the original hath it, **#1Sa 28:20**; but, as humbling himself under the mighty hand of God, who would raise him up in due season, **#1Pe 5:6**, and as reverently and religiously submitting to his will. And it is probably observed, saith a late expositor, Mr Caryl, out of another, that the ancient prophets and holy men were called *Nephalim procidentes*, or *prostrantes*, that is, prostrates, or railers-down, because in their worship they usually fell down upon the earth, to humble themselves before the Lord.

Ver. 21. **And said]** He lay not on the ground dumb as a stone, as it is said of Nabal, **#1Sa 25:37**, and feigned of Niobe. He rageth not as Xerxes did, when he beat the sea, by way of revenge; neither vexeth himself without measure, as Achilles, at the death of his friend Patroclus. He curseth not God to his face (as Satan, that old liar, said he would do), nor so much as the Sabeans and Chaldees, or the devil, the chief engineer of his present sufferings; but, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer," **#Ro 12:12**, he said, in the words of truth and soberness,

Naked came I out of my mother's womb] Hence the proverb, *Nudus tanquam ex matre*, not having a rag to my back, but stark naked, as ever I was born. Hither I came a pitiful, poor, destitute, shiftless, and forlorn creature, not having a cross to bless myself with, as they say; much less sheep and oxen, children and servants, &c.; howbeit God provided for me then; and as he took me out of the womb, so he made me to hope when I was upon my mother's breasts, **#Ps 22:9,10**. I was cast upon him from the womb, &c. And shall I now cast away my confidence, which hath so great recompense of reward? No, though he hath stripped me stark naked, and left me with as little as he first found me, yet I will trust in him. It is he that maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up again, **#1Sa 2:7**. The will of the Lord be done. Here I am, let the Lord do with me that which is right in his own eyes, **#2Sa**

15:26. He is Lord paramount, the true proprietary and owner of all; I have been only his steward, his tenant at will.

*Iamque meos dedo Domino tibi iure penates:
Tu mihi ius dederas, posse vocare Meos.*

And naked shall I return thither] sc. To the womb of my *Magna Parens*, Great mother, the earth, *Magna parens terra est* The great mother is the earth, (Ovid.), fitly called a mother, because, as thence we came in Adam, so there hence shall we be born again, as it were, at the resurrection; called, therefore, the regeneration, **#Mt 19:28**, for so some read the words there, Ye which have followed me, shall in the regeneration (when the Son of man shall sit in his glory) sit upon twelve thrones, &c. See **#Ps 2:7 Ac 13:33**. This Plato hammered at in his *παλιγγενεσία*, or great Revolution. To the grave, therefore, that womb of the earth, that congregation house of all living, as Job elsewhere calleth it, **#Job 30:23**, shall I return, saith he, implying that our life is nothing but a coming and a returning, *Repatriasse erit hoc*, saith Bernard, concerning death. It is but a coming and a going, saith a divine, it is but a flood and an ebb, and then we are carried into the ocean of eternity. I read of one who, being asked what life was? made an answer answerless; for he presently turned his back, and went his way. The truth is, we fetch here but a turn, and God saith, Return again, **#Ps 90:3**. To live is but to lie a dying; the earth receiveth us like a kind mother into her entrails; when we have a while trodden her underfoot, we haste to our long home, **#Ec 12:5**; Heb. to our old home, sc. to the dust, from whence at first we were taken. Tremellius rendereth it, *in domum saeculi*, to the house of our generation, where we and all our contemporaries shall meet. Cajetan, in *domum mundi*, the house which the world provided for us; and to this house (much in Job's mind, and, therefore, he here saith, thither), this house of the grave, as the Chaldee paraphraseth, men must return naked. "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came," saith Solomon, "and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand," **#Ec 5:15**. Death, as a porter, stands at the gate, and strips men of all their worldly wealth, leaving them *ne obolum quidem unde naulum solvant*.

*Haud ullas portabis opes Acherontis ad undas,
Nudus ab inferna stulte vehere rate (Propert.).*

Some have had great store of gold and silver buried with them, but to small purpose more than to proclaim their own folly. Some wiser than some: if I must leave all the rest, yet this I will take with me, said a silly fellow, when, giving up the ghost, he clapped a twenty shillings piece of gold into his mouth. Athenaeus telleth of one, that at the hour of his death devoured many pieces of gold, and sewed the rest in his coat, commanding that they should be all buried with him. Hermocrates being loth that any man should enjoy his goods after him, made himself, by will, heir of his own goods. These muck worms, like those ten men, #**Jer 41:8**, having treasures in the field, of wheat, barley, oil, &c., are full loth to part with them; and having much cattle, as those Reubenites and Gadites, #**Nu 32:5**, they would fain live still on this side Jordan; having made their gold their god, they cannot think of parting with it; they would, if possible, carry the world with them out of the world. But what saith the apostle? We brought nothing with us into this world, and it is certain (see how he assevereth and assureth it, as if some rich wretches made question of it) we can carry nothing out, nothing but a winding sheet, #**1Ti 6:7**; as Sultan Saladin's shirt, which he commanded to be hung up at his burial; a bare priest going before the bier and proclaiming, Saladin, the mighty monarch of the East, is gone, and taketh no more with him than what you here see. And to the same sense the poet speaking of Hannibal, saith,

— modo quem fortuna fovendo
Congestis opibus donisque refersit opimis,
Nudum tartarca portarit navita cymba (Sil. Ital.).

The Lord gave] It is his blessing upon the diligent hand, that maketh rich, #**Pr 10:22**, as without that all pains and policies are but arena sine calce, sand without lime, they will not hold together. Not only every perfect (that is, spiritual blessings in heavenly things), but every good gift, that is, temporal blessings in creature comforts, come from above, from the Father of lights, #**Jas 1:17**, as pledges of his love to those that are his, and as an earnest of better things hereafter, #**Ps 23:5,6 Ge 27:28** God give thee the dew of

heaven, saith Isaac to Jacob. Esau likewise hath the like, but not with a God give thee; he profanely sacrificed to his own net, not having God in all his thoughts. He said with that Assyrian, **#Isa 10:13**, By the strength of my hand have I done this: my power and the might of my hand hath gotten me all this wealth, &c., **#De 8:10,11**. Is not this great Babel that I have built? &c. Job uttereth no such bubbles of words; he arrogateth nothing to himself, but ascribeth all to God, whom the heathens also acknowledge Δωπηρεαων, The giver of all good (Hom.).

And the Lord hath fallen away] As well he might, for though I had the possession, yet he hath the property; neither can he possibly do me wrong, since he is Lord of all, and may dispose of me and mine as he pleaseth. Jerome teacheth his friend Julian to say, *Tulisti liberos quos ipse dederas: non contristor quod recepisti, ago gratias quod dedisti*, Thou hast taken away the children which thou hadst given me. I grieve not that thou hast taken them, but give thee thanks for giving them. Julian, that vile apostate, said at his death, I gladly render up my life to Nature requiring it; as a thankful and faithful debtor, *Vitam reposcenti naturae tanquam debitor bonae fidei redditurus exulto* (Ammian. 1. 25). This was, sure, but a copy of his countenance, and merely for a name. And what shall we think of Quintus Fabius Maximus? who, when he heard that his mother and wife, whom he loved dearly, were slain by the fall of a house, and that his younger son, a brave hopeful young man, died the same time in Umbria, he never changed his countenance (though his friends lamented the loss with many tears), but went on with the business of the commonwealth, as if no such calamity had befallen him: was this patience or stupidity, whether? Patience is a fruit of the Spirit, **#Ga 5:22**, so that Aquinas needed not to have questioned, whether a man can have patience *sine auxilio gratiae*, without the help of God's grace. A natural man may, for sinister ends, bite in his pain, as Marius did, when his leg was cut off by the surgeon; he may conceal his grief, as Mithridates did for a time; but all the while he was in a kind of fever (Epiasis the physicians call it) wherein men be cold without, but hot as fire within. And the like we may judge of Philip II, king of Spain, who is said to have borne the loss of his invincible Armada that had been three years a rigging, with much patience, giving, and commanding to be given all over Spain, thanks

to God and the saints, that it was no more grievous. This was but a feigned and a forced patience; it was rather pertinacy than patience, it was an obstinate stiffness of mind, &c. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and what was the ground of it? he beheld God in all, the Lord hath taken away, saith he: not a word of the Chaldean and Sabeian plunderers, not a tittle against the devil who had employed them; and why? Job easily discerned God's arrows in Satan's hand, and God's hand on the arms of those that had robbed him, and wronged him; hence *Taceo, Fero, Spero*, I am silent, I endure, I hope. was his motto. It is the Lord, said Eli, when threatened with the loss of all. I was dumb, saith David, because it was thy doing, **#1Sa 3:18 Ps 39:9**. So was Jacob for the same reason, in the rape of Dinah, his only daughter, afterwards married to Job, say the Jewish doctors, **#Ge 34:5**. So was Aaron in the untimely end of his untowardly children, **#Le 10:3**. So was Mauricius, the good emperor, when he saw his wife and children slain before his eyes by the traitor Phocas. And so was, lastly, that noble lord of Plessis, who when he had lost his only son (a gentleman of marvellous great hope) in the Low Countries, and shortly after, his lady died of that grief, he took up those words of David, I was silent, and said no word, because thou, Lord, hadst done it.

Blessed be the name of the Lord] As well for taking away as for giving. This was a rare bird that would thus sing in winter. It is easy to swim in a warm bath, and every bird can sing in a warm sunshine; but to bless God heartily when afflicted most heavily, this, this is the breathing of an excellent spirit. In everything to give thanks, *O quam hoc non est omnium!* O then is this not all things! In this theme of blessing God for afflictions, also Basil spendeth all his sermon which he entitleth, Giving of thanks in all things. *Christianorum propria virtus est*, Courage is peculiar to Christians, saith Jerome, it is a virtue proper to true Christians, heartily, and not hollowly, to give God thanks for crosses, for it proceeds from the joy of faith, and some taste of God's fatherly care of us in our corrections. If good things befall thee, bless God, and they shall be increased; if evil things, bless God, and they shall be removed, saith Austin; of whom also it is reported, that he had always in his mouth *Deo gratias*, Thanks be to God, for whatsoever befalleth us; *Si bona dederit Deus, gratias agito, et augebuntur*, &c. If God gives

good things I will be thankful, and if he increases... &c The prophet, #Ps 89:38-52, lamentably complaineth of the Church's miseries, and yet concludeth, Blessed be the Lord for evermore; and this he doth, not formally and slightly, but earnestly, and with much affection. Lo, this is the guise of those that be gracious. But how blank (think we) was the devil, when, hoping to hear Job blaspheme God, he heareth him blessing God's name in this sort, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord! The Greek and Latin translations insert here another sentence that is not found in the Hebrew verity; viz. even as it pleaseth the Lord, so come things to pass, $\omega\varsigma \tau\omega \kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omega \epsilon\delta\omicron\zeta\epsilon\nu, \omicron\upsilon\tau\omega \epsilon\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ (Sept.). Our late common prayer book also hath the same words in the form for burial of the dead.

Ver. 22. **In all this Job sinned not**] The Greek and Latin versions add here, with his lips; but I could rather be of Mercer's judgment, who referreth the former part of this verse to the mind, and the latter to the mouth (Beza.); showing that Job neither thought in his heart, nor uttered with his mouth, anything unsuitable and unworthy of God, insomuch, that both within and without he carried away the victory and conquest over Satan, and so better deserved to be sainted than our Henry VI, of whom the chronicler writeth thus: The king in both estates so demeaned himself, that he modestly carried the one, and moderately underwent the other; yea, such was his deportment, that the inconstancy of his state could not alter the constancy of his mind; insomuch that one of his successors, King Henry VII, laboured for that only virtue, to have him canonized for a saint; and had obtained to have done it, had not the charges thereof so far exceeded mediocrity, as to cause him to leave it undone (Dan. Hist. contin. by Trussel). God himself hath here canonized, crowned, and chronicled holy Job, for his many good properties before, and here for his humility and patience. The trial of his faith, being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, is found to praise and honour and glory, #1Pe 1:7. It was a saying of Philostratus, that one Jupiter set out by Homer, the poet, was worth ten set out by Phydias, the carver; because the former flew abroad through all the world; whereas the other never stirred from his pedestal at Athens: so one Job, thus renowned by God's own pen, is far beyond all that have been memorized in human histories for their equanimity and constancy. In all this that Job suffered, acted, and

uttered, he sinned not, *sc.* sinningly; he was not transformed into sin's image; he sinned not by cursing God, as Satan hoped, and would have had it; or charged God foolishly, or with folly; with anything insolent, insulse, unsavoury; he charged him not in the least, to have dealt unwisely or unworthily with him; and this is here mentioned, as grace, almost to a miracle, as patience having her perfect work, and proving Job to be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, #Jas 1:4.

Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Again there was a day]** Whether the next day, or the next sabbath day, or the next first, day of the year (which is God's day of general audit, as the Rabbis will have it), we have not to say. God, as he hath in his eternal counsel fore appointed everything that is done; so he hath set the times wherein, #Ec 3:1, such as the creature can neither alter nor order. This is a comfortable consideration.

When the sons of God, &c.] See #Job 1:6.

And Satan came also among them] Whether summoned to give an account, or of his own accord to sue out a new commission against Job, it skilleth not. Restless he is; and it behoveth us to be vigilant; not ignorant of his wiles, nor unmindful of his inveterate envy and enmity.

Ver. 2. **And the Lord said unto Satan, &c.]** See #Job 1:7.

From going to and fro in the earth] In heaven he comes not; into that earthly paradise he could screw himself, not so into the heavenly. No dirty dog ever trampled on that golden pavement; those that are there are *extra iactum* outside have been thrown out of Satan's gun shot; but while here he will ever and anon have a bout with the best; he walks about for the nonce, spying advantages.

And from walking up and down in it] Doing his feats, and carrying news. It might very well be he who, when Domitian the emperor was slain by his own servants at Rome, informed Apollonius Tyaneus thereof at Ephesus, where he is said to have cried out the same time, To him, Stephen; strike him, kill him. But

what a vain glorious vaunt of an impudent wretch was this, that though vanquished, as he had been by Job, and beaten on his own dunghill, he should take upon him still in this sort, that he had been walking up and down as a conqueror or emperor of this present world! Surely as Job still retained his integrity, so did Satan his vanity: boasting that he came now from visiting his estate; and that nothing rendered him more glorious than the great number of his subjects which depended upon his will (Senault).

Ver. 3. **And the Lord said unto Satan]** Before he would condemn him he thus interrogateth him (which he would not vouchsafe to do when he had deceived our first parents, #Ge 3:14), but with a very bitter taunt and sharp reprehension; as if God should have said, Art thou not ashamed, Satan, thus to answer me, as if I had forgotten what I granted thee in our last assembly, and thus in my presence to dissemble? &c. (Beza).

Hast thou considered my servant Job] See #Job 1:8.

One that feareth God, &c.] This he did not without God (according to that clause in the new covenant, I will put my fear into their hearts, #Jer 31:40. I, is emphatical and exclusive, *q.d.* I, and I alone), yet God giveth him the honour of it; as if he himself had been the sole doer. *Certum est, nos facere quod facimus; sed ille tacit ut faciamus,* saith Austin. Sure it is that we do what good we do; but as sure it is that God doth all our works in us and for us, #Isa 26:12.

And still he holdeth fast his integrity] Which thou hast driven *quasi ficedula extorquere,* as to tear a small bird, by wrench and wile to get from him; but he hath hitherto held it fast, as with tooth and nail. This was a singular commendation, and that is a rare faith, which, being long tried, doth not flag and hang the wing. By reason of the overflow of iniquity the love of many shall wax cold (saith our Saviour), but he that endureth to the end shall be saved, #Mt 24:12,13. Lo, it is but a he, a single man, that retaineth his integrity; when many lose their first love, and fall from their former stedfastness, as fast as leaves fall in autumn. Job would not part with his integrity to die for it; when all was taken away he laid fast hold on that, and resolved to let go his life sooner. Christ he saw standing

over him (as once Stephen did), and saying, Hold fast that thou hast, that no one take thy crown from thee, #Re 3:11. *Omnia perdidit qui fidem amisit*, he destroys everthing who loses faith. saith Seneca. In a common combustion a mail will be sure to secure his jewels, whatever become of his lumber.

Although thou movedst me against him] That is, against his personal estate, and his children, which are called himself; against these Satan is said to have moved the Lord, to have incited and instigated him, stirring him up with reasons and arguments; as he is an excellent orator if he may but have audience. But that the Lord was hereby moved to do aught against Job must be wisely and rightly understood; for God is immutable and unmovable; neither can he be drawn to do anything but what he hath decreed to do from before all beginnings; but here he speaketh after the manner of men, as if he were prevailed with by Satan's solicitations.

To destroy him] So Satan would have had it, when God meant to try him only. See the like #Re 2:10.

Without cause] Or for nothing (as the word signifieth, #Job 1:10, "Doth Job fear God for nought?") without any provocation or cause on his part procuring it. Not but that there is cause enough in the best why God should afflict them: but as there was no *peccatum flagrans* burning sin in Jacob, #Nu 23:21, no foul sin of that people, flaming at that time in the eyes of God, or stinking in his nostrils, and therefore Balaam (the devil's spellman) could do nought against them by his enchantments, #Nu 23:23; so there was not in Job that gross hypocrisy, wherewith Satan had falsely charged him (*Iob non erat flagitiosus*, Job was no disgraceful, Lavat.), he was not that mercenary that Satan would have made of him. In vain did that arch slanderer and accuser of the saints move the Lord against Job, *Gratis, id est, Frustra*, without payment it is, in vain, saith Lyra; in vain did he assault this stout champion, &c.

Ver. 4. **And Satan answered the Lord]** This impudent adversary had yet an answer in his mouth, and would not be so set down. Of him and his agents (those false teachers, as the apostle calleth them) it may be truly said,

— *Nihil est audacius illis*
Deprensus: iram atque animos ex crimine sumunt (Juvenal).

Nothing is more bold to those caught, they are angry but proud from their crime.

Skin for skin] *Any skin for his own; cattle, servants, children may be easily parted with by him, to save himself in a whole skin, to keep himself whole: others read it, skin after skin, or skin upon skin; both the Cutis skin and the Pellis hide shall go so that life may be preserved; as a man will hold up his arm to save his head, or suffer the loss of a limb to save his life. Ut corpus redimas; ferrum patieris et ignes.* So that the body may be redeemed; endure the sword and the fire. Job is still *integra cute*, skin whole, saith Satan; and so long there is little trial of him: that man is rich enough who is well. I read of one, who being asked how old he was, answered that he was in health; and to another that asked how rich he was, answered that he was not in debt: *q.d.* he is young enough that is in health, and rich enough that is not in debt. Now all this Job was yet, and therefore Satan ill paid and unsatisfied.

And all that he hath will a man give for his life] Life is sweet, we say; and man is a life loving creature, saith the heathen, ζῶον φιλοζῶον (Aesop), fond of life, and afraid of death, which is Nature's slaughterman, and therefore the most terrible of terribles, as Aristotle styleth it, τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερῶτατον. The Gibeonites refused not to be perpetual slaves, so they might but live. Those that are overcome in battle are content to be stripped of all, so they may have quarter for their lives. Mariners in a tempest cast their lading into the sea, though never so precious, in hope of life. If Job may escape with the skin of his teeth, it is some favour; he may not think much to sacrifice all that he hath to the service of his life, his conscience only excepted. Some good people have strained that too for love of life, as when Abraham denied his wife; David changed his behaviour; Peter denied his Master; Queen Elizabeth (though afterwards she could say, When I call to mind things past, behold things present, and expect things to come, I hold them happiest that go hence soonest, yet) in Queen Mary's time, she sometimes heard divine service after the Romish religion, and was often confessed;

yea, at the rigorous solicitation of Cardinal Pole, she professed herself a Romish Catholic; yet did not Queen Mary believe her (saith mine author), remembering that she herself, for fear of death, had by letters written with her own hand to her father, both renounced for ever the bishop of Rome's authority, and with it acknowledged her father to be supreme head of the Church of England under Christ, and her mother's marriage to have been incestuous and unjust. Those good souls did better that loved not their lives unto death, #Re 12:11, that by losing their lives saved them, #Mt 10:39, that held with that martyr (Julius Palmer), that life is sweet only to such as have their souls linked to their bodies as a thief's foot is in a pair of fetters.

Ver 5. **But put forth thine hand now]** {See Trapp on "Job 1:11"} This God did at Satan's motion, yet *non ad exitium Iobi, sed ad exercitium*; not for the destruction of Job but his training, Job's temptation is of Satan, but his trial and invincible constancy is of God. God in a sense tempted Job. Satan also; even as the dog may be said to bait the beast, and the owner of the beast too, that suffered him to be baited.

And touch his bone and his flesh] Pinch him to the quick, that not his flesh only may feel it, but the marrow also in his bones, #Ps 6:2,32:3 51:8. The bone and flesh are the chief materials of man's body, which is fitly compared to a fabric, wherein the bones are the timber work, the head the upper lodging, the eyes as windows, the eyelids as casements, the brows as pent-houses, the ears as watch towers, the mouth as a door, to take in that which shall uphold the building, and keep it in reparations, the stomach as a kitchen, to dress that which is conveyed into it, the guts and baser parts as sinks belonging to the house, &c., as one maketh the comparison. Now in all these and the rest of his parts of body Satan would have Job to be smitten; and then he made no question of a conquest. Pain is a piercing shaft in Satan's quiver of temptations; hence he stirred up his agents to tympanize and torment the martyrs with as much cruelty as the wit of malice could devise; but all in vain, #Heb 11:35,36. Apollonia had all her teeth pulled out of her head (hence Papists make her the saint for toothaches). Blandina tired those that tortured her. Theodorus was cruelly whipped, racked, and scraped with sharp shells, by the command of Julian, but yielded not (Socrat.

Theodor.). Rose Allen had her hand wrist burnt by Justice Tyrrell, who held a candle under it till the sinews brake that all the house heard them; and then thrusting her from him violently, said, Ah, strong whore, wilt thou not cry? thou shameless whore, thou beastly whore, &c. But she quietly suffered his rage for a time, at the last said, Sir, have you done what you will do? and he said, Yea; and if thou think it not well, then mend it. Mend it? said she; nay, the Lord mend you, and give you repentance, if it be his will. And now, if you think it fit, begin at the feet, and burn the head also; for he that set you awork shall pay your wages one day, I warrant you. As little got the devil by these worthies, as he did by Job's boils and carbuncles. We are ashamed (said one of Julian's nobles to him), we are ashamed, O Emperor, the Christians laugh at your cruelty, and grow the more resolute.

And he will curse thee to thy face] Heb. If he curse thee not to thy face, *q.d.* then damn me, send me to hell presently. This Satan holds in by an aposiopesis, *{A rhetorical device, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed.}* being therein more modest than our desperate and detestable God-damnmes: let them see how they gratify the devil who curse and blaspheme, or protest openly what they know to be false. This the devil did not.

Ver. 6. **And the Lord said unto Satan]** Who hath his request: it is not always a mercy to have what we wish. *Deus saepe dat iratus, quod negat propitius.* God often gives wrath because he denies his favour. Be sure we bring lawful petitions, and true hearts, **#Heb 10:22**, and then we shall have good things, and for our greatest good.

Behold, he is in thine hand] Here God puts his child into his slave's hand to correct, but not to destroy. And surely, if we give reverence to the fathers of our flesh, who correct us for their own pleasure, shall we not much more be in subjection unto the Father of spirits chastening us for our profit, and live? The Turks, though cruelly lashed, are yet compelled to return to him that commanded it, to kiss his hand, and give him thanks, to pay the officer that whipped them. This last we need not do, but the former we ought, taking God's part against ourselves, and resting contented; though as Paul delivered up some to Satan, that they might learn not to

blaspheme, so God delivered us up to him and his agents (such as Satanically hate us, and are devilishly bent against us, **#Ps 32:10** causing us to suffer more than any ever did out of hell), that we may learn not to be proud, secure, sensual, and may preach forth the virtues of him who hath brought us out of darkness into his marvellous light, **#1Pe 2:9**. Let us not say if God would take the rod into his own hand, I could better bear it; but the tender mercies of that wicked one and his imps are mere cruelties. For, 1. This is as if the child should say, If I might choose my rod, I would not care to be whipped; or the condemned nobleman, If I might choose mine executioner, I would not care to lose mine head. 2. It is but one hand and many instruments that God smiteth us with. Our enemies are but the men of God's hand, **#Ps 17:14**, that can do no more than is given them from above, **#Joh 19:11**. God's masons to hew us here in the mount, that we may be as the polished corners of the temple, **#Ps 144:12**. God's scullions, to scour up the vessels of his household, that they may shine upon the celestial shelf, as that martyr said. 3. God ever reserveth to himself the royalty of setting them their task, limiting them their time, and letting out their tedder; hitherto ye shall go, and no further. 4. If they exceed their commission (as they are apt), God's jealousy will smoke against them, **#Zec 1:14**.

But save his life] Heb. his soul; put oft for the life, the cause for the effect. Satan shook his chain at Job's soul, and would have destroyed it, but that he might not do; scratch him he might with his paws, but not fasten his fangs in him. Job could say (for a season at least), as that dying saint did, my body is weak, my soul is well. His afflictions, as afterwards St Paul's, reached but to his flesh, **#Col 1:24**. And see that thou save his life too, saith God (see how he chaineth up the devil who would fain have been sucking Job's blood, and swallowing him down his wide gullet, **#1Pe 5:8**); save it, that is, spare it; see that the spirit fail not before me, and the soul that I have made, **#Isa 57:16**. I have yet some further use of him, though a lamentable lazar. You know how through infirmity of the flesh, that is, notwithstanding the infirmity and weakness of my body, I preached the gospel, saith Paul, and my temptation which was in my flesh you despised not, **#Ga 4:13,14**. Daniel, though sick, yet did the king's business; and Job, though scabbed all over, was yet of great use, and reserved to great honour; therefore saves his

life, saith God; and the devil, say the Rabbis, was as much vexed and wounded with this restraint as Job was with all his wounds and ulcers. It is surely a vexation to malice not to do its utmost.

Ver. 7. **So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord]** The like is said of Cain, when he meditated the murder of his innocent brother, and went to put it in practice. Malefactors amongst us, we know, are indicted in this form: For that thou, not having God before thine eyes, but moved by the instigation of the devil, didst—

And smote Job] He pretended to touch him only, **#Job 2:5**, but let every good man bless himself out of Satan's bloody fingers; his iron entered into Joseph's soul, his stroke was very vehement upon Job's body, making return *pro vulnere corpus*: for to wound his body, for he smote Job

With sore boils] Hot boiling boils, such as the sorcerers of Egypt were smitten with, **#Ex 9:10**, and afterwards the limbs of Antichrist, **#Re 16:2**. The Indian scab some say it was, or the French disease. A most filthy and odious ulcer it appeareth to have been, sore and matory (why else should he so scrape himself with a potsherd, as **#Job 2:8**), such as whose sharp and pricking humour penetrated the very bone, and put him to exquisite pain, being worse to him than Augustus's *tres vomicae tria carcinomata*, above mentioned, or Philip II of Spain's loathsome and lousy disease, whereof he died A.D. 1598. Carolus Scribanus thus describeth it (Instit. Princip. cap. 20), This potent prince for a long time endured *ulcerum magnitudinem, multitudinem, acerbitem, faetorem, &c.*, i.e. many great, sharp, and stinking ulcers, which fastened him to his bed, as to a cross, for a whole year before his death; besides six years torture by the gout, a hectic fever, with a double tertian for two years feeding upon his bowels and the very marrow of his bones; besides a most grievous flux for twenty two days, a continual nauseousness of his stomach, an unsatisfiable thirst, a continual pain of his head and eyes, abundance of matter working out of his ulcers, *quae binas in dies scutellas divite paedore implet*, which in two short days, he spent is wealth, besides a most loathsome stench that took away his sleep, &c. :thus he. Think the same and worse of Job, the object of Satan's utmost malice, and that for a whole year, say the Hebrews; for seven whole years, saith Suidas. Chrysostom compareth him

with Lazarus, and maketh him to be in a far worse condition. Pineda showeth that his sufferings were a great deal worse than those of the wicked Egyptians under all their ten plagues; this was a boil, an evil boil, saith the text, one of the worst sort, the most painful and malignant that might be, and this all over his body.

From the sole of his foot unto his crown] It was all but one continued sore, universal as the leprosy, and therefore incurable; threatened as an utmost plague, an evil, an only evil, **#De 28:35**. If any part were left untouched, it was his tongue and mouth, that it might be free to blaspheme God; and that herein he was not smitten by Satan, some have observed from **#Job 19:20**, I am escaped with the skin of my teeth, having no sores there, as I have all the rest of my body over.

Ver. 8. **And he took him a potsherd]** A piece of a broken pot, for want of better; ointments he had none, nor baths, to lenify his soreness. Physicians and friends were far from him. He looked on his right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know him: refuge failed and perished from him; no man cared for his soul, **#Ps 142:4**. He had still a wife and servants, and (as some think) his household stuff left him. He should therefore by them have been helped; but they helped on his misery, jeering him, and jesting at him, as he afterwards complaineth. Himself, therefore, in this necessity, taketh a potsherd, a piece of earthen pot, thereby to mind himself, saith Gregory, that he was of the earth, earthy, For which cause also

He sat down among the ashes] Or dust, as repenting in dust and ashes, **#Job 42:6**. So **#Jon 3:6 Mt 11:23**. The Septuagint say that he sat upon the dirt or dung, for want of a better cushion, and that he was laid without the city, as if, for the stink and ill savour that came from him, he was not suffered to be in the city (*επι της κοπριας εξω της πολεως*), as Uzziah, afterwards, being a leper, dwelt in a house by himself alone, **#2Ch 26:21**. *Disce hic, si aegrotas*, saith Lavater, Learn here, if thou be sick, and have help about thee of friends, food, medicine, clean linen, and the like, to show thyself patient; poor Job had none of all this. Nay, the Lord Christ had not whereon to rest his head. *Sin autem omni cura et solatio es destitutus*, But if moreover all care and comfort is wanting, saith he: But say thou be

destitute of all cure and comfort, forced to lie without doors, and upon the hard ground; say thou be in such a condition, that thou canst neither stand nor go, nor sit, nor lie, nor eat (either for want of food or want of stomach); comfort thyself with this and the like examples of the saints. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and what end the Lord made, **#Jas 5:11**. He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory, **#1Sa 2:8**. Again, let no man trust to his present prosperity. Job, who heretofore spake not to his subjects but from his throne, was now seated upon a dunghill; and his hands, accustomed to bear the sceptre, were employed to wipe the matter which distilled from his sores, as the French paraphrast hath it.

Ver. 9. **Then said his wife]** Was this Dinah, Jacob's only daughter? So the Jewish doctors say; and that Job had a fair daughter by her, whom Potipher married; and that of her came Asenaz, whom Joseph married. They tell us also (but who told them all this?) that she was hitherto spared, when all Job's outward comforts were taken away, for Jacob her father's sake. Moreover, the Septuagint here help her to scold, adding a whole verse of female passion: I must now, saith she, go wander, and have no place to rest in, &c. Job said nothing all this while; not because he was either insensible or sullen; but because it was God that did it, **#Ps 39:2**, and he had well deserved it, **#Mic 7:9**. I will bear (thinks he) the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. Yet, my soul, be silent to Jehovah, &c., **#Ps 12:1**. Satan therefore (who waited for his cursing of God, as a dog waiteth for a bone, but was defeated) cunningly setteth his wife awork, by her venomous words, to make him speak at least, and by her unseemly and sinful counsel, to draw him to do wickedly. Some think, saith Chrysostom, that the devil, in the shape of Job's wife, spake thus unto him; and surely their words agree: He will curse thee to thy face, saith he; Curse God, and die, saith she. Chrysostom himself thinketh that the devil (if he spake not in her, yet) spake by her, as he did once to Eve by the serpent, and that he borrowed her mouth, using her as a strong engine to a wall of adamant, as the choicest arrow in his quiver, to wound Job's righteous soul; and as a scaling ladder, whereby to get up into this impregnable tower, as Gregory hath it. He had tried this course before with Adam, and had singular success, **#Ge 3:6**; he had by his

rib (as by a ladder) gotten up to his heart, *Per costam tanquam per scalam ad cor Adami asceudit*, Just as through a rib he scales the ladder to the heart of Adam, yea, with his rib broken his head, as one phraseth it, darting in death at the windows of his ears. This he assayed upon Job, but without effect; his ears were waxed up, his heart fixed, &c., although he could not but be vexed that his wife should do it; especially since hereby his servants and friends would be encouraged to do the like. O wives, saith one; the sweetest poison, the most desired evil, &c. (Greg. Moral. 1. 3, c. 8). Sir Thomas Moore was wont to say, that men commit faults often, women only twice, that they neither speak well, nor do well. This may be true of bad wives, such as Jezebel, who stirred up Ahab (of himself forward enough) to do wickedly with both hands earnestly, **#1Ki 21:25**. This in Job's wife might be a particular failing, though a foul one. Women are the weaker vessels, and naturally more passionate; they must have their allowance, as light gold hath. She in the text had no small trials, and he is a perfect man that offendeth not with his tongue.

Dost thou still retain thine integrity?] *Cui bono*, for what good, as he said; what gettest thou by it? Is not this thy fear, thy confidence; the uprightness of thy ways, and thy hope? Lo, Eliphaz (who should have had more grace and government of his tongue than Job's wife) scoffeth religious Job, as some sense that text, **#Job 4:6**, rendering the words thus: Is not thy fear (or religion) become thy folly? Where is now thine uprightness, and hope of reward? It is an ancient and an ordinary slur and slander cast upon the ways of God, as if they were unprofitable, as if God were an austere man, a parsimonious Lord; as if there were no gain in godliness, nothing to be got by it but knocks, crosses, losses, &c., whereas God is a rewarder of all those that diligently seek him, **#Heb 11:6**. He recompenseth the losses of his people, as the king of Poland did his noble servant Zelislaus, to whom, having lost his hand in his wars, he sent a golden hand instead thereof. He rewardeth the sufferings of his saints, as Caligula the emperor did Agrippa, who had suffered imprisonment for wishing him emperor. The history saith, that when he came afterwards to the empire, the first thing he did was to prefer Agrippa, and gave him a chain of gold as heavy as the chain of iron that was upon him in prison. The devil could have told this peevish

woman that Job did not serve God for nought, **#Job 1:9**. See **#Mal 1:10 3:14**. {See Trapp on "Mal 1:10"} {See Trapp on "Mal 3:14"}

Curse God, and die] What cursed counsel was this! and from her who should have administered conjugal help to him! How well might Job have turned her off with, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me! These were the devil's words, and not the woman's, saith Chrysostom; it was her tongue, but the devil tuned it, saith Origen. Curse God, and die, for he will not endure thee to live, having once so set thy mouth against heaven, but will quickly set thee packing by a visible vengeance; or, Curse God, and then die by thine own hands, having first spit thy venom in his face for having handled thee so hardly, after so good service done him. Hackett did thus at the gallows, A.D. 1591, threatening to set fire on heaven, to pluck God out of his throne, if he would not show some miracle out of the clouds to convert those infidels that brought him to execution, and to deliver him from his enemies; having the rope about his neck, he lift up his eyes to heaven, and grinning, said, Dost thou repay me this for a kingdom bestowed? I come to revenge it, &c. O wretch! By the way observe, that Satan is a *πεισοθανατος* (as Hegesias the philosopher was called), a persuader of people, that death is an end, at least an ease, of outward troubles; when as to the wicked death is but a trap door to hell: we, silly fish, see one another jerked out of the pond of life; but we see not the fire and the frying pan whereunto those are cast that die in their sins, to whom all the sufferings of this life are but a typical hell, the beginning of those terrors and torments which they shall hereafter suffer, without any the least hope of ever either mending or ending.

Ver. 10. **But he said unto her]** He did not start up, and lay upon her with his unmanly fist (Chrysostom saith it is the greatest reproach in the world for a man to beat his wife), but he reproveth her, and that sharply, as she deserved; and so did Jacob his best beloved Rachel, when the offence was against God, **#Ge 30:2**. A wise husband, saith Marcus Aurelius, must often admonish, never smite, and but seldom reprove, and that with the spirit of meekness too, **#Ga 6:1**; meekness of wisdom, **#Jas 3:13**. That was wonderful patience that was exercised by Dr Cowper, bishop of Lincoln, who, when his wife had burnt all his notes, which he had been eight years in gathering, lest he should kill himself with overmuch study (for she had much ado

to get him to his meals), showed not the least token of passion, but only replied, Indeed, wife, it was not well done; so, falling to work again, he was eight years in gathering the same notes, wherewith he composed his dictionary (Young's Benef. of Afflict., 153). Job, though somewhat more tart, as reason required, the offence being of so high a nature, yet he breaks not out into fierce and furious language; he saith not, Go, go, thou art an arrant fool, a wicked woman, an abominable wretch, but,

Thou speakest like one of the foolish women] Like one of the women of Idumea, that have no sap of wisdom or goodness in them, but do whip their gods (as the Chinese are said to do at this day) when they cannot have what they would have of them, and revile them for neglecting their worshippers. Note here that Job's wife might be a good woman for the main, though in this particular she did amiss; but it is a fault in God's people when it shall be said unto them, Are ye not carnal, and walk as men? when it shall be said of God's daughters, that they speak or act like one of the foolish women. David's daughters were known by their party coloured garments; so should God's, by the law of wisdom in their lips and lives, by their patient mind made known to all men, by their eximious and exemplary holiness. What, should Job's wife, the governess of such a religious family, the yoke fellow of such a holy husband, be talking of cursing God! be speaking after the rate of profane Edomites! The heathen comedian can say, that she is a wise woman who can be well content to suffer hardship; and not repine that it is now worse with her than formerly it hath been; *Quae aequae animo pati potest sibi esse peius quam fuit*. Job would fain bring his wife to this, and therefore addeth,

What? shall we receive good? &c.] He seeketh to set her down, not with rage, but with reason; and that, indeed, is the right way of backing a reproof; wherein as there must be some warmth, so it may not be scalding hot. Words of reviling and disgrace, they scald, as it were; but words that tend to convince the judgment, and to stir up the conscience to a due consideration of the fault, they be duly warm, and tend to make the physic work the more kindly.

Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil?] Shall we not eat the crust with the crumb? drink the sour with the sweet? bless God as well for taking away as for giving? accept of the chastisement of our iniquity? receive it patiently, thankfully, fruitfully? Shall we be all for comforts, and nothing at all for crosses? Is it not equal that we should share in both, since it is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed? **#Ge 49:28**, Jacob is said to have blessed all his sons. Now he seemeth rather to curse Reuben, Simeon, and Levi; for he speaks only of evil to them; but because they were not rejected from being among God's people, because they were not cut out of the list (as Dan afterwards was, **#1Ch 7:1,13,30 Re 7:7**), though they were under great and sore afflictions, they are counted blessed. *Doles quod amisisti? gaude quod evasisti*, saith Seneca: Grievest thou at thy losses? be glad that thyself art escaped. Be ready at all hours to send God home again the blessings which he lent us with thankfulness. There is a complaint of some men, so ungrateful, that if you do them nineteen courtesies, and then deny them the twentieth, you lose all your thank with them; carry them on your back to the very suburbs of Rome, and not into the city itself, you do nothing for them (Auson.). God is not to be thus dealt with; especially since he altereth the property of those evils and crosses which he layeth upon us, turning them to our greatest good, **#Ro 8:28**, like as the skilful apothecary turneth a poisonous viper into a wholesome antidote. Good, therefore, and worthy of all acceptation is that counsel of the wise man, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider." Consider? What? This, that "God also hath set the one over against the other," and, therefore, thou must take the one as well as the other, **#Ec 7:14**; that is but reasonable and equitable. Plato saith, that God doth always γεωμετρειν, act the geometrician, do and dispose of all things in number, weight, and measure; such an order and vicissitude he hath set of good and evil in the life of man, that they are, as it were, interwoven. Accept them, therefore, and acquiesce in them both, as the Hebrew word here signifieth.

In all this Job sinned not with his lips] Hitherto he did not, though in a pitiful pickle, and much provoked by the wife of his bosom. He did not murmur against God, nor let flee at his wife; he did not threaten her, as Lamech, nor fall out with the whole sex, as he that

said, *Femina nulla bona est*. There is no good woman. He doth not wish himself single again, as Augustus saith; or hold himself, therefore, only unhappy because married, as Sulla did, *Sylla faelix, si non habuisset uxorem*. Sulla the blessed, if he had had no wife. No such unsavoury speech falls from Job's lips, as the devil wished and waited for it. Neither doth it follow (as some Rabbis would infer from this text) that Job sinned in his heart though not with his lips (Chaldaeus Paraphrastes et Talmudici); for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth would have spoken. Look what water is in the well, the like will be in the bucket; and what stuff is in the warehouse, the like will be in the shop. If his heart had been exulcerate he would not meekly and wisely have withstood his wife's motion to blaspheme. Hitherto, certainly, God had helped him. It was the uncouth and unkind carriage of his friends concurring with the increase of his bodily pain, besides the eclipse of inward comforts, that drew from him those passionate expressions, **#Job 3**.

Ver. 11. **And when Job's three friends]** His familiar friends, that did eat of his bread, as **#Ps 41:9**, that were as his own soul, **#De 13:6**, his bosom friends, and, therefore, precious jewels, such as could both keep counsel and give counsel. Of such there are but few to be found. Friends, there is no friend, said Socrates (φιλοι, ουδεις φιλος). Faithful friends, saith another, are in this age all for the most part gone in pilgrimage, and their return is uncertain. A friend is a changeable creature, saith a third; all in changeable colours, like the peacock, as often changed as moved. Job complaineth of these his chief and choice friends, that they were miserable comforters, physicians of no value, &c., **#Job 16:2**. *Amicitia sit tantum inter binos, eosque bonos*; Let such friendship be between two, there and good. such as were Jonathan and David, *Corporibus geminis spiritus unus erat*. The soul and the body were on one accord.

Heard of all this evil] Whether by the ministry of the good or bad angels, or of neither, it skilleth not. Ill news is swift of foot, saith the Greek proverb (αι βλαβαι ποδωκεις); and like ill weather, which comes ere it be sent for. The sins and miseries of good people are much talked of, and soon rumoured abroad. The Chaldee paraphrast here telleth of strange businesses, viz. that these three here mentioned (besides the report they heard of Job's calamity) were

moved to visit him by the wonders that happened with them at the same time; for their trees suddenly withered in their orchard, their bread at their table was turned into raw flesh, their wine into blood, &c. But this may well pass for a Jewish fable: the author of that paraphrase was R. Joseph Caecus, nothing so ancient or authentic as he who paraphraseth upon the historical books, but exceedingly full of mistakes, and seldom cometh he near the right meaning of the text, all along the Hagiographa.

They came every one from his own place] More than these came to such a sight, no doubt; but these out of a desire and design to condole with him, and comfort him. But it happened far otherwise; for they tormented Job well nigh as much as Satan himself; though it were by ignorance, and unwittingly, rather than by ill will, or premeditated malice. Their very silence and gesture, before ever they spake a word, did so torment his mind, that at last he cries out in that bitter manner, as **#Job 3.**, like a frantic man, which, through some grievous sickness, hath lost his wits.

Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, &c.] Idumeans all, likely, and men of much estimation for wisdom {#Jer 49:7, "Is wisdom no more in Teman?"} and godliness, as descended all of Abraham, whose care was to catechise his whole family, and to teach them the ways of God, **#Ge 18:19.** Their following disputations show as much, wherein they admonish him to repent; assuring him that he could be no less than a gross sinner, and a hypocrite, because so grievously afflicted. Job answereth their various speeches, tormented in body, perplexed in mind, but stoutly defending his own innocence, and seeming to tax the Lord also; like as dogs in a chase bark at their own masters

To this his friends reply sharply from **#Job 15:1-22:30**, and he answereth them again with greater boldness and courage than before. Hereupon they begin a second reply, and here Eliphaz and Bildad only spake; the third man fainted and spake no more, for that Job was invincible, &c., till at length Elihu moderateth, censuring both parties; and God determineth, to Job's conviction and final commendation.

For they had made an appointment together to come] Not by accident, or at adventure, as Origen will needs have it against the text; but by solemn agreement: it was a pitched meeting. Neither stayed they till they were sent for, but came, as friends, to do Job all friendly offices; like as, in a fright, the blood and spirits run to the heart to relieve it. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity," **#Pr 17:17**. {See Trapp on "Pr 17:17"}

To mourn with him] Heb. To shake the head, or other parts of the body, in token of commiseration; to bewail his condition, as Cyprian did the persecuted saints of his time, *Cum singulis pectus meum copulo*, I join with him with the singleness of my heart, saith he *Moeroris pondera luctuosa participo*, &c. With heaviness of heart I join weeping, "Who is offended, and I burn not?" **#2Co 11:29**.

And to comfort him] This they intended, but proved miserable comforters too, by reason of the deceitfulness of their hearts, fitly, therefore, compared to a broken or a deceitful bow, that carrieth the arrow a clean contrary way, **#Ps 78:57**. The word rendered to comfort, signifieth likewise to mourn with the mourning of repentance, to teach us here to begin our pity to others, to bewail their and our own sins. So Jonah prayed unto the Lord, **#Jon 4:2**. He thought to have prayed, but it proved that he brawled: {See Trapp on "Jon 4:2"} These men's words were as a murdering weapon in Job's bones; pious they were and divine all along, but much misapplied. It is said of them that they handled an ill matter well, and Job a good cause as ill, especially when once he came to be wet through.

Ver. 12. **And when they lift up their eyes afar off]** Hence some conclude that Job lay abroad, as lepers used.

And knew him not] For they had never seen him before but in a splendidious fashion; now then to see him in such a pickle, that he had lost all form and fashion, more like a dead beast than a living man; this amazed and amused them; they might also by this, so sad a spectacle, be admonished of their own mutable and miserable condition (*Aut sumus, aut fuimus, aut possumus esse quod hic est* either we are, or will be or are able to be because this is), and have the same thoughts as the psalmist afterwards had, Man, being in honour, abideth not, **#Ps 45:1,2**; he is like the beasts that perish,

pecoribus morticinis, dead hearts, saith Tremellius, the beasts that die of the murrain, and so become carrion, and are good for nothing. Job was now no otherwise to be seen than as a stinking carcase full of sores, more like than a living man, as he painteth out himself in most lively colours.

They lifted up their voice and wept] Good men are apt to do so, saith the poet, *et faciles motus mens generosa capit*; we are bound to weep with those that weep, and to be both pitiful and courteous, **#1Pe 3:8**. To him that is in misery pity should be showed from his friend (it was so to Job here at first), but he forsaketh the fear of the Lord, **#Job 6:14**. Job's friends did so, when, amazed with the greatness of his calamity, they there hence concluded him an arrant hypocrite, unworthy of any one word of comfort.

And they rent every one his mantle] His stately mantle, his robe of state, such as men of great honour used to wear, *Stolam regiam*. royal garment. Some Hebrews and Jesuits will have these three friends of Job to have been kings; such I believe they were, as the three kings of Collen; so the Papists call those wise men, **#Mt 2:1**, be they what they will; they rent every man his mantle in token of greatest sorrow at their friend's calamity, a ceremony not unusual among other nations than those of the East. Suetonius telleth us that Julius Caesar, when he had passed his army to river Rubicon, and was marching toward Rome, he made a speech to his soldiers, weeping and rending his garment, that thereby he might testify to them what a grief it was to him to fight against his country; which he would never have done had there not been a necessity.

And sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven] They so threw it up into the air that it might fall upon their heads; to import, 1. That all things were full of sorrowful confusion, as here earth and air were mingled. 2. That themselves and all mortals were but dust, **#Ge 18:27**, a little dirt neatly made up, and to dust they should return, **#Ge 3:19**, little deserving in the mean while to tread upon the earth, or to be above ground, **#Jos 7:6**. See **#Job 1:16**.

Ver. 13. **So they sat down with him on the ground]** Though his scent and loathsomeness were intolerable, yet they bare him company; this was love and sympathy, thus to sit by him on the

ground, then, when every one loathed him, and would not lend him a hand to help to scrape him.

Seven days and seven nights] Not all this time, but the most part of it, without giving almost any regard to their ordinary rest and necessary sustenance. Origen saith, they were sustained and preserved all that while without sleep and meat, by a miracle; others, holding it a thing impossible, have, therefore, judged this whole book to be a parable only.

And none spake a word unto him] So great was their grief, *Curae leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent*. They speak of light care, they are astounded not natural. Calvin thinks they were to blame to be so long silent. Belike they were loth to be troublesome, and waited a fit opportunity; looking that he should speak first, and harbouring hard conceits of him.

For they saw that his grief was very great] His pain was extreme, and, therefore, no time to talk with him. Besides, though they came prepared, yet, altering their opinions of him, they doubted how and what to speak, till at length they became Satan's advocates.

Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **After this]** After so long silence of his friends, and to provoke them to speak, who haply waited for some words from him first, as knowing him wise and well spoken. Or *After this* After that Job's pains were somewhat allayed, so that he could breathe, recollect himself, and utter his mind; for some troubles are above speech, **#Ps 77:4**, they will hardly suffer a man to take breath, **#Job 9:18**, {See Trapp on "Es 4:14"} or to hear anything, though never so wholesome or comfortable, **#Ex 6:9**.

Job opened his mouth] But better he had kept it closed still: either be silent, saith the Greek proverb, or else say something that is better than silence. But it may befall the best, left to themselves, to speak unadvisedly with their lips, as meek Moses did at the waters of Meribah, for which sin of his, some Jews say that he was damned, because we read not of his repentance. And a like wretched censure they pass upon holy Job for his cursing his day here, saying, that

although in words he cursed the creature only, yet interpretatively and indeed, he cursed the Creator; like as he that spitteth upon a king's picture, or robe royal, doth the same to the king himself. But why do they not then say the same of Jeremiah, and pronounce him a reprobate for cursing his birthday too? **#Jer 20:14**. R. Levi answereth, because it appeareth to be otherwise by Jeremiah's whole prophecy besides. And may we not say the like for Job, if we wisely weigh his words in their right sense, and the end which the Lord made, **#Jas 5:11**, propounding him for a pattern of patience, not of impatience, whereof nothing is said against him, though he had his outbursts, as here; and must have his allowance (as good gold hath when it comes to the scale) that so he may pass. If he had blasphemed God, or denied his providence, ascribing all events to the conjunction of the stars at a man's birth (as the Talmudists falsely gather from this chapter), Satan had had his design upon him; and God would never have justified him, and preferred him before his friends, as he did, **#Job 42:7,8** True it is, that, **#Job 38:2**, when he had spoken his mind overly freely, and indeed sinfully (as there is not a man upon earth that liveth, and sinneth not), as if the Lord had dealt unkindly, if not unequally, with him, God in the end steppeth forth, as it were, from behind the hangings, overhearing him, and taking him up, Who is this, saith he there, that talketh thus? how now? After which Job was not only hushed, **#Job 40:4,5**, but humbled, **#Job 42:6**. And truly it should be considered, say both Ambrose and Chrysostom, in Job's defence, that, though patient in the two former chapters, yet now he begins to be wet to the skin; yea, the drops of God's wrath began to soak into his soul; the devil also set upon him with all violence, as some conceive from the next verse, Job answered and said, *sc.* to some dispute with the devil. Now, therefore, that he thus falleth a roaring and a cursing his day, it is, saith Chrysostom, as a sick man, who, being under the physician's hands, of whom he is well persuaded, useth all patience towards him; but, being in extremity of pain, lays about him, and strikes at the bystanders, &c. *Exemplo Iobi liquet*, it is evident from the example of Job saith another good writer; by this example of Job it appeareth, that in extreme trials of the best it oft happens that pain and grief speaketh rather than the man himself, and that in the sieve of temptations, upon a more violent sifting, the holes being worn or widened, not the offal only, but some grains of good wheat, that is,

of faith, do slip through; which yet the right hand of a gracious God is wont to gather, and to lay up in the granary of his grace (Bucholc.). Job cannot altogether be excused, saith Fetus upon this chapter, neither is he said, as before, not to have sinned in these following expressions. Rather is it to be held, that the Lord, who before stood by him, now for a time left him, to try what is in man, even the best man living, if he be not strengthened by God continually. David was most courageous when he went against Goliath, but fearful when Saul pursued him. Elijah was most zealous for the Lord of hosts when he slew 450 of Baal's priests: *Tantus tamen fulminator ad Iezabelis minas trepidat, factus seipso imbecillior*; saith one; and yet this valiant prophet flees at the threats of Jezebel, and heareth from heaven, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" So Jeremiah, Peter, Father Latimer, Pray for me, saith he, I say, pray for me; for I am sometimes so fearful that I would creep into a mouse hole; sometimes God doth visit me again with his comforts; so he cometh and goeth, to teach me to feel and know mine infirmity. Thus he writeth to Bishop Ridley, with whom he afterwards suffered at the same stake. His last words were, *Fidelis est Deus, &c.*, God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, &c. This was also Job's comfort, when himself, doubtless; for at this time it was *Ego non sum Ego* I am not I, with him, and God considered it; for he knoweth our mould, he remembereth we are but dust.

And cursed his day] *Diem, non Deum*; his day, and not his God, as the devil would have had it. It was too much howsoever of that; and Job should have opened his mouth to better purpose. In the Revelation, whensoever heaven opened, some memorable matter followed; when wisdom openeth her mouth, she speaketh excellent things, **#Pr 8:6**. When Asaph opened his mouth, he spake parables, **#Ps 78:2**. When our Saviour did so, he delivered that famous Sermon on the Mount, **#Mt 5:2**. But Job, alas, in the extreme pain of his body, and anguish of his soul, openeth his mouth, and curseth bitterly; curseth his day in a most emphatical manner, and in most exquisite terms, wishing all the evil to it that it was any way capable of. Now the day that he here curseth, is either the day wherein he suffered such a world of evils, as **#Ob 12 Isa 2:12**, or rather the day which gave occasion to his sufferings, his birthday, as **#Job 3:3**.

Jeremiah did the like by a like infirmity, #**Job 20:14**, and some others; but never hath any yet been heard to curse the day of his new birth, nor ever shall as whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: and besides an entrance ministered unto us further and further into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, #**2Pe 1:4,11**. There is a *μυριομακαριωτης*, a multiplied happiness in holiness.

Ver. 2. **And Job spake, and said]** Heb. Answered and said. Answered? Whom answered he? The Jewish doctors say, he answered his friends, who having hitherto said nothing to him, and heard as little from him, at length— *rupere silentia voce*, to destroy a silent voice, and asked him what he ailed? others more probably conceive that Job answered here to some dispute in his own mind, or rather with the devil. Some take this verse for a transition only. Others make it a preparation for Job's future discourse, to move expectation, and win attention. The discourse indeed is all along, to #**Job 42:7**, poetical, and very accurate, made up in hexameters (as Jerome holdeth), not by Job and his friends at the first uttering, but afterwards by Job at better leisure; or, as some think, by Moses whilst a shepherd in Midian, for the comfort of his poor countrymen in Egypt, *Sic et Ionas orationem suam in ventre balaenae habitam, et David plerosque Psalmos, &c.* Mercer saith that his predecessor Vatablus (as he had heard) had found out a way of scanning these hexameters to others unknown, and to all the more obscure, because the verse causeth a cloud. The first hexameter that ever was made in Greek is said to be this,

Συμφερετε πτερατ οιωνοι κηρον τε μελισσαι.

Birds, bring your plumes, and bees, your wax at once.

Ver. 3. **Let the day perish wherein I was born]** He curseth his birthday, which the Greeks call *γενεθλιον*, quasi *γενεσιν αθλιον*: the beginning of a man's nativity they call the begetting of his misery; because he is *non prius natus quam damnatus* (Aug.), no sooner born but damned to the mines of misery, #**Job 14:1**. Crying he comes into the world, and before he speaketh he prophesieth, and

saith in effect, Τι βιος ει μη βια; σωμα μεν σημα, χρωμα πτωμα, δεμας δεσμος, γενεσις εις γην ωσος, &c.

Nasci poena, labor vita, necesse mori.

To be born is a penalty, to labour life, to die necessary. Oh that I had ne'er been born! Woe worth the day That brought me forth, and made me not away!

This whole life is overspread with sins and miseries as with a filthy morphew; {A leprous or scurfy eruption} or as Job was with his leprosy; the anguish whereof, together with his inward troubles, so grieved and galled him, that he not only crieth out (which is natural for a man to do), but giving the reins wholly to his grief, he roareth and rageth beyond all reason; and had not the Spirit held him back, he would surely have run headlong into blasphemy and desperation, which was Satan's design. But in the saints, as the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and sometimes getting the upper ground (as it were), bears it down, as here in Job at this present; so the Spirit again lusteth against the flesh, and a great bustle there is in the good soul (as when two opposite things meet together, cold saltpetre and hot brimstone, there is a great noise; and as when Paul came to Ephesus, there was no small stir about that way, **#Ac 19:28-41**), so that ye cannot do the things that ye would, saith the apostle, **#Ga 5:17**. As Job cannot do and say the good that he would, because of the flesh, so neither could he do or say the evil that he would, because of the Spirit; he curseth indeed his day, but not his wife nor friends, much less his God, as those malcontents did, **#Isa 8:21**. Nay, so soon as God came into his mind, **#Job 3:20**, the flesh was thereby, though not altogether, quailed and quelled, yet so far daunted and damped, that it kept itself within the compass of weeping and wailing; and God himself, though he find fault with Job's speeches for unadvised, and sometimes ranging beyond the precincts of godliness; yet acquitting him from all gross sin, he crowneth him with the garland of a famous victory, as Mr Beza here well observeth. Most wisely, therefore, and fitly doth St James warn us, that in thinking upon Job, we regard not so much what was done while the combat lasted, as what end the Lord made, **#Jas 5:11**. The saints do never more prevail and triumph than when it seemeth otherwise. See **#Re 13:7**

Job 12:11. They gather strength by opposition, and conquer in being conquered, **#Ro 8:37.** They repent of their outbursts, as Job did, **#Job 42:5,6.** And *Quem poenitet peccasse, pene est innocens* (Senec.), he is little less than innocent who is afterwards penitent. Yea, it is almost more to repent of a fault, saith a Father, than to have been free from the fault (Ambr. in Psal.).

And the night] He would be sure to hit the time, whether it were day or night. He that is once out of God's way knows not where he shall stop, or when he shall step back. Take heed therefore to thy ways, that thou sin not with thy tongue, that unruly member, **#Ps 39:1 Jas 3:8.**

— *Hanc fraenis, hanc tu compesce catenis.*

For this bridle, this restrain you for chains. When God's hand is on thy back, let thy hand be on thy mouth, keep it as with a bridle or muzzle, **#Ps 39:1.** Passionate speeches *leniter volant, non leviter violant.* The best that come of them is repentance; Job, when he was once out, could keep no mean; but what he had said against day and night, he amplifieth by the parts; and first for the day, **#Job 3:4,5,** and then for the night, **#Job 3:6-8, &c.**

Ver. 4. **Let that day be darkness]** Thick darkness, as that once was in Egypt, **#Ex 10:28.** A day of trouble and distress, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, **#Zep 1:15.** Let it be a dreadful and a dismal day, let sorrow and sadness overshadow it, let mourning and tears overwhelm it; let it be as when the sun hideth his head in a mantle of black, and is eclipsed; at which time all creatures here below flag and hang the head. In the gloomiest day there is light enough to make it day, and distinguish it from night, though the sun shine not. But Job would have no light to appear on his birthday. Thus he throweth out words without wisdom, and as hinds by calving, so he by talking casteth out his sorrows, **#Job 39:3.**

Let not God regard it] Or require it; let it pass as not worth looking after, let him not take care of it, or pour down any special blessing upon it, as he doth upon his people every day, but especially upon the Sabbath Day, God's market day, called by the Jews *desiderium*

dierum, the desire of days, and by the Primitive Christians *Dies lucis*, the day of light.

Neither let the light shine upon it] And what is the air without light, that first ornament of the visible world? so what are all creature comforts, unless God shine through them? What a woeful case is that poor soul in that walketh in darkness, and hath none of his light, **#Isa 50:10**; how lamentably is such a one deserted, benighted! how doth he find himself in the very suburbs of hell itself, where the pain of loss is greater than the pain of sense, **#2Th 1:9**. And to note thus much, Job here, after he had said, Let that day be darkness, added as a greater evil, Let not the light shine upon it.

Ver. 5. **Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it]** Let it be *dies luctuosus et lethalis*, such a deadly dark day, that each man may think it his last day, fatal and feral. Let there not be dimness only (such as appeareth through a painted glass, dyed with some obscure colour), but horrid and hideous darkness, such as was that at our Saviour's passion, when the sun was totally eclipsed, and a great philosopher thereupon cried out, Either the God of Nature suffers, or the world is at an end. To darkness Job here emphatically addeth the shadow of death. The shadow is the dark part of the thing, so that the shadow of death is the darkest side of death, death in its blackest representation. Now let these stain it, saith he, or challenge it, or espouse it. *In nocte funestatur mundi honor—Sordent, silent, stupent cuncta*, saith Tertullian, elegantly.

Let a cloud dwell upon it] *Crescit etiamnum per Auxesin oratio*. Job heaps up words, like in sound, and not unlike in sense. Grief had made him eloquent; as hoping thereby to ease himself. "Let a cloud dwell upon it," a fixed cloud, not such a one as continually hangeth over the island of St Thomas, on the back side of Africa, wherewith the whole island is watered; nor such a cloud of grace as God promiseth to create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, that upon all his glory may be a defence, **#Isa 4:5**. But such as St Paul and his company were under before the shipwreck, **#Ac 27:20**, when neither sun nor star appeared for many days together, the heavens being wholly muffled, &c.

Let the blackness of the day terrify it] Or, Let the heat of the day terrify it; as it befalleth those that live under the torrid zone, where nothing prospereth. The Atlantes (a certain people) are said to curse the rising sun, it doth so torture them with extreme heat. When the dog star ariseth, those are in ill case who dwell in hot countries towards the east, they are troubled and terrified. Some take the word *Chimrine*, here rendered blackness, for those Chemarims mentioned by the prophets, those chimney chaplains of the heathen idols, and so render it thus, Let the priests of the day terrify it, *Hinc forsane tenebrae Cimmeriae*; that is, Let those who used to observe and distinguish days note it for a terrible day. Others understand it of the noon day devils, that should vex people on that day with hellish heats and fires: the Vulgate Latin hath it thus, Let, as it were, the bitternesses of the day terrify it: and to the same sense the Chaldee Paraphrast. Job still riseth in his discourse, making use of many poetical figures, and tragic phrases, picked out for the purpose.

Ver. 6. **As for that night, let darkness seize upon it]** Having spent his spleen upon the day, he now vents himself upon the night, according to that division, **#Job 3:8**. As for that night of mine unhappy conception, or birth, let *tenebrosus turbo* (as the Vulgate here hath it), a dark tempest, or a tempestuous darkness, grasp it, or invade it; let it be as dark as pitch, by a darkness superadded to its natural darkness, *Caligo perpetua et inusitata* (Mercer).

Let it not be joined unto the days of the year] Let nature quite disclaim it, and disjoint it from the day following; let it not be reckoned as any part of time, that measure of all our motions. Some render it, *Ne gaudeat inter dies*, Let it not rejoice itself among the days of the year, as one of them. The night hath glory by union with the day; this he wisheth taken from it. Disunion and division is a curse; and the number of two hath been accounted accursed, because it was the first that departed from unity.

And let it not come into the number of months] *Deleatur e calendario*, let it be razed out of the calendar, and not have any place in the computation of time. The Hebrews call the moon and a month by the same name; because the moon is renewed every month, So $\mu\eta\nu$, month, and $\mu\eta\nu\eta$, moon.

Ver. 7. **Lo, let that night be solitary]** And so consequently sorrowful; for aloneness is comfortless, *et optimum solatium sodalitiū*. There is a desirable solitariness, such as was that of Isaac, #Ge 24:63, of Jacob, #Ge 32:24, of Christ, #Mr 1:35, of Peter, #Ac 10:9, to talk with God and with themselves. But usually to sit solitary is a misery, #La 1:1 (for Satan is readiest to assault when none is by to assist), neither is there a greater tie to constancy than the society of saints. This the heathen persecutors perceived, and therefore banished and confined the Christian confessors to isles and mines; where they could not come together for mutual edification and comfort. There is a woe to him that is alone, and good reason showed for it by Solomon, #Ec 4:9-12. Let no man sty up himself, or affect solitariness; but make conscience of fellowship in the gospel, as the Philippiaus did from the first day of their conversion to Christ, #Php 1:5, accounting, that communion of saints is a point of practice, as well as an article of belief.

And no joyful voice come therein] That is, saith one, no pleasing stillness (as in other nights there is), to invite the melody of music. Or, let there be no merry meetings, feasting, and jollities, as was usual in the night season. Let not so much as the voice of the cock be heard that night (so the Chaldee here paraphraseth), but the doleful ditties of screech owls, and other inauspicate creatures. Let no traveller, that is then benighted, solace himself with sweet songs, or musicians play from house to house, as minstrels do.

Ver. 8. **Let them curse it, that curse the day]** As those *atri et tetri Atlantes* (before spoken of) curse the rising sun for scorching them, *Non tam cute, quam corde* Not so much skin as heart, (Aethiopici); as despairing persons, and malefactors led to execution, use to curse the time that ever they were born. The help of all such Job here calleth in against the harmless night he banneth with so much bitterness. Like as that desperate wretch mentioned by Mr Bolton, who being upon his death bed, albeit he swore as fast and as furiously as he could, yet desired he the bystandersy to help him with oaths, and to swear for him. Tremellius here thinks that Job calls to the stars and winds to help him curse, See his translation of the text, and his notes thereon.

Who are ready to raise up their mourning] Whether they be those mercenary mourners mentioned elsewhere, which, for hire, are wont at funerals with doleful execrations to lament the day of their benefactor's death, **#Jer 9:17,18,20**; crying out, Oh the day! alas for the day! oh that ever such a day came! See **#Eze 30:2 2Ch 35:25 Am 5:16**. Or else those that really mourn for their deceased friends; and yearly, as oft as the day returneth, they renew their mourning. These are called upon by Job, *totes saccos deplere*, to pour out their utmost lamentations and execrations upon this his night. Concerning the word Leviathan, here rendered mourning, whether it be taken for the sea dragon, or the devil, and what it is to raise him up, and why they cursed him that are ready to do so, with a prepared and meditated active readiness, if I should go about to show the reader, with the several opinions of interpreters, I should not only tire him out, but also danger doing as that vicar of Augsburgh did, mentioned by Johannes Manlius. This doctor of divinity (for so he was) having read at Tubinga certain lectures upon Job, at the end of his last lecture said, that both Job and himself were very glad to be rid of one another; for as he understood little or nothing of Job's meaning, so Job seemed to him to be more tormented with his narrations than ever he had been with all his own ulcers. Let them that have a mind consult the commentators here.

Ver. 9. **Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark]** If the stars of its twilight be dark, how great is that darkness! Job would not have this night to have light of stars, or hope of day's dawn, hope of better, or place of worse. And this part of the curse he reserveth to the last place, as worse than any of the former. Semblably, that judgment of pining away in their iniquity is the last that God denounceth, **#Le 26:39**, after those other dismal ones there to befall the disobedient. And that, **#Re 22:11**, Let him that is filthy be filthy still, is the last, but not the least (of those that befall in this life), threatened in all the New Testament.

Let it look for light, but have none] Heb. But none. Loss of expectation is a great loss. Esau found it so, and the mother of Sisera, **#Jud 5:28**, and those shall once, that come knocking and bouncing at heaven's gates, with "Lord, Lord, open unto us," and shall hear, "Depart ye." The hopes of the wicked fail them when at highest; whereas the saints find that comfort in extremity which they

durst not expect: their light shall rise in obscurity, **#Isa 58:10**, it shall shine more and more unto the perfect day, **#Pr 4:18**.

Let it not see the dawning of the day] Heb. The eyelids of the morning; that is, the first breakings of light, the morning rays or beams peeping abroad. These this night must never see. Heaven is a nightless day (*ανεσπερος ημερα*), hell a dayless night. Fire there is, but without light; it burneth, but shineth not to those reprobates who are in *tenebras ex tenebris infeliciter exclusi, infelicibus excludendi*; thrust into outer darkness, a darkness beyond a darkness, as the dungeon is beyond the prison, **#Mt 8:12**.

Ver. 10. **Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb]** Lest this curse should seem causeless, and he mad without reason, he telleth you here why he thus poureth out his passion; and complaineth so heavily against the day of his birth and night of his conception, which yet were harmless, and had not deserved to be thus charged, cursed. "Because it shut not up," &c. But how could the night do that? Is it not of God alone to shut or open the womb? **#Ge 20:18 29:31**. And was it not he that took David thence? **#Ps 18:23**. This Job could tell well enough at another time, but now he is quite out of all reason; beating himself with his passions, as the lion doth with his own tail; yea, like some sullen bird in a cage, he could almost find in his heart to beat himself to death. We use to say, — *Res est ingeniosa dolor*; Grief is an ingenious thing; yet it maketh a man foolish (the excess of it), as it did Job here; yea, it maketh a wise man mad, as Solomon saith of oppression, **#Ec 7:7**, and we see it exemplified in Job, especially if the words be thus read, as they may, Because he (that is, God) shut not up the doors, &c.

Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes] In Scripture, to see good or evil is to feel it, **#Ps 34:12 Jer 17:6 Isa 65:16 Job 33:17**. He meaneth, that he had missed those evils which now he met with since his coming into the world, if those doors, being shut, had shut him out of the world. Man is no sooner born than born to trouble, **#Job 5:7**, yea, man that is born (or conceived) of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble, **#Job 14:1**. Miserable he is even as soon as he is warm in the womb, as David phraseth it, **#Ps 51:5**. If he live to see the light, he comes crying into the world, and an untimely birth may be better than he, **#Ec 5:3**. The Hebrews call him Enosh, that is, sorry man; or

doleful, miserable, and desperately diseased man, whose living is but to lie a dying. The Greeks, when they would set forth one extremely wretched, they call him *πρισανθρωπον*, thrice a man, that is, thrice miserable. And, What is man? saith Seneca (Ad Mar. cap. 11). He answereth, *Morbidum, putre, cassum, a fletu vitam auspicatum*; a diseased, rotten, empty thing, beginning his life with tears, as if he wept to think upon what a shore of trouble he is landed; or rather, into what a sea of sorrows he is launching; not unlike the Straits of Magellan, a sea of that nature, say geographers, that which way soever a man bend his course, he shall be sure to have the wind against him.

Ver. 11. **Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost? &c.]** Why was I not forthwith carried *ab utero ad urnam*? from the womb to the tomb, from the birth to the burial? True it is, that infants have the seed of death in them, and the principle of corruption, **#Ro 5:14**. Every one (say some chemists) hath his own balsam within him; his own bane it is sure that he hath. But why should Job be so weary of life, and so wish to be rid of it? Is not life a great mercy? Doth not the philosopher affirm, that a pismire excelleth the heavens in dignity, because it is a living creature? Saith not the Scripture, that a living dog is better than a dead lion? **#Ec 9:4**; and why is living man sorrowful, a man for the punishment of his sin? **#La 3:39**; *q.d.* Let him be never so much punished, it is for his sin; and if, amidst all, he be yet a living man, and have his life spared, he need not be so overly sorrowful, and to make such an outcry, and a wishing himself out of the world, as Job here doth. Life, alas! in its utmost extent is but a little spot of time between two eternities, before, and after; but it is a great consequence, and given us for this end, that glory may be begun in grace, and we have a further and further entrance here into the kingdom of heaven, as Peter saith, **#2Pe 1:11**. This, if Job had seriously and sedately considered (but now, alas! as in a hot lever, all the humours were on a hurry), he would rather have done, as they say Themistocles did; who though he lived till he was about 107 years of age; yet when he came to die, he was grieved upon this ground, Now I am to die, said he, when I begin to be wise.

Ver. 12. **Why did the knees prevent me?]** Why did the too officious midwife lay me on her lap, and not let me alone to perish by my fatal helplessness? Man is a poor shiftless creature; and Pliny

rails at nature for producing him so forlorn, naked, and unable to help himself; but he knew not that this was a fruit of sin. Cicero indeed could say (whether he believed himself therein I know not), *Cum primum nascimur, in omni continuo pravitae versamur*; as soon as we are born we are head and ears all over in wickedness; but Pliny was not so persuaded, as I have elsewhere showed.

Or why the breasts that I should suck?] Why did not my mother turn tigress, and cast me out when newly born? Why was she not cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness, that refuse to give suck to their young ones? Rather we may ask, Why doth not Job, out of his deepest discontent, think much of such a mercy; and rather bless God, first, for filling two such bottles with milk for him, ready against he came into the world? and then, for giving his mother a heart to suckle him, which some nice or unnatural women will not, being therein worse than those sea monsters, #La 4:3, that help their young? The heathens called their *Ceres* (queen of plenty) *Mammosam*, as the nurse of all living creatures; and there are that derive God's name Shaddai from *shad*, a dug; because, as he openeth the hand, so he draws out the breast to every living thing. And for his saints, they may suck and be satisfied with the full strutting breasts of his consolations, the two Testaments, #Isa 66:11. And whatever Job now (under a heavy temptation, which, like lead, sunk downward, and carried his soul with. it) may misjudge, they may sit and sing thankfully with David, Lord, thou (and not the midwife) art he that took me out of the womb; thou (and not my mother) keptest me in safety when I hung upon the breasts; neither then only, but afterwards, for *puerilitas est periculorum pelagus*, and the preserver of men keepeth us still from a thousand deaths and dangers. And is this matter of complaint, and not rather of thankfulness?

Ver. 13. **For now should I have lain still and been quiet**] Why, but is it not better to be preserved in salt than to putrefy in sugar? to be emptied from vessel to vessel, than to be at ease, and so to settle on the lees? #Jer 48:11; to be tumbled up and down, as fishes are in the streams of Jordan, than to perish in the Dead Sea? It is not always (if at all) a happiness to lie still and be quiet. Life consists in action; and in all these things is the life of my spirit, saith good Hezekiah, who had been in death's hands (where Job so much desired to be),

and could therefore make a better judgment, **#Isa 38:16**. What haste, then, was there of his lying still, and being quiet; say that he were assured of his salvation (for else death had been but a trap door to eternal torments), was there nothing more to be done, but taking present possession? nothing to be suffered with Christ, or ere we come to be glorified with him? **#Ro 8:17**. Ought not he himself first to have suffered and then to have entered into his glory? **#Lu 24:26**. And ought not we to be conformed to his image (in sufferings also) that he might be the firstborn among many brethren? **#Ro 8:29**. Let us run with patience (running is active, and patience passive) the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, &c., and looking off our present troubles (as the word ἀφορωντες, **#Heb 1:12**, importeth), which while Job beheld too wishtly, and was more sensible of than was meet, he brake out in this sort, and showed himself too much a man. Let us do up our work, and then God will send us to bed all in good time, **#Isa 57:2 Re 16:13**.

Ver. 14. **With kings and counsellors of the earth]** *q.d.* Those that here have been most negotious, and (as the nobles of the earth) have had greatest matters in hand, with those should I have been coupled in the grave, that congregation house of all living (πανηγυρις), as it is called, **#Job 30:23**. That long or old home, **#Ec 12:5**. Heaven is called the congregation house of God's firstborn, **#Heb 12:23**, and their house not made with hands, **#2Co 5:1**. But not many kings or nobles meet here, **#1Co 1:26**, because strait is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth to it; there must be stripping and stopping, which great men cannot frame to. It was a poor comfort to Henry VIII to be told upon his death bed, that he should now go to the place of kings. And a small commendation to Henry II, that some few hours before he died, seeing a list of their names who had conspired against him, and finding therein two of his own sons, he fell into a grievous passion, both cursing his sons, and the day wherein himself was born; and in that distemperature departed the world, which himself had so often distempered. He went indeed to his grave, and slept with his fathers; yea, he was royally interred under a stately monument, meant here, haply, by building desolate places for themselves: Absalom had erected a pillar for this purpose; and the Egyptian kings their pyramids, to perpetuate their memories. The Spanish friar was wont to say, there were but few princes in hell; for why? because there were but few in all. Confer **#Eze 26:20**.

With these Job, had he died prematurely, or never seen the light, might have been fellowed: for death is the only king against whom there is no rising up, **#Pr 30:31**, and the mortal since his master of the royal sceptre, mowing down the lilies of the crown as well as the grass of the field, *Sceptra igonibus aequat*. The unknown scepter makes equal.

Ver. 15. **Or with princes that had gold]** Great store of it. Petrarch reporteth of Pope John XXII, that his heirs found in his coffers no less than 250 tons of gold. Boniface VIII, taken prisoner and plundered by the command of Philip the Fair, king of France, had as much gold carried away out of his palace as all the kings of Europe received for one year's revenue from their subjects, together with their crown land. What a mass of treasure had Cardinal Wolsey gotten here! and before him Cardinal Beaufort, who when he saw that he must needs die, and that his riches could not relieve him till a further time, asked, Why should I die, being so rich? fie, will not death be hired? will money do nothing? The Cardinal Sylberperger took so great a pleasure in money, that when he was grievously tormented with the gout, his only remedy to ease the pain was to have a bason full of gold set before him, into which he would put his lame hands, turning the gold upside down. Of Nugas, the Scythian monarch, it is said, that when Michael Paleologus, the Greek emperor, sent him many rich ornaments for a present, he asked whether they could drive away calamities, diseases, and death? this because they could not do, he slighted them. These princes that had gold, and filled their houses with silver, what would not they have given to have bought off death? but riches avail not in the day of wrath; it is righteousness only that delivereth from death, **#Pr 11:4**. Thrice happy, then, are they who are rich to God, as our Saviour phraseth it, who have the Almighty to be their gold; and who have silver of strength, as Eliphaz speaketh, **#Job 22:25**.

Who filled their houses with silver] That is, their graves, say some; called the dead men's houses, **#Job 17:13**. The Jews call the burying place Bethchajin, the house of the living; and they used not only to adorn their sepulchres richly; but also to put their wealth into the grave with them. Josephus saith that Hircanus found in David's sepulchre three thousand talents and, **#Jer 8:1**, God threateneth that the Chaldeans shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and of

his princes, out of their graves, as searching there for hid treasure; so some conceive. Sure it is, that in the siege of Jerusalem, under Vespasian, there was gold found in the entrails of a Jew that was slain, which caused over twenty thousand of them to be ripped up.

Ver. 16. **Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been]** As an abortive or miscarrying embryo that falleth from the mother, as untimely fruit falleth off from the tree. See **#Re 6:13**. Hidden it is called, because cast aside as an unsightly spectacle, that cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name is covered with darkness, **#Ec 6:4**. Job could have wished some way or other never to have been, rather than to have been in so calamitous a condition; and herein he sinned, no doubt: for that which is of the flesh is flesh, **#Joh 3:6**.

As infants which never saw light] But were still born, as we call them. The word rendered infants is taken from a word that signifieth to defile, see **#Job 16:15**, for children in the womb are compassed about with pollution; and the first sheet or blanket wherewith they are covered is woven of sin, shame, blood, and filth, **#Eze 16:4,6**.

Ver. 17. **There the wicked cease from troubling]** Here they are restless, as being acted and agitated by the devil, who being a discontented, turbulent creature, maketh ado in the world, and setteth his imps awork to do mischief, and to vex others, מִיַּעֲשֶׂר The word here rendered wicked signifieth vexatious persons, that worry and weary out others, molestuous and mischievous. In the grave they shall cease from so doing. That was a strange mind of our Edward I, who 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 suffer it to be interred till they had absolutely subdued the country (Daniel's Hist. 201). This was a desire more martial than Christian, saith the chronicler, showing a mind so bent to the world, as he would not make an end when he had done with it, but designeth his travel beyond his life.

And there the weary be at rest] Hence some heathens also have counted mortality a mercy, and some of them appointed contrary ceremonies to those now in use; for they brought their friends into the world with mournful obsequies, but they carried them out of the world with joyful exequies, all sorts of sports and pastimes, because

then they conceived they were at rest, and out of gunshot (Plotin. ap. Aug. de C. D. l. 9, c. 10; Quintil. Inst. lib. 5; Herod. l. 5; Val. Max.). Ver. 18. **There the prisoners rest together]** Or alike, as do their cruel creditors and hard taskmasters. There, that is, in the state of the dead, whether by land or sea, the prisoners, or bound persons, the miserable captives, rest; such as were those poor Christians, shut up so close (by Barbarossa, the Turkish general, returning toward Constantinople) under hatches among the excrements of nature, that all the way as he went almost every hour, some of them were cast dead over board. Such were many of the martyrs, kept fast shut up in Lollard's tower, in the bishop of London's coal house, a dark and ugly prison, said Mr Philpot, as any is about London; but I thank the Lord, I am not alone, but have six other faithful companions, who in our darkness do lightsomely sing psalms and praises to God for his great goodness, but especially for this, that I am so near the apprehension of eternal bliss. God forgive me mine unthankfulness and unworthiness of so great glory (Acts and Mon. 1669, 1670). What pitiful hard usage God's poor prisoners met with in the late troubles, at Oxford especially (from which death God graciously delivered me when I was in their hands) and in the western parts, see Mr Bonas' Sermon called Job in the West, where he compareth the enemies' cruelty to that of the American cannibals, who, when they take a prisoner, feed upon him alive, and by degrees, to the unutterable aggravation of his horror and torment.

They hear not the voice of the oppressor] Their harsh and hard speeches, #**Jude 15**, that were as a murdering weapon in the poor prisoner's bones, #**Ps 42:10**. Send me back to my frogs and toads again, where I may pray for your conversion, said one of the martyrs to his railing adversaries. Art thou come, thou villain? how darest thou look me in the face for shame? said Stephen Gardiner to Dr Taylor the martyr, who told him his own freely, but fairly: for the spirit of grace is *nec mendax, nec mordax*. neither lying nor deceitful. *Est autem Satanae pectus faecundissimum convitiis*, Moreover, there is in the heart of Satan most fruitful vice, saith Luther; the devil and his agents are bitter railers, fetching their words as far as hell, to break the hearts of God's prisoners, #**Ps 69:20**. But besides that they have their cordial of a good conscience

by them, #2Co 1:12, in the grave they hear not the voice of the oppressor, nor the barking of these dead dogs, any more.

Ver. 19. **The small and the great are there]** In Calvary are skulls of all sizes, say the Hebrews. *Stat sua cuique dies* (Virg. Aeneid, lib. 1 0). It is appointed for all once to die, be they great or small, low or high. *Mors sceptrā ligonibus aequat*, death makes no difference; kings and captives, lords and lowlies come, then under an equal parity; death takes away all distinctions. William the Conqueror's corpse lay unburied three days; his interment was hindered by one that claimed the ground to be his (Daniel). King Stephen was interred at Feversham monastery; but since his body, for the gain of the lead, wherein it was confined, was cast into the river, where at length it rested; as did likewise the dead corpse of Edward V, and his brother, smothered in the Tower by Richard III, and cast into a place called the black deeps at the Thames' mouth (Speed.).

The servant is free from his master] Servant is a name of office. He is not his own to dispose of, but the master's instrument, saith Aristotle, and wholly his, till he please to free him: if he do not, yet death will; and by taking away his life, give him his liberty. His body resteth from all servile offices for a season howsoever: and if with good will he hath done service as to the Lord, and not to men, he shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance, even a child's part, #Col 3:24.

Ver. 20. **Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery]** Job hath not done yet, though he had said more than enough of this matter; but for want of the oil of joy and gladness his doors move not without creaking, his lips (like rusty hinges) open not without murmuring and complaining: good, therefore, is that counsel given by David, Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; take up in time, before it hath wholly leavened and soured you: "Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil," #Ps 37:8. He shall not choose but do evil who is sick of the fret. David had the sad experience of this when he had carted the ark, and thereupon God had made a breach upon Uzzah: David was displeased, saith the text; and how untowardly spake he, as if the fault were more in God than in himself; though afterwards he came to a sight of his own error, #1Ch 13:11 15:2. And so did Job, no doubt, when come to himself; but here he proceeds to express his peevishness and impatience, yea, against God himself

(though not by name, *forsan sese cohibens—ob bonae mentis reliquias*, saith Mercer, out of his good respect to God, which he still retained), and calls for a reason why the miserable should be condemned to live, since death would be much more welcome to them. How apt are men to think there is no reason for that for which they can see no reason!

Ver. 21. **Which long for death, but it cometh not]** The bitter in soul long for death, those that are in pain or penury are apt to desire to be dispatched upon any terms, and would freely pardon them, they say, that would give them their passport. But these, for the most part, consider not the unsupportableness of the wrath to come, that eternity of extremity in hell, that death usually baleth at the heels of it; so that by death, whereof they are so desirous, they would but leap out of the frying pan into the fire, as Judas did.. they do so, as the ass in the fable, who desired to die, that he might be no more beaten; *at post mortem factus est tympanum*, but when he was dead he was made a drum head of, and so was ten times more laid on than ever in his lifetime before.

And dig for it more than for hid treasures] Covetousness is παντολμος, all daring, saith an ancient; and men, for love of wealth, will dig to hell, light a candle at the devil, as they say: with such an eagerness of desire do some (that have little reason for it, all things reckoned) long and labour after death, not to be rid of sin, or to be with Christ, as **#Php 1:23**, but to be freed from misery incumbent or impendent. Thus Cato (having first read Plato's book of the soul's immortality) committed suicide, that he might not fall into the hands of the conqueror. Thus Adrian the emperor, having lain long sick (and could get no help by physicians, but was the worse for them, as he complained at his death, πολλοι ιατροι κατεκτειναν τον βοσιλεα), would gladly have slain himself, if those about him would have suffered it. It is said that Severianus, whom this emperor injuriously put to death, wished of God, *ut Adrianus, quamvis mortem obire percupiat, tamen non possit*, that Adrian might desire to die, and not be able, or find opportunity. There is an epistle of his extant, saith the historian, wherein is set forth what a misery it is to desire to die, and yet to be denied it (Dio Cass. in Adrian). This was the case of those popelings, **#Re 9:6**. And in particular of Roger, bishop of Salisbury in King Stephen's time; who, through long and strait

imprisonment, was brought to that evil pass, *ut vivere noluerit, mori nescierit*, live he would not, and yet die he could not. This is a very typical hell, and a foretaste of eternal torment.

Ver. 22. **Which rejoice exceedingly]** Joy till they skip again, so Broughton rendereth it. Strange that any should be so glad of death, that last enemy, that slaughterman of nature, and harbinger of hell to the ungodly; but this the devil hideth from them till he hath them where he would have, and whence there is no redemption. What was it else that moved Augustus at his death to call for a round of applause or that made Julian the apostate to die so confidently; and many today that have little reason for it to be so prodigal of their lives, and seemingly fond of death? Is it not because they are fearfully blinded by the god of this present world, #2Co 4:4, who holdeth his black hand before their eyes, lest they should see the evil consequents of death, and be saved? which because they do not, what do they else but rejoice exceedingly (or with exultation, as the word here signifieth) in their woeful bondage, and go dancing to hell in their bolts, not so much as desiring deliverance. A man that is to be hanged next day may dream overnight he shall be set free, nay, that he shall be a king, and rejoice therein accordingly; but the end of such joy is heaviness.

Ver. 23. **Why is light given to a man whose way is hid?]** *i.e.* Why is the light of life continued to him who is in a maze or labyrinth of miseries, whereof he can see no cause, and whereout he can descry no issue? no hope at all appeareth of ever either mending or ending. Therefore *Vale lumen amicum*, as he in St Jerome said, Sweet light, adieu; *Quin morere ut merita es*, as she in the poet, Be thine own death's man. Seneca counts it a mercy to a man in misery that he may, by committing suicide, let out his life when he will; and this he calls valour and manhood. But we have not so learned Christ, neither may we leave our station till called for by our Captain, but must stand to our arms, and, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, suffer hardship, #2Ti 2:4. His word to us is the same as the king's was to his son, the Black Prince, Either vanquish or die (Speed.); and as she in the story said to her son when she gave him his target, See that thou either bring this back with thee, or else be thou brought back dead upon it out of the battle, *ταυ η επι ταυ*. It troubled Job that he could not see his way, and that God had hedged him in, viz. with a thorn hedge of afflictions, #La 3:7,9 Ho 2:6, so that he could find

no way out. But what if he could not, nor any man alive? yet the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, **#2Pe 2:9**. He hath his way in the whirlwind, and his judgments are a great deep, **#Ps 36:6**. Sometimes secret they are, but ever just. Surely it had been more meet for Job to have said unto God, "That which I see not, teach thou me," **#Job 34:32**. "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have I waited for thee; the desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee," **#Isa 26:8**.

Ver. 24. **For my sighing cometh before I eat]** It cometh unsent for, as evil weather useth to do, and most unseasonably surpriseth me at my repast. I mingle my meat with my tears, with every bit of bread I have a morsel of sorrows; and I mingle my drink with weeping, **#Ps 102:9**, though indeed Job's was not so much a shower of tears as a storm of sighs, and a volley of roarings, betokening extremity of grief, such as was beyond tears, and vented itself as the noise of many waters; for my roarings, saith he, are poured out like water. I am as hungry as a lion roaring on his prey, and as violent as the torrents ranging the fields; and yet I neither have leisure nor list to eat my bread; as loth to prolong such a troublesome life, but that I must, or be guilty of self murder. Mr Fox reports of Mr John Glover, that not long after his conversion, upon a mistake of the sense of that text, **#Heb 6:5,6**, he was strongly concerned that he had fallen into the unpardonable sin, and must necessarily therefore be damned; and in that intolerable grief of mind, although he neither had nor could have any joy of his meat, yet was he compelled to eat against his appetite, to the end to defer the time of his damnation so long as he might (Acts & Mon. 1 552). Now who can tell how near Job's case might come to this, since the devil was both author and actor in a great part of both these tragic comedies?

Ver. 25. **For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me]** Heb. I feared a fear, and it came upon me. Had Job been wicked, this had been no wonder, **#Pr 10:24 Job 15:21**. Or had his fear been sinful, it had been less pity, **#Pr 29:25 Joh 11:48**; for why should he, by a painful preconceit, suffer before he needed, and send for his crosses before they came? A good man should be careful (and so consequently fearful) in nothing, **#Php 4:6**, he should hope the best, and bear bravely $\sigma\tau\iota\ \alpha\nu\ \Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \delta\iota\delta\omega$, saith Demosthenes, whatever God sendeth. The Epicureans held, that a good man might be cheerful under whatsoever miseries: 1. In consideration of honesty

and integrity. 2. In consideration of those pleasures and comforts that formerly he had enjoyed, and now cheered up himself with, *Ex praeteritarum voluptatum recordatione* (Cic. de Finib. lib. 2). Of neither of these was Job to seek; but whereas it might be said unto him, Is it fit for thee, who hast hitherto been so happy, now to take on so heavily, because thus and thus afflicted? Truly, saith he, I was never so happy as you took me for; because (considering how moveable and mutable all outward things are) I always feared lest I should outlive my prosperity; that which now also is unhappily befallen me. Sulla had been happy, *si eundem et vincendi et vivendi finem fecisset*, saith one; that is, if he had made an end of conquering and of living together; but that he did not. In him and many others it hath appeared that mortality is but the stage of mutability. This holy Job had oft forecasted with himself: and though in his passion he here allege it as a reason why he took no comfort in his meat, &c., yet in true account it could be no grief unto him, nor offence of heart (as she once said to David, #1Sa 25:31), since it was a fear of wisdom and caution; a fear of the head, and not of the heart; a fear of diligence, and not of diffidence.

Ver. 26. **I was not in safety]** *i.e.* I counted not myself simply the safer and happier man, because of creature comforts; but knowing their uncertainty, I held at a distance, and hung loose to them all.

Neither had I rest] I set not up my rest here, as did Nebuchadnezzar, #Da 4:4, and that rich fool, #Lu 12:20, and the purple whore, who sitteth and saith, I shall see no sorrow. Once indeed Job said (but not so well), "I shall die in my nest, and multiply my days as the sand," #Job 29:18. And so (by a like error, which was quickly confuted) David said in his prosperity, "I shall never be moved," #Ps 30:6,7. But for the main and the most part Job was otherwise minded. A godly man may be master of and busied about these paltremments of this present world, but not satisfied in them as adequate objects: he looks upon them all in their greatest lustre, as Hiram did on the cities Solomon had given him, which he called Chabul, that is, land of dirt. He minds the things above most of all.

Yet trouble came] Although I ever kept myself within the bounds of humility and modesty, and so took the safest and wisest course to

secure that I had, and to gain a settled estate; yet all is gone, and I am left a mirror of misery. What can any one make of this? This is a riddle to me; here I am gravelled and benighted.

Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **Then Eliphaz the Temanite]** Then, when Job had laid about him in this sort; and, giving his tongue too much liberty to lash out, had uttered words little better than blasphemous and contumelious against God; then Eliphaz, *Temanites ille*, the first born of Esau, #Ge 36:4 (saith R. Salomon), brought up in the bosom of Isaac, and so inured to revelations from on high. Others think he descended of Teman, nephew to Esau, &c. A man of great wisdom he was, and of great discourse; one that could speak his mind fitly, and did it freely. He seems to have been the chief of the three for age and authority, and therefore begins; pretending to be moved thereunto by zeal for God's glory, not a little impaired by Job's impatience savouring of hypocrisy, and arguing *eum ficto fucatoque cordo fuisse*, that he had been little better than a dissembler. A causeless and uncharitable charge; enough to have driven him into desperation. The Rabbis speak so well of Job's three friends, that they used to say in a Proverb (*Bava bathra Perech 1*), Let a man either get him such friends as Job had, or else get him out of the world (like as Chrysippus was wont to say, *Aut mentem, aut restim comparandam*). But Gregory the Great saith, that these three, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, do fitly set forth heretics, who begin to speak smoothly at first, as if they meant no harm to him to whom they speak, but only good, to purchase his benevolous attention, but soon come to speak words which much hurt the hearer, and greatly trouble him, &c.

Ver. 2. **If we assay to commune with thee]** Or may we assay to commune with thee? Art thou in case to be counselled? and will not an essay to this purpose further trouble thy patience and distemper thee? The ear which tasteth words (as the mouth doth meat), if filled with choler, can relish no comfort; and the easiest medicines, or mildest waters, are troublesome to sore eyes (Basil. Orat. 12). Honey causeth pain to exulcerate parts, though in itself it be sweet and medicinal; children, though at other times they like it and lick it in, yet they will not endure to have it come near their lips when they have the cankers (Alex. Aphrod. problem.). Some patients are mad

against their medicines; and some hearers rage at a reproof. Eliphaz knew not but that Job might do as much, and that having newly been in a fearful fit of passion, he might fall into another, as Jonah did; the orifice of his corruption being not yet closed up by repentance; hence this preamble by way of friendly insinuation. The like art useth Paul with Philemon, and with the Corinthians often.

But who can withhold himself from speaking?] Who that hath any piety toward God, or pity to his offending friend? We use to say, He that receiveth a courtesy selleth his liberty; but true love will not be tongue tied. Our Saviour's mouth was not stopped with all the good cheer that Simon the leper made him, #Lu 7:36-50, neither entertained he the Pharisees with fewer menaces than they did him, eftsoons, with messes of meat. Job had been doubtless very friendly to his friends, who yet spare him not; and had they done it aright with the meekness of wisdom they had showed themselves friends indeed there being not a better office or evidence of love than this, #Le 19:17. Friends, as bees, are killed with the honey of flattery, but quickened with the vinegar of reproof, so it be well managed. The eagle, though she loveth her young ones dearly, yet she pricketh and beateth them out of the nest when they are ready for flight.

Ver. 3. **Behold, thou hast instructed many]** *sc.* To do each day's duty with Christian diligence, and to bear each day's crosses with Christian patience thou hast done it well. But how comes it now to pass, *quod dicta factis erubescant*, that thy present doings shame thy former sayings? (Tertul.); and that (as it was noted of Demosthenes the orator) thou art better at praising of virtue than at practising of it? *Turpe est Doctori, &c.* Should not the physician first heal himself? and ought not the preacher's word be *Spectemur agendo*; let our profiting appear to all men, let our lives be a true transcript of our sermons? What a shame was it that Hilary should complain that the people's ears were holier than the preachers' hearts, *Sanctiores sunt aures plebis quam corda sacerdotum* (Hilar.), and that Erasmus, by a true jest, should be told that there was more goodness in his book of the Christian soldier than in his bosom! Eliphaz from this ground would here argue that Job was little better than a hypocrite; a censure overly rigid, it being the easiest thing in the world, as a philosopher observed, to give good counsel, and the hardest thing to take it. Dr Preston, upon his death

bed, confessed, that now it came to his own turn, he found it somewhat to do to practise that which he had oft pressed upon others.

And thou hast strengthened the weak hands] Loose and lax, feeble and infirm, through many terrors and troubles: to these thou hast spoken words which have been as sinews to their hands, and as strength to their joints. Job had comforted the feeble minded, or the dispirited, the sick at heart, and sinking under the sense of sin and fear of wrath, **#1Th 5:14**. This is a harder work than to raise the dead to life, saith Luther; this not one of a thousand can skill of, **#Job 33:23**. He must have feeding lips and a healing tongue that shall do it. *O quam hoc non est omnium!* The Christian Romans were able to do it, **#Ro 15:14**. And holy Job was both able and apt, for he did it to many. True goodness is diffusive of itself, and is therefore compared to the most spreading things; as fire, water, sunlight, &c.

Ver. 4. **Thy words have upholden him that was falling]** So forcible are right words, well timed and fitted to the present necessity, they shore up the tottering, they catch him before he comes to ground, and prevent his fall. This made Latimer bless God that ever he came acquainted with that fellow prisoner of his, that angel of God (as he called him), John Bradford he and Ridley, so long as they lived, upheld Cranmer by their words and letters; who soon after fell, to the grief of the godly party, but rose again by repentance (Mr Clark in his Life). The story is told of Urbanus Regius, a famous Dutch divine, that meeting with Luther at Goburg, he spent a whole day in conference with him about matters of great moment, of which himself writeth, that he never had a more comfortable day in all his life. The earl of Derby's accusation in the parliament house against Mr Bradford was, that he did more harm (so he called good, evil) by letters and conferences in prison than ever he did when he was abroad by preaching (Acts and Mon.).

Thou hast strengthened the feeble knees] That bend and buckle under a back burden of afflictions: this was to be like unto God, who doth not crush, but cherish the worm Jacob; he doth not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; he despiseth not the day of small things, nor slighteth the well meant weaknesses of his

upright hearted people. Now Job, as a partaker of the Divine nature, resembled God herein, and made it his work to comfort the abject, to strengthen and straighten those that were bowed down with pains and pressures, to be eyes to the blind and feet to the lame, **#Job 29:15**; to distribute spiritual alms, which is far the best in many respects, as were easy to instance.

Ver. 5. **But now it is come upon thee**] This is a galling. But hitherto Eliphaz had commended Job; now he dasheth all, and draweth a black line over that he had spoken once. To commend a man with a but is a wound instead of a commendation; it sounds like that which is said of Naaman, **#2Ki 5:1**, he was an honourable and a valiant man, but a leper; it sprinkleth black upon white, and so smutteth a man's good name, which is slander in a high degree.

It is come upon thee] What is come? The evil thou fearedst, by thine own confession, **#Job 3:25,26**; or now it is come to thy turn to act what thou hast taught others.

And thou faintest] Thou art down on all four, most shamefully degenerating into a faithless pusillanimity and unbelieving impatience, to the scandal of the weak and scorn of the wicked. Nay, thou art not only in a maze, but in a rage, so that thy reason seems tired as much as thy strength; thou layest about thee like a *Hercules furens*, a man stark mad. See the word used in this sense, **#Pr 26:18 Ge 47:13**. *{mad, fainted}*

It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled] It toucheth thee, but so tender thou art, and delicate, that a light touch disquieteth thee; like as some men's flesh, if but razed with a pin, rankleth straight. *Invalidum omne natura querulum*, saith Seneca, The weaker anything is the more full of complaint.

And thou art troubled] Pitifully put to it, as if utterly undone, because touched a little, *Mira vero constantia!* Truly amazingly constant! But is this you that were a great teacher, that were so forward and forth putting to press others to a patient and peaceable behaviour under God's hand? Should not thy words be made visible by thine actions? and thy patient mind be made known to all men, since the Lord is at hand? Hypocrites can talk of duty, as if their

tongues did run upon pattens; *{The plate or shallow dish, usually circular and of silver, on which the bread is laid at the celebration of the Eucharist.}* they talk by the talent, but act by the ounce, as did those Pharisees, **#Mt 23:8 Ro 2:21**, that shamed goodness by seeming good. Eliphaz here reproacheth Job for such a one, as both here and everywhere, he and his two companions are too hot and harsh in their censures passed upon him; which God also giveth them the telling of, **#Job 42:7-9**.

Ver. 6. **Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, &c.**] Or thy folly: *q.d.* Is not thy religion a mere foolery? and hath not thou rather acted religion, played devotion and the fear of God, than been serious therein? This was a most bitter scoff, a cruel shake, and came near his heart. Like as nothing vexed David more than when they laid his religion in his dish, asking, Where is now thy God? So he. By this alteration that affliction hath wrought in thee, thou mayest easily see what thou art, viz. a very painted hypocrite: hard weather shows what health; empty vessels set near the fire, crack quickly. At the parting way every dog followeth his own master. *Afflictio virum arguit, &c.* Affliction shows a man, it turns the inside outward, the bottom of the bag upward; bringing that which was at the bottom to the top; as that stick cast into the water made the iron swim, **#2Ki 6:6**. Doth it not appear (saith Eliphaz here) that thou hast been merely mercenary, serving God while he prospered thee; and now kicking against him, because he afflicteth thee? See how near this man cometh, saith Mercer, to that first instigation of Satan, **#Job 1:9**, *in hoc Satanae factus minister*; herein acting the devil's part, though unwittingly, as Peter also did, **#Mt 16:22,23**.

The uprightness of thy ways and thy hope?] *q.d.* Thou hast taken to thyself many fair titles, and made a great flaunt, as if there were none such; but what is it all come to? Is it any better than a flask, a foppery, a name, and not a thing? Or if it be a reality, make proof of it. True grace is operative, and will not lie dormant.

Ver. 7. **Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent?**] Why? that hath many a one, as the world counteth and calleth perishing: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart," **#Isa 57:1**. And it was given unto the beast, to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, **#Re 13:7**. So it seemed to be, though so it never was, **#Re 12:11**. The first man that died, died for religion, so early came martyrdom into the world; and John Baptist

was put to death in prison without all show of law, right, or reason, as if God had been nothing aware of any such matter, as that martyr phrased it (Acts and Mon.). Indeed, if Eliphaz meant it of perishing eternally, neither Job nor any one else could produce an instance of a godly man so perishing; but for temporal miseries it is sure that never any out of hell have met with more than the most holy and harmless heirs of heaven. See #**Heb 11**, and you will say so. But the Scriptures, haply, were not written when Eliphaz uttered this speech; howbeit, he might have observed the contrary to what he here seemeth to affirm, appealing to Job's own experience for proof. And the truth is, if men were so well read as they might in the story of their own lives, they might have a divinity of their own, by noting experiments; such as that 119th Psalm is in a manner wholly made up of. Remember, saith he here; and the philosopher saith, that experience is nothing else but *multiplex memoria*, because of the memory of the same thing often done, ariseth experience. Eliphaz, therefore, after that he had given Job his turn to search his experiences, brings forth his own in the next verse.

Ver. 8. **Even as I have seen]** And therefore can boldly say: for what so sure as sight? See #**Nu 11:23 Ge 34:1,2**. Diligent inspection of a thing, and deep consideration upon it, makes confidence, which is the fruit of experience.

That they plow iniquity, and sow wickedness] Here is ploughing and sowing, a mystical husbandry. Sinners are sore labourers, great painstakers: they plot and plough, they sow and reap, they dig and delve, #**Pr 16:27**, they weave and spin, #**Isa 59:5**, they busy their heads, and beat their brains, as hard students in their black art; they labour even unto lassitude, #**Jer 9:5**. Hence they are called workers of iniquity (the Vulgate rendereth this text *Qui operantur iniquitatem*), and sin is called a work of the flesh. How can those but work hard in digging descents to hell, who have the devil for their task master, who continually spurs them on to a quick despatch of the deeds of darkness? *Arant, serunt, occant scelera*, as the devil's hinds and horses, they drudge night and day, turning up all the corruption in their hearts and conveniences in the world, for the effecting of their wicked devices.

And sow wickedness] *Nemo repente fit turpissimus.* No one suddenly becomes wicked. Sin goeth on gradually (here is first ploughing, then sowing), wicked men and seducers grow worse and worse, till at length they are even Satanized, #2Ti 3:13; being transformed into sin's image, and bereft of all passive power of awaking out of the snare of the devil, being taken alive by him at his pleasure, #2Ti 2:26.

Reap the same] Not the same day it may be, but too soon, to their sorrow, they receive the guerdon of their sin. Sooner or later, it is sure, he that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity, #Pr 22:8 Jer 4:18. As everybody hath its shadow, so hath every sin its punishment; and many times the one is so like the other, that a man may safely say, Such a punishment is the product of such a sin, #Ga 6:7. Men shall reap the same they sow, and good reason. Give them blood to drink, for they are worthy, #Re 16:6. God loves to make him a name among men by his art of justicing (as one calleth it) in that most exact way of counterpassion, or retaliation; and Adonibezek hath got him a fame of ingenuity, by acknowledging as much, #Jud 1:7.

Ver. 9. **By the blast of God they perish]** He puts himself to no great pain to punish them; but blows them away as so many dust heaps; he nods them to destruction, saith the psalmist, #Ps 80:16; he can as easily do it as bid it to be done. So Caesar Metellus. If the Lord do but arise, his enemies shall be scattered; and all that hate him fly before him, #Ps 64:1. If he but put his head out of the windows of heaven, as it were, and say, Who is on my side; who? all the creatures (who for fear of him had hid themselves, as worms wriggle into their holes in time of thunder) shall look out presently, and offer him their service; so that he cannot possibly want a weapon to tame his rebels, or a way to bring the wicked to condign punishment. He is Eloah, as he is here called; that is, The powerful One, the mighty strong God, as #Isa 9:6, before whom all nations are as the drop of a bucket, or as the dust of the balance, #Isa 40:15; no more able to stand against him than is the glass bottle against a cannon shot, or downny thistle before a whirlwind. Behold, I will send a blast upon him (saith God concerning Sennacherib, #2Ki 19:7), and so set him going. So, elsewhere, he threateneth to tread down his stoutest enemies as straw is trodden down to the dunghill. Neither shall he much trouble himself in doing this: for he shall only spread forth his

hands in the midst of them, "as he that swimmeth, spreadeth forth his hands to swim," &c., #**Isa 25:11,12**, to signify that he shall do it with greatest facility. The motion in swimming is easy, not strong; for strong violent strokes in the water would rather sink than support. It is said, that by a look of his out of the pillar of fire and of the cloud he troubled the host of the Egyptians, #**Ex 14:24**, and as the rocks repelled the boisterous waves, — *Conantia frangere frangunt*, so did he the enemies of his people.

By the breath of his nostrils are they consumed] Heb. By the wind of his nostrils. This is the same with the former. Only it is conceived that Eliphaz here alludeth to the manner of the death of Job's children by a mighty wind, so strong as if God himself had breathed it out. By the breath of his mouth he made the world, #**Ps 32:6**, and by the same breath can he as soon and as easily unmake it again, as he did in the general deluge, whereunto the Chaldee paraphrast holdeth that Eliphaz here referreth; the remembrance of which standing monument of God's wrath was fresh and well known when this was spoken.

Ver. 10. **The roaring of the lion, &c.]** Lest any should think, saith Mr Caryl, that the blast of God mentioned above carrieth away only straws and feathers, light and weak persons, into perdition, Eliphaz addeth the weightiest and the strongest, "The roaring of a lion," &c., *q.d.* God by his blast can take away or break the strongest, the mightiest lion like men, &c. Under the shadow of which allusions he closely strikes at Job, who was once a great man, a fierce spoiling lion in the apprehension of his friends, and yet God brought him down. Of tyrants and oppressors compared to lions, and why, see #**Na 2:11,12 Pr 28:15**. {See Trapp on "Na 2:11"} {See Trapp on "Na 2:12"} {See Trapp on "Pr 28:15"} The proverb is, The lion is not so fierce as he is painted. But no words can sufficiently set forth the atrocious savagery and cruelty of absurd and wicked men. See that of Nebuchadnezzar graphically described, #**Jer 51:34**, "He hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out."

The teeth of the young lions are broken] Or, pulled out, that they may no more devour the flesh and drink the blood of God's poor

afflicted, that fell into their strong ones. Thus David had prayed, #Ps 58:6, and this he had proved: #Ps 3:7, "Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly." God with his hard and heavy hand had so boxed and buffeted them, that they spat forth some of their teeth; and for the rest, they might go seek them in their throat; as Dares, that bold champion in Virgil, whom (when he had been soundly beaten by old Entellus) his fellows led away.

Iaetantemque utroque caput, crassumque cruorem

Ore reiectantem, ipsosque in sanguine dentes.

A just hand of God upon such as, exercising regimen without righteousness, ravin and rend, as lions greedy for their prey, plucking off the skins of their poor subjects, and pulling out their teeth, #Mic 3:2: as Melancthon telleth of one tyrant, who, to get great sums of money out of his people, used to send for them; and if they refused to answer his demands, he would first knock out one of their teeth, and then another, threatening to leave them toothless.

Ver. 11. **The old lion perisheth for lack of prey]** As not being able to hunt and get it. The meaning is (saith one) that men who reign like lions, that their children who equalled them in cruelty, that their wives who surpassed them in insolence, do end their lives tragically, *Quotidiana et domestica experimenta hoc docent;* all this is true for the most part. Eliphaz speaks of what is usually done, saith another (Mercer), in #Ps 30. Or he speaks of what God can easily do at any time; and of what God may justly do at all times. If he suspend this justice, it is for weighty reasons, &c. Some wicked men God punisheth here, saith Augustine, lest his providence, but not all, lest his patience and promise of judgment, should be called into question.

Ver. 12. **Now a thing was secretly brought to me]** Heb. Was brought to me by stealth, closely and privily, so as others were not aware of it: see #Ac 22:9 9:7. Saul's companions heard his voice, but not Christ's. By this vision Eliphaz would convince Job that none are afflicted but those that have well deserved it; since the best are defective and blame worthy, though they should be *puriore caelo afflictione facti,* as Chrysostom saith, as those good souls were that prayed Peter out of prison, #Ac 12:5. Some are of the

opinion, that this vision either came from his phantasy, and so was none; or else, by an illusion from Satan. But Mercer holds it to have been a true vision from God; although Eliphaz abused it in his misapplication thereof to Job, playing the sophister, after a sort, while he quite changeth the state of the question, which at this time was, Whether we ought to judge a man's life and behaviour by the greatness of those troubles and miseries that he doth suffer? This vision he describeth *verbis magnificis et ampullosis*: As for me, a thing (or a word) was stolen upon me, or secretly brought to me, &c. But what so great a secret was this, saith Calvin, that God alone is perfectly righteous, and all men unrighteous in comparison to him? For answer, he calleth it a secret (though it be a plain and evident truth), because few consider it, and improve it to be a humble submission to God, and suffering his judgments. See a like expressmn, #Ps 78:2,3, &c., "I will open my mouth in a parable," which yet was nothing extraordinary, but poetically set out, so #Ps 49:4. The happy and secure estate of saints in trouble is described, and the contrary; which though an ordinary argument, and often treated, yet is called the great wisdom, the dark saying.

And mine ear received a little thereof] *Nonnihil pauxillum, quippiam*, not all that it might, but as much as it could, as being but a narrow mouthed vessel. *Vide ut modeste loquatur*; saith Mercer; See how modestly the man speaketh, not taking upon him any perfection of knowledge, though he were a man of great understanding; his ear caught somewhat of what was revealed, and but somewhat. The best men, while here, knows only in part; for what reason? We prophesy but in part, #1Co 13:9. Such is our weakness and narrow heartedness, that we cannot take in all of all; no, nor any part of all in the full latitude and extent of it. The greatest part of that we know is the least part of that we know not, saith a Father. Hence those modest expressions of some philosophers, and others: This only I know, that nothing I know, said Socrates. I know not so much as this, said another, that I yet know nothing. My greatest knowledge, said Chytreus, is to know that I know nothing. And albeit I am otherwise ignorant, saith another, yet of mine own ignorance I am not ignorant. Not only in most other things am I to seek, saith Austin (Epist. cxix. c. 21), but even in the Scriptures (my chief study, and trade of life) *multo plura nescio*

quam scio, there are many more things hid from me than what I yet understand, #**Joh 14:4,5**. Thomas seems to contradict Christ. Austin thus reconcileth it: they did partly know whither Christ went, but dared not once believe that they had any such knowledge; they did not know their own knowledge. The best here can see but God's back parts, and live, as Moses. Isaiah saw only his train in the temple, and the latter end of that too. Eliphaz's ear caught only the latter end, as it were, of a sentence, only that which the echo resounded, a particle of the whole that was whispered secretly to him. Howbeit, that he received but a little was not from neglect of the rest, but from inability to receive more or to receive it more perfectly.

Ver. 13. **In thoughts from the visions of the night, &c.]** Or, in thoughts of the visions of the night. It appeareth by this and other circumstances that this vision was no fiction or holy fraud (as some have conceited) to bring Job to a sight of his sin. Let Papists praise their St Dominic for his holy hypocrisy which he taught his disciples to make use of, to bring people the better to a good esteem of the faith and love of virtue. Eliphaz was a better man than to deal in such depths of the devil, and with such deliberate gravity put a lie upon God. He was really plodding, he was in thoughts, the word properly signifieth branches, or boughs of trees, which are many, thick, intertwined, and crossing one another, In the multitude of my perplexed thoughts within me, saith David, thy comforts have refreshed my soul, #**Ps 94:19**. The same word is rendered vain thoughts, or wavering cogitations, #**Ps 119:113**, such as David's soul hated. Carnal hearts are exchanges and shops of vain thoughts, stews of unclean thoughts, slaughter houses of cruel and bloody thoughts; a very forge and mint of false, politic, undermining thoughts: but Eliphaz's thoughts were better busied; his top thoughts, those uppermost branches of his soul, were concerning God, and the things of his kingdom: when other men became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, he had visions of God. In the night season, when dead sleep fell upon others, he slept, but his heart waked, and was free to receive revelations, and to contemplate them; or, perhaps, he was wide awake at that time of night, that he might the better converse with God and his own soul. Abraham had many such sweet visions: Isaac walked out into the fields for the purpose: Jacob met with God in this manner, both at

Bethel and at Penuel. Daniel had visions both in the day and in the night: so had Paul, and other apostles. The monks make long relations of revelations and apparitions that they have had. So do the enthusiasts and high attainers; but we are not bound to believe them. Matthew Paris reporteth of Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London, A. D. 1161, that one night musing about the difference between the king and Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, he heard a terrible voice, saying, *O Gilberte Foliot, dum revolvis tot et tot, Deus tuus est Ascarot.* O Gibert Filiot, then you turn back to much and so much. Your God is Iscariot. He, taking it to be the devil, answered boldly, *Mentiris, daemon: Deus meus est Deus Sabaoth.* Lying devil my God is the God of Hosts. Aeneas, in Virgil, is said to have his visions and conferences with his deceased friends. Satan loves to imitate God in what he can, that he may deceive with better success; but we have a most sure word of prophecy, and yet a more glorious light of the gospel, **#Heb 1:2**, the promised daystar being risen in our hearts, **#2Pe 1:19**.

Ver. 14. **Fear came on me, and trembling]** Fear in the inward man, and trembling in the outward. And this is God's method still: the more he draweth nigh to any man the more doth rottenness enter into his bones, and he is horribly afraid of God's judgments, with David; he trembleth at his word, with Josiah, that it may be the more efficacious in his soul. "Let us have grace" (saith the apostle), "whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for even our God also" (and not the God of the Jews only) "is a consuming fire," **#Heb 12:28,29**. Αξιωματικωτατος μεν εστιν ο βασιλευς ημων, saith Basil. Our King will be served like himself, served in state; and although he alloweth us a humble familiarity, yet he expecteth our reverential fear; acquainted he will be with us in our walks of obedience; but yet he takes state upon him in his ordinances, and will be trembled at in the addresses we make unto his majesty; he looks we should bring with us a legal faith and a legal repentance, as well as an evangelical; and that we should work out our salvation with fear and trembling, **#Php 2:12**. Terrors and humiliations prepare and posture the heart for revelations; never is it right till a man lie low at God's feet, putting his mouth in the dust, and crying out, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth: there shall be only fear to make them understand the hearing, **#Isa 28:19**; fear met Eliphaz, and made way for the heavenly vision.

Which made all my bones to shake] Heb. The multitude of my bones, or the number of my bones, how many soever they be, and they are as many (say the Hebrews) as there are affirmative precepts in the law. These pillars of my body shook sore, and threatened a downfall.

— *Gelidusque per ima cucurrit*
Ossa tremor: -(Aeneid ii.)

Ver. 15. **Then a spirit passed before my face]** Some render it a wind, as a messenger or forerunner of God near at hand, as #1Ki 19:11. But better, a good angel in some bodily shape, #Ps 104:4 Lu 24:37; for else how could he be seen of Eliphaz, gliding rather than going, as a ship upon the face of the waters?

The hair of my flesh stood up] *Horripilatus sum*. In a fright the heart falleth down, the hair standeth up; the blood hastening to the heart to relieve it, as soldiers do to the castle when all is likely to be lost.

Dirigui, steteruntque comae —

Ver. 16. **It stood still]** As now ready to speak. An ambulatory voice is hardly heard: the heavens, indeed, are walking preachers, but then they utter but these three words (Lib. ii. de Arca, cap. 3), saith Hugo, in all languages, *Accipe, Redde, Fuge*, that is, Receive mercies, Return duties, Flee offences, and their just punishments.

But I could not discern the form thereof] Heb. the aspect or countenance. He was so frightened, that his eye could not do its office distinctly, to discern the thing that was just before it. It is natural to a man to fear at the sight of an angel: what then will wicked men do at the last day, when the Son of man shall bring all his angels, not leaving one behind him in heaven? Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men: and oh that we could persuade them!

An image was before mine eyes] But I could not tell what to make of it. It is not the will of God that man should represent him by an image, #De 4:15,16. The Jews, after the captivity, were so far from idolatry, that they would not admit a carver or painter into their city.

The Turks will not endure any image, no, not upon their coins, because of the second commandment. Varro saith, he that first brought in imagery (and that is thought to be Ninus, king of Babylon), *superstitionem auxit, metum dempsit*, increased superstition, and took away fear. The wiser heathens held that God was too subtle for sinew or sight to seize upon; and the Greek painters, when they would draw the image of their Jupiter in a table, they were still changing it, but never ending it, saying, that herein they showed him to be a god; for that they might begin to paint, but could not perfect him.

There was silence, and I heard a voice] It was fit there should be silence and sedateness of spirit when a Divine voice was to be heard. Let all the earth keep silence before God, **#Hab 2:20**. When the seventh seal was opened there was half an hour's silence in heaven, **#Re 8:1**. What a noise is there in many men's hearts even while they are hearing what the Lord God speaketh unto them! what bargaining, lawing, projecting, running into another world (as men in dreams do), so that they can tell no more what the preacher said than the man in the moon can! Silence is a good preparative to audience. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. Let the woman (and so the man too) learn in silence. Let by thoughts, swarming and humming in our hearts, like the flies of Egypt, be barred out; let the devil, interrupting us with his suggestions, as the Pythoness did Paul and his companions, be haltered up. Let even good thoughts, if unseasonable and heterogeneal to the work in hand, be turned out of doors; let us say to them, as Hushai did to Ahithophel, Thy counsel is good, but not now. How shall we else hear with attention and affection? how shall we listen as for life, and hearken diligently with much heed? **#Isa 21:7**.

Ver. 17. **Shall mortal man]** Sorry sinful man, a very mixture and hodge podge of dirt and sin, *Miser, aerumnis et peccatis obnoxius*.

Be more just than God?] Or, be just rather than God? as **#Lu 18:14**. This is the matter of the vision; and it is (saith Diodati) a revelation of the doctrine of the free remission of sins, and of the sinner's justification by grace, through his faith in the promised mediator. But Eliphaz turns it another way, and misapplying it to Job, would there hence evince, that all his present sufferings were

the proceeds of his own sin, and so from the process of God's justice. The truth is, Job had blurted out some words in the former chapter that reflected somewhat upon God: he had also bitterly cursed the day and services of his birth; this latter, if Eliphaz had sharply reproved Job for, he had done him a friendly good office: but he waives that part, *et quae desperat nitescere posse, relinquit*; the other, of clearing God's justice, he takes up and presseth it too far, to prove this unsound position: that whosoever is greatly afflicted by God, and for a long time together, that man is to be numbered with the wicked, though no other evidence or witness, appear or speak a word against him; for if he be innocent, how shall God be just that punisheth him? But Eliphaz should have known that afflictions are of two sorts, penal and probational; these latter are not simply for punishment of men's sins, but for trial and exercise of their graces, to humble them, to prove them, and to do them good at their latter end, #De 8:16. Wait till God have made an end of his work (and we must not judge God's works, saith Peter Martyr, *ante quintum actum*, before the fifth act), and we shall see the effect both just and good. This Job had scarcely the patience to do, as appeareth by sundry passages of his; howbeit he ever preserved high and holy thoughts of God, neither at any time questioned his justice and purity, or complained of his dealings with him, and dispensations toward him, as unrighteous, though now and then, through the extremity of his pain, the anguish of his spirit, and the provocation of his friends, some unwary speeches slipped from him.

Shall man be more pure than his maker?] Take man in his prime and pride, in his best estate and utmost strength, when and wherein he is most a man, **רַבֵּן** *Vir a viribus*, a man of the first magnitude, of the highest elevation (as one fitly phraseth it), both in parts, gifts, and graces; shall he be more pure than his Maker? never think it. Man, compared with his Maker, hath no purity or righteousness at all, no, not so much as a show or shadow of it; just he may be, or pure, by participation from God (saith Austin), but neither just nor pure, in comparison to God: he surpasseth all notion, and surmounteth all creatures, he hath no parallel; so true he is, that all men are liars; so pure, that all men are filthy; so just, that all men are wicked; so incomparably great and glorious, that the angels make

their addresses to him with greatest self abasement. For what reason?

Ver. 18. **Lo, he put no trust in his servants, &c.**] Those menial, domestic servants of his, the holy angels that wait upon him, and are at his hand to do his will. Servant is a name of office; and they delight rather to be called angels (that is, messengers) and ministering spirits, than principalities, thrones, dominions, &c. Now in these God put no trust, he found no such cause to confide in them, because not perfectly sure and loyal to him, further than upheld and assisted by himself. The Vulgate Latin hath it thus, They that serve him are not stable; that is, the good angels are not stable by their own strength, but by God's stablishing of thereto stand when others fell. Hence, **#Ps 68:17**, the angels are called Shinan, as God's seconds, say some; the nobles of that court, the very next unto him; but others say they are so called from their changeable state, now taken away by Christ, under whom they are as a head of government, of influence, of confirmation, but not of redemption, as we. Christ, as God, giveth them their being, and all their excellencies. As mediator, also, he maketh use of their ministry, for the safe guard and comfort of his people.

And his angels he charged with folly] That is, he spared not the angels that sinned, as St Peter expounds it, **#2Pe 2:4**. Their sin is said to be folly, that is, pride and self confidence. How this folly and madness of theirs (depravity, the Vulgate rendereth it) shows itself, whether in affecting a divinity, or in envy stirred up by the decree of exalting man's nature above angels in and by Christ, and appointing them to be good men's guardians, which office they scorned; or whether their pride appeared by transgressing some commandments in particular, not expressed, as Adam's was, it is hard to say. Sure it is, that they abode not in the truth, that they kept not their station, &c.; and that the good angels stand, and are out of danger of ever falling, it is of divine grace. Hence, **#Ex 25:19**, the cherubims stand upon the mercy seat, and are made of the matter thereof.

Ver. 19. **How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay**] Or how much more (in reference to the latter part of the preceding verse) may God charge men with folly and depravity! And how much more ought he to acknowledge that he cannot subsist nor stand

before God's judgment, *{as #Job 4:17}* but only by his gracious pardon and absolution!

That dwell in houses of clay] *Periphrasis est hominum*, saith Mercer; this is a description of men, as opposed to angels, those inhabitants of heaven, called therefore the angels of heaven, **#Mt 24:36 Ga 1:8**, the courtiers of that heavenly Jerusalem, **#Heb 12:22**, in and with which, it may seem, they were created; as Christ's soul was in and with his body in the virgin's womb, the same moment. Hence they are also said to be in heaven, when as men and other things here below are said to be on earth, **#Mt 6:10**, on the surface only, as ready to be shaken off, and as having here no continuing city, **#Heb 13:14**, no mansions till they come to heaven, **#Joh 14:2**, no settled abode: some huts we have here, rather than houses; clay cottages, earthly tabernacles, το σκηνοϛ, as Paul after Plato calleth men's bodies, **#2Co 5:1**. And so the most interpreters understand these words of Eliphaz concerning the body of man (rather than of his house he dwells in here, made up of clay and dust a little refined and sublimated by art or nature), which is nothing else but a clod of clay neatly made up. What is man, saith Greg. Nazianzen out of **#Ge 2:7**, but Νοϛ και χοϛ, soul and soil, breath and body, a puff of wind the one, a pile of dust the other? no solidity in either, רפא רפא קונוϛ, *cinis*, ashes **#Ge 3:19 18:21**. *Pulvis et umbra sumus*, Dust and shadows we are, saith the poet, Her. Od. iv. 7, 16; and Κεραμοϛ ο ανθρωποϛ, saith the Greek proverb, Man is but an earthen pot. The first man, Adam, was of the earth earthy, **#1Co 15:47**. And no better are the best, *quos ex meliore forsan lute finxit Titan*, who are made of the finest common mould; but as the finer the metal, the purer the matter of any glass or earthen vessel, the more subject it is to break, so are they to die: for what reason?

Whose foundation is in the dust] The house is but weak, and yet the foundation weaker, *terra friabilis*, flying, light, unstable, unmoveable, dust that is soon wherried and whirled about with every puff of wind. Hence the apostle calleth man's body not a house only (in respect of, 1. The comely and orderly workmanship thereof; 2. The soul which inhabiteth it), but a tabernacle, which hath no foundation, and is transportative, **#2Co 5:1**, opposing to it building, which is firm and stable. Hence David, *Omnis Adam est*

totus Abel, saith he. Verily every man in his best estate (when he is best founded and settled on his best bottom, when he is underlaid on all sides, and seems set to live) is altogether vanity, #Ps 39:5,12. So #Ps 144:4. Adam is Abel's equal, or man is like to vanity; what can he be better, when as

Which are crushed before the moth?] He saith not, before the lion, but before the moth. Now what a poor thing is man, that a moth may crush him; that a flee may choke him, as it did Pope Alexander; that a light bruise on his toe may kill him, as it did Aemilius Lepidus (Plin. lib. 7, cap. 53), that a poisoned torch may light him to his long home, as it did the Cardinal of Lorraine! I have known, saith one, death admitted in by a corn on the toe; and enough the hurt were so far off the heart, yet the man died upon it (Purchas). Another I knew, who seeming to have conquered the elements, the wide ocean, wild wilderness, wilder beasts, wildest men, hottest climates; after sixteen years' absence, returned home, and died of a hurt in his thumb. Mr Terry, a great traveller, telleth of a nobleman in the Great Mogul's court, who sitting in dalliance with one of his women, had a hair plucked by her from his breast; this little wound, made by that small and unexpected instrument of death, presently festered; and turning to an incurable cancer, killed him (Lawless Liberty, in a Serm. at Paul's, by Edm. Terry, p. 21). God needs no bigger a lance than a hair to kill an atheist, as this dying man acknowledged. But besides all ill accidents and casualties from without; look how the garment breeds the moth, and then the moth eats the garment; so man's own distempered body breeds ill burnouts, they diseases, and these breed death, as one well observeth upon this text. It is holden for certain, that in every two years there is such store of ill humours and excrements engendered in the body, that a vessel of one hundred ounces will scarce contain them. *Ipsa suis augmentis vita ad detrimenta impellitur*; saith Gregory, *et inde deficit undo proficere creditur*. Life weareth out by the very meat that maintaineth it; and every man hath his bane about him.

Ver. 20. **They are destroyed from morning to evening**] Heb. They are beaten to pieces, as in a mortar, with one sorrow upon another, till the very breath be beaten out of their bodies at length; and all this from morning to evening, all the day long, or all their life long, which is here set forth (for the brevity of it) by an artificial day, and

such also as no man can be sure he shall have twelve hours to his day (*Per totum diem*, through the entire day, Drus.), for how many are there whose sun hath set at high noon! in the prime and pride of their days have they been suddenly snatched away by the hand of death; yea, how many see we whose sun setteth in the very rising, so that they are carried from the birth to the burial! Every hour, surely, we all yield somewhat unto death, and a very short cut hath the longest liver of all, from the grave of the womb to the womb of the grave. Eliphaz here seemeth to compare us to those creatures called *Ephemerobii*, which are young in the morning, middle aged at noon, and dead ere night; they begin and end their lives in a day (Aristot.). Man's life is a vapour, saith St James, a bubble, say the heathens, a blast, a dream, a shadow, a dream of a shadow, &c.

They perish for ever] That is, they die once for all. For "if a man die, shall he live again?" #**Job 14:14**. No such matter. In this war, as there is no discharge, #**Ec 8:8**, so neither is it granted to any man to err twice; therefore Austin said that he would not for the gain of a million worlds be an atheist for half an hour; because he knew not but God might in that time call for him, and cut him off from all time of repentance, acceptation, and grace for ever, since he could die but once only, and after death judgment: every man's death's day is his doom's day, #**Heb 9:27**.

Without any regarding it] Heb. Putting, *sc.* his heart to it, or laying it upon his heart, as every man living should do, #**Ec 7:2**, but that few or none so do, see #**Isa 57:1**. David did, when hearing of his child's decease, he said, "I shall go to him," #**2Sa 12:23**. And Moses, seeing the people's carcasses fall so fast in the wilderness, prayed for himself and the rest, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom," #**Ps 90:12**. Every dead corpse is a monitor, a dumb preacher, *Etiam muta clamant cadavera*. Abel, though dead, speaketh; but how few hearken to him! Dives thought that if one came from the dead to forewarn his brethren, great matters would be done. Petrus Sutorius telleth of one that, preaching a funeral sermon on a religious man, as he calleth 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, I am judged, I am damned (Pet. Sutor. de Vita Carth.). This

very much wrought upon the heart of Bruno, saith he, and occasioned him to found the Carthusian order. Waldus, a French merchant, was so affected with the death of one that died suddenly in his presence, that he thenceforth became a right godly man, and the father of the Waldenses, those ancient Protestants in France, called also, The poor men of Lyons. But oh, the dead lethargy, the spirit of fornication, that hath so besotted the minds of the most, that they can see death, and yet not think of it! They can look into the dark chamber of the grave, and never make the least preparation for it: if for present they be somewhat affected, and have some good impressions, yet they soon vanish; as the water, circled by a stone cast into it, soon returns to its former smoothness; as chickens run under the wings of the hen, while the kite is over them, or in a storm, but soon after get abroad again, and dust themselves in the sun. As Nebuchadnezzar had seen a vision, but it was gone from him; so here, if men at the house of mourning have some good motions, they improve them not to resolutions, or draw not forth their resolutions into executions, &c.

Ver. 21. **Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?]** Journeyeth not their excellency with them? so Broughton rendereth it. By their excellence here some understand the soul, called by David his glory. A philosopher said, there was nothing excellent in the world but man, nothing in man but his soul (Favorinus). The Stoics affirmed that the body was not a part of a man, but the instrument, or rather the servant, of the soul. Hence the Latins call the body *Corpus*, or *Corpor* (as of old they speak), *quasi cordis puer sive famulus*. And Plato saith that that is not the man that is seen of him; but the mind of a man, that is the man (οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπος τὸ ὁρώμενον). And in the **#Job 4:19** man is said to dwell in a house of clay; that is, the soul to inhabit the body. The soul goes away with the name of the whole person; the soul indeed is the man in a moral consideration, and is, therefore, elsewhere called the inward man, and the hidden man of the heart, **#2Co 4:16 1Pe 3:4**; the body, compared to it, is but as a clay wall encompassing a treasure, a coarse case to a rich instrument, a leathern sheath to an excellent blade, **#Da 7:15**, or as a mask to a beautiful face. Now at death this excellence of a man departeth, returneth to God that gave it, **#Ec 12:7**. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish," even the most excellent effects of his

mind and spirit, as the word signifieth, #Ps 146:4. And as that, so all other excellencies go away at death, #Ps 39:11 49:13; even the whole goodness of man, #Isa 40:6, whether it be the good things of the mind, as wisdom, science, conscience, judgment; or of the body, as beauty and health; or of fortune, as they call it, as favour and applause, together with plenty of prosperity. No man's glory goeth down with him into the grave, #Ps 49:16. Where is now the flourishing beauty and gallantry of Caesar, saith one? his armies and honours, his triumphs and trophies? Where are the rich fool's great barns? Nebuchadnezzar's great Babel? Agrippa's great pomp? &c. Have not all these made their bed in the dark, leaving their excellence behind them? Are they not, many of them, gone to their place, as a stone to the centre, or as a fool to the stocks?

They die, even without wisdom] Heb. They die, and not with wisdom; they die like so many beasts (but for their pillow and bolster), without any care to lay hold on eternal life; they die as a fool dieth, #2Sa 3:33. Not in wisdom; that is, in abundance of folly, saith Pineda. And this is most men's case; their wit serves them not in this weighty work of preparing to die; they put far away the thoughts of it, and hence they die *tempore non suo*, #Ec 7:17, when it were better for them to do anything rather than to die. To live with dying thoughts is a high point of heavenly wisdom, #Ps 90:12 De 32:29. How might one such wise Christian chase a thousand foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men's soul in perdition and destruction! #1Ti 6:4.

Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **Call now, if there be any that will answer thee]** The beginning of this chapter is hard, saith Mercer, till you come to the seventh or eighth verses, and then all is plain and easy. That which Eliphaz driveth at here is, to drive Job out of all good conceit of his own condition, and to persuade him that never any good man suffered such hard and heavy things as he, or, at least, suffered them so untowardly and impatiently. Call, I pray thee, saith he, call over the roll, look into the records of former saints, and see if thou canst find among them all such another knotty piece as thyself, that needed so much hewing, and made such a deal of complaining. Was there ever the like heard of? Call now, if there be any one

answerable to thee. Broughton rendereth it, Call now, if there be any one that will defend thee, that is, be thy patron or advocate, in word, or in the example of their lives.

And to which of the saints wilt thou turn?] *q.d.* Thou art alone, neither mayest thou hope to meet with thy match in the matter or manner of thine afflictions, unless it be among hypocrites and graceless persons, as **#Job 5:2**. The Septuagint read it, To which of the angels wilt thou look? and the Popish commentators think they have here an unanswerable ground for their doctrine of invocation of saints and angels. But did not the buzzards take notice of an irony here, and that Eliphaz assureth Job that it would be in vain for him to call to any saint? &c. Is it not plain, or probable, at least, that he here meaneth the saints living in this world? or if not, yet is Gregory the Great of no authority with them, who acknowledgeth none other to be called upon, here meant, but God; and that the saints are mentioned to Job in derision, as if it were a ridiculous thing to call to them departed out of this life, who cannot hear us.

Ver. 2. **For wrath killeth the foolish man]** Such as thou art, Job; hot and hasty, pettish and passionate, fretting thyself to do evil, and so provoking God to fall foul upon thee as a just object of his wrath, to thine utter ruin, without repentance. Surely, with the froward God will show himself froward, **#Ps 18:26**. Neither hath ever any one hardened himself against the Lord and prospered, **#Job 9:4**. For what reason? he is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, as it is there, every way able to overly master an adversary: if he but turn his own passions loose upon him, such as are wrath and envy, they will soon dispatch him. How many are there who, like sullen birds in a cage, beat themselves to death! Did not Bajazet do so? and was Diodorus any wiser (Laert. lib. 2)? or Homer, who died for anger that they could not resolve certain questions put unto them? or Terence, who drowned himself for grief, that he had lost certain comedies that he had composed? We read of some, that, out of discontent, they turned atheists, as Diagoras, Lucian, Porphyry, &c.; and of others, that, missing of bishoprics, or other church preferments, they turned heretics *in sui solatium*: were not these great sinners against their own souls, like the angry bee, who, to be revenged, loseth her sting, and soon after her life? Died they not like fools indeed, that died of the sullens, and so were deeply guilty of

suicide? especially if their wrath were bent against God, if they howl against heaven; such are at once twice slain; slain with the wrath of God, and with their own.

And envy slayeth the silly one] Him that is under the power of his passions, *et minima afflictione ab officio abducitur*, saith Mercer, and is turned off from duty by every light affliction; such a one doth envy at another man's prosperity, *Αγνηορια δε μιν εκτα* (De Ajace, Homer). It is the same with wrath, *nisi quod vehementius est*, but that it is somewhat worse, saith the same author, as being a most quick sighted and sharp fanged malignity. Hence that of Solomon, Wrath is cruel, and anger outrageous; but who can stand before envy? **#Pr 27:4**. It is the rottenness of the bones, **#Pr 14:30**. And like the serpent porphyrius, it drinks the most part of its own venom.

{See Trapp on "Pr 14:30"}

Ver. 3. **I have seen the foolish taking root]** *q.d.* I grant that wicked men are not always presently punished, *sed Nemesis in tergo; et subito tollitur, qui diu toleratur*. God's wrath is such as no wicked man can avert or avoid. This had Eliphaz well observed, "I have seen"; he had set a memorandum on God's just judgments, and marked his spits with his own stars, as one speaketh. Eliphaz was a man of much experience. See **#Job 4:8**. In him that was true which Elihu saith should be, that days spake, and multitude of years taught wisdom, **#Job 32:7**. Only herein he is mistaken, that he misapplieth all to Job, arguing from his outward condition to his inward; as if, therefore, he were wicked, because seemingly wretched. Thus the gloss he set was viperous, eating out the bowels of the text; it was a truth of God that he uttered, and the same in sense with that of David, **#Ps 37:35**; and that of Solomon, **#Pr 23:18**. But why should he thus writhe it and wrest it, to make the tune sound to his own key? St Peter speaketh of some that wrest the Scriptures, **#2Pe 3:16**, putting them upon the rack, and making them speak that which they never thought. And Tertullian saith of others, that they do murder the Scriptures for their own turns, and to serve their own purposes, *Caedem scripturarum faciunt*. The make a slaughter of the scriptures. But let us hear Eliphaz: "I have seen," saith he, and what more sure than sight? **#Nu 16:14**, "the foolish," the wilful fool, and perhaps he points at some one such rich fool as is mentioned **#Lu 12:20**, not unknown to Job, and, as Eliphaz deemeth, a fit parallel for him,

"taking root," dwelling alone in the earth, confirmed and settled in a fair estate, in a prosperous condition, as Nebuchadnezzar, that goodly tree, thought himself, **#Da 4:4,22**, {see **#Jer 12:2**} and Dionysius, tyrant of Sicily, who conceited that his kingdom was bound fast unto him with chains of adamant; but he was soon after cast out, and thereby convinced of singular folly (Aelian. Var. Hist. lib. 2). A tempest, or, at least, an axe, of Divine vengeance, can easily fell these rooted fast and best fruited trees, and lay them low enough, as he did Nebuchadnezzar, that club of the nations and rod of God's wrath, **#Isa 14:4-8 Da 4:22**, &c., and Attila, the conquering Hun, who called himself the wrath of God and scourge of the world, and arrogantly said, that the stars of heaven fell before him, and the earth trembled (Jovius), but was soon after rooted up by impartial death in the midst of his nuptial solemnities, *Subita morte extinctus est, sanguine copiose in fauces exundante et ex ore erumpente*. He died suddenly, much blood pouring from his throat and his mouth.

And suddenly I cursed his habitation] His house, which he held his castle, together with his family, **#Job 5:4**, and his family provisions, **#Job 5:5**. All these Eliphaz suddenly (even when he was in the ruff of all his jollity, in the height of his flourish) cursed, Heb. pierced, or bored through, not so much by a malediction as a prediction, *Male ominatus sum iis*, I foresaw and foretold that that happiness would not hold long; I ominously divined it; I both thought it and spake it. *Pium non decent dirae*; cursing men are cursed men; but a godly person may presage a curse, and foretell it, according to that, **#Pr 3:33**, "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked," yea, the flying roll of curses, that is ten yards long and five yards broad, shall remain in the midst of it, and consume it, **#Zec 5:4**. Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation, and the fire of God shall kindle it; so that his roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off, &c., **#Job 18:15,16**.

Ver. 4. **His children are far from safety]** This is one principal root of wicked men, viz. their children, which have their very name in Hebrew from building, because by them the house is built up, and way made to greatest honours by friendships and affinities of other great families. These are far from safety, that is, they are in a great deal of danger (Lavater); or, by their intemperance, they run into many diseases and disasters; by their evil practices they come under

the lash of the law, and without repentance under the danger of damnation too; salvation is far from them, #Ps 119:155 Isa 59:11.

They are crushed in the gate] That is, they are cast in judgment, all goes against them, and sentence pronounced upon them, as it befell Haman's children, and David's enemies, #Ps 109:7.

Neither is there any to deliver them] None to plead for them, or rescue them, #Pr 31:8,9; none to extend mercy to them, nor any to favour those fatherless children, #Ps 109:12, and that because their fathers were pitiless, #Job 5:13,14, Haman for instance.

Ver. 5. **Whose harvest the hungry eateth up]** This is another root of the wicked one, his estate, against which God raiseth up a rout of needy wretches to pillage him. These are as a sweeping rain, that leaveth no food, #Pr 28:1. These, as lean lice, bite hardest, and, as sparrow hawks, are extremely greedy: Malesuada fames putteth them upon it. These harpies seize upon his very harvest *ad maiorem cruciatum et miseriam*, to the more crude and wretched, pulling the meat out of his mouth, as it were, and not suffering him to roast that which he took in hunting, #Pr 12:27. He shall meet with greatest disappointment, and come to that poverty which he so studiously shunned, singing that doleful ditty,

— *En queis consevimus agros?*

Ἄλλοι μὲν σπειροῦσ', ἄλλοι δ' αὖ ἀμῆσονται.

See this threatened #Le 26:19 De 28:33 Isa 1:6 Mic 6:15.

And taketh it even out of the thorns] Creeping through the midst of the thorns and bushes wherewith it is fenced and hedged in, to steal it away. Hunger, we say, breaks through stone walls: the Rabbis sense it thus, He that comes out of the thorns, that is, every base fellow, carrieth away the store of this rich oppressor (*Scultatus*). The armed man carrieth it away, so the Vulgate after the Septuagint. Mr Broughton reads it thus, The hungry shall eat up his harvest which he had gotten through the thorns, that is, not without a great deal of care, and much pains in stubbing up the thorns, that he might not sow amongst them.

And the robber swalloweth up their substance] Or, the thirsty shall drink up their substance, as gold thirsty Babel did Hezekiah's treasure for his coming so near the garb and guise of the wicked in his ostentation. The thirsty shall swill up their wealth, so Broughton rendereth it: so that neither their *esculenta* food, nor *poculenta* drink shall escape the spoiler, but there shall be a clean riddance of all; the enemy shall play at sweepstake, he shall sup up all ($\Psi\aleph\eta$) as the Hebrew hath it, and as Eliphaz would have Job consider that the Chaldeans and Sabeans had done his substance.

Ver. 6. **Although addiction cometh not forth of the dust]** It cometh not by fate or blind fortune, it haps not as it may that men suffer. Philistines indeed will say, haply, It is a chance, #1Sa 6:9, a common occurrence, that had a time to come in, and must have a time to go in; but every Naomi will in such case conclude, "The hand of the Lord is gone out against me," #Ru 1:13, and carry her sails accordingly, #Job 5:20,21; and every good soul will cry out, I will bear the indignation of the Lord (who is the efficient cause of all my miseries), because I have sinned against him, which is the meritorious cause. The word here rendered affliction signifieth also iniquity; and well it may, since they are tied together with chains of adamant, as that heathen said; *Flagitium et flagellum sunt sicut acus et filum*, saith another. Man weaves a spider's web of sin out of his own bowels, saith a third; and then he is entangled in the same web; the troubles which ensnare and wrap about him are twisted with his own fingers. "Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?" #Am 3:5. *Turdus sibi malum cacat*, Of the blackbird's dung is made the bird lime whereby he is taken; so out of the dung of men's sins are made the lime twigs of their punishment.

Ver. 7. **Yet man is born unto trouble]** Which is the natural fruit of his sin; and a piece of the curse. He hath in him a $\pi\alpha\nu\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho\mu\iota\alpha$, a common seminary of all sin, and this he brings into the world with him; what wonder, then, though troubles come trooping in upon him on every side, as if he were born for no other end but to suffer, and that as naturally as fire ascendeth? Sure it is, that sin doth as naturally and ordinarily draw and suck judgments to it as the loedestone doth iron, or turpentine fire. Some read the words thus, Man is born to sin, and so consequently to trouble; for sin usually ends tragically and troublesomely. Hence the same word, both here

and that in the former verse, signifies both sin and sorrow; and man, by reason of his birth blot, hath a birthright to them both, he is even born to them. The devil, when he speaketh lies, speaketh of his own, **#Joh 8:44**. And we, when either we do evil, we work *de nostro et secundum hominem*, of our own, and according to men, **#1Co 3:3**; or when we suffer evil, we suffer nothing but what is human and incident to men, **#1Co 10:13**. The very heathen could say as much; witness that of Xenophon, παν προσδοκων δει ανθρωπον οντα, It behoveth him that is no more than a man to expect all sorts of troubles; and that of Demosthenes, It is fit for men to hope the best, but bravely to bear the worst, as that which is common to all mankind; and that of Isocrates, Ο μεμνημενος, &c., He that remembereth that he is a man will not be discontented at whatsoever trouble befalleth him; and that of Herodotus, πας εστιν ανθρωπος συμφορα, every man is miserable. For this it was likely that God, to keep Ezekiel lowly in the abundance of revelations, calleth him so oft son of man. And when the French king, being prisoner to Charles V, saw written upon the wall that emperor's motto, *plus ultra*, more beyond, further yet, and underwrote, *Hodie mihi, cras tibi*, Today for me, tomorrow for you, I am now thy prisoner, thou mayest hereafter be mine; the emperor came after him, and subscribed, I confess I am a man, and may soon suffer anything incident to mankind, *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto* (J. Manl. loc. com. 175).

As the sparks fly upward] Heb. The sons of the quick or live coal lift up to fly. The Vulgate hath it, As the birds fly upward; the Septuagint, As the young vultures fly upward. Sparks and birds fly upward naturally, and by a principle of their own, they need not be taught it; so here. Birds, though they have more of the earth than of the other three elements, **#Ge 2:19**, yet are light (which is a wonder), and delight in high flying, and this is innate to them; so is it to man, as man, to be in trouble, **#Job 14:1**. Some of the Hebrews by sparks, or sons of the quick coal, here understand the devils, and make this to be the sense; like as sin is connatural to men, so doth God stir up the devils, to whom it is as natural to flutter up and down here for the punishment of such as sin; *Sed hoc friget*, but this is cold, saith Mercer; but this is not likely to be the meaning.

Ver. 8. **Surely I would seek unto God]** Not let fly at him, as thou hast done, cursing thy birthday, and wishing thyself out of the world. Assure thyself, this that thou takest is not the way to get off with comfort, but rather to return by repentance unto him that smiteth thee, and to seek the Lord of hosts, #**Isa 9:12**, since else his anger will not turn away, but his hand will be stretched out still (as the prophet there hath it); for is it fit that he should lay down the bucklers first? or that we should stand upon terms, and capitulate with him, and not stoop unto him by a humble yeldance? especially since,

— *Deus crudelius urit*

Quos videt invitos succubuisse sibi (Tibul. Eleg. i. 8).

*God burns more severely those he sees to have laid themselves down in envy. The way to disarm God's heavy indignation, is to submit to his justice, and to implore his mercy, #**Ho 5:14**, to flee from his anger to his grace. Blood letting is a cure for bleeding, and a burn a cure against a burn; and 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: and this is the thing I would do, were I in thy case, saith Eliphaz here. He doth not vaunt (as Olympiodorus mistaketh his meaning), but advise Job to humble himself, and confess his sins, and sue for pardon of sin and release of punishment; to kiss the rod, and not to bite it; to drink from God's cup willingly and at first, when it is full (as Mr Bradford, martyr, hath it), lest if he linger, he drink at length of the dregs with the wicked.*

And unto God] *The righteous judge, as the word importeth, who πασι δικαία νεμει, μηδε κρισιν ες χαριν ελκει (Phocyl.), neither hateth nor feareth any man (as it was said of Trajan the emperor, but more truly of God): he proceedeth according to truth, not according to opinion or appearance, and greatly scorneth to look at displeasure, revenge, or recompense.*

Would I commit my cause] *Put my case and condition, by self resignation, and humble supplication. This David did notably, #**2Sa 15:25,26 Ps 142:2**, and counsels all to do accordingly, #**Ps 55:22**.*

Cast thy burden (or thy request) upon the Lord by virtue of this writ or warrant.

Ver. 9. **Which doth great things and unsearchable]** The better to persuade Job to take his counsel, he entereth into a large description of God's attributes, his power, wisdom, justice, mercy, &c., all which are clearly seen in his works of wonder as in a mirror, or as on a theatre. These he is ever in doing, as the word here signifieth; and showeth himself great in great things, and not little in the least, *dum nemora culicis et pulicis disponit* (Aug.), yea, he useth to be greater in smaller things than in bigger. The soul is more operative in ants than in elephants; in dwarfs than in giants. So he delights to help his people with a little help, **#Da 11:34** (that through weaker means they may see his greatest strength), to magnify his power in pardoning their many and mighty sins, **#Nu 14:17,18 Mic 7:18**; to illustrate his power in their perseverance and wonderful preservation amidst a world of evils and enemies, **#Joh 10:29 1Pe 1:5**; to fulfil his promises, seem they never so improbable or impossible, **#Jer 32:14,15**; to answer prayers that look as if lost, and to do for his people exceeding abundantly above all that they can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in them, **#Eph 3:20**. All this Eliphaz would have Job to consider, that he might not cast away his confidence, but seek to God, and turn his talk to him, as Beza turneth the foregoing words.

And unsearchable] Heb. And no search, for they are fathomless, and past finding out, **#Ro 11:33**. This Eliphaz might say, to stop Job's curiosity; and to humble him for his sin, in inquiring too much into the reason of God's so severe dealing with him, **#Job 3**; in prying too far, or too boldly, into the secret workings of God. It should suffice us to know that the will of God is the rule of right, that his judgments are sometimes secret, always just; that it is extreme folly to reprehend what we cannot comprehend (we may as soon comprehend the sea in a cockleshell as the unsearchable things of God in our narrow and shallow understandings); that at the last day all things shall be cleared up, and every mouth stopped, when exquisite reasons of all God's proceedings (which now seem not so well carried) shall be produced, and wisdom shall be justified of her children.

Marvellous things] Such as the wisest may well wonder at. God is the only *Thaumaturgus*, the great wonder worker; and these marvels are more ordinary than the most are, either at all either aware of, or affected with. To let pass those wonders of the creation (for which, see **#Ps 136:4-7**), Canst thou tell how the bones grow in her that is with child, saith Solomon? **#Ec 11:5**. *Mirificatus sum mirabilibus operis tuis*, so Montanus rendereth that of David, **#Ps 139:14**, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works," &c. Galen, that great naturalist, was much amazed at the motion of the lungs in man's body, and would needs offer sacrifices therefore to that God whom he knew not (Fernel. de abd. Rer. Caus.). Who can give a natural reason of the strength of the lower limbs, of the heat in the stomach, of the colours in the rainbow, of the ebbing and flowing of the sea, or but of this ordinary occurrence, that chaff is so cold, that it keeps snow hidden within it from melting, and in addition, so warm, that it hasteneth the ripening of apples? Well might Eliphaz say, that God doth marvellous things without number.

Ver. 10. **Who giveth rain upon the earth]** This is reckoned, and rightly, among the marvellous works of God. See **#Job 28:26 Jer 10:13 Am 5:8 Ac 14:17**. 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 is God's gift. For he, 1. Decreeeth it, **#Job 28:26** 2. .Prepareth it, **#Ps 147:8** 3. Withholdeth it at his pleasure, stopping those bottles that should yield it, **#Am 4:7** 4. Sendeth it for the behoof and benefit of man and beast, as also for the demonstration of his power, wisdom, justice, and goodness, whereof he hath not left himself hereby without witness, **#Ac 14:17**, while he weigheth these waters above the firmament by measure, so that not one drop falleth in vain, or in a wrong place. In those hot countries, where rivers were scant, rain was highly valued; they called it the husband of the earth, because the earth can no more bear fruit without it than a woman children without the company of a man. The Egyptians were wont in mockery to tell the Greeks that if their god (whom they called cloud gathering Jupiter, *νεφεληγερετα Ζευς*) should forget to give rain they might chance to starve for it. See the reason, **#De 11:8-12**. Egypt was watered with the foot as a garden, by sluices from the Nile: not so Canaan.

He sendeth waters upon the fields] *Irrigat aquis universa*, saith the Vulgate, He moisteneth all places with waters; by the showers which, falling upon the ground, run hither and thither, he divideth the fields, as it were, into streets and highways, so Beza paraphraseth. Another thus, It is he himself who watereth it, as well by those waters which fall from heaven as by those which he hath hidden in its entrails, and whose secret drains produce in a thousand places sources and rivers. Some render it, upon the out places, and understand it as wilderness, to set forth God's bounty. Others render it, upon the face of the streets, and will have it meant of navigable rivers, which, by the passage upon them, do, after a sort, make streets and highway ways through several countries, to the which also they convey many commodities.

Ver. 11. **To set up on high those that be low]** By those rich rains whereby he fatteneth the earth, and makes it fruitful, giving them a whole country of corn, as he did that *vir divitiarum qui animam etiam habuit triticeam*, a man of wealth who moreover a spirit of grain. #Lu 12:16. But God hath more ways than this to prefer men to riches, honour, and authority, as he did Joseph, David, Daniel, Mordecai, &c. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, "that he may set him with princes," &c., #Ps 113:6,7. Let Job hear this, and know it for his good, as #Job 5:27.

That those which mourn] As those do commonly who are in a low condition; and it is much if they murmur not. The word signifieth, such as are *pullati*, clad in mourner's weeds, or that having lain among the pots, are smutched and sullied like so many black scullions, #Ps 68:1 3. Lo, these shall the Lord not only make to be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold, but shall also make them to mount up with wings as eagles, #Isa 40:31. He shall exalt them to safety, saith Eliphaz here; yea, he shall safely exalt them to safety. Wicked men are oft exalted, #Ps 12:8, but then it is not to safety; — *tolluntur in altum ut lapsu graviore ruant*, they are lifted up, but for a mischief, that they may be brought down again with the greater poise, as Haman, and Pharaoh's chief baker, whose head was lifted up, but to the gallows; the chief butler's head was lifted up too, but after another manner.

There is great difference between the advanced merit of the righteous and the wicked. Those God carrieth as the eagle doth her young on her wings, to exalt them to safety, to set them upon a rock that is higher than they; these he lifteth up as the eagle doth her prey in her talons, to dash them against some rock, and to destroy them.

Ver. 12. **He disappointeth the devices of the crafty]** He vacateth and rendereth ineffectual the curious contrivances of the world's wizards, full of serpentine subtilty, and so setteth his people in safety by out plotting their enemies; served he not Pharaoh so (who dealt craftily with our fathers, κατασοφισαμενος, saith Stephen, #Ac 7:19)? and Saul, that subtle tyrant? and Herod, that crafty fox? #Lu 13:32; and all the primitive and modern persecutors, to whom the old dragon had lent his seven heads to plot, and his ten horns to push against the people of God, but all to no purpose? God disappointed the devices of those malignants: so the Vulgate rendereth this text, which the Chaldee appropriateth to Pharaoh and his counsellors, who said, Come, and let us deal wisely; when as (in laying hard tasks upon the Israelites to keep them from increasing) they never dealt more foolishly; for who knows not that your labouring men have the most and the lustiest children.

So that their hands cannot perform their enterprise] They could not give their plots an actual being or subsistence. Their hands bring nothing soundly to pass, so Broughton rendereth it. Others thus, Their hands cannot perform their wisdom; that is, execute what they had projected. Perceive ye how we prevail nothing? said the Pharisees, #Joh 12:19. *Nomine Christianorum deleto qui Romp evertabant;* the name of Christians being erased who Romp has destroyed. so those cruel crafties of the primitive times sounded the triumph beforehand, and engraved the victory upon the pillars of marble; but the Church may still sing as of old, "They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen, and stand upright." Charles V and the French king had covenanted the utter extirpation of the Lutheran faction throughout their dominions; but God found them other employment, and gave his Church a happy halcyon. And who knows not how God hath hitherto helped us of this nation against the power and policy of earth and of hell?

Ver. 13. **He taketh the wise in their own craftiness]** Those wise to do evil, worldly wise, mere Machiavellians; for though the

Florentine secretary was not born of some thousands of years after Eliphaz spoke this, yet the devil was well nigh as great a master then as now, and had his crafty cubs, students, and great proficient in that wisdom which St James affirmeth to be from beneath, and not from above (like the wings of the ostrich, it may help a man to outrun others upon earth, but helps not at all towards heaven); and further describeth it to be earthly, sensual, devilish. Earthly, as managing the lusts of the eyes unto the ends of gain; sensual, as managing the lusts of the flesh unto ends of pleasure; and devilish, as managing the pride of life unto ends of power: these subtle sirs, these profound politicians, that dig deep to hide their counsels, not from men only, but (which is impossible) from the Lord, **#Isa 29:15**, that think they can work out anything (πανουργια), **#1Co 3:19**, and that none can prevent them (as the apostle's word from this text importeth), God takes and makes fools of them; he frustrateth the tokens of these liars, and maketh the diviners mad; he turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish, **#Isa 44:25**. "Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish:—they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof: the Lord hath mingled a spirit of perversities in the midst thereof; and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit," **#Isa 19:11,13,14**. Did ever any man deal so unwisely as Ahithophel, that oracle, **#2Sa 17:23**, curious to provide for his family after his death, and yet careless to preserve himself from eternal death? Was not this a madness even to a miracle? He should first (saith a reverend man) have set himself in order, and then he might have hanged his house with coverings of tapestry, **#Pr 7:16**, and with embroidered work of Egypt, **#Eze 27:7**. And if he had bridled his anger when he saddled his ass he would not have broken the lantern of his body, and quenched the light of his life, he would not have put his house in order, and himself into such a desperate and irrecoverable confusion. But what saith Solomon? "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins," **#Pr 5:22**. "The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgsaion, Selah." Mark and meditate, as one rendereth it, **#Ps 9:16**.

And the counsel of the froward is carried headlong] More haste it maketh than good speed, though it be the counsel that is the extract of reason, the result of serious and sad debates (as Cicero defineth it, Lib. 2, de Invent.), because it proceedeth from froward persons, *obtorti, contortuplicati*, such as have one crafty device twisted within another, like a rope; such as of whom we use to say in a proverb, there never wanteth a new knack in a knave's cap.

Ver. 14. **They meet with darkness in the daytime]** They are infatuated and besotted; a spirit of giddiness seizeth them; *ita ut in re clarissima destituantur prudentia*, saith Vatablus, so that they cannot discern things that are evident and clear as the sun at noon day; they have light without, but want light within; they lack discretion and judgment to do for the best: this was threatened, **#De 28:29**, and accordingly fulfilled upon those blind Pharisees, as our Saviour often calleth them, and now upon that whole nation, **#Ro 11:18 2Co 3:14**. Since they crucified the Lord of glory, they never prospered in anything they uundertook, neither will they be driven out of that fool's paradise of a sublime dotage whereinto they have long since wrought themselves: They had bribed our William Rufus to hear them and favour them in a disputation against the Christians; but they lost the day, and their money together. Rabbi Judah, surnamed The holy, was intimate with Antoninus Plus, the emperor, and thought to have proselyted him but it would not be. Rabbi David Reubenita and Rabbi Solomon Molchu set upon Charles V, in the year of grace 1530, to convert him to Judaism, but with ill success; for they were presently imprisoned, and shortly after executed, Rabbi Solomon at Mantua, and Rabbi David in Spain. How they are benighted in their expositions of Scripture, troubling those clear fountains with their ridiculous conceits and foolish fables, I need not relate. Neither are many of the Popish interpreters (as they will be accounted) much wiser, being judicially blinded, given over to an injudicious mind, **#Ro 1:28**, to the efficacy of error, **#2Th 2:11**, so that

They grope at noontday, as in the night] They have neither light nor sight left them, and this by a just hand of God upon them, because they closed up their eyes lest they should see, **#Ac 28:27**, they would not receive the love of the truth, **#2Th 2:10**. Therefore now it is hid from their eyes, and the light that is in them is

darkness. Women and children see further into the mysteries of religion, than many of these learned doctors, these idol shepherds; God's sword being upon their arm, and upon their right eye, **#Zec 11:17**, that is, both upon their power and policy, so that they are like owls, that can see better in the dark than in the light; and like moles, that dig dexterously underground, but are blind above ground, neither do they ever open their eyes till the pangs of death are upon them.

Ver. 15. **But he saveth the poor from the sword]** From the woe of war, from the hurt of it, not always from the smart of it; for all such promises as this of temporal deliverance are ever to be taken with exception of the cross, which yet shall be so sanctified, that the saints shall say, It was good for us to have been afflicted; provided that they may be poor in spirit (for God will save the humble person, **#Job 22:29**), and *sue in forma pauperis*, as spiritual beggars, such as get their living by begging; the word signifieth needy and desirous of relief, very indigent, and therefore humbly suppliant for supply of things necessary. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him (meaning himself), and saved him out of all his troubles," **#Ps 34:6**. "Forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever," **#Ps 74:19**. He will not, he cannot, for they are written upon the palms of his hands, so that he cannot look beside them. Who hath not heard bow graciously poor Geneva hath been preserved? Rochel relieved, as it were, by a miracle? A. D. 1573; Leyden rescued from the duke of Alva's sword: that very night that he thought to have stormed it, the winds turned, the tide swelled, and the waters came in, and forced him to raise the siege. How well might these poor saved ones sit and sing with David, **#Ps 68:20**, "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."

From their mouth] Which is a sword, so some sense it; God saveth his poor from the sword of their enemies' mouth, or the sword that comes out of their mouth. *A gladio oris eorum*, saith the Vulgate. David felt the false tongues of his enemies as a murdering weapon in his bones, **#Ps 42:10**. The tongue is thin, broad, and long, like a sword, it is also red like a flaming sword; by calumnies and false testimonies many are those that fall down wounded, **#Pr 12:6 18:8 26:22**. Korah and his complices stick not to object to the meekest of men with one breath, pride, ambition, and usurpation of authority,

but; God vindicated his reputation. Mary was accused three times; the Pharisees accused her of presumption, #Lu 7:39; Martha of carelessness, #Lu 10:40; Judas of wastefulness, #Joh 12:5; but Christ ever answered for her, and took her part. And was it not so with Job? #Job 42:12-17; is there not a promise to all saints? #Ps 37:6.

From the hand of the mighty] God sayeth his, not only from the virulent tongues, but from the violent hands also of the mighty, that might overcome not right, that the poor fall not by his strong ones, or into his strong paws and parts, #Ps 10:10, where oppressors are fitly compared to lions lying in wait for their prey. Now to be thus saved from the slaying sword, the slandering tongue, and the oppressing hand, is complete salvation.

Ver. 16. **So the poor hath hope]** How should it be otherwise? experience will breed confidence. Thou hast, thou wilt, is an ordinary Scriptural medium, #Ps 85:1-4 2Co 1:10. So, the poor, helpless, hopeless person, who is pined away, spent and utterly exhausted and wasted, both for health and wealth, he hath hope (*spem maiorum et meliorum*, greater and better, as Alexander said when he had given away all); and this holds head above water, makes wants plenitudes, and beguiles calamity, as good company doth the way. Neither is hope ever more highly elevated than when our state in all men's eyes is at its lowest. I was brought low (or drawn dry, the same word as here), and he helped me, #Ps 116:6. "So he will regard the prayer of the destitute," #Ps 102:17. The Hebrew word there signifies a poor shrub that is in the wilderness low and slender, trod upon by beasts, unregarded, worthless; such a one looketh unto God and is lightened, #Ps 34:5, conceiveth lively hope, hope unfaillable through faith unfeigned, having earnest expectation (as the word signifieth) of strong consolation; so that he can truly say with St Paul, When I am weak, then am I strong, #2Co 12:10. Such prisoners of hope can turn them to the strong holds, #Zec 9:12.

And iniquity stoppeth her mouth] Iniquity, that is, the workers of iniquity, those worst sort of sinners (the word importeth men of manifold perverseness, *Maligni et nocendi studiosi*. Aquinas), amazed at godly men's good successes, contrary to their

expectations, shall stand speechless, as he did, #Mt 22:12, convicted of their wickedness, and confounded at God's wonderful works. See the like #Isa 52:15 Ps 107:42 Mic 7:16 Jer 8:14. Thus Jannes and Jambres were silenced and convinced, but not converted. No more are many today, who yet have as little to say as they. The full accomplishment of this promise is not to be looked for till the last day.

Ver. 17. **Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth]** This behold holds forth a paradox, a strange sight, viz. an afflicted man, a blessed man. This the world wondereth at, and can as little conceive of, or consent to, as the Philistines could of Samson's riddle of meat out of the eater, &c. How can these things be, say they? It will never be, saith sense; it can never be, saith reason; it both can be, and will be, saith faith: the property whereof is to gather one contrary out of another; life out of death, happiness out of misery, assurance of deliverance out of deepest distresses, and to believe God upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible. What if the afflicted man be Enosh (that is the word here), a sorry, sickly, miserable man, so the world esteemeth him? yet blessed is the man (there he is called Geber, the gallant man) "whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law," #Ps 94:12. Oh the happiness, the $\mu\pi\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\kappa\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$, the present and future happiness of that man whom God correcteth, and withal instructeth, chastening him with pain upon his bed, and in addition opening his ears to counsel, and sealing his instructions, #Job 33:16,19, disputing him out of his evil practices, with a rod in his hand.

Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty] Fret not, faint not, be not so impatient as to think that either thy crosses come not from God, or not in mercy, or that he is not all sufficient to bear thee up under them, or to help thee out of them. Set not light by his love tokens (this is one of those two extremes Solomon warns us of, #Pr 3:11, neither despise afflictions, nor despond under them). See my Treatise called God's Love Tokens, and the Afflicted Man's Lessons, p. 37-39, &c. Loth we are to take up the cross, and when called to carry it, we shrink in the shoulder: no chastening seemeth joyous, but grievous; as averse the best may be to it, as a sick man is to those physical slobber sauces; he had as soon have died almost as

take them down. How then, alas! will wicked men do to drink off that cup of God's wrath that hath eternity to the bottom? #Ps 75:8. Let the saints be content, and say, *Ferre minora volo, ne graviora feram*, I wish to bear the lessor so I will not bear the greater. "It is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed," #La 3:22, that we are set safe from the wrath to come, whatever here betideth us. It is the chastening of the Almighty, who could as easily crush us as correct. See #Isa 13:6 Joe 1:15.

Ver. 18. **For he maketh sore, and bindeth up]** As a surgeon maketh an incision to let out the imposthomed matter, and then heals up the wound again. God hath a salve for every sore, a medicine for every malady; he is both a Father and a Physician, he lanceth us not unless need be, #1Pe 1:6. We are judged of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. Would we that God should let us alone to perish in our corruptions (as he did Ephraim, #Ho 4:14), and not meddle with us? or that he should scarf our bones before they are set, and lap up our sores before they are searched? this were a mercy more cruel than any cruelty, as a Father calls it. And yet most people are of that countryman's mind, spoken of by Luther, who being on his sick-bed advised by his minister to take in good part his present pain, as a token of God's love, answered, *Ah quam velim alios amare, non me!* If this be his love, I could wish he would love others, and not me (Luth. in Gen.).

He woundeth] This is more than to make sore or sick, like as #Heb 12:6. Scourging is worse than chastening. God sometimes makes bloody wales upon the backs of his best children; he wounds them with the wound of an enemy, #Ps 68:21 110:5, and leaves them all gore blood, as the word here used importeth, *צוץ צוץ* *cruentavit*. stained with blood.

And his hands make whole] He hath, as a chirurgeon should have, a lady's hand, soft and tender, a father's heart, relenting over his pained Ephraims, #Ho 11:8. He afflicteth not willingly, or from the heart, #La 3:33; it goeth as much against the heart with him as against the hair with us; and evermore

*Deiecit ut relevet, premit ut solatia praestet:
Enecat, ut possit vivificare Deus.*

Ver. 19. **He shall deliver thee]** Heb. Snatch thee away, or pull thee out, as a brand out of the fire, or as a prey out of the teeth of a wild beast. Thus God snatched Lot out of Sodom, David out of many waters, Paul out of the mouth of the lion, Jonah out of the belly of hell, &c. As birds flying, so will I defend Jerusalem, **#Isa 31:5**. A metaphor from the eagle and other birds, which when they fly highest set a watchful eye upon the nest, to rescue their young ones in case of danger.

In six troubles] Or straits, such as enemies or other evils put men to. Israel at the Red Sea, for instance, where they were sorely distressed, encircled with troubles, neither was there any way of escape, unless they could have gone up to heaven, which because they could not, heaven came down to them and delivered them.

Yea, in seven] A certain number for an uncertain. Boundless deliverances will God grant to his people, even as oft as they shall need deliverance; enemies oft plough upon their backs, and God as often cuts their traces, **#Ps 129:3,4**. As Cato was two and thirty times accused, and two and thirty times cleared and absolved; so shall it be with the saints; and this not only at the end of the world, as Gregory and others interpret this text (as if by six and seven allusion were made to God's creating the world in six days, and resting on the seventh; and so must his servants labour here under afflictions, and rest in heaven), but in this life present, where many are the troubles of the righteous (millions, some render it), but the Lord delivereth them out of all, **#Ps 34:19**; yea, in them all, as this text hath it, by his supporting grace, and those divine comforts, which, as blown bladders, bear them aloft all waters.

There shall no evil touch thee] *sc. Tactu qualitativo*, with a deadly touch. God chargeth afflictions as David did his captains concerning Absalom, Handle the young man gently for my sake. Touch not mine anointed, &c. Either touch them not at all, or not to hurt them. Troubles may touch the saints, but evils must not, **#1Co 10:14**.

Ver. 20. **In famine he shall redeem thee from death]** They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger, **#La 4:9**. Famine, therefore, is here set as the first and greatest of the six ensuing evils, the forest of God's judgments, **#Eze 6:11 Jer**

24:10; the certain harbinger of death, as here. From this so great a death God delivered Abraham, **#Ge 12:12-20**; Isaac, **#Ge 26:6-12**; Jacob and his family, **#Ge 47:11,12**; the poor widow, **#1Ki 17:9-16**; the Israelites in the wilderness by quails; the Rochellers by a miraculous shoal of shellfish, cast up into their town in a strait siege, &c. There is a promise that the lions shall lack and suffer hunger, but so shall not any such as seek the Lord, **#Ps 34:10**. There shall be special provision made for such, and God shall redeem them from this evil by a wonderful separation, as he did in another case, **#Ex 8:22**: either he will send them in meat or take away their stomachs, as she once said. *Fides famem non formidat*, Faith feareth no famine; having trusted God for a crown, she will not distrust him for a crust.

And in war from the power of the sword] Here is the saints' safety, or their writ of protection. True it is, that the sword devoureth one as well as another, **#2Sa 11:25**, and pale death cutteth its way oftentimes through a wood of men, out of the mouth of a murdering piece, without distinction. But though the saints, with Josiah, be slain in battle, yet they die in peace, **#2Ki 23:29**, with **#Job 22:20**, for their eyes see not the evil that God bringeth upon others that outlive them, as it followeth there. Besides, they are gathered to their fathers, who enjoyed peace. Redeemed they are from the power or hands of the sword, which may kill them, but cannot hurt them; take away their head, but not their crown, *αποκτειναι δυναται, βγαφαι δε ου*.

Ver. 21. **Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue]** That is, from reproaches and slanders, which is a tongue smiting, **#Jer 18:18**, as smart as any hand smiting, and draws blood, **#Eze 22:9**. Backbiting is backbeating (Speed.). The devil is both a liar and a murderer, **#Joh 8:44**. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, was by the people of England thought to be doubly murdered (saith the chronicler), viz. by detraction and deadly practice. Plato commendeth that law of the Lydians that punished detractors like as they did murderers; because their words are swords, and their breath, as fire, devoureth, **#Isa 33:10**. Now from such pests the Lord promiseth to hide his people, that either the traducer shall not find them, or not fasten upon them: Dabbar is the Hebrew for a word, Debher for a pest (Drus.). Some render the text thus, He shall be hid,

cum vagabitur lingua, when the tongue wandereth or walketh about. Their tongue walketh through the earth, #Ps 73:9, it runs all the world over, and, like a mad dog, snaps at every one. Hence the Hebrew word *Ragal*, to defame or slander, #Ps 15:3, properly noteth a footing it up and down, a going to and fro to carry tales and rumours, #2Sa 19:27. Now from such a mischief, from the lash of such lewd tongues, God will hide his people under the hollow of his hand, because he knows that many a good heart is more afflicted with words than with blows, #Ps 42:3. St Paul reckoned that it were better for him to die than that any man should make his glorying void, that is, take away his good name, and so disable him from doing good by his ministry, #1Co 9:15.

Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh] Much less at the rumour of it, #Mt 24:6 Lu 24:6. Thou shalt walk about the world as a conqueror, being above fear, then when others are below hope. Noah like-thou shall be, — *mediis tranquillus in undis*, calm in the midst of the waves, and not as Magormissabib, a terror to thyself and all about thee, #Jer 20:3.

Ver. 22. **At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh]** viz. By the force of thy faith, which (like perfect love) casteth out sinful fear; as grounding upon God's infallible promises, and knowing that all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies, #Ps 25:10. All the passages of his providence are to such not only mercy, but truth; they come to them in a way of a promise, as bound to them by covenant; and hence their holy courage lifteth them up so far above dangers and fears, that they even laugh at them, as Leviathan laugheth at the shaking of the spear, #Job 41:29. They famish famine, and destroy destruction itself; like as Christ Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, swallowed up death in victory; and as many of the martyrs baffled it, deriding their tormentors.

Neither shall thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth] *i.e.* Wild beasts, that devour men and cattle, as lions, bears, boars, wolves, &c., whereunto we may add those cannibals, man-eating persecutors, who eat up God's people as they eat bread, #Ps 14:4. Such *lycanthropi*, or beasts in the shape of men, Paul fought with at Ephesus, and God had delivered him out of the mouth of that lion

Nero, #2Ti 4:17, who yet afterwards martyred him. But the viper at Malta did him no harm; no more did the lions Daniel; neither would they meddle with some of the primitive martyrs, cast before them to be devoured.

Ver. 23. **For thou shall be in league with the stones of the field]** Thou shall not dash thy foot against them (the Latins call a stone *lapidem a laedendo pede*, from hurting the foot that hitteth against them, #Ps 91:1,2.) They were wont of old to go barefoot (as Vatablus here noteth). And our chronicler telleth us of King Henry II, that, for a penance, going to Canterbury to the shrine of Thomas Becket, his bare feet with the hard stones were forced to yield bloody tokens of his devotion on the way. Or thus, the stones of the field shall not hinder thy harvest, as #Mt 13:6. Or being piled up for a mound, or wall, they shall not fall upon thee, and brain thee, as the stones of the wall of Aphek did the blasphemous Syrians, #1Ki 20:33; as the town house did the insulting Philistines, #Jud 16:30; as the house did Job's children, &c.; or, the stones out of the wall shall not cry out against thee, as #Hab 2:11, but all creatures shall be thy confederates; not only not hurting, but helping thee, all that may be. For as they are all armed against the wicked as rebels and traitors to the Divine majesty; so God hath promised to make a covenant for his saints with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, &c., *Rebellis facta est; quia homo numini, creatura homini* (Aug.), #Ho 2:18. {See Trapp on "Ho 2:18"}

And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee] The tame beasts shall not only not mischief thee (as some they have done: Euripides the poet was torn in pieces with dogs; horses have been the death of many, &c.), but shall be serviceable and profitable unto thee; some alive, not dead, as the dog, horse; some dead, not alive, as the hog; some both, as the ox, sheep, &c. Ambrose hath a very strange story of a man slain at Antioch by night, by a soldier, in hope of spoil; this man's dog would not leave his master's dead corpse, but lay howling by it till daylight; many came in the morning to see that sad sight, and the murderer among the rest came, that he might be the less suspected. The dog no sooner saw this soldier but he ran fiercely at him, and would never stop barking and baiting at him till he saw him apprehended and carried to prison, where he confessed

the fact and was for the same deservedly executed (Amb. in Hexaem.).

Ver. 24. **And thou shalt know]** Thine own eyes shall see it, and thine experience seal to it; thou shalt be well assured of it. This is a sweet mercy: it is the sweetmeats of the feast of a good conscience, saith Latimer, to know that all shall go well with us here, and that our names are written in the book of life; to be able to conclude from temporal blessings to eternal, as David doth, **#Ps 23:5,6**; to have not only sustentation, but *suavities* spiritual sweets, as one speaketh.

That thy tabernacle shall be in peace] *i.e.* Thy house, household, and household stuff shall be in safety; and all shall be as well with thee as heart can wish. Or, thy tabernacle shall be peace. Thou shall be free from domestic dissensions. It is a sign of a Christian family, if the son of peace be there, and peace rest in it, **#Lu 10:6**. This turneth water to wine, and the contrary: where envying and strife is there is confusion (or unquietness) and every evil work, **#Jas 3:16**. Such a tabernacle is more like to a kennel of hounds than a family of Christians.

And thou shalt visit thy habitation] As a busy bishop, within thine own diocese, thou shall carefully inquire into the state of thy family, and take an account of all that are under thy roof; that God be sincerely served there, and all things well husbanded, **#Pr 27:26,27**.

And shalt not sin] viz. By too much indulgence to children and servants, Eli's sin, who brought up his children to bring down his house; or, thou shall not be found guilty, *sc.* of thy family's faults imputed unto thee; or, thou shalt not miss, *sc.* of thy desire and expectation, but all shall go as well within doors as heart can wish.

Ver. 25. **Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great]** Thou shalt live to see thy children (whereof thou art now bereft) not only restored, but increased. Children are the seed, parents are but the husk, as it were: to have these multiplied is no small mercy, **#Ps 128:3**, especially when the wife is as the vine, and the children like olive plants, two of the best fruits, the one for sweetness, the other for fatness, **#Jud 9:13**; when they prove to be as arrows of a strong man, such as whose natural knottiness is reformed and smoothed by

grace, such as for the workmanship of grace and holiness in their hearts and lives are become like the graving of a king's palace, **#Ps 144:12**. What can better preserve Jacob (Job) from confusion, or his face from waxing pale, than if he might see his children, the work of God's hands, framed and fitted by the word in regeneration, and the duties of new obedience? this would make religious parents to sanctify God's name, even to sanctify the Holy One, and with singular encouragement from the God of Israel, **#Isa 29:22,23**.

And thine offspring as the grass of the earth] Thy nephews shall be not only numerous, but innumerable, they shall also flourish, as grass in its prime.

Ver. 26. **Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age]** In a good old age, or (as the Hebrew hath it, **#Ge 25:8**) with a good hoar head, in an εὐγηρία, when thou hast even a satiety of life, and art as willing to die as ever thou wast to dine, or to rise from table after a full meal. The Hebrews made a feast when they were past 60 years of age; and some of them observe that the numeral letters of Chelach (the word here used) make up sixty, but that is not a full old age; rather it is the beginning of it. Thou shalt die in lusty old age, so Broughton rendereth it, old, and yet healthy and comfortable, as was Moses, **#De 34:7**; and Mr Dod, that Moses of our times. Of Mr Samuel Crook likewise it is recorded (in his Life by W. G.), that when he saw no more ability for labours he desired to die in a satiety and fulness of life; not as a meat loathed (as many times natural men do), but as a dish, though well liked, that he had fed his full of; few men having ever run so long a race without cessation or cespitation, so constantly, so unweariably, so unblameably. Lo, such a hoary head was a crown of glory, as being found in the way of righteousness, **#Pr 16:31**. But so are not all that yet are long lived. A sinner may do evil a hundred times, and yet have his days prolonged, **#Ec 8:12**. Manasseh had the longest reign of any king of Judah. Pope John XXII held the mortality of the soul, and was otherwise erroneous and vicious, yet he lived longest of any pope, and died richest, A. D. 1335; howbeit he died *tempore non sua*, too soon for himself, **#Ec 7:17**; he went not to his grave in a good old age, ripe and ready.

As a shock of corn cometh in in his season] As grian when ripe is reaped, shocked up, and carried into the barn for the master's use. *Dei frumentum ego sum*, I am God's bread grain, said that ancient martyr.

Ver. 27. **Lo this, we have searched it, so it is]** We are sure that all this is true, and may be trusted to, for we have tried it; we have not it only by tradition, neither take we it up upon trust from others; but we believe and know, as Peter spake, **#Joh 6:69**; we believe, and therefore speak it, as Paul (after David), **#2Co 4:13 Ps 116:10**. Thou mayest write upon this whole chapter, as those ancients did upon their oracles, $\phi\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$, $\phi\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$, God, God; or as John the divine did upon his Revelation, "These sayings are faithful and true," **#Re 22:6**. *Vera tanquam ex tripode*, As true as gospel, as we say. Those that take upon them to teach others should go upon sure ground, and be masters of what they teach: how else will they teach with authority? Those also that come to hear must strive to find out that which St Luke calleth the certainty of things, **#Lu 1:4**, and not be led by conjectural suppositions, or the tenets of their teachers, but be fully persuaded, **#Job 5:1**.

Hear it] With utmost attention of body, intention of mind, retention of memory and practice: else all is lost.

And know thou it for thy good] Make thy best use of this our diligence and experience so freely and friendly communicated unto thee. Let not all this that hath been spoken be spilt upon thee, but prove every whit as profitable to thee as I conceive it seasonable for thee. Some knowing men are not a button the better for all they know. The devils are full of objective knowledge; but they get no good by it; no more do graceless men, that draw not their knowledge into practice, but detain the truth in unrighteousness: it swimmeth in their heads, but sinketh not into their hearts; it maketh them giddy, as wine fuming all up into the head, but never coming at the heart to cheer it. Such a man may cast out devils, and yet be cast to the devil; he may go to hell with all his unprofitable knowledge; like as a bull with a coronet and garland goes to the slaughter. Unless a man hear and know for himself, he shall find no more comfort of it than a man doth of the sun when it shineth not in his own horizon; or than a traveller doth of the fatness of a far country which he only passeth

through, and taketh a view of. If therefore thou be wise, be wise for thyself, **#Pr 9:12**. Let thy knowledge be not only apprehensive, but effective, illightening, but transforming, {#2Co 3:18} discursive, but experimental and practical. "For thereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," **#1Jo 2:3**.

Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **But Job answered and said]** Eliphaz thought he had silenced him, and set him down with so much reason, that he should have had nothing to reply; yet Job, desirous to disperse himself, and to clear up his reputation, answered, and said. For indeed *Negligere quid de se quisque sentiat, non solum arrogantis est, sed et dissoluti*, saith one, that is, altogether to neglect what others think or speak of a man's self, and not to make apology, is the part not only of a proud, but of a dissolute, person; silence sometimes argueth guiltiness, or at least it strengtheneth suspicion.

Ver. 2. **Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed]** Heb. Were weighed by weighing. The word rendered grief signifieth also anger, and is the same with that wherewith Eliphaz began his speech, **#Job 5:2**, where he saith, "Wrath killeth the foolish man," pointing at Job, as an angry man exalting folly. Here, therefore, Job beginneth his refutation, wishing that that anger or grief of his, so hardly censured, were duly weighed in an even balance; for then it would appear that there was some reason for his passion, that he had enough upon him to cry for, and that he had not complained without a cause. We read of a certain philosopher, who, hearing of his son's death, brake out into a loud lamentation; for which being reproved, *Permittite, inquit, ut homo sim*, Suffer me, I pray you, said he, to show myself to be a man, that is, sensible of my sufferings.

And my calamity weighed in the balances together] That is, that my calamity were accurately set against my grief, my laments and my torments equally poised; it would then appear that I have not yet grieved or complained up to the height or weight of those calamities which are upon me. "Even to day is my complaint bitter" (saith he elsewhere in answer to Eliphaz too, interpreting his complaints to be rebellion against God): "my stroke is heavier than my groaning," **#Job 23:2**.

Ver. 3. **For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea]** How light soever thou, O Eliphaz, esteemest it, as being in a prosperous condition. It is easy to swim in a warm bath; and every bird can sing in a sunshine day. But grief lieth like a load of lead upon the soul, heavy and cold; afflicting it, as an unsupportable burden doth the body. It so oppressed the poor Israelites in Egypt, that they had no mind to hearken to Moses, #Ex 6:9. Solomon cries out, "A wounded spirit who can bear?" #Pr 18:14. My soul is very heavy, and exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, saith our blessed Saviour, #Mt 26:37,38, then when the Father made all our sins to meet upon him, and he bare our griefs and carried our sorrows, #Isa 53:4,12. Sure it is, that had he not been God as well as man, he had been utterly crushed by that inconceivable weight of sin and wrath that he then groaned under. Oh what will all Christless persons do in hell, where God shall lay upon them and not spare! they would fain fly out of his hand, #Job 27:22, but that cannot be.

Therefore my words are swallowed up] *Vix loqui possum, vox faucibus haeret:* I want words, which yet, if I had them at will, would be far too weak to utter the grief of my mind. Broughton rendereth it, Therefore my words fall short; they are *semesa*, saith Junius, half eaten before spoken; I am, as it were, gagged with grief; or, my words are even smothered up with sighs and sobs. Thus Job rhetoricates, and yet thinks himself greatly word bound.

Ver. 4. **For the arrows of the Almighty are within me]** What marvel, then, though his flesh had no rest, but he was troubled on every side, since without were fightings, within were fears? #2Co 7:5. The arrows, not of a mighty man, as #Ps 127:4, but of an Almighty God; troubles without and terrors within. David felt these arrows, and complaineth of them heavily, #Ps 38:1,2. "He shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded," saith he of his enemies who had bent their bow and shot their arrows at him, even bitter words, #Ps 64:3,7. God will make his arrows drunk with the blood of such persons, #De 32:42. But the arrows Job here complains of were poisoned or envenomed arrows.

The poison whereof drinketh up my spirits] Drieth them up, and corrupts the blood in which the spirits are, sprinkling in my veins a mortal poison, working greatest dolour and distemper. The Scythians

and other nations used to dip their darts in the blood and gall of asps and vipers, the venomous heat of which, like a fire in their flesh, killed the wounded with torments, the likest hell of any other; and hereunto Job alludeth.

The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me] *i.e.* The terrible strokes of God, who seemeth to fight against me with his own hand, to rush upon me as the angel once did upon Balaam, with a drawn sword in his hand, threatening therewith to cut off my head, as David did Goliath's, yea, to send me packing to hell, in the very suburbs whereof, methinks, I feel to be already; and shall not I be suffered to complain? A galled shoulder will shrink under a load, though it be but light; and a little water is heavy in a leaden vessel. But the word here used for terrors noteth the most terrible terrors, hellish terrors, and worse, for they are the terrors of God, surpassing great, **#2Co 5:11**, which made Jeremiah pray so hard, Be not thou a terror to me, O Lord, and then I care not greatly what befalleth me. "While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted," saith Heman, **#Ps 88:15**. Add hereunto that these terrors of God had set themselves in array, they were in a military manner marshalled and imbattled against him, as **#Jer 50:9**. God afflicted Job methodically and resolvedly; he led up his army, as a reverend man phraseth it, exactly formed to a pitched battle against him, and this was truly terrible; for who, saith Moses, knoweth the power of his wrath? since the apprehension and approach of it was so terrible to an upright-hearted Job, to a heroical Luther, upon whom God's terrors were so heavy for a time, *ut nec calor, nec sanguis, nec sensus, nec vox superesset* (In epist. ad Melancth.), that neither heat, nor blood, nor sense, nor voice remained, but his body seemed dead, as Justus Jonas, an eye-witness, reporteth: agreeable whereunto is that memorable speech of Luther, *Nihil est tentatio vel universi mundi, et totius inferni in unum conflata, &c.*, The temptation and terror of all the world, nay, of all hell put together, is nothing to that wherein God setteth himself in battle-array against a poor soul; in which case that in excellent counsel that one giveth in these words, When thy sins and God's wrath meeting in thy conscience make thee deadly sick, as **#Isa 33**, then pour forth thy soul in confession; and as it will ease thee (as vomiting useth to do), so also it will move God to pity, and to give thee cordials and comforts to restore thee.

Ver. 5. **Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?**] *q.d.* Sure they do not. As if these creatures, wild or tame, want necessary food, you give them leave to fill the air with their outcries; yea, you supply their wants; but for me ye will do neither, such is your tenderness and love toward me. Nay, ye condemn me for that which is naturally common to all creatures. Ye must needs think I am not without ailment that make such great lamentations, unless ye conceit that I am fallen below the stirrup of reason, nay, of sense. It is easy for you who want neither grass nor fodder, or mixed meat, as the word signifieth, who lie at rack and manger, as it were, and have all that heart can wish, or need require; it is easy, I say, for you to rest contented, and to forbear complaints. But why am I so severely censured for impatient, who am stripped of all, and have nothing left me, *praeter caelum et caenum*, as he said, but only air to breathe in and a dunghill to sit on; not to speak of my inward troubles.

Ver. 6. **Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?**] Or, Can that which is unsavoury for want of salt be eaten? Hunger will down with unsavoury or unpleasant food, though salt or sauce be wanting; but when meat is putrefied for want of salt, and full of maggots, it will hardly be eaten, unless it be in extreme famine: it is as if he should say, a man doth with no good will feed upon unsavoury or loathsome meats; how, then, can I use such moderation as you desire I should, my evils being extreme, sweetened with no kind of comfort, nor seasoned with anything that is any way toothsome or wholesome? that I speak not of your tasteless and insulting speeches, which are no small vexation to me.

Ver. 7. **The things that my soul refused to touch, &c.**] I suffer such torments even in my very soul, as the very thought of them would heretofore have frightened me. Thus Mr Diodati. Others take soul here for the appetite, and so make this the sense: Those things which I exceedingly loathed, and would once have thought scorn to have touched, are now my sorrowful meat; I am forced with a heavy heart to feed upon them for want of better; and they go down the worse because you vex me with your hard words (who have little need of such choke pears), and will not allow me the liberty of a needful lamentation, which yet I must needs take (lest heart should break), and say, as before, **#Job 3**, though with some more respect to God, the object of my present prayer:

Ver. 8. **Oh that I might have my request!**] How heartily begs Job for death, as a medicine of all his maladies and miseries; as that which would bring him *malorum ademptionem, bonorum adeptionem*, freedom from all evil, fruition of all good; by the force of his faith he looks upon death as the best physician, that would cure him of all infirmities inward and outward, and of all at once, and for ever. Job might likely be of the same mind that Chaucer was, who took for his English motto, Farewell, medicine; and for his Latin one, *Mors aerumnarum requies*, death will be a sweet rest from all my labours. The same to a believer death is that Mount Ararat was to Noah, where his ark rested after long tossing; or as Michal was to David, a means to shift him out of the way when Saul sent to slay him; or as the fall of the house was to Samson, an end of all his sorrows and sufferings. Hence it is that he rejoiceth under hope, and with stretched out neck looks and longs for death's coming, as dearly as ever Sisera's mother did out of a window for the coming of her son laden with spoils from the battle. As when death is come indeed, he welcometh it, as Jael did the same Sisera (but much more heartily), with, "Turn in, my lord, turn in to me," **#Jud 4:18**; and further bespeaketh it, as Jacob did his brother Esau, at their interview, Surely I have seen thy face as the face of God, who hath made thee to meet me with kisses instead of frowns, and hath sent thee to guard me safe home to my father's house.

And that God would grant me the thing that I long for] Or, have long looked for. Heb. My hope or my expectation, as that which will put a period to my miseries, and possess me of heaven's happiness, as that which will be a postern to let out temporal life, but a street door to let in eternal.

Ver. 9. **That it would please God to destroy me**] That is, to despatch me out of this world, and send me to a better. A dissolution would be far more acceptable to Job than that restitution which Eliphaz seemed to promise him, **#Job 5:24**. It is as if Job should say, Take you the world among you, since you like it so well; I have more than enough of it; I am neither fond of life, nor afraid of death, but the clean contrary; I had rather die than dine, and crave no greater favour than to have more weight laid upon me that I may die out of hand. *Feri, Domine, feri; nam a peccatis absolutus sum*, as

Luther once said, Strike, Lord, strike deep; for thou hast pardoned my sins, and wilt save my soul.

That he would let loose his hand] That now seemeth tied, or bound behind him. *Manus ligari videtur quando parcit*, saith Vatablus. God had chained up Satan, and strictly charged him not to take away Job's life; but this is it that Job would fain have done. Mortality he would account no small mercy; he desired nothing more than to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; he might do it, because he knew that his Redeemer lived, &c. So might Simeon, because he had seen God's salvation; and so might Paul, who had fought a good fight, and kept the faith. But how could Plato say, in the eighth of his laws, The communion of the soul with the body is not better than the dissolution, as I would say, if I were to speak in earnest? Κοινωνια ψυχη και αωματι διαλυσεως ουκ εστι κρειττων, ως εγω φαιην αν σπουδη λεγων. His master, Socrates, when to die, was nothing so confident; for he shut up his last speech with these words, as both Plato himself and Cicero tell us, *Tempus est iam hinc abire*, It is now high time for us to go hence; for me to die, and for you to live longer; and whether of these two is the better the gods immortal know; *hominem quidem arbitror scire neminem*, it is above the knowledge, I believe, of any man living. Thus he; but Job was better persuaded; otherwise he would have been better advised than thus earnestly to have desired death.

And cut me off!] *Avide me absumat quasi ex morte mea ingens lucrum reportaturus* (Pineda). Let him greedily cut me off (so the word signifieth), even as if he were to have some great gain, or get some rich booty by my blood.

Ver. 10. **Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow, &c.]** I would take hard on, and bear what befallerh me as well as I could, by head and shoulders, had I but hopes of an end by death; as having this for my comfort;

I have not concealed the words of the Holy One] I have boldly professed the true religion, #Ps 40:10 116:10 119:43, not spared to preach the truth sincerely to others for God's glory, and their good, however you may judge of me. I never rejected the word of God, but have highly honoured it; so that my desire of death is not desperate,

as you may conceive, but an effect of good assurance that by death heaven advanceth forward that happy term, when all my miseries shall end at once; and hence it is that I am so greedy after the grave.

Ver. 11. **What is my strength, that I should hope?**] *q.d.* Thou hast told me, O Eliphaz, that if I frame to a patient and peaceable behaviour under God's chastisement, I shall go to my grave in a good old age, &c., but, alas, it is now past time of day with me for that matter: "my breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me," #**Job 17:1**. Were I as young and lusty as ever I have been, some such things as ye have promised me might be hoped for; but, alas, the map of age is figured on my forehead, the calendars of death appear in the furrows of my face, besides my many sores and sicknesses which, if they continue but a while, will certainly make an end of me.

And what is mine end] *i.e.* The later part of my life, what is that else but trouble and sorrow? See this elegantly set forth by Solomon, #**Ec 12:2-4**, &c.

That I should prolong my life?] That I should desire my life to be prolonged or eked out to that? Rather let it be my care, with Varro, *ut sarcinas colligam antequam proficiscar e vita*, to be ready for death, which seemeth so ready for me (De re Rust. lib. 1, cap. 1).

Ver. 12. **Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?**] Is it made of marble, or of the hardest metal? as it is said of one in Homer, that he was χαλκεντερος, of brazen bowels, and of Julius Scaliger, that he had a golden soul in an iron body; he was a very iron sides: but so was not Job; he had neither a body of brass, nor sinews of iron, to stand out against so many storms, and bear so many batteries; he felt what he endured, and could not long endure what he felt. As for the damned in hell, they are by the power of God upheld for ever, that they may suffer his fierce wrath for ever; which else they could never do. And as for those desperate assassins, Baltasar Gerardus, the Burgundian, who slew the Prince of Orange, A. D. 1584, and Ravilliac (*Ferale illud prodigium*, as one calleth him, that hideous hell hound), who slew Henry IV of France in the midst of his preparations, and endured thereupon most exquisite torments; this they did out of stupidity of sense, not solidity of faith; and from a reckless desperation, not a confident resolution.

Ver. 13. **Is not my help in me?**] Have I not something within wherewith to sustain me amidst all my sorrows, viz. the testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity I have had my conversation in the world, #2Co 1:12. Lo, this is my rejoicing, this is my cordial, &c. *Innuit innocentiam snare, ac vitro integritatem*, saith Drusius: he meaneth the innocency and integrity of his heart; and this was the help Job knew he had in store, this was the wisdom or right reason he speaketh of in the following words: and is wisdom, or virtue, driven quite from me? no, no; that boldeth out and abideth when all things else in the world pass away and vanish, as the word *Tushijah* importeth. Job had a subsistence still; for his life consisted not in the abundance which he had possessed, but was now bereft of. The world calleth wealth substance, but God giveth that name to wisdom only. The world he setteth forth by a word that betokeneth change, for its mutability, #Pr 3:8, and the things thereof he called *Nonentia*, #Job 23:5. Wilt thou set thine eyes, saith he, upon that which is not? and which hath no price but what opinion setteth upon it? Grace, being a particle of the Divine nature, is unlosable, unperishable.— *Virtus post funera venit*.

Ver. 14. **To him that is afflicted**] Heb. melted, viz. in the furnace of affliction, which melteth men's hearts, and maketh them malleable, as fire doth the hardest metals, #Ps 22:15 Jos 7:5.

Pity should be shewed from his friend] By a sweet tender melting frame of spirit, such as was that of the Church, #Ps 102:13, and that of Paul, #2Co 11:29, "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" *sc.* by way of sympathy; "who is offended, and I burn not?" when others are hurt, I feel twinges: as the tongue complaineth for the hurt of the toe, and as the heart condoleth with the heel, and there is a fellow feeling amongst all the members; so there is likewise in the mystical body.

From his friend] Who is made for the day of adversity, #Pr 17:17, and should show love at all times, and especially in evil times; but poor Job bewaileth the want of such faithful friends, Αφιλον το δυστυχεσ, *Et cum fortuna statque caditque fides*. David also complaineth to God, his only fast friend, of those that would be the causes, but not the companions, of his calamity, that would fawn upon him in his flourish, but forsake him in his misery. My lovers and friends stand aloof, &c., they looked on him, and so passed by

him, as the priest and Levite did the wounded passenger, #Lu 10:32. But God takes it ill that any should once look upon his afflicted, unless it be to pity and relieve them, #Ob 12,13, and hath threatened an evil, an only evil, without the least mixture of mercy, to such as show no mercy to those in misery, #Jas 2:13.

But he hath forsaken the fear of the Almighty] Which wheresoever it is in the power of it, frameth a man to all the duties both of piety and charity. Obadiah feared God greatly, and it well appeared by his pity to the persecuted prophets. Cornelius feared God, and (as a fruit of it) gave much alms, #Ac 10:2. Not so Nabal, that sapless fellow, whose heart was hardened from God's holy fear; nor Judas the traitor, who had no heart of compassion towards his innocent Master; and therefore he burst in the midst with a huge crack (ελακησε μεσος), and all his bowels gushed out by a singular judgment, #Ac 1:18. There are many other readings of this text, as that of the Tigurine translation, It were fit for friends to show kindness to their friend that is in misery: but the fear of the Almighty hath forsaken me, as you please to say. See what Eliphaz had said to this purpose. {See Trapp on "Job 4:6"} Others read it thus, to him that is afflicted should reproach be given, that he hath forsaken the fear of the Almighty? *q.d.* Must a man therefore be reviled as irreligious because he is calamitous? The Vulgate translation runs thus, He that taketh away pity from his friend hath forsaken the fear of the Almighty, &c.

Ver. 15. **My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook]** Even you, whom I esteemed as my brethren (for to them he applieth this speech, #Job 6:21), prove hollow and helpless to me; like the river Araris, that moveth so slowly, that it can hardly be discerned, saith Caesar, whether it flow forward or backward (Caesar, de Bell Gal. l. 1); or rather, to a certain fish in that river Araris, called *scolopidus*; which at the waxing of the moon is as white as the driven snow, and at the waning thereof is as black as a burnt coal. Job here elegantly compareth them, not to a river which is fed by a spring, and hath a perennity of flowing; but to a brook arising from rain or melted snow, the property whereof is in a moisture, when there is least need of them, to swell; in a drought, when they should do good, to fail. It is reported of the river Novanus, in Lombardy, that at every midsummer solstice it swelleth and runneth over the banks, but in

midwinter is quite dry (Plin. lib. 2, cap. 10. 3.) Such were Job's deceitful brethren; good summer birds, &c. The same author telleth us, that in that part of Spain called Carrinensis there is a river that shows all the fish in it to be like gold; but take them into thine hand, and they soon appear in their natural kind and colour. Job found that all is not gold that glittereth.

And as the stream of brooks they pass away] *i.e.* As an impetuous land flood, they fail me; and now that I have most need of their refreshments, they yield me none, but the contrary rather; like as land floods by their sudden and violent overflow do much hurt many times to corn and cattle. I can go to these streams of brooks, saith Job, and show my friends the face of their hearts in those waters.

Ver. 16. Which are blackish by reason of the ice] Or frost, a black frost we call it, which deceiveth those that tread upon it. Or if, hard enough to bear up passengers, it promise to be a storehouse of preserving snow and water against the scorching time of summer, yet there is no trusting to it; for these waters, as they are in winter locked up with frosts, so they will be in summer exhaled and dried up by the sun.

Ver. 17. What time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, &c.] Lo, such is the fruit of creature confidence, of making flesh our arm, of trusting in men or means; whereas *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*, they that trust in the Lord shall never be disappointed. This thou canst never do, unless (unbottomed of thyself and the creature) thou so lean upon the Lord, as that if he fail thee thou sinkest, and not otherwise.

Ver. 18. The paths of their way are turned aside] *i.e.* They being (as it were) cut into divers small rivers running here and there, by little and little, and being resolved into vapours, at length quite vanish away (Beza).

They go to nothing, and perish] *Metaphora insignis et hieroglyphicum*, saith an interpreter; this is an excellent metaphor, and a lively picture of the vanity of such as make a great show of piety and charity, which yet floweth not from the spring of true faith; and therefore cannot but, after a while, go to nothing and perish. A failing brook, saith another, is a clear emblem of a false heart, both to God and man. Lavater thus explaineth the comparison: 1. As

brooks run with waters then when there is least need of them; so false friends are most officious when their courtesy might best be spared. 2. As the ice of such brooks is so condensed and hardened that it beareth men, horses, and other things of great weight; so counterfeit friends promise and pretend to be ready to do their utmost to suffer anything for our good and comfort. 3. But as those brooks are dried up in summer, and frozen up in winter, so that we can set no sight on them; in like sort these are not to be found when we are in distress and affliction. 4. As brooks in winter are covered with snow and ice; so these would seem to be whiter than snow when their affections towards us are colder than ice. 5. Lastly, as the ice that was hard and firm, upon a thaw breaketh and melteth; so false friends leave us many times upon very small or no dislikes; as being constant only in their unconstancy.

Ver. 19. **The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them]** The troops, that is, the travellers, the caravan or company of merchants from those parts, passing through dangerous and dry deserts, expected relief from those brooks which they had marked out for themselves against summer; but with what success?

Ver. 20. **They were confounded because they had hoped, &c.]** Heb. They blushed, or they were abashed, because disappointed and defeated of their hope and expectation. See #**Jer 14:3,4 Joe 1:10,11**. God's people have a promise, that hoping in him they shall never be ashamed, #**Joe 2:26 Ro 10:11**. Their hope is infallible, #**Ro 5:5**, because founded upon faith unfeigned, #**1Ti 1:5**. Hence they are commanded to rejoice in hope, #**Ro 12:12**, and to conceive *gaudium in re, gaudium in spe, gaudium de possessione, gaudium de promissione, &c.*, joy for what they have in hand, and in present possession; joy also for what they have in hope, and in reversion. Wicked men's hopes may hope headless (as the proverb is, and as these troops of Tema experimented), they come to the world's felicities as they do to a lottery, with heads full of hopes, but return with hearts full of blanks: not so the saints; God will be better to them than their hopes; and when at worst, they can confidently say, it is well for the present, and it will be better hereafter.

Ver. 21. **For now ye are nothing]** *i.e.* To me nothing worth; I have no more joy of you than if you were not at all; ye are not unlike him who said to his friend, I am all yours, except body and goods; ye are not so much as friends at a sneeze, who will come out with a God

bless you; or as those great benefactors in St James, #Jas 2:15,16, that were free of their mouth mercy; ye are mere mutes and ciphers, nullities, as to me just nothing; that is, ye are no such thing as I expected. And here Job brings the foregoing similitude home to his friends by close application. And according to the Hebrew margin called keri, it may be rendered, *Fuistis ei similes, sc. torrenti;* ye are like to it, that is, to the brook before mentioned; ye fail me as much as it did the thirsty passengers (Drus.).

For ye see my casting down, and are afraid] There is an elegance in the original that cannot be Englished; your eyes see what you had before heard of only by the hearing of the ear, that I am at a great under, dejected and impoverished; you are therefore afraid of me, lest I should ask you something for the supply of my wants; or else you keep at a distance, as more afraid of catching mine evil than desirous of curing it; ye visit me, but are not moved with any compassion towards me, *Horrore percussi resiliuistis a me veluti si quispiam viperam calcasset* (Lay.). So the Septuagint.

Ver. 22. **Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give, &c.]** Did I ever charge you for my reparation or redemption? This interrogation is more emphatic than a simple negation: *q.d.* I never did it, and, therefore, unless you had been at more charge with me, you should have bestowed better words upon me; those would have cost you nothing certainly.

Ver. 23. **Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? &c.]** Rescue me, ransom me from those that have robbed and wronged me; fetch back my lost goods by price or force. The word rendered mighty signifieth also formidable, terrible, breach makers. The word is opened by St Paul, #Php 1:28; where he useth a metaphor from horses snorting (πυρομενοι) and starting when frightened.

Ver. 24. **Teach me, and I will hold my tongue]** If I be in an error, I am willing to be rectified. Hitherto you have mistook my case; and so your speech hath been to small purpose. But if you will come home to my case indeed, and weigh things in an even balance, I shall gladly submit to your more mature judgment and direction. Teach me, and you shall find that I am not indocible, that I am not as "horse and mule that have no understanding," #Ps 32:9, nor will learn any; much less than the creature called rhinoceros, untameable and untractable. It shall appear to you that I am not utterly

uncounselable, as those of whom Basil complaineth, *qui quid verum sit neque sciunt, neque sustinent discere*, that neither know what truth and right is, nor will endure to be taught it (Epist. ad Euagr. 10). Job was not to be told that it was easier to deal with 20 men's reasons than with one man's will; he promiseth therefore not to stand out against his friends, because he will stand out. It is not my will, saith he, that opposeth what you have spoken, but my understanding. I am a slave to right reason; and if convinced thereby, I shall soon lay down the bucklers. Teach me, and I will hold my tongue, and not strive for the last word to lengthen out the contention; I am willing to reason, but not to wrangle. See #Pr 30:32.

Cause me to understand wherein I have erred] A humble man will never be a heretic; err he may (that is common to mankind, *triste mortalitatis privilegium*); but convince him by solid reasons and good arguments, and he will not long stand out: a little child shall lead him, #Isa 11:6. It is by pride that contention cometh, #Pr 13:10, for it maketh a man drunk with his own conceit, #Hab 2:5; and who so wilful, so quarrelsome, as he that is drunk? A heretic may be condemned of himself, #Tit 3:10, but he will not be convinced by another (such is his pertinacy, or rather obstinacy), no, though he be stoned with hardest arguments, holden out of that crystal book of the Holy Scriptures, he stands as a stake in the midst of a stream; and you may as soon move a rock as cause him to understand wherein he is out of his judgment of practice: *Lapidandi sunt haeretici* (Athan.).

Ver. 25. **How forcible are right words]** How sweet, saith the Chaldee, interpreting it by #Ps 119:103. It may be read *Nimletsu* for *Nimretsu*; but the word is well rendered forcible, potent, valid. It noteth also, saith Mr Caryl, acrimony, sharpness, or smartness, because right words have a pleasing acrimony upon the palate of the soul, and a power upon the judgment to sway and carry it. *Ille regit dictis animos, &c. Audite senem iuvenes quem iuvenem senes audierunt*: these few words from Augustus, falling right, quieted the rebels in his army; and the like is reported of Alexander the Great, of Menenius, Agrippa, &c. But we have better instances, as that of Abigail treating with David; the woman of Abel with Joab; Nicodemus, by a few seasonable words, dissolving the council

gathered together against Christ, #Joh 7:50,53; Paphnutius stickling for the married clergy at the Nicene council, &c. One seasonable truth failing on a prepared heart hath often a strong and sweet operation. Luther having heard Staupicius say that that is kind repentance which begins from the love of God, ever after that time the practice of repentance was sweeter to him. This speech also of his took well with Luther, The doctrine of predestination beginneth at the wounds of Christ; but before any of this he was much wrought upon by conference with an old priest about justification by faith. So was that Italian marquis, Galecius Caracciolus, by a similitude used by Peter Martyr reading upon the First to the Corinthians. *Nescio quid divinum in auscultatione est*, saith one, there is a kind of divine force and efficacy in hearing more than in reading the word. We may say of it, as David once did of Goliath's sword, There is none to that. And yet it cannot be denied that the word read also hath a mighty force and powerful influence upon the conscience Hence those many praises of it, #Ps 19:7,8, "The statutes of the Lord are right," &c. Right for every man's state and purpose; so penned, that every man may think they speak *de se in re sua*, of himself in this particular case, as Athanasius hath it; so right the good word of God is and suitable; how then can it be but forcible. {see #Heb 4:12 2Co 10:4,5} And how forcible it is none can tell but those that have felt it; nor those neither; hence this expression by way of admiration, Oh how effectual are right words!

But what doth your arguing reprove?] Heb. What doth your disputation dispute? What force, what energy, is in your arguments? how flat and sinewless are they! what dull stuff appear they! and how little to the purpose! *Tam facile diluuntur argumenta vestra, quam vulpes comest pyrum*. I can blow them off as easily as I could a feather off my hand. Strong is the truth (I grant), and easily evinceth the things that are true; but to conclude truths from falsities (as that I am a hypocrite because afflicted), that ye can never do.

Ver. 26. **Do ye imagine to reprove words?]** Idle and hasty words, which have more sound than sense? Think you that I do only make a noise, or rave like a madman, and am accordingly to be dealt with? Ye have not hitherto had vain, windy words from me, but words full of weight and matter, words of truth and soberness; wherefore then do ye speak thus? Do ye imagine to reprove words.

And the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?]

Do ye think I speak like one that is distracted, who knows not what he speaks? or that I have at once lost my hope and my wits? It is an easy and a compendious way of refuting all a man can say, to say he is mad, his words must needs be but wind without weight who is himself without reason. Mr Broughton readeth, Do ye hold the terms of the forlorn a wind? shall the poor man's wisdom be despised (as Solomon asketh), and his words not be heard? #Ec 9:16. Some refer this also to Job's friends, reading it thus, Ye frame speeches only to reprove (ye are good for little else but to find fault), and bring forth words against the wind; ye beat the empty air with your bubbles of words and senseless sayings.

Ver. 27. **Yea, you overwhelm the fatherless]** Heb. Ye throw yourselves upon the fatherless, that is, upon miserable me, who am helpless, friendless, comfortless: see #Ge 43:18, that he may roll himself upon us, say they there, as hunters and wild beasts fall upon their prey.

And you dig a pit for your friend] Who had better deserved of you, and expected better usage from you. Here he taxeth them for craft, as before for cruelty, and this to his friend, whom they sought to circumvent, and to drive into desperation. Some read the words thus, You make a feast upon your friend; you banquet upon your companion, and make great cheers, being glad of my calamity, which you make an argument of mine impiety. See #Job 41:6 2Ki 6:23.

Ver. 28. **Now therefore be content, look upon me]** Let it suffice you to have thus hardly handled me; cast now a more benign aspect upon me, and be not henceforth so hot and so harsh. Now therefore be content, regard me, so Mr Broughton translateth it, or look upon me, *sc.* with a critical eye: what guiltiness can you find in my face? do I look like a hypocrite, and can you read my conscience in my countenance?

It is evident to you if I lie] You may soon see mine integrity if you please, for my heart sitteth and showeth itself in my forehead, neither can I collude. I am one of those children that will not lie: so be God my Saviour, #Isa 63:8.

Ver. 29. **Return, I pray you]** Change your minds of me, and your language to me, *Bona verba quaeso*; I seek good words, what need all this heat of speech, and height of spirit? be better advised, I beseech you, **#Job 17:10 19:28**. Some think that Job's friends were rising to be gone; and he hastily calleth them back again.

Let it not be iniquity] Judge charitably, and make not the worst of matters: I may be weak, but am not wicked. Or thus, take heed that God fault you not for usurping his right; taking upon you to judge secret things even against your neighbour, with calumniations and cruelty.

Yea, return again] See you do it at your peril: either you must do it, or do worse.

My righteousness is in it] I am surely in the right; and that will appear to you upon better consideration. I shall be *recta in curia*, and you utterly mistaken. Uprightness hath boldness, and dares put itself upon God's examination, as David did, **#Ps 139:23**, yea, Abimelech, **#Ge 20:5**.

Ver. 30. **Is there iniquity in my tongue?]** Yea, or else you shall pass for a perfect man, and well able to bridle the whole body, **#Jas 3:2**. St Paul, **#Ro 3:13**, anatomizing a natural man, standeth more upon the organs of speech, his tongue, lips, mouth, throat, &c., than upon all the other members. But Job was a perfect and an upright man, **#Job 1:1**, he had said he would take heed to his ways, that he sinned not with his tongue, **#Ps 39:1**, he was also convinced of this, that if any man seem to be religious, and bridle not his tongue, that man's religion was in vain, **#Jas 1:26**. He did not therefore prepensedly and willingly lash out in sinful or superfluous language.

Cannot my taste discern perverse things?] Cannot I distinguish between right and wrong, truth and falsehood? **#Job 12:11 34:3**. Is my mouth so far out of taste? &c. It is a heavy judgment to be given up to an injudicious mind, **#Ro 1:28**, a reprobate sense.

Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth?]** There is, certainly. Our bounds are prescribed us, and a pillar set by

him who bears up the heavens, which we are not to transpass. *Stat sua cuique dies*, said the heathen poet (Virg. Aeneid 10), our last day stands, the rest run. It is said of the Turks, that they shun not the company of those that have the plague, but pointing upon their foreheads, say, it was written there at their birth when they should die. Now if there be an appointed time, &c., what mean the Lutherans to teach that God hath not determined the period of men's days, but it is in man's power to lengthen or shorten them, *Humanae vitae terminus non est decreto simplici et absoluto constitutus* (Homing). In this one verse we have two metaphors, both which do evince the contrary. The first is from soldiers, implied in the word צבא translated an appointed time, or a warfare, because there was a set time for soldiers to fight, and a set time also for them to serve. The second is from a hireling.

Are not his days also like the days of an hireling?] *Describit humanae vitæ brevitatem*, saith Vatablus. Here he describeth the shortness of man's life, and with it that his days are determined; for with a hireling we agree to work with us for a certain time, and usually for a day, or by the day; and hence we call them day labourers. It importeth then that the time of man's life is short and set; for hirelings are appointed to an hour. See **#Job 14:14 Ec 2:3 Joh 7:30 Isa 38:5**. Fifteen years just were added to Hezekiah's life. Our hairs are numbered, much more our days. This Job allegeth to set forth his own extreme misery, as one condemned to perpetual torments without any respite or refreshing; and therefore in a worse case than any soldier or servant.

Ver. 2. **As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, &c.**] Heb. Gapeth after, or gaspeth for his shadow; that is, for some place of cool repose after his hard labour in the hot sunshine, as in harvest; or for the shadow, that is, for dark night, or for the evening.

Cum Sol crescentes discedens duplicet umbras (Virg. Eclog.).

And as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work] Heb. Expecteth his work, that is, his wages. God's work is its own wages; and in doing thereof (not only for doing thereof) there is great reward, **#Ps 19:11**. Righteousness is its own recompense; but a poor hireling looketh for his wages, he sets his heart upon it, **#De 24:15**,

and God provideth there that it be duly paid him; and those that detain it are sorely threatened. See #**Jas 5:5**: it is a crying sin. The whole verse may cohere with the former; and be thus rendered, Is not a man as a servant that earnestly desireth the shadow? and is he not as a hireling, that looketh for the reward of his work? but it is better to join it with that which followeth, according to our translation.

Ver. 3. **So am I made to possess months of vanity**] So, but a great deal worse than so is it with me. The labouring servant hath his shade; the painful hireling hath his hire at the set time; but I am made to possess, or have assigned to me for mine inheritance, not days, but whole months of vanity, that is, of molestation and misery, void of the least comfort or hope of amendment. The soldier, servant, hireling, suffer hardship in hope of better; but with me it is every day worse than other; and were it not for the hope of heaven, the life I lead here would be a little hell to me. From the months of vanity here mentioned (lying months some render them, because he hoped for ease, but found none) it may be gathered that Job's calamities lasted a long time, twelve months, say the Hebrews, seven years, saith Suidas. If we hold out faith and patience but half so long in any sort, we think ourselves worthy to be crowned and chronicled. For mouths of vanity some read empty moons; as if Job's moon were always in the wane, or ever in the eclipse.

And wearisome nights are appointed to me] *sc.* By God; and that so exactly as if he had numbered them to a night. See #**Da 10:1**. *Pondere, mensura, numero Deus omnia fecit*, It is he that cutteth us out our conditions, that prepareth for us troublesome days and tiresome nights, and purposely that he may take us off from the inordinate love of life: like as by strait binding (which mortifieth and deadeneth the flesh) men are made more able to bear the cutting off of a member; so shall we take our cutting off from this world the more gently, by how much the more painful, pinching days and nights we have endured.

Ver. 4. **When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise? &c.**] Here is a graphic description of a wearisome night. The night is most laborious and irksome to sick people: then they revolve their troubles, and being free from visits of friends, they visit their own afflictions, and study their own distempers freely; then they lie all

night wishing for day, telling the clock, hearkening for the cock (that natural clock), tossing to and fro unto the dawning of the day, not able to get the least wink of sleep, that nurse of nature, and sweet parenthesis of men's griefs and cares. Oh present the condition of a restless sick man to your thoughts (saith an interpreter here), praise God for quiet nights, and pity those to whom wearisome nights are appointed.

Ver. 5. **My flesh is clothed with worms]** Here Job showeth how and whence his nights were so wearisome and restless; he was in his grave clothes before he died (saith Mr Caryl), viz. a gown of worms set or embroidered with clods of dust. Covered he was with sores, and putrefied ulcers full of worms, which made him abhorring to himself.

And clods of dust] A fit dress for a dying man. The word signifieth the filings of any metal, or the scrapings of an unclean thing. He meaneth then the scurf, scraped off from him, or the dust contracted by his sitting upon the ground, #**Job 2:8**.

My skin is broken] Or, cleft and chapped (as the earth is in drought), in most loathsome and formidable manner.

And become loathsome] Or melted, as in that distemper which physicians call *corruptionem totius substantiae*; or as in the leprosy or gangrene, when the flesh falleth off from the bones. *Hinc igitur disce patientiam in morbis*, saith Lavater. Hence, then, learn to be patient under the most noisome and troublesome diseases. What though thou be in such a pickle all over, that thou canst neither stand, nor walk, nor sit, nor lie, nor live, nor die: was not this holy Job's condition, and worse? Remember that there are not a few sick as heart can hold, sore all over, and want necessary food and physic which thou dost not; consider that God could, and justly might, lay more and heavier plagues upon thee, &c. When Dr Munster was sick, and some friends came to visit him, being very sorry for pains he was put to by the ulcers of his body; O my dear friends, said he, these boils and blains, *gemmae sunt et pretiosa ornamenta Dei*, are God's gems and jewels wherewith he adorneth his friends, that he may draw them to himself; which ornaments let us esteem far more precious than all the gold and wealth of this whole world. Soon after

which speech he piously and peaceably fell asleep in the Lord. Craterus also, when he saw his body begin to swell with a dropsy, and other distempers, *Euge Dee sit laus et gloria*, said he, Oh, blessed be God, that my deliverance is at hand, *et horula gratissima*, and that sweet hour that shall put an end to all my miseries (Melch. Adam).

Ver. 6. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle] Which is of a very swift and sudden motion. Nights and days pass the shuttle of man's life forward and backward, to and again. The night casts it to the day, and the day to the night; between these two time quickly wears off the thread of life. I have cut off, like a weaver, my life, saith good Hezekiah, **#Isa 38:12**. And the heathens hammered at this in their fiction of the three sister destinies, whereof the poet saith,

Clotho colum baiulat, Lachesis trahit, Atropos occat.

You that are weavers, saith Lavater, or lookers on them at their work, think of this text, and learn to live holy.

And they are spent without hope] Heb. In not hope. I cannot conceive that I shall ever recover, or be recruited, whatever thou, O Eliphaz, hast gone about to put me in hope. All Job's desire was death, which he looked upon as the readiest remedy of all.

Ver. 7. O remember that my life is wind] Before, swifter or lighter than a weaver's shuttle (or than a sword or speech, as the Septuagint there render it, *ελαφροτερος λαλιας*), now my life is a wind, or as a wind (so the Chaldee paraphraseth), that speedily passeth away, and returneth not. So St James, "What is your life?" saith he; "it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," **#Jas 4:14**. One hath well observed, that the Holy Ghost giveth us very many items of this (and especially in this book), which shows that we are very apt to forget it. A point that is easy to be known, but very hard to be believed; every man assents to it, but few live it, and improve it to reformation.

Mine eyes shall no more see good] *sc.* In this world, for in the world to come he was confident of the beautiful vision, **#Job 19:27**. Hezekiah hath a like expression when sentenced to die: I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the

land of the living (that is, in this life present, **#Ps 27:13 52:5 142:5 Isa 53:8**, called also the light of the living, **#Joh 9:5 Ps 56:13**); I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world, **#Isa 38:11**. And this both sick Job and sick Hezekiah tell the Lord, and both of them begin alike, O remember, **#Isa 38:3**. God forgetteth not his people and their condition; howbeit he requireth and expecteth that they should be his remembrancers for their own and others' good, **#Isa 62:6,7**. See the margin.

Ver. 8. **The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more]** In death we shall neither see nor be seen, but be soon both out of sight and out of mind too. It is told of Richard III, that he caused the dead corpse of his two smothered nephews to be closed in lead, and so put in a coffin full of holes, and hooked at the ends with two hooks of iron, and so to be cast into a place called the black deeps, at the Thames' mouth, whereby they should never rise up, nor be any more seen (Speed. 935). Such a place is the grave till the last day: for then the sea shall give up the dead which are in it, and death and the grave shall render up the dead which are in them, **#Re 20:13**, then shall Adam see all his nephews at once, &c.

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not] Thou even lookest me to death; like as elsewhere God is said to frown men to destruction, **#Ps 80:16 Ps 104:29**; they are not able to endure his flaming eyes, sparkling out wrath against them. What mad men therefore are they that speak and act against him who can so easily do them to death! If God but set his eyes upon them for evil (as he oft threateneth to do, **#Am 9:4 Job 16:9**), they are undone.

Ver. 9. **As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away]** A cloud is nothing else but a vapour thickened in the middle region of the air by the cold encompassing and driving it together, **#Ps 18:11,12**, vessels they are as thin as the liquor that is in them; but some are waterless: the former are soon emptied and dissolved; the latter as soon scattered by the wind, and vanish away. *{See Trapp on "Job 7:7"}*

So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more] *sc.* To live and converse here with men, as **#Job 7:10**. Or, he shall come up no more, *sc.* without a miracle (as Lazarus and some others long since dead rose again) he cannot return to me, said David to his deceased child, **#2Sa 12:23**. God could send some from the dead to

warn the living; but that is not now to be expected, as Abraham told the rich man, #Lu 16:27-31 Those spirits of dead men that so oft appeared in times of Popery (requiring their friends to sing masses and dirges for them; and that drew this verse from Theodorus Gaza, *Sunt aliquid manes, lethum non omnia finit*) were either delusions, or else devils in the shape of men. That Job doubted the resurrection, or denied it (as Rabbi Solomon, and some other, both Hebrew and Greek writers, conclude from this text) is a manifest injury done to this good man, and a force offered to the text, as appeareth by that which next followeth.

Ver. 10. **He shall return no more to his house]** Either to despatch business or to enjoy comforts; he hath utterly done with the affairs of this world. Melancthon telleth of an aunt of his who, having buried her husband, and sitting sorrowfully by the fireside, saw (as she thought) her husband coming into the room, and talking to her familiarly about the payment of certain debts, and other businesses belonging to the house; and when he had thus talked with her a long time, he bid her give him her hand; she at first refused, but was at length persuaded to do it; he taking her by the hand so burnt it, that it was as black as a coal, and so he departed. Was not this the devil?

Neither shall his place know him any more] His place of habitation, or his place of honour and ruledom; these shall no more acknowledge him, and welcome him back, as they used to do after a journey. Death is the conclusion of all worldly comforts and relations. Hence wicked people are so loth to depart, because there is struck by death an everlasting parting blow between them and their present comforts, without hope of better. *Spes et fortuna valete*, farewell hope and fortune, said one great man at his death. Cardinal Bourbon would not part with his part in Paris for his part in paradise. Fie, said another rich cardinal, Will not death be hired? will money do nothing? Never did Adam go more unwillingly out of Paradise, the Jebusites out of the stronghold of Zion, the unjust steward out of his office, or the devils out of the demoniac, than graceless people do out of their earthly tabernacles, because they know they shall return no more; and having hopes in this life only, they must needs look upon themselves as most miserable.

Ver. 11. **Therefore I will not refrain my mouth]** Heb. I will not prohibit my mouth, *sc.* from speaking, I will bite in my grief no

longer; but since death, the certain end of all outward troubles, is not far from me; I will, by my further complaints, press the Lord to hasten it, and not suppress my sorrows, but give them a vent.

I will speak in the anguish of my spirit] Heb. In the straitness or distress of my spirit, which is almost suffocated with grief.

I will complain in the bitterness of my soul] His greatest troubles were inward; and if by godly sorrow for his sins he had poured forth his soul in a humble confession (as some understand him here), he had taken a right course; but thus boisterously to break out into complaints savoureth of human infirmity, and showeth *quantae sint hominis vires sibi a Deo derelicti*, what a poor creature man becomes when God leaves him to himself, and subjects him to his judgments (Mercer).

Ver. 12. **Am I a sea, or a whale]** Can I bear all troubles, as the sea receives all waters, and the whale bears all tempests? This (as is well observed) was too bold a speech to God from a creature, for when his hand is on our backs our hands should be upon our mouths; as **#Ps 39:9**, "I was dumb," or (as others read it) I should have been dumb..."because thou didst it." But it is a fair step to perfection and victory when one can kiss God's rod and say, as **#Ps 44:17**, All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor declined from thy way. Job was not without his impatience; but being he was right for the main, and at length bewailed them, God looked not upon him as he doth upon those refractories, who to their impatience add impenitence; and to their passive disobedience, active.

That thou settest a watch over me?] That thou surroundest me with sorrows, and wilt not suffer me to die? Here Job should have set a better watch over his lips, **#Ps 39:1 141:3**, than thus boisterously to have blustered against God (who is ἀνυπευθυνος, not to be called to an account for his proceedings) like the raging sea or unruly whirlpool. He should have considered that the best men have somewhat of the sea in them, that must be bounded; and somewhat of the whale, that must be watched and kept under; and that God never lays more upon a man than there is need, though he may think otherwise.

Ver. 13. **When I say, My bed shall comfort me]** The bed was the most proper and probable means of refreshment; but it is not the bed that can give sleep, nor the couch ease. Creatures are not able of themselves to give out the comforts committed to them; their common nature must be assisted with a special word of blessing, or else they do us no good: man liveth not by bread only, &c. God maketh the merciful man's bed, **#Ps 41:3**. So he giveth his beloved sleep, quiet sleep (Shena with an Aleph quiescent), **#Ps 127:2** He is the God of all mercies, and the Father of all consolation, **#2Co 1:3**. It is he that shines through the creature, which else is but as the air, without light. Look how the air lights us not without the sun; and fuel heats us not without fire; so neither can any man or means comfort or content us without God.

My couch shall ease my complaint] Heb. Shall lift up, or take away, viz. the burden of my cares and grief; some part of my load at least; but it happened otherwise: for— {see next verse}

Ver. 14. **Then thou scarest me with dreams]** *Extremam tentationem describit*, saith Vatablus; and the devil doubtless had a great hand in this business (for it was within his commission, and he would not neglect any part of it); but Job taketh notice of none but God, the chief agent, and to him he applieth himself. His providence is exercised even about dreams, which, in melancholy people, happen (especially when they are sick) to be oftentimes very horrid and hideous; as that they fall down from some high place, commit some capital offence, are slain, torn in pieces by devils, &c. Bishop Foliot's terrible night vision was before mentioned. Richard III, after the murder of his two innocent nephews, and Charles IX of France, after the Parisian Massacre, had such dreadful dreams, that they became a terror to themselves and to all about them. But to instance in better men: Calvin in the year of grace 1562, being sick of the gout, dreamed that he heard a great noise of drums beaten up most vehemently, as they use to be in warlike marches (Beza in Vita). Pareua also, A.D. 1618, saw in a dream the city of Heidelberg set on fire in many places, and the prince elector's palace all on a light flame: this he set down the next morning in his dairy, and added these words, *O Deus clementissime, averte sinistrum omen, &c.*, O most merciful God, turn aside this evil omen. (Philip Par. in Vita

Patris). Such fearful dreams cause a sick sleep, and a worse waking. This Job complaineth of here; and yet more fully in the next words.

Ver. 15. **So that my soul chooseth strangling]** *i.e.* *Quamvis durissimam sed praesentissimam mortem*, any violent or ignominious death, as long as it were a speedy death. Hippocrates telleth us, that many have been so frightened with dreams and apparitions, that they have hanged themselves, leaped into deep pits, or otherwise committed suicide. Let those that either have not been so terrified, or so tempted, or so deserted of God, bless him for that mercy.

And death rather than life] Heb. Rather than my bones; that is, any kind of death rather than such a body, which is now nothing else but a bag of bones; or than such rotten bones full of sores and ulcers. He maketh mention of his bones, because his pain had pierced as far as his very bones; the putrefaction had sunk down into his marrow.

Ver. 16. **I loathe it, I would not live alway]** I loathe or abhor it, that is, my life, or I loathe them, that is, my bones, **#Job 7:15**. "I would not live alway," that is, long in this world, and in this condition. Plotinus, the philosopher, held it a special mercy of God to men that they were mortal; and did not always live to labour under the miseries of this wretched life (Aug. de Civitate Dei, l. ix. c. 10). Cato professed, that if he might have his age renewed as the eagle's, so that he might be made young again, he would seriously refuse it (Cic. Cato Major). How much better might Job say thus, since the righteous hath hope in his death; and might well take up that of the poet,

Utque adeone mori miserum est?

The days of the best are so full of evil both of sin and pain, that it is good they are not fuller of days; if they should have length of life added to heaps of sorrows, and perpetuity with all their misery, how miserable were they! Christ promiseth it as a point of favour of his, that the days of trouble should be shortened, **#Mt 24:22**, and that he may put an end to the age, he dispatched away the generations with all the convenient speed that may be.

Therefore let me alone] Some read thus, I cannot live for ever, or very long, therefore let me alone, that is, stop afflicting me, and let me go quietly to my grave, **#Ps 39:13**. Here one well observeth that the world and time, while they continue, are always ceasing; and therefore have their denomination from this word, which signifieth to cease, *Quod cito cessat et deficit* (Mercer in Pagnin.).

For my days are vanity] *Hebel*, a puff of wind, or a bubble on the water. Man's body is a bubble, his soul the wind that filleth it. The bubble riseth higher and higher, till at last it breaketh; so doth the body rise from infancy to youth, from youth to age, &c., till at length it cracketh and dissolveth. The life of a man is a vain life. This Job often beats upon, and why, see the note. {See Trapp on "Job 7:7"}
Ver. 17. **What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him?**] *i.e.* Make so much ado about him, or look upon him as a fit match for the great God to grapple with, **#Ps 14:3**, or to take care of his affairs? *Debile argumentum*, saith Vatablus here, a poor argument; but Job maketh use of all kinds of arguments to move God to make an end of him: *Domine, fac finem, fac finem*, God, make an end, make an end! said dying Erasmus; but what he meant by those words I know not, saith Melancthon, who reporteth it.

And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?] So as to make any account of so mean and miserable a creature, **#Ps 144:3**, to magnify him whom thou mightest rather vilify, or indeed, nullify; or, that thou shouldest set thy heart against him, *sc.* to destroy him, as **#Job 34:14**. That is but an ignoble contest, *ubi et vincere inglorium est, et atteri sordidum*.

Ver. 18. **That thou shouldest visit him every morning]** Be at so much pains, as it were, with him, as to chasten him; and every morning to do it, that is, certainly and early; God took Job to task as soon as he was awake every morning, and this he thought much of, and would rather have been without; but that was his weakness, since the rod is as necessary as food.

And try him every moment] Proving by affliction both what corruption and what grace is in his heart; this David reckoneth upon the score of God's favours, and prayeth for, **#Ps 139:24**. This God promiseth as a special blessing, **#Jer 9:7**, and with it assureth that he

will try and refine his people, but not as silver, #Isa 48:10. He will not deal with them as in rigour of justice he might do, because if he should do so, they, having more dross in them than good ore, more corruption than grace, they would soon be consumed in this fiery trial; this God considered, and so should Job have done, and have quit his growling.

Ver. 19. **How long wilt thou not depart from me]** Here he seems desirous to be rid of God's company, of his afflicting presence, #Ps 139:10; so true is that of the apostle, #Heb 12:11, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous," till patience come to have her perfect work, and men be brought to cry out, as one did under a great fit of the stone, The use, Lord, the use; not so much ease of my pain, as a good use of my suffering. This Job came to at length, no doubt; meanwhile, we have in him, as Mercer observeth, *mirum ubique specimen*, a wonderful instance of that conflict between flesh and spirit that is in the saints.

Yet let me alone, till I may swallow down my spittle?] That is, nor afford me the least intermission, no, not a spitting while. He will not suffer me to take my breath, #Job 9:18. Jerome thinks that Job was troubled with a quinsy, or sore throat, which hindered the swallowing of his spittle; neither had he power to spit out the corrupt matter that ran down his throat. Oh what a sweet mercy is health! and how ill able are the best without special support from heaven to bear sickness! The Stoics, who said, that he who lived honestly might live cheerfully though under many bodily weaknesses, *senserunt ipsi in morbis se magnificentius locutos esse quam verius*, saith Wolfius; that is, when it came to their own turn to be sick, they well perceived that they had spoken rather bravely than truly.

Ver. 20. **I have sinned]** Or, Have I sinned? Have I fallen into any foul offence, as these men charge me? Am I guilty of anything more than involuntary failings, unavoidable infirmities? although I know that these also are downright sins, fruits of the flesh properly so called, missings of the mark, as the word here signifieth, and for such I humbly confess them, I put myself into the hands of thy justice in hope of thy mercy; and what wilt thou more of thy poor creature?

What shall I do unto thee] No sooner had Job confessed his sin, but he is desirous to know a remedy. Reprobates can cry *Peccavi*, I have sinned; but then they proceed not to say, as here, What shall I do? They open their wound, but lay not on a plaster, and so the wounds made by sin are more putrefied, and grow more dangerous. Job would be directed what to do for remedy; he would have pardoning grace and prevailing grace upon any terms; and more than this, what can I do unto thee? *δυνησομαι πραξαι*, as the Septuagint render this text.

O thou preserver of men?] Of all men, but especially of them that believe, **#1Ti 4:10**. The Grecians called their Jupiter *ελευθεριος*, the deliverer or preserver of their persons; and again, *ερκειος*, from *ερκος*, a wall, as if he were the watch and defender of their houses. Some render it, O thou observer of men. But these are praises proper to the true God, the keeper of his Israel, **#Ps 121:4**. The preserver of the faithful, **#Ps 31:23**. Whom he keepeth as the apple of his eye, **#Ps 17:8**, that tenderest piece of the tenderest part, most diligently and strongly guarded by nature with tunicles. It is the wisdom of a Christian in his addresses unto God to make choice of fit and appropriate titles and attributes; for the strengthening of his faith, and increasing of his fervency.

Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee] As a bulwark, as an object, or as a rock of offence, against which thou mayest always dash; so Vatablus rendereth it; to the same sense Job asketh, **#Job 19:11 13:24**. Wherefore holdest thou me for thine enemy? So **#La 3:12 Job 16:13**. Job conceived that God dealt with him in no other way than the Turks did with the great crucifix of Constantinople, upon the head whereof they put a Turk's cap, and so setting it up in derision, shot at it with their arrows, calling it the God of the Christians: or, as the same Turks at the taking of Tripoli, in Barbary, dealt with one John de Chabas, a Frenchman, who in the time of the siege had shot off the hand of the clerk general of the army. They brought him into the town, saith the story, and when they had cut off his hands and nose, they put him quick into the ground to the waist, and there for their pleasure shot at him with their arrows, and afterwards cut his throat.

So that I am a burden to myself?] How can he be otherwise who is a butt mark for Almighty God, who cleft his very reins asunder, and poured out his gall upon the ground, **#Job 16:13**. Job had once before complained that the poison of God's arrows had drunk up his spirits, **#Job 6:4** Neither did anything lie so heavy upon him, or was so burdensome to him, as this, that God seemed to frown upon him, and to fight against him with his own hand. The Septuagint and Talmudists read thus, So that I am a burden unto thee, viz. with my complaints and expostulations; this, say they, was the ancient reading.

Ver. 21. **And why dost thou not pardon my transgression?]** Heb. Lift up, or take away; for sin was Job's greatest burden, which therefore he prayed to God to pardon; and that not in heaven only, but in his own conscience; and then no darkness can be so desolate, no cross so cutting, no burden so importable, but he shall, by God's grace, be able to deal with it. Hence this vehement expostulation of his for remission and removal of sin first, and then of its evil consequents; for pardon of sin is a voluminous mercy; and being justified by faith, we can glory in tribulation, **#Ro 5:1,3**.

For now shall I sleep in the dust] In the dust of death, **#Ps 22:1,5**, and therefore must have help presently, or not at all; since a man once departed is no more to be found in this world, though never so diligently sought for. See **#Job 7:7,8**. One paraphraseth these words thus, For now I shall die, and then when thou lookest to receive thy morning sacrifice of praise as beforetime, I shall not be found to give it thee.

Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said]** Bildad (who was of the posterity of Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah, **#Ge 24:1,2**) interrupteth Job, and endeavours to maintain what Eliphaz had spoken; nevertheless, it appeareth by this chapter, **#Job 8:5,6,20,21**, that his opinion was not so rigid as that of Eliphaz: for he grants that a righteous man may be afflicted, but yet so, that if God restore him not speedily, he may be censured, cast, and condemned as unrighteous. He passeth (as they do all) some hard censures upon Job; and is paid in his own coin by him; who saith that he was, according to his name, a wicked kinsman; for לֹב is

naught, and ׀׀ an uncle. With what judgment men judge they shall be judged. #Mt 7:2.

Ver. 2. **How long wilt thou speak these things?]** *Quousque effaberis ista. q.d.* Hast thou nothing better than this to utter? (Tremel.) Be silent for shame, or forbear at least to vent thy spleen against God, of whose proceedings with thee thou hast heavily complained; thy words have been stout against the Lord, and thou hast taken too much liberty of language in this tempest of talk.

And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?] Big and boisterous, rude and robustuous, as if thou wouldst *Dominum impetere, evertere, et deiecere*, blow down God and his proceedings at a breath (Mercer). The Tigurine translation is, *Quandiu verba oris sui sonabunt pertinaciam?* How long shall the words of thy mouth sound out thine obstinacy? If evil thoughts be *maioris reatus*, of greater guilt, as the schools speak; yet evil words and works are *maioris infamiae*, of greater scandal, and do more corrupt others. This Bildad was sensible of, and conceiving that Job complained of God as dealing hardly with him, and unjustly afflicting him, he addeth,

Ver. 3. **Doth God prevent judgment?]** By not punishing the wicked; or doth the Almighty prevent justice? by not rewarding the righteous (so the Hebrews expound it). Why, no; neither did Job ever say such a thing; only he had pathetically set forth the greatness of his pain, and the unkindness of his friends, and wished to die rather than to endure it. Now this was construed for blasphemy, or little less; and Bildad is very hot in his invective against Job, as good reason he had, if he had not been so mistaken. Here he wresteth in a most true proposition (*commodam sane sed non accommodam*), but yet such a one as very little concerned this present disputation; and he doth it with as small wisdom and discretion, saith Beza, as with great pride and confidence. For doth it either argue Job a hypocrite and wicked man, or charge God with injustice, if it be said, that Job for his sins was not so afflicted by God (whereas he in the mean time denieth himself to be a sinner, and to have deserved God's heavy hand upon him), but rather proved and tried by him according to his good pleasure? yet Bildad goeth on as if he had done very well; and in the next verse in plain

words boldly avoucheth that Job's children were by God's judgment destroyed with the fall of the house, whatever betide their souls.

Ver. 4. **If thy children have sinned against him]** As what man is he that liveth and sinneth not? But Bildad meant that Job's children had heinously sinned, had been grievous sinners against their own souls (as afterwards were Korah and his accomplices), had not sinned common sins, and therefore died not common deaths; indeed, they died early and suddenly, and eating and drinking (wherein there might be some excess), and before sacrifice offered for them, as formerly; all this was sad, and moved Job more than anything else. But did it therefore follow that God had cast them away? &c.

And he have cast them away for their transgression] Or, and he have expelled or abandoned them into the hand (so the Hebrews hath it elegantly) of their transgressions or rebellions, as so many executioners. Some render it thus, He hath driven them out of the world for their transgression. The Chaldee paraphrast goeth further, interpreting hand here for place (Pagnin.). If God have sent them, saith he, into the place of their wickedness, that is, into hell prepared for the wicked. Now surely, saith Lavater, *Inhumanissimus fuit Bildad, qui ista calamitosissimo obiecere non dubitabat*, Bildad was a most unmerciful man, who doubted not to lay these things in the dish of him that was before so heavily afflicted, and to heap more load upon him who was ready to sink under his burden; but he did it, say some, of a good intent, to bring Job to a sense of his sin, and to put him in hope of appeasing God's wrath, who had yet spared his life that he might make his peace, and not suddenly slain him, as he had done them; and therefore he assureth him in the following verses, as Eliphaz had done before, that all things shall go well with him if he repent. Albeit thy children have sinned, &c., yet

Ver. 5. **If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes]** If warned by the evil end that befell thine unhappy children, thou wouldst early and earnestly seek unto God for mercy, for which purpose it may seem that thy life hast been graciously spared, when thy children have been destroyed, that thou might be made wise at their expense. Such counsel as that is Eliphaz hath given Job before, **#Job 5:8**.

And make thy supplication to the Almighty] Pray for mercy out of free grace alone, so the Hebrew word signifieth; plead for pity,

speaking supplications, as the poor man doth, **#Pr 18:23**. Be poor in spirit, a stark beggar and bankrupt, less than the least of all God's mercies, **#Ge 32:10**, and in this mind address thyself to the all sufficient, the cornucopia, the God rich in mercy to all that call upon him, for pardon of thy great sin in standing out in contention with his majesty, and resisting his fatherly visitation.

Ver. 6. **If thou wert pure and upright]** If thou didst lift up pure hands to God in prayer, &c. Ος κε θεοις επιπειθηται μαλα τ εκλυον αυτου..

*Pura Deus mens est, pura vult mente vocari:
Et puras iussit pondus habere preces.*

*The fountain of goodness will not be laden at with foul hearts and hands, #Jer 4:14 Jas 4:8 Isa 1:15,16 Joh 9:31 1Ti 2:8. Thus a heathen philosopher, being at sea in a great storm, and perceiving many wicked wretches with him in the ship calling upon the gods, Silete, inquit, ne Dii vos hic navigare sentiant, Hold your tongues, said he, pray not, lest the gods take notice that you are here, and we all perish for your sakes. There are that take these words for reformation, as the former verse for humiliation, those two parts of true repentance: if thou wert pure and upright, as a right penitentiary would be; if thou wouldst break off thy sins by repentance, and especially thine hypocrisy which hath brought this punishment upon thee from the Lord. If thou wouldst not only repent for thy sins, but also from thy sins, and frame to lead a new life, which is *optima et aptissima paenitentia*, saith Luther, the best and soundest repentance.*

Surely now he would awake for thee] Thou shouldst undoubtedly find speedy and unmiscarrying returns of thy prayers, and all good acceptance of thy services. He will hear thee for deliverance, so the Septuagint render it; he will up and do it, he will arise and have mercy upon Zion, **#Ps 102:13**, for now that she prayeth and purgeth herself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. I am come for thy words, saith the angel to Daniel, **#Job 10:12**.

And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous] *i.e.* He will bless thy well ordered family, and whatsoever thou dost therein shall prosper, #Ps 1:3. Thy children and servants shall live together in peace, and all good agreement; thy stock, also, and thy store shall be increased. He shall restore it to, or repair it for, thee, as the Septuagint here render it, αποκαταστησει δι σοι (Sept.), peace, plenty, and prosperity shall be heaped upon thee; this is the import of the word שְׁלֵמָה. Some of the Hebrews by habitation of righteousness here understand the soul, in which dwelleth righteousness. Others of them take it for the body, the habitation of the soul, wherein righteousness is seated. But these senses are far fetched.

Ver. 7. Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase] Thy recent losses God will recompense with interest; and the felicity which he prepareth for thee shall be far greater than the loss whereof thou dost now regret; for he will enrich thee to admiration, thy latter end shall be ineffable (so the Septuagint have it), such as none shall be able to utter or describe, τα εσχατα σου αμυθητα. See #Job 40:10,12. The day of small things is not to be despised, #Zec 4:10. Every former mercy is a pledge of a future; and to him that hath shall be given. God delighteth to help his people with a little help at first, to crumble his mercies to us, as one phraseth it; to give us his blessings by retail, to maintain trading and communion between him and us. So the cloud emptieth not itself at a sudden burst, but dissolveth upon the earth drop after drop.

Ver. 8. For enquire, I pray thee] Bildad speaks fairly, as Eliphaz had done, whom he all along imitateth.

A bove maiori discit arare minor.

Of the former age] The generations who came before, the Kadmonim, as the Jews called their ancestors, and used this saying concerning them, *Cor priscorum fuit sicut porta, &c.*, the heart of our progenitors was as the gate of the porch of the Temple, ample and beautiful; but the heart of their posterity is as the eye of the needle, narrow and of no receipt in comparison, *Rara datur longo prudentia temporis usu* (Talmud). Of witnesses Aristotle witnesseth, that the more ancient they are the more creditable, because less corrupt, Πιστοτατοι οι παλαιοι, αδιαφοροι γαρ (Rheto. lib. i). *Nihil*

mihi antiquius, say the Latins; Nothing is more ancient to me, that is, more highly reputed. And new things are nothing, say the Greeks, τα καινα κενα. Siculus maketh mention of an Egyptian priest, who said to Solon, one of the Greek Sages, You Greeks are very boys (ye are but of yesterday, as it is in the next verse), neither is there an old man (that is, a man versed in ancient histories, or acquainted with antiquities) to be found amongst you all, *Seris venit usus ab annis*, Γερων δε ελλην ουκ εστι (Diod. Sic.). Much of the ancient divinity was traditional till Moses set pen to paper; the mind of God was either immediately revealed, or handed down and transmitted from father to son, from generation to generation. Hence Bildad here bids Job inquire of the former ages; and thereto refers him for further information; so doth Moses the Israelites, #De 4:20 32:7. Antiquity, so it be right, is of no small authority; that is a received rule, *Quod antiquissimum verissimum*, That is truest which is most ancient; as we prefer the newest philosophy, so the ancientest divinity. The Papists boast much of antiquity (as the Gibeonites did of old shoes and mouldy bread); but when they come to prove it, they go no higher than to about a thousand years ago. They scornfully look upon us as novelers, and ask where our religion was before Luther? We answer them, that our religion was always in the Bible, where their religion never was. This is the old commandment, saith St John, which was from the beginning, #1Jo 2:7.

And prepare thyself to the search of their fathers] Or fit thyself, fix thy mind upon it, as #Ps 100:1. We must not think to find truth but upon a serious search, #Pr 2:3. Anaxagoras complained *omnia esse circumfusa tenebris*, that all things were full of darkness. Empedocles, that the inlets of the senses were very narrow. Democritus, that truth lay hid as it were in a deep pit that could hardly be fathomed. St Paul cries out, O the depth! How unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out! Prepare therefore to this search after God; and pray as that poor man did that cried after Christ; and when he was asked, What wouldst thou have? Lord, said he, that mine eyes might be opened.

Ver. 9. **For we are but of yesterday]** Heb. We are yesterday, that is, yesterday's offspring, upstarts, mushrooms, novices of very small standing in the world. And yet they were old men, #Job 15:10. Eliphaz is esteemed to be a hundred and fifty, Bildad a hundred and

forty, Zophar a hundred and twenty years old; and yet, in comparison to the fathers before the flood, they were but of yesterday, they had lived but a very little while, and were but of late time.

And know nothing] *Neque experti sumus*, saith Tremellius; the greatest part of our knowledge is but the least part of our ignorance: how can we know much, when our abode here is so short, our experience so little? *Art longa, vita brevis*, said Hippocrates, life is short, and art is long. Themistocles, though he lived a hundred and seven years, yet at his death complained, saying, Now I am to die when I begin to be wise. Solon said, that though old, yet he thought not himself too old to learn; and Julian the lawyer was wont to say, that when he had one foot in the grave, yet he would have the other in the school.

Because our days upon earth are a shadow] *Fluxa, instabilis, et ipsa ultro abiens*, saith Junius, unsubstantial, unsettled, uncertain, there is no hold nor tack in it, **#Ps 102:11 1Ch 29:15**, What is man but a dream of a shadow, saith Pindarus; a shadow of smoke, saith Sophocles; a shadow of a shadow, saith Aeschylus, σκιάς ουαρ, καπνου σκια, ειδωλον σκιας. He is therefore not a man, but a shadow of man (as Lamech's second wife's name was Zillah, a shadow of a wife, Tsillah, *umbra ipsius*, and as Menander calleth a false friend φιλου σκιαν, the shadow of a friend); he hath not so much as shadow of reason or true understanding, who, by spending the span, by wasting the shadow of this short life, after the ways of his own heart, bereaveth himself of a room in that city of pearls, and loseth the comforts of that life which lasteth for ever.

Ver. 10. **Shall they not teach thee, and tell thee]** They, that is, the forefathers, **#Job 8:8**, these, though dead and gone, yet by their records and monuments, by their apothegms and oracles (for the words of dying men are living oracles), do still teach us and tell us their minds, as if they were yet living, **#Heb 11:4 Lu 16:29**. Books are mute matters, silent voices. The way to be wise, said a heathen, is to converse with the dead, τοις νεκροις συγγρωτιζειν. Histories are faithful counsellors, and by the reading of them many young men have attained to more understanding than their elders; as Augustus, Theodosius, Macarius, who was surnamed

παιδαριωγερον, the old youth, for his wisdom and gravity above his years, gotten by reading and prayer, as saith Nicephorus.

And utter words out of their heart?] Discourses dug out of their own hearts, things new and old, thrown out of that good treasure, *e cordibus, non e codicibus*, they were *egregie cordati homines*, hearty good men, and their speeches were heart sprung, dipped in their hearts, and there recalled *ad limam, priusquam ad linguam*, weighed before uttered. They spake not as thou dost, Job, rashly and at random; judiciously, solidly, oraculously conduct them therefore, and as they speak from their own heart, so let them speak to thine. With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days understanding, **#Job 12:12.**

Ver. 11. **Can the rush grow up without mire?]** *Iam subiungit quod illi exploratum habuerant et perspectum, sed eleganti similitudine*, saith Mercer; that is, here Bildad setteth forth what the fathers had observed, taught, and told them; and this he doth by three elegant similitudes, which was a way of teaching usual among the ancients, *ut quod per simplex praeceptum teneri non possit, per similitudines teneretur*; that that which could not be remembered by simple precepts, might be retained by similitudes drawn from natural things, which are as shadows to us of spiritual (Hieron. in cap. 19, Matth.). And first from the rush, which hath its name from drinking; because it lives in liquor, it loves and delights in a moorish soil. Can the rush (or bulrush, **#Ex 2:3 Isa 18:2**) grow up? Heb. perk and pride itself, bear the head aloft, shoot up amain, without mire or moisture, such as are the fens? **#Job 40:21.** The meaning hereof is, saith Ferus, look how the rush and flag grow not but in miry places; remove them to dry and firm ground, and they soon wither: so the wicked hypocrite in prosperity maketh a great show of piety; but in adversity he loseth that very show, and by his impatience maketh the hollowness of his heart appear to all men. And herein Bildad aimed at the making of Job's case odious, whom he now held to be a hypocrite.

Can the flag] Or grass of the meadow? **#Ge 41:2.** It hath its name from brotherhood, because many piles of grass, or sedge, grow from one and the same root, but not without water. See **#IKi 18:5**, *Sic mala quaedam olitores Germanitatis recant.*

Ver. 12. **Whilst it is yet in his greenness, &c.**] And so withereth not through age, as being but in its shooting up.

And not cut down] Or, cropped off, either by the hands of men or teeth of beasts.

It withereth] For want of water, without store whereof it cannot live. The hypocrite is a sensualist, **#Jud 18:19 Job 21:11 Ho 4:11**; he liveth in such miry places as cannot be healed by the waters of the sanctuary, **#Eze 47:11**. He saith, as the vine and the olive in Jotham's parable, I cannot leave my wine, my fat and sweet sins; take away my liquor, you take away my life. He serveth not the Lord Jesus Christ (whatever he pretendeth), but his own belly, **#Ro 16:17,18**. He followeth Christ for the loaves only.

Before any other herb] That is, of less show, but better rooting. These retain their verdure, and look on, as it were, to see the rush wither: so David did by Doeg, **#Ps 52:5,6,8**.

Ver. 13. **So are the paths of all that forget God]** To remember God is as necessary as to draw breath, saith Chrysostom. This the wicked man doth not, **#Ps 9:17**. He will neither have God in his head, **#Ps 10:4**, nor heart, **#Ps 14:1**, nor words, **#Ps 12:2**, nor ways, **#Tit 1:16**. What wonder then though his paths wither, though his life, health, wealth, power, perish, since he is in such a posture of distance from, and defiance with, the fountain of living waters, the Father of all mercy and consolation; by whose favour such flourish for a time, *sed exoriuntur, ut exurantur?*

And the hypocrite's hope shall perish] Every wicked man is a hypocrite; and if there were nothing else to evince it, yet his very hope and groundless confidence in the mercies of God without warrant of promise, would undoubtedly prove it. *Praesumendo sperat, et sperando petit,* saith an ancient; he presumptuously hopeth, and by hoping perisheth; he lays his own shadow for a bridge, and so must needs fall into the brook. Trust thou in the Lord and do good, saith David, **#Ps 37:3**. But this man, though he cannot tell of one tear for sin, nor one hour spent in the practice of mortification; yet he affirmeth deeply of going to heaven, and is ready to rap, yea, bounce at heaven's gate with Lord, Lord, open

unto us: but what saith the psalmist? "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways" (though they do it never so slyly, as if they would steal a passage to hell, and the world never the wiser), "the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity," with gross offenders, #Ps 125:5, as malefactors are led forth to execution; and when the filthy sinner (so the word here rendered hypocrite signifieth) goes damned to hell, what shall become of the zealous professor, with all his fair hopes and possibilities? Surely God rejecteth their confidences; they shall not prosper in them, #Jer 2:37.

Ver. 14. **Whose hope (or whose folly, that is, whose foolish hope) shall be cut off]** The Latin translation hath it, his folly shall not please him, *sc.* when once he seeth, by the disappointment of his high hopes, what a fool's paradise he had wrought himself into, what pains he hath taken to go to hell, his hope shall be cut off; and that is the greatest cut in the world, *Hypocritis nihil stupidius*. This Bildad telleth the hypocrite twice over; because he will hardly be drawn to believe it. But that he telleth Job so, as if he were this hopeless hypocrite, he is quite beside the cushion, as we say.

And whose trust shall be a spider's web] Wherein there is much artifice, but no strength. Trust is somewhat more than hope; it is a bearing a man's self bold upon the assurance that all shall be well. Such was that of Babylon in their provision laid in to hold out a siege of twenty years' length. Such also is that of mystical Babylon, who saith, "I shall see no sorrow," #Re 18:7. But this trust never triumpheth. It is (by a second comparison) here fitly set forth by a spider's web, Heb. a spider's house, #Isa 59:5, so called because therein the spider lodgeth herself, as if safe, and out of harm's way, which is nothing so. A reverend man cleareth the comparison thus: first, the spider's web is made out of her own bowels (her motto was *mihi soli debeo* I owe it to myself only), so is the hypocrite's hope merely from his own brain and imagination. Secondly, though this web be curiously framed, yet it only catcheth flies; so do hypocrites look after ceremonies, and not substance. Thirdly, the spider is full of poison, and remaineth in a dusty nasty hole, though she work never so curiously; so doth the hypocrite abide in his unregeneracy, &c. Fourthly, she gets to the top of the window, as high as she can; and then when she falls, she falls to the bottom, for nothing stays

her: so here. Fifthly, when the besom comes, she and her web are swept away, and she is trodden under foot; so are all presumptuous hypocrites. Becket's friends advised him (for his security) to have a mass in honour of St Stephen, (to keep him from the hands of his enemies): he did so, but it saved him not. Contrarily, a poor persecuted Huguenot in the Massacre at Paris had crept into a hole, a spider comes and weaves a cobweb over it; the murderers therefore presumed him not there; and so he was preserved. What cannot the Lord do by the weakest means that may be?

Ver. 15. **He shall lean upon his house]** The spider shall, so Vatablus taketh it; but better, the hypocrite leaneth, or layeth his whole weight upon his house, that is, wealth, children, friends, clients, tenants, &c., as did Doeg, #Ps 52:7; Haman, #Es 3:9-11. That profane earl of Westmoreland, who said that he needed not at all to pray to God, for he had tenants enough to pray for him. Bildad probably glanceth here at Job, as if he had once trusted in his riches, relations, &c., which yet Job disavoweth, #Job 31:24,25

But it shall not stand] No more than the spider's house doth, borne down sometimes by her very weight, and not only by the wind. Hypocrites ruin their own houses by their sins, and particularly by relying on them. Though thou build thy palace as high as heaven, said the oracle to Phocas, yet sin, that lieth at the bottom, will be the ruin of it.

He shall hold it fast] *Mordicus tenebit*, he shall hold it, not with his hands only, but with his teeth, as Cynegiras did the Persian ship; or as a drowning man doth the branch of a tree.

But it shall not endure] All will not do; riches avail not in the day of wrath, &c. A hypocrite runs in his trouble to former false refuges; he trusted to his legs, or repairs to his bushes, as the hunted hare goes to the places that she used when she lived in quiet, thither she flees when she knows not how else to escape; but all to no purpose.

Ver. 16. **He is green before the sun]** *Succosus est*, saith Tremellius, he is sappy and juicy, having a confluence of all kind of comforts and contentments, even more than heart could wish, as David expresseth it, #Ps 73:7. The hypocrite is all this; the height of whose happiness is here set forth by a third similitude, lest any

should think that the two former did not reach home to the thing intended. Look how, saith Bildad, a great and tall tree, having many roots and branches, may be so cut up and thrown down, that no footstep, or sign of it, may any more appear; so may it fare with a wicked man: though he be as a tree green or juiceful before the sun, or when the sun shineth hottest upon him, the rush may then wither, but not the tree. See **#Ps 37:35**. A hypocrite may abound exceedingly in outward prosperity; yea, he may be green for a while before the sun of persecution, as was Alexander the coppersmith, **#Ac 19:32 2Ti 4:14**. The thorny ground stood out the heat of the sunbeams, and shrank not in the wetting.

And his branch shooteth forth in his garden] Mr Broughton translates, His suckers sprout out over his orchard, that is, he grows luxuriously eminent in the place where he liveth, which he hath made to become a kind of a paradise, or garden of delight. By garden here we are to understand, saith Mercer, all those ways and means whereby a wicked man fenceth and increaseth his own greatness. Some of the Jewish doctors, and others also after them, think that Bildad here beginneth to speak of the godly man's happiness; and they read the text thus, But the perfect man (so they supply the text out of **#Job 8:20**) is green before the sun, and his branches, &c. His roots are wrapped near the fountain, and he windeth himself about the stony building (that is, it spreadeth and twisteth its boughs round about the fountain vault, being strongly built with stone); shall he be taken out of his place, which may deny, saying, I have not seen thee? No, that cannot be, Lo, this shall be that joy of his way, even out of his mould shall others grow, *i.e.* his very dust shall live and grow up after him. Thus Beza, and after him Diodati; he is like an exquisite tree set in a pleasant garden in sight of his master's palace, sucking the sweet moistness of the quick springs, without ever fading or withering, **#Ps 1:3 Jer 17:8**. That is to say, he shall have a lively root of faith, continually nourished by God's grace; under his safeguard and favour he shall be strong in all assays, abundant in good works, and all manner of blessings. *Uterque sensus egregius est*, saith Mercer; this also is a good sense, but the former I conceive to be the better, and more agreeable to the letter of the text.

Ver. 17. **His roots are wrapped about the heap, &c.]** *i.e.* They are deeply entrenched, and strongly incorporated into the ground, wreathed in with the heap, as thorns about a hedge. The hypocrite seemeth to be notably well rooted (*intricantur*), not in the world only, but in the Church too, which we may compare (as Plato doth man, whom he calleth $\varphi\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu\ \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\iota\omicron\nu$, a heavenly plant) to a tree inverted, with the root above, and the branches below. Our Saviour speaketh of branches in him (seemingly so) that bear not fruit, **#Joh 15:2**. These are hypocrites, who think themselves to be rooted in Christ, and others also think no less of them, but it proves otherwise, for they are fruitless; as a pole fixed in the earth, but not rooted there; as a rotten leg cleaves to the body, but is no part of it; or as wens and ulcers, which are taken away without any loss to it. How far a hypocrite may go, see the parable of the stony and thorny grounds, **#Mt 13:20-23** See also **#Heb 6:4,5 10:39 2Pe 2:20,21**. He may come as far as Kadeshbarnea, within 11 days' journey of the heavenly Canaan, and yet fall short of it; he may seem to be steadfast and unmoveable, as a tree whose roots are wrapped about a rock.

He seeth the place of stones] Mr Broughton rendereth it, He planteth about the house of stone: others, He looketh into the house of stone; he looks in at the windows, and so hindereth the light, annoying the master's house both below and above, who therefore resolves to have him down; as it followeth.

Ver. 18. **If he destroy him from his place]** If he stub up this green tree, no better surely than the cyparit, of which Pliny writeth that it beareth fruit to no purpose, small berries, bitter leaves, that it yields an ill smell, and no pleasant shade; or as the boxtree, green indeed all the year about, but of an offensive smell, no fruit, and such a seed as all living creatures hate. Now if he, that is, Almighty God, destroy him, that is, the hypocrite, as he will do questionless (totally and speedily swallowing him up), what then?

Then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee] Heb. It shall tell a lie of him, &c., the place, as ashamed to own him, shall feign and say, We have not seen him, we know not what is become of him. So **#Ps 37:35,36**. As they have denied the Lord that bought them, **#2Pe 2:1**, so they shall one day be denied by the places they have

bought or builded, by the people that once clawed them, and cried them up.

Ver. 19. **Behold, this is the joy of his way]** *q.d.* A goodly joy! sure the hypocrite's joy is but the hypocrisy of joy, a little counterfeit complexion, like a slight dash of rain, a handful of brushwood, or sear thorn under the pot, **#Ec 7:6**, or as weeds that grow on the top of the water, floating aloft, but touch not the bottom. Though it be an exulting joy (as the word signifieth), a leaping joy (such as is that of dogs leaping upon their masters returning home after a journey, *Ut canes solent quando peregre advenienti domino adulantur*), yet it is not lasting: it goes out as a snuff, or as a blazing star, or at best as the fire of thorns, **#Ps 118:12**. Yea, though for the time it hath been so great that if it had continued but a while it would have overwhelmed them, so that their spirits would have expired, as some apostates have professed; they have thought themselves in heaven sometimes, and have rejoiced accordingly, οὐδεν δε π ροσποιητον νομιμον (Naz.).

And out of the earth shall others grow] *Alii qui alieni erunt ab eo* (Drus.). Others who had no relation to him shall succeed him, enjoy his estate, and eat the sweet of all his labours, **#Job 27:16,17 Ec 2:18 4:8 Pr 12:3**, "A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved." See another sense of this, and the three foregoing verses, **#Job 8:18**.

Ver. 20. **Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man]** *Epilogus sermonis Bildad*. This is the epilogue or close of Bildad's speech to Job; and it hath been the tartness of a threatening mixed with the sweetness of the promise: sour and sweet, we say, make the best sauce (Mercer). The strong God will not use, or rather abuse, his power, to the rejecting or reprobating (as the Septuagint render it) of an upright person; but will help him by taking him by the hand, as it followeth in the next clause, and taking it ill if others do not so too, **#Isa 51:18**. He will never leave them (or if sometimes he seem to leave them, yet), he will not forsake them, **#Heb 13:5**: forsake them he may in regard of vision, but not of union; desert them for a time (as he did Christ himself), but not disinherit them. "When they be in the land of their enemies" (and so may seem quite cast away) "I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God,"

#Le 26:44. Lo, this is the portion of a perfect man. As for hypocrites (who are *semiperfectae virtutis homines*, as Philo calleth them; cakes half-baked, **#Ho 7:8**; Christians almost, but not altogether, **#Ac 26:29**), my God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him, **#Ho 9:15**.

Neither will he help the evildoers] Heb. He will not lay hold upon the hand, viz. to help them; or he will not take by the hand the evil doers that make a trade of sin: *Non porriget manum malignis* (Vulg.); he will have no communion or commerce with such, he will not strike hands or join hands with them, but wash his hands of them for ever, shake them off with a *Discedite*, Depart ye, be packing: so should we. See David's practice, **#Ps 26:4,5**, and prayer, **#Job 8:9**, "Gather not my soul with sinners," &c. It was once the prayer of a good gentlewoman, when she was to die, being in much trouble of conscience, O Lord, let me not go to hell, where the wicked are; for, Lord, thou knowest I never loved their company here.

Ver. 21. **Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, &c.]** Here he applies the promise of the Divine help to Job, and that which is here spoken, *debent et reliqui fideles ad se transferre*, saith Lavater, every true believer must take home to himself. God will turn all their sadness into gladness, all their sighing into singing, all their tears into triumphs, their sorrowful outcries into joyful jubilees. In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare or a cord, viz. to strangle his joy with, to check and choke all his comforts: but the righteous sing and rejoice, **#Pr 29:6**. They may do so here amidst all their troubles, **#2Co 7:4**. As the lily looks fresh, and beautiful, and blithe, though among thorns; they shall do so hereafter, when they enter into the joy of their Master. See **#Isa 65:13**. A joy fitter to be believed than possible to be discoursed. See a shadow of it, **#Ps 126:1,2**.

Ver. 22. **They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame]** It shall cover their faces, **#Ps 69:7**, yea, cover over the whole man; when beyond all expectation they shall see thee restored to thy former prosperity. Where it is worth considering, saith one, how truly this happened touching Job, and these friends of his; he was restored, and they, by God's reprovng them, covered with shame, as it appeareth, **#Job 42:7-10**

And the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought] Heb. Shall not be. See **#Job 8:18**. Understand it not of his tabernacle only, or dwelling place, but of his whole estate, both temporal and spiritual, all shall come to rack and ruin. God shall utterly overturn them, as Zisca did those 300 monasteries, and among the rest that 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 (Mr Clark in his Life). "The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish," **#Pr 14:11**.

Chapter 9

Ver. 1. **Then Job answered and said]** He answered to his two friends who had formerly spoken; first, to Eliphaz's speech, **#Job 4:17**, and next to that of Bildad, **#Job 8:3**. Bildad had interrupted him when he would have excused himself, that he did by no means deny the justice of God, as they mistook him. Now, therefore, that Bildad had spoken his utmost, Job beginneth to dispute and to declare his judgment concerning that subject; and this he doth *longe magnificentius et augustius quam socii*, saith Mercer, far more magnificently and majestically than his two friends had done, proving that God is just, even then when he afflicteth the innocent; neither have such any just cause to except against his proceedings in that behalf, since he fetcheth not the causes of his decrees and purposes from the things which he governeth; but his will, which is before all things, is the rule of all justice. St Paul also had respect unto this, **#Ro 9:20 11:32**, rising a great deal higher, namely, to the eternal decree of election and reprobation: after this, Job setteth forth what is the condition of men, and what poor things they are in comparison of God, thereby to bring himself and others to the true knowledge of God, and of themselves, which is the highest wisdom in the world.

Ver. 2. **I know it is so of a truth]** Bildad's argument was, God, who hath punished thee, is just, therefore thou art unjust. Job grants the antecedent here, but denies and refutes the consequent, **#Job 9:22,23**, &c. To Eliphaz also Job grants, not only that man could not be more just than God, as he had said, **#Job 4:3**, but also that none could ever be found so just that he might any way be compared to

God. Job is one of those candidates of immortality, who can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth, #2Co 13:8, every parcel whereof he accounted precious, and could not but be a friend to it, though brought by them who seemed his enemies; this spoke him ingenuous and humble, a well tempered champion for the truth. Athanasius is said to be such another, and so Mr Bucer. Helvidius is taxed by Jerome for the contrary, and Bishop Montague, by Dr Rivet.

But how should man be just with God?] Mr Broughton translath, And how can man be just before the Omnipotent? Sorry, sickly, wretched man, how can he be just (*sc.* by an inherent righteousness; by an imputed he may) before the most Holy and Almighty God; or compared to him? Job afterwards, setting himself by God, and considering the infinite distance and disproportion, crieth out, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," #Job 42:5,6. I say likewise, "Woe is me, for I am undone," #Isa 6:5. He that hath looked a while intently upon the body of the sun is so dazzled with the beams thereof, that he can see nothing.

Ver. 3. **If he will contend with him**] If any one would be so fool hardy, or adventurous, as to dispute with God about his judgments, he could not, though he were never so wise, or well skilled, answer him one objection of a thousand, but must needs yield and say, I am no fit match for God. The Jewish doctors (and after them Vatablus) set this sense upon the text, If he (that is, if man) should contend with him (that is, with God, as, through the Luciferian pride of his heart, he is apt enough to do), he would not answer him one of a thousand; God would not honour him so far as to answer so contemptible an adversary, and so slight and senseless arguments; if he vouchsafe an answer, it shall not be so much as the echo giveth the voice; it shall not be to one article or argument of a thousand. *Egregius quidem sensus*, saith Mercer; this is a good sense, but the other is better, and well agreeth with #Job 9:14.

Ver. 4. **He is wise in heart and mighty in strength**] And must therefore needs be a most just judge, since he neither wanteth wisdom to judge nor power to execute; what then should turn him out of the track of justice? Let God be just and true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome (or be clear) when thou judgest, or when

thou art judged, **#Ps 51:4 Ro 3:4**; for at the same time that God doth judge, or execute judgment upon any, he may also be said to be judged; whilst men pass their censures, either as applauding or disliking his judgments; and then may he be said to overcome, when judged, when men acknowledge the justice of his judgments; when they conclude him wise in heart, that is, "the only wise God," **#1Ti 1:17**, and mighty in strength, that is, the mighty strong God, **#Isa 9:6**; who doth whatsoever he will in heaven and earth, **#Ps 118** In speaking of these and others of his most glorious attributes, we speak *non quantum debemus, sed quantum possumus*, not so much as we ought, but so much as we are able. As for the wisdom of God, *Nemo sapientiam Dei immensam in omnem aeternitatem exhauriet* (saith Gratian, the emperor, in an epistle to Ambrose), no man shall ever be able to fathom or find it out. And as for his power, so infinite is the distance between God and the greatest noble, that it is an honour that they may be suffered to live in his sight, **#Ex 24:10,11**. And it is all one with God whether against a man or a nation, **#Job 34:29**.

Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?] Instance but any one, whether tongue or hand smiter, that could ever boast of the last blow, or could cry, *Victoria. Quis dura locutus est ei?* so some render it. Who ever uttered hard speeches, **#Jude 15**, stout words, **#Mal 3:13**, against God, and prospered, seaped scot free, as we say, and had not his full payment? Blasphemers set their mouths against heaven, witness Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Julian, &c., dealing with Almighty God, as if Augustus Caesar were dealing with some god Neptune; Caligula with his Jupiter, whom he dared to a duel, $\eta \mu \alpha \nu \alpha \epsilon \rho \eta \epsilon \gamma \omega \sigma \epsilon$; or the three sons trying their archery at their father's heart, to see who can shoot highest. But shall they thus escape by iniquity? No: "In thine anger cast down the people, O God," **#Ps 56:7**. The wall of Aphek did execution upon the blasphemous Syrians; the angel of God upon the Assyrians; his visible vengeance fell upon Julian, Arius, and Olympius, an Arian bishop, who denying the Trinity, was struck with three thunderbolts, and killed in a bath. Others understand here the word *Libbo*, and read it thus, Who hath hardened his heart against him? &c. Surely if men harden their hearts, God will harden his hand, and hasten their destruction. See **#Pr 29:1 Isa 6:10,11 Ro 2:5**, and get thy flinty

heart made fleshy, since a hard heart is in some respect worse than hell (which is the just hire of it), since one of the greatest sins is far greater in evil than any of the greatest punishments.

Ver. 5. **Which removeth the mountains, and they know not]** For further proof of God's power first (and then afterwards of his wisdom) Job produceth divers particular acts of his upon the creatures, both unreasonable and reasonable. Eliphaz had said somewhat to this purpose, **#Job 4**, *sed hic admirandus est Job*, saith Mercer, Job doth it admirably; his tongue, like a silver trumpet, sets forth the high praises of God far more plainly, plentifully, and magnificently than any of his friends, who yet have done it very well too. God, to show his power, removeth the mountains, saith Job, *sc.* by stupendous earthquakes, and otherwise, at his pleasure, **#Na 1:5 Ps 97:4,5 Isa 40:15**, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing, he can remove mountains with a wet finger, as we say, though so mighty in bulk, and strongly founded. Dionysius thinketh, that in thus speaking, Job aimeth at that which was done in the time of Noah's flood, when the waters with their mighty force galled and bare down many great mountains, but that is uncertain. Great things God will do by the fire of the last day, when mountains shall melt, rocks rend, and the earth, with the works therein, shall be all burnt up, **#2Pe 3:10**. And what desolations he hath made in sundry parts of the earth by terrible earthquakes, as at Antioch often (which was therehence called Θεοπολις, because so visited by God), in divers places of Italy, Sicily, Burgundy, Helvetia, and here in Herefordshire, mention is made in Pliny, Stumpfius, Jovius, and other historians, all making good this of Job, and that of the psalmist, The mountains will skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs, when the Lord is displeased, **#Ps 114:4**.

And they know it not] *Dicto citius*, it is done with a trice, speedily and secretly, before the mountains (if they could at all know) could know what is done to them; or before the mountaineers or the neighbourhood could foresee and avoid the danger of being overwhelmed and buried alive.

Which overturneth them in his anger] Or, that he overturneth them in his anger. Men are not sensible of God's anger for sin, no, not in the greatest commotions, such is their stupidity; but will needs

swelter and pine away in their iniquities, as if nothing could awake them, #Le 26:39.

Ver. 6. **Which shaketh the earth out of her place]** By mighty earthquakes, dislocating the earth, some part of it; for the whole was never removed, though God can take up the whole globe as a man would do a ball, tossing the very centre itself whereon it is established, #2Sa 22:8, &c. There is a twofold power of God; 1. Absolute. 2. Actual. By the former he can do more than he doth: by the latter, whatsoever he willeth, that without impediment he effecteth. As for the earth, as God upholdeth it by the word of his power, #Heb 1:3, so he hath poised it merely by its own weight, that it should not be removed for ever, #Ps 104:5. For if you imagine that the earth could be removed out of its natural place, which way soever it be removed, it shall move towards heaven, and so shall naturally ascend; but to do so is utterly repugnant to the nature of the earth, which is to bear downward. All which, notwithstanding, the God of nature, as he is in the heaven, so he doth whatsoever he will in heaven and earth.

Ver. 7. **Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not]** God, in framing the world, began above, and wrought downward; but Job, in describing the great works of God here, began below; and now goes upward from earth to heaven. It is as natural to the heaven to move as to the earth to stand still. Copernicus's opinion, that the earth turns round, and heaven stands still, is worthily exploded. Round the earth is, indeed, notwithstanding the hills and valleys (as an apple is round, notwithstanding some knots and bunches in it), and being round, it is naturally apt for motion (the Pythagoreans held that the earth was *natura sua mobilis*, as the heavens are), but God hath fixed and made it immoveable, while the heavenly bodies are restless in their courses. The sun (the glistening sun, as the word here signifieth) rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race, #Ps 19:5. Bellarmine saith, that in the eighth part of an hour the sun runneth 700 miles (De ascens. mentis in Deum, grad. 7); but God, the sovereign of the sun, can speak to it, and it riseth not. If he do but give the word of command to the sun not to rise, the morning shall be made darkness, #Am 4:13, and the day dark with night, #Am 5:8. Was it not so in that three days' darkness in Egypt? #Ex 12:21, in that miraculous standing still of the sun in Joshua's days, when the sun rose not with the antipodes one morning, and the stars were

sealed up part of the night? **#Jos 10:13**, in that dismal darkness (mentioned by Lavater upon this text), March 12, 1585, lasting for a quarter of an hour, and being so like the night, that the fowls went to roost at noon, and many fell to their prayers for pardon of their sins, as thinking verily that the day of judgment was come. *{There was no solar eclipse for this date.}* St Paul in the tempest at sea saw neither sun nor stars for many days, **#Ac 27:20**. And I have read of a foreigner, who having been in these parts in the deep of winter, and returning home again, desired one that was then bound for England to commend him to the sun when he next saw him, for I have not seen him there, said he, of a whole fortnight together, **#Eze 32:7**. I will cover the sun with a cloud; and, in that sense, speak to it that it rise not.

And sealeth up the stars] Heb. Sets a seal upon the stars, making them hide their heads, and withdraw their influences: for stars are God's storehouses, **#De 28:12**, which he openeth or shutteth at his pleasure. Every star is like a purse of gold; out of which God can, when he will, throw down riches and plenty into the earth; but many of them never appear to us, though visible to the antipodes, **#Job 37:7**.

Ver. 8. **Which alone spreadeth out the heavens]** Without the help or counsel of any other. As God was alone and by himself in making the world, **#Isa 44:24**, so he is in ordering it, **#Job 37:18 Ps 104:1,2**. The Hebrews, as they held with Pythagoras in the point of transanimation; so with Plato in that false opinion of his, that the angels were the movers of the heavens, and the governors of the whole world; whence grew that angel worship amongst them, **#Col 2:18**. As God made the heavens alone, even that whole expanse or firmament, **#Ge 1:6**, the whole region of the air; so he still spreadeth it out as a curtain, which he draweth before the sun and stars, masking and muffling them up with clouds, whensoever he pleaseth.

And treadeth upon the waves of the sea] Or, spurneth, exercising a regiment over the raging surges of the seas, though they seem to swell against him. Thus Job fetcheth evidences of God's power from all places. See **#Ps 89:9**.

Ver. 9. **Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades]** Those glorious constellations, which do, after a sort, govern the four seasons of the year; but are governed by God, from whose power all

their influence and virtue is borrowed, even that which they exercise upon the raging seas. The learned interpreters have not unfitly translated—Has Arcturus, Chesil Orion, Chimah Pleiades, or the seven stars, and the climates of the South, the summer signs; altogether neglecting the toys of the unlearned Rabbis; which stars or signs are answerable to autumn and winter, the spring time and summer. But I had rather (saith Rev. Mr Beza) retain still the Hebrew words than use the other; which have been so much abused with glosure and impure tales and devices of the wicked and profane poets. {See Trapp on "Job 38:31"}

And the chambers of the south] *Interiora Austri*, the most remote, hidden, and secret parts of the south; so called, because the stars which are under the southern pole are hidden from us, and are enclosed and lodged as in a chamber. Those stars (and so all the rest) God maketh, that is, he maketh them to appear and do their office for the use and good of man. It is he alone that telleth the number of the stars, he calleth them by their names; neither can they do anything but as they receive order and commission from him (Mr Caryl, #Ps 147:4). That was an idle brag of Aratus, the astrologer, that he had found out and set down the whole number of the stars (Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. 16); and that is a strange arrogance of the kings of Mexico, who when they are consecrated, are reported to take this oath, I swear that the sun, during my life, shall hold on his course; and that the clouds shall send down rain, the rivers shall run, and the earth bring forth all manner of fruit, &c. (Lopez de Gomara).

Ver. 10. **Which doth great things, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Job 5:9"} whence this verse is taken verbatim. If Eliphaz say the truth of God's wisdom and power, Job will soon seal to it; he can find in his heart to speak all good of a wounding God, of a killing God, and not wish, as Spira did, Oh that I were above God, and could overpower him! Or as Hacker here did, A.D. 1591, threaten God to fire the heaven about him, to pluck him out of his throne. (Camb. Eliz. fol. 408)

Ver. 11. **Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not]** As he is powerful in his deeds, so he is secret in his designs, passing, and not repassing daily, but yet unseen; he is everywhere present, and not so far from any one of us as the bark is from the tree; for in him we live, move, and have our being; and therefore we had need take heed what we say or think of him in any extremity or misery, for he overheareth

us; yea, he knoweth our thoughts long before, #Ps 139:2. As a circumspect judge that goeth obscured under some disguise, to hear and see what is said and done by those that are to be judged by him. Or, as the Great Turk standing behind the arras, at the dangerous door, to hear all the debates and decrees of his senate, and to call them to a strict account of all afterwards: God, as he is invisible, too subtle for sinew or sight to seize upon; so he is ολοφθαλμος, All-eye, to survey and look all around us; yea, to see through us: "The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven"; howbeit, he is not so confined or shut up there (as the Epicures dreamed) but that "his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men," #Ps 11:4. The one points out his knowledge, the other his judgment, or his critical descant; he pryeth into the very entrails of the soul, the heart of the heart; the reins, those seats of lust, and most abstruse parts of the body. No man needs a window in his breast (as the heathen Momus wished) for God to look in at; every man before God is all window, and he, like the optic virtue in the eye, seeth all, and is seen of none. Look to it, therefore, and walk exactly. *Cave, spectat* Care, Take heed, Care seeth you, was an ancient watchword among the Romans, and a great retentive from vice; how much more should this among all men, Take heed, the Lord looks on! What though he is invisible, and we see him not; he passeth on also, and we perceive him not; shall we, like the foolish bustard, thrust our heads in a hole, and then think that, because we see none, we are therefore seen of none? The whole world is to God as a sea of glass, clear and transparent, #Re 4:6, and his eyes are as a flaming fire, #Re 1:14, that need no outward light, but can see by sending out a ray. God, that fills and sees all (saith Nazianzen), though he lighten the mind, yet flies before the beams thereof, still leaving it as it is able in sight to follow him; and so draws it by degrees to higher things; yet interposeth between it and his incomprehensible essence, as many veils as were over the Tabernacle.

Ver. 12. **Behold, he taketh away]** *Raptim aufert*; He snatcheth away, or taketh by force, as a lion doth his prey, or a thief doth another man's goods. Confer #Pr 23:28. Which if he do, who can repel or turn him back? Here Job plainly alludeth to the taking away of his children, servants, and cattle, the likelihood also of losing his life (according to the Chaldee paraphrast) by his present miseries; which, if it should befall him from God, it would not be safe for him

to cavil, or once question God's proceeding, to urge him to restitution, or charge him with oppression; since he is chief Lord of all, and may do with his own what he pleaseth. He is uncontrollable, as Nebuchadnezzar at length acknowledged, #Da 4:35, and his will is the true and only rule of justice itself, *nec solum recta, sed et regula*. Wherefore let all the earth keep silence before him, #Hab 2:20, and let none presume once to ask him what he hath done, either to question his right to do it, or to question his righteousness in the doing of it.

Ver. 13. **If God will not withdraw his anger]** That is, of his own free accord forbear to execute his judgments, the stoutest must stoop; for "he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth even that he doth," #Job 23:13, his power is altogether irresistible. Men, though never so puissant, may be withstood and out matched, as Asa was, #2Ch 14:8,9. Nature may be resisted, and her power suspended, as when the fire burned not the three worthies, the Red Sea drowned not the Israelites passing through it. In the creatures there is an essence, and a faculty whereby they work; between these God can separate, and so hinder their working. In the angels there is an essence, and an executive power; God comes between these sometimes, and hinders them from doing what they would. But God is most simple and entire, and, therefore, the strong helper, *qui portant orbem*, saith the Vulgate, that bear up the pillars of the world (which some understand to be angels, others to be saints, who stand in the gap, #Eze 22:30, and others, again, to be carnal combinations), shall not hinder him, but shall stoop and buckle under him, or under it, viz. his wrath, as not able to bear up; helpers shall prove no helpers against the mind and purpose of God; no, though they be as potent and as proud as Egypt (such an allusion there may be in the Hebrew text), or although they be helpers of latitude, as one rendereth it, that is, of the largest extent, either in power, or by an elate mind; and so the meaning is, None are so mighty, or so highly conceited with their own ability, but, if he be angry, he will make them to stoop under, as not being able to bear his wrath.

Ver. 14. **How much less shall I answer him]** If heaven, earth, and sea cannot stand before him; if strongest men, and strongly befriended and seconded, cannot make their party good with him, it is not for me to stout it out; but rather to stoop and strike sail,

seeking to disarm his indignation by a humble yielding; especially since I am not able to hold discourse with him, to answer him one of a thousand; I not only have not arguments, but I lack fit words; not argumentative words only, but persuasive also.

And choose out my words to reason with him?] Heb. Shall I choose out words with him? Broughton renders it, Shall I choose to word it with God? Surely my best eloquence in this case will be a submissive silence. It can be neither wisdom nor duty in me to deal with and undertake God, either with an open or a closed hand, either with logical subtilties or rhetorical flourishes. If I should either be respondent or opponent, I should come off with loss.

Ver. 15. **Whom though I were righteous]** Legally righteous, as none ever were, but the first and second Adam.

Yet would I not answer] viz. By pleading mine own righteousness, since no created righteousness can answer God. Some render it, *non attollam vocem, ne hiscere quidem audebo*, I will not lift up my voice, nor dare to mute against him. {see #1Co 4:4} No, though I were never so innocent, and did suffer this misery undeservedly.

But I would make supplication to my judge] As he doth, though it were a good while first, in the end of the next chapter. It is likely that he intended to do it sooner, but was put by by his passions; which, when they fume up into the head, gather oft into so thick a cloud, that we lose the sight of ourselves, and what is best to be done. Jonah thought to have prayed, **#Jon 4:1,2**, but it proved a brawl; and when as by prayer he thought to overcome his anger, anger overcame him and his prayer too.

Ver. 16. **If I had called and he had answered]** If, in confidence of mine own righteousness, I had sought some good thing at his hands, and he had therein condescended to me, yet would I not believe that he had, in mercy, hearkened to my voice; but rather, for a further mischief, that he might roll himself upon me, as Joseph upon his brethren, and as God did upon the Israelites after their quails; that he might tear them with his tempest, &c. Some think that Job speaketh these words, as despairing of audience, or denying God's particular providence; but neither of these is likely. Rather it seemeth, saith Pineda, to be the speech of a mind marvellously cast down, and

meanly conceited of himself, and of his prayer; and trusting to the goodness of God alone; so Drusius. Job speaketh not this, saith he, out of diffidence, but out of fear of God's judgments, and sense of his own imperfections.

Yet I would not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice]

Namely, for any worth that he findeth in it: what am I, poor creature, that I should think I had carried the matter with God?

Ver. 17. **For he breaketh me with a tempest]** *q.d.* This is one thing also that maketh me think I am not heard, because I am not helped; but after my prayer I am in as bad a case as before and seem to have a repulse from God. Afflictions continued are no evidence that prayer is not heard; yet usually it is very inevident to an afflicted person that his prayer is heard. The Hebrew (and so the Vulgate) hath it, He will break me, that is, saith one, If I should plead before him as pure, although I might temporally, or for a time, be delivered, yet I should not finally escape destruction, although I should give him none other cause. Whereby we may see upon what danger of being torn in pieces by God's judgments our justiciaries put themselves that will needs go to God in their own righteousness, as the proud Pharisee, **#Lu 18:11,12** The calamity of these merit mongers shall rise suddenly. Behold, a whirlwind, or a tempest of the Lord, goeth forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of these wicked ones, **#Jer 23:19**. This St Paul knew, and, therefore, did his utmost that he might be found in Christ (*sc.* when sought for by the justice of God), not having his "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**.

And multiplieth my wounds without cause] *i.e.* Without any other cause than to try me, and prove my patience, which now Job began to perceive, as Philip gathereth; or, without any manifest cause, and perceivable by an afflicted man, so Aquinas senseth it. God hath not told me the reason of his chastenings; but, to increase my grief, he concealeth from me the cause of them; and yet he multiplieth still my sores and my sorrows. Or, without cause, that is, without any such cause as his friends alleged against him, viz. that he was a rank hypocrite.

Ver. 18. **He will not suffer me to take my breath]** I am so far from a period, that I have no pause of my troubles. I cannot get any *interspirias*, or free breathing space. See **#Job 7:19**. And in the former verse he had complained that God had stormed him. *Interim per Pathos*, saith Mercer; here he returns to his old practice of expostulating about the greatness of his grief, and spares not to hyperbolize. Beda and others understand this text to be a bodily distemper upon Job, which had made him short winded. And Lavater hath this good note here, *Hoc cogitandum nobis est, &c.* Let this text be thought upon when our spirits begin to sink; as also when by reason of the phtisic, {A wasting disease of the lungs; pulmonary consumption} or any other like disease, we feel a difficulty of breathing, and a straitening of our pectorals, or be otherwise compassed about with great sorrows.

But filleth me with bitterness] Heb. He satiateth me with bitternesses, *i.e.* with sore and sharp afflictions, which are in no way joyous, but grievous to the flesh, **#Heb 12:11**. Job had his belly full of gall and wormwood; he had not only a draught or two, but a diet drink made for him of most bitter ingredients. Of this he complaineth heavily; what then will the wicked do, that must suck up the dregs of God's cup, **#Ps 78:8**, which hath eternity to the bottom?

Ver. 19. **If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong]** Neither by might nor right can I deal with him. Broughton renders it, As for force, he is valiant. The Lord is a man of war, saith Moses, **#Ex 15:3**. Yea, he is the Lord of arms, saith David, **#Ps 84** Yea, he alone is a whole army of men, van and rear both, saith Isaiah, **#Isa 52:12**, there is no doubt, then, but he will carry the day, since no creature is able to grapple with him. The weakness of God (if any such thing there were) is stronger than men, **#1Co 1:25**, and by the weakest means he can effect the greatest matters, as once he did in Egypt.

And if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?] Who shall appoint the time and place for our meeting? If I shall go about to sue him at law, I shall have but a cold suit, an ill pull of it; for who shall make him appear, or bring him to his answer? and where shall I find an advocate, a patron, to plead my cause? yea, where shall I get a witness? for so the Vulgar reads it, *Nemo audet pro me testimonium*

dicere; no man shall be so bold as to give an evidence for me, or be a witness on my side.

Ver. 20. **If I justify myself]** If, in default of other pleaders, I should undertake to manage my cause myself, I should be never the nearer.

Mine own mouth shall condemn me] *i.e.* God out of mine own mouth, as finding mine arguments weak and worthless; he knows us better than we know ourselves; and when he comes to turn the bottom of the bag upwards (as once Joseph's steward did theirs) all our secret thefts will be revealed, and those will appear to be faults that we little thought of. A Dutch divine, when dying, was full of fears and doubts; said some to him, You have been so employed, and so faithful, why should you fear? Oh, said he, the judgment of man and the judgment of God are different. *Vae hominum vitae quantumvis laudabili, si remota misericordia iudicetur*; Woe to the most praise worthy man alive, if he meet with judgment without mercy. The best lamb should abide the slaughter, except the ram were sacrificed, that Isaac might be saved.

If I say I am perfect] What if God had said so, **#Job 1:1**, yet Job might not, **#Pr 27:2 2Co 10:18**. Or if he do at any time justify himself, as **#Job 29:1-30:31** he doth, it is in his own necessary and just defence, against the charge of his friends. Real apologies we must ever make for ourselves when wronged; verbal, if any, must be managed with meekness of wisdom.

Ver. 21. **Though I were perfect]** That is, of an unblameable conversation, yet could not I know mine own soul, that is, those secret sins, **#Ps 19:12**, those litters of lusts that lurk therein; therefore I despise my life, I have no joy at all of it, but could wish to be out of the world to be rid of these evil inmates, that will not out of doors till the house fall upon the heads of them, till the earthly tabernacle that harboureth them be at once dissolved. Others read and sense the words thus: I am perfect or upright, neither do I know mine own soul, *i.e. quicquam perversi anima mea*, they allowed sin in my soul; yet I am so afflicted, that I despise my life, as being but a continued death. Aben Ezra reads the verse with an admiration, thus, Perfect I am; and think you that I know not mine own soul! that I am so great a stranger to myself! or that I have so little care of mine own good, as that I despise my life, and walk at all adventures!

Tremellius thus, I am upright, whatever you my friends may make of me, neither value I my life or soul in comparison of mine integrity; my life is but a trifle to my conscience, &c.

Ver. 22. **This is one thing, therefore I say it]** And will stand to it, though I stand alone; this being the one thing wherein I differ in opinion from you; and because it is the hinge upon which the whole dispute between us is turned, therefore I will abide by it, and be *Doctor resolutus*, resolute in the maintenance of it, viz.

He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked] A harsh doctrine, yet a good one, saith an interpreter. Grace is no shield against the greatest affliction. See #Ec 9:1-3 Mal 3:14 Eze 21:3 Heb 11:36-38 shows that none out of hell have ever suffered more than God's dearest children; and #Heb 12:6, He not only chasteneth, but scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. God will not cast away a righteous man, said Bildad, #Job 8:20; that is, totally destroy him in temporals, but restore him again. No such matter, saith Job, for it may, and many times doth happen, that a godly man may, as to this life present, perish, as well as a wicked man; he may be totally and finally bereft of outward comforts, the righteous perisheth, #Isa 57:1; only with this difference, as hath been before noted, God's judgments on the wicked are penal and typical of eternal torment; whereas upon the godly they are no more than medicinal or probational, &c.

Ver. 23. **If the scourge slay suddenly]** By scourge here is meant a common calamity, such as rides circuit, compassing a country as a scourge doth a man's body round about. Any sweeping judgment is a swinging scourge in God's hands; such as is the sword, #Isa 10:26, which when it rides circuit (as a judge) it is in commission, #Eze 14:17 Jer 47:6 7, devouring flesh and drinking blood. Thus Attila, the Hun, stiled himself God's scourge. Tamerlane was commonly called the wrath of God, the terror of the world. Think the same of famine, pestilence, wild beasts, #Eze 14:1 2, &c., these oft slay suddenly, #Isa 30:13 Jer 18:22, as did the sweating sickness here in England, the massacre of France, and that later of Ireland, that scourge, if ever any, slew suddenly the perfect and the wicked. When an overflowing storm sweeps away the wicked, the tail of it may dash their best neighbours.

He laugheth at the trial of the innocent] The Vulgate readeth, He will not laugh at the trial of the innocent; but it is not there in the original. Others thus, will he laugh at the trial of the innocent? *q.d.* no, he will not. God may seem to slight his own in affliction, as **#Ps 77:2,3**. The lion lets her whelps roar sometimes, till they do almost kill themselves with roaring. The truth is (and I think the true sense of this Scripture), God scorneth the allegation of innocence, or the justification and plea of the most upright man breathing, in the way of exemption or prevention of his just and wise dispensations, when he pleaseth to inflict them, involving good and bad in the same common calamity (Mr Abbot).

Ver. 24. **The earth is given into the hand of the wicked]** God many times suffereth the wicked most licentiously to reign in the world, **#Jer 27:6 Da 5:18,19**. And it is thought by some that Job, speaking here in the singular number, aims at some famous tyrant in those parts, known both to himself and to his friends; such as was Phocas the emperor, who, when he had slain his master Mauritius, and was set up in his stead, there was an honest poor man (saith Cedrenus) who was wonderfully importunate at the throne of grace to know a reason why that wicked man prospered so in his design? he was answered again by a voice, that there could not be a worse man found; and that the sins of Christians and of the city of Constantinople did require it.

He covereth the faces of the judges thereof] *i.e.* That tyrant, above mentioned, subverteth all order of justice, condemneth and putteth to death even the judges themselves, if they will not pervert justice, as Bassianus did Papinian (Spartian). The covering of the face was the mark of a condemned man, **#Es 7:8 Job 40:8 Isa 8:17 Mr 14:65**. Or thus, God blindeth the judges by giving them over to error, or permitting them to take bribes, so that they cannot discern right from wrong, &c. Some by judges here understand the saints who shall one day judge the world, but are in the mean while grievously afflicted by the wicked.

If not, where, and who is he?] Which things, if we say they are done, besides the will and foreknowledge of God, we shall thrust God out of the world, and set up fate and blind fortune; or thus, it is even so; or if not, where is he, and who is he {see #Es 7:5 Mal 2:17} that can

disprove what I have asserted? *prodeat, siquis me potest falsi arguere*, I would fain see the man that can convince me of error (Mercer, Pagnin., Vatab.).

Ver. 25. **Now my days are swifter than a post, &c.]** Not my prosperous days only (as Broughton glosseth), but the whole course of my life; the vanity whereof Job expresseth by many similitudes; and here search is made into three of the four elements, earth, water, and air, to find out a fit one. What is swifter upon earth than a post, who rides without stop or stay, and spares for no horse flesh? indeed, he taketh some time to rest in; but so doth not man's life; it is ever in motion, and every moment we yield somewhat to death. *Animantis cuiusque vita est fuga*, saith the philosopher, our last day stands, the rest run. *Cum crescit vita, decrescit*, to live is but to lie a-dying (Seneca).

They flee away] As David fled from the face of Absalom, #Ps 3:1; as Brentius was advised by that senator of Hala to flee for his life, *cito, citius, citissime*, with all possible speed, since they were at hand that sought it. See #1Sa 19:11,18.

They see no good] But are few, and with all evil, #Ge 47:9 Job 14:1. {See Trapp on "Ge 47:9"} {See Trapp on "Job 14:1"} Some good days Job had had, but they were so soon over (and his present pressure so great) that he was scarce aware of them, nor could take the comfort of them now; the Epicurians indeed held that a man might be cheerful amidst the most exquisite torments, *ex praeteritarum voluptatum recordatione*, by the remembrance of those pleasures and delights that formerly he had enjoyed (Cic. de Fin. I. 2; Sen. de Benef. 1. 4. c. 22). Job held this but a slight comfort; his care was in prosperity how to make the best use of it; his thoughts ran upon the uncertainty of all creature comforts, that he might hang loose to them, and hold them no otherwise than a child doth a bird in his hand.

Ver. 26. **They are passed away as the swift ships]** Heb. They are changed (gliding away insensibly) as the ships of desire (so called, because they seem willing to be at the haven as soon as may be), or as the ships of Ebeh, a very swift river in Arabia, saith Rabbi Solomon; or as the pirate's ships, so Broughton, such as are your nimble frigates, fly-boats, {A fast sailing vessel used chiefly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: a. for rapid transport of goods, etc., esp. in the coasting trade} and catches, &c.

Labitur uncta vadis abies (Virg.). Let our souls be like a ship which is made little and narrow downward; but more wide and broad upward. Let them be ships of desire, hastening heavenward; and then let our days pass away as they can, we shall but be the sooner at home; mortality shall appear to be no small mercy.

As the eagle that hasteth to the prey] When hunger addeth swiftness to her wings, and maketh her pour or souse down upon the prey like a thunderbolt; so transitory is our time: redeem it, therefore. It is reported of Ignatius, that when he heard a clock strike, he would say, Here is one hour more now past that I have to answer for.

Ver. 27. **If I say, I will forget my complaint]** And suffer in silence, as thou, Bildad, hast advised me, **#Job 8:2**. Sorrows are not so easily forgotten; **#La 3:19**, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall." The Stoics boasting of their indolence, or ability to bear afflictions without making moan or complaining, when it came to their own turn, found by experience that they had spoken more trimly than truly; and therefore one Dionysius, surnamed Μεταθήμενος, or the Flincher, left for this reason from the Stoics to the Peripatetics.

I will leave off my heaviness] Heb. My face, viz. the sourness that used to sit upon it, as **#1Sa 1:18**. The Pharisees were *vultuosi tetrici inamaeni*, **#Mt 6:16**, of a sad and sour countenance, grim and ghastly; they affected to look like Sycthians, as the word signifieth, that they might seem great tasters, when as inwardly they were merry and pleasant. Job's case was far different; his heart was heavy as lead; nevertheless, to give content to his friends, he would endeavour to look lightsomely, but found a very hard task of it.

And comfort myself] Heb. Strengthen, viz. so as not to make moan, but bite in my pain. *Invalidum omne natura querulum*, the weaker anything is the more apt it is to complain; and, on the contrary, some men's flesh will presently rankle and fester, if but razed with a pin only: so some men's spirits, they are ever whining.

Ver. 28. **I am afraid of all my sorrows]** That come thronging thick about me, and terrify me; they will surely be doubled and trebled upon me; hence my sorrow is incurable; if I should resolve never so

much against it, I should break my resolution, and fall to fresh complaints, #Ps 39:1,3. *Hic vides*, saith Lavater. Here we may see how little is to be ascribed to man's freewill in the things of God, since it is not in our power to comfort and cheer up ourselves under afflictions, though we would never so fain.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent] But wilt hold me guilty, and accordingly punish me. This was the language of Job's fear; had his faith been in heart, it would have quelled and killed such distrustful fears, and have gathered one contrary out of another, life out of death, assurance of deliverance out of deepest distresses, #De 32:36 2Ki 14:26, going into captivity was a sign of Israel's returning out of captivity.

Ver. 29. **If I be wicked]** Heb. I am wicked, *sc.* in your thoughts, and you have so earnestly and effectually affirmed it, and confirmed it, that I am almost ready to say as you say, I am wicked. Plato brings in Socrates in his apology to the judges, thus bespeaking them, My lords, I know not how you have been affected with mine accusers' eloquence while you heard them speak; for mine own part, I assure you that I, whom it toucheth most, was almost drawn to believe that all they said, though against myself, was true, when they scarcely uttered one word of truth. The Chaldee paraphrase reads it, I shall be culpable, or, I shall be condemned.

Why then labour I in vain?] Or, for nothing, as the Chaldee hath it. See the like #Ps 73:13,14. Why put I myself to so much fruitless pains, either in praying to God, or apologizing to you, my friends, since by God I am still afflicted, and by you reputed a wicked person? Job's hope was low, his endeavour was therefore little. Si nihil sperarem, nihil orarem, saith one. Let us pray on. God sometimes defers to come till men have even left looking for him, till he scarce findeth faith upon earth, #Lu 18:8.

Ver. 30. **If I wash myself with snow water]** Some take the former words, I am wicked, to be Job's confession of his own sinfulness in comparison of God's surpassing holiness. And then this followeth very fitly, Though I wash myself with snow water, *i.e.* with water as clear as snow is white. Some read it *aquis vivis* for *aquis nivis*, spring water for snow water.

And make my hands never so clean] Though I wash my hands with soap (so some read it), as **#Jer 2:22 Mal 3:2**; or, though I wash mine hands in a well (where there is no want of water), both inside and outside, as **#Jas 4:8**.

Ver. 31. **Thou shalt plunge me in the ditch]** Thou shalt declare me to be no less loathsome than he that, having fallen into a foul guzzle, or nasty jakes, abhorreth himself and his own clothes, being ready to lay up his gorge at the sight and smell of them. The Vulgar hath it, Sordibus intinges me, thou shalt dip me in the dirt over head and ears, and stain me all over, as dyers do the cloth they colour. By the ditch, Beza and others understand the grave; and by clothes, grave clothes, *q.d.* My very winding sheet shall abhor my filthiness. Take the proud Pharisee for instance, and Popish merit mongers, whom the Lord abhorreth.

Ver. 32. **For he is not a man as I am]** He is not such a one, nor can be, as I am, and must be; he hath other eyes and thoughts and ways than creatures have. He who is just before men is unjust before God; therefore he is no fit match for me to contend in addition: have I an arm like God? or can I thunder with a voice like him? **#Job 40:9**. Is it safe to contend with him that is mightier than I? **#Ec 6:10**. Surely if I should be so mad as to justify myself, yet I should soon be given to know that "that which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of God," **#Lu 16:15**.

And we should come together in judgment] How can that possibly be, when as God is the supreme judge, neither is there any appealing from or repealing of his sentence?

Ver. 33. **Neither is there any daysman betwixt us]** Heb. Any arguer or reprover, as **#Ge 31:24**. We call him an umpire or referee who hath power to reprove and to lay the blame where he findeth it, and finally to compromise the business. The late judge Dyer amongst us, if there came any controversies of poor men to be tried before him, would usually say, that either the parties are wilful or their neighbours without charity, because their suits were not quietly ended at home. Now, saith Job, as there is no judge, so there is no daysman between me and God. If one man sin against another, saith good old Eli, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who can mediate? **#1Sa 2:25**.

That may lay his hand] To moderate and keep us both in compass, and to compose the difference.

Ver. 34. **Let him take his rod away from me]** Having sufficiently set forth that he will not once offer to contend with God, he here humbly begs of God no further to contend with him, but to grant a truce, at least during the treaty; and either to take away or (however) to mitigate his sorrows and sores. See the like **#Job 13:20,21**.

And let not his fear terrify me] *i.e.* His formidableness, {see #Job 7:14} let it not scare me, or put me, as it were, beside my wits, **#Ps 88:15**, *Ne me transversum agat* (Sept.).

Ver. 35. **Then would I speak, and not fear him]** I would come boldly to the throne of grace, and freely pour out my soul into his bosom. If he meant that he would maintain his own cause against God's proceedings (as some understand it, grounding upon **#Job 33:6,7**), he was questionless in a very great error, and the flesh had got the hill of the spirit.

But it is not so with me] So, how? so as you imagine, *Non sum talis, qualem me esse putatis* (Vatablus). I am no such one as you take me for, viz. a hypocrite; I am not so self-guilty, say the Septuagint: or thus, It is not so with me; that is, I do not find God answering my suit; for I am still scourged and frightened, so that I scarce know what I say.

Chapter 10

Ver. 1. **My soul is weary of my life]** Because it is a lifeless life. *Mortis habet vires*, a death more like. Life is sweet, and every creature maketh much of it, from the highest angel in heaven to the lowest worm on earth. The Scripture setteth it forth as a sweet mercy, **#Ge 45:28 La 3:39 Es 7:3 Jer 39:18 51:5**. But God can so embitter it with outward and inward troubles, that it shall become a burden. "I am weary of my life" (saith good Rebekah, **#Ge 27:46**), and "What good shall my life do me?" David, forced to be in bad company, cries, Oh that I had the wings of a dove, &c. Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech, &c. Elijah, fleeing from Jezebel, requested for himself that he might die, saying, "It is enough, Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers," **#1Ki 19:4**. No: but God had provided some better thing for him (as the apostle

speaketh in another case, #**Heb 11:40**), for he was shortly after translated and taken out of the reach both of Jezebel, whom he feared, and of death, which he desired. *Sed multi magni viri sub Eliae iunipero sedent*, saith one, many good men sit under Elijah' juniper, wishing to be out of the world, if God were so pleased, that they might rest from their labours, and be rid of their many burdens and bondages; as, in the mean while, they rather endure life than desire it, as holding it little better than hell, were it not for the hopes they have of heaven hereafter.

I will leave my complaint upon myself] Liberty I will take to complain, whatever come of it. I will lay the reins in the neck, and let my passions have their full swing at my peril. See the like #**Job 13:3**. *Verum Iob hac in re nimius*, saith Mercer, but Job was to blame in doing and saying thus; and it is to be attributed to the infirmity of the flesh, wherewith, although the spirit do notably combat, yet the flesh seemeth sometimes and in some sort to get the better. *Nimis augusta res est, nusquam errare*, saith one; *Triste mortalitatis privilegium est, licere aliquando peccare*, saith another. The snow like swan hath black legs; and in many things we offend all: gold is not to be refused because it wanteth some grains, and hath a crack, &c.

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul] And so seek to ease my grief by giving a vent unto it. But it is evident that such outbursts and overflowings of the gall and spleen come from a fulness of bad humours.

Ver. 2. **I will say unto God, do not condemn me]** You may say so as a humble suppliant, but not as holding yourself innocent, and therefore harshly dealt with. The Hebrew is, Do not make me wicked; rather do good, O Lord, to those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts; but lead me not forth with the workers of iniquity, as a malefactor is led forth to execution, #**Ps 125:5**.

Show me wherefore thou contendest with me] *i.e. Quare sic me affigas*, saith Vatablus, why thou thus afflictest me, whether for sin or for trial; and this Job desired to know, not to satisfy his curiosity, but his conscience, as one well observeth; and that the world might

be satisfied, the rash judgment of his friends confuted, and answered by a determination from heaven.

Ver. 3. **Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?**] It is the guise of wicked judges to take this counsel, to follow this course; whom thou, being a most just and righteous judge, canst not confirm or encourage by thine own example, as it were by a light shining from above. Thus Job rhetoricateth; his complaints are high, yet ever with an alloy or mixture of modesty (Beza).

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands] *i.e.* Me, thy poor creature, wilt thou do and undo? make a man, and unmake him again for thy mind's sake? Builders use not to ruin what they have built; artificers love and plead for their own handiwork; fathers foster their children with all tenderness. Some authors dote upon their own doings, as Laurentius Valla did upon his logic, as if there had been none such, calling it, in a bravado, *Logicam Laurentinam*; and as Campian the Jesuit did upon his ten leaden reasons, which he deemed and boasted to be unanswerable, Heliodorus would rather be unbishoped than yield that his Ethiopic history (a toilsome toy, but the brat of his brain) should be abolished. The saints are "God's building," #1Co 3:9; handy work, #Eph 2:10; "children," #Ro 9:26; "epistles known and read of all men," #2Co 3:2,3. This if we plead, when sorely afflicted (as the Church did, #Isa 64:8, and David, #Ps 138:8, and Job here), we may have anything. See that notable text, #Isa 45:11, and that other, #Isa 59:16.

And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?] That is, favour and further their designs. God makes his sun to shine upon such, but himself never shineth upon them. He may be angry enough with men, though they outwardly prosper; yea, to prosper in sin is a most heavy judgment. See #Zec 1:15. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:15"}

Ver. 4. **Hast thou eyes of flesh?]** Which see but the surface of things, and not that neither in the dark. Hast thou not fiery eyes, #Re 1:14, that need no outward light, but see by sending out a ray, and pierce the inward parts also? Hast thou not made the eye? yea, the optic virtue in the eye, which seeth all and is seen of none? If the sun be the eye of the world, God is much more. The Greeks give him his name from seeing, because he seeth through and through; eyes he hath, but not of flesh; he seeth, but not as man.

Or seest thou as man seeth?] Art thou subject to error, ignorance, partiality, popularity, &c.? Proceedest thou not according to truth (yea, truth in the inward parts), and not according to opinion or appearance? Of a judge it is said, that he doth *neque suspicere, nec despiciere, nec respicere, nec circumspicere*, neither look up nor down, nor this way nor that, but straight forward to the cause, and not to the person. Of a just law it is said, that it is a heart without affection, an eye without lust, a mind without passion, a treasurer which keepeth for every man what he hath, and distributeth to every man what he ought to have; so and much more than so is God, whatever thoughts might arise sometimes in Job's heart to the contrary.

Ver. 5. Are thy days as the days of man?] Art thou mortal and short lived, as sorry man is, that thou proceedest in this sudden and severe manner, as if thou shouldest not have time enough to try me, and to take an order with me? Art not thou eternal, and dost thou not know in the indivisible moment of thine eternity, all what hath been, is, and shall be? "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," #Ac 15:18; yea, long before. The truth is, neither foreknowledge nor remembrance are properly in God, since all things, both past and future, are present with him, #Ro 4:17 2Pe 3:8 Jer 1:5-7 Ps 139:2; and all things without him are but as a point or ball, which with as much ease he discerneth as we turn our eyes.

Are thy years as man's days] It is well observed that God's time is set out by years, man's by days; his time is so short, that it is reckoned by the shortest complete time, a day. The days of our years are threescore and ten, #Ps 90:10. As for God, he is not only the Ancient of days, #Da 7:9, but the day's Ancient, for he made the day.

Ver. 6. That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, &c.] viz. By strong pains and mighty terrors, as judges sometimes make inquisition by torture, to find out treason or other heinous offences. What, wouldest thou that I should confess myself a wicked person?

Ver. 7. Thou knowest that I am not wicked] A lewd liver, and a rank hypocrite, as these men would make of me. A sinner I am, but I allow not, wallow not in any known sin; there is no way of wickedness found in me; hypocrisy reigns not in my heart: *Haeret*

in rege[n]itis peccatum, saith one, sin abideth in the best; yet they may not, they must not be called wicked. Julian, the apostate, affirmed that Peter's halting at Antioch was so taxed by Paul that Peter must needs be a hypocrite (Cyril, lib. 9, in Julian); but this cavil and calumny can never be proved from Paul's words, for not every one that through infirmity dissembleth sometimes is presently a hypocrite. It is upon thy knowledge, saith Job, that however I am weak, yet wicked I am not; my great scum is not in me, **#Eze 24:11,12**. The good heart admits not the mixture of any sin; like right wine or honey, as the scum ariseth, it ever casteth it out; as spring water worketh itself clean; as the sea will endure no poisonous thing, but casts it up upon the shore; so a Christian cleareth himself of sin. Well, it may cleave to it for a while, as dross doth to silver, but it entereth not into the frame and constitution; Job is confident of that, and will venture all upon it.

And there is none (or nothing) that can deliver out of thine hand] *q.d.* Thus thou, Lord, knowest it to be with me, that I have no wicked heart; but for this I expect not to be delivered, for thou canst still find matter in me for which to lay thine hand upon me: but the more I submit myself the more mild shouldest thou surely be in thy dealings toward me; as a lion to a man crouching to him. As Paul said, "I know nothing by myself; yet am I not thereby justified," **#1Co 4:4**; so Job saith, Lord, thou knowest nothing by me, yet hereby I cannot be delivered (Junius).

Ver. 8. **Thine hands have made me]** Or, throughly and accurately wrought me, as it were, with much pains and labour; thou hast exactly fashioned all my members: not that God either hath hands, or putteth himself to pains; for he doth his work without either tool or toil, **#Isa 40:28**. But this is attributed to him after the manner of men, to show the curious workmanship showed in man's creation, the masterpiece of all his works of wonder. This David sweetly singeth of, **#Ps 139**, and Galen admireth in that excellent book of his, *De usu partium humani corporis*, setting forth the praises of that God whom he knew not, and singing a hymn unto him. Man, saith one, is *cura divini ingenii*, he is God's escutcheon, wherein he hath portrayed all the titles of the most excellent beauties of the world. The sun, moon, and stars are but the works of God's fingers, **#Ps 8:3**, but man is the work of his hands, **#Ps 139:14**. He is the

most beautiful building of a most wise architect, saith Euripides; the bold attempt of daring nature, saith another heathen; the greatest of all miracles, saith a third. David, speaking of him, and of God's goodness to him, begins to wonder before he speaketh, and stops speaking, but not to wonder, **#Ps 8:1,9**.

And fashioned me together round about] A metaphor from potters, who make their work by turning it around till it be all finished, **#Jer 18:3**. Thou hast fashioned me, and made me in every point, so Broughton rendereth it. *Totum me, non dimidium*, Thou hast made the whole, and every part of me, from top to toe, not my nails excepted (as Mercer hath it), with extraordinary care and cunning, bestowing upon me mercies enough between head and foot to till a volume. Who is there, saith Galen, which, looking but upon the skin only of man's body, wondereth not at the artifice of the Creator? but especially he was amazed at the manner of the motion of the lungs by systole and diastole, and would needs offer hecatombs to that God, whosoever he were, that was author of so admirable and excellent a piece of work.

Yet thou dost destroy me] And this seemeth strange to me. Dost thou yet destroy me? so some read this text; wilt thou swallow me up quick and devour me, as the greater fishes do the lesser? See the note on **#Job 10:3**. Carest thou not that I am tby workmanship, created unto good works? **#Eph 2:10**; one in whom thou hast erected the fair fabric of the new man? for this also Job may here very likely refer to.

Ver. 9. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay] Remembrance and foreknowledge are not properly in God. {*See Trapp on "Job 10:4"*} But he is said to remember us when he relieveth us, **#Ps 136:23 9:18 1Sa 1:19**. "That thou hast made me," &c., viz. in those protoplasts, my first parents, formed out of the ground, **#Ge 2:7**, whence the heathen philosopher could say, that man is nothing else but a piece of clay weakly made up: or thou hast wrought me like clay, *sc.* in the womb, where thou hast framed and formed my body, as the potter worketh his clay, well tempered, into an earthen vessel, *πηλος κομφος πεφουραμενος* (Arrian. in Epict.). Here, then, Job in minds the Lord (by the matter whereof he was made) of the frailty, vility, and impurity of his nature (*Lutum enim conspureat*

omnia, sic et. caro), to move him to a mitigating of his misery. See #Ps 103:14 78:39.

Wilt thou bring me into the dust again?] viz. By those grievous torments; or, And that thou wilt bring me into dust again; for so thou hast said, To dust shalt thou return, #Ge 3:19. And it is appointed for all men once to die, #Heb 9:27. Oh, therefore, that I might have some small rest and respite before I go hence, and be no more seen, #Ps 39:12,13.

Ver. 10. **Hast thou not poured me out as milk**] Or, melted me, that is, made me of some such thing as liquid and white milk. *Generationem hominis describit* (Vatab.). Man is a very mean thing in his first conception, modestly here set forth by the making of cheeses.

*Unde superbit homo, cuius conceptio turpis,
Nasci poena, labor vita, necesse mort?*

Where comes man's pride, I am conceived in sorrow, I am born as a penalty, I work for life, and needs die.

Concerning man's formation in the womb see the Naturalists, and Lactantius de Opificio Dei, cap. 12, but especially #Ps 139:13-16, where, and in this text, there is enough spoken to satisfy us about this great natural mystery, saith Mercer. That is a good moral that one maketh of it; God strains out the motes of corruption from a godly man, while his heart is poured out like milk with grief and fear, whereby the iniquity of Jacob is purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin, #Isa 27:9.

And curdled me like cheese?] *Sic castissimo ore, et elegantibus metaphoris*, saith an interpreter; *i.e.* Thus, in a most modest manner, and with elegant metaphors, doth Job, as a great philosopher, set out man's conception in the womb. Aristotle (whose manner is *obscurioribus obscura implicare*, as Bodin observeth) hath some such expression as this, but nothing so clear and full (Bodin. Theat. Natur., 434. Arist. de Gen. Anim. cap. 20).

Ver. 11. **Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh**] Out of that soft and liquid substance (the slime of my parents' loins), grossed first

into a rude fleshy mass, and consolidated, thou hast made not only a thin skin and firm flesh, but also hard bones and knitting nerves; and all this for a garment or guardment to those more noble inward parts, the brain, heart, liver, &c., which Job here accounts to be the man, when he saith, "Thou hast clothed me," that is, my vital parts, with the upper garment of skin, and with the under garment of flesh, all which, and the rest of the parts, both similar and organical, are in their origin but the same matter which God hath thus diversified, and all by the book, #Ps 139:16. Had he left out any member in his common place book, thou hadst wanted it, saith one.

And hast fenced me with bones and sinews] Bones are the pillars of the body, giving it stability, straightness, and form. The Rabbis say, there are as many of them in man's body as there are affirmative precepts in the law, that all his bones may say, Lord, who is like unto thee? &c., #Ps 35:10. By the sinews are the bones knit together, that upon them man may move from place to place as he pleaseth. Sense also and motion is by these, in their wonderful and inexplicable conjugations, conveyed to the rest of the parts. It is God alone that knoweth how the bones (think the same of the sinews, arteries, veins, gristles, flesh, and blood, &c.) do grow in the womb of her that is with child, #Ec 11:5. The anatomists find out every day almost new wonders; and an ancient styles man the miracle of miracles. Besides what is seen, God hath packed many rarities, mysteries, yea, miracles together in man's chest. And surely, saith Mr Caryl, if all the angels in heaven had studied to this day, they could not have cast man into a more curious mould, or have given a fairer or more correct edition of him.

Ver. 12. **Thou hast granted me life]** *i.e.* Into my body, thus formed and organized, thou hast infused a soul; that principle of life quickened me in the womb, and brought me alive out of it; which, because it is a miracle of mercy, therefore Job addeth favour, "thou hast granted me" (Heb. thou hast wrought with me) "life and favour." Thou hast dealt life and goodness unto me; that is, thou hast given me life accompanied with thy goodness and blessings: so Beza senseth it. Some understand it to be the reasonable soul; others to be the beauty of the body, according to #Isa 40:6.

And thy visitation hath preserved my spirit] *i.e.* Thy good providence hath safe guarded me from innumerable deaths and dangers. *Puerilitas est periculorum pelagus.* Children are apt to run into mischief; and those of riper years are subject to a thousand disasters and evil occurrences. God's special care is exercised over his, as is sweetly expressed, **#Ps 121 Ps 23** Davids pastoral psalm, **#Ps 3** where David doubteth not of safety, though asleep, and in the midst of enemies, because God sustained him; when as Samson and Ishbosheth, asleep in the midst of friends, were circumvented, because deserted by him. Oh pray, pray, that the Lord Jesus Christ would be ever with our spirits; visit him in duty, that he may visit us in mercy.

Ver. 13. **And those things hast thou hid in thine heart]** *Legendum hoc cum stomacho,* saith Mercer: And hast thou indeed hid these things in thine heart? What things meaneth Job? his afflictions, which God was long before preparing for him, and now took his time to lay load upon him, to be revenged on him at unawares, and at greatest advantage. If this be the sense of Job's words (as some would conclude from the next verses), he was mightily mistaken; and this was *atrox querimonia*, a grievous complaint, and unworthy of God, who lieth not at the catch, nor pretendeth fair when he intendeth otherwise. A Cain may do so to Abel, Esau to Jacob, Absalom to Amnon, Joab to Amasa, &c. The Creator needs not daub or prevaricate thus with his creatures; if Job thought he did with him, Job was utterly out, though for confirmation he add, I know that this is with thee; I am sure that thou hast dealt thus closely and covertly with me, and that thy plagues have surprised me. Oh these still revenges! Merlin and others understand by those things hid in God's heart, and which he was well assured could not have befallen him without God's will and decree, the mercies which in the former verses Job had recounted and reckoned up, viz, his conception, quickening, preservation; all which he looked upon as love tokens coming out of the heart of God, and from the spring of special love. Here, then, we see whence we may fetch comfort when most hardly bestead; namely, from those effects whereby God sealed up his love to us in forming us in the womb; but especially in his covenant of grace, that beehive of heavenly honey, whereby he hath engaged to be our God even from the womb to the tomb; yea, to all perpetuity. Hereunto Job had respect, and so had David, **#Ps 22:10,11 25:10.**

Ver. 14. **If I sin, then thou markest me]** Though through human frailty only I offend (*et nimis dedignatur mortalitatem qui peccasse erubescit*), thou soon notest it, thou followest me up and down, as it were, with pen, ink, and paper, to set down my faults (Euphorm.). How, then say some, that God sees not sin in his children? Job thought the Lord was overstrict with him (which yet could not be), and that he put no difference between him and those that were notoriously wicked, as the next words import.

And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity] That is, from the punishment of mine iniquity. *Verba diffidentis*, saith Mercer; words spoken according to the judgment of the flesh, saith Diodati, which holdeth God's visitations to be punishments and vengeancees.

Ver. 15. **If I be wicked, woe unto me]** Here he bringeth a dilemma, whereby he declareth himself every way miserable, saith Mercer; whether he be bad or good, suffer he must without remedy. "If I be wicked, woe unto me"; woe is the wicked man's portion; tell him so from me, saith God, **#Isa 3:10,11**. Though he love not to hear on that ear, but can bless himself in his heart, when God curseth him with his mouth, **#De 29:19**. And a godly man setteth the terror of sin's woes before his flesh, that slave, that must be frighted at least with the sight of the whip. Woe be to me, saith Paul, if I preach not the gospel, **#1Co 9:16**. Or if, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway, **#1Co 9:27**; which to prevent, he kept under his body (his corruption), and gave it a blue eye; for we are not debtors to the flesh, saith he, **#Ro 8:10**. We owe nothing but stripes and menaces, cursing it in every respect, &c.

And if I be righteous, yet I will not lift up my head] indeed I cannot, because I am so bowed down with changes of sorrows, armies of afflictions: my pains are continued, and I shall surely sink under them; much ado I have now to keep head above water. Others make this a description of Job's humility: "I will not lift up my head," viz. in pride, but humble myself to walk with my God, as that poor publican did who stood afar off, and would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, **#Lu 18:13**.

I am full of confusion] Cast upon me by my friends, who reproach me for a hypocrite, and make my cheeks glow. The fulness of an

aspersion may possibly put an innocent person to the blush; and it is the property of defamations to leave a kind of lower estimation many times, even where they are not believed. This was the confusion that Job complained of, the stomach of his mind was full of it, even to satiety and surfeit.

Therefore see thou mine affliction] My pressing and piercing affliction, see it and remedy it, as **#Ps 119:153**. Let not all my trouble seem little unto thee, as **#Ne 9:32**. See, Lord, see, behold, it is high time for thee to set in.

Ver. 16. **For it increaseth]** Heb. For it lifteth up itself; it even boileth up to the height, or it waxeth proud, as the proud surges of the sea. Broughton rendered it, Oh how it fleeth up! Why how? Surely, as a fierce lion, so it hunteth me; it riseth upon me, as a lion rampant doth upon his prey, or as a lion, when he is pursued, gives not place, hides not his head, but comes into the open fields as holding it a disgrace to withdraw; so some sense it: or,

Thou huntest me as a fierce lion] *Tanquam leo*. God, when he afflicteth men, is oft compared to a lion, **#Isa 38:13 Ho 5:14 13:7**. Or, *tanquam leonem*, as if I were a ravening lion; so thou huntest me, setting thy nets and toils, making thy snares and pits *ut capiar ad occisionem* (so the Septuagint), that I may be taken and destroyed, as **#2Pe 2:12**.

And again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me] Heb. And thou returnest. Here Job showeth, saith an interpreter, what a confidence he had, that God, returning to him in mercy, would do wonderfully for him in the end; the word turning here, and the turning his captivity, **#Job 42:10**, so aptly answering the one to the other to approve this exposition. But others understand it to be the continued or repeated acts of Job's affliction, *una vice post aliam*; as if he should say, thou clappest one affliction upon another; my pains know not only no period, but no pause; thou layest upon me extraordinary sorrows, as if thou wouldest declare in me alone, *quam mirus sis artifex*, what an excellent artisan thou art when thou pleasest, and what thou canst do against a poor creature; surely thou hast made my plagues wonderful, **#De 28:59**. So the apostles were

made a gazing stock, a theatre, a spectacle of human misery, #1Co 4:9.

Ver. 17. **Thou renewest thy witnesses against me]** These fresh witnesses were devils, say some; Job's friends, say others; his dolorous sufferings rather, saith Austin; those open witnesses of some secret wickedness in Job, as the world would esteem them. See #Job 16:8 Ru 1:21. Thus the Jews censured our Saviour, #Isa 53:3,4; the barbarians Paul, #Ac 28:4; and those in the Gospel them that perished by the fall of the tower of Siloam. And how many precious men as well as Job have been cast upon this evidence for traitors and rebels against the highest majesty? Junius thinks that when Job uttered the words of this text he felt some new pains growing upon him and increasing.

Thou increasest thine indignation upon me] Or within me, as #Job 6:4, and this was it that put a sting into his sufferings; God's heavy displeasure seemed to be kindled against him. Be not thou a terror unto me, O Lord, said Jeremiah, and then I shall do well enough with the rest.

Changes and war (or armies) are upon me, or against me] Variety of troubles come trooping and treading, as it were, on the heels of one another: *fluctus fluctum trudit*, there is a continual succession of my sorrows, fresh forces sent against me, &c. We see, then, that Job complained not without cause, though he kept not always within compass, as appeareth by that which followeth.

Ver. 18. **Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?]** Why? but was not that a mercy? David esteemed it so, and gives God the glory, #Ps 22:9. But discontent is an utter enemy to thankfulness. The bird sings not till she have taken up her stand to her mind. Some men's eyes are so bleared and glazed with tears for what they want, that they cannot see what good they have, cannot see mercies for blessings. Job here, in a distemper, wisheth himself (as he had done before, #Job 3. "Who can understand his errors?" #Ps 19:12) either unborn, or presently dead, without the distance of one day between his birth and his burial. *In quo errorem erravit non levem, vir alioqui pientissimus*; this was a worse wish than if he had desired that his life might be presently taken away from him, for herein he showeth himself unthankful to God for all his former

benefits; and not so only, but angry with God for the good he had done him: thus we have seen dogs in a chase fly at their masters, and children in a pelt strike at their parents. But these were the voices of the flesh lusting against the spirit, which afterwards (being justly reprehended for them, first by Elihu, and then also by God himself) he repressed and repented of in dust and ashes, **#Job 42:6**.

Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!] *sc.* With delight: for what pleasure is there in seeing a dead corpse, especially a stillborn child? See **#Ge 23:4**, with the note. This text teacheth us, saith an interpreter, what sad effects extreme grief and pain worketh in the very best: it distempereth their spirits, and so disturbeth them, that their complaints look like the blasphemies of the wicked, and they sometimes wish absurd things, dishonourable to God, and prejudicial to themselves.

Ver. 19. **I should have been as though I had not been]** Here he sings the same song as **#Job 3 Job 4**. It is hard to say how oft a child of God may discover the same infirmity. Our lives are fuller of sins than the firmament is of stars or the furnace of sparks.

I should have been carried from the womb to the grave] He makes mention of the grave as a desirable place, which yet in the two last verses he describeth as a place of darkness and disorder. Thus Job himself was in the dark, and in his passion he throweth out words without wisdom. *Itaque solícite orandus est Deus*, saith one here, God is therefore to be earnestly entreated, that when we are hard put to it with pain and misery, we may not give way to unruly passion, nor suffer our tongues to outlash, as they will be apt to do. See **#Ps 39:1**; confer **#Ps 22 Ps 77 Ps 88 Ps 89**., and we shall see David well nigh as far out as Job in his complaints and wishes; but God can put a difference between the godly and sin in them, as between poison and the box that holdeth it. He can also pity them, as we do poison in a man, which yet we hate in a toad, &c.

Ver. 20. **Are not my days few?**] And oh that they might not be also evil! since I shall not much trouble the world, oh that I might not find much trouble in the world! What man is he that would fain see good days? saith David, **#Ps 34:12**. What man is he that would not? saith Austin in answer to him. Job and David join in one and the

same suit for a truce from trouble, since their time here was so very short, #Ps 39:13 89:47.

Cease then, and let me alone] After he had vented his passions he falls again to his prayers. Ye have done all this wickedness (saith Samuel to the people who had been over importunate for a king), yet turn not aside from following the Lord, &c., #1Sa 12:20. Whilst prayer stands still, the whole trade of godliness stands still. Saints, though they have sinned, yet must not restrain prayer, but go home to God again with shame in their faces and tears in their eyes, and he will speak peace; only they must be sensible that their Father hath spit in their faces, &c.

That I may take comfort a little] A modest request. The poor man speaks supplications, begs a farthing. They who are lowly make low demands. Oh that I were but a door keeper! Oh that Ishmael might live in thy sight! &c.

Ver. 21. **Before I go whence I shall not return]** Before I go out of this world, never more to return hither to enjoy the comforts that are here to be had. Death is a departure hence, #1Pe 1:15 Lu 9:31. And so the ancients (Irenaeus, Clement, and others) used to call it. I shall change my place, but not my company, said that dying saint who had here walked with God in uprightness, and was now to bid adieu to all worldly interests (Tertul.). The old Romans were wont to say of a dead friend, *Abiit, et reversurus est*, He is gone, and will come again. It seems hereby that they had some dark notions of a resurrection; whence also their poets called a dead body a soul; — *animamque sepulchro condimus* (Virg. Æneid). The Hebrews did the like, #Nu 5:2 9:10 19:11 Hag 2:13,14, as having a more sure word of prophecy; and Job was clear in this point, firmly believing in the resurrection of his body, #Job 19:26,27. It must needs be therefore that he speaks here of not returning into this world. See the like, #Job 16:22 Ps 39:13 2Sa 12:23.

Even to the land of darkness, &c.] {See Trapp on "Job 10:22"}

Ver. 22. **A land of darkness, &c.]** This is not a description of hell, and of the state of the damned (as some would have it), for Job never meant to come there, no more than Jacob did, #Ge 37:35 42:38; but it is such an elegant description of the grave, as exceedeth

the phantasy of poet, and the rhetoric of all heathen orators. There is something like it in David's Psalms, especially **#Ps 88:11,12**, where the grave is called a place of perdition, a land of forgetfulness, and of darkness, whereinto they who descend praise not God, **#Ps 115:17**. In respect of their bodies they do not, they cannot, **#Isa 38:18**. Hell, indeed, is much more a land of darkness as darkness itself; it is that outer darkness, a darkness beyond a darkness, as the dungeon is beyond the prison; and the pains of hell are the chains of darkness. Now death is hell's harbinger to the wicked, and hence it is so dreadful in the apprehension and approach of it, that men's hearts do even die within them, as Nabal's did, through fear of death; and they tremble thereat as the trees of the wood, or leaves of the forest, with Ahaz, **#Isa 7:2**. Darkness, we know, is full of terror: the Egyptians were sorely frightened by their three days' thick darkness, insomuch as that none stirred off his stool all that while, **#Ex 10:23**, and it was the more terrible, doubtless, because they had no warning of it, as they had of other plagues. How oft do men chop into the chambers of death (their long home, the grave) all on the sudden, as he that travelleth in the snow may do over head and ears into a clay pit! Death of any sort is unwelcome to nature, as being its slaughterman: but when sudden, it is so much the more ghastly; and those that desperately dare death to a duel cannot look it in the face with blood in their cheeks: only to those that are in Christ the bitterness of death is past, the sting of it pulled out, the property altered, as hath been already noted. Christ, the Sun of righteousness, saith a learned expositor here (Mr Caryl), lay in the grave, and hath left perpetual beams of light there for his purchased people. The way to the grave is very dark, but Christ hath set up lights for us, &c.

And of the shadow of death] The shadow is the dark part of the thing, so that the shadow of death is the darkest side of death, death in its most hideous and horrid representations; the shadow of death is the substance of death, or death with addition of greatest deadliness.

Without any order] Heb. And not orders. What then? confusion surely, without keeping to rules or ranks: men's bones are mingled in the grave; whether they have been princes or peasants it cannot be discerned; *Omnia mors aequat*: as chessmen are put up all together

in the bag when the game is ended, without distinction of king, duke, bishop, &c., so here. Junius rendereth it, *expertem vicissitudinum*, without any interchanges, distinctions, vicissitudes, or varieties (as of day, night, summer, winter, heat, cold, &c.) of which things consisteth the greatest part of the brevity of this world.

And where the light is as darkness] How great then must needs be that darkness? as our Saviour speaketh in another case, **#Mt 6:23**. Surely when, by the return of the sun, there is light in the land of the living, in the grave all is abysed and sunk into eternal night; as the bodies of those two smothered princes were by their cruel uncle, Richard III, in the black deeps, a place so called at the Thames' mouth. In the grave light and darkness are both alike; and as the images in Popish temples see nothing, though great wax candles be lighted up before them; so the clearest light of the sun shining in his strength would be nothing to those that are dead and buried. Let this be much and often thought on; *mors tua, mors Christi*, &c. thine death, the death of Christ &c. Cyrus, that great conqueror, lying on his death bed, praised God, saith Xenophon, that his prosperity had not puffed him up; for he ever considered that he was but mortal, and must bid adieu to the world. Charles V, emperor of Germany, caused his sepulchre and grave clothes to be made five years before his death, and carried them closely with him whithersoever he went. Samuel sent Saul newly anointed to Rachel's sepulchre, **#1Sa 10:2-4**, that he might not become proud of his new honours, &c.

Chapter 11

Ver. 1. **Then answered Zophar the Naamathite]** With a most bitter invective, savouring more of passion than charity. Zophar rejoineth, or rather revileth innocent Job, misinterpreting his meaning, **#Job 11:4**, and laying to his charge, 1. Loquacity, or talkativeness; 2. Lying; 3. Scoffing at God's good providence, and men's good counsel; 4. Self-conceitedness and arrogance, besides rashness, boldness, &c. For want of better arguments against him, he falls foul upon him in this sort. And if the adversaries of the truth do the like by us (as our Saviour saith they will, **#Mt 5:11**, and as himself, after Job and many other of his members, had the experience of it), we must not be overly troubled. Zophar signifieth a watcher, he watched for Job's halting, and took him up before he was down; he is styled

the Naamathite from Naamah (a city in the land of Uz, eighteen miles from Job's Pyramis, saith Adricomius), which signifieth fair. But he dealeth not so fair with his friend as had been fit, for he giveth him no honour or respect at all, but treateth him with singular sharpness and violence, or rather virulence, of speech: hear him else.

Ver. 2. **Should not the multitude of words be answered?**] Should not he who speaketh what he will, hear what he would not? *Nunquid qui multa loquitur, non et audiet?* (Vulg.) Yes, Job shall now, or you will want of your will; but if Job have talked more than his part came to (the truth is, his speeches are longer than any of those of his three friends, which are all, except that first made by Eliphaz, #Job 4 Job 5, comprehended in one chapter, whereas his take up by two, three, or more), he may well be excused, considering the sharpness of his disease, the ungentleness of his friends, and the sense of God's displeasure, which his soul laboured under. Zophar and the rest looked upon him as a wretched hypocrite, and were angry that he would not yield himself so; they accused his former conversation as wicked; what way he had therefore to defend and assert his own integrity, but by words? And must he yet pass for a prattling fellow, a man of lips, a very wordy man, one that loveth to hear himself talk, because he will not be by them outtalked, and overly borne by their false charges? Most sure it is, that profane and profuse babblings are to be avoided, and to bring fulness of matter in fewness of words it is very commendable. *Quam multa quam paucis!* said Cicero of Brutus's laconical epistle; how much is here in a little! but, 1. Every man cannot be a short spoken Spartan. It is reported that in Luther's house was found written, Melancthon hath both matter and words; Luther hath matter, but wants words; Erasmus hath words at will, but wants matter. Every one hath his own share: all are not alike gifted. 2. He is to be accounted talkative who uttereth unprofitable words, and far from the purpose, beside the point; and so Zophar himself was to be blamed in this whole discourse of his, wherein he talketh much, but speaketh little. Concerning the infinite and unsearchable wisdom of God, he argueth truly and gravely, but yet nothing fitly to convince Job, who himself had said as much and more of the same subject. The counsel also that therehence he giveth Job doth little or nothing concern him; it being the same in effect that Eliphaz and Bildad had said before him: Zophar therefore was the *locutuleius*, the talkative man here

mentioned, rather than Job, the lips man, *adversus sua ipsius vitia facundus satis*; and as Bion was wont to say, that the grammarians of his time could discourse well about the errors of Ulysses, but not at all see their own; so it befell Zophar.

And should a man full of talk be justified?] Heb. A man of lips, so called, as if he were made all of lips, and had no other members. Shall such a one be ever a whit the better thought of? Not among wise men surely, whatever he may amongst his fellow fools; for *in multiloquio stultiloquium*: in much speaking is much foolishness, some gravel and mud passeth away with much water; some vanity with much talk; it is no wisdom for a man to lay on more words than the matter will well bear. A good orator, saith Plutarch, will see that his words and his matter be matches. And Hesiod saith, that words, as a precious treasure, should be thriftily husbanded and warily wasted: especially since an account is to be rendered, as our Saviour assureth us, **#Mt 12:36**; yea, by thy words (he saith not, for thy words) thou shalt be justified, and by thy words (if superfluous and sinful, waste and wicked) thou shalt be condemned, **#Mt 12:37**.

Ver. 3. **Should thy lies make men hold their peace?**] Or, thy toys, toilsome toys, hammered in thine own head, hatched in thine own heart, which is deceitful above all things, and so a fit shop to frame lies in; but should we be silent at the hearing of them, and so become guilty of thy sin by a tacit consent? Can any mortal wight hear what thou hast said in behalf of thine own imaginary innocence, **#Job 6:29,30**, and how bold an appeal thou hast made to God as a witness thereof, **#Job 10:7**, and not reply upon thee, and reprove thee? The truth is, had Job been a liar, as Zophar would make of him (even *mendaciorum loquacissimum*, as Tertullian saith of Tacitus, one that fearing his many words would not carry his cause, had intermixed various untruths, the better to grace the business), he ought not to have been forborne by Zophar or any else that wished well to his soul: but it was far from good Job to be guilty of this foul sin, so hated of God, so like the devil, so inconsistent with religion. *Christianus est, non mentietur*; he is a Christian, you may be sure he will not lie, was the old argument; he will rather die than lie. David indeed, in a distress, roundly told two or three lies together to Abimelech the high priest, who suspected that he fled as a proscribed person, **#1Sa 21:2,8 27:10**. But that he allowed not this

sin in himself it appeareth in that, 1. He had chosen the way of truth, his election was truth, **#Ps 119:30**. And, 2. He prayed against the contrary evil, "remove from me the way of lying," **#Ps 119:29**. He was not one of those that took fast hold of deceit, as Jeremiah phraseth it, **#Job 8:5**. Much less was Job; however, Zophar was mistaken in him, as he was much more in his next charge, wherein he maketh him a scoffer of God and good people.

And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?] Job is made a mocker here; yea, a scorner, and derider, as the word signifieth, such as David describeth, **#Ps 22:6**, and the author to the Hebrews, **#Heb 11:36**, where he speaks of cruel mockings, such as the Scripture everywhere (but especially in the Proverbs) brandeth for the worst sort of sinners. See **#Ps 1:1**, where the Septuagint translate for scorners, pests; as elsewhere incorrigible, **#Pr 21:1**; naught, **#Pr 9:12**; λοιμοι, ακολαστος, κακος, proud, **#Pr 3:34**; workers of iniquity, υπερηφανοι παρηνομουν, **#Ps 119:51**. But where did Job mock in Zophar's judgment? First, he spoke contemptuously (as he thought) of God, as **#Job 10:3**, "Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?" &c. And whereas he spake better sometimes of God's wisdom and righteousness, Zophar thought it was but from the teeth outward; but poor Job had little list or leisure to mock and jeer. Next, he mocked his friends for saying that he was justly afflicted, saying that they were cold comforters, void of God's fear, merciless men, &c. This they took in very ill part, and Zophar thinks to make him ashamed of it; for saith he,

Shall no man make thee ashamed?] *sc.* By refuting thee, and by bringing thee to a due sight of thine error. This good office he that shall undertake to do for another, must be sure that he be able to do it effectually, else better not to attempt it. When Carolostadius opposed Luther's consubstantiation only weakly and insufficiently, Zuinglius said, he was sorry that so good a cause lacked shoulders, *Non satis humerorum haberet.*

Ver. 4. **For thou hast said]** Thou hast confidently affirmed; and this he makes to be a loud lie, and not an idle word only. But where and when had Job said it? Did not Zophar openly play the sophister, so interpreting what Job had spoken, **#Job 6:10 9:22 10:7**, in defence of his innocence, as if Job had maintained that he was free from all

sin; whereas, notwithstanding, he had very often witnessed and confessed himself to be a sinner, insomuch as that albeit he were without sin, yet he could not be accounted clear and pure in the sight of God? But Zophar took these for good words only, and was therefore so sharply set against him. So Cyril and Theodoret mistook one another, and objected heresy mutually; when afterwards it appeared that they were both of one judgment. Charity would have taught Zophar to have taken Job in a better sense, and to have said of him, as Cruciger did of Luther, *eum commodius sentire quam loquitur dum effervescit*, that he held right, though in his heat he spake not so fitly as might be wished. Good men's words are *reverenter glossanda* (as one said of the laws), to have a reverent gloss put upon them, and not, by a spiritual unmannerliness, to be taken with the left hand, when they might and ought to be taken with the right.

My doctrine is pure] Clear as crystal, transparent as a crystal glass with a light in the midst; you may see through it, and find no flaw or filth in it. Job was no professed preacher, yet he had "not concealed the words of the Holy One," **#Job 6:10**. As he had received the knowledge of the truth from parents and teachers (the word here rendered doctrine comes from a root that signifieth to receive), so he had freely and purely imparted it to others, commending it unto them as sound and sincere, and therefore well worthy of all acceptance. But that which troubled Zophar and his two fellows was, that Job should affirm that God did afflict good men in this world as heavily as bad men, which yet was an irrefragable truth, such as Job resolved to live and die in.

And I am clean in thine eyes] *i.e.* I am not sinless, but sincere and upright, no hypocrite (as you have charged me), no worker of iniquity, but one that would be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and do, by the daily practice of mortification, purify myself as God is pure. More than this Job said not, though Zophar thought he did, and therefore wisheth in the next words that God himself would convince him of his error.

Ver. 5. But oh that God would speak, &c.] For we do but lose our sweet words upon thee, since thou art set, and so wedded and wedged to thine own will and way, that thou canst not be removed

and rectified, but by an extraordinary touch from the hand of heaven: oh therefore that God would speak and open his lips against thee, and for us; for so Zophar doubts not but he would do; but if it proved otherwise, **#Job 42:7-10**, Job was justified, and these three condemned, because they had not spoken of God (or to God, as in this text), the thing that was right, **#Job 11:7**, but had been Satan's instruments to discourage Job, and to drive that good man to many passionate speeches. Some men (and women too, as Sarah, **#Ge 16:5**) are overly hasty to send for God, as it were, by a post, to decide their controversies; who, if he should come at their call, would certainly pronounce against them. Fret not thyself therefore to do evil, **#Ps 37:1**; be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything in this way before God, **#Ec 5:2**, or to interest him in thy quarrels and controversies, for he will surely pass an impartial sentence; neither is there any iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respecting of persons, nor receiving of gifts, **#1Ch 19:7**. One interpreter from this wish of Zophar noteth, that it is an ordinary practice of heretics (Satan's factors) to mention God, as approving of their errors, if by speaking he would from heaven declare himself plainly, and that therefore we should take heed of those that labour to work upon us this way, when by right reason they are able to evince nothing that they say.

Ver. 6. **And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom]** This may be understood as God's law (saith Diodati), or as the hidden ways of his providence; which if God would show Job, he should at once see that he mistook much, and knew little of those many mysteries that are both in the word and works of God, in all divine dispensations, which are such as none can unriddle but God himself; neither can we see them till he show them. It is well observed, that the word here rendered show signifieth to interpret and expound that which is dark, mysterious, and enigmatical; and till God show us in this sort we remain ignorant both in the book of the creatures and in the book of the Scriptures. Oh, pray that ye may be all taught of God, that he would show you great and mighty things which you know not, **#Jer 33:3**, that he would so open your eyes, that ye may behold wondrous things out of his law, **#Ps 119:18**.

That they are double to that which is] *Sunt enim Deo iudiciorum duo genera,* so the Tigurines translate the words, for God hath

judgments of two several sorts, viz. open and secret, such as thou with all thy skill canst not dive into. The Hebrew is, doubles to the being; that is, saith one, manifold more than is by thee apprehended; and although God hath afflicted thee according to what he hath revealed, yet he might afflict thee more if he should proceed according to the height of his secret wisdom; thy plagues should be double to that which is, if God should deal rigorously with thee; there is reason therefore thou shouldest be patient, since thy sins are far more than thy sufferings.

Know, then, that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth] This is a meditation that may be of special use, as to humble us, so to stanch murmuring, and to strengthen patience under present pressures. See #Ezr 9:13, with the note. Junius rendereth it, acknowledge at least that God exacteth somewhat of thee for thine iniquity; somewhat it is, and but somewhat, since hell is the just hire of the least sin, and it is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, #La 3:22.

Ver. 7. **Canst thou by searching find out God?**] *i.e.* The nature of God, or the course of his providence, and the reason of his proceedings? thou canst never do it. Neither did Job ever take upon him to do it, but had excellently and accurately set out the same things, #Job 9:4, &c., that Zophar here doth; so that he might well have spared his pains in this discourse as to Job; but that being too pertinacious in his evil opinion of him, he chose rather to thwart him than to close with him, as contentious people use to do.

Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?] No, nor the brightest angel in heaven, the highest graduate in glory. Find him we may possibly, but not find him out, much less find him out to perfection. *Tantum recedit, quantum capitur*, so much slips away and how much is retained, saith Nazianzen. The nearer you draw unto God the farther off he is from you, and you are as much to seek as ever; he is indeed like the pool Polycritus writeth of (cited by Aristotle), which in compass at the first scarce seemed to exceed the breadth of a shield, but if any went in to wash, it extended itself more and more. A country fellow thinks, if he were upon such a mountain he could touch heaven, and take a star in his hand; but when he comes thither heaven is as far off as it was, &c. So it is

here, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," &c., #1Co 2:9. Chrysostom, speaking of God's love in Christ, saith, I am like a man digging in a deep spring; I stand here, and the water riseth up upon me, and I stand there, and still the water riseth upon me. What the apostle saith of this infinite love of God, that it passeth knowledge, as having all the dimensions, #Eph 3:18,19, the same is true of the wisdom of God, as Zophar setteth forth in the following verses.

Ver. 8. **It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do?**] And much higher; it is as the highnesses of heaven (so the Hebrew hath it), which is so high that one would wonder we should be able to behold the starry sky (which yet is but as the marble wall round about the palace), and the very eye not be tired in the way. {See Trapp on "Pr 25:3"} How high that second heaven is may hereby be gathered, in that the stars (whereof those of the first magnitude are said to be every one above 107 times as large again as the whole earth) do yet seem to us but as so many small sparks or spangles; but how high the third heaven is above them cannot be conjectured, #Eph 4:10. And yet the wisdom of the Almighty is far above that. But what meaneth Zophar by these cutted questions of his, What canst thou do? and what canst thou know? He thought, belike, that either Job considered not what he had said when he so set forth God's wisdom, and his own shallowness; or else that he contradicted himself when he nevertheless stood so much upon his own integrity, and complained so greatly of his misery, as of an injury.

Deeper than hell] Which, wherever it is, appeareth, by this and other texts of Scripture, as #Re 14:11 De 32:22 Ps 55:15 Pr 15:24, &c., to be below, *Ubi sit, sentient, qui curiosius quaerunt*, saith one; where it is they shall find one day who too curiously inquire. The word here rendered hell signifieth the lower and more remote parts of the earth; and David telleth us that the wicked shall be turned into hell, into the lowest part of it, as the *He locale* there implieth, #Ps 9:17.

Ver. 9. **The measure thereof is longer than the earth**] Wherein some kingdoms are of a very great length, as those of the Turks and of the Tartars at this day. How long, then, is the earth itself? Some have undertaken to tell in how many days a nimble footman might measure it, but that is but a conjecture. It must be remembered that these things are spoken after the manner of men; for the wisdom of

God can neither be measured nor numbered: of his understanding there is no number, saith the prophet, **#Ps 147:5**. Archimedes, the mathematician, vaunted that he, by his skill in arithmetic, could number up all the sand or dust that is in the whole world, habitable and inhabitable. But who can cast up the extent of the Divine wisdom?

And broader than the sea] Which yet David calleth the "great and wide sea," **#Ps 104:25**. Breadth is ascribed to the sea, because of its huge extension: mariners for many days together, while they sail upon the main, see no land, but only sky and water. God's wisdom goes beyond all these; neither must we think to lade this ocean with our cockle shell. We may sooner drain the sea with a spoon than the perfections of God with our largest understandings.

Ver. 10. **If he cut off, and shut up]** Heb. If he change, viz. his course or way of proceedings toward men, either to shut them up close prisoners, or otherwise to put them to such straits that (Job-like) they know not what to do, or which way to turn themselves.

Or gather together] viz. His witnesses, say some, against an offender; his armies and military forces, saith the Chaldee paraphrast, to ruin his enemies; his outcasts, say some interpreters, according to that, **#Ps 147:2**, "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel." If he do any or all of these to show his sovereignty, as well he may,

Then who can hinder him?] Heb. Turn him away, or put a stop to him? If God should do and undo, confound all things, turn the world upside down, who shall contradict him or question him? May he not do with his own as he pleaseth? And might not Zophar have spared thus to have spoken to Job, since Job had said the same to him in effect before? *Atqui non erat necesse haec a Zophar dici, quum de his iam et eadem dixisset Job* (Merc.). But Zophar's design was to prove hereby that he who is by God brought into straits is a wicked liver. He therefore in the two following verses glanceth at him as vain, wicked, brutish, and not unlike to a wild ass's colt, such as God would surely tame and tutor to better things by afflictions, and so bring him to hand.

Ver. 11. **He knoweth vain man, he seeth wickedness also]** Doubtless he beholdeth faithless men, mortals of vanity, headlong and headstrong wights; *homines falsitatis* (so Cajetan rendereth it), men of falsehood; *homines mendaces* (so Pagnine), lying persons, such as thou Job art presumed to be by thy impious words and grievous punishments: He seeth wickedness, *inanitatem et iniquitatem*, vanity and villany. God seeth all, how closely and cleanly soever hypocrites think to carry the matter; first hiding God from themselves, and then vainly hoping to hide themselves also from God; but "his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men," **#Ps 11:4**. He seeth their wickedness or unreasonableness (as the word properly signifieth), for wicked men are absurd men, **#2Th 3:2**, they are compact of mere incongruities, solecizing in opinion, speeches, actions, all.

Will he not then consider it?] *sc.* To judge and punish it? Man maketh no great matter of sin, but God doth. He will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," **#Ec 12:14**; he will see that every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward, **#Heb 2:2**. This Zophar doth not only affirm, but puts it home strongly by a question (wherein he closely taxeth Job of hypocrisy), Will he not consider it? Some read it without a question, thus, But he (that is, man) considereth not, is without understanding of God's wisdom and justice, being dull and stupid like a wild ass's colt, as it followeth.

Ver. 12. **For vain man would be wise]** Heb. Hollow man, that is, as void of grace as a hollow tree is of heart of oak.

Would be wise] Heb. Would be hearty, *egregie cordatus homo*, there is an elegance in the original that cannot be translated into English. "Wilt thou know, O vain man," saith St James, **#Jas 2:20**. The Greek is, thou empty man, κενε, thou that hast nothing in thee, and yet art highly conceited; thou that art (Ephraim like) a silly dove without a heart, **#Ho 7:11**, and yet *in superbiam erectus* (as the Vulgate here hath it), raised up to pride: that little knowledge he hath puffeth him up, **#1Co 8:1**. So bellows like is the natural soul, or rather so bladder like, that, filled with earthly vanities, it grows great, and swelleth in pride; but pricked with the least pin of

piercing grief, it shrivelles to nothing. The prophet Isaiah fitly compareth it to a bulrush, #Isa 58:5, the colour whereof is fresh, the skin smooth; but if you peel it, what is under but a kind of spongy, unsubstantial substance, of no use in the world worth the speaking of? Formalists and pretenders to holiness are flat nothing, worse than nothing, iniquity, #Mt 23:28.

Though man be born as a wild ass's colt] Take him in his pure natural, he is no wiser; created he was in God's image, which consisted in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; knowledge in his understanding, rightness or straightness in his will, and holiness in his affections, #Eph 4:24. But since the fall all this is lost and gone quite; he hath *principium laesum*, neither can he know the things of God, no, though he be φυχικός, a souly man, one that doth *excolere animam*, develops the soul, such as Cicero and Aristotle; yet is he in spirituals as blind as a beetle, a mere ass's colt. A colt is not among the wisest of creatures, much less an ass's colt, least of all a wild ass's colt; and yet such is man, sensual man, #Jud 19:22, sapless man, #Ps 14:1, he is as an ass's foal for rudeness, a wild ass for unruliness, untamed, and untractable. Surely as a wild ass's colt (saith Gregory upon this text), not used to the yoke, runneth up and down the large fields and woods at his pleasure, and when he is weary lieth down, and thus doth from day to day: so man by nature is licentious, running as his lusts carry him, to all manner of sin, and giveth not overrunning till he is weary; he will not be held in by any reins, or kept to do the work he should by any yoke which the Lord by teaching seeks to put upon him. Surely, saith Marbury, God is fain to deal with such as men do with frisking jades {A contemptuous name for a horse; a horse of inferior breed} in a pasture, that cannot take them up till they get them to a gate; so till the hour of death, &c. Thomas Blaverus, chief counsellor sometime to the king of Scots, believed not that there was God or devil, heaven or hell, till he came to die, and then cried out he was damned (Theatr. Hist. p. 127, 128). So also died one Arthur Miller, and before him, a desperate dean of St Paul's (Sword against Swearers, p. 34). When death comes, saith Sir Walter Raleigh, which hates and destroys men, that is believed. But God, that loveth and maketh men, he is not regarded. Oh eloquent death! Oh mighty death! whom none could advise, thou art able to persuade, &c.

Ver. 13. **If thou prepare thine heart]** viz. To meet God, #Am 4:12, humbly submitting to his justice, and heartily imploring his mercy. The sum of what Zophar saith in the following verses is this: If thou truly repent, thou shall prosper; as if not, thou shall perish. This he might have said more fitly to most of us, who are deeply guilty, saith Lavater, than to Job, who was nothing so sinful as we are, and yet much more penitent. But Zophar calls upon him to quarrel with his faults, and not with his friends, and to break off his sins by repentance, without which, if he should have peace, it would be but like those short interims between the Egyptian plagues.

And stretch out thine hands toward him] Heb. And spread thy palms to him: so in prayer for pardon of sin and power against sin; for this stretching out, or spreading of the hands, is a prayer gesture, wherein God's people come *forma pauperis*, holding out the hand to receive mercy, as beggars do an alms; or as men beg quarter for their lives with hands held up; or, lastly, as he that is fallen into a ditch, or deep pit, and cannot get out, lifteth up his hands, and crieth out for help. See #Ex 17:11,12 Le 9:22 1Ki 8:22 Ps 141:2. It appeareth that the ancients prayed not with their hands joined together or a little way lifted up, but with their arms stretched abroad, and the palms of their hands turned up towards heaven.

Ver. 14. **If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away]** Cast away all thy transgressions, and throw thy lusts out of service, hands lifted up in prayer must be pure, #1Ti 2:8, for the fountain of goodness will not be laden at with foul hands, #Isa 1:15,16. Good therefore is the counsel of Jeremiah, #Jer 4:14, and of St James, #Jas 4:8. The priests had their laver to wash in before they sacrificed, and their brazen altar to offer on before they burnt incense. He that comes to pray, having not first purged himself of all filthiness of flesh and spirit, doth (say the Jewish doctors) as he that cometh to offer a clean beast, but holds an unclean one in his hand. By iniquity in the hand here Beza and others understand wrong dealing, either by fraud or force, by strength or sleight of hand; and their Zophar presseth Job to restitution: Away with it, saith he, send it home to the right owner; else you will cough in hell, and the devils will laugh at you, saith Latimer.

And let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles] *i.e.* In thy family, and wherever else thou hast to do. I and my house will serve the Lord, saith Joshua; I and my maids, saith Esther, **#Jos 24:15 Es 4:16**. David's care for the reforming and well ordering of his household, and of his whole kingdom. **#Ps 101** Such a man is really as he is relatively. Those governors of families and countries show themselves perfect strangers to the practice of repentance, who make no other use of their servants and subjects than they do of their beasts; while they may have their bodies to do their service, they care not if their souls serve the devil. This will lay heavy one day.

Ver. 15. **For then shall thou lift up thy face without spot, &c.]** Repentance must be performed in faith, or else it will prove to be *poenitentia Iscariotica*, a Judas like repentance. Lord (said that dying saint), cast me down as low as hell in repentance, and lift me up by faith into the highest heavens in confidence of thy salvation. Zophar, that he may move Job kindly and rightly to repent, promiseth him thereupon *malorum ademptionem, bonorum adeptionem*, freedom from evil and fruition of good. And, first, "Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot," *i.e.* Thou shalt be full of comfort and of confidence, not casting down thy countenance, as guilty Cain, but looking up boldly and cheerfully, as St Stephen did, **#Ac 7:55,56**, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Ibat ovans animis et spe sua damna levabat.

Yea, thou shall be stedfast] Or durable and compact as a molten pillar. Thy heart shall be established with grace, thy mind with peace, thine outward estate with a lasting felicity.

And shalt not fear] *sc.* The loss of those enjoyments. To be freed from the fear of evil is better than to be freed from evil; and a great part of the saints' portion both on earth and in heaven lies in their deliverance from fear, **#Lu 1:74 Ps 112:7 Zep 3:13 Isa 17:2**. Repent, and thou shall fear no more a revolution of any thy troubles. Ver. 16. **Because thou shalt forget thy misery]** There being no fear left, or footstep thereof remaining to renew thy grief, **#Ge 41:30**. Remember thy former trouble thou shall, with thankfulness for a better condition now, but not otherwise; all the marks of former

affliction shall be worn out. See **#Isa 65:13,16**, so that thou shalt discount all the evil thou hast endured.

And remember it as waters that pass away] As a land flood soon gone, as a light cloud quickly over; or as Noah's flood, which that good man thought upon, when it was past, with thankfulness to God, offering sacrifice for his safety. So shalt thou, Job; and as a man seldom thinketh how much water passeth by his habitation by day and by night, or if he do, yet it is no trouble to his mind, no more shall the remembrance of former miseries be to thine.

Ver. 17. And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday] The rest of thy life which thou givest for lost, shall be the very prime part of thy time for glory. Solid glory springeth out of innocence of life, beneficence toward all men, acts done valiantly and successfully with justice and moderation of mind; whereunto is added the constant applause of good men, proceeding from an admiration of so great virtue. This Zophar promiseth Job upon his true repentance, with a daily increase thereof, as the sun shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Fame followeth virtue, as the shadow doth the body at the very heels. "If there be any virtue, if any praise," saith the apostle, **#Php 4:8**. Where the one is the other will be. Abel for his faith and righteousness is yet spoken of (as some render **#Heb 11:4**), though dead long ago. "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance," **#Ps 112:6**.

Thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning] **#Isa 58:8**. Or, if thou dost wax obscure, yet thou shalt match the morning, which disperseth darkness, and conquers it by the approaching light. Look how the moon wadeth out of a cloud, so shall thine overcast righteousness "break forth as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday," **#Ps 37:6**.

Ver. 18. And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope] It is a spiritual security that is here promised, which is a fruit of faith, quelling and killing distracting and distrustful fears; faith, I say, unfeigned, **#1Ti 1:5**, which produceth hope unfailable, **#Ro 5:5**. Hope is the daughter of faith, but such as is a staff to her aged mother.

Yea, thou shalt dig about thee] That is (saith one interpreter) by searching to find out how to do all things for the best, thou shalt prosper in all. Others sense it thus, Thou shalt be secure as they that lie in trenches (Eugub. Tigur.). Rabbi David, Thou shalt dig only about thy city, and not need to make any walls about it for thy security. Others, Thou shalt labour hard, and sleep soundly thereupon (Lavater). Or thus, God shall so encompass thee with his safe protection, as if thou dost but dig a place to pitch thy tent in, thou shalt enjoy thyself more safely therein than otherwise thou wouldest do in a walled city.

And thou shalt take thy rest] God will keep off those gnats of cares and fears, that might disquiet thee. We read of some great princes that could not sleep, as Ahasuerus, #Es 6:1, Richard III of England, and Charles IX of France, after that barbarous massacre at Paris (Daniel Thulin.); but David could, #Ps 3 Ps 4, because God was his keeper. No marvel that Philip sleepeth soundly when Antipater, his fast friend, watched by him the while. Job and all God's beloved ones shall sleep on both ears, #Ps 127:2, rest securely and comfortably (*In utramvis aurem*). What should hinder, when the keeper of Israel, who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, shall watch over them for good?

Ver. 19. **Thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid]** Thou shalt walk about the world like a conqueror, being ever under a double guard, the peace of God within thee, #Php 4:7, and the power of God without thee, #1Pe 1:5, neither shall any enemy come upon thee in the night to fright and to disturb thee, which is a great mercy. It is not long since we of this nation did eat the bread of our souls in peril of our lives, neither could we rest in our beds for the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction was cried, &c., #Jer 4:19,20. Should this ever be forgotten?

Yea, many shall make suit unto thee] Heb. Shall entreat thy face; yea, they shall tire thee out with their entreaties. Many seek the ruler's favour, #Pr 29:26, he is even thronged with suitors, so that he cannot be without a master of requests. Hence the poet Orpheus feigneth that *Litae*, or supplications and petitions, are Jove's daughters; and that they are ever attending at his throne, ου γαρ ατιμοι ικεσιου Ζηνοϋ κουραι λιται (Orph. in Arg.). Here then Zophar

promiseth Job, that upon his return to God he shall be as great a man as ever; and that many, yea, that his very enemies, shall not only not molest him, but fear his power, and beg his favour, #Jer 30:17. And whereas once it was, This is Job whom no man seeketh after, then the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour, #Ps 45:12, and all that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, #Isa 60:14 45:14 Re 3:9 Pr 19:6. Lo, this is the honour God putteth upon holiness: "Holy and reverend is his name"; and therefore reverend because holy, #Ps 111:9: so also is ours, #Isa 43:4. Howbeit we have cause to complain, that in these last and worst times, as the Turks count all fools to be saints, so men with us account all saints to be fools; and not a few turn to unholiness, lest they should be despised, *Omnes quodammodo mali esse coguntur, ne viles habeantur* (Sal.).

Ver. 20. **But the eyes of the wicked shall fail]** Contraries illustrate one another; and Zophar, willing his words should stick and work, thinks to leave a sting in Job's mind by telling him what he must trust to if he persist in his sin. And first, his eyes shall fail. The eye is a principal part of the body; and the failing of the eyes followeth either upon some sudden fright or upon much weeping, #La 1:2 Ps 38 Ps 88. (we read of one Faustus, son of Vortigem, king of Britain, who wept out his eyes), or too long looking after the same thing, or on the same object. *Ut vehementius vellicet et fodiat inopinatum, ut putabat Iobi, animum* (Merl., Speed.). The wicked, saith Zophar, shall never lach frights and griefs; they shall also look many a long look after help, but none shall appear, #La 4:17; their hopes shall be fruitless, their projects successful.

And they shall not escape] Heb. Refuge or flight shall perish from them; miseries and mischiefs they shall never be able to avert or avoid. "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked," #Ps 32:10; and although they may think to get off or outrun them, yet it will not be, #Am 2:14 Ps 142:4. Saul for instance: God hath forsaken me, saith he, and the Philistines are upon me, #1Sa 28:15.

Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost] Broughton rendereth it, Their hope is nought but pangs of the soul. Of that which yieldeth but cold comfort we use to say, It comforteth a man like the pangs of death. The Vulgate hath it, Their hope shall be the

abomination of their soul; the Tigurine, Their hope shall be most vain, even as a puff of breath, which presently passeth away, and cometh to nothing. Some Rabbis make this the sense, Their hope shall be as the snuffing of the breath; that is, they shall be so angry at their disappointments, that they shall vex and snuff at it. According to our translation, the wicked man's hope is set forth as utterly forlorn, and at an end for any good ever to befall him. The godly man's hope is lively, #1Pe 1:8, and the righteous hath hope in his death, #Pr 14:32 *Cum expiro spero*, when I die I have hope, is his motto; whereas the wicked's word when he dieth is, or may be, *Spes et fortuna valet*, Farewell hope and fortune, My life and hope endeth together. *Spes eorum expiratione animae*, so Tremellius rendereth the text. Death causeth in the wicked a total despair, and a most dreadful shriek giveth the guilty soul, when it seeth itself launching into an infinite ocean of scalding lead, and considereth that therein it must swim naked for ever.

Chapter 12

Ver. 1. **And Job answered and said]** Being nipped and nettled with his friends' hard usage of him, and harsh language to him, but especially with Zophar's arrogant and lofty preface in the former chapter, he begins now to wax warm, and more roughly and roundly to shape them an answer.

Ver. 2. **No doubt but ye are the people]** The select peculiar people, the only ones, as a man is put for a good man, #Jer 5:1, a wife for a good wife, #Pr 18:22, a name for a good name, #Ec 7:1. As Athens was said to be the Greece of Greece, and as one promising to show his friend all Athens at once, showed him Solon; or as the Latin poet, saying of Fabius Maximus,

Hic patria est, muri que urbis stant pectore in uno (Silius).

So saith Job by a holy jeer (not to disgrace his friends, but to bring them to more modesty and moderation, if it might be), Certes, ye are not one or two men, but specimen *totius orbis*, an epitome of the world, or at least the representative of some whole people (Vatablus); ye have got away all the wit from myself and others, whom ye look upon as so many wild ass's colts in comparison of yourselves. Thus the pope (Simon Magus like) pretends to be some

great thing, #Ac 8:9, even the Church virtual; and that in his breast, as in Noah's ark, is comprehended all wisdom and worth. Ye know nothing at all, saith he (Caiaphas-like), to all others, #Joh 11:49. So do his janizaries, the Jesuits, who will needs be taken for the only scholars, politicians, and orators of the world. The Church, say they, is the soul of the world; the clergy, of the Church; and we, of the clergy; the empire of learning is ours, &c.

And wisdom shall die with you] As being locked up in your bosoms. Suetonius telleth us of Palaemon, the grammarian, that he was heard to say that learning was born with him, and would die with him. The Gnostics would needs be held the only knowing men; Illuminates, in Spain, the only spiritual men; Swenkfeldians, in Germany, styled themselves the confessors of the glory of Christ; our Antinomians, the hearers of the gospel, and of free grace. But what saith Solomon? "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth," #Pr 27:2. And that which had been much to a man's commendation if from another, soundeth very slenderly from himself, saith Pliny. Aben Ezra and Rabbi Levi set another sense upon this verse, as if it were no irony, but a plain assertion to this effect: Questionless you are to be counted among the common sort of people. See #Joh 7:49. Neither is there in you anything excellent or extraordinary, that ye should be looked upon as drained from the dregs or sifted from the brans of the very vulgar; your wisdom, if ever you had any, is even dead and decayed with you, and you have outlived your prime, &c.

Ver. 3. **But I have understanding as well as you]** Think not that you have engrossed all the knowledge, and that you have the monopoly of wisdom in your breasts; for surely I may come into the balance with you, and claim as great a share in understanding as yourselves. Zophar was pleased to call me hollow and heartless, #Job 11:12; but I have a heart (so the Hebrew here hath it), that seat of understanding; and that shall appear in the ensuing discourse: where Job proveth that by solid arguments concerning which Zophar had but barely propounded. And whereas this patient man was not without his impatience, yet he discovereth more grace, even in his distempers, than his friends did in their seeming wise carnages. Breaking out in the body shows strength of nature. Some infirmities discover more good than some seeming beautiful actions.

I am not inferior to you] Heb. I fall not lower than you. See **#Ne 6:16 Es 6:13 Job 13:2**. He meaneth that he was much their superior, and did better understand the doctrine of God's providence than they. This he speaketh not out of any vain glory, or ambitious boasting, but as David, and Paul, and others after them did, commending themselves, either in defence of their own wronged innocence, or when it appeared unto them that the concealing of their good parts and practices might turn to the hindrance of the truth, or to the harm of the Church, or to the impairing and impeaching of God's glory. In these cases self-commendation is not unseemly; but a Job may lawfully stand upon, not his comparisons only, but his disparisons also.

Yea, who knoweth not eueh things as these?] viz. That God rewardeth the righteous, and punisheth the ungodly. The heathen saw this by the rush candle of nature's dim light. "Doth not nature itself teach you?" saith Paul, **#1Co 11:14**. And again, "This ye know, that no whoremonger, &c., hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ," **#Eph 5:5**.

Ver. 4. **I am as one mocked of his neighbour]** Those that should countenance and comfort me contemn and scorn me. I am their laughter and pastime; so he took it, since they sat so heavily upon the skirts of his conscience, and would not weigh his reasons brought in his own defence.

Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him] *i.e.* I, Job, do make God my refuge when these jeering neighbours of mine do shame my counsel, **#Ps 14:6**, and would mock me out of my religion; but God favoureth me though men frown; and where human help faileth Divine appeareth. Or thus rather: I am derided by those who profess to call upon God, and to hear often from heaven. They are hard hearted to me, though themselves have liberally tasted of God's tenderness; and they pull up the bridge of mercy before me, which themselves have oft gone over.

The just upright man is laughed to scorn] "Shame shall be the promotion of fools," **#Pr 3:35**, and such a dissembler as Doeg may well be derided, **#Ps 52:6,7**. But what hath the righteous done? And

why should just, upright Job be laughed to scorn? But this is no news. Christ and his people have ever been for signs and for wonders in this mad world, always beside itself in point of salvation. "He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey," or is accounted mad, #**Isa 59:15**. If he will needs be a just upright man, if he will live godly in Christ Jesus (if he be so set upon it, that none shall hinder him), he shall suffer persecution, this of the tongue howsoever, #**2Ti 3:12**. A wolf flieth not upon a painted sheep. We can look upon a painted toad with delight; it is the reality of godliness that is hated.

Ver. 5. **He that is ready to slip with his feet]** He who is in a declining, tottering condition, ready to fall and perish under the burden of his afflictions, though formerly he was looked upon and made use of as a lamp or torch, yet when he is at an under, and brought low, is shamefully slighted by such as have the world at will; like as a torch when wasted and waxen short is cast out of the hands, and trodden on with the feet of him that held it. The holiest men, if afflicted, do but smother instead of shining. When Christ himself was a man of sorrows, he was therefore despised and rejected of men, who hid, as it were, their faces from him, and esteemed him not, #**Isa 53:3**. The prodigal's elder brother speaks scornfully of him, because poor, #**Lu 15:30**, "This thy son." He saith not, This my brother, &c. Gregory saith, that the poor just man is here compared to a lamp extinct, because he shineth inwardly by the virtue of an upright heart; but outwardly is as it were extinct, because there is nothing outward to commend him; no glorious apparel, no goodly houses, &c.; whence they are slighted by the rich wretches of this world. But such a lamp (saith he, following the Vulgate translation) is set for an appointed time; that is, the day of judgment, when he shall shine most brightly, even as the sun, &c., when the world's favourites shall be thrust into utter darkness.

Ver. 6. **The tabernacles of robbers prosper]** By robbers here understand all such as sin against the second table, but especially oppressors and wrong dealers, whether by force or fraud. As by those that provoke God (*qui res Dei interturbant*, so the Tigrines translate), that irritate and disquiet him, attempting to put him out of temper, are meant sinners against the first table. See the like #**1Ti 1:13**: I was against God a blasphemer, against man a persecutor, against both injurious; but I obtained mercy, special mercy. So do

not these robbers and God-provokers in the text: thrive they may, and be in a peaceable condition; yea, they may be secure and confident of the continuance of their prosperity. Confidences are to them, saith the Hebrew, verity; for they trust in uncertain riches, while God bringeth into their hands, viz. whatsoever they wish, yet not as love tokens, but as wrath tokens; these fattening beasts are but fitting for the slaughter. God oft giveth in wrath to some which he withholdeth from others in great mercy. Meanwhile Zophar's twofold assertion in the former chapter, **#Job 12:17,20**, that good men prosper here, and bad men suffer, falls to the ground, while Job disproves it, 1. By experience in this verse and the former. 2. By the testimony of the creatures, those catholic preachers, **#Job 12:7-10 3**. By the testimony of the senses, and of ancient men, **#Job 12:11,12**.

Ver. 7. **But ask now the beasts of the earth, and they shall teach thee]** Even the wildest of them that abide in the wilderness. There is not one of these, or else of the fowls of the air, but can both teach thee, and tell thee that the world is ordered by a providence, that God is powerful, wise, just, &c., and must therefore be loved and served. That he suffereth the bad to oppress the good, as the beasts do devour the little ones; as the hurtful fowls destroy the harmless; as the great fishes eat up the smaller: man, who was once the captain of God's school, is now, for his truantcy, turned down into the lowest form, as it were, to learn his A B C's again; yea, to learn it from the meanest creatures. See **#Pr 6:6 Jer 8:7 Mt 6:26**; where it appeareth, that in the ant, stork, swallow, &c., God hath set before us, as in a picture, the lively resemblance of many excellent virtues, which we ought to pursue and practise. These are the right laymen's books, the images that may truly teach people the knowledge of God, and of his will, of themselves, and of their duties; which we should the rather learn, because God hath given us wisdom beyond them, **#Job 37:11**, and yet by sending us to them, shameth our dulness and disobedience.

Ver. 8. **Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee]** Teach thee? what? Surely many good lessons; as that of humility and modesty, considering our origin, *Terra quam terimus docet terram quam gerimus*; that of fruitfulness, while she liberally yields her riches and strength, and brings forth food for the maintenance of those innumerable armies of creatures that live upon her; but especially, and for the purpose, this the earth teacheth, that the tabernacles of

robbers prosper, that oppressors swallow down most of her delicates, eat the fat and drink the sweet, ruffle in her silks, and rifle in her hidden treasures of gold and silver.

And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee] These *muti magistri* silent teachers, have somewhat also to say to thee, and by a dumb kind of eloquence read thee a divinity lecture, while they are able to produce many such particular examples of violence in the seas; and will further declare (or cipher up unto thee) how oft they are served up to great men's tables, and do fill the fat paunches of oppressors. It is not unlikely that Job, in this frequent sending Zophar to school to the unreasonable and inanimate creatures, closely twitteth him with those quicker questions of his, #**Job 11:8**, "What canst thou do? what canst thou know?" &c., giving him also to know that he need not travel as far as heaven or hell for instances of God's infinite power and wisdom, since we may contemplate the footsteps of God in each creature; and since he is so near unto us that he may be almost felt with our hands, as Paul speaketh (*ψηλαφησειαν*), #**Ac 17:27**.

Ver. 9. **Who knoweth not in all these, &c.]** Or, by all these before mentioned creatures, &c., and therefore, Zophar, you have shewn no more wisdom in your lofty discourse than the birds, beasts, and fishes have taught and told us. It is a silly vanity to pretend mysteriousness about vulgar truths; to dig deep for that which lieth above ground, *Theologia cryptica*; to talk of new truths, and never before heard of, when as the hearer may well say, as here, Who knows not such things as these? Of some in these days it is observed, that they call upon their hearers to mark, it may be they shall hear that which they have not heard before; when the thing is either false, or if true, no more than ordinarily is taught by others.

That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?] That he alone made all without tool or toil, and that he alone manageth and ordereth all according to the good pleasure of his will; neither need he subscribe his name to his work; for the very things that he hath made proclaim that he made them. Meanwhile, hereby we may see how much we are beholden to Aristotle, Aelian, Gesner, and other learned men, who have written books concerning the nature of living creatures.

Ver. 10. **In whose hand is the soul of every living thing]** That is, the life of every beast, flowing from a sensitive soul, **#Le 17:10,11**. This, God both giveth to the creature and conserveth it; he suffereth it not to be taken away from little sparrows, or the like, without order from him; much less befalleth any such thing to man without his singular providence, since our very hairs also are numbered, **#Mt 9:30 Lu 12:7**. The Jewish doctors do therefore offer manifest injury to Job when they say, that he held indeed that God created, and doth preserve, the several kinds of things, but permitteth the particulars and individuals to be hap hazard; whereas here he delivereth his judgment plainly to the contrary, when he saith,

And the breath of all mankind] Heb. The spirit of all man's flesh (and so Broughton readeth it), that is, of every man's body: hence God is called the God of the spirits of all flesh, **#Nu 16:22**, and the Father of spirits, **#Heb 12:9**, and the former of the spirit of man within him, **#Zec 12:1**. "My times are in thy hand," saith David, **#Ps 31:15**. God preserves our lives as a light in a lantern, and we may be glad it is in so safe a hand; we should therefore honour him, as Daniel telleth Belshazzar, **#Da 5:23**; yea, "let everything that hath breath praise the Lord," **#Ps 150:6**; or, as the Hebrew hath it, Let every breath praise the Lord: as oft as we breathe we are to breathe out the praise of God, and to make our breath like the smoke of the tabernacle; this we should do the rather because our breath is in our nostrils, **#Isa 2:22**, every moment ready to puff out, and the grave cannot praise God, death cannot celebrate him, **#Isa 38:18**.

Ver. 11. **Doth not the ear try words? &c.]** The mind may as easily conceive of these truths as the ear judgeth certainly of the variety of sounds, and the tongue of the diversity of tastes; neither may you think that I will, without any examination or distinction, allow your discourses; or that I can take it well that you reject, as void of reason, whatsoever I have said, without once weighing it. The ear is one of the two learned senses, it is an instrument of discipline; only it should be kept clean and free from prejudice or passion, which will be as gall in the ear. See **#Ex 6:9**. Demosthenes called oft upon his Athenians to get their ears purged of choler, *Quaedam animalia fel in aure gestant*, and Alexander, when he heard a cause, was wont always to keep οὐς ἀδιαβλητον, one ear free from the other party: he would not be prepossessed, Mercer observeth, that the Hebrew word

for an ear doth in the dual number signify a pair of balances (*Ozen, oznajin*), to note that a judicious Christian taketh not up truth upon trust, but considereth first, and afterwards believeth. He trieth all things, and then holdeth fast that which is good, but abstaineth from all appearance of evil, **#1Th 5:21,22**. The ear and the mind are in the Greek tongue very like in sound, οὐς νοῦς: the mind judgeth of the truth of words by the ears, as the beam in a pair of balances determineth the just weight of things by the two scales. He that is spiritual discerneth all things, **#1Co 2:15**, he hath spiritual senses, **#Php 1:9**, senses exercised, habitually exercised, to discern good and evil, **#Heb 5:14**; his service is a rational service, **#Ro 12:1**, his obedience the obedience of faith, **#Ro 16:26**. Whereas the natural man is carried away as he is led, **#2Co 12:2**, pulled away with the error of the wicked, **#2Pe 3:17**, taken prisoner by seducers, **#2Ti 3:6**, and by them made prize of, **#Col 2:8**, as having either no skill or no will to examine what is doctrinally propounded to him.

And the mouth taste his meat?] Heb. The palate, *sensorium*, which is the proper instrument of tasting. Now the order of nature requireth, saith Merlin, that seeing our bodily senses are so nimble and able to discern what is sour, what sweet, &c., our understandings also should do the same by right reason; and the contrary is very absurd and unbecoming a man; neither can there be any good excuse made for our dulness, if we bend not our minds to the search of the truth, forasmuch as there is so much ado made to please the palate, eyes, ears, and other senses. Catullus wished all his body were nose, that he might spend all his time in sweet smells. Philoxenus, that his neck were as long as a crane's, that he might take more delight in meats and drinks (it seems that he placed tasting not in the mouth, but in the throat). Boccacio, the Italian poet, said, that he was born *al'amore delle donne*, for the love of women; and of a prodigal pleasure monger in London, we read, that to please all his five senses at once, he allowed to the delight of every different sense a several hundred pounds (Theatre of God's Judgments). {See Trapp on "Am 6:6"} There is a *sancta crapula*, a holy gluttony, as Luther calleth a hearty feeding on divine viands, a finding fatness and sweetness beyond that of the honey and honeycomb in God's ordinances, **#Ps 63:5,6**; crying to Jesus Christ as the spouse doth, **#So 8:13**, Cause me to hearken to thy voice; and

obeying him, thus bespeaking us, Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved, till you are even inebriated with loves, #So 5:1.

Ver. 12. **With the ancient is wisdom]** Heb. With the decrepit, who have a long, long being upon earth, and are now become wondrous old, even fourscore and upward; with such is wisdom, or else it is a shame for them. See #1Jo 2:12 Heb 5:12. True it is, that wisdom doth not always lean upon a staff nor look through spectacles. Age is no just measure of wisdom. There are beardless sages (as was Solomon) and grey headed children, as Rehoboam. Macarius was called *μειρακτιογενων*, the old youth (Samuel, Daniel, Timothy, were such). When Arsacius, who succeeded Chrysostom, was an old dotrel of fourscore years, *adorandm rubiginis*, rust to be worshipped, as one saith of some ancient authors; and Nectarius, who succeeded Nazianzen, was a mere novice, and preferred to that place only because he was of a venerable aspect, and of a bishop like presence and deportment, *Veneranda canitie, et vultu sacerdote digno* (Baron.). Of the Brabants Erasmus testifieth, that the older they are the more foolish. And Job here seemeth to tax his friends, that though old, yet they were not overly wise, not worthy of their years, since they understood not what he spake concerning God's providence. Is wisdom with the ancient? saith he, and understanding in length of days? so some read it as a question, *q.d.* it ill appeareth.

And in length of days understanding] By reason of their much observation and frequent experience, together with their ability to draw other things out of those they have observed, and from former events to presage future. This is to be understood as such old men are like flowers which have their roots perfect when they themselves are withering; as, with roses, keep a sweet savour though they lose their colour; as, like the sun, they shine most amiably at their going down. But lest we should attribute too much to such sages, Job shows, in the next verse, that all their wisdom is but derivative, and that all their understanding is but a spark of God's flame, a drop of his ocean.

Ver. 13. **With him is wisdom and strength, &c.]** Wisdom, strength, counsel, and understanding, are all concentrated in the Ancient of days; complete he is in all excellence and perfection, all which meet in him, and continue always in the highest degree. The mighty God

"fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding," #Isa 40:28. He is also no less good than great and wise; good, original, universal, all sufficient, and satisfactory, proportionate, and fitting for our soul; which, as it was made by him, and for him, so it is never at quiet till it resteth in him. See #Job 9:4.

He hath counsel and understanding] Counsel he hath, but without consultation; wisdom, but without experience; knowledge, but without discourse; decree, but without deliberation: *Loquimur de Deo, &c.*, We speak of God, saith one, not as we ought, but as we are able. And these things we speak of God, saith Augustine, because we find not what better to speak of him. But Job hath a mind to say the utmost that may be said.

Ver. 14. **Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again]** As he did the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, many monarchies and empires, the tower of Babel, and other castles and houses which now live by fame only, if at all. If God have a mind to ruin these, who shall raise or repair them? Julian, the apostate, in spite of the Christians, set the Jews to work to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, but they could never effect it by reason of a terrible earthquake, that slew the workmen and marred the materials (Am. Marcel., Socrat. 3, Theod., Ruffin.). The Arian bishops held a second council at Nice, with the purpose of having abolished the memory of the first together with the Nicene Creed, and to have established Arianism (Func.); but God disappointed them, and sent them packing thence by a huge earthquake, which overturned a great part of that city, and killed a number of people. Constans, nephew to Heraclius, the Greek emperor, and (three hundred years after him) Otho, emperor of Germany, endeavoured, but in vain, to make Rome the seat of their empires, as anciently it had been (Theophanes, Zonares, Cedrenus). God would not allow it so to be, saith Genebrard, because the kingdom of the Church, foretold by Daniel, was to have its seat there. If he had said, the kingdom of Antichrist, foretold by Paul and John the divine, he had hit the nail on the very head.

He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening] He clappeth him up close prisoner, as Manasseh, Zedekiah, Bajazet, Boniface VIII, &c., or fasteneth him to his bed by some chronic disease (as he did Abimelech, Ahaziah, Asa, Aeneas, #Ac 9:33), or otherwise

straiteneth him, that he knows not how to help himself, as he did Pharaoh, Saul (when the Philistines were upon him on every side), those refractories in Isaiah, **#Isa 9:2**, and shall do the whore of Babylon, **#Re 18:9-19**, when her lovers shall bewail her, but not be able to help her, **#Job 12:9,10**. For when God shutteth up any in this sort, they must lie by it till he please to release them and extricate them, as he did Joseph, Jehoshaphat, David, Peter, Valentinian, and many others, when they were even forsaken by their hopes.

Ver. 15. **Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up]** He not only, when he pleaseth, imprisoneth men, but waters also, that they cannot get out of the clouds, those bottles of rain, those airy sponges, vessels as thin as the liquor that is contained in them; it is from the power of God that they dissolve not upon us at once, and overwhelm us. Bartholinus reports that in the year of grace 1551 a great number of men and cattle were drowned by the sudden breaking of a cloud; various vineyards, stone walls, strong houses, were destroyed and ruined. At sea, sometimes, ships are by the same means sunk; seamen call it a water spout. Again, it is by the anger and judgments of God that the clouds are sometimes so closed up, that they yield no more water than iron or adamant. "If I shut up heaven," saith he, "that there be no rain," **#2Ch 7:13 De 28:23,24**. God threateneth, as a punishment of men's sins, that the heavens over their heads shall be brass, and the earth under them shall be iron; that the rain of their land shall be made powder and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon them, &c., by exceeding great drought, grains of dust shall ascend into the air with the wind, and come down as the drops of rain in a shower when it is kindly weather. Thus it was in Ahab's days, **#1Ki 18:1**; {See Trapp on "Joe 1:20"}

And they dry up] The rivers, fruits of the earth, roots of trees, all dry up, languish, and perish; fevers also, and other acute diseases, abound.

Also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth] They did so with an accent in the general deluge, and in Deucalion's flood in Thessaly, besides many other great tracts and parts of the earth overturned by water. Pliny and Seneca give us sundry instances of towns and countries laid waste by water (Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. ii. cap. 90, 92; Sen. Nat. Quaest., lib. vi. cap. 23). What great damage was

lately done about Amsterdam by water, and what breaking down of bridges, mills, and other houses, by excessive rain and floods thereupon, besides marring of grounds and rotting of cattle in many places among us, needeth not here to be related.

Ver. 16. **With him is strength and wisdom]** *i.e.* Such strength as he exerciseth most wisely, mightily, and righteously. *Sic volo, sic iubeo*, I wish so, so I command, saith the tyrant, Right or wrong, thus it shall be. *Volumus et iubemus*, saith that man of sin, We will and command, &c., neither must any one mute or say so much as What dost thou? upon pain of damnation. When Constantius would have Paulinus, Lucifer, and other bishops subscribe against Athanasius, and communicate with the Arians, he yielded to no other reason but this, *Quod ego volo, pro canone sit*, Do as I bid, or get you into banishment. But God, though he hath all power in his hand, and may do whatsoever he pleaseth, yet with him is strength and equity (so Vatablus rendereth the word Tushijah here used), or the being, substance, and permanence of all creatures (so Munster), which subsist merely by his manutention; or, the rule and certain law of wisdom and judgment, by which wisdom acteth, saith Mercer. So then the Lord, though he make his will a law, yet he cannot do otherwise than well, because nothing but wisdom and equity is in it.

The deceived and the deceiver are his] This Job produceth as a proof of God's insuperable strength and unsearchable wisdom, that he hath an over ruling hand in the artifices and sleights of men, even the "cunning craftiness" (as the apostle speaketh), **#Eph 4:14**, "whereby they lie in wait to deceive." These he not only and barely permitteth in his just judgment upon the deceived (whether through ignorance or idleness), but disposeth, also, and ordereth both the deceiver and the deceived (whether in spiritual things or civil) to his own righteous ends and holy purposes. See **#Eze 14:9 1Ki 22:19,20 2Th 2:11 Isa 19:14**, and then conclude, with Job, that wisdom and strength are his, who can thus draw light out of darkness, and powerfully order the disorders of the world to his own glory, and the good of his people: "For there must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest," **#1Co 11:19**. Meanwhile, here is the comfort of every good soul, that none can take them out of the Father's hands, **#Joh 10:29**, and it is impossible that the elect should be totally and finally deceived, because both the deceived and the

deceiver are God's; by him, and from him, and for him are deceivers and deceived (so Broughton translatheth this text). By him, for he suffereth and ordereth them; from him, for he sendeth them; and for him, for they promote his glory and serve his ends. He many times suffereth the tree of the Church to be shaken, that rotten fruit may drop off. There are those who set this sense upon the words; they are both in God's hands, the deceiver, to have revenge taken upon him, and the deceived, who revengeth not himself, to have his cause righted, as #1Th 4:6; an argument both of God's wisdom, to find out the deceiver, however subtle; and likewise of his power, in punishing them, however potent.

Ver. 17. **He leadeth counsellors away spoiled]** viz. Of wit, wealth, and honour. This should be a warning to them, not to take ill causes in hand, not to call evil good and good evil, not to justify the wicked for a reward, and to take away the righteousness of the righteous from him; not to bolster out a bad cause, and to outface a good, lest if they improve their wits and parts to so evil an end, God make them as despicable as before they were honourable. They may see what the Lord did to Ahithophel, that oracle of his time; to Pharaoh's counsellors, #Isa 9:11,12; to Pharaoh himself, #Ex 1:10 with #Pr 28:15.

And he maketh the judges fools] Broughton rendereth the verse thus, He brings counsellors to badness, and judges to stark madness. He infatuateth them, not by infusing folly into them, anymore than the sun, when he shineth not in our horizon, causeth darkness in the air, which of itself and of its own nature is dark. But when God withholdeth that light of wisdom which he had imparted to a man, his inbred darkness must needs show itself. More than this, it sometimes cometh to pass, that when God delivereth a man up for his sins to a reprobate and injudicious mind, he is thenceforth deprived sometimes of natural wisdom and common sense, that the divine revenge may be the more apparent.

Ver. 18. **He looseth the bonds of kings]** He degradeth them, taking away all command and authority from them, which is the bond that bindeth the people to obedience and subjection, #Job 30:11 Isa 45:1,5; as our Henry III, who was called *Regni dilapidator*, unloved by his people, and far a less king, saith Daniel, by striving to be more than he was; the just reward of violations.

And girdeth their loins with a girdle] With a rope, say the Vulgate; he brings them from the throne to the prison (Val. Max. Christ.); he layeth affliction upon their loins, as **#Ps 66:11**. An instance hereof (beside the late king, and Corradinus, king of Germany, likewise beheaded at Naples) we had here in Richard II, brought forth in a royal robe to be deposed, and then hunger starved in prison; as also in Henry VI, who having been the most potent monarch for dominions that ever England had, was afterwards (when deposed) not the master of a mole hill, nor owner of his own liberty, but baffled and beaten by every base fellow. Some interpreters make the sense this way: God sometimes looseth the bonds into which princes are brought, and advanceth them again to kingly dignity, the ensign whereof was of old a precious girdle. So it befell Manasseh, Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiakim, restored and honoured again as a king, by Evilmerodaeh, **#2Ki 25:28**. Historians write, that Nebuchadnezzar was so offended with his son and successor, Evilmerodach, as he cast him into prison, and that in prison he and Jehoiakim became acquainted together, which resulted in his advancement afterwards.

Ver. 19. **He leadeth away princes spoiled]** Or priests. *Ducit sacerdotes inglorios*, so the Vulgate translateth, He leadeth away the priests without glory, dishonoured. Priests were generally much esteemed and privileged in all ages. Alexander the Great gave greatest respect to Jaddus, the Jewish high priest. When the Gauls had burnt Rome, and were besieging the capitol, Gaius Fabius Dorso, attired as a priest, with his sacrifice and other necessaries in his hand, marched through the midst of the enemies, astonished at his resolution, offered his sacrifice on the hill Quirinalis, and returned in safety. The Bardi, a kind of priests, were here in Albion of such esteem among the greatest commanders, that if two armies were even at push of pike, and a bard had stepped in between them, they would have held their hands, hearkened to his advice, and not have offered to strike till he were out of danger: *Magna fuit quondam capitis reverentia sacri*. Howbeit, such also have been carried captive, and slain by the enemy, as was Seraiah, the high priest, by Nebuchadnezzar; and before him the two sons of Eli (whose white ephod covered foul sins), slain by the Philistines. "The Lord hath despised, in the indignation of his anger, both the king and

the priest," #La 2:6. "Both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not," #Jer 14:18. The word Cohen is used indifferently to signify a priest or prince, an ecclesiastical or secular governor. Broughton rendereth it here dukes; others, presidents or praefects of provinces. Honour is no shelter against the wrath of God.

And overthroweth the mighty] Such as might seem immoveable as a rock, or tree firmly rooted, these God shaketh and shattereth to pieces; he rooteth them up, and ruineth them. Let no man think to prevail by strength, #1Sa 2:9, since the weakness of God (if any such thing there were) is stronger than men, #1Co 1:25. He will smite his enemies (as so many puny boys) in the hinder parts, and so put them to a perpetual reproach, #Ps 78:66. Yea, he will not only smite them on the loins, but through the loins, #De 32:11, that they never rise again. Let them, therefore, learn to meddle with their match, #Ec 6:10, and take heed how they fall into the punishing hands of the living God.

Ver. 20. **He removeth away the speech of the trusty]** Or, of the eloquent, as Demosthenes, the most eloquent of the Greeks, being by them frequently sent as an ambassador to Philip, king of Macedonia, thrice stood speechless before him, and on thirty different occasions forgot those things which he had thought to have spoken, as Tzetzes testifieth (Chiliad 7). So Latomus, of Lovain, that apostate and persecutor of the truth, having prepared an elegant oration to make to Charles V, emperor, was so confounded, that he could hardly speak a word of sense, the grief whereof broke his heart. The counsellor and the eloquent orator, the prudent and the ancient, are reckoned up as the stay and the staff, the beauty and bulwark, of a nation, #Isa 3:2,3. These God removes at his pleasure, and, for a general judgment, causing either them to die or their abilities to die and decay, or crossing their attempts, that they shall speak persuasively, but not persuade people, but beslighted and exploded of all. Yea, though they be truth speakers (*veracium*), so the Vulgate hath it, or trusty, as our translation, confiding men, as they are called, worthy to be trusted; such faithful counsellors as Polybius was to Scipio, who never miscarried in anything wherein he followed his advice, as the historian testifieth; yet God can remove or change the speech of such, by leaving them to their own

unfaithfulness and inconstancy, as we have plentifully experimented in these late discriminating and shedding times.

And taketh away the understanding of the aged] Heb. And taketh the sense, or savour, or taste of the elders or senators, that they shall be no more able to discern and determine what is true or false, right or wrong, than old Barzillai could skill of the court meals and music. See this threatened **#Isa 29:14**. Such old men, as either were bred scholars, or have had much experience in the management of great affairs, are presumed to be of great understanding; but God can either take such away, as he threateneth to do, **#Isa 3:3,4**, or take away their wisdom, to render them useless to the public; as it is reported of Theodorus Gaza and of Albertus Magnus, those great scholars, that for certain years before they died they did so dote, and were so childish, that they could not write their own names, or read a letter on the book. Let, therefore, the eloquent and the aged take heed they abuse not their abilities, lest they forget and lose them.

Ver. 21. **He poureth contempt upon princes]** Or nobles, or gentlemen, which are, or should be, free, bounteous, munificent benefactors (ευεργεται): if they be not Nedibim, but Nebalim, liberal, but churlish (see these opposed, **#Isa 32:5**), it is just in God to pour contempt, to lay abundance of shame and scorn upon them, as sordid penny fathers, ignoble Euelios, poor-spirited men, the base brood, or rather blot, of their better forefathers. Of our Edward II it is chronicled, that never was prince received with greater love and opinion of all than he, or never any that sooner lost it: for his very first action in recalling his minion, Pierce Gaveston, discovered a headstrong wilfulness, that was uncounsellable; hence he was slighted by his subjects, pursued by his wife and son, and at length cruelly murdered (Daniel). Mercer observeth that David hath the selfsame words, **#Ps 107:40**, that are found here and **#Job 12:24**. Neither need we wonder, since they both spoke by the same spirit.

And weakeneth the strength of the mighty] Heb. He slackeneth the girdle of the impetuous, that, like strong streams in narrow straits, bear down all before them. So do soldiers in war. See **#2Sa 22:36 Job 6:11**. But God can loose their girdles (or belts, which bind their garments, and buckle their armour close to them), he can dispirit them, and make them feeble and faint hearted, as he did

Samson, and those Assyrians, #Ps 76:5,6. By this whole discourse of Job it appeareth that he had very diligently observed God's providence, and way of administration in the several ranks of men, and alterations of commonwealths; whereby he had learned secretly to admire and adore God's judgments, which thing we ought also similarly to do.

Ver. 22. **He discovereth deep things out of darkness]** As he did to Joseph and Pharaoh by dreams, to the prophets by visions and revelations, and still doth to his people by his Spirit: "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," #1Co 2:10. He bringeth to light also the hidden things of darkness, hellish conspiracies, as in the gunpowder plot; the deep reaches of kings to maintain their authority and compass their designs, resolving to suffer never a rub to lie in their way that might hinder the true running of their bowl Philip de Comines dived so deep and wrote so plainly of the stately affairs (those *arcana imperii*), that Katharine de Medicis (queen-mother of France) was wont to say that he had made as many heretics in policy as Luther had done in religion. She saw not that God had set Comines to work, and that he will yet further bring out to light (that all men may see) the shadow of death; that is, the things that are most obtruse, and most unlikely ever to have been discovered. See #Mt 16:26, with the note, and say, "Woe to them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord," #Isa 29:15. The gunpowder plot was a deep thing of darkness, it was underground, they were so long digging in their vault of villany; and a long time it was kept secret under oaths and strongest concealments; but a bird of the air revealed it, and that which had wing told the matter, #Ec 10:20. It was a quill, a piece of a wing, brought all to light by a blind letter put (by a providence) into a wrong hand; the danger was at the very ακμη, within eight hours of being acted, when, from a match ready fired, we received a matchless deliverance. Say then,

Σοι χαριν οιδα θεω ευσπλαγχνω ος μ εφυλαξας.

Ver. 23. **He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them]** It is all one with God whether against a single man or a whole nation, #Job 34:29, when he once taketh them to do. "The wicked shall be turned into hell," and (that they may not hope to escape because a multitude) "all the nations that forget God," #Ps 9:17. Soon after the

flood the Babel builders were scattered; Sodom and her sisters were not only consumed with fire from heaven, **#Ge 19:23-29**, but thrown forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, **#Jude 7**. Some nations were ejected, and others substituted, **#De 2:10,12,20**. Some utterly wasted and rooted out, such as the Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, &c., that live by fame only; others not so much as by fame, their very names being blotted out from under heaven. "The cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land is utterly desolate," **#Isa 6:11**. Now all this is the Lord's own doing, and should be marvellous in our eyes. He plants, and plucks up; he builds, and breaks down, **#Jer 31:28**.

He enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again] Or, that he may straiten them again: so in the former clause, that he may destroy them. This if he may justly do to whole nations, why should it seem so strange that he suffereth particular persons, though wicked, to prosper for a season; and though righteous, for a while to suffer hardship?

Ver. 24. **He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people]** That is, of the greatest part of the people of the world (say some). These God suffereth to walk in their own ways, **#Ac 14:16**; to become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they become fools, **#Ro 1:21,22**. As the philosophers of old, and the Chinese at this day, who are known to be ingenious, and used to say of themselves, that all other nations of the world see but with one eye, they only with two (Description of the World, of China and Cataia), yet continue they gross idolaters, mere heathens, having no less than a hundred thousand gods, which they worship one while and whip another, if they come not at a call. But the most interpreters, by chief or heads of the people, here understand their governors, of whom, though Job had said as much in effect before, **{#Job 12:17}** viz. that God dispiriteth and besotteth them for a plague to the people who follow their rulers (and fall with them), as the body of a beast followeth the head; yet because few observe and improve this truth, therefore he repeateth and illustrateth it by three elegant similes. And first,

He causeth them to wander in a wilderness, &c.] Not knowing which way to extricate themselves. They beat their brains about it, but to no purpose; they are so bewildered and puzzled, as if they were treading a maze; and this God causeth, he is active in it, while he withdraws his light, and delivereth them up to their own foolish hearts, and to the prince of darkness, to be further benighted, #2Co 4:4.

Ver. 25. **They grope in the dark without light]** This is the second simile, setting forth this judiciary act of God in taking away the heart of the heads of the earth; grope they do, and would fain find out a way by feeling, but they feel darkness, and not light (so the Hebrew); they try to help themselves and their people out of misery, as the last Greek emperor did notably; but it would not be (Turk. Hist. 345).

And he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man] Who, having lost the use of reason, knoweth neither where he is nor what he was, but reeleth and falleth oft, and cannot rise again, much less go forward. So fareth it with evil rulers when God smiteth them with a spirit of giddiness and of slumber. See #Isa 19:24 40:20.

Chapter 13

Ver. 1. **Lo, mine eye hath seen all this]** *sc.* All those effects of God's providence, declared in the former chapter. I have not discoursed about God's powerful and wise dispensation by rote, or without book; I have not blurted out what I believe not, or am not able to prove, as you have accused me; I have spoken both that which I have seen (and what is more sure than sight?) and that which I have heard and received from our ancestors and doctors (to whom you have frequently referred me, for better information). Mine ear, that sense of discipline, by which not learning only, but life also, entereth, #Isa 55:3, hath heard it, and understood it too; which he addeth for further assurance. Job was a weighing hearer, as Mr Bradshaw was called the weighing divine (Mr Clark, in his Life). Let us learn by his example heedfully to observe God's works, laying up experiences, and diligently to listen and learn the things that are taught us, or written for us by others, that we may grow to a right and ripe understanding of divine truths, and be able confidently

to commend the same to others, as being upon sure grounds. See #Mt 13:51,52.

Ver. 2. **What ye know, the same do I know also**] Heb. According to your knowledge I also know. This may seem an unseemly boast; which, if his friends had taxed him for, he might have answered, as Paul did in a like case, Ye have compelled me, #2Co 11:5. The rule is, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves," #Php 2:3. *Non est tamen prodenda Dei veritas, aut integritas nostra, &c.*, Nevertheless, no man ought to betray the truth, or his own integrity, lest he should be counted contentious (Merlin in loc.). See #Job 12:3, where we have the same in effect as here; whence some do gather that Job's friends had a very high opinion of their own knowledge, and a very low one of Job's. He that is thus proud of his knowledge, the devil careth not how much he knoweth.

Ver. 3. **Surely I would speak to the Almighty**] It were far better for me to speak to God than to you, and much fairer dealing from him I might expect. "A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he," #De 32:4; but ye are forgers of lies, and ye load me with false accusations, depraving my speeches, as thou, Zophar, especially hast done, wishing withal that God himself would speak with me face to face; which, if it should come to pass, thou saidst my misery and affliction would be redoubled. But oh that I might commune with the Almighty! surely and seriously I would rather do it than with you, my friends; and should hope so to defend mine innocence against your slanderous accusations; yea, to maintain God's justice against you, in the presence and judgment of God himself. Oh the confidence of a good conscience! see it in Abimelech, #Ge 20:5, but much more in David, #Ps 7:8,4 139:23,24 Jer 12:1; in every strong believer, #1Pe 3:21; those that walk uprightly, and speak uprightly, #Isa 33:15. Not so every ungirt Christian or profligate professor, #Job 13:14. The sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrites, &c., but good Job was none such; and God knew it to be so; what if to the wicked he be a devouring fire? yet to those that fear his name he is a reviving sun, #Mal 4:1,2. And upright Job feareth not to reason with him. Upon the same ground John Huss, and other martyrs, cited their persecutors to answer them by such a time before God's tribunal.

And I desire to reason with God] If he please (*Si voluerit*). So the Septuagint adds, and makes out Job's meaning; as if he had used the like modesty and humility as Nehemiah, and after him Esther, did in their suits unto the king of Persia, when they said, If it seem good to the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, **#Ne 2:5 Es 5:4**. Others think that Job here desireth to plead with God as with a party that had dealt too hardly with him, &c.; that he challengeth God into the schools, as it were, there to crack an argument with him, and by reason to reduce him to milder dealing. And, indeed, the Hebrew word here used signifieth to dispute or argue, and from it the Rabbis call logic the art of arguing. This boldness is that, say our large annotations, which both Elihu and God blame Job for in the end of the Book, though neither of them condemn him for a hypocrite; and that shows that Job did speak amiss of God in his passion, and is not altogether to be excused; much less in everything to be commended.

Ver. 4. **But ye are forgers of lies]** *i.e.* Ye create false maxims to judge me by; ye gather up without any order, and to no purpose, whatsoever cometh in your way to strengthen and maintain your false accusation against me. You are not only cencinators, forgers, but compactors, botchers, such as, by sewing one lie to another, do patch up a false and frivolous discourse, *Mendacia mendaciis assuitis*. So David, **#Ps 119:69**, The proud have forged (or pieced together, made it up as of many shreds) a lie against me. David saith of hypocrites, that their tongue frameth deceit, **#Ps 50:19**; and of Doeg, that his tongue devised mischief, like a sharp razor, doing deceit, **#Ps 52:2**. Jeremiah saith of his countrymen, that they had taught their tongues to speak lies, and were grown artists at it, **#Jer 9:5**; yea, that they had taken fast hold of deceit, and could not be got off without striving, **#Jer 8:5**. But these countrymen of Job were none such, for God said, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie," **#Isa 63:8**. And although every man be a liar, either by imposture or by impotence; yet it must be understood that these good men aimed at truth, and intended not to deceive Job, but to undeceive him rather. They maintained errors, but unwittingly; they charged him also (but unjustly) with hypocrisy. Hence this so severe a high charge, Ye are forgers of lies, such as our ruffians would revenge with a stab. But we must know, saith Merlin, that in those better times it was not so harsh a business in a serious disputation to call that a lie which was safely alleged by an adversary as today it is

in this corrupt age of ours, wherein the greatest liars, though taken in the manner, yet take it extremely ill to be told of their fault. Besides, in the defence of God's cause, and the labouring truth, plain-dealing, even with our best friends, is best; so that the apostle's rule, **#Eph 4:31**, be observed, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."

Ye are all physicians of no value] Because you go to work upon wrong principles, and mistakenly ministered. Physicians he acknowledgeth them, and that they came with a good intent to comfort him; but, for lack of skill, instead of curing, they had well nigh killed him, because they judged amiss of his disease, and used corrosives instead of cordials. By the way, observe that God's word is not only the food, but the medicine of the soul, and may far more fitly be so called than the library of Alexandria was of old: for as the diseases of the body are healed by medicine seasonably and rightly used, so are the distempers of the soul by Scriptural consolations; neither shall we ever have cause to complain of them, as Cicero did of philosophical comforts, *Nescio quomodo, &c.*, I know not how it cometh to pass, but this I find, that the disease is too hard for the medicine; or as the Romans did of Sulla's bloody government, that the remedy was worse than the malady. "How forcible are right words!" said Job, **#Job 6:25**. And fair words, as physicians, cure the mind distempered with passion, saith the poet, *Οργης νοσοουσης εστιν ιατροι λογοι* (Aeschyl.). Once, when Luther was in a great heat about something that had crossed him, Melancthon pacified him by repeating this verse,

Vince animos, iramque tuam, qui caetera vincis.

But Job's friends, as they were botchers of lies, so they were bunglers at healing him; they did, saith Lavater, as a surgeon who applieth a plaister to the hand of him whose grief is in his foot; or as that country mountebank in France, who was wont to give in writing to his patients for curing all diseases (Becan. sum. Theol., part 1, cap. 16),

*Si vis curari de morbo nescio quali,
Accipias herbam, sed qualem nescio, nec quam:*

Ponas neseio quo, curabere nescio quando.

These verses are rendered in English by one in the following way:

Your sore I know not what, do not foreslow

*To cure with herbs, which whence I do not know:
Place them (well pounced) I know not where, and then*

You shall be perfect whole, I know not when.

Such ουτιδανοι, nullities in the world, such no physicians, such idols, such extreme nothingnesses, good for nothing (as that rotten girdle in Jeremiah, #Jer 13:7, those vine branches in #Eze 15:6,7, that idol in St Paul, #1Co 8:4), were Job's friends to him, miserable comforters, #Job 16:2, adding to his affliction instead of easing it, and pushing at him as the whole herd of deer doth at that one that is wounded.

Ver. 5. **O that you would altogether hold your peace]** Heb. In being silent, would be silent: *q.d.* I thought much of your seven days' silence, #Job 2:13, and now I am no less troubled at your speeches. Oh that you had either continued your silence, or else would frame to say something better than silence: for hitherto ye have spoken much, but said little. I could heartily wish, therefore, that you would now stop your mouths, and open your ears, as #Job 13:6, that you would be as mute as fishes, since I can hear nothing from you but what speaks you to be mere mutes, ciphers, nullities' as #Job 13:4.

And it should be your wisdom] For "even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding," #Pr 17:28.

Πας τις απαιδευτος φρονιμωτατος εστι σιωπων.

As when the door is shut it cannot be seen what is within the house; so the mouth, being shut by silence, the folly that is within lieth undiscovered; and as in glasses and vessels, so in men, the sound which they make showeth whether they be cracked or sound. An ass is known by his ears (saith the Dutch proverb), and so is a fool by

his talk. As a bird is known by his note, and a bell by his clapper, so is a man by his discourse. Plutarch tells us, that Megabysus, a nobleman of Persia, coming into Apelles', the painter's, workshop, took upon him to speak something there concerning the art of painting and limning, but he did it so absurdly, that the apprentices jeered him, and the master could not bear with him (Plut. de Tranq.).

Ver. 6. **Hear now my reasoning, &c.**] Or, hear, I pray you. Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; suffer the word of exhortation and of reprehension; sharp though it be, and to the flesh irksome, yet suffer it, since it is for your good. Quintilian testifieth of Vespasian, that he was *patientissimus veri*, one that could well endure to be told the truth; but there are few Vespasians. Many people are like the nettle: touch it never so gently, it will sting you.

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips] Heb. The contention of my lips. See that you not only hear, but hearken to it with attention of body, intention of mind, and retention of memory: neither God nor man can bear it, to speak, and not be heard. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," &c., **#Heb 12:25**. See that ye slight not, shift not off Christ speaking to you in his ministers and messengers; 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 speaketh from heaven.

Ver. 7. **Will ye speak wickedly for God?**] Ought ye to defend God's justice by unjustly accusing me? Or must ye needs so free him from injustice, that ye must charge me with hypocrisy? Job had before called them physicians of no value; here he compareth them to lawyers of no conscience, that care not what they plead, so they may carry the cause of their client. But the Lord needeth no such advocates; he so loveth truth, that he will not borrow patronage to his cause from falsehood; he so hateth flattery (though it be of himself) that he hath threatened to cut off all flattering lips, **#Ps 12:3**; and would one day say as much to Job's friends, notwithstanding their pretended zeal for his glory, as once Alexander the Great did to Aristobulus the historian, who presented him with a flattering piece concerning his own worthy acts, which he extolled above measure; he cast the book into the river Hydaspes, and told the author he could find in his heart to cast him after it.

And talk deceitfully for him?] To talk for God is our duty; it is to make our tongue our glory; but to talk deceitfully for him, to seek to hold his truth by our lie (the Vulgate here hath it, needeth God your lie?), that is altogether unlawful; for shall we do evil that good may come thereof? God forbid, **#Ro 3:8**. And yet the Papists do so familiarly, and think they therein do God good service; as when they deny his provident hand in ordering the disorders of the world to his own glory, lest they should make him the author of sin; so they think to defend his justice by teaching predestination according to foreseen works, by ascribing to man free will, righteousness of works, merit, &c. So their doctrine of equivocation for the relief of persecuted Catholics, their *piae fraudes* (as they call them), their holy hypocrisy to draw infidels to the embracing of the faith, and to the love of virtue; their lying legends, made, say they, for good intention, that the common people might with greater zeal serve God and his saints; and especially, to draw the women to good order, being by nature facile and credulous, addicted to novelties and miracles (Spec. Hist. lib. 29).

Ver. 8. **Will ye accept his person?]** While you think to gratify him, and to ingratiate with him by oppressing me? Can you find no other way of justifying God's proceedings than by condemning me for wicked, because by him so afflicted? The truth is, these friends of Job, out of a perverse zeal of advancing God's righteousness, unrighteously suspected poor Job of wickedness, and so rejected his person to accept God's. See the like done **#Isa 66:5 Jer 50:7 Joh 16:2**. *O sancta simplicitas!* said John Huss, when, at the stake, he observed a plain country fellow busier than the rest in fetching faggots to burn the heretics.

Will ye contend for God?] Why not? Good blood will not belie itself; the love of God constraineth his people to stand to him and to stickle for him; *Non amat, qui non zelat*, saith a Father. But then it must be a zeal according to knowledge; for else it will appear to be but base and reprobate metal, such as though it seemeth to be all for God, yet it never received the image and impress of God's Holy Spirit, and therefore is not current in heaven. But that I believe and know (said that fiery friar, Brusierd, in a conference with Bilney) that God and all his saints, whom thou hast so greatly dishonoured, will take revenge everlastingly on thee, I would surely with these

nails of mine be thy death (Acts and Mon. 914). Another friar, preaching at Antwerp, wished that Luther were there, that he might bite out his throat with his teeth, and with the same teeth receive the Eucharist by Luther so dishonoured (Erasm. Epist. lib. 16).

Ver. 9. **Is it good that he should search you out &c.]** *q.d.* Could you have any joy from such a search? Will not all your warpings and partialities, your colloguing and sinisterity, be laid open to your loss and shame? Will not God reprove instead of approving you in that which ye have said for him, but all against me? The time will come when God will surely search out all controversies, that they all may be ashamed who, under a pretext of religion and right, have spoken false things, and subverted the faith of some. See **#1Co 3:17**.

Or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?] Be not deceived; God is not mocked, deluded, beguiled, as clients are by their corrupt lawyers; as patients are by their cogging quack healers. Sorry man may be mocked, and made to believe lies, as **#2Sa 15:11 Ac 8:9,10 Re 13:3**: all the world wondered after the beast. Judges, and other wise men, are shamefully out in other ways deceiving, and being deceived. Not so the all wise God. They that would mock him, *imposturam faciunt et patiuntur*; as the emperor said of him that sold glass for pearls, they deceive not God, but themselves. Neither may their conceit that their good intentions will bear them out (as Merlin here noteth) any more than it did these contenders for God, who little thought of mocking him. A bad aim maketh a good action bad, as we see in Jehu; but a good aim maketh not a bad action good, as we see in Uzzah, and here.

Ver. 10. **He will surely reprove you]** That is all the thank you are like to have from God; your work in pleading for him so stoutly, though it be materially good, yet it will never prove so formally and eventually, because you so confidently determine things you do not understand, but only by a light conjecture. You do secretly, that is, cunningly and deceitfully, accept persons, that is, God's own person, while ye wrong me for his sake, and under a pretence of doing him right, condemn me for a wicked hypocrite, whom till thus afflicted, you ever counted honest and upright. This the righteous judge, who loveth judgment, and hateth robbery for a burnt offering, **#Isa 61:8**, will at no hand endure. No, but he will certainly reprove you, *arguendo arguet*, he will surely and severely blame and punish you.

Carry it never so cleanly, cover it so closely, God, who seeth in secret, will reprove you openly; that is, he will chide you, smite you, curse you for it (if repentance interpose not to take up the matter), he will so set it on, as no creature shall be able to take it off. Men reprove offenders sometimes slightly and overtly, *deest ignis*, as Latimer said, whereby they do more harm than good; for their reproofs are rather soothing than reprovings, *Personatae reprehensione sfrigent* (Junius). Such was that of Eli to his sons, #1Sa 2:23. Such also was that of Jehoshaphat to wicked Ahab, "Let not the king say so," #1Ki 22:8. But when God took those same men to do, he handled them after another manner: he gives it them both by words and blows, till both their ears tingled, till their hearts ached, and quaked within them; so fearful a thing it is to fall into the punishing hands of the living God. Let all those look to it, especially that are in place of judicature, #Ps 82:1-3. Let them hear causes without prejudicate impiety, judiciously examine them without sinister obliquity, and sincerely judge them without unjust partiality, remembering that *Acceptatio personarum est iudiciorum pestis*, partiality is the pest of justice.

Ver. 11. **Shall not his excellency make you afraid?**] Heb. His highness, his majesty, his surpassing sublimity and transcendent glory; shall not this frighten you, and rein you in from wrongly dealing and warping? "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain," #Jer 10:7. And, "Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence?" #Jer 5:22. If an earthly king be so dread a sovereign; if the glory of angels hath so terrified the best saints on earth, that they could hardly outlive such an apparition; what shall we think of the great and terrible God, as he is called, #Ne 1:5, the first motion of whose anger shall put men into disorder, and the brightness of his offended majesty strike your spirits with astonishment? It is reported of Augustus, the emperor, and likewise of Tamerlane, that warlike Scythian, that in their eyes sate such a rare majesty, as a man could hardly endure to behold them without closing his own; and many in talking with them, and often beholding them, have become dumb (Turk. Hist. 236, 415). Now the Lord of glory as far outshineth any mortal wight as the sun in his strength doth a clod of clay; and this made Job cry out, #Job 9:34, "Let not his fear terrify me." Be not thou a terror to me, O Lord, saith holy Jeremiah, #Jer 17:17; and, The Lord most high is

terrible, saith David, **#Ps 47:2**. Most high he is, and therefore terrible.

And his dread fall upon you?] Some read the whole verse thus: Shall not this acceptation of him make you afraid, seeing his dread will fall upon you? *q.d.* Let the sense of your sin and the fear of his wrath, ready to seize upon you, deter you from passing an unrighteous sentence, and from harbouring such low conceits of God.

Ver. 12. **Your remembrances are like unto ashes, &c.]** Mr Beza readeth the whole verse thus: Your speeches are the words of ashes, and your stately bulwarks are but bulwarks of clay. And thus he paraphraseth: For these things which you allege as matters gathered by long observations, and which you thunder out against me as if they were most certain and grounded axioms, are indeed no more sound and substantial than ashes; and those your high forts, as it were, and turrets, out of which you assail me, are made but of dirt and mire. Others, by "your remembrances," understand with Mercer, *quicquid in vobis memorabile est*, whatsoever it is for the which you are so often remembered and mentioned by others, as your wealth, dignity, power, splendour, name, and fame, yea, your very life, is nothing else but ashes, and all shall return to ashes, and come to nought, according to that of Abraham, I am but dust and ashes, **#Ge 18:27**; such an infinite distance there is between God's unconceivable highness and your extreme meanness, or rather, utter nothingness.

Your bodies to bodies of clay] *i.e.* To images made of clay or earth; or, that which is highest in you, even your best enjoyments, your chiefest eminences, or greatest elevations, are like to a lump of clay, *terrae quam terimus, terrae quam gerimus*. See **#Job 4:19**. {See Trapp on "Job 4:19"}

Ver. 13. **Hold your peace, let me alone, &c.]** This he had requested of them before, **#Job 13:5**, and now having nipped them on the crown by these rebating arguments, he calls upon them again for silence and audience; which he now requesteth not, but requireth; and the rather, haply, because they began to take him off, as fearing lest by his unadvised expressions he should provoke the Lord to lay yet more load upon him. Wherefore he addeth,

And let come on me what will] That is, at my peril be it, take you no thought; let all the trouble that may ensue be on my score, I will be accountable for it to God, who, I hope, will be more favourable to me than you: *Interim non sine stomacho hoc dicit*, saith Mercer; This Job speaketh not without some heat, yet not as one desperate; but rather resolute; for he feared no hurt from God.

Ver. 14. **Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?**] *q.d.* Do ye think, O my friends, that I am in a fit of spiritual frenzy, and so far out of my wits, that tearing, as it were, my flesh with mine own hands, I mean to sue any cruelty towards myself, and willingly to betray mine own life? (Vatab.) *Non sum ira crudelis, ut totus perdi velim*, I am not yet so cruel to myself (whatever you may gather by my complaints and outcries) as utterly to cast away my confidence and all care of my life and soul. See #1Sa 19:5. To despair in part and for a time may befall a godly man. See Mr Perkins's discourse of Spiritual Desertion, where he remembereth that Luther lay (after his conversion) three days in desperation. And the like is recorded of Mr Robert Bolton. *Aliqui suspicantur Iobum respondentem, &c.* (Pineda). But of any good man that destroyed himself we read not. David's life was in his hand continually (and he in daily danger of losing it), yet have I not forgotten thy law, saith he, #Ps 119:109, which flatly forbiddeth all the degrees of suicide, as the worst sort. That Satan tempted Job to this sin some do probably collect from this text. A man is to expect, if he live but his days, saith a reverend casuist, *{A theologian (or other person) who studies and resolves cases of conscience or doubtful questions regarding duty and conduct}* to be urged to all sins, to the breach of every branch of the ten commandments, and to be put to it in respect of every article of our creed.

Ver. 15. **Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him]** Though he should multiply my miseries, and lay stroke after stroke upon me, till he had dashed the very breath out of my body, yet he shall not be so rid of me, for I will hang on still; and if I must needs die, I will die at his feet, and in the midst of death expect a better life from him. *Dam expiro spero*, shall be my motto. "The righteous hath hope in his death," #Pr 14:32; yea, his hope is most lively when himself lieth a dying, *superest sperare salutem*. "My flesh and my heart faileth," saith he; "but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever," #Ps 73:26. True faith in a danger (as the blood)

gets to the heart, **#Joh 14:1**, and if itself be in good heart it will believe in an angry God, as **#Isa 63:1 5,16** (the Church there thought she should know him amidst all his austerities); yea, in a killing God, as here; yea (as a man may say with reverence), whether God will or no, as that woman of Canaan, Matt. xv., who would not be damped or discouraged with Christ's either silence or sad answers; and therefore had what she came for, besides a high commendation of her heroic faith.

But (or nevertheless) I will maintain mine own ways before him]

We have had the triumph of Job's trust, here we have the grounds for it, viz. his uprightness, the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world, **#2Co 2:12**. This was his cordial, without which grief would have broken his heart, **#Ps 69:20**; this was his confidence, even the clearness of his conscience, **#1Jo 3:21**. Uprightness hath boldness; and that man who walks uprightly before God may trust perfectly in God. Job was either innocent or penitent; he would therefore either maintain his ways before God, and come to the light, that his deeds might be manifest, that they were wrought in God, **#Joh 3:21**, *Quem poenitet peccasse pene est innocens* (Sen. Again.), or else he would reprove and correct his ways (so the Hebrew word signifieth also), that is, he would confess and forsake his sins, and so be sure to have mercy, according to that soul satisfying promise, **#Pr 28:13**. Ver. 16. **He also shall be my salvation]** So long as I judge myself God will not judge me, **#1Co 11:32**; nay, he will surely save me: for God will save the humble person, **#Job 22:29**. What is humiliation but humility exercised? (Merlin in loc.) *Non est igitur inanis electorum fides res evanida nec infirma*, saith an interpreter here; Therefore the faith of God's elect is no empty or vain thing, but a light shining from the Spirit of God, and such as overcometh the very darkness of death. It is a sure testimony of God's good will toward us, and an infallible persuasion of our salvation, such as slighteth the world's false censures, overcometh temptations of all sorts, laugheth at death, and through the thickest darkness of affliction beholdeth the pleased face of God in Christ, through whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him, **#Eph 2:12**.

For an hypocrite shall not come before him] No, that is a privilege proper to the communion of saints; therefore I am no hypocrite, as you have charged me to be, **#Job 4:6 8:13**; for I dare both offer to maintain my ways before him to be upright for the main, and I doubt not but he will be my salvation, and that I shall appear before him in heaven: this no hypocrite shall ever do. *Coram Deo dolus non ingreditur.* How should he (say), when as he is an unclean wretch, as the Hebrew word signifieth; flagitious (so Vatablus rendereth it); a flagitious, impious person, a very juggle (so the Septuagint); a fair professor indeed, but a foul sinner, moiled all over, and even buried in a bog of wickedness. He is a wicked man in a godly man's clothes, saith one. He doth but assume religion, saith another, as the devils do dead bodies without a soul to animate them. He is like the painted grapes that deceived the living birds; or the golden apples with this motto, No further than colours; touch them, and they vanish. He knows that he is naught, and that God knows it too; how then should he approach him, or appear before his throne? No, he dare not, for the very show of his face doth testify against him, as the prophet speaks in another case; or if he do, he shall not be able to subsist there, **#Ps 5:5**; he shall not stand in judgment, **#Ps 1:5**, but shall run away with these or the like words in his mouth, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" **#Isa 33:14**. "Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hands of this mighty God?" **#1Sa 4:8**. None, for he shall surely assign you a part with the devil and hypocrites, **#Mt 24:51**; when as the righteous shall give thanks unto God's name, and the upright only shall dwell in his presence, **#Ps 140:13**.

Ver. 17. **Hear diligently my speech]** Heb. Hearing hear, that is, incline your ears and hear, as **#Isa 55:3**. Mark and attend; hear me not only, but heed me too; interrupt me not, neither give me the slip, as it may seem they were ready to do, when they heard him profess such a deal of faith and hope under so many and heavy afflictions; wherein they thought that either he was beside himself, or, at least, beside the cushion, as we say, and utterly out. See **#Job 13:6**, and observe, that it is but needful often to stir up our auditors to attention. Job makes more prefaces than one to be heard; so do the prophets often. Hear the word of the Lord, hear and give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken it. So doth the arch prophet more

than once, #Re 2:7,11,17,29 3:6,13,22 Mt 13:9, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." All Christ's hearers had not ears; or if they had, yet they were stopped; or if open, yet the bore was not large enough. Oh pray that God would say unto us, Ephphatha, be opened, for a heavy ear is a singular judgment.

Ver. 18. **Behold now, I have ordered my cause]** Heb. My judgment. He had spoken before of his declaration, which is conceived to be a term of law; for in law suits, the plaintiff putteth in a declaration of his grievance. Job had his declaration ready drawn, and craved audience; he asketh afterwards, Who will plead with me? and here in the like language he telleth us that he had ordered his cause, he had marshalled and methodized his arguments, he had set and stated the controversy. Lo, here I stand ready prepared to plead, and am confident I shall prevail.

I know that I shall be justified] That is, I am persuaded, or, I am sure, as #Ro 8:38, I believe and I know, as #Joh 6:69, *sc.* with a fiducial knowledge, that I shall be justified, *sc.* from my sins, by Christ's righteousness imputed (yea, that I am so already, and that for ever; for *peccata non redeunt*, discharges in justification are not repealed or called in again), and that I shall depart from God's bar acquitted in this particular controversy. And so he did; for God justified Job, and reprov'd his three friends, #Job 42:7,8

Ver. 19. **Who is he that will plead with me?]** Of my justification in both respects I am so confident, that I dare encounter any that shall deny it. Who is he, and where is he, that shall lay anything to my charge, since it is God that justifieth? #Ro 8:33. Having ordered my cause, and cleared my conscience by confession and judging myself, and now being justified by faith, I can cast down the gauntlet to all comers, and, Goliath like, call for an opposite to grapple with; in the name of the Lord of hosts I will undertake him, and am sure to come off more than a conqueror, even a triumph, #2Co 2:14, there being not any one "condemnation" (neither from God, nor the devil, from the law, sin, or death) "to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," as Job did, #Ro 8:1,33. Here he challengeth all the world, saith Gregory, if they could, to accuse him for anything outwardly done amiss by him. And herein if none could tax him, there, was nothing but evil cogitations in his heart, of which he could be guilty; but for these, from which none can be free, he

held not his peace, but spake and complained internally hereof to God by reproving his own ways; and if he should have been silent, and not speak hereof, and bewail them, he should die and perish; for so he readeth the following words, according to the Vulgate translation.

For now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost] Vulgate Wherefore being silent, I am consumed. Broughton, If now I speak not, I should starve. The Hebrew is, For now I shall be silent and die, *q.d.* My passion must have a vent, or else it will make an end of me, as **#Job 7:11**; so tormented I am with these aspersions of my friends, that I know not how to live unless I may wipe them off; or, at least, unless I pour out my soul into God's blessed bosom.

Ver. 20. **Only do not two things unto me]** Accord me only two conditions, and then I will not fly the combat. He knew he might have anything from God that was fit and lawful to be asked. When poor men make requests to princes they usually answer them as the echo doth the voice, the answer cuts off half the petition; and if they beg two boons at once, they may be glad that they get one. But God dealeth by his servants and suppliants not only as the prophet did by the Shunammite (when he bade her ask what she needed, and promised her a son, which she most desired, and yet through modesty asked not, **#2Ki 4:16**), but also as Naaman did by Gehazi, when, asking one talent, he forced him to take two. This Job well knew, and, therefore, he beggeth two things at once; but better he had begged that one thing necessary, patience; or, if two, the best use of his present sufferings. As we read of one good man, that, lying under great torments of a gall stone, he would often cry out while his friends melted with compassion towards him, The use, Lord, the use; and of Mr William Perkins, that, when he lay in his last and killing torment of the gall stone, hearing the bystanders pray for a mitigation of his pain, he willed them not to pray for an ease of his complaint, but for an increase of his patience (Mr Leigh's Saints' Encouragement, &c., p. 164; Dr Hall's Rem. of Profaneness, p. 143): thus if Job had done, he had done better; but by what he doth here we may easily gather that he expected no freedom from his misery but from God alone; and that he was wont familiarly to impart to God all the thoughts and actings of his heart; and, lastly, that he acknowledged him to be a most righteous Judge, who would

not deal with his people upon unequal conditions, but give them a fair trial.

Then will I not hide myself from thee] *i.e.* I shall have no cause, either through fear or shame, to hide myself. It is not safe for a man to indent with God, and make a bargain with him; for so one may have the thing he would have, but better be without it; as those workmen, **#Mt 20:9-14**, who bargained for a penny a day, and yet when they had it, were no whit contented. Socrates thought it was not fit to ask of God any more than this, that he would bestow good things upon us; but what, and how much, to leave that to him, not being overly earnest, or presuming to prescribe aught. Sir Thomas Moore's wife was mightily desirous of a boy (that was her word), and she had one that proved a fool; and, saith her husband, you were never quiet till you had a boy, and now you have one that will be all his life a boy. But what were those two things that Job was so earnest for?

Ver. 21. **Withdraw thy hand from me, and let not, &c.]** Neither afflict me nor frighten me. See the same request, **#Job 9:34**, and granted by God, **#Job 38:3 40:7**. They must be very sorry prayers indeed that God will not hear, if they come from honest hearts: **#Ps 31:22**, "I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee." For the sense of this whole verse— *{See Trapp on "Job 9:34"}*

And let not thy dread make me afraid] Appear not unto me in thy majesty, but in thy mercy; come not upon me in such a terrific manner, as through astonishment at thy surpassing glory to kill me, for who can see thy face and live? Surely, as the sight of the eye is dazzled with the sun, or a crystal glass broken with the fire, so there is so much dread in the face of God that the best cannot behold it. Destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure, **#Job 31:23**.

Ver. 22. **Then call thou, and I will answer, &c.]** Here Job gives God his choice, offering to be either defendant or plaintiff, respondent or opponent: *Hoc multum erat*, saith Lavater. This was much, and indeed too much; for if God should enter into judgment with his best servants, no man living should be justified in his sight,

#Ps 143:2. The best may bear a part in that song of mercy, *Asperge me, Domine*, " Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me," &c., **#Ps 51:7.** Job is confident of his innocence, and he might be for that particular wherewith his friends charged him, viz. that he was a hypocrite, but yet in defending himself, and charging God so highly, as he doth in this and the next chapter, he cannot be excused: what though he knew himself justified by Christ's righteousness, imputed according to the covenant of grace; *Omnino tamen semper est Iob immodicus*, Yet altogether always Job is excessive, saith Mercer here; yet surely he passeth the bounds of moderation, and is overly bold in this offer of his, laying the reins in the neck of his passions, *Fertur equis auriga*, &c. Cajetan saith these words are arrogant and scandalous; and Eliphaz is supposed for this passage to tax Job as he did, **#Job 15:4**, "Yea, thou castest off fear."

Or let me speak, and answer thou me] *i.e.* I will be plaintiff or opponent, I will be bold to say, it is not seemly to handle him as an enemy, who knows nothing by himself. If there be anything more than involuntary and unavoidable infirmity in me, show me what, and how many my sins are, that require so many and great punishments.

Ver. 23. **How many are mine iniquities and sins?**] How many? too many to be reckoned: sin imputed to thee, sins inherent in thee, sins issuing from thee; commissions, omissions, failings in the manner of performance (for a good work may be marred in the doing, as many a garment is in the making, and many a tale in the telling); thy life is fuller of sins than the firmament is of stars or the furnace of sparks, besides thy birthblot and inward evils which might justly cause thy destruction, as a man may die of inward bleeding. When the house is well swept, and all rooms seem very clean, if the sun do but shine into it through the windows, the beams thereof discover an infinite number of motes in all places; so will it be with the best, if narrowly examined. Lesser sins, secret faults, are of daily, and almost hourly, incursion; yet we must be cleansed from them, **#Ps 19:12**, or else *vae hominum vitro quantumvis laudabili*, saith one, Woe to the life of men, though praiseworthy, as the world judgeth. A pardon there is of course for such sins, and they do not usually distract and plunge the conscience; but yet that pardon must be sued out, and these sins must be disliked and bewailed.

Make me to know my transgression and my sin] That particular sin that thou chiefly striketh at for every affliction hath a voice in it, **#Mic 6:9**, and saith to the sufferer, as those mariners did to Jonah, **#Jon 1:8**, What evil hast thou committed, or admitted? what good hast thou omitted, or intermitted? Up and search. Israel hath sinned: why liest thou upon thy face? as the Lord once said to Joshua, **#Jos 7:10,11**: something surely there is amiss that God would have amended; it is, therefore, meet to be said unto him, "Make me to know my transgression and my sin," yea, the iniquity of my sin, the filthiness of my lewdness, all my transgressions in all my sins, as the phrase is, **#Le 16:21**, that is, how many transgressions are wrapped up in my several sins and their circumstances. This either Job meant here, or else he was afterwards by Elihu tutored to it, **#Job 34:31,32**, "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more."

Ver. 24. **Wherefore hidest thou thy face]** Who wast wont to shine upon me, **#Job 29:2,3**. He that hideth his face showeth that he neither pitieth nor purposeth to relieve. God seemed to look upon Job no otherwise than as under Satan's cloak, said that martyr. But he hideth his love sometimes out of increasement of love, as Joseph did to his brethren; and is never so near us as when, with Mary Magdalene, we are so bleared with tears for his absence, that we cannot see him, though at hand. A child of light may walk in darkness, **#Isa 50:10**, which, when he doth, he must resolve, as **#Isa 8:17**, I will wait upon the Lord, who hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look tbr him: he must also in that dark condition cast anchor, as they did in the shipwreck, **#Ac 27:29,30**, and pray still for day, waiting till the day star arise in their hearts, and all clear up.

And holdest me for thine enemy?] Which if God should have doue indeed, it would have been wide with Job, and far worse than ever yet it had been; for if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? **#1Sa 24:19**. I think not, unless it be for a greater mischief at another time. But Job was out when he judged himself hated of God, because afflicted, since he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, **#Heb 12:5**. See my Love tokens, pp. 23, 54.

Ver. 25. **Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? &c.]** *q.d.* *Egregiam vero laudem*, Thinkest thou to get any honour by encountering and overturning me, who was at my best but as a leaf, or as stubble, weak and worthless; and am now, by reason of mine afflictions, but as a leaf blown off, and whirled up and down, *Indignum est maiestate tua, ut misellum homuncionem, &c.* (Jan.); or as stubble fully dried, which is soon scattered by the wind, **#Ps 1:4**, or quickly burnt by the fire, **#Na 1:10**. David reasoneth in this manner with Saul, **#1Sa 24:14**, "After whom is the king of Israel come forth? after whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea." A great purchase surely! a great victory!

— *An gloria tanta est
Insidias homini supposuisse Deum? (Tibul.)*

The truth is, God doth not afflict any man (whom he knows to be a thing of nothing) on purpose to try his strength, or to show his power; but either to exercise his justice upon the wicked, or to prove the faith of his people, and to promote their salvation.

Ver. 26. **For thou writest bitter things against me]** As it were by a judicial rescript thou decreest my doom; and accordingly thou inflictest hard and heavy things upon me, as is most elegantly described in the following verses by metaphor fetched from the course of courts, *Humanitus dictum ex usu forensi* (Jun.). Sin is an evil and a bitter thing, **#Jer 2:19 Heb 12:15 Ac 8:23**; and hath bitter effects, **#Ru 1:20 Ex 1:14**. This made that holy man, Mr Paul Baine, say, The sweet ways of my youth did breed such worms in my soul, as that my heavenly Father will have me yet a little while continue my bitter worm seed, because they cannot otherwise be thoroughly killed. I thank God, saith he in another place, sustentation I have, but sweet spirituals I taste not any (Mr Clark in his Life). It is reported of this good man that, when he came first to Cambridge, his conversation was so irregular, that his father, being grieved at it, before his death left with a friend forty pounds by the year, desiring that his son might have it if he amended his manners, else not: he afterwards had it, as he well deserved, as proving a notable instrument of much good to many, and particularly to that Reverend Dr Sibbs, whom he converted; howbeit, in his last sickness he had many fears and doubts, and God letting Satan loose upon him, he

went out of this world with far less comfort than many weaker Christians enjoy; his case being not unlike his who saith in the next words,

And makest me to possess (or to inherit) the iniquities of my youth] Which I took for pardoned long since (and so no doubt but they were); but Job's affliction renewed the remembrance of them to his conscience, as it is the best art of memory. Satan also made him believe that now he was punished for the new and the old, as we say, and that God meant to make him answer for all the sins of his life at once, having watched a time to be revenged on him for all together. Youth is a slippery age, and soon slips into sin. There is great cause that a young man should cleanse his ways, **#Ps 119:9**, where the word *Nagnar*, signifying a lad, or stripling, comes from a root signifying to shake off, or to be tossed to and fro. And the other word, rendered cleanse, signifieth to be clean as glass, which will soon gather a new dustiness. Such must cleanse their ways, by cleaving to the word; or otherwise, they may one day groan as much under the sins then committed as many do under the blows and bruises then received. See the former note.

Ver. 27. Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks] Mercer here observeth an elegant gradation in God's proceeding with Job, as himself describeth it, rising higher and higher in his discourse. 1. God hid his face, and denied him his favour. 2. He counted him as his enemy. 3. He broke him like a leaf or stubble. 4. He wrote bitter things against him. 5. He made him possess the sins of his youth. 6. For his young sins he claps him up close prisoner now in his old age, and there keeps him as with a strict guard following him close at heels if he but stir a foot. Was there ever sorrow like unto Job's sorrow? was ever greater severity and rigour showed upon any godly person? Where, then, shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? &c. God's wrath is like Elijah's cloud, little at first, as a man's hand, but soon after very dismal and dreadful; or as thunder, of which we hear at first a little noise afar off, but soon after a terrible crack. Well might Moses say, "Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" **#Ps 90:11**, *Cavebis autem, si pavebis*. You will beware if you will be frightened.

And lookest narrowly into all my paths] He saith not ways, but paths. Gregory maketh this difference: ways are larger, paths narrower. God then is said to look into all men's paths, when he looketh not only at the evil done by them, but at the intention of their mind, which is not so easily discerned but by him, the searcher of all hearts. And for that which followeth,

Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet] Gregory here observeth, that God looketh at the hurt done to others by examples given by men's evil doings unto them, leaving a print upon the ground, as it were, whereby others follow them, and so their sin is in this regard made the greater; to which purpose some sense those words, **#Ps 49:5**, "When the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about." Others make Job's meaning here to be, Thou followest me with continual pursuit, as a prisoner that is dogged at heels by his keeper from place to place, lest he should escape. Thou followest me close, and upon the track, like a hunter, **#Job 10:16**. The footsteps of thy wrath (saith an interpreter) are seen upon the soles of my feet (so that from top to toe I have no free part), like as prisoners' feet are oft swelled with the weight of their fetters.

Ver. 28. **And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth]** Heb. Waxeth old. He, that is, this poor man, this silly wretch, as David speaketh of himself, **#Ps 34:6**. Or this body of mine, as **#Job 19:26**; Job pointing to it, as it is like he did there; and Paul, **#1Co 15:53,54**. "As a rotten thing" (Heb. as rottenness), "consumeth." When a thing once rotteth, as an apple, flesh, &c., it soon perisheth. Such is man, under pressing afflictions especially.

And as a garment that is moth eaten] The beauty whereof is defaced, and the usefulness departed.

Chapter 14

Ver. 1. **Man that is born of a woman, &c.]** Or, that is borne about by a woman in her womb. Job's design is here to set forth the misery of man (whom in the last verse of the former chapter he had compared, 1. To a rotten thing; 2. To a moth eaten garment), *ab exordio ad exodium*, from his conception to his dissolution. Man, earthly man, that is born of a woman, or mannesse, that weaker vessel, who both breedeth, beareth, and bringeth forth in sorrow a

weak sorry man, #Ge 3:16, and is (as Gregory expresseth it) *ante partum onerosa, in partu dolorosa, post partum laboriosa*, every way calamitous; neither is her babe in a better condition, but born with a cross on his back (as the story is told of Frederick, the Elector of Saxony), and having his whole life overspread with sins and miseries, as with a filthy leprous eruption. (Joh. Manl. loc. com.)

Is of few days] Heb. Short of days. Short indeed, everything reckoned; for, 1. Childhood and youth are vanity. 2. Sleep, as a publican, takes off a third part of our time. 3. All the days of the afflicted are evil, and *Mortis habet vices quae trahitur vita gemitibus* (Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 10); it is not a life, but a death rather that is spent in sorrow; in which regard Plotinus, the philosopher, held mortality a mercy, that we may not always be held under the miseries of this life present. 4. Scarce one of a thousand live that little time that they are here, but woefully waste the flower of their age, the strength of their bodies, the vigour of their spirits, in sinful pleasures and sensual delights, and then either sit and sing all too late, and in vain,

O mihi praeteritos referat si Iupiter annos!

or else complain with old Themistocles, that now they must die when they do but begin only to be wise. The life of a wicked man runneth out as the sand in an hour glass, that doth little good; he considereth not that upon this little point of time hangs the crown of eternity; and that the very next moment he may be cut off from all possibility of repentance, acceptation, and grace for ever. Hence his many troubles here; all which are but typical of those hereafter; besides the fear of death, which maketh him all his lifetime subject to bondage, #Heb 2:15. It were much to be wished that men would consider their time is short, their task long, and that, therefore, they should use all speed and diligence; lest (so as children have usually torn their books) they have ended their lives before they have learned their lessons.

And full of trouble] Or, of indignation, commotion, perturbation. Those three vultures, fear, anger, grief, are frequently feeding upon his heart while he is in this world; and, like a ship in a storm, he is

tossed much, but faileth little or nothing. Few and evil are the days of my pilgrimage, saith good old Jacob, #Ge 47:9. And she in the poet could say as much of her son Achilles:

Νυν θ αμα ωκυμορος, και υζυρος περι παντων Επλεο—(Thetis ap. Hom. Iliad).

Ver. 2. **He cometh forth like a flower]** What he had asserted concerning the shortness of man's life is here illustrated by two elegant similitudes, frequently used, not in Scripture only, but in heathen authors, as were easy to instance, #Isa 28:1 40:6 Jas 1:10,11 1Pe 1:24. A flower hath a spring and a fall; so have men their times and their turns; their rise and their ruin. Why and how man in his flourish is like to a flower; see #Ps 103:15,16, where he is compared to a flower of the field (which lies open to all inconvenience), not of the garden, which is much sheltered from sharp winds, fenced from the teeth and feet of beasts, from the hands of children, strangers, &c.

And is cut down] Heb. Cut around, or circumcised, *sc.* by some nipping or blasting wind, such as that east wind, #Ge 41:23, or some cropping hand, or its own fading nature; and then it is not, saith David, #Ps 103:16, that is, it neither continues any longer in being, nor returns any more into being; no more doth man, though in his time never so flourishing.

He fleeth also] With post haste, as one that fleeth for life; so doth he from life, every moment yielding somewhat unto death: *Orimur; morimur; finisque ab origine pendet;* life, as fast as it increaseth, decreaseth. It is improper, saith one, to ask when we shall die, but rather when we shall make an end of dying?

As a shadow] As the shadow of a dial, our lives are continually hastening to their period, and never make stop. By these, and many the like comparisons (common in this Book and other Scriptures), we see how much God desireth that we should mind our mortality; to blame, then, are those who have one leg in the grave and the other in hell, and yet do put far away thoughts of death, and under gray hairs nourish green hopes and desires; neither may young men be excused who bind upon long life, and boast of tomorrow, #Pr 27:1, since

they know not what a great bellied day may bring forth. *Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam* (Hor. i.). The Jews have a proverb, that many times old camels carry young camels' skins to the market. And how often see we elder folk carry men's and children's bodies to the grave?

And continueth not] Heb. Standeth not, as a pillar, but vanisheth as a shadow, yea, as a dream of a shadow, as the Greek poet hath it, *τιδε τις; τιδ ουτις; σκιας οναρ ανθρωπος* (Pindar). The Vulgate translatheth, He continueth not in the same state. To have no shadow of turning, noteth the perfection of God, **#Jas 1:17**.

Ver. 3. **And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one?]** *sc.* To observe his faults strictly, and to punish him for the same severely? doth this become so great a Majesty? This Job speaketh, *non citra stomachum*, not without stomach, as forgetting himself through impatience, saith Mercer, and seeking to ease himself any way of the pains and dolours he sustained, being carried out of himself by his unruly passions. By this question Job doth *non tam admirari quam arguere*, saith Brentius; not so much wonder as warble with God, that he should care for so poor a creature, whom it might seem to him rather to contemn. But Job should have remembered, that God openeth his eyes upon man, not to punish him only, but to help and relieve him, **#Ps 34:15**. And at another time Job could set it upon the score of God's favours to man, that he visiteth him every morning (*viz.* by his fatherly chastisements) and trieth him every moment **#Job 7:17,18**.

And bringest me into judgment with thee?] Poor me, who am *τρισανθρωπος*, thrice a man; that is most miserable, even me thou questionest in the rigour of thy righteous judgment, *Me gravissimis tuis iudiciis extra ordinem divexas* (Mera.). See a like expostulation **#Ps 89:46-51**, and all to move God to compassion. Our frailty is a good pleadable argument to this purpose.

Ver. 4. **Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one]** *q. d.* I confess I am unclean; but what can I do withal? or how can I do otherwise, since I do but my kind? But was this a sufficient plea? David was of another mind when he alleged this as a great aggravation of his bloodguiltiness, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," **#Ps 51:5**: *q. d.* I

have not only fallen into these foul sins, but I have done it out of the venomousness and vitiosity of my nature, commonly called original, and by the apostle inhabiting sin, **#Ro 7:17**, as by the schools *peccatum peccans*, the sinning sin, as that which is the source and seminary of all actual disobedience. And because this uncleanness is natural to us, therefore it maketh us as loathsome to God as a toad is to us, because poison is in the nature of it. Papists say (but not truly) that original sin is the smallest of all sins, not deserving any more of God's wrath than only a want of his blessed presence; and that too without any pain or sorrow of mind from the apprehension of so great a loss. They hold also those motions of the heart not consented to be no sins, but necessary conditions, arising from our constitution, and such as Adam had in his innocence. Contrariwise, Job here grants a birthblot upon all, and lays his hand upon it as the cause of the length of men's troubles and shortness of their lives; only he forgetteth himself (saith Mercer here) when he pleadeth that he should rather be pitied than thus sharply punished, because he was naturally inclined to sin, and cannot avoid it. For as Aristotle saith of drunkards, that they deserve double punishments, *διπλα τα τιτιμια* (Ethic. lib. 3, cap. 5); first, for their drunkenness, and then for the sin committed in and by their drunkenness: so do all men deserve double damnation; first, for the corruption of nature (signified by those legal pollutions, by bodily issues), and then for the cursed effects of it, **#Ge 6:5 Ro 7:8**. But it may be Job here had an eye to that promise made to Noah after the flood, **#Ge 8:21**, where the Lord moveth himself to mercy by consideration of man's native corruption, even from his childhood, for he knoweth our frame, &c., **#Ps 103:14**, that is (as the Chaldee paraphrast explaineth it), he knoweth our evil figment or thought which impelleth to sin; he knoweth it, and weigheth it. See the like **#Isa 48:8,9**. We may beseech the Lord to spare us when we act in sin, because our natures are sinful; but let not any go about either to palliate or extenuate their acts of sin by the sinfulness of their natures; as those do, who, being told of their evil pranks and practices, plead for them, saying, We are flesh and blood, &c.

Not one] *Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis*; but no mere man can bring forth a clean child out of unclean seed. Adam begat a son after his own image, **#Ge 5:3**. *Corruptus corruptum*, that which is of the

flesh, **#Joh 3:3-8**. Sin is propagated, and proceedeth from the union of body and soul into one man. That phrase, warmed in sin, **#Ps 51:5**, is meant of the preparation of the body, as an instrument of evil, which is not so actually till the soul come. But we should not be so inquisitive how sin came in, as how to be rid of it; like as when a fire is kindled in a city, all men are more careful to quench it than to question where and how it began. Now there is one only way of ridding our hearts of sin, viz. to run to Christ, and to believe in him; "For if the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed"; and hereunto, both the Chaldee paraphrast had respect, likely, when he rendered this text, Cannot one? that is, cannot God? as also the Vulgate Latin, *Nonne tu qui solus es? Canst not thou alone? sc.* by thy merit and Spirit, according to that of the apostle, **#1Co 6:11**.

Ver. 5. **Seeing his days are determined, &c.**] God hath set every man both his time (whether shorter, called here his days, or longer, the number of his months, they have both their bounds which none can pass) and also his task, **#Ac 13:25**. John fulfilled his course, *et in brevi vitae spatio tempora virtutum multa replevit*, and he lived long in a little time; he wrought hard, as not willing to be taken with his task undone (Hieron.). So **#Ac 13:36**. David, after he had served his own generation, and had done all the will of God, fell on sleep. See more of this on **#Job 7:1**.

Thou hast appointed his bounds] Heb. His statutes. It is appointed for all men once to die, **#Heb 9:27**, once for all, and for ever it is appointed, and this statute is irrevocable. Here then we see the cause why some, likely to live long, die soon, and others more infirm live longer. God hath set the bounds of each one's life to a very day. The bounds may be passed which our natural complexion setteth; the bounds cannot be passed which the providence and will of God setteth. *Stat sua cuique dies* -(Virg.).

Ver. 6. **Turn from him, that he may rest]** Heb. Look away from him, *i.e.* from me; look not so narrowly, and with such a critical eye, upon mine out strays, thus to hold me still on the rack; look not so angrily, afflict me not so heavily, but let me rest or cease from my present pressures and doleful complaints, and spend the span of this transitory life with some comfort, and then let the time of my departure come when thou pleasest.

Till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day] That is, saith the gloss, till I am as willing to die as a labouring man is to go to supper and to bed. The word rendered accomplish signifieth properly to acquiesce, and rest in a thing, and vehemently to desire it. The saints, when they die, shall rest in their beds, **#Isa 57:2**, they rest from their labours, **#Re 14:13**, and that *απαρτι*, presently, straight upon the stroke of death; no sooner have they passed under the flaming sword of that punishing angel but they are forthwith in paradise. Here they are seldom quiet, but tossed up and down as the ball upon the racket, or ship upon the waves; and hence it is that they sometimes fret or faint, as Job, and speak unadvisedly with their lips; these firm mountains are moved with earthquakes, these calm seas are stirred with tempests; and truly, whosoever hath set himself to do every day's work with Christian diligence, to bear every day's crosses with Christian patience, and is sensible of his failings in both; *libenter ex vitae, et quasi pleno passu egredietur*, saith one, he will be full glad to be gone hence, and be as weary of his life as ever any hireling was of his work. {See Trapp on "Job 7:1"} {See Trapp on "Job 7:2"}

Ver. 7. For there is hope of a tree, &c.] Here Job setteth on his request, **#Job 14:6**, with a reason; God loveth a reasonable service, and liketh well that we reverently reason it out with him. And for the literal sense, all things, saith Gregory, are so plain, that there is no need to say anything to that, it being no more than this; either I shall have comfort in this world before I die, or never here; therefore grant me rest now. This argument Job illustrateth, 1. By a dissimilitude, here. 2. By a similitude, **#Job 14:11,12**. The dissimilitude between a tree and a man is this: a tree may be hewed and felled, yet feel no pain. Again, *succisa repullulat, imbribus irrigata*, a tree cut down, if well watered, -will spring and sprout up again (Merlin). But now man, as he is very sensible of every stroke of God's hand, neither can he suffer sickness or other affliction without smart, so when once cut down by death, he can by no means be recovered; he cannot revive without a miracle.

Ver. 8. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth] And so the more unlikely to shoot forth again. Trees also have their old age wherein they decay.

And the stock thereof die in the ground] Heb. In the dust, as it needs must, when, cut off from the root, it lieth along on the earth. It was by a miracle that Aaron's rod flourished: not only all the plants of God's setting, but the very boughs cut off from the body of them, shall flourish and be fruitful.

Ver. 9. **Yet through the scent of water it will bud]** Heb. From the smell of waters. A sweet metaphor, saith Merlin, sense being attributed to things senseless, as smelling to the fire, **#Jud 16:9**, and here to trees, which are said to turn themselves and their roots after a sort, to take in the smell of the water, and thereby refreshed to bud and bring forth boughs, like a plant. This is check to those that live under the droppings of the ordinances, and yet are like the cypress tree, which, the more it is watered, proves the less fruitful, and being once cut down, it never springs again; whence the Romans, who did not believe in a resurrection, were wont to place a cypress tree at the threshold of the house of death, as Pliny and Servius tell us. (Serv. in Virg. 1. 4; Plin. lib. 16, cap. 32.)

Ver. 10. **But man dieth, and wasteth away]** Heb. Strong and lusty man, *Homo quantum vis robustus* (Vat.), dieth and wasteth away, or is cut off, *sc.* worse than a tree, for he grows no more; or is discomfited, vanquished, as **#Ex 17:13 32:18**, *sc.* by death, and so carried clean out of this world.

Yea, man giveth up the ghost] *Homo vulgaris et plebeius*. All of all sorts must die, whether noble or ignoble, as Rabbi Abraham here observeth. Job is very much in this discourse about death; and surely, as Nazianzen wisheth of hell, so could I of death, *Utinam ubique de morte dissemeretur!* Oh that it were more in men's minds and mouths than it is!

And where is he?] *q.d.* Nowhere above ground; or if he be, *putrefit et teterrime olet, he putrefies* and stinks filthily; and as his life is taken away, so is his glory; yea, being once out of sight, he grows by little and little out of mind too, little thought of, less spoken of, many times not so much as his name mentioned or remembered in the next generation, **#Ec 1:11**. There is no remembrance of former things, or men, neither shall there be any remembrance, &c. So **#Ec 2:16 8:10 9:5**. Hence the state of the dead is called "the land of

forgetfulness," #Ps 88:12 31:12, "I am forgotten, as a dead man out of mind." Heathens also say the same (Hor. lib. 4, Carm. 7):

Cum semel occideris, et de te splendida Minos

Fecerit arbitria,

Non, Torquate, genus, non te facundia, non te

Restituet pietas.

Ver. 11. **As the waters fail from the sea]** He sets forth the same truth by an elegant similitude drawn from drying up of waters. Look how these, after some exundation of the sea, or some great river, are separated and left (upon the reflux thereof) behind the rest upon the land, which cannot return (for then they must ascend, which is impossible to nature) nor continue, but do utterly dry up, and evaporate; *sc.* & *c.*, #Job 14:11. Others read it thus, As when the waters from the sea fail, the flood decayeth, and drieth up; so when man's life is taken away, it returns no more while this world lasteth. God hath made in the bowels of the earth certain secret ways, passages, and veins through which water conveyeth itself from the sea to all parts, and hath its saltness taken away in the passage. Thence are our springs, and from them our rivers; but in hot countries and dry seasons springs are dry, and rivers lack water exceedingly; as at this time they do, March 7th, 1653. So when natural moisture decayeth in man, he faileth and dieth; the radical humour, that supplement and oil of life, is dried up, and can be no more renewed till the last day, when yet it shall not be restored to the same state and moisture, but, instead of natural, rise spiritual, #1Co 15:44.

Ver. 12. **So man lieth down]** *sc.* In the dust of death, or in the bed of the grave; his dormitory, till the last day.

Ut somnus morris, sic lectus imago sepulchri.

And riseth not] *sc.* To live again among men. So, #Ps 78:39, man is compared to a wind, which, when it is past, returneth not again. If it be objected, that we read of three in the Old Testament, and five in the New, raised from death to life; besides those many that arose and came out of the graves after Christ's resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many, #Mt 27:52,53; it is answered, 1.

These few raised by God's extraordinary power do not infringe the truth of what the Scripture here and elsewhere affirmeth of all mankind according to the ordinary course of nature. 2. Even those men also afterwards died again, and vanished, no more to return or appear again in this world.

Till the heavens be no more] *i.e.* Never (say some interpreters), to wit, *vi sua*, by his own strength, and to a better condition in the land of the living; so the word "until" is used, #2Sa 6:13 Mt 5:26 1:25, *ut pie credimus*. How sound and clear Job was in the point of the resurrection we shall see, #Job 19:26, and because he falls upon it in the words next following here, some understand these words thus: They shall not rise till the general resurrections, when these heavens shall be changed and renewed, #Ps 102:25,26 Isa 65:17 2Pe 3:7,10,11 Re 21:1.

They shall not awake] Out of the sleep of death;

nor be raised] *viz.* By the sound of the last trump, till the last day. But raised they shall be, and sleep no more, *viz.* when the heavens shall be no more. And till that time the bodies of the saints are laid in the grave, as in a bed of down, or of spices, to mellow and ripen. This is matter of joy and triumph, #Isa 26:19 Da 12:2, when they were to lose all: so #Heb 11:35. The wicked also sleep in the grave, #Da 12:2, but shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt, *ib.*; their sick sleep shall have a woeful waking, for they shall be raised by virtue of Christ's judiciary power, and by the curse of the law, to look upon him whom they have pierced, and to hear from him that dreadful *Discedite*, "Depart, ye cursed," &c.

Ver. 13. **O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave]** As in a sweet and safe repository (*Sepulchrum est quasi scrinium vel capsula in quam reponitur corpus*), sanctuary! my soul meanwhile living and reigning with thee in heaven, expecting a glorious resurrection, and saying, How long, Lord, holy and true? The fable or fancy of Psychopannychia hath been long since hissed out, though lately revived by some libertines, that last brood of Beelzebub; our mortalists especially, who say, that the body and soul die together. But what saith the apostle, #Ro 8:10? "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of

righteousness." Now that Job thus woos death, and petitions for the grave, it is manifest that he saw some good in it, and that he promised himself by it *malorum ademptionem, bonorum adeptionem*, freedom from evil, and fulness of good. We should learn to familiarize death to ourselves, and put the grave under the fairest and easiest apprehensions, that we hear God speaking to us, as once he did Jacob, Fear not to go down to Egypt (so down to the grave), for I will go with thee, and will surely bring thee up again, #Ge 46:3,4. Or as he did his labouring Church, #Isa 26:20, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

That thou wouldest keep me secret] *In limbo Patrum*, say the Papists, *in parabola ovis capras suas quaerentes*.

Until thy wrath be past] For it is such as I can of myself neither avoid nor abide. Turn it away, therefore, or turn it into gentleness and kindness, #Ps 6:4, and be friends again, #Jer 2:35. Or, secrete and secure me till the resurrection, when all thy wrath will be gone from me.

That thou wouldest appoint me a set time] Heb. Set me a statute; set down even what time thou pleasest, either to send me to bed, or to call me up again, so that thou wilt but be sure at last to remember me.

And remember me] Job is willing to die out of the world, but not to die out of God's memory; to be out of sight, but not out of mind; that God should bury him in the grave, but not bury his thoughts of him; he could be content to be free among the dead, free of that company, but not as the slain that lie in the grave, whom God remembereth no more, #Ps 88:5. Job would be remembered for good, as Nehemiah prayeth, and be dealt with as Moses was, whose body, once hid in the valley of Moab, did afterwards appear glorious in mount Tabor at the transfiguration.

Ver. 14. **If a man die, shall he live again?**] This he speaketh in way of admiration at that glorious work of the resurrection. See the like question #Job 15:11 Ge 3:1 17:17. So the apostle, #Ro 8:30,31,

having spoken of those glorious things, predestination, vocation, justification, glorification, concludeth in these words, "What shall we say then?" We cannot tell what to say to these things, so much are we amazed at the greatness of God's goodness in them. Surely, as they have a lovely scarlet blush of Christ's blood upon them, so they are rayed upon with a beam of divine love, to them that are in Christ. We read of that godly and learned Scotch divine, Mr John Knox, that a little before his death he got up out of his bed, and being asked by his friends, why, being so sick, he would offer to rise, and not rather take his rest? he answered, that he had all the last night been taken up in the meditation of the resurrection, and that he would now go up into the pulpit, that he might impart to others the comforts which thereby himself had received. And surely if he had been able to have done as he desired, I know not what text fitter for his purpose he could have taken, than these words of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" He shall without question; and those that deny it or doubt it (as the Sadducees of old, and some brain sick people of late), they err, not knowing the Scriptures (this among the rest), which are express for it, and the power of God, **#Mt 22:29**, being herein worse than devils, which believe it and tremble, worse than some heathens, who held there would be a resurrection, as Zoroastes, Theopompus, Plato, &c., worse than Turks, who at this day confess and wait for a resurrection of the body at such a time as the fearful trumpet (which they call Soor) shall be sounded by Mahomet, say they, at the command of the great God of the judgment.

All the days of mine appointed time (or warfare) will I wait, till my change come] *i.e.* Till my death, (**#Pr 31:8**, men appointed to die are called in the original children of change) or till the resurrection come, when we shall all be changed, **#1Co 15:51**, our vile bodies shall be changed and conformed to Christ's most glorious body (the standard), **#Php 3:21**, in beauty, agility, impassibility, and other angelical perfections. When I awake, saith David, *sc.* at that general resurrection, I shall be full of thine image, **#Ps 17:15**. I shall be brought from the jaws of death to the joys of eternal life, where are riches without rust, pleasures without pain, &c. Three glimpses of this glorious change were seen: 1. In Moses' face. 2. In Christ's transfiguration. 3. In Stephen's countenance

when he stood before the council. Such change as this is well worth waiting for: what would not a man do? what would he not suffer, with those noble professors, #**Heb 11:33-40**, to obtain a better resurrection? I would swim through a sea of brimstone, saith one, that I might come to heaven at last. The stone will fall down to come to its own place, though it break itself in twenty pieces: so we, that we may get to our centre, which is upwards, &c. *Sursum cursum nostrum dirigamus; et minantem, imminentem, et exterminantem mortem attendamus: ne simul, cum corporis fractura, animae iacturam faciamus.* Let us wait and wish every one for himself, as he once did:

Mi sine nocte diem, vitam sine morte, quietem

Det sine fine, dies, vita, quiesque Deus.

Ver. 15. **Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee]** At the resurrection of the just thou shalt call me out of the grave by thine all powerful voice, uttered by that archangel, with the trump of God, #**1Th 4:16 1Co 15:52 Ps 50:3,4**, and thou shalt not need to call twice; for as I shall not need then to fear (as the hypocrites will) to show my face, so I will readily answer, Here I am; yea (as that dying saint did so), I will say, I come, I come, I come. I will even leap out of the grave to obey thine orders; and I doubt not but, to draw me out of that dark prison, thou wilt lend me that hand of thine whereof I have the honour to be the workmanship.

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands] I know that thou thyself (for the love thou bearest me, of thy goodness, who am thy creature, and on whom thou hast shown favour, and reprinted thine image) wilt long after the consummation of my happiness; for then I shall be like unto thee (more like than ever), for I shall see thee as thou art, and appear with thee in glory, #**Col 3:4**, being next unto thee, #**Lu 22:30**; yea, one with thee, #**Joh 17:21**, and so above the most glorious angels, #**Heb 1:14**. The King shall greatly desire my beauty, #**Ps 45:11**, and rejoice over me, as the bridegroom doth over his bride, #**Isa 62:5 10:3**. The word here rendered thou wilt have a desire signifieth thou wilt desire as men do after silver. The Lord seemed to deal by Job as men do by dross, to put him away as wicked, #**Ps 119:119**; nevertheless, he believed that he would look upon him as silver: and although he now crushed him together, and

brake him to pieces, as the silversmith doth an old piece of plate which he means to melt; yet that he would in the grave, as in a furnace, refine him, and at the resurrection bring him out of a new fashion. Lo, this is the right logic of faith, to make conclusions of life in death, and of light in darkness, to gather one contrary out of another.

Ver. 16. **For now thou numberest my steps]** Or, But now thou numberest, &c., thou keepest an exact account of every sin of mine, of every step that I have trod awry; yea, though it be but some wry motion of my mind (as the Septuagint here translate), so curious art thou and critical in thine observations of mine outstrays, *επιτηδεύματα*. See **#Job 10:14**. But is this Job that speaketh, or some other? How confident was he erewhile, and comfortable in the hope of a glorious resurrection! but now down again upon all four, as we say; and like an aguish man in a great fit of impatience, which holdeth him to the end of the chapter. But for this, who knoweth not that every new man is two men? that in the saints the flesh is ever lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh? that in the Shulamite is, as it were, the company of two armies maintaining a continual contest? **#So 6:13**. "I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple," **#Jon 2:4**. *{See Trapp on "Jon 2:4"}*

Dost thou not watch over my sin?] This is the same with the former, but without a figure. The Rabbins have a saying, that there is not any doubt in the law but may be resolved by the context: the Scripture is its own interpreter.

Ver. 17. **My transgression is sealed up in a bag]** As the writings or informations of a process which is ready to be sentenced, **#De 32:34 Ho 13:12**. Thou hast, as it were, sealed up and made sure work with all my sins, saith Job, to have them forthcoming for the increase of my punishment. Look how the clerk of assizes (saith one) seals up the indictments of men, and at the assizes brings his bag, and takes them out to read the same against them; so God dealt with Job, in his conceit at least. The truth is, God had not sealed his transgressions in a bag, but had cast them behind his back. A bag God hath for men's sins, and a bottle he hath for their tears, **#Ps 56:8**. Now Job was one of those penitents that helped to fill God's bottle, and therefore he saw at length (though now he was benighted) all his sins, bag and

all, thrown in the sea, and sinking as a weighty millstone in those mighty waters of free grace and undeserved mercy.

And thou sewest up mine iniquity] *Adsuesne aliquid iniquitati meae?* so the Tigurines translate, *i.e.* Wilt thou sow or add anything to mine iniquity? wilt thou tie to it that tag (as a martyr phraseth) of the law's malediction, conjoining the punishment to the sin? *Adsuere ad iniquitatem, est poenas poenis continenter adiungere* (Merl.). Some make this an explication of the former; *q.d.* the bag is not only sealed, but, for more surety, sewed too, and that purposely for a purchase of punishment, as some sense it.

Ver. 18. **And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought]** *q.d.* If thou, Lord, proceed to deal thus rigidly with me, viz. to number or cipher up my steps, to watch over my sins, to seal them up in a bag, &c., and all this in fierce wrath, that thou mayest lay load upon me; what mountain, what rock, what other creature is ever able to abide it? Job had said before, "Is my strength the strength of stones?" **#Job 6:12**; "Am I a sea, or a whale?" **#Job 7:12**: were I these, or any the like robust creatures, yet could not I expect to stand before the displeased Omnipotency, who taketh the hills like tennis balls, and cracketh the rocks like a nut shell. See **#Hab 1:4-6**. {See Trapp on "Hab 1:4"} {See Trapp on "Hab 1:5"} {See Trapp on "Hab 1:6"}

And the rock is removed out of his place] As in earthquakes it sometimes happens. See **#Job 19:5**. Or by reason of the sea underlaking, it decayeth in time, and waxeth old, as the Hebrew word signifieth.

Ver. 19. **The waters wear the stones]** *Gutta cavat lapidem, &c.* The weakest things wear out the hardest by often falling upon them, or continual running over them; so doth God's wrath, though let out minimally, secretly, but surely consume. **#Ho 5:12**, "I will be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness," or that little worm (*teredo*) that eats into the heart of wood, and rots it. Thus he plagued the Egyptians by lice and flies. There may be much poison in little drops.

Thou wastest away the things that grow out of the earth] Or, Thou overflowest, as once in the general deluge (when the face of the earth was grown so foul, that God was forced to wash it with a

flood), and frequently since, we see that after great rains there are huge floods that mar whole meadows and grain fields, not only discolouring, but drowning all their beauty and plenty. This is the fourth comparison used in this and the former verse; where a man would wonder, saith an interpreter, *audire Iobum in mediis aerumnis philosophantem*, to hear Job, in the midst of his miseries, making use of his philosophy, and travelling thus in his thoughts, for illustrations of his own case, over mountains and rocks, &c.

Thou destroyest the hopes of man] viz. In destroying the things above mentioned; or, so thou destroyest, &c.; though some reserve the reddition to the next verse, so thou prevailest against him, &c., *i.e.* So thou never ceasest with thy might to cast down sorry men, till such time as they, changing countenance, and departing with a heavy and sorrowful heart, thou violently throwest them out, their lives and hope ending together, if they have been wicked; as if godly, yet their vain and groundless hopes of prosperity and plenty, &c., come to nothing: though over the Red Sea, yet God's people may be made to tack about two and forty times in the wilderness.

Ver. 20. **Thou prevailest for ever against him]** This, and the rest of the words to the end of the chapter, some make to be the application of the similitudes; others an amplification only of what he had said, Thou destroyest the hope of man. Thou must needs, when thou overmatch and overmaster him, and art never worsted. #Ex 15:3, the Lord is called, "A man of war"; the Chaldee there hath it, The Lord and Victor of wars. And the word here rendered "ever" cometh from a root that signifieth to finish, conquer, and triumph.

And he passeth] *sc.* Out of the world by a violent or untimely death, *Violenta morte aut certe immatura* (Merlin), with as ill a will many times as the unjust steward did out of his office, as the Jebusites did out of the fort of Zion, or as the devil out of the demoniac. *Sed voluntas Dei necessitas rei;* he passeth, because he can neither will nor choose, as they say.

Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away] *Eleganter vero mors notatur, immutandi verbo,* saith one, Elegantly is death set forth by changing the countenance: for death taketh away the fair and fresh colour of a man, and makes him look wan

and withered, pale and ghastly. It is easy to see death, many times, before it come, in the sick man's face, *Facies Hippocratica*, in his sharp nostrils, thin cheeks, hollow eyes, &c., those harbingers of death, whereby God sendeth for him, and so sendeth him away, *extrudit et amandat*, as once he did Adam out of Paradise. Lavater's note here is, *Propone tibi semper horribilem speciem morris, ut eo minus pecces*, Set before thyself always the horrid face of death, to restrain thee from sin.

Ver. 21. **His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not]** While he lieth sick, he regardeth no earthly thing, no, not what becometh of his children (formerly his greatest care), whether they be advanced or impaired in their outward condition, *Omnis hi Ascanio churi stat cura parentis* (Vir.). As when he is dead he can take no knowledge of anything done in this world, **#Isa 63:16 Ec 2:19 9:6**, be his children or friends rich or poor, high or low, he is both ignorant and insensible. It was a base slander, published by a Jesuit, some years after Queen Elizabeth's death, That as she died without sense or feeling of God's mercies, so that she wished she might after her death hang a while in the air, to see what striving would be for her kingdom. As for that opinion of some Papists, That the dead do sometimes return into the land of the living, that they know how things go here, and make report thereof to those in heaven, it is contrary to the whole Scripture.

Ver. 22. **But his flesh upon him shall have pain]** That is, say some, but as long as he is living his body is afflicted with a thousand evils; and though his soul, by the condition of her creation, be exempt from them, yet she bears a part in them, and becomes miserable with it. A dying man hath sorrow without and sorrow within; the whole man is in misery, as Job here felt himself. Others hold that this poetic representation hath no other meaning, but that the dead have no manner of communication with the living (Aben Ezra, Mercer, Diodati). Broughton rendereth it, His flesh is grieved for itself, and his soul will mourn for itself; *q.d.* he takes no thought or care for his children or nearest relations.

Chapter 15

Ver. 1. **Then answered Eliphaz, the Temanite, and said]** *Lapides locutus est*. In this second encounter Eliphaz falls upon Job, not so much with stronger arguments as with harder words; reproving him

sharply, or rather reproaching him bitterly, *Facundia quadam canina*, with more eloquence than charity. So hard a thing is it, saith Beza, especially in disputing and reasoning, to avoid self-love, as even in these times experience daily teacheth us. He hinteth, I suppose, at the public conference between himself and Jacobus Andreas at Mompelgard, whereby the strife was rather stirred than stinted, as Thuanus complaineth (Lib. 35, Hist.); or else at the disputation at Possiacum, wherein Beza, speaker for the Protestant party (before the queen mother of France, the young King Charles, and many princes of the blood), entering into the matter of the Eucharist, spake with such heat (unless the historian wrongs him), that he gave but ill satisfaction to those of his own side, so that he was commanded to conclude. Such meetings are seldom successful, saith Luther, because men come with confidence and wit for victory rather than verity. In this reply of Eliphaz to Job we may see what an evil thing it is to be carried away with prejudice and pertinence, which make a man forget all modesty, and fall foul upon his best friends. Here is enough said to have driven this sorrowfull man into utter despair, had not God upheld his spirit, while he is fiercely charged for a wicked man, and hated of God; neither doth any of his friends henceforth afford him one exhortation to repentance, or one comfortable promise, as Lavater well observeth, *Non affert ullam consolationem, non invitat eum ad poenitentiam; sed potius ad desperationem compellat.*

Ver. 2. **Should a wise man utter vain knowledge**] Heb. Knowledge of the wind; light, frothy, empty discourses, that have no tack or substance in them, but only words that are no better than wind, a mere flash or airy nothing. Solomon thinks a wise man should beware of falling into this fault, lest he forfeit his reputation: **#Ec 10:1**, "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour"; as spots are soonest observed in the whitest and finest garments; and envy, like worms and moths, doth usually feed on the purest cloth. A great many dead flies may be found in a tar box, and no harm done, but one of them fallen into a pot of sweet odours, or precious perfumes, may soon taint and corrupt them.

And fill his belly with the east wind?] *Per ventrem, mentem intellige, et per ventum Orientalem, vanam opinionem,* saith

Vatablus. By belly understand the mind, and by the east wind a vain conceit, or frothy knowledge, blown forth out of a swelling breast, to the hurt of others; for the east wind is destructive to herbs and fruits, #Ho 12:1 Ge 41:6. But doth not Eliphaz here by these bubble of words and blustering questions, betraying much choler and confidence, fall into the very same fault which he findeth with Job; doth not he also fill his belly with heat (so the Vulgate rendereth this text), which, kindling in his bosom, blazeth out at his lips? Doth not this angry man exalt folly, and show himself none of the wisest, though he were the oldest in all the company.

Ver. 3. **Should he reason with unprofitable talk?**] Why? But if he do, should he, therefore, be thus rippled up, and roughly hewen? And not rather reduced and rectified with hard arguments and soft words? Man is a cross crabbed creature: *Duci vult, trahi non vult*, Persuade him you may; compel him you cannot. A fit time also must be taken to persuade him to better, for else you may lose your sweet words upon him. The husbandman soweth not in a storm; the mariner hoisteth not sail in every wind; good physicians evacuate not the body in extremity of heat and cold. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city," #Pr 18:19. This Eliphaz should have considered, and not so rashly censured Job for a fool, and his talk for trash, but rather handled him tenderly, considering his condition, and desired him to explain such of his speeches as he thought not so well and wisely uttered.

Or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?] This is but the same with the former; and indeed this whole verse is but a saying of that plainly which in the foregoing verse he had said figuratively.

Ver. 4. **Yea, thou castest off fear**] Heb. Thou makest void fear; that is, religion, whereof the fear of God is both the beginning, #Pr 1:7, and the end, #Ec 12:1. This is a heavy charge indeed; as if Job, by saying the extreme miseries of this life are common to the godly and the wicked, had by consequence taught men to cast off all religion as unprofitable, which none but such a shameless man as thyself, saith Eliphaz, would ever have averred. It cannot be denied but that Job, through the bitterness of his grief and the unreasonableness of his adversaries, was sometimes carried beyond the bounds of that reverence which is due unto God, and reasoneth the matter somewhat hotly with God; but that thereby he betrayed his manifest

contempt of his majesty, casting off all awful regard and recourse thereto by prayer, as the wicked, who call not upon God, #Ps 14:4, this was a mere conjecture, or rather an unsufferable injury done to the good man, who gave sufficient testimony of his fearing God, and soon poured out his prayer in his presence. All which, notwithstanding, he heareth in the next words,

And restrainest prayer before God] Thou forbearst to pray thyself, and thou discouragest others. If this had been true it had been a foul fault indeed, for while prayer standeth still, the whole trade of godliness standeth still likewise; and to cast off prayer is to cast off God, #Jer 10:25. We must take heed of falling from the affections of prayer, though we continue doing the duty. As vessels of wine, when first tapped, are very smart and quick, but at last grow exceedingly flat; so do many Christians, through unbelief, and worldly cares and businesses, or domestic discords, or some other distempers, whereby prayers are hindered, #1Pe 3:7; either they pray not frequently, or not fervently, but in a customary, formal, dull way. And this Eliphaz might suspect Job of, and assign it as the cause of all his miscarriages in word and deed. Sure it is that, as sleep composeth drunkenness, so doth prayer the affections; a man may pray himself sober again, as a reverend man (Dr Preston) gathereth out of this text.

Ver. 5. **For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity]** Heb. Thy crooked, wry disposition, that standeth across to God and goodness, #Ps 51:5, *Homo est inversus decalogus*. Solomon speaketh of perverse lips, as if the upper lip stood where the nether should, #Pr 4:24. And St Jude speaketh of hard speeches, uttered by ungodly sinners, #Jude 15, such as Job was none, whatever Eliphaz, by misinterpreting, made of him, wresting his words to a wrong sense, as #Ps 54:5, and, by a spiritual unmannerliness, making the worst of what he spake; there being not anything that may not be taken with the left hand. Now, if this befell Job from his friends and those godly persons, what wonder though the like, and worse, be done to us by wicked enemies?

Qui id quod boni est excerpunt, dicunt quod mali est.

Nihil est quin male narrando possit depravarier. -(Terent. Phorm.)

And thou choosest the tongue of the crafty] Than the which nothing is a greater enemy to piety, saith an interpreter. Politicians formalize and enervate the power of truth, till at length they leave us a heartless and sapless religion, saith another. Such a one Eliphaz makes Job to be: q.d. Thou wast wont to speak prayer, but now thou speakest policy, yea, Thou choosest to do it, thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak right, #Ps 52:3. Thou hast as many turnings and windings in thy mind as the serpent hath in his body (so the Hebrew word seemeth to signify, #Ge 3:1). Thus he heighteneth his charge, and layeth on yet more load.

Ver. 6. **Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I]** Yes, you, and none but you. Job's heart condemneth him not (and thence his confidence toward God, #1Jo 3:21), much less his mouth, had not his words been misconstrued. But as charity maketh a good sense of doubtful speeches and passages, so prejudice and displeasure takes all things (though well meant) at the worst, and as logicians do, *Sequitur partem deteriorem*. Eliphaz diggeth up evil, #Pr 16:27, and is like Achilles, of whom Homer saith, that he was a great fault finder (Iliad, xi. 653).

Δεινος ανηρ, ταχα κεν και αναιτιον αιτιωωτο.

Yea, thine own lips testify against thee] Heb. Answer against thee. For witnesses ordinarily answer to interrogatories. So the pride of Israel (breaking forth as a great master pockmark in his forehead) testified to his face, #Ho 5:5, and the heretic is contemned of himself, #Tit 3:11. Virtually he doth so, though not formally. But Job did neither, good Eliphaz.

Ver. 7. **Art thou the first man that was born?]** Or, Wast thou made before Adam? *Ut vox Rishon non significet primus, sed prius* (Lavati., Bucholc.). Out of the mouth of Adam, as from a fountain, flowed whatsoever profitable learning, skill, or wisdom, is found in the world, saith the divine chronologer. Job had taxed Zophar for a young puny and a novice. #Job 12:9-12 This Eliphaz kindleth at, and taketh upon him to answer in Zophar's behalf. As indeed these three speakers, Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad, stood to one another, as much as any one of them did for himself, as if they had all entered bond, and given security for reciprocal assistance. Here then Eliphaz

asketh, Art thou the first man born? that is, Art thou the wisest man alive? and must we all be taught by thee, as Adam's nephews were by him, in things divine and human.

Or wast thou made before the hills?] *i.e.* Before the angels, as some sense it. But take it literally for the mountains, called, for their antiquity, the everlasting hills, #Ge 49:26 Hab 3:6, because they were from the beginning, and shall continue to the end. These appeared first at the separation of the waters, #Ge 1:9,10. And Christ, to set forth his eternity, saith, #Pr 8:25, "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth." So #Ps 90:2.

Ver. 8. **Hast thou heard the secret of God?]** Thus he goes on to jeer Job, and to accuse him of insolent arrogance, as if he had taken himself to be of God's cabinet council, and so to have known more of his mind than any other. Now this never came into Job's heart; but these hot spirited people, *Biliosi et bellicosi*, when their choler is once up, will not stick to say anything against another whom they desire to gall, and to make the worst of his words, when as themselves cannot take a reproof, though never so just.

And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?] Hast thou engrossed all the wisdom in the world? and must it needs live and die with thee? Is every man a fool presently, who is not of thy mind and make? *An solus sapis, ita ut te pereunte sit ipsa sapientia peritura?* (Vatabl.) Epicurus indeed had such a conceit; and Pulaemen, in Suetonius, and Laurentius Valla, with some others of late: but Job was far from it, as appeareth by his many self-abasing expressions; and it had been well for him if his three friends had taken out that lesson in Wisdom's school; viz. to judge those certain good things found in another better than they are; and certain evils, less; doubtful good things, certain; and doubtful evil things, none.

Ver. 9. **What knowest thou, that we know not?]** Here Eliphaz inveigheth against Job's pride, *sed maiori cam fastu*, but with greater pride, else what meaneth this arrogant comparison? Did not a deceived heart turn him aside, as the prophet speaketh in another case? and might it not be said of him, as it was once of Antony, That he hated a tyrant, but not tyranny. {See Trapp on "Job 12:3"} {See Trapp on "Job 13:2"}

Ver. 10. **With us are the grayheaded, &c.]** Job had said, **#Job 12:12**, "With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days is understanding." This, though modestly spoken, yet was very ill taken; and is here replied unto with a great deal of heat. *Sed ita solent importuni homines, &c.*, saith Mercer here; but such is the course and custom of unreasonable men, to take everything in the worst way, and to deal rather by reproaches than by reasons; as Eccius, Sanderus, Genebrardus, the whole generation of Jesuits, of whom Aurelius, the Sorbonist, saith, and truly, that they are a sort of men, *qui nihil magis habent quam arrogantiam Theologicam: nihil minus possident quam Theologicam scientiam;* Arrogant and yet ignorant; for, while they think they know all things, they know nothing at all as they ought to know, **#1Co 8:2**. As for antiquity, here so stiftly pleaded, it must have no more authority than what it can maintain. Papists boast much of it, as once the Gibeonites did of old shoes and mouldy bread. But antiquity, severed from verity, is of no value; for, as Cyprian saith well, *Consuetudo mala, vetustas erroris est*. And our Saviour saith not, I am custom, but, "I am the way, the truth," &c. And God saith, by the prophet Ezekiel, "Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments," &c., but, "walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them," **#Eze 20:18,19**. {See Trapp on "Job 8:8"} {See Trapp on "Job 8:9"} {See Trapp on "Job 8:10"} {See Trapp on "Job 12:12"}

Ver. 11. **Are the consolations of God]** *Sic fastuose suas consolationes appellat et sociorum*, saith Mercer; so Eliphaz, with state enough, calleth the comforts that he and his fellows had ministered to Job, promising him mercy from God upon his sound repentance; but telling him withal, that unless he Would yield himself a hypocrite, those promises would profit him nothing at all. Had Job slighted the precious promises, those conduits of comfort, he had been much to blame, as he was, doubtless, who said, My soul refused comforts, **#Ps 77:2**; like some sullen child, that will not eat his milk because he hath it not in the golden dish. The soul is ready to turn the back of the hand, and not the palm, to the staff of divine consolations, saying, Oh my stubbornness, &c., and rather to shift and shirk in every by corner for comfort, than to suck it out of those breasts of consolation, and be satisfied, **#Isa 66:11**. The apostle taxeth his Hebrews, that they had forgotten the consolation (so the words may be read) which spake unto them as unto children, saying,

My son, &c., #Heb 12:5-11 Wrangling with God by cavilling objections, when they should rather have wrestled with him by earnest supplications, putting the promises in suit, and drawing waters with joy out of those wells of consolation, #Isa 12:3. Job was not altogether clear of this fault. He was so poor and sore without, and within so full of horror and terror, that he was ready, with Rachel, to refuse to be comforted. Mercies were offered unto him, but he was scarce in case to receive them. The ear, which tasteth words as the mouth doth meat, was so filled with choler, that he could hardly relish any comfort. The easiest medicines of waters are troublesome to sore eyes. The flesh with her roarings and repinings maketh such a din, that the voice of the comforter cannot well be heard in the best heart sometimes. The Spirit knocks, but there is none to open; hence he goes away grieving, and that should not be.

Is there any secret thing with thee?] Hast thou food to eat that we know not of? Are there with thee consolations of thine own better than those of God, which we have ministered unto thee? Some render it, and lieth there any hidden thing within thee? that is, either some greater and more profound wisdom than every man knoweth; or else some secret sin which must be cast out ere comforts can fasten. For as the wound cannot close and heal as long as any part of the iron weapon remaineth in it; so here in the *Cordiaea passio*, or passion of heart, the heart is so oppressed and overly covered, that the most refreshing cordials cannot come at it, so that it is even suffocated with sorrow. In allusion whereunto, the Church prays, #La 3:65, "Give them sorrow of heart." This was Spira's case; and for the time might be Job's. Possibly some sin or sorrow might lie at the fountain head, and stop the course of his comforts. This Eliphaz fisheth after, and would have found out, and remedied.

Ver. 12. **Why doth thine heart carry thee away?**] Violently transport thee; *sc.* beyond all bounds of reason and modesty, *Quis te furor cordis exagitat?* (Pineda.) There is another charge, and higher than the former, as if he had been *emotae mentis*, not well in his wits, but wild and wood, as they call it; or, at least, that his passions were so far too hard for his reason, as they did

Rectam de cardine tollere mentem,

We are in no small danger of our naughty hearts. It was no ill prayer of one, Lord, keep me from that naughty man myself, *Domine, libera me a malo homine, meipso*. Nor was it any ill counsel of another, who said, So take heed to thyself, that thou beware of thyself, *Ita cave tibi ut caveas teipsum*. 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 to feed it. Keep thy heart therefore with all custody, **#Pr 4:24**; it will get away else, and carry thee away with it.

And what do thy eyes wink at?] *Nictant, celeriter scilicet, et subtiliter*. Possibly Job, through pain and anguish, might be made to wink while he was speaking to them, or they to him; and this they misconstrue as done in contempt. See **#Ps 35:19**. Or that he was plotting some mischief, **#Pr 10:10 16:30**, or pretending to some extraordinary devotion, and therefore shutting his eyes, that he might be the more reserved to God. The Vulgate hath it, Why doth thine heart lift thee up? and as if thou wert thinking of some great things, why are thine eyes so set? it is for no goodness, sure.

Ver. 13. **That thou turnest thy spirit against God]** A foul fault surely, but merely for want of a fair interpretation. It is as if Eliphaz should have said, Thy spirit was right when thou bravely barest up under the afflicting hand of God, **#Job 1:13-22**, but because patience hath not had her perfect work, as appeareth by thine angry expostulations, thy contesting with God, and chatting against him and his proceedings, therefore I conclude that thou art not perfect and entire, all is not right. Why doth thy spirit swell against God (so the Vulgate rendereth it)? "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him," that is certain, **#Hab 2:4**, *Quid tumet contra Deum Spiritus tuus*.

And lettest such words go out of thy mouth?] Contumelious and blasphemous words, not fit to be named. *Bona verba, quaeso Eliphaz*. True it is, Job had spoken some things more freely than was fitting, and not without a tincture of bitterness. But charity would have made the best of those speeches which you thus odiously aggravate against him; and have taught you to use the same equity toward others that you would have others use toward yourself. That faith (and so that love) is easily wrought which teacheth men to

believe and think well of themselves, and worse of others. We will make a good exposition if we have but a good disposition.

Ver. 14. **What is man, that he should be clean?**] Eliphaz hath now done chiding (it is but time he should), and falls to reasoning; wherein nevertheless he showeth himself an empty and troublesome disputer, urging again the same arguments as before, **#Job 14:17-19**, and not resting satisfied in a sufficient answer. Did Job ever assert himself clean? Said he not the clean contrary in many places? See **#Job 14:4**. Only as washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of his God, **#1Co 6:11**, he discoursed of his integrity and righteousness; not denying himself otherwise tainted with original sin, and guilty of actual; which he begged pardon for; according to the tenour of the covenant of grace. And therefore Eliphaz might have spared these words, and better bestowed his pains in comforting Job, and exhorting him to patience. The Jesuits have at this day a device in handling texts of Scripture by their nice distinctions to perplex and obscure the clearest places; and for those that are doubtful, not at all to distinguish or illustrate them. Again, in points of controversy they make a great putter about that which we deny not, but say little or nothing to the main business.

Haec quae desperant renitescere posse relinquunt.

Ver. 15. **Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints**] Here he proceedeth to prove that which Job never denied; and Bildad also hath the same, **#Job 25** *Lege eius verba, nam non male huc quadrant*, saith Lavater; lay his words to these, and they will lend light to each other. {See Trapp on "Job 4:18"} There they are called his servants, here his saints or holy ones; these were the old patriarchs, say the Septuagint, with whom God at some times was angry; and although he was a God that forgave them, yet took he vengeance of their inventions, **#Ps 99:8**. Others understand it to be the saints in heaven, or the holy angels.

And the heavens are not clean in his sight] Nor they of heaven be clean in his eyes, so Broughton rendereth it. The angels are called angels of heaven, **#Mt 24:36 Ga 1:8**; because made with and in the highest heavens, and appointed there to inhabit. Howbeit in the apostate angels, and in heaven, God's holy and pure eyes found

uncleanness, and delivered them therefore into chains of darkness, #2Pe 2:4. Again, to be clean in God's sight is another manner of matter than to be simply clean; like as to be just is one thing, and to be just before God another, #Lu 1:6. *Sordet in conspectu iudicis quod fulget in conceptu operantis*. Some understand the text to be the visible heavens, the purest of all inanimate creatures; and therefore Chrysostom, speaking of those praying saints that prayed Peter out of prison, #Ac 12:12-17, saith, that they were *ipso coelo puriores afflictione facti*, more pure than the heavens, yet are they not pure in the sight of God, but have their spots, which we count their beauty spots.

Ver. 16. **How much more abominable and filthy is man?**] And therefore abominable because filthy, or stinking and noisome, as putrefied meat is to the nose and palate. Now this is every man's case by nature, #Ps 14:3, there being never a barrel of better herring, but all in a pickle, though few believe it. Κακοι κεν θριπτες κακοι δε και ιπτες. Prov. Circumcision of old taught them, that that which was begotten by that part deserved, in like sort, as abominable and accursed, to be cut off and thrown away by God. And what else doth baptism still teach us? See #Col 2:11-13 1Pe 3:21. David compareth man to the beasts that perish, *pecoribus morticinis*, to beasts that die of the murrain, and so become carrion, and are good for nothing, #Ps 49:20 (Tremel.). He lieth rotting in the graves of sin, wrapt up in the winding sheet of hardness of heart, and (as the carcass crawleth with worms) swarming with noisome lusts, such as God's soul abhorreth. This is his nature; and for his life,

He drinketh iniquity like water] He is as it were altogether steeped and soaked in sin; he sucks it in with delight, as an ox doth water, or a drunkard wine, who prefer that you take away his life as his liquor, and could find in his heart to be drowned in a butt of Malmsey; as George, duke of Clarence, was in the Tower of London, and, as some say, by his own election. Sure it is that a draught of sin is the only merry-go-down to a carnal man; he drinks it frequently and abundantly, even till he swelleth therewith. One observeth here, that Eliphaz saith not, Man eateth, but, drinketh iniquity; because to eat a man must chew, and this taketh up some time, and leaveth a liberty to spit out what he liketh not; but drink goeth down without delay, and we usually drink oftener than we eat; so here.

Ver. 17. **I will show thee, hear me]** Here Eliphaz useth a short but a lofty preface, calling hard for attention, and raising in Job an expectation of no mean matters. But

Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu -(Horat.)

This is his argument:

This is to be held to be true which experience evinceth, and wise men teach us, just as they have learned it from their religious ancestors.

But, both continued experience and consent of men teach us, that wicked men have terrors within and troubles without.

Therefore this is to be taken for a truth. Therefore also, by consequence, that is false which thou hast spoken concerning the prosperity of wicked men, **#Job 12:6**. Neither canst thou avoid the charge of wickedness who dost suffer the punishments of the wicked. Now what is all this more than Eliphaz had said in a former discourse (so that Job might have cried out, *Apaga coccysmum?*) only there he grounded his argument upon a night vision; here upon the testimony and consent of certain wise men, commended by their power and justice. Some think he meaneth Noah and his pious posterity.

That which I have seen I will declare] Wilt thou not believe an eyewitness? What can be more sure than sight? **#Joh 1:1**. Surely, if we were well read in the story of our own lives, and had laid up our experiences, we might have a divinity of our own. The 119th Psalm is made up of experiments; and David oft telleth us what he had seen and observed.

Ver. 18. **Which wise men have told from their fathers]** Who have carefully and faithfully transmitted it as a doctrinal truth to us, their posterity, from hand to hand. For in Job's time it is likely that the Scriptures were not yet written. *Which, or, which things wise men* Who did, in their generations, *Deum recte cognoscere et colere*, rightly know and worship God, which is the highest wisdom, saith Lactantius.

Have told] Have spoken it so plainly and plentifully, as if they had showed us the things acted before our eyes.

From their fathers] Who were careful to instil good instructions and heavenly truths into the minds of their children, their familiars, and families, as did Abraham, **#Ge 18:17-19**, and others according to God's own appointment, **#De 6:1,2**

And have not hid it] But communicated it for the good of many. Light is diffusive of itself. Knowledge is perfected while it is communicated. The more you teach and impart to others, *eo ditior ac doctior fias*, saith one, the richer and more skilfull you become (Bodin. Theat. Nat. p. 9). It is not the pouring out which drieth up the streams of grace, like that oil, **#2Ki 4:6**. See **#Pr 11:24,25 Ps 78:2-4**.

Ver. 19. **To whom alone the earth was given]** Noah and his pious posterity (as was above noted), whom Methodius and other ancients call, *Mundi chiliarchos*, the lords of the whole world, given them by the possessor of heaven and earth, as Melchisedek first called God, **#Ge 14:19**, and from him Abraham, another prince of God, **#Ge 22:3**, as those heathens acknowledged him, and heir of the whole world, **#Ro 4:13** As for Melchisedek (commonly taken to be Shem), he was king in Salem, and no stranger, that is, no enemy, molested him; no, not those great spoilers, Chedorlaomer and his accomplices; these never meddled with Melchisedek and his subjects (probably out of respect to his wisdom and holiness, for which he was famous), no, not when, marching against the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, they wasted and smote all the neighbour countries. So true of his subjects and territories was that which followeth here,

And no stranger passed among them] viz. In a hostile way, in a warlike manner, **#Ne 4:15** Some read, No strange thing passeth among them; as not the devouring sword, so neither the pestilence that walketh in darkness nor the destruction that wasteth at noontide, **#Ps 91:6**. Such as was the reign of Ferdinando III, king of Spain, for five and thirty years' time. *In quibus nec fames nec pestes fuit ni*

regno, saith Lopez, wherein there happened neither famine nor pestilence (Gloss. in Prolog. par. 1).

Ver. 20. **The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days]** He tormenteth himself, or thrusteth himself through (so some read it), **#1Ti 6:10**. He takes no more rest than one upon a rack; he hath his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, **#Jer 30:6**; he smiteth upon his thigh; *sicut mulierculae in puerperio facere solent*, saith Luther in his marginal note on **#Jer 31:19**. And if he would do so for his sin, as he doth for his misery, *pia esset illa tristitia, et, si disci potest, beata miseria*, as Austin hath it (Aug. Epist. 545), his grief would be godly, and his misery a blessing, God would pity him, as he did his moan making Ephraim, and earnestly remember him still, **#Job 15:23**. But, alas, that wicked are strong, the hypocrite in heart, as he heaps up wrath, so he crieth not when God bindeth him, **#Job 36:16**. Or if he do cry, it is peril, and not *peccavi*, I am undone, and not, I have done amiss. Hence God many times turneth loose upon him those three vultures, care, fear, and grief, to feed upon his heart. It is seldom seen that God alloweth unto the greatest darlings of the world a perfect contentment. In the very pursuit of these outward vanities is much anguish, many grievances, fears, jealousies, disgraces, interruptions, discontentments. In the unsanctified enjoyment of them, something the wicked shall have to complain of, that shall give an unsavoury verdue to their sweetest morsels, and make their very felicity miserable; witness Ahab, Haman, &c. But then followeth the sting of conscience, that maketh a Cain, a Pashur, a Richard III, to be a terror to himself. And with this pain some wicked men travail all their days here, but hereafter it shall infallibly and inexpressibly torment the souls of them all, through all eternity. And this, with the following illustrations, is that oracle or divine sentence which Eliphaz received from those famous men above mentioned, and which he not obscurely applieth and wresteth against Job, whom herehence he would prove a wicked man by his own confessions, **#Job 3:25,26 7:13,14**, compared with **#Le 26:36 De 28:65**, for that which Eliphaz had heard from his ancestors was but the same law, for substance, that was afterwards written by Moses.

And the number of years is hidden to the oppressor] Heb. To the terrible tyrant, who, as he hath not a more cruel executioner than his

own conscience, so not a more sensible displeasure than to know that he is mortal, and yet to be ignorant when his tyranny must end. The number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain, saith the Vulgate translation. And from this uncertainty, which he knoweth not how to remedy (though he run to light a candle at the devil sometimes, viz. by consulting with soothsayers and sorcerers, to know of them how long he shall live, and who shall succeed him, as Tiberius and other tyrants did), followeth suspicion and fear, saith Aquinas upon this text.

Ver. 21. **A dreadfid sound is in his ears]** Heb. A sound of fear and terror. Not one, but many at once, so that he is a *Magormissabib, factus a corde sua fugitivus* (Tertul.), as Cain, that wretch, and those Hivites, with their hornets of a clamorous conscience, worse to them than if their bodies had been tormented with stings or torn with stripes, #Ex 23:28. What a sound of terror in their ears frightened those Syrians! #2Ki 7:6; and those Persians and Saracens overcome by Theodosius! *Panico terrore incusso*, saith the historian, afraid of their own shadows, they desperately cast themselves into the river Euphrates, and there perished above a hundred thousand of them, A.D. 394. The wicked flee when none pursueth, #Pr 28:1; the sound of a shaken leaf chaseth him, #Le 26:36, when the righteous is bold as a lion, and not dismayed at evil tidings, #Ps 112:7. His heart is balanced with the fear of God; and thence it is that he floateth steadily; blow what wind it will, he sails to the port; storms and tempests do but beat him into it.

In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him] Heb. In peace, when he shall say, Peace and safety, #1Th 5:3. When he is at the highest he shall be destroyed, #Da 4:30,31. In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits, #Job 20:22. His short spring shall have an eternal winter, #Ps 92:7. *Ultimus sanitatis gradus est morbo proximus*, say physicians, The utmost degree of health is nearest to sickness; so the wicked when nearest misery have greatest prosperity.

Ver. 22. **He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness]** He despondeth and despaireth of a better condition, sighing out that doleful ditty, *Spes et fortuna valet*; Farewell hope and fortune, he looks for no further light and delight of former comforts; he knows that they that go down into the dark pit cannot hope for God's truth,

#Isa 38:18; there being left them neither hope of better nor place of worse. *Desperat qui summus est diffidentiae gradus* (Jun.).

And he is waited for of the sword] Or, looked upon by the sword, which waiteth, as it were, an opportunity to slay him. *Circumspectans undique gladium*, so the Vulgate; he looketh this way and that way, as fearing the murderer; his guilt representing to him on all sides nothing but naked swords; he believeth that they will assassinate him in his bed. This was the case of Saul, who suspected his best servants; of Dionysius the tyrant, who durst not trust his own daughter with his throat; of Alexander Pheraeus, who would not go to bed to his wife Thebe, whom he loved, till he had first searched the room and her pocket for edge-tools (Cicero. *Offic.* lib. 2); of Richard III, who, after the death of his two innocent nephews, had fearful dreams and apprehensions, insomuch that he did often leap out of his bed in the dark, and catching his sword (which, always naked, stuck by his side), he did go distractedly about the chamber, everywhere seeking to find out the cause of his own occasioned disquiet, saith the chronologer (Dan. Hist. 249). Tiberius felt the remorse of conscience so violently, that he protested to the Senate that he suffered death daily through fear of death; whereupon the historian maketh this profitable observation, *Tandem facinora et flagitia in supplicium vertuntur*; Heinous sins will at length have heavy punishments (Tacit.).

Ver. 23. **He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it?]** He is hard put to it for necessaries, and would be glad of a piece of bread, as **#1Sa 2:5,36**. This was the case of Pythias, once so rich, that he entertained a million men (even Xerxes' whole huge host) for three days' time at his own proper charge; but afterwards so poor, that he died through hunger (Herodot.). And the like befell Gillimer, king of Vandals, of whom the story is told, that being overcome and beleaguered by Belisarius, he sent to him for a sponge to dry his tears, a cittern to ease his grief, and a piece of bread to save his life. Belisarius himself was afterwards glad to beg for his bread. And Henry IV, emperor of Germany, after ten years' reign, was deposed and driven to the like exigent; whereupon he is said to have made use of those words of Job, **#Job 19:21**, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me." And there is no doubt but Eliphaz glanceth at Job in all these

expressions, as if he were the man whom he here describeth with much eloquence, but small charity.

He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand] His conscience telleth him that he is not yet at worst; he knows in himself, say the Septuagint, that further evil shall be upon him, that his misery is inevitable, and next door; and this knowledge being full of fear, is also full of torment; it is even hell aforehand, and above ground.

Ver. 24. **Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid]** Or scare him, not only out of his comforts, but out of his wits and senses too, as it did Charles the Great, Cardinal of Lorraine (Meutis inops moritur). See #De 28:34. Tullus Hostilius, the third king of Romans, deriding the religion of his predecessor Numa, as that which did emasculate men's minds, was afterwards so terrified, that he set up and worshipped two new gods, viz. *Pavorem et Pallorem*, trouble and anguish, which he had perpetually present with him, as Lactantius reporteth. What a pitiful agony Vitellius the emperor was in when Vespasian's army marched toward Rome, is notably set forth by Dio in his Life (Ἐμπλεκτῶς ἀνω καὶ κάτω ἐφερέτο ὡσπερ ἐν κλυδωνί). Not long after that, at the sack of Jerusalem, some Jews killed themselves, lest they should fall into the hands of Vespasian's soldiers.

Hic rogo; non furor est, ne moriari, mori?

They shall prevail against him] Or, begirt him, as a king is surrounded, in peace by his guard, in war by his army. Or, they shall destroy him, as a king ready to the battle doth his enemies' forces, which he routeth and ruineth. Fear hath a deadly force upon feeble spirits; neither is it any wonder that they ring their bells backward when things begin once to be on fire.

Ver. 25. **For he stretcheth out his hand against God]** Worthy therefore to have a dead palsy transfused into it, or dried up, as Jeroboam's was, when but stretched out against a prophet; and as Valens the emperor's hand was made unable to hold a pen, when he would have subscribed a warrant for the banishing of Basil. Such a giant-like generation there are to this day among men, as face the heavens, cast down the gauntlet against God, *Erecto collo valido*

impetu, arrogantia incurva cervice, saith Brentius upon the text, with stiff necks, full force, and insufferable insolence, as it were on purpose to cross the Almighty, and to wrestle a fall with him; they sin with a high hand, #Le 26:21 Nu 15:30, and do as wickedly as they can, #Jer 3:5, yea, with both hands earnestly, #Mic 7:3; persecuting his people who are unto him as the apple of his eye, and resisting the Holy Ghost always, #Ac 7:51. Surely he would even destroy God if he could, for he hateth him, #Ro 1:30, with a hellish hatred, as the word θεοστρυγεις there signifieth, such as striketh at God's very essence, #Ps 18:40; confer #1Jo 3:15.

And strengtheneth himself against the Almighty] *Sed vanae sine viribus irae.* To his sinews of iron he hath added brows of brass, #Isa 48:4. To his natural crossness habitual hardness and hardiness; so that now, like a stout warrior, he bends all his strength against the Almighty, but with no better success than to be broken in pieces, #Isa 8:9, with his iron mace, #Ps 2:9, Sennacherib for instance. {See Trapp on "Job 9:4"}

Ver. 26. **He runneth upon him, even on his neck]** Vulgate, He runneth upon him (God) with an erected neck; such is his audaciousness and impudence, daring to do any heinous wickedness, and not fearing to run against the strongest part of God's armour, though able to grind him to powder. Sin hath etched such an impudency in his face, that he dare with a full forehead encounter God, even upon the points of his justice and righteous judgments, wherein he is the ablest to give us the shock, &c. Thus some sense the text. Others (of good note also) refer the word runneth to God, and render it thus, God runneth upon him, even upon the neck, &c. He breaking his shields, how many and how thick soever they be, drags him by the neck, as a miserable vanquished wretch, and lays upon him exquisite and high punishments, according to that, #Job 31:3, "Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?"

Upon the thick bosses of his bucklers] Wherewith the Belialist, this champion for hell, thinks himself best armed and secured against the dint of the divine displeasure. Bucklers, besides other bosses for ornament, had one great boss in the middle, with a sharp spike in it for use, to pierce and wound the adversary. Now God runs

upon this also, and is no whit hindered thereby from punishing the refractories, these high attempters, these monstrous men of condition, that so fiercely and so fearlessly lift up their hands against heaven, as if they would pull God out of his throne, and throw the house, yea, the world, out at the windows. Surely as pride resisteth God in a special manner, so doth God in a special manner resist it, **#1Pe 5:5**. The reason whereof is given by Boetius: All other vices, saith he, fly from God, only pride flies at him, stands out, and makes head against him.

Ver. 27. **Because he covereth his face with his fatness**] This is given in as one chief cause of his insolence; he is a belly god, he maketh plaits upon the paunch, so Broughton rendereth it; he hath fattened his guts, so Calvin; he maketh it his business to pamper his body; his heart also is as fat as grease, **#Ps 119:70**. *Bene curavit cutem suam in hoc mundo* He takes good care of his skin in this world. (Vat.). He is waxen fat, that is, prosperity proud, and kicketh, **#De 32:15**. Pride and fulness of bread were Sodom's twin sins, **#Eze 16:49**. When people are provender pricked, as we call it, they easily turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, **#Jude 4**, and that fulness breeds forgetfulness; as the fed hawk soon forgets his master, and the moon at fullest gets farthest off the sun. Sensualists who love feasts, **#Jud 5:10**, are void of the Spirit, **#Jude 19**. A full belly maketh a foul heart. The rankest weeds grow out of the fattest soil; and those that make their gut a gulf, well, they may have collops in their flanks, but they have leanness in their souls; indeed, they have (as swine) their souls for salt only, to keep their bodies from putrefying.

And maketh collops of fat on his flanks] Heb. And maketh mouths, that is, wrinkles, upon his flanks. He is active about it, and makes it his business to make provision for the flesh, **#Ro 13:14**. He labours "for the meat that perisheth," **#Joh 6:27**. He lives to eat, and laughs himself fat, till his heart, now hardened for the deceitfulness of his sin, becomes as insensible as Dionysius', the Heracleot, who felt not when men thrust needles into his fat belly; or those bears in Pliny, that could not be stirred with the sharpest prickles.

Ver. 28. **And he dwelleth in desolate cities**] Such as had been before desolated, but are now by him edified again, to get him a name and a renown amongst men, and to make himself formidable,

as those do who build themselves strongholds upon high rocks, as if they would wage war against heaven, *Ad numinis contemptum et hominum terrorem* (Merlin). Peradventure, saith Diodati here, he meaneth those kings of violent empires, who repaired or built great cities after the deluge, as Nimrod, Ashur, and others, #**Ge 10:8 Job 3:14 Isa 23:13**, and raised themselves upon other men's ruins. Eliphaz's scope is to show that a man that hath great power amongst men begins to think himself strong enough for God also.

And in houses where no man inhabiteth] For he hath driven away the inhabitants through his oppressions. This is that crying sin of depopulators, who build themselves desolate places, #**Job 3:14**; and enclosers, who betray towns, as Rome did Carthage, with a distinction, We will save the city, but destroy the town. This hath been noted as a great fault in our nation, and therefore Goropius thinks the English were called Angli, because they were good anglers, and had skill to lay various baits when they fished for other men's livings. But that is his mistake, though perhaps wilful, for we were so called from the old Angli who came in with the Saxons, and were subdued by the Normans, whose duke, William the Conqueror, paid dearly for his depopulations at New Forest, wherein six and thirty parish churches had been demolished, and the inhabitants removed, to make room for beasts' or dogs' game. Various of his sons and nephews came there to untimely ends, so dangerous it is for men to prove Abaddons or destroyers.

Which are ready to become heaps] Heaps of stones: the strongest structures in the world are subject to ruin. Make sure of heaven, which the philosopher fondly dreamed to be made of stone (arch-work), and would one day come to ruin. But whatever becometh of the visible heavens, which shall be purified by the fire of the last day, upon the invisible we may well write, as Hippocrates telleth us it was engraven on the gates of a certain city, *Intacta manet*, it remaineth untouched. And as the Venetians boast of their city, that she is still a virgin, because from the first founding thereof (which is 1200 years since or near upon) it never came into the hands of a foreign enemy.

Ver. 29. **He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance, &c.]** If he be rich, it is for a mischief, neither is it likely long to continue

with him, for God will blow upon and blast his substance, which is the fort and strength, **#Isa 10:14**. He resolves he will be rich, **#1Ti 6:9**, and is set upon it. God, to cross him, saith here, He shall not be rich, but I will make a poor fool of him, according to that **#Jer 17:11**, "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 shall be a fool." There is a curse upon unlawful practices, though men be industrious, as in Jehoiakim, **#Jer 22:19** It is God that giveth power to get wealth, **#De 8:18**. Our care can no more add a penny to our estate than it can a cubit to our stature, **#Mt 6:27**.

He shall not prolong the perfection thereof] Vulgate, He shall not send forth his root in the earth. "A man shall not be established by wickedness," saith Solomon: "but the root of the righteous shall continue," **#Pr 12:3**; {See Trapp on "Pr 12:3"}

Ver. 30. **He shall not depart out of darkness]** But be held under remediless misery, being ever blasted and benighted, till God at last breathe forth upon him his final displeasure. When God hath brought wicked men into straits, there he holdeth them; not so the godly, **#Ps 34:19**, they are sure of deliverance in due season. And as before the morning light is the thickest darkness, so before help hardest trials. *Post tenebras lux*, After the darkness, light, is the Christian's motto; not so the ungodly, they are *ex tenebris in tenebras, infelieiter exclusi, infelicus excludendi*, as Austin hath it, to pass out of one darkness into another, till they be cast into utter darkness (Hom. 16).

The flame shall dry up his branches] That *ventus urens et exsiccans* of God's wrath shall blast and consume, not his offspring only, but all his beauty and bravery; he shall be as a tree that is thunder struck, **#Zec 11:16**.

And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away] God will blow him to destruction, his very breath shall leave him breathless, **#Isa 11:4 Ps 18:15 Job 4:9**; {See Trapp on "Isa 11:4"} {See Trapp on "Ps 18:15"} {See Trapp on "Job 4:9"} Others understand it to be the wicked man's mouth, and take this to be the sense, He shall be so choleric and impatient in his trouble, that he shall send out his last breath suddenly in a passionate

fit. So did Nerva, the emperor, likewise Valentinian, Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia, and our Henry II.

Ver. 31. **Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity]** Let it suffice him that he hath been once already deceived by the uncertainty of riches, which were never true to those which trusted them, nor ever will be, #1Ti 6:17. As Charondas was wont to say of going to sea, and another of going to law, That he wondered not at those that go once, but at those who go a second time. So may we at those that having found the deceitfulness of sin, and the instability of creature comforts, that they should again be drawn in and deceived. This folly Eliphaz here forewarneth Job of, and would not have him twice stumble at the same stone, but deliver his soul, if ever God should restore him again, and say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Why feed I upon ashes? &c., #Isa 44:20.

For vanity shall be his recompense] *i.e.* Poverty and misery shall be his portion, as shame shall be the portion of fools, #Pr 3:35. As he hath sowed the wind, so he shall reap the whirlwind, whereof he is likely to have a great catch, #Ho 8:7; {See Trapp on "Ho 8:7"}

Ver. 32. **It shall be accomplished before his time]** Heb. In not his day. That recompense before mentioned of calamity and death shall be hastened, so that they shall not live out half their days, #Ps 55:22, but die *tempore non suo*, #Ec 7:15, then when it were better for them to do anything rather than to die, since they perish in their corruptions, they are killed with death, #Re 2:23; see #Pr 7:27. Death ever taketh a wicked man unprovided, *Haec enim vena nobis ab Adam agnata est, ut nullam arborem ad suspendium aptam invenire possimus: neque unquam caro mortem eligit, nisi pressa iudicio* (Brent. in loc.). We naturally dream of an immortality here, neither yield we to die till there be a necessity, *Miserandum est autem*, saith Lavater; but it is a pitiful thing, that, being all so desirous of life, we should so little care for those things that would lengthen our lives, such as are piety, justice, temperance, &c.; we forget that short way to long life, #Ps 34:12.

His branch shall not be green] Heb. His crooked or bowed down branch; this is his full estate or numerous issue, those boughs of his, laden and bowed down with fruit, shall not be green, but blasted and dried up; *ramificans eius non virescet*. It is a misery to be the

branch of a wicked stock, for such, as they leave the rest of their substance to their little ones, #Ps 17:14, so they leave them God's curse, as Joab's legacy, #2Sa 3:29, or as Gehazi's leprosy, #2Ki 5:27, a wretched bequeath.

Ver. 33. **He shall shake off his unripe grapes as the vine]** *Filios intelligit per batra, et pueros per florem,* saith Vatablus: *i.e.* By unripe grapes he meaneth the wicked man's sons grown up; and by flowers of the olive, his little ones: and so it is the same with the former, only flourished over with two similitudes, He (that is, God) will snap off his sour grapes as the vines; so Broughton rendered it: *Luctuosa foecunditas* (such as was that of Laeta, in Jerome, Epist. 7, who buried many children) is a sore affliction. If the bud or flower decay, what hope can there be of fruit? Others understand it to be the untimely death, as before, or of the decay of his wealth and possessions.

Ver. 34. **For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate]** Heb. Of the hypocrite; where he seemeth to point at Job, as by the unripe grapes, and blasted flowers of the olive, he had understood Job's children and possessions, #Job 15:33. Now the whole congregation or train and retinue of the hypocrite God will unnest and ruin, saith Eliphaz; they shall all be as one desolated, so the original hath it.

And fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery] Heb. The tabernacles of a bribe. Under these two heads, saith one, we may reduce all sorts of sinners; sinners against God under the notion of hypocrites; and sinners against men under the notion of bribe takers; δωροδεκτον, say the Septuagint, that is, receivers of gifts; and the Hebrew word signifieth, a gift in general; it is taken also for a bribe, because very many gifts are bribes, *Munera sunt honoraria vel corruptoria* (Lavati. in loc.). Now houses built by bribes or very many gifts shall be consumed and come to nothing, #Jer 22:13-17 **Hab 2:9-12**; see the note there. This Eliphaz casteth in Job's teeth, but herein he dealt with him as injuriously as Bouner did with Philpot, the martyr, when he said to him, Also I lay to thy charge, that thou killedst thy father, and wast accursed of thy mother on her death bed (Acts & Mon. fol. 1650).

Ver. 35. **They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity]** Here Eliphaz for a close, by an elegant and usual metaphor taken from

child bearing, showeth that all such as conceive with guile or wrong to others, by that time they have reckoned their months aright, though they grow never so big, shall bring forth nothing but wind and vanity. Like as a woman that thinks she hath conceived and is deceived, pleaseth herself with the thoughts of a child, but brings forth nothing but wind, water, or some dead mass. Brentius exemplifieth this by the Papists, devising *tot modos et formas confitendi et missandi*, so many ways and forms of confessing and massing. Poor souls, when stung by the friars' sermons, or otherwise troubled in mind, run to those practices for help, but all in vain; for though stilled for a while, yet conscience recoileth upon them, and, making them miserable, leaveth them desperate, as Popery is a doctrine of desperation. Meanwhile, till they are confuted by the event, wicked men please themselves not a little in their sinful conceptions; they have a kind of a *sensus veneris* (which Scaliger will have to be the sixth sense, besides those five commonly counted of), a sensual delight in their sinful projects, *In male agendo voluptatem quaesierunt* (Merlin). As one, speaking of the Council of Trent, saith, That it was carried on by the pope with such infinite guile and craft, as that themselves will even smile in the triumphs of their own wits, when they hear it but mentioned, as at a master stratagem (Spec. Europ.). These heathens (so they are called, **#Re 6:2**) consider not, that while they thus tumultuate they do but imagine a vain thing, **#Ps 2:1**, and that the child's name is vanity, as here.

And their belly prepareth deceit] Not their head, but their belly, prepareth (accurately and strongly prepareth, so the word signifieth) deceit, self deceit (so some sense it), or rather to deceive and undo others whom they cannot overcome by might, to overcome by sleight. And in these guileful projects they delight and take a contemplative kind of pleasure, as the voluptuous person doth in his lust, **#Ps 52:1,2**.

Chapter 16

Ver. 1. Then Job answered and said] Although he had little or nothing to answer unto but what he had answered before, yet that he might not say nothing, he replieth to Eliphaz's painted speech, and giveth him to know, that *prudentibus viris non placent phalerata*

sed fortia (as Bishop Jewel was wont to say), that is, that wise men look for matter, and not for words only, from those that accost them. Ver. 2. **I have heard many such things]** Heard them over and over, till I am even sated and nauseated, *Vexatus toties rauci; q.d.* Your sayings are superfluous, your proofs insufficient; you produce nothing new, nothing but what is trivial, and of very common observation. *Haec sex centies audivi*, Mine ears are grated and grieved with these unnecessary repetitions, only reinforced with greater bitterness; which, as it addeth nothing at all to the weight of your words, so it causeth me to add this,

Miserable comforters are ye all] Heb. Comforters of misery, or of molestation, onerous and burdensome (so the Vulgate rendereth it), and in that sense, weighty if you will, laying more load upon me who was before in a sinking condition. You charge me for slighting the consolations of God, and pretend to come on purpose to comfort me; but such cold comforters I have seldom met with; for instead of abating and allaying my sorrows, you do all you can to increase and heighten them. Is this your kindness to your friend? Calvin noteth upon this text, That some comforters have but one song to sing, and they have no regard to whom they sing it. But St Jude's rule is, Of some have compassion, making a difference; others save with fear, **#Jude 22,23**; which while Job's friends observed not, they were justly styled, "Miserable comforters."

Ver. 3. **Shall vain words have an end?]** Heb. Shall there be an end to words of wind? *Ampullatur in arcto*. Bubbles of words, big swollen speeches, full of pride, void of reason; when shall we once have an end of them? They that would comfort another indeed must not multiply vain repetition (for these are very burdensome to a serious ear, much more to a sad heart), much less bitter speeches, least of all taunts and buffooneries, as **#Job 16:4**. For, like as, if the eye be inflamed, the mildest medicine troubleth it, so is it here: how much more when harsh and uncouth!

Or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?] That thou rejoineest, having been so fully answered before? Some men will never be said or set down; such is their pertinace, they will not lay down the bucklers, though beaten to their heads. *Sed praestat*

herbam dare, quam turpiter pugnare, Better yield than stand out with dishonour.

Ver. 4. **I also could speak as you do, &c.**] Every whit as curiously, as furiously. I could scold and scoff as freely as you do, but I know no warrant so to retort and retaliate; "being reviled, we bless; being defamed, we entreat," #1Co 4:12,13. To render railing for railing is to think to wash off dirt with dirt.

If your soul were in my soul's stead] Some read it optatively, as #Isa 64:1, Would to God your soul were in my soul's stead; for then I would heap up words against you, and act your part upon you; but Job was not so malicious or vindictive as to think that tallying of injuries is but justice. *Hypocritis nihil est crudelius, impatientius, et vindictae cupidius,* saith Luther. Hypocrites are cruel, spiteful, and revengeful; but Job was none such. He, therefore, telleth his friends that if they were in his condition he would deal much more mildly with them.

I could heap up words against you] I could, but would not. *Posse et nolle, nobile est* (Sen.). Or thus, Would I heap up, &c., and handle you thus discourteously, by speeches and gestures, as you do me? It were easy to wag a wicked tongue, and to shake my head at you in despite and mockery; but were this religion? Doth not moral philosophy say, If a wise man speak evil of thee, endure him; if a fool, pardon him? *Vincit qui patitur,* as David did Saul, overcoming evil with good, though, when he marched against Nabal, how rough and rash was he in a resolution of revenge! #1Sa 25:32.

Ver. 5. **But I would strengthen you with my mouth**] I would speak to your hearts, and raise up your drooping spirits. True it is, that *consolatiunculae creaturulae* (as Luther calleth them), creature comforts are poor businesses; nevertheless God conveyeth comfort many times by one man to another, as the air conveyeth light, or water heat. His comforts are either rational, fetched from grounds which faith ministereth; or real, from the presence of anything that comforteth, as the sight and discourse of a friend. And herein, "how forcible are right words!" #Job 6:25. They are of force, we see here, both to strengthen the feeble minded, and to abate the strength of their sorrows, to assuage the most swelling floods thereof. And thus one man may be an angel, nay, a God, to another, Now whereas

some might say, You that are so good at comforting others, and promise so fair, why are you not comfortable? Job answereth, in the next verse, that this was their fault who had unkindly kept him apart from receiving any comfort.

Ver. 6. **Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged]** Heb. If I speak; *sc.* to bewail my misery, or to maintain mine innocence, ye say it is good enough for me, and how can I be but wicked who am so punished? As,

If I forbear, what am I eased?] Heb. What goeth from me? *q.d.* Ye conclude me guilty, because silent; as if I had nothing to say for myself. Some make the words to refer to God; as if Job had said, Whether I speak, or whether I forbear, God doth not come in to my help, I find no comfort from him, &c., and by the next verse it should seem that this is the right sense.

Ver. 7. **But now he hath made me weary]** *i.e.* God, whom he acknowledgeth the author of his afflictions; but he should better have borne up under them than to faint and fret even unto madness, as the Septuagint here translates, *Quis eum fatigavit? Dolor, vel Deus ipse?* (Lavat.). Job was now not only wet to the skin, but his soul came into iron, as Joseph's once, **#Ps 105:18**. Like Ezekiel's book, **#Eze 2:10**, he was written quite through with woes and lamentations. And he might say, with Heman, **#Ps 88:15**, "While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted." The grief which he here describeth, *Maior erat quam ut verbis comprehendi, gravior quam ut ferri, molestior quam ut credi possit*, saith Brentius; *i.e.* was greater than could be uttered, heavier than could be borne, more troublesome than can be believed. He, therefore, sets it out as well as he can, and amplifies it by figures and hyperbole, to move God and his friends to pity him, and to show that he complained not without cause.

Thou hast made desolate all my company] Heb. Thou hast wonderfully desolated, or wasted, all my company; that is, all my joints and members (so. the Vulgate translath it, *In nihilum redact; sunt omnes artus mei*); but they do better that understand it of Job's family and familiar friends, who were either destroyed, or stood amazed at his so great affliction, and yielded him little comfort. *Ne te autem turbet enallage personae*, saith Mercer here;

the change of person need not trouble us; only the troubled and uneven speech of Job showeth that his spirit was troubled and unsettled. We meet with the like oft in the Psalms.

Ver. 8. **Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me]** viz. That I am an afflicted man, but yet not a wicked man, such as Elipbaz had described by his *pinguis aqualiculus* (Persius), those collops in his flank, **#Job 15:27**. Thou hast made me all wrinkled (so Broughton rendereth it); or, Thou hast wrinkled me. The Hebrew word is found in Job only; but in the Rabbis more frequently. Grief had made furrows in Job's face, and his tears had often filled them.

And my leanness rising up in me] *sc.* By the continuance of my sores and sorrows, which have made my body a very bag of bones, and cause me to cry out, "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!" **#Isa 24:16**. My flesh, through my grievous anguish, being fallen from my bones, which rise up in a ghastly manner.

Beareth witness to my face] *sc.* That I am one of God's *Plagipatidae*, poor afflicted: but what of that? Scourgeth he not every son whom he receiveth? **#Heb 12:6**. Others render it, In my face; where my leanness sitteth, and is most conspicuous; like as it is said of our Saviour, That with fasting and painstaking he had so waned and macerated himself, that, at little past thirty he was looked upon as one toward fifty, **#Joh 8:57**. And as Mr John Fox, the martyrologue, by his excessive pains in compiling the Acts and Monuments of the Church, in eleven years, grew thereby so lean and withered, that his friends hardly knew him to be the same man (Mr Clark in his Life).

Ver. 9. **He teareth me in his wrath, &c.]** Who did all this to Job? The devil, say some; his disease, say others that was a most uncharitable censure passed by Luther upon Oecolampadius, that he died suddenly, *ignitis Satanae telis confossus*, slain by Satan's fiery darts, because he died of a carbuncle (Lib. de Missa. prin., A.D. 1533). But Job surely meaneth it of God, upon whom his heart was still, though he speak here somewhat unhappily of him, out of the sense of the flesh, and greatness of his grief.

Who hateth me] Heb. He Satanically hateth me. What strange language is this from him who elsewhere calleth God his salvation, his redeemer, **#Job 13:15,16,18 19:25**, and will eventually call him his witness in heaven, to whom his eye poureth out tears! **#Job 16:19,20**. How shall we reconcile these so contrary passions and passages, otherwise than by saying, that every good man is two men? &c.; neither can it possibly be expressed how deeply sensible the saints are of God's displeasure when they are more than ordinarily afflicted by him, and especially when he seemeth to fight against them with his own hand. Hereby, saith Ferus, we may easily see in what a perplexed estate wicked reprobates shall be at the last day, when God shall declare himself to be such an enemy to them indeed; for so much as one of his elect, and a most rare man, but, conceiving him to be against him, because he had no present sense of his favour, was thus extremely troubled.

He gnasheth upon me with his teeth] As extremely angry, **#Ac 7:54**, and by sharpening his teeth threatening destruction, **#Ps 37:12**.

Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me] Which cast forth, as it were, sparkles of fire. An elegant hypotyposis, or description of his sad condition to the life, *Ut non tam gesta res quam nunc geri videatur*, saith Brentius, as if we saw it even acted before our faces. Ver. 10. **They have gaped upon me with their mouth]** They? who? *Non solum Deus, nec solum amici mei, sed tota rerum machina mihi adversatur*, Not God only, nor these friends of mine, but all the creatures are up in arms against me, and threateneth to devour me at one morsel.

They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully] *i.e.* They have done me all the disgrace that may be. See **#La 3:30 2Co 11:20,21 Mic 5:1 Ac 23:1,2 Joh 18:22**. Our Saviour was so served according to the letter; they gaped upon him, mowed at him, buffeted him on the face, gathered themselves together against him, as here. Hence some of the ancients call Job a figure and type of Christ, who was thus dealt with both literally and also figuratively.

They have gathered themselves together against me] Or, They have filled themselves upon me, as **#Ex 15:7**. They have taken their

fill of pleasure at my miseries, as Tigurius rendereth it; or, They come upon me by full troops, so Broughton. Men are apt to agree for mischief **#Ps 35:15 83:5-7**.

Ver. 11. **God hath delivered me to the ungodly]** *i.e.* To the devil and his instruments, those Chaldean and Sabeian robbers, **#Job 1:15,17**, together with his hard hearted friends, who, for want of the true fear of God, added to his afflictions, **#Job 6:14**. {See Trapp on "Job 6:14"}

And turned me over, &c.] As a magistrate doth a malefactor to the executioner. It is a sore affliction to be under the rule of wicked men; much more to be under the rage, which yet was the case of that noble army of martyrs, ancient and modern. The comfort is, that although the Lord turn his servants over into the hands of the wicked, whose tender mercies are mere cruelties, yet he never turns them out of his own hand, neither will he suffer the rod of the wicked to rest upon the lot of the righteous, **#Ps 125:3**. His constant care is, that the choice spirits of his afflicted people fail not before him, and, therefore, he numbereth out their strokes, and if their enemies over do and go beyond their commission, so as to help forward the before appointed affliction, he is sore displeased, and jealous with a great jealousy against them, **#Zec 1:15**.

Ver. 12. **I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder]** It is no small misery to have been happy. *Fuimus Troes et fortis Milesis*. Euripides bringeth in Hecuba as ashamed to look Polymnestor in the face, because having been a queen she was now a captive; her former felicity was no small aggravation compared to her present misery: so was Job's. *Prosper eram, sed disruptit me*, saith he. I was wealthy, but he hath undone me; so Broughton rendereth it. The same Hebrew word signifieth both to be rich and to be at ease; for such commonly sing requiems to their souls, as he did **#Lu 12:19**, and say, "I shall never be moved," **#Ps 30:6**; "I shall see no sorrow," **#Re 18:7**. But God can quickly confute them. Job's worldly prosperity was quickly dashed and lost. He once hoped to have died in his nest, but God not only un-nested him, but broke him to shivers, yea, beat him to dust and atoms, as the word here signifies. Nay, more,

He hath also taken me by my neck] As a strong man doth his enemy, dashing him to the ground, and giving him his passport, as we say.

And hath shaken me to pieces] Heb. He hath scattered and scattered me, as a stone crumbled to crattle, or a pitcher beaten to powder. *Sunt illustres figurae et elegantes hyperbolae*, saith Mercer. Here is brave rhetoric.

And set me up for his mark] Heb. For a mark to him; that I may feel all the arrows of his judgments. See **#Job 7:20**, with the notes there. God shot showers of shafts at him, and seemed to take pleasure in so doing, as a man doth in his shooting at a mark.

Ver. 13. **His archers compass me round about]** *i.e.* His instruments of my woe, whether persons or things, but especially my grievous sores putting me through intolerable pain; these are God's arrows or archers, and do make my poor body not unlike that shield of Sceva, at the siege of Dyrrachium, which had two hundred and twenty darts sticking in it, when Caesar came to his rescue, *Densamque ferens in pectore silvam* (Luc.).

He cleaveth my reins asunder] As a skilful archer, he hits the white, he cleaves the pin, as they call it, he shooteth exactly (to the very chilling and dissecting of my backbone), and so putteth me to most exquisite pain and torment, **#La 3:13**.

He poureth out my gall upon the ground] My bowels, saith the Vulgate. The gall is affixed to the liver, and when that is poured out; the man cannot live, because his wound is mortal and incurable. Job held himself so, but it proved better; the Lord chastened him sore, but he gave him not over to death, **#Ps 118:18**.

Ver. 14. **He breaketh me with breach upon breach]** So that I have hardly any breathing while, *Quis tot et tantis ferendis simul par sit?* Let no man henceforth say, Never did any one suffer such hard and heavy things as I do. What! did not Job? This story of his is a case book to answer such an objection, since never any before nor since his time was so handled; witness the lamentable moan he maketh here, *Non habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum*. And yet to show his equanimity under the hand of God, Buxtorf and Amama have

observed, that the Hebrew word, *Perets*, in this text rendered breath, hath a letter lesser than ordinary in the best copies, to signify that Job's great calamities seemed to him to be but little, because he hoped that God would turn them all to the best unto his soul.

He runneth upon me like a giant] With speed, strength, and courage, fiercely and fearlessly. But now what doth Job? doth he stand stouting and sturding it out with God? No, but in the next words he telleth us how he was affected with these afflictions; *sc.* that as God's hand was heavy upon him, so he held out all the demonstrations and emblems of a heavy heart; and as God had laid him low, so he carried his soul accordingly. God reined him with a rough bit, and he repented.

Ver. 15. **I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin]** Not silks, but sackcloth, is now mine immediate clothing, next to my very skin, which must needs be troublesome to a man so full of sores and other sorrows. So far was poor ulcerous Job from that height and haughtiness of spirit, wherewith Eliphaz had charged him, **#Job 15:12,13,25**, as if Job had been low indeed, but not lowly; humbled, but not humble, Here was a real apology, I have sowed sackcloth, &c.; here was an ocular demonstration, and should have moved his friends to more moderation; for why should any deal harshly with him, who dealt so coarsely with himself?

And defiled my horn in the dust] My horn, that is, my head, say some. My splendour, saith the Chaldee. *Omnia quondam msgnifica*, all that I formerly made any reckoning of, saith Brentius; who also hath this good note upon the text. The sense of God's wrath and judgments due for sin changeth all our gaiety, maketh all our costly garments to be laid aside, putteth us into the habit of penitent suppliants, causeth us to abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes, which were anciently the signs and symbols of true contrition. And now since Christians ought to repent all their life long, and to grieve for their sins, let them be always clothed with sackcloth, not without, but within; and let them put dust on their heads, by remembering that they are but dust; and that they cannot be raised out of the dust, and instead of sackcloth be clothed with the robes of glory, but by the mercy of God, through the merits of Christ, &c.

Ver. 16. **My face is foul with weeping]** Is swelled, saith the Vulgate. Is shrivelled up, say the Jewish doctors. Is doublely dirtied, so one rendereth it. So far was Job from stretching out his hand against God, and strengthening himself against the Almighty, as Elipbaz had charged him, **#Job 15:25**, that he lay at God's feet as a suppliant, with blubbered and beslubbered cheeks; having furrows in his face, and icicles from his lips with continual weeping; yea, he had wept himself blind almost, for so it followeth,

And on mine eyelids is the shadow of death] *i.e.* Mine eyes do fail with tears, as **#La 2:11**. *Larga lacrymarum copia aciem oculorum obstruente;* they are even wasted away and sunk into my head, as in a dying man (Mercer). Much weeping spendeth the spirits, weakeneth the visive power, and sometimes blindeth, as it did Faustus (the son of Vortigern, king of this island, by his own daughter), who is said to have wept himself blind for the abominations of his parents. See David's tears and the effects thereof, **#Ps 6:7 38:10**.

Ver. 17. **Not for any injustice (Heb. Violence or wrong doing) in my hands]** Job could wash his hands of that rapine and bribery wherewith they had injuriously charged him, **#Job 15:34**, and safely say of it, as afterwards Father Latimer did of sedition (3 Serm. before K. Edw.), As for that sin, for aught that I know, methinks I should not need Christ, if I might so say. Some failings there might be in him in doing justice, but no intentions of doing injustice.

Also my prayer is pure] As proceeding from a heart washed from wickedness, **#Jer 4:14**, and presented with holy hands, lifted up without wrath or doubting, **#1Ti 2:8**. That he regarded not iniquity in his heart he was well assured, **#Ps 66:17**. Prayer is the pouring out of the heart; if iniquity be harboured there, prayer will have the scent and savour, and that incense will strike off the hand which offereth it. God requireth that in every place incense be offered unto his name, and a pure offering, **#Mal 1:11**. It standeth a man in hand to see that though his work be but mean, yet it be clean; though not fine, yet not foul, soiled, and slubbered with the slur of a rotten heart. An upright man in afflictions is not without his cordial, as is to be seen in Job here, and St Paul, **#2Co 1:12**.

Ver. 18. **O earth, cover not thou my blood]** Job had made a high profession of his innocence and integrity. This he further confirmeth, 1. By an imprecation against himself. 2. By an appeal to God, **#Job 16:19**. In this imprecation or wish of his (which Mr Broughton taketh to be meant by the foregoing words, Also my prayer is pure, rendered by him thus, But my wish is clean, saying, O earth, cover not, &c.) he hath an eye, no doubt, to the history of Abel's blood, shed by Cain, **#Ge 4:1-15**, and it is as if he should say, If I have committed murder or any the like wickedness, cover it not, O earth, but do thy office by crying out against me; yea, cry so loud to God for vengeance, as to drown the voice of my supplication.

And let my cry have no place] A most pathetic speech, able to move the heart of his friends to relent to hear it, and straightway to alter their opinion of him, while he thus bespeaketh the earth, and maketh *res mutas mortuasque*, the dumb and lifeless creatures his hearers.

Ver. 19. **Also now behold my witness is in heaven]** Here is his appeal to God. So great is the confidence of a good conscience. We also may do the like, if there be no other way left for clearing our innocence; provided that we do it with a clear conscience, and in a matter of consequence; not in jest, but in judgment. Some of the martyrs appealed thus, and cited their persecutors to answer at God's tribunal. Yea, to help the truth in necessity, a private oath between two or more may be lawfully taken, so it be done sparingly and warily; for in serious affairs and matters of great importance, if it be lawful in private to admit God as a judge, why should he not as well be called to witness? Again, the examples of holy men show the practice of private oaths as not unlawful. Jacob and Laban confirmed their covenant by a private oath, so did Jonathan and David, &c.

Ver. 20. **My friends scorn me]** Or, play the rhetoricians against me. David likewise complaineth of his rhetorical mockers at feasts, that made as it were set speeches against him. One rendereth it, My friends are interpreters, or rather misinterpreters, of my speeches. "For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer," **#Ps 109:4**.

But mine eye poureth out tears unto God] *Expletur lachrymis egeriturque dolor.* The Hebrew hath it, Mine eye droppeth or distilleth to God. Prayers and tears are the weapons of the saints, whose eyes, glazed with tears, are fitly compared to the fishpools of Heshbon, **#So 7:4**. These tears have a voice, *{#Ps 39:12, "Hold not thy peace at my tears"}*; they are most powerful orators. Christ, going to suffer on the cross, could not but turn back and comfort those weeping women. God will pour out comforts into their bosoms who can pour out tears into his; they can never be at any loss who find out God to weep to.

Ver. 21. **O that one might plead for a man with God]** Heb. And he will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend; that is (say our late learned annotators, to whom we are greatly bound for this most sweet and spiritual exposition of the words), Christ, who is God and man, will plead my cause with his Father; he can prevail, because he is God equal to the Father; he will undertake it, because he will be man like to me. This interpretation agreeth best with the coherence and the words following. And it seemeth that Job knew the mystery of Christ's incarnation, **#Job 19:25-27**, where he speaketh of him both as God, and as a visible Redeemer. Christ is frequently called the Son of man in the New Testament, and believers are called his friends, **#Joh 15:13-15**. By this text thus expounded we see that the doctrine of a mediator between God and man was known and believed in the world long before Christ came into the world. He is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, **#Re 13:8**, and to the Jews the ceremonial law was instead of a gospel.

Ver. 22. **When a few years are come, &c.]** Heb. Years of number; that is, years that may easily be counted and cast up. The years of the longest liver are but few, they may be quickly numbered. This ran much in Job's mind, and made him very desirous to be cleared before he died, that he might not go out of the world in a snuff.

Then shall I go the way] That way of all flesh, **#1Ki 2:2**, which Job feareth not to do, as knowing whom he had trusted, and that death should be unto him the daybreak of eternal brightness.

Whence I shall not return] See **#Job 7:9,10 10:21**, with the notes.

Chapter 17

Ver. 1. **My breath is corrupt]** Which argueth that my inwards are imposthumated and rotten, so that I cannot in likelihood have long to live; Oh therefore that I might have a day of hearing and clearing before I die! But Job should have remembered that there will be at the last day a resurrection of names as well as of bodies; which he that believeth maketh not haste. Howsoever, it was not amiss for Job, so grievously diseased, and now well in years, to have thought himself to be dying and to discourse about these three particulars, that speak of him as a dying man. In the old the palm tree is full of blooms, the map of age is figured on his forehead, the calendars of death appear in the furrows of his face, the mourners are ready to go about the streets, and he is going to his long home, according to that elegant description, #Ec 12:1-7 He should therefore say with Varro, *Annus octogesimus me admonet, ut farcinas colligam, &c.*, It is high time for me to pack up, and to be gone out of this life; or rather, as Simeon, Lord, now let thou thy servant depart in peace, &c.

My days are extinct] As a candle, #Pr 13:9. Or cut off, as a web, so some read it. The original word is found only here.

The graves are ready for me] Heb. The graves for me; *q.d.* I bid adieu to all things else, and as the grave gapes for me, so do I gape for the grave, Ειθε μοι τουτο γενοιτο. I would it were even so, as Basil said, when Valens, the Arian emperor, threatened him with death. But why doth Job speak of graves in the plural? Surely, to show that he was besieged with many deaths; or else, because the dead are buried (as it were) first in their grave clothes, and then in the coffin, and then in the bier or hearse, and lastly in the sepulchre, which every place did, as it were, proffer to Job, and threaten him with death, in regard to his many pains and pressures, by the scoffs and taunts of his friends. For,

Ver. 2. **Are there no mockers with me?]** Heb. If there be not mockers with me, *q.d.* *despeream*, let me be punished, or let me be blamed for wishing to argue it out with God; so some Jewish doctors sense it. Job had before complained about his friends' jeering and girding at him, #Job 16:20. To be mocked in misery is no small aggravation. See what is threatened, #Pr 1:26. The proverb is, *Oculus, fides, et fama non patiuntur iocos*, There is no jesting with

a man's eye, faith, and fame. Junius rendereth the text thus, Forasmuch as there are no mockings with me, I mean honestly, and deal plainly, and yet mine eye continueth in their provocations, neither can I be set right in their opinions, so prejudiced they are against me.

And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?] Heb. Lodge or tarry all night in their provocations, or bitternesses? Broughton readeth, In these men's vexing lodgeth mine eye; that is, I lodge not so much in my bed as in the thoughts of my friends' unkindness. And indeed, saith one, a man may sleep better upon bare boards than upon hard words. Some refer it to the eye of his mind lifted up to God in prayer; but yet no sweetness coming from him either internally or externally. The former is rather to be followed.

Ver. 3. **Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee]** This Job speaketh not to Eliphaz (as R. Moses, Beza, and some others would have it), but to God himself, as **#Job 16:7**, whom he desireth to lay down or appoint, as **#Ex 1:11**, and put in Christ as a surety to plead for him; see **#Heb 7:22**; and so Brentius expoundeth it: There is one only surety, saith he, one only intercessor, the Lord Jesus Christ, who if he appear not in the eyes of our faith, we have none else that can undertake for us to God; neither is there any creature which can stand in the judgment of God, though he would never so fain be surety for us: thus he. And accordingly our late learned annotators, reading the words thus: Appoint, I pray thee, my surety with thee; who is he then that will strike upon my hand? that is, Appoint Christ, who is with thee in heaven, and hath undertaken to be my surety; appoint him, I say, to plead my cause and to stand up for me, and then no man will dare to contend with me. And so it is suitable to the notes on {*See Trapp on "Job 16:21"*} {*See Trapp on "Ro 8:33"*} The Vulgate Latin (not altogether from the purpose, saith Brentius) translates the whole verse thus, Put me near thyself, and then let whoso will contend with me.

Ver. 4. **Thou hast hid their heart from understanding]** That is, thou hast hidden understanding from their heart, thou hast left them in the dark, destitute of a right judgment, while they condemn me to be a wicked person, because I am grievously afflicted; and thence it is that I do so confidently appeal to thee in Jesus Christ, since my

friends are so far mistaken in this controversy. If God give not both light and sight, if he vouchsafe not to irradiate both organ and object, the best will be bemisted. Every good gift and perfect cometh from above, even from the Father of lights, #Jas 1:17. It was he that made Reverend Doctor Sibbs (as one saith of him) spiritually rational and rationally spiritual; one that seemed to see the insides of nature and grace, and the world and heaven, by those perfect anatomies he had made of them all.

Therefore shalt thou not exalt them] Therefore thou shalt not give them honour, so Broughton rendereth it. But that is not all. *Litotes est*, saith Mercer; it is a figure, wherein less is said, and more is meant; thou shalt not only not exalt them, but thou shalt also abase and humble them; this contestation shall be nothing at all to their commendation in the end. It is sound knowledge of the truth according to godliness, that exalteth a man, and makes him to be accounted of; and the contrary. Howbeit many great and good men have been greatly mistaken in very great controversies and transactions, as was Luther, *Doctor resolutus, sed non in omnibus illuminatus*. And yet how many learned able men hath his name misled in the point of consubstantiation! Ursin was carried away with it awhile, till he read his arguments, which he found to be little better than an illogical argument. Holy Greenham, when pressed to conformity to the ceremonies, by the bishop of Ely, who urged Luther's approbation of them; and are you wiser than Luther? his sober and gracious answer was, I reverence more the revealed will of God in teaching Luther so many necessary things to salvation than I search into his secret will, why he hid his heart from understanding in things less necessary.

Ver. 5. **He that speaketh flattery to his friends]** As you, my friends, do to and for God, in seeming to assert his justice in punishing me for my wickedness, so soothing and smoothing up the Almighty (*quod ipsum nihil aliud est quam falso Deo blandiri*, saith Merlin), and seeking to make the world believe, by your great words, that you are his great champions, while you go about to clear up his righteousness by concluding that I am unrighteous. See #Job 13:7,8. {See Trapp on "Job 13:7"} {See Trapp on "Job 13:8"}

The eyes of his children shall fail] Not himself only shall smart (while the Lord cutteth off flattering lips and the deceitful tongue, **#Ps 12:3**), but his poor children shall repent for it. They shall lie languishing at hope's hospital, and after all be disappointed; or their eyes shall fail with long looking after good; but nothing comes. They shall look for peace, and there is no good; and for a time of healing, but behold trouble, **#Jer 14:19**. God will destroy flatterers, head and tail, branch and rush, like as the Thessalians once utterly destroyed the city called Κολακκεια, or Flattery (Hen. Steph. Apol. pro Herod.).

Ver. 6. **He hath made me also a byword of the people]** Here Job returns to his old task of setting forth his own misery; for what men are most sensible of that their tongues do most of all run upon. Job is a byword, or a proverb, to this day, for we say, As poor as Job; as of old they said, *Iro pauperior*, &c. He was become a common proverb, a public mocking stock, yea, he was *pro cantione ad tympanum trita*, as some sense the next words. And before time (or, to men's faces) I was (or I am) a tabret; they sing my miseries to the tabret, as a matter of mirth; they compose comedies out of my tragedies; and this greateneth my grief. I am openly a tabret; so Broughton reads it. The Vulgate hath it, I am an example before them. The Chaldea paraprast, I am as hell before them. The Hebrew word is Tophet, taken afterwards indeed for hell, but not so in Job's time. The Septuagint, I became a sport, γελως, to them. David met with the like measure, **#Ps 69:10,11**, and the Church, **#La 2:15**. And Christ on the cross was matter of mirth to the malicious Jews. God had made Job all this. He (that is, God) hath made me, &c.: his name he spares in reverence; but everywhere he acknowledgeth God the author of his troubles, as Mercer here noteth. The whole verse may be read thus; He hath made me also a byword of the people, whereas beforetime I was as a tabret; that is, I am now a scorn to them who delighted in me in my prosperity.

Ver. 7. **Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow]** Not only is my good name blasted, but my body also is wasted; the nerves of mine eyes are contracted, the visual faculty decayed, **#Ps 6:7**. "Mine eye is consumed because of grief; yea, my soul and my belly," **#Ps 31:9**. Not the visual only, but the vital powers are wasted; {see #Job 16:16} yea, the intellectual part as well as the sensitive, understood by the formations in the next clause, that is, the cogitations, say they,

according to #Ge 6:5. But I rather take it according to our translation, for the members of the body.

And all my members are as a shadow] My *membra* members are but *umbra*, shadows, they look more like a skeleton, an anatomy, an apparition, than a true body, nothing being left but skin and bone, so much meagred are all my members. This is *hyperbolica malorum suorum amplificatio*, saith Merlin.

Ver. 8. **Upright men shall be astonied at this]** They shall silently admire and adore the fathomless depth of the divine administration when they see a man so upright to suffer such heavy pressures; yet shall they not censure me as you do, nor condemn me for complaining, since there is a cause. They cannot indeed see far into God's secret intentions, they do therefore *mirari* marvel, rather than *rimari*, examine, like as the old Romans dedicated unto Victory a certain lake, the depth whereof they could not fathom.

And the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite] He shall learn of me not to be baffled out of his sincerity, to be mocked out of his integrity, but to maintain and take comfort therein against all his false accusers. Opposition doth not weaken, but waken, heroic spirits, #2Sa 6:21,22. They proceed so much the more vigorously in the ways of holiness; like as lime burns the more for the cold water cast upon it, and as the palm tree, which, although it have many weights at the top, and many snakes at the bottom, yet it stirreth up itself, and flourisheth, taking for its posy, *Nec premor, nec perimor*. Nothing hurteth or hindereth me.

Ver. 9. **The righteous also shall hold on his way]** Stumble he may for a time at his own calamity, and worse, men's felicity; but as he that stumbleth, and yet falleth not, gets ground, so fareth it with the righteous in this case. Once David said, "Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence; for all the day long have I been plagued," when bad men have been prospered. Hence he began to repent of his repentance, and to miscensure the generation of God's children as thrice miserable, #Ps 73:13-15; but after a while, and upon better consideration, he said, "This is mine infirmity"; yea, he fooled and beasted himself, #Ps 73:22, for so saying. And the like will all those at length do that belong to God; though for the present offended at God's proceedings, and by their

passions miscarried to their cost, yet they return to their right minds; forwards they may fall sometimes, but not backwards, for that were far more dangerous. "Lord, to whom should we go," saith Peter, since "thou alone hast the words of eternal life?" #Joh 6:68. Neither know we where to mend ourselves, by gadding about, to change our way, #Jer 2:36. The righteous shall hold on his way, *mordicus tenebit*, he shall hold it toughly, hold it as with tooth and nail, not going aside a nail's breadth; ἀνθεξεται, he shall stick to it, as the Greek hath it.

And he that hath clean hands] Upright, innocent, righteous, clean handed, these all are the good man's adjuncts and titles of honour, far beyond those of the world's greatest magnificent.

Shall be stronger and stronger] Heb. Shall add strength. Not only shall he hold his own, but get more grace; not only persevere, but proceed and make progress. He shall take boldness, *Sumet audaciam*, say the Septuagint, and (by a holy antiperistasis) {*Opposition or contrast of circumstances; the force of contrast or contrariness; resistance or reaction roused against any action.*} get heart of grace, as they call it, from the evil attempts of others against him; the more outrageous they the more courageous he; like as by St Paul's bonds many waxed confident, #Php 1:14, and as the primitive Christians, the more they were killed up the more numerous they became. *Plures effimur quoties metimur* (Tertul.). True zeal is of a most masculine and courageous nature; it is enkindled by quench coals, quickened by rubs and remoras. Baruch repaired earnestly, bursting out into heat, #Ne 3:20. Shall such a man as I flee? said that heavenly spark, #Job 6:11. Shall I change my opinion, because *hoc Ithacus velit?* Remit my diligence, because of a frown or a trump? because such a persecutor threateneth me? Oh that I might enjoy those wild beasts prepared for my death! said Ignatius. Oh that I might have the maidenhead of that kind of suffering for Christ, said that martyr to Bonner, threatening to whip him, &c.

Ver. 10. **But as for you all, do you return, &c.]** Change your minds, as #Mal 3:18, and close with me, lay aside your prejudiced opinions, deliver up yourselves to my discipline, who am ready to teach you things both weighty and necessary, *Siquis culturae patientum accommodet aurem.*

For I cannot find one wise man amongst you] *Nihil hic ex odio dicit*, saith an interpreter. This Job speaketh not out of hatred to their persons, but freely uttereth that which he was persuaded to be the truth, and wisheth them a better understanding of the thing controverted between himself and them at this time. Now it is no fault to speak of men as we find them. See #**1Co 6:5**, "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you?" and yet, #**Job 10:15**, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."

Ουδεις ανθρωπων αυτος απαντα σοφος (Theog.).

Ver. 11. **My days are past]** *q.d.* It is past time of day for me to hope for a return of a prosperous condition, since I am irrecoverably diseased, and cannot be long of life.

My purposes are broken off] Or, My thoughts are plucked up by the roots, even the possessions of mine heart, that is, those thoughts that should wholly possess me, and take me up entirely, seizing upon my spirit; *q.d.* I am not now in case to think settledly and seriously of any good, my sorrows are so many, and my sores so grievous. The Chaldee hath it, The tables of my heart are broken. How foolish then are they who put off their repentance till they are cast upon their sick beds, when they may soon find enough to do to attend the pain and infirmity of their bodies! To suffer and be sick (saith one) is work enough for any man at one time; he had not need to have his greatest work to do when he hath such work to do.

Ver. 12. **They change the night into day]** *i.e.* My troubled thoughts render my nights restless, filling me with confusion. When the mind is unsettled the man cannot rest.

The light is short because of darkness] *i.e.* Comfort is long ere it cometh, and soon it expireth; *Rara hora, brevis mora* Rare the hour, short the delay (Bern.). The Vulgar, *Post tenebras spero lucem*, here, After darkness I hope for light (the ancient motto of the town of Geneva), is far fetched.

Ver. 13. **If I wait, the grave is mine house]** In that congregation house of all living (as it is called, #**Job 30:23**) both I and my hopes must be suddenly lodged. Some render it thus, If I build, the grave is my house. Solomon calleth it, The house of eternity, #**Ec 12:5**. And

the Egyptians accordingly call graves everlasting houses, as Siculus saith, lib. i.

I have made my bed in darkness] The grave was Job's house, and therein he had made his bed to rest from his labours. There men follow their works no more, because followed by their works, **#Re 14:13.**

Ver. 14. **I have said to corruption, Thou art my father]** See how he speaks of corruption and the worms, *Ac si iam iuris illorum, et domesticus esset,* as if he were of family with them, and nearest of kin to them; so doth he court them, as it were, that they might be willing to receive him; showing by it how willing he was to die; for whither do men in a strange country, and in misery, desire rather to go than to the house of their parents? Here also Job declareth what will be the end of all men, and what shall be their kindred in the grave. From corruption we came (for what else is the seed and blood of generation), to corruption also we go, as sons thereof; and *Pulvis et Putredo,* we salute for sisters, what shall be most tender to us, and attendant upon us. Why then should any boast of high kindred? To the pit I cry, O father, O sister; O mother, to the worm: so Broughton rendereth it. Why should any boast of bodily beauty, since corruption will shortly seize upon the fairest face, which is now but putrefaction and worms once removed, and to the same must suddenly move back again. *Mihi experto credite,* saith Austin, Believe me, who have made trial of it: Open a grave, and upon the dead man's head you shall find toads leaping, begotten of his brains; upon his loins serpents crawling, begotten of his reins; in his belly worms abounding, arising out of his entrails. Behold what now we are, and what we shortly shall be; behold the origin and filthiness of sin (Serm. 48, ad Frat. in Erem.).

Ver. 15. **And where is now my hope? &c.]** Heb. And where is my hope? *sc.* of restoration to my pristine prosperity, which you have so often promised me, who am now ready set upon the confines of death? Job was past the Cape of Good Hope in his own apprehension; but God turned again his captivity, **#Job 42:10** *Qui nihil sperare potest desperet nihil.* Who is able to hope for nothing, despairs for nothing. Job did well to propound death to himself, and prepare for it by such a before mentioned familiarity; but yet he should have better thought of the infinite power and goodness of

God, who raiseth the dead, and delighteth to help such as are forsaken of their hopes. "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver," #2Co 1:10. The Hebrew word that signifieth hope signifieth also a line, because by hope the heart should be stretched out as a line to the thing it hopeth for; and because it signifieth also a congregation, therefore some render this verse thus, And where now is my congregation? And as for my congregation, who shall see it? *q.d.* I have no other family or familiars but what are to be found in the grave, #Jer 3:17 Ge 3:19.

Ver. 16. **They shall go down to the bars of the pit]** That is, I and my things, or I and my hopes of prosperity, #Job 17:15, and they that will see the good I hope for must pass through the gates of death to behold it, and lie down in the grave with me, and then it shall appear. Cajetan thinks that this is spoken ironically to his friends, and by way of derrision, *Per irrisionem haec dicta sunt; q.d.* It seems like you think I shall be rich in the grave (who promise so much to me, and make me such overtures of a happiness here), for I have no hope to be rich in this world. And the Septuagint seem to favour this sense, rendering it, Shall my goods go into the grave with me? See #1Ti 6:7. {See Trapp on "1Ti 6:7"}

When our rest together is in the dust] Or, When I shall rest alone in the dust, as #Job 34:29; and then (De Annibal. Sil. Ital.),

— *Modo quem fortuna fovendo,
Congestis opibus donisque refersit opimis,
Nudum tartarea portabit navita cymba*

Chapter 18

Ver. 1. **Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said]** Not so much disputing as inveighing against Job in a sharp and angry oration, wherein he elegantly describeth the woe of a wicked man, but wrongfully wresteth the same against good Job, who might well say with him in Tacitus, *Tu linguae, ego aurium dominus*, If I cannot command thy tongue, yet I can command mine own ears; or with another, *Didicit ille maledicere, et ego contemnere*, This man hath learned to reproach, and I to slight his contempts and contumelies; unless I should yield, that wicked men only are grievously afflicted

in this life present; that they are not to be reckoned wicked who prosper in their way, but those only who suffer extremely.

Ver. 2. **How long will it be ere you make an end of words?**] First he taxeth Job with being talkative, when he himself talked much, but said little, save only what he had spoken before, #Job 8, though Job had sufficiently refuted him. But as nothing in the world is more unreasonable than an ignorant person, who thinketh nothing well done but that which he doth himself; so those that bear themselves overly bold upon their own knowledge, and overween their own abilities, account it a great injury if any dissent from them in opinion and judgment, *Λαλειν αριστος λεγειν δε αδυνατωτατος* (De Alcibiade, Plutarch). And such a one here Bildad showeth himself to be by his *exordium ex abrupto*, as Junius phraseth it, his abrupt beginning, as if he could bear no longer with Job's prittle prattle; who, if he were more prolix than his friends, he had greater reason, as being heavily afflicted and falsely accused, *Quando tandem finem loquendi seu nugandi potius facies?* (Lay.) Among the Romans the plaintiff was allowed only three hours, the defendant six. But why doth Bildad speak of Job here in the plural number? Was it for honour's sake (as Cajetan holdeth)? I scarcely can agree. Was it because he thought Job to be possessed by an evil spirit (as Philip after Bede)? No. But this he seemeth to do, either by bending his speech to the bystanders, who seemed to favour Job, and sometimes to put in a word for him; whom therefore Bildad looked upon as his fellow hypocrites; or else, by an irony, he speaks unto Job as unto many (Vos, o Calliope, precor. Virg.), because he seemed to set up his opinion above all others, and would needs have his counter to stand for a thousand pounds.

Mark, and afterwards we will speak] Let thy words be henceforth dipped and dyed in thy heart before they be uttered; let our words also be duly weighed, that some end may be put to these altercations and disputes.

Ver. 3. **Wherefore are we counted as beasts, &c.**] Here he taxeth Job with pride and arrogance; grounding upon those words of his taken at the worst, #Job 12:7 17:4,10, and not considering his case, that he was full of pain, which maketh wise men touchy (as oppression maketh them mad, #Ec 7:7), and that they had sorely provoked him by their bitter taunts and scurrilous invectives, which

called for so sharp a currycomb. *Pessime autem habet hypocrisin, si contemnatur*; Hypocrisy loves not to be sighted, saith Brentius here. And Gregory upon this text saith, that in Bildad heretics are set forth, who stomach it much that the faithful take upon them to reprove them, as carried away by error; as if the knowledge of the truth resided in themselves only, and all others had no more understanding than beasts. "This people which know not the law are cursed," say those Pharisees, **#Joh 7:49**. "Ye know nothing at all," saith Caiaphas to his assessors, **#Joh 11:49**. The Gnostics and Illuminates referred to themselves as being the only knowing men. But if Bildad had been right, he would neither have so far misconstrued Job's words nor yet have been behind to fool himself, as Asaph in a similar case did, **#Ps 73:22**, where he useth the plural of the words here used in the singular, calling himself, Behemoth, *id est, magnam et crassam bestiam*, a great and a gross beast.

And reputed vile in your sight?] Heb. Polluted or unclean; that is, as beasts unfit for food, much less fit for sacrifice. The same Hebrew word signifieth polluted and vile. Every wicked man is a vile man, be he never so high and honourable in the world's account, as Antiochus, **#Da 11:21**; is called a vile person, and yet he was the great king of Syria, surnamed Epiphanes, or illustrious, and by the flattering Samaritans he was styled, Antiochus, the mighty God. See **#Ps 15:4**.

Ver. 4. **He teareth himself in his anger]** Here he chargeth Job with desperate madness, as if through extreme impatience he fell foul upon his own flesh, as did that demoniac in the Gospel, Bajazet, the Great Turk, in his iron cage, Pope Boniface VIII, when clapped up close prisoner in St Angelo; and as they say the tiger doth, when he heareth a drum struck up, he teareth his own flesh with his teeth; or as all ravenous beasts tear in pieces the prey which they have taken. Many read the text thus, O the man which teareth his soul in his anger; or, O thou which tearest thyself, &c. The moralist describeth an angry man forcibly held by his friends, biting his own lips, rending his clothes, and dashing himself against the pillars, *Labia mordet, caput quassat, vestimenta scindit, et se in columnas impingit* (Senec.). Such a one Bildad maketh Job to be, horn-mad, or mankind, as we say; and he takes occasion, likely, from those words of his, **#Job 13:14**. But love would have thought no evil. Bildad

herein sinned against the law of love, as likewise he doth much more in the following vehement interrogation, charging Job with insolent boldness against God.

Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?] Shall God cast off the care of his earthly kingdom to gratify thee, and to make good thine assertion, that good men may suffer, and bad men go unpunished? Never think it; thou mayest sooner expect him to overturn the whole world for thy sake, and put everything out of that order he hath decreed and made it in, than cease to be just in punishing the wicked. The course of justice is as firmly settled as the course of nature is. *Fiat iustitia, pereat mundus*. Of Fabricius it was said, that the sun might as easily be turned out of his track as he out of his path of justice; much more may it be so said of Almighty God, the rock that cannot be removed, though he varieth the manner, the means, the times and seasons of executing justice, as seemeth best unto his heavenly wisdom.

Ver. 5. Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out] The ensuing description of a wicked man's unhappiness in like, at death, and after death, is very true, and daintily set forth, but falsely and wrongfully wrested against Job. Yea, or of a surety, the light of the wicked shall be put out, though thou wilt not hear of it; but the truth shall be spoken, however it be taken, and thou shalt hereby see thyself to be a wicked man, because thy light is extinct, that is, thy outward prosperity, fitly compared to light, because, 1. It cheereth our minds; 2. Directeth our hands to every business; 3. Lesseneth our frights; 4. Rendereth us conspicuous. The light of the wicked shall put out itself (so some render it); he is commonly the cause of his own ruin (Merlin).

And the spark of his fire shall not shine] He is quenched as the fire of the thorns, #Ps 118:12. Whereof, after a while, neither spark nor spunk remaineth.

Ver. 6. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle] The glory of his family shall be obscured; he and his shall come to utter and unexpected ruin, as Haman's did.

And his candle shall be put out with him] He and his prosperity shall die together; he shall go out in a snuff, and leave nothing

behind him but a detestable name. *Sicut felis fugiens pedit, sic ille moriens hunc crepitum cecinit*, saith Melancthon concerning Eckius' last piece, *De coniugio sacerdotum*. Or, his candle shall be put out above him, so the Vulgate interpreter; the lamps which glittered overhead, during the pride and pomp of his feasts, shall give no more light; or if they give any, it shall be but to shine upon his tomb.

Ver. 7. **The steps of his strength shall be straitened]** That is, saith Vatablus, he shall not do what he would and was wont. He shall lose his courage in the midst of his enterprises, and not be able to effect his attempts.

And his own counsel shall cast him down] His cunning shall fail him, his counsel, whereby once he rose, shall serve but to advance his overthrow, and to precipitate him into misery. We use to say of a cunning pated fellow, that he never lacked a trick wherewith to help himself; but there is neither power nor policy against the Lord and his judgments. Of the Athenians it is said, that Minerva turned all their evil counsel into good unto them. God's enemies have no such friend to help them at a dead lift. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall bring down the golden image with a powder, and make it like the chaff of the summer floor, **#Da 2:35**.

Ver. 8. **For he is cast into a net by his own feet]** Wicked men are even ambitious for destruction; judgments need not go to find them out; they run to meet their bane. Divine justice and their own indiscretion undo them. He hath sent his feet into the net, so the Vulgate rendereth it. He is sent into a net by his own feet, so Mr Broughton. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins," **#Pr 5:22**; these shall cast him into inextricable straits.

And he walketh upon a snare] Upon a platted gin, saith Broughton; whereupon the more he strives to get, the more he entangleth himself. *Sic laqueas fera dum iactat astringit. Sic aves viscum dum trepidantes excutiunt, plumis omnibus illinunt* (Sen. de Ira, lib. iii. cap. 6): So the beast, while he tosseth the snares wherein he is taken, straiteneth them. So the birds, while they think to shake off the birdlime, besmear all their feathers with it.

Ver. 9. **The gin shall take him by the heel]** Or, he shall lay hold on the trap with his heel, so Mercer readeth it; that is, he foolishly runs upon his own ruin, he perisheth by his own oversight.

And the robber shall prevail against him] *Horridi sitibundi*, the shag-haired ruffians, that have wasted their own estates, and now thirst after other men's. Broughton readeth it, The savage shall lay hold on him. So that either by secret contrivance or open violence he shall be undone.

Ver. 10. **The snare is laid for him in the ground, &c.]** This heap of words, net, snare, gin, trap, cords, showeth that God hath many ways to catch the wicked with, and that *nusquam et nunquam non eis impendat exitium*, destruction is ready to meet them at every turning. God cannot lack a weapon to beat a rebel.

And a trap for him in the way] He walks as it were upon a mine of gunpowder. The Hebrew hath it, His trap; such as most of the Caesars, till Constantine the Great, met with; and among the rest Maximinus, that inastive tyrant, eight feet high, who daily devoured forty pounds of flesh, and drank thereto six gallons of wine. This foul beast, after he had raised the sixth persecution against the Christians, especially against the pastors of the Church, and exercised many other great cruelties, was told to his teeth (*Mimus in Theatre*),

Eleptias grandis est, et occiditur;
Leo fortis est, et occiditur:
Cave multos, si singulos non times.

And it befell him accordingly, for at the siege of Aquileia, in Italy, he was slain as he slept at noon in his tent by his own soldiers (Euseb.). Ezekiel foretelleth the degenerate sons of Josiah, that they shall be taken by the king of Babylon as beasts in a toil. So Pharaoh, that natural brute beast, was "made to be taken and destroyed," #2Pe 2:12 Ex 9:16. So Saul complaineth that God had forsaken him, and the Philistines, those savage creatures, were upon him, #1Sa 28:15 "Behold, I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them," &c., #Jer 16:16.

Ver. 11. **Terrors shall make him afraid on every side]** These terrors are, as it were, the cruel sergeants and merciless officers of that king of terrors, #Job 18:14, arresting him, as it were, in the devil's name, and bringing him to justice, *Apparitores et lictores* (Jun.). How can it be but a terrible time with him, when death comes with a writ of *Habeas corpus*, Let you keep the body, and the devil with a writ of *Habeas animam*? Let you keep the spirit, when the cold earth must have his body, and hot hell hold his soul, according to that of the psalmist, "Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them," #Ps 55:15. The sad forethought hereof causeth many unutterable griefs and grapings, perplexities of spirit and convulsions of soul, a very hell above ground, and a foretaste of eternal torments. The word here rendered terror signifieth utmost frights, such as put a man well nigh out of his wits and distract him. R. Solomon understandeth it to be devils; others to be furies, such as the poets feign. Most certain it is, that a body is not so tormented with stings or torn with stripes as a mind with remembrance of wicked actions and fear of future evils (Cic. Orat. pro Rose. Amer.).

And shall drive him to his feet] As they did Cain, that wretch, *Qui factus est a corde sua fugitivus* (Tertul.), who would fain have fled from his own conscience (if he could have known whither), and become a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth, #Ge 4:12, seeking to outrun his terrors, which yet dogged him hard at the heels. They shall press him at his feet, so Broughton readeth this text.

Ver. 12. **His strength shall be hunger bitten]** Heb. His strength (or wealth) shall be famine, *Fit famelicum robur eius*. Or, Famine shall be his strength. He, who while, having health and wealth at will, fared deliciously and gathered strength, shall be hunger starved, and hardly have prisoner's pittance; so much only as will neither keep him alive nor suffer him to die. See #1Sa 2:5,36. It is as much, saith Brentius, as we use to say of an extreme poor or feeble person, his wealth is poverty, his strength weakness.

And destruction shall be ready at his side] *i.e.* Shall suddenly and inevitably seize upon him, there will be no running away from it, for can a man run from his side? The word signifieth not an ordinary calamity, but a dreadful and direful destruction. Some understand it

to be the pleurisy, or ulcers in the side of a man. Others of rib rest, as they call it, tortures inflicted on condemned persons, as **#Heb 11:34**, who are beaten with bats.

Ver. 13. **It shall devour the strength of his skin]** *i.e.* His bones, which support his skin; these destruction shall devour or swallow up at a bite, as a hungry monster.

The firstborn of death shall devour his strength] *i.e.* The devil, say some, that destroyer, **#Re 9:11**, that old manslayer, **#Joh 8:44**, Prince of death, **#Heb 2:14**, as Christ is called Prince of life, **#Ac 3:15**, and firstborn of death, as Christ is the firstborn of the resurrection, **#Col 1:18**. Others understand it, *De cruentissima ac funestissima morte*, to be the most tragic and cruel kind of death, see **#Isa 14:30**. Broughton readeth it, A strange death shall eat the branches of his body, judgments shall come upon thee in their perfection, saith God to Babylon, **#Isa 47:9**.

Ver. 14. **And his confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle]** Whatsoever he trusteth in about his house shall be pulled up by the roots, or grubbed up. Thus it befell Doeg, **#Ps 52:7**. And this disappointment, this broken confidence of his, shall bring him, or make him go, to the king of terrors; *i.e.* to death, that most terrible of terribles, as the philosopher calleth it (Aristot.). Or the devil (as R. Solomon interpreteth it), that black prince, **#Eph 6:12**, to whom wicked men are brought by death, which to them is not only nature's slaughterman, but God's curse, and hell's purveyor. Hence **#Re 6:8**, death haleth hell at the heels of it.

Ver. 15. **It shall dwell in his tabernacles, because it is none of his]** Heb. Not his; Why? the king of terrors hath turned him out of it, and taken it up for a habitation for himself. Some render it thus, nothing, or have nothing (that is, want) shall dwell in his tabernacle, his house shall be replenished with emptiness, scarcity shall be the furniture of his habitation.

Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation] As is also threatened, **#Ps 11:6**. And as was executed upon Sodom and her sisters; as also upon Dioclesian, the tyrant, who, giving over his empire, 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, not without a sulphurous

smell, he hiding himself for fear of the lightning, died a short time later. (Euseb. de Vita Const. lib. v.)

Ver. 16. **His roots shall be dried up beneath, &c.**] The meaning is, saith Diodati, he shall be deprived of God's grace, which is the root of all happiness, and of his blessing, which is the top of it.

Ver. 17. **His remembrance shall perish from the earth]** As a tree, when root and branch is gone, is clean forgotten, and no man remembereth where it grew; so shall it be with the wicked, *Non celebrabitur eius nomen et fama, nisi in malum*, #Ec 8:10 (Mercer). It is reckoned as a great benefit to a wicked man to have his memory die with him, which, if it be preserved, stinks in keeping, and remains as a curse and perpetual disgrace.

And he shall have no name] *i.e.* No honourable name, no renown. A good name only is a name, #Ec 7:1, as a good wife only is a wife, #Pr 18:22. Every married woman is not a wife. Zillah, Lamech's wife, was but the shadow of a wife, as her name also signifieth. In like sort, those only have a name in the streets or public places who are talked about for good; like the martyrs, who have left their names for a blessing, #Isa 65:15, when as their wretched persecutors have left a vile snuff behind, their lamps being put out in obscurity.

Ver. 18. **He shall be driven out of light into darkness]** Heb. They shall drive him; *sc.* the devils shall drive him out of the light of life into outer darkness, as they did that rich wretch, #Lu 12:20; confer #Mt 8:12 25:30. The Dutch translation readeth it, Men shall drive him. Others understand it to be his troubles and sorrows.

And chased out of the world] As Tarquin was by Collatine, as Phocas was by Heraclius; kicked off the stage of the world, as one phraseth it; or, as Job saith of some wicked, buried before half dead, #Job 27:15. "Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place," #Job 27:23.

Ver. 19. **He shall neither have son nor nephew, &c.]** A sore affliction to be written childless, which yet is the portion of some good people, as Abel; many prophets and apostles, for whose comfort that is written, #Isa 56:4,5. God, as he will be to his childless children better than ten sons; so he will give them in his house, and within his walls, a place and a name, better than of sons

and of daughters, he will give them an everlasting name that shall never be cut off, #1Sa 1:8 Isa 56:5. Not so the ungodly, those men of God's hand, for though, full of children, they leave the rest of their substance to their babes, #Ps 17:14, yet it will prove to be but *luctuosa faecunditas*, as Jerome speaketh, they shall weep for their lost children, and not be comforted, because they are not. Or if they survive, they prove singular cuts and crosses to their wretched parents, who have cause enough to cry out, as Moses sometime did, Let me die out of hand, and not see my wretchedness, #Nu 11:15. They are filled with unmedicinable sorrows, in the loss either of their children, or of their estates by their wasteful children, so that they praise the dead above the living, and wish they had never been born, #Ec 4:2,3.

Nor any remaining in his dwellings] When the soldiers slew the tyrant Maximinus and his son, at the siege of Aquileia, they cried out, *Ex pessimo genere ne catulum quidem habendum*, Of so ill a kind let not a whelp be kept alive.

Ver. 20. **They that come after him shall be astonished at his day]** Future ages, hearing the relation of his dismal destruction, shall stand aghast, as if they beheld the dirty ruins of some once beautiful city. Happy they, if in good earnest they could make that good use of it which Herodotus, the historian, saith men should make of the overthrow of Troy; viz. to take notice thereby that great sinners must look for great punishments from God, Των μεγαλων αδικηματων μεγαλιε εισι και αι τιμωριαι παρα του Θεου (Herod.). But Ham and his posterity were little the better for the deluge in their days, nor the adjacent countries for Sodom's downhill.

As they that went before were affrighted] *sc.* His contemporaries and eyewitnesses of his calamity apprehended horror, so the Hebrew hath it, they took a fright; which yet was little to the purpose without faith and repentance; and unless their hearts fell down when their hairs stood upright.

Ver. 21. **Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked]** As sure as death it is so; and this is oft inculcated, because hardly believed. Bildad hints at Job in all this, and therefore speaks of the wicked here in the singular number; as who should say, Thou art the man. But Job's innocence served him for a Heptaboean buckler.

And this is the place] That is, the state.

Of him that knoweth not God] *Periphrasis impii*, saith Drusius; this is the character of a graceless man. "Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?" #Ps 14:4. No, none that they were a button the better for.

Chapter 19

Ver. 1. **Then Job answered and said]** He replied as followeth to Bildad's bitter and taunting invective. His miseries he here setteth forth graphically and tragically, granting to Bildad that he was dealt with no otherwise than if he were that wicked man described in the foregoing chapter, and yet denying himself to be any such one, by his lively hope of a joyful resurrection, such as would make a plentiful amends for all, #Job 19:26-28. For though Mercer make question of it yet I am out of doubt, saith Beza, that this is the true meaning of this place. And surely the whole Scripture doth not yield us a more notable or a more clear and manifest testimony, to confirm unto us the resurrection of our bodies, than this. This confession of his faith, saith Lavater, is the chief thing in this chapter, and therefore challengeth our best attention.

Ver. 2. **How long will ye vex my soul?]** viz. With your furious and reproachful charges and criminations? Have I not misery enough already, but you must lay more load of scorn and contempt upon me; and so go on to trouble me by adding to my saddest sorrows, such as pierce to the very soul? Call you this comforting an afflicted friend? *Hoccine est maestum consolari?*

How long will ye break me in pieces with words?] Words also have their weight, and if hard and harsh, *Leniter volant, non leniter violent*. Like mauls, they break the heart in pieces; like a rack, they torment it, #Ps 42:10. As with a murdering weapon in my bones, mine enemies reproached me. You shall find some, saith Erasmus, that if death be threatened can despise it; but to be belied, reproached, slandered, they cannot brook, nor from revenge contain themselves. Job was a strong man both in faith and patience, yet put hard to it by the hard words given him by Bildad and the rest, who did rather hurt his ear, by the loudness of their voices, than helped

his heart, by the force of their reproofs. God's servants "must not strive, but be gentle," #2Ti 2:23,24, "showing all meekness to all men," #Tit 3:2 Jas 3:17. Gentle showers comfort the earth, when dashing storms drown the seed. There is a twofold inconvenience followeth upon bitter and boisterous proceedings with a supposed offender. First, the party looketh not so much to his own failing as to their passion. Secondly, as he is unconvinced, so they are not esteemed; but though they have the right on their side, yet they lose the due regard of their cause and reverence of their persons.

Ver. 3. **These ten times have ye reproached me]** *i.e.* Oftentimes. Herein Job endured a great fight of affliction, as the apostle styleth it, #Heb 10:32,33; a manifold fight, as the word there signifieth. Cato was two and thirty times accused publicly, and as oft cleared and absolved. Basil was counted and called a heretic, even by those who, as it appeared afterwards, were of the same judgment with him, and whom he honoured as brethren. Dogs in a chase bark sometimes at their best friends, &c.

Ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me] Or, Are you not ashamed that ye harden yourselves against me? or, that ye jeer and jest at my misery? or, that ye make merchandise of me, and take your penny worths out of me? *Significat etiam emere, vel cauponari.* Beza (agreeable to our translation) paraphraseth it thus, Ye take me up so short, as if ye dealt with a stranger and foreigner, and not with a friend. And so the word is taken, #Ge 42:7.

Ver. 4. **And be it indeed that I have erred]** Of human frailty; for that there is any way of wickedness in me (as you would have it) I shall never yield. But *nimis angusta res est, nusquam errare.* Involuntary failings I am not free from; who knoweth the errors of his life? #Ps 19:12. What man is he that liveth and sinneth not? It is the sad privilege of mortality, saith one, *Licere aliquando peccare,* to have licence sometimes to sin (Euphorm.).

Mine error remaineth with myself] *q.d.* It is little that you have done toward convincing me of any error in all this time, and talk, which until ye have done, I must still remain of the same mind. Or thus, You shall neither answer nor suffer for mine error; what need, then, all this heat and harshness? Not that every man must be left to himself, and let alone to live as he wishes. Admonition is a Christian

duty, and the word of exhortation must be suffered, sharp though it be, and to the flesh irksome; better it is that the vine should bleed than die. Had Job been guilty, he would or should have been, as Vespasian is reported, *patientissimus veri*, patient of a reproof. But his friends falsely accused him for a hypocrite, and fell foul upon another man's servant, whom they had nothing to do to condemn, **#Ro 14:10**. And hence this expression of his discontent.

Ver. 5. **If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me]** Or, Will you indeed magnify yourselves against me? *sc.* because of mine error, as **#Job 19:4**, which yet ye have not convinced me of? Will ye insult me, therefore, and throw dirt upon me? Of Bonassus, a certain beast as big as an ox, Aristotle reporteth, that having horns bending inward and unfit for fight, after that he is wounded by the hunters, he fleeth for his life, and often letteth fly his dung for four yards or more, upon the dogs or men that pursue him, to their great annoyance (Hist Animal., lib. ix. cap. 4, 5). In like sort deal many disputers of this world; when they cannot make good their matter by strength of argument, they cast upon their adversaries the dung of calumnies, so seeking to magnify themselves against him, and pleading against him his reproach.

And plead against me my reproach] Affliction exposeth a man to reproach. Where the hedge is low the beast will be breaking over. See **#Zep 3:12**. {See Trapp on "Zep 3:12"}

Ver. 6. **Know that God hath overthrown me]** Do not you therefore add affliction to the afflicted, which is so odious a thing to God, **#Ps 41:2 69:26**; but regard the greatness of mine evils, which draw these complaints from me that seem so immoderate to you. See **#Job 6:2** (Diodati).

And hath compassed me with his net] Hath encompassed me round with affliction, that I can get out no way. A hunting term, **#Job 10:16 La 1:13 Eze 12:13 Ho 7:12**. Bildad had made much mention of nets and gins, wherein God ensnareth and ensnarleth the wicked, **#Job 18:8,9**. Job granteth that God's net had encompassed him; but withal denieth himself to be wicked, or that his friends should therefore reproach him, but rather pity him.

Ver. 7. **Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard]** Nothing is more natural and usual than for men in misery to cry out for help.

Job's great grief was, that neither God nor man would regard his moans or deliver him out of the net. God did not rescue him, men did not right him or relieve him. His outcry seemeth to be the same in effect with that of Habakkuk the prophet, **#Hab 1:2,3**, "O Lord, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear? even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save? Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are those who raise up strife and contention." "Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously," &c., **#Job 19:13**. Thus Job, but without an answer; as the lion letteth his whelps roar themselves hoarse for hunger, yea, till they are almost dead, before he supplieth them. Sure it is, that God always heareth his Jobs, though he doth not always answer in our time, and in our way. Yea, it is a hearing and an answer of prayer (saith one) that we can pray, though unheard and unanswered.

I cry aloud] Heb. I set up my note, *cam gemitu et ululatu*, with groaning and howling. Men never pray so earnestly as in greatest afflictions, **#Heb 5:7 Ho 12:4**; then their prayers, like strong streams in narrow straits, bear down all that stands before them.

Ver. 8. **He hath fenced up my way, &c.]** Here Job, carried away, as it were, with a torrent of grief, amplifieth his miseries by many other comparisons. And first of a traveller, whom nothing so much troubleth in his journey as hedges and darkness. God, saith Job, hath every way hedged me out of content and comfort, so that, though I seek it never so, I cannot find it. God's people are oft brought into greatest straits, as David, **#Ps 31** and **#Ps 142**, Israel at the Red Sea, Jehoshaphat, **#2Ch 20:1-29**, that they may learn to depend upon the Divine providence, &c.

And he hath set darkness in my paths] I am benighted, and know not whither to go or how to get out. Darkness is full of error and terror. A child of light may walk in darkness, **#Isa 50:10**; yea, in the valley of the shadow of death, **#Ps 23:4**; yet he is never without some spark of faith, which guideth him in the deepest darkness, until he behold the Sun of righteousness. Light is sown for the righteous, &c.; heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning, **#Ps 30:5**. And as before the day breaks the darkness is greatest; so here.

Ver. 9. **He hath stripped me of my glory]** This is the second comparison, *ab externo corporis cultu et habitu*, saith Merlin; from the outward habiliments and habits of the body, #Ge 37:23. Our King Richard II, when he was to be deposed, was brought forth gorgeously attired in his royal robes, with a crown upon his head, a sceptre in his hand, &c., but soon after despoiled of all, and unkinged. So it fared with poor Job, stripped and bereft of all that he formerly gloried in, and was respected for, as a man robbed hath all his clothes taken off, and is left naked. In him it appeared that mortality was but the stage of mutability, as one saith of our Henry VI, who of a most potent monarch was, when deposed, not the master of a molehill, nor owner of his own liberty (Daniel's Hist.).

And hath taken the crown from off my head] Hence some infer that Job was a king, the same with Jobab, king of Edom, mentioned #Ge 36:34. But this is uncertain, since crown is often in Scripture taken allegorically, for riches, authority, dignity, and other ornaments. These were taken from Job, yea, from off his head. See #La 5:16. But he had a better crown, *quae nec eripi nec surripi potuit*, which could not be taken away; viz. that crown of twelve stars, or celestial graces, #Re 12:1, together with that crown of glory (the fruit of the former) that is "incorruptible and fadeth not away," #1Pe 1:4. Happy Job in such a crown; and that he was in the number of those few heads destined to such a diadem. David had (whatever Job had) a crown of pure gold set upon his head, Psal. xxi. 1; this was a great mercy to so mean a man, since beyond a crown the wishes of mortal man extend not. But David blesseth God for a better crown, #Ps 103:4, "Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies." And how was this set on his head? "Who forgiveth all thy iniquities," &c., #Ps 103:3. Neither can any take away this crown, because we are kept (Greek, φρουρουμενοι, guarded or garrisoned as in a tower of brass, or town of war, that is well fenced with walls and works, and so it is made impregnable) by the power of God through faith unto salvation, #1Pe 1:5.

Ver. 10. **He hath destroyed me on every side]** Heb. He hath demolished me, he hath pulled me down piece meal, as an old house is taken down part by part. See #Le 14:45 Jud 8:17. God had made and fashioned Job's body together round about, #Job 10:8, and now he destroyeth it round about. The body of a man is a wonderful

fabric, wherein the bones are the timber work, the head the upper lodging, the eyes as windows, the eyelids as casements, the brows as pent houses, the ears as watch towers, the mouth as a door to take in that which shall uphold the building, and keep it in repair; the stomach as a kitchen to dress that which is conveyed into it; the guts and baser parts as sinks belonging to the house, &c. All these were decaying apace in Job as he thought.

And I am gone] That is, I am as good as gone already; every day I yield somewhat unto death, I am free among the dead, free of that company.

And my hope hath he removed like a tree] He hath not left me so much as hope (which is the last comfort of the afflicted) of ever recovering here my health, wealth, and former enjoyments; but hath left me as a tree that is plucked up by the roots, and so can never grow again. A saint may be at that pass here in regard to his outward estate, that there may be to him neither hope for the better nor place for worse (Melch. Adam). This was Cranmer's case.

Ver. 11. **He hath also kindled his wrath against me]** Now if his wrath was kindled, yea, but a little, woe be to all those against whom it is bent. He will surely heap mischiefs upon them, he will spend his arrows upon them, **#De 32:22,23 Ps 2:12**. Job felt them striking in the sides of his soul, even the envenomed arrows of the Almighty; and yet this was only a refiner's fire, **#Mal 3:2**, or, if a consuming fire, as **#Heb 12:29**, yet it was to waste his corruptions only, to sever the sin which he hated from the Son whom he loved; to try and exercise his patience, &c., all which notwithstanding, he complaineth heavily about these spunks and sparks of divine displeasure.

And counteth me unto him as one of his enemies] Heb. As his enemies; not as a single enemy, but a rabble of rebels, an army of enemies, such as shall one day meet at Armageddon, their rendezvous. See **#Job 13:24**.

Ver. 12. **His troops come together]** *i.e.* Troops of tribulations and temptations, of pirates and robbers, *σπειρατηρια* (as the Seventy have it). Sickness and other sorrows are God's soldiers, **#Mt 8:8,9**, and they seldom come single, **#Jas 1:2**, but trooping and treading on

the heels of one another, *Concateuata piorum crux*; a company comes.

And raise up their way against me] As soldiers besieging a place cast up their trenches and fortifications. Vatablus rendereth it, And have beaten their way upon me; that is, saith he, tribulations have so often passed over me, that they have made a pathway upon me, more *transeuntium*, as passengers use to do.

And encamp round about my tabernacle] Afflictions hem me in on every side; the troops of troubles besiege me so straitly, that I can no way in all the world find relief or comfort; which, now as by a strong hand, yea, as by a strong host, are withheld from my soul; and so are like to be for a long season, as sieges are many times. Heman was afflicted and ready to die from his youth up, suffering those terrors, **#Ps 88:15**. Job was a man of sorrows.

Ver. 13. He hath put my brethren far from me] In their affections at least. Some stuck to him, but for a mischief, for they proved miserable comforters, as did likewise Peter to our Saviour, who fled not with the rest of the disciples, but better he had for any good he did him. "A brother is born for adversity," saith Solomon, **#Pr 17:17**; and although at other times there may be some unkindness, *fratrum concordia rara est*, Harmonious among brothers is rare. yet in affliction and extremity good nature will work, and good blood will not belie itself. But Job's brethren proved unkind, and grew out of kind; they got farthest from him when his enemies had besieged him. And all this befell him, not without the Lord. He hath put my brethren far from me; this was no small aggravation of the affliction, that God withdrew or withheld that assistance and influence that should have enlarged and united the hearts of his brethren unto him. See **#Ps 105:25**.

And mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me] Those that formerly knew me thoroughly, and were as well known of me, mine intimate friends, who knew all my heart, are now truly as strange to me, as if there had never been any such matter of acquaintance, *Noti mei* (Vulgate). *Necessarii mei* (Tigur.). R. Solomon readeth it, They are cruel to me, *Quasi esset scriptum aczaru*. "All the brethren of the poor man hate him," saith Solomon, **#Pr 19:7**, "how much

more do his friends go far from him?" He pursueth them with words; yet they are lacking to him. This the heathen (as Ovid and others) heavily complain of. Αφιλον το δυστυχες (Thue.). *Et cum fortuna statque caditque fides* (Ovid.). *Tempera si fuerint nubila, solus eris* (Ibid.). In the river Araris there is reported to be a fish called Scolopidus, which at the waxing of the moon is as white as the driven snow, and at the waning thereof is as black as a burnt coal. A fit emblem of a false friend. "Wealth maketh many friends but the poor is separated from his neighbour," #Pr 19:4, who therefore turneth from him as a stranger, if not against him as an enemy.

Ver. 14. **My kinsfolk have failed]** scil. In courtesy, as Ruth's kinsman did. Job had many kinsfolk, but few friends; and this was a great grief to him, as it was afterwards also to David, #Ps 31:11 38:11 69:8; to Heman, #Ps 88:8; and to Paul, #2Ti 4:16.

And my familiar friends] They whom I favoured, saith Broughton, according to #Ps 11:7.

Have forgotten me] Out of sight out of mind. A thing forgotten is as if it had never been. All Job's courtesies were cast away upon these summer birds, who had well nigh forgotten there was ever such a man in the world as Job.

Ver. 15. **They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, &c.]** My tenants, or my guests, or my sojourners, those widows and orphans haply, whom he kept at his own charge, #Job 31:32. More than this, my maidens, those housekeepers, intrusted with the keys of the family, and that are no drudges to wash the feet of other servants, as #1Sa 25:41. And for his servants of the other sex, he was as coarsely used by them too.

Ver. 16. **I called my servant, and he gave me no answer]** Though I lay under greatest sores and sorrows, and called them to help me, yet such was their impudence and inhumanity, that they would not vouchsafe an answer. *Considera hic quanta crux sit*, saith Brentius, *a sua propria familia despici et rideri;* Consider with me, here, what an affliction it is for a man to be despised and derided by his own family. A servant's eye should look to the hands of his master, and the eye of a maiden to the hand of her mistress, to observe the motion thereof, and to pick out the meaning, #Ps 123:2. Accounting their governors worthy of all honour, #1Ti 6:1, as the centurion's

obsequious servants did, #Mt 8:9. *Sed sic fere sunt servorum ingenia*, But so wild are the servants of nature, saith Merlin here. But such is the condition of many servants today, that they will do no more than needs must. Job's would neither say nor do.

I intreated him with my mouth] As a suppliant to my servant, who lived upon me, but would do nothing for me, though I humbly besought him. Here we may see, saith Vatablus, that when God is angry with a man all doeth cross with him; it is good for us in this case to reflect and see whether we have not served God in this sort. Alphonsus, that renowned king, in a speech to the pope's ambassador, professed that he did not so much wonder at his servants' unthankfulness and undutifulness to him as at his own to God.

Ver. 17. **My breath is strange to my wife]** The corruption of his inwards (besides the noisomeness of his outward ulcers) made his breath strong and unwholesome. This his wife (as did that Roman lady, who said she thought all men's breath as unsavoury as her husband's was), should have borne with, in a time of sickness especially, when she should have shown herself a help, and not a heartbreak, to her husband. Famous in our chronicles is the Lady Eleanor, wife to Prince Edward (afterwards Edward I), who extracted the poison out of her husband's wounds with her tongue, licking daily, while he slept, his rankling wounds, whereby they perfectly closed (Cambd. in Middlesex, Speed. 630). And no less famous is the wife of Valdaurus, celebrated by Ludov. Vires, lib. 2, de Christiana Femina, p. 360. A young and beautiful maid, saith he, was matched to a man stricken in years, whom after she found to have a very fulsome breath and a diseased body, yet (out of conscience, being by God's providence become his wife) she most worthily digested, with incredible patience and contentment, the languishing and loathsomeness of a husband, continually visited with variety of most irksome and infectious diseases; and though friends and physicians advised her by no means to come near him, for fear of danger and infection, yet she, passing by with a loving disdain and contempt these unkind dissuasions, plied him night and day with extraordinary tenderness and care, and services of all sorts above her strength and ability; she was to him friends, physician,

wife, nurse; yea, she was father, mother, brother, sister, daughter, everything, anything to do him good in any manner or way, &c.

Though I intreated for the children's sake, &c.] *i.e.* By the holy right of wedlock, and the fruit thereof, those dear pledges of our matrimonial good affection; children, as they are dear to their parents (Charos, Plautus somewhere calleth them), so they are an endearing to their parents, whose seed they are called, as if there were nothing left to the parents but the husks. This therefore was a melting argument; but it moved not Job's wife. Men may speak persuasively, but God only persuadeth.

Ver. 18. **Yea, young children despised me]** Fools, saith the Vulgate, who are never more pleasant than when they play the buffoons at my expense. Ungodly men, some render it, as **#Job 16:11**. Others, the baser sort of people. And surely none so base as they that deride virtue, especially because forsaken of fortune, as one phraseth it. What a bitter jeer was that of Tobiah, the servant, or slave, the Ammonite! **#Ne 4:3**. The basest can mock, as the abjects did David, **#Ps 44:15,16**, and the alestakes also, **#Ps 69:12**. But it is a happiness to do well, and yet hear ill. All God's people must be ready to pass through good report and evil report, **#2Co 6:8**. And every Job must reckon, that as the reproacher is *homine peior*, a more worse man, not so much as a man (saith Chrysostom); so the reproached, that bears it well, is *Angelis par*, equal to the angels.

I arose, and they spake against me] I arose, *sc.* to rebuke them, or to pacify them, or to pass away from them, and my back is no sooner turned, but they reviled me. Some render it, *Sto coram illis*, I stand before them; that is, they stay not till I am gone past, but reproach me to my face, such is their boldness and baseness. See **#Isa 3:5**.

Ver. 19. **All my inward friends abhorred me]** Heb. All the mortals of my counsel, *q.d.* My most intimate acquaintance and associates, my highest confidants, to whom I was wont to open my bosom, and with whom I maintained closest correspondence; lo, these now abhor me, and keep aloof off from me; yea, they apostatize from their professed friendship; and renouncing the laws of love, they deal despitefully with me, and are turned against me. Such a one was Ahithophel to David, **#Ps 55:14,15**, Judas to Christ, **#Mt 26:23**,

and Bildad to Job (as some conceive that he conceived by the latter clause of this verse).

And they whom I loved, &c.] Heb. And this man whom I loved, this bitter Bildad, that in his last speech hath so grievously galled me, who have hitherto so highly prized him. What? thou, my son Bildad? Καὶ σὺ τέκνον Βσουτε; This went to the very heart of him, as afterwards it did of David, when for his love they were his adversaries, when they rewarded him evil for good, and hatred for his good will, #Ps 109:4,5. Precious therefore and worthy of all acceptation is that advice of the prophet Micah, #Mic 7:5-7, "Trust not in a friend, put not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom," Ευμεταβλητον ζωον ο φιλος. "For the son dishonoureth the father...a man's enemies are the men of his own house. Look therefore unto the Lord," &c. All that trust in him shall triumph; but for others we may be compelled to complain, with Queen Elizabeth, In trust I have found treason, &c.

Ver. 20. **My bone cleaveth to my skin]** My skin is a bag of bones. I am become a mere skeleton, and may well cry out, O my leanness, my leanness! So bare I am grown, that little appeareth in me but skin and bones, #Isa 24:16. My bone cleaveth to my skin as to my flesh (so it may be read), that is, as once it did in my flesh, when I was well lined within. Now, alas! I lie under a miserable marasmus; and should therefore be pitied, as being a just object of your commiseration, *Ossa sub incurvis apparent arida lumbis*.

And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth] Escaped I am, and come off (as out of a hot skirmish) with my life, and very little else. All I have left me whole is the skin of my teeth; that is, of my gums, into which my teeth are engrafted; the rest of my body is all over a scab. The Vulgate rendereth it, My lips only about my teeth are left me untouched. And Junius gives this gloss, Job had nothing left him but the instrument of speech. These, say some, the devil purposely meddled not with, as hoping that therewith he would curse God. Curse him he might with his heart only; but this would have pleased the devil nothing so well as to hear him do it with his tongue, *Hoc fecisse Satanam volunt, ut voluntatem caperet* (Merc.). This is the conceit of some of the Jewish doctors. But it is better to ascribe this

escape to the good providence of God than to the malice of the devil.

Ver. 21. **Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, &c.]** To him that is afflicted pity should be showed from his friends; and to do otherwise is to forsake the fear of the Almighty, **#Job 6:14**; {*See Trapp on "Job 6:14"*} There was little either fear of God or mercy to men in that barbarous bishop of Spire, who denied to Henry IV, emperor of Germany (deposed after ten years' reign, and hardly bestead), a poor clerkship there in a monastery of his own foundation; which caused the miserable emperor to break out into these words of Job, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." The Papists tell us that the souls in purgatory cry out to their friends on earth for help on this manner, and in these terms. But this is as much a fiction as purgatory itself is the pope's invention; who must needs be extremely pitiless to suffer so many souls to lie in such great torments, when he hath power to fetch them out at his pleasure.

Ver. 22. **Why do ye persecute me as God?]** Is this that pitying of me thus to press me with reproaches, and therein to think you gratify God, and do him good service? Know ye not, that to persecute him whom he hath smitten is greatest cruelty? and to talk to the grief of those whom he hath wounded is to heap up guilt, and thereby wrath? **#Ps 69:26,27**. When a deer is shot the rest of the herd push him out of the company. When a tree falleth every passenger is ready to be pulling at it, *Δρυος πεσουσης ανηρ πας ξυλευεται*. But God's people should love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, **#1Pe 3:8**; and of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, **#Jude 22,23**. Thus it should be; but as of old, in Egypt, one Hebrew smote another; blows enough were not dealt by the common adversary, but their own must add to the violence. Still Satan is thus busy, and Christians are thus malicious; that, as if they wanted persecutors, they persecute one another; and if (as here) they can but do as God, that is, for God, as they mispersuade themselves (to vindicate his justice, and to promote his glory), then they rage and are confident, as these friends of Job; in whom nevertheless it was rather *error amoris* than *amor erroris*, an error of love than any love of error.

And are not satisfied with my flesh?] Which is pined away with pain and grief; this contents you not, but you must break my bones also, and suck my blood by your contumelies and calumnies. Brentius and others apply this text to slanderers and backbiters, whom they compare to cannibals, *Est detractoris periphrasis* (Mercer). *Non minus enim calumniatores homines devorant quam Scythae* (Brent. in loc.). It is reported of wolves, that when they have once fed upon man's flesh they desist not, but desire more of it. Job looketh upon his friends as such man eaters, wherein his sorrow transported him too far; and while he was moving them to compassion he shows himself overly passionate.

Ver. 23. **Oh that my words were now written!**] This reiterated wish Job setteth as a preamble to that ensuing memorable testimony of the resurrection, as a matter most weighty and worthy the consideration of all ages; which therefore he wisheth recorded in some public instrument to all eternity; and God said Amen to it. For not only this precious passage, but the whole Book of Job, so full of divine instruction preparatory to the last day, was committed to writing (either by Moses, or some other prophet of that age, or else by Job himself after his restoration), and put among the canonical books of Scripture; concerning which David saith, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven," **#Ps 119:89**. And Christ, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle," &c., **#Mt 5:18**. Not one hair of that sacred head can fall to the earth. Thus God hath answered Job, *ad cardinem desiderii*, as a Father speaketh, letting it be to him even as he would (Aug. Confess. 1. 5, c. 8).

Oh that they were printed] Or drawn out, that is, written (saith one) in great and capital letters, that every man might read them, **#Hab 2:2**, for there was no printing in those days that we know of. The Chinese indeed tell us that they had the art of printing long before. But in Europe it was not heard of till the year 1440. It begun to be practised at Haarlem, in the Low Countries (by Lawrence Jans, say some, by John Guttenberg, say others), and was perfected at Mentz, where Cicero's Offices, the first book that ever was printed, is still kept for a monument.

In a book!] That it might be preserved and laid up for the use of posterity, in some Kiriahsepher, or city of books. Let them that are able, be apt and active in setting forth books for the benefit of others, since *Paulum sepultae distat inertiae celata virtus* -(Horat.), he that buried his talents gave a heavy account to the master, and was therefore called evil, because an idle servant, #Mt 25:26

Ver. 24. **That they were graven with an iron pen, &c.]** That my words were not only *scripta sed sculpta*, written, but graven in a rock, as the laws of various nations were cut in brass or marble; and as monuments and epitaphs are graven on tombs for remembrance of those that are dead.

And lead] *Plumbo per sulcos infuso*, saith Junius, the cuts of the letters in marble being filled with lead, that they might be the more legible and durable.

In the rock] In marble cut out of the rock. Golden words they are indeed that here follow, and well worthy to be written in letters of gold. In the Life of Zisca (that warlike Bohemian) it is recorded, that in the famous monastery called the king's court, a mile from Prague, in the walls thereof the whole Bible was most exquisitely engraven in letters of gold (Clarke's Lives).

For ever!] To last longer than the world lasteth. Those bloody tyrants of the primitive times made account they had made sure work in rooting out true religion, when they sounded the triumph beforehand, and engraved the victory upon pillars of marble in these bubbles of words: *Nomine Christianorum deleto qui Remp. evertabant*, &c. The name of the Christians I have erased who... But Christ shall reign, and the Church shall stand upon his right hand as a queen in gold of Ophir, #Ps 45:9, when all earthly greatness shall lie in the dust. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," #Ps 45:6; and there shall be a new succession of saints to all perpetuity. #Ps 72:17, "His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued (Heb. childed) as long as the sun," as long as the world, as long as the word of our God, which, according to Job's wish here, shall stand for ever, #Isa 40:8. But what meaneth the Vulgate translation here by this insignificant word *Celte*? *Celte vox est nihili* (Merc.). And why should Hugo seek to solve the matter, by telling us that

celtis is a tool wherewith letters or pictures are cut in the flint? Whereupon, *Vide, quaeso, mi Lector;* saith Brentius, See, I pray thee, good reader, how oddly they interpret Scripture that lack learning; for neither is *celte* such a tool, nor can it be *celte* for *certe*, since the Hebrew word *lagnad* doth not signify surely, but for ever.

Ver. 25. **For I know that my Redeemer liveth]** *Clarissima fidei confessio,* saith Brentius, A most famous confession of his faith. *Brevis et longa, totaque aurea, est haec apologia,* saith another, This is Job's short and yet long apology, but golden all over, and such as hath fulness of matter in fewness of words. Calvin and Mercer (*virii alioqui iudiciosissimi*) are mistaken here, when, following the Rabbis, they interpret this text as a temporal restoration of Job to such an estate of honour and riches as he had enjoyed in the former part of his life; this they call Job's resurrection and redemption, &c. But his thoughts soared higher than so. "I know," saith he; it is as if he should say, You take yourselves to be the only knowing men, and as for me, Bildad hath set me among such as know not God, **#Job 18:21**. But hereby I know that I know him, **#1Jo 2:3**, because I know him whom he hath sent, Jesus Christ, **#Joh 17:3**, not only as a redeemer, but as "my redeemer," by a particular application of him to myself, which is the very pith and form of faith. This great mystery of godliness I know, whatever else I am ignorant of; and I know it savingly, because I am secure in my interest in Christ, my kinsman and redeemer; and, therefore, I am no hypocrite or wicked man, as you would make me. Were it not for this word of possession (mine), the worst man alive, nay, the devil, might say as Job here doth; yea, repeat all the Articles of the Creed to as good purpose as he; but that which tormenteth the devil is, he can say "my" to never a one of them. I know, said Job, when condemned for a hypocrite, that Christ is my redeemer, and that this my redeemer liveth for ever, and is for ever mine. So Dr Taylor, martyr, when condemned for a heretic, subscribed his last will and testament in these words, Rowland Taylor, departing hence in a sure hope, without all doubting of a glorious resurrection, I thank God, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, my certain Saviour (Acts and Mon.).

And that he shall stand] As keeping the field when all his foes shall be his footstool, #Ps 110:1. So he standeth, #Re 10:2, setting his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth (opposing all heretics and antichrists that there hence arise), as Lord paramount of both.

At the latter day] Or last of all. Theodosius rendereth it, *Novissime*. A general judgment of quick and dead at the last day, was in Job's time, and afterwards by Zoroaster, and other heathens (as Lucretius, Theopompus, Plato, Cicero, Ovid, &c.), believed and foretold. But, in process of time, this true and pure doctrine was darkened among them; and when once it was extinct, superstitions and other vain fopperies overgrew the greatest part of the world. The ancient tradition was that the latter age of the world should be so filthy all over, that, as it could not be washed with water, as once, so it should be wasted with fire, #2Pe 3:10.

Upon the earth] Or, Over the earth; to wit, in the air. For there it is probable Christ will sit in the clouds of the air near unto the earth, whither the elect shall be caught up to meet the Lord, and so shall they ever be with the Lord, #1Th 4:17. There the devils shall be subdued and sentenced, where they have ruled and played Rex, #Eph 2:2; see #Mt 24:30. Some read it, And this (pointing to his body) shall stand up at the last day upon the earth.

Ver 26. **And though after my skin worms destroy this body]** Here he pointeth again, as doth likewise David, when in #Ps 34:6, he saith, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him," &c. So the ancient believers, when they came to that Article in the Creed, I believe the resurrection of the flesh, were wont to add, *Etiam huius carnis*, even of this flesh, pointing to some naked part of their body; or else alluding to that of the apostle, "This mortal must put on," &c.

Worms destroy this body] Heb. They destroy this. He saith not this body, *quod ob deformitatem summam, non liceret corpus dicere*, saith Vatablus, So worn it was, and wasted with sores and sicknesses, that it could scarcely be called a body. And yet it was not at the worst either, for in the grave it should be worm eaten, and something more. *Mihi experto credite*, saith Austin, Believe me, who have tried it, open dead men's sepulchres, and upon their heads

ye shall find toads crawling, begotten of their brains; on their loins serpents, begotten of their reins; in their bellies worms, begotten of their bowels, &c. (Serm. 48, ad Frat. in Erem.).

Yet in my flesh] Heb. Out of my flesh, as out of a casement.

I shall see God] I shall see Christ, *Christum in corpore* (Austin's wish), the human and glorified body of Christ, who is God blessed for ever, as also the mystical body of his Church perfectly united unto him, **#1Jo 3:2**. To this sense some render the text thus, I shall see God in my flesh, that is, I shall see Christ sitting in glory, clothed with flesh, or in the likeness of man. And here do but think with thyself, though it far pass the reach of any mortal thought, saith one, what an infinite inexplicable happiness it will be to look for ever upon the glorious body of Jesus Christ, shining with incomprehensible beauty, and to consider that even every vein of that blessed body bled to bring thee to heaven; and that it being with such excess of glory hypostatically united to the second person in Trinity, hath honoured and advanced thy nature, in that respect, far above the brightest cherub. The whole verse may be read thus, And after I shall awake, though this body shall be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God. And being thus read, it is a plainer and fuller confession of the resurrection, saith an interpreter. It is common in Scripture to compare death to sleep and resurrection to awaking, **#Da 12:2 Ps 17:15**. The bodies of the saints are laid in the grave, as in a bed of roses, to ripen and mellow against the resurrection, and they write upon their graves, as one did once, *Resurgam*, I shall surely rise again (Dr King). Moses's body, hid in the valley of Moab, appeared afterwards glorious in Mount Tabor. This is matter of joy and triumph, as it was here to Job, and to those good souls who were to lose all, **#Da 12:2**, and those, **#Heb 11:35**, considering that God, by rotting, would refine their bodies, and in due time raise them conformably to Christ's most glorious body, the standard. The forethought of this cheered up David's good heart, **#Ps 16:9**, and those in Isaiah, **#Isa 26:19**, and the good people in our Saviour's time, **#Joh 11:24**. I know, saith Martha, concerning her brother Lazarus, that he shall rise again at the resurrection; at the consolation, saith the Syriac interpreter (Benuchama). Resurrection and consolation then were terms equivalent. Hence that great

apostle, #2Co 4:16: "For this cause we faint not," saith he. For what cause? Because we believe "that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." And the same apostle maketh this doctrine of the resurrection the canon of consolation, #1Th 4:13,14, &c., to the end.

Ver. 27. **Whom I shall see for myself]** He speaketh confidently, as one fully assured of a resurrection; which, if it should not be, how should there be a remuneration of the body? Say not, we cannot see how it is possible. See we not a yearly resurrection of grass, grain, herbs, flowers, fruits, every spring time? Know we not that men can of ashes make glasses? that a chemist can of several metals, mixed together, extract the one from the other, and reduce every metal to its own species or kind? *Etiam animalculae quaedam typi Resurrectionis sunt*, saith Lavater: Some little living creatures are types of the resurrection. He instanceth in dormancey, which sleep all winter, and revive in the spring; in silkworms, which, dying, leave nothing behind them but a certain excrement, which, being borne about in the bosoms of women, takes heat and reviveth. Wherefore, if nature do such things, shall it be held hard for the God of nature to raise the dead? The keeping green of Noah's olive tree in the time of the flood; the blossoming of Aaron's dry rod; the flesh and sinews coming to Ezekiel's dry bones; what were these but living emblems of the resurrection?

And mine eyes shall behold, and not another] Here he maintaineth the identity of his flesh and body in the resurrection; an identity, I say, not specific only, but numeric or individual. The self-same particular body which fell shall rise. This was denied of old by the Marcionists, Basilidians, and Valentinians (those semi-Sadducees, as Tertullian termeth them); and after them Eutychius, bishop of Constantinople, who, as Gregory saith, taught that men, rising again, should have airy bodies, and not fleshly, yea, more subtile than the air, abusing that place of the apostle, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised again a spiritual body," &c.: but his book was burnt as heretical. A spiritual body it is called, for its great strength and activity wherewith it shall be endowed, and whereby it is enabled to bear a weight of glory; as also, for that it shall have no need of food, sleep, or other natural helps, but we shall be as the angels of God, #Mt 22:30, yet still the same men that now we are.

Let no man say, with Nicodemus, How can this be? There is no difficulty to Omnipotence, **#Php 3:21**. Besides, there is a substance still preserved, even when the body is turned to dust, and this shall be raised, clarified, and reunited to the soul. He that made man at first of nothing, can easily remake him of something. And what though his dust be scattered hither and thither, and mixed with that of others? The skilful gardener, having various sorts of seeds mixed together, can soon separate them; and shall not he, who hath the whole earth in his fist, discern the dust of his saints one from another? Little balls or pickles of quicksilver, being scattered on the ground, mix not themselves with any of another kind; but if any man gather them, they run together into one of their own accord; so it is here, saith Greg. Nyssen.

Though my reins be consumed within me] Though, from my skin outward to my reins inward, all be wasted, yet all shall be raised and restored. The Vulgate rendereth these words thus, This hope is laid up in my bosom; and is by Burgensis expounded thus, This is the only thing that I do most earnestly wish and wait for; viz. to see Christ in the flesh at the last day: the reins are the seat of strong desires.

Ver. 28. **But ye should say, Why persecute we him?]** *Nam olim dicitis cur eum persequeremur?* (Tigur.) This ye shall one day surely say, "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked," &c., **#Mal 3:18**. Then shall it repent you (it should do so now) that ye have rated and reviled me for a hypocrite; viz. when God hath cleared mine integrity (as he did, **#Job 42:10**), or at the last day howsoever, what time there shall be a resurrection of names as well as of bodies. Would ye but say so now it would be some satisfaction. *Quem poenitet peccasse poene est innocens*. You have heard, by the confession I have made, I am no miscreant, no misbeliever; but that I do hold fast the faithful word.

The root of the matter is in me] Or, the root of the word, the engrafted word of God, that is able to save my soul, hath taken deep root in me, **#Jas 1:21**. I hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, **#1Ti 3:9**, this is the cabinet, that the jewel kept therein. And with what face can ye censure such a one for a castaway, who am sorely afflicted indeed, so that my very reins are consumed

within me; nay graces also haply are somewhat deflourished, and it is little better with me than with a tree in winter; and as a tall tree, whose sap is in the root, **#Isa 6:13**. But so long as "the root of the matter is in me," that radical grace of faith; and since I do utter, as ye have heard, the words of truth and soberness (as some fruits of a sound faith), sure you should handle me with more tenderness, as one that hath some sap and substance in him.

Ver. 29. **Be ye afraid of the sword]** Heb. Be ye afraid for yourselves, from the face of the sword; God's sore, and great, and strong sword, **#Isa 27:1**, that hangeth over your heads, as it were, by a twined thread. Oh tremble at God's judgments, while they hang in the threatenings. He that trembleth not in hearing shall be cut to pieces in feeling, as that martyr said: God's sword contemneth the rod, **#Eze 21:13**. If Job be under his rod, they that persecute him, under what pretence soever, shall feel the dint of his sword, or of his deep displeasure. Now it is a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God. And cruelty toward others, toward his own especially, he will be sure to punish, for he is gracious, **#Ex 22:27**. *Fugite ergo a facie gladii*, Flee, therefore, from the face of the sword, so the Vulgate rendereth this text. The sword is an instrument of death; it hath its name in Hebrew from laying waste; and the face or faces of the sword, show that Divine vengeance is near at hand. It is a mercy to men that God whets his sword before he smites, and first takes hold on judgment before his judgments take hold on us, **#De 32:41** (Aug. in Psal. XXX.).

For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword] It is from displeased love that God chastiseth his children; but from fierce wrath that he plagueth his enemies: some of these God punisheth here, lest his provideuce, but not all, lest his patience and promise of judgment, should be called into question.

That we may know that there is judgment] Wherein they that rashly judge others shall be judged by God, **#Mt 7:1**. And this Job's friends knew well enough, but well weighed not, to scare themselves from rash censurings. He reminds them, therefore, of their danger, and labours to prevent their sorrow, who had so much caused his. See the like in **#Jer 26:15**, in our Saviour, in St Stephen, &c., and learn to be similarly charitable; though your success be no better

than Job's was, upon whom, in lieu of this love, they fell more foul than before, as will appear by their following discourses.

Chapter 20

Ver. 1. **Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said]** "If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest," #Pr 29:9. Christ piped to that crooked generation, John mourned to them, but all to no purpose; absurd and unreasonable people will never be satisfied or set down, say what you can to them, such is their pertinacy and peevishness. Job had uttered himself in such passionate expressions as might have moved stony hearts, *Sed surdo fabulam*. He had set forth his own misery, begged their pity, made an excellent confession of his faith, every word whereof had its weight, each syllable its substance, *Ubi habent fere singulae voces aliquid ponderis* (Merl.); he had lastly terrified them with the threats of God's sword; but nothing would do. Zophar here, though he had little to say more than what he had said, #Job 11, yet he takes occasion from Job's last words, though full of love, to roughly hew at him again, and makes as if he were necessitated thereunto for his own and his fellows' necessary defence. Vatablus thinks that Zophar here maketh answer, not to the preceding words, but to those in the 12th chapter, where Job had complained that wicked oppressors live commonly in greatest peace and prosperity. Whatever it is, Zophar henceforth will say no more; either he had said what he could, or was satisfied with Job's reply in the next chapter; or, lastly, *quia lusurum se operam credebat*, as Mercer observeth; because he thought he should lose his labour, which no wise man would do.

Ver. 2. **Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer]** *q.d.* Whereas I had thought, O Job, to have spoke no more to thee (for I see I do but lose my sweet words), thy last comminatory expressions have altered my resolution. So nettled I am that I must needs interrupt thee. And yet think not that I shall speak whatsoever lieth uppermost; for I have dipped and dyed my words in my thoughts, which do now prompt me what to answer, and bid me make haste.

And for this I make haste] Lest I should forget the particulars of thy speech, whereto I am to answer. Munster rendereth it thus, *Et ob id promptitudo mea est intra me*, as if Zophar had boasted of his

ready elocution, as in the next verse of his ripe understanding. Some render it, For this I delight in answering (Lavater.).

Ver. 3. **I have heard the check of my reproach]** Zophar conceived himself disgraced as well as menaced by Job; and this kindled him. Some are of so testy a nature, saith one, so skittish and unquiet humour, that a little offensive breath, a disgraceful word, blows them up into a rage that will not be laid down, without revenge, or reparation of their credits. Job's reproofs were by this man construed for reproaches; and what was spoken to them all he applied to himself. It appeareth that he was sick of a *Noli me tangere*, when being touched so gently, nettle like, he stingeth him who handled him.

And the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer] This I shall do with reason and understanding, not with passion and recrimination. *Spiritus Dei nec mendax, nec mordax;* meekness of wisdom is a fruit of God's Spirit; by the which, and not by his reasonable soul only, Zophar seemeth to himself to be carried on. And surely they are holy truths all along that he uttereth, but wrested and misapplied as to Job, whom he will needs have to be wicked. *Interim observemus,* saith Lavater, Meanwhile let us observe that these things, *sc.* the state and portion of the wicked, the greatness and suddenness of their punishments, is therefore by God's appointment so oft propounded and pressed in this whole book (whereof this is almost the sole argument), that we might be right in that point; fear to offend, and not fret at the wicked man's prosperity, which is but momentary. The Tigurines translate this clause thus, *Tametsi me conscientia hic consolabitur;* Albeit herein my conscience shall comfort me.

Ver. 4. **Knowest thou not this of old]** Whether Zophar intended his own conscience or not before, he here appealeth to Job's; and secretly taxeth him of going against it, or, at least, of gross ignorance; knowest thou not this, which every one knoweth that is not a mere novice, and which is proved by the examples and experiences of all ages? to wit, *Malis male esse*, that it shall be ill with the wicked. This is a generally received maxim, and the histories of all ages do plainly and plentifully confirm it. *Hinc collige, diligenter observanda esse, &c.* (Merlin). Hence we may well gather, that God's judgments against wicked persons are to be

diligently observed out of the histories of all ages, both divine and human.

Since man was placed upon the earth] Heb. Since he placed man upon the earth, viz. in that earthly paradise, the garden of Eden, planted for purpose of man's pleasure; where, nevertheless, he stayed not one night, as some gather from **#Ps 49:12**, but soon by his sin became like the beasts that perish (*pecoribus morticinis*), that die of the murrain, saith Junius, and so are good for nothing. Cain for like cause was cast out, the old world drowned, Sodom and her sisters consumed with fire, &c. There cannot be one instance given to the contrary of that which is here affirmed, viz.

Ver. 5. That the triumphing of the wicked is short] Heb. That the shouting of the wicked is from near, it is of no long standing, but like a blaze of thorns, that is quickly extinct, or as a bubble in the water, that is soon down; the pleasure of sin is but for a season. *Huius sententiae exemtum habes in Goliath*, saith Brentius here. An example of this sentence we have in Goliath, **#1Sa 17:42-44**; and another in his countrymen, the Philistines, who had twice beaten the Israelites, and taken the ark, **#1Sa 5**, but this triumph was soon at an end; and so was that of the Jews when they had crucified Christ, and now danced upon his grave, as the proverb is; but he arose in despite of them, and set up his trophies. Say that the triumph of the wicked should last as long as life, what is that to the Infinite? *Punctum est quod vivimus, et puncto minus*. But wicked men commonly die before their time, as Solomon phraseth it, **#Ec 7:17**; that is, by an untimely death, they live not half their days, **#Ps 55:23**. God cuts them off, that others may live more quietly; and while they live, their comforts are not sincere, but mixed with many molestations. Little knoweth the world where their new shoes pinch them, as that Roman said. One little drop of an evil conscience can trouble a whole sea of the wicked man's triumphs.

The joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?] Zophar had a strong conceit that Job was but a hypocrite, one that was wicked before God in heart, notwithstanding his fair pretences and professions of piety, and should therefore be led forth with the workers of iniquity, **#Ps 125:5**, as cattle led to the slaughter, or as bulls led to the altar, with garlands on their horns, and music by their sides, **#Ac 14:13**,

but suddenly they feel and fall under the murdering axe. Such is the hypocrite's joy, and Zophar would he should know so much, being sensible of this that himself was the party in speech; since his prosperity had ended in misery, and God had dashed all his comforts.

Ver. 6. **Though his excellency mount up to the heavens]** Though he conceit himself, and would have others hold him to be, more than a man, and to accord him divine honour. If his pride ascend even up to heaven, so the Vulgate rendereth it. If his gifts ascend up to heaven, so the Septuagint: and indeed hypocrites are ever lifted up with their gifts, as some Corinthians were with their waxen wings, **#1Co 8:1**, being enriched in all utterance and knowledge, and coming behind others in no gift, **#1Co 1:7**, yet were they babes at best, and carnal, walking as men, **#1Co 3:2,3**; their religion was more in notion than in motion; they had the spiritual rickets, which, having grown big in the head, &c.; as the moon, they increased in light, but not in heat. In which respect, also, and for her external privileges, Capernaum is said to be lifted up to heaven, **#Mt 11:23**; and the temporary, to taste of the heavenly gift, to partake of the powers of the world to come, **#Heb 6:4,5**.

And his head reach unto the clouds] *Aequalis astris gradior*, saith he in the poet (Sen. in Thyest.), and Bibulus *in Coelo est*, saith the orator (Cic. ad Attic.). The heathen rhetoric is but dull stuff to that in this Book; and indeed in this one chapter. A hypocrite's head is oft above the clouds of heaven when his heart is beneath the clods of earth; like the eagle, which, when he soareth highest of all, even out of sight almost, hath his eye all the while upon his prey below. Or like the apricot tree, which shoots up and leans upon the wall, but is fast rooted in the earth. This whole allusion may be unto a tree, like that of Nebuchadnezzar, whose height was great, and reached unto heaven, **#Da 4:10,11,22**. Or that of the Amorite, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks, **#Am 2:9**.

Ver. 7. **Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung]** Than the which nothing is more filthy and detestable. See this exemplified in Herod, Haman, Boniface VIII, bloody Bonner buried in a muck hill, &c. The word rendered dung hath its denomination from rolling, because it is rolled out of doors, and swept out of sight. Many

instances hereof might be given in the pristine and modern persecutors, punished with ignominious and disgraceful ends. Sisera and Jabin perished at Endor, and became as dung for the earth, #Ps 83:10. Jehoram died undesired, Julian the apostate abhorred. God hath for such a besom of destruction, #Isa 14:23.

They which have seen him shall say, Where is he?] They which have seen him with wonder shall now see him with horror, when they see him at such an under, such an ebb, such a dead low water. See this exemplified in that proud Chaldean, #Isa 14:4,12,16.

Tam subito casu, quae valere, ruunt.

Ver. 8. **He shall fly away as a dream, &c.**] As a delightful dream is soon forgotten, so shall it be with the hypocrite. His felicity is merely imaginary, his joy is but as the commotion of the affections in a dream, which comes to nothing, #Isa 29:7,8. A man that is to be hanged next day may dream over night he shall be a king. A man that sleepeth upon a steep rock may dream of great possessions befallen him, and, starting for joy, may fall to the bottom, and mischief himself. #Ps 73:20, "As a dream when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou wakest, thou shalt despise their image"; that is, their painted pageant of outward pomp. Surely such of all men, walk in a vain show or in an image, #Ps 39:6; their seeming prosperity hath no tack or consistence in it, themselves and their money perish together, #Ac 8:20.

Yea, he shall be chased away] By the displeasure of Almighty God, he shall be driven or rather kicked out of the world.

As a vision of the night] *Phasma, sire Phantasma*, which passes sooner out of memory, and is more transient than a day vision.

Ver. 9. **The eye also which saw him shall see him no more**] He shall be utterly out of sight, out of mind; unkent, unkist, as the northern proverb hath it. See #Job 7:8,10, where Job speaketh as much of himself, and Zophar here twits him with it, as if *Sorex suo periisset indicio*, Job were a hypocrite by his own confession; so ingenious is evil will.

Ver. 10. **His children shall seek to please the poor**] *Tenuiores sunt ipsis tenuibus*, saith Junius; shall be poorer than the poorest, and

full glad to comply with them, and humour them, to beg with them, if not to beg of them. A just hand of God upon oppressors, whose work it hath been to make many poor; and now their posterity are brought to extreme poverty. Such shame consult these men to their houses, besides their sin against their own souls, **#Hab 2:10**. {See Trapp on "Hab 2:10"} Some read it thus, The poor shall oppress his children; and how grievous that is, see **#Pr 28:3**. {See Trapp on "Pr 28:3"} A heathen historian observed that Dionysius, after his death, paid dear for his sacrilege, in the disasters that befell his children (Val. lib. 1, cap. 2).

And his hands shall restore their goods] Or, For his hands shall, &c. They should indeed restore their ill gotten goods, though to the impoverishing of their posterity, though they left their children no more but a wallet, to beg from door to door. But such are rare birds; most men will rather venture it than be drawn, Zacchaeus like, to make restitution. God must give them a vomit, as **#Job 20:20**, or they will lay up nothing; part they will not with those murdering morsels, that riches of iniquity {#Lu 16:9} they have devoured, but what they can nor will nor choose, as being compelled to do it either by law or force, either by justice or violence. The right owners do not always receive what was by wrench or wile gotten from them; but these oppressors or their imps are many times rooked or robbed by others as bad as themselves (as the usurious Jews are in this day by the injurious Papists, who use them as sponges, which they may squeeze at their pleasure); God so disposing and ordering the disorders of men to his own glory.

Ver. 11. **His bones are full of the sin of his youth]** Foul practices have so grown up together with some sinful people, that they may say of them as the strumpet Quartilla did of her virginity, that she could not remember that ever she had been a maid, *Iunonem meam iratam habeam si unquam me meminerim Virginem* (Petron.). "This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice," **#Jer 22:21**. Then thou hadst no mind to it, but now thou hast less, thy heart being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, **#Heb 3:17**. Now in the froth of these youthful vanities unrepented of breedeth that worm of an evil conscience that never dieth. In the best, they procure much ruth {grief}, though not utter ruin. The sweet ways of my youth (saith a man afterwards eminent for holiness) did breed such worms in my soul as that my heavenly Father will have

me yet a little while continue my bitter wormseed, because they cannot otherwise be killed. Thus he. Holy David prayeth hard, **#Ps 25:7**, "Remember not against me the sins of my youth." Austin was much in the same suit. That age of man's life is very subject to, and usually very full of, sin, yea, reproachful evils, **#Jer 31:19**, fleshly lusts that war against the soul, **#1Pe 2:11**, and like so many noisome diseases, soak into the bones, and suck out the marrow, to the consumption and destruction of the whole man.

Which shall lie down with him in the dust] That is, saith Vatablus, God will so forsake him, that he shall never repent, but shall die in his sins, which is worse than to die in prison or to die in a ditch; for they that die in sin shall rise in sin, and stand before Christ in sin; and how shall they be able to stand before him?

Ver. 12. **Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth]** As poison swallowed in some pleasing meat or drink. Agrippina, in poisoning her husband, Claudius the emperor, tempered it in meat he most delighted in. Poison given in wine works more furiously, as did that wassail {The liquor in which healths were drunk; esp. the spiced ale used in Twelfth-night and Christmas-eve celebrations.} the monk drank to King John of England. That wickedness with a witness here meant is oppression, and is said to be held in the mouth, and hid under the tongue, as some think, because it is oft covered with godly speeches, whereby he seeketh to circumvent and deceive his neighbour. Others by these expressions will have understood continuance in sin and complacency therein, rolling it under his tongue, as a child doth a piece of sugar, which he is loth to part with, and retaining it a long time in his mouth, that he may taste it with more pleasure. Philoxenus wished his neck were as long as a crane's, that he might the longer keep the taste of his sweetmeats and dainty morsels. Such is the wicked man's wish, and his practice is answerable; for under his tongue is mischief and vanity, **#Ps 10:7**. He licks his lips with the remembrance of his former sins, and so recommitteth them in his desires, at least, while he recalleth former acts with delight. Thus the rebellious Israelites called to mind the flesh-pots of Egypt, and were moved; and thus afterwards they multiplied their whoredoms by calling to remembrance the days of their youth, wherein they had gone a whoring in the land of Egypt, **#Eze 23:21**.

Ver. 13. **Though he spare it, and forsake it not]** This is the same in sense with the former verse, and the second time repeated, that Job might know that he was the man here meant; *Ut qui in malis artibus sibi placuisset*, saith Merlin, as one who took pleasure in raising himself upon another's ruins. And another good note the same author giveth here, viz. That as anything is more sweet and delectable to the sensual appetite, so much the more should we suspect it, as fearing a snare laid for us therein, by that old manslayer. *Vipera later in veprecula. Diabolus capite blanditur, ventre oblectat, cauda ligat.* Divorce the flesh from the devil, and then there is no great danger.

But keep it still within his mouth] And will not be drawn to spit it out by confession, and to carry it through the dung port of his mouth into the brook Kidron, which was the town ditch. Satan knows there is no way to purge the sick soul but upwards. He therefore laboureth to hold his lips close, that the soul may not unburden itself, and God come in with his cordials of comfort. {See Trapp on "Job 20:12"}

Ver. 14. **Yet his meat in his bowels is turned]** Sour sauce be hath at length to his sweet meats, viz. gripes and throbs of conscience, terrors and tortures inexpressible; a greedy vulture feeding upon his entrails (as the poets feigned of Prometheus), those furies or hell hags (so much mentioned by them), as haunting evildoers. In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare, #Pr 29:6. There is a cord to strangle his joys with, to mar his mirth. Did not Joseph's brethren experiment with this? and Ahab, in his house of ivory? and Belshazzar, amidst his sensualities?

Principium dulce est, sed finis amoris amarus:

Laeta venire Venus, tristis abire solet.

The sinner's cup of honey ends in the dregs of gall, even the gall of asps. Voluptia and Angerona went yoked together among the Romans. If men would forecast the sad issues of sin, they would only strive to be innocent.

It is the gall of asps within him] Gall of any sort is bitter, but that of asps is most poisonous and mortal. Pliny saith, that the poison of asps is nothing else but their gall. An asp is a kind of serpent, not

known in these parts of the world. Aelian writeth, that the biting of an asp is incurable; and others say, that it killeth without remedy within four hours' time. Unto this kind of poison is sin fitly compared; for when an asp stingeth a man, it doth first tickle him so as it maketh him laugh, then it casteth him into a sleep, till the poison gradually gets to the heart, after which it paineth him more than ever before it delighted him. So doth wickedness. It is a bitter sweet, γλυκυπικρον. Bernard compareth it to the itch, which first yieldeth pleasure, and afterwards smart. Austin saith, many devour that on earth which they must digest in hell, where they shall have punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succour, mischief without measure, torments without end, and past imagination. When therefore thou art making a covenant with sin, say to thy soul, as Boaz said to his kinsman, #Ru 4:5, What time thou buyest it, thou must have Ruth with it. So if thou wilt have the sweet of sin, thou must have the curse with it; and let thy soul answer, as he there doth, No, I may not do it, I shall mar and spoil a better inheritance.

Ver. 15. He hath swallowed down riches] As wild beasts do their prey, as the greater fishes do the lesser, greedily, easily, suddenly, irrecoverably, as the fire swalloweth up the fuel, as the lean kine devoured the fat, and as the Pamphagus glutton doth his tidbits, his sweet morsels. This word, hath swallowed, showeth his infinite and insatiable desire of getting and gathering riches; and that by continual gaping after more, he loseth the pleasure of what he hath already, like as a dog at his master's table swalloweth the whole meat he casteth him without any pleasure, gaping still for the next morsel. He knoweth no other language but that of the horse leech's daughter, Give, give; or that of greedy Esau, returning from the field, as hungry as a hunter, #Ge 25:30, Feed me, I pray thee, or let me swallow at once (like as camels are fed by casting gobbets into their mouth) that red, red, &c. Gold is no better than red earth, and cannot terminate man's appetite, #Ec 5:10.

And he shall vomit them up again] Either by remorse and restitution in the mean time, or by despair and impenitent horror hereafter; he shall vomit them up, and together with them his vital blood and spirits; he shall bring up his very heart withal, as Judas did, together with those thirty pieces of silver, #Mt 27:4, all his

bowels gushing out, **#Ac 1:18**. He thought to have digested his ill gotten goods, as the ostrich doth iron; but, pelican-like, he is forced to cast them up again, פֶּלִיאֵן *Pelicanus a vomitu*. (See Plin. l. 10, c. 30.) The large fish that swallowed Jonah found him hard meat, and, for his own ease, was forced to regurgitate. Think the same of this wretched mammonist. The Septuagint interpret the text when they thus render it, Wealth unjustly gathered shall be vomited up again, and an angel shall hale it out of his mouth. (*Graeci eleganter tropo explicato*.) An evil angel, say their interpreters; but the Hebrew verity referreth it to God, as an act of divine justice.

God shall cast them out of his belly] As by a writ of ejectment, or rather, as by a violent purgation, that shall work both ways. **#Jer 51:44**, "I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth what he hath swallowed up"; viz. the wealth of the nations round about him. This God will rake out of his belly, so that a piece of his heart shall go with it. In the last destruction of Jerusalem some of the Jews had swallowed their gold, that the Roman soldiers might not have it; this was found out, and thereupon thousands of them were killed and ripped up for the gold that might be found in their stomachs and bowels. In like sort shall God deal with those covetous wretches, that have devoured the riches of iniquity; that have sucked in pestilential air, as **#Ho 8:7**. *{See Trapp on "Ho 8:7"}*

Ver. 16. **He shall suck the poison of asps]** That lieth in his head, whence also it hath its name in the original. *{See Trapp on "Job 20:14"}* *Caput aspidis suger*; saith the Vulgate. It is said of the toad that he hath in his head a stone of great virtue, called Bufonites. But the asp hath nothing in his head but strong poison. This the rich wretch shall suck, like as he was wont to suck the blood of the poor oppressed, to eat their flesh, **#Ps 14:4**, and to eviscerate them.

The viper's tongue shall slay him] *Perinde cedet ei maleficium*, saith Junius; his wickedness shall prove his bane, unless he presently take the antidote of repentance, whereby to expel the poison ere it get to the vitals. Repentance is the soul's best vomit, the hardest, but wholesomest medicine. It is repentance unto life; whereas the sins of the impenitent are mortal, saith St John **#1Jo 5:17**, or rather immortal, as saith St Paul, **#Ro 2:5**. The hand that is here and elsewhere lifted up in threatening, **#Isa 26:11**, will fall down in

punishing. "The wages of sin is death." When the barbarians saw the viper hanging on St Paul's hand, they looked when he would fall down dead, #Ac 28:4,6. The devil's design was there to have slain Paul, but he was defeated. And Brentius holdeth that the metaphor here used is taken not so much from serpents, whose venom lieth in their tongues, as from Satan, who, by the serpent in Paradise, cast our first parents into all kind of evils. Another there is who thus explains this text, *Caput viperis suget*. When vipers engender, the female sucketh the head of the male, and biteth it off with great delight; then she conceiveth her young ones, which eat out her belly. So the oppressor, getting the poor man's goods, they seem sweet unto him, but at the last his sin findeth him out, for it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder, as Solomon saith of drunkenness (which Austin calleth *dulce venenum*, a sweet poison), #Pr 23:32.

Ver. 17. **He shall not see the rivers, the floods**] That is, that plenty and abundance of all good things that cometh in to the righteous, *Velut confertim, certatim, et affatim*, a confluence of all manner of comforts and contentments (Mercer). These the oppressor shall have none of; for being insatiable and vexed with the furies of an evil conscience, they enjoy not anything, though they abound with all things, being worse than tantalized; and if after his fall he seek to recruit himself, he shall never be able to effect it. He shall not see the rivers, &c. The Seventy, and others after them, render it by an elegant apostrophe, *Ne, specter rivos*, Let him never look after the rivers, &c., for it will never be. He may please himself in hope and expectation of a better condition, but God will surely cross him. For his hoped for riches he shall have poverty, for pleasure pain, for health sickness, for nourishment poison, for dignity disgrace, for the favour of God his wrath and hatred, for life destruction. A further account of the wicked man's non-enjoyment of what he hath wrongfully wrested from others Zophar giveth us in the next verse.

Ver. 18. **That which he laboured for shall he restore**] (Great pains he hath taken to small purpose) in hope to make himself happy, the result whereof is, *Reddet laborem*, he shall restore his labour, either by regret and remorse of conscience, or by law, or by force, he shall be made to restore his ill gotten goods, which he had laboured for, even to lassitude; for wicked men are sore worksmen, and oppressors are great pains takers, κερδαινοντες ου κοπωσι, in getting wealth unwearable (Nazian.).

And shall not swallow it down] Or if he do, as **#Job 20:15**, it shall be but as the fish swalloweth the hook, or as the whale swallowed Jonah, ill at ease till he had laid up again.

According to his substance shall the restitution be] Heb. According to the substance of his exchange. *Opes compensationis*, the riches of his recompense, so the word is rendered, **#Job 15:31**. The oppressor is so infatuated, that he looks upon his cursed hoards as the reward of his labour, and rejoiceth in that whereof he hath more reason to repent, as Leah said at the birth of her son Issachar (but not well), "God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband," **#Ge 30:18**. *Felix scelus virtus vocatur*. Dionysius gloried that the gods disliked not his sacrilege, because they punished him not presently. But what saith Zophar here?

He shall not rejoice therein] Or if he do for a while, yet the triumphing of the wicked is short, **#Job 20:5**, as a blaze of thorns under a pot, or as a flash of lightning, which is followed by rending and roaring; he shall be filled with unmedicinable sorrows, when his gold (his god) is taken from him; when he parteth with that whereon he had set his heart and built his felicity.

Ver. 19. **Because he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor]**. Heb. Because he hath crushed or broken in pieces. The original word importeth (as one well observeth) tyrannical oppression without mercy or moderation, without ho or hold; some give full scope to their rage and wrath, they put neither bond nor bridle upon their covetousness and cruelty: such are characterized by this word.

And forsaken the poor] Or, Left men poor; viz. by leaving them without a livelihood, and so as good as without life. A poor man in his house is like a snail in his shell; crush that, and you kill him. They which read it, And forsaken the poor, give us this good note, that as it is sinful to forsake the poor, though we have never oppressed them, **#Mt 25:35,36** (not to do justice is injustice, not to show mercy is cruelty, **#Mr 3:4**), so to oppress, and then forsake them, is far more sinful.

Because he hath violently taken away] Violently and in open view, in an impudent manner. He pulleth down men's houses, but never thinketh of repairing them; so some read this text. Let our depopulators look to it, who build themselves desolate places, and desire to live alone in the earth. This hath been noted as a great fault in our nation. And therefore Goropius thinketh that the English were called Angli because they were so good anglers, having skill to lay various baits when they fished for other men's livings.

Ver. 20. **Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly]** *i.e.* Peace in his conscience, satisfaction in his soul; but as he is still coveting more, being sick of a dropsy or bulimy, as it were; so he hath many inward gripings and grabbings, worse than any belly ache or sickness of the stomach; he never eateth to the satisfying of his soul, as the righteous man doth, but the belly of the wicked shall want, **#Pr 13:25.** His meat is so sauced, and his drink so spiced, with the wrath of God, that he hath no joy of it. His belly is pained, his mind is in perpetual turmoil, while, like a ship laden, but not filled up, he hath enough to sink him, but not enough to satisfy him.

He shall not save of that which he desired] Which he coveted with strong desire, and had as soon have been knocked on the head as parted with, as his plate, wardrobe, jewels, &c., neither can he save them nor they him. Broughton rendereth, By that which he desired he shall not be safe; and to like purpose the Septuagint,

Ver. 21. **There shall none of his meat be left]** Zophar still pursueth the allegory of the belly; and in all striketh at poor Job, who had scarce a bit of bread to eat, but yet was not without the hidden manna, the feast of a good conscience, which made him say with Luther, *Manducato pane hic vivamus, &c.*, Let us take up with coarse fare here, since we have better within, and better yet we shall have in heaven; in our Father's house is bread enough, &c.

Therefore no man shall look for his goods] Heb. His goods, or goodness. It was well said, that he that first called riches *Bona*, goods, was a better husband than divine. But it may be thought that the most are such husbands. The common cry is, "Who will show us any good?" The Lord answereth, **#Ex 33:19**, "I will make all my good pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee." The prophet answereth, **#Mic 6:8**, "He hath showed

thee, O man, what is good," viz. to do justly; and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. But most men are of his mind who said, He that will not venture his body will never be valiant, and he that will not venture his soul will never be rich (Nevessan). But what saith the prophet? He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall die a poor fool, #**Jer 17:11**. And what saith Zophar here? He shall die a plain beggar, and leave no estate worth the looking after or suing for; this does not always happen, but *ως επι το πολυ*, many times it doth, as is easily to be observed.

Ver. 22. **In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits**] The covetous man never hath a sufficiency (but is as greedily gasping still after more, as if he were not worth a halfpenny), much less a fulness of sufficiency, a superfluity, a superabundance. Whatsoever Esau pretended in his, "I have enough, my brother," #**Ge 33:9**, Jacob could indeed say truly, I have enough, #**Ge 33:11**, for godliness only hath an autarchy, #**1Ti 6:6**. True piety hath true plenty, and is never without a well contenting sufficiency, wherein the good man is, when in the fulness of straits. See it in David, #**1Sa 30:6**, in Habakkuk, #**Hab 3:16,17**, in Paul, #**2Co 6:10 Php 4:11**, he had nothing, and yet possessed all things. But that which Zophar here drives at, is to show that the oppressor shall be ruined when at highest, and when he least looketh for it; as was Nebuchadnezzar, Haman, Belshazzar, Babylon the Great, #**Re 18:7,8**. How was Alexander the Great surprised at a feast! Caesar in the senate house! many of the emperors in their own palaces! &c.

Every hand of the wicked shall come upon him] Or, of the labourer, whose wages he hath detained. Or, of the poor oppressed, whom he hath forced to labour hard for a poor living. Broughton rendereth it, Each hand of the injured and grieved shall come upon him; and so he shall have many fists about his ears, many ready to rifle him and to pull a fleece from him.

Ver. 23. **When he is about to fill his belly**] It appeareth, by this expression, that it was belly timber wherein the wicked man placed his sufficiency, #**Job 20:22**, his felicity, *Si ventri bene sit, si lateri*, saith the Epicure in Horace. If the belly may be filled, the body fitted, that is all that these Lurcones, these profligates, look after. Polyphemus knew no other god but his belly. There were belly gods in St Paul's time, such as of whom he could not speak with dry eyes,

#Php 3:18,19. Such are compared by Clement of Alexandria to the sea ass, that hath his heart in his belly. By others to the locust, the belly whereof is said to be joined to his mouth, and to end at his tail; to the fish called Blax, that is altogether unprofitable; and to rats and mice, good for nothing but to devour victuals. When therefore such a pamphagus is about to fill his belly and to pamper his paunch, or otherwise to gorge himself with the full messes of sin's dainties (as the viper lives on venomous things, the spider on aconite, the sow on swill, as Tartarians on carrion, holding them as dainty as other men do venison), then, saith Zophar,

God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him] Heb. He shall send forth, &c. He will no longer keep in his judgments in the chains of mercy, but give them their full forth upon this wicked oppressor; and that even very then, when he bids his heart make merry, and assures himself of unchangeable happiness. For,

He shall rain it upon him (that is, reveal it from heaven against him, #Ro 1:18) while he is eating] **#Mt 24:38.** As it befell those cormorants, **#Nu 11:33**, and the old world, **#Lu 17:26,27** Sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; *Vel ut pluvia quae sereno coelo inopinantes opprimit.* Or as foul weather that comes unsent for, and oft unlooked for. The Vulgate rendereth it, And he shall rain his war upon him. But this Zophar setteth forth in the next verse, where he denounceth war and weapons.

Ver. 24. He shall flee from the iron weapon] *i.e.* While he seeks to shun one mischief he shall fall into another; and when he thinks to run from death he runs to it. God, who can do what he will with his own bare hand, is here brought in, after the manner of men with sword and bow, to show that both at home and afar off he can tame his rebels. Neither boots it any man to stand out with God, or to seek to save himself by fight or flight; since he is that "King, against whom there is no rising up," **#Pr 30:31**, and if he be angry, no other helps can relieve us. Brass and iron can fence me against an arrow or a sword, but if I were to be cast into a furnace of fire, it would help to torment me, if into a pit of water, to sink me. Now our God is a consuming fire, and his breath a stream of brimstone, **#Isa 30:33**. "Submit yourselves therefore to God," **#Jas 4:7**. Humble yourselves

therefore under his mighty hand, and he shall lift you up in due season, #1Pe 5:6. To run in to God is the way to escape him; as to close and get in with him that would strike you doth avoid the blow.

And the bow of steel shall strike him through] Or, shall change him; that is, kill him. Death is our great change, and to the wicked a dismal change; for they shall be killed with death, #Re 2:23. Then Balaam and his bribes, Balthasar and his bowls, Dives and his dishes, Herod and his harlots, the usurer and his bills, the merchant and his measures, &c., shall part asunder for ever. But that is not the worst of it. The word here used signifieth excision, or cutting off, and hence that of Bathsheba, #Pr 31:8, *Beni chaloph*, children of destruction, answerable to that of our Saviour, #Joh 17:12. A son or child of perdition, that is, a man devoted to utter destruction.

Ver. 25. **It is drawn, and cometh out of the body]** That is, the arrow out of the quiver, or the sword out of the sheath, as the Vulgate translatheth it. By a like metaphor the body is called the soul's sheath, #Da 7:15. But I rather take it properly: It cometh out of his body that is, out of the wicked man's body, who is under such a deep and deadly wound as Jehoram was, whom Jehu shot through the heart; and as William Rufus was by Walter Tyrrel, who in hunting mistook him for a deer.

Yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall] And so the wound must needs be mortal, since none can come at the gall to cure it. The wicked shall be double slain (first with God's bow, and then with his sword), rather than he shall escape. How much better were it to fall down as Paul did, #Ro 7:11, slain with the sword of the Spirit! Bernard told his brother, a soldier, that because he would not listen to the word of exhortation, God would shortly open a way to his hard heart by his glistering sword; which accordingly befell him.

Terrors are upon him] Heb. The terrible upon him; which some interpret of devils or hell hags. The Vulgate rendereth it, Then horrible ones shall come upon him. The word is used for giants, #De 2:10. The Emims shall fall upon him, that is, men of fierce and cruel spirits. But better take it for terrors, as we render it; and so the sense is, That the wicked, when he sees he must needs die, is surprised with greatest anxieties and perplexities of spirit, as beholding that

threefold dreadful spectacle, death, judgment, hell, and all to be passed through by his poor soul.

Ver. 26. **All darkness shall be hid in his secret places]** That is, saith Diodati, wheresoever he shall think to find a place of safeguard there shall he meet with some horrible mischance. Men that are proscribed, and sought for to death, usually hide themselves, as various Jews did in privies at the last destruction of Jerusalem, and were thence drawn out to the slaughter. The duke of Buckingham, in Richard III's time, was betrayed by his servant Bannister. Appian telleth of a Roman hid by his wife, and then exposed by his wife to the murderer, to whom she soon after also was married (De Bell. Civ. Rom.). Others render and sense the words thus, The wicked shall come into darkness, *propter abscondita*, for his secret sins. And others thus, All darkness is laid up for his hid treasures; that is, God or men have taken order that he shall lose his riches as well as his life, though he hide them never so secretly.

A fire not blown shall consume him] *i.e.* say some, calamities whose causes shall be unknown, and shall proceed immediately from God. See **#Isa 30:33**. Many of the Greeks interpret this text of hell, with its unquenchable fire, **#Mt 3:12**, which being created by God, and kindled by his breath, that is, by his word, it burneth everlastingly. Albeit God many times punisheth wicked men here with fire from heaven, as he did Sodom, Nadab and Abihu, those captains of fifties with their companies, **#2Ki 1:9-12** Tremellius rendereth it thus, A fire consumeth him, *non accensum flatis*, I say him, not kindled by blowing, but burning of his own accord, as stubble fully dried, or hurds, or sear wood, *Ut stipulae aut stupae. Ut cremium aut arefactum lignum*. See **#Na 1:10**. {See Trapp on "Na 1:10"}

It shall go ill with him that is left] His posterity shall never prosper, but be rooted out. Eliphaz and Bildad had said the same thing; and all to pay poor Job, whose family was now ruined. It shall surely go ill with him, or, He shall be wringed, saith Broughton; alluding to the likeness of the sound as well as the sense of the Hebrew word.

Ver. 27. **The heaven shall reveal his iniquity]** Job had called heaven and earth to record his innocence, **#Job 16:19**. This is not to do now, saith Zophar, for all creatures have conspired thy ruin, and

contributed thereunto, wind, fire, Sabeans, &c., so that he that hath but half an eye may see thee to be a wicked person. Such as are wicked indeed, not only *secundum dici*, as Job, but *secundum esse*, as Ahab, cannot look to heaven above, or to earth beneath, without horror to think even these, if other witnesses fail, shall bring to light their secret sins, and come to give testimony against them before the great Judge at the last day.

And the earth shall arise up against him] Night will convert itself into noon against the evildoers; and silence prove a speaking evidence. Earth cried Cain guilty, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera as a traitor and rebel to the highest majesty; yea, *Servi ut taceant iumenta loquentur*; the ass hath a verdict to pass upon Balaam. A bird of the air shall carry the voice that but whispereth treason, #Ec 10:20. Yea, if nothing else will reveal iniquity, it will reveal itself. It will prove like the ointment of the right hand, of which Solomon saith, that it bewrayeth itself, #Pr 27:16.

Ver. 28. **The increase of his house shall depart]** All his posterity shall be destroyed, and so shall his prosperity to, even all at once, with a sudden ebb, in the day that God visiteth him with his wrath and righteous judgments. All the wicked man's wealth and revenue shall be wretchedly wasted and embezzled by one means or other.

And his goods shall flow away] As waters. The apostle saith, The fashion of this world passeth away; viz. as a hasty headlong torrent; or as a picture drawn upon the ice: "Thou carriest them away" (both persons and things) "as with a flood," #Ps 90:5.

Ver. 29. **This is the portion of a wicked man from God]** A portion God alloweth the wicked in this life, #Ps 17:14; as a king, when he reprieveth a traitor, alloweth him a subsistence, prisoner's pittance at least. Yea, the worst of men divide the wealth and honours of the world between them for a time. Nebuchadnezzar had Tyre as pay for his pains in Egypt. And the whole Turkish empire is nothing else but a crust cast to his dogs by the great housekeeper of the world, saith Luther. But besides this, God hath provided a far other portion for them (saith one), and that by way of inheritance, never to be parted from them; viz. all the forementioned miseries, and many more, all torments here, and tortures in hell. This is the inheritance, *Quam*

nunquam deserere, non magis quam seipsos, poterunt, which will stick to them as close as the skin to the fesh or the flesh to the bones; it falls to them as the inheritance doth to the heir, #**Job 27:13 31:2**, or as the mess of meat doth to the invited guest. Misery is the heritage of the wicked, as they are children of disobedience; and their wages, as they are workers of iniquity; their present prosperity also is a piece of their punishment, #**Isa 1:5 Pr 1:32**. The words of Zophar are ended. Let others reply as they please, but he hath done. *Praestat herbam dare, quam turpiter pugnare.* No surer sign of an evil cause than a powerless pertinace.

Chapter 21

Ver. 1. **But Job answered and said]** Disproving and refuting that proposition of theirs concerning the infelicity of the ungodly by reason, by experience, and by divine authority; all which evince and evidence that neither is prosperity a proof of men's innocence, nor adversity a mark of their wickedness, as Zophar and his fellows would have it. And that they might not any more interrupt him, nor think him too rough, he useth a gentle preface, craving attention, and pressing them thereunto by many arguments in the first six verses.

Ver. 2. **Hear diligently my speech]** Heb. In hearing hear. The Greek hath it, Hear, hear; that is, hear me out, have so much patience with me as not to interrupt me any more; yea, hear with understanding; let your ους and νοϋς meet; draw up your inward ears to your outward, that one sound may pierce both. Lay aside passion and prejudice, suffer a word of information, for it is but one word that I have to say, &c, The Hebrew is singular, and promiseth brevity. Only this one word Job would that they should hear double; *sc.* by an after deliberate meditation, as David did, #**Ps 62:11**, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this," &c. *Gravis rationis humanae morbus est, quod plerunque soleat ea damnare quae aut non intelligat, aut non placuerint* (Brent.).

And let this be your consolations] Comfort me this way at least, that you will give me the hearing. Hither you came as comforters, but by your galling speeches you have grieved and vexed me above measure. Now make me some amends, and remembering your office as friends, and your design, which was to condole with me and to comfort me, hear me intently, and this I shall take as kindly as if in

tenderest compassion you had drunk to me in a bowl of nepenthes, {A drug of Egyptian origin mentioned in the Odyssey as capable of banishing grief or trouble from the mind; hence, any drug or potion having, or conceived as having, the same power; also, occas. the plant or herb supposed to yield the drug.} or had given me a cup of consolation, as **#Jer 16:7**. The Vulgate Latin rendereth it (but not well), Hear, I pray you, my speech, and repent. The Hebrew root signifieth first to repent, and then to comfort, **#1Sa 15:35 Isa 40:1**, because the penitent only get sound comfort.

Ver. 3. **Suffer me that I may speak**] Say that it be suffering to you to hear me (for now I see you have, as they write of some creatures, *fel in aure*), yet put yourselves to the pain of hearing me, and bear me, though I am burdensome to you, though my speeches cross the grain of your spirits. See **#2Co 11:1**. I will promise you to speak nothing worthy of a scoff, such as was that of Theophrastus, Let him shun the talkative man who would not be put into a fit of a fever (Theoph. Charact. cap. de garrul.). Or that of Aristotle, before whom when one, having made a long and idle discourse, concluded it thus, I doubt I have been too tedious unto you, sir philosopher, with my many words: In good sooth, said Aristotle, you have not been tedious to me, for I gave no heed to anything you said (Plut. de Garrulit.).

And after I have spoken, mock on] Heb. Mock thou on, thou Zophar (to whom he turned his speech, and very likely his eye also), if thou canst find in thy heart to mock at so much reason as I shall allege in mine own defence; I gainstand thee not. He lacked no wit who said, If a wise man speak evil of thee or to thee, endure him; if a fool, slight him. *Sile, et funestam dedisti plagam*, trouble not thyself at his taunts, and thou punishest him sufficiently (Chrysost.).

Ver. 4. **As for me, is my complaint to man?**] *Vult dicere*, saith Lavater, Job's meaning is, that he complained not to man, but to God himself, who well knew his heart and his innocence, though men misjudged him. And this being so, how could he be otherwise than anxious and solicitous, since if a man be but to speak to an earthly prince, he will be afraid? It is said of Charles V, emperor, that he spake more to God than to men. Job did so, it seemeth; and this he allegeth to the shame of his hard hearted friends, who put him to it in this way.

Ver. 5. **Mark me, and be astonied**] Heb. Look upon me. He had said before, Hear and hear, now, Behold and see if there be any

sorrow like unto my sorrow. Mark it, I say, and stand amazed at it. Did you ever find any on this side hell so sore afflicted as I am? Is it not because you are not duly affected with my miseries, that ye are so regardless of my discourse? Strange that my sorrows should be great enough to work astonishment, and yet not great enough to deserve attention. O mark first what I suffer, and then what I speak.

And (this once done) lay your hand upon your mouth] Be swift to hear, but slow to speak; yea, spare to speak at all in this case. The Greek proverb admonisheth men either to be silent or to speak something that is better than silence. Harpocrates, the heathenish god of silence, was pictured with his finger laid upon his lips.

Ver. 6. **Even when I remember I am afraid]** Surprised I am with a most formidable amazement, when I call to mind and consider how ill (by the divine providence) it fareth with me, how well with many wicked; and how little you pity me, or seek by sound reason to settle my mind; I am ready to cry out, Oh the depth of God's stupendous dispensations! Confer #Ps 73, where David delivereth himself to like purpose.

And trembling taketh hold on my flesh] Heb. My flesh hath taken hold on trembling. *Totus horreo*, horror hath taken hold on me, #Ps 119:53, such as makes my body to shake and shudder. So #Hab 3:16 1:3,13. Job had called upon his friends to mark and be astonished; here he propoundeth himself to them for an example. *Quod iussit, et gessit*, as Bernard saith of another. See #Job 18:20.

Ver. 7. **Wherefore do the wicked live, become old]** *Vivunt, veteraseunt*, they are lively and longlived, so that they outlast many better than themselves; being as sound as roaches and as vivacious as the snail, the property whereof is to live a long while even after the head is off and the heart out. Of some creatures we use to say, that they have nine lives; of some wicked men it may be thought so, they do evil a hundred times, and yet their days are prolonged, #Ec 9:12. Manasseh reigned longest of any king in Judah. Pope John XXII. (that monster and mortalist) lived longest of any pope, and died richest. God gives wealth, health, and long life to many wicked, *Non aliter ac si quis crumenam ingentem aure plenam latrinae inieciat*, saith one; No otherwise than as when a man casts a great purse filled with gold into an outhouse (Gasp. Ens.). Now if any

shall ask, with Job, Why all this? the apostle answereth one question by another: **#Ro 9:22**, "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endure with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" What hath anyman to say to that? And again, Who knows not that the Lord hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, even that day of the revelation of the righteous judgment, **#Ac 17:31 Ro 2:5**. The Judge of the earth keepeth his petty sessions now, letting the law pass upon some few, reserving the rest till the great assizes, **#1Ti 5:24**.

Yea, are mighty in power?] Or, prevail in wealth, which maketh them mighty; for money is the monarch of this present world, and carrieth all before it.

Ver. 8. **Their seed is established in their sight with them]** Some understand it of their seed sown in the fields, nor blasted nor wasted, but timely gathered into their barns and granaries; and so by offspring, *Germina*, they, taking it literally, conceive to be meant their plants, trees, flowers, fruits, all which come kindly, and grow to their minds. But better interpret it of their children and nephews, whom they have many, healthy, lusty, and lively, *Multos, sanos, vegetos, et viraces*, and not unfitly compared to seed; as if the parents were but only the husks; and to branches or sprigs, because they may be, and must be, bent betime to the best things, before they be aged and crooked in their evil practices, refusing to be rectified.

And their offspring before their eyes] This is the same with that before, and is repeated, because a singular happiness, to see their children prosper as much as themselves. This is a third time instanced, **#Job 21:11**.

Ver. 9. **Their houses are safe from fear]** *Seculi laetitia est impunita nequitia*. No domestic discords, no foreign disturbances, but peaceable possession and enjoyment of what they have; as much welfare as David wished to Nabal, **#1Sa 25:5**: Thus shall ye say to him that lives (that is, that lives prosperously, for that is the only life), Peace be to thee, and to thine house, and to all that thou hast.

Neither is the rod of God upon them] So that they seem to themselves and others to be out of the reach of God's rod. "They are

not in trouble, as other men, neither are they plagued like other men; therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain," &c., #Ps 73:5,6. *Vermis divitiarum est superbia*, It is hard for the rich not be high minded, #1Ti 6:17 (August.).

Ver. 10. **Their bull gendereth, and faileth not, &c.]** All things hit, and nothing misseth to make them happy and wealthy; they have profit and pleasure at will, the world comes tumbling in upon them, as towns were said to come in to Timotheus' toils while he slept (Plut. in Sulla), and so they seem to be the only heirs of those promises, #Ex 23:26, "There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in the land"; so #De 7:14; whereunto notwithstanding they are perfect strangers: Laban and Nabal for instance.

Ver. 11. **They send forth their little ones like a flock]** *Sunt qui de eorum vitulis intelligunt recens natis*, saith Mercer. Some understand it to be young calves, but better of young children, which have here their name from a root which signifieth wickedness, naughtiness, to show what little ones are, not innocents, as we call them, not *pueri quasi puri*; *νηπιος*, is both a fool and a child. The first blanket wherein a child is wrapped, is woven of sin, shame, blood, and filth, #Eze 16:4,6. Hence infants were circumcised, and their foreskin cast away, to show that they themselves had deserved to be so served. Parents therefore should strive to mend that by education which they have marred by propagation. Wicked parents think not on this, though they send out their little ones like a flock, but tend them not, keep them not from the wolf of hell, who seeketh to devour them.

And their children dance] *Exiliunt, vitulantur, choreas ducunt*, they skip and leap up and down, as young cattle, and are taught to dance artificially, which no sober man will do, saith Cicero, *Nemo sobrius saltat*. And, the better dancer the worse man, said Diogenes.

Ver. 12. **They take the timbrel and the harp]** They take them, and are taken with them, being melted in sensual delights, which wise men slight. The philosopher told the fiddlers that he could be merry without music. Aristotle said, Jupiter is happy, and yet no musician. One in Plutarch saith of the Scythians, that though they had no music nor vines among them, yet they had God. It is here alleged, as a piece of their lasciviousness and luxury, that they took or touched the timbrel, &c. Not but that music is lawful, for this is the gift of

God, and a noble art; but the abuse of it is here noted, as likewise **#Isa 5:12 Am 6:5**. {See Trapp on "Isa 5:12"} {See Trapp on "Am 6:5"} These wicked and their children lived in pleasure upon earth (which is not a place for such a purpose; God did not cast man out of one paradise that he might make himself another), **#Jas 5:5**, and were like the people of Tombutum, in Africa, who are said to spend their whole time in singing and dancing. It is not good for men to take pleasure in pleasure, to spend too much time in it, as Solomon did, and afterwards Cleopatra. It was not simply a sin in Esau to go a hunting; but yet the more he used it the more profane he waxed, and came at length to contemn his birthright.

They rejoice at the sound of the organ] Their mirth was merely carnal; they did rather revel than rejoice. Their cheerfulness did not end in thankfulness; their music made them not more heavenly minded, as it did that late learned and holy Mr 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, Art of Div. Medit.) The instrument here mentioned hath its name (as Mercer noteth) *Ab amore, oblectatione, et lusu*, from love, delight, and sport. *Amabit sapiens, cupient caeteri*, saith Seneca.

Ver. 13. **They spend their days in wealth]** Or, in mirth. Heb. In good. They wallow in wealth, and have the world at their will, even more than heart could wish, as David phraseth it in **#Ps 73:2-12**, which may well serve for a comment upon this text; and the rich glutton for an instance. He in his lifetime received good things, and in a moment went down to the grave, **#Lu 16:25**. True it is, that this is not every wicked man's case; for some of them live wretchedly and die lamentably, being held long upon the rack of a torturing disease (as Jehoram), all which is to them none other than a type and foretaste of hell, whither they are hastening.

And in a moment they go down to the grave] *Ad inferna*, to hell, saith the Vulgate; they spend their days in wealth, and end their days in woe; their merry dance determineth in a miserable downfall. Thus that "rich man died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment," &c., **#Lu 16:22,23**. But though the same Hebrew

word signifieth hell and the grave (both which have their names from their unsatiableness, #Pr 30:15,16), yet here, in a suitability to what went before, the grave is to be understood; and the sense is, *Dicto citius moriuntur*; they die easily, suddenly, sweetly, without much pain of body or trouble of mind; "there are no bands in their death," saith David, #Ps 73:4. They die without much ado, like a lamb, or like a lamp, that goeth out of itself when the oil faileth; they go quickly and quietly to the grave. Some wicked persons indeed die piecemeal by a complicated disease, and a long lingering death, as did Antiochus, Herod, Philip II of Spain, &c. Dionysius the tyrant is said to have envied a beast, whose throat he saw cut, because he died so soon. Julius Caesar wished he might die speedily, saith Suetonius. Pliny commendeth sudden death as the chief felicity of life. That is a good death to nature which is neither feared nor expected; yet that is the best death which hath been longest expected and prepared for. *Mors iucunda cuius nulla praecessit expectatio aut metus*. Happy is he that, after due preparation, is passed through the gates of death ere he be aware. Happy is he that, by the holy use of long sickness, is taught to see the gates of death afar off, and addresseth for a resolute passage. The one dieth like Elijah, the other like Elisha, both blessedly.

Ver. 14. **Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us]** Lest any should think, saith Merlin here, that Job speaks of such wicked as used a moderation in sinning, and (as the historian said of the emperor) rather lacked vice than were virtuous. *Magis extra vitia, quam cum virtutibus* (Tacit.). He describeth their great impiety by a rhetorical imitation, expressing the language of their heart, which is most base and blasphemous. For first they speak of God as if he were some lowly prized scoundrel; Apage, be packing; thus they reject his acquaintance, and would be rid of his company. *Porro reieciunt Deum quotquot verbum eius contemnunt*, saith Brentius here; now they reject God who slight his word and cast his commands behind them, #Ps 50:17. Hence it follows by way of explanation,

For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways] Lo, they profess themselves to be of the number of those, *qui ut liberius peccent, libenter ignorant*, who are wilfully ignorant, and like not to retain God in their knowledge, #Ro 1:28; or, if they profess to know him,

yet "in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate," **#Tit 1:16**. Wicked men cannot abide God; such is their evil heart of unbelief, **#Heb 3:12**, they get as far from him as they can, with Cain, and not only desire him to depart out of their coasts, with those swinish Gergesites, but churlishly say unto him, as here, *Avaunt!* room for us. They will neither have God in their heads, **#Ps 10:4**, nor hearts, **#Ps 14:1**, nor words, **#Ps 12:4**, nor works, **#Tit 1:16**. See this exemplified in those perverse Jews, lying children, children that would not hear the law of the Lord; which said to the seers, See not, -Get ye out of the way, turn aside out of the path; *i.e.* out of this tract of truth in dealing so plainly, and reproving us so roundly. Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease before us, let us henceforth hear no more of him, **#Isa 30:10,11**. Now for such miscreants as these, who can say it is otherwise than righteous that God should regeest one day upon them, Depart from me, ye wicked? (He loves to retaliate.) And that they who now say unto him, We desire not the knowledge of thy ways, shall hear from him, "I tell you, I know you not," **#Lu 13:27**.

Ver. 15. **What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?**] Here the rottenness of their hearts blistereth out at the lips of these rich wretches, these fat bulls of Bashan, such as was Pharaoh, that sturdy rebel, who asked this very question in the text, What, or who, is the Almighty? &c., **#Ex 5:2**; and hath a large reply made him by one plague upon another, till he was compelled to answer himself, The Lord is righteous. (He seemeth to rehearse the very words of Pharaoh. Diod.) Forced he was to speak fair while held upon the rack, if nothing else, yet that he might get off. Such queryings as this carry greatest contempt in them, and would lay the Almighty quite below the required duty; as if Almighty were but an empty title, and that he could do neither good nor evil, **#Zep 1:12**, that it was to no purpose or profit to serve him, that the gains would not pay for the pains, &c.

And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?] Heb. If we meet him, viz. by our prayers, **#Jer 7:16 Am 4:12 Mal 3:14**, {See *Trapp on "Mal 3:14"*} Children will not say their prayers unless they may have their breakfast; nor hypocrites pray but for some profit. They pretend sometimes to meet God, but they draw not near with that true heart, mentioned **#Heb 10:20**; in seeking God they merely seek

themselves, as Spira said he did. *In Parabola ovis capras suas quaerunt.* No penny, no *Pater Noster* our Father. And as the wolf in the fable having spelled Pater, and being bid put together, said Agnus; so when these pray, their hearts are upon their half penny, #Eze 33:31 They follow Christ for the loaves, and serve him no longer than he serves their turns.

— *Rarae fumant faelicibus arae.*

Ver. 16. **Lo, their good is not in their hand]** That is, they are not enriched by their own industry, prudence, piety, &c., but God hath exalted them thus, that he may bring them down again with the greater poise; so some sense the text. Others thus, Their good is not in their hand; that is, they are no masters of them, but are mastered by them; they are servants to their wealth, as the Persian kings were to their wives or concubines, *Captivarum suarum captivi* (Plut.). And as those stall fed beasts in the Gospel, the recusant guests, I mean, that had bought farms, oxen, &c., or rather were bought of them.— *Difficile est opibus non tradere mores.* Others make this the sense, and I concur with them, These wicked rich men, buried in a bog of security, condemn God, as if they had their happiness in their own hands, and were petty gods within themselves. But they are deceived. All is in God's hand, who can take away their wealth when he pleaseth. These men may fall sooner than they rose, since they subsist merely by God's manutention, and he may do with his own as he wishes.

The counsel of the wicked is far from me] I am so far from envying their prosperity, that I cannot approve of their course of life, for all their wealth. I am not of their judgment, I like not of their way. O my soul, come not thou into their secret. Let their money perish with them (said that noble Italian convert, Caracciolus, to a Jesuit who tempted him with a great sum), who esteem all the gold in the world worth one day's society with Jesus Christ and his Holy Spirit; and cursed be that religion for ever and ever.

Ver. 17. **How oft is the candle of the wicked put out!]** *q.d.* I confess that which you say concerning God's judgments upon the wicked to be sometimes true in this world (Diod.); yet it is not so continually nor ordinarily, but very oft their lamp is extinguished, their comforts damped, and hopes of better dashed; they are all on

the sudden left in the dark, cast into straits inextricable, plunged into sorrows inexplicable, and yet all these are but the "beginning of sorrows." For

How oft cometh destruction upon them!] Utmost destruction, irresistible ruin, that comes on in manner of a black cloud or fierce storm, undoing calamity, overflowing scourge, a tempest from which there is no covert. The Vulgate renders it thus, How oft is there an inundation upon the wicked!

God distributeth sorrows in his anger] Gives them their lot of greatest sorrows, as by a line, **#Lu 12:46**, such sorrows as a travailing woman suffereth; or such as were those of Monsieur Mylius, an old minister at Heidelberg, when taken by the Spaniard; first they abused his daughter before his eyes, and then they tied a small cord about his head, which with truncheons they wreathed about till they squeezed out his brains (Spec. bell. fac.). The text implieth that though in this world many sorrows are to the wicked, yet these do not supersede their sufferings in hell, **#Ps 32:10**; but now they receive only a small portion or part of their punishments, there they shall be paid to the full; here they sip of the top only of God's cup, there they shall suck up the dregs thereof, though they have eternity to the bottom. This shall be the portion of their cup, and but a portion, **#Ps 11:6**.

Ver. 18. **They are as stubble before the wind]** Lest any man should say, How can these things befall those that are so strongly set and firmly built? Well enough, saith Job, since when they are best bottomed or underlaid, they are but as stubble before the wind, &c. *Haec consideranda*, saith Mercer, these things would be laid to heart, for hereby it appeareth that the wicked shall be destroyed suddenly, and certainly, *certo, cito, penitus*, **#Isa 17:13**. That they can no more stand before a punishing God than thistle down before a whirlwind, or a glass bottle before a cannon shot.

Ver. 19. **God layeth up his iniquity for his children]** That is, the punishment of his iniquity, while he visiteth the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, **#Ex 20:5**. Neither doth this contradict that of the prophet Ezekiel, "The son, shall not die for the iniquity of his father," **#Eze 18:17**; nor that of the apostle, "Every man shall bear his own

burden," #Ga 6:5; for the meaning of those words is, that no man be damned for the sin of his father, nor one man for the sin of another, unless by commission, or approbation, or some way or other he make it his own. But for temporal punishments there is none but (by occasion of others' sin) may have their portion in them; and wicked parents leave Job's legacy to their children; {#2Sa 3:29} yea, though they prove to be good children, #1Ki 14:12,13, for whom God layeth up their parents' iniquity in the treasures of his justice to be produced in due time.

He rewardeth him] For every transgression and disobedience; that is, every commission and omission "receiveth a just recompense of reward," #Heb 2:2. God will abate him nothing.

And he shall know it] Know it to his cost. Vexation shall give understanding; he that, before this judgment came, would know nothing of the bitter effect of sin upon him and his, now hath his eyes forced open (as the blind mole is said to have by the pangs of death), and cry out with the lion in the snare, *Si praescivissem*, Oh! if I had foreknown the mischief, &c. The wicked are wise too late; the fool passeth on and is punished; he knows not the evil of sin till he feels it.

Ver. 20. **His eyes shall see his destruction]** His slaughter, saith the Greek; his breaking to pieces, saith the Chaldee; this he shall see with his eyes, the destruction of his person, and ruin of his family. The sight of evil is a grief to see as well as the feeling of it is a pain; and that is complete destruction which is not only felt but seen. Zedekiah first saw all his children slain, and then had his eyes put out. Maurichus had the like woeful sight, and then was stewed in his own broth by the traitor Phocas.

And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty] Heb. The scalding hot wrath, worse than that cup of boiling lead turned down the throat of a certain drunken man, by the command of the Turkish bashaw. Jerusalem drank wrath to drunkenness, and had none to guide her; as a drunken man had need to have, #Isa 51:17. The nations were to drink it to madness, #Jer 25:10. Babylon's brats shall drink of the wine of God's wrath, #Re 14:10 (poison in wine works more furiously than in water); their irreparable ruin is set

forth to the eye, as it were, when, **#Re 18:21**, an angel, a mighty angel, taketh a stone, a great stone, even a millstone, which he casteth and with impetuous force thrusteth into the bottom of the sea, whence it cannot be buoyed up. Now what is a mighty angel to the Almighty God, who hath his name, Shaddai, from destroying, as some are of opinion?

Ver. 21. **For what pleasure hath he in his house after him?**] *Hoc est, Omnia impiorum, etiam post mortem eorum, maledicta erunt*, saith Brentius; All that belongs to the wicked shall be accursed, even after death, though some are so desperately set upon wickedness that they will have their swing, whatsoever come of it, either to themselves or their children after them. *Sic fere αστοργοι sunt improbi*, so unnatural they are, many of them, that, so they may satisfy their own sinful and sensual desires, let their posterity sink or swim, let them shift as they can, they care not, εμου θανοντος γιαια μηθητω πυρι (Sueton. de Tiberio). Dives in hell seemed somewhat careful for his brethren; but self-love moved him to it; for he knew well that if they were damned he should be double damned, because they had sinned by his example and encouragement.

When the number of his months shall be cut off in the midst] *Mortis periphrasis*; that is, when he shall die, saith one. But that is not all. *Impius moritur importune*, the wicked dieth in an ill time for himself; then when it were better for him to do anything than to die. Many of them live not out half their days, **#Ps 55:23 Ec 7:17**. God cut off Eli's two sons in one day; and further threatened their father that there should not be an old man left in his house for ever, **#1Sa 2:32**. Hezekiah, when he thought he should die, complained that he had cut off his life like a weaver, **#Isa 38:12**, who cuts off the web from the thrum. But the saints (such as he was) die not till the best time, not till that time when, if they were rightly informed, they would even desire to die.

Ver. 22. **Shall any teach God knowledge?**] None but a presumptuous fool will take upon him to do that. Such as was Alphonso the wise (the fool rather), who feared not to say openly, that if he had been of God's counsel at the creation, some things should have been better made and marshalled (Roderic, Sanct. Hist. Hispan, p. 4, ch. 5). The wisest men are benighted in many things; and whatever light they have it is from the Father of lights, whose

judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. What a madness were it therefore for any mortal to prescribe to the Almighty, or to define whom, when, by what means, and in what measure he must punish offenders! Herein Job's friends took too much upon them; and he gives them the telling of it, wishing them to be wise to sobriety, and not to give laws to God, who well knoweth what he hath to do, and how to order his earthly kingdom. To disallow of his dealings is to teach him knowledge; which is greatest sauciness.

Seeing he judgeth those that are high] *Excelsos in excelsis*, the angels, who are so far above us in all manner of excellencies, and yet are ignorant of the wisdom of God's ways, which they know but in part; for how little a portion is heard of him? **#Job 26:14**. His judgments therefore are rather to be adored than pryed into: *Mirari oportet. Non rimari*, it is proper to be amazed, not to explore. Let us rest contented with a learned ignorance.

Ver. 23. One dieth in his full strength] *Iste moritur*, There is one dieth in his very perfections; or, in the strength of his perfection, when he is in the zenith, in the highest degree, of earthly felicity; and he seemeth to point at some one eminent wicked person, well known to them all. Confer **#Ec 9:2**. God is pleased to do wonderful contradictory things in man's reason; so that we must needs confess an unsearchableness in his ways. *In hoc opere, ratio humana talpa magis caeca est*, saith Brentius; In this work of his, human reason is blinder than a mole. Averroes turned atheist upon it, and Aristotle was little better, as being accused at Athens and banished into Chalcis, *quod de divinitate male sentiret*. because he was thinking poorly about the gods.

Being wholly at ease and quiet] At ease in body and quiet in mind. The common sort ask, What should ail such a man? The Irish, What such a one meaneth to die?

Ver. 24. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones, &c.] He is well lined within, as we say, having abundance of good blood and fresh spirits in his body; fat and plump, and well liking. He is enclosed in his own fat, **#Ps 17:10**. His back is well larded, and his bones are moistened with marrow; which, Plato saith, is not only the source and seminary of generation, but the very seat of life (Plat. in

Timaeo). Now such a state of body as is here described is no defence at all against death, saith Job; nay, it is a presage and a forerunner of it many times. For *ultimus sanitaria gradus est morbo proximus*, say physicians; the highest degree of health is nearest to sickness; we many times chop into the earth before we are aware; like a man, walking in a field covered with snow, who falleth into a pit suddenly.

Ver. 25. **And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul]** Heb. And this dieth with a bitter soul; in a sad and sorrowful condition; having suffered many a little death all his life long (as godly men especially use to do, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, #**Heb 11:37**, seldom without a cross on their backs), and then dieth not only in the sorrows of death, but in the sorrows of life which to him hath been a lifeless life, because a joyless life.

And never eateth with pleasure] Either because he hath but prisoners' pittance, which will neither keep him alive nor suffer him to die; or, if he sit at a full table, yet his body is so ill affected by sickness, or his mind with sorrow, that he finds no good relish in what he eateth. That it is better with any of us, see a mercy and be thankful.

Ver. 26. **They shall lie down alike in the dust, and worms, &c.]** Death and afflictions are common to them both, as #**Ec 9:2,3** How then do ye pronounce me wicked, because afflicted, and free among the dead, free of that company? &c.

And the worms shall cover them] Who haply were once covered with costliest clothing. The best are but worm's meat; why then should we pamper and trick up these carcasses?

Ver. 27. **Behold, I know your thoughts]** *sc.* By your words; as it is no hard matter for a wise man to do, #**Pr 20:5**; for otherwise, God only knoweth the heart, #**1Pe 1:24 Ps 139:3**, it is his royalty. But when men discover their thoughts by their discourses, looks, gestures, &c., we may say, as Job doth here, "I know your thoughts"; and that by the wicked wretch described by you myself is intended; this I am well aware of, though you hover in generals, and speak in a third person. Bartolus writeth of Dr Gabriel Nele, that by the only motion of the lips, without any utterance, he understood any man's thoughts. The like some say they can do by looks. The Italians have

a proverb, That a man with his words close, and his countenance loose, may travel undiscovered all the world over.

And the devices which you wonderfully imagine against me] viz. To take away, as it were by violence, my credit and comfort; this is the foulest theft; avoid it.

Ver. 28. **For ye say, Where is the house of the prince?**] Ye say though not in so many words, yet upon the matter, Where is this man's (Job's) princely pomp and port, that but even now was so splendid? A prince they called Job in a jeer, and by contraries, *Per ironiam et antiphrasin*, saith Vatablus, because he had been rich, and should have been liberal and munificent, but had not been so. The apostle calleth the Pharisees and philosophers, in like sort, "princes of this world," #1Co 2:8.

And where are the dwelling places] The palaces, large and lofty, *ut sunt praetoria et principum aedes*, as the houses of princes use to be (Junius). Lavater rendereth it, The tabernacle of tabernacles, as gentlemen's houses among us are called, places, halls, courts, &c., *Tahernaculum habitaculorum*.

Of the wicked?] viz. Of Job and his children, the eldest son's especially, which was blown down, #Job 1:18. As if it might not befall a good man also to have his house plundered, burnt, his children brained, &c. They had often in their discourses jerked at Job's children.

Ver. 29. **Have ye not asked them that go by the way?]** The cause of their rash judgment, Job showeth here to be their ignorance of things known to every ordinary passenger, and such as whereof there are many pregnant proofs and examples everywhere. Some, by them that go by the way, understand men by experience, such as have gone many voyages, &c., made many observations in their travels of things remarkable; their notes are here called their tokens. By those that go by the way, others understand Abraham, the Hebrew (so he is called, #Ge 14:13 that is, that Trans-Euphratean, or, he that passed over the river Euphrates, when he passed by the way from Chaldea to Canaan), and his progeny, Isaac and Jacob, who were passengers and pilgrims, and could tell, by experience, that men greatly afflicted may be yet favoured of God, and in due time delivered.

Abraham had ten sore trials, and yet was the friend of God. Isaac, besides many other sharp afflictions all along his pilgrimage, was blind for over twenty years before his death. Few and evil were the days of the years of Jacob, his whole life almost one continuous affliction, and yet it was, Jacob have I loved. Of all this Job likely was not ignorant, and why should his friends?

And do ye not know their tokens?] Or, Their tokens you shall not be estranged from. Broughton thus, So ye would not make their signs strange. There will be so much evidence of truth in what they say, that you will not be able to gainsay it.

Ver. 30. **That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction?]** Here is the passenger's verdict; viz. that wicked men escape scot free, and flourish for a season; nevertheless their preservation is but a reservation (as Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and others have found it), and if they flourish for the present, it is that they may be destroyed for ever, #Ps 92:7. Others read this verse more suitably to the next, thus, That at the day of destruction the wicked is kept back, and they are carried out in the day of wrath; that is, they are oft spared when the testimonies of God's wrath are rife against others.

Ver. 31. **Who shall declare his way to his face? &c.]** Who shall be so bold as to deal plainly with this rich wretch, and tell him his own? *Divitibus ideo deest amicus, quia nihil deest.* Great men have many flatterers, and not a few mutterers against them, but very few that will faithfully show them their sin, and forewarn them of their danger, lest they meet with the same hard measure that the hares in the fable did, who, taking upon them to reprove the lion, were torn in pieces by him for the same. Truth breedeth hatred; and although she be a good mistress, yet they that follow her too close at the heels may hap to have their teeth struck out. But truth, downright truth, must be spoken, however it be taken. Elias dealt roundly and impartially with wicked Ahab, Jeremiah with Josiah's sons and successors, the Baptist with Herod, Christ with the elders and Pharisees, that noble General Trajan with Valens, the Arian emperor, telling him, That by his persecuting the orthodox he had lost the day, abandoning the victory, and sending it away to the enemy.

And who shall repay him what he hath done?] *q.d.* Men dare not, for who will take a lion by the beard or a bear by the tooth? God will

not punish him here, therefore he must needs escape unpunished, This is by Gregory fitly referred to Antichrist, who may not be admonished, and will not be punished; but thinks to bear out his most malapert misdemeanour, because it is— *facinus maioris abollae*, the fact of a great one.

Ver. 32. **Yet shall he be brought to the grave]** He that was erst so stern and terrible shall shortly be laid low enough, and then *leoni mortuo vel mus insultabit*. the corpse of a lion or a leaping mouse. Though he were such a son of Belial that none could speak to him (as Nabal was, #1Sa 25:17), yet death will speak with him, and confute this proud haughty scorner, that dealeth in proud wrath. When death comes, saith Sir Walter Raleigh, which hates and destroys men, that is believed and obeyed; but God, that loveth and maketh men, he is not regarded. Oh mighty death! Oh eloquent death! whom none could advise, thou art able to prevail with.

And shall remain in the tomb] Heb. He shall watch over the heap, *super tumulum cumulo frugum in area constructo similem* (Lavat.); as a watchman, there he is fixed and keeps this place. Or, He shall be watched in the tomb.

Ver. 33. **The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him]** Here he saith the same as before, but more poetically, and is variously rendered. The Vulgate, alluding to an old poetical fable, readeth it thus, He shall be sweet to the sand of Cocytus, which is feigned to be one of the rivers of hell, or an infernal lake, so called from the moan there made by damned ghosts, who should be glad of his arrival there. Hell from beneath is moved for him to meet him at his coming, as it is said of the Assyrian tyrant, #Isa 14:9. Others better expound it thus, He shall taste so much bitterness while he treads upon the clods of the earth, that the clods under the earth shall be reckoned sweet unto him. And oh, how well pleased would he be if he might for ever lie hidden there, and never rise up again to come to judgment! And as it is with one wicked man departed, so it is with all ether, whether they died before, or shall die after (Caten. Graec.).

Ver. 34. **How then comfort ye me in vain]** Since ye apply nothing rightly to me, nor affirm nothing rightly of me, but, instead of comforting me, which you came for, ye trouble me. And such are all those *consolatiunculae, creaturulae* (as Luther finely phraseth it),

petty creature comforts, waterish and empty businesses; an unsubstantial substance, as one saith of the bulrush.

Seeing in your answers remaineth falsehood?] Or prevarication, or double dealing; foul mistakes, and little less than malice.

Chapter 22

Ver. 1. **Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said]** Abruptly, without any preface, he sets upon Job (as doth likewise Bildad, **#Job 25**), acting the part of a spiteful caviller rather than of an ingenuous accuser; reckoning and ranking just Job among the wicked, not covertly, as before, but overtly and expressly; and then thinking to salve all by an exhortation to repentance, backed with a fair promise of a full restoration. *Pulcherrima parsenesis, sed quid ad Iobum?* saith Brentius, A very good exhortation, but ill applied. We shall do well to take notice what a dangerous thing it is to give way to unruly passions, which, like heavy bodies down steep hills, once in motion, move themselves, and know no ground but the bottom.

Ver. 2. **Can a man be profitable unto God]** No, neither doth Job say he can, but the contrary, **#Job 21:22**. Howbeit the God of glory, as he is called, **#Ac 7:2**, although his glory is as himself, infinite and eternal, and, therefore, not capable of our addition or detraction (the sun would shine though all the world were blind), yet, to try how we prize his glory, and what we will do for him, he hath declared that he accounteth himself made glorious by us when we get so far as to conceive of him above all creatures.

As he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?] Or, But he that is wise, &c. See **#Pr 9:12**, which Solomon seemeth to have taken hence. Natural reason taught Plautus to bring in a countryman animating his son cheerfully to follow his business thus, Thou ploughest, harrowest, sowest, and reapest for thyself; to thee shall this labour bring in joy. The word here rendered wise sometimes signifieth prosperous, *quod prudentibus omnia feliciter cedant*, because prudent persons do usually prosper. *Prudentiam felicitas fere sequitur*, **#Isa 52:13**.

Ver. 3. **Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?]** *Num volupe est Omnipotenti?* &c. Is anything added to his joy? Or needeth he thy manners and virtues to the making up of

his perfection? Nothing less, surely. True it is, that he soliciteth suitors, #Joh 4:23, and is well pleased with our performances, #Ps 51:6. But it is for our sakes, and to our benefit, and not his own. Like as the sun, when he casteth abroad his beams in the world, seemeth to receive light from some other creatures, whereas in truth they all receive light from him, and not he from them; so it is here: and as the same sun draws up vapours from the earth, not for itself, but to render them again to the earth, to moisten and fatten it; so God, the true Sun of our souls, draweth from us our sighs and services, not for his own profit, but to rain them down again upon us in so many blessings.

Ver. 4. **Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?**] Doth he plague and punish thee thus, for fear that in time thou mayest grow so overly good, that he cannot reward thee, or so overly great, that he cannot command thee? No such matter. Others read it thus: Would he reprove thee for thy religion? *Vox timoris sire religionis active sumitur, &c.* (Merlin), Would he come into judgment with thee? *q.d.* Surely God would not deal thus harshly with thee if thou didst truly fear him; but thou art a wicked wretch, as #Job 22:5. Either God punisheth thee for thy piety or thy sinfulness. Not for the former, doubtless (for piety is profitable to all things, &c.), therefore for the latter. This is Eliphaz's argument here. But Austin makes answer (besides what Job doth in the two following chapters), Tract. in Joan. 124, God chastiseth his best children sometimes for his own glory, as #Joh 9:3, sometimes for their good; as, namely, for prevention, probation, purgation, preparation, either to the performance of some special service or to the receipt of some special blessing, &c., *Vel ad demonstrationem debitae miseriae, vel ad emendationem labilis vitae, vel ad exercitationem necessariae patientiae.*

Will he enter with thee into judgment?] This seemeth to be the same in sense with the former hemistich; {The half or section of a line of verse, as divided by the caesura or the like; also, a line of less than the usual length. spec. Such a half-line or line in Old English verse.} and then it shows Eliphaz's confidence, though he were in an error.

Ver. 5. **Is not thy wickedness great?**] Why, no; God of his grace had kept Job innocent of the great transgression, #Ps 19:13, and that wicked one had not touched him, #1Jo 5:18, *sc.* with a deadly touch, *Tactu qualitativo* (Cajetan); had not thrust his sting into him, or

transformed him into sin's image. Had Eliphaz ever found Job to be such a one as here he maketh him? Or doth he not, by these interrogatories, cunningly come over him (in kindness, as we say), to make him confess it? Had all been true that is alleged, Job's wickedness must needs have been great, and his iniquity infinite. But to be accused is not enough to render a man guilty; for then who should be innocent? *Novit sapiens se ad hoc scamma productum, ut depugnet cum iis qui maledictis aluntur, ut venems capreae.* Cato was thirty-two times accused, and as often absolved.

And thine iniquities infinite?] Heb. There is no end of thine iniquities; and hence it is that thy miseries are so many and so long lasting; *commeruisti tanta tuis sceleribus.* The wicked indeed are eternally tormented: 1. Because, being worthless, they cannot satisfy God's justice in any time; 2. Because they have an infinite desire for sinning against God. But neither of these could be truly affirmed in Job. That so grave a man as Eliphaz (whom the Jewish doctors account a prophet) should fall so foul upon his innocent friend, and taking occasion by his great afflictions only, conjecture and conclude him so heinous an offender, cannot possibly be excused, *Coniectura duntaxat, non rei veritate nititur.*

Ver. 6. **For thou hast taken a pledge, &c.]** *Bona verba, quaeso,* I seek good words, Eliphaz. How well might Job have cried out, as David afterwards did, **#Ps 35:11**, "False witnesses rose up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not." Here he stands accused, 1. Of inhumanity and cruelty; 2. Of irreligion and impiety. But he fully clearth himself of both, **#Job 30:1-31:40** Athanasius in like sort was falsely accused of adultery in the Council of Tyre, A. D. 343; Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, was injuriously deprived for the same cause, about the latter end of Constantine the Great; adultery, heresy, and treason were objected to Archbishop Cranmer; parricide to Mr Philpot; sedition to father Latimer; to which he answereth, As for sedition, for aught that I know, methinks I should not need Christ, if I might so say.

For nought] Or unconscionably, as one rendereth it; and herein lay the fault. See **#De 24:6,10.**

And stripped the naked of their clothing] If naked, how could he strip them, skin them, as the word signifieth? Chrysostom useth this proverb, *Nudus nec a centum viris spoliatur*; He that is naked cannot be stripped by a hundred men. We also have a proverb, Where nothing can be had the king must lose his right. And again,

He is like to get little

Who robbeth a spital.

In the late German wars, the Crabats, at Altroff, a university, plundered the scholars, and put poor genus and species to their ransom (Life of the King of Sweden). Micah inveigheth against such cannibal princes, as plucked the skin from the flesh, and the flesh from the bones of the poor oppressed, **#Mic 3:2,3**. {See Trapp on "Mic 3:2"} {see Trapp on "Mic 3:3"} That which Eliphaz here chargeth Job with, but without truth, is, that he stripped off the clothing of the naked; that is, that, finding them poor enough, he left them yet poorer, hardly having a rag to hang on their backs, through his extortion.

Ver. 7. **Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink]** But hast slain him with thirst, when thou mightest have saved him with a cup of cold water. *Qui non, cum potest, servat, occidit*: Who when able did not serve, and died. Not to do good (when it is in the power of a man's hand) is to do evil; and not to save a life is to destroy it, **#Mr 3:4**. Not robbing only, but not relieving the beggar, was the rich man's ruin, **#Lu 16:24**, who, for a cup of cold water, duly given, might have had heaven, **#Mt 10:42**. But what meant Eliphaz to charge innocent and munificent Job with such a cruelty? 1. The man was angry; and,

Impedit ira animum ne possit cernere verum (Horat.).

Anger hinders the soul so that it is not able to know the truth. 2. He seems not directly to charge him with these crimes, but to urge him to consider and confess, that he could not be but a grievous sinner who was so great a sufferer. Surely God would never handle thee so hardly unless thou wert deeply guilty of these or the like enormities, *Necesse est, ut fatearis te aut hoc, aut illud, aut omnia commisisse, &c.* (Junius).

Thou hast withholden bread from the hungry] Bread thou hadst enough and to spare; but, like a greedy-gut Pamplagus, thou wouldst part with none, though it were to save the life, not of thine enemy (which yet thou shouldest have done, #Pr 25:21; Elisha feasted his persecutors, #2Ki 6:22,23; Isaac his wrong doers, #Ge 26:30,31, by a noble revenge), but of thy fellow friend and brother by race, place, and grace. Thou hast hidden thine eyes from thine own flesh, when thou shouldest have dealt thy bread to the hungry, #Isa 58:7; yea, drawn out thy soul (and not thy sheaf only), *famelico* to the hunger starved, and satisfied the afflicted soul, #Job 22:10.

Ver. 8. **But as for the mighty man, he had the earth]** Heb. But as for the man of arm, he had the land. This the Vulgate applieth to Job; as if by his power he had wrought all others out, and seated himself alone in the land; suffering none to dwell by him but those that he could not overly match. Others by the mighty man understand the strong and wealthy, who are said to be gracious with Job, sharing with him in his possessions, and partaking of his privileges, when the poor were slighted and could not have justice, much less mercy, *Pauperes non dignaris pane: at potentibus possessiones tuas offers, &c.* (Vatab.). Here then Eliphaz accuseth Job of pride and partiality.

And the honourable man dwelt in it] Heb. Eminent, or accepted for countenance; that is, he who came commended by his wealth, friends, great alliances, honours, &c., was in great request with Job, and might easily carry any cause with him. *Haec sunt peccata gravissima, quae non reputant homines,* saith Vatablus, These are very great sins, though men little think of it.

Ver. 9. **Thou hast sent widows away empty]** A widow is a calamitous name: #2Sa 14:5, "I am indeed a widow woman, and my husband is dead." As a tree whose root is uncovered thriveth not, so it fareth with a widow. R. Jona observeth, That in Hebrew she hath her name from dumbness, *quod marito mortuo respondere non possit adversariis, et se adversus eos tueri,* because now that her husband is dead, she cannot answer her adversaries, or defend herself against them. *Vidua desolata et derelieta nihil est humiliatius: et proinde peculiariter viduarum iudex et vindex est Deus* (Bain. in #Pr 15:25). God, therefore, hath taken them and their orphans into his tuition, owning them as his clients, and

commanding all men to be good to them. These, if Job had indeed sent away empty, not only not relieving their necessities, but ravishing their estates, adding the misery of poverty to that of their condition, he had surely subjected himself to the fierce wrath of God, their patron, by a specialty.

And the arms of the fatherless have been broken] *Immanis iniuria, si ita res haberet, sed calumnia erat,* saith Mercer. This had been a crying crime if it could have been proven against Job; but he was not the man. Some from these words conclude him a judge; others a king. Doubtless he was a potent person, and by his greatness could have borne out his foulest outrages, breaking through the lattice of the laws, as the larger flies do through a spider's web. *Sed alia de se infra profitebitur;* saith Mercer here; but Job shall clear himself in the following chapters; where we shall find him described and characterised to have been the oracle of wisdom, the guardian of justice, the refuge of innocence, the comet of the guilty, the patron of peace, and pattern of piety, to magistrates especially, in the wise managing of all public affairs, both of judgment and mercy.

Ver. 10. **Therefore snares are round about thee]** *Flagitium et flagellum sunt sicut acus et filum,* Sin and punishment are tied together with chains of adamant. Eliphaz having with more earnestness than truth set forth Job's sins, now discourseth about his snares. Four punishments he assureth him of, and every one worse than the other. 1. He shall be ensnared; 2. Frightened; 3. Benighted; 4. Overwhelmed, if repentance step not in and take up the matter, as **#Job 22:22**. And it is as if he should say, Seek not after any other cause of thy calamities than thy before mentioned wickedness; neither seek any other way to get off than by confessing and forsaking them, that thou mayest have mercy.

And sudden fear troubleth thee] Fear is a troublesome passion; and sudden evils are very terrible, because they expectorate a man's abilities, and render him helpless, shiftless, comfortless. See this in Saul, who, surprised with sudden horror at his destiny read him by the devil, fell straightway all along on the earth like an ox, and was sore afraid, and there was no strength in him, **#1Sa 28:20**. Job also

had his fears, but then he had his cordials too, that kept him from falling under them.

Ver. 11. **Or darkness, that thou canst not see]** *Sunt tenebrae supplicia, et damnatorum desperationes,* saith Brentius here. By darkness are meant punishments, temporal and eternal. Others understand the text of blindness and confusion of mind, that can neither see the cause of trouble nor find an issue.

And abundance of waters cover thee] So that although thou shouldest escape, the snares, outlive the fears, run away in the dark, yet how wilt thou avoid the deluge of destruction, the overflowing scourge that carrieth all before it?

Ver. 12. **Is not God in the height of heaven?]** Some add out of the next verse these words, Sayest thou; making Job's atheistic speeches (here mimetically fathered upon him by Eliphaz) an argument of his great wickedness; as if Job should say, and so discover himself ("for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," #Mt 12:34) to be of Protagoras's opinion, who doubted Deity, *De Diis, utrum sint non ausim affirmare* (Prot.); or of Diagoras's, who flatly denied it; or, at least, of Aristotle's, who pent up God in heaven, and taught that he took little or no care of things done on earth. But what saith the psalmist (and Job was of the same mind whatever the Jewish doctors affirm of him to the contrary)? "Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased" in heaven and in earth. "The Lord is high above all nations; and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust," &c., #Ps 115:3 113:4-7. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth to show himself strong," &c., #2Ch 16:9. His wrath "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," #Ro 1:18. Job had frequently acknowledged and celebrated the power and providence of God, his judgments upon the wicked, his fatherly chastisements upon himself; deeply detesting all such thoughts and speeches as he is here wrongfully made the author of.

And behold the height of the stars] Heb. The head of the stars; those that are the very highest, and at the top of the visible heaven, the eighth heaven, beyond which some of the ancients

acknowledged not any other. Aristotle saith, That beyond the aspect and movement in the heavens, there is neither body, nor time, nor place, nor vacuum. But the Scripture teacheth us that there is beyond the stars, how high set soever, a third heaven, a heaven of heavens, the throne of God, and habitation of the blessed; the starry sky is but as the brick wall encompassing this lofty palace, the glorious and glittering rough cast thereof.

How high they are!] *Ut vix eo noster possit aspectus pertingere*, so high that our eyes can hardly reach them (Mercer). It is a wonder that we can look up to so admirable a height, and that the very eye is not tired in the way. Now God is far, far above the stars, *omnium supremus, altissimorum altissimus*. "The high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity," #Isa 57:15, dwelleth in light inaccessible, #1Ti 6:16, such as whereof no natural knowledge can be had, nor any help by human arts, geometry, optics, &c. How, then, can he see from such a distance what is here done on earth? saith the atheist; who thinks to hide himself from God, because he hath hidden God from himself. *Propterea quod tantum Chaos sit inter nos et Deum* (Vat.). Hear him else in the next verse. See also #Eze 8:12 9:9.

Ver. 13. **And thou sayest, How doth God know?]** A brutish question, #Ps 94:7,8, and never of Job's making. There are a sort of such miscreants as believe nothing but what they see with their bodily eyes; and indeed, for a finite creature to believe the infinite attributes of God, he is not able to do it thoroughly, without supernatural grace; which therefore must be begged of God, #Jas 1:5, that he would give us "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of our understanding being enlightened," &c., #Eph 1:17,18. For want whereof, the wicked, blinded with sin, ask such senseless and blasphemous questions as this in the text, and those like this, #Ps 10:11 Zep 1:12; {See Trapp on "Ps 10:11"} {See Trapp on "Zep 1:12"} It is a ridiculous thing, saith Pliny, to think that the highest Majesty taketh care of human affairs; a service, doubtless, far below him, and unworthy of his greatness.

Can he judge through the dark cloud?] Can he discern through such a dark medium? Men cannot see God; and therefore some fools are apt to think that neither can he see them, *Sicut pueri vultum obvelant, putantes sese tum non conspici* (Lavati.). But that Job was

far from any such thought, see #**Job 21:16,22**. To blame therefore was Eliphaz to charge him with such a wickedness; and all because he had said that in this life bad men oft prosper and better men suffer; which yet is *verum tanquam ex tripode*, very true, and not at all derogatory to the Divine providence.

Ver. 14. **Thick clouds are a covering to him]** He lieth close hid among the clouds, and seeth nothing. But be the clouds never so thick, Christ's eyes are a flaming fire, #**Re 1:14**. And the school of nature teacheth, that the fiery eye needeth no outward light, but seeth *extra mittendo*, by sending out a ray, &c. He will freely blot out the sins of his people as a cloud, and their transgressions as a thick cloud, #**Isa 44:22 43:25**; but the clouds cannot hinder him from sight of their sins; for he is all eye, ολοφθαλμος, and darkness and light are both alike to him, #**Ps 139:12**. A cloud may come between the body of the sun and us, and the whole hemisphere may be masked and overcast, as we call it, but nothing can keep God from eyeing and ordering all things.

And he walketh in the circuit of heaven] Where it seemeth thou thinkest he only manageth matters and beareth rule, and not below. So indeed the Peripatetics thought, and taught. Agreeably whereunto Lysippus made Alexander's picture looking up to heaven, with this posy,

Iuppiter, asserni terram mihi, tu assere caelum.

With which picture Alexander was so delighted that he proclaimed that none should take his picture but Lysippus, Plin. l. 6, c. 16.

Augustus also heard with delight,

Divisum imperium cum Iove Caesar habet (Virgil. Vita).

Caesar has with Jupiter divided the empire. And the Great Turk, vexed at his great loss in the last assault of Scodra, most horribly blasphemed against God, saying, That it were enough for him to have care of heavenly things, and not to cross him in his worldly actions. The atheist here taketh it for granted that God hath enough

to do to walk from place to place in heaven (as princes do in their progress), and to order those heavenly bodies how they shall affect these lower bodies, by their light, heat, and influence, &c. Fain they would confine him to that circuit or circle (the heavens are supposed to be spherical and circular), that he might meddle no further. Fain they would persuade themselves and others that God hath cast off the care of earthly business, and committed all to fate and fortune; that many might live far more comfortably if they were less conscientious; that it nothing concerneth God, whether men do or not do this or that, &c. Such dust heaps as these may be easily found in every corner; for all places are full of them, and so is hell too. As for Job, the counsel of these wicked ones was far from him, #**Job 21:16**, he was the worse to think of them, whatever Eliphaz (by mistake of his meaning, at the least) thought of him.

Ver. 15. **Hast thou, marked the old way]** Heb. The way of old. Broughton rendereth it, the way of the old world; of those ungodly ones before the flood. Hereby it appeareth, say our learned annotators, that Job lived before the deliverance out of Egypt, because he mentioneth the creation and the flood, but not the deliverance; which, had he known, it would have afforded him an excellent argument to prove that godly men might be in great affliction, as the Israelites were in Egypt; and his friends a plausible argument that God useth to destroy wicked men for their sin, as he did the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

Which wicked men have trodden?] Heb. Mortals of iniquity or vanity. *Viri nequam et nequaquam, vel nihili*, Men of wickedness with a witness. The face of the old world was grown so foul, that God was fain to wash it with a flood. All was out of order in family, State, and Church. In the family was found luxury and unlawful marriages. In the State tyranny, violence, rapacity, and injustice. In the Church contempt of God's word, and a fond opinion that God did not order all by his providence, but that a man might do well enough without him. Now that this was the opinion of those antediluvian Belialists, some have gathered from this text, which they read thus, Wilt thou follow the old way; that is, the tenet of those old sinners against their own souls, whom God, for their damnable security and licentiousness (the products of such a

portentous opinion), buried all together in one universal grave of waters?

Ver. 16. **Which were cut down out of time**] Or, Which grew full of wrinkles (as those that have long lain in the water are apt to do), and not time; that is, before that time of life that they had promised themselves on earth; or before they had fulfilled the days of their forefathers, who, though wicked above measure many of them, yet the flood could not come till Methuselah (the last alive of the ten patriarchs) were laid up. God cuts off some notoriously wicked sometimes, *Intempeata morte abrepti* (Jun.), when in the course of nature they might have lived longer, that they may do no more hurt, as the gardener destroyeth young henbane, and the countryman young vermins.

Whose foundation was overflown with a flood] Heb. A river was poured upon their foundation. This some understand of that river of brimstone and fire poured from heaven upon Sodom and her sisters; but better take it of those in Noah's days, whose foundation (that is, the earth, that foundation of mankind; or their wealth and prosperity, whereon they thought themselves firmly founded, or their lives, &c.), were overflown with a flood; which came rushing in upon them with mighty force, and drowned the universe. And here the Hebrews make to be the middle of this book of Job, wherein they reckon in all one thousand and seventy verses.

Ver. 17. **Which said unto God, Depart from us**] Atheists those antediluvians were; if not dogmatic, yet practical, such as Job had described, speaking the like language of hell, **#Job 21:14**. *Et malitiose eum Eliphazus talium atheorum numero accenset*, saith Mercer: And maliciously doth Eliphaz reckon Job among those odious atheists, so thinking to cut his throat with his own sword, and confute him with his own words. Malice cares not how truly things are set forth, so it may gall or kill.

And what can the Almighty do for them?] That is, they asked, What can the Almighty do for them? As if God neither could nor would reward their services; as if he would do them neither good nor evil. The Seventy render it, $\tau\iota\ \epsilon\pi\alpha\zeta\epsilon\tau\alpha\ \eta\mu\iota\nu$, What will he bring upon us? *q.d.* He threateneth us with a flood, but when, where, and how? Let the day of the Lord come! **#Isa 5:19**. "Where is the

promise of his coming?" &c., #2Pe 3:4. Thus they jeered when it was fitter they should have feared: but what was the issue?

Ver. 18. **Yet he filled their houses with good things]** Heb. With good; that is, with all precious and pleasant riches, whereof he gave them both plenty and propriety, but no otherwise than as Joseph caused his cup to be conveyed into Benjamin's sack, the better to furnish out an indictment against him. And as Benjamin's pretended theft was held more heinous, by how much his welcome was the greater, for he had a five fold portion; so shall it one day fare with such rich wretches, as whose bellies God filleth with his hidden treasure, and whose houses he filleth top-full with good things.

— *Eutrapelus cuicumque nocere volebat.
Vestimenta dabat pretiosa* -(Horat.)

Well might Eliphaz add, all things reckoned.

But (or yet) the counsel of the wicked is (or be) far from me] See these words expounded #Job 20:16, where Job hath the very same. *Sed ea vult illi eripere Eliphaz,* saith a learned interpreter. But Eliphaz will needs take them away from him, and it is as if he should say, Thou, O Job, seemest by thy words and with thy mouth to detest the counsel of the wicked; but thy doings declare the contrary, while thou so many ways celebrate the prosperity of the ungodly. To me, therefore, and to all righteous men, who do heartily hate the wicked, and do seriously set forth God's just judgments against them, doth this speech better agree and more truly appertain, &c. And as for these righteous men, let me tell thee further,

Ver. 19. **The righteous see it, and are glad]** And as or myself, the counsel of the wicked is far from me: I do therefore abominate their present prosperity, because they shall shortly be for a laughing stock to all good men; the upright shall see it and be glad, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth, as self condemned, and therefore by the saints (swallowed up with a zeal of God's glory) rightly derided, #Ps 52:9 58:11.

And the innocent laugh them to scorn] Not out of ill will, or envy, or other corrupt affection; but, 1. For the glory of God, whose power, justice, and goodness is hereby evinced and evidenced. 2.

For the good of others, who stumble at the prosperity of the ungodly, or else are eased of their cruelty. 3. Add hereunto, that it is never the worse for the wicked themselves that God taketh them off. For if they be elect, they repent ere they die; as if reprobates, they are kept hereby from adding to their sin and so to their torments, which shall be proportioned thereunto. Those who understand this verse of Noah and his sons, rejoicing when they saw the rest drowned and themselves preserved, render the words thus, The righteous saw it and were glad, and the innocent laughed them to scorn. A late reverend man of God among us, in a discourse of his about the benefit of a good conscience in times of common calamity, brings in Noah and those with him in the ark, insulting over the perishing old world thus (Mr Jeremy Dyke, p. 1 83):

“Now, Jubal, let us hear one of your merry songs; pipe now, and make yourself merry, as you were wont in jibing at Noah’s folly in making a ship to sail on dry land. What ailest thou, Jubal, to howl and wring thine hands thus? Where is thy harp and organs now? Now the flood is come, now Noah is in his cabin, and the water begins to be chin deep, tell me, O Jubal, whether building of tents or building of an ark be the wiser work? Would you not give all the shoes in your shop, all the tools in your tents, all the cattle in your flocks, to be but where Noah’s dog lies? And now, sirs, you that were such men of renown, #Ge 6:4, you that were the brave gallants of the earth, now tell me who is the fool and who is the wise man now.”

Piscator takes the next verse, "Whereas" (or, though) "our substance is not cut down, but" (or yet) "the remnant of them the fire consumeth," to be spoken in the person of Noah, whom he makes the innocent man here mentioned; and adds, saying in the beginning of the next verse: as if Noah coining out of the ark should wash his feet in the blood of those wicked; and say, God hath preserved me and mine (our sincerity hath prevailed for our safety), and in his wrath destroyed the ungodly. But I rather concur with Tremellius, and Merlin, and others, who make this verse coherent with, and preparatory to, the following famous exhortation to repentance, #Job 22:21-23, &c. Acquaint thyself now with him, and be at peace, &c. But be sure thou do it now, that is, speedily and timously.

Ver. 20. **Whereas our substance is not cut down]** That is, while life lasteth, and while it is called today; before death cometh: and after death, judgment; when the remnant of the wicked fire shall consume. Where we have a forcible motive to repent, because we must either turn or burn, *Aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*. See **#Ac 17:31 2Co 5:10,11 Heb 12:28,29**. Eliphaz seemeth here on purpose to have mentioned that fire wherewith wicked men shall be tormented at the last day (and before, for every man's death day is his doomsday), and to have changed the person.

The remnant (or excellence) of them the fire consumeth] That it might the more effectually move men to repent, that they might be delivered from the wrath to come. And here I could willingly take up Chrysostom's wish, *Utinam ubique de Gehenna dissereretur!* Oh that men would talk more everywhere of hell fire unquenchable, intolerable, and the fuel thereof made of the most tormenting temper, **#Isa 30:33**. It was a speech of Gregory Nyssen, He that does but hear of hell is, without any further labour or study, taken off from sin filled pleasures, and set upon the practice of mortification. But men's hearts are grown harder today, and he that shall observe their impiety and impenitence may well say to them, as Cato once did to Caesar, *Credo quae de inferis dicuntur falsa existimas*, I believe thou thinkest all but a fable that is said concerning hell (Juven. Sat. 2.).

Esse aliquos Manes, &c.

Nec pueri credunt nisi qui nondum aere lavantur.

Ver. 21. **Acquaint now thyself with him]** *Accommoda te nunc illi, assuesce cum illo*. Converse with God in a humble familiarity; set him at the right hand, **#Ps 16:8**, be ever at his hand, *ut famulus seu accensus*, as attendant upon his person. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and let him direct thy paths, **#Pr 3:6**. Ask counsel at his mouth, aim at his glory, be thou in his fear all the day long, **#Pr 23:17**. Account it thine happiness to be in communion with him, and conformity to him in all parts and points of duty. The Lord is with you if you be with him, **#2Ch 15:3**.

And be at peace] Return to him by repentance from whom thou hast so deeply revolted, and against whom thou hast so shamefully

rebelled. For Eliphaz here takes it for granted that Job had estranged himself from God; and therefore could not possibly be at peace till better acquainted with him, and acquiescing in him, as the Vulgate here hath it. *Acquiesce ei*. No creature is more fearful than a fish, fleeing at the shadow of a man; yet it feareth not the roaring ocean (which yet lions and other fierce creatures fear), because it is of its own nature and acquaintance. A sheep feareth not his shepherd; nor shall we God, if once acquainted with him. Peace shall be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy tabernacles.

Thereby good shall come unto thee] Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee, **#Ps 128:2**. A cornucopia, a confluence of all manner of comforts and contentments, shall betide thee; but then thou must humble thyself to walk with thy God, **#Mic 6:8**. By faith walk with God, and by reflection walk with thyself, *Compone et emenda vias tuas coram Domino*, and then thou needest not say, with the worldling, "Who will show us any good?" **#Ps 4:6**; for God himself will say to thee, as once he did to Moses, when he gave him but a glimpse of himself and his glory, *Ostendam tibi omne bonum*, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee," **#Ex 33:19**.

Ver. 22. **Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth]** Now he speaks Job fair whom before he had sufficiently ripped up, and roughly hewen without mercy, or so much as truth. That which he here persuadeth him to is to depend upon God for direction and success in all his enterprises; to consult with him upon all occasions, and not to do aught without his warranty and approbation. God's testimonies were David's delight and his counsellors, **#Ps 119:24**. All that advise not with these must needs be without understanding, a nation void of counsel, **#De 32:28**.

And lay up his words in thine heart] Heb. Put his word, as the tables were put in the ark; mingle God's word with faith in thine heart, as in a vessel. *Cor autem sit carneum fide*, the flinty heart is made fleshy by faith, and capable of divine impressions.

Ver. 23. **If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up]** By sin men run from God, by repentance they return to him. Break off thy sins by repentance, and put away iniquity far from thy tabernacle (for iniquity and repentance cannot cohabit, and he is no true penitentiary that reformeth not his family, that setteth not up God

wherever he hath to do), so shalt thou be built up; that is, thou shalt be restored, and all thy losses in wealth and children shall be made up again; *prorsus erigeris qui iam collapsus es*; thou, who art now down on all fours, shalt be new set up, and made to stand in thy former strength. Only thou must return *usque ad Omnipotentem*, all out as far as to the Almighty, thou must not give the half turn only, as hypocrites do, but with thy whole heart; and as **#Joe 2:12**. *{See Trapp on "Joe 2:12"}*; Thus Eliphaz discourseth very well and handsomely of the business in hand; only he was out in this, that he looked upon Job as an impenitent person, and upon his family as ill ordered. As, also, in that he conceived that true repentance is ever rewarded with outward and inward prosperity; whereas a penitent person may continue under crosses, though God will surely save the humble, as he saith afterwards, **#Job 22:29**, and repentance can turn crosses into comforts; and, like the philosopher's stone, make golden afflictions, **#1Pe 1:7**. As scarlet pulls out the teeth of a serpent, so this takes away the sting of a judgment. As wine draweth a nourishing virtue from the flesh of vipers, &c.

Ver. 24. **Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust]** Which is as much as to say, saith one, Thou shalt make pavements of gold. See **#2Ch 1:15 Ps 68:30**. Then shalt thou have thy desire; for thou shalt be rich with content, which is worth a million, as another paraphraseth it. Beza rendereth it thus: Cast thy gold on the ground (even that worldly wealth, whereto thou hast been wholly addicted), and let the gold of Ophir be unto thee as the pebble stones of the brooks (make no more account of it than of those small stones), and let the Almighty be thy tower, let him be unto thee as plenty of silver. The Spaniards are said to have found in the mines of America more gold than earth. Perhaps Eliphaz here promiseth Job, that upon his return to God his land should have many rich veins of gold. And so Senault paraphraseth this text thus, Then shall you acquit yourself of all your losses, and you shall recover with usury what was taken from you; for, for barren lands, which could bring forth nothing, you shall have such as in their entrails shall produce porphyry; and instead of those unprofitable rocks which made a part of your estate, you shall have fertile mines, from whence shall issue rivers of gold. Agreeable whereunto is that exposition of Brentius, *Reponetur pro pulvere aurum, pro vili preciosure, pro fluviis arenam trahentibus torrentes aureis lapillis impleti*, Thou shalt have for dust gold, for vile things

those that are precious, for sandy rivers golden torrents. A hyperbolic expression.

And the gold of Ophir] Where the best gold grew. Possibly the same with Peru, the letters only transposed. Ophir, #Ge 10:29, was one of the sons of Joktan, who came from Shem, from whom, saith Josephus, a country in India, abounding with gold, had its name. *Hinc aurum obrizum dictum, quasi Ophirizum.* Ophir is here put for the gold of Ophir; for the word gold is not in the original.

Ver. 25. **Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence]** Or, thy gold, for the same word signifieth both, #Job 36:19, because gold is the worldly man's defence, #Pr 18:11, though but a sorry one, #Zep 1:18 Pr 11:4 Eze 7:19. It is as if he should say, Either thou shalt have gold gods plenty; or else, thou shalt have that which is better than gold, viz. God the maker and master of all the world, saith Junius, who rendereth the text thus, And the Almighty shall be thy choicest gold, and silver, and strength to thee. He shall be all that heart can wish or need require. A friend of Cyrus, in Xenophon, being asked where his treasure was? answered, οπου Κυρος φιλος, Where Cyrus is my friend. Let us answer, οπου Κυριος φιλος, Where God is my friend. When David had said, "The Lord is my portion," he subjoined in the next verse, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage," #Ps 16:5,6. When God had said to Abraham, I am thy shield, he easily slighted the king of Sodom's rich offers.

And thou shalt have plenty of silver] Heb. Silver of strengths or of heights; that is, as the Vulgate interpreteth it, *argentum coacervabitur tibi*, thou shalt have high heaps of silver, store of money. Godliness hath the promise of both lives; and if godly men are not always rich men, it is that godliness may be admired for itself. And they must know, that what they lack in temporals shall be made up in spirituals, according to that which followeth.

Ver. 26. **For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty]** As in thine only portion. Thou shalt enjoy him, which is the peak of human happiness; solace thyself in the fruition of him, taste and see how good the Lord is, and thereupon love him dearly, #Ps 18:1; not only with a love of desire, as #Ps 42:1,2, but of complacence, as #Ps 73:25,26, affecting not only a union, but a unity, with him; and

conversing with him, as we may, in the mean while, in a fruitful and cheerful use of his holy ordinances.

And shall lift up thy face unto God] Wrapping thyself in Christ's righteousness, thou shalt draw nigh to God with a humble boldness in duty, and not doubt but he will draw nigh to thee in mercy. It is said of Luther, that he prayed with so great reverence, as unto God; and yet with so great confidence, as to his friend (Melch. Ad. in Vita).

Ver. 27. **Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee]** Yea, though thou multiply prayers, *Multiplicabis verba tua* (Mer.), and intercessions for thyself and others (as the word signifieth, and as afterwards Job did for Eliphaz and his fellows, or else it had gone worse with them), yet he shall hear thee in all. Thou shalt, as his favourite, have the royalty of his ear, and he shall say unto thee seriously, as Zedekiah did once to his courtiers soothingly, The king can deny you nothing. *Iste vir potuit apud Deum quod voluit*, said one concerning Luther, That man could have of God whatsoever he wanted. This David took (as well he might) for a singular mercy, **#Ps 13:6 66:20.**

And thou shalt pay thy vows] *i.e.* Thou shalt return thy thanks, and so shalt drive a holy trade, as it were, between heaven and earth. *Nulla tibi a Duo nisi gratias agendi occasio dabifur.* Thou shalt have unmiscarrying returns of thy suits; so that thou must be ready with thy praises after their prayers; for that is all thou shalt have to do. "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed. O thou that hearest prayers, unto thee shall all flesh come," with their thanks in their hands as it were, **#Ps 65:1,2.**

Ver. 28. **Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee]** God will be better to thee than thy prayers; and prosper all thy counsels, effect thy designs. The ungodly are not so, as is to be seen in those revolted Israelites, **#Jud 2:1-3**, in King Saul, and in our King John. Or if they have their designs, it is for a further mischief to them. As, if the godly be crossed, it is in mercy; like as the story is told of our Queen Isabel, that being to repass from Zealand into England with an army, they had all been utterly cast away had she come unto the port intended, being there expected by her enemies. But Providence, against her will, brought her to another

place, where she safely landed. The like is reported of Bishop Jewel, that being sought for by the Popish persecutors, he had been caught, but that, going to London, he lost his way (Mr Clark in his Life, p. 262).

And the light shall shine upon thy ways] That is to say, God will inspire thee with good counsel and direction in all thine affairs (Diod.), and turn thine ill-counsels into good unto thee (as the heathens thought Minerva did to her Athenians, and as the Romans fancied of their goddess Vibilia, that she set them in their right way when they were wandering), or will shine over them with his blessing, contrary to thy complaint, **#Job 19:8.**

Ver. 29. **When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up]** And that by the force of thy faith, the nature whereof is to gather one contrary out of another (as life out of death, assurance of deliverance out of deepest distresses, **#De 32:36**), and to believe God upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible. Because they are humbled, thou shalt say, Exaltation: and saving of him that boweth his eyes down; whereof some make this to be the sense: Job, attaining to such a blessed change, shall be able out of his own experience to comfort others in misery, who likewise humble themselves. Junius rendereth it and the following verse thus: When men shall have cast down any one, and thou shalt think of his lifting up; then will God save the low of eyes, or him that is low in his own eyes: he will deliver that guilty person, and he shall be delivered by the purity of thy hands; that is, saith he, So great shall his love be to thee, and his blessing upon thee, that for thy sake he shall show mercy to others, though they be none of the best, according to the promise made to Abraham, **#Ge 12:3 18:24.** And hence Job's intercession is joined with that of Noah and Daniel, **#Eze 14:14.**

And he shall save the humble person] Heb. Him that is low of eyes, as was Job at this time; and the publican, **#Lu 18:13.** "A high look and a proud heart" go together, **#Ps 101:5.** And as God resisteth such, **#Jas 4:4 1Pe 5:5,** so he giveth grace to the humble; and not grace only, but glory too, as here; safety here, and salvation hereafter.

Ver. 30. **He shall deliver the island of the innocent]** Or, He shall deliver the not innocent; him that is not guiltless; and even such shall be delivered for the purity of thine hands. Thus God gave Zoar to Lot, and all the souls in the ship to Paul, and the guilty Israelites to Moses. See **#Jer 5:1**. Or, The innocent shall deliver the island; or, *Liberabitur vita innocentis*, the innocent shall be freed from affliction: so Brentius.

And it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands] *i.e.* Of thy works, or by thy pure hands lifted up in prayer. *Semen sanctum statumen terrae*, the saints bear up the state, **#Isa 6:13**, they uphold the pillars of the earth by their piety and prayers; and therefore when God is unchangeably resolved to ruin a people he silenceth his saints, as **#Jer 7:16**, or removeth them out of the world, as he did Methuselah the year before the flood. And as one sinner may destroy much good, **#Ec 9:18**; so one praying saint may save an island, a whole country; it is delivered by the pureness of thy hands. It may be the work sticks at thee; why then is not thy shoulder at the wheel when the cart is stalled?

Chapter 23

Ver. 1. **Then Job answered and said]** viz. In defence of his own integrity, against Eliphaz's calumnies in the foregoing chapter. To make apology to every one that shall traduce us, Plato holdeth to be both base and bootless, Πασιν απολογεισθαι θεραπευτικον (Plat.). But when such a weighty man as Eliphaz shall lay load upon so innocent a man as Job, *Quis tulerit?* something would be said in way of answer.

Ver. 2. **Even today is my complaint bitter]** *q.d.* After all mine endeavour to satisfy you, I am still misinterpreted, and accounted by you, my friends, no better than a malcontent and a murmurer against God; albeit my laments do no way equal my torments. True it is that Eliphaz had given him excellent counsel, **#Job 22:21,22**, &c., but it was to flatter him into the same error that he himself held; viz. that bodily and temporal sufferings are a sure sign of a notorious hypocrite. Hence Job never taketh notice of it in this reply; but begins his apology pathetically and abruptly; and soon falls into an appeal to God, the righteous Judge, who well knew (though his

friends would take no notice of it) that he complained not without cause; but the contrary.

My stroke is heavier than my groaning] Most men's groaning is greater than their strokes or sufferings. *Invalidum omne natura querulum est* (Senec.). Some are ever whining and growling; their lips, like rusty hinges, move not without murmuring and mutining, yea, they not only creak, but break, as rotten boughs do, if but a little weight be hung upon them; or as some men's flesh, which if never so little razed with a pin, it presently rankleth and festereth. Job was none of these; if he groaned, as he did (and will they deny him that ease of his dolour? *Expletur lachrymis egeriturque dolor*. Ovid), there was very great cause for it, since his pressures were greater than could be expressed by any sighs or words.

Ver. 3. **Oh that I knew where I might find him!**] That is, God, so oft in his mind and mouth, that his acquaintance might easily know whom he meant. *Aph-Hu*, even he, **#2Ki 2:4**, as held by some to be one of God's attributes (Weems). And Μα του, without mention of Δα, was an ordinary oath in Plato's mouth, as Suidas recordeth.

That I might come even to his seat!] His tribunal prepared for him. *Venirem usque ad stationem eius* (Mercer). Great is the confidence of a good conscience. See **#Ge 20:5 1Pe 3:21**. But yet *haec certe omnia audacius dicuntur a misero homuncione*, this was too bold a speech for a mortal creature, as God himself (who gave him his wish) will afterwards tell him, **#Job 38:2 40:2**, and contrary to that which he had before resolved on, **#Job 9:3**. See the like failing in David, **#Ps 39:1,3 2Sa 6:8,9**. In these examples of so good men we may see how natural it is to us in affliction to rise up against God, as the horse that casteth his rider, and riseth up against him. *Hoc a pietate alienum est, quod adversus Deum praefractius, et contumeliosius loquatur quam humilitas fidei ferat* (Brent.). This the poets shadowed out in their fiction of the giants conspiring to pull Jove out of heaven. That which may be said in favour of Job herein, is, 1. That **#Job 23:6**, he professeth to plead with God in God's strength. 2. That being accused by his friends of such foul offences, he had no other way of clearing himself than by appealing unto God whose most just judgment he acknowledged. 3. That he dared not have spoken thus boldly, but in confidence of his mercy. 4. That he

would have his controversy with his friends (and not his whole life) to be exactly examined and judged by God.

Ver. 4. **I would order my cause before him]** I would not stick to approach to his tribunal, there to plead my cause (not against him, as being the supreme Judge, and not either plaintiff or defendant, but) against your false and wrongful accusations, which undoubtedly I would disprove and confute by many forcible and strong arguments (Beza).

And fill my mouth with arguments] Heb. Redargutions (ελεγχος,) increpations, reprehensions. A good orator will first rightly lay down his cause, state the question, as we call it. 2. Confirm it with reasons. 3. Observe what is said to the contrary, and confute it. Job would do all this if he might have audience; but if to God all this, Job was much mistaken. And so at another time, when in a better mind, he could say, "Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge. If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me," &c., **#Job 9:1 5,20.**

Ver. 5. **I would know the words that he would answer me]** *q.d.* I cannot know your minds, O my friends, nor understand your words, which yet I believe are little to the purpose; but God (I know) will utter his mind plainly, and approve my cause, which you so rashly condemn. Thus John Huss and other martyrs, when they could not have a fair hearing from men, appealed and applied themselves to God, committing their cause to him who judgeth righteously.

Ver. 6. **Will he plead against me with his great power?]** No; for then you were in a woe-case. For if God's breath blow us to destruction, as so many dust heaps, **#Job 4:9**, if he frown us to death, and nod us to destruction, **#Ps 80:16**, what shall we think of his Almighty power, which none can abide or avoid? *Dittleile est contra eum scribere, qui potest proseribere.* It is dangerous dealing with him who hath at his command thirty legions, saith the philosopher to the emperor, who would needs crack an argument with him. And should Job dare to do it with the Lord of hosts, as if stronger than he? The thunder of his power, who can bear? The stoutest men quake before him; and as the worms, when it thundereth, wriggle into the corners of the earth, ready to run, as Caligula did, under any bed or any bench hole.

No; but he would put strength in me] *Sic enim ex fidei πληροφορία persuasus*, saith Merlin. Thus was Job persuaded, out of the full assurance of his faith, that God would deal with him as a loving Father, and not as a severe Judge: for who can stand before his wrath, or withstand his will? No man surely can contend with God unless he put strength in him, as he did into Jacob, **#Ge 32:24**, whom he upheld with the one hand, as he strove against him with the other. This foregoing wish, therefore, of Job hath an excellent commendation in it of his faith and integrity, yet so as that in some things it is blameworthy. For who can come to God's seat, since he dwelleth in light unapproachable? neither can any one see God and live, **#Ex 34:5-8**. For this boldness, therefore, of his he shall be hereafter sharply reprov'd; first by Elihu, and then also by God himself, stepping forth as it were from behind the hangings, overhearing him, and saying, Who is this that talks thus? how now? **#Job 38:2,3**.

Ver. 7. **There the righteous might dispute with him]** There for then; *sc.* when God shall put strength into him; the upright or honest man (who draweth near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus Christ, **#Heb 10:22**) might dispute with God, but not unless he have that advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just one, to appear in the presence of God for him, **#Heb 9:24**, as the lawyer appeareth for his client, to put by and non suit all accusations, to plead his cause, and to justify him by the only merit of his righteousness and obedience. All St Paul's care was to be found in Christ when sought for by the justice of God; not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, **#Php 3:9**; for *sordet in conspectu iudicis, quod fulget in conspectu operantis* (Aug.), "that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God," **#Lu 16:15**. They only may dispute with God, that is, in a humble and laudable manner plead with him, as did Jacob, **#Ge 32:24**, and Jeremiah, **#Jer 12:1**, who partake of Christ's righteousness imputed and imparted; opposing to the appearances of God's wrath the firm persuasion of his grace, by the seal of his Spirit, *Et O quam hoc non est omnium!* This is few men's happiness.

So should I be delivered for ever from my judge] Who would quit me by proclamation; and then I should the less care to be condemned by you, my fellow prisoners. I care not for man's day, since he that judgeth me is the Lord, **#1Co 4:3,4**; where note what boldness and confidence the upright have in God; neither shall they be herein deceived, as Job was not.

Ver. 8. **Behold, I go forward]** Heb. Eastward, which is reckoned the forepart of the world; because that eye of the world, the sun, riseth there; and every man looketh to the rising sun.

But he is not there] *sc.* In that sort, as I desired to find him, **#Job 23:3**, he is not visible to me; he is too subtile for sinew or sight to seize upon; his judgments also are unsearchable, and his paths past finding out. True it is, that the whole world is nothing else but *Deus explicatus*, God expounded, a mirror or theatre wherein God may be seen; yea, felt and found out by those who are blind, **#Ac 17:27**. If a man hear a sermon by night, and in the dark, though he see not the preacher, yet he knows he is there. So Job questioned not God's omnipresence; but complaineth that himself was benighted, and forsaken of his hopes to be eased of his troubles, outwardly in body, or inwardly in mind; this is the judgment of the flesh, when under affliction.

And backward, but I cannot perceive him] For indeed he is imperceptible by bodily eyes, neither sitteth he anywhere in this world to decide controversies, as he shall do in the clouds at the last day, when the righteous shall look up, for their redemption draweth nigh, **#Lu 21:28**, and the wicked shall look on and wail because of him, *οψονται κωπονται*, **#Re 1:7**, they shall look and lament, yea, be mad for the sight of their eyes which they shall see, as **#De 28:34**.

Ver. 9. **On the left hand, where he doth work]** *i.e.* Northward; where God is said to work; either because that in the north part of heaven are more signs, and of more remarkable influence, than in the south; or else because the northern parts of the world are more inhabited than the southern, because more temperate; and so there is more of God to be seen there in his works, as letters refracted in a glass. *Seculum est speculum, quo Deum intueamur.*

But I cannot behold him] *{See Trapp on "Job 23:8"}*

He hideth himself on the right hand, &c.] He worketh not so much in the southern parts of the world; the torrid zone is uninhabitable, &c. Yet the Ethiopian judges were wont to keep the chief seat for him empty when they sat in judgment. And besides, the Habassines, that large region of Nubia, had from the apostles' time, as it is thought, professed the Christian faith though now it hath again, over one hundred years since, forsaken it, and embraced Mahometanism and idolatry (Alvarez).

That I cannot see him] *{See Trapp on "Job 23:8"}*

Ver. 10. **But he knoweth the way that I take]** Heb. That is with me. He perfectly understandeth that there is no way of wickedness in me, **#Ps 139:24**, no sin that I do favour, allow, and wallow in; but that the way that is called Holy is my delight and endeavour; that I am upright for the main, that my heart is not turned back, neither have my steps declined from his way, **#Ps 44:18**. I cannot see him, but he seeth me, and mine uprightness.

When he hath tried me] *sc.* With favour, and not with rigour (for then who should abide it? **#Ps 143:2**). God promiseth to refine his people, but not as silver, **#Isa 48:10**, that is, not exactly, lest they should be consumed in that fiery trial. This David knew, and therefore prayed, "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me, try my reins and my heart," **#Ps 26:2 139:23**.

I shall come forth as gold] Which is purged in the fire, shines in the water; as on the other side, clay is scorched in the fire, dissolved in the water.

Ver. 11. **My foot hath held his steps]** I have followed God step by step, walking as I had him for an example, and pressing his footsteps. This Job speaketh of himself, not as vaunting, but as vindicating and defending his own innocence; and as giving Eliphaz to know, that he had already done, and still continued to do, as he had in the former chapter exhorted him, **#Job 22:21,22**. Acquaint now thyself with God, &c. That is not now to do, saith Job; for my foot hath held his steps. Be at peace. I am so, saith he, for his way have I kept and not declined. Now, can two walk together, and they not be agreed? Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth. What

else have I done, saith Job, when as I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips? Lay up his words in thine heart. This I have done *ex instituto*, saith he; *vel prae demenso*, more than my necessary food, have I esteemed the words of his mouth. So exact a pattern of the rule was Job; so consonant to Eliphaz's good counsel. Plain things will join in every point one with another; not so round and rugged things: so do plain spirits close with holy counsels: not so such as are proud and unmortified. Let these be touched never so gently, nettle like, they will sting you. Deal with them roughly and roundly, they swagger, as that Hebrew did with Moses, saying, Who made thee a man of authority? &c., #Ex 2:14. Good Job was of another spirit with God, as it is said of Caleb, #Nu 14:24, and followed him fully; *ornavit doctrinam coelestem piis officiis*, adorned the heavenly doctrine with his pious office, heavenly doctrine was as the mould, and he as the metal, which takes impression from it in one part as well as another. His constant endeavour was to express God to the world, and to preach forth his virtues or praises by a suitable practice, #1Pe 2:9. *Gressum eius retinuit pes meus*.

His way have I kept, and not declined] *sc.* In excess or defect, and therefore I am no such flagitious person as thou, Eliphaz, wouldst make of me.

Ver. 12. **Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips]** *i.e.* *Ab ipsissimo Dei verbo*, from the very word of God, that sure *cynosura*, which he that holdeth straitly to may truly say, Lord, if I be deceived, thou and thy word hath deceived me. But of that there is no danger, since the Scripture is the invariable canon or rule of truth, saith Irenaeus, the cubit of the sanctuary, the touchstone of error, the divine beam, and most exact balance, as Austin and Chrysostom style it, *Κανων της αληθειας ακλινης*, yea, the very heart and soul of God, as Gregory. And if Job lived before the word was written, yet not before the law of nature and the traditions of the patriarchs; which while they remained uncorrupted, were the commandment also of God's lips, as having been received from his very mouth; and might far better be called *ipsissimum Dei verbum* the very word of God itself, than the pope's *pronunciata*, which Cardinal Hosius profanely and blasphemously pronounceth to be the very word of God.

I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food] I have preferred Heb. I have hid, or laid up, as men do precious things, as housekeepers do provision for their family them before my bodily food, my daily bread; and we see what pains men take, what shift they make, *Ut bene sit ventri, ut lateri*, for food and raiment, and other things requisite to the preservation of this present life. Now Job knew that God's holy word is ψυχης τροφη, as Athanasius calleth it, the soul's nourishment; and that the promises are *pabulum fidei*, the food of faith, as another calleth them; that we may better lack bread than that bread of life. Hence he esteemed it more, not only than his dainties or superfluities, but than his substantial food, without which he could not live and subsist; more than his appointed portion (so some render it) set out for him by the Divine providence, which cutteth out to every man his allowance. I would rather be without meat, drink, light, anything, everything, saith one, than that sweet text, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," &c. (Selneccer). I would not for all the world, saith another, than that one verse, **#Joh 17:24** ("Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world"), had been left out of the Bible (Mr Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, p. 24). And again, There is more worth (saith the same author) in those four chapters, **#Joh 14:1-17:26**, than in all the books in the world besides. Luther said, He would not live in Paradise without the Word; as with the Word it were no hard matter to live even in hell itself (Tom. 4, Oper. Lat. p. 424). Of old they were wont to say, It were better for the Church that the sun should not shine than that Chrysostom should not preach to the people. The Jews in this day will not omit prayers for their food or labour. They divide the day, even the working day, in three parts, the first *ad Tephilla*, for prayer; the second *ad Torn*, for the reading of God's law; and the third *ad Malacca*, for the works of their calling (Weemsc.). And when they have read one section they begin another, lest they should seem to be weary of their task. Whereas if we read but a chapter (not a quarter so long as one of their sections or paragraphs), Oh what a weariness is it! neither begin we till we have looked over the leaf to see how long it is; so soon sated are we with this heavenly manna.

Ver. 13. **But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?]** He is ever like himself, not mutable, inconstant, or various, as men who are (as Tertullian saith of the peacock) all in changeable colours, as often changed as moved. God's name is, "I am," #Ex 3:14. And if Pilate could say, What I have written I have written, nothing shall be altered; how much more may the Lord, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever! His decrees are immutable, his power irresistible. Some think that Job complaineth here of God's absolute power, and little less than tyrannical, exercised against him, an innocent person. If so, Job was surely much to blame, sith God's absolute power is never sundered from his justice; and it must be taken for an undoubted truth that his judgments are sometimes secret, but always just.

And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth] *Id est, Cupit ac facit statim; eius voluntas est executio;* that is, he desireth and doth it forthwith; his will is present execution. It is his pleasure to lay load of afflictions upon me, but wherefore it is I know not. But Job should have known that as God is a most free agent, so his will is not only *recta*, (right) but *regula*; (the law) neither may any man here presume to reprehend what he cannot comprehend.

Ver. 14. **For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me]** He hath performed all my necessities; so Vatablus rendereth it. It is the word that was used for appointed or necessary food, #Job 23:12. *Voluntas Dei, necessitas rei,* God hath decreed thus to deal with me, and therein I must rest satisfied.

And many such things are with me] I know not but that there may be many more sufferings yet decreed to come upon me in his secret counsel. *Fiat voluntas Domini.* Godly people, though they know not many times what the Lord will do and how he will deal with them; yet they always know that he is a merciful Father to them, and will order all for the best. This should content them, and keep them from chatting against God; and from nourishing hard conceits of him, or heavy conceits of themselves, as if wicked because afflicted.

Ver. 15. **Therefore am I troubled at his presence]** At the consideration of his formidable power and majesty, I am troubled and terrified; troubled at my present calamities, and afraid of fiercer. This verse then seemeth to be a correction of that wish of his above,

#Job 23:3, and not unlike that, **#Job 13:21**, "Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid. Then call thou, and I will answer," &c.

When I consider, I am afraid of him] I have always imagined that, as it were weakness to fear a man, so it were madness not to be afraid of God. Let me be accounted timorous rather than temerarious.

Ver. 16. **For God maketh my heart soft]** Methinks I feel it fall asunder in my bosom like drops of water, and dissolved with manifold afflictions, so that I am hardly able to bear up any longer; I am almost done, as we use to speak, and my heart faileth me. How should it do otherwise when God withdraweth from his own the supplies of his Spirit, **#Php 1:19**, that Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind, **#2Ti 1:7 Ac 20:22**, saith that great apostle, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit up to Jerusalem," &c. Whereupon Dr Preston gives this good note, The Spirit hemmeth us about, comprehendeth and keepeth us. When a man's own strength would fall loose, this supernatural strength stayeth and strengtheneth it. Hence that of David, **#Ps 138:3**, "In the day when I cried unto thee thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." So **#Ps 27:14**, "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart," which else will melt (as did the hearts of the men of Jericho, **#Jos 2:11**), like metal melted with fire, or like ice thawed into water and spilt upon the ground, which cannot be taken up again. And this is the soft heart Job here complaineth of. God had dispirited him, and

The Almighty troubleth me] *sc.* With the thoughts of his Almightyness; see **#Ps 39:11**; and with so many miseries growing upon him, *Tot malis ingruentibus* (Jun.). Now it is not amiss for God's people thus to be melted and troubled otherwise; for by this means shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin, **#Isa 37:9-14**.

Ver. 17. **Because I was not cut off before the darkness]** *i.e.* The afflictions that now are upon me. It is a mercy to some to die sometimes, as Josiah, and those righteous ones, **#Isa 57:1**, who were taken away from the evil to come. When God's glory was to pass by,

he put Moses into the hole of the rock; so he sometimes doth his servants, till the glory of his justice hath passed upon others.

Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face] *i.e.* He hath neither prevented my troubles by death, as I wished he would have done, **#Job 3:3,11-13**, nor yet will he put an end to them by the same means; for, *Mors aerumnarum requies* (Chaucer's motto), Death is a rest from trouble. To the tossed soul it is as Mount Ararat was to Noah, where the ark rested; as Michel was to David, a means to shift him out of the way, when Saul sent to slay him; or as the fall of the house was to Samson, an end of all his sorrows and servitude.

Chapter 24

Ver. 1. **Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty]** Heb. Why are not times hidden from the Almighty? *q.d.* Who could think any otherwise, that had not been at the sanctuary, **#Ps 73:17**, and there heard, Woe to the wicked! it shall go ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be (sooner or later) given unto him? **#Isa 3:11**. The Jewish doctors conclude, but falsely, from this text, that Job denied the Divine providence. And the Vulgate Latin, to solve the matter and save Job from the imputation of epicurism, takes the boldness to leave out the interrogative why, and rendereth it thus, The times are not hidden from the Almighty; lest, by making it a question, Job should affirm that times and events are hidden from God, or at least should wish and desire that they were so. Vatablus thinketh that Job here putteth on the person of one that denieth God's providence, or at least doubteth it; as if he should say, Ye, my friends, say that nothing is hidden from God, and I now demand of you how the times, and those things which are done in time, can be otherwise than hid from him, when as we see wicked men so to take their swing in sin, and yet, for aught we see, to escape unpunished? It should seem, by his winking at wicked practices, that he takes no care how things are carried in this present world; as certainly he would do were he *diligens mundi oeconomus, aut rerum humanarum conscius* (Brent.). This indeed might stagger a David or a Jeremiah in a passion, as **#Ps 73:2-17 Jer 12:1**, and make a Diagoras or an Averroes turn atheist; but Job was better instructed in this point, as appeareth by many passages in this Book. See **#Job**

21:16,22. Neither can any such thing be concluded from this text, if we take in the latter part of the verse.

Do they that know him not see his days?] The whole verse should be read thus, Why are not times hidden from the Almighty, seeing that they that know him do not see his days? that is, since his most knowing servants could never observe the times and the seasons (of punishing graceless persons here) which he hath put in his own power, **#Ac 1:7.** Abraham indeed (by special favour) was told that Sodom should be suddenly destroyed. And Moses could say, Wrath is gone out from the Lord, take a censer, &c., **#Nu 16:46.** As any one is more faithful and familiar with God, so much better and earlier doth he discern his judgments on the wicked, and is affected therewith. See **#Hab 3:16.** *{See Trapp on "Hab 3:16"}* But there is no certain rule given us by what punishment to conclude a man wicked; neither can we safely say at what time or what manner and measure God will punish the ungodly in this present life. That of Austin is very right. Some wicked God punisheth here, lest his providence, and but some, lest his patience and promise of judgment, should be called into question.

Ver. 2. **Some remove the landmarks]** Here he instanceth in all sorts of wicked persons, with their *seculi laetitia, impunita nequitia*; they go pointblank against God's commandments; they please not him, and are contrary to all men; and yet who but they, so long as it will last? Some remove (or touch) the landmarks, which the very heathens held to be sacred, and not once to be touched. Numa, king of the Romans, made a law, that if any hid or removed a landmark he should be slain, by the next that met him, as a sacriligious person, or public pest, *Inter ethnicos Terminus numinis loco habitus est.* God's law curseth such an offender, **#De 27:15-26,** and the civil laws pass sentence of death upon him. The Chaldee paraphrast and old Rabbis understand this and the following offences, of the old world, full of rapacity and impiety. But are there not the like and worse evils found also among us, upon whom the ends of the world are come, in these last and worst times, as Bernard fitly yoketh them? In his *ultimis et pessimis temporibus.* Read the catalogue and compare. Reckon, also, that you then read or hear this chapter aright, when, applying each passage to yourselves, you learn to wash your hands in innocence, or at least in tears for these abominations; as

also, if ye be not offended at the prosperity of those who fall into all or but some of these wickednesses, since the time is at hand when account must be given of all things done in the body, whether good or evil.

They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof] Though they eat that on earth which they shall digest in hell. Or, and feed them; viz. openly and impudently, with as much insolence as injustice; and as if they had got them by right, and not by rapine and robbery. Lavater upon the text maketh mention of a certain Helvetian tyrant, who violently took away the oxen from the plough of an honest countryman, and told him that it was fit that clowns should draw the plough themselves, without the help of oxen.

Ver. 3. **They drive away the ass of the fatherless]** The only ass of orphans, those helpless, shiftless creatures, so merciless are these *abigei*, which is no small aggravation of their injustice. {see #2Sa 12:3} For all sins are not equal, as the Stoics once held, but lighter or heavier according to their circumstances. To rob the rich is a great offence, but to pillage the poor is far greater.

They take the widow's ox for a pledge] Without which she cannot plough; or, her cow, as some render it, without which she and her children cannot live. A poor body's livelihood is his life (as that poor widow's was $\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \beta\iota\omicron\nu$, #Mr 12:44, and the like is said of the *haemorrhoisse*, #Lu 8:43), crush this snail in his shell, and you kill him. Now therefore albeit it be not unlawful to take a pledge for security in some cases; yet courtesy must be used, and mercy must be shown to orphans, widows, strangers, and such like, because they are God's clients, and he hath taken them into his special care and tuition.

Ver. 4. **They turn the needy out of the way]** Either to make room for themselves, as the only men. Stand back, say the Sodomites to Lot, #Ge 19:9. Stand further off, say those in Isaiah. See #Pr 30:14 Am 8:4. Or else, because when these spoilers are abroad, they beset the ways, and no travellers, be they never so poor and needy, can pass freely by them (Beza); insomuch that they are constrained to leave the broad beaten way, and everywhere to seek out by ways and unknown passages, to escape their hands.

And the poor of the earth hide themselves together] Lest after their cattle driven away, as before, themselves, *ut mancipia nexa*, as slaves linked together (Junius), should be taken and carried away by them to such base offices, as are mentioned in the next verses. Tyrants are looked upon as so many comets or tempests. Atilas styleth himself, *Dei flagellum, et orbis vastitatem*, The scourge in God's hand, and the world's waste good; he arrogantly said, that the stars fell before him, the earth shook under him, and that he would make the inhabitants thereof wriggle into corners, as worms do into their holes when once it thundereth. We know who they were (even those worthies of whom the world was not worthy) who, hunted as partridges by their cruel persecutors, and driven out from house and home, wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, **#Heb 11:38**, where they found the wild beasts were more mild and merciful to them than those hard hearted tyrants.

Ver. 5. **Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work]** These barbarous and brutish oppressors, skilful to destroy, do live in this world as the wild ass doth in the wilderness, roving and rambling up and down for booty, *Onagri inter feras sunt effertissimi, neque unquam mansuescunt* (Merc.), whereunto early in the morning they prepare and harness themselves, as if this were their trade and occupation whereby they must needs get their living. *Hic labor, hoc opus, vel artificium eorum est*, saith Lavater. As "man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening," **#Ps 104:23**, so do these greedy cormorants, these evening wolves (as Micah calleth them), these spoilers "that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds: when the morning is light they practise it, because it is in the power of their hands. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away," &c., **#Mic 2:1,2**. Job had suffered much by the Arabian spoilers, those wild asses, who continue their old trade to this day, catching and snatching, *vivitur ex raptis*; neither can they be repelled or restrained by reason of their multitudes and their incredible swiftness (Fabric. in descrip. peregr. Hierosol.).

The wilderness yieldeth food, &c.] Their pillage is their tillage, their rapine their revenue, whereby they maintain themselves and theirs; as the wild ass picks out a living in the desert. But shall they thus escape by iniquity? Have they no other ways to work? no better

mediums? Never think it. "In thine anger cast down the people, O God," #Ps 56:7. He will do it; for the words are prophetic as well as optative. "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing," #Pr 10:2. Mammon of iniquity is the next odious name to the devil; and to the devil it will bring a man, #1Ti 6:9. English Hubertus, a covetous oppressor, is said to have made this will: I yield my goods to the king, my body to the grave, my soul to the devil. Pope Sylvester II is said to have given his soul to the devil for seven years' enjoyment of the popedom.

And for their children] We have a profane and false proverb, Happy is that child whose father goeth to the devil. O faithful drudge! said a graceless son once of such a father, who died and left him great store of ill gotten goods.

Ver. 6. **They reap every one his corn in the field]** The poor oppressed are made by them to harvest their crops, and tread their vintages in the end of the year (*sero colligunt*), as the Hebrew importeth, without either food or wages, or so much as a cup to drink, as the eleventh verse sets forth; which is extreme cruelty, and flatly forbidden, #De 24:14,15, and order taken that the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn should not be muzzled, #De 25:4. *Quantum igitur iudicium*, saith Brentius, How great judgments of God then will light upon those who do that to men of the same flesh, of the same faith, of the same country, with themselves, which they ought not to do to the brute creatures they make use of! *Quod malum in Germania frequentissimum est; Vae igitur Germaniae:* This, saith he, is a common sin in Germany; woe, therefore, to Germany. Think the same of England, and take notice that this is one of those crying sins that entereth into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, #Jas 5:4, and he will hear, for he is gracious, #Ex 22:27. The words are otherwise sensed by some; but this to me seemeth most suitable to the subsequent verses.

Ver. 7. **They cause the naked to lodge without clothing]** viz. By denying and detaining from them what they have earned, wherewith they should provide them garments, which are so called, quasi gardments: because they serve to guard men's bodies from the injury of the weather. They cause them to lodge naked, because they have no clothing, so some read the text; they lay them open to the pinching cold of the night. And what a misery it is to lie cold and

wet, and not to have wherewith to keep us warm and dry, in winter season especially, who knows not? *Hic disce Deo gratus esse*, saith Lavater. Here then learn thankfulness to God, thou that hast not only a warm and wholesome lodging room, but also good store of bedclothes; and those of the better sort too. Abuse not these blessings to pride and luxury, lest God turn in upon the spoilers and plunderers, who may leave thee little enough; leave thee *nudum tanquam ex mari*, as they did many in these late shredding and stripping times, #Eze 25:4. God threateneth to send the men of the East to dwell (as so many Lord Danes) in their palaces, and to eat their milk, &c. When the children play with their meat, and cast it to the dogs, what can the father do less than bid take away?

Ver. 8. **They are wet with the showers of the mountains]** Wet they are, but not at all refreshed, as this word (here only found in the Bible) signifieth sometimes among the Rabbis. Cold comfort they find abroad; and at home they dare not abide, lest rich men should oppress them and draw them before the judgment seats, #Jas 2:6, or drag them to prison for refusing their drudgery. Hence they are forced to live in the mountains and desert places, in extreme misery.

And embrace the rock for want of a shelter] Like conies or wild beasts, glad of any lurking place that may keep them out of the hands of unreasonable and wicked men. What hardship have many worthy men in all ages suffered from persecutors and oppressors (in Dioclesian's days especially), driven out of house and harbour, and glad to take up in any hole, there to lie on the cold stone instead of a warm bed (as that good duchess of Suffolk, with that noble gentleman her husband, did in the Low Countries, whither they fled from the Marian persecution), till, as Elijah once under the juniper, they wish themselves out of the world? *Iterum hic disce gratias Deo agere*, saith Lavater. Here again learn to give thanks to God for this great benefit, if thou mayest stay at home, and not be forced to flee for thy life, or for conscience' sake; for home is home, as we say, and very desirable; and the apostle reckons it for a piece of his sufferings that he was ἀνεστιος, and had no settled station, no certain dwelling place, ἀστατουμεν, #1Co 4:11.

Ver. 9. **They pluck the fatherless from the breast]** What can be more to be pitied than a fatherless suckling? Who less to be molested or violenced than the mother doing that office to her babe?

In the Parisian Massacre one of the murderers took a little one in his arms, who smiled upon him and played with his beard; yet this barbarous wretch was so far from compassion, that he wounded it with his dagger, and so cast it all gore blood into the river (Acts and Mon.). The story of the infant of the isle of Guernsey, thrown back into the fire, out of which it had sprawled, is well known. So is the savage inhumanity of that merciless Minerius, the pope's champion, who at Merindola, in France, cut off the paps of many which gave suck to their children; which, looking for suck at their mother's breasts, being dead before, died also for hunger. Well, therefore, might our Saviour say, "Beware of men," #Mt 10:17. It had been better the Indies had been given to the devils of hell, said those poor natives, than to those bloody Spaniards, who dashed the mothers in pieces upon their children, as once at Betharbel, #Ho 10:14.

And take a pledge from the poor] Misery, which should beget pity in them, begetteth but audacity, and inviteth them to ruin the poor, and fill their houses with their spoils. Some render it thus, They take the poor for a pledge; *sc.* putting them to their ransom, and meanwhile enslaving them.

Ver. 10. **They cause him to go naked without clothing]** Naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to their shame and danger, as #Isa 20:4. So dealt the Popish bishops with the poor Protestant Albigenses, at the rendition of Carcasson, in France; they let them have their lives upon the condition that both men and women should go thence stark naked; those parts that cannot well be named being laid open to the view of those pope-holy cruciates (Rivet. Jesuit).

And they take away the sheaf from the hungry] Or, the handful; that little that they had leazed; snatching the ears of corn out of their hands, and condemning them, thus denuded and despoiled, to a death which is so much the more cruel as it is tedious and languishing. Some read it thus, And those that carried their sheaves they made to go away hungry; either not feeding or not paying their harvest labourers and other servants. It is noted in history as a cruelty in the Athenians, that they put an engine about their servants' necks called *παστικοπη*, and it reached down to their hands, that they might not so much as lick of the meal when they were sifting it.

Ver. 11. **Which make oil within their walls, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Job 24:6"}
{See Trapp on "Job 24:10"}

Ver. 12. **Men groan from out of the city]** viz. Under the pressures of their oppressors. Thus did Jerusalem, that faithful city, when once become a harlot; it was full of judgment, righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers, #**Isa 1:21**. The like did the city of Rome, when, under the government of Marius set up against Sulla, she cried out that the remedy was worse than the disease; and under Pompey, *Calamitas nostra magnus est*; Our calamity is great, and under the Caesars, that the names of their good emperors might all be set down in the compass of a signet ring; and again under the popes, that for many years together she had not had the happiness to be ruled by any but reprobates; *Heu, heu, Domine Deus*, saith Fasciculus *temporum*, bitterly bewailing Rome's misery under her turbulent tyrants, Hildebrand, Urban II (whom Cardinal Benno worthily calleth Turban), Boniface VIII, and many other such like monsters. Of most great cities it may be said, as of that strange vineyard in Palestine, #**Isa 5:7**, God "looked for judgment, but behold oppression" (Heb. a scab); "for righteousness, but behold a cry."

And the soul of the wounded (of the deadly wounded) crieth out]
Anima confessorum voci feratur; sc. For grief; and in prayer to God for ease.

Yet God layeth not folly to them] *Deus non ponit prohibitionem*, so one of the Rabbis renereth it. God putteth not a stop to the proceedings, he punisheth not those tyrants who do oppress whole cities, making their lust a law, and overbearing all right with their *Volumus et iubemus*; we will and we judge, nothing at all moved with the groans of the oppressed city, or with the outcries of the wounded. Word for word it is, *Deus non interponit insulsum quid*, God interposeth not anything senseless or unsavoury; that is, he suffereth not any cross meanwhile to befall them; yea, he so carrieth the matter as if he favoured them; yea, approved and prospered their crafty and cruel practices: for they live happy, obtain victories, are magnified among men, they flatter themselves in their own eyes, until their iniquity be found to be hateful, #**Ps 36:2**. Meanwhile, *felix scelus virtus vocatur*, as the orator speaketh, their prosperous

villany is called virtue (Cicero, de Divin. lib. 2); and if any man mutter against them, yea, if he cry them not up, he is looked upon as a traitor, as Thraseas, that noble Roman, was by Nero (Dio in Ner.).

Ver. 13. **They are of those that rebel against the light**] Against the common light of the sun, say some, which they are ready to curse (as the Atlantes, a people of Ethiopia, are said to do), and could wish extinct, that they might sin unseen (Herodot.). Others more fitly understand it of the light of nature and Scripture; against which wicked atheists rise up and rebel; as malcontents and mutineers do against lawful authority. In the poor blind Ethiopians it is to be seen that some few principles and notions of good and evil, right and wrong, truth and falsehood, are yet to be found in corrupt nature; like as when cities and great buildings are overthrown by war, some towers, some pinnacles, survive the violence. Now some desperate sinners against their own souls take the boldness to tear out these principles, that might any way disturb their course in sin; and to take an order with their natural consciences, clapping up those prophets from God, close prisoners, **#Ro 1:18**, till at length all that little light is lost, that rush candle quite extinct. When wine is poured out of a cup the sides are yet moist. But when it is rinsed and wiped, then remaineth not the least taste. Even so that glimmering of divine light left in the natural man is so defaced by obstinace in sin, that not the least spark thereof remaineth. These bats have flown so long against that light, that at length they have put it out. And whereas to those that live under the ordinances there is another light risen, viz. that of God's word and works, graceless wretches shut their windows, lest this light should come in upon them, as the Pharisees did, **#Joh 3:18**. They hate it because their deeds are evil, saith our Saviour; they spurn and scorn at it, saith Solomon, **#Pr 1:7**.; they are willingly ignorant, saith Peter; they wink wilfully, saith Austin, martyr; *Ut liberius peccent, libenter ignorant*, saith Bernard, they rebel against the light, as Balaam did when he set his face toward the wilderness, and would needs curse howsoever. Or as Pharaoh, who sat not down under the miracle Moses wrought, but sent for the magicians. How many are there in this day, who, after conviction, get the bit between their teeth, like unruly horses, and run away!

They know not the ways thereof] A carnal heart is not willing to know what it should do, lest it should do what it would not do. Of

such Bernard saith, that they seek straws to put out their own eyes with, *Festucam quaerunt ut oculos eruant*. If they seek after God's ways, it is but as a coward seeketh after his enemy, with a hope he shall not find him. So he is loth to find, and fears to know, therefore be searcheth no further than will serve his turn, and the little light he hath he putteth not under a bushel, but under a dunghill. Woe be to these rebels, these *solifugae* that refuse, or abuse, gospel light! Turks and Pagans shall have an easier judgment. It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, saith Peter, than after they have known it, &c., #2Pe 2:21. *Gravis est lux conscientiae*, Serious is the light of conscience, saith Seneca; but *gravior est lux Evangelii*, more serious is the light of the gospel, say we; if this light be hated by any, it is merely because it stands in the light of their wicked ways, as the angel did in Balaam's way to his sin.

Nor abide in the paths thereof] They have no stability nor settledness in well doing. They follow not on to know, #Ho 6:3, but soon give over the pursuit and practice of holiness; not caring to "add to faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge," &c., #2Pe 1:5.

Ver. 14. **The murderer rising with the light]** Sometimes, while it is yet darkish; for here Job showeth how those that do evil hate the light, and take the fittest opportunities for a dispatch of the deeds of darkness, daily digging descents down to hell, and hastening thereto, as if they feared it would be full before they came thither. They spend, therefore, the whole day in wicked pranks and practices, *prout videtur commodum*, as shall seem best for their purposes, *interdiu latrones, nocte fures agunt*. By day they do what mischief they may in woods and deserts; at night they return into the city, and there play the thieves, hoping to do it unobserved. Thus every such one may better say than that ancient did, *Totum tempus perdidit, quia perdite vixit*, I have lost all my time, by spending it loosely and basely (Bernard). I have been too faithful a drudge to the devil, whom Christ calleth a murderer, #Joh 8:44, and Tertullian calleth *Furem veritatis*, a thief of the truth. Two notable thieves of Naples (whereof one was called *Paternoster*, and the other *Ave Maria*) had murdered a hundred and sixteen different people, at different times and in various places (Rain. de Idol. Rom. praefat.). These were worthily put to a cruel death by the magistrate; who possibly might,

by his connivance and slackness in doing his office, be himself guilty of some of those murders; since, to restrain justice is to support sin, and not to correct is to consent to the crime. Hemingius maketh mention of a felon, who was indicted from seven murders; while the judge was studying what grievous punishment should be inflicted upon such a bloody villain, an advocate steps to the bar, and pleading for him, proved, That the judge was guilty of six of the murders; for the felon was not put to death for the first offence.

Killeth the poor and needy] Without authority (such as magistrates have to kill malefactors, and soldiers in a lawful battle to kill their enemies. *Sum Talbotti pro occidere inimicos meos*; I am Talbot's for to kill my enemies, this blunt boisterous sentence was written upon the renowned L. Talbot's sword, while he warred in France), and without any present necessity for his own lawful defence, as **#Ex 2:22**, when he must either kill or be killed; provided that he endeavour first to save himself by flight, if possibly he can (Speed.). For that tenet of Soto, a Popish casuist, is the most false, That it is lawful for a man in his own defence to kill another, because it is a shame to flee, *Quia fuga est ignominiosa*. And that also of Navarrus, that for a box on the ear it is not unlawful to kill another, for the recovering of his honour, *Ad honorem recuperandum*.

And in the night is as a thief] That is, is a very thief; for this as is *magis expressivum veritatis*, as Mercer speaketh, he would not seem to be, but yet is an arrant thief, ending the day with theft which he began with murder. How these two sins go commonly coupled, see **#Ho 4:2 Isa 13:16**.

Ver. 15. **The eye also of the adulterer waiteth]** Observeth, expecteth, and longeth till it cometh. *Ut videas illum non peccare infirmitate sed malitin*, saith Vatablus. This showeth that he sinneth not of infirmity, but of forethought, malice, and wickedness; which he plotteth and plougheth, as the Scripture phraseth it, purveying for the flesh, **#Ro 13:14**, putrefying alive, under a tabes of impure lusts, and daily perishing therein, as Tiberius, at Capreae, by his own confession, *Quotidie perire me sentio* (Suet.). This beast was not ashamed of his detestable filthiness; as being a most impure and impudent defiler of other men's beds. But the adulterer here spoken of seeks the covert of the twilight, and another of a disguise. He

putteth his face in a secret place, so the Hebrew hath it, wrapping it in his cloak, or getting on a vizard, which, saith he, shall render me unknown, and no eye shall see me. For as for God's eye, either he conceits him blind or presumes him indulgent, not doubting an easy and speedy pardon. This is charged upon David, #2Sa 12:10, "because thou hast despised me," &c., viz. in thinking to sin secretly, not considering mine all seeing eye, not caring though I looked on, &c., therefore shall all come to light, #Job 24:12. Sin secretly committed shall be strangely discovered; yea, perhaps the sinner himself shall confess his sins, as Judas. So, sooner or later, "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing," #Ec 12:14; see also #/Apc Sir 33:13-17

Ver. 16. **In the dark they dig through the earth, &c.**] Heb. He digs through houses; *i.e.* the adulterer doth, to come at his strumpet, with whom he had agreed upon a place of meeting for that evil purpose, and in whose bosom by night (the dark and black night, as Solomon calleth it, #Pr 7:9) he spareth not to bury his name, substance, soul, and carcass, while they glut their unclean desires by the favour of the darkness. This is a bitterness beyond that of death, #Ec 7:26. But the devil presenteth his butter in so lordly a dish, that the soul spies not the hammer and nail in his hand till he have driven it into the temples. Roger Mortimer, who dug that hole at Nottingham castle, and was afterwards hanged at Tyburn (a just reward of his ambition and uncleanness), had the experience of this.

They know not the light] *i.e.* They brook it not, but run full butt against it, because it discovereth and disquieteth them. See #Job 24:13.

Ver. 17. **For the morning is unto them as the shadow of death**] *i.e.* They are in deadly fear lest the light should bewray them, and expose them to condign punishment. How fearful was Judah of being shamed after he had thus sinned! #Ge 38:23; and how forward to save his credit by sending his kid by the hand of that hang by Hiram! That young man in Terence (in Eun.) was sore ashamed to be seen in the eunuch's garment, a token of his uncleanness; whereas to have done the deed did nothing so much trouble him. But the children of light hate and shun sin more for the filth that is in it than for the fire that is in it; the blackness of that coal offendeth them more than the heat of it. Plato condemneth the poets for setting forth

Jupiter's adulteries, whereby the people were drawn to the like wantonness; and for saying, it were no matter though men did commit sin, so they could hide it, Ως λυσιτελει το αδικειν εαν λανθανη. *Si non caste, saltem caute*, say the Popish shavelings, who are sometimes taken in the manner, as was that carnal Cardinal Cremonensis, the Pope's legate here, in Henry VIII's days, and Dr Weston, dean of Windsor, in the reign of Queen Mary, apprehended in adultery, and for the same deprived of all his spiritual livings by Cardinal Pole. Pope John XII being taken to bed with another man's wife, was killed immediately by her husband. In Germany, a gentleman of note and his harlot were served in like sort, as Luther relateth. So was Rodoaldus VIII, king of Lombardy, and Sergus, a king of Scotland (P. Mel. Chron. Lang. Chron.). Of all these, and many more *eiusdem furfuris*, it may well be said, as here, that being noted and notified, they were in the terrors of the shadow of death. Which death to escape,

Ver. 18. He is swift as the waters] He stays not long in a place, but flees away swiftly (like the river Tigris, swift as an arrow out of a bow), to avoid punishment. Heb. He is light upon the face of the waters. The meaning is, saith one, they are as a light thing upon the streams of water running swiftly, and carrying it away with speed. Some, that it is spoken in respect to their swift passing on from one wickedness to another, or their never being settled after such wickedness committed, but always ready to be overturned, as a ship that is unballasted, and so to be drowned in the sea.

Their portion is cursed in the earth] Cain like, they wander up and down, a *corde suo facti fugitivi*, but their sin will surely find them out; neither can they run out of the reach of God's rod, &c. This Job saith, lest any should gather, from what he had said before, that it should be always well with the wicked and ill with the godly. Some take it as a curse, Let their portion on earth be accursed, neither let them turn themselves to the vineyards; *sc.* either to dress them or to taste of the fruits of them.

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards] That is, say some, to run away by them, which were common ways to cities, but by some other obscure byway, that he may not be found. In vineyards something is to be done at all times, that way therefore they take not,

lest they should be discovered and punished. Beza rendereth it, He turneth not into the way (that is, the nature) of the vines, which, by cutting and pruning, sprouteth out, and becometh more profitable. Others sense it far otherwise. The concise brevity and ambiguity of the words, together with the change of number, hath caused a cloud upon them.

Ver. 19. **Drought and heat consume the snow waters]** Here also brevity hath bred obscurity. Snow waters, as they are more subtile, so they sooner sink into the dry earth; so die the wicked, quickly and easily. See #**Job 21:13,31**. There are that read the whole verse thus, In the drought and heat they rob, and in the snow waters; they sin to the grave; that is, they rob (and run into other flagitious practices) in all weather, summer and winter, and never stop till they die. They persist in their sins (saith Calvin) wherein they have been muzzled up, even to their grave. This is a good sense. Luther tells of one filthy adulterer, so set upon that sin that he was heard to utter these abominable words, If I were sure to live here for ever, and that I might still be carried from one brothel house to another, I would never desire any other heaven than that. *Vae dementiae, et impietati*. This beastly man breathed out his wretched soul between two harlots. Once I knew a most odious adulterer of seventy years old (saith another great divine, Mr Dan. Roger) who having wasted his flesh and state with harlots, and lying near death, was requested thus, Potter, call upon God; he replied, with his ordinary oaths, Pox (boils) and wounds, is this a time to pray? I knew (saith a third reverend man, Mr Bolton), a great swearer, who coming to his death bed, Satan so filled his heart with a maddened and enraged greediness after 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. Athenaeus reporteth of one covetous mammonist, that at the hour of his death he devoured many pieces of gold, and sewed the rest in his coat, commanding that they should be all buried with him. And our chroniclers write of King Edward I that he adjured his son and nobles, that if he died in his expedition against Bruce, king of Scots, they should not inter his corpse, but carry it about Scotland, till they had avenged him on that usurper (Dan. Hist. 201).

Ver. 20. **The womb shall forget him]** Some read it, The merciful man forgetteth him; *sc.* because he himself was merciless. Or because he was a trouble to the world, and a common pest, therefore good men are glad to be so rid of him; and instead of sighing over him, say, Let the worm feed sweetly on him, it is well he is gone; as he lived wickedly so he died wickedly; let him be no more remembered or honourably mentioned, but moulder away, and fall as a rotten tree. Others interpret the words of the sudden and easy death of the wicked, thus, The womb shall forget him; that is, saith Beza, being once dead, neither his mother nor his wife do bewail and lament his death, because without that pain and torment that many suffer when they depart the world.

The worm shall feed sweetly on him] *Morifur impunitus*, he maketh the worms a feast with his fat corpse (as Dr Taylor, martyr, made account to have done, if buried in Hadleigh churchyard), and feels no pain.

He shall be no more remembered] And this is reckoned up as a piece of his happiness. See **#Ec 8:10**. *{See Trapp on "Ec 8:10"}*

And wickedness] That is, the wicked person, that crooked piece, that can hardly ever be set straight again.

Shall be broken as a tree] As a rotten tree blown down by the wind. Ver. 21. **He evil entreateth the barren that beareth not]** Who had more need to be comforted than further afflicted. But *homo homini daemon*. Jacob and Elkanah loved and comforted their wives under this cross. The Vulgate rendereth it, He hath fed the barren, whereupon some expound it of wicked men's feeding whores, and maintaining them for their pleasure; keeping them barren, that they may keep their beauty.

And doeth not good to the widow] *i.e.* Doth her much hurt; for not to do good is to do evil, **#Mr 3:4**. He hath afflicted his barren wife, and evilly intreated the poor desolate widow, his mother. What marvel than if the womb forget him, &c., if his wife bewail not so unkind a husband, nor his mother so unnatural a son, as **#Mr 3:30**: thus Beza here.

Ver. 22. **He draweth also the mighty with his power]** *i.e.* He hath brought them by force under his girdle, and compelled them to do him homage and service.

He riseth up] In the fulness of his might, as "a king, against whom there is no rising up," #Pr 30:31.

And no man is sure of life] Which the tyrant taketh away at his pleasure. Or thus, the tyrant himself, after he hath made all cock sure, as he may think, is not yet sure of his own life, dare not confide in his best friends. Dionysius, for instance, and our Richard III. The Hebrew is, And he is not sure of life.

Ver. 23. **Though it be given him to be in safety]** Heb. It is given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth. His safety and prosperity was given him for a better purpose; but (as if God had hired him to be wicked) he abuseth it to creature confidence, leaning too hard upon the arm of flesh.

Yet his eyes are upon their ways] Nevertheless God prospereth them (according to #Ps 34:11). Or, as others sense it, God eyeth their wicked ways, and designeth them to destruction. And the next verse seemeth to make for this interpretation.

Ver. 24. **They are exalted for a little while]** Or, they are exalted, but within a little while they are not. This former part of the verse needeth no exposition, saith an expositor. And as for the latter,

They are taken away as all others, they are cut off as the tops of the ears of corn] It may be understood that the like violence wherewith tyrants shall be cut off, by which they have cut off other mighty and great men; *Velut farrisspicæ succiduntur* (Trem. ex Varr.), as Thrasibulus, king of the Milesians, by striking off with his staff certain ears of corn, and Tarquin, king of the Romans, by doing the like to certain poppies in his garden, signified their minds to have various chief men beheaded; which was accordingly accomplished. So Mithridates, king of Pontus, by one letter caused the death of eighty thousand Romans, trading throughout Asia (Val. Max.). Now God loveth to retaliate, as hath been said before. See it exemplified in Adonibezek, Agag, Haman, and others.

Ver. 25. **And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar?**] *Quis ementietur me?* Who shall disprove or confute what I have affirmed? viz. That God doth many things, the depth whereof we cannot fathom, and that he let wicked men many times spend their days in pleasure, and end them without pain. This I will abide by, and I would fain see the man, *qui ausit et possit*, who can and will maintain the contrary.

Chapter 25

Ver. 1. **Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said]** A pithy and ponderous speech he here maketh, though little to the purpose, for he quite digresseth from the question in hand concerning the wicked's flourishing, and saints' sufferings, he chooseth to sing the same song with his fellows, concerning the power and purity of God above all creatures. See **#Job 4:18 15:15**. Some men are of that mind, that they will never be said or set down, but strive to have the last word. This was Peter's vanity and the rest of the disciples, **#Mt 26:35**, which our Saviour winked at till time should confute them, as it also did soon after.

Ver. 2. **Dominion and fear are with him]** God is therefore to be feared, because Lord over all. If an earthly king be so dread a sovereign, if an apparition of angels hath so amazed the best men, who would not fear that King of nations, since to him doth it appertain? **#Jer 10:7**. "God is greatly to be feared in the assemblies of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him," **#Ps 89:7**. Power and terror are with him, so the Vulgate hath it here. He that is able to destroy both body and soul in hell, is surely to be feared; yea, therefore to be feared, **#Mt 10:28**. If servants should fear their masters because they have power over the flesh, **#Col 3:23**, what should we do, since he can sooner undo us than bid it be done?

He maketh peace in his high places] Or, Among his high persons, those heavenly courtiers, the angels and saints. By an unchangeable decree, God keepeth all persons and things in the heavens, both visible and invisible, in a most firm and quiet condition, so that there is no clashing, but a happy harmony among them. He appeaseth, saith Senault, the differences of the elements, and obligeth them to force their own inclinations, to preserve the quiet of the world. He

shakes all the heavens with so much evenness, that in the contrariety of their motions they never disorder themselves. Finally, He maintains peace among the angels, and tempering his justice with his goodness, he makes himself equally loved and feared of those blessed spirits. Therefore Job did ill, saith Mayer, to offer to make a disturbance there (as Bildad at least conceited he did), where there was all peace, **#Job 23:4**.

Ver. 3. **Is there any number of his armies?**] God is Lord of hosts; and, as the Rabbis well observe, he hath his upper forces and his lower forces, as his horse and foot, ready pressed. The upper are here chiefly meant, viz. the angels and stars, as appeareth by the context. *An est numerus expeditorum?* so Brentius rendereth it; Tremellius, *turmariorum*, of his troopers? they are innumerable, and yet no variance among them; this is admirable. The army of Nineveh was quiet, no failing out nor complaining in their hosts, therefore did their king march on, pass through, **#Na 1:12**. The Turks' military discipline at this day is beyond that of all other nations in the world besides; yea, beyond that of the old Greeks or Romans. There is no quarrelling heard at any time among their many soldiers, no, nor any words at all. *Perpetuum silentium tenent ut muti*, saith Cuspinianus. There is perpetual silence kept, and most ready obedience yielded to the dumb signs and noddings of their officers. But all this is nothing to that in heaven. Of God's hosts, together with their number, order, and obedience, see my treatise called The Righteous Man's Recompense.

And upon whom doth not his light arise?] That is, his sun, that prince of planets, but servant of the saints (as his name importeth), whose "going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof," **#Ps 19:6**. It is called, His light, because, as he made it, so he gathered into it, as into a vessel, that first light, which before was scattered here and there in the heavens. Some there are that understand this text of the light of God's omniscience; others, of his beneficence. *Quis est quem non superet luce bonitate sum?* (Merlin) Who is it whom he overcometh not with the light of his goodness? Surely all the good that is in the creature is but a spark of his flame, a drop of his ocean.

Ver. 4. **How then can man be justified with God?**] *Homo frivolus*, so the Tygurines translate. How can frivolous man, sorry man, *morbis mortique obnoxius*, man subject to diseases and death; how can such a man, so mortal and miserable, a mass of mortalities, a map of miseries, a very mixture and compound of dirt and sin, be justified with God? How can he be perfect within himself without the gift of grace, without an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just One, who alone is the propitiation for our sins, **#1Jo 2:2 Ro 3:25**, who is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, &c.? **#1Co 1:30**.

Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?] And therefore born in sin and under a curse, the sign whereof appears in the woman's bearing and bringing forth, **#Ge 3:6**. Our whole nativity is impure. Hence in the law it is commanded, that the woman should be unclean seven days, that the child should be circumcised on the eighth day; and that the mother should remain three and thirty days in the blood of her purification, **#Le 12:4**. For by nature we are all children of wrath; and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Neither can any one bring a clean thing out of an unclean, **#Job 14:4**. {See Trapp on "Job 14:4"} Surely as a slave begetteth a slave, so doth a sinner beget a sinner. Hence we are loathsome to God, as a toad is to us, because poison is in the nature of it. *Infantes ergo non sunt insontes*, Infants are not innocents, though we commonly call them so, because free from actual sin, they having not yet "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," as the apostle expresseth it, **#Ro 5:14**. But. the first sheet or blanket wherein they are covered is woven of sin, shame, blood, and filth, as may be seen **#Eze 16:4,6**. This should teach us modesty and lowly mindedness.

Unde superbit homo cuius conceptio turpis?

Whence with the man overcome whose conception is shameful.
Ver. 5. **Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not**] *i.e.* Either descend in thy thoughts, from the highest orbs as low as the moon; or else ascend from gold, gems, jewels, and other orient resplendent creatures, as high as the moon and stars, and comparing them with the surpassing majesty of God, thou shalt find no more beauty or brightness in them than is in a lump of earth or clod of clay; those

heavenly lights will appear to be as so many snuffs. Or if thou canst discover no spots and blemishes in them, yet God can, without the help of any such perspective glasses as Galileo got him to explore the mountains on the moon. Some think it was by moonlight that this speech was uttered, and therefore the moon is mentioned. But as the moon is confounded, so the sun also is ashamed when the Lord of hosts will display the beams of his glory, **#Isa 24:23 60:19**. There is a learned interpreter (Mr Abbot) who thus paraphraseth the text: Consider, that by reason of the fall of man, the very creatures that in themselves are sinless, yea, the very moon and stars (that are so far from earth, and so near to heaven), have contracted defilement, and are blemished; so that with God, for man's sake, and by man's sin, even they are not accounted free from pollution in his sight: thus he. The visible heavens are defiled by our sins, and must therefore be purged by the fire of the last day; as of old the vessel that held the sin offering was to be broken if earthen, or to pass the fire if of better metal.

Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight] Whatever they are in ours. A thing that I see in the night may shine, and that shining proceed from nothing but rottenness. There is a comparative imperfection and impurity in the stars and angels, **#Job 4:18**.

Ver. 6. **How much less man, that is a worm?**] He saith not, as a worm, but a worm itself, so **#Ps 22:6**, "I am a worm, and no man"; *nullificamen hominis*, as Tertullian somewhere phraseth it. David in the Arabic signifieth a worm, saith one, to which he may seem in that psalm to allude. The word here rendered a worm, signifieth a small worm bred in cheese or flesh, a mite, a maggot, *Vermis parvus in carne aut caseo nascens*, **#Ex 16:24**. Others say, it signifieth rottenness, which hath no strength. Hereby man, convinced of his infirmity, vanity, and impurity, should learn *Virium suarum ουδενειαν agnoscere*, to give glory to God, and to take shame to himself.

And the son of man, which is a worm?] *Lumbricus, quo vix quidquam contemptius nominari potest*, So vile and abject a creature is man. The greater is God's mercy to look upon such a walking dunghill: learn hereby to know God and thyself, which is the highest point of heavenly wisdom.

Chapter 26

Ver. 1. **But Job answered and said]** Bildad had vexed him with his impertinence and superfluous discourses of God's attributes, as if Job had denied them or doubted of them, which was far from him, witness this chapter. He therefore rippleth up Bildad with a continued smart irony in the three next following verses, letting loose the reins to his justly conceived grief and indignation, and invading his adversary with these sharp questions by way of wonderment.

Ver. 2. **How hast thou helped him that is without power?**] *q.d.* Full well hast thou done it, surely. (See a like irony **#Mr 7:9 1Co 4:8,10**) Thou art a very goodly comforter, and with a great deal of wisdom thou hast framed thy discourse to my present necessity. Thou lookest upon me as a poor, forlorn, strengthless, fruitless creature. Thou shouldest therefore have set thyself to support me and shore me up, by uttering not only *commoda, sed et accommoda*, things true and profitable, but things fit and suitable to my distressed condition. Thou hast spoken much of the majesty and purity of Almighty God (wherein I well accord thee), but these are words of terror, such as I can hardly bear. Of strong medicine we say, *Quod nec puero, nec seni, nec imbecillo, sed robusto conveniat*, that it is not for children, or old folks, or weak ones, but for the stronger sort; it is not for every complexion and state. So neither is every discourse for all sort of people. It is a singular skill to be able to time a word, **#Isa 50:4**, and to set it upon its wheels, **#Pr 25:10**, to declare unto a man his righteousness, which not one of a thousand can tell how to do it like him, **#Job 33:23**, to seek to find out pleasant words, such as have both goads and nails in them, **#Ec 12:10,11** (to prick them on to duty, and to fasten them to the right, as pales to their rails), to divide the word of God aright, **#2Ti 2:15**, and to give every one his portion in the due season, **#Mt 24:45**. Not as he in the emblem, who gave straw to the dog, and a bone to the ass. The good word of God, if well applied, is profitable to all things, as is here hinted; *sc.* to help the powerless, to save the strengthless, to counsel the ignorant, and to set forth things as they are, that there may be no manner of mistake; but then it must be wisely handled, and the help of God's Holy Spirit must be implored, **#Job 26:4**, that it may be a word of reconciliation, a savour of life unto life, **#2Co 2:16 5:19**, and whatsoever else is said in commendation of it, **#Ps**

19:7-10. Mercer interpreting this verse and the two following, *Hoc de Deo accipio*, saith he, These things I understand concerning God; and it is as if Job had said to Bildad, Oh, how bravely helpst thou him that is weak, and pleadest for him that is forlorn, as if God wanted thy patronage and defence! No question but thou art a man fit to advise him, and to set him in a course that he cannot otherwise hit on: this is a good sense also. But what meant Brentius to bring in Job blaspheming here, as thus, *Quem iuvas? impotentem? salvas brachium invalidi? Cui consulis? insipienti? &c.* Whom helpst thou, O God? the impotent? savest thou the arm of the strengthless? Whom counsellest thou? the ignorant? &c.: *q.d.* Surely thou shouldest do so by promise, and it would well become thee to do so by me; but (alas) thou dost nothing less; and hence it is that I skill stick in the briars, &c. Upon this gloss we may write, as the canonists do sometimes, *Palea*, or, *Hoc non credo*.

Ver. 3. **How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?**] *q.d.* Thou lookest upon me as a fool and an atheist; but this thou dost with far greater folly; for I am not the man thou takest me for, but can say as much for God as thyself, and more too; and if I were such as thou wouldest make of me, I might so continue, for any help I should have by thy counsel. The like hereunto we may say to the Papists and other seducers, who pretend to tender our good, to counsel us for the best, and to wish our salvation.

And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?] Heb. The essence, or the reason, or the naked truth: *q.d.* What ado hast thou kept to tell me no more than I knew before? wherein thou hast fairly lost thy labour and missed of thy design, if ever thou intendedst to counsel and comfort me. Very wisely hast thou done it, I must needs say for thee.

Ver. 4. **To whom hast thou uttered words?**] And, as thou thinkest, words weighty, and worthy of all acception, when in truth there is no such matters; bubbles of words they are, and big swollen fancies, *sed cui bono?* What tack is there in them? and to what good purpose are they? Melancthon makes mention of a certain good man, who reading Aristotle's discourse concerning the rainbow, conceited thereupon many strange speculations, and wrote to a friend that he had far outdone Aristotle in that matter (Manl. loc. com. 536). But coming afterwards to the university, and disputing there upon that

subject, he was found to be utterly out in those fancies of his, which indeed were no better than a sublime dotage.

And whose spirit came from thee?] Or, came out of thee? Was it by God's Spirit that thou spakest, or thine own rather? For "there is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," #Job 32:8. Job would not have Bildad think and term his discourses to be divine inspirations, or such admirable pieces, rare sayings, being but vulgar and ordinary businesses (Sculd. Ann. p. 238). Muncer, the arch Anabaptist, wrote a book against Luther, wherein he boasteth much of the spirit, and of propheticall light, accusing Luther for unspiritual, and one that savoured nothing but carnal things. The Antinomians use to call upon their hearers to mark; it may be they shall hear that which they have not heard before, whenas the thing they deliver after so promising a preface, is either false, or what is taught ordinarily by others. Some read the words thus, Whose spirit admired thee? for the spirit goeth as it were out of itself after those things it admireth. The Hebrews expound it thus, Whose spirit hast thou quickened, or confirmed, by these thy words? Who is the wiser or the better for them? *Quam animam per haec fecisti?* What soul hast thou gained to God by thy doctrine? confer #Ge 12:5, the souls which they had made, that is, brought to the true fear and service of God.

Ver. 5. **Dead things are formed from under the waters**] Here Job's tongue, like a silver bell, begins to sound out the great things of God far better than Bildad had done, beginning at the bottom, and declaring that nothing is bred or brought forth, whether animate or inanimate, fish or other things in all the vast and deep ocean, but it is by his decree and power (Abbots). The Septuagint or Vulgate, for dead and lifeless things render giants, and understand thereby whales, those huge sea monsters formed under the waters.

And the inhabitants thereof] That is, saith one, other fishes in general, which are in the seas where those whales are; for there is that Leviathan, and there are creeping things (that is, smaller fishes) innumerable. And in particular certain little fishes that are noted always to swim with the whales, as guides of their way, that they may not unawares, coming into muddy places, be mired there. Aristotle calleth them muscules; Pliny, musticets.

Ver. 6. **Hell and destruction are before him]** Here beginneth a magnificent and stately description of the majesty of God; and, 1. From his omniscience; 2. From his omnipotence. For the first, "Hell and destruction are before him." Not the grave only, but the nethermost hell, that most abstruse part of the universe, and most remote from heaven, God's court. Of hell we know nothing save only what the Scripture saith of it in general, that there is a hell, and that the pains of it are endless, easeless, and remediless, &c., but God only knoweth who are in hell, and who is yet to be hereafter hurled into it. It is the saints' happiness that to them there is no such condemnation, **#Ro 8:1**, that over them this second death hath no power, **#Re 20:6**. That if hell had already swallowed them up (as they sometimes when deserted feel themselves to be in the very suburbs of it), it could no better hold them than the whale's stomach could do Jonah. **#Lu 22:31**, "Satan hath desired to have thee"; *sc.* to hell, but that he shall never have; for they are the redeemed of the Lord, saved from the wrath to come, and may triumphingly sing, Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? &c.

And destruction hath no covering] That is, hell, the place of destruction, the palace of King Abaddon (so the devil is called, **#Re 9:11**), and so hell is called in this text, because thereinto are thrust all that are destined to destruction, all the brats of fathomless perdition, such as was Judas the traitor, who went to his place, and all wicked ones, who shall surely be turned into hell, with all those that forget God, **#Ps 9:17**. This place is not covered, saith Ferus here, but open to God, for whomsoever he will cast thereinto.

Ver. 7. **He stretcheth out the north over the empty place]** Heb. Over Tohu. Aristotle saith, that beyond the movable heavens there is neither body, nor time, nor place, nor vacuum. But on this side of the heaven there are bodies, time, place, and, as it may seem to some, an empty place; for so the air is here called, over which, and not over any solid matter, for a foundation, God hath spread and stretched forth the heavens which are here called the north, because they are moved about the north pole; and besides, the north is held the upper part of the world, according to that of Virgil,

Mundus ut ad Scythiam Riphæasque arduus arces

Cousurgit; premitur Libyæ devexus ad austros.

Hence it is here put for the whole heaven which, held up by the word of God's power; without any other props, leaneth upon the liquid air; the air upon the earth, and the earth upon nothing.

And hangeth the earth upon nothing]

*Terra pilae similis, nullo fulcimine nixa,
Aero sublato tam grave pendet onus (Ovid. 6, Fasti).*

The earth hangs in the midst of heaven, like Architas' or Archimedes' pigeon, equally poised with his own weight. Of this great wonder the philosophers, after much study, can give no good reason, because ignorant of this, that God hath appointed it so to be, even from the first creation, #Ps 104:5 Heb 1:2. The poets fable that Atlas beareth up heaven with his shoulders; but we confess the true Atlas, viz. the Lord our God, who by his word alone beareth up heaven and earth (This is the very finger of God, Aristotle himself admireth it, De Cael. 1. 2, c. 13); and it is here fitly alleged as an argument of his Almightyness. The greatness of this work of God appeareth hereby, saith Merlin, that men cannot spread aloft the thinnest curtain, absque fulcris, without some solid thing to uphold it.

Ver. 8. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds] Heb. Clouds, which yet have their name from thickness, because they arise from air condensed. In these God bottleth up the rain, and there keepeth it in by main strength (as the word signifieth), though those vessels are as thin and thinner than the liquor that is contained in them. This, duly weighed, were enough to convince an atheist, especially if he consider how.

The cloud is not rent under them] And so causeth a cataclism to drown the earth; as sometimes at sea, especially, great harm is done this way among the ships, by a water spout, as mariners call it, the Greek ἐξυδρία, and the Dutch *Ein Wolckenbruch*, or a breach of heaven; viz. when clouds cleave asunder, and discharge themselves all at once, for a great mischief to mankind. Now that God thus binds up these heavy vapours, and keeps them in the clouds, as a strong man in a cobweb, till brought by the winds whithersoever he

pleaseth to appoint them, they drop upon the earth by little and little, to make it fruitful; this is a wonderful work of God, and should bring us to the knowledge of his power, wisdom, and goodness, **#Ro 1:19,20 Job 38:37 Jer 5:22.**

Ver. 9. **He holdeth back the face of his throne]** *i.e.* Of heaven, **#Isa 66:1**, which he soon overcloudeth and muffleth up, or masketh, with a veil. Mystically, by the face of his throne, we may understand the knowledge of his glory; for this is held from us so in this world, that we cannot perfectly know him as he is, but must content ourselves with a learned ignorance, **#1Jo 3:3**. Here darkness is, and will be, under his feet, **#Ps 18:9**.

And spreadeth his cloud upon it] It is fitly called his cloud, because, 1. It is his handiwork, **#Ps 18:11 Ge 9:14 Job 28:26,27 37:15,16 38:9 Ps 104:5**. His sun draweth up those vapours, which, being thickened in the middle region of the air by the cold encompassing and driving them together, become a cloud. 2. He used it of old as a sign of his glorious power and gracious presence with his people, **#Ex 13:21 16:10 2Ch 5:13,14**; and as a figure of Christ's guiding and protecting his Church through the wilderness of this world, **#Isa 4:5,6 3**. He still rideth in state upon the clouds, **#Isa 19:1**. Christ was by a cloud coached up to heaven, **#Ac 1:9**, and shall come in like manner, **#Re 1:7 10:1**. We also shall then be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord, **#1Th 4:17**.— *O mora! Christe, veni.*

Ver. 10. **He hath compassed the waters with bounds]** *Decreto circumavit superficiem aquarum* (Tremel.). He hath as it were with a pair of compasses drawn a circle about the sea, that it may not pass to drown the earth. Confer **#Job 38:8,10,11 Ps 33:7 89:10 104:9 Pr 8:29**. So he drew a circle round about the earth, **#Pr 8:27**, doing all with infinite wisdom, *Pondere, mensura, numero, &c.* He foundeth the earth not upon solid rocks, but fluid waters. And that it floateth not upon them, nor is shaken with them (as oft as there is a tempest in the ocean that begirteth it), neither yet is overflowed by them, this is the wonderful work of God. Aristotle in his book *De Mirabilibus* admireth it, and acknowledgeth God's providence, which elsewhere he denieth. *Terminum aquis prescripsit*, saith Job here. And this either he had from Moses, **#Ge 1:10**, or, if he lived before Moses, as it is most likely he did, he had it, as he had many other things, by

tradition from the fathers. Sailors tell us, that as they draw nigh to the shore, when they enter into a haven, they run as it were downhill. And yet men are said to go down (not up) to the sea in ships, #Ps 107:23. See a reason hereof in this text and #Ps 104:26. *An vero non stupendum est?* saith Lavater. But is it not a wonderful thing that so fierce an element, so huge a mass of waters, tossed by the winds, should be bounded and bridled by sands, confined and kept within their prescribed place and shore? Especially if the water be (as some affirm) ten times larger than the earth, the air than the water, the fire than the air.

Until the day and night come to an end] Heb. Until the consummation of light with darkness; that is, till time shall be no more, till the end of the world, when all things shall be let loose to devastation, and the sea shall overflow the land again, as that then it shall, some would gather from this text.

Ver. 11. **The pillars of heaven tremble]** *i.e.* The angels, say some, who tremble out of conscience of their own comparative imperfections. The best of saints on earth, say others (according to #Ga 2:9 Re 3:12 Pr 9:1,2), who tremble at God's word, #Isa 66:2, and have many concussions by afflictions. But better understand the firmament of heaven, #Hag 2:6,7 Mt 24:29. The powers of heaven shall be shaken, they shall quake with the loud check of his thunderclaps. Or the high and mighty mountains, whereon the heavens seem to rest, as on so many pillars, shaken by earth, quakes, and sometimes with great astonishment removed out of their places.

And are astonished at his reproof] As all the beasts of the field are at the roaring of the lion; *Ut quis a gravi et magnae potestatis vire, obiurgatus, tremet et vehementer sollicitus est,* as a slave chided by a prince trembleth, and is aghast.

Ver. 12. **He divideth the sea with his power]** *i.e.* With his strong winds causing tempests: see the like #Isa 51:15: so that it lieth as it were in ridges, the top of one wave far from another, #Jer 31:35. That was a strange thing that is reported to have fallen out at London the last week. On Monday, Aug. 14, 1654, by reason of the great winds the tide was so low in the Thames, that boys waded over it from one side to the other, the old watermen affirming they never saw it so before.

And by his understanding he smiteth through the proud] Heb. Pride, or Rahab, which is oft put for Egypt, as **#Ps 87:4 89:10 Isa 51:9**, whence some would have Pharaoh meant; others, the devil; others, the whale dashing against a rock, or driven to shore where he is taken; others, the proud waves of the sea, as **#Job 38:11**, disabled by God to stir more, as a man mortally wounded is to fight longer. An instance hereof we have in the history of Jonah, and another in the Gospel, **#Mt 8:14**. As God is powerful enough to raise storms, so he is wise enough to lay them again, **#Ps 107:25,29**. He hath the sea in as great awe as a giant hath a pigmy.

Ver. 13. **By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens]** *Spiritu eius caeli sunt ipsa pulchritudo*, By his Spirit the heavens are beauty itself, so Vatablus rendereth it, *Adoravit, decoravit, pulchrefecit. Hinc* κόσμος. That Three in One, and One in Three, wrought in the creation: see **#Ps 33:6**, "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Here Jehovah, his Word, and his Spirit, are noted to be the Maker of the world; so **#Ge 1**. The heathens had some blind notions hereof, as appeareth by Plutarch, who reporteth that in Thebe, a town of Egypt, they worshipped a God whom they acknowledged to be immortal; but 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 the spirit of his mouth. Upon the heavens especially God hath bestowed a great deal of skill and workmanship, as appeareth, **#Heb 11:10 Ps 8:3**, where heaven is called, The work of God's fingers; a curious Divine work; a metaphor from them that make tapestry. Garnished it is with stars, as a palace is with stately pictures, besides the inward beauty, which is unconceivable. There is something of a Saphir in the Hebrew word here rendered garnished, and **#Re 21:19** search is made through all the bowels of the earth to find out all the precious treasures that could be had, gold, pearls, and precious stones of all sorts; and what can these serve to? only to shadow out the glory of the walls of the New Jerusalem, and the gates, and to pave the streets of the city. See also **#Isa 54:11,12**.

His hand hath formed the crooked serpent] *Enixa est, peperit*, hath brought forth as by birth, hath formed the most deformed and dreadful creature in the earth; or those flaming dragons flying in the

air (meteors I mean); or the constellation in heaven called the Dragon, between the two Bears, and not far from the north pole (*Est hoc sane maximum, et maxime conspicuum in caelo sidus, &c.*); or, lastly, those sea dragons, the whales, which Mercer thinketh most likely to be here meant, and compareth **#Isa 27:1 Ps 104:26 Job 40:20**. Neither need we wonder, saith he, that the beginning of the verse is of heaven and the end of the sea; for Job would show and set forth two admirable works of God in two extremes of the world; viz. in heaven above, and in the waters under the earth; his power and wisdom shineth everywhere in the creatures, neither can a man easily look beside a miracle. Job, therefore, insisteth not long upon particulars, but, as one lost in the labyrinth of admiration at so great things, he thus shuts up:

Ver. 14. **Lo, these are parts of his ways]** Or rather, particles of his works. *Extrema sunt viarum eius*, so the Tigurines translate it; these are the ends, extremities, or utmost parts of them, the τὸ γνῶστον, as St Paul calleth it, that which may be known of God, *per species creaturarum*, **#Ro 1:19,20**, as the sun may be seen in the water after a sort; but in *rota*, circle, as the schools speak, in the circle wherein it runs, we are not able to behold him; so something of God may be seen in his works, in his word; his back parts we may see and live, as Moses, **#Ex 33:18-20**; his train in the temple, as Isaiah, **#Isa 6:1**

But how little a portion is heard of him?] Heb. What a littleness, or shred of a word or thing, is heard of him, *Quam exiguitatem* (Pis. cat.). *Parvam stillam* (Vulg.). *ικμαδα* (Sept.). *Paucum de paucis, pusillum et parum admodum* (Merc.). As when one heareth the latter end only of a sentence, that which the echo resoundeth, and no more; it is but a modicum, the main we cannot know, we are as narrow mouthed vessels: Ye are not able to bear what I have to say to you, saith Christ to his apostles, **#Joh 16:12**. And to the people he spake as they were able to hear, **#Mr 4:33**, and not as he was able to have spoken. *Loquimur de Deo non quantum debemus, sed quantum possumus*, saith Gratian the emperor, We speak of God, not so much as we should, but so much as we can (In Epist. ad Ambrose). We prophesy but in part, and what wonder, since we know but in part, **#1Co 13:9**. In human things the wisest men have professed that the greatest part of what they knew was the least of that they knew not; how much more in things divine? By no

expressions do we so fully set forth God, saith Scaliger, as by those which set forth our ignorance. Our safest eloquence concerning God is our silence, saith learned Hooker.

But the thunder of his power, who can understand?] Heb. Of his powers; that is, his powerful thunder; which, while Alladius, king of the Latins, would by certain engines that he had made him imitate, he justly perished by a thunderbolt from heaven; his house also, wherein he had attempted so to do, was consumed with fire from heaven, as Dionysius Halicarnassus and Orosius testify. Some by thunder here understand God's astonishing presence and utterance of himself. Others, his force and grandeur, his notable and thundering exploits, which shine all the world over, and to which, if all that have been instanced shall be compared, they will appear to be but as a few heat drops to a great shower of rain. He that shall go about to declare them shall be forced to say with the poet (Lucret.),

Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque, mensque.

Chapter 27

Ver. 1. **Moreover Job continued his parable, and said]** It was Zophar's turn, and Job waited a while, as it was fitting, to see whether he or any other of them would take up the bucklers again against him; which, when they did not (having heard his high expressions concerning God's power and providence, and haply having now a better opinion of him than before), he assuageth his grief by defending his innocence and maintaining his opinion, in the five following chapters. Here he is said, after some respite, to recount again his parable; which hath its name in Hebrew from lording it, and bearing sway, because allegories and figurative speeches bear away the bell, as they say, from plainer discourses; are more gladly heard, or read, sooner understood, and better remembered, לִשְׁמָה *Sermo figuratus prineipatum tenet, ac velar dominatur.* The word rendered continued is, in the original, added to lift up; importing either that he spake now with courage, as we say, and with a greater emphasis, since having silenced his adversaries; or that he uttered himself in a higher style, and his matter were master sentences, maxims, axioms, speeches of special precellency

and predominance; such as might well challenge a throne in the minds of all men.

Ver. 2. **As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment]** Job well knew the nature and end of an oath, which is to put an end to all strife and controversy among men, #**Heb 6:16**. For more authority's sake, therefore, to his ensuing discourse, by taking God as witness in a matter of so great moment, and that his friends might the better believe him, he doubteth not to begin his speech with a private oath (for a public is that which is taken before a magistrate, who upon just cause may exact it), which, so it be sparingly and warily used, is not unlawful, as appeareth by the example of Jacob and Laban, Boaz and Ruth, Jonathan and David, *sc.* to help the truth in necessity, and when the other party will not otherwise be satisfied. But what meaneth Job to say that the God, whom he so solemnly taketh to witness, had taken away his judgment? Can the righteous Judge do otherwise than right? Or doth not the plaintiff know that he is punished less than his iniquities deserved? #**Ezr 9:13**. For answer Job was at present under a sore temptation, and being pressed out of measure above strength, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and is afterwards barely told of it by Elihu, #**Job 34:5**. The best faith, if long tried, may flag and hang the wing. Moses at Meribah, David at Gath, Elijah under the juniper, sufficiently show that every new man is two men; that the flesh soon lusteth against the spirit, and that the best may have their outbursts; yet so as that the seed of grace still abideth in them, and some way shows itself; Job here, for instance. He complaineth of God's severity, but stormeth not against him. He blustereth, but he blasphemeth not. He holdeth himself hardly dealt with by God; and yet while he so solemnly sweareth by him, he thereby acknowledgeth him a witness of his conscience, a patron of truth, a lover of right, an avenger of perjury, and, lastly, the author and arbiter of his life, which he resolveth rather to let go than his innocence: he can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth, #**2Co 13:8**.

And the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul] Heb. Hath embittered. Job should have remembered that bitter portions bring sweet health, and that τὸ πικρὸν μικρὸν, the bitterness would soon be past; but he remembered only at present the affliction and the misery, the wormwood and the gall, #**La 3:19**. "Now no affliction

(but especially soul affliction) for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby," #**Heb 12:11**. But patient Job wanted patience to wait for that. *Adeo nihil est in nobis magni, quod non queat minui*; such failings are found in the very best.

Ver. 3. **All the while my breath is in me**] *Periphrasis vitae, -Dum spiritus hos regat artas*, While I have an hour to breathe, I will hold to this oath of mine; neither may you ever hope to dispute me out of mine integrity. Life is described by breath, which, when it faileth, the man dieth, #**1Ki 17:17 Ps 146:4 Isa 2:22**. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, every moment ready to puff out. What is man, saith Nazianzen, but soul and soil, breath and body, a puff of wind the one, a pile of dust the other, no solidity in either? Jovinian, the emperor, was choked with the smoke of charcoal (Eutrop. Oros.); Pope Adrian with a fly, getting into his throat as he gaped; the cardinal of Lorrain was lighted to his lodging and to his long home both at once by a poisoned torch. Defer not, saith one, since at the next puff of breath thou mayest blow away thy life.

And the Spirit of God is in my nostrils] He seems to allude to #**Ge 2:7**, or some tradition of the fathers to like purpose; #**Ac 17:25**, God giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. And again, #**Ac 17:28**, "In him we live, and move, and have our being." Wherefore "let everything that hath breath praise the Lord," #**Ps 150:6**; yea, let every breath (as some read it) praise the Lord. Let it be as the smoke of the tabernacle, as pillars of incense ascending up to heaven. *Tam Dei meminisse opus est, quam respirare* (Chrysost.).

Ver. 4. **My lips shall not speak wickedness**] Which I should do, should I, contrary to that which the Spirit of God witnesseth to my conscience, through a feigned humility, confess that I have been wicked. Let God's dejected servants take heed, lest by the temptation of Satan, and the misgivings of their own evil hearts of unbelief, they be drawn to belie the work of God's Spirit in them, and to hold themselves utterly void of grace, because not endued with such and such measures of grace. Learn to distinguish between imbecility and nullity; show yourselves faithful in weakness, though but weak in faith. There is an allowance to gold, with which it may pass; neither is it to be cast aside because it wanteth some grains,

and hath a crack. *Nec vinum reiecimus et si faecem habeat*, saith Spinaeus (de Instit. Christ.). God seeth nothing amiss in that man whose heart is upright, #2Ch 15:17. He lays the finger of mercy on the scars of his people's sins, as that limner in the story. He will not crush, but cherish, that worm Jacob.

Nor my tongue utter deceit] No, for that were to speak wickedness, yea, to speak yourself wicked. For the remnant of Israel shall not, by betraying the truth, do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth, #Zep 3:13. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour, #Isa 63:8.

Ver. 5. **God forbid that I should justify you]** *sc.* By saying as you say; viz. that I am a hypocrite, and secretly guilty of some foul practices, for which I thus grievously suffer. I know nothing of this nature by myself, God forbid, *Absit, res profana sit mihi*. The Hebrew word signifies a profanation, or profane thing. It was the same they used when they rent their clothes at blasphemy.

Till I die, I will not remove mine integrity] My perfection, some render it; and so God accounteth it, when the bent, frame, and tendencies of the heart are for him; though the man's wants be many and great. This Job knew, and would hold to. Let not the devil baffle us out of our integrity.

Ver. 6. **My righteousness I hold fast]** As with tooth and nail, yea, though it be to the loss of my teeth, *Mordicus tenebo*, as it befell that valiant Sir Thomas Challoner, who served, when he was young, under Charles V, in the expedition of Algiers, where, being shipwrecked, after he had swam till his strength and his arms failed him, at the length, catching hold of a cable with his teeth, he escaped, not without the loss of some of his teeth.

And will not let it go] *sc.* Upon your persuasions or suspicions, so long as the bird in my bosom continueth singing.

My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live] His heart must needs reproach him who habitually doth evil, what good show soever he doth make before men; and though he hide his wickedness with no less subtle sleights than once Rachel did the idols, Rahab the

spies. Conscience is God's spy, and man's overseer. It is *Index, Iudex, Vindex*: neither is a body so torn with stripes as a mind with remembrance of evil actions. This Job knew, and would therefore keep his conscience clear. This was also St Paul's greatest, both care, #Ac 24:16, and comfort, #2Co 1:12.

Ver. 7. **Let mine enemy be as the wicked]** *q.d.* I need wish my greatest enemy no greater harm than to be as the wicked, for then he is sure to be wretched. So far am I from saying that God favoureth the wicked, or that he always suffereth them to escape unpunished.

And he that riseth up against me, as the unrighteous] Or, froward and perverse. This is the same again in other words; and it is well noted to be a popular manner of speaking, wherein when men express an abomination of a thing, they wish it to their enemies; taking it for granted that the power of malice is so great that no man can express it in the wish of any particular evil. See the like phrase #2Sa 8:2,3 1Sa 25:26 Da 4:27.

Ver. 8. **For what is the hope of the hypocrite, &c.]** Here Job proveth himself to be no hypocrite, by his and their different character and carriage, especially under affliction. Though God kill Job, yet he will trust in him; but "what is the hope of the hypocrite?" &c. He that maketh a bridge of his own shadow must needs fall into the brook. The common hope thinks it takes hold of God; but it is but as a child that catcheth at the shadow on the wall, which he thinks he holdeth fast in his hand, but soon finds it otherwise; so shall the hypocrite at death, his hope shall be then as the giving up of the ghost, and that is but cold comfort. While he was in health, and had all well about him, he nourished strong hopes of God's favour, and the rather because he gained and gathered wealth apace. So bladder like is the soul that is filled with earthly vanities, though but wind, it grows great, and swells in high conceitedness; but if pricked with the least pin of piercing grief (how much more when struck with death's dart!) it shriveleth to nothing, and is ready to say, as one rich wretch did on his death bed, *Spes et fortuna valet*, Life and hope, adieu to you both at once.

Though he hath gained] Or, When he hath been covetous; raking together *Rem, rem, quocunque modo rem*. See this notably

exemplified in that rich fool, #Lu 12:20, whose life and hopes ended together.

When God taketh away his soul?] *Extrahet*, Shall pull it out by violence, as a sword out of his sheath; when God shall make a breach upon their citadel, come upon them by forcible entry, turn them out of their cottages of clay, by a *firmae eiectione*, cut them in twain, as he did that evil servant, #Mt 24:50,51, tear their bodies and souls asunder, as a man teareth the bark from the tree, or the shell from the fish, leaving it naked. Where, then, shall be the high hopes of the hypocrite? And oh what a dreadful shriek giveth his guilty soul then, to see itself launching into an infinite ocean of scalding lead, and to consider that it must swim naked in it for ever!

Ver. 9. **Will God hear his cry]** Here is another distinctive note between a hypocrite and an honest man. As many are said in Daniel to cleave to the better side by flattery, so many false signs will come in, and flatter a man (when he is in health and prosperity), and give their testimony, speak the same thing that true evidences do; but this will not always hold.

When trouble cometh upon him?] Then the hypocrite will cry, and make pitiful moans; as a prisoner at the bar begs for his life. Then Joab and Adonijah will run to the horns of the altar, who till then little cared to come there. But with as ill success they cry to God as Saul did, #1Sa 28:15, and as other of David's enemies did, #Ps 18:41; for either God answereth them not at all, #Eze 21:2,3, or else he answereth them according to the idols of their hearts, #Eze 14:3, gives them bitter answers, as #Jud 10:13,14. Or if better, it is for the good of others, and for a further mischief to themselves, that he may snatch away his own and be gone, #Ho 2:9, and that he may consume them after he hath done them good, #Jos 24:20: their preservation proverb but a reservation.

Ver. 10. **Will he delight himself in the Almighty?]** viz. When trouble cometh upon him, as in the former verse. No, this is *Christianorum propria virtus*, a practice that none can skill of but God's people, saith Jerome, to rejoice in tribulation, and then to continue instant in prayer, #Ro 12:12, for deliverance, with some confidence grounded upon former experience. *Crux enim iis inuncta est*, saith Bernard. Together with the cross, they have an

unction from the Father; anointed they are with that oil of gladness, the Spirit of glory and of God, which resteth upon them, #1Pe 2:14, and refresheth them amidst all their sorrows and sufferings; and hence their delight in the Almighty, yea, though he frown and lay upon them, as he did upon Job, with his own bare hand. Not so the hypocrite; for what reason? he hateth God in his heart, as doth every evildoer, #Joh 3:20. *Est enim talium poena Deus, utpote qui lux est: et quid talibus tam invisum?* (Bernard.) God is light, and therefore hated as a punishment to such inauspicate night birds. He is holiness, but the hypocrite filthiness, as his name also importeth. How then can he delight himself in the Almighty? What complacency can there be, where is such an utter contrariety? They that love the Lord hate evil, #Ps 31:23, but so doth not any hypocrite; leave it he may, but not loathe it. Part with it he may (as Jacob did with Benjamin, lest otherwise he should starve; or as Phaltiel with Michal, lest he should lose his head), but his heart is glued to it still; he hath a month's mind to be doing, if he dare. Finally, he is without faith, and therefore without joy and peace of conscience. And as for his spider web of hope, a little wind bloweth it down. The world hath his heart, and so the love of the Father cannot be in him, #1Jo 2:15. He leaneth upon the Lord, and saith, Is not the Lord among us? #Mic 3:11, yet is he rooted in the delights of life. Like as the apricot tree leaneth against the wall, but is fast rooted in the earth.

Will he always call upon God?] Heb. In every time? No, nor scarce at any time. Indeed, as beggars have learned to cant, so have some hypocrites to pray; #Isa 26:16, "They have poured forth a charm when thy chastening was upon them." "When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and inquired after God," #Ps 78:34. But this was only a prayer of the flesh for ease, and not of the Spirit for grace. They spoke God fair (as the devil did Christ) only to be rid of him. Thus Pharaoh, when on the rack, roared out a confession, and called for a prayer. Joab, in danger of death, hangs on the horns of the altar. The captivated Jews fasted and prayed for seventy years, to get off their chains rather than their sins, #Zec 7:5, which Daniel therefore reckoned lost labour, #Job 9:13. But many wicked men, though in prosperity they have some short winded wishes (such as was that of Balaam, #Nu 23:10, wherewith compare

that of David, **#Ps 26:9**, and see a difference), or perhaps are able by strength of wit and memory to pray handsomely; yet in adversity they set their mouths against heaven, as hunger bitten wolves, and howl upward; they curse their king and their God, and look upward, saith Isaiah, **#Isa 8:21**; they murmur and mutiny, as the Israelites in the wilderness; they ban and blaspheme, as did that Israelitish woman's son, **#Le 14:11**, and Micah's mother, **#Jud 17:2**. A parrot may be taught to talk like a man (histories tell us of one at Rome that could repeat the whole creed), but let him be but beaten, and he returns to his own natural harsh voice. So a hypocrite, while all goes well with him, may seem very devout at his orisons, but lay thy hand upon him (saith Satan to God concerning Job, presuming thereby to prove him a hypocrite), and he will curse thee to thy face, **#Job 2:5**. But say he be somewhat better conditioned, as they call it, and for a while pray to God for ease and help; yet he will not pray always, he will not persevere in prayer, follow on to pray, wait upon God for an answer, and be content to want it, if God see good to deny it. He cannot draw nigh to God "with a true heart" (such a heart as is well satisfied, if God may be glorified, though himself be not gratified) "in full assurance of faith," **#Heb 10:22**; which is, saith Brentius, *Orationis medulla*, the marrow of prayer. Hence St James calleth it "the prayer of faith," **#Job 5:15**. Afflictions cause a saint to seek out God's promise, the promise to seek faith, faith to seek prayer, and prayer to find God; to find him at length, for he is a God that hideth himself, **#Isa 45:15**. But what saith faith? "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him," **#Isa 8:17**. See this exemplified in the woman of Canaan, who fetched Christ out of his retiring room by the force of her faith, **#Mr 7:24**, and prayed on, though denied. She would not be said nay, or set down either with silence or sad answers, but showed herself a woman of a well knit resolution, such as could *credere invisibilia, sperare dilata, et amare Deum se ostendentem contrarium*, as Luther speaketh: Believe things invisible, hope for things deferred, and love God when he shows himself most angry and opposite. Now this the hypocrite (who is an infidel) cannot skill of. He is short spirited, and cannot hold out in prayer, cannot, as our Saviour taught by that parable, **#Lu 18:1**, always pray, and not faint, *εκκακειν*, shrink back, as sluggards do in work, or cowards in war. *Oratio est res ardua, et magni laboris*, saith Luther. Prayer is a hard work, and

a man must tug at it and stick to it, as Jacob did, who wrestled and raised dust, as the Hebrew word signifieth; he held fast, and hung on, yea, he held with his hands when his thigh was lamed. Let me go, saith God, bespeaking his own liberty. No, thou shalt not, saith Jacob, until thou bless me. Lo, such is the generation of them that seek God in sincerity, of them that seek thy face; this is Jacob, **#Ps 24:6**. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that I will seek after," saith David, **#Ps 27:4**. If his suit had not been honest, he would never have begun it; but being so, he will never give it over till he hath prevailed; he will pray till he faint, and then to it again, **#Ps 119:81,82**. "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer," **#Ro 12:12**. So doth not the hypocrite, for want of an inward principle. If God come not at a call, he is out of patience, and ready to say, with that profane prince, **#2Ki 6:33**, "Behold, this evil is of the Lord; and what should I wait for the Lord any longer?" Away to the witch of Endor, to the god of Ekron. *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*. This Job would not do, and therefore no hypocrite.

Ver. 11. **I will teach you by the hand of God**] That is, by the help of God, $\sigma\upsilon\nu\ \Theta\epsilon\omega$, or concerning the hand of God, what is in the hand of the Lord (so the Septuagint), what things he is wont to do by his power, and what are his usual proceedings, his actual and efficacious providence, **#Ac 4:28**. *Deo iuvante et subministrante facultates* (Vat.).

That which is with the Almighty I will not conceal] *Neque celabo, ut res divinae comparatae sint*, so the Tigurines translate. Envious masters use to hide from their scholars the best and chiefest part of their skill. It is reported of that spotted beast, the lynx, that knowing that his urine will congeal into a precious stone, and so stand man in stead, of pure envy, when he pisseth he maketh a hole in the ground to cover it. Cardan, speaking of one that had a receipt that would suddenly and certainly dissolve a stone in the bladder, and died, not imparting his skill to any one, I doubt not, saith he, but that man went to hell, *quod moriens, artem suam mortalibus invisit*, because he envied his skill to those that survived him. Job was none such: but what he knew of God's mind and manner of dealing (which hath no certain law, nor invariable rule, but

dependeth upon his mere pleasure) he was ready to impart to his friends, who measured God's actions by a wrong rule.

Ver. 12. **Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it]** And can say as much to it as I can in these *sc.* that God afflicteth good men as well as bad, &c. *Ecce autem cum vos omnes speculationibus (theologicis) operam dederitis, quare tam vanas opiniones habetis?* So the Tigurine translation hath it; that is, But behold, whereas all ye have spent your time in theological speculations, how is it that ye have taken up such vain opinions? The Hebrew runs thus, Behold, you all have seen, or are seers (and he that is now called a prophet was before time called a seer, #1Sa 9:9), ye are knowing men, and of great experience, why then do ye go against your own knowledge, by speaking vainly and vilely notwithstanding?

Why then are ye thus altogether vain?] Heb. And why is this that ye are vain in vanity? *sc* while ye assert that God's love may be known by prosperity, and his hatred by adversity; and while ye conclude me a hypocrite because afflicted? for so they had all done with one consent. Bildad, #Job 8:13; Eliphaz, #Job 15:34; and Zophar, #Job 20:5. When as yet Job had given sufficient proof to the contrary; the matter was clear enough; but they did, *data opera*, for the nonce, obscure it: this was a vanity of vanities, and Job tells them as much.

Ver. 13. **This is the portion of a wicked man with God]** *q.d.* So ye say, and so I say too; for herein I will not deny to comply and to chime in with you. Zophar had said the same in effect, and used the selfsame expressions that Job here doth, #Job 20:29. See the notes there. But must Job therefore be a hypocrite, though he continue to hope, and pray, and delight in God amidst all his miseries? #Job 27:8-10. *Negatur.* He had spoken much before of the wicked man's prosperity; now, to prevent mistakes, he discourseth largely of his punishment, and how ill he beareth it.

And the heritage of oppressors, &c.] Of fierce and formidable tyrants, that are a terror to others. These are the rewards they shall receive from the God of recompences, the Almighty, who can well enough deal with them, and delights to get him a name in their just destruction.

Ver. 14. **If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword]** As were Ahab's seventy sons, for instance, #2Ki 10:1, whom he had begotten after God had threatened to root out his posterity. He, therefore, as it were to cross the Almighty, gives himself so much the more strenuously to the work of generation; but this was (like Ephraim) to bring forth children to the murderer, #Ho 4:13. See the like of Ahaziah and his forty-two brethren slain at the shearing house. {#2Ki 10:14}

And his offspring] Heb. His issues, or egressions, his shoots or branches, his pledges: so Mercer rendereth it.

Shall not be satisfied with bread] *i.e.* Shall be pined and famished, which their wicked parents, by heaping and hoarding, sought to prevent, but it could not be. And this shall be a more cruel kind of death than the former, #La 4:9. Drusus, the son of Tiberius Nero, was put to this death; so was our Richard II, at Pomfret Castle; Sanders, that traitor in Ireland; and many others.

Ver. 15. **Those that remain of him shall be buried in death]** That is, shall be presently and privately buried (as some sense it), without any noise or notice. Or, they shall be so hated, that no man shall speak well of them when they are dead; but their name shall be buried, and shall rot with them: so others understand it. Or, they shall be buried alive; as was Zeno the emperor in a fit of an apoplexy. *Sepelientur adhuc vivi moribundi* (Vatab.). And when as he recovered of that fit in his sepulchre, and cried for help, his wife, Ariadne, was so kind as to deny it him. The like is recorded of Scotus, the great school man. Diodati saith, that by this being buried in death is meant that the wicked dying are plunged into everlasting death, which only is the true death, *εν θανατω τελευτησουσι* (Sept.). Agreeable whereunto is that phrase, #Re 2:23, "I will kill her children with death." It is one thing to die, and another thing to be killed with death; this last is the time when death proves a harbinger to hell, when it haleth hell at the heels of it. This is a woeful death indeed.

And his widows shall not weep] *Mors mea ne careat lacrimis*, saith one. Tears are one of the dews of the dead; but some men, as they have lived undesired (their friends and whole neighbourhood

being sick of them, and even longing for a vomit), so they die unlamented by their own widows (for in those days men took many wives, as now the Turks do so many as they are able to maintain, and very coarsely they use them), who are glad that they are thus rid of them, who were wont to lay upon them with their unmanly fists, or otherwise to abuse them. Of King Edwin it is said, that he lived wickedly, died wishedly. And of Henry II, that hearing that his son and successor, John, had conspired against him, he fell into a grievous passion, both cursing his sons and the day wherein himself was born, and in that distemper departed the world which so often he himself had distempered, and had now every man's good word to be gone hence. See #Jer 22:18.

*Cum mors crudelem rapuisset saeva Neronem,
Credibile est multos Romanam agitasse iocos.*

Ver. 16. **Though he heap up silver as the dust]** Silver and gold, what are they else but white and red earth, the guts and garbage of the earth, as one saith? Yet how greedy of them and gripple after them are many muck worms, heaping up riches, and not knowing who shall gather them, #Ps 39:6; laying up, as if their lives were riveted upon eternity; or were sure to leave it to their children, who yet shall never enjoy it. This is a great vanity, saith Solomon; and yet such dust heaps as these are to be found in every corner.

And prepare raiment as the clay] *Tantum vestium quantum est luti,* saith Vatablus, that he have as great store of suits in his wardrobe as he hath dirt in his ditches.

Ver. 17. **He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on.]** Well may he prepare it, so Broughton. Let the wicked man toil and take pains for it; God hath prepared for him an executor never mentioned in his will. God gave the Egyptians' and Canaanites' goods to Israel; Nabal's to David; Haman's to Mordecai. See #Pr 28:8 Ec 2:26. This plague among the rest God threateneth the disobedient with, #De 28:30. *Sed haec non semper;* saith Mercer, although we see not this always so to be, but the contrary; yet it is easy to observe that many spend their strength and waste their wits in *congerendo et converrendo*, in getting and gathering these outward things; and then, when to possess them might seem a happiness, they die and leave them to uncertain heirs, as did Absalom and Alexander the

Great, who left his ring to Perdiceas, but his dominions, τὸ κρατιστῶ, to him that should best deserve them (Plut.).

And the innocent shall divide the silver] Shall share it among them, as their child's portions. *Soles enim Deus dividere aliis dona, aliis donorum usum et lucrum,* saith Brentius here. God gives gifts unto men, even to the rebellious, but the use and enjoyment of those gifts he bestoweth upon the righteous. The former have "great treasure and trouble therewith," #Pr 15:16. *Misera est magna custodia census* (Juvenal). The latter have, howsoever, contented godliness; and though they gather less of this manna here below, yet they have no want.

Ver. 18. **He buildeth his house as a moth]** Which lodgeth itself in some stately garment, and thinks there to die in his nest, which he hath feathered (as the silkworm endeth his life in his long wrought clew), but is soon bruised or brushed out; so shall the oppressor be cast out of his sumptuous buildings, which he hath with much cost and care erected, rather for a moth than a man to dwell in. It is not unlawful to build houses; only men must not build them, as the moth doth, with loss and hurt to others. Tremellius reads the text thus, He shall build his house at Arcturus (so this word is translated, #Job 9:9), that is, a heavenly house, and as it were a second paradise. But God did not cast man out of one paradise that he should build him another. *Haec sunt quae nos invitos faciunt mori,* said Charles V to the duke of Venice (who had showed him his palace, which was very magnificent and majestic), These be the things that make us loth to die. The Turks' private houses in Constantinople are for the most part low and base; they, after their homely manner (by long custom received), never build anything sumptuously for their own private use; but content themselves with their simple cottages, how mean soever; commonly saying, that they are good enough for the short time of their pilgrimage.

And as a booth that the keeper maketh] *i.e.* The keeper of the field, orchard, or vineyard, who setteth him up a booth, cabin, or cottage, to defend him from the parching heat of the sun, which lasteth only for one summer at utmost; so here, the experience whereof we have had abundantly in these late desolating wars; for how many gallant houses have been utterly ruined,

Ut praeter nomen solum, nihil amplius extet?

Ver. 19. **The rich man shall lie down]** That is, the wicked rich man, as #Jas 5:1. *Magna cognatio ut rei sic nominis, divitiis, et vitiis.* He shall lie down, viz. in the streets, as being left homeless.

But he shall not be gathered] *i.e.* Taken into house or harbour by any man; but abhorred by all for his former cruelty.

He openeth his eyes, and he is not] He looketh about him on every side, but findeth no succour. There are that understand it of death: The rich man shall lie down, *sc.* in the dust of death; but shall not be gathered, that is, *nec honorifice funerabitur*; he shall not have the honour of a comely burial (Tigur.). Besides, he openeth his eyes, and he is not; upon his death bed he looks about for comfort (the mole, they say, never openeth her eyes till the pangs of death are upon her); but instead thereof shall see that threefold terrible spectacle, death, judgment, hell, and all to be passed through by his poor soul; hence, and no wonder.

Ver. 20. **Terrors take hold on him as waters]** Abundantly, suddenly, irresistibly; he is even swallowed up by them and overwhelmed; as he that is plunged into a deep pit full of water, or that hath the proud surges going over his soul, #Ps 124:5. The misery of it is, that these waters are fiery, and hell is a lake; but a burning lake, and such also as hath eternity to the bottom.

A tempest stealeth him away in the night] *i.e.* *Furtim, et repente et horribiliter.* Night is itself full of terror; but much more when a tempest is up, and thieves are abroad, &c. Oh! it must needs be a terrible time indeed, when death shall come with a writ of *Habeas corpus*, and the devil with another of *Habeas animam* upon a man at once. Petrus Suetorius speaketh of one that preaching a funeral sermon on a certain canon at Paris, 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 (Pet. Suetor. de Vit. Carth). Oh! let us but think with ourselves, though it pass all thought, what a screech the poor soul giveth when hurled into hell; there to suffer such tortures and torments as it shall never be able to avoid or abide!

Ver. 21. **The east wind carrieth him away]** *Deus subito et severo suo iudicio* (Lavat.). God, by his sudden and severe judgment, hurrieth him hence to the place of torment, without the least hope of ever either mending or ending.

And he departeth] But with as ill a will as ever did Lot out of Sodom; Adam out of Paradise; the Jebusites out of Jerusalem; the unjust steward out of his office; the devil out of the demoniac.

And as a storm hurleth him] *Turbinat eum*, tosseth him like a ball into a far country, as if he were wherried away by a fierce whirlwind, or served as pastime for tempests.

Ver. 22. **For God shall cast upon him, and not spare]** But set himself to inflict upon this cursed caitiff all the plagues written and unwritten in his book, full vials of vengeance; an evil, an only evil, even punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succour, crying without comfort, mischief without measure, torments without end, and past imagination.

He would fain flee out of his hand] But that will not be; like a wretched caitiff, he runs without resting, but God's hand pursueth him till he perisheth. He may shuffle from side to side, as Balaam's ass did; he may skip up and down, as the wounded deer; *Sed haeret lateri lethalis arundo*, the deadly dart sticks in his side, &c.

Ver 23. **Men shall clap their hands at him, &c.]** Heb. He shall clap, &c. Every he shall, or God shall, as some read it. God shall kick him off this stage of the world, and then men shall clap and hiss at him in sign of detestation; as they did once at Sejanus, Phocas, Richard III, whose miseries were a part of other men's happiness, who looked upon them as wolves and public pests.

Chapter 28

Ver. 1. **Surely there is a vein for the silver]** For there is a vein, &c., so Tremellius readeth it. But here is no reason rendered of God's heavy judgments on the wicked, last discoursed of; but the unsearchableness of God's wisdom, and the righteousness of his proceedings asserted, while some bad men prosper, and some good men suffer. The reason whereof lieth hid (as a river that runneth underground) from the natural man (and in part, from the spiritual

also), be he never so perspicacious or industrious in prying into Nature's secrets. The silver vein lieth very low, and far out of sight; yet is found out and known; as also is the art of fining it. This art was soon learned in the world; and mortals were quickly become metallaries. *Effodiuntur opes, &c.* (Ovid). A great part of their skill they might have from Adam, according to that of the Divine chronologer, *Ex Adami sapientissimi Doctoris ore promanavit, tanquam ex fonte, quicquid in mundo est utilium doctrinarum, disciplinarum, scientiae et sapientiae.* He that knew so much before his fall (far more than ever Solomon did) of Nature's most hidden mysteries, who can doubt that afterwards also he retained and imparted to his nephews a great deal of abstruse and rich skill? such as was this here instanced, and afterwards by Cicero, among others, celebrated in his second book, *De Nat. Deor.*, where, discoursing about men's witty inventions, he saith among other things, *Nos aeris, argenti, auri venas penitus abditas invenimus, &c.*, We have found out the veins of brass, silver, gold, and other metals, though deeply hidden in the bowels of the earth. Some of the ancients have wished that we had never found out these metals, because of the great abuse of them. Josephus saith that Cain heaped up great store of them. Strabo saith, that Phaletius feared lest, in digging for gold and silver, men would dig themselves a new way to hell, *Et Plutonem brevi ad superos adducturos,* and bring up the devil among them (Geog. l. 5). Some say that he haunteth the richest mines, and will not suffer them to be searched. Sure it is, that, by the inordinate love of these metals, he drowneth many a soul in perdition and destruction, **#1Ti 6:9,10** *Auri sacra fames, &c.* So subject they are to sin, as that God made a law to have them purified before he would have them used by his people, **#Nu 31:22,23**, &c., who should herein have the mind of those Persians, **#Isa 13:12,17**, which regarded not silver, nor were desirous of gold. If Satan offered them these outward things in a temptation, they should answer him, as Abraham did the king of Sodom, with a "God forbid that I should," &c., **#Ge 14:23**, and send them away from whence they came; as Pellican sent back the silver bowl sent him by the bishop for a token with this answer, *Astricti sunt quotquot Tiguri cives, &c.*, All the inhabitants of our city are sworn not to take any gift from a foreign prince (Melch. Adam). Or as that noble marquis Caracciolus answered the Jesuit, who tempted him with money to

revolt from the reformed religion, and to return to Italy, Let their money perish with them, who esteem all the gold in the world worth one day's society with Jesus Christ, &c. Let it be remembered, that gold is that which the basest element yields, the most savage Indians get, servile apprentices work, Midianitish camels carry, miserable muckworms admire, covetous Jews swallow, unthrifty ruffians spend. Gold makes many men run quick to the devil on an errand; yea, sell their souls to him, as Pope Sixtus V did, for seven years' enjoyment of the popedom. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things," &c., #1Ti 6:11, and while others lay fast hold on these base and bootless businesses, lay thou hold on eternal life, #Job 28:12. But this by way of passing only.

And a place for the gold where they fine it] Or, From whence they fine it; or, Which they refine. The Spaniards are said to have found in the mines of America more gold than earth. It is accounted of metals the most precious; but it is opinion that sets the price upon it. The only material of money among us is gold and silver; but among the Roman provinces it was most times brass, sometimes leather, *Corium forma publica impressum* (Seneca). The like is said to have been used here in England in the time of the barons' wars. And why not? since, A.D. 1574, the Hollanders then being in their extremities, made money of paste board. Who the first man was that made money of gold, Pliny saith is uncertain. But Herodotus writeth, that the Lydians were the first coiners of gold and silver for that use. And Pliny, that Cadmus, the Phoenician, was the first that found gold; viz. at the hill Pangaeus, in Thracia; a place that aboundeth with gold and silver, as Herodotus testifieth. But so did Havilah (afterwards called Susiana, in East India) long before Cadmus was born, #Ge 2:11. Near unto this land of Havilah, Solinus saith, were two islands, called Chryse and Argyre, that is, the golden and silver islands, because they were so full of those richest metals, *Ut plerique eas aurea sola prodiderint et argentea habere*, that many have affirmed the soil thereof to be of gold and silver. Junius thinketh that Solinus and Pliny called this land of Havilah (by mistake of letters) Babytace, the inhabitants whereof, saith Solinus, through hatred of gold, for the hurt it doth mankind, buy up and bury very deep in the earth all the gold they can get. Like as Crates, the Theban philosopher, is said to have cast his gold into the sea for a

similar reason, as he pretended when he said, at the same time, *Abite malae cupiditates: ego vos mergam, ne ipse mergar a vobis*, but indeed, for a name, as Jerome rightly judgeth; calling him therefore, *Gloriae animal, popularis aurae vile mancipium*, a vain glorious fool (Hier. ep. ad Julian consolat.). There is no hurt in having these metals, so we love them not; so they do not get within us, as #Lu 11:41; so we make not our gold our god, nor say to the fine gold, "Thou art my confidence," #Job 31:25, *Divites magis aurum suspiciunt quam caelum* (Minut. Octav.).

Ver. 2. **Iron is taken out of the earth]** That is, out of the irony vein, which is said to be a drossy kind of earth, not sufficiently digested and hardened to make a stone. Of the generation of these inferior metals, see Pliny and the chemists; who yet are not to be hearkened unto when they tell us, that by their art they can turn these baser metals into gold, since they are here distinguished by their place, matter, form, &c. Neither is gold the end of other metals, every one of which is perfect in its kind; and, besides, the essence of everything is indivisible, and the use diverse. Iron can do that which gold and silver cannot. Historians tell us, that Alexander's old soldiers, armed with shields of iron, conquered a great part of the world. But when, as growing rich, they made them shields of silver, and were there hence called *Argyraspides*, they were basely beaten by those whom they had formerly subdued. The first inventors of iron and brass Pliny will have to be the *Chalybes*, or *Cyclopes*. *Diodorus*, the *Idaei*, *Dactyli*, or *Vulcan*. *Vulcanum, inquit, ferri, aeris, argenti, auri, omniumque quae igne fabricantur, artem invenisse, ferunt* (Diod. Sic. 1. 6). And surely if *Vulcan* were the same as *Tubalcain* (as various commentators will have it), *Diodorus* was not far from the truth; for he taught men to work in brass and iron, #Ge 4:22. Iron they had before, and the art of using it; how else could they have ploughed the accursed earth? But this man added to their skill by his invention, he sharply and wittily taught smith's craft, and is therefore by the heathens feigned to be the god of smiths.

And brass is molten out of the stone] That is, out of the ore, which is like a stone, and is called *cadmia*, as *Junius* here noteth, perhaps from *Cadmus*, whom *Pliny* maketh the first that invented the use of these metals, which *Aristotle* ascribeth to *Lydus*, the *Scythian*,

Theophrastus to Delas, the Phrygian. It is probable that these were the first that showed their countrymen the use of these metals, and so were by them accounted the first authors of what was elsewhere found out long before. Some render the text thus, And the stone is melted into brass; that is, by melting, is turned into brass. Many are of the opinion that there was anciently an art of melting stones, which is now lost. Brass is, as it were, incorporated into stone or harder matter; but forced forth by the heat of fire: *Aes in mediis lapidibus latet: sed ignis vehementia lapides aeris usque adeo torquentur ut veluti flumen aes effundant* (Bren.). Hence the Vulgate Latin thus rendereth this *hemistich*, *Lapis solutus calore, in aes vertitur*; The stone, dissolved by heat, is turned into brass. So excellently doth Job here set forth the nature of these chief metals, as Mercer would have us to take notice.

Ver. 3. **He setteth an end to darkness]** *i.e.* He (viz. the miner) brings light down into the dark entrails of the earth, and fetches out those metals that had long lain hid there, and that else would never have been beheld. Though Nature hath taken pleasure, as one speaketh, to hide all these metals, yet industry provideth man of certain marks for to discover them, and infallible conjectures to know the time when they must be drawn out of their darkness. *Habent metallici suas virgas metallicas*, Metal workers have their metal rods, whereby they search into and distinguish between metals and minerals.

*Quasque recondiderat, Stygiisque admoverat undis,
Effodiuntur opes irritamenta malorum* (Ovid. *Metam.*).

And searcheth out all perfection] *sc.* That is to be found in those subterraneous cells, in that bosom and bottom of the earth; the utmost that is there to be had he thoroughly eviscerateth, digging many yards underground, where nothing is to be seen but a deadly shade; *Ex cuius horrore mori quis posset*; enough to frighten one to death; beside the deadly damps, which suddenly breaking out of the veins of the earth, do sometimes choke the workmen.

The stones of darkness, &c.] That is, the darkest stones that lie lowest of all in the earth's bowels, whither one would wonder how any man should ever come; and especially how the sun and stars

should come by their influences to make those metals, and the precious stones, that are engendered and bred in the darksome and deadly vaults of the earth.

Ver. 4. **The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant]** Broughton rendereth it, from the spring. Others, *Erumpit fluvius iuxta accolam*, A river breaketh out near to the inhabitant; that is, to the miner, who is forced to leave the place, till by buckets, wheels, and other fit devices, the pits be cleared, so that they may start working again. *Illae ergo utribus praegrandibus ex multis bovum coriis consutis indefesso labore exhauriuntur; adhibitis ad eam rem rotis et machinis idoneis* (Merl.).

Even the waters forgotten of the foot] Broughton, Unkened of any foot. Brentius, *Quas nemo pedibus vadare possit*. Unfordable waters, deep and dangerous. To which purpose also the Tigurines translate the following words (They are dried up, &c.) thus, *Superant etiam hominis staturam, et qui poterant vadari?* They are above the height of a man, and how could they be waded through? But better,

They are dried up, &c.] Heb. They are drawn up, or diminished.

They are gone away from men] *Mortalis opera* (Trem.); by such means as men use, and are unwearable. Κερδαινοντες ου κοπιωμεν, saith a Greek father, What pains will not men take for gain and emolument?

Per mare pauperiem fugiunt, per saxa, per ignes (Horat.).

Ver. 5. **As for the earth, out of it cometh bread]** That is, grain. Alma Tellus, plentifully yieldeth those precious fruits of hers, as they are called, #**Jas 5:11**, *Fertilis et ferax* (Vatab.). These fruits lie hidden in the seed for a season; and so doth likewise fire in the flint (whereof some understand the following words), yet are they brought at length into the light.

And under it is turned up as it were fire] That is, materials of fire, as coals of, &c., or brimstone, which hath fire in it, and doth sometimes take fire in the mines; or gold, which is to be tried in the furnace, and various sparkling stones created from a sulphureous

matter, such as is that which Pliny and Isidore call *pyrites persicus*, and tell us, that if it be held hard in a man's hand it burneth. As also that which Hiarchas in Philostratus calleth pantarbe which burneth with a kind of sweet brightness, saith that author, that dazzleth the eyes of the beholder, and hath a strange attractive virtue. Thus it sometimes happens that the upper part of a ground is fruitful, and brings forth grain and grass, and underneath are precious stones and metals. But commonly where there is gold below there is the barrenest soil above. God and nature thereby teaching us, that where the love of money (that root of all evil) groweth there is no good to be found. A harvest may as well be looked for in a hedge as true grace in a gold thirsty heart.

Ver. 6. **The stones of it are the place of sapphires]** Which are excellent stones, and, therefore, here joined with gold, *Quod punctis aureis collucant*, because they shine with golden sparklings. #Ex 24:10, the Sanhedrim "saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone," &c. To show, saith one, that God had now changed their condition, their bricks made in their bondage to sapphire. So, #Isa 54:11, God graciously promiseth unto his afflicted Church, that had been tossed with tempests, and not comforted, to lay her stones with fair colours and her foundation with sapphires; to make her windows of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones; to render her all glorious within, by the curious enamel and embroidery of holy graces, and to beautify also and bespangle her with outward plenty and prosperity, that she might glitter in the eyes of God and men.

And it hath dust of gold] Or, ore of gold; better than that which our Frobisher, in his voyage to discover the strait, brought back with him; from which, when there could be drawn neither gold nor silver, nor any other metal, we have seen it cast forth to repair the highways, saith Mr Cambden.

Ver. 7. **There is a path which no fowl knoweth]** That is, say some, those places where this gold lieth are so barren, as they bring forth nothing else but gold, nothing for fowls to feed upon, no, not discernible by the eye of the vulture, which excelleth in seeing afar off, and smelleth out his prey at a very great distance (Albert. Dionys. Aquin.). But men make their ways even here, to dig and

find out gold, being herein more perspicacious and sagacious than the very vultures. The covetous would do well to consider, saith a good author, that for the most part those countries that are furnished with gold are destitute of better provision, both temporal and spiritual; that it lieth furthest from heaven, and the best of it in India, furthest from the Church; that though Adam had it in the first paradise, #Ge 2:11,12, yet in the second we shall not need it; but God shall be our gold, and we shall have plenty of that which is better than silver, #Job 22:25. That wise men have esteemed it as the stones of the streets, #2Ch 9:27, and that the children of wisdom might not possess it in their purses, #Mt 10:9; that wicked men have the most of it as their portion, #Ps 17:14, and that the devil danceth in rich and pleasant palaces, #Isa 13:21,22, &c.

And which the vulture's eye hath not seen] Or, the kite's eye, or the pie's, or the chough's, which yet is said to be *sitiens auri*, desirous of gold, and to hide it when she hath gotten it, though she can make no use of it. Some good interpreters by this path in the text understand the mines themselves, those underground places, as far underground as the fowls fly above ground; and that are by them and the most prey seeking beasts unknown and untrod; yet thither goeth the miners, by his skill and industry, letting in both light and vital air, *Quem follibus arte mirifica e sublimi deducit, ut respirent artifices, et alantur lucernae*, which with wonderful art he by bellows bringeth from above into those low holes, that the workmen may breathe, and the lights may be kept burning.

Ver. 8. The lion's whelps have not trodden it] Heb. The children of pride, {see #Job 41:34} that is, saith Vatablus, *belluae truces et immanes*, fierce and cruel creatures, which yet pass through mountains and valleys and vast forests, but come not under ground, where these metals are; that is no part of their walk. Where the Vulgate had, his *filiis institorum* here, Sons of the hucksters, Mercer cannot imagine, and his best patrons are hard put to it to defend him.

Nor the fierce lion passed by it] Heb. The huge lion. There are seven names of lions observed in Scripture, whereof here are two in this verse, of like sound the one to the other. The Tigurines render it here, the leopard; the Vulgate Latin, the lioness; and his paraphrast hath the whole verse thus, Those wild beasts, whose savage humour

searcheth out the most solitary places, could never yet find them; and the lionesses, which run everywhere when they have lost their little ones, have never approached them.

Ver. 9. **He putteth forth his hand upon the rock]** "He," that is, mortal man, the miner, #Job 28:4 (not God, as Mercer would have it), "putteth forth his hand"; *sc.* to dig down these rocks, that he may come at that treasure, and make himself master of that spoil that is hidden in their entrails.

Nil tam difficile est, quod non sollertia vincit.

Alexander the Great being asked, How he so soon overran the universe? answered, I never held anything impossible to be achieved. When he had heard of anything dangerous to be done, or unlikely, he would the rather set upon it, and say, *Iam periculum par animo Alexandri*, This is an enterprise fit for an Alexander. So of Julius Caesar (who had in his time taken a thousand towns, conquered three hundred nations, taken prisoners a million of men, and slain as many) sings the poet (Lucan),

— *Caesar in omnia praeceps,
Nil actum credens, dum quid superesset agendum,
Fertur atrox.* —

Difficulty doth but whet on heroic spirits; it wakeneth, but not any way weakeneth, the courageous and industrious. Hannibal made his way through the Alps by breaking down a huge rock putrefied with fire, and vinegar poured thereon. Hence Juvenal,

*Opposuit natura Alpemque nivemque
Deduxit scopulos, et montem rupit aceto.*

He overturneth the mountains by the roots] Or, he turneth it up at the roots of the mountains; *sc.* which he mineth, by the obstinace of his labour.

— *Labor improbus omnia vincit.*

Δεινος και παντολμος της φιλοχρηματιας ερωσ, saith Isidore, the love of money is daring and desperate.

Ver. 10. **He cutteth out rivers among the rocks]** *i.e.* By cleaving hardest rocks, he draws in store of water to wash the inward parts of the earth, that he may see what gold lieth hidden there; as also, to wash and purge his metals, which require much washing. This is the work of his hands. And then for his eye, and as a reward of his labour (for the diligent hand maketh rich, #Pr 10:4, and in all labour there is profit, #Pr 14:23).

His eye seeth every precious thing] Heb. Every price; or, All preciousness. Whatsoever is rare, so Tremellius rendereth it. His house is filled with all precious and pleasant riches, #Pr 24:4. *Dii laboribus omnia vendunt*, said the heathens, God sells all good things to men for their pains taking.

Ver. 11. **He bindeth the floods from overflowing]** Heb. From weeping; that is (by an elegant metaphor), from distilling and dropping, as those underground waters use to do; but the miner bindeth them; that is, he dammeth them up, and diverteth them, that they may not fall into his pit and mar his work. Thus he removes all blocks, and devours all difficulties, and all for a little pelf, which perisheth in the use, and will rather hinder from than help men to heaven. How much more should we labour for the true treasure, the pearl of price, the one thing necessary? &c. *Si tanti vitreum, quanti veram margaritam?* (Tertul.). All those outward things are *nec vera, nee vestra*, as Austin elegantly; they are neither true riches, nor ours, but another's, as our Saviour telleth us, #Lu 16:12. Aristotle also teacheth us, That wise men may get riches, but not make it their business, *Αλλ' ου τουτ εστι περι ου σπουδαζουσι* (Polit. lib. 1). Brentius reads this text, *Perplexa fluminum gyrat*, He turneth about the crooked rivers, putting them into a new channel, that he may get the gold and precious stones that lie in the bottom; for there are some gold flowing rivers; such as are Ganges in India, Pactolus in Asia, Tagus in Spain, the Rhine in Germany, &c.

And the thing that is hid he bringeth to light] Contrary to the design of nature, he revealeth her secrets, and discovereth all that she hideth by this raking out of her riches, and making those things

that lie couchant in her bowels as common as if they grew above ground.

Ver. 12. **But where shall wisdom be found?**] Here is now the other part of the antithesis, and the second part of the chapter, which is not as hard as the former was. Wisdom is either natural or spiritual, #1Co 2:11-15, earthly or heavenly, #Jas 3:15 The wisdom here inquired after is supernal and supernatural; such as can neither be found upon the earth or dug out of it; such as cannot be fathomed or found out by human abilities or by natural reason. "But God revealeth it unto his by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," #1Co 2:10. And with this heifer must all those plough that will find out his riddles. *Lucisci et qui hebeti sunt visu*, saith Vives, Those that are weak sighted and sand blind, if at any time they look wishly upon anything with desire to see it the better, they see it so much the worse, and not as well as they did before (Lud. Viv. in Aug. de C. D., l. 22, c. 6). Think the same of the most acute and perspicacious naturalist; when he comes to look into the things of God, he is not only sand blind, but stark blind, #1Co 2:14, he will not see (and, therefore, who so blind?), he hath an antipathy to Divine truths; he loveth the law better than the gospel, and any truth better than the law. And as for this high point of heavenly wisdom (called here *ills sapientia*, with an emphasis), whereby is understood that God's judgments are all just, even then when he afflicteth the godly and prospereth the wicked, he cannot comprehend it, or yield to it; but is ready to turn flat atheist upon it, as Averroes did; denying the Divine providence, and conceiting that all things were carried on by fate and fortune. Job's enemy like friends herein were no wiser than they should be, when they thus rashly censured him for wicked, because afflicted; and presumptuously took upon them to give a reason of God's proceedings in his various dispensations with as much confidence as if they had been of God's privy council, whereas they should have considered, that God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out; and that he who herein is scholar to his own reason is sure to have a fool to his master.

And where is the place of understanding] As there is no vein to be found of the Divine wisdom, so neither any known place (like there is for gold, silver, precious stones) where it ought to be sought, save

only of God by prayer, **#Jas 1:5**. Man, whatsoever good success he hath in the before mentioned searches, he is not as happy nor dextrous in that of Divine understanding. Epiphanius resembleth him to the mole, which doth all his work underground; but if once he be brought above ground, as he is stark blind, so is he every way a weak and contemptible creature. The best that are seen but in part, and are sometimes at a loss about the reason of God's most righteous proceedings, which men must *mirari, et non rimari*, silently adore, and not overly curiously search into. There is a learned ignorance, saith Calvin, of those things, *quae scire nec datur, nec fas est*, which it is neither granted us nor fit for us to know; and in this the very desire of knowledge is a kind of madness. Let that saying of Xenophanes be remembered: There is no great difference whether a man set his feet or his eyes in another man's house without his permission. *Arcana Dei sunt arca Dei*, God's secrets are God's ark; pry not, lest ye come halting home for so doing (Plut. de Curiositat.).

Ver. 13. **Man knoweth not the price thereof]** Or, the order thereof, in what manner and method God proceedeth; no, though in other things he knew as much as Homer did, of whom one saith that he was πανσοφος, και παντα τα ανθρωπεια επισταμενος, a man that knew all human affairs; or as Aristotle did, whom some have called an eagle fallen from the clouds; or as Jerome, *quem nullum scibile latuit*, who knew all that was knowable; or as Bishop Andrew, whom one calleth (but how truly I inquire not) a gulf of learning. Sure it is that man, sorry man, knoweth neither the price of Divine wisdom, for it is invaluable; nor the place of it, for it is investigable; nor the order of it, for that is unattainable till we come to heaven; there being a wheel within a wheel, **#Eze 1:16**, and providence shall one day be unriddled.

Neither is it found in the land of the living] That is, here upon earth, by any human wit or industry. In other texts of Scripture the time while we live in this world is called, the day, **#Joh 9:4**, and the light of the living, **#Ps 56:13**, in opposition to death, which is called, a land of darkness, as darkness itself, **#Job 10:22**, where they that inhabit are said to be free among the dead, **#Ps 88:5**, free of that company. See **#Isa 38:11**. None but those that live spiritually, and have senses habitually exercised to discern good and evil, **#Heb**

5:14, can see anything of the worth of this wisdom so as to seek after it as silver, and prize it above gem; for *ignoti nulla cupido*, men covet not what they value not. Now the cock on the dunghill knows not the price or place of this inestimable jewel, and, therefore, slights it. Those epicures especially, *qui suaviter vivunt*, as the Vulgate here translath, who live in pleasure upon earth, and are wanton, **#Jas 5:5**.

Ver. 14. **The depth saith, It is not in me**] It is not to be had above ground, may some say; but what, underground? Not there either, saith Job; for the abyss saith, that is, if it could speak, it would surely say, "It is not in me"; and the sea gives us the same verdict: dig to the centre of the earth, dive to the bottom of the sea, you shall hear no tale or tidings of her; she neither groweth with gold and precious stones in the earth, nor with pearls and coral in the sea; we must be taught by God, and the Holy Spirit must join himself to our chariot, as Philip did to the eunuch's, **#Ac 8:29**; he must teach us this wisdom from above, or we can never learn it, **#Isa 54:13**. A man may read the figure on the dial, but he cannot tell how the day goes unless the sun shine upon the dial; we may read over the book of the creature, and the book of the Scripture, but we cannot learn to purpose till the Spirit of God shine into our hearts, **#2Co 4:6**. The gospel is full of jewels; but they are locked up from sense and reason, **#1Co 2:10**. The angels in heaven are searching into these sacred depths, **#1Pe 1:12**, and know not as much but they would fain know more of this manifold wisdom of God, *πολυποικιλος*, **#Eph 3:10**, that hath such an abundance of curious variety in it, as the word there signifieth, even such as is seen in the best pictures or textures.

Ver. 15. **It cannot be gotten for gold**] *Non emitur, nec aestimatur*, it is not purchased or procured with money, as other learning may (*en precium et praestantiam sapientiae*). "With a great sum obtained I this freedom," said that colonel, **#Ac 22:28**. So may many say of their learning, they have sufficiently paid for it. Cleanthes parted with all he had for learning; Plato gave thirty thousand florins for three books; Reuchlin gave the Jew that taught him Hebrew a crown for every hour's pains; Jerome got his skill in that language with the hazard of his life, and held it a good bargain. But here is no such trading. See **#Ac 8:18-20**. Fie (quoth that rich and wretched cardinal, when he saw he must die), will money do nothing? will not

death be hired? may not heaven be purchased? No, no, God is no money merchant; his kingdom is not *partum*, wealthy, but *paratum*, the prepared, #Mt 25:34, his grace is gratuitous; #Mt 13:11, To you it is given (and what more free than gift?) to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. And to you it is given, freely given, on behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, &c., #Php 1:29. That proud merit monger that said, *Gratis non accipiam*, I will not have grace or glory of free cost, could not but go without both (Vega).

Ver. 16. **It cannot be valued]** Heb. Thrown on the ground, as wares were wont to be, and are yet, when they are set to sale, and to be prized or valued.

With the gold of Ophir] The word here rendered gold is not the same as that in the former or those in the following verses. Five different times gold is here mentioned (because so highly prized among men), and in four different words. Jerome on #Jer 10 observeth that the Hebrew have seven different words for gold; and five different sorts are here instanced. That here mentioned is a special name for the most resplendent and glistening gold, #Ps 45:9 **Da 10:5 So 5:11**. Of it comes Michtam of David, or David's golden psalm, #Ps 16:1, his ingot of gold. Broughton thinks it to be no Hebrew word, but the name of gold in Ophir; *Obrizium dictum volunt, quasi Ophirizium*. Ophir is Peru, say some; others, an island in the Indies, where the most precious gold was to be had, called also gold of Parvaim, #2Ch 3:6. This is supposed to be in Havilah, #Ge 2:11. It is called perfections of gold, #2Ch 4:21.

With the precious onyx, or the sapphire] The onyx is a stone said to be found in the river Ganges, and to be of a white colour, like the white of a man's nail, whence it hath its name. See of it, Plin. lib. 37, cap. 4; Boet. Hist. Gem. lib. 2, cap. 90. The sapphire is a stone of a sky coloured blue, or of a light coloured purple.

Ver. 17. **The gold and the crystal cannot equal it]** For crystal some read diamond, others adamant. It hath its name from its purity and transparency. Junius rendereth it therefore *nitidissima gemma*. It seems to be, saith one, the last attempt of nature, and makes us find heaven on earth.

And the exchange of it shall not be for jewels (or vessels) of fine gold] Of phez gold, so Broughton renders it, *Vas auri puri puti*, and would have it come from Fesse, in Barbary. The Arabians now call gold phes. Of this solid fast gold were made many precious jewels or vessels, like that French coin in the historian, *in qua plus formae quam ponderis*, in which was not so much weight as workmanship: #Pr 25:11, "Apples of gold in lattices of silver"; or put in a case of silver cut work.

Ver. 18. **No mention shall be made of coral]** No talk of coral or carbuncle, of pearl, or any other the rarest and richest jewels in all the world. We read of Cleopatra, that vying with Antony in luxury, she drunk up a pearl of incredible price dissolved in vinegar; and of Charles, duke of Burgundy, that in the fight at Nansey, he lost a diamond of that worth, *ut eo tota aliqua regio emi posset*, that therewith a man might have bought a whole country (Macrob. Sat. lib. 5, cap. 17; Alsted. Chronol.). It was afterwards set in the pope's triple crown; but no way worthy to be mentioned in the same day with wisdom.

For the price of wisdom is above rubies] Which are so called from their lovely redness. See #La 4:7. Pearls some render it; of which Pliny saith, *Principium culmenque rerum ommum pretii margaritae tenent*, Pearls are the principal of all precious things. They were so of old; but they are not so today. What huge sums were once given for saints' relics (as they called them) and popes' pardons! but now the world is grown wiser. England is no more a babe; there is no man here, but now he knows that they do foolishly that give gold for lead, more weight of that than they receive of this. This and much more to the same purpose speaketh Henry VIII (in his protestation against the pope), who yet, as a faint chapman, went not to the price of this true wisdom; as appeareth by that public speech of his in parliament, There are many that are too busy with their new *sumpsimus*, and others that dote too much upon their old *mumpsimus*. The new religion, though true, he envied; the old, though his own, he despised; being as a speckled bird, or a cake half baked, &c.

Ver. 19. **The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it]** Of the Topaz, see Plin. lib. 86, cap. 8. It seemeth to have the lustre of gold and purity of crystal, and those agreeable mixtures of colours which make the

purple of kings. The operations of this stone are many and rare, as Rueus sets them forth, lib. 2, cap. 3.

Neither shall it be valued with pure gold] Plato saith as much of moral wisdom, Ουτε χρυσις, ουτε αδαμας, ουτως αστραπτει, No gold or gem so glistereth. And elsewhere he saith, that if moral virtue could be beheld with mortal eyes, *mirificos sui amores excitaret*, it would wonderfully enamour men. Aurelius the emperor would say, that he would not leave the knowledge he might learn in one hour for all the gold that he possessed. Alphonsus, king of Arragon, professed that he would rather choose to lose his jewels than his books, his kingdoms (whereof he had many), *quam litteras, quas permodicas scire dicebat*, than that little learning he had attained unto (Val. Max. Christian. 118,237). Many have been so taken with the study of the mathematics, that they could have lived and died in it. *Vae igitur stupori nostro*, woe then to the world because of wisdom! this incomparable wisdom of God in a mystery, as the apostle calleth it.

Haec quia pro vili, sub pedibusque iacet (Ovid).

Money is most men's study, not without a horrible neglect of piety, which yet is the principal thing, **#Pr 4:7**, and profitable to all things, **#1Ti 4:8**, as that which hath the promise of both lives, *Ibid*. Now the promises are exceeding great and precious things, **#2Pe 1:4**, even the unsearchable riches of Christ, **#Eph 3:8**. Such gold as cannot be too dearly bought, **#Mt 13:44,46**, nor too far set, no, though so far as the queen of Sheba came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and could have been content to have changed her throne for his footstool. Sure it is she was no niggard, but parted with abundance of precious things and sweet odours for that wisdom which she held, and worthily, far more sweet and precious than all her annual revenue. Sure it is, that if the mountains were pearl, the huge rock rubies, and the whole globe a shining chrysolite, yet all this were nothing to the worth of the wisdom here commended. How greatly bound then are God's people to bless his name for communicating unto us this invaluable treasure by his word and Spirit, **#1Co 2:13** Hath he not written for us excellent things in counsels and knowledge? **#Pr 22:20**; hath he not made his Son, that essential

wisdom of his, to become unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? #1Co 1:30. Should some earthly prince give us a rich ring off his finger, wherein there were a chrysolite, a sapphire, a topaz, or some other precious stone, how highly would we honour him, and what would we not be ready to do or suffer for him? And shall we not much more do so for God, rich in mercy, plenteous in goodness, abundant in kindness and in truth, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy? O pray for that blessed sight, #Eph 1:18 3:18, and reckon one grain of grace more worth than all the gold of Ophir, one remnant of faith beyond all the gorgeous and gay attire in the world.

Ver. 20. **Whence then cometh wisdom? &c.**] {See Trapp on "Job 28:12"} *q.d.* Nowhere surely is she to be found but with God, the fountain of wisdom, #Job 28:23. To seek her elsewhere is but laborious loss of time; witness the philosophers' anxious, but bootless, disquisitions after the *summum bonum*, the true blessedness or chief good; about which there were eight various opinions, and yet all out.

Ver. 21. **Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living]** As hath been before set forth, #Job 28:13. They that see most into it see but in part, and must needs say, that the greatest part of their knowledge is the least part of their ignorance, *Maxima pars eorum quae scimus est minima pars eorum quae nescimus*. Something they know of his revealed will, but nothing at all of his secret. Whereunto we may add, that there are many occult qualities in nature, the reason whereof the wisest men understand not.

And kept close from the fowls of the air] Which yet fly very high, and seem to touch the clouds of heaven; as the eagle, which delighteth in high flying. Some will have the angels (elsewhere set forth as winged creatures) to be here meant; who, although they stand always in God's presence, and see much of his majesty, yet not at all nothing near, #Isa 6:2,3, they cover their faces with their wings, as with a double scarf (as not able to behold his glory), and make their addresses unto him with greatest self-abasements.

Ver. 22. **Destruction and death say, &c.]** That is, the dead in the grave, and damned in hell, as some gloss it. Others, man in his corrupt estate, though a child of death, yet capable of salvation; and the wisdom of God hath found out a way to save him by his Son, letting in life by the ear, according to that, "Hear, and your souls

shall live," #Isa 55:3. The dead in sins and trespasses shall hear the voice of the Son of God (in the preaching of the word), and shall live, the life of grace here, and of glory hereafter, #Joh 5:25. These have heard of God's wisdom in his various dealings with the sons of men, and that with their ears; both with the gristles that grow on their heads, and with the inward ears of their minds, so that one sound hath pierced both, but yet the one half hath not been told them; they can truly say, as the queen of Sheba said to Solomon, Thou hast added wisdom and goodness to the fame, #1Ki 10:7. And as David in the person of Christ, #Ps 16:11, "Thou wilt show me the path of life"; whereby is hinted that Christ himself, as man, did not so fully understand in the days of his flesh the unconceivable joys of heaven, as he did afterwards, when his whole person was glorified with the glory which, as God, he had with the Father before the world was, #Joh 17:5.

Ver. 23. **God understandeth the way thereof]** The only wise God, who alone knows her price, knows her retreat. *Haec sunt inferni et morris verba*, saith Brentius; those are the words of hell and of death. But we may better take them, as spoken by Job himself; which yet are to be understood, not as if Job thought that there was any place, apart from God, where his wisdom might be sought; or any way, out of himself, to go to it. But these things are spoken after the manner of men, saith Merlin; for wisdom is in God, yea, God is wisdom itself. For the wisdom of God is nothing else but the most wise God; since whatsoever is in God is God. Therefore seeing he is well known to himself, how can his wisdom be but as well known unto him? His infinite knowledge and understanding is in some sort shadowed out unto us in the words following.

Ver. 24. **For he looketh to the ends of the earth]** He is ολοφθαλμος, all eye (Basil); so that together and at once he beholdeth all things in the whole course of nature, and under the whole of heaven. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men," #Ps 11:4. Where the former pointeth out God's knowledge, the latter his judgments, his critical descant, saith one. And surely this all seeing eye of God, saith another interpreter, should keep us within the compass of obedience as much as anything; since he who is our judge is a constant eye witness of our cogitations, communication, and whole conversation. *Cave, spectat Cato*, Take heed, Cato seeth you, was an old watchword among the Romans,

and a retentive from vice. How much more should this be among Christians! *Ne pecces, Deus ipse videt*, Be advised, God beholdeth you. Think not that he who is invisible cannot see, or that because he is the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, therefore he cannot see so far as earth; for he looketh to the ends and extremities of the earth, his eyes run to and fro, they are in every place beholding the evil and the good, **#Pr 15:3**. The world is to him as a sea of glass, **#Re 4:6**. He seeth through it, and every man before him is all window; he seeth the very entrails of the soul, the heart of the heart, "All things are naked and open before him," saith the apostle, **#Heb 4:13**. Naked for the outside, and open for the inside of them; the word signifieth dissected, quartered, and, as it were, cleft through the back bone. He searcheth the reins, those seats of lust and most abstruse parts of the body, so wrapped up in fat and flesh, as if no eye should come at them.

And seeth under the whole heaven] His providence, like a well drawn picture, looketh every way, and extendeth to every the least and lightest occurrence; governing all things wisely and powerfully, and ordering the disorders of the world to his own glory. Epicures and atheists would shut him up in heaven, as hath been before noted, as if he did neither know nor do anything here below; but they will find it otherwise.

Ver. 25. **To make the weight for the winds]** He ordereth wind and water, rain and thunder, *Pondere, mensura, numero, tacit omnia*, - therefore wisdom is with him. The winds he weigheth in a balance; then when they seem to blow where they list, piercing through the air with their violent blasts, God sets them their bounds, and appoints them their proportion. He sends them out as his posts, and makes them pace orderly.

And he weigheth the waters by measure] Both the rain (not a drop falls in vain in a wrong place, or at random, but by a divine decree, as a witness of his wisdom and goodness, **#Ac 17:14**) and the sea and rivers; neither do the winds blow nor the waters flow without the Lord, who is the great moderator, who measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand, &c., **#Isa 40:12**.

Ver. 26. **When he made a decree for the rain]** And hence it is that it raineth upon one city, and not upon another, **#Am 4:7**. {See Trapp on

"Am 4:7"} The rise of rain out of vapours drawn up from the earth by the heat of the sun, and the generation of it in the clouds, is no less wonderful than the use of it is necessary for the refreshing and fattening of the earth; allaying the heat, and nourishing the herb and tree, &c. These showers may seem to arise and be carried up and down at random, and without a law; but Job assureth us that God maketh a decree, a statute, or a bound for them, and that he gives or withholds rain at his pleasure.

And a way for the lightning of the thunder] Or, for the lightning and the thunder. In both which there is much of God to be seen and heard; these being the harbingers, as it were, and officers to make room for him, and to manifest his power, which the greatest must acknowledge, #Ps 29:1,2, and the saints must take comfort in, #Job 28:11. As for those impious wretches, that slight these wonderful works of Almighty God, and speak basely of them (as he of whom Mr Perkins somewhere writeth, that hearing it thunder, said it was nothing but Tom Tumbrel a hooping his tubs, and was thereupon killed with a thunder bolt; and those old Italians that used, in time of thunder, to ring their greatest bells, and shoot off their greatest ordinance, &c., on purpose to drown the noise of the heavens); as they are worse than Pharaoh and Caligula, and other heathens, who stiled their chief god Altitonans, the high thunderer; so they shall one day see the Lord Christ suddenly coming upon them as lightning, and dreadfully thundering out that dismal *Discedite*, Go, ye cursed.

Ver. 27. **Then did he see it, and declare it, &c.]** Or, Then doth he see it, and number it, &c., *sc.* When he ordereth winds, waters, and other creatures, he hath wisdom ready *et in numerate*, as we say; as well known and as familiar as men have those things they daily deal in. *Illa vero verborum congeries*, saith Merlin. This heap of words, God saw it, numbered it, prepared it, searched it out, serveth but to show how intimate wisdom is with God, and how proper to him. And lest any should say, Hath God then communicated no heavenly wisdom to his creature? Yes, saith Job, but such as is thus circumscribed.

Ver. 28. **But unto man he said, &c.]** *q.d.* Let him not curiously pry into God's secrets, nor rashly censure others (as you have done me), but, out of a reverential fear of God, eschew evil and do good, for

this shall be his wisdom, **#De 4:6**, and the contrary, **#Jer 8:9**, *Insignis est hic locus* (Mercer). See like texts, **#De 29:29 Ec 12:13 Ps 111:10 Pr 1:7 9:10**. {See Trapp on "De 29:29"} {See Trapp on "Ec 12:13"} {See Trapp on "Ps 111:10"} {See Trapp on "Pr 1:7"} {See Trapp on "Pr 9:10"}

Chapter 29

Ver. 1. **Moreover Job continued his parable]** Or, his sentence, as Tremellius rendereth it, his sententious and elegant oration, his *aureum flumen orationis*, golden flood of grave discourse, as we may better call it, than Cicero did Aristotle's politics, *Tota oratio gravissimis sententiis, et verborum luminibus illustris est* (Merlin). Here Job describeth graphically his former felicity; as in the next chapter his present misery. The promise of prosperity to God's people is to be understood with exception of the cross, wherewith, if need be, **#1Pe 1:6**, they are sure to be exercised; and they shall take it for a favour too, **#Heb 12:6**. "By the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report," &c., **#2Co 6:7,8**, they must learn "to be abased, and to abound, to be full and to be hungry," &c., **#Php 4:12**, though this be a hard lesson, *Perquam durum est? sed ira lex scripta est*, saith the civilian (Ulpian). Hard or not hard, we must frame to it, and hope for better. The Epicures held that a man might be cheerful amidst the most exquisite torments: 1. In consideration of his honesty and integrity: this indeed was Job's great comfort, as we see, **#Job 31:6**. And, 2. In consideration of those pleasures and delights that formerly he had enjoyed, and now cheered up himself with the remembrance of, *Ex praeteritarum voluptatum recordatione* (Cicer. de Finib. l. 2; Sen. de Benef. l. 4, c. 22). But how slight and slender a comfort this was Job setteth forth in this chapter. And who knoweth not that as it is a sweet thing in prosperity to relate what hazards and hardships we have passed through; so in adversity it is grievous to call to mind what better days we have had?— *Olim haec meminisse iuvabit* (Virg.). *Minerum est fuisse faelicem* (Sen.). And yet it is but reason that we should eat the crust and crumb together; receive, I mean, evil at the hand of God as well as good, **#Job 2:10**. {See Trapp on "Job 27:1"}

Ver. 2. **Oh that I were as in months past]** *O mihi praeteritos, &c.* Though Job desireth not so much to be young again (which to be Chiron and Cato are said seriously to have refused, *Secundum*

menses antiquitatis vel anteaetatis) as to prosper again; for this is what we all covet; but we shrink in the shoulder when called to carry the cross. To show his earnest desire, he redoubled his wish, as in the days, &c., and God answered him to the full, by redoubling upon him his former prosperity; not for days and months, but for various years together; and by giving him again all things richly to enjoy. So liberal is the Lord to his, that he many times giveth them more than heart can wish.

When God preserved me] That he acknowledged God to be the author of his earthly felicity was well done; but not so well to think that God preserved him not, because he prospered him not. See the like **#Job 29:5**. God oft wraps himself up in a cloud, and will not be seen till afterwards; but his hand is ever upon all them for good that seek him, **#Eze 18:21,22**, he knoweth their souls in adversity, **#Ps 31:7**.

Ver. 3. **When his candle shined upon my head]** When I was apparently blessed by him, and all went hail well with me. The sun smote me not by day nor the moon by night, **#Ps 121:6**, but both seemed to be made and to make for me. Nay, more; the sweet sunshine of God's loving countenance was displayed upon me, which is not like the winter sun, that casts a goodly countenance when it shines, but gives little comfort and heat. Job had both counsel and comfort from God; and that when other men were to seek of both: for,

By his light I walked through darkness] Without the least fear of those evils and miseries that put others into very great distemper. So Noah was— *Mediis tranquillus in undis*. Abraham stands upon the hill, and seeth the cities of the plain burning. David can walk (not step) through (not cross) the valley (not a dark entry) of the shadow of death (the darkest side of death), and not fear (though he should go back again in the same way). And why? "for thou art with me," saith he, "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," **#Ps 23:4**.

Ver. 4. **As I was in the days of my youth]** *Hybernorum meorum*, so Junius; as I was in the days of my winter quarters, when I lay and did little more than gather up mine assignations. Others render it, As I was in the days of mine autumn; that is, when, being a great man, I refreshed the poor, as autumn doth the passenger and others with its

fruits. But they do best that render it days of my youth, which hath the same name in Hebrew with winter and with reproach **חַרְחָר** because (say some) young people are prone to reproachful practices, and that age is commonly frozen in vice, no virtue then springing or showing itself. So **#Ec 11:10**, the word used to signify youth signifieth darkness or blackness; to note that youth is the dark age, many times sooted with sin; and therefore young men should cleanse their ways by cleaving to the word, **#Ps 119:9**.

When the secret of God was upon my tabernacle] *i.e.* When God did so friendly and familiarly intermeddle with mine affairs, making them to prosper (Annotat. Diod.). When his most wise conduct did govern my house, and did provide for it; stopping those secret leaks, and that hole in the bottom of the bag, by which other men's estates do usually run out; and supplying me and mine, *tanquam virgula divina*, with all things necessary for life and godliness. The Greek hath it, When God gave my house a visit. And some taking the secret of God here, for his law and covenant, say, that Job was good early; and when but a young housekeeper, had a church in his house, and much resort thither of godly people.

Ver. 5. **When the Almighty was yet with me]** To prosper me, and give me all that heart could wish or need require. But if that be not done, God's people are apt to think him absent. "Is the Lord among us?" say they in the wilderness; as if that could not be, and they athirst, **#Ex 17:7**. So Gideon in the invasion of the Midianites; "The Lord," saith the angel, "is with thee, thou valiant man. But Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" **#Jud 6:12,13**. "If it be so, why am I thus?" as she said, **#Ge 25:22**. *Si amatur, quomodo infirmatur?* If Lazarus be Christ's friend, why is he sick? (Aug.). But these two may very well stand together; and God is never nearer to his children than when they, for crying, cannot see him. Moses speaks of the good will of him that dwelt in the bush, the burning bush, **#Ex 3:2 De 33:2,3**, but not consumed. God is with his in the fiery trial, **#Isa 43:2**, as he was with the three children, and with the martyrs.

When my children were about me] Round about my table, **#Ps 128:3**, morigerous and obsequious unto me; when my children and servants (for the word signifieth both) were about me; as circles

about a point or centre, all looking at and observing me, to do as I directed them.

Ver. 6. **When I washed my steps with butter]** When I had of everything God's plenty, as they call it. Butter enough to have washed my feet in, had I been so proud and profuse. And oil great store, insomuch as that rivers thereof seemed to flow for me from those rocks and craggy mountains in Arabia Petraea, where some say Job dwelt. Lavater, upon the text, tells us of rocks that yield oil, and of petroleum or *petrelaeum*, a sovereign ointment (very good against various diseases) that issueth out of rocks, whence also it hath its name (not unlike that berry which the French call, *Uva de Spine*, the grape of a thorn); but this whole verse seemeth to be a hyperbole (not unlike that of Zophar, **#Job 20:17**, and that of Moses, **#De 32:13**; confer **#Ge 49:11 Ps 80:15**), importing the very great abundance of all outward comforts and contentments that Job once enjoyed. He had the reward of humility and the fear of the Lord, even riches, and honour, and life, **#Pr 22:4**. Riches he had *quantas optare nullus auderet* (as Austin saith of Constantine the Great), more than heart could wish (De Civ. Dei, 1.5, c. 25). What honour he had with his wealth (and that is to be chosen before riches, **#Pr 22:1**) he setteth forth at large in the following verses. And what long life he promised himself, not without the continuance of both the former, see **#Job 29:18-20 42:12,16,17**.

Ver. 7. **When I went out to the gate]** *i.e.* To the place of judicature, called by Solomon the holy place, **#Ec 8:11**, because God sitteth in the midst of those gods, **#Ps 82:1**. The Ethiopian judges were wont to keep the chief seat empty for him. It appeareth by this text that Job was a judge: or chief magistrate, not like those whom Isaiah calleth scabs or wounds, **#Isa 3:7**, vid. Pisc. in loc.; but those whom the same prophet calleth healers, or binders up of wounds, **#Isa 3:7**, Here *αναξ* from *ακος*, Medela; and Hosea, shields, as Junius translateth, **#Ho 4:8**; and another prophet, heirs or possessors of restraint, **#Jud 18:7**. It appeareth also that he did justice in his own person; so did David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Augustus Caesar, more vigorously than any young man, and more prudent than any old man, as the historian saith of him, Παντος μεν ανδρος νεανικωπερον, παντος δε γεροντος φρονιμωτερον (Dio). Which while Aurelian the emperor neglected to do, he was even bought and sold by his deputies.

When I prepared my seat in the street/] *i.e.* My judgment seat, where he sat *Sub dio, non attollens inane supercilium, sed exhibens utile ministerium*, Not priding himself, but profiting others, while justice, justice, as Moses speaketh, that is, pure justice, was duly administered, #De 10:20. Over this tribunal might well have been set that distich at Zant,

*Hic locus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, iura, bonos.*

Ver. 8. **The young men saw me, and hid themselves]** As awed with my presence, and fearing the censure of my gravity. Valerius Maximus reporteth the like of Marcus Cato among the Romans (lib. 5, cap. 2), as being *Vir rigidae innocentiae*, saith Livy; *Et virtuti quam simillimus*, as Velleius hath it; that is, a most strict and very virtuous magistrate. Hence at their Floralia, those wanton sports, the youths could not play their pranks till he departed; they all crying unto him, *Aut vultum deponas, aut discedas*, Either lay down your grave looks or leave the place.

And the aged arose, and stood up] Performing that respect to me which was due to them, #Le 19:32, and saluting me as the Athenians did their Phocion, by the title of *Bonus* Good; or as the Romans did their Trajan, by the style of *Optimus* the best ruler that ever they had; and all both young and old crying out, as once they did at Rome to Severus, the emperor, All men do the better in all respects for thy good government, Παντες παντα καλως ποιουσιν επειδαν συ καλως αρχεις (Dio). These acclamations and public honours, though Job sought not, yet it could not but be a comfort to him, as it was to David, that whatsoever he did pleased the people.

Ver. 9. **The princes refrained talking]** Not only as acknowledging his authority, but as admiring his great eloquence, and hanging upon his lips, as the babe doth upon the breast, the bee upon the flower, or the little bird upon her dam's bill.

And laid their hand on their mouth] Kissing their hands and adoring me (*adorare est applicare manum ad os*), or rather, as stopping their mouths, being ashamed to speak in his presence, whom they knew to be far beyond them in wisdom and elocution.

Now of this honour done Job by all sorts of people, Brentius hath this note, *Parum est ingentes camelos possidere, &c.* It is a small matter, that Job had many camels and flocks of sheep; this was a greater blessing of God upon him, that he was honoured and observed by all sorts. This followeth virtue (as the shadow doth the body) at the heels. To do worthily in Ephrata, is the way to be famous in Bethlehem, #Ru 4:11.

Ver. 10. **The nobles held their peace]** The Hebrew word for nobles signifieth such as stand in the presence of great princes; or, such as the people eyeth and referreth all things to them, *Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant* (Virg.). These (after the example of those forementioned princes, #Job 29:9) *held their peace* Heb. hid their voice, as ashamed to hear themselves speak before such a master of speech as Job was; of whom it might well be said, as once of Dr Whitaker, That never any man saw him without reverence, nor heard him without wonder (Dr Hall).

And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth] *Ex metu loquendi*, as being afraid before me, though themselves were *antecessores vocis* (as some render the former words), eloquent men and able speakers. Demosthenes, that great orator, being to speak before King Philip, three several times stood speechless, and thirty different times forgot what he had prepared to speak unto him: Τρις αφωνος εγενετο. Τρισακις διελαθετο των α λαλειν εσκοπει (Tzetzes, Chiliad 7). An awful respect to Job's dignity and worth caused this extreme silence in these grandees. And besides, it may be they were of Pliny's mind, who said, *Non minus interdum oratoris est tacere quam dicere.* There is a time to keep silence and a time to speak, #Ec 3:7.

Ver. 11. **When the ear heard me, then it blessed me]** That is, it praised me, and praised God for me, as for a common blessing; so weighty were my words, and so just my sentence, not unlike that of the Areopagites, in Athens, which was so upright, that none could ever say that he was unjustly condemned by them; but both parties, as well those that were cast as they that cast them, were alike contented, Ηττωμενοι στεργουσι ομοιως τοις κεκρατηκασι.

And when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me] Job (though he neither sought it, nor was puffed up with it) had that *Pulchrum*

monstrari, et dicier, Hic est. The like happiness befell Demosthenes at Athens and Pliny at Rome, ουτος εστιν ο Δημοσθενης.

Ver. 12. **Because I delivered the poor that cried]** Here are set forth the true causes of that great respect that was generally given Job; he was a good justicer, such as Jethro describeth, #Ex 18:21. He hated, much more than did Mithridates, such as maliciously persecuted virtue forsaken of fortune. And as James V of Scotland was called the poor man's king, so might Job well have been; for no sooner could a poor body cry to him for help but he relieved him, and rescued him out of the hands of his oppressor (Cassiodor.). Theodoric of old, and Gustavus, king of Swedes, of late, are famous for so doing (Mr Clark).

And the fatherless, and him that had none, &c.] The fatherless and friendless, from whom he could not expect any reward. He was not of those who follow the administration of justice as a trade only, with an unquenchable and unconscionable desire of gain, but held out a constant course of integrity, and righted those whom others would have slighted.

Ver. 13. **The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me]** Such poor creatures as were destined to destruction, and seasonably delivered by my means, gave me their good words and wishes; yea, they cried me up for their gracious deliverer, with a courage, as the Grecians did Flaminius, the Roman general, as the Christian captives did Hunniades, who had set them at liberty from Turkish slavery; as the drowning man pulled out of the water by King Alphonsus, cried, Arragon, Arragon; and as the Italian prisoners in '88, released and sent home by Queen Elizabeth, sainted her, and said, That although they were Papists, yet they would worship no saint but her.

And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy] *sc.* By ready righting her upon her adversary; and this out of conscience of duty, and not for her importunity, as that unjust judge, #Lu 18:5, or because she conjured him to it, as that widow did Adrian the emperor, to whom, when he had answered, That he was not at leisure to hear her cause, she boldly replied, Και μη Βασιλευε, Then lay down the empire. Whereupon he turned again, and did her right, and sent her away a joyful woman (Dio in Adrian).

Ver. 14. **I put on righteousness, and it clothed me]** It was not ambition, popularity, or self-interest that put Job upon these and the following good practices and proceedings, but the care he had of discharging his trust, and the pure love he bare to justice and upright dealing, *Fontem horum officiorum aperit* (Merlin). For although he desired more to be loved than honoured (as it is said of Trajan the emperor), yet he would not do anything of popularity or partiality, by writhing or warping, but retained the gravity of the law; which is a heart without affection, an eye without lust, a mind without passion, a treasurer which keepeth for every man what he hath, and distributeth to every man what he ought to have, *Φιλουμενος μαλλον η πιμωμενος εχαυρε* (Dio). Job did put on righteousness, and it put on him; so the Hebrew hath it. By which similitude he declareth that he could as little be drawn from doing justice as he could go abroad without his clothes, or suffer them to be pulled off him, *Declinatione et detorsione iudicii* (Merlin).

My judgment was as a robe and a diadem] Righteousness is that whereby the innocent is delivered, judgment is that whereby the guilty person is punished, saith Brentius. With these was Job arrayed and adorned far better than was Alcisthenes the Sybarite with his cloak, sold by Dionysius to the Carthaginians for a hundred and twenty talents (Athenaeus); or Hanun with his solid gold diadem, "the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones," **#2Sa 12:30**. Some judges have nothing more to commend them than their robes, which are oft lined with rapine and robbery. So were not Job's; he made the like use of them that old Eleazar did of his hoariness, he would not do anything that might seem to be evil, because he would not spot his white head; no more would Job, lest he should stain his purple, disgrace his diadem. He knew that *dignitas in indigno est ornamentum in luto*, Ruledom without righteousness is but eminent dishonour (Salvian).

Ver. 15. **I was eyes to the blind]** Here he saith the same in effect as before, **#Job 29:12,13**, only he setteth it forth *Pulcherrimis allegoriis per synathroismum velut conglobatis*, by a heap of most elegant allegories (Mercer). He meaneth here, I gave advice to the simple, and support to the weak and impotent. But how many great men are there, *qui etiam videntes, circumveniunt et fallunt*, who put out the eyes of men, as Korah falsely accused Moses, **#Nu 16:14**.

And cut off their legs (as that tyrant in the story served his guests that were too long for his bed) by disabling or discouraging them to follow their just causes, so that they are ready to say, with Themistocles, that if two ways were showed him, whereof the one led to hell and the other to those corrupt courses of justice, he would seriously choose the former rather than the latter (Plut.).

Ver. 16. **I was a father to the poor]** *Ab laebionim*, an elegant agnomination, as Mercer here noteth. Job was not only a friend to the poor, as said before, but a father, providing for their necessities, and protecting them from injuries. So Augustus Caesar delighted to be called *Pater Patriae*, the father of his country (Suet.). And our Queen Elizabeth would many times say that she could believe nothing of her people that parents would not believe of their children (Cambden, Eliz.).

And the cause which I knew not I sought out] Sifting it to the bran, and not pronouncing sentence till I had fully understood each circumstance of the controversy. Judge not according to the appearance, but judge a righteous judgment, #**Joh 7:24**. Thucydides well saith, That there are two things most opposite to right proceedings, *ταχος τε και οργην*, haste and anger; a justifier must do nothing rashly, but with greatest deliberation and industry, to come to a right understanding of matters, in capital causes especially, lest he repent it too late; as that Sir James Pawlet did, who, out of humour and for revenge, laid by the heels Thomas Wolsey, then a country minister (afterwards a cardinal, and Lord Chancellor of England), for the which he suffered long imprisonment (Negotiat. of Card. Wolsey). And as that judge mentioned by Fortescue, who, having condemned a gentle woman to death for the murder of her husband, upon the bare accusation of her man, which afterwards was found false, *saepius ipse mihi falsus est*; he afterwards confessed unto me, saith the author, that he should never during his life be able to clear his conscience of that fact. We know what pains Solomon took in the case of the two harlots that strove before him. And we have read of a judge, who, to find out a murder, caused those that were accused to open their bosoms, and felt the beating of their hearts. And when he found one of their hearts to beat extraordinarily, *Tu, inquit, fecisti*, Thou art

the murderer certainly, said he. The man presently confessed the fact, and was executed for it (John Manl. loc. com. p. 290).

Ver. 17. **And I brake the laws of the wicked]** It is a mercy to have judges, saith one, *modo audeant quae sentiunt*, as the orator hath it (*Cic. pro Milone*); so they dare do as their consciences tell them they should do. Job was such a judge, he feared not to encounter and keep under those unruly beasts and Belialists, who oppressed the poor, and then doubted not to oppose with crest and breast whatsoever stood in the way of their humours and lusts. *Hic forti magnoque animo opus fuit*, saith one. Here Job's courage was put to the proof, if ever. Is it nothing to break the jaw bones of the wicked, to take the prey out of the lion's mouth, and to rescue the oppressed from the man that is too mighty for him? Is it nothing to encounter the Hydra of sin, to oppose the current of times and torrent of vice, to turn the wheel over the wicked, and to leave them as powerless as old Entellus in Virgil did Dares; whom his fellows led away well beaten, and well nigh broken,

Iactantemque utroque caput, crassumque cruorem

Ore reiectantem, mistosque in sanguine dentes? -(Virg. Aeneid.)

And plucked the spoil out of his teeth] *i.e.* I made him make restitution of his ill gotten goods, whether by fraud or force. So that Job's court, we see, was not *vitiorum sentina, sed virtutum officina*; his course was, *Parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos*, to help the afflicted and to punish the proud. Augustus, the emperor, was wont to say, That such a one only was fit to be a magistrate that was free from foul offence himself, and could withstand the corruptions of the times, keep a constant countermotion to the evil manners of the multitude; "Ὅς μητε τι αυτος αμαρτανειν και ταις του δημου σπουδαις ανθιστοσθαι δυναται (Dio); as Cato was ever inveighing against covetousness and riot in the Roman State. Here also we have in Job the lively picture of a good magistrate, much better than that of Caesar Borgia, that villain, whom Machiavel proposeth as the only pattern for princes to imitate (De Principe, p. 185).

Ver. 18. **Then I said, I shall die in my nest]** Heb. I shall expire and breathe out my last, by a natural death, in my house, and amidst my people; as a bird dieth in his nest when he hath lived his utmost. *Pollicebar mihi securitatem*, I promised myself a prosperous and

long life, all health and happiness (Brent.). This some make to be a fault in Job, as it was likewise in David, when in his prosperity he said, "I shall never be moved," #Ps 30:6. And indeed the holiest hearts are apt in such a strait to grow proud and secure; like as worms and wasps eat the sweetest apples and fruits. But others are of judgment, that this was a commendable confidence in Job, grounded upon God's promises, and the conscience of his own uprightness; an εὐθυμία, a spiritual security, a blessed calm and composedness, a sabbath of spirit, flowing from faith, and causing joy. This was all well, only that of Bernard must be carefully heeded and held to, *Laeti simus non securi, gaudentes in Spiritu Sancto, sed tamen caventes a recidivo*: Be merry we may, but not carnally secure; rejoicing in the Holy Ghost, but yet beware that we backslide not. David by misreckoning of a point, missed the haven, and ran upon the rocks, #Ps 30 And Job here seemeth to have been mistaken, by taking the promises of outward happiness without exception of the cross; for the which he is afterwards reproved by Elihu, and also by God himself.

And shall multiply my days as the sand] *i.e.* Very long, by a Scripture hyperbole, #Ge 22:17 32:12 41:49. The Septuagint read, As the Phoenix: the Vulgate Latin, As the palm tree, which is reckoned among the long lived trees, as is likewise the Phoenix among the longest lived creatures. R. Solomon saith it lives a thousand years, others five hundred, and then dieth in his nest, made of frankincense and myrrh, and other sweet odours, which being kindled by the heat of the sun, he is burnt to ashes, they say; out of which ashes, a long time after, cometh another Phoenix. How true all this of the Phoenix is, I have not to say. Let them that will read more in Gesner's History of Birds; or let them look upon Lactantius's poem called the Phoenix, with Betuleius's comment.

Ver. 19. **My root was spread out by the waters]** Heb. Opened to the waters; which therefore had free recourse to it, and much refreshed it. Hereby he describeth his flourishing condition when time was, through the perpetual inflowings of God's free grace and favour.

And the dew lay all might upon my branch] *Pernoctabat*; because in the night the dew falleth. Beza thus paraphraseth this

whole verse: For, downward, the root of my good and upright conscience was spread out by the ever flowing waters of God's bountifulness, with which it was daily watered; and upward, the boughs growing out of this root, to wit, my children, my servants, nay flocks of sheep, and in a word, my substance, were washed with the celestial dew which from heaven fell down upon them; so that by this blessing of God they were marvellously increased.

Ver. 20. **My glory was fresh in me]** *i.e.* I had daily new accessions to mine honours; and I was herein like a bay tree, that is always green. This was also Joseph's happiness in Egypt; David's in the court of Saul; Mordecai's and Daniel's in the court of Persia; and Queen Elizabeth's; concerning whom (besides that famous epitaph set upon her tomb by command of King James) Thuanus, a French historian, testifieth, that the Lady Anna Atestina, mother to the Guises and Nemours, pronounced her to be *Gloriosissimam et omnium quae unquam sceptrum gestarunt felicissimam foeminam*, The most glorious and happiest woman that ever swayed sceptre. Among her subjects she got a continual increase of honour and respects, by coupling mildness with majesty, and stooping, yet in a stately manner, to the lowest sort; but especially by setting up God and his sincere service wherever she had to do, trusting God with her precious life (so much sought for by Popish assassines); which while her contemporary, Henry IV of France, dared not do, he lost his life, and much of his honour; witness that known anagram, Borbonius, once *Bonus orbi*, the good of the bereft now *Orbus boni*. bereft of good.

And my bow was renewed in my hand] That is, I had fresh and new supplies of strength, by friends and otherwise, outwardly and inwardly, according to that above, **#Job 17:9**, "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." *Robur meum instaurabitur maiusque reddetur* (Vatab.). See **#Ge 49:24 1Sa 2:4**.

Ver. 21. **Unto me men gave ear, and waited]** *i.e.* Such a gift I had in flexanimous oratory, that my auditors were held, as it were, by the ears in great attention to my speeches; as Lucian saith of Alcibiades, and Cicero of Crassus; and as the poets fable of their Hercules, that he had the ears of his hearers chained to his tongue, as being,

Αμφοτερος ρητηρ τ αγαθος, κρατερος τ αιχημητης.

And kept silence at my counsel] Received it as an oracle from heaven with all humble submission and plenary satisfaction; so great was the force of his wisdom, the weight of his counsel, and the authority of his person, *tanquam ex tripode dictum. Erant* κυρια και αμυμονες δοξαι (Lavati.). In some men's discourses a man shall have *satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum*, much eloquence, little enough wisdom. But where there is a concurrence of these two, as was in Job, much may be done. This great men are not ignorant of, and do therefore greatly covet eloquence, *Non phaleratam illam sed fortem; non effeminatum sed virilem*, not a pedantic style or phrase, but majestic; such as was that of Phocion, a great orator, but one that could speak much in few, as Plutarch reporteth, *πλειστον εν ελαχιστη λεξει νουν ειχε*; or that of Julius Caesar, who wrote as he fought; and whom a man might know to be a soldier by his words, had he never heard of his noble achievements.

Ver. 22. **After my words they spake not again]** They replied not, but rested in my words, as if I had been some Doctor *Resolutus* or rather *Irrefragabilis*. The Vulgate rendereth it, *Verbis meis addere nihil audebant*, They dared not add anything to my words, as holding them current and sufficient.

And my speech dropped upon them] viz. As dew drops, #De 32:2, or, as some, prophecy, saith R. Levi here. Confer #Mic 2:6 Am 7:17. Surely as the dew refresheth and cherisheth the dry and fading fields; so do fit words the hearts of the hearers. And as the dew allayeth great heats, and moisteneth the earth, that it may fructify; so it is here. *Ills regit dictis animos, et pectora mulcet* (Virg.). And lastly, as the dew lies in a little compass; so in fewness of words there is oft a fulness of matter, &c.

Ver. 23. **And they waited for me as for the rain]** Which in those hot countries was highly prized, and dearly longed for.

And they opened their mouth wide] *Stupebant, me loquente, et ore hiabant*; they gaped, as if they would have eaten my words; they listened as for life.

As for the latter rain] A rain which came very seldom in that country, saith Diodati; but was much desired for the refreshing and nourishing of the grain and other fruits and benefits of the earth, **#Pr 26:1 Zec 10:1**. Merlin collecteth from this text that Job came not into the public assemblies there to speak, and give counsel, but upon deliberate premeditation. Demosthenes would not be drawn to speak extemporarily to an audience. Aristides being by the emperor put upon such a task, answered, Propound today, and I will answer tomorrow; for I am not of those that spit or vomit out my conceptions; but of those that weigh things before I utter them, and polish before I publish them, ου γαρ εσμεν των εμουντων αλλα των ακριβουντων. Mr Bradshaw was called the weighing divine; and Melancthon took time to answer Eckius's cavils, though by him and his Popish party he was jeered for so doing. It must be an elaborate speech that shall persuade or prevail much. Among the Romans the prince was not to be treated with otherwise than by writing. Caesar brought in this custom, that he might have time to consider that which was demanded, and what answer to return. Augustus *sermones libello habuit, ne plus minusve loqueretur*; Augustus had his speeches set down in a book, lest he should say more or less than what he thought of (Sueton.).

Ver. 24. If I laughed on them, they believed it not] They took it for a great favour, and could hardly think that I would grace them so far as to smile upon them, or jest with them; which if I did at any time, they were overjoyed, **#Ec 10:19**. *Ingenii fructus tenuissimus eat risus*, saith Cicero (de Orat. lib. 2). To break a jest is no such witty thing as men conceit it. Howbeit, a harmless jest (that hath nothing in it which may justly grieve or offend another) may very well consistent with piety and Christian gravity; whatever some sour Anabaptists have held to the contrary. Jocularity indeed and scurrility are strictly forbidden, and reckoned among those τα ανηκοντα, things that conduce not to the main end of our lives, **#Eph 5:4**. But Socrates would be very merry when he liked his company; yet so as that his mirth should be some way profitable, saith Xenophon, lib. 4, de Dict. et Fact. (Socr.) And Erasmus did the Papists more prejudice by his jesting, saith a grave author, than Luther did by his stomaching and storming. Good men's jests should have something in them of seriousness and usefulness. All their speeches should be seasoned with salt of grace; and in the midst of

their recreations they should show that their best affections are upon better things. Great care must be taken, that too much familiarity with those below us breed not contempt; which some think is meant by the next clause, "And the light of my countenance they cast not down"; or, Yet the light, &c., that is, they did not slight me because of this familiar carriage; they did not therefore count me ridiculous and vain as men did that Rodulphus, the 35th archbishop of Canterbury, that succeeded Anselm; whom, for his jesting and merry toys, unbeseeming the gravity of his age and place, they surnamed or rather nicknamed, Nugax, the trifler. *Sed auctoritatem meam non spernebant, nihilominus, us me reverebantur*; They despised not mine authority, they revered me no whit the less (Vatablus); but rather they took care that nothing might be done whereby of merry I might be made sad; they cherished this sign of complacency in me as a rare thing, and so much the more accepted as less expected and unusual; neither would they be so bold and so bold with me as to return me jest for jest, as if I had been their compeer and hail fellow well met. One paraphrast, Mr Abbot, senseth the whole verse thus: If I by my smiles gave any intimation of my suspicion of any report or business, it was presently distrusted and dissented from of all the rest. And on the other hand; my least countenance or show of approbation to any cause was observed of others, as a rule to go by. He goes on to give the meaning of the next words thus:

Ver. 25. **I chose out their way, and sat chief]** In those days I was the only man in all matters, chosen by consent of all, to be the *prolocutor* and advanced to the first place in all assemblies and places of judicature, &c. Tremellius and others read it thus, If I chose their way (that is, if of mine own accord I came unto them at any time), I sat chief, and was chairman; in a word, I dwelt as a king amidst his troopers, when he comforteth them being cast down; that is, when, after some defeat or disappointment, he cheereth up their spirits by his speeches, and cries, Courage, my hearts:

*Flebile principium, melior fortuna sequatur:
Victorem a victo superari saepe videmus.*

The Tigurines render the former part of the verse thus, Accommodavi me illorum moribus cum iudicio, I fitted myself to their fashions, yet with discretion. R. Solomon and others thus, they

asked me, What way shall we go? What course take? And I chose out their way, and set them down a course; as a counsellor doth to his clients, a king to his soldiers, or a casuist those that resort to him for comfort.

And dwelt as a king in the army] Where he is continually surrounded by his soldiers, and highly honoured. The bees, in their commonwealth, have a king, whose palace they frame as fair in show, as strong in substance; if they find him fall, they establish him again in his throne with all duty, with all devotion; they guard him continually, for fear he should miscarry, for love he should not. Job had so tempered and mixed gravity and lenity, he had so furbished the sword of justice with the oil of mercy, that he was at once both feared as a king, and loved as a comforter.

As one that comforteth the mourners] That mourn for the loss of some dear thing or person, as the word signifieth, and especially for the loss of God's favour, as **#Zec 12:10**, groaning under the sense of sin and fear of wrath. Now to comfort such mourners in Zion is as difficult a work as to raise the dead, saith Lather; and scarce one of a thousand can skill of it, **#Job 33:23**. Every Christian should have feeding lips and a healing tongue, to comfort the feeble minded, to drink to them in a cup of Nepenthes, that cup of consolation, **#Jer 16:7**, taking them down into Christ's wine cellar, **#So 2:4**, and there stay them with flagons and comfort them with apples, **#Job 29:5**, those apples of the garden of Eden (as the Chaldee there hath it), the sweet and precious promises, which are *pabulum fidei*, the food of faith, and do give the joy of faith; even that peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that have been in a low and lost condition. But this few can do to purpose; because they are either unskilful in the word of truth or unexperienced; they dig not their discourses out of their own breasts, they utter them more from their brains than from their bowels, from their own experience, I mean; which made even Christ himself a more compassionate high priest, **#Heb 5:1,2**. And that eminent servant of his, St Paul, had by this means got an excellent faculty in comforting the disconsolate, **#2Co 1:4**. So had Luther, as having himself from his tender years been much beaten and exercised with spiritual conflicts (Melancthon). Conceive we may the like of Job, who was therefore flocked unto from far and

near, as known to be able to time a word and to speak to the hearts of drooping and dejected persons. "But now," &c.

Chapter 30

Ver. 1. **But now they that are younger than I have me in derision]** *Id quod ei morbo suo longe gravius fuerit, sicut et Hebraei testantur;* saith Mercer. This troubled him much more than all his sores and sicknesses; that every young shackrag slighted him, and laughed him to scorn. In this case especially,

— *Faciles motus mens generosa capit* (Ovid).

You shall find some, saith Erasmus, that if death be threatened, can despise it; but to be despised or belied they cannot brook; but least of all by base persons: *Quilibet ab aquila quam corvo discerpi mavult.* Job was now grown ancient, and had been honourable, as he had set forth, #**Job 29**. Old age and honour, in the Greek tongue, are near akin, *Cognata sunt, γηρας et γερας, ut ηθος et εθος;* and,

*Summa fuit quondam capitis reverentia cani:
Inque sue precio ruga senilis erat.*

*But it is a sign of gasping devotion, and that things are far out of order; when the child behaveth himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable, #**Isa 3:5**, as at Bethel, where those poorly bred children derided the old prophet, and petulantly cried after him, "Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head," #**2Ki 2:23**. If the like unworthy usage befall us, let it suffice us that our betters, Job, David, Christ himself, have sped no better. Art not thou glad to fare as Phocion? said he to a lowly man that was to die with him.*

Whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock] *i.e.* To have made my dog keepers, that they might feed with them, as the prodigal son did with the swine. Dogs are commonly looked upon as paltry carrion creatures; only some, for their mind's sake, and others, for certain necessary uses, as shepherds and hunters, make some reckoning of them. It was not permitted to a dog to enter into the Acropolis, or tower of Athens,

for his libidinousness and ill savour, δια του ακολαστου και δυσωδους (Plut.). At Rome they crucified a dog yearly, in detestation of those dogs in the capitol that gave not warning of the approach of an enemy. Job, it seems, had his dog feeders, men of meanest account. Now these men's sons, a beggarly breed, and very rascals, insulted and trampled upon this precious man, dealt as basely and coarsely with him, haply, as those factious fellows in Geneva did with reverend Calvin; whom they not only in contempt called Cain (as Athanasius was sometimes by his enemies called Sathanasius; and Cyprian, Coprian, that is, a dunghill fellow), but also named their dogs Calvin, as Beza, in his Life, reporteth.

Ver. 2. **Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me]** For, to say the truth (thus Beza here paraphraseth), the strength of those young striplings could not have stood me in any stead at all; and as for the old age of their fathers, it were such, that, having spent the greatest and best part of their life partly in idleness, and partly in divers wicked and lewd pranks, they might worthily seem to have lived in vain all that while. Thus he. The Greeks say, Εργα νεων, and the Latins, *Iuniores ad labores*, young men are fit for hard labour, because strong and lusty. But these Sanuiones in the text were, through idleness, mere nullities in the world, superfluities in the earth, Jeremiah's rotten girdle, good for nothing but to devour victuals; vermin, apes, monkeys, their whole life was to eat and drink (when they could come by it), and sleep, and sport, and flear, jeer at God's afflicted, with words as full of scorn as profane wit or rancoured malice can make them. These are excrements in human society; pests, the Scripture styleth them, #Ps 1:1 (λοιμοι. Septuag.).

In whom old age was perished?] Their fathers also were old dottrels, *in ipsa senectute, senectute carentes*, old, but not wise (Moriae Encore.); like the Brabanti, who are said to be the older the foolisher. Some men live long, but are good for little. *Non ille diu vixit, sed diu fuit*, saith Seneca of somebody, He hath not lived long, but only been long; as a ship in a storm, he hath been tossed much, but sailed nothing. Those old men who have not gotten wisdom by long experience are not worthy of their years; their old age is perished, and their honour forfeited. The Vulgate rendereth it, They were reckoned unworthy of life itself: *Depontani*.

Ver. 3. **For want and famine they were solitary]** Miserably poor they were, and nittily needy; scarce having a rag to their backs, and, therefore, ashamed to show themselves in company of others, *propter penuriam, et propter esuriem*, they lurked in bycorners, and seldom came abroad, unless when hard hunger drove the wolf out of the wood. Slow bellies they had ever been, and evil beasts, fitter, therefore, to live in the wilderness, in former time desolate and waste, than in a civil society; or, if in any place, at Poneropolis, a city built by Philip, king of Macedonia, for varlets and vagrants, and with such kind of persons peopled; that they might not pester other places. Job would have none such about him; and was, therefore, haply, now in this low condition, so much hated and affronted by them.

In former time desolate and waste] And so perhaps haunted by the devil, as **#Isa 13:20,21**. Brentius rendereth it, *Hesternam pressuram et consternationem*, yesterday's pressures and fright; that is, saith he, The creditor's eagerness to be satisfied, which frighteth these wretches, and putteth them to their work.

Ver. 4. **Who cut up mallows by the bushes]** Pitiful poor fare they are glad of; not so good as that of the Baptist, locusts and wild honey, **#Mt 3:4**, but mallows, which, together with asphodelus, Hesiod mentioneth as poor folk's fare. Tremellius rendereth it, *Herbas e salsilagine cum stirpibus*, salt, and bitter herbs and stalks; Brentius rendereth it, nettles; some take it for samphire, which is a kind of sea mallows, or sea purslain. The Hebrew word comes from another that signifieth salt; and sounds like the Latin malva, and the English mallows. Coarse and homely provision the wretches were glad to make use of, to appease the cruel hunger that devoured them, *Ut famem quoquomodo sedarent* (Merc.). And this hath been sometimes the case of better men; as of those worthies, who wandered in deserts, and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, **#Heb 11:38**. The Duke of Lorrain had proscribed some thousands of his Protestant subjects, who were thereby forced to feed upon leaves of trees and grass of the fields, till the senate of Strasborough, overcome by the importunity of their divines, took them in, and relieved them, till they could be otherwise provided for (Scultet. Annal.). In the late wars of Germany people were found

dead in the highways with grass in their mouths, perishing for want of better food.

And juniper roots for their meat] These, though they surpass all other in bitterness, were their ordinary food. Our forefathers, as they coloured their bodies with woad {A blue dye-stuff prepared from the leaves of *Isatis tinctoria* powdered and fermented: now generally superseded by indigo, in the preparation of which it is still sometimes used.} (and were, therefore, called Picts), this was their fine clothes; so their food was barks of trees, and roots, say our chroniclers. Is not the matter well amended with us? and should we not serve the Lord with joyfulness in the abundance of all things, **#De 28:47**. Lavater thinks that these poor people for a living dug up juniper roots, and sold them to others for the use of making perfume. Ver. 5. **They were driven forth from among men]** *E corpore*, saith Tremellius, out of the body; that is, out of the community, as not fit to live in a commonwealth. The Jews are, for their inexpiable guilt, banished out of the world, as it were, by a common consent of nations. Out of England they were exiled for ever by King Edward I, A.D. 1290; out of France, 1307; out of Spain, 1492; Portugal, 1597; Naples and Sicily, 1539. In Turkey they pay for the very heads they wear; but in Cyprus, if a Jew be taken (though driven thither by tempest), he is put to death immediately. Country they have none, nor resting place anywhere. In Jerusalem they are not to be found, at this time, a hundred households of them; indeed, in Constantinople and Thessalonica there are esteemed to be about 160,000 Jews; who yet are exceedingly condemned and hated there (Breerwood's Inquiries); and at every Easter in danger of being stoned by the Christians, because at that time they crucified our Saviour, derided, and buffeted him (Biddulph). All this, and more, they suffer; and yet they continue, by a just judgment of God upon them, woefully hard hearted, blood thirsty, thievish, treacherous, flagitious. Howbeit there is a remnant according to the election of grace, **#Ro 11:5**. A.D. 1556, at Weissensten, in Germany, a Jew, for theft (they had cried after him with hue and cry, as after a thief), 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. The Jew, embracing the Christian faith, requested but this one thing, that he might be taken down, and be baptized, though presently after he were hanged again (but by the neck, as Christian malefactors suffered), which was accordingly granted him (Melch. Adam in Vit.).

They cried after them as after a thief] Presuming that, by doing nothing, they had learned to do naughtily; and that, having nothing of their own, and not willing to work, they lived by rapine and robbery. Such, therefore, as these they served as Philip of Macedonia did a couple of his idle, and therefore evil, subjects; he made the one of them run out of the country, and the other drive him. Solon made a law at Athens, that every man once a year should show the magistrates by what art or trade he maintained his family. This if he could not do to their good liking, he was presently expelled from the city. At Corinth, also, Periander ordained, That if any man spent freely, and could not make it appear that he got it honestly, he should, without further process of law, be trussed up for a thief.

Ver. 6. To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys] Like wild beasts and serpents; which these idle persons will rather choose to do, and suffer any hardship, than labour for their livings, and do good in their places; earning it before they eat, and contributing something to the public welfare, as bees bring their honey to the common hive; this, those that will not do, are worthily cast out, and made to dwell in the cliffs, &c. In the time of Cato Censorius, when any one would be a citizen of Rome, they took his hand between theirs; and if it felt smooth and soft, they presently, as an idle vagabond, gave him his dismissal; but if hard and knotty, they forthwith admitted him to dwell in their city. And if a malefactor were apprehended whose hands were labouring hands, his punishment should be mitigated, though his crime were grievous; as if otherwise, a severe punishment was inflicted for a light offence.

Ver. 7. Among the bushes they brayed] Through grief and discontent at their low condition and many miseries; which yet they would rather bootlessly bewail than take a right course to remedy. They lust, and have not; they kill (themselves through idleness), and desire to have (if it would come without labour), but cannot obtain,

#Jas 4:2. And hence they bray like the wild ass when empty, and roar as the lion when bitten with hunger.

Under the nettles they were gathered together] Or they were pricked, whealed, as we call it. *Urtica ab urendo*, they were nettle stung, while they got under those weeds for shelter and warmth. All this Job relateth of those that derided him; not to be even with them, or out of a desire to disparage them, but to aggravate the indignity of his misuse, and to comfort himself, as Seneca in like case did: *Male de me loquuntur, sed mali*, They speak evil of me, but who are they? base persons, and wicked above measure; and oh how easy a thing it is to wag a wicked tongue! especially when the devil hath the doing of it, as he hath in this kind of men *qui revera os aperiant, et diabolum loqui sinunt*, whose mouth the devil borroweth to vent the language of hell by (Lavater).

Ver. 8. **They were children of fools, yea, children of base men]** *Homines flagitiosissimi, etiam homines ignominiosissimi afflictissimi erant, extorres*, so Tremellius translateth; Naught all over they were, and nought esteemed; what wonder, therefore, if heavily afflicted and relegated? Their poverty was self-procured, and, therefore, unpitied; they had brought themselves into the briars, and also in their fathers' iniquities they were pining away with them, **#Le 26:39.** Evil eggs they were of evil birds, *nihili homunciones et inglorii*, as the Tigurines translate, fellows of no fashion, and as little account, *terrae filii*, earth sprung mushrooms, men in whom all true wisdom was faded and decayed, sapless persons, Nabals, Nebulones.

They were viler than the earth] *Terra quam ferimus, terra etiam quam terimus*; or, They were smitten out of the earth, driven out of the land, *sc.* by me when I was in power; but now these vile varlets show themselves again, and trample upon me with the feet of pride and petulancy, *Leoni mortuo vel mus insultat*.

Ver. 9. **And now am I their song]** They compose comedies out of my tragedies, and make themselves merry in my misery; they not only make ballads and sonnets of my sufferings, but also play them upon their instruments, as the Hebrew word importeth.

Yea, I am their byword] *Sermonis argumentum* , the matter of their discourse; I am all their talk; neither have they anything else whereof to chat and babble, but only of me; yea, to make my disgraces to pass into a proverb, they call all miserable men by my name, *De me confabulantur et contemptim loquuntur* (Disc.). The ale stakes served David in like sort; the drunkards upon their ale bench tossed his name as dogs do carrion, making him their ballad and their byword, **#Ps 69:12**. The whole Church complaineth of the like contempt, **#Ps 79:4 La 3:14,63 Eze 33:32**. Thus when the invincible Armada, as they called it, was coming for England, Don Bernardino Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in France, solaced himself with a vain and false poem or song of England's miseries; which, as a triumph before the victory, he absurdly printed (Cambd. Eliz.). The gunpowder traitors also did the like in their sevenfold psalmody, as they called it; that devilish ditty, which secretly the Papists passed from hand to hand with tunes set to be sung or played. The matter consisted of railing upon King Edward VI, Queen Elizabeth, King James, and others; of petition, imprecation, prophecy, and praise (Spec. Bell. Sacr.).

Ver. 10. **They abhor me, they flee far from me]** As if I were a leper or a bugbear, or that my breath were infectious; like that maid spoken of by Avicen, who, feeding upon poison, was herself healthy, yet infected others with her venomous breath. Job was wont to be honoured; now he is as much abhorred. People were used to hanging upon his lips for learned counsel, but they stand aloof, and keep at a distance. They looked upon that face of his as the face of an angel, which now, with utmost despite and detestation, they spit upon and spare not. *At virtutes evertere non possunt*, as Demetrius Phalereus said, when the Athenians threw down the many statues they had once erected in honour of him, But they cannot throw down my virtues and valiant acts, whereby I deserved those statues. Job was not without his cordial in this sad and sudden change of his condition. For, first, the bird in his own bosom sang sweetly still, as birds in the spring tune most melodiously when it rains most sadly. And, secondly, what if these miscreants prate against Job with malicious words, as Diotrephes did against Demetrius, **#3Jo 9-13**, yet it is enough for Job or Demetrius that they have a good report of all men; that is, of all good men, who indeed are the only men (because a good name only is a name, **#Ec 7:1**, and a good wife only

a wife, #Pr 18:22) to be reckoned on; and of the truth itself, that is more, #Job 30:12.

And spare not to spit in my face] *In signum videlicet maximi contemptus et indignationis* (Junius), In token of greatest contempt and indignation, as #Nu 12:14 Isa 50:6 De 25:9. The face is the table of beauty or comeliness; and when it is spit upon it is made the seat of shame. Their words were, likely, such as the English barons here said of the popes that excommunicated them, Fie on such rascal ribalds, &c., *Marcidi ribauldi* (Mat. Paris.). Our Lord Christ also was spit upon in like manner, that he might cleanse our faces from the filth of sin, and make them shine with his beams, #1Jo 3:2.

Ver. 11. **Because he hath loosed my cord]** *i.e.* God hath taken away mine authority, whereby I heretofore kept them in order, and made them more obsequious, so that now, like headstrong horses, having gotten the bit between their teeth, they run whithersoever they list, and rise up against their rider. It is God who casteth contempt upon princes, #Ps 107:40 Job 12:21, as he did upon Solomon in his old age, upon his son Rehoboam, upon Ephraim, #Ho 13:1, {*See Trapp on "Ho 13:1"*} upon our Edward II, and Henry VI. Some render it, He hath loosed my bow string, in reference to #Job 29:20, so that I cannot now shoot at those that slight me. Job was disarmed and disabled to do as he desired, as Philip, king of France, was in the battle between him and Edward III, king of England, at the instant whereof there fell such a piercing shower of rain as dissolved the strings of his archers, and made their bows useless (Dan. Hist. f. 237).

And afflicted me] When a tree is felled each man pulleth off a branch, saith the Greek proverb. When a dog is worried, every cur will fall on him, and have a fling at him; when a deer is wounded, the whole herd will set against him, and thrust him out of their company: so, when God hath afflicted Job, every base beggarly fellow sat heavy upon his skirts. This was an addition to his affliction.

Theft have also let loose the bridle upon me] Those insolents, having pulled their heads out of the halter, lay the reins in the neck, and run riot; yea, they run at tilt against me, as it were, beyond all reason and measure, without fear, shame, or manners, *Effraenate in*

me invecti sunt (Jan.). For, upon me, some read, before me; *q.d.* Now they dare do anything, even in my presence, who formerly stood in awe of me.

Ver. 12. **Upon the right hand rise the youth]** Broughton readeth, The springals. The Hebrew hath it, The blossom, or the young birds, *Vix puberes*, such as are scarcely out of the shell. The youngsters, the boys, scoffed and abused Job. The lawless rout, riding without reins, took a licentious boldness to despise and despite him, because he was ever most severe against their unruly practices.

They push away my feet] They trip up my heels, as we phrase it, and lay me along. *Vide admirandam humanae sortis varietatem*, saith Brentius here; *i.e.* See the strange turns of human condition. Job was wont to have the chief seats in the temple, and salutations in the market place; now he cannot have a room anywhere to stand in, but every paltry boy is pushing him down. May it not be said of Job, as it was of that emperor, that he was *fortunae pila et lusus*? But he saw God in all.

And they raise up against me the ways of their destruction] *Allegoria castrensis*. Job borroweth this expression from the camp, as he doth many more from other things, whensoever he speaketh of his great afflictions, and the contempt that was cast upon him. Upon me they tread the paths of their unhappiness, so Beza; that is, they make a path in which they may practise that their malapert boldness in doing mischief. They beat their paths by running up and down therein, to undo me, so Vatablus; they cast upon me the causes of their woe, so Broughton.

Ver. 13. **They mar my paths]** That is, all my studies and endeavours; they obstruct all passages whereby I might hope for help, as if they were resolved upon my ruin.

They set forward my calamity] See #Zec 1:15. {See Trapp on "Zec 1:15"} Or they count it profitable to them to vex me, so great is their malice against me. And though it do them no good, yet if they may do me hurt, they have enough.

They have no helper] Neither need they any to animate them or egg them on to mischief, who of themselves are overly forward, though

but small and young, as Vajezatha, Haman's youngest son, was. {See Trapp on "Es 9:9"}

Ver. 14. **They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters]** *Quasi irruptione lata invadunt me.* As soldiers when they have made a breach in a wall, come tumbling in upon the town, and sack and ransack it, yea, raze it, and harass it; so have these dealt with me.

They rolled themselves upon me] Labouring wholly to suppress me, #Ge 43:18. Taking occasion by this my downfall, which they ought rather to have lamented and pitied, they unmercifully fell upon me, as if they themselves had lived out of the reach of God's rod.

Ver. 15. **Terrors are turned upon me]** I am horribly afraid of thy judgments, as David expresseth it; and this was it that pointed and put a sting into all other sufferings; for a wounded conscience who can bear? If the shoulder be galled, the burden will be very tedious and irksome. Be not thou a terror unto me, Lord, saith Jeremiah, and then I care not much what else soever befalleth me. But why were these terrors so troublesome?

They pursue my soul as the wind] Brentius rendereth it, They pursue my liberality, or, They take away from me all the cheerfulness and readiness of my mind; whereby heretofore I suffered so many calamities, and shrank not; for the joy of the Lord was my strength, and then nothing came amiss to me. Thou hast strengthened me with strength in my soul, #Ps 138:3, and upheld me with thy noble spirit, #Ps 51:12. The Chaldee hath it, kingly spirit, and it is the same word in the original that is here rendered, my soul; it is, my princess, or, my nobility, for so the soul is the more noble part, *Animam meam nobilem et inclytam* (Vat.). David calleth it his glory, #Ps 16:9, and his darling, #Ps 22:20. Some of the Jewish doctors make it the same with welfare, in the words following; but that is not likely.

And my welfare passeth away as a cloud] *i.e.* Totally, as before; irresistible like the wind. Job aboundeth with similitudes, which do notably illustrate. *Terrorum vim simili a vento illustrat, et salutem a se abeuntem similitudine nubis* (Merl.). He would say, I am utterly deprived of all means of avoiding this misery.

Ver. 16. **And now my soul is poured out upon me]** Now that I am under these inward terrors, I am become strengthless, even weak as water, my soul doth melt away for grief, as in **#Ps 42:4**, and I am as a hollow tree, wherein there is not any heart of oak; I am utterly dispirited.

The days of affliction have taken hold upon me] And so hard hold, that I despair of ever getting loose while I am alive.

Ver. 17. **My bones are pierced in me in the night season]** Sleep is the nurse of nature, and the sweet parenthesis of men's griefs and cares. But Job had so many aches and ailments in his body (over and above the terrors and troubles of his mind), that rest he could take none at all in the night season, when all creatures are wont to be at quiet. For for what reason? the very marrow of his bones raged through intolerable pain; as if it had been run through with a tuck. Nay more,

And my sinews (or, my pulses) take no rest] Heb. Sleep not; my sinews or arteries are racked with the cramp; and my pulses, by the force of fever, beat excessively, and pant without intermission; *Qui tamen minui deberent, quia calor retrahitur in partem interiorem*; which yet should move more slowly by night, because then the heat is drawn into the internal parts (Vatablus).

Ver. 18. **By the great force of my disease is my garment changed]** *sc. Sudore, cruore, sanie, sanguine*, By the matter that my disease forceth outward in boils and botches, is my garment (which once was *decoris et magistratus insigne*, the ensign of my authority) utterly stained and spoiled, loathsome to myself, and noisome to others, *Totum cruentum et sordidatum* (Merc.). Every one (say some chemists) hath his own balsam within him; his own bane it is sure he hath. Physicians hold that in every two years there is such store of ill humours and excrements engendered in the body, that a vessel of one hundred ounces will scarce contain them. Now if these, by God's appointment (for he is the great centurion, **#Mt 8:9**, who hath all diseases at his beck and call), break outward, what an ulcerous leper and lazarus must that man needs be! This was Job's case, and Munster's, who called his sores *Gemmas, et preciosa Dei ornamenta*, God's gems and jewels, wherewith he decketh those whom he loveth; and King Philip's, of Spain, who, besides many

other diseases, had *ingentem puris ex ulceribus redundantiam, quae binas indies scutellas divite paedore impleret*, abundance of filthy matter issuing out of his sores, insomuch as that no change of clothes, or art of physicians, could keep him from being devoured by lice and vermin thereby engendered (Carol. Scriban. Instit. Princip. cap. 20).

It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat] It is become so stiff and starky, that it wrings me and hurts me, as an uneasy collar girds and gripes a man's neck; as the edge of my coat it girds me, so Broughton readeth it. Beza rendereth this latter part of the verse thus: He (God) compasseth me about as the collar of my coat. Piscator, the whole thus: By the greatness of his (God's) strength (which he putteth forth in scourging me with diseases), my garment changeth itself (putteth upon, as it were, another garment of scabs and scurf), as the mouth of my coat, he (God) girdeth me; *i.e. Morbo premit corpus meum*, he pincheth my body with diseases. But the former reading is better.

Ver. 19. **He hath cast me into the mire]** My disease hath, so Vatablus senseth it. Others, God hath as it were trampled me to dirt, thrown me into the kennel, and so done me the greatest disgrace that can be.

And I am become like dust and ashes] Like a dust head behind the door, *cadaverosus et semimortuus*, saith Mercer; being covered all over (saith Beza) with the scales and scrapings that fall from my scabs; I am become more like unto the unprofitable dust and ashes, than unto a living man. Dust and ashes are not more like one another than their names are in the original; sic κοινός, cinis. See **#Ge 3:19 18:27**.

Ver. 20. **I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me]** This was a sore trial, that God should cast him into straits, and there leave him. His enemies indeed he usually dealeth so by, **#Eze 22:20 29:5**, but not by his servants, **#Heb 13:5**. Or if he do leave them, yet he will not forsake them. The mother leaves her child sometimes, but when he setteth up his note and crieth lustily, she hasteneth to help him. So doth God: but now Job cried unto him, and was not heard or answered, to his thinking at least, and that was a great cut to him, as **#Ps 22:2**.

I stand up] *sc.* To make supplication to my judge, as Haman stood up to make request for his life, #Es 7:7, as the publican stood and prayed, #Lu 18:13, and as Moses and Samuel are supposed to stand before God in prayer for their people, #Jer 15:1. Hence that proverb among the Jews, *Absque stationibus, non staret mundus*, Did not the saints stand in prayer, the world could not stand.

And thou regardest me not] This was but a mistake in Job, for the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. Only God answereth our prayer, *non secundum voluntatem, tamen ad utilitatem*. Not always or as soon as we would, but doth that which is better for us, and takes it ill to be misconstrued, as he was by Job; witness the next words, bloody words indeed, and not far from blasphemy. *Accusat ergo Iob Dominum mendacii* (Brent.). *Contumeliosus videri potest* (Merl.).
Ver. 21. **Thou art become cruel to me]** *Mutatus es mihi in tyrannum*, thou art turned tyrant towards me, so Brentius rendereth it; and the like he had said before, #Job 16:13 19:8-10, out of the vehemency of his pain, and the sense of his flesh, which should have been silenced, and faith exalted; the property whereof is to pick one contrary out of another (as life out of death, assurance of deliverance out of deepest distresses, #De 32:36), and to persuade the heart that God concealeth his love, out of increased love, and in very faithfulness afflicteth his darlings, that he may be true to their souls, #Ps 119:75.

With thy strong hand thou opposeth thyself against me] Thou hatest me, Satanically hatest me; *Intestinum odium exerces adversum me* (Tremell.); and accordingly thou dost practise all thy might upon me. Thus Job in his heat; and that he may not seem to rage without reason, he subjoineth.

Ver. 22. **Thou liftest me up to the wind]** Thou whifflest and wherriest me about as chaff or thistle down. *Pro libidine tractas me* thou usest me at thy pleasure (Brent.).

Thou causest me to ride upon it] Upon the wings of the wind, lifting me up aloft, that I may fall with the greater poise, as the eagle is said to do the tortoise; *Ut lapsu graviore ruam*. —

Thou dissolvest my substance] Or, Thou meltest my wisdom. I have neither flesh nor reason remaining. The issue that he expecteth of all these his forementioned miseries, followeth:

Ver. 23. **For I know that thou wilt bring me to death]** Such hard thoughts had Job of God, and such heavy thoughts of himself. *Nam experior, mors avocatur me* so Tremellius: For I feel it, death calleth me away. *Sic ludis tecum, ut facile conieciam tibi moriendum esse* saith Brentius: Thou so dalliest with me, that I plainly perceive I must shortly die, there is no avoiding of it. Thus good Job was pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch as he despaired even of life; and had the sentence (or denunciation) of death in himself, &c., **#2Co 1:8-10**. But God was better to him than his fears, and delivered him from so great a death: this is usual.

Qui nil sperare potest, desperet nihil.

And to the house appointed for all living] That is, the grave, **#Ps 49:14 89:48**, that congregation house of all living; as heaven is called Παναγορις, the congregation house of the firstborn, **#Heb 12:23**, the public or common meeting place, as **#Isa 14:13**, the house of constitution or assignation to all living, as the Hebrew here hath it, that is, to all men, who are by an excellence called, "every creature," **#Mr 16:15**, as being the best living creatures upon earth.

Ver. 24. **Howbeit he will outstretch not his hand to the grave]** He will not dig up the dead, as the Papists dealt by Bucer and others, to afflict them any more. *Quid facere poterunt? Occident? Nunquid, resuscitabunt ut iterum occidant?* What can they do? said Luther concerning his enemies who threatened him. Will they kill me? but what then? Will they raise me up to life again, that they may kill me again? No: Charles V, emperor, when he might have done that, and was moved to do it, would not. *Mors requies aerumnarum*. Dead men are at rest, was Chaucer's motto. There, in the grave, the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest, **#Job 3:17**. Thus Job speaketh, going no further than the afflictions of the body, as being for his own part fearless of eternal punishment. But as for the wicked, when they die out of bodily misery, it is but as the man's flying from a lion, and a more savage bear meeteth him; or going from it into the house (this house mentioned in **#Job 30:23**),

and that more venomous serpent (the devil, who hath the power of death, #Heb 2:14) there biteth him, #Am 5:19.

Though they cry in his destruction] *i.e.* While God is crushing or killing of them. Or, Is there any cry in his destruction? It was never yet known that dead men made moan; whatever the Popish legenders tell us of one that cried out, I am dead, I am judged, I am damned; which gave occasion to Bruno to found the Carthusian order.

Ver. 25. **Did I not weep for him that was in trouble?]** *Rursum, per pathos, excandescit* (Mercer). Here Job wondereth and is much moved again at his unpitied condition, since he was so full of pity for the afflicted. He could safely say with Cyprian, *Cum singulis pectus meum copulo, maeroris et funeris pondera luctuosa participo, cum plangentibus plango, cum deflentibus defico*. He had tears ready for the afflicted, and wept with those that weep; not for a compliment, as the Brazilians, who

Ut flerent, oculos erudiere suos (Ovid),

nor out of tender heartedness, as Gordian the emperor, who would weep for the beating of a boy at school; but out of hearty compassion and commiseration, as good Nehemiah, #Ne 2:2, and those Christian Hebrews, #Heb 10:33,34. Now forasmuch as the merciful have the promises of mercy made unto them, #Mt 5:7 **Jas 2:13**, and all men say, *Ab alio expectes alteri quod feceris*, Job marvelleth at others' hard heartedness toward him, and expostulateth the unkindness.

Was not my soul grieved for the poor?] Into whose case good Job put himself, and so became *mendicorum maximus*, as Salvian saith of Christ, because he shareth with his saints in all their necessities; he drew out not only his sheaf, but his soul to the hungry, #Isa 58:7,10, and satisfied the afflicted soul; this was right. *Contrisrata est anima mea super egenum*. Some render it, *Restagnavit lachrymis anima mea*, My soul stood with tears, like a standing pool. Others, *ustulatur; πυρουται*, My soul burneth: which is agreeable to that of the apostle, #2Co 11:29, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?"

Ver. 26. **When I looked for good]** According to that general rule, and the common course of God's proceedings, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," #Mt 7:2. "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful," #Ps 18:25. *Middah cenegedh middah*, say the Hebrews, Men shall have measure for measure, like for like. Hence Job expected to have all things at will, but it happened somewhat otherwise; and this puzzled him, he could not understand these cross occurrences. He could almost find in his heart to think that he was therefore so little pitied by others, because he had been so full of pity toward others.

When I waited for light, then came darkness] Things grew every day worse and worse with me, mending like sour ale in summer, as we say. Thus it fares many times with God's best servants, these children of light walk in darkness, nevertheless let them trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God, in the fail of all outward comforts, #Isa 50:10 Hab 3:17,18. This is the triumph of faith, which tells the soul that things must go backward before they can come forward, and when matters are at worst they will mend.

Ver. 27. **My bowels boiled, and rested not]** Being tossed and tumbled with continual boiling and bubbling, rumbling and making a rattle (as the word signifieth), whether through passion or compassion, *Ollae more insonuerunt* (Merc.). With most compassionate sympathy (saith one learned paraphrast) did my bowels yearn over the afflicted, so that I could have no quiet in myself for grieving and taking thought for them; I was seldom or never without sorrow for some one or other's affliction.

The days of affliction prevented me] Prevision should have hindered this prevention. Evils foreseen come no whit the sooner, but far the easier. It is a labour well lost if they befall us not; well spent if they do; whereas coming suddenly, they find weak minds secure, make them miserable, leave them desperate. Expect them therefore and prepare for them; darts foreseen are dintless.

Ver. 28. **I went mourning without the sun]** *Ater ambulo, sed non ob solem;* I am not sun burnt, but heart burnt; black and discoloured without, because parched and dried up within by the force of my disease and my grief, wherewith I am pained, pined, and even perished.

I stood up and cried in the congregation] Which was not very handsome, but I could not hold. Rise I did, and roar I must amidst the press of people, whatever they should think of me. So Mordecai went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; and came even before the king's gate, &c., #Es 4:1,2. In extreme heaviness men care not to keep decorums.

Ver. 29. **I am a brother to dragons, &c.]** *i.e.* I utter a very lamentable voice, or rather noise, like dragons, which sucking the elephant's blood till he fall down dead upon them, and quell them with his huge bulk, make a horrible howling; so horrible and hideous, say some, that they amaze, yea, kill those that hear it (Plin. Solin.).

And a companion to owls] I give forth rude and confused cries, as if I howled with owls, or grunted with ostriches. We use to say of such, that they roar like bears and bellow like bulls, filling the air with their outcries. Young ostriches cast off by their dams, #Job 39:14 La 4:3, make a pitiful moan; so do the young ravens for like cause, #Ps 147:9. Job cried out more like a beast than a man, in his pain and misery. This the Stoics censured as effeminate, and would not allow a wise or valiant man to sigh, or cry, or show any token of grief, whatever befell him. But this was to destroy nature, and to transform men into stocks and stones void of sense. The patriarchs bewailed their deceased friends. David, likely, was not ignorant of the Gentile's proverb, Weeping becometh not a king; yet he wept abundantly, yea, he out wept Jonathan. Because the better anyone is, the more inclined to weeping and lamentation, which yet must be duly moderated (Eurip.—Αγαθοι δ αριδακρυες ανδρες).

Ver. 30. **My skin is black upon me]** Through the violence of the fever, and a dust matter, his skin was as black and mud coloured as the waters of the river Nile, which hath its name Sihor, in the Hebrew, from this root, #Jer 2:18. The Ethiopians' skin is black, but that is natural to them, and they think it best so, and therefore paint the devil white, &c.

And my bones are burnt with heat] In the fever they call Epialis, the heat is all inward, and drieth up the radical moisture. Job complaineth of such a distemper, and so doth David, #Ps 32:3,4, and

Solomon tells us, that a heavy heart drieth up the bones. Beza expoundeth it of the jawbone, dried and pined away for want of moisture.

Ver. 31. **My harp also is turned to mourning]** All the days of the afflicted are evil, **#Pr 15:15**, his harps are hanged up, his lute no longer fit but for melancholy airs; his song nothing but lachrymae, doleful ditties; his organs, all those instruments that were wont to divert him, are condemned either to sigh or to be silent. *Intempestiva est in luctu Musica* **#/RIPC Sir 22:6**, ου ναβλα κωκυτοισιν ου λυρα φιλα (Sophocl.). Gillimer, overcome and besieged by Belisarius, sent to request of him three things: 1. A loaf, to ease his hunger. 2. A harp, to ease his grief. 3. A sponge, to dry up his tears. Such mournful music was Job's, if any at all.

Chapter 31

Ver. 1. **I made a covenant with mine eyes]** This chapter, since it is one of the largest in all the book, so it is elegant, various, and very full of matter; for it shows us, as in a mirror, both what we should do and what we should not do. Good Melancthon, about the beginning of the Reformation, mournfully complained, *Quos fugiamus habemus; quos sequamur non intelligimus*, We have whom to flee from (meaning the Papists), but whom to follow, we yet understand not (by reason of the many divisions among Protestants). But here we may be at a better certainty; by treading in Job's footsteps, and striving to express him to the world; who against all the cavils and calumnies of his foe friends, makes it out here, that he is no hypocrite or flagitious person as they falsely charged him, but a man fearing God and eschewing evil, **#Job 1:1**. Let therefore as many as would be perfect be thus minded and thus mannered; propounding to themselves the highest pitch and the best patterns; resolving to resemble them as much as may be. Here we have Job's holy care to flee fornication as a deadly evil; by avoiding the occasion, by taking bonds of his senses, and by doing all he could to be out of the way when the temptation came. Austin thanks God that the temptation and his heart met not. Job would prevent that mischief by laying laws upon his eyes, those windows of wickedness and loop holes of lust, the very door and bait of all evil concupiscence, **#Mt 5:29 1Jo 2:16**, that flesh pleasing lust, that nest egg of the devil (as one wittily calleth it), that eldest child of old Adam's strength, bearing

name of the mother, which is called in general, lust, or concupiscence. Now that Job might not lust, he would not look on a forbidden object; for he knew that wanton glances cause contemplative wickedness; such as will soon break out into foul practices; as ill humours in the body do into sores and blotches, εκ του οραν γινεταιτο εραν, *Ut vidi, ut perii!*—*oculi sunt in amore duces.*

Why then should I think upon a maid?] *Contemplerer in virginem,* Lustfully consider her beauty, till my heart be hot as an oven with lawless lusts, and my body wollows in the mire of that abominable filth. For unbridled lust, like the wild fig, will soon mount over the wall; and those base, vain, wanton, capering thoughts will break out, if not timely suppressed; if we handle them not roughly at the door (as Elisha said), their master's feet will not be far behind them. Quell them therefore and crush them in the egg; it is not safe being at Satan's meal, though our spoon be never so long; remember, that of looking comes thinking; and of thinking, worse. Look upon the woeful chain of David's lust, and remember how many have died of the wound in the eye. The basilisk slayeth with his sight. Circe {In Greek and Latin mythology the name of an enchantress who dwelt in the island of Aea, and transformed all who drank of her cup into swine; often used allusively.} Will enchant all that behold her. Irregular glancing, or inordinate gazing, is that which metamorphoseth a man into a beast, and makes him a prey to his own brutish affections. Hence David prayeth, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," **#Ps 119:37**. Job here steppeth one degree further, from a prayer to a vow; yea, from a vow to an imprecation, **#Job 31:7**. That his eyes should be eyes of adamant, that will turn only to one point; that he would not look but where he might lawfully like. Saints have a single eye (and contrariwise the wicked, **#Ho 3:1**), like that Persian lady, who being at the marriage of Cyrus, and afterwards asked how she liked the bridegroom? How? said she, I know not; I saw no one but my husband. Charles V used to clap to his casement; and the young Lord Harrington to pull his hat over his eyes when fair ladies passed along.

Ver. 2. For what portion of God is there from above?] What but a portion with the devil and hypocrites? The unjust are reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished, saith Peter; but chiefly, they that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, **#2Pe 2:9,10**. Such

shall have a specialty of punishment, even the hottest fire in hell; and hereby Job frighted his conscience from this foul sin; and well he might: did men but consider what sin would cost them, they durst not but be innocent; but the hope of impunity hardeneth them, and so hasteneth their destruction. *Hac, tanquam lena, semper usus est antiquus ille serpens*, this hope, as a bawd, that old manslayer hath ever made use of to allure men into wickedness (Merlin). But set the threats of God's word (such as are **#1Co 6:9 Heb 13:3 Eph 5:3**) against this sin, and the sin is laid. Satan can no more abide by it than an owl by the shining of the sun. A man will be loth to fetch gold out of a fiery crucible.

Or, What inheritance of the Almighty from on high?] God, and Almighty, and from above, and from on high. By all these expressions Job affecteth himself with the due apprehension of the Divine majesty, that he may be wise, and beware how he fall into the punishing hands of this living God. "The Lord your God," saith Moses to the people, "is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible," &c., **#De 10:16,17**. "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your hearts"; cut off and cast away that filthy foreskin; shave your eyebrows (as the leper was to do), pull out your right eyes, &c. So Joshua; God, saith he, "is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins," *sc.* unless you will part with them, though never so dear or delicious, **#Jos 24:19**.

Ver. 3. **Is not destruction to the wicked?**] Yes, that is their portion, their inheritance; and so Job makes answer to his own question proposed in the preceding verse. The ruin of impure souls is infallible, unsupportable, unavoidable; if God hath aversion from all other sinners, he hath hatred and horror for the unchaste; such stinking goats shall be set on the left hand, and sent to hell; where they shall have so much the more of punishment as they had here of sensual and sinful pleasure, as sour sauce to their sweet meats, **#Re 18:7**. Not to speak of the miseries they meet with here, which are not a few: in their souls, hardness of heart, or horror of conscience: in their bodies, foul and loathsome diseases, such as will stick to them when their best friends forsake them: in their names, indelible reproach and infamy; like an iron mole, which nothing can fetch out; like the leprosy, which could never be scraped out of the walls: in

their estates, poverty, even to a piece of bread, #Pr 6:26. Harlots are *poscinumma*, *crumenimulgae*, suck purses, #Lu 15:14. In their posterity, as Jericho was built, so is uncleanness plagued, both in the eldest and youngest; it goes through the race, till it have wasted all.

Corpus, opes, animam, famam, vim, lumina, Scortum

Debilitat, perdit, necat, aufert, eripit, orbat.

And a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?] *Even such as is unusual and extraordinary; as upon the Sodomites, who, going after strange flesh, were thrown forth for an example, as Jude hath it, #Jude 7. So those Benjamites, #Jud 20:12-15,43-48; the Trojans; the Lacedemonians at Leuctra; Zimri and Cozbi; Zedekiah and Ahab, #Jer 29:22; Eli's two sons; Heraclius, the emperor; Muleasses, king of Tunis, in Barbary, bereft by his own son Amida (another Absalom), not of his kingdom only, but of his eyes too, put out with a burning hot iron; those eyes of his that had been full of adultery, and could not cease to sin. In Hebrew the same word signifieth both an eye and a fountain; to show, saith one, that from the eye, as a fountain, floweth both sin and misery.*

Ver. 4. **Doth he not see my ways, and count, &c.**] Yea, sure he doth so; and the conscience of God's omniscience, who would soon take him tripping, kept him from this great wickedness. So it did Joseph, but so it did not David; who is, therefore, said to despise God and his commandment, (#2Sa 12:9,10) to do evil in his sight; and this was no small aggravation of his offence. *Ne pecces, Deus ipse videt.* "I have seen the lewdness of thy whoredom," #Jer 13:27. "Even I know, and am a witness, saith the Lord," #Jer 29:23. That should be a powerful retentive from vice, #Pr 5:21.

And count all my steps?] Doth not he cipher them up? *Habens omnia in numerato;* not my ways only, my counsels and cogitations, but my steps also, that is, all mine outward attempts and actions. A most needful and useful consideration surely, to keep men within the compass of obedience. See this doctrine of God's singular providence plainly and plentifully set forth, #Ps 139:1-4.

Ver. 5. **If I have walked with vanity**] As they do who disquiet themselves in vain, in heaping up riches by evil arts, by deceits and covin in bargaining; by getting other men's means fraudulently, &c.

"The getting of treasures by a lying tongue" (or any the like indirect course) "is a vanity tossed to and fro for them who seek death," #Pr 21:6. Eventually such do seek death, though not intentionally; they spin a fair thread to strangle themselves, both temporally and eternally. Such vain and vile ways, therefore, Job carefully declined; for he knew them to be both base and bootless, *Furtum a Virg. vocatur inane* (Aeneid 6). Ephraim fed upon the wind, the balances of deceit were in his hand; if, thereby, he filled his purse with coin, yet he had emptiness in his soul; *Lucrum in arca, damnum in conscientia*: filled he was with air, and that air was pestilential too; his breath and death he drew in together. Job would have none of that.

Or if my foot hath hastened to deceit] If I have been nimble and active to go beyond and defraud another in any matter, #1Th 4:6, which, what is it else but *crimea stellionatus*, the very sin of deception? and this not only acted, but arted, after long trading in it, as the words of walking and hastening seem to import.

Ver. 6. **Let me be weighed in an even balance]** Heb. Let him weigh me; Examine me, saith Tremellius. David, with the like confidence, Search me, O God, saith he, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, any course of sin that is grievous to God or man, wherein I have walked, or my foot hath hastened, #Ps 139:23,24. Job would not rest in his own heart's applause; neither would he be borne down by his friends' false charges; but puts himself into God's hands to be weighed, and then makes no question but his present sufferings will be found heavier than his former miscarriages, in his interdealings with men for matter of gain; and that there is some other cause (though what he knoweth not) for which God doth so grievously afflict him. See David doing the like, #Ps 7:4 26:2.

That God may know mine integrity] *i.e.* That he may make known mine innocence and upright heartedness in this particular of commerce with others; that I have not dealt deceitfully. Otherwise, if God should weigh the best that are in a balance, they would be found too light; if he mark iniquities no man living can be justified, #Ps 130:3 143:2. If he turn up the bottom of the bag all our secret thefts will out, and come to reckoning. It is an idle conceit of some

ignorant folk, that God will weigh their good deeds against their bad; and they shall well enough set off with him by the one for the other. This they have drawn (as they have not a few other fopperies) from that practice of Popish priests; to persuade people that when men are at point of death, St Michael, the archangel, bringeth a pair of balances, and putteth in one scale their good works, and in the other their sins; and that if those weigh down these, they are saved, as if otherwise, they are damned. But what saith an ancient, *Vae hominum vitae etiamsi laudabili, &c.*, Woe to the best man alive if God should weigh him in a balance of justice; since his sins would be found heavier than the sands of the sea, #**Job 9:15 10:15**.

Ver. 7. **If my step hath turned out of the way]** *sc.* Of justice and equity, in trading and trafficking to get the mammon of unrighteousness. No; the sun might sooner be turned out of his course (as it was once said of Fabricius) than Job out of the track of truth and honesty; he had laid laws upon his feet, his eyes, and his hands too; binding them all to the good behaviour: witness the next words.

And mine heart walked after mine eyes] As it doth too often, to coveting other men's goods; which St John calleth the lust of the eyes, #**1Jo 2:16**. Alexander the Great called the Persian maids *Dolores oculorum*, the griefs of the eyes. The wedge of gold and Babylonish garment proved to be so to covetous Achan, #**Jos 7:21**, and Naboth's vineyard to that no good Ahab, #**1Ki 21:2**. He was even sick of it, and could not be cured but by a salad out of it. Hence the law flatly forbiddeth men to go after the sight of their eyes and the lust of their hearts; for these are seldom sundered, #**Nu 15:39 Ec 11:9**. Unruly eyes, like Jacob's sheep, too firmly fixed on unlawful objects, make the affections bring forth spotted fruit. Job would, therefore, set a guard upon them, lest they should prove brokers of wickedness to the heart; as that hang by Hiram, the Adullamite, was to Judah, #**Ge 38:20**. There is an easy passage for evil through the eyes into the heart, saith Quintilian, *Oculus et cor sunt proxenetæ peccati* (Hebr. Proverb).

And if any blot hath cleaved to my hands] If I have been fingering that which was not fit for me to meddle with; viz. evil gotten goods, whether by bribery, usury, deceit, or the like; the very touching

whereof will blot and benumb the hands, as Pliny writeth of the fish torpedo; and as scholars know that Demosthenes, a great lawyer, by poisoning Harpalus's goblet, was tempted and swayed to favour his cause, to the great danger of his country, and his own indelible infamy.

Ver. 8. **Then let me sow, and another eat]** God loves to retaliate; and let him do so to me, according to that he hath threatened, **#De 28:30**, &c., and as he executed upon Laban, Nabal, Saul, Haman, others. The Greeks have a proverb,

Ἄλλοι μὲν σπειροῦσ' ἄλλοι δ' ἀναμῆσονται.

Some sow that which others reap. This Job wisheth may befall, if he had been oppressive and injurious, as Eliphaz had wrongfully accused him, **#Job 22:6**.

Yea, let my offspring be rooted out] Or, Let that which I have planted be plucked up by the roots. It is commonly seen that oppressors and unconscionable persons procure their own ruth and ruin; and he that gathereth the fruits of another man's tree pulleth his own up by the roots.

Οἱ αὐτῷ κακὰ τεύχει ἀνηρ, ἀλλῷ κακὰ τεύχων.

Those who spoil houses which they builded not, **#Job 20:19**, shall, when they cease to spoil, be made a spoil; and when they have made an end of dealing treacherously, be treacherously dealt with themselves, **#Isa 13:1**.

Ver. 9. **If my heart hath been deceived by a woman]** By a female sinner, as they call such, a strange woman (as the Scripture), whose lips are snares, whose hands are bands, whose words are cords to draw a man in, as an ox to the slaughter, **#Pr 7:21**, whose face is as a glass, wherein while larks gaze they are taken in a day net (**ἡμεῖς**, *Hinc πειθῶ*, *persuadeo*). Here Job disavoweth and disclaimeth the sin of adultery, purging himself, as it were, by oath, as before he had done of fornication, and of wrong dealing. These sins he reckoneth up, either as they came to mind, or else in such order as men are many times tempted to them. Young people are prone to fornication;

Job, when young, had kept himself clear from that iniquity. When men have got some years over their heads, and are entered into the world, as they call it, they usually grow greedy and gripple; they are set upon it, and will be rich, however they come by it. Job was none such either, #Job 31:5,7. Afterwards, when married, they are sick of a pleurisy; and as the devil, who sets them to work, they long to be sowing another man's ground, #Mt 13:25. The temptation to fornication is strong, but to adultery stronger, *Adulterium quasi ad alterius torum*. God doth often punish fornication, unrepented of, with strong and vexing honings and hankerings after strange flesh. But Job either was never troubled in this way; or else, when the temptation came, he was sure to be ever out of the way. The devil's fire fell upon wet tinder; and if he knocked at Job's door, there was no one at home to look out at the window and let him in; for he considered the punishment both human, #Job 31:11, and divine, #Job 31:12, due to this great wickedness.

Or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door] Either as waiting the opportunity of his absence, as #Pr 7:19, or as insinuating myself into her familiarity, while she was standing in her door. Of the Italian women one giveth this character, That though witty in speech, and modest in outward appearance, yet they are magpies at the door, goats in the garden, devils in the house, angels in the streets, and syrens in the windows. Job's heart was not deceived by any such; neither sought he to defraud his brother in any such matter, #1Th 4:5,6. {See Trapp on "Joh 8:4"}

Ver. 10. **Then let my wife grind unto another]** *i.e.* Let her be his slave, as #La 5:13 Ex 11:5 Mt 24:41; or rather, let her be his whore; and may my sin, which hath served her for example, serve her also for excuse. Not that Job would hereby license his wife to commit filthiness (as those Lituanians, who have their *connubii adiutores*, co-helpers in wedlock, and prize them far above all their acquaintance, as Maginus relateth, *Alienas permolere uxores* (Horat.). *Sic μωλλειν, i.e. molere, apud Theocrit. est coire*; and as some wits among us, panders to their own beds, who, either for gain or for a quiet life, wink at their wives' disloyalty; and, as woodculvers or silly hedge sparrows, hatch and bring up that which cuckoos lay in their nests), but to set forth by this horrible imprecation how extremely he abhorred the sin of adultery.

And let others bow down upon her] A clean expression of an unclean act. Some *Borborologi podicem ex ore faciunt*, being like ducks, that ever have their noses puddling in puddles: *sic hi spurcitas Veneris eliminant*, delight in ribaldry and obscene language; as did Proculus, the emperor, and before him, that beast Tiberius. These are to be avoided as pests and botches of human society. So also are stage plays for that very cause, as the brothels of bawdry, the corrupters of youth, the canker of the commonwealth, as Plato, a heathen, complained. Filthiness and fornication should not be once named among Christians, **#Eph 5:3**. Groves were flatly forbidden by God to be planted near the places of his worship; in detestation of that heathenish custom of Priapus's worshippers, promiscuously satisfying their lusts in a thicket after they had sacrificed; thereby, as they conceived, best pleasing their god.

Ver. 11. **For this is an heinous crime]** *Hoc enim grande flagitium est*, so the Tigurines translate; for this is a wickedness with a witness, though counted by some a light offence, a peccadillo. The Popish priests, deeply guilty of it themselves, seldom cried out against it in their sermons; this the great ones, and others, observed; and, therefore, ran into it, as if it had been a venial sin, if any sin at all. But we have not so learned Christ; and there was once found an English bishop (Adelm, elect bishop of Sherborn, A.D. 705) who boldly and sharply reprov'd Pope Sergius to his face for this foul sin (Godwin. Catal. p. 333). Joseph calleth it a great wickedness, **#Ge 39:9**, because a breach of the bond of loyalty, which cannot but be treachery; as also because it destroys society and the purity of posterity, stealing sometimes an heir into the estate.

Yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges] Since it is a theft of that which is most precious and most peculiar to the owner; as Joseph told his mistress, **#Ge 39:9**; the suspicion or jealousy of it raiseth the rage of a man to such a height that it will not be allayed without revenge, **#Pr 6:34,35**. Some render it, *iniquitas iudicata*, an iniquity already adjudged capital. The Hebrew hath it, an iniquity of the judges; that is, that which judges should severely punish. Before the law Tamar was to have been burnt for it, **#Ge 38:24**, as under the law the high priest's daughter, **#Le 21:9**. Ahab and Zedekiah were roasted in the fire for this offence by

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, #Jer 29:22,23. Some think that these two were the elders that assaulted Susanna. The Egyptians cut off the harlot's nose, and the adulterer's members. Ezekiel, #Eze 23:25, alludeth to this custom. The Locrians pulled out their eyes. The Julian law, among the Romans, adjudged them to die; and Jerome saith this law was yet in force in his time; but the poet complaineth that, for want of due execution, it lay dormant, *Lex Iulia dormit*; as many other good laws do by the baseness and partiality of the judges, such as were those Athenian judges, who, having before them Phryne, that notable strumpet, were about to pass sentence of death upon her; but when her advocate, Hyperides, had opened her bosom, and showed them her beautiful breasts to move them to mercy, they acquitted her, and let her go (Plutarch, Vit. 10; Rhetor. in Hyper.). In like sort also they dealt with the dame of Smyrna, whom they appointed to appear some hundred years after. How much better the old Saxons, who, while they were yet heathens, made a law, and saw it well executed, that the adulteress should be first strangled, and then burnt in a bonfire, over which the adulterer was to be hanged in chains, and burnt to death by degrees? And of another heathen people we read, that they put the adulterers' and adulteresses' heads into the paunch of a beast, where all the filth lieth, and so stifled them to death.

Ver. 12. **For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction]** *Ad Gehennam usque*, to the place of destruction. Heb. to Abaddon, that burneth as low as hell itself. In case men should be slack to punish this heinous crime, yet whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, #Heb 13:3, shutting them out of heaven, #Re 22:15 (for what should any such dirty dog do trampling on that golden pavement?), and thrusting them into hell, as he did the filthy Sodomites, #Jude 7, beside that hell above ground which he rained from heaven upon them, hot fire for their burning lusts, and stinking brimstone for their stinking brutishness. How God signally punished this sin in Charles II, king of Navarre, roasting him to death. {See Trapp on "Ge 19:24"}; Joan of Naples also, and Mary of Arragon, wife to the Emperor Otho III, burnt at a stake, are set upon record as instances of the Divine displeasure against adultery, a fire which burns hearts and consumes houses.

And would root out all mine increase] Leaving me nothing. As a devouring fire burns up men, cattle, houses, corn, trees, &c.; so doth this sin all a man's income, baring him to the very bones, and exhausting him to the utmost: so that, like Tiberius at Capreae, he doth *indies perire*, which is a bitterness beyond that of death, #Ec 7:26. Or like Samson, befooled and bereft of all by Delilah, who had not her name for nought, for it comes from Dalal, to exhaust and impoverish. And indeed such kind of creatures do ordinarily drain the strength, exhaust the purses, dry up the credit, waste and consume the all of the mightiest Samsons, besides the loss of their immortal souls, and perpetual shame at the last day (when all their faults shall be written in their foreheads), unless the matter be taken up in the judge's privy chamber of mercy; and unless, by timely repentance, course be taken to stop his open judicial proceeding in court.

Ver. 13. **If I did despise the cause of my many, errant, &c.]** Servants of old (among the heathen especially) were mere slaves to their masters according to the flesh, who had power to use them at their pleasure, as they did their cattle. A servant (saith Aristotle) is the master's instrument, and wholly his *ολων εκεινου*. He might do what he would to them, saith Seneca, even to the taking away of their lives, without danger of law. But Job held with the same Seneca, that *posse et nolle nobile est*; and that in some cases, *Nimis angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse*; that utmost right is utmost wrong; and that there will come a reckoning afterwards, the forethought whereof awed him, and swayed him to do his servants right, when he might have oppressed them and tyrannized over them; as now the Turks do over their galley slaves. Of Archbishop Cranmer it is recorded, that he never raged so far with any of his household servants as once to call the meanest of them varlet or knave in anger. Tremellius, who was for a time entertained in his house, saith of it, that it was *schola vel palaestra pietatis et literarum*, A school or nursery of piety and learning. And therefore what wonder that there was so good accord between him and his family, when there was so careful a performance of domestic duties, and he was not a better man than a master? Think the same of Job, discontents might occur in his house, and complaints might be made, which he heard with patience, and then set all to rights again,

taking course that he might be both loved and feared by all about him.

Ver. 14. **What then shall I do when God riseth up, &c.]** Job considered that he had a Master in heaven, #Col 4:1; that there is one higher than the highest, #Ec 5:8, with whom there is no respect of persons, but wherever any deal proudly, God is above them, #Ex 18:11. These and the like humbling considerations, and not any placability or natural courteousness, made him deal thus fairly and kindly with his servants; how much more, then, with his wife and children!

And when he visiteth, what shall I answer?] Job looked to be visited, and called to an account of his household government. It is a good saying of a heathen, *Ita vivamus, &c.*, Let us so live as those that must render an account of all we do (Cic. 4 in Verr.). And that which the ruffian in Seneca scoffeth at in the sober young man is true of the godly in a sense more divine, *Ita laborat, ita ludit, ita coenat, ita potat, ita loquitur, ita vivit, ut qui Ephemeridas patri est approbaturus*; that is, he so laboureth, so sporteth, so eateth, so drinketh, so speaketh, so liveth, as he that must approve his day books to his father. Job was not to learn that there is a way of upright walking in our houses, so as God will come to us, if our houses be rightly ordered, #Ps 101:2, and we shall look him in the face with comfort; for it is called there a perfect way, in opposition to hypocrisy. Now uprightness hath boldness.

Ver. 15. **Did not he that made me in the womb, make him?]** In which regard have not we all one Father, and hath not one God created us? #Mal 2:10. Is it not he who formeth and shapeth us, and all by the book, #Ps 139:16. We are all of all sorts in this respect (whether kings or captives, lords or lowlies), made of the same mould, hewn out of the same rock, digged out of the same pit, cut out of the same piece, the shears only going between, as they say. Thus for our bodies, and for our better part, is not the meanest made in God's image, and as capable of heaven, if God please, as the greatest? In the law the servant paid the half shekel as well as the master; and in Christ Jesus, as there is neither Jew nor Greek, so neither bond nor free, #Ga 3:28. Truth it is, God hath made these distinctions and degrees among men, but himself is no respecter of persons. He acknowledgeth no faces (so the Hebrew expresseth it).

He taketh no notice of any man's outward condition, as country, sex, wisdom, wealth, dignity, &c. These neither please God nor displease him, but as they are in a good or bad man; as a cipher by itself is nothing without a figure before it. This reason wrought with Job, and should do, doubtless, with all superiors, to bring them to a moderation. Why should a poor man be slighted or brow beaten? Is he not God's handiwork also? Was he not made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth? #Ps 139:15, that is, in his mother's womb, as it followeth.

And did not one (that is God) fashion (Heb. apt or fit) us in the womb?] *Quum fortuna, non natura eos fecerit servos, cur, propter fortunam, eos contemptiores habuissem?* Forasmuch as not Nature, but Providence, hath made them my servants, why should I for that cause deal hardly with them; and not rather favour them the more, for our common condition of birth, and death, and coming to judgment? *Apte et concinne elaboravit* (Brent.). *Servus ἀναδελφος vei ομοδελφος domini sui est.*

Ver. 16. **If I have withheld the poor from their desire]** The poor man speaketh supplications, he comes to the rich with his God help me, as Lazarus did, #Lu 16:20,21, his very name speaks as much, but the rich answereth him roughly, #Pr 18:23 Either the answer cutteth off half the petition, as the echo doth the voice; or else he is commanded *ad quercum dicere*, to tell his tale to the statues and images, as Diogenes used to do; for of living men he could get no hearing. But Job's suitors sped better. Pennyless they were, but not friendless; drawn dry (as the Hebrew word importeth) and such as whose wealth was utterly wasted; but Job shored them up and supplied them. And this he did readily, and at the first asking; they no sooner desired relief but they had it. Job was a cheerful giver, he neither denied nor delayed those that came to him for relief or refuge. *Multi contra studiose causas inquirunt quibus se a benefaciendo cohibeant* (Merlin). Many seek occasion to put off poor people, and to rid their hands of them.

Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail] *Viduae saepe sunt verecundae* (Mercer). Widows many times are modest; their eyes are weakened with much weeping, while they remember their former comforts and present crosses. This good Job considered, and

therefore soon condescended to their requests. He held it enough that their hearts ached, and would not suffer their eyes to ache with expecting his help, but speedily sped them.

Η χάρις η βραδυπλους αχαρις εστι χάρις.

Ver. 17. **Or have eaten my morsel myself alone]** As that churl Nabal did, and therefore merited the title of Pamphagus. Many rich wretches are like little children, who, though they have their mouths full of food and both their hands full, yet will part with none to another, but rather mar it. The richer they are the harder, as Dives; whom, to upbraid, Lazarus was laid in the bosom of liberal Abraham, of whom it is recorded, that he sat in the door of his tent in the heat of the day (the usual time of repose and repast) purposely to invite passengers, #Ge 18:1. He pursued hospitality, as the apostle's expression is, #Ro 12:13, and a very hearty householder he was. Think the same of Job, whose cup overflowed into other men's lesser vessels, as #Ps 23:5, neither did anything he eat do him good without some good company to take part with him. Charity is no churl. Of a certain bishop of Lincoln the story is told, that he never thought he had that thing which he did not give, *Quod nondum dederit, nondum se credit habere. Hoc habeo quodcunque dedi,* saith Seneca; and another (Martial),

Quas dederis solas, semper habebis, opes.

And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof] These were his fellow commoners; and the like is reported of Charles the Great, and of Bishop Hooper, who had his board of beggars, widows, and orphans sent for to his palace in Worcester, and served every day with whole and wholesome meats ere himself sat down to dinner. Neither were these any losers by their liberality. The flowers hurt not their own fruit, though they yield honey to the painful bee. The sun loseth not light, though it lend it to the moon. But as the moon, the fuller she is of light the farther she gets from the sun, and as the sun moveth slowest when he is highest in the zodiac; so are those farthest off from bounty, for the most part, who abound most in plenty. Your fattest men have the least blood, and your richest men do the least good. Whereas those that are rich in this world should be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate to widows

and fatherless especially, sith those are God's own clients, #1Ti 6:17.

Ver. 18. **For from my youth he was brought up with me, &c.]** *i.e.* Ever since I could do anything it hath been my delight to be doing good to the poor orphans, whom I have tenderly bred, as a father useth to breed his children. *Non est vulgare Dei donum*, saith Mercer, This is no ordinary mercy for men to be of a merciful disposition and melting hearted toward the poor and necessitous, as some are naturally, and from the womb. Such are said to have been Artaxerxes Longimanus, Titus the emperor, Otho III, Stephen king of Hungary, Oswald king of England, &c.

And I have guided her from my mother's womb] *Ductavi illam*, meaning the widow, or the orphan, to whom I have been a manly guide, and that of a child little. See the previous note. Sutton's hospitals and many more monuments of charity in this kind are worthily alleged by some of our divines, to prove that, for their time and ability, Protestants have equalled and exceeded Papists in this way of good works. Job's desire of doing good appeared early, as if it had been born with him; like as Plutarch writeth of Coriolanus, that he was so natural and expert a soldier, that he might seem to have been born with his arms upon his back and his weapons in his hands, *εγγενη και εμφοτα*..

Ver. 19. **If I have seen any perish for want of clothing]** Job was *ad omnem humanitatem effectus atque assuefactus*. This liberal man devised liberal things; and as he dealt his bread to the hungry, so when he saw the naked he covered him; he hid not himself from his own flesh, #Isa 58:7. Giles, of Brussels, and Mr Wiseheart, the Scot, are famous among the martyrs for their charity in this kind. And so is Mr Fox, the martyrologer, of whom it is reported, that as he gave away his horse at one time to a poor man when he had no money to give him; so at another, having bestowed his wife's money in a petticoat, and meeting by the way home with a poor woman that wanted clothing, he freely gave it to her; telling his wife that he had sent it to heaven before her. The poor man's belly is surely the best cupboard, and his back the best wardrobe; *Ubi non pereunt, sed parturiunt*, where they rot not, as those moth eaten ones in St James, #Jas 5:2, but remain for ever. Great Alexander believed this far better than most among us, for when he had given away all

almost, and his friends asked him, where it was? he pointed to the poor and said, *In scriniis*, in my chests. And when he was further asked, what he kept for himself.; he answered, *Spem maiorum et meliorum*, The hope of greater and better things. And another of his name, viz. Pope Alexander V, was so liberal to the poor, that he left nothing to himself; so that he would merrily say, that he was a rich bishop, a poor cardinal, and a beggarly pope, Ωποτοι. It was wont to be said,

Pauperibus sun dat gratis, nec munera curat

Curia Papalis; quod modo percipimus.

But this distich must be read backwards, saith mine author (Heidfeld.), thus, Percipimus modo quod Papalis, &c. This Pope Alexander then was a rare bird at Rome.

Or any poor without covering] Whether he craved it of me or not, if I did but see it, the poor creature was sure of it. The liberal man helps the poor and needy, **#Ps 41:1**. *Praeoccupat vocem petitura*, so Augustine expounds that text in **#Ps 103** He stays not till he is asked a good turn, but ministereth to the uses, not only to the necessities, of the saints, as the apostle's word is in the original, **#Ro 12:13**, τας χρηειας. So did Dr Taylor, martyr, when he visited the almshouse in his parish once a fortnight to see what they lacked, and to supply them. And so did Mr Fox, when, unasked, he gave the poor woman the petticoat, as above said.

Ver. 20. If his loins have not blessed me] As being warm clothed by me; not with a suit of words, as those great benefactors, **#Jas 2:15,16**, who were much in mouth mercy, which indeed is good cheap; but a little handful of Job's wool is much better than a mouthful of such airy courtesies, and would open more mouths to bless men who, today, for the most part, will be but as friends at a sneeze, the most you can get of them is, God bless you. These have as many flouts and curses as Job had well wishes, and God thereby had praises, according to that of our Saviour, **#Mt 5:16**.

And if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep] His sheep were his own, else his charity had been unwarrantable. "Honour the Lord with thy substance," **#Pr 3:9**, but see it be thine,

and not another's. "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor," #Pr 22:9; specially if he have spared it out of his own belly to give to the hungry; if it were the bread of his own demense, or allowance, as some interpret it.

Ver. 21. **If I have lift up my hand against the fatherless]** That is, against any that are destitute of human helps and defences. Such to ill treat and oppress is easy for great ones. See #Ge 50:15-21, &c. But where the true fear of God is no such thing will be done. The Tigurines render, *Si minitatus sum Orphano, &c.*, If I have lifted up my hand in threatening first, and then let it fall in striking and punishing, the fatherless or friendless.

When I saw my help in the gate] *i.e.* When, by my greatness and grace with the people, I might have borne out my worst miscarriages; when I might have had more than enough that would have defended, yea, applauded me, as the Senate of Rome did Nero even for his most malapert misdemeanors and most horrid outrages.

Ver. 22. **Then let mine arm fall from the shoulder blade]** That unworthy arm of mine (as Cranmer cried out of that unworthy right hand of his, which he therefore burnt first), so injuriously lifted up against the fatherless, #Job 31:21, let it never be useful to me any more, but let me be punished with that wherewith I have sinned. God sometimes takes notice of the offending member; as in Jeroboam's withered hand, Abimelech's head, which had stolen the crown, Samson's eyes, the rich man's tongue, the adulteress's thigh, #Nu 5:27. This Job knew, and therefore subjoineth this imprecation, *Diris se devovens*, thereby to clear himself from Eliphaz's false imputations, #Job 22:6,7. The like may be done by us, but sparingly, and not without great necessity, for the helping of the truth in necessity, lest if we do it falsely or rashly, God say, Amen, and set his fiat to it; as he had done in sundry instances in several ages; witness Alexander, the cruel keeper of Newgate, and his son-in-law, John Peter, who rotted above ground, according to their wish. So Anne Averies, in Queen Elizabeth's days; Sir Gervaise Elloways, in King James's, hanged on the Tower hill, which he confessed was just upon him, for that in carding and dicing he had often wished himself hanged, if it were not so and so.

And mine arm be broken from the bone] Broken to shivers, as the word signifieth, and by the infamous hands of the hangman, for a terror to all false judges, as some do sense it; *Rumpar medius*, saith Brentius, as Judas burst in the midst with a huge crack, #Ac 1:18, his guts gushing out; as did likewise Foxford's, a great persecutor in Henry VIII's time. Some men's sins go before to judgment, God hanging them up, as it were, in gibbets, that others may hear and fear, and do no more so.

Ver. 23. **For destruction from God was a terror to me]** Such an eminent and exemplary calamity or misery, as is mentioned in the former verse, frightened me from wrong dealing. I foresaw the evil event of such practices, and therefore dared not venture. We may not fear the punishment only, and not the offence (for that is a servile fear, and hath torment); neither may we fear the punishment more than the offence. But to fear the punishment with the offence, the offence being feared in the first place, and most, this is incident to saints, and commanded, #Mt 10:28.

And by reason of his highness (or excellency) I could not endure] *Non praevaluissem*, saith Tremellius. The Hebrew is, I could not; *sc.* Prevail or subsist. If there be no standing before a lion, or bearing up sail before a tempest; why should any one think to contest with omnipotence, to strive with his Maker, whom nothing can disarm or pacify, but a humble yielding to his justice in hope of mercy, with a resolution to fear before him continually, as the Scripture phraseth it?

Ver. 24. **If I have made gold my hope]** The Seventy read, *Si posui aurum in coniugmm meum*; signifying the covetous man's great love (Minut. Octav.). If I have trusted in uncertain riches, and been high minded, as Paul expounds it, #1Ti 6:17, holding myself simply the better or the safer for the wealth I have gotten; this is creature confidence, this is fiat idolatry, worse than that of the belly god, who sacrificeth to his gut, but trusteth not to it. An ancient complaineth (and not without cause), *Divites facultatibus suis alligatos magis aurum consuevisse suspicere quam caelum*, That rich men mind gold more than God, and money more than mercy. If wealth be wanting, they sit down in a faithless sullen discontent and despair; as, if they have it, they rise up in a corky, frothy confidence that all shall go well with them. This St Paul calls idolatry, #Col 3:5; St

James, adultery, #Jas 4:4, and enmity with God, in a sense both active and passive; for it maketh a man both to hate God and to be hated by God. Now who would buy gold at so dear a rate?

Or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence] This the mammonist speaketh, as if he were bowing before his golden god, whereunto, though he bow not the knee, yet with his heart he serveth it (and obedience is better than sacrifice), and with his tongue he talketh of it, saying, Thou art my confidence; if thou fail me, I must needs sink: and with all his might he makes after it, as if his life lay upon it, which yet, our Saviour saith, doth not consist in the abundance of those things a man hath, #Lu 12:15, since (as a ship) he may have enough to sink him, but not enough to satisfy him.

Ver. 25. **If I rejoiced because my wealth was great]** Those that trust in it cannot but rejoice in the increase of it; though, in truth, they do rather revel than rejoice; for true joy is a severe thing, saith the philosopher, and must have a better bottom than these *bona scabelli*, than corn, and wine, and outward substance, #Ps 4:7. Job rejoiced not, though the world came tumbling in upon him, as we say. For he knew he was but a wether sheep, upon whom the shepherd had bestowed a bell more than upon the rest of the flock; and therefore he would not cast his noise into the wind, and carry his crest the higher, for outward prosperity. If God should take what he had so graciously given, he would bear it not only patiently, but thankfully and fruitfully, as he did, #Job 1:21, suffering, with joy the spoiling of his goods, as having in heaven a more enduring substance, #Heb 10:34.

And because mine hand had gotten much] Heb. Had found very much. This he speaketh in the worldling's language, who ascribe all they have to their own industry and good fortune. God is not in all their thoughts, *Per mimesim, verba avarorum imitatur* (Lavata.). But Job is of another spirit; and as for this sinful self ascribing, he utterly detesteth and disavoweth it.

Ver. 26. **If I beheld the sun when it shined]** viz. To adore it, as the Persians did, and other heathens. The Egyptians had their Heliopolis, or city of the sun; and the Canaanites their Timnath heres, #Jud 2:9 Jos 24:30, that is, the figure of the sun; so called from the idolatry there committed, in worshipping the sun (though I know there is

another reason given). The Persians consecrated a horse to the sun, as the swiftest to the swiftest; and the idolatrous Israelites had their horses of the sun, which Josiah took away. It is not amiss to behold the sun, moon, and stars in their pomp and lustre. It is sweet, saith Solomon, **#Ec 11:7**. Comfortable, saith David, **#Ps 97:11**, and useful in many respects; to mind us of our present beauty and safety, **#Re 12:1 Ps 84:11**, and of our future felicity and glory, **#Mt 13:46 Da 12:3**; but above all, of Christ, that Sun of righteousness, Star of Jacob, &c. But this we must do, not to worship them, as they of old did the queen of heaven (and this is thought to be the ancientest idolatry in the world), nor to swear by them, as **#Mt 5:34**, but to see and worship the Maker of them; which because the blind Ethnics did not, they were damned, **#Ro 1:19**. Oh, then, what will become of us, who see much more of God by so clear a light in that molten looking glass, **#Job 37:18**.

Or the moon walking in brightness] Heb. Bright or precious; that is, enlightened with the precious light of the sun, as when she is at full, and shineth like the finest gold; and was therefore idolized by the heathens, under the names of Phebe, Diana, &c. Of this idolatry Job here purgeth himself; as he had done before of that other of covetousness.

Ver. 27. **And my heart hath been secretly enticed]** *sc.* By the devil, who is εἰδωλοχαρής, as, saith Synesius, a great promoter of idolatry; and probably had tempted good Job to this sin also; but was bravely repulsed. If I have done this secretly, saith he, that is, contrary to my open profession of sincere religion. See **#De 27:10**.

Or, my mouth hath kissed my hand] An action of idolaters, who kissed their idols that were present, **#1Ki 19:18 Ho 13:2** (as the Papists now do their idols, even to the wearing of hardest marble), and to those which were further from them, they held out their hand, and afterwards did put it to their mouth; as an acknowledgment that they had their life and breath from them, saith Diodati, as a sign of subjection, saith Piscator, from **#Ge 41:40 Ps 2:12**, "Kiss the Son," *sc.* with a kiss of homage, such as wherewith Samuel kissed Saul, **#1Sa 10:1**. And Plutarch saith (in Caton. Uticens.), that not to all, but to some special chief commanders, and generals, it was granted among the Romans, That the hand should be kissed before them by

way of honour; and this was called *adorare, quasi applicare manum ad os*. That saying of Bernard (In Cantic. serm. iv.) is worthy of inserting, *Qui in se, non in Domino gloriatur; manum suam osculatur*; He that glories in himself, and not in the Lord, kisseth his own hand, and is, interpretative, an idolater.

Ver. 28. **This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge]** No less than adultery, but rather more. This also is *iniquitas iudiciaria*, a God provoking, land desolating sin, a wickedness with a witness, a capital crime. See **#Job 31:11**, and take notice how these foul sins swell in Job's eyes as so many toads; and how full in the mouth he is in speaking of them.

For I should have denied the God that is above] Far above any of these *deastri gentium*, even the most high God, **#Ge 14:18,22**. I should rob the master to give to the servant; ascribe that to the creature which is due only to the Creator; this he will by no means endure. For, be the gods of the heathens good fellows, saith one; the true God is a jealous God, and will not share his glory with another.

Ver. 29. **If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me]** If I rejoiced at his ruin or fed my thoughts with his fall. Flesh and blood would have taught him so to do; there being nothing more natural to us than revenge; as we see in little ones. Heathens commended it for manhood (Arist. Rhet. c. i. lib. 9), and held it out as sweeter than life itself.

At vindicta bonum vita iucundius ipsa.

Howbeit some heathens professed against it, as Seneca, *Immane verbum est ultio*, saith he; Revenge is unmanly, both word and thing. And, *Qui ulciscitur excusatus peccat* He that avengeth himself sinneth, though he hath some colour for his sin. Socrates is famous for forgiving of injuries; and Julius Caesar, when he had Pompey's head presented to him, wept, and said, I sought not revenge, but victory, *Non mihi placet vindicta, sed victoria*. Both law and gospel forbids revenge; and Job, who lived before both, obeyed both; as here appeareth. Enemies he had, but he hated them not. That of Solomon was his practice, "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth," &c., **#Pr 24:17,18**. {See Trapp on "Pr 24:17"} {See Trapp on "Pr 24:18"}

Or lifted up myself when evil found him] Sin will find men out, sooner or later; *Nemesis semper a tergo*; and they called her Ἀδραστεια, because unavoidable. Men may shuffle from side to side, as Balaam's ass did; but there is no escaping this punishing angel. God will pursue wicked men to destroy them, till such time as they throw the traitor's head over the wall. Now, good Job had put over his enemies to God, that he might order them (which also he did), and therein did himself no disservice. But how did Job deport himself toward them in this case? Did he lift up himself and insult? Did he bestir himself, as Broughton here elegantly translateth, and was he well paid? Nothing less.

Ver. 30. **Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin]** Heb. my palate; which is one of the nine instruments of speech. I have not so much as broken out into any passionate word against him; but when I was raging ripe I refrained, and forbore boisterous and blustering expressions, whereby some would have vented their choler in such a case. Nothing is more easy and ordinary than to curse an enemy; by prayer at least to turn him over to God to be punished; as David did Nabal, and it was soon done. But Job, out of private revenge, dared not do this, whatever David did out of a zeal of God's glory, which wicked men sought to deface.

By wishing a curse to his soul] Heb. by asking his life by a curse. Job knew that cursing men are cursed men, **#Ps 109:18**. If the prophets cursed their enemies at any time, as Elisha did the children at Bethel, and David oft in the Psalms, it was not *livore vindictae*, *sed zelo iustitiae*, not out of a vindictive spirit, but by the instinct of God's Holy Spirit, and out of zeal for God's glory (Gorran.). Our rule is, "Bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not," **#Ro 12:14**. Render not evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise bless, knowing that we are thereunto called, that we should inherit a blessing, **#1Pe 3:9**. Epiphanius and Chrysostom falling out about Origen's writings, wished a curse to one another; and it occurred accordingly; the one died ere he came home, and the other was unbishoped.

Ver. 31. **If the men of my tabernacle said not]** *Contubernales*, *sive domestici*; those of my family and familiarity. A man is to take heed of the iniquity of his heels, that is, of his followers and

attendants at the heels, as some sense that text, #Ps 49:5, for these will be apt enough to put a man upon courses of revenge, as they dealt by David, #1Sa 24:4 26:8 2Sa 16:9, and by the Son of David, #Lu 9:54. And thus Isidore, Cajetan, and others, interpret these words, as if they were added to the former, #Job 31:29,30, further to commend Job's love to those that hated him. For although he were put on by his domestics, who seeing their master despitefully used, would have torn those of his enemies in pieces; yet he was not moved thereby, but contained and kept them in from such violence. Beza thus paraphraseth this text: And yet I protest that I wanted not besetters on, even among mine own household servants, who still persuaded me to requite those injuries which I received with most bitter revenge: nay, their minds were so incensed, that they cried out, That they should never be satisfied on them, no, not though they had eaten them up quickly.

Oh that we had of his flesh!] So barbarous and brutish is revenge. See #Ps 27:2. Erasmus telleth of a friar, Augustine of Antwerp, that he openly in the pulpit wished that Luther were there, that he might bite out his throat with his teeth (Epist. lib. 16, *ad obtrectat.*). I can hardly forbear with these nails of mine to be thy death, said Friar Brusierd to Bilney the martyr. At the town of Barr, in France, the Italians, in hatred of Lutheranism, broke forth into such fury, that they ripped up a living child, took out his liver, being as yet red hot, and ate it as meat. Christian, king of Denmark, pulled the dead body of his enemy Stevon, the Swedish general, out of the grave, *inuitataque rabie dentibus adpetiit*, and, like a mad dog, tore it with his teeth (Val. Max. Christian. 138). The Jews, in Trajan's time, having one Andrew for their captain, cut in pieces, about Cyrene, many Greeks and Romans, eating their flesh, besmearing themselves with their blood, and clothing themselves with their skins. The like they did also about Cyprus, and in Egypt, to the slaughtering of over four hundred thousand people. Tacitus noteth of the Jews in general, that they are very kind among themselves, but *contra omnes alios hostile odium*, against all others they bear hostile hatred. *Homo homini daemon*.

We cannot be satisfied] But with his heart blood. It is as easy to quench the fire of Etna as the thoughts fired by revenge, *Plane inexplebile est viudictae desiderium* (Mercer). See #Ps 124:3 1:4.

Ver. 32. **The stranger did not lodge in the street]** Job was so far from liking and commending those enraged stomachs of his servants, that he would not suffer strangers to lodge abroad in the night season. Gregory noteth here, that he speaketh first of his pacific disposition toward his enemies, and then of his hospitality; because, saith he, the heart must first be freed from malice and wrath, and then charity is to be exercised, that we might be accepted. Abraham neither set up an altar to God nor showed himself forward to entertain strangers, till Lot and he were reconciled. Hospitality is commended to our practice, both by the prophet Isaiah, #Isa 58:7, by St Paul, #Ro 12:13 Heb 13:2, and by St Peter, #1Pe 4:9. Of Cranmer, Tremellius testifieth, that he was *homo Φιλοξενος nec minus φιλολογος*, humane and hospitable, after the example of Abraham and Lot, whom Synesius therefore calleth Θεου εστιατορας, God entertainers. Julian the apostate reckoneth the hospitality of the primitive Christians among those three things that caused their religion to be so generally embraced. Of the Waldenses also, those ancient Protestants in Germany, it is reported that they could travel from Colen to Milan in Italy, and every night lodge with hosts of their own profession, who would bid them heartily welcome (Chrys. in Joan. της περι τους ξενους φιλανθρωπιας. *Hinc tot olim Xenodochia*).

But I opened my doors to the traveller] I bid the weary wayfaring man welcome to my house, and kept a good table for such. *Mensa res sacra est, per quam Deus honoratur praeses amicitiae et hospitii*. Job was known to be a good housekeeper, and was much resorted to; he set open his gate in the highway; so Beza, after Mercer, rendereth this text. It was his will, that that part of his house which bounded upon the highway side should always lie open, to harbour passengers, Jupiter φίλιος, τε και ξενιος *dicebatur. Ad viam, vel versus viam*.

Ver. 33. **If I covered my transgression as Adam]** A transgressor then Job yieldeth himself; the lives of the best alive are fuller of sins than the firmament is of stars, or the furnace of sparks. But he did not act like Adam, or after the manner of men, cover or conceal

them, extenuate or excuse them, denying them, as Cain did, #Ge 4:9, and Gehazi, #2Ki 5:25, and Ananias, #Ac 5:8, or at least, dealing with them as the unjust steward did, who for a hundred set down fifty. Adam went about to hide his sin, alleging, *non causam pro causa*, that for the cause of his flight that was not the true cause thereof, viz. the voice of God, his fear thereupon, his nakedness, &c.: thus sin and shifting came into the world together. Secondly, when that would not do, but that he was driven from that κρησφυγετον, then he seeks to excuse it, by accusing God, and transferring the blame upon him, for giving him a woman to tempt him, #Ge 3:12. The like thereunto do they that plead predestination, or constellations, or natural inclination, &c., that put God to his proofs, as they did, #Jer 2:35. Job was none such; but made it his daily practice to acknowledge his iniquities against himself, #Ps 32:5, and with utmost aggravation from all the circumstances; laying open how many transgressions were wrapped up in each sin, as it is #Le 16:21, lest, as Samuel once said to Jesse, Are here all thy sons? so God should say to Job, Are these all thy sins? and, there being but one only uncovered, that one should prove destructive to his soul, as that bastard Abimelech did to all his brethren. But now that he freely and fully confesseth his offences, he is sure to find mercy, #Pr 28:18. No man was ever kept out of heaven for his confessed badness; many are for their supposed goodness.

By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom] As silly men think to do, 1. From God, who is all eye, and every man before God is all window, so that he needs not a window in his bosom (as the heathen Momus wished) for God to look in at, #Job 34:22 2. From the world; which yet they cannot always do; for God, that descrieth, will also discover all, sooner or later; else how should that be fulfilled, The name of the wicked shall rot? Broughton rendereth it, By hiding mine iniquity of self love. So Kimchi also readeth it. Tremellius to the same sense, *Ex dilectione mei*. And surely it is this sinful self love that closeth up men's lips, and keepeth them from poaring out their souls as water before the Lord. Some deal with their souls as others do with their bodies; when their beauty is decayed, they desire to hide it from themselves by false glosses, and from others by painting; so their sins from themselves by false glosses, and from others by excuses. But this was not Job's practice; for though he

were a great man, and able enough to have crushed those that should accuse him of any miscarriage, yet he was far from it; as he sets forth in the next verse.

Ver. 34. **Did I fear a great multitude]** Or, Though I should have terrified a great multitude, yet the most contemptible of the families frayed me (or humbled me), so that I held my peace, and went not out of doors; *q.d.* I could by my greatness have borne out my misdemeanors, and who dared have once questioned me, or quacked before me? But this I did not, I dared not; as being reined in by the reverential fear of God; yea, rather, if any one, though but of the meanest rank, had come to me, and admonished me friendly of my faults, or else, more sharply reprov'd me, I took it well aworth from him, not once opening my mouth to contend with him for my sins, not at all stirring out of doors to do him hurt. Let us fight with our faults, and not with our friends that tell us of them, said that German emperor. And when a poor hermit came to our Richard I, A.D. 1195, and preaching to him the words of eternal life, bade him be mindful of the subversion of Sodom, and abstain from things unlawful; otherwise (said he) the deserved vengeance of God will come upon thee; the king laid these things to heart, and became more devout and charitable to the poor.

That I kept silence, and went not out of the door] I replied, not in defence of what evil I had done; I cried not, as they used to do in courts of justice, *Non feci*, Not guilty; but Me, me, *ego qui feci*, I am verily guilty, and for this cause I went not out of doors, but kept me at home as much as I might, through shame and grief for what I had done amiss. I held my tongue, and hid my head. This was right; and this seems to me to be the right interpretation of the text among those many others that are brought by expositors.

Ver. 35. **Oh that one would hear me]** *Quis det mihi auscultantem mihi?* Oh that after all this purging and praising of myself (wherein I take no pleasure, but that I must do it, unless I will betray mine innocence, and lie under heavy imputations), some one would help me to a fair trial! that God, who is best able, would undertake the business, and effectually vindicate me from these calumnies and contumelies that are cast upon me.

That the Almighty would answer me] *i.e.* That he would give a reason why he dealt so harshly with me. This was Job's desire, or mark he aimed at, with confidence enough, *Hac in re petenda nimis importunus est* (Merl.); but sure he should have carried this matter with more modesty and lowly mindedness, with more reverence and godly fear, since our God is a consuming fire; since he is greater than our consciences; neither may we ever forget the infinite distance and disproportion that is between him and ourselves.

And that mine adversary had written a book] Heb. The man of my contention; mine antagonist, that he had made his declaration, and set down his charge. By these and the following expressions, Job denoteth his innocence and plerophory of faith, wherewith he was well acquainted, and whereby he was exceedingly supported. Oh that we could as bravely bear all contumelies and contempts for our consciences; wearing them as crowns and confirmations of our conformity to Christ.

Ver. 36. **Surely I would take it on my shoulder]** As a father doth his darling, or as a standard bearer doth his ensign, or as a man carrieth his most desirable things out of a common combustion.

And bind it as a crown to me] Heb. Crowns. I should be very proud of it, as we use to speak, and take it for a great glory, as not doubting with much ease and in a trice to confute it; or at least to slight it. The lash of lewd tongues it is as impossible to avoid as necessary to contemn. The best apology to such is that of Isaac to his brother Ishmael, patience and silence. If any reply be made, it should be like that of the faithful steward to his passionate lord, who called him knave and worse, Your honour may speak as you please, but I believe not a word that you say, for I know myself an honest man. Do well and hear ill is written upon heaven's gates, said that holy martyr. A bad report is the ordinary reward of very well doing, which made Luther wax proud even of his reproach, as he said himself, *Indies magis mihi placeo, superbus fio, quod video nomen pessimum mihi crescere*, I please myself herein every day more and more; I grow even proud of this, that I hear every day worse and worse for well doing; surely should such curs wag their tails and not their tongues, I should suspect mine own innocence; as Phocion did, when the Athenians liked his oration. And in another place he saith,

Maior est mihi timor in laudibus; gaudium vero in maledictis et blasphemis, When I am praised I am afraid all is not well; but when I am reproached and railed on it is a joy to me; for this will be accounted to my reckoning at the last day; this will add weight to my crown of glory. Reproaches, as they make graces more splendid, so they will make glory more radiant, as the more dirty feet tread and rub the more lustre they give the figure graven in gold. Hence Austin, whatsoever (saith he) willingly reproacheth me, the same doth, though against his will, add to my reward in heaven. And this I take for a great glory (saith Jerome), all the heretics rail at me.

Ver. 37. **I would declare unto him the number of my steps]** I would tell him all that ever I know by myself, and turn him the inside outward, deal ingeniously with him, and make him my confessor; and so help him make up his book. *Elice igitur hine,* Therefore entice this, saith Lavater. Hence we may learn so to demean ourselves in all companies and conditions of life, that we may neither be ashamed to live nor afraid to die; and that we need not care though our greatest enemies knew of our worst practices, though our faults were written in our foreheads, as they say. Of Socrates Pliny saith, that his name was not the name of a man, but of integrity itself (Nat. Hist. 1. 7, c. 31). Of Cato Major Paternus saith, that he was free from all human vices, and as like to virtue itself as might be. Cicero saith, that he was one of those few that lived and died with glory. How much more truly and boldly may we affirm the like of Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Daniel, Nehemiah, Paul, who knew nothing by himself, Melancthon, George, prince of Anhalt, John Bradford, and many others famous in their generations, whom, for their piety and patience, as their enemies could not but admire, so their friends could never sufficiently extol them. This is no small help to the cause, said Erasmus concerning Luther, that his enemies could find no fault or flaw in his life.

As a prince would I go near unto him] *Id est, Animo heroico et imperterritito, quippe bene sibi conscio* (Piscat.); that is, with a heroic spirit, and an undaunted courage: I would not shrink back, or flinch him a jot, as having a clearing, cheering conscience that feareth no colours, that would not budge or yield a hair for an angel's authority, **#Ga 1:8.** *Quasi Princeps, hoc est, animo liberrimo et expositissimo,*

&c., saith Brentius, As a prince against whom there is no rising up. I would speak my mind, and lay open the whole matter of my deportment very freely and fully, that both present and future ages might judge it. Of Trajan the emperor it is recorded, that he neither hated nor feared any man living. And of Trajan, general to Valens, the Arian emperor, that as he could speak his mind fitly, so he dared speak it freely. Think the same of Job.

Ver. 38. **If my land cry against me]** As unjustly gotten; where we have an elegant personification not unlike that of the prophet, **#Hab 2:11,12**, where the stone out of the wall cries out against the oppressor, and the *tignum e ligno*, the beam out of the timber, answereth it by a woeful antiphony. It hath been noted before, that Goropius will have the English to be called Angli, because they were good anglers, and had skill to lay various baits when they fished for other men's livings. May it be our care to disprove him, and to show ourselves angels rather (as Gregory the Great derived us), and our land to be *Regnum Dei*, the kingdom of God, as it was anciently counted and called, by the holiness and righteousness exercised among us (Polydore Virgil). These two make up one perfect pair of compasses, which can take the true latitude of an upright heart (such as Job's was, witness this whole chapter). The first, like the top of Jacob's ladder, reacheth up to heaven; the second, like the foot of the ladder, resteth on the earth, or rather walketh about in a perfect circle of all such duties as one man oweth to another. Job was famous for both, whatever his friends surmised or suggested to the contrary. He was righteously religious and religiously righteous; exercising the first table of the law in the second, and caring to keep always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men, **#Ac 24:16**.

Or that the furrows thereof likewise complain] *Si plorant porcae*. Heb. Weep, *sc.* As it were, out of a desire after their own right owner, from whom they are detained, as was Naboth's vineyard.

Ver. 39. **If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money]** *i.e.* Not paying the labourers their wages, which is a bony sin, **#Am 5:12,13**, crying cruelty, **#Jas 5:4**, such as hath a woe hanging on the heels of it, **#Jer 22:17**. See what sins it is set among, and what punishment is

awarded to it, #Mal 3:5. Let Laban be guilty of it, #Ge 31:7, but Job protesteth against it here with an imprecation.

Or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life] That is, the occupiers thereof, the poor rent holders (by racking their rents), to miss subsistence, so that they could not make a living of it with all their labour. Owners of the land he calleth them improperly; since the land was his, as in the former verse; but if he had the propriety, they had the pains, and theretbro should have a livelihood, as Solomon's vinedressers had, #So 8:12; but so had not Pharaoh's labourers, the oppressed Israelites, who toiled like horses, and yet were held to so hard allowance, that they were weary of their lives, and their souls were ready to expire, as the Hebrew here hath it. Prisoners' pittance many poor tenants have, such as will neither keep them alive nor suffer them to die.

Ver. 40. **Let thistles grow instead of wheat]** This was a piece of that first curse, #Ge 3:8, under which the earth hath lain bedridden, as it were, ever since, waiting for the coming of the Son of God, that it may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, #Ro 8:20; and Job wished it as due to him, *Ex lege Talionis*, if he should be guilty of the forementioned cruelty, #Jas 2:13, ἀρoura *et Arvum ab Heb. Arur*, accursed.

And cockle instead of barley] *Lolium et lappae*, stinking stuff the word signifieth; as those were stinking grapes, #Isa 5:2,4, rotten, corrupted, vitiated; and as that was blasted corn, yielding nothing better than dust and chaff, #Mt 13:25, ζιζανιον, *Frumentum adustum*. Whereas wheat and barley are the precious fruits of the earth, #Jas 5:7, whereof when the Metapontines had one year a great crop, they dedicated to their god Delphos, in token of thankfulness, a harvest graven in gold, Χρυσουν θερος (Strabo).

The words of Job are ended] *i.e.* His conference with his three friends, whom having before silenced, and now for himself sufficiently apologized, he putteth a period to that discourse; having (as Octavius once said to Decius) to the understanding spoken sufficient, and to the ignorant or obstinate too much, had he said less.

Chapter 32

Ver. 1. **So these three men ceased to answer Job]** They were as quiet as men are on a Sabbath, so the word importeth; they had tired themselves with talking, and now they were resolved to rest them, and the rather, because they judged there was little good to be done by aught that they should say; for Job was set.

Because he was righteous in his own eyes] And so there was no more hope of a fool than of him. Pertinacious they held him and contentious, self-conceited and opinionated; which, indeed, was a right character of themselves, if they could have seen it. He was only constant to himself, and to the truth; whereof he showed himself a stout and resolute champion. Only, as every pomegranate hath some rotten kernels in it; so Job had his frailties, his outbursts, caused by extremity of pain and excess of passion; for the which these three did him wrong to give him up for deplored and desperate.

Ver. 2. **Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu]** Or, Then burnt the nose of Elihu; a periphrasis of anger, which appeareth in the nose, eyes, and other parts of the body. *Quis enim celaverit ignem?* Who can hide fire? The Rabbis have a saying, that a man shows what he is *becos, bechis, becagnas*, by his purse, his cups, and his anger; which, if it be rash and unadvised, is a mortal sin, and not venial (as the Papists falsely infer from **#Mt 5:22**), dispossessing a man of his wit and reason, and disfiguring his body with fieriness of the face, swelling of the veins, stammering of the tongue, gnashing of the teeth, and many other impotent and unmanly behaviours. Hence angry men were counselled, in the heat of their fit, to look themselves in a glass, where they may see themselves swollen like a toad, glowing like a devil, &c. But Elihu's anger was not of this kind. A fire it was, but the flame of God, as holy zeal is called, **#So 8:6**, a most vehement flame (as it is there rendered) kindled upon the hearth of his heart by the spirit of judgment and of burning, **#Isa 4:4**, and such as many waters could not quench, for the zeal is the extreme heat of all the affections; and the coals thereof are coals of fire, **#So 8:6**, only we must see that it burns clear and quick, without all smoke of sin; wherein, though Elihu somewhat faulted, yet, because he was right for the main, all was well taken. We are apt to mingle sin with our best actions, and so to plough with an ox and an

ass. But God considers whereof we are made, and graciously lays the finger of mercy on the scars of our sins, as that painter in the story.

Of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite] Descended he was of good parents (*Fortes creantur fortibus, et bonis*) who gave him a good name, signifying, He is my God, or, My God is Jehovah; to remind him of his duty, whereunto we have need of all helps that may be. His father's name, Barachel, signifieth, One whom God hath blessed; he hath blessed him indeed in so good a son, as could not but make him a glad father, #Pr 10:1. The Buzite he is called, either from his progenitor Buz, the son of Nahor, who was the brother of Abraham, and had by Milcah, Huz, his firstborn (of whom some think Job came), and Buz, his brother, #Ge 22:21; or else from his country, the city of Buz, a city of Idumea, #Jer 25:23. Jerome will have this Elihu to be the same with Balaam, who, while young, was a prophet of God, and dealt thus divinely with Job, but afterwards, being corrupted by Balak, he became the devil's boggyman. This I look upon as a Jewish tradition, not much to be credited. His pedigree is here more fully described, *Ut certitudo historiae ostenderetur*, saith Mercer, that we might not doubt the truth and certainty of the history so circumstanced; as also, because Elihu did better than the rest of Job's friends, who proved no better than Satan's instruments. How he came to make one among them we know not. It is conceived, that hearing about the going of the other three by consent to visit Job, he also went to hear their conferences, not doubting that he should thereby derive much benefit to his understanding. But failing in his expectation, and finding both parties incorrect in their discourses, he steps forth, and takes the boldness to interpose as an arbiter, or moderator, blaming both sides, and beginning, in the six following chapters, that determination of the difference between them, which God himself will afterwards finish. Meanwhile it is well observed by the learned Beza, that Elihu in blaming Job (as there was cause), doth for the most part interpret Job's words far otherwise than he meant them; and moreover, that even in finding fault with those things that were justly to be found fault withal he kept not always that moderation that was meet; which is evident to godly men, and especially such as are of a more earnest nature and disposition; so hard a thing is it, even when we do well,

not to offend on the one side or on the other. But if we consider how far Job, being thereto driven by the importunity of his accusers, and his most intolerable calamity, did range out of the right way, and how we are all given, even to the uttermost, to defend and maintain our credit and estimation, especially when we are therein touched by those men who ought, least of all others, to have done the same; we shall confess that it was very requisite and necessary for Job rather to be censured in this sharp manner, as he was, than after any milder sort; to the end he might the better acknowledge and humble himself before God; as always he had done, till, through the slanderous speeches of his friends, he was drawn into these altercations.

Of the kindred of Ram] *E familia Syra*, so Tremellius; as if Ram were put for Aram. The Chaldee saith, it is put for Abraham, who was first called Ram, secondly Abram, thirdly Abraham. But Elihu was of the family of Nahor rather than of Abraham; and Ram seemeth to have been some famous man of that family.

Because he justified himself rather than God] This he did not directly, *et totidem verbis*; but by consequence; and Elihu was kindled at it. It is a blessed thing to have a stomach for God, and to be blown up in his cause, as was Moses, #Ex 32:19,20, Elijah with his *Zelando zelavi*, Phinehas, David, Christ, #Joh 3:17, the angel of Ephesus, #Re 2:2; to be all on a light fire with love to God, and indignation against all that do him any dishonour by word or deed. Job had uttered some discontented speeches against God; which reflected upon his justice and goodness; he had also despaired of a restoration, and most earnestly wished for death, &c., and thereby seemed to justify himself rather than God; this good Elihu could not brook.

Ver. 3. **Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled]** True zeal is of a most masculine, disengaged, courageous nature; like fire, it catcheth on every side, and is impartial. Elihu was a man made all of fire, walking among stubble, as Chrysostom saith of Peter. And, surely, he that is not angry against sin, whether in himself or others, it is because either he knows it not or hates it not as he ought. He also kept within the bounds of modesty and moderation, and expressed himself without bitterness. We read of Idacius, that he would needs be doing with Salvianus and Instantius, both

Priscillianists. But by his passionate and intemperate language he not only did not convert them, but made them worse (Sulp. Sever. l. ii., p. 171).

Because they had found no answer] They were gruelled and nonplussed, as the Popish doctors were oft by the martyrs, Philpot, Ridley, &c., yea, by those of the weaker sort, as Anne Askew, Alice Driver, &c. The prolocutor in convocation, A. D. 1553, confessed that those dejected ministers (afterwards martyrs) had the word on their side, but the prelates in place the possession of the sword, and that was their best answer to the others' arguments.

And yet had condemned Job] Condemned him for a wicked man, as the word signifieth. So the Popish doctors did innocent Cranmer of adultery, heresy, and treason; Philpot, of parricide, heresy, &c. To accuse was easy, but how shamefully failed they in the proof! These three, after they had also interested God himself in their rash accusation of Job, were forced to give him over.

Ver. 4. **Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken]** Yea, though his speech was very long, yet he heard him out, though himself were with child to speak. Broughton rendereth it, waited to speak with Job; he would not thrust in till they had all done their discourses. This was his modesty, though a man of singular abilities. *Raram facit virtus cum scientia mixturam.* To blame then surely was Gregory, for thinking so ill and writing so harshly of this good young man, as if he had been proud and arrogant; descanting to that purpose upon his name, country, and kindred.

Because they were elder than he] And therefore ought of right to have the precedence of speech; though it appeareth, by all that followeth, that in this controversy he saw further into it, judged righter, and rebuked Job with more gravity and wisdom, than any of them; so that Job was fully convinced, and made no reply at all; no more than Jonah did when God set him down, **#Job 4:11**: so forcible are right words.

Ver. 5. **When Elihu saw that there was no answer]** And therefore Job looked upon himself as one that had won the day. St Austin professeth this was it that heartened him, and made him to triumph in his former Manicheism, that he met with feeble opponents, and

such as his nimble wit was easily able to overturn. And when Carolostadius opposed Luther's consubstantiation but weakly and insufficiently, Zuinglius said he was sorry that so good a cause, *non satis humerorum haberet*, lacked shoulders.

then his wrath was kindled] viz. From their coldness, like as #Ne 3:20. Baruch repaired earnestly (*se accendit*, he burst out into heat, angry with his own and others' sloth); so Elihu here, when he saw that Job's eloquence triumphed over their wisdom, and that their silence was a loud acknowledgment of their defeat, he grew more angry than before; and, transported with zeal, he saith to them very briskly,

Ver. 6. **I am young, and ye are very old]** Yet was he nothing inferior to any of them in wit, piety, and learning; he had lived long in a little time, and was (as one saith of Macarius) *μειρακτογερων*, an "old" young man (Niceph.); as if he had been an Alban born, *qui albo crine nascuntur*; who come into the world hoar headed, as did Seneca; and thence had his name, as Cassiodorus thinketh, *quod canus, quasi senior natus sit, Canitiem habent auspiciam capillarum* (Solin). Some young men are ripe early, and more ready headed than their ancients; as David was, #Ps 119:100, and as Solomon was, a child king, but very wise; contrarily, his son and successor Rehoboam entered into the kingdom at a ripe age, yet Solomon was the man and Rehoboam the child. Age is no just measure of wisdom. There are beardless sages and greyheaded children. Not the ancient are wise, but the wise is ancient as Elihu will tell us in the next verses.

Wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion] Heb. my knowledge; that is, the truth, so far as I understand it, *siquid ego aut capio, aut sapio*, if I have any judgment. Thus he delivers himself in modest terms, using many prefaces. And if hereafter he seem to boast, and set up himself above the rest, as he doth, it is out of his zeal for God, whose honour he seeketh, and not his own. The words here rendered, I was afraid and to show, are both Syriac. Elihu, by his family of Ram or Aram may seem to be that countryman, and to have a touch of that dialect, as Livy had of his Patavinity.

Ver. 7. **I said, Days should speak]** This seems to have been a proverb in those days; and it ran much in Elihu's mind. We use to say, that at meetings young men should be mutes, and old men vowels. Of Arsadius, who succeeded Chrysostom in the see of Constantinople, it is recorded (but nothing to his commendation) that at eighty years of age he was as eloquent as a fish and as nimble as a frog.

And multitude of years should teach wisdom] Heb. Should make known wisdom; sc. such as consisteth in the knowledge of God and of his will, of ourselves and of our duties. This is far beyond all that of the heathen sages, of the seven wise men of Greece, of Archimedes of Syracuse, who had a name in fame, saith Plutarch, not of human, but of a kind of divine wisdom. So had Socrates, so had Apollonius, of whom Philostratus saith, that he was *non doctus, sed natus sapiens*, not taught, but born a wise man, οὐκ ἀνθρώπινης ἀλλὰ δαιμονίου τινοῦ συνέσεως (Plut.). These all were the world's wizards; and what they came, to see **#Ro 1:21-23 1Co 1:11** Lactantius truly telleth us (Instit. 1. 3, c. 30), in the name of the whole community of Christians, that all the wisdom of a man consisteth in this, to know God and worship him aright. And that these seniors should have taught and notified such wisdom Elihu had well hoped: but it proved otherwise.

Ver. 8. **But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty]** Or, Surely there is a spirit in man, but the inspiration, &c. Man hath a reasonable soul and a natural judgment, whereby he differeth from brute beasts; and not only so, but some there are that do *animam excolere*, as Cicero and Aristotle; they improve their natural abilities by art, and so go far beyond others in worth; differing from the unlearned as much almost as a man doth from a beast. Lo, such a spirit there is in some men; which yet amounteth not to wisdom without the concurrence of God's good Spirit to sanctify all, as the altar sanctifieth the gold of the altar. If this be not attained unto, the wiser any man is the vainer he proveth, **#Ro 1:22**. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of those wise (even of the choicest and most picked men among them) that they are vain, **#1Co 3:20**. And to such we may say, as Austin once wrote to a man of great parts, *Ornari abs te diabolus quaerit*, the devil desireth to be tricked up by thee.

And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding]

He is the wise man, when all is done, whom, whether old or young, the Spirit of God, who acteth most freely, is pleased to imbreathe. And although arts and age be good helps to knowledge, yet they must be all taught of God that shall be wise unto salvation; and such as these, the older they grow the wiser they are, for the most part; and if young saints, they become old angels. True it is, that God is debtor to none; neither doth a longer life of itself deserve anything at God's hands; because the longer they live the more sins they commit. But yet the promise is, that to him that hath shall be given, and he shall abound. "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean bands shall be stronger and stronger," #Job 17:9. Howbeit, some good men's first days have been their best days; and they have suffered no small decays in their spiritual intellect; as did Solomon, Asa, Joash, and perhaps these three friends of Job, to whom this speech is directed. Certain it is that he is a rare and a happy man of whom it may be said, in a spiritual sense (as it was said of Moses), that, after long profession of religion, his sight is not waxed dim, nor his holy heat abated. The heathen sages have cause to admonish us to take heed of old age; as that which cometh not alone, but is itself a disease, and ever accompanied with many maladies, both of body and mind. Elihu seemeth to take this here for granted (experience sealing to it), that true wisdom dependeth not upon any man's authority, power, learning, experience, or old age; but upon the inspiration of the Almighty, #2Pe 1:21 2Ti 3:16. And, therefore, the Holy Scriptures must needs be the storehouse of wisdom, the statute book of heaven, as being θεοπνευστος, imbreated by God, as Paul speaketh, the very heart and soul of God, as Gregory.

Ver. 9. **Great men are not always wise]** Rabbis are not the grandees of the earth; they who seem to be somewhat, #Ga 2:6, and take it ill if they be not so accounted, these are not always wise, or these are none of the wisest. *Non sunt sapientes magistri*, so Brentius reads it. Our masters (*ut sunt magistri nostri Parisienses*) have not engrossed all the wisdom. And why? *Spiritus non est alligatus Rabbistorum authoritati, et magistrorum nostrorum capitibus, &c.*: the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, is in nowise bound to such, nor are his gifts held captive by any, but freely distributed

according to the good pleasure of his will, who worketh all, and in all. Paphnutius was wiser than the whole council; John Wickliffe, than the University of Oxford; Daniel, than all the magicians of Babylon, *Patres legendi cum venia*. Fathers of reading with favour. Augustine, being oppressed with the authority of the Fathers, saith, he regardeth not *Quis*, but *Quid*; who speaketh a thing, but what he speaketh.

Neither do the aged understand judgment] Prudence is not proper to old age; and though knowledge be the daughter of time, it doth not always happen that the most aged are the most learned. Wisdom doth not ever lean upon a staff nor look through spectacles. Experience giveth us to see both old fools and young wise men, some of each sort. When the State of Venice once sent two young men ambassadors to the Emperor Frederick IV, and he, being offended at their age, refused to admit them; they bid him to know, That if the Venetians had valued men by their gravity and well grown beards as the only wise men, they would, doubtless, have sent on their embassy a pair of well bearded goats: for,

Si prolixa facit sapientem barba, quid obstat

Barbatus possit quin caper esse Plato?

Ver. 10. **Therefore I said, Hearken to me]** This he speaks by way of apostrophe to Job, with whom he would fain ingratiate, that he might the better prevail to convince him of his coarse dealing with God, whose cause he wholly pleadeth. Elihu had hoped to have learned much by this conference held by such heads, *Nunquam a te nisi doctior redeo*; but, finding it otherwise, he grows to a *Semper ego auditor tantum?* Hearken to me another while, that God may hearken to you. Hearken, I say, all of you; but thou, Job, especially; for with thee lieth my main business, *Tu nominatim et notanter*.

I also will show mine opinion] He saith not my judgment (that might savour of arrogance in so young a man), but mine opinion, or knowledge; I will offer my thoughts, judge you of them as you please. See #**Job 32:6**. Elihu was far from the spirit of Bacon, the Carmelite, who would endure no guessing or doubting; and was, therefore, called Doctor *Resolutissimus*, as requiring that every one should think as he thought: this was too magisterial.

Ver. 11. **Behold, I waited for your words]** While you had anything to say I was silent, and no way troublesome or obstreperous. This he speaketh to Job's friends, who had free liberty to speak while they would without interruption; and should, therefore, now be content to hear (though perhaps what they would not) if God thereby might be glorified, and Job better convinced.

I gave ear to your reasons] Heb. To your understandings. *Usque ad intelligentias vestras*, to the utmost of your best arguments and most elaborated demonstrations, *Ut cum dicitur, Redite usque ad me*, #**Joe 2:12**; for the which you has eviscerated your brains, and well nigh cracked your sconces, but all to no purpose; since you hover in generals; and, declining that which was the main matter in question (like lapwings, that cry farthest off from the nest), you brought only such reasons as were not cogent, and used such discourses as did *nec coelum, nec terram attingere*, to touch neither heave nor earth, never come at the business; which was no better than laborious loss of time.

Ver. 12. **Yea, I attended unto you]** *Et usque ad yes perpendebam*, I throughly weighed your words, and rightly considered them (as our Mr Bradshaw was wont to do at the ministers' meetings, and was therehence called the weighing divine), that you may not think I answer the matter before I understand it, as fools do, to their shame, #**2Pe 2:12**, daring to reprehend what I do not comprehend, as did that Popish expositor, who calleth Ezekiel's description of the temple *insulsam descriptionem*, an absurd description (Sanctius in cap. 40, Ezek. in argum.).

And, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words] And yet they thought they had done both effectually; and that it was merely his stubbornness to stand out against them. Ready they were to give him up for uncounsellable; and to turn him over to God with a *non convertetur*; he is past our cure, we can do no good on him; none but God can put him out of his good conceit of himself, &c. Out of all this a good interpreter maketh these following conclusions: 1. That we must diligently hear and weigh what things are spoken by others before we proceed to censure them. 2. That we must not pass a censure upon any one part of a speech, but take it all together, ere we make judgment of it. 3.

That when we have weighed everything well and wisely, we must not countenance any error, but freely utter what we do truly and rightly think of it. 4. That we may think things sufficiently refuted by the learned which yet had need to be further inquired into. 5. That one younger man may see further sometimes into a matter than many others of longer standing and experience. 6. That men may be esteemed obstinate and opinionated who are nothing less. 7. That multitude and antiquity are but ciphers in divinity, &c.

Ver. 13. **Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom]** Or, See that ye say not, We need not search out words, as **#Job 32:11**. For, we have found out wisdom, *rem acu pertigimus*, we have hit the nail on the head, and said sufficient to convince him, if any reason would do it, while we affirm that

God thrusteth him down (as it were, with a thump on the back), and not man] Who might do amiss, but so cannot God; who, forasmuch as he fighteth against Job, tossing him as a tennis ball, or as the wind doth a withered leaf, from one affliction to another, who can doubt but that he holdeth him a wicked man? This, saith Elihu, is a very weak way of reasoning; therefore never please yourselves in it as convincing, *Hoc argumentum tam facile diluitur quam vulpes comest pyrum*, as one merrily phrased it. There is no judgment to be made of a person or cause by the good or evil success of things, since none out of hell ever suffered more than God's dearest children: witness that little book of martyrs, **#Heb 11** Neither have any sped better here than those worst of men, Turks, Papists, persecutors, &c.

Ver. 14. **Now he hath not directed his speech against me]** And so I have no particular edge or grudge against him, he hath no reason to think that I come prejudicated or exasperated. This Elihu speaketh purposely, to get within Job; that he might the better persuade with him. We must endeavour to preserve in the party with whom we would prevail an opinion of our love and good affection to him; for else we shall lose all our sweet words, since man is a cross and crabbed creature; *duci vult, trahi non vult*, lead him you may, drag him you must not.

Neither will I answer him with your speeches] But with better; he shall have from me soft words and hard arguments; I will come over

him in a milder manner, and to better purpose; while, moved merely by a zeal for God's glory, I shall show him his miscarriages, not in mine own words, but in God's. That is a true saying of learned Junius, *Personatae reprehensiones frigent; plurimumque interest ex animo omnia, ut conscientia fert animusque, facias; an de industria.*

Ver. 15. They were amazed] As if they had seen Medusa's head, {*Gr. Myth. One of the three Gorgons whose head, with snakes for hair; turned him who looked upon it into stone; she was slain by Perseus, and her head fixed on the ægis or shield of Athene.*} or some such terrible spectacle, that had rendered them dumb. Talkative enough they have been when there was no such necessity; but now that they might speak to some purpose they stand like stocks, and are mute as fishes, whereby they bewray their ignorance and folly. Silence in some cases is *sepes sapientiae*, as the Rabbis speak (Pirkeaboth), the fruit and sense of wisdom, **#Am 5:13**; {*See Trapp on "Am 5:13"*} But in addition there is a sinful silence, which Luther wished never to be found guilty of, *Modo impii silentii non arguar.* And it is the devil, doubtless, that gaggeth people when being called to speak of, or for, God, as these friends of Job were at this time, they answer no more.

They leave speaking] They desert a good cause, or betray it by a cowardly silence. It may be feared the spirit of faith is no indweller, where the door of the lips move not right, **#2Co 4:13**. He speaks thus of those three seniors in a third person, by way of irony and contempt, turning his talk to the bystanders, whereof it is likely there were many; or (as Tremellius thinketh) to Job, with whom he seeketh to ingratiate.

Ver. 16. When I had waited, for they spake not, but stood still] Or, Seeing I have waited, but they have not spoken, &c. Nothing appears but a dumb show, a deep silence, such as Elihu much marvelled at, and therefore setteth it forth in many words, all to one purpose. See **#Job 32:15**.

Ver. 17. I said, I will answer also my part] It is a virtue to be forward and forth putting in that which is good; and a vice to be shy and shame faced. A Christian should catch at opportunities of doing and receiving good, he should be ready to every good work; as the busy bee, so soon as ever the sun breaks forth, gets abroad to gather honey and wax.

I also will show my opinion] Heb. my knowledge, as **#Job 32:6**, and so the Vulgate readeth it. Hereupon Gregory taking Elihu (but

not well) for an arrogant person, showeth that such love to vaunt themselves, and out of ostentation to set forth their good parts to public view; and are therein like unto a vessel without a cover, touching which the law saith that it shall be counted unclean. Thus he. But to utter a man's knowledge for the benefit of others, as good Elihu did, is not pride, but zeal, however the world censure it. And they have, doubtless, a heavy account to make who hide their talents; and, having a great treasure of rare abilities, will not be drawn to impart them; the canker of these men's great skill shall be a swift witness against them. *Vile latens virtus...* worthless hidden virtue.

Ver. 18. **For I am full of matter]** Heb. Of words; such as are weighty and stuffy, steeped in mine understanding (as Plutarch saith Phocion's words were), and very well digested. I am εἰπεῖν δεινотаτος, in very good case to speak; as full of solid arguments as the moon is of light. Whether Elihu speaketh this arrogantly and from the flesh, or from the spirit, I determine not, saith Brentius here. But sure it is, that such words as these, howsoever they may seem arrogant and carnal, *possunt tamen esse spiritualissima*, yet they may be very spiritual, as **#Jer 4 Jer 20**. And as sure it is, that we should be in company like full clouds or paps, that pain themselves with fulness till eased of their milk.

The spirit within me constraineth me] Heb. The spirit of my belly; that is, God's Holy Spirit inhabiting mine heart, and exciting me to so good a work. "The love of Christ constraineth us," **#2Co 5:14**. It hath not only an impulsive, but a compulsive, faculty. *Rumperer medius, si non erumperet sermo intra me conceptus*, as Brentius here paraphraseth; I should even burst if I did not vent my conceptions, which, like a child in the womb at full time, or as wind in the bowels, want room, and press to come out, **#Ps 39:3 Jer 20:9**. *Sicut flatus in ventre conclusus magno impetu exitum quaerit: sic zelus mentis quaerit exitum per sermonem* (Pisc.).

Ver. 19. **Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent]** By this elegant similitude Elihu illustrateth what he had said before; wherein (as Merlin well observeth) he compareth words shut up in the mind of him that would fain utter them to new wine, not yet thoroughly purged, the soul to bottles, silence to the stopple, which keeps in the wine, grief hereupon to the breaking of those bottles, speech to the

opening of them, by taking away the stopple of silence. And although in this discourse Elihu may seem to lay on more words than the matter requireth, yet he doth not; for he saith no more than the psalmist doth, #Ps 45:1, and Jeremiah, #Jer 6:11, and the apostles, #Ac 4:20, "We cannot but speak," &c. And whereas Gregory saith that all this came from pride in Elihu, Chrysostom praiseth him rather (and therein he is in the right) for his zeal, which will have a vent, or the heart will cleave; as the waters undermine when they cannot overflow. As for that which is urged against Elihu, that God saith of him, as of a reprobate and one whom he knew not, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" #Job 38:2, it is plain that God speaketh there, not of Elihu, but of Job, and so Job understood and applied it, #Job 42:2; and that God speaketh not of Job's sacrificing for him, as for the other three, makes more for his praise than else; and shows that he had spoken of God the thing that was right, which they had not done, #Job 42:7. Ver. 20. **I will speak, that I may be refreshed]** Heb. that I may breathe: this many martyrs did, though to the loss of their precious lives; as those that came to the tribunals, and cried out, *Christiani sumus*, We are Christians, hang us, burn us, stone us, &c., *Modo Iesum nostrum nanciscamur*; so that we may get our Jesus. And when they were told that they were put to death, *Non pro fide, sed pro obstinatione*, not for their religion, but for their obstinace, Tertullian answered, *Pro hac obstinatione fidei morimur*, For this religious obstinace we gladly die. As for those that made not a good confession, but either denied or dissembled their religion, for political respects, what a deal of unrest found they in their consciences, till they had better declared themselves, or revoked their recantations; as Bilney, Bainham, Benbridge, Abbes, Sharp, besides Origen, and all those of old? Let a man speak boldly and freely in a good cause when called to it, and he shall be refreshed; for as every flower hath its sweet smell, so hath every good word and work its comfort.

I will open my lips and answer] viz. Freely and fully, as #Eph 6:19, with great alacrity of spirit and vehemence of speech. Some kind of answer a man may make, though he open not his lips; as he did, who, being asked what man's life was? presently turned his back, and went his way. Theodoret also, upon #Mt 5:2, observeth

that our Saviour taught sometimes when yet he opened not his mouth; viz. by holy life and wondrous works.

Ver. 21. **Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person]** *q.d.* This leave you must give me, or at least wise I must take it, since my life lieth upon it to be impartial and plain dealing, laying the blame where it lights, and sparing the pains of pleasing and parasitical poems of oratorical and rhetorical insinuations. *Nihil loquar ad gratiam, &c.* I shall know no man after the flesh in this business, nor look on any face. If Job found this fault with his other three friends, **#Job 13:7**, he shall have no cause so to do with me; but, as a right moderator, I will hear arguments speak, and not persons; I will shut out my friend, or my senior, and speak the truth in love. *Diem hominis non desideravi*, saith Jeremiah, **#Jer 17:16**. And, if I yet please men, I am no more the servant of Christ, **#Ga 1:10**; {See Trapp on "Ga 1:10"}

Neither let me give flattering titles] *Praenomen aut cognomen*, those that seem to be somewhat, whatsoever they be, it shall make no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person, **#Ga 2:6**. I shall call a spade a spade, tell every one their own without circumlocution, and not soothe or smooth up any man (though never so great) in his sinful practices. *Semper Augustus* is a title still given to the German emperors. But Sigismund, once emperor, when a fellow flattered him above measure, and extolled him to the skies, gave the flatterer a good box on the ear, and when he asked, Why smite you me? he answered, Why clawest thou me?

Ver. 22. **For I know not to give, &c.]** I have as little art in it (it is out of my road) as heart to it. For,

In so doing my maker should take me away] *i.e.* Kill me and send me packing to hell. He would soon snatch me away; he would burn me, as some render it; so dangerous is the sin of flattery. A preacher called Constantine the Great, Blessed, to his face, but he went away with a check. What will God say to such, think we? (Euseb. de Vita Const. l. iv. c. 4.)

Chapter 33

Ver. 1. **Wherefore Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches]** Plain Job, for flattering titles Elihu would give none, **#Job 32:22**; only in

prefacing to his discourses he is very large, witness the whole former chapter, which may well stand for a common exordium to all the five following; and the seven first verses of this, wherein he both calleth upon Job for audience, and useth arguments for that purpose. An orator he showeth himself all along; for in his introduction he hath τα ηθη, milder affections, which suit best to insinuate; and toward the conclusion he hath τα παθη, pathetic expressions, that may leave an impression on his hearers.

And hearken to all my words] And not to some of them only, picking and choosing what pleaseth you, and turning a deaf ear to the rest, as he in Tacitus did, who said, *Tu linguae, ego aurium dominus*, You may say what you please, but I will hear no more than I like and list. This is an evil ear, and must be healed (as the orator told his countrymen) ere any good can be done. The good soul lieth low at God's feet and saith, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." All that the Lord our God shall speak unto us, that will we hear and do, **#De 5:27**. Now, therefore, we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God, **#Ac 10:33**. It is a sign of an honest heart to take the precepts together with the promises, and to tremble at the threatenings as well as to reach after the comforts, of God's Holy Word; which last every hypocrite will be catching at, as children do at deserts, passing by the better provision.

Ver. 2. **Behold, now I have opened my mouth]** I have taken upon me to be a speaker, an arbitrator in this controversy, which is usually a thankless office; for he who interposeth in business of this nature, if he had two friends before, is likely enough to lose one of them. I must of necessity blame both parties, however I come off with them. Thy three friends have had their share in the former chapter, and now comes thine, which shall be sound, though sharp, of matters weighty and important, as **#Ps 78:2** *Habebis sermonem serium, et de re gravi*; for so much the Hebrews intend by this expression of opening the mouth. In the Revelation, wherever we read that heaven opened, some great matter followed; so when such open their mouths as have the law of God in their hearts, **#Ps 37:31 Pr 31:26**. Fools indeed have their mouths ever open, blustering out whatsoever lies uppermost, rashly and without consideration, *Κεχηνοτες, a Luciano et Aristophane dicuntur*. But a wise man weigheth his

words before he uttereth them; and speaketh not but for some good purpose.

My tongue hath spoken in my mouth] Heb. In my palate, or under my palate, which are two chief of those mine instruments of speech, none of which can well be wanting. Let God be glorified for and with that peculiar faculty; and let our praises proceed, not from the palate only, or roof of the mouth, but from the root of the heart. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet as that which cometh from the bottom of the breast. One interpreter saith, that by these words, My tongue hath spoken in my mouth, Elihu meaneth, that he would not speak clamorously, but, as it were, whisperingly, to his ear, in secret.

Ver. 3. **My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart]** *i.e.* Out of the uprightness of my heart I will deal fairly and faithfully with thee; I will carve thee a piece of my heart, without doubling or dissembling; and why should not downright truth please thee better than a smooth supparasitation *{flattery}*? Bees pass by roses and violets, and sit upon thyme; so should men rather heed sound rebukes, though hot and biting, than flattering discourses, which Solomon fitly calleth, "The song of fools," #Ec 7:5, a syren's song. And another calleth a flatterer a courteous murderer, Ευνους σφακτης, that killeth in kindness, kisseth and killeth. *Cavete vobis ab osculo hoc Iscariotico*, Beware of this sweet poison, and covet rather those faithful wounds of a friend, #Pr 27:6, as David did, #Ps 141:5. And as Vespasian, who carrieth this commendation, that he was *Patientissimus veri*; verp patient of truth, and as Alphonsus, king of Arragon, who complained of this, that whereas of everything else he had enough, of truth he was very much scanted, there being few about him that would deal candidly and faithfully without flattery or partiality.

And my lips shall utter knowledge clearly] *i.e.* Simply and sincerely, plainly and perspicaciously, I will show my meaning, without either gall or guile. My discourse shall be clear and pure from all dross of deceit, as the original word signifieth. This is a praise proper to God's Holy Word, #Ps 9:9-11 Pr 30:5. And they that handle it (Tophshe Torah, #Jer 2:8) may here learn not to obtrude their own conceits or conjectures for doctrinal truths; but to

utter demonstrative things: not to huckster the Word of God, or corrupt it with their own mixtures, as vintners do their wines; "but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God," &c., #2Co 2:17. Let them not preach one thing and practise another, *sed animentur moribus praecepta*; lest some Hilary complain as once, That there were many heavenly doctrines in the people's ears that never yet had been in the preacher's heart.

Ver. 4. **The Spirit of God hath made me]** That is, I am God's creature no less than thou art, made and maintained by the word of his power, by the breath of his mouth; why then may I not utter pure and holy doctrine? since I also am a rational creature; and if the Holy Spirit please to blow upon me, I can turn about like the mill; if to tune and touch me, I can move to make music; if to infuse good notions, I can utter them. Hear me therefore.

And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life] This some will have to be a metaphor taken from the blowing of glasses into this or that shape. It hath been before noted, that the Egyptians worshipped a god whom they knew not, under the shape of a man blowing an egg out of his mouth, to signify that he made the round world by his word (Plut. de Isid. et Osirid.). "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth," #Ps 33:6. Where some well note the mystery of the Trinity; as others do, not so well, out of this text; by God, understanding the first person; by Almighty, the second; and by the breath of the Almighty, the third. *Sed hoc subtilius*, saith Mercer.

Ver. 5. **If thou canst answer me]** Or, If thou canst, do thou answer me. This bold challenge, and the like confident expressions, not unlike in appearance to that of Campian, with his ten unanswerable reasons (as he accounted them), or that of Sanders, with his forty not probable reasons, but most solid demonstrations (if men would believe him) to prove, that the pope is not Antichrist, hath caused one interpreter, following Gregory, to censure Elihu, for a palpable braggadocian, full of pride and vain-glory (De visib. Monarch. libri 8). This is a hard saying, and at the best *reverenter glossanda*, as he said of the Pontifician laws. I think this good man is hereby no less mistaken and wronged than John Baptist was by Tertullian, who falls foul upon him in three different places, for that harmless question of his sent to our Saviour by two of his disciples (whom he

sought to settle), "Art thou he that should come?" &c., #Mt 11:3, as if he himself had doubted who the person of the Messiah was.

Set thy words in order before me, stand up] A metaphor from military matters; muster up and marshal thine arguments in good array, and then stand to it; make good thy ground like a valiant soldier, who will rather die for it than stir an inch. An expression not unlike this is that of David, #Ps 5:3. In the morning will I direct (or marshal up) my prayers, and then look up; be as a spy upon a watch tower, to see what speed, and whether I get the day: military terms they are both.

Ver. 6. **Behold, I am according to thy wish]** Heb. According to thy mouth. If the saints do but open their mouths wide God will fill them; he will give them not only the desires of their hearts, but the request of their lips, #Ps 21:2, fulfil all their counsel, #Ps 20:4, in that very way, by that very means, they wished it: he fitteth his mercy *ad cardinem desiderii*; and lets it be to his even as they will. Was it not so with Job here?

In God's stead] Heb. For God, to act and plead for him, and to show how thou hast dealt with him. So ministers are said to be in Christ's stead, #2Co 5:20. A great mercy, that he will treat with us by men like ourselves.

I also am formed out of the clay] *Et non ex meliore luto effictus*, of the same make and matter with thyself, cut out of the same lump, digged out of the same pit. He alludeth to #Ge 2:7, the wonderful formation of those protoplasts, as a potter mouldeth his pots, cutting them out of the lump. And the like God doth for men still, by that, viz. πλαστικη, that is in the seed, making it prolific, and generative.

Ver. 7. **Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid]** This Job had earnestly desired of God, #Job 9:24 13:21, and Elihu, as a cunning disputant, presseth him with his own words: I will not, saith he, neither is it fit any mortal man should by his terror and power ravish another of his right religion, as some Zamzummims do the meaner sort of people by their belluine *{brutal}* greatness; as the pope and his janissaries *{One of a former body of Turkish infantry, constituting the Sultan's guard and the main part of the standing army. The body was first organized in the 14th century, and was composed mainly of tributary children of Christians; after a large number of them had been massacred in 1826, the organization was finally abolished.}* do the heretics, as they call those of the reformed

religion, that will not renounce it; not once hearing what they can say for themselves. Either you must turn or burn, say they. This is monstrous immanity. Giants are called Emim, formidable, and Nephilim, because men fall before them through fear.

Neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee] Brentius rendereth this verse thus: *Ecce frons mea non terreat te, et inclinatio mea super te non gravet*, Behold, my forehead cannot fright thee; neither can my bowing down upon thee surcharge thee. I shall neither brow beat thee nor quell thee with my weight, that thou shouldest refuse to reason the case with me. *Periculosum est contra eum scribere, qui potest proscribere; et illi contradicere, qui potest aqua et qui interdicere*. It is ill meddling with those that are armed with great power, and can as easily undo a man as bid it be done. I must needs acknowledge you the better scholar (said Phavorinus the philosopher to Adrian the emperor) *qui triginta habes legiones*, who hast thirty legions at command (Aelius Spart.). But here was no such disparity or cause of fear in Job, from his compeer, Elihu.

Ver. 8. **Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing]** Here beginneth the charge, and it is for words; *Quae leviter volant, non leviter violant. Nihil tam volucere quam maledictum, nihil facilius emittitur* saith Cicero, *pro Plancio*, Nothing is so swift as an evil word, nothing is more easily uttered. But should a man set his mouth against heaven and utter error against the Lord? **#Isa 32:6**. Should he toss that reverend name of God to and fro, with such impiety and profaneness, as if his speech could have no grace, but his disgrace? as if Augustus Caesar were dealing with some god Neptune, or the three sons trying their archery at their father's heart, to see who can shoot the nearest? Surely, as God is the avenger of all such; so Elihu cannot hear it, and not be kindled. Good blood will not belie itself. **#Ps 139:20,21**, "They speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred," &c. The very Turks have the Christian's blaspheming of Christ in execration; and punish it in their prisoners, when through impatience or desperateness they break out in this kind, What a shame is it, then, that our ranters (that last brood of Beelzebub) should, till of late, be suffered to affirm that Christ is a carnal or fleshly thing; and to contemn him by the notion of the man dying at Jerusalem? &c. Can we hear these hellish

blasphemies without ears tingling, hearts trembling? &c. When Servetus condemned Zuinglius for his harshness, he answereth, *In aliis mansuetus ero, in blasphemis in Christum, non ita*. In other things I can bear as much as another, but when I hear Christ blasphemed I am altogether impatient; for what reason? in this case patience would be blockishness, moderation mopishness, toleration cowardice. Madness here is better than meekness.

Ver. 9. **I am clean without transgression]** Clear as the picked glass, without defection.

I am innocent] Heb. Neat and compt, not a hair out of order; as it was objected to Pompey the Great, *Nitidus ego*, פה a *Syriaca voce* פפה *pectere*.

Neither is there iniquity in me] Nothing crooked or dishonest. But had Elihu ever heard Job saying thus? Or did not he rather misinterpret his words? Some proud monk hath been heard to say, *Non habeo, Domino, quod mihi ignoscas*, I have not done anything, Lord, that needeth thy pardon. The reporter of Bellarmine's life and death telleth us, that when the priest came to absolve him, he could not remember any particular sin he had to confess; till he went back in his thoughts as far as his youth. But good Job had no such conceit of himself, as may appear by many passages of his, as **#Job 9:2,20,21 14:4**, &c. Only out of the greatness of his grief, and the unkind usage of his friends (who spared not without all reason to revile him as a most wicked and ungodly liver), he did soon cast out some rash and harsh words against God, {see **#Job 10:7 16:17 23:10,11 27:5**}; and hence this accusation here laid against him as a perfectist, or self-justiciary.

Ver. 10. **Behold, he findeth occasions against me]** Or, breaches; he picks quarrels with me, and would fain find out somewhat in my carriage wherefore to break friendship with me, and to break me in pieces. But did Job ever say in this sort? Not expressly so; but by consequence, and to the same purpose, **#Job 9:17 13:24 14:17 16:9 19:11**.

He counteth me for his enemy] This indeed he had said, and somewhat more, **#Job 13:24 16:9 30:21**, as if God, of his mere pleasure, had made cruel wars upon him, and exercised all kind of

hostility against him, as a vanquished enemy. {See Trapp on "Job 13:24"} {See Trapp on "Job 19:11"}

Ver. 11. **He putteth my feet in the stocks, &c.]** See #Job 13:27 14:16, {See Trapp on "Job 13:27"} {See Trapp on "Job 14:16"}

Ver. 12. **Behold, in this thou art not just]** In this thy expostulation with God, as if he had dealt unjustly with thee (think the same of thy postulation, or unreasonable request, that God should give thee a reason why he so grievously afflicteth thee, #Job 33:13), thou art nothing less than what thou holdest thyself to be, viz. just, pure, innocent. *Sorex suo perit indicio*, the mole betrays himself by casting up the mould; and so dost thou, good Job, by throwing forth words without wisdom, as God himself will once tell thee, #Job 38:2. Canst thou be just, whose words are thus unjust? Never think of it. Thus Elihu is as nimble with Job (but far more ingenuous) as that Jesuit was with Drusius; whom when he had called heretic, and Drusius in his own defence alleged that heresy must be in *fundamentis fidei*; the fundamentals of the faith, the Jesuit replied, that even that assertion of his was heresy.

I will answer thee, that God is greater than man] *Longe superat frivolum hominem*, say the Tigurines, is far above sorry man; the distance and disproportion is infinite. But how is this an answer to Job's justifying himself, and complaining of God as overly rigid? God's greatness here is not to be understood to be his power only (which yet should overawe us when ready to rise up against him), but also of his truth, wisdom, justice, goodness, &c., all of which Job, by his complaints, seemed to question and quarrel with; and is therefore fitly minded of this attribute of Almighty God, who is "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders," #Ex 15:11. Great he is, without quantity; good, without quality; everlasting, without time; omnipresent, without place; containing all things, without extent. He is not only great, #Ps 77:13, but greater, as here; greatest, #Ps 95:3; greatness itself, #Ps 145:3. So he is not only good, #Ps 106:1, but better, #Ps 108:9; best of all, #Php 1:23; goodness itself, #Mt 19:17. The least glimpse of this knowledge is worth all the gleams of human wisdom. And albeit this is a truth commonly known and acknowledged, yet very few are affected with it aright, as appears by their cross carriages toward this great God, and presumptuous misdemeanors, as if he were such another as

themselves, #Ps 50:21. Certainly, if we were thoroughly persuaded of God's infinite greatness, so as it is set forth, #De 10:17 and elsewhere, we would much more fear to offend him and care to please him than we do. The truth is, all the exorbitances in men's lives proceed from the weakness of this spring; and were they but well assured that God is Almighty they would walk before him, and be upright, #Ge 17:1. But to this none can attain but by the help of supernatural grace.

Ver. 13. **Why dost thou strive against him?**] Why dost thou wrangle and reason it thus irreverently with God, whose will alone is the supreme reason, *nec recta solum, sed et ipsa regula;* and not only right, but the very rule of right? He may better say, than any Constantine, that Arian emperor, *Quod ego volo, pro Canone sit,* Let my will be your sovereign rule; since things are therefore right because I will them; I will them not, because they are right. Who then art thou, O man, that repliest against God? saith St Paul; that chatted and worsted it with him, that answereth again, and thinkest to hold him to it, and be hard enough for him? #Ro 9:20. "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth," #Isa 45:9. Let men learn to meddle with their match, and not to contend with God, who is much mightier than they, #Ec 6:10, and hath assured them that with the froward he will wrestle, #Ps 18:26. Jeremiah, who in his distemper would needs reason the cause with God concerning his judgments (which are sometimes secret, but always just), did well and wisely to preface thus: "Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee," #Jer 12:1.

For he giveth not account of any of his matters] Heb. of all his matters; for he is ἀνυπερβυτος, the most highest; and therefore not to be reckoned with by any for aught he doth. If he so far abase himself as to give account of any of his proceedings for our satisfaction, it is *dignatio stupenda*, a wonderful condescension. Vatablus rendereth the text thus, *Non enim omnia verba sua loquitur;* for he uttereth not all his words; that is, he revealeth not all his secrets, *q.d.* he doth all for our good, though we for present understand it not. He oft answereth us as the echo doth the voice, cutting off the one half of it; but stand a while and see the salvation

of the Lord, he is usually better to his people than their conceits, and delighteth to help those that are forsaken in their hopes.

Ver. 14. **For God speaketh once, yea twice]** He loveth to foresignify; and although not bound to it, yet he usually gives warning; as "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," #2Pe 3:9. For which purpose God saith Elihu here useth two ways to nurture his children; the one more mild, to keep them from falling into sin, #Job 33:15-18, the other more rigorous, when they have committed wickedness, to bring them to ammendment of life, #Job 33:19-21, &c.

Yet man perceiveth it not] *Prae crassitie, et supinitate (ut ita dicam) sua;* through his forlorn dullness and heedlessness, his singular inattention and inadvertence. Though God say, as once, "O generation, see ye the word of the Lord," #Jer 2:31, "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it," #Mic 6:9, yet man is not only naturally averse, but adverse, to listen, or lay to heart anything, till it light on his hide, to believe till he feeleth; yea, to his natural dullness he soon addeth a habitual hardness; to his sinews of iron brows of brass, #Isa 48:4. This is fearful, #Ac 28:27, and yet common to all, whose hard hearts God is not pleased to soften with the oil of his grace and to soak in the blood of his Son, that they may be supple and soluble.

Ver. 15. **In a dream, in a vision of the night]** At sundry times and in various manners. God delivered his mind to men of old by dreams in the night, by visions in the day time, imprinting upon their minds what by them he would have understood, or uttered to others. This he did, especially before the law written, whereof therefore here is made no mention. See #Nu 12:6. Indeed with Moses, by a specialty of his favour, he spake mouth to mouth; even apparently (as a man doth to his friend), and not in dark speeches; the similitude of the Lord did he behold, *sed non absque aliquo Maiestatis eius involucro,* but not without some overshadowing of his Majesty, which none can see and live, #Ex 33:20, he must needs be oppressed and swallowed up of it, as the sight of the eye is dazzled with the sun, or a crystal glass broken with the fire.

When deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed] When men, plunged in sleep, are neither in the number of the living

nor the dead. Then many times the reasonable soul cometh into the shop of phantasy, and there doth strange works, which are vented in our dreams. And sometimes God, by an angel, or otherwise, causeth men to dream, and thereby admonisheth them with weighty matters; as he did Abimelech, #Ge 20:3-7; Jacob, #Ge 28:12-15; Joseph, #Ge 40:5-11; the other Joseph, #Mt 1:20-24; the wise men, #Mt 2:12; Pilate's wife, #Mt 27:19, which, though some think it came from the devil, to hinder man's redemption, yet others think it came from God, for the clearing of Christ's innocence, and, as Theophylact holdeth, for the salvation of this woman's soul. Ἐπερω. Of the several sorts of dreams, natural, divine, and diabolical. {See Trapp on "Ge 20:3"}

Ver. 16. **Then he openeth the ears of men]** He maketh the bore bigger, as it were, that good counsel may enter; he calleth up the ears of the soul to the ears of the body, that one sound may pierce both; he saith, as to him in the Gospel Ephphatha; and together with his word there goeth forth a power, as #Lu 4:32. See #Job 36:10,15.

And sealeth their instruction] Or, their correction, for they go together, #Ps 94:12 Pr 3:12,13 6:14, and God sealeth, or setteth on, the one by the other; as when a schoolmaster would have a lesson learned indeed, he set it on with a whipping. Luther saith, that many of St Paul's Epistles could not be understood but by the cross, *Vexatio dat intellectum*. Another grave divine giveth this good advice to find out the sin that God afflicteth for, consider what truths have been pressed upon your hearts before the affliction; for afflictions used to come as seals to instruction; before they did not come with power to your hearts, now God seals them: thus he. Bernard saith concerning his brother, 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. The Tigrine translation is full and elegant, *Tunc aurem hominibus vellit, et disciplinam eorum velut impresso sigillo consignat*: Then he pulleth men by the ear, and consigneth their instruction, as with a seal set unto it.

Ver. 17. **That he may withdraw man from his purpose]** Or, rather, practice. Heb. work, that is, evil work, called a man's own work, #Heb 4:10; for when we do evil we work *de nostro, et secundum*

hominem, #1Co 3:3, as when the devil speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own, #Joh 8:44. Now from such bad work God taketh men off, by dreams sometimes, as he did Abimelech, #Ge 20:3, and Laban, #Ge 31:24 but more frequently by corrections of instruction, which are the way of life, #Pr 6:23: *Christianorum Theologia*, as Luther calleth it; *Virtutum officina*, as Ambrose; *Bonorum omnium thesaurus*, as Brentius upon this text.

And hide pride from man] Which else, as a master pock, will break out in his forehead and testify to his face. By pride we may understand all other sins, which God both covereth and cureth in his penitent people; but pride is fitly instanced, because it was one of the first sins, and is still the root and source of all other sins. God therefore humbleth all under his mighty hand, and preserveth them from the perilous pinnacle of self exaltation; as he dealt with Paul, both when he met him on the way to Damascus, and unhorsed him, as also when by that thorn in the flesh he let out the swollen matter of pride out of his heart, which might else have broken forth into odious and loathsome practices.

Ver. 18. **He keepeth back his soul from the pit]** Or, That he may keep back his soul, that is, his body, as #Ps 16:10 Le 21:1, from the pit; *i.e.* from the grave, or from the pit falls made for him by his enemies. A penitent person redeemeth his own sorrows, and provideth for his own safety, #Ps 91, and accordingly some read it, He shall keep back his own soul, &c.

And his life from perishing by the sword] Whether by the sword of God or man, he shall be extra *iactum*, out of the gunshot or danger of any death, whether corporal or eternal. The universal antidote for all the judgments of God is our humble repentance. Aaron escaped by it, when Miriam was smitten with leprosy.

Per miserere met, tollitur ira Dei.

This is the rainbow, which if God see shining in our hearts, he will never drown our souls. Jehoshaphat by this escaped the edge of the sword; David and his poor sheep the stroke of the punishing angel; all the crowned saints now in heaven the damnation of hell, &c.

Ver. 19. **He is chastened also with pain upon his bed]** He is chastened or chidden, *Coarguitur dolore*; for all diseases are vocal; they are real reprehensions. As God is said to hold his peace when he punisheth not, **#Ps 50:21 Isa 42:14**, so to preach and reprove when he doth, **#Isa 26:9 28:19**. Thus God, by chastening David, instructed him every morning, **#Ps 73:14**. His reins also taught him in the night season. Sickness, saith one, is the shop of virtue. It is *morum disciplina, felicitatis meditatorium, voluntatis Dei schola*, saith another. King Alfred found it so, and therefore besought God to send him ever and anon some fit of sickness; for that, saith he, I ever find myself best when worst, best in soul when worst in body, the sickness of this is a medicine to that.

And the multitude of his bones with strong pain] Some read it, *Et lis est ossium eius vehemens*, his bones rattle in his skin, as we say. Confer **#Ps 38:4**. He is all over so ill at ease, that live he would not, die he cannot; his pain piercing even to his very bones, and drinking up his marrow, as Job's did; all this discourse being exemplified in him, save that we find not that he kept his bed.

Ver. 20. **So that his life abhorreth bread]** Which is the staff of man's life, and by the Latins called *panis*, of the Greek *πav*, as if it were all in all. This the sick man *velut sordidum abominatur*, abhorreth as some filthy thing, so the original word here signifieth; he nauseateth and cannot away with it, though made of the kidneys of wheat, as Moses phraseth it; he brooks it no better than if it were made of sawdust, or mixed with gravel, or made with man's dung, as that in Ezekiel.

And his soul dainty meat] Heb. Meats of desire. Those dainties which he once sought so passionately, and fed upon so eagerly, he finds no more relish in than in the white of an egg or a dry chip; yea, they are no less horrid to him than rank poison. See a like description of a sick person, **#Ps 107:18**, which seemeth to be taken from hence.

Ver. 21. **His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen]** He that was *habior paulo*, corpulent and well lined within, as we say, is so pined with long sickness, that you can hardly know him for the same man, and he may well cry out with the prophet, My leanness, my leanness! Of Christ it is said (though not through sickness), that

he had "no form nor comeliness" (and yet he was the fairest among men, #Ps 45:2), through grief and sufferances, "neither was there any beauty left that we should desire him," for his outside, #Isa 53:2. And of Mr Fox, the martyrologue, it is reported, that having with infinite pains finished that elaborate work of his, the Acts and Monuments of the Church, in eleven years' time, never using the help of any other man, he grew thereupon so lean and withered, that his friends knew him not (Mr Clark in his Life). Now if sorrow and hard study will so macerate a man, what marvel if long and sharp sickness, and thereby extreme stomachlessness, cause leanness and deformity?

And his bones that were not seen] But could hardly be felt for flesh and fat; now they stick out as in an anatomy, so that you may count them, as also the veins and sinews; his body is become a very bag of bones, a skin bottle in the smoke, as David hath it.

Ver. 22. **Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave]** His soul, that is, his body, as #Job 33:18, for Elihu was no mortalist, neither dreamed he of a psychopannychia. {All-night sleep of the soul; a state in which (according to some) the soul sleeps between death and the day of judgement.} He is in the very confines of death, and no ways likely to recover; he is free among the dead, as the psalmist hath it.

And his life to the destroyers] *Lethalibus malis*, to deadly evils, saith Tremellius. *Mortiferis*, i.e. *Morbis*, to those messengers of death, deadly diseases, saith Vatablus, *Gentiles multa de Parcibus fabulati sunt*. To those that kill; viz. to the angels, by whom God sometimes destroyeth men, as #2Sa 24:16,17, saith Piscator. To enemies, say other. *Pollinctoribus*, to the bier carriers, say the Tigurines, and so Beza paraphraseth; so that he stands not in need of any remedy or help of anything more than of those who should carry his carcass unto the grave.

Ver. 23. **If there be a messenger with him]** An angel, say some; but one man may be an angel to another, as Bradford was to Dr Taylor, martyr, who usually called him, That angel of God, John Bradford. If some prophet or teacher sent of God {see #Jud 2:1 Mal 3:1 Re 1:20} to the sick man, who seeth his face as the face of an angel, and receiveth him as an angel, yea, as Christ himself, #Ga 4:14, in whose stead he

is, #2Co 5:20, bringing the embassy of reconciliation, #2Co 5:20, than which what can be more acceptable?

An interpreter] *sc.* Of God's holy will, who may assure the sick party that it is God who visiteth him in very faithfulness, that he may be true to his soul; that he doth it in mercy and in measure, not to ruin him, but to reduce him by repentance from dead works, and by faith in Christ Jesus, &c., who may also set him in a course, and pray for him, as #Jas 5:16. Dr Ussher tells us (Serm. on #Eph 4:13), that even in the times of Popery, among our forefathers, the ordinary instruction appointed to be given to men upon their death beds was, that they should look to come to glory, not by their own merits, but by the virtue and merit of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; that they should place their whole confidence in his death only, and in no other thing; and that they should interpose his death between God and their sins, between them and God's anger. This was right, and, considering the times, admirable. This was better than that blasphemous direction they give elsewhere to dying men to say, *Coniunge Domine, &c.*, Conjoin, O Lord, mine obedience to all those things which Christ suffered for me.

One among a thousand] *Unus e millibus*, not *Unus e similibus*, as the Vulgate Latin hath it by a gross mistake, such as that translation hath many. One among a thousand he is said to be, for the scarcity of such as can time a word, comfort the afflicted conscience, and speak to the heart of a poor distressed creature, who laboureth under the sense of sin and fear of wrath. *O quam hoc non est omnium*, This very few can skill of. Luther, who was excellent at it himself, telleth us, that it is a work every whit as hard as to raise the dead to life again. Go ye rather to them that sell, said the wise to the foolish virgins, and those are rare; *sc.* such faithful and wise distributors of God's grace, as having the tongue of the learned, #Isa 50:4, and being instructed for that purpose to the kingdom of heaven, can comfort the feeble minded, shore up and support the weak, &c. Such a choice man is worth his weight in gold; and oh, how beautiful are his feet, angelic his face!

To declare unto man his uprightness] Or, his righteousness, that is, either the righteousness of Christ, who is his peace; or his, that is,

the righteousness of his own experience, how he hath been raised and received to mercy. Or, his, to clear up to him his spiritual estate, and show his evangelical righteousness, consisting more in purpose than in practice; in confession of our imperfection, than in any perfection we can attain unto. It is not so much our inherent righteousness, in regard of the worth, dignity, and excellence of it, much less purity and perfection in it, but as it is a fruit of God's love and token of his favour, a sign of our adoption and justification, and a pledge of our glorification, that yieldeth comfort. And this it will do when skilfully made out to a poor soul by a godly minister, and set on by the hand of that Holy Spirit, whereby the saints are sealed to the day of redemption, **#Eph 4:30 1:13**.

Ver. 24. **Then is he gracious unto him, and saith]** If the sick man, thus counselled and comforted, repent and believe the gospel, delivering himself up to God, and to that his messenger by the will of God, mercy and truth shall be with him, he shall be cured on both sides, as that palsy man was, **#Mt 9:2**, the Lord shall raise him up, if it may stand with his eternal welfare. But howsoever, if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him, **#Jas 5:15**. Both the guilt and filth of them shall be taken away, so that he shall be able to look death in the face with everlasting comfort, as being made to him *ianua vitae, porta coeli; a postern*, to let out temporal, but a street door, to let in eternal, life.

Deliver him from going down to the pit] Tell him from me, that he shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord, as **#Ps 118:17**. Nay, say to this righteous man, tell him so from me, that it shall be well with him, and very well, **#Isa 3:10**. Redeem him from going down to the infernal pit; that is, declare that redemption to him wrought for him by Christ, and apply it to his conscience, pour the oil of grace into his broken vessel, and assure him in my name, and by mine authority, that I am his salvation. Whose sins soever ye, my faithful ministers, remit, they are remitted unto them; and whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven, **#Mt 18:18 Job 20:23**. But all this ministerially and declaratively, not absolutely and out of a full liberty and power, as Popish priests arrogate. I have known one (saith a very grave divine, Mr Ley, in his Pattern of Piety) who neither by education nor affection was disposed to Popery, who having the ill hap when his conscience was perplexed

to fall into the hands of a Popish priest, for this reason (because, as the priest suggested, that religion afforded more comfort, because it had, and exercised, a power to pardon sin, which our ministers neither did, nor dared assume unto themselves) he became a Papist. But it is honour enough to ministers, and may be comfort enough to their hearers, that God gives them commission to deliver a penitent man from hell; not as the means (for that is Christ alone), but as instruments: 1. To apply Christ crucified, or rather risen again, unto him. 2. To pronounce his safety and salvation, upon the due use of that means. And this is the greatest honour that ever was done to any mere creature. Angels never had such a commission. They indeed are ministers for the good of those that shall be heirs of salvation, #**Heb 1:14**; but ministers are called Saviours, #**Ob 21 1Ti 4:16 Jas 5:20**.

I have found a ransom] Or, an atonement; a cover for his sin; as a thing is covered with plaster; or as, under the law, the ark covered the decalogue, the mercy seat upon it, and over them two cherubims covering one another; all which showed Christ covering the curses of the law, and expiating the sins of his people: which things the angels desire to pry into, as into the patterns of God's deep wisdom, who hath found out such a ransom, which he now professeth to accept for this penitent man, #**1Ti 2:6 Ps 32:1**.

Ver. 25. **His flesh shall be fresher than a child's]** Tender and smooth, full of good blood and fresh spirits, he shall be battle and blithe like a suckling. See a like hyperbole concerning Naaman the Syrian restored to health, #**2Ki 5:14**, implying that his disease was thoroughly cured, and his flesh in better case than ever. There is a memorable story in the Acts and Monuments of the Church, which here may not unfitly be inserted, to show the sweet fruits of remission of sins by the free mercy of God. In the dungeon with Petrus Bergerius at Lyons, in France, was a certain thief and malefactor, who had lain in the dungeon for seven or eight months. This thief, for pain and torment, cried out for God, and cursed his parents that begat him, being almost eaten up with lice, miserably handled, and fed with such bread as dogs and horses had refused to eat. So it pleased the goodness of the Almighty, that through the teaching and prayer of this Bergerius, he was brought to repentance and the knowledge of God, learning much comfort and patience by

the word of the gospel preached unto him. Touching his conversion, himself wrote a sweet letter to some friends, declaring therein that the next day after he had taken hold of the gospel, and framed himself to patience according to the same, his lice (which he could pluck out before by twenty at once between his fingers) now were so gone from him, that he had not one; his rotten flesh (the Vulgate translatheth this text thus, *Consumpta est eius caro a suppliciis*) was recruited, and the alms of good people so extended toward him, that he was fed with white bread, and that which was very good. His name was John Chambone.

He shall return to the days of his youth] *Reiuuuescet*, He shall grow young again, and renew his youth, like the eagle's, #Ps 103:5. He shall be vigorous and active, as #Isa 40:31.

Ver. 26. **He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him]** All former unkindnesses notwithstanding. God will cast his sins into the bottom of the sea, and be as propitious to the poor sinner now reconciled, recovered, and making request, as if he had never been offended by him. Amongst men, *Reconciliationes sunt vulpinae amicitiae*, Reconciliations are for the most part fox like friendships; and there is little trust to them. Not so between God and men; witness Peter, of whom Christ thought no whit the worse for his threefold denial of him, when once he wept bitterly, and prayed for pardon. Go, tell the disciples and Peter, that I am risen, #Mr 16:7. If any man want wisdom, or any other good thing else, let him ask it of God, who giveth unto all men liberally, and hitteth no man in the teeth, either with his present weaknesses or by past wickednesses, #Jas 2:5. *Imo plus est propemodum a vitiis se revocasse, quam vitia ipsa nescivisse*, saith a Father. Penitence is in a manner as good as innocence (Ambros. in Ps.).

He shall see his face with joy] Or, God shall make him to see his face with joy, *Ostendet ei faciem suam in iubilo*, even with joyful acclamation, when he shall find himself possessed of God's kingdom, which consisteth in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; which Chrysostom rightly calleth ουρανου προ ουρανου, heaven beforehand.

For he will render unto man his righteousness] Which he had lost by falling into sin, as **#Eze 18:24**. Understand it of degrees and measures for true grace cannot wholly be lost. Or, he will render unto him now in Christ that righteousness he lost in Adam, he will fully and freely justify him, and sweetly seal him up to the day of redemption, *Rursus eum in album iustorum et plorum referet* (Lav.); the former falling out shall be but a renewing of love; as it was between Christ and his spouse, **#So 5:1-6:13**

Ver. 27. **He looketh upon men]** He looketh to see when any will repent and return unto him. Now Christ's looks are often operative, and cause that which he looks after. A stroke from guilt broke Judas's heart into despair; but a look from Christ broke Peter's heart into tears.

And if any say, I have sinned] So he say it penitently, as David and the prodigal; and not feignedly, as Saul; or forcedly, as Pharaoh; or desperately, as Judas. In men's courts, saith Quintilian, it is best to say *Non feci*, to plead not guilty; but in God's court it is better to say *Ego feci*, Guilty, Lord; mercy, Lord; and not to put God to his proofs, as they did, **#Jer 2:35**; since he that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy, **#Pr 28:13**.

And perverted that which was right] Thus the true penitentiary layeth load upon himself, and aggravates his sins, whereof (saith Merlin) we have here a definition answerable to that of St John, **#1Jo 3:4**, "Sin is the transgression of the law." I have writhed from the right, saith he in the text. I have turned aside to crooked ways, and so have deserved to be led forth with the workers of iniquity, **#Ps 125:5**; as cattle are to the slaughter, or malefactors to execution.

And it profited me not] Sin is an ill pay master, and sends home all her servants by weeping cross. The best that can come of it is shame, **#Ro 6:21**, and godly sorrow, working repentance, **#2Co 7:10**, but usually the end of those things is death; this is the just hire of the least sin, **#Ro 6:23**. It not only profiteth not (whatever it promiseth), but prejudiceth and proves pernicious. This penitent man thanks his sin for his late sickness, and yet thinks he hath escaped fair too; for so some render the text, *Nec poenas condignas dedi*, My

punishment hath been less than my offence, *Non aequale fuit*. See **#Ezr 9:13**, {See Trapp on "Ezr 9:13"}

Ver. 28. **He will deliver his soul from going, &c.]** God will heal him, and lengthen out his life. Or, the sick man will, by his unfeigned repentance, procure his own reprieve and deliverance from deadly danger. Some make these words to be the sick man's thankful confession, He hath redeemed my soul, &c., not unlike that of David, **#Ps 116:8**, and that of Hezekiah, **#Isa 38:17**.

And his life shall see the light] He shall not only live, but live happily and comfortably: a joyless life is no life.

Ver. 29. **Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes]** Heb. twice, thrice; such is his patience, that he trieth all conclusions, as it were, and beareth long with men's evil manners; one while casting them down, and making them believe he will pitch them into hell; and another while raising them up again, and restoring them, that if nothing will do he may pay them all at once for the new and the old, as he did Ahab, and Pharaoh, and Nineveh, because they despised "the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing," or not weighing, "that the goodness of God should have led them to repentance," **#Ro 2:4,5**. Woe be to him that will not be warned at the first, second, or third time! See **#Am 1:3 2:1**, &c., {See Trapp on "Am 1:3"} {See Trapp on "Am 2:1"} R. Solomon would thence infer, That God pardoneth a man only thrice; and then if he take not warning, to hell he must; and this he thinketh to be Elihu's meaning here. But this is to limit the Holy One of Israel, who multiplieth pardon, as we multiply sin, **#Isa 55:7**, and further addeth, for our comfort, **#Job 33:8**, that his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways; but as the heavens are higher than the earth, &c. We are apt to measure God by our models, to cast him into a dishonourable mould, and to think him like ourselves in mercy, power, and other of his attributes. Xenophanes was wont to say, that if the creatures were put to paint the Creator, they would surely conceit him to be like themselves, because a creature cannot think of anything higher than a creature. So deal we for the most part with Almighty God. But he is God and not man; he is Jehovah that changeth not, neither is there any God like unto him for pardoning iniquity, not once, but often, **#Mic 7:18,19**; see the note there. He who commandeth us to forgive

an offending brother seventy times seven times in a day, if he say, It repenteth me, what will not himself do in such a case?

Ver. 30. **To bring back his soul from the pit]** *i.e.* That he may save him from temporal and eternal destruction, which is the most excellent fruit of affliction sanctified. We are judged by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. So that a saint may say, *Periissem nisi periissem*, I had been undone had I not been undone.

Ferre minora vole, ne graviora feram.

To be enlightened with the light of the living] To live comfortably, and to be famous among the saints, *Conspicius sit inter heroines* (Mercer), who, had they not been reduced by affliction, would have perished infamous and obscure wrapped up in the sheet of shame, and going out in a snuff.

Ver. 31. **Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me]** For I speak from God, and for God. It was a good speech of Austin to Manicheus, contesting with him for audience. Hear me, hear me, said Manicheus. Nay, saith Austin, *Nec ego to, nec tu me, sed ambo audiamus Apostolum, dicentem, Peccatum non cognovi, &c.*, Neither will I hear thee nor do thou hear me, but let us both hear the apostle, saying, "I had not known lust," &c.

Ver. 32. **If thou hast anything to say, answer me]** Heb. If thou hast words, yet not empty words, but such as may bear weight, and make for thy defence. Some men's discourses are nothing else but words. Hermodorus of old was said to sell words for want of better commodities. Δογους εμπορευεται Εσοδοπος. Erasmus was noted for a very wordy man, *Verba habet sine rebus Erasmus*. Turrian for a great trifler, *Cornicutas citius in Africa, quam res rationesque solidas in eius scriptis reperias*, saith one. Elihu would have no such words, nor any wise man else; for they are very irksome, yea, vexatious.

Speak, for I desire to justify thee] Not to condemn thee, as these three have done; but to hear thee and clear thee as much as may be. This was fair dealing. Some are so eristical and testy, that they will not hear the adverse party, or bear with any that dissent; as the Jesuits, many fierce Lutherans, yea, Luther himself, as appeareth by

his bitter invectives against Carolostadius, Zuinglius, all the Helvetian Churches, that would not receive the doctrine of consubstantiation. *Tantaene animis coelestibus irae?* He would not once hear the contrary party, nor read their books, but called them arch devils, and all that ever was naught, as he doth in his Epistle to the Senate of Frankfort.

Ver. 33. **If not, hearken unto me]** Elihu is much in calling for attention; so are all the prophets, and Christ the arch prophet, as **#Mt 13:9**, where, although it might seem superfluous to stir up such to hear, as had come from all parts for that purpose, and now hung upon his holy lips, as the babe doth on the breast, **#Lu 19:48**, yet he, well knowing our heedlessness and fickleness, doth it once and again, leaving all ministers an example to do likewise.

Hold thy peace] viz. While I am speaking interrupt me not, but have patience. Some men, as they have *fel in aure*, gall in their ears (as some creatures are said to have), so they have fire in their tongues, which they presently spit at all that offend them in the least.

And I shall teach thee wisdom] A good inducement to thee to hear. I will not trouble thee with trifles, nor detain thee with endless and needless discourses; but set before thee God's wise precedings, and bring thee to such a sight of thine own folly as shall render thee restless till set right for heaven.

Chapter 34

Ver. 1. **Furthermore Elihu answered and said]** *i.e.* He prosecuted his former discourse, he thus pronounced (as the Vulgate hath it) in answer to some of Job's former speeches, which he here reciteth, but not so candidly; and refelleth, but not so mildly as was meet. *Pronunciants itaque Eliu*, Elihu going on still in his anger and speech. True it is, that Job in his heat had let fall very many lavish and inconsiderate speeches, as is to be seen almost throughout the tenth chapter; but yet it was far from him ever to say either that himself was without sin or that God was unjust, as Elihu would bear him down; very odiously taking up certain sayings of his that way sounding, and very gravely calling forth the rest there present to give sentence with him against Job. Yet is not Elihu to be censured for a proud, arrogant person (as some make him), but to be

esteemed, *Sapiens et egregius vir*; as Lavater here styleth him, a wise and excellent man; though he should have considered that the Spirit of God is *neque mendax, neque mordax*, a spirit of truth and of meekness.

Ver. 2. **Hear my words, O ye wise men]** And those are not many, #**Ho 14:9**. He excludeth poor Job, whom yet he had promised to teach wisdom, #**Job 33:33**. And that he spoke not to the many it is probable, for they have not those *auras perpargatas*, that he calleth for in the next verse. Βοιωτες *ferē sunt*, they are heavily eared for the most part, and of dull apprehension;

Boeotum in patria, crassoque sub acre nati.

To the other three then of Job's friends he applieth himself; whom because he had sharply reprov'd before, and that they may not think that he held himself the only wise man among them, he thus bespeaketh to get audience, and makes them judges of his discourse. Men may be wise in some things that have carried the matter foolishly enough in other, ουδεις ανθρωπων αυπος απαντα σοφος (Theog.).

And give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge] It is a happiness to have such hearers. "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say," #**1Co 10:15**. Jovianus the emperor was wont to wish, That he might govern wise men, and that wise men might govern him. But as it was once said, That there was never less wisdom in Greece than in the days of the seven wise men; so may we now well complain, that there is a very great want of sound and saving knowledge in this great abundance of helps thereunto; so that we may cry out, with the prophet Isaiah, Whom shall we teach knowledge, and whom shall we make to understand the hearing? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts; *q.d.* We have to do with very babes, children in understanding, but not in malice.

Ver. 3. **For the ear trieth words]** And for that end we have that excellent sense of hearing given us, that we may hear with judgment, and trying all things, hold fast that which is good, #**1Th 5:21**, taking heed what we hear, #**Mr 4:24**, as by the taste we may take heed what we let down; for else a man may easily eat his own bane, drink his poison: so here, for the soul hath her senses also,

#Php 1:9, and these habitually exercised to discern good and evil, **#Heb 5:14**. Which while carnal people want, they are carried away as they are led, **#1Co 12:2**; plucked away with the error of the wicked, **#2Pe 3:17**; wherried about with every wind of doctrine, **#Heb 13:9**, &c. {See Trapp on "Job 12:1"}

Ver. 4. **Let us choose to us judgment]** Let us summon the sobriety of our senses before our judgments; laying aside all prejudice; for, *Omne iudicium a se aufert qui praeiudicium affert*, He can never judge aright who comes to a cause forestalled or prepossessed.

Let us know among ourselves what is good] Let us go knowingly to work, according to apparent truth; and not use cunningly devised arguments, as many (*mataeologi* rather than *theologi*) do today in the greatest controversies of religion; and hereunto let us all contribute our best help, for the finding out of truth, and convincing of Job.

Ver. 5. **For Job hath said, I am righteous]** So he was with a twofold righteousness: imputed, or the righteousness of justification; and imparted, or the righteousness of sanctification. But Elihu understood him as if he had said, I am sinless. This Job never said; only he cleared himself of foul offences wherewith his friends falsely charged him; and asserted his own integrity, whereof he seemed to be more solicitous than of giving God the glory of his justice; and therein he was to be blamed, as here he is to some purpose.

And God hath taken away my judgment] *sc.* By handling me like a wicked man, and not showing me why. See **#Job 27:3**, where Job had used these very words; but not in the sense that Elihu urgeth them against him.

Ver. 6. **Should I lie against my right?]** *Ut meam causam prodam*, so as to betray my cause, and yield myself guilty when I know myself innocent (R. Levi). This I will never do, said Job; no more would that peerless Lady Elizabeth, when as a traitor she was laid up in the Tower, and pressed to appeach herself. Better die than lie.

My wound is incurable without transgression] These last words, "without transgression," Elihu spitefully thrusteth in, saith Beza. Others think they may be gathered out of **#Job 9:17 16:17**. Without

presumptuous sin (which David calleth the great transgression, the wickedness with a witness) Job might truly say, it may be; for all men are sinners, yet not all alike; though all have a discrasy, yet every man hath not a fever; and though none are without ill humours, yet some have not a leprosy upon them.

Ver. 7. **What man is like Job?**] This Elihu speaketh by way of angry admiration, as if he would make Job a very nonsuch, a matchless offender; and that he much wondered with what face he could speak in that sort, *Exclamatio admirativa* (Pisc.). What, such a man as Job do thus? Oh, shameful! what? upbraid and reproach Almighty God? who would ever have expected such words from such a mouth? Is the man in his right mind, wot you, that he thus maketh himself a common laughing stock and by word, and yet maketh nothing of anything, but doth with as great facility and readiness swallow up men's scoffs and taunts, as if he were drinking cold water, and no more is he troubled at them? Why, but is this Job? and is it possible that he should have so far lost all fear of God, and shame of the world, that he should set his mouth against heaven, as if he would spit in God's face, and not care though he drink up scorning and affronts like water, *quasi maledictis aleretur, ut venenis capreae*, as if he were much taken and tickled with them? True it is, that *Nemo pluris aestimavit virtutem*, as Seneca saith, No man setteth a better price upon virtue than he who will rather part with his good name than part with his honesty. But it is also as true, that to neglect altogether what others think and say of us, *non solum arrogantis est, sed et dissoluti*, is the part not of a proud only, but of a forlorn person, saith the orator.

Ver. 8. **Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity]** Strange if he should; for the wicked is abomination to the righteous, **#Pr 29:27**. "Lord, gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men," saith David, **#Ps 26:9**. Lord, send me not to hell among the wicked (said a certain good woman upon her death bed), for thou knowest I never liked their company here on earth. But how proveth Elihu this charge against Job, who was ever a terror to graceless Belialists? Forsooth he gathereth it from a certain speech of his, if he could tell what, or when it was uttered.

Ver. 9. **For he hath said, It profiteth a man not]** Did Job ever say so or think so? where? and when? He said indeed, and truly, that in this life it is oft seen, that bad men prosper and good men suffer. But

must it needs follow, therefore, that it is a course of no profit to walk with God? Knoweth not Elihu that there is nothing that may not be taken with either hand? and that it is a spiritual unmannerliness to take it with the left? Indeed, it is not amiss to admonish good men, what absurdities may be gathered out of their words; and it is fit that they should prevent it as much as may be. Elihu also was the more to be borne with (and that made Job let him go on, likely, without a reply) because he pleaded for God and the glory of his justice, which Job had somewhat wronged, as cannot be denied, while he gave too much way to his grief and other passions, and now beginneth to be sensible of his outbursts. But, truly, if he should have said as here he is taxed (and yet David and Jeremiah said little less), he would have gone in company with those workers of iniquity, **#Isa 58:3 Mal 3:14,15**, and have lifted at the very foundation of all true religion, **#Heb 11:6**, and thence it was that Elihu was so hot. But men must take heed of drawing odious consequences out of other men's speeches; and of forcing them to go two miles when they would go but one. "Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood," &c., **#Pr 30:33**.

That he should delight himself with God] Or, When he runneth with God. Tremellius, When he shall be willing to walk with God, as **#Ge 5:22**; see **#Eze 1:14**. The Tigurines render the whole verse thus, *Dixit enim, vir non faciet paria, si cum Deo cursu contendat*. Sure it is *nec volentis, nec volantis* (as a nobleman gave it for his motto), it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; no, though he could run as fast as a bird can fly; but in God that showeth mercy. Ver. 10. **Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding]** Heb. Ye men of heart, *Cor est sedes sapientiae. Egregie cordati viri*.

Mentemque habere queis bonam

Et esse corculis datum est.

Having recited Job's evil speeches, he turneth away from him as it were in great displeasure, and directeth his speech to others. See the like done by Jacob, #Ge 49:4. We should abhor that which is evil, and show our detestation thereof.

Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, &c.] sc. By punishing any without a cause; and this he double denieth for better assurance. Cause enough there may be found in the very best, as well by reason of their actual abominations (their omissions, commissions, and failings in the manner) as of their birth blot, which ever abideth with them while they are here, and is a seed plot of all sin. How then can God wrong any one? Surely it is inconsistent with God's, 1. Nature, here; 2. Actions, #Job 34:11 3. Will, #Job 34:12. And although he might, to show his sovereignty, punish men for his pleasure, #Ro 9:20, yet far be it from us to imagine that he will abuse his might and power to do anything unjust or unbecoming his goodness.

Ver. 11. **For the work of a man shall he render unto him]** This is both his covenant and his custom; so far is he from doing wrong to any, that every man shall be sure to reap as he sows, to drink as he brews, to receive according to that he hath done in the flesh, whether good or evil, #2Co 5:10. And albeit this is not done forthwith, yet we may write upon it, and reckon that *nondum omnium dierum soles occiderunt*; as sure as the night followeth the day, a day of account will come, and God will render unto each man reward or punishment according to his works.

And cause every man to find according to his ways] According to the course of his life, and not according to this or that particular action. A Doeg may set his foot as far within the sanctuary as a David; and a David may in some particular out sin a firebrand of hell. But "the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings," #Pr 5:21. He considereth the bent, frame, and tendency of the heart, and proceeds accordingly.

Ver. 12. **Yea, surely God will not do wickedly]** This must be laid down for a certain truth, and is, therefore, so reiterated. Job had said as much to this purpose as Elihu could do; but then he had seemingly dashed all again with his inconsiderate complaints and murmurings. This Elihu could not bear, but again and again celebrateth the righteousness of God; and when he hath said his utmost, seemeth to say, as Cicero once did of Crassus and Antony, the Roman orators, That if any man think he had said too much in commendation of them, he must needs be such a one as either knew them not or was not able to judge their worth. As for Job, whom he

here confuteth, he seems to say of him as Calvin somewhere doth of Luther, That as he excelled with great virtues, so he was not without his great failings. *Atque utinam recognoscendis suis vitiis plus operae dedisset;* And I spent less time in declaiming against others, and more in recognizing his own faults (Calv. ep. Bulling.).

Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment] For shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? *{See Trapp on "Job 7:3"}*

Ver. 13. **Who hath given him a charge over all the earth?]** *sc.* To govern it. Is not he the Maker and Monarch of all men? Who is his superior? and to whom shall he give account? and who shall expostulate with him about injustice? Or, for fear of whom should he warp or writhe? The emperor cannot do right, saith one, because he hath none to overly awe him or question him (Theophil. Inst.). It is said of Trajan, that he neither feared nor hated any man living. What, then, shall we think of him, who is *Moderator et Dominator supremus ac solus* (Mercer).

Or who hath disposed the whole world?] The habitable world; and especially that habitable part of God's earth, as man is called, **#Pr 8:31.**

Ver. 14. **If he set his heart upon man]** *viz.* For evil, and not for good, and have a purpose to unmake him again, which he can as easily do as will it to be done.

If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath] If he take away his life, which what is it else but a puff of wind, a vapour, &c., who can say he is unjust? May not the potter do with his pot as he pleaseth? We subsist merely by his manutension; and if he but pull back his hand only we are gone immediately. This is to be seen in those that swoon suddenly away. See **#Ps 104:29**, and consider how little this is considered by the most. Elihu thought that Job was wanting herein; for he had heard him, **#Job 12:13-25**, disputing concerning the sovereign and absolute power of God almost in the very same words which himself here useth, from **#Job 34:13-31.**

Ver. 15. **All flesh shall perish together]** *i.e.* All men, called here "All flesh," as, **#Mr 16:16**, they are called every creature, a little world. If God command it to be so they shall all breathe out together.

And man shall turn to his dust again] The body to the dust, whence it was taken, but the spirit to God, who gave it. #Ec 12:7

Ver. 16. **If now thou hast understanding, hear this]** Hear it, and know it for thy good, as #Job 4:2-7, if at least thou hast any wit for thyself or care of thine own well doing. This is a stinging apostrophe to Job. *Si vel mica est in te bonae mentis;* unless thou hast buried thy brains and lost thy senses, listen as for life.

Ver. 17. **Shall even he that hateth right govern?]** Heb. Bind; *sc.* malefactors, whom magistrates use to hamper? Others take it to be binding up the wounded after the manner of churgeons. *An qui odit iudicium, chirurgos imitaretur?* so the Tigurines translate: Would he who hateth right do as surgeons use to do? Would God, if he were unrighteous, bind up the broken hearted, or receive into favour, as he doth, a sinner that repenteth, doing him good again, as if there never had been a breach between them? It hath been noted, that a king hath his name in the Greek tongue from healing, *Αναξ* from *ακος* Medela; and that, #Isa 3:7, a governor is called a healer, or binder up; the same word there as here in the text. But how unfit for such an office must he needs be who not only doth not right, but hateth it, as did Nero, Caligula, Commodus, &c.?

And wilt thou condemn him that is most just?] Or, that is strong and just; *illumne impietatis sugillabis?* (Tigur.) None in his right wits would ever do so; for what else were this but to exalt a man's self above the Divine Majesty? And yet what do they less than this who grudge at God's proceedings, and are ready to think that if they had the ordering of things in their hands they could dispose of them a fair deal better? How absurd and unseemly this is in any one is aptly set forth in the next verse, "Is it fit?" &c.

Ver. 18. **Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked?]** Heb. Belial; that is, Thou yokeless, lawless, masterless monster. Kings are not wont to be so accosted and aviled, nor is it lawful, #Ex 22:28. It is blasphemy in the second table to speak evil of dignities, #Jude 8, *Qui dicit regi Apostata* (Vulg.). It was some disadvantage to St Paul that, although provoked and unjustly smitten, he called the high priest whited wall, #Ac 23:3; he was glad to excuse it by his ignorance. And Luther cried our Henry VIII mercy, for his uncivil language to him, such as was that, *Audi, Domine Rex, edocebo te,*

in a jeer. Henry VI indeed was coarsely handled in a tumult, and wounded, but then he was at in bad times; and being restored, he freely pardoned the offender, saying, Alas, poor soul, he struck me more to win favour with others than of any ill will he bare me: but this was a rare example of patience in a king (Dan. Hist.). Alexander the Great dealt more harshly with his friends, Clitus and Callisthenes, for their plain dealing. Tiberius put to death a poet for uttering some free words against him, though under the person of Agamemnon, *quem in tragoedia probris lacesisset* (Sen.). Savonarola suffered deeply for telling the pope his own. And Bajazet II took great revenge upon his janizaries, ^{a} who, for his casting Achmetes Bassa into prison, they in an uproar insolently cried out that they would by and by teach him, as a drunkard, a beast, and a rascal, to use his great place and calling with more sobriety and discretion. Kings must be spoken to with soft and silken words, as she said, η ηκιστα, η ηδιστα (Plut.). If Elijah, or Elisha, or Isaiah, or the Baptist do otherwise, that is not a copy for every man to write after. Is it safe to take a lion by the beard, or a bear by the tooth? Naboth suffered, though falsely accused to curse the king; and Shimei had at length his payment for reviling David. If Ezekiel called the king of Judah, Thou wicked and profane prince, #Eze 21:25, that was by an extraordinary spirit, and by a special command of God.

And to princes, Ye are ungodly?] *Ingenuis*. These, as they must not be flattered, so neither may they be unmannerly advertised of their duty or danger. It is probable that Joseph used some kind of preface to Pharaoh's chief baker in reading him that hard destiny, #Ge 40:19, such haply as was that of Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, #Job 4:19, "My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee," &c.; or as Philo brings him in with a *Utinam tale somnium non vidisses*, I wish I had no such dream to interpret unto you. But for the matter he giveth him a sound, though a sharp interpretation.

^{a} One of a former body of Turkish infantry, constituting the Sultan's guard and the main part of the standing army. The body was first organized in the 14th century, and was composed mainly of tributary children of Christians; after a large number of them had been massacred in 1826, the organization was finally abolished.

Ver. 19. How much less to him that accepteth not the person of princes] How much more both dangerous and indecent must it

needs be wrongfully to accuse God of injustice and partiality, which is far below him; since he neither doth nor needeth prefer great ones before meaner men in judgment! See on #**Job 13:7 32:21**.

Nor regardeth the rich more than the poor?] The word rendered rich, opulent, or potent, comes either from a root, **יָצַח** that signifieth to save, because it is in the power of such to save others from hurt and damage; or else from another root, **צָעַק** that signifieth to cry aloud; because such men use to speak their minds more freely and boldly, as having that which can bear them out. But God acknowledgeth them not as such; only of them to whom much is given much shall be required.

For they are all the work of his hands] Both for their persons, for they are all equally his creatures; and for their conditions, which God also hath cut them out and apportioned. Thus he is said to have made Moses and Aaron, that is, to have advanced them, #**1Sa 12:6**; and Christ is said to have made the twelve when he ordained them to the apostleship, #**Mr 3:14**.

Ver. 20. **In a moment shall they die]** Be they mean or mighty, they are, when God pleaseth, suddenly swept away by the hand of death; as chess men are into the bag, without distinction of kings, dukes, bishops, or common people.

And the people shall be troubled at midnight] As were the Egyptians, when their firstborn were slain in their dead sleep, #**Ex 12:29**, not without much terror and tumult; and as were the army of Sennacherib, #**2Ki 19:35**, and Belshazzar with his Babylon, #**Da 5:30,31**. "The people shall be troubled," they shall be shaken as leaves in a great wind, or be carried away as by a mighty torrent; when they were most secure, and dreamed of no such danger. Neither in all these alterations and various occurrences is God unrighteous, since he is debtor to none, neither doth he anything without reason and right.

And pass away] *Praeteribunt, id est, peribunt*; they shall pass into the grave, as #**Ec 1:4**, "One generation passeth, and another cometh"; or they shall perish, as when it is said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." The Vulgate hath it, *Pertransibunt*. It is not

transibunt, they shall pass, saith Gregory; but *pertransibunt*, they shall pass through, because the wicked are always passing on to perdition throughout all their lives.

And the mighty shall be taken away without hand] That is, without seeing the hand that smiteth them; which is, saith one, a Divine force, invisibly cutting asunder the thread of their lives in a moment: **#Ps 76:12**, The Lord cutteth off the spirit of princes. The Hebrew importeth, that he slips them off, as one should slip off a flower between his finger; or as one should slip off a bunch of grapes, &c. The original here is, They shall take away the mighty, that is, the angels shall *{as #Lu 12:20}* hurry them out of the world without hand, that is, without man's help, without human violence.

Ver. 21. For his eyes are upon the ways of man] God's providence (like a well drawn picture, that eyeth each one in the room) observeth all things; he seeth cause enough thus to proceed in judgment against a person or people, though we see it not. And although one man knoweth not another, nor doth any man well know himself; yet God, following, as it were, all men hard at the heels, doth with his eyes narrowly observe and mark what way every one walketh in, he seeth all his goings: let not men, therefore, please themselves in their sinful practices, as if God saw them not, because for a time they escape unpunished; *Saeculi laetitia est impunita nequitia*; but sin and punishment are tied together with chains of adamant, and cannot long be asunder.

Ver. 22. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, &c.] Sinners would fain shroud and secrete themselves from God's all seeing eye; for which end they search all corners, with Adam, and hope that their evil pranks and practices shall never come to light; but that cannot be, for not only darkness and the shadow of death, but hell also, is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering, **#Job 26:6**; *{See Trapp on "Job 26:6"}* See also **#Ps 139:12 Am 9:2,3 Heb 4:13**.

{See Trapp on "Ps 139:12"} *{See Trapp on "Am 9:2"}* *{See Trapp on "Am 9:3"}* *{See Trapp on "Heb 4:13"}*

Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves] Either from God's all seeing eye, or punishing hand. Adam is pulled out of the thicket; Manasseh from among the thorns; Zedekiah and his family from between the two walls; many Jews out of the privies and other

lurking holes where they lay hidden, at the last destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 23. **For he will not lay upon men more than right]** *Plus quam par est.* He cannot over do likely, *Nam non super virum ponet ultra;* no, though he should inflict upon him all the torments here, and tortures in hell, since death, in the utmost extent of it, is the just hire of the least sin, **#Ro 6:23.** See **#Ezr 9:13.** {See Trapp on "Ezr 9:13"}

That he should enter into judgment with God] Commence a suit against him, or challenge him into the schools to argue it out with him, as thou Job hast offered to do, but unadvisedly; since God hath justice on his side; as the very heathens also saw, when they set Themis, their goddess of justice, τῷ δὲ παρεδρον, next of all to Jupiter, their chief god.

Ver. 24. **He shall break in pieces mighty men, &c.]** *Infinite conterit validos,* so Tremellius rendereth it. He infinitely mauleth the mighty; and breaketh them in pieces like a potter's vessel, **#Ps 2:9.**

Without number] Or, Without inquisition; as knowing all things beforehand, and not needing any evidences or examination of witnesses; or, without end, because their ruin is endless, *Ruina maiorum sit cautela minorum.*

And set others in their stead] As is to be seen in the rise, reign, and ruin of the four mighty monarchies, and others not a few, that had their times and their turns; as the kingdom of the ten tribes, which in a few years fell into nine different families; and few of those kings died a natural death. No more did the emperors of Rome, till Constantine. See **#Da 2:21 Ps 113:7,8.**

Ver. 25. **Therefore he knoweth their works]** It appeareth by their punishment that God took notice of their wicked works, though they thought otherwise; yea, when they know not, or are not aware of it, he overthroweth them therefore. This he doth in the night, *i.e.* suddenly and unexpectedly. Others render it, As soon as he hath changed the night they are crushed; that is, as soon as he hath brought forth the light which revealeth all things, **#Eph 5:19,** and layeth them open to public view, who before were taken for better men, they are destroyed, as public pests.

Ver. 26. **He striketh them as wicked men, &c.]** *Complodit eos*, saith Junius, *scilicet ut inflatas vesicas in sun ipsorum sede*, he striketh upon them, as blown bladders, in their own seat. This is an elegant similitude, setting forth the sudden overthrow of graceless great ones, as with a kind of noise, and not without public notice; for it followeth,

In the open sight of others] Heb. In the place of beholders, *in proscenio*, as upon a stage or scaffold, *Discant iustitiam moniti; et non temnere numen*, others may hear and fear, and do no more so. God is pleased for this purpose to bang up some notorious offenders as it were in gibbets; as Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Antiochus, Herod, Julian. See those writs of execution, **#1Co 10:5-7**, and be wise by others' woes; enjoy their follies, and gather, with the bee, sweet honey out of those bitter weeds, *Poena ad paucos, metus ad omnes*. Punishment to the poor, fear at all.

Ver. 27. **Because they have turned back from him]** To pursue after lying vanities, broken cisterns; which whosoever do, as they fall into two foul sins at once (such as heaven and earth have cause to be astonished at and afraid of), **#Jer 2:12,13**, so they are miserable by their own election, **#Jon 2:8**.

And would not consider any of his ways] Wisely consider them, as David did, **#Ps 119:168**. All God's laws were in his sight; and all his ways in God's sight. This was the general cause of their destruction. The special followeth.

Ver. 28. **So that they cause the cry of the poor, &c.]** These they compel, by their oppressions, to wash the earth with their tears, and to importune heaven with their complaints, as Senault phraseth it. The wicked do, as it were, bring up to God the cries of the poor oppressed, and so pull upon themselves inevitable destruction, for he is the poor man's patron, and heareth the cry of the afflicted. The Grand Signior would have the world take notice, that such as lament unto him shall be sure to have redress and succour from him. Wherefore also he calleth himself, *Awlem Penawh*, The world's refuge, a title far more fit for the God of heaven than for any earthly monarch, were he far more gracious than the Great Turk, from whose courtesy, freely offered him, Luther blessed himself with a

Deus me tueatur a tali benefice Domino, God defend me from such a gracious Lord (Joh. Maul. loc. com.).

Ver. 29. **When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?**] *Ipse tranquillabit, et quis inquietabit?* This is like that of the apostle, saith Brentius, #Ro 8:31-39, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" &c. It is he alone who giveth peace, both of country and of conscience; Peace, peace, #Isa 26:3, *Pacem omnimodam*; external, internal, eternal; and then, who can disturb or unsettle? Surely as Isaac once said to Esau, concerning Jacob, He is blessed, and he shall be blessed; so may it be said of such as have made their peace with God; peace shall be upon them and mercy, *contra gentes*, whosoever saith nay to it; yea, though it be the devil himself, that ο πονηρος, as he is oft called, the troublesome one; who, even since he was cast out of heaven, keeps ado on earth, and seeks to disquiet all such as, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, #Ro 2:7.

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?] Him? whom? God; who dare look upon him, or toward him for help, when he is thoroughly displeased and looketh irefully? Or, the party frowned on by God; who will smile upon him, or show him any favour and furtherance? Here Aben Ezra giveth a good note, *Aversio vultus Dei*, &c., The turning away of God's pleased countenance is the cause of all wars and other disasters. The physiologer in Epiphanius telleth of the bird charadius, that being brought into the room where a man lieth sick, if he look with a steady and fixed eye upon the sick man, he recovereth; but if he turn away from him, and look another way, the disease is to death. Apply this to God, and it fitteth.

Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only] All is a case (as they say) to God, he stands not upon multitudes, as men use to do in case of mutinies or the like, to punish the tenth man or so, *in terrorem*, for a terror to the rest. This is not God's way of punishing; but as a thousand years are to him but as a day, and one day as a thousand years; so when he proceeds to execution of justice, whether it be done against a nation, &c. All nations to him are but as a drop of a bucket or dust of a balance, #Isa 40:15 And

hence he buried a world full of people in one universal grave of waters. And the wicked (be they never so many) shall be turned into hell, with whole nations that forget God, #Ps 9:17. God seemeth to say, *Fiat iustitia, ruat orbis.*

Ver. 30. **That the hypocrite reign not]** That he reign no longer. Almighty God taketh order, by putting these mighties from their seat, and exalting them of low degree, #Lu 1:52. And why? 1. Lest the hypocrite, or the impure and impious man, reign; such as was Jehu, Herod, Julian, our Richard III, Pope Sixtus Quintus, of whom one saith, that he was the most crouching humble cardinal that ever was lodged in an oven, and the most stout proud pope that ever wore crown (Spec. Europ.). What pride equal to his, making kings kiss his pantofles? ^{a} What humility (pretended) greater than his, shriving himself daily on his knees to an ordinary priest? He calleth himself the servant of God's servants; and yet stamps in his coin, That nation and country that will not serve thee shall be rooted out; he also suffereth his parasites to style him, Our Lord God the pope. Is not this a notorious hypocrite? and when such a one reigneth and taketh upon him to be Lord of all, both in spirituals and temporals, may not we conclude that God hideth his face (as in the former verse) from his people? May we not cry out, as Basil once did (Epist. 17), *Num ecclesias suas dereliquit Dominus?* Hath the Lord utterly forsaken his Churches? It is, doubtless, a very great judgment upon a people, when a hypocrite or a profane person is set over them, who pretends the public good to his own designs and self interests, and by his crafty inventions undoes his subjects, robbing them of their lawful liberties, and enslaving them. Some read the words thus, He causeth that the hypocrite reigneth for the sins of the people. It is threatened as a heavy curse, #Le 26:17. 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; such as was Phocas, that bloody tyrant, who, when he had slain his master, Mauritius, and reigned in his stead, there was an honest poor man, saith Cedrenus, who was earnest with God to know a reason why such a thing was suffered? to whom it was answered, That a worse man could not be found; and that the sins of Christians required it. We read of Attilus, king of Swethland, that he made a dog king of the Danes, in revenge of a great many injuries received by them. Gunno, likewise, king of the Danes, made a dog king of Norway; and

appointed counsellors to do all things under his title and name. That which these men did spitefully God sometimes doth righteously; setting up tyrants for a punishment to those that were unthankful for better government, and would not have him to reign over them.

Lest the people be ensnared] Heb. For the snares of the people; that is, for the injuries and vexations wherewith that hypocrite oppressed the people; to put an end to those, by taking away the tyrant, who, for his cruel craft and crafty cruelty, is here fitly compared to a hunter or fowler laying snares. *Sunt autem leges iniquae et exactiones iniustae principum hypocritarum, laquei et decipulae quibus populum sibi subiectum venantur et capiunt*, saith Brentius here; *i.e.* Bad laws and unjust exactions of hypocritical princes are the snares and traps wherewith they hunt after and catch their subjects.

{a} A slipper; formerly applied very variously, app., at one time or another, to every sort of in-door slippers or loose shoes; esp. to the high-heeled cork-soled chopins; also to out-door overshoes or goloshes; and to all manner of Oriental and non-European slippers, sandals, and the like.

Ver. 31. Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement] To convince a man of a fault, and not to advise him how to do better, is to snuff a lamp and not pour more oil into it. Elihu therefore now sets himself to counsel Job, whom he conceiveth he had sufficiently convinced of injury done to God. Surely it is meet, &c. *Par est*; this is supplied by the translators to make sense; for the original is very concise and dark, and therefore diversely interpreted; as is also all this latter part of the chapter. Some render it thus, But to God who saith, I pardon, I will not destroy, it should be said, That which I see not, teach thou me, &c. Some thus, Therefore we ought thus to speak unto God, I suffer patiently, I will not break asunder; viz. these bonds wherewith thou hast fast bound me. Others thus: Hath Job said to God, I have borne, &c. *q.d.* Nothing less, as ye all are witnesses. Others again thus: Hath he (that is, the tyrant dethroned, as in the verse foregoing) said to God, I have been, &c.? Hath he confessed his wickedness, and promised amendment? No such matter, surely; therefore is he justly punished. This is a very good sense, saith Mercer. But to stick to our last and best translation, Surely it is meet, &c., for is it fit that God should cast down the bucklers first, and not have the better of

us? Should we not rather disarm his just indignation by a humble yieldance?

I have borne chastisement] Heb. I have borne and will bear, being active in suffering and taking up my cross.

I will not offend any more] Heb. I will not corrupt; to wit, my ways, and so undo myself.

Ver. 32. **That which I see not, teach thou me]** For I am yet in the dark, and know not the right cause wherefore thou afflictest me. Herein men are very apt to mistake themselves, and when God calls one way to run another, as young Samuel did, i Sam. iii. 5. The devil also dealeth by the afflicted as the Jews did by Christ, blindfolds them, and then bids them prophesy who smote them, and for what? Hence in afflictions we many times grope as blind men, guessing at this cause and at that, but seldom fasten on the right. Here, then, God must be sought unto for direction, and besought that he would graciously point us to the sin he strikes at. This Job had done once and again, #**Job 10:2 13:23**. But Elihu would have him to do it yet better.

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more] Thus men must both vow and perform to the Lord their God, #**Ps 76:11**, and not promise amendment, as children do when taken up to be whipped; or as men in danger at sea, or on their sick beds, use to do largely; but then *Sciaputo il morbo, fiudato il santo*, as the Italian proverb hath it, When the disease is removed the saint is defrauded. Pharaoh promised fair while upon the rack; but got off once, he hardened his heart, and would do nothing. So those slippery votaries, #**Jer 34:11**.

Ver. 33. **Should it be according to thy mind]** Heb. From with thee; *q.d.* Must things be as thou wilt? And is it fit for thee to prescribe to the Almighty? {#**Ho 8:4**} to set the sun by thy dial?

He will recompense it, whether thou refuse, &c.] He will have his pennyworths of thee, whether thou be pleased or displeased.

And not I] Though I foretell thee this, yet it is God that will effect it; therefore think not the worse of me, no more than a people should of a herald or the trumpet as the cause of their war.

Therefore speak what thou knowest] viz. In thine one behalf, but speak the word of truth and soberness, he was no fool who said, It hath often repented me to have spoken, but seldom to have held my peace. There are many other readings and expositions of the words. Let every man (for me) take his choice, and abound in his own sense, so it dissent not from the analogy of faith.

Ver. 34. **Let men of understanding tell me]** Or, say with me; say as I say; viz. That Job hath spoken without knowledge, as **#Job 34:35**, and that I have spoken the thing that is right in vindicating the divine justice from thy causeless criminations.

And let a wise man hearken unto me] I presume there is not one wise man alive but will be of my mind; and for fools, the wen of this world, ever beside themselves in point of salvation, I regard not their censures.— *Equitem mihi plaudere curo.*

Ver. 35. **Job hath spoken without knowledge]** *Inscienter et inscite,* He hath outlashed and overshot himself in some words against God; yea, amidst his complaints, he hath let slip not a few lavish and loose speeches; which thing also, being reprov'd by God, he doth ingenuously acknowledge, **#Job 40:3-5 42:1-6.**

And his words were without wisdom] Heb. Not in wisdom; and this he here heareth of on both ears, being barely told of it again and again, and not without some bitterness, in the close of this chapter. Some warmth there must be in a reproof (the physic will work the better), but scalding hot it must not be.

Ver. 36. **My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end]** Or, unto victory, till he be vanquished and set down, *Usque ad victoriam* (Trem). It is conceived that Job, by clapping his hands, as **#Job 34:37**, or by the set of his countenance, or some other way, had discovered his dislike of and discontent at that which Elihu had spoken. He therefore begs of God to continue afflicting him, till he be in a better mind, *Crux sancta est et salubris.* This he doth by a special instinct for Job's good, and not out of any desire for revenge. So Farel pronounced a curse upon young Calvin's studies, in case he should refuse to join with him in the Lord's work at Geneva, where a Church had been newly planted; this so thunderstruck him, that he dared not stir from there to his dying day, *At ego tibi studia tua*

praetextenti denuncio Omnipotentis Dei nomine, &c. (Calv. Vit.). Some read it, My Father, let Job be tried. It is not to be doubted but those ancients also called God by this sweet name of Father. See #**Joh 8:41**. Beza makes Elihu thus bespeaking Job, for honour's sake, O my Father, Job shall be yet still tried. The Tigurines read, *Haec autem in medium affero*, These things I produce, that Job's things may be most exactly discussed, and wicked men's mouths stopped.

Because of his answers for wicked men] Who will take liberty by him to excuse their iniquity, and speak dishonourably of God, as he hath done.

Ver. 37. **For he addeth rebellion unto his sin]** Or, he will add, viz. unless he be exercised and subdued by more and longer load of afflictions; there will else be no hoe with him, no ground will hold him. The cross is of singular use to tame that rebel flesh; and is theretbre prayed for by Jeremiah for himself, #**Jer 10:24**, and here by Elihu for Job, who had before advisedly chosen affliction rather than sin, and reckoned it as a mercy to be visited every morning, and tried every moment, #**Job 7:18**.

He clappeth his hands among us] By way of derision, and as insulting over us. This it may seem Job had done in a disdainful way against all that had been spoken, which maketh Elihu thus fiercely to charge him.

And multiplieth his words against God] By a strange pertinace. He delivereth him therefore unto God to be further afflicted; as St Paul did Hymenaeus and Alexander unto Satan to be inwardly buffeted and bodily tormented, as #**Ac 13:11 19:16** *ut castigati discerent*, that they might learn not to blaspheme, #**1Ti 1:20**.

Chapter 35

Ver. 1. **Elihu spake moreover, and said]** His speech was for God, as before; and therefore he spake moreover. For, as Austin saith of the feast of Pentecost, *Gaudet produci haec solennitas*; so we may say of a discourse of this nature, *Gaudet produci haec sermocinatio*; the longer it is the better; since of God and his righteous dealing, *Non saris unquam dici potest*, as Lavater here

hath it, never can enough be spoken. For although we all yield that God is just, yet if any cross befall us we are apt to question it, and to think ourselves hardly dealt with.

Ver. 2. **Thinkest thou this to be right?**] Heb. Reckonest thou this to be right? *q.d.* I appeal to thine own conscience. This is a sign of great confidence in the appealer, yet may it be done by men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth. Witness that bold Anabaptist, that in a solemn disputation at Tigure, appealed to Zuinglius, as if convinced in his own conscience he had inwardly favoured Anabaptism (Scul. Annal.). And those impudent Papists, that report themselves to our consciences, to tell them, Whether our condemnation be not so expressly set down in our own Bibles, and so clear to all the world, that nothing more needs thereto than that they know to read, and to have their eyes in their heads at the opening of our Bible; to tell them, moreover, whether England hath not brought forth within these few years past, to the number of twenty several sorts of Bibles, far different one from another (Gagge of the New Gospel, Preface).

That thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's] Heb. My righteousness is before God's. Diodati rendereth it, My righteousness is from God; that is, I am sure God will justify me, though men condemn me. But it is better to render it, *Prae Deo*, more than God's. See a like expression, #**Heb 12:24**, understanding it to be the justice of his cause, and not of his person. But taking it so too, when and where did Job ever say that his righteousness was more than God's? Nowhere surely in so many words, for then doubtless Satan, and not Job, would have carried away the victory in this conflict. Neither surely could this be rightly gathered out of Job's words, but distorted and misconstrued. Elihu therefore reprov'd him with too great austerity, neither can anything be pleaded for him but this, that he pleaded for God; of whose glory he was so very tender, that he could not brook or bear with any syllable of a word that seemed to detract from it.

Ver. 3. **For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee?**] Here he endeavours to prove the charge, grounding upon some words of Job's, as #**Job 9:22 10:15**, which seem to hold out thus much, that no good was to be gotten by leaving evil ways, since good men and bad suffer and perish together. But we must know,

that Job herein reasoned not of those things that happen after death, but only of the prosperous or unhappy estate of this life present; denying, and that rightly, that we are hereby to judge God's love or hatred, or of any man's honest or dishonest conversation. Neither yet did he stand in defence of his own righteousness against God, but only appealed to God as a most wise and just judge, against the false accusations of his foe-like friends, who, by pouring oil into the fire, as it were, very much vexed and disquieted him all along.

Or what profit shall I have if I be cleansed from my sin?] Or, What profit shall I have be it more than by my sin? This, if Elihu could have proved that Job had said, he might very well have justified what he had wished to him, and affirmed of him in the two last verses of the preceding chapter.

Ver. 4. **I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee**] Thy three friends (who have not so well quit themselves in this controversy, as having answered little or nothing to this unsavoury saying of thine), and to the rest of the bystanders which approve of thine opinion, as people are apt to favour the weaker side, as it is reputed, and to encourage them. Thus it befell Luther, when he began first to reform.

Ver. 5. **Look unto the heavens and see**] Yea, look into them, if thou couldst, as did Stephen the proto-martyr, **#Ac 7:56**, and as our Saviour Christ, as man, could do (say some) with his bodily eyes; and as a believer by the eye of his faith, through the perspective glass of the promises, may do, doubtless. The further we can look unto heaven (or into it) the better shall we conceive of that infinite distance that is between God in heaven and men on earth. God is far above the highest heavens, therefore higher than any mortal can attain to him, much less contribute anything unto him by his righteousness, or assault him by his wickedness. Herodotus writeth, That the Thracians once were so mad against their god Jupiter, for raining down upon them when ready to join battle with the enemy, that they threw up their darts against heaven, which shortly returned upon their own heads. And of Caligula, the emperor, the story is told, that he thundered and lightened with certain engines he had; and if at any time a thunderbolt fell from heaven, *ipse contra iaeiebat lapidem*, he on the other side threw up a stone, and used that hemistich ^{a} in Horner, $\eta \mu \alpha \nu \alpha \epsilon \rho \eta \epsilon \gamma \omega \sigma \epsilon$, Either do thou kill

me, or I will kill thee if I can, (Dio in Vit. Calig.). And what less than this upon the matter do those monsters and miscreants among us, who set their mouths against heaven when things go cross with them especially; and their "tongues walk through the earth?" #Ps 73:9. As Hacker did, who lifting up his eyes to heaven, and grinning against God, blasphemed him, and threatened him, even when he had the rope about his neck, A. D. 1591. Now, as in the water face answereth to face, so doth the face of a man to a man. And as there were many Marii in one Caesar, so there are many Caligulas and Hackets in the best of us all, if God restrain us not from such horrid outrages. But Elihu would have us here to know, that God is far above our reach, neither can we throw this high and lofty one out of his throne, *utcunque fremamus et ferociamus*; for how should anything that we silly creatures can do reach to God, when as we cannot reach up to the visible heavens?

And behold the clouds which are higher than thou] *Eminent prae te*. The clouds are God's chariot whereon he rideth, and wherein he manifesteth much of his majesty. These Elihu would have Job to contemplate in their height, even *superiores nubes*, as Tremellius rendereth it, the upper clouds; or, as others, the starry heaven, Heb. The thin of heavens. So Bildad before had called upon him to behold the moon and the stars, #Job 25:5. And surely the very sight of heaven over us (to the which all that we are or can bring no help or hurt at all), should admonish us of our meanness, and make us think most modestly of God, whom we are so infinitely below; and not dare either to complain of him or to boast us before him, &c. For this cause it is that Elihu so presseth Job here with this heap of words, that he may henceforth know and keep his distance; and not so presumptuously call God, as it were, to reckoning, touching expenses and receipts.

{a} The half or section of a line of verse, as divided by the Caesura or the like; also, a line of less than the usual length. spec. Such a half-line or line in Old English verse.

Ver. 6. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him?] What more than show thy teeth? or shoot at a rock, where the arrow rebounds upon thee? In the sack of Constantinople the image of the crucifix was taken down by the Turks, and a Turk's cap put upon the head thereof, and so set up, and shot at with their arrows; and afterwards,

in great derision, carried about in the camp, as it were in procession, with drums playing before it, railing and spitting at it, and calling it the God of the Christians. But what was all this to Christ? He that sitteth in the heavens (*extra iactum*) laughed at them, the Lord had them in derision, #Ps 2:4. Do wicked sinners, when they work hardest against God, as the word here signifieth, and take greatest pains to go to hell; do they, I say, provoke the Lord to anger? *Etsi naviter peccas*. "Do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?" #Jer 7:19. And, nay we not well say to such, as Ulysses's companions said to him, when he would needs provoke Polydamas,

Σχετλιε τιπτ εθελεις ερεθιζεμεν αγριον ανδρα (Hom. Odys.).

God can easily get him a name in the utter overthrow of a rabble of rebels conspiring against him, as at the flood, tower of Babel, Sodom, Egypt, Moab, &c., who were trodden down under him, as straw is trodden down for the dunghill, #Isa 25:10. And in the next verse, "The Lord shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim" (that is, with greatest facility; for violent strokes rather sink than support a swimmer): "and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands. And the fortress of the high fort of their walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust," #Isa 25:11,12.

Ver. 7. **If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?**] Nothing, since he is self sufficient, and independent. He needeth us not, neither doth our righteousness reach him, #Ps 16:2. The Pharisees dreamed of an over-doing of the law, and making God beholden to them. The Papists also, those modern Pharisees, talk of works of supererogation, and of merit of congruity, and merit of condignity. But these are mere fictions, chimaeras, absurd doctrines, such as Elihu never heard of. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous," #1Jo 3:7, but he addeth nothing thereby to God, let him do his utmost. Indeed who so offereth praise glorifieth God, #Ps 50:23, so he is pleased to account it, and call it; but his glory is, as himself is, eternal, infinite, immense. The sun would shine in its own brightness though all the world were blind, and should wilfully wink: so here. God accepts not our presents, but to return them us back with

interest, as the rain ascends in thin vapours, but comes down again in thick showers.

Or what receiveth he of thine hand?] If anything, it is of his own, as David thankfully acknowledgeth, **#1Ch 29:14**, and besides that, our sweetest incense smelleth strong of the hand that offereth it.

Ver. 8. Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art] Wicked men are many ways mischievous to others; and have much to answer for their other men's sins. How many are undone by their murders, adulteries, robberies, false testimonies, blasphemies, and other rotten speeches, to the corrupting of good manners! &c. What hurt is done daily by the devil's factors, to men's souls, bodies, names, estates! Besides that they betray the land wherein they live into the hands of divine justice, while they do wickedly with both hands earnestly, **#Mic 7:3**; that I speak not of the manifold miseries they pull upon themselves.

And thy righteousness may profit the son of man] Thyself and others; for the just liveth by his own faith; he maketh a living of it, and a good one too. And as for his charity, it is the mother of all manner of good works, whereof others have the benefit. Papists, and some as silly, have shrunk up charity to a hand's breadth, to giving of alms. But besides that, a good man draweth out, not only his sheaf, but his soul to the hungry. He also warneth the unruly, comforteth the feeble-minded, supporteth the weak, and tradeth all his talents for the good of others, **#1Th 5:14**. He is a common blessing to all that are about him. As Plutarch said of the neighbouring villages of Rome, in Numa's time, That sucking in the air of that city, they breathed δικαιοσυνην, righteousness; so may it be said of the city of God, and her citizens.

Ver. 9. By reason of the multitude (or magnitude) of oppressions, &c.] Or, of the oppressed, whom they (that is, whom the oppressors, not worthy to be named, as neither is that rich glutton, **#Lu 16:19-31**) make to cry. Job had said, **#Job 24:12**, "Men groan out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them." He punisheth not the wrong dealers according to their deserts, as Elihu interprets Job; and here refuteth him, as one that accused God of injustice, because he heareth not the cries of the oppressed. But this is merely their own fault, saith Elihu; because

they cry not to God with truth and devotion. They ask and miss, because they ask amiss. For God never faileth to be with his afflicted, #Ps 91, to preserve the simple, as David found by experience, &c., #Ps 116, to hear those that call upon him in truth, #Ps 145; he requireth nothing of them but lawful petitions and honest hearts, and then they are sure to have out their prayers, either in money or money's worth; either the same thing they ask or a better.

They cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty] *Magnatum*. Such as was Pompey, of whom the Romans cried out, *Nostra miseria tu es Magnus*, We rue by thy greatness, and are ruined. The greater any man is, unless gracious also, the more he thinks he may oppress the meaner sort. They "eat up my people as they eat bread," #Ps 14:4, as so many cannibals, and as the bigger fishes devour the lesser; they lay load upon them without mercy or measure; they beat them with a strong arm, and make them cry aloud, filling the air with their complaints, as nature teacheth even brute beasts to do when they are hurt: *Videri possunt magnates non alio loco habere tenues quam minutos pisciculos, quos confertim et pleno ore pro deliciis esitent* (Merl.). It was not patience, but pertinace, an obstinate stiffness of mind, that made some heathens, as Mithridates, Marius, Epicurus, &c., forbear crying when grievously tormented.

Ver. 10. **But none saith, Where is God my maker]** Heb. my makers; to note the Trinity, *{Hebrew Text Note}* say some; others think that he speaks of God in the plural number only for honour's sake. They call not upon God as their Creator, they praise him not as their preserver and benefactor, saith Elihu in this and the next verse; but express a great deal of pride and vanity, #Job 35:12,13; and thence it is that their prayers are unanswered and themselves unrelieved. The oppressed should not only make moan and fill the air, *vagis clamoribus*, with brutish outcries (the fruit of the flesh for ease, rather than of the spirit for grace), but beg help of God by faithful prayer, and say, "Where is God my maker?" as Elisha once said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" Did he not make me, and will he not maintain me? built he not the earthly house of this tottering tabernacle, and is not he bound to repairs? will he cast off the care of his own handiwork? *Qui nos fecit, idem ille est qui nos fovet, conservat ac sustentat*, &c. (Brent.). Is he not my master as well as

my maker? and shall other lords beside him have dominion over me, and do with me at their pleasure? Lord, look upon the wounds of thy hands (said Queen Elizabeth while she was a prisoner at Woodstock, and had like to have been burnt in her bed one night), and despise not the work of thine hands. Thou hast written me down in thy book of preservation with thine own hand; oh read thine own handwriting, and save me, &c.

Who giveth songs in the night] As the oppressed pray not, and therefore are not eased (they are deservedly miserable, that might, but will not, make themselves happy by asking), so they praise not, God for former deliverances by day and night conferred upon them. Thou hast compassed me about, saith David, with songs of deliverance, #Ps 32:7, that is, Thou hast given me plentiful matter of praising thy name. So here, *Qui dat Psalmormn argumentum de nocte*, as Tremellius translateth it; who giveth cause to praise him with psalms by night, as David did, #Ps 119:62, and as Paul and Silas, #Ac 16:25; and as Mr Philpot and his fellows did in the Bishop of London's coal house. In the night season it is that God giveth his beloved sleep, and keepeth them and theirs then in safety. Or, if he hold them waking, he filleth them with many sweet meditations (their reins, at that time especially, instructing them, #Ps 16:7), shineth upon them by his moon and stars (which praise God in their courses, and twinkle as it were at us to do the like), and remindeth them by the melody made by the nightingale, which singeth for fifteen nights and days together without intermission, if Pliny may be believed, putting a thorn to her breast to keep her waking for that purpose, Plin. 1. x. c. 29. *Luscinia dicitur quia ante lucem canit. Nec quantum Inscinia dormiunt.* Hereupon Epictetus hath this savoury saying, *Si luscinia essem, facerem quod luseinia; Cure autem homo rationulls sire, quid faciam? Laudabo Denm, ne cessabo unquam; Vos vero ut idem faciatis hortor:* that is, If I were a nightingale, I would do as the nightingale doth; but since I am a man endued with reason (since God hath taught me more than the fowls of heaven, as Elihu hath it in the next verse), what shall I do? I will incessantly praise God; and I exhort you to do the like. But this is not done, saith Elihu here, or very slenderly; and hence it is that men complain of their many and mighty oppressions without remedy from God, who seeth that his favours and benefits would be even

lost and spilt upon them; according to that of the philosopher, *Ingrato quicquid donatur deperditur*, All is cast away that is conferred upon an ungrateful person.

Ver. 11. **Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth]** This many wretched people never consider; and are therefore heavily, but worthily, vexed by oppressors, *ut vexatio det intellectum*, that smart may make wit; and that they may not bellow as beasts do when they feel pain; but flee to God by well prepared prayer, not so much for ease as for the use of what they suffer. Now, blessed is the man whom God chasteneth, and withal teacheth him out of his law; that he may give him rest from the days of adversity, **#Ps 94:12,13**. Hereunto, not only reason is required (the mercy here mentioned, and celebrated), but religion also; which is the true philosopher's stone that makes golden afflictions, **#1Pe 1:7**, and, as Moses's hand, turneth a serpent into a rod. The truth is, religion is the highest reason (neither is anything more irrational than irreligion, **#2Th 3:2**), and this also God alone teacheth. For, *Cathedram habet in coelo qui corda docet*, saith Austin. And again, *Quando Christus Magister, quam cito discitur quod docetur?* It is God above who teacheth the heart; and this, if he once undertake, it is soon despatched. All this, if sinful men would well weigh, and be thankful for, as they ought, God would surely help them, and not suffer them so to be held under.

And maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?] *Sapientificat*. Some birds are very silly, as the struthiocamelus, that having thrust his head into a thicket, and seeing nobody, thinketh that therefore none seeth him, and so maketh himself a prey (Plin. l. x. c. 1). Doves sit in their dovecotes and see their nests destroyed, their young ones taken away and killed before their eyes; neither ever do they offer to rescue or revenge. Mention is made by writers of a certain nameless little bird, which, for fear lest the heavens should fall upon her, puts always, when she sleepeth, one foot upon her head (Cael. Rhod.). How much better the bird onocrotalus; of whom it is reported, that out of expectation of the hawk to grapple with her, she sleepeth with her beak exalted, as if she would contend with her adversary. Something there is that the wisest may learn from the fowls of the air, to whom, therefore, they are sent and set to school, **#Mt 6:26 Jer 8:7**; yet generally God hath put more understanding

into men; so that as he should not do like them by preying upon others, so he should not cry unto God only in distress, as the young ravens do when hunger bitten; but pray always, and in everything give thanks; for which purpose it is that God hath given us reason, speech, and much matter and means, far above the unreasonable creatures. *Vae igitur stupiditati hominum in calamitatibus torpentium.*

Ver. 12. **There they cry, but none giveth answer]** Cry they do, but not to the true God, **#Jon 1:5**. The Papists have their he saints and she saints, for several uses. Or, if to the true God, yet not in a due manner; not in faith, and with remorse for their misdoings. And hence it is that either they are not heard and helped; or not in mercy, but for a further mischief, and to furnish out their indictment at the last day; and on their death beds God will not come to them, or be entreated by them, **#Pr 1:28 Ps 18:42**.

Because of the pride of evil men] *i.e.* Because these oppressed ones that thus cry are not so poor as proud; humbled they are, but not humble; low, but not lowly. *Plectuntur, sed non flectuntur;* they have lost the fruit of their afflictions, and are not a button the better for all that they have suffered.

Ver. 13. **Surely God will not hear vanity]** Prayer without faith is but an empty ring, a tinkling cymbal. *Neque enim omnes qui citharam habent, sunt citharaedi,* Every sound is not music, neither is every complaint and outcry of men in extremity an effectual prayer. Those in Hosea, when pined almost, howled as dogs, growled as swine, bellowed as bulls, screeched horribly as the ravens of Arabia, **#Ho 7:14**, but because they cried not to God with their hearts he heard them not. It is not the labour of the lips or the loudness of the voice, but the travail of the heart, and truth in the inward parts, that he regardeth, **#Ps 51:6**. Wilt thou not know, O vain (or empty) man, that faith without works is dead? saith St James, **#Jas 2:20**; so that prayer without faith is to no purpose. Men may cry aloud in distress, and make their voices to be heard on high; they may chatter out a charm when God's chastening is upon them, yea, be with child, as it were, of a prayer, yet bring forth nothing better than wind, work no deliverance at all in the earth, **#Isa 26:16-18**. God may turn them off, and justly, with, Depart, ye workers of iniquity; get you to the gods whom ye have chosen, let them deliver

you in the time of your tribulation; for I will deliver you no more, #Jud 10:13,14.

Neither will the Almighty regard it] Heb. Look intently into it. It is other and better fruit of affliction that he looketh for. Whereof missing, he looketh another way, as it were, and taketh no notice of their prayers or pressures. Hence they deny, or at least doubt, the Divine providence; and are ready to let fly at God, as the Chinese whip their gods if they help them not at a call.

Ver. 14. **Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, &c.]** This is that *tertium Iobi pronuntiatum*, Job's third speech, which Elihu taketh upon him to reprehend and refute. It is taken out of #Job 23:8,9, and the sense is, that God would never appear to do him right. But although thou sayest such a thing, and so seemest to chime in with those wicked ones who deny God's providence; yet thou oughtest to be better persuaded of his presence with thee and providence over thee; for judgment is before him, and he will certainly do right; only thou must give glory to God and wait his time.

Yet judgment is before him] Or, Judge thyself in his sight; give glory to God, and confess thy sin; and then, stepping from the bar to the bench, judge thyself worthy to be destroyed, #1Co 11:31. This do, and then

Trust thou in me] For safety here and salvation hereafter; acting thy faith upon the precious promises, and hopefully expecting the performance thereof in due time. This was excellent counsel indeed, and worthy of all acceptance, *Pia et salubris adhortatio* (Mercer).

Ver 15. **But now, because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger]** Because thou hast not yet done as I have prescribed, God is forced thus to treat thee, and to increase his plagues upon thee in great displeasure at thine incorrigibleness. Thus is good Job miscensured, whom God suffered so to be afflicted for his trial, and not for his punishment; though there wanted not in him cause enough if God should have taken advantages. But know now that his anger hath visited thee but a little (this is Beza's translation of the whole verse); neither hath he made any great inquisition. Piscator readeth this and the next verse thus: But now, because his anger hath

not visited, neither hath he taken notice of the multitude of his sins very much; therefore doth Job open his mouth with vanity, and heap up words without knowledge. Tremellius thus, For now, because there is nothing of these, doth his anger visit thee: viz. because thou neither rightly judgest thyself nor waitest upon God; but lookest upon thyself as utterly undone, casting away all hope of better, therefore art thou yet held under.

Yet he knoweth it not in great extremity] Job perceiveth not (so blind he is) though he have his back burdened with afflictions, and knows not how to be rid of them. This Elihu speaketh to the company, by an angry apostrophe.

Ver. 16. **Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain]** *Dilatata, divaricata, rictum diducit ut bellua.* An open mouth is oft a purgatory to the master; *digito compesce labellum.*

He multiplieth words without knowledge] Eliphaz had charged Job with malice and blasphemy, #Job 22 Elihu, only with vanity and ignorance. We may not make the worst of things, but give a favourable interpretation.

Chapter 36

Ver. 1. **Elihu also proceeded and said]** Heb. And Elihu added, viz. this his fourth oration, not unlike the former, made in behalf and for defence of God's justice, which he here further asserteth against Job (who had seemed to cast some slur upon it) by arguments drawn from his wondrous works, the meteors especially; and all to prevail with Job to submit to God's justice and to implore his mercy, *Ex abundantia quae sequuntur adiecit.*

Ver. 2. **Suffer me a little, and I will show thee]** He promiseth brevity and thereby woeth attention: brevity and perspicuity are two great graces of speech, and do very much win upon intelligent hearers, who love to hear much in few, and cannot away with tedious prolixities. When a great trifler had made an empty discourse in the presence of Aristotle, and then cried him mercy for troubling him so long: You have not troubled me at all, said he, for I scarce hearkened to any one word you said all this while.

That I have yet to speak on God's behalf] Heb. That there are yet words for God. His zeal for God's glory drew from him this following speech, wherein *insignis est Elihu et magnificus*. Elihu excelleth himself, and appeareth to be no worse an orator than was M. Crassus among the Romans, who had this commendation given him, *Quod cum aliquid accuratius dixisset, semper fere contigit ut nunquam dixisse melius putaretur*; That whenever he spoke it was judged to be the very best that ever he spake. (Cir. de Orat. 1. 1).

Ver. 3. **I will fetch my knowledge from afar]** Even from heaven, as one taught of God; I will discourse of ancient things (for τα κ̄ατα κ̄ενα), and fetch my reasons from the wonderful and sublime works of God, *De arduis atque admirandis Dei operibus*, those real demonstrations of his Deity. *Est autem plane hic Elihu mirus et egregius*, saith Mercer. And he is not a little wronged by that French Paraphrast, who saith of him, That he knew well how to begin a discourse, but knew not how to end it; and that seeing well that his tediousness might make him troublesome, he awakened his languishing auditors by this artificial preface.

And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker] This is both the main proposition of the ensuing oration and the main end of man's creation, viz. to glorify his Maker, **#Ro 11:36 Re 4:11**.

Ver. 4. **For truly my words shall not be false]** I shall deal truly and plainly with thee; my discourse shall be simple and solid, having no better ornament but that of truth; which is like our first parents, most beautiful when naked: it was sin covered them, it is treachery hides this. *Aperta veritas clausos etiam oculos ferit*, saith one.

He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee] *Integer sententiis* (Vatab.); meaning himself, who fully understood the business between them, and would faithfully deliver it. There are that hold God to be hereby meant. A pious sense, but not so proper.

Ver. 5. **Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any]** Much less oppresseth he any one in a good cause, or tyrannically abuseth his power to the crushing of an innocent. He is equally good as great; neither was Job well advised in seeming to sunder these two excellencies in God, the one from the other; since whatsoever is in God is God; neither ought we to think of him otherwise than of one

not to be thought of; as of one whose wisdom is his justice, whose justice is his power, whose power is his mercy, and all himself.

He is mighty in strength and wisdom] Or, He is mighty, the strength of the heart, *Validus est, virtus animi* (Tram.). He was so to David: **#Ps 138:3**, "In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenest me with strength in my soul." At the sack of Ziklag, in the fail of all outward comforts, David encouraged himself in the Lord his God, **#1Sa 30:6**. A Christian is never without his cordial.

Una est in trepida mihi re medicina, Iehovae

Cor patrium, os verax, omnipotensque manus.

Ver. 6. **He preserveth not the life of the wicked]** He is no such friend to them; though he be good to the godly, be greatly careth not what becomes of them. Their life they hold of him, and many good things besides; for he is the Saviour, or preserver, of all men, but especially of them that believe. But he suffereth not the wicked to live, as the Hebrew here hath it, he withdraweth them not from the hand of justice, he bindeth not them up in the bundle of life, he reckoneth them not among the living in Jerusalem, among the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; he many times slayeth them with his own hand, and cutteth them short in righteousness. Or if not so, yet their preservation is but reservation, &c.

But giveth right to the poor] Or, to the afflicted. For poverty is an affliction, and subjecteth a man to many injuries: **#Zep 3:12**, they are an afflicted and poor people, but trusting in the name of the Lord, they shall be relieved and righted, not so soon perhaps as themselves would, nor yet so long hence as their oppressors would. In the mount will the Lord be seen, who, as he seldom comes at our times, so he never fails his own time. Meanwhile this comfort they have:

Ver. 7. **He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous]** He is so lost in love, as I may say, toward such that he cannot like to look beside them; he beholdeth them when afflicted with singular care and complacency. Then, if ever, the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears open to their cry, **#Ps 34:15**; then they may have anything of God, there being no time like that for hearing of prayers, **#Zec 13:9**. Times of affliction are times of supplication,

#Ps 50:15 91:15. They are *mollissima fandi tempora*, **#Jer 51:19-21.** Then our hearts are largest, then God's ears are most open. Neither his ears only, but his eyes too, are busied about his suffering servants, as the goldsmiths are about the gold cast into the furnace, that no grain thereof be lost. He sits down by the fire, saith Malachi, and tends it, as a refiner and purifier of silver, **#Job 3:3.** He refines them, but not as silver, **#Isa 48:10,** that is, not exactly, and to the utmost, lest they should be consumed in that fiery trial: he seeth to it that the choice spirits of his people fail not before him, **#Isa 57:16,** as they would do if he should bring upon them an evil, an only evil, **#Eze 7:5,** and not in the midst of judgment remember mercy.

But with kings are they on the throne] *i.e.* He raiseth them to highest honours, as he did Joseph; whose fetters God in one hour changed into a chain of gold, his stocks into a chariot, his jail into a palace, his rags into fine linen, &c.; yea, as Jeremiah's rags helped to draw him out of the dungeon, so do afflictions work out to God's people an exceeding, eternal weight of glory. Here, perhaps, they may be held under, but to him that overcometh will the Lord Christ grant to sit with him in his throne, **#Re 3:21.** The deluge of calamities may assault them, but it shall certainly exalt them. They shall have crowns on their heads, and palms in their hands, and walk arm in arm with angels. Some of the Hebrews by "kings" here understand angels, as if it were written מַלְאָכִים, not *Melachim*, but *Maleochim*.

Yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted] Or, when they are exalted. This no earthly prince can promise himself. Dionysius, who thought his kingdom had been tied to him with cords of adamant, was at length driven out of it. But Christ's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and he will not reign alone; if we suffer with him we shall also reign together, **#Ro 8:37.**

Ver. 8. **And if they be bound in fetters]** If it so happens, that through abuse of their prosperity and preferment, they wander, as they are men, out of the right way, and God sends out afflictions as his pursuivants to attack them, and lay them in cold irons for their correction, and to prevent judgment, **#Ps 107:10.**

And be holden in cords of affliction] Or poverty; so that *irretiti funibus misere vixerint* (as the Tigurines here translate), they have only prisoners' pittances, which will neither keep them alive nor suffer them to die.

Ver. 9. **Then he showeth them their work]** By these sharp waters he cleareth up their eyesight, and gives them to see their sin, the mother of their misery. *Vexatio dat intellectum*, Smart makes wit. Manasseh, for instance, and the prodigal, and King Croesus, with his *Nocumenta documenta*, and Tullus Hostilius, with his excess of devotion, when once he had paid for his learning (Herodot. lib. 1. Liv. decad. 1, l. 5).

And their transgressions that they have exceeded] Heb. when they prevail; that before they grow too potent they may cast them away: *Ne illi victi in Gehennam descendant*, lest they hale them into hell (Mercer).

Ver. 10. **He openeth also their ear to discipline]** See on #Job 33:16.

And commandeth that they return from iniquity] Unless they will have it to be their ruin; whereof obstinate sinners, who refuse to return, seem to be ambitious. Affliction sanctified is *Lex practica*, a practical law, saith one; it is *Verus Scripturae commentarius*, an excellent comment upon the Scripture, saith another. David could not learn God's statutes till taught by this free schoolmaster; cursed enough and crabbed, but such as whereby God openeth men's ears to discipline, and speaketh to them to return from iniquity, which is a piece of learning that people cannot pay too dearly for.

Ver. 11. **If they obey and serve him, they shall, &c.]** Heb. they shall finish, they shall spend and end their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasure, as Joseph, Job, and some others have done, who lived and died with glory. Howbeit this promise is to be understood with exception of the cross, which yet God both can, and to his will, make profitable and pleasant; as he did to that godly prince who, being asked, How he could so well endure so long and hard imprisonment? answered, That he had therein felt the divine consolations of the martyrs. But,

Haud facile invenies multis e millibus unum,

Virtutem pretium qui putet esse sui.

Ver. 12. **But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword]** *In gladium transibunt*, they shall pass away by the sword; that is, some evil end shall befall them, and worthily, because they would not be warned, which is both a presage and desert of utter ruin. Lesser and lighter judgments (where they work not) are foretokens of greater and heavier at the heels of them; as the black horse in the Revelation followeth the red. And as clouds cluster against a storm, one following in the neck of the other, unless the sun break forth and scatter them; so do God's judgments usher in one another and every less a greater, unless repentance and better obedience take up the matter.

And they shall die without knowledge] Heb. because they were without knowledge; and wilfully so. It was not a bare nescience, but an affected ignorance, that undid them. Some render it, *Non praesentientes*, they shall die suddenly, and before they have bethought themselves. It should be our care that death do not suddenly surprise us. No guest comes unawares to him who keeps a constant table. Every sharp affliction is a warning piece, and let us so conceive of it, *Stillicidia praecedunt ruinam*.

Ver. 13. **But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath]** Or, Yet; or, Howbeit: *q.d.* These foul sinners, that have turned repentance into a form, and converted conversion itself into sin, though they see bad men made good and good men made better by their afflictions, and incorrigible persons destroyed before their eyes, yet they amend not by God's hand upon them, but are the worse for it; as iron grows more cold after a heat, and as naughty boys are more stupid and more stubborn after a whipping. *Hypocritis nihit stupidius*. These hollow hearted ones heap up wrath against the day of wrath, as St Paul makes up this saying, **#Ro 2:5**, which shall fall upon the Jew first, because of his pretence to religion, and then upon the Gentile. *Nemo enim magis iram meretur, quam amicum simulans inimicus*, saith Bernard, No man more deserveth wrath upon wrath than a feigned friend but true enemy. Such are all hypocrites, whether gross or close. And hence our Saviour's severity against such in the Gospel, but especially **#Mt 23** Neither let any such goat in sheep skin think to steal on Christ's right hand at the last day; he shall uncase such and cashier them, yea, cast them into the hottest fire of

hell, whereof hypocrites are as the freeholders, and other sinners but as tenants to them, for they shall have their portion with the devil and hypocrites. Some render it, *Ponunt iram*, and expound it *incandescunt in Deum*: When they are afflicted they wax hot against God, they gather wrath, as a toad swelleth when handled, as a serpent gathereth poison to spue out at those who meddle with him.

They cry not when God binds them] Cry they do after a sort, as hogs do when to be stuck; or dogs, when tied up from their meat. Murmur they do, and expostulate a wrong with God, as those **#Isa 58:2,3**. *Non ita Deos coluimus*, as that heathen hypocrite said, We have not served God so well that he should serve us no better; but pray they do not, unless it be as those hypocrites in **#Zec 7**, who fasted to themselves, and prayed for their own ends, more to get off their chains than their sins. They bear fruit to themselves, as Ephraim, and see what comes of it.

Ver. 14. **They die in youth]** They die before their time, as Solomon expresseth it; then, when it were better for them to do anything than to die, for they are killed with death, as Jezebel's children were, **#Re 2:20-23**. Their soul dieth, as the Hebrew here hath it. Their soul perisheth among the boys, their life among the Sodomites, as Beza translateth this text, and thus paraphraseth. Therefore as accursed before God they die, and are reckoned among those impure young men whose youth, being spent in all filthiness and uncleanness, was subject to that most abominable lust which is not to be named. The sum of all is, saith Brentius, *Hypocrita peribit turpiter*; The hypocrite shall once come to a shameful end. And when the foul sinner shall be damned, what shall become of the fair professor? God will lead such forth with the workers of iniquity, yea, with the worst kind of sinners, Sodomites, for instance, shall he punish them.

Ver. 15. **He delivereth the poor in his affliction]** Oft in this life, as he did David signally, **#Ps 34:6**, "This poor man" (meaning himself) "cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." So he pulled Paul out of the mouth of the lion; yea, and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, "and preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom," **#2Ti 4:18**, where the saints shall be sure of full deliverance, and shall say of their afflictions, as that adulteress said of her accusers, **#Joh 8:10**, They are all gone.

He openeth their ears in oppression] Or, by oppression, as by a key; be openeth the ears of their hearts to holy and wholesome counsel. This Elihu had said before; but he saith it again for that end and purpose, that Job might rouse up and raise up himself to the hope of a comfortable restoration; for as much as God afflicteth not his to destroy them, but to make them partakers of his holiness; and that once done, to deliver them.

Ver. 16. **Even so would he have removed thee, &c.]** *Thesin revocat ad hypothesin.* Here Elihu applieth to Job that which he had more generally discoursed concerning godly men's afflictions turned to their greatest good, if they be careful to improve the same. Heb. He would have persuaded, or gently removed thee.

Out of the strait, &c.] Heb. out of the mouth of the strait. A metaphor from wild beasts, that hold some prey in the mouth, saith Piscator. Or from a pit, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, as R. Solomon, and some others, who understand it of hell. Brentius to the same sense rendereth the text thus, *Eripiet te ab ore angustiae lato, sub quo nullum est fundamentum,* He shall deliver thee from the broad mouth of straitness, under which there is no bottom.

And that which should be set on the table, &c.] Thou shouldest eat of the fat and drink of the sweet, thou shouldest have known no want of anything, if thou hadst not been wanting to thyself, in making the best use of thy troubles. See **#Ps 23:5.**

Ver. 17. **But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked]** But thou contrariwise blusterest against God, and blurtest out such words, that thou seemest to be as bad as the worst, and to have little or no goodness in thee. See **#Job 34:8.** It is a shame to God's holy people to symbolize with the wicked, to be carnal in their speeches or carriage, and to walk as men, **#2Co 3:3.** They should so speak and so do as those that shall be judged by the law of liberty, **#Jas 2:12.**

Judgment and justice take hold of thee] Thou art worthily attached by the Divine justice, which thou hast quarrelled.

Ver. 18. **Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke]** Beza readeth it thus, Surely it is wrath, take heed lest with strokes it take thee away; *i.e.* Certainly the wrath of God

doth in this thy calamity most manifestly show itself. Oh beware lest he double his strokes, and beat thee to pieces for thy disobedience and stubbornness. With the froward God will wrestle, **#Ps 18:26**, and add to their miseries seven times more, and seven times and seven to that, **#Le 26:18,21,24,28**.

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee] Heb. turn thee aside, or help thee to decline; that is, to escape, no, though thou shouldest offer thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil, as **#Mic 6:7**.

Ver. 19. **Will he esteem thy riches?]** Tremellius rendereth it, thy nobility. Others read it thus, Will he regard thy crying in thine adversity? Or, That thou shouldest not abide in adversity? See **#Pr 10:2 11:4**, {See Trapp on "Pr 10:2"} {See Trapp on "Pr 11:4"}

No, not gold] Which yet can do much with men. The Hebrew word signifieth finest gold, **#Job 22:24**, and hath its name from defending, because gold is a man's defence: with men it may be so, but not with God, **#Zep 1:18**; see the note there. Others read it, No, not in affliction.

Nor all the forces of strength] Which are poor things in comparison to God, whose weakness is stronger than men, **#1Co 1:25**. He need but to arise, and his enemies shall be scattered; yea, all that hate him shall fly before him, **#Ps 68:1**. As the rocks repel the greatest waves, so doth God his enemies, *Conantia frangere franguut*.

Ver. 20. **Desire not the night, &c.]** That is, as some sense it, do not thou peevishly desire death, {see **#Job 7:15**} lest it come too soon, and it do by thee as it doth by many a one, whom it cuts off in judgment. For surely in the state thou art now in thou oughtest to fear an extraordinary kind of death, an inlet to eternal destruction, as in the deluge, Sodom, and Egypt. Others render it thus, Neither let it disquiet thee in the night, how people are destroyed out of their place; that is, in the night season, when thy mind is void of cares, puzzle not thyself how and why some nations perish, and not others, but rather rest thyself upon God's providence and unsearchable wisdom, and trouble not thy head in searching out the cause of this so sudden misfortune. Brentius makes this the sense, *Noli impie agere*, Desire not the night; that is, deal not wickedly by

complaining against God, and impatiently bearing his hand; as thieves and adulterers desire the night for despatch of their deeds of darkness. Think not thou to hide thyself in the dark from the dint of God's displeasure.

When people are cut off in their place] Heb. ascend under them; *i.e.* rise, that they may fall, #Ps 102:10; as the light of a candle, when it is ready to go out, flieth up, and then vanisheth away; or as the corn is first taken up by the hand of the reaper, and then cut off, and laid flat on the ground.

Ver. 21. **Take heed, regard not iniquity]** This especially of blaming God's judgments, as if they were unequal. No more of that, saith Elihu. *Cave tibi, ne coniecias oculos ad vanitatem*, Beware thou cast not an eye towards such a vanity or iniquity as that is. This was very good counsel; and it is very well observed that this whole following treatise to the end of the thirty-seventh chapter is, as it were, a gentle lenitive of that foregoing sharp rebuke which otherwise was likely to drive Job beside all patience.

For this thou hast chosen rather than affliction] That is, this forementioned iniquity of speaking rashly and wickedly against God's proceedings with thee; this thou hast chosen rather than to bear thine affliction, or thy poverty, patiently. Now this was an ill choice; for, *quas non oportet mortes praeeligere*, saith Zuinglius (Epist. 3), What deaths ought not a man rather to make choice of, what torments not rather undergo, yea, into what deepest gulf of hell itself not rather enter, than wittingly and willingly to sin against God! The ancient martyrs would not be delivered upon base terms, #Heb 11:35. Daniel chose rather to be thrown to the lions than to violate his conscience, and so to have a lion roaring in his own bosom. The primitive Christians cried out, *Ad leonem magis quam lenonem* (Tertul.). I would rather enter into hell, being clear from sin and innocent, *quam peccati sorde pollutus, coelorum regna tenere*, than go to heaven, if I might, besmeared with the filth of sin, saith Anselm. I would rather leap into a bonfire and be burnt, said another of the ancients, than commit any sin against God (Pintus in Daniel). Some write, that there is a certain little beast, called the mouse of Armenia, which will rather die than be defiled with any filth; insomuch that if her hole be besmeared with dirt she will rather

choose to be taken than polluted. Such ought the servants of God to be.

Ver. 22. **Behold, God exalteth by his power]** Vulgate—God is high in his strength. He both exalteth himself and others whensoever he pleaseth. Beza reads it, Behold, God in his strength is above all; *q.d.* It is he that must restore thee, if ever thou beest restored.

Who teacheth like him?] Vulgate—None among the law givers is like unto him. But the word *Moreh* signifieth a doctor or a teacher; as *Moreh Nebuchim*, a teacher of perplexed things, an unriddler of riddles. He knows all things exactly, and does all things with singular skill and understanding. He hath many ways of teaching people, and making them to profit, #**Isa 48:17**, and one is by afflictions, which Luther therefore fitly calleth *Theologium Christianorum*, the Christian system of divinity, as hath been before noted. Mr Ascham was a good school master, saith one, to Queen Elizabeth, but affliction was a better.

Ver. 23. **Who hath enjoined him his way?]** *q.d.* Wilt thou take upon thee to teach this great Teacher how to govern the world? This were a strange kind of arrogance.

Or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?] God's judgments are sometimes secret, but always just. Let not men reprehend what they do not yet comprehend, but content themselves with a learned ignorance, till God shall further discover himself, saying of God's works, as Socrates did of a certain book that he had read, What I understand therein is very good, and so I think is that I understand not. When we come into a craftsman's shop, we may see many tools, the use whereof we know not, and yet we conclude they are of some use. Why then should men rashly censure God's proceedings, which are many times *in mediis contrariis*, as Luther was wont to say, brought about by contrary means; that he may be the more admired, as Nazianzen giveth the reason, ' *Ἰνα και μαλλον θαυμαζηται* (Naz. in Cypr.). The craftsman with a crooked tool makes straight work. The apothecary maketh of a poisonous viper a wholesome antidote; so here. Far be it from us therefore to charge God with iniquity, for this were, with those mad Manichees, to affirm, that till he had created light he dwelt in darkness, as if God were not an eternal

light, #1Jo 1:5 1Ti 6:16, *Manichaeorum diabolicus sarcasmus* (Paraeus).

Ver. 24. **Remember that thou magnify his work]** His work of creation; wherein the wisdom, power, and goodness of God is clearly manifested, #Ro 1:19, in that glorious structure of the heavens especially, which men behold. Or his work of administration and gubernation, whereof David saith, All thy works praise thee, O Lord; that is, they yield matter of magnifying thee; and thy saints shall bless thee, #Ps 145:10. Remember that this be done, saith Elihu. Junius, by God's works here, understandeth Noah's flood.

Which men behold] Or, Whereof men do sing, saying, as in the next verse,

Ver. 25. **Every man may see it]** *sc. In quo est vel mica bonae mentis;* for a brutish man knoweth it not, #Ps 92:6,7. But *stupidus est, et dignus cui oculi eruantur;* saith Plato, He is a very blockhead, and worthy to have his eyes pulled out of his head, who looketh not above him and about him, that he may magnify and admire the wisdom of the creator of all, and preserver of mankind, *Id quod et prudentes viri olim veluti gnoma quadam et communi sententia iactarunt, dicentes, Omnis homo aspicit, &c.* (Brent.).

Man may behold it afar off] For heaven is far above earth, and it is a wonder that we can look to so admirable a height, and that the very eye is not tired in the way. And for things that are nearer to us, we see them but as through a glass obscurely; our knowledge of them is very imperfect, #1Co 11:13, the reason of many things is above our reach. We read of one who had spent over forty years in finding out the nature and property of bees, and yet was not fully satisfied with many things therein.

Ver. 26. **Behold, God is great]** Yea, he is *maximus in minimis,* greatest and most of all seen in the meanest creatures; as in ants more than in elephants, &c. God showeth in his works of all sorts, *se aliquantum esse; sed quantus sit rursus operibus involvit;* that he is very great, but how great he is that appears not (Brent.).

Neither can the number of his years be searched out] How should they say, when as his countenance is beyond all count, #Ps

102:24,27. Years are here ascribed unto him, and he is elsewhere called "Ancient of days," #**Da 7:9**, and the hairs of his head are said to be white like snow, #**Re 1:14**; but all this is spoken of God after the manner of men; and should teach us, neither curiously to inquire into his counsels, nor discontentedly to complain of his doings.

Ver. 27. **For he maketh small the drops of water]** Here Elihu beginneth to instance the greatness of God in his works, and particularly in the meteors; many of which Aristotle confesseth he understood not. And this I dare say, saith a learned interpreter here, that there is not extant any poem, either of the Greeks or Latins, which may be compared with this stately eloquence of Elihu in describing those natural effects which are caused in the air; and for the same cause are of the philosophers called meteors, or airy impressions; as namely, clouds, rain, hail, snow, thunder, lightning, and such like; whereof he here discourseth very gravely and learnedly; and first of rain, which he describeth, 1. By the form or manner of producing it, #**Job 36:27,28** 2. By the largeness of the clouds, and their noise, #**Job 36:29** 3. By the sudden succession of fair weather and foul, #**Job 36:30**. And lastly, by the different use thereof in the three last verses of this chapter: God maketh small the drops of water; that is, he raineth by dividing the drops in the cloud, causing them to come down *guttatim*, piece-meal; and not by whole spouts, or pail fulls. Others read it, *Subtrahit Deus*, God draweth up drops of water, viz. out of the sea, the rivers, and other moist places, whence those vapours do ascend, of which are generated those drops of rain: #**Ps 147:8**, "He covereth the heaven with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth," &c.

They pour down rain according to the vapours thereof] As the vapours are greater or lesser, so is the rain. The rain ascendeth in thin vapours, but descendeth oft in thick showers; so do our poor prayers come down in greatest blessings; and we are sure of as much mercy as we bring faith to carry it away.

Ver. 28. **Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly]** Hence the Dutch call it *raegen*, and we rained, *a rigando*, from watering the earth all over, at times. This is God's work, and it ought to be marvellous in our eyes; it would be so were it not so ordinary. *Non sanctis id ascribamus, multo minus sagis*, the heathens gave their gods the glory of it. The Holy Ghost here

and elsewhere setteth before us these common things, that when we see them, and yet know not the reason of them, we may gather, that we ought not overly curiously to pry into the profound judgments of God, which are far above the clouds, those receptacles of rain; yea, far above the highest heavens.

Ver. 29. **Also can any understand the spreading of the clouds]**

That is, the skill that God showeth in spreading forth the clouds to that large extent, and muffling the whole heavens with them, so that nature finds herself buried in darkness? Some render it, the divisions or differences of the clouds; *illic enim fiunt miracula magna* (Vatab.); for some clouds are empty, and answer not expectation (worthless and vain boasters are compared to such, #Pr 25:14 Jude 12), some yield rain and drop fatness. Some, again, send forth hail, snow, frost, storm, thunder, lightnings, &c. (R. Levi). These are wonders in nature, far beyond human apprehension. The clouds God maketh one while as some airy seas, to hold water; another while as some airy furnaces, whence he scattereth the sudden fires into all parts of the earth, astonishing the world with the fearful noise of that eruption. Out of the midst of water he fetcheth fire, and hard stones out of the midst of thin vapours. *Haec sunt sane admiranda et tremenda*, saith Mercer. These are wonderful things, and no less dreadful. Is it not strange that of one and the same equal matter, viz. the vapours exhaled from the earth or water, various and different meteors should he engendered?

Or the noise of his tabernacle?] *i.e.* The swinging showers, or rustling winds, or rattling thunder claps, one in the neck of another, out of the clouds, called here God's tabernacle; *in quo velut abditus, tot rerum miracula creat*, wherein he sits in secret and unseen, creating many strange meteors to send down upon the earth; whereof the profoundest philosopher of them all can give no certain and undoubted reason.

Ver. 30. **Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it]** That is, his fair weather, clearing up the cloudy sky, as some expound it; or, as others, his lightning shot forth every way, #Ps 18:13,15 144:6. Or the sunbeams spread upon the sea, and drawing up vapours; *unde mare hoc loco nubium radix dicitur*, saith Brentius, whence the sea is here called the root of the clouds; or the surface of the sea is called the root of it, in regard to the wandering waves which are cut

in asunder, after the manner of roots; so saith Vatablus. Those that by light here understand lightnings, say, that God maketh them dart so abundantly through the waters of the sea, that they do, as it were, cover all the bottom of it.

Ver. 31. **For by them judgeth he the people]** *i.e.* By rain and drought in excess or defect, he punisheth people at his pleasure; whom oh how easily could he affamish by denying them a harvest or two! in granting whereof he giveth testimony of his bounty, **#Job 14:17.**

He giveth meat in abundance] *sc.* By sending moderate showers fattening the earth; whereunto also the preaching of the Word is fitly compared, **#Isa 55:10,11**, which those that drink not in and fructify, **#De 32:2**, are accursed, **#Heb 6:8.**

Ver. 32. **With clouds he covereth the light]** Heb. With the palms of his hands (so the clouds are called, see **#1Ki 18:44**) he hideth light; that is, the sunbeams, viz. when he sendeth rain, the heavens are masked.

And commandeth it not to shine] Heb. And forbiddeth it (those words, not to shine, are not in the original), *propter intercedentem*, for the sake of those that intercede. He giveth rain or fair weather upon the prayers of his faithful people; who can thereby open and shut heaven, as did Elijah and the thundering legion. R. Levi interpreteth this and the following verse concerning thunder.

Ver. 33. **The noise thereof sheweth concerning it]** The hurrying noise made in the air before a shower of rain foreshoweth it to be at hand.

The cattle also concerning the vapour] Heb. concerning that which goeth up. Hogs, sheep, oxen, &c., have a better scence of smell than men; and can perceive the vapours going up to cause rain before men can see or feel them. Hence shepherds and herdsmen gather prognostics of rain, and are so weather wise, as we call it. Aben-Ezra noteth, that sheep lying on the right side foreshignify foul weather, *Ad dextram cubantes oves pluviam portendunt* (Merlin). See Virgil, Georg. l. i., and Pliny Nat. Hist. l. xviii. c. 35. Some render this verse (than which there is not a harder in all the book, saith Mercer), thus, Declaring toward him (who intercedeth) his

good will toward the cattle, and also toward the increase of the earth.

Chapter 37

Ver. 1. **At this also my heart trembleth]** At this? At what? at the thunder, whereof he had spoken before, and more meant to speak; and which he heard at that instant (as it may seem by the next verse), and therefore no wonder that his heart trembled, and was moved out of its place by an extraordinary palpitation, or, as the Tigurines have it, luxation. Thunder is so terrible, that it hath forced from the greatest atheist an acknowledgment of a deity. Suetonius telleth us of Caligula (that monster, who dared his Jove to a duel), that if it thundered and lightened but a little, he would hoodwink himself; but if much, he would creep under a bed, and be ready to run into a mouse hole, as we say. Augustus Caesar also was so afraid of thunder and lightning, that always and everywhere he carried about him the skin of a sea calf, which those heathens fondly held to be a preservative in such cases, and if at any time there arose a great storm he ran into a dark vault. The Romans held it unlawful to keep court, *love tonante, fulgurante*, in a time of thunder and lightning, as Cicero telleth us (De Divin. 1. 2). And Isidore deriveth *tonitru a terrendo*, thunder from its terror; and others from its tone, or rushing, crashing noise, frightening all creatures. At the voice of thy thunder they are afraid, **#Ps 104:7**, which one, not unfitly, calls David's medicine.

Ver. 2. **Hear attentively the noise of his voice]** *Coniunctam commotione vocem eius*, the great thunder crack that now is; that angry noise, as the word signifieth. Hear in hearing; you cannot but hear it with the ears of your bodies, hear it also with the ears of your minds; tremble and sin not; contrary to the course of most men, who sin and tremble not, drowning the noise of their consciences, as the old Italians did the thunder, by ringing their greatest bells, discharging their Roaring Megs, *{a huge piece of ordnance.}* &c. But what saith Elihu here to his hearers? *Audite, audite, audite etiam atque etiam, contremiscetis et vos, vos testes adhibeo*, as Mercer paraphraseth it out of Kimchi: Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye again and again, and then ye also will tremble. I take you to witness; whether ye consider his greater thunder claps ringing and roaring in your ears, see **#Ps 29:4 87:7**, or the lesser rumblings, called here

Murmur vel mussitationem, vel habitum, citra quem sermo non profertur; the sound, or breath, that goeth out of his mouth. All is ascribed to God; though naturalists tell us, and truly, that there are second causes of thunder and lightning (Aristot. Pliny); wherein, nevertheless, we must not stick, but give God the glory of his majesty, as David teacheth, **#Ps 29:1-3**, and as blind heathens did, when they called their *Iove Altitonantem*, the high thunderer. The best philosophy in this point is to hear God Almighty by his thunder speaking to us from heaven as if he were present; and to see him in his lightnings, as if he cast his eyes upon us to see what we had been doing. His eyes are as a flaming fire, **#Re 1:14**, and the school of nature teacheth, that the fiery eye seeth *extra mittendo*, by sending out a ray.

Ver. 3. **He directeth it under the whole heaven]** Heb. He maketh it to go right forward, meaning the thunder, the vehement noise or sound whereof (not altogether unlike that of cloth violently torn, or of air thrust out of bellows, or of a chestnut burst in the fire, but far louder) is brought through the air to our ears with such a mighty force, that it drowns all noises, clappings, clatterings, roarings even of many waters; making the earth to shake again, and all things tremble, *non secus quam siquis currum onustum per plateam lapidibus stratum ducat* (Lavati.). And this dreadful noise is by God directed to this or that place under the heavens, at his pleasure. The word rendered directeth signifieth also beholdeth; whence some interpret this text of God's seeing all things under heaven. But the former sense is better.

And his lightning unto the ends of the earth] God commands the lightning to cleave the clouds, and to scatter its flames through the world. Lightning is the brightness of a shining flame, running through the whole air in a moment, rising of a small and thin exhalation kindled in a cloud. See **#Ps 18:13**. The natural end and effect of thunder and lightning is to clear the air, by wasting poisonous vapours. The supernatural is, to show God's excellent majesty and might, which the mightiest must acknowledge, **#Ps 29:1,2**; to be his officers about him to make room for him, **#Ps 97:1,4**, to execute his wrath upon his enemies, **#Ex 9:23,27 Ps 77:18,19 1Sa 2:10 Isa 29:6**, and his mercy toward his people for the humbling of them, **#1Sa 12:18-20**, &c., raising them again to an

assured confidence, #Ps 29:11, &c. But that God can shoot these arrows of his so far, #Mt 24:27 Ps 77:18 97:3,4, and here; yea, and that at the same time when it rains, when one would think that the one should quench the other, #Ps 135:7; this is a just wonder, and Jeremiah urgeth it twice as such, #Jer 10:13 51:16.

Ver. 4. **After it a voice roareth]** After it, that is, after the lightning, it thundereth; indeed, before, or at least together with it; but the lightning is seen before the thunder is heard, because the sense of hearing is slower than the sense of seeing, thus fire is first seen in a gun ere the report is heard; the axe of the wood cutter is up for a second blow ere we hear the first, if any way distant, *Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures* (Horat.). And besides, as R. Levi well observeth here, that the sight of the lightning may come from heaven to us, there needeth no time; because our eyes reach up thither in an instant; but that a sound may come there hence to us (in regard to the distance, and because the air must be beaten and many times impressed as into so many circles) there must be some space of time; neither can it be done so suddenly.

He thundereth with the voice of his excellency] Or, of his height, or of his pride. Proud persons think themselves high, and use to speak big swollen words of vanity, bubbles of words, as St Peter calls them. If they be crossed never so little, *verbis bacchantur; et cum quodam vocis impetu loquuntur;* oh the tragedies, the blusters, the terrible thunderous cracks of fierce and furious language that follow thereupon. Some have been threatened to death, as Cornelius Gallus was by Augustus Caesar; and Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor, by Queen Elizabeth. How much more should men quake and even expire before the thunder of the Most High, or wriggle as worms do into their holes, the corners of the earth!

And he will not stay them when his voice is heard] Them, that is, new flashes of lightning; or rain and hail, which usually break out either while it thundereth, or presently after, in a most vehement and impetuous manner.

Ver. 5. **God thundereth marvellously with his voice]** Or, God thundereth out marvellous things with his voice. Marvellous indeed, if we consider the effects of thunder, lightning, and lightning bolts, which differ from lightning in form only, and not in matter; and for

the effects thereof naturalists tell us strange things; as that by them the money hath been melted without hurting the purse; the sword hath been broken within the scabbard, the wine hath been exhausted within the barrel, the bones broke within the flesh, &c. How various and marvellous the nature, generation, matter, form, effects of the thunder and thunderbolt are, not only Seneca, Pliny, and other meteorologists testify, but daily experience sealet to the truth of it.

Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend] As being above the reach of our shallow capacity; or, which we will not know; so the Hebrew hath it; such is our oscitance, or obstinace, that we will not take knowledge of God's works of wonder, though they do even run into our senses. This he construeth for a high contempt; as a skilful artificer would do when he hath set forth a curious piece to public view, and none will take notice of it. God seemeth to have made the meteors in such great variety, that therein he might show his own skill, and their imperfection.

Ver. 6. **For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth]** He commandeth it, and it is done; for together with his word there goeth forth a power. *Dixisse Dei, est fecisse.* **#Ps 147**, God giveth snow like wool. Many wonders there are in snow; as that it should be made in the lowest part of the air, and not above where it is coldest; that it should snow upon the earth, but never upon the sea, as Pliny saith; that snow should lie continually, not only upon the Alps, but upon Mount Aetna, where fire flames out; that no snow falleth in Egypt; but in Tartary, a hot country, sometimes it snoweth in the heat of summer; that it serves for a cover to preserve the earth's heat, though itself be cold; that being white, it should sometimes bring forth red worms, &c.

Likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength] Not a drop of rain, whether it come leisurely or hastily, but falleth by a divine decree, **#Job 28:26**, {See Trapp on "Job 28:26"} The Chaldee paraphrast understandeth here the summer and winter rains. God showeth his strength in a thing so weak and diffluent of itself, that thereby he may overturn and break in pieces the proudest of men's spirits; for whom also, if they repent not, he hath a more terrible rain, **#Ps 11:6**, overflowing with fire and brimstone, **#Eze 38:22**

Ver. 7. **He sealeth up the hand of every man]** *i.e.* He, by his great showers, sendeth men home for shelter, glad to intermit their work till better weather. See **#Ex 9:19**. The Hebrews call rain *Sagir*; **#Pr 27:15**, from shutting up; because it keeps men at home, from travelling or working abroad. Chiromancy *{palmistry}* finds here no footing, whatever some have doted; as if God had set certain signs and notes in men's hands of what should hereafter befall them, and this text is alleged for proof; but absurdly (Vide Joan de Indeg.).

That all men may know his work] *i.e.* That they may take notice of God's handiwork in ordering the seasons; and have time to think on their domestic affairs.

Ver. 8. **Then the beasts go into dens]** In rainy and snowy weather, the very wild beasts (as lively and lusty as they are, whence also they have their name in the original) are glad to take harbour, and there to hold them till the storm be over.

Ver. 9. **Out of the south cometh the whirlwind]** Which is a wonderful wind indeed; *τοφων* the Greeks call it (as they do a like wind at sea *ευροκλυδων*, the mariner's mischief), the Latins, vortex, because it turns up trees by the roots, houses by the foundation, **#Job 1:19**, and turbo, as breeding great trouble; for which cause also Pope Urban was called Turban. It suddenly ariseth and as suddenly ceaseth, but doth much mischief, and especially in strait and narrow places. In allusion whereunto the apostle would not have people to be wherried and whirled about with every wind of doctrine, **#Eph 4:14**, as unstable souls use to be. Illebius, for instance; who, as a Protestant, first turned Antinomian, and afterwards a Papist. So the old Illuminati, boasting at first of a certain angelic purity, fell suddenly to the very counterpoint of justifying bestiality (Spec. Europ.). For prevention of this pernicious lightness, "It is good" (saith the apostle) "that the heart be established with grace," **#Heb 13:9**. That men be sound in the faith, well principled, bottomed and ballasted.

And cold out of the north] Heb. out of the scattered winds. North winds scatter the clouds, clear the sky, and so bring on fair cold weather, *Και Βορρης αιθρηγενετης* (Hom. Odyss.). By *mezerim* here some understand certain stars toward the north pole; Arcturus, the Vulgate Latin rendereth it.

Ver. 10. **By the breath of God frost is given]** Frost is the excess of cold by the blowing of the coldest winds, which are here called, "The breath of God"; these congeal the waters, and turn them into ice, contracting them into a narrower room. Hence it is, that as any country is more northerly, so it is colder; the sea also is frozen and impassable.

And the breadth of the waters is straitened] This the same again in other words, though some understand it to be hail; when the broad flowing water in the clouds by the force of the cold is narrowed up into hail. All this is of the Lord. *Fides non in ordinem operis, sed in authorem oculos suos dirigit,* saith Brentius upon the text; faith seeth God in all.

Ver. 11. **Also by watering he wearieth the thick clouds]** That is, by showering down of much rain he disburdeneth and dissipateth them, seem they never so thick and large. These seem to be troubled and tired out when, as they are watering the earth, they are wasted and drawn dry by the heat of the sun.

He scattereth his bright cloud] Heb. the cloud of his light; that is, the cloud by dissolving whereof he restoreth light and fair weather, or the cloud which was covered over with lightning before, **#Job 36:30.**

Ver. 12. **And it is turned round about by his counsels]** *Vertit Dominus et revertit,* The Lord turneth and returneth; letteth out, and bringeth back the clouds, as it were by a rope, at his own pleasure; a metaphor from mariners, who skilfully manage the ropes of the ship to best advantage. In like sort the clouds are by God's cunning turned about in a circuit (as Beza rendereth it), that is, in a round compass or circle; they are not carried up and down the air by any wandering and inconstant motion; but they are, as it were, by certain engines (so he maketh the metaphor) of Almighty God, turned about at his own pleasure, when and where he thinketh good to use them; for he best knoweth where is most need of rain, snow, &c., and therefore he by his wisdom driveth them hither and thither, for the fulfilling of his purpose. Some refer this text to the revolution of the heavenly orbs, which is also done by God.

That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them] A metaphor like that, **#Le 25:21**, where God saith that he will command his blessing upon the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. Now if the senseless creature so readily obey God, how much more should we! And if he be Lord of tempests, he is also of diseases and disasters. Cheer up, therefore, and ply the throne of grace. He will see that all shall go well with his supplicants.

Ver. 13. **He causeth it to come, whether for correction]** Heb. For a rod, εις παιδειαν (Sept.). God hath his rods sticking up in every corner of his house for chastisement of his children, and they shall take it for a favour too, **#Heb 12:7 1Co 11:32**. *Sinite virgam corripientem, ne sentiatis malleum conterentem*, saith Bernard. Be content with the rod of correction, that ye feel not the maul of confusion. Better suffer immoderate rains and lightnings, than that terrible tempest, **#Job 27:21**, and the black flashes of hell fire, that πυριφλεγεθων, as Plato calleth it; the fiery lake, as the Scripture.

Or of his land] *i.e.* His Church, **#Ho 9:3**. A land that he watereth and watcheth over from one end of the year to the other, **#De 28:12**. His vineyard cared for, and kept to himself night and day, **#Isa 27:3**. Or, the earth at large, which is God's great field, **#Ps 24:1** (as the Church is his fold, **#Ps 100:3**), and especially that part of it which is desert and uninhabited. There also God causeth his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, **#Mt 5:45 Job 38:26,27**, that the wild beasts also may have food.

Or for mercy] Some singular and extraordinary mercy, as **#2Sa 21:10 1Ki 18:45**. *Sive ad faciendum beneflcentiam;* or to bestow his bounty, and to bestow a largess; as princes sometimes make a scatter of monies among the multitude. Clouds are God's storehouses, which he soon opens to our profit, **#De 28:12**; by them he maketh them a scatter of riches upon the earth, which good men gather, and bad men scramble for.

Ver. 14. **Hearken unto this, O Job]** Here Elihu by little and little draweth to a most wise conclusion, bringing Job to this point, that as the wisdom of God in these daily and ordinary works of nature doth far exceed the reach and capacity of man, so he should much more consider the same in this grievous calamity, which was now befallen him. And forasmuch as he could not come to the knowledge of any

other secondary and middle causes, he should rather adore and reverence the secret counsel and purpose of God herein than labour in vain, and without any profit at all to torment himself in searching out that which is not possible for any man to understand. Which argument God himself doth at large most truly and divinely prosecute in the four following chapters.

Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God] *Consiste, considera,* and that thou mayest see into these divine secrets, *Non arrigendae sunt aures carnis, sed fidei,* Prick up the ears of thy faith, which alone can skill of these mysteries; whereinto if thou hast yet no insight, and canst not yet feel the justice, wisdom, and goodness of God in thy present sufferings, it is for want of judgment (as I shall evince in that which follows), it is because thou hast not mine eyes, senses habitually exercised to discern good and evil, **#Heb 5:14.** Nicostratus in Elian, himself being a skilled artist, finding a curious piece of work, and being wondered at by one, and asked, What pleasure he could take to stand gazing as he did on the picture? answered, Hadst thou mine eyes thou wouldst not wonder, but rather be ravished, as I am, at the inimitable art of this rare piece. Elihu seemeth here to say as much to Job.

Ver. 15. **Dost thou know when God disposed them]** viz. Those wondrous works of God in the air especially; those varieties of meteors, the generation and motions whereof the greatest philosophers cannot perfectly find out by their natural causes, neither do they well agree among themselves concerning those causes. For Anaximander holdeth one thing, Metrodorus another, Anaxagoras a third, Aristotle a fourth; let those that have a mind to it read their janglings and disputes in Plutarch, *De placitis philosophorum.* Now if no man (though never so wise) can understand the wondrous works of God in these common things of nature, how can he comprehend his hidden works, *hoc est, crucem?* saith Brentius.

And caused the light of his cloud to shine?] Or, That he may cause the light of his cloud to shine. Hereby he meaneth lightnings, issuing out of the moist and cold cloud, say some; the rainbow, say others, that wonderful work of God (feigned therefore by the heathens to be the daughter of Thaumantias, or of wonderment), which is full of

wonders, witness the beautiful shape thereof and various colours, with their several significations, as some conceive (Plato); the several prognostics; viz. of rain in the morning, of fair weather in the evening, as Scaliger concludeth; the form of it, a bow, which yet never shooteth any man unless it be with astonishment and love, &c. God puts his bow in his hand (saith Ambrose on #Ge 9:13), not his arrow, but his bow, and the string of the bow is to us ward. The Jews conceit that the name Jehovah is written on the rainbow, and therefore they no sooner see it, but they hide their eyes, confess their sins, that deserve a second deluge, celebrate God's great goodness to mankind, &c. Some by the light of God's cloud here understand the sunshine through the clouds, causing it to clear up. Now who can certainly foretell rain or fair weather? Some learned men have spent much time and pains in astronomy to get skill in prognosticating, but could do little good of it; when they foretell a fair day it commonly raineth, and the contrary. The countryman's prognostics, the shepherd's calendar, hold better, for the most part, than the predictions of these artisans.

Ver. 16. **Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?**] *i.e.* How they are hung up even in the air, like Architas' or Archimedes' pigeon, equally poised with their own weight. But how they are upheld, and why they fall here, and now, we know not, and wonder. Some naturalists tell us that the clouds are upheld by the heat of the sun but that is more than they can tell, and there is much to be said against it. Wherefore it is better for men to confess their ignorance than so peremptorily to pronounce things they know not. Let it be proper to God to be perfect in knowledge. It was too much that some ascribed to Tertullian, to Jerome, to Tostatus, and some others, that they knew all that was knowable.

Ver. 17. **How thy garments are warm, when he, &c.**] Canst thou give a reason of the extreme heat that is about the summer solstice, when the warm south winds blow so gently, that they are scarce felt at all, and thy clothes heated by thy body are a burden to thee, so that thou art ready to cast them off, and, but for common honesty, thou couldst go naked? Brentius thinks, that although one of the winds only is here instanced, yet the disposing of them all is intended; wherein much of God may be seen; for it is he alone who holdeth them in his fist, hideth them in his treasures, sendeth them out as his posts, rideth upon them, as his chariot, #2Sa 22:10 Ps

104:3, checks them at his pleasure (whence they concluded Christ's Deity, #**Mt 8:27**), makes them pace orderly, appointing them their motion, &c., #**Job 28:24-27** *Nos motum sentimus, modum nescimus.* #**Joh 3:8**, Thou hearest the sound of the wind, but knowest not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. Now if in these common matters men are so blind, how much more in the deep judgments of the Most High.

Ver. 18. **Hast thou with him spread out the sky**] He had convinced Job of his ignorance, and now he will of his impotence and imbecility; and this by an irony; *q.d.* *Tune ille gigas es?* Art thou indeed that giant, or demi-god, that helped the Almighty when he spread the heavens, when he laid the foundation of the earth? &c. *Age itaque si tantus vires, quantum te ostentas, &c.*, Go to, then, if thou be indeed such a one as thou wouldst seem to be, while thou takest upon thee to be, viz. to contend with God, and to complain of his hard dealing with thee. "Teach us what we shall say unto him," &c., as #**Job 37:19**, for we dare not, as thou hast done, dare him to come into the lists with us, as hoping to have the better of him.

Which is strong] Not by reason of any hard massy elemental thickness, but by reason of their airy, incorruptible, indissoluble nature, composed of very thin and even parts (Diodati). Hence the Greeks call it στερεωμα, and the Latins *firmamentum*. {See Trapp on "Ge 1:7"}

And as a molten looking glass?] *Perspicuum et sapphirinum*, dear and transparent as a mirror wherein God maketh himself visible, as it were; who of himself is too subtile for sight or sinew to seize upon (R. Levi). The Hebrew hath it, which is strong as a molten looking glass; *i.e.* as a polished brazen looking glass, being more solid than brass, more transparent than crystal.

Ver. 19. **Teach us what we shall say unto him**] A notable scoff, a sharp sarcasm. *Verba sunt urgentis et insultantis;* *q.d.* *Velim ut e tot argumentis,* #**Job 23:4**, *aliqua nunc proferas*, I would that thou wouldst bring out some of those many arguments thou didst brag of; for we are at a fault; neither can we (such is our ignorance) find what to say in thy just defence, had we never so good a mind to it.

For we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness] We are benighted and word bound; forced to acknowledge our ignorance, our infancy, and to complain (as Anaxagoras afterwards did), *omnia esse circumfusa tenebris;* and (as Empedocles) *angustas esse sensuum semitas,* that we are far to seek of what to say in this case, and ready to think that silence would be our safest eloquence.

Ver. 20. **Shall it be told him that I speak?]** *An in acta referetur ei, si loquar?* Shall it be recorded before him? &c. *q.d.* Then woe be to me, for I am sure to rue it; yea, and (without mercy) to be ruined for it. Did not Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesy long since, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh to execute judgment upon all, and to convince them of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," **#Jude 14,15.**

If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up] If he speak in thy behalf, or after thine example, presuming to control God's works, and to quarrel his proceedings, as thou hast done, he is sure to be undone. Some read the words thus, For if he speak man shall be devoured; that is, if God speak, man (who, before he cometh to speak, thinks that he shall be able to reason with him) shall be quite confounded, and his words, as it were, swallowed up by his profound wisdom; and be made unable to speak one word for himself. Wherefore let all flesh be silent before the Lord; for if any presume to chat against his judgments, he shall have his words driven down his throat again by a divine vengeance. *Cave ne lingua feriat collum,* Take heed thy tongue cut not thy throat, say the Arabian's wise proverb.

Ver. 21. **And now men see not the bright light that is in the clouds]** It seemeth, saith an expositor, that at that very instant the cloudy weather did begin to clear up, and that thereupon Elihu took occasion to speak these words: *q.d.* Thou art not able to look into the body of the shining sun, *quia nimium sensibile laedit sensum;* how much less canst thou behold God in his glory, in comparison to whom the sun in his strength is but as a clod of clay! The sun is called light by an excellency; the Egyptians call him *Orus,* from the Hebrew, *Or.* Hereafter we shall see God as he is, see him face to face, **#1Jo 3:1,2;** see as we are seen, &c.; but here we can see his back parts only and live, **#Ex 33:20-23** Surely out of what Elihu had hitherto said Job should have reasoned thus with himself, I cannot

bear the force of a flash of lightning, of a clap of thunder, of a violent shower, of an overturning whirlwind, of an extreme frost of the outshining sun, &c., how much less of God in his majesty!

Ver. 22. **Fair weather cometh out of the north]** Heb. Gold cometh, &c., that is, the golden beams of the sun, as golden oil, #Zec 4:12, *Serenitas aura similis* (Tit.). The north wind also cleanseth the clouds, and shows us the pleasant face of the sun, that gold maker; all whose rays come tipped and gilt with a glistering glory upon them.

With God is terrible majesty] Far beyond that of the sun or of the most dread sovereign upon earth; be it an Augustus Caesar, or a terrible Tamerlane, in whose eyes sate such a rare and reverend majesty as a man could hardly endure to behold them without closing his own. The Tigurines render it, *Ad Deum reverendissimum pertinet confessio*, To the most reverend God belongeth praise. Others, by way of doxology, Unto God be reverend majesty; a fit perclose of Elihu's excellent discourse. It was the last speech of dying Chrysostom, Glory be to God from all creatures. Let it be the badge of the beast, *Laus Deo, et beatae Virgini*. Cry we, *Deus terribilis landetur*; as Brentius rendereth this text, Let God alone be praised.

Ver. 23. **Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out]** Heb. The Almighty. The nominative case put absolute; *q.d.* in short, as for the Almighty (that *nomen Maiestativum*, majestic name, as Tertullian phraseth it), we cannot comprehend him, any more than we can the main ocean in a cockle shell. And whereas we can say, as here, that he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice, *Ista de Deo dicimus, quia non invenimus melius quod dicamus* (August.); We say these things of God, because we have nothing better to say of him, and must owe the rest unto our thoughts, although, indeed, he is above all name and above all notion. In searching after God, saith Chrysostom, I am like a man digging in a deep spring, I stand here, and the water riseth upon me, and I stand there, and still the water riseth upon me. To Thomas Aquinas, busy in this search, was showed (they say) a deep pit in the edge of the sea (which empty it, and carry away the water as oft as they will), it is still filled with other. It is a knowledge that passeth knowledge,

#Eph 3:19. That which in measure is pleasant and profitable, being too much inquired into, proves unsavoury and unsafe.

He will not afflict] viz. Willingly, **#La 3:33**, or causelessly, **#1Pe 1:6**; or, He will not answer; viz. every one that questioneth the justice of his proceedings, as Job, in his heat, had done. The Seventy render the question, Will he not answer? *sc.* those that call upon him in truth, since he is excellent in power and in judgment? &c. Sure he will.

Ver. 24. **Men do therefore fear him]** They do, or should do, for his excellent greatness and goodness, **#Ps 130:4 Mt 10:28**. But in case they do not,

He respecteth not any that are wise of heart] That out of a conceit of their own wisdom stand it out against him, and think to reason it out with him, as thou hast done. Or, But he seeth not all wise in heart; he findeth not all wise, whom he beholdeth here upon earth. *Stultorum plena sunt omnia*, and thou also hast dealt very foolishly, as God hath seen, and wilt shortly show thee better than I can do.

Chapter 38

Ver. 1. **Then the Lord answered Job]** God himself, taking the word out of Elihu's mouth (who had spoken well, but lacked majesty to set it forth), became his own patron, *et huius disputationis sequester*; and decider of this long controversy, vindicating his own authority, and teaching that truth in the four following chapters, which St Paul briefly compriseth in these words, **#Ro 11:33,34**, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" Why then should any one require an account of his proceedings, or question his justice? Job had often desired that God would take knowledge of his cause. His friends also had desired the same, **#Job 11:5**. Here therefore he appeareth in person, not as out of an engine devised for that purpose, after the manner of some partial tragedy, for the whole narration testifieth that this is a true story of things done indeed, and afterwards faithfully recorded (Beza). Which history is highly to be esteemed as an incomparable treasure, if it were for nothing else, yet for the right knowledge of

natural philosophy here laid open, in these four following chapters, together with the chief and principal end thereof, which is, that in these visible creatures we may behold the invisible things of God.

Out of the whirlwind] That is, out of a cloud whence issued a whirlwind or a storm, as a testimony of his heavenly majesty, and to procure attention. See the like **#De 4:12 1Ki 19:11 Eze 1:4 Na 1:9 Heb 12:18**. God loves to be acquainted with men in the walks of their obedience, yet he takes state upon him in his ordinances, and will be trembled at in his word and judgments.

And said] With much more mildness and moderation than Elihu or any of them had used in reprehending Job, and yet with such plenty and efficacy of words and arguments, *Ut facillime omnes omnium orationes superet*, that no such oration can anywhere else be read. Well might Lavater say, *Hoc postremum colloquium est admodum suave et utile*, This conference of God with Job is very sweet and profitable; for it teacheth us, among other things, how gently God dealeth with his offending servants, and how hardly the best are brought to confess their sins, and truly to repent of them.

Ver. 2. Who is this that darkeneth counsel] Who is this that talketh thus? saith God, stepping forth, as it were, from behind the hangings; how now? What is to do here? Some ancients think it meant of Elihu; but Job is the man. See **#Job 42:3**, where he takes it to himself; and it may be God here pointed to him with a *Quis est iste Iob?*

That darkeneth counsel] My counsel, by misconstructions; his own, by rash and unskilful expressions; for which Elihu also rightly blamed him, and his other friends took great offence at him; who should rather have said, as Cruciger did of Luther, *Eum commodius sentire quam loquitur; dum effervescit*, that he thought not so ill as he spoke in his heat.

By words without knowledge] This is the worst that God chargeth Job with; words of folly and ignorance: not with malice, falsehood, blasphemy, &c. Counsel also he attributeth to him, though not wisely managed. If there be any good in us, he noteth and noticeth it; passing by our defects and failings; as when Sarah called her

husband lord, she is much commended for it; though there was never another good word in all that sentence, #Ge 18:12 1Pe 3:6 Job 35:16.

Ver. 3. **Gird up now thy loins like a man]** As men did use to do when they went to fight, #1Ki 20:11. Stand to thy ward, and see to thyself; for I mean to assail thee and to try thy manhood. Plato hath observed, that the best fencers are the worst soldiers. Many can brave it beforehand, as that Thrasonical Gaal did, #Jud 9:29, who yet cannot look their enemy in the face with blood in their cheeks.

For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me] I will be thy opponent, since thou hast challenged me into the schools, as it were, and given me my choice, and prove thee with hard questions; whereunto if thou canst give no good answer, see thine own folly, and be satisfied.

Ver. 4. **Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?]** *q.d.* Thou wast nowhere, a mere *nonens*; thou wast no companion or counsellor of mine; nay, not so much as an onlooker, for thou art but of yesterday. Thou understandest not the reason of this fair fabric; much less of my dark and deep counsels.

Declare, if thou hast understanding] Heb. if thou kuowest understanding. An irony, but friendly, and free from all bitterness; the better to convince Job of his folly and faultiness; for which end, also, *multis eum interrogationibus onerat*, God loadeth him with many deep questions, the least whereof he could not answer. (Mercer).

Ver. 5. **Who hath laid the measures thereof]** In that circumference and diameter that it holdeth?

If thou knowest] Or, For thou knowest; *quandoquidem scitus es*, a tart irony. Geometricians take upon them to know the various dimensions of the earth; and Archimedes boasted, that if he had but where to set his foot from off the earth he could shake the whole body of it. As also, that he could number all the sands that were in the whole world, habitable and inhabitable. But these were vain boasts.

Or who hath stretched the line upon it?] A metaphor from masons and other master builders, who work by line and by rule. Vitruvius in his 7th book saith thus, *Longitudines ad regulam et lineam, altitudines ad perpendiculum, anguli ad normam respondententes exigantur.*

Ver. 6. **Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?]** Surely, upon nothing, but the word of God's power. The philosophers dispute many things concerning the foundations of the earth but without any sound foundation of good reason. Some Jewish doctors make the mountains to be them; but these bear not up the earth, but the contrary. The Psalmist saith, that God hath founded the solid earth upon the liquid waters, **#Ps 24:2**, wherein appeareth the infinite wisdom and power of God the founder. Vitruvius saith, *In solido extruendum*, foundations must be laid in solid places. But God is not tied to rules; his works are in *oppositis mediis*, as was above noted.

Or who laid the corner-stone thereof] *i.e.* The centre, say some Jewish doctors, whither all heavy things are carried, and about which the whole world hangeth; the elements and heavenly orbs surrounding it in their motions. Others fetch this corner stone out of the middle of the sea. But all this discourse is metaphorical, to show the firmness of the work, wherein none had any hand but only the essential wisdom of God, **#Pr 8:1**, who did it with more ease than men can build a house.

Ver. 7. **When the morning stars sang together]** There is but one morning star properly so called, viz. Phosphorus, Lucifer, or Venus, the sun's forerunner. But for their brightness, they are all called here stars of the morning, and said to sing together, as birds use to do at break of day; so did these in the morning of the creation, when first those heavenly torches began to shine, and joyfully to dance, as it were, in number and measure. This they do still in their kind, **#Ps 19:1**, beckoning also, as it were, to us to do the like, **#Ps 145:3**.

And all the sons of God shouted for joy?] *i.e.* All the angels, as **#Job 1:6**, meant also by those morning stars, as Piscator and others will have it. These being created, together with the highest heavens, on the first day (as it is probable, like as Christ's soul was created in and with his body in the Virgin's womb the same moment), were

present at a great part of the creation, if not at all; and were rapt with admiration at the great wisdom and power of their Creator, singing, "Holy, holy, holy," &c. Shall the stars sing, the angels shout, and shall we be so dull? This was all they did at the creation. Note this against those who held that God made the superior creatures himself, but the inferior by his angels. A great hand they have, as God's instruments, in governing the world, #Eze 1:5-7, &c., whence also they are called watchmen and keepers, #Da 4:13, but not any had they in making the world; for in that work God was alone, and by himself, #Isa 44:24.

Ver. 8. **Or who shut up the sea with doors]** *i.e.* With bounds and banks. The sea God shut up in the hollow parts of the earth, as in a great house, that the dry land, naturally overwhelmed thereby, might appear, and become fit, both to bear grain, grass, plants, &c., and to yield a habitation for men and beasts. Piscator thinks it is a metaphor from flood gates at mill ponds.

When it brake forth as if it had issued out of the womb?] The sea is here set forth in lively colours, as an incomprehensible work of God's wisdom. Out of nothing God produced it at first, as an infant out of the mother's womb. How great is God, then, to whom the great sea is but as a little infant? It brake out of the womb, when it was severed from the abyss; which lay covered with darkness, till the waters below were separated from those above, #Ge 1:10.

Ver. 9. **When I made the cloud the garment thereof]** When I clothed this new born child with a cloud, *Elegans allegoria* (Jun.); commanding the vapours which environ it to serve it for garments. Clouds are begotten of the waters, of the sea especially, and appear daily upon it.

And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it] This thick darkness is well interpreted to be those fogs and mists which arise upon the sea, and are between the clouds and the sea; as the swaddling bands between the upper garment and the child. *Interim significat*, saith Mercer here. Meanwhile here is signified, that God can as easily rule and repress the sea as the mother, or nurse, can her suckling when it is swathed up.

Ver. 10. **And brake up for it my decreed place]** That great house in the hollows of the earth, #Job 38:8, gathering it together by a

perpetual and powerful decree, into that place and pit. Tremellius rendereth it, *Quum diffregi pro eo terram decreto meo*, When I brake up for it the earth by my decree. Others, And laid upon it nay statute; for *shabhar* signifieth also *statuere, decernere*, say they; but that is more than I know.

And set bars and doors] *Vectes et valvas*. See #Job 38:8. This is a work of God's great power; and is therefore much instanced and insisted upon in Scripture, #Ps 109 Jer 5:22, &c. God could have put many other hard questions to Job about the sea; as, why it swelleth not by the inflowing of so many great rivers? why the waters of it are so salt? whence it is that it so ebbeth and floweth? &c. Aristotle showeth himself no very wise man in answering these questions; whom yet Averroes so madly admireth, that he saith there is no error at all to be found in him; and that his doctrine is the chiefest truth.

Ver. 11. **And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further]** This God commanded, and it is done. If the sea at any time break its bounds, and overflow countries (as in Holland, Zealand, and other parts it hath done), that is to declare the power of God, and his just anger against sin.

And here shall thy proud waves be stayed?] Canute commanded such a thing, but the sea regarded him not. Xerxes beat the sea, and cast a pair of fetters into it to make it his prisoner, but to no purpose. God here chides it by an elegant ellipsis or aposiopesis, *Illic ponet* (sc. *ventus*) *elationem fluctuum tuorum*, and it is quieted immediately, as #Jon 1:15 Mt 8:26 Think the same of the waters of afflictions.

Ver. 12. **Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days]** It may be thou wilt say, These are ancient things, done long before I was born; but ask me of things within my reach and remembrance. Well, then, what sayest thou to the sunrising? Hast thou either lengthened or hastened it at any time since thou wert born, causing it to rise at such or such an hour, in such or such a point of heaven, according to the various degrees and situations of the zodiac? No; this is more than ever any man could do. "The day is thine, the night also is thine," saith David: "thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer

and winter," #Ps 74:16,17. If all the emperors and potentates of the earth should conjoin their threes to hinder or hasten the rising of the sun, they could never do it. Joshua did indeed stop the course of the sun; but that was by the power of God set awork by his faithful prayer; whence one crieth out, *O admirabilem piarum precum vim ac poteutiam, quibus etiam coelestia cedunt!* Oh the admirable power of prayer, force of faith, which is such as the visible heavens are sensible of, and giveth way to! how then should earth or hell stand before it?

And caused the dayspring to know his place] The word dayspriug comes from blackness; for it is not ηως ηνοδακτυλος, clear light at first; but κροκοπεπλος, rather dark than light, *Aurora sic a nigrore dicta qui eam comitatur.*

Ver. 13. **That it might take hold of the ends of the earth]** That is, suddenly illighnten the whole horizon; for which cause also David ascribeth wings to the morning, #Ps 139:9, so that the light is not a body, nor, as some will have it, a substance, but an accident. The truth is, no man can tell what it is of any certainty; an admirable creature it is, surely a divine and heavenly thing, than which nothing is more desirable, nothing more profitable. Two excellent uses of it are here set forth: 1. To refresh men by the sight of the earth, and the things thereon. 2. To set us upon serious employment, such as is the punishment of evil doers, for so some interpret those next words.

That the wicked might be shaken out of it?] *sc.* By banishment, or rather by death, inflicted upon them in the light, for their deeds of darkness. Or, at least, that those *Lucifugae, tenebriones*, those inauspicate night birds, who hate the light, because their works are evil, might be shamed and shunned. Their motto is, *Iam lux inimica propinquat* (Virg.). See #Job 24:13,17.

Ver. 14. **It is turned as clay to the seal]** That is, the earth, now discerned, by reason of the air enlightened. The sense is this, Like as clay in the lump, that hath no figure stamped upon it, is changed by a seal impressed, and receiveth the figure of the seal upon itself (Piscator); so the earth, which by night was without form by reason of darkness, when once the sun is up, is figured as it were; that is, it shows the several figures stamped upon it.

And they stand as a garment] All the several fruits, flowers, and various workmanship of God in her produced creatures that grow thereupon, appear as a stately garment or ornament on a man, **#Mt 6:28,29**, the sunbeams shining upon it as lace (Abbot).

Ver. 15. **And from the wicked their light is withholden]** They have no such joy of those comforts which the light afforded; but as it discovereth their dark practices, **#Eph 5:13**, so it bringeth them forth to condign punishment, *Utpote indignos, qui hac luce fruuntur.*

And the high arm shall be broken] *i.e.* His strength, tyranny, and power, whereby he oppressed others as with an outstretched arm, lifted up to strike with violence, this shall be broken, as Moab's was, **#Jer 48**, and as all the wicked's shall be; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous, **#Ps 37:17**. It is well noted that this verse is an exposition of the latter part of **#Job 38:13**, as the former verse was of the former part. And well might Mercer say of this and the three following chapters, *Sunt haec alta et insignia, et nonnulla difficilia*, these are things high, and excellent, and something dark and difficult
Ver. 16. **Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?]** Heb. into the tears of the sea, *Usque ad plorata maris*, **#Job 28:11**; for springs pour out water as eyes do tears; and the same Hebrew word signifieth an eye and a spring; because, saith one, the eye is of a watery constitution; or to show that from it, as from a spring or fountain, did flow both sin itself, the cause of sin, and misery, the punishment of both: and because by it came the greatest hurt, therefore God hath placed in it the greatest tokens of sorrow: *iisdem quibus videmus oculis flemus*. Now, if Job cannot fathom the sea, much less can he the deep counsels of God.

Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?] *Et in vado voraginis ambulasti?* No; that is God's walk alone, **#Ps 77:19**, whatever the Papists' legend of their St Christopher.

Ver. 17. **Have the gates of death been opened unto thee]** *sc.* That thou shouldest know when, how, and of what disease every man shall die; together with the state and condition of the dead.

Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?] No, nor any man living hath ever seen those dark and dismal receptacles of the

dead, called here the shadow of death; that is, so dreadful, that they were enough to strike a man dead.

Ver. 18. **Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?**] Heb. the breadths, i.e. the length also and circumference thereof. Geographers define the length of the earth from east to west, the breadth from north to south; and they have their supputations and conjectures, *Frigidae sunt et leves coniecturae* (Mercer). Peucer and others tell us, that if there were a path made round the earth, an able footman might easily go it in 900 days. Which if he could, yet what mortal man, though he should live 900 years, could ever visit and view the whole face, nature, and dimension of the earth, wherein are so many deserts and bogs impassable? Or, what Job can give a reason why God made the earth of such a length and breadth, and no more, when he could so easily have done it? How much less can he of God's secret and unsearchable judgments? and why should he so desire to know the cause wherefore he is afflicted?

Declare if thou knowest it all] Since a great part of it is uninhabited; and the sea surroundeth it as a girdle.

Ver. 19. **Where is the way where light dwelleth?**] These are poetic terms likewise; which signify, or mean nothing else, but that God alone, without any help or work of any man, appointed the various points of sunrising and sunsetting.

And as for darkness, where is the place thereof?] *i.e.* Little canst thou tell what is become of it, or where the sun setteth; by the absence whereof cometh darkness. The truth is, our reason is by original sin so darkened that we understand not these lesser and common matters. Those that are more high and hard we learn not but with much labour and long experience. As for the mysteries of God, and things pertaining to salvation, we cannot at all attain unto them by human reason, as is to be seen in Nicodemus, **#Joh 3:9,10 1Co 2:14**

Ver. 20. **That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof**] That thou shouldest take light and darkness by the hand, as it were, and lead them to the place of their abode.

And that thou shouldest know the paths, &c.] That is, which way to go to bring them out of their retiring rooms; and to reduce them into our hemisphere.

Ver. 21. **Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born?]** Beza readeth it thus, These things, forsooth, thou knowest, because thou wast then born (viz. when I made them, and appointed what order and course they should keep), and the number of thy days is great, thou art very far grown in years, as having lived ever since the creation, *Es annosissimus et antiquissimus, &c. Ironice omnia.*

Ver. 22. **Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?]** *i.e.* Into the clouds, where these meteors (whereof before, #Job 37) are engendered; and from whence God, when he pleases, bringeth such great store as if he had them treasured up by him for a long season. See the like said of the winds, #Ps 135:7, *Quasi parata haberet horum penuaria.* Gregory, allegorizing these words, showeth that earthly treasures are treasures of snow. We see little children what pains they take to rake and scrape together snow to make a snowball: right so they that scrape together the treasure of this world have but a snowball of it; as soon as the sun shineth, and God breatheth upon it, and so entereth into it, soon it cometh to nothing.

Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?] Another metaphor from officers of the exchequer or public treasury; *q.d.* Hast thou the inspection or administration of these meteors?

Ver. 23. **Which I have reserved against the time of trouble]** Or, against the time of the enemy to punish him, as #Ex 9:24 Jos 10:11 Isa 30:30. By deep snows men are sometimes withered and destroyed; by violent hail stones and coals of fire. *{as #Ps 18:13-15}* What an overthrow was procured against the Quades by the prayers of the thundering legion, as they were afterwards called in the days of Aurelius the emperor! *Ingens grando compluraque fulmina in hostes ceciderunt,* Huge hail stones and many lightning bolts fell upon the enemy, saith the heathen historian (Dio in Vit. Ant. Phil.).

Against the day of battle and war?] When God is pleased to bring forth his upper and lower troops ready pressed, as the Rabbis phrase it.

Ver. 24. **By what way is the light parted]** *sc.* From the clouds by lightning, or from darkness by the sunrising? Knowest thou that? Or

the cause of it? Nothing less. Something philosophers have to say here, but upon no great certainty.

Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?] *Eurus est ventus urens, exsiccans;* the east wind hath its name in Hebrew from the sunrising; the Latins call it, *Venture subsolanum*, as that which usually followeth the rising sun; but whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, is more than Job or any other can tell.

Ver. 25. **Who hath divided (or derived) a watercourse for the overflowing of waters]** That is, the waterclouds, for the pouring out of rain, *velut per canales et tubulos*, as by pipes and conveyances, wheresoever God pleaseth, men being amazed at those miracles of nature; is it not the Lord alone? He it is who divideth the deluge of waters; as it were, draining them into certain furrows which would otherwise fall down from heaven all at once, and make great spoil here below.

Or a way for the lightning of thunder] *Nimbo sonoro*, saith Tremellius. See #**Job 28:6**. {See Trapp on "Job 28:6"}

Ver. 26. **To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is]** But wild beasts only. These also are God's creatures, and he provideth food for them. How much more will he do so for us, though small faiths.

In the wilderness, wherein there is no man] *Repetitio ad varietatem et elegantiam*, as also to show the certainty of the thing.

Ver. 27. **To satisfy the desolate and waste ground]** The waste and waste ground, saith Broughton elegantly; and the Hebrew sounds alike.

And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth] For the use of wild creatures, whereof there are great store in the desert of Arabia, not far from Job; for the which, and the rest of his living creatures, this great housekeeper of the world provideth food suitable to their several appetites.

Ver. 28. **Hath the rain a father?]** *Subaudi, praeter me?* saith Vatablus. Hath it any father but me? Can any of the heathen deities give rain? Or can the heavens give showers? "Art not thou he, O

Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things," #Jer 14:22.

Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?] Those round orient pearls, that, falling from heaven in a clear night, do sweetly refresh whatsoever groweth in fields and meadows. The natural causes hereof and of rain are known, but we must rise higher to God, the first Author and Father of these and other things, before and after mentioned, who bringeth them out of his treasuries, and doth wonderfully both make and manage them. It is remarkable that Christ saith, #Ho 14:5, "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily," &c. {See Trapp on "Ho 14:5"} Christ is unto them as a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest, #Isa 18:4 making their hearts to be as so many watered gardens, #Jer 31:12.

Ver. 29. **Out of whose womb came the ice**] Indeed of ice and water is said in a sense,

Mater me genuit: eadem mox gignitur ex me.

But these creatures are not produced by causes which are constant and invariable in nature, as human generation is, but they proceed from God's pure and simple free will.

And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?] Out of the heaven, that is, out of the lower region of the air, cometh the matter of it, but God maketh it. Naturalists say that the hoar frost is a vapour congealed by a cold wind in cold places of the lower region of the air; as in winter we see the breath that cometh out of the mouth to congeal and hang upon the beard and hairs. This hoar frost is answerable in the counter point to the dew, but lasteth much longer.

Ver. 30. **The waters are hid as with a stone**] This is a further description of ice, which is hard as a stone and clear as crystal; so great is the force of frost; how much more, then, of God to do whatsoever he pleaseth.

And the face of the deep is frozen] Some deep rivers are ice to the bottom, so that laden carts are driven over, fires made upon them, meat dressed, &c., as was here upon the Thames in the great frost,

some forty-five years since, *Quae aquae magno et diuturno frigore congelescunt, velut per 10 vel 20 annos continuos appellantur crystallus, velut in Alpibus.* Yea, some seas are frozen over (Juvenal speaks of the icy ocean, *et glaciale Oceanum*) in the northern part of the world, the ice thereof, when once thawed, floateth in the waters like huge mountains, as in Greenland.

Ver. 31. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades] That is, restrain the pleasantness of the spring, or assuage the sharpness of winter, that cold and comfortless quarter? There is none beside God who can either forbid flowers to break forth in the springtime or else cause them to flourish in winter. The Pleiades (otherwise called *Virgiliae* and the hens, *a verni temporis significatione*) are the seven stars in the end of Aries. They are in Hebrew called *Chimah*, or *Chamah*, to love ardently, because of the fellowship and working together that appeareth in them. They have all one name, because they all help one another in the 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 perfected by mutual help. The best time of the year cometh with these Pleiades, and the best time of our life cometh when we enter into true love and fellowship.

Or loose the bands of Orion?] Which is a constellation which arises in the beginning of winter, and draweth foul weather after him as with bands; these can no man loose, for winter never rotteth in the air (as the proverb hath it), nor is it fit it should, for it is of very great use for mellowing of the earth, killing of worms and weeds, &c. Neither can the spring come kindly till Orion have prepared the way, *Nimbusus Orion* (Virg.), *παρα το ορνειν*, *turbare et concitare*. God will have us suffer before we reign. The word *Chesil* here used signifieth in the Chaldee to perfect; because, saith one, by suffering and offering violence to ourselves we enter into perfection, **#Lu 13:32**. If we would have a pleasant spring of grace in our hearts we must first have a nipping winter. The spirit of mortification must be like the cold constellation of 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 delights of Pleiades, or the seven stars of comfort, shall never appear to us.

Ver. 32. **Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth?**] Or, the twelve signs; or the southern stars that bring in summer. Lucifer, some render it; others, the Hyades, and others again every one of the stars or signs. It is like it was some one star very well known in those days, as were likewise the rest here mentioned, and put for the four seasons of the year.

Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?] Or, Bootes with his wain (those northern stars), or, Autumn with the yearly fruits, the gift and work of God alone. Of Arcturus, Jerome observeth, that *semper versatur, nunquam mergitur*; this is most true of Christ's Church, much tossed, never drowned.

Ver. 33. **Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?**] Either how to order them, as master over them, or to comprehend what they are certainly and perfectly.

Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?] As well in regard to the motion of the heavens, which varieth the seasons of the year, as of the influences and virtue which cometh from thence. For they who think that the superior bodies have no power at all upon these inferior do go against common sense and experience, yea, this and many other texts of Scriptures; which yet make nothing at all for that judiciary astrology so much cried up in these last and worst days of the world, by some who would have the manners, studies, and events of every man to depend upon the stars, yea, the rise and ruin of kingdoms, arts, religion, &c.

Ver. 34. **Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds?**] Thy commanding voice, as #Nu 9:23. Some render it, Thy thunder. Will the clouds obey thee, and rain upon thee at thy pleasure? Something thou mayest get by thy prayers, as Elias did, #Jas 5:17, and the thundering legion in the ecclesiastical history, but nothing by command or compulsion. The monarch of Mexico is a mad man to take an oath at his coronation, that it shall be what weather soever he pleaseth all the time of his reign (Lopez de Gomara).

Ver. 35. **Canst thou send lightnings?**] *Nunquid emittes.* Canst thou send forth lightnings and thunder bolts, as hurtful creatures, out of the cave wherein they are kept? or as so many soldiers or servants, to do as thou commandest them? The poets feign that Mercury had once a mind to steal Jupiter's thunder bolts, but durst not, lest they

should burn his fingers. Histories tell us of a king of Egypt, and of Caligula, the Roman emperor, that they attempted to thunder and lighten, but with very ill success. Job is here told that that is too hard a work for any creature to do, *Admirari duntaxat potest, efficere non potest* (Brent.).

Ver. 36. **Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?**] Hitherto God hath set forth his own admirable power, wisdom, and providence in making and governing the lifeless creatures, the meteors especially. Now he comes to declare the same in things endued with life; and first with man, his masterpiece: Who hath given him wisdom (saith God) in the inward parts, or reins? where the reasonable soul sitteth and sovereigneth. The Hebrews say, That the heart understandeth, and the reins deliberate. They have their name here from plastering over, or covering, because they are overly covered with fat and flesh; howbeit the Lord trieth them, **#Jer 17:10**; and hath given wisdom to man to moderate his affections and concupiscences which are here seated, and to get truth into these inward parts, **#Ps 51:6**, that this hidden man of the heart may be highly accepted in heaven, **#1Pe 3:4**.

Or who hath given understanding to the heart?] To the cock, saith the Vulgate Latin, after the Talmudists and Jewish doctors; who teach their disciples whensoever they hear the cock crow by night to say this benediction, The Lord be praised, who giveth understanding to the cock; *sc.* to awaken men, and to announce day. The Septuagint render it, Who hath given to women skill to weave and art to embroider? But they do best that take the word (though found only in this place) for the heart, as that wherein are painted and imprinted the imaginations and representations of things, as the word seemeth to import, *Mens quasi imaginatrix et figuratrix dicta quod omnia pervideat et cognoscat*.

Ver. 37. **Who can number the clouds in wisdom?**] *Quis sapphirinas efficit nubes?* Who can make the clouds like sapphire, that is bright and clear? so some read it. Others, Who can declare the clouds? *sc.* their number, nature, and uses?

Or who can stay the bottles of heaven?] *i.e.* The clouds, fitly compared to bottles, as those vessels that hold the rain, and pour it out on the earth, when God pleaseth to turn the mouths of those

bottles downward. This is a great miracle, saith Lavater, that whereas water is fluid, and beareth downward, yet it abideth in the lofty and soft air, nor can fall but where and when God appointeth.

Ver. 38. **When the dust groweth into hardness, &c.]** When the ground hath had its fill, so that the light dust is turned into lumps of earth, and that which was tossed with every wind is clodded and glued together by water into a heavy substance, *Hic enim simplex est et nativus huius loci sensus*, saith Merlin. Danaeus in discoursing about stones, how they are made of earth, saith that this text is a compendium of all the large discourses of the natural philosophers concerning that subject.

Ver. 39. **Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion?] Heb.** For the old lion, as #Ne 2:9, that cannot hunt for himself. Prey he must have, as being a very ravenous creature; but wilt thou provide it for him? With what great charge do princes maintain a few lions! But God maintaineth all, and all other creatures, #Ps 104:27,28 145:15, putting it into the young lions to provide prey for the old; and causing these creatures to keep for most parts in the deserts, where they feed upon camels, and such as they can light upon. Plin. *et Aristot. scribunt, Leones multa solida sine dissectu devorare.* Ammianus Marcellinus writeth, that in Chaldea there are a huge number of lions, which were like enough to devour up both men and beasts throughout the country. But in addition he saith, that by reason of the store of water and mud thereof there breed yearly an innumerable company of gnats, whose property is to fly into the eye of the lion, as being a bright and orient thing, where, biting and stinging the lion, he teareth so fiercely with his claws, that he puts out his own eyes; and by that means many are drowned in the rivers, others starve for want of prey, and many the more easily killed by the inhabitants.

Or fill the appetite of the young lions] Which is very greedy and insatiate. Some render it, *Catervam*, the troop or company of young lions. But God in mercy to mankind hath so disposed it, that as devouring creatures are more rare (the lioness seldom brings forth more than one in all her life), so they go not often by troops, but range alone seeking their prey.

Ver. 40. **When they couch in their dens, &c.]** When both by might and sleight they provide for themselves. Hunters with all their pains

and means cannot catch a beast as soon as the lion can. An ape he hateth in a special manner, as being too crafty for him; and yet he feareth man (although as the poet Ennius saith),

Simia quam similis furpissima bestia nobis,

whereof no other probable reason can be given, but the small remnant of God's image left as yet in man, who once had dominion over all the creatures, and is still feared by the fiercest of them.

And abide in the covert to lie in wait?] Where they crouch, counterfeit themselves asleep, lie quiet and close, as cats that would catch mice, or foxes birds. But if this way they speed not, Basil saith they set up a loud roar, whereby the beasts are so amazed, that they have no power to stir out of the place they stand in, till the lions have taken them.

Ver. 41. Who provideth for the raven his food?] Though the raven be a most vile creature, and hated almost of all: in some places there is a reward appointed for those that shall kill them up. Though an unclean creature, and therefore abominable, **#Le 11:13,15**. Though unmerciful to her own, and pitiless to other birds, though an inauspicate creature, a sign both of man's punishment and God's curse, **#Isa 34:11**. Though he crieth with a hoarse and harsh voice (whence also he hath derived the origin of his name), and so unfit to move pity; yet God provideth food for him. What then will he do for his faithful servants? **#Mt 6:26**, where our Saviour fetcheth not an example from the Israelites miraculously fed in the wilderness, or Elijah in the desert, but from fowls of the air; and among them, not from eagles, hawks, nightingales, but ravens, &c. "Consider the ravens," **#Lu 12:24**, *Corvus incubat 20 diebus, et pullos nido expellit* (Plin. Arist.).

When his young ones cry to God] Though by implication only they cry, and not directly: being forsaken by the old ones, and left bare, they are fed by God with flies and worms bred in the nest out of their excrements; till, able to fly, and leave the nest, they wander for lack of meat to take it wherever they can meet with it.

Chapter 39

Ver. 1. **Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?**] The history of the living creatures is of singular use we see to set forth the goodness, power, wisdom, and other of God's attributes clearly shining in them. And therefore they have very well deserved all sorts who have put forth such histories and discourses; as Aristotle, Aelian, Pliny, Gesner, Aldobrandinus, &c., of whom I may say, as once Eneas Sylvius (afterwards Pope Plus II.) did of learning in general, that popular men should esteem them as silver, noblemen as gold, princes as pearls; and not so slenderly reward them as Pope Sixtus did Theodorus Gaza (who translated and dedicated unto him Aristotle, *De Natura Animalium*), paying him only for the rich binding and bossing forty crowns; but bountifully encourage them, as Great Alexander did his master Aristotle for that same work; he gave him, saith the history, eight hundred talents, which is four hundred and fourscore thousand crowns (Job. Manl. loc. com. 572). The pleasure of reading such authors is not so great as the profit; for thereby we may attain to the knowledge of God, and of ourselves; of his will, and our duties. Hence we are sent to school to the unreasonable creatures, even the most contemptible, as the pismire, #Pr 6:6. And Basil, writing to one that was proud of his knowledge, propoundeth unto him divers questions concerning this same pismire, as, namely, how many feet he hath? whether he hath entrails, such as kidneys, liver, heart, veins, nerves, as other living creatures do? &c. Similarly, God here, to humble Job, and to convince him of his meanness, asketh him whether he knoweth the wild goats and hinds, with the time of their bringing forth young, the means and the manner? &c. And whether these things were done by his ordination and vigilance? Many admirable things are written of these wild goats; as what cold places they live in, what inaccessible rocks, how strangely there they hang, what huge leaps they fetch; but especially about their bringing forth, how by a natural sagacity they help themselves, both before and after, by biting upon certain herbs that are helpful to them in that case,

Pendentem summa capream de rupe videbis

Casuram speres, decipit illa canes (Mart.).

These things and many more such may be read about in Pliny's Natural History; of which book Erasmus well saith, that it is a store house, or rather a world full of things most worthy to be read. So are not the Jewish expositors, who tell us many strange things here concerning these creatures, quae commentitia esse puto, which I take to be mere fictions, saith learned Mercer; and I to be trifles and old wives' fables, saith Lavater, to the belief whereof they are justly given up by God for their rejection of Christ, the light of the world. We grant that the whole world is full of miracles, though for the commonness of them they are little noted, or noticed. But should these men think to help the truth by their lies? Should they speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?

Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?] Which they do not without a great deal of pain (as the Hebrew word importeth), no creature the like, unless it be woman. God sometimes frighteth them by his thunder, and so furthereth their delivery, **#Ps 29:9**, while they struggle with many griefs, and to give life to their calves, are in danger of losing their own. Now, if God help the hinds in this case, will he be wanting to his labouring daughters? Let them send for Lady Faith to be their midwife; and all shall go well. She hath delivered graves of their dead, **#Heb 11:35**. How much more then will she them of their quick births, yea, though they carry death in their bowels!

Ver. 2. **Canst thou number the months they fulfil?**] Eight months, Aristotle saith (the elephant is said to go above eight years), but who can tell the instant when, or why not sooner or later? Dost thou exactly observe and count those months, as I do, to a moment? *Sola hic Deo providentia elucet.*

Ver. 3. **They bow themselves**] *sc.* By an instinct of nature, whether it be the pain they suffer, which compelleth them to it, or the fear of hurting their calves, which obligeth them to it.

They bring forth their young] *Diffidunt: fissa sc. et aperta tandem matrice;* they bring forth with a great deal of difficulty, to the crushing of their young, which yet escape and grow up. Let good women learn, *sperare a Deo faciles et faelices partus,* to trust in God for a happy delivery, though it go hard with them, sometimes to the making of some Medea say, *Millies in acie mori malle quam*

semel parere, I had rather a thousand times die in battle than bring forth one child (Eurip.).

They cast out their sorrows] *Tormina*, their throes, and therewith their young, by the benefit of the herbs Arus and Seselis, which they feed upon, for the better bringing away of their gleanings, as they call the *involucrum*, that wrappeth the young in the matrix (Arist. Hist. Anim. lib. 8, cap. 5; Plin. lib. 8, cap. 31). The Vulgate hath it, They utter roarings; they cast forth cries which are as terrible as the roarings of lionesses. *Stato partus tempore valvae dehiscunt quae a partu mox occluduntur; id quod fieri videmus, inquit Galenus, sed quomodo fiat, admirari tantum possumus. Avicenna vocat opus supra mirabilia omnia, mirabile. Sed miracula assiduitate vilescent.* If a man should be born but once in a hundred years, all the world would stand amazed at such a miracle.

Ver. 4. **Their young ones are in good liking]** Or, they recover; revallescent {begin to grow well}, as **#Isa 58:14**, notwithstanding the hardness of their birth, by reason of their dam's exceeding dry temperature, **#Ps 42:1**. As the hind brayeth after the water brooks, as being naturally hot and dry, when in pain especially; and this the young are sensible of in their coming into the world, which yet they soon recover and grow sleek and fat, η ελαφος (Sept.). Let God be trusted for the welfare of our children, though weak and wearish when newly born, and hard put to it in the birth.

They grow up with corn] Or, in the field; after that they have been nourished a while with their dam's milk, they forage for themselves; being calved about autumn, as Aristotle noteth, that is, in seed time; others say, about harvest, when grain is in the field, and God's great barn door open, as the proverb is. This is here brought as an argument for the Divine providence.

They go forth, and return not unto them] That is, to their dams; as finding food enough abroad. Thus other creatures, as soon as they are born almost, can shift for themselves; only poor shiftless man is long ere he can do anything, or comes to any proof, to be able to provide for himself.

Ver. 5. **Who hath sent out the wild ass free?]** אָרֶפֶה *Phere, ferum animal* (so Tremellius rendereth it), the wild creature. And it is not

unlikely that the Latin word *fera* comes from this Hebrew word for a wild ass; which is a most untameable and untractable creature, *Eo quod onager feritate antecellit* (Piscat.). "Every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind," #Jas 3:7. We read of Augustus Caesar that he had a tame tiger, but who ever heard of a wild ass tamed? Africa is said to have whole herds of them; and it is reported, that when they see a man they stand stock still, and kick with their hinder feet, braying aloud. And when the hunter comes so near to them that he could touch them almost, they snuff up the wind, kick up their heels, and run quite away; so nimble they are, that they can hardly be taken, much less tamed? To the colt of this wild creature is a natural man compared by Zophar, #Job 11:12, for his extreme rudeness and unruliness. The prophet Jeremiah hath the like of the idolaters of his time, #Jer 2:24, who were lawless and lewd losels, obstinate, and refractory; such as *multo facilius fregeris quam flexeris*, will sooner break than bend: with these froward God will wrestle, #Ps 18:26; with these antipodes God will walk contrary, #Le 26:41, and be as cross as they are for the hearts of them. His law hath four teeth to taw and tame these masterless monsters: viz. 1. Irritation, #Ro 7:7 2. Induration, #Isa 6:10 3. Obsignation, #Ge 4:7

4. Execration, #De 28:16,17, &c. Obeyed he will be of them, either actively or passively; and sanctified he will be, either by them or upon them, #Le 10:3. Wild asses are free from men; but so are not wild Ishmaelites from God. Who hath ever loosed the bands of the wild ass? but God will hamper his rebels, and certainly subdue them; all his foes shall become his footstool. Be instructed therefore, O Jerusalem, #Jer 6:8. Be not as horse and mule that have no understanding, &c., for many sorrows shall be to such wicked, #Ps 32:9,10, and it is too hard for them to kick against the pricks, #Ac 9:5, to push back upon the goad, as untamed heifers use to do, but to their further sorrow and sufferance.

Ver. 6. **Whose house I have made the wilderness**] That of Arabia especially near unto Job, where were whole droves of these wild asses. There are a sort of them also in Plara, one of the islands of the Aegean Sea. Hermits and anchorites seem to affect the same liberty; but where did God ever grant it them? Man is Ζωον πολιτικον, saith Aristotle, Nature's good fellow, as one Englisheth him; and no sooner had the Philippians received the gospel but they were in

fellowship to a day, **#Php 1:5**. The communion of saints is as well a point of Christian practice as an article of Christian belief; and they have much to answer for who sty up themselves, and forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; these are in the ready way to utter apostasy, **#Heb 10:25,39**. He is not like to walk long who affecteth to walk alone. Two are better than one; and why, see **#Ec 4:9,11,12**, with the notes.

And the barren land his dwellings] Heb. The salt place, that is, barren as if it had been sowed with salt, **#Jud 9:45 Ps 107:33,34**. Salt is taken in Scripture to be both a cause and sign of barrenness, **#De 29:23 Zep 2:9**, though among us there are some kind of soils, they say, that are manured with salt, and thereby made fruitful; but in those hot and dry countries it was otherwise. In these barren places God provideth for the wild ass; and although he hath there but little food, yet he is lusty and nimble, and sayeth himself both from the hunter and from the ravage of other fierce and savage creatures, by his strength and swiftness. Xenophon telleth us, That Cyrus passing through the wilderness of Arabia, with his horsemen, there were many of these wild asses (Cyropaed. l. 3); who, being stirred, ran so swiftly away, that some horsemen following could not come near them; then standing still; but when the horsemen approached they fell again running as before, thus deluding them. *Haec igitur bestia non mediocre mirabilis Dei potentiae vestigium est*, saith Brentius. In this beast, therefore, there is much of God's great power and providence to be seen. And from hence also we may gather, saith another interpreter, that a little is enough to sustain men in the wilderness of this world. As the children of Israel also were here sustained, having nothing to eat but what God sent them down from heaven from day to day, forty years together. Nature is content with a little, grace with less.

Ver. 7. **He scorneth the multitude of the city]** Heb. He laugheth. *Insignis metaphora*. He would scorn to be set to work, as the tame ass is. *Asinum oneramus et non curat, quia asinus est*, saith Bernard, We load the ass, and he taketh it well for worth, because he is an ass. But the wild ass will not take so; he is not a beast born to bear burdens as the other. He is not *tardum et pigrum animal* as the other, a dull and slow creature; for which cause also, saith Bellarmine, God would none of him, **#Ex 13:13 34:20**. Christ so far

hateth dulness, that he bade Judas the traitor what he did do quickly. The wild ass is very swift, and fed by God's providence in the wilderness; scorning the multitude, or the hurrying noises of the city.

Neither regardeth he the crying of the driver] Heb. of the exactor, who rateth and rageth against the tame ass with words and blows, to hasten him to his work, and to bring him this way and that way. Oppressive princes do the like to their poor subjects (the king of France is called, *Rex asinorum*), which sometimes maketh them turn wild, and shake off subjection; as the Jews did that to the Romans, choosing rather to suffer the most exquisite torments than to be enslaved (Joseph. l. xviii. c. 2). But what a mad conceit was that of Martin Stembach, a Dutch sectary, A. D. 1566, who would needs correct the Lord's Prayer, *Stultam et inefficacem asserens orationem in qua interiectione o uteremur; non secus enim hac exclamandi formula divinam gratiam impediri, quam asinarii, asinorum impetum hoc adverbio?* (Lonicer. ex Theatre Vitro).

Ver. 8. **The range of the mountains is his pasture]** There he keeps, probably, for fear of lions and other fierce creatures; and there he finds food and forage, such as doth not only appease his hunger, but excite his appetite; as if he were in some fat pasture.

And he searcheth out every green thing] Speeding better in his search than those asses of Hetruria, which, feeding upon green hemlock, are thereby laid for dead for three days; till half hileded by the countrymen, who take them for dead, they start up, and with a horrible noise run away in that pickle.

Ver. 9. **Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee?]** The rhinoceros, saith the Vulgate: but that is another kind of beast, so called from the growing of his horn from his nose (*Naricornis*). This is the *monoceros* or unicorn, which cannot be taken alive (*interimi potest, capi non potest*), as the rhinoceros may. A very fierce and strong creature it is; and today very rare, but anciently more common. He hath one horn only (and not many, as R. Levi by a mistake would infer from **#De 33:17**), that greweth in the middle of his forehead; and that he lifted up on high; whence also he hath his name in the Hebrew. He is described in Scripture, 1. By this high lifting up of his horn, **#Ps 92:10** 2. By his strength, **#Nu 23:22**

3. From his untameable fierceness here. Pliny calleth him a Licorn. Vertomannus saith he saw two of them. Scaliger saith he had seen the horn of a unicorn, a special antidote against poison. But some deny that there is any such creature; because if he had a horn so placed, and of such a length as is affirmed, he could not graze; and besides, it appeareth not certainly that ever any man saw such a creature. Aelian saith that there are a sort of wild asses in India of the size of a horse, that have one horn in the midst of their foreheads in length a cubit and a half; and so sharp, that therewith he pierceth through the hardest things. Some conceive that by the beast here mentioned is meant the wild bull, here opposed to the tame ox, and elsewhere joined to oxen, #De 33:17 Isa 34:6. Whatever it is, it will not be brought to do man service, though fitted by stature and strength to do much; but lives at liberty, and is provided for by God.

Or abide by the crib?] Heb. lie all night there, as oxen do, ready for service next morning? I think not.

Ver. 10. **Canst thou bind the unicorn? &c.**] To keep him in order, and to hold him hard to his work, that he may lay the furrows even? Canst thou tether or gear him, like a horse? Or wilt he be brought to drive or lead a plough or harrow? No such matter. Before the Fall all creatures would gladly have served man. *Sed rebellis facta est, quia homo numini, creatura homini* (August.).

Ver. 11. **Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?**] Of the unicorn's strength Balaam speaketh, #Nu 23:22. The Hebrew word signifieth such lustiness, courage, and prowess, as whereby one endureth labour without weariness or fainting. Such strength is required in ploughmen, whose work is never at an end; and hard fallow must have a strong team. But the unicorn will never fadge nor frame to such an employment. Free God hath made him; and rather than part with his freedom he will part with his life. Let men learn to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, #Ga 5:1, and not be again entangled (as oxen tied to the yoke) with the yoke of spiritual bondage, worse than the Egyptian servitude.

Ver. 12. **Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed**] That is, the crop that comes of thy seed; as in the former verse, thy labour, that is, the fruit of thy labour, as #Ps 128:2. There is no trusting to this wild and fierce creature to do any such thing.

Vertoman saith, that he saw two unicorns, and that they were not of so fierce a nature but that they might be brought to somewhat. But then they were not true unicorns, say we; such as God here describeth.

And gather it into thy barn?] No trusting to the unicorn's gentleness for any such matter, unless we desire to be deceived.

Ver. 13. **Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks?]** *Alam exultandam*, the wings and tail to the peacock, wherein he so prideth himself and taketh such pleasure, being all in changeable colours. So are some great promises (the peacock here hath his name from his loud and shrill voice), as often changed as moved. A beautiful bird it is, and preciously clothed by God. They were wont to say here, that peacocks, hops, and heresy came first into England in one and the same ship. They say, he most of all spreads his fair tail when he is most beheld by men, and praised. His feathers are good for little else but only to please children. But that he pulleth down his fair plumes, and setteth up his harsh note, when he looketh down upon his ill favoured feet, is an old wive's tale; let those who wish to believe it.

Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?] And so by a synecdoche, to all other fowls of the air; in the admirable variety of whose colours, tunes, and tastes, **#1Co 15:39**, much of God's power and wisdom, yea, of his goodness also, may be seen; and therefore the loss of these creatures (good for food, for physique, and for delight, as the companions of our lives) is threatened as a judgment, **#Jer 4:25 9:10**. Some for the ostrich render the stork, and some a night bird of an ill note; but the following description agreeth best with the bustard or ostrich, which is between a beast and a fowl, having so thin feathers and so heavy a body that he cannot fly, but only lifteth up his wings, and runneth very swiftly. Aelian saith, that he is almost as big as a camel, being, therefore, called *Struthio-camelus*. Pliny saith that he is higher than a horseman on horseback, and can outrun him; but is so foolish, that being pursued, if he can hide his head only in some hole or thicket, and can see nobody, he thinks himself safe, and that nobody seeth him; though his great bulk be all in sight, *Cum interim tota corporis mole promineat*. Other effects of his folly follow in the next words.

Ver. 14. **Which leaveth her eggs in the earth]** Some say that she layeth 80 eggs, and having a faculty of discerning which of them will prove ostriches, and which will come to nothing; she leaveth some of them upon the sand, and upon other some sitteth and hatcheth them. But this appeareth to be a fiction, because another and a better reason of her leaving her eggs is here alleged; and the power and providence of God giving them life by the heat of the sun, evidenced and evinced.

And warmeth them in the dust] Julius Scaliger reporteth the like of a certain crested bird of the size of a hen, found in Catigan, an island in the sea Sur; which sitteth not upon her eggs, but burieth them two feet deep in the sand; whence they are hatched by the sun and hot sands; and this, say some, in very hot countries is not unusual.

Ver. 15. **And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them]** This brutish and blockish bird forgetteth, that is, she never considereth, what may befall her eggs, left so carelessly. Other fowl set their nests aloft and out of harm's way; not so this foolish and careless creature, who hath neither affection to preserve them nor fear to lose them.

Ver. 16. **She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers]** Heb. her sons. So are those *peremptores potius quam parentes*, as Bernard calleth them, rather parricides than parents, who look not to the precious souls of their poor children; who labour not to mend that by education which they have marred by propagation. These are worse than those daughters of Jerusalem, who, slain almost with grief and hunger, became cruel to their sucklings, like the ostriches of the wilderness, #La 4:3. What a cruel mother was Medea! and the mother of King Edward, the martyr, whom she basely murdered; and when his brother Egelred (who succeeded him in the kingdom), being then but ten years old, mourned thereat, his mother was so enraged, that taking wax candles, which were readiest at hand, she therewith scourged him so sore, that he could never after endure wax candles to be burnt before him (Mr Clark's Martyrol. fol. 31). But this cruelty was nothing to that of soul murder, whereof many parents, by their negligence at least, are deeply guilty; they bring forth children to that old manslayer, and so their labour (in bearing and breeding children) is

in vain, and worse, without fear, for they will not be better advised nor affected.

Ver. 17. **Because God hath deprived her of wisdom]** That is, of such forecast to provide for her young ones by a natural instinct, as other fowls and beasts have, *Struthionis astorgia declaratur e causis duabus, vacuitate metus et vacuitate intellectus*. God's mercy to men appeareth, 1. In giving us wisdom beyond them, **#Job 35:11** 2. In giving us power over them, **#Ps 8:6-8**; and 3. In learning us so much by them in those many Scripture comparisons, **#Pr 7:23 26:2 27:8 Mt 8:26**. That is a sweet place, **#Isa 31:5**, "As birds flying" (*sc.* to save their young), "so will the Lord defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it." The fowls of the air are and may be unto us examples and monitors of many virtues to be embraced and vices to be eschewed. In the ostrich, for instance, we may see that strength and size of body is not always accompanied with wisdom and understanding; that it is God who either giveth or denieth wisdom to his creatures; that natural affection is of him; that he gives not all things to one man, but diversely distributeth his gifts. The ostrich hath wings, but not to fly with.

Ουτως ου παντεσσι θεοι χαριεντα διδουσι

‘Ανδρασι.— *Non omnia possumus omnes*.

Ver. 18. **What time she lifteth up herself on high, &c.]** That is, when she runneth away from the hunter (which she doth with singular swiftness), she lifteth up herself on high, not from the earth, as other birds (for that she cannot do), but on the earth, with wings stretched out like sails, and her whole body bolt upright, scarce touching the earth at all with her feet, but quickening her own pace with sharp spurs, which they say she hath in the pinion of each wing, so pricking herself on, that she may run the faster; to teach us what we should do in the race of religion, and when pursued by Satan, how to hasten to Christ.

She scorneth the horse and his rider] That is, she easily outruns them, being as swift as a bird that flieth. They say the Arabians are wont to try their horses' swiftness by trying to overtake them.

Ver. 19. **Hast thou given the horse strength?]** Having mentioned the horse, he comes next to show his nature; and here we have a

most elegant description of a generous horse, such as Dubartas maketh Cain to manage, and as the Greeks call φρουγματιαν, *fremebundum*.

*-Quod siqua sonum procul arms dedere
Stare loco nescit, micat auribus, et tremit artus;
Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem*

(Virg. Georg.).

*In this creature therefore we have a clear instance of the wonderful power and wisdom of God. If the horse be so strong and warlike, what is the Almighty, that man of war? #Ex 15:3, and victor in battle, as the Chaldee there calleth him? This is one way whereby we may conceive of God, sc. per viam eminentiae, for if there be such and such excellence in the creature, what is there in the Creator, since all that is in us is but a spark of his fame, a drop of his ocean? How then wilt thou, O Job, dare to contend with him, who art not able to stand before this creature of his? Wonderful things are reported concerning Bucephalus, and the horse of Julius Caesar, of Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, of the Sybarites' war horses, *Qui ad symphoniae cantum saltatione quadam movebantur* (Pausan.). The Persians dedicated a horse to the sun, so did the idolatrous Israelites, #2Ki 23:11, as the swiftest creature to the swiftest God. Very serviceable he is for drawing and carrying, but especially in battle, whereof only here, *De equis militaribus et cataphractis;* of war horses, the use whereof appeareth to be very ancient, even in Job's days. The Israelites made little or no use of them in the conquest of Canaan; but their enemies there did, and Pharaoh before them, #Ex 14:6-10 Let it be held that "a horse is a vain thing for safety, neither shall he deliver any by his great strength," #Ps 33:17. The Jews are sharply reprov'd and heavily threaten'd for trusting to the horses of Egypt, #Isa 31:1; Θεος ουκ εστι φιλιππος (Plut. in Numa).*

Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?] That is, with neighing and snorting, answerable to his strength, and which soundeth terribly from within his neck, till his very eyes sparkle, as if he did both thunder and lighten. The apostles and other ministers of God are called Christ's white horses, #Re 6:1,2, upon which he rideth about the world, conquering and to conquer; horses, for their courage and

constance, and white, for their purity of doctrine, discipline, and conversion: they thunder in their doctrine and lighten in their lives (as Nazianzen, saith Basil, did), to the subduing of souls to the obedience of faith.

Ver. 20. **Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?**] Which soon flincheth and flieth with the least noise. But the horse is more like that formidable army of locusts described #Joe 2, that bare down all before them, and shook all places wherever they came.

The glory of his nostrils is terrible] Heb. Terrors; his snorting and sneezing strikes terror into people. The more wonderful is God's goodness in subduing to weak man so lusty a creature, to be ridden and ruled at his pleasure. He trains him to the great saddle, and teacheth him to obey his hand and spur, to bound in the air, to observe his measures, to show that docility, dexterity, and vigour, which none but God hath given him, and be every way so serviceable and useful, both in war and peace. Joannes Bodin hath observed (Theat. Nat. 405), That whereas lions, wolves, and other ravenous creatures have a gall and choler, whereby they are easily stirred up to anger and revenge; not so horses, asses, camels, elephants, and other creatures made for man's help; these have neither gall nor horns, wherein appeareth *summa Opifieis sapientia*, the great wisdom and goodness of the Creator.

Ver. 21. **He paweth in the valley**]

— *Cavatque*

Tellurem, et solido graviter sonat ungula cornu.

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum (Virg.).

Such is the impatience of his spirit, that he champs his bit and stamps with his feet; he pricks up his ears, and grows white with foam, and can hardly be held in till the enemy come, and would fain be in the battle; whither, when he comes, he runs upon the pikes, and undauntedly casts himself and his rider among the enemies' squadrons. Quod summa mirum est, saith Mercer, which is a wonderful thing indeed; and it is no less wonderfully set forth by a most lively and lightsome hypotyposis, giving us to see, as it were, the horse rushing into the battle, and to hear him shearing and

snorting with disdain and despite, bringing everywhere horror and disorder.

Ver. 22. **He mocketh at fear, &c.**] Heb. He laugheth, by an elegant prosopopoeia, {a} such as this Book is full of. *Non vanes horret strepitus*. He feareth no colours when once engaged in fight, but counts that a sport and play whereof others are afraid.

Neither turneth he back from the sword] Or any other offensive weapons; these cannot make him turn tail or recoil. He is never more furious than when he sees himself covered with blood.— *Vires animosque a vulnere sumit*; being wounded, he biteth and kicketh, and fighteth no less stoutly than the rider himself doth.

{a} A rhetorical figure by which an inanimate or abstract thing is represented as a person, or with personal characteristics: = personification

Ver. 23. **The quiver rattleth against him]** The arrow; those messengers of death come whisking and singing about his ears (so the bullets now in so much use), but he is unappalled by this.

The glittering spear] Heb. The flaming spear, as #Ge 3:24, that is, bright and clear, shining like a flame of fire, which must needs be terrible; but not at all to the war horse.

And the shield] Or rather javelin, lance, or the like; he feareth not a wood of pikeman set in array against him.

Ver. 24. **He swalloweth the ground with fierceness]** He runs over it as fast as if he did swallow it up at a draught, *Terrain prae cursus celeritate, ebibare, et epotare videtur* (Merc.). A hyperbolic metaphor.

With fierceness and rage] Or, With commotion or unquietness, *In fremitu et commotione*. There is an elegance in the original that cannot be interpreted in English.

Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet] He is so overjoyed, when that sign is given, to begin the battle. Others, he cannot stand still when he hath once heard the sound of the trumpet.

Ver. 25. **He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha]** Or, *Euge*. A note of rejoicing, which he seemeth to utter in his language: these are poetic terms.

He smelleth out the battle afar off] He knows that the onset is about to be given. Pliny writeth, That horses will perceive beforehand the very time of the fight, if it be but

By the thunder of the captains, and the shouting] The captains' adhortations and the soldiers' acclamations, &c. The Hebrew word signifieth the noise either of joy or sorrow: both are commonly heard in battles. "For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood," #**Isa 9:5**. The glory of all this that is said of the horse the Lord assumeth to himself; and yet the horse is not so courageous, but that he is as much afraid of and troubled at the sight of the stone Taraxippe (which therehence also hath its name) as the elephant is at the sight of a hog, and a lion of a cock, wherewith they have a natural antipathy, as naturalists tell us (Bodin. Theat. Nat. p. 407).

Ver. 26. **Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom?**] Or, Doth the hawk (*plumescere*) get her feathers by thy wisdom? The word cometh from a root which signifieth strong, because the strength of fowls is in their wings, their delight in high flying. Hath the hawk her wings from thee? and doth she recruit and use them, *artificio et auspicio*, by thy art or industry? Tame them indeed men may, and bring them to hand, as falconers do, for pleasure more than for profit; but neither can they give them their wings nor repair them when broken.

And stretch her wings toward the south] Thereby to furnish herself with a second plumage, while she flieth into those hotter countries, where (as they say) her old feathers by the sun's heat fall off, and new come in their room (Pennabit).

Ver. 27. **Doth the eagle mount up at thy command?**] Mount plumb up (which no bird else can do) to an infinite height, even out of sight; not without an eye still on her prey, which by this means she spies sooner, and seizeth upon better, #**Mt 24:28**. A fit emblem of a hypocrite, who seems to soar aloft, but it is for some self and sinister respect: he seeketh not the Lord Jesus Christ (as the sincere hearted do), but his own belly, #**Ro 16:18**.

And make her nest on high] Not in plains, but on lofty tops and inaccessible rocks, for the safety of her young ones. Of the nature of eagles, read Aristotle, De Nat. Animal. lib. 9, cap. 32, and Pliny, lib. 3, cap. 10. They tell us, that there is an enmity between the eagle and the serpent; and because the serpent seeketh to destroy the young eagles, she setteth her nest on high, to safeguard them. And if any man seek to rob her nest, she doubteth not to assault him with her wings and talons. Formidable she is to all birds save only the hawk, who is able to deal with her if he can but avoid the first shock.

Ver. 28. **She dwelleth and abideth upon the rock, &c.]** Which are counterscarfed and encompassed with precipices; there she makes her nest in the clefts and crags. The reason whereof see in the note on the verse before.

Upon the crag of the rock] She nestleth not upon the sand, as the ostrich doth, #Job 39:14. And in this so great difference of birds and other creatures is seen the wonderful power and providence of God.

Ver. 29. **From thence she seeketh her prey]** Besides fowls (whereof she is called the queen) she preyeth upon hares, hinds, foxes, and such other beasts as she can master. Hence that complaint of the hare,

In me omnis terraeque marisque aviumque ruina est (Martial).

And her eyes behold afar off] To a very great distance. She has sharp sight, and first sees her prey, and then seeks it. Her sight is so strong, that she can look intently into the body of the sun without being dazzled; and by that property makes proof of her young ones whether they be right or not. Those that cannot so behold the sun she drives out of the nest as spurious. Those that can she owneth, and beareth abroad with her open wings (as Munster noteth out of R. Solomon, Schol. in #De 32:11), that none can shoot them but through her body; and thereto Moses alludeth, #Ex 19:4.

Ver. 30. **Her young ones also suck up blood]** Heb. They are gluttonous for blood. The Hebrew word, *jegnalegna dam*, seems to be made from the sound in sucking. The young eagles, not yet able to tear the prey brought unto them by the old one with their talons, suck the blood with their beak, and so are fleshed in blood betimes.

And where the slain are, there is she] This is true of all the kinds of eagles, but especially of the vulturine eagle, which is of a very sharp smell as well as sight, and, by a strange sagacity of nature, resorteth with her young ones to places of slaughter and bloodshed; she followeth armies and feedeth on carcasses, which they can smell, say some naturalists, before the battle is fought. And can this be of any one but the Lord. Our Saviour alludeth to this text, **#Mt 24:28**, Where the carcase is, there will the eagles be also. {See Trapp on "Mt 24:28"}

Chapter 40

Ver. 1. **Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said]** *Hic verisimile est aliquantisper Deum tacuisse*, saith Mercer. Here it is likely that God held his peace awhile, and seeing that Job replied not, he added the following words, the more fully to convince and affect him. There is somewhat to do to reduce a sinner from the error of his way; yea, though he be in part regenerate, the flesh will play its part against the spirit. This must be considered, and all gentleness used to those that offend of infirmity, after God's example here.

Ver. 2. **Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?]** Or, Is it wisdom to contend with the Almighty? *An disputare cum Omnipotente est eruditio?* No, but the greatest folly and sottishness. Job might think otherwise, so long as he compared himself with others; but being once set by God in his super excellencies considered, he shall see his own nothingness, and sit down in silence and patience, though severely tried and sharply afflicted.

He that reproveth God, let him answer it] Answer it if he can, or else yield the cause. *Praestat herbam dare quam turpiter pugnare.* But if Job have yet further a mind to question and quarrel God in any his ways and works, let it be heard what answer he can return to what hath been already spoken.

Ver. 3. **Then Job answered the Lord, and said]** It was time for him, if ever, to stoop to the Most High, so far condescending to his meanness, and to answer his expectation by acknowledging a fault, and promising amendment. Lo, this is the guise of a godly person: he may be out, but he will not usually be obstinate. A humble man will never be a heretic; convince him once, and he will yield: not so the obstinate and uncounselable person; he runs away with

conviction, as the unruly horse doth with the bit between his teeth; and his wit will better serve to devise a thousand shifts to elude the truth than his pride will suffer him once to yield to it, and acknowledge his error.

Ver. 4. **Behold, I am vile]** Light and little worth; and therefore deserve to be slighted and laid by, as a broken vessel. The humble man vilifies, yea, nullifies, himself before God, as Abraham, **#Ge 18:27**; as Agur, **#Pr 30:3**; as Paul, **#Eph 3:8**; as that martyr who cried out, *Gehenna sum Domine*, Lord, Thou art heaven, but I am hell, &c. *Tantillitas nostra*, saith Ignatius of himself and his colleagues. Behold, I am an abject, saith Job here, contemptible and inconsiderable. This was well, but not all; an excellent confession, but not full enough: his meanness he acknowledgeth, and that he was no fit match for God; but not his sinfulness, with desire of pardon and deprecation of punishment; God therefore gives him not over so, but sets upon him a second time, **#Job 40:6**, and brings him to it, **#Job 42:1**. There must be some proportion between a man's sin and his repentance, **#Ezr 9**, and this God will bring all his Jobs to ere he leave them.

What shall I answer thee?] I am silenced, and set down; I see there is no reasoning against thee; I acknowledge thy greatness so plainly and plentifully demonstrated in the foregoing discourse; and am well pleased that thou shouldest be justified when thou speakest and overcome when thou judgest, **#Ps 51:4 Ro 3:4**.

I will lay my hand upon my mouth] I that have spoken more freely and boldly than I ought, *Et ore patulo multa sine iudicio effutivi*, and have opened my mouth more wide than was meet, will henceforth be better advised, and keep my mouth with a bridle, or muzzle, as **#Ps 31:1**. {See Trapp on "Job 21:5"}

Ver. 5. **Once have I spoken, but I will not answer]** It is enough of that once: the saints, running out, and meeting with a bargain of sin, come back by weeping cross, and cry, What have I to do any more with wickedness? **#Ho 14:8**. Judah knew his daughter Tamar no more, **#Ge 38:26**. "If I have done iniquity, I will do no more," **#Job 34:31,32**. That was Elihu's counsel; and now it is Job's practice.

Yea, twice] That is, often; so eager was I set upon a dispute. This was an aggravation of Job's sin, the committing of it again and again. Numbers added to numbers are first ten times more; then a hundred; then a thousand, &c. "This hath been thy manner from thy youth," **#Jer 22:21**; that was an ill business.

But I will proceed no further] *sc.* In this controversy. I will not come into the lists to contend with thee. I see there is no safety in such a contest. In many things we offend all, saith St James; and he is a perfect man who sinneth not with his tongue. But as he who hath drunk poison maketh haste to cast it up again, ere it get to the vitals; so should we deal by our daily misdoings. It is not falling into the water that drowns a man, but lying long under it. Bewail thy sin and hasten to get out of it.

Ver. 6. **Then answered the Lord unto Job out of a whirlwind]** As before, **#Job 38:1**, notwithstanding Job's submission. See the reason on **#Job 40:4**. God took his outbursts against him so very ill, that he is not easily pacified; but the better to abase Job, and quite to break the neck of his pride, he answereth him again angrily, not by a soft and still voice, as he dealt by Elijah, but out of the whirlwind, though with some abatement of terror, as Rainban conceiveth from the leaving out here the notificative article set before *segnarah*, the whirlwind, in **#Job 38:1**. Peter was not overly forward to comfort those that were pricked at heart with sense of sin and fear of wrath; but presseth them yet further to repent, **#Ac 2:38**. Men are apt to slight and slubber over the work, doing it to the halves; and must therefore be held hard to it, lest it should not be done to purpose.

Ver. 7. **Gird up thy loins now like a man]** Resume new strength, and prepare yourself for a second encounter; for I have not yet done with you. If, therefore, you think yourself able to stand in contention with me, show your valour. *{See Trapp on "Job 38:3"}*

Ver. 8. **Wilt thou also disannul my judgment?]** Dost thou think to ruin my justice to establish thine own innocence? and wilt thou needs be a superior judge over me? Wilt thou not revoke thy former expostulations and complaints against me, and with open mouth give me my due glory? Here God showeth his dissatisfaction with Job's former confession.

Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?] Job had bolted out some words that either tended to this purpose, or seemed so to do, to the just grief and offence of his friends. For this, therefore, he must be better humbled, and henceforth learn to abstain not only from things simply evil, but seemingly so; *quicquid fuerit male coloratum* (as Bernard hath it), whatsoever looks but ill favouredly.

Ver. 9. **Hast thou an arm like God?]** That thou shouldst wrestle a fall with him, and hope to overmatch him? "Thou hast a mighty arm," saith David: "strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand," **#Ps 89:13**. It spans the heavens, and holds the earth in the hollow of it. The weight of it broke the angels' backs; and the terror of it may be seen in all those writs of execution recorded in the Scriptures. Oh, it is a fearful thing, saith the apostle, to fall into the (punishing) hands of the living God! **#Heb 10:31**

Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?] Of Pericles, the orator, it is said, that when he declaimed, *Intonabat., fulgurabat, totam Graeciam commiscebat, &c.*, he thundered, he lightened, he mingled all Greece together (Cicero). And Livy, speaking of a certain Roman commander, saith, *Haec cum intonisset iracundus, &c.*, These things, when he had thundered out angrily, and with a courage, the people departed of their own accord. Alexander the Great, being once vexed at his soldiers for mutining and tumultuating, thunder-struck them with these words, *Facessite hine ocyus, neminem teneo; liberate oculos meos ingratisissimi milites*, Get you quickly out of my presence, and be packing hence, ye ungrateful soldiers. And Severus, the emperor, in like sort dealt with his unruly army, *Discedite Quirites*, said he, *et incertum an Quirites*. These were terrible hard words, and very resolutely uttered: but what is any or all of this to the voice of God's thunder, whereof see before? Knowest thou not, O Job, that thine arm is an arm of flesh? and thy voice so small and low that a fly would not be frightened at it?

Ver. 10. **Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency]** Or, with magnificence and sublimity, &c., *i.e. Deum age*, show thyself as God; for he thus decks himself, **#Ps 93:1 96:6 104:1,2 Job 29:14**.

And array thyself with glory and beauty] That thou mayest appear, *Os humerosque Deo similis*; as Herod afterwards in his cloth of silver, which being beaten upon by the sunbeams, saith Josephus, dazzled the people's eyes, and drew from them that fond acclamation, "It is the voice of a god," #Ac 12:22.

Ver. 11. **Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath]** In this glorious equipage; make thy just indignation felt by all the rebels of the world, *Nemo te impune lacesset*.

And behold every one that is proud] Look upon him *oculo minaci*, with a flaming eye; look through him, let him see thy displeasure. Upon some God looketh to convert them, as Christ did upon Peter, #Lu 22:61. Upon others, to confound them, —εχει Θεος εκδικον ομμα..

And abase him] Abate his pride, and abase his pomp and greatness; this is God like, #Ps 147:6. Aesop, being asked by Chilo (one of the seven wise men of Greece), What God was doing? answered, He abaseth the proud, and exalteth the lowly minded. Tamerlane, to manifest that he knew how to punish the haughty, made Bajazet, the Great Turk, to be shackled, and shut up in an iron cage, and so carried up and down as he passed through Asia, to be scorned and derided by his own people. And when one of his favourites requested him to remit some part of his severity against the person of so great a prince, Tamerlane answered, That he did not use that rigour against him out of hatred to the man, but to manifest the just judgment of God against the arrogant folly of so proud a tyrant (Turk. Hist. f. 220).

Ver. 12. **Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low]** This God doeth, #Isa 2:11,12,17 5:15. The builders of Babel, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Dioclesian, Attilas, and others, for instances. Amurath III, king of Turks, in the pride of his heart, styled himself, God of the earth, governor of the whole world, the messenger of God, and faithful servant of the great prophet. This proud prince was slain by a half dead Christian soldier, who, coming to crave his life of him after a battle, stabbed him in the bottom of his belly with a short dagger, of which wound that king and conqueror presently died. {See Trapp on "Job 40:11"} (Turk. Hist.).

And tread down the wicked in their place] Heb. under them; lay them as low as may be. God putteth away all the wicked of the earth as dross, he treads them, as vile things, under his feet, **#Ps 110:1**, till they bethink themselves, and humble their souls at his feet for mercy; for then he will make the place of his feet glorious, as he promiseth, **#Isa 60:13**; and as, **#Ex 24:10**, they saw uuder God's feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone; to show that he had now changed their condition, the bricks made in their bondage into sapphire. See **#Isa 54:11**.

Ver. 13. **Hide them in the dust together]** Make a hand of them all at once, as God can do his enemies, by raking them all into the grave; yea, turning into hell whole nations that forget God, a whole rabble of rebels that fight against heaven; he can soon lay them low enough, even in that slimy valley, where are many already like them, and more shall come after them, **#Job 21:31,32**. Now when God biddeth Job do all this, who was himself lying in the dust, full of sores and sorrows, how could he but be greatly ashamed and affected with grief for his former follies?

And bind their faces in secret] As Haman's face was covered when the king had sentenced him, **#Es 7:8**; {See Trapp on "Es 7:8"} Or rather, as dead men's faces use to be bound up and covered; for we like not to look on death's face. Abraham was desirous to bury his dead out of his sight, **#Ge 23:4**, though she had once been the desire of his eyes, **#Eze 24:16**. Lazarus came out of his grave with his face bound about with a napkin, **#Joh 11:44**. See the like done to our Saviour, **#Joh 20:6,7**, though there was as little need to have done it as was of those sweet spices brought by the good women to anoint his body, which could not see corruption, **#Mr 16:1**.

Ver. 14. **Then will I also confess unto thee, &c.]** Or, I will give praise unto thee, as thou by right shouldst do to me; not for my goodness only, but for my greatness and majesty also, in destroying the wicked. See David doing it, **#Ps 18:27**, and Moses, **#Ex 15:1**, and the whole choir of heaven, **#Re 19:1,2**.

And that thine own right hand can save thee] That thou art self sufficient, and my peer; strong enough to maintain thine own cause, and that thou hast some show of reason to withstand me, *Et ego quoque praedicabo te heroa* (Tig.). This is that which we all

naturally, but foolishly, fancy, viz. that we are petty gods within ourselves; we would be absolute and independent, when in truth all that we have is derivative: the Church's beauty is borrowed, #Eze 16:3-14, and we may say of all that we are, as he did with his hatchet, Alas! master, I borrowed it, #2Ki 6:5.

Ver. 15. **Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee]** *i.e.* The elephant, called behemoth, that is, beasts, in the plural, for his size; as if he were made up of many beasts, *Vocatur Bellua per antonomasiam, et θηρ Graec.* So David, aggravating his own brutishness, saith, "So foolish was I and ignorant: I was as a beast" (Heb. Behemoth, beasts in the plural) "before thee," #Ps 73:22, that is, as a great beast; his sin swelled in his eyes, as a toad; he befools and bebeasts himself, as reason required; for nothing is more irrational than irreligion.

Which I made with thee] Thy fellow creature, made to serve thee. He is in the Chaldee called פִּיל Pil; that is, wonderful; because the wonders of God's glory do so marvellously appear in him. Made he was the same day with man, and hath a kind of familiarity and love to him, if brought up with him, doing him great good service in peace and war, and may be taught to adore kings.

He eateth grass like an ox] He is not ravenous nor carnivorous; neither eateth he daily the grass upon a thousand hills, as the Hebrews foolishly fable, and that he is to be killed at the resurrection to feast the saints, as being a creature of a monstrous size (Lyra). As the ox licketh up grass, #Nu 22:4, so doth the elephant; yet not with his tongue (which for so great a beast is but little, neither read we here anything at all of his voice, to teach great men, saith one, not to speak big swollen words), but with his trunk or great snout, called his tail, #Job 40:17, as Beza thinketh, because it bears the resemblance of a tail, and is of most marvellous and necessary use to him (Arist. de Nat. Anim. l. 2, c. 4,6). With this he grazeth, and with this he overthroweth trees, and then feedeth upon them. But he doth not proudly abuse the mightiness of his limbs to the hurt of other cattle. Yet he will not be wronged, and is of so great strength that no one man dare assault him.

Ver. 16. **Lo, now, his strength is in his loins]** Wherein he is so strong that he can bear a wooden tower upon his back, and upon that

thirty two men standing to fight therefrom. In India, where the largest elephants are, they ride upon the larger, plough with the lesser, and carry great loads and burdens with both. For which and the like purposes, *totus robustissimus est superne et inferne* (Junius). Howbeit God hath chiefly placed his strength, not in any offensive part (his head hath no horns, and his feet no claws, to do mischief with), but in his loins, and about his belly.

And his force is in the navel of his belly] Which must needs be very hard undergirded, when so great weight is made fast to his back. Naturalists observe, that the softest part of the elephant is his belly; and, therefore, the rhinoceros, his deadly enemy, setteth upon him there with his crooked horn whetted against a rock, and overcometh him; yet is he stronger in his belly than other creatures are in the back; and, therefore, his navel is here called navels in the plural. His skin is exceeding hard and rough, so that an arrow can hardly pierce it. Yet Eleazar, **#/RAPC 1Ma 6:46**, rushing into the enemy's army, got under an elephant's belly (upon which he thought King Antiochus rode), and killed him, being himself crushed to death with the weight of the beast falling upon him.

Ver. 17. **He moveth his tail like a cedar]** The elephant hath but a small and short tail for his bulk; Beza, therefore, rendereth it his prominent part, which is as the cedar, and interpreteth it to be his *proboscis*, or large snout, which truly, saith he, as being proper to the elephant, and of very great use, might not in any wise be pretermitted in this description. See **#Job 40:15**.

The sinews of his stones are wrapped together] This is also another of the elephant's properties, whose testicles are hidden and stick to his belly, fastened there by certain sinews and ligaments, and do not hang, as other beasts' testicles do. As his genital members are but small, considering his size; so his lust to the female is not great, never coupling with her but in secret, and when she is once filled, forbearing her company.

Ver. 18. **His bones are as strong pieces of brass]** Or, as conduit pipes of brass, whereby may be understood his hollow bones, as by bars of iron the solid ones, and by both (together with his trunk, composed of gristles, and his teeth and tusks, eight feet long, some of them) we may conjecture to be the size of his whole body; the

size of all earthly creatures, saith Pliny; nine cubits high, saith Aelian, of some. Now can Job look upon such a monstrous creature, or hear his noise, or stand before him, without great horror? and will he not submit to the great God, and give him all his glory.

Ver. 19. **He is the chief of the ways of God]** *i.e.* The masterpiece among all the beasts (and perhaps first made), as man is among all earthly creatures, being *divini ingenii cura*, as one calls him. Of all earthly irrational creatures the elephant is the largest and strongest and of most understanding.

He that made him can make his sword to approach unto him] *i.e.* God alone can deal with him, and kill him, for no man dare undertake him unless it be by art and cunning; and that in Job's days, likely, was not yet known or practised. And if God had not given a horn to the rhinoceros, and poison to the dragon (who are the elephant's most mortal enemies), there were no beasts to be found that could have the better of him. He is of himself long lived, saith Aristotle, but God can and doth cut him off at his pleasure; and so he will those masterless monsters that persecute his people, though they may seem to be out of the reach of his rod. Some read the words thus, He that made him made his sword to be near him; and interpret it as his *proboscis* or snout, wherewith, as with a sword, he fights, and does many feats. Curtius saith, That when Porus, the Indian king, being wounded in battle, fell down armed to the ground, his elephant with his trunk gently took him up, and set him upon his back again. Some in their wars have fastened sharp swords to the snouts of the elephants, and done much mischief therewith to the enemy.

Ver. 20. **Surely the mountains briny him forth food]** And food enough, though he be of a huge body. Learn we to trust unto God's providence for our necessary provision: the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. See **#Job 40:15**.

Where all the beasts of the field play] And play they may securely for him; for he is so far from using his sword to destroy them, that when he is to pass through the herds of other beasts or cattle, he maketh way, saith Pliny, with his snout, that he may not hurt any of them, and beckoneth to them therewith, as it were with his hand, that he will only pass by them, and do them no harm.

Ver. 21. **He lieth under the shady trees]** Vatablus readeth the words questioning thus, Lieth he under the shady trees, in the covert of the reeds and fens? No such matter, he is too big to be shaded by trees; neither can reeds and fens cover him (So R. Levi, and Kimchi). But Aristotle tells us, That he loves to lie by the banks of rivers beset with trees, as being naturally hot, and bred in hot countries; and yet he is impatient with cold and winter (De Hist. Anim. l. 9, c. 46). And therefore when Hannibal brought many elephants out of Africa into Italy, they all perished in the cold Alps, except only that one whereupon Hannibal himself rode (Pliny lib. 8, c. 10).

In the covert of the reed, and fens] Hence Cardinus saith, That the elephant is of a swinish nature, delighted with mud and mire, *Ad calorem frangendum crasso coeno perfunduntur* (Plin.). And Gulielmus Parisiensis applieth Behemoth in the fens, to the devil in sensual hearts. He sleepeth in moist places, saith he; that is, in those that lie melting in sinful pleasures and delights; therefore, **#Lu 11:24**, it is said that he walketh in dry places, seeking rest, but finding none; and, **#Eze 47:11**, when the waters of the sanctuary overflowed, the miry places could not be healed.

Ver. 22. **The shady trees cover him with their shadow, &c.]** He leaneth against those trees and sleepeth, for lie down and rise again he cannot, for want of joints in his limbs. And why may not we conceive the trees in those parts big enough to overshadow the elephant, when, as in America, but especially in Brazil, the trees are so huge that it is reported of them that several families have lived in several arms of one tree, to such a number as are in some petty village or parish among us? (Abbot's Geog., p. 271.)

The willows of the brook compass him about] To shelter him from the wind and cold. And although they cannot swim, they are so big, yet they love to be about pools and brooks for shade, and to ease their thirst; for the elephant drinketh off fourteen firkins of water in a morning, saith Aristotle, and eight at night, as it followeth,

Ver. 23. **Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not]** viz. Through fear, *tanquam canis ad Nilum*, as the dogs that drink at Nile fear the crocodile; or as they of this land anciently drank in fear of their lives the while, and were, therefore, wont to have some friend to undertake for their safety: whence that expression of him

who is drunk to, I'll pledge for you. The elephant, as he drinks huge draughts (beyond that of the camel, who drinketh, saith Pliny, lib. 8, cap. 18, *Et in praeteritum, et in futurum*, for both the time past and the time to come), so he drinks without disturbance, for who dare deal with him? Other cattle, through the frightfulness of their disposition, break their draughts to stare about them. Not so the elephant, who drinks as if he would exhaust and drain dry the river, and steps into it with such a big body as if he would stop the course of it; therefore some read the words thus, He hindereth the river, that it hasteth not. Some by he hasteth not understand that custom of the elephant, not to drink till he have first, by going into and stirring the water, made it puddly, for he loveth not clear waters, as Aelian writeth. Neither yet doth he at any time enter higher into a river than he can breathe through his large snout, for swim he cannot by reason of the weightiness of his body, saith Aristotle (Hist. Anim. l. 9, cap. 46).

He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth] In the vast imagination of his fancy he conceits that he can devour and drink up the whole Jordan at once. Jordan is the greatest river of Canaan, running along the land, and falling into the Dead Sea, which yet grows no bigger by swallowing it. Hereunto some think that this text alludeth. But better by Jordan here (which ariseth from the root of Libanus, and, as some say, from a double fountain, the one on the right side, called Dan, and the other on the left, called Jor) we may understand, by a synecdoche, ^{a} any river; and so these words are nothing else but a hyperbolic repetition of the former.

{a} A figure by which a more comprehensive term is used for a less comprehensive or vice versa; as whole for part or part for whole, genus for species or species for genus, etc.

Ver. 24. **He taketh it with his eyes]** It, that is, Jordan, which he thinks, when he seeth it, to drink up at a draught; but it is better filling his belly than his eye, as we say. Others, He thrusteth his head in up to the eyes through extreme greediness. Brentius readeth it, *Oculis suis capitur ipse, decipulis perforatur nasus;* and saith, That this creature is taken only by his eyes and nose; for otherwise he is as sleek and slippery as an eel: so is Satan, saith he, neither can we shun his wiles but by the spirit of faith. But *Nonne hoc spumosum?* Luther in one place calleth allegories, *Spumam Scripturae*, the

froth of the Scriptures (in Gen. iii. p. 67); and in another, the allegorical sense is a beauteous harlot that enticeth idle men, who think themselves in paradise, and in God's bosom, when they fall upon such speculations. Gregory and others (who have wholly allegorized this and the former chapter, applying all to the devil and Antichrist), observed not what was the state and scope of this disputation. Some read the text thus, Will any take him in his sight, will any pierce his nose with snares? *q.d.* That is not the way to take him, or hold him when taken. He must be caught by wiles, and not by main force or open strength (see Pliny to this purpose), although when he is once caught he is soon tamed and made tractable to many uses. See Aristotle's history of living creatures (lib. viii. cap. 8, 9). Pliny saith he had seen elephants dance on the rope, and write Greek letters with their feet (lib. ix. cap. 46).

His nose pierceth through snares] Or, Will any bore his nose to put in snares? Though he be apt enough to be tamed and taught, yet he will not endure halter, bridle, bit, or ring in his nose; as neither will leviathan, of whom the like is spoken, **#Job 41:1,2.**

Chapter 41

Ver. 1. **Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?]** As men use to do the lesser fishes in angling? No, as little as thou canst bore behemoth's nose with a snare, **#Job 40:24.** Leviathan is a common name for all great sea monsters, **#Ps 104:26.** Beza and Diodati understand it to be the crocodile; others, of the sea dragon; others, of the whirlpool: but most, of the whale; in creating whereof, *Creavit Deus vastitates et stupores,* saith one. Pliny writeth about them, when they swim and show themselves, *annare insulas putes,* you would think them to be so many islands (lib. ix. cap. 2). Another saith, they appear like huge mountains; and that when they grow old they are so fat and corpulent that they keep long together in a place, so that upon their backs (by the dust and filth gathered and condensed) grass and shrubs grow, as if there were some islands there; whereat seamen attempting to land, have cast themselves into no small dangers (Heidfeld). Some tell us of a whale that would have covered four acres of ground, his mouth so wide, that he could have swallowed a whole ship (Plin. lib. 9). Virgil calleth whales monsters; the Greeks call them *θηρας* and *θηρια*, wild beasts. The

majesty and power of the Creator is much seen in these vast creatures. #Ps 77:14, "Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness." Hereupon the Jewish doctors have fabled, that God at first made two leviathans only; the one whereof he gave to the Israelites in the wilderness to feast with, the other he hath salted up for a feast to be made for the Jews, to be gathered together by the Messiah at the end of the world. Others have turned all this, and a great part of the former chapter, into allegories; whereof see #Job 40:24. Let us by the ensuing description take notice of, 1. God's omnipotence, who hath made such great wonders, whereof the sea hath more store than the earth, as they know well who are conversant therein. 2. His justice, who by these creatures oft punisheth offenders. Procopius telleth us, That in his time a great whale much infested the coasts of Constantinople, and did great mischief for fifty years together, till at length being taken and brought to land, he was found to be thirty cubits long, and ten broad. 3. His wisdom in making the whale so complete in all its parts, which all have their various uses; all which are here noted and numbered; how much more are our members, yea, our very hairs! 4. His goodness in creating such sea monsters for man's use and benefit in many particulars; as his flesh for meat, his fat for oil, his hide for thongs, his teeth for combs, his bones for building, mounding, bodice making, &c. In Africa the whales' bones serve commonly for rafters of houses. Leviathan he is called because of the fast joining together of his scales and members, wherein consisteth his strength; and so doth ours in unity.

Ver. 2. **Canst thou put a hook into his nose?**] Canst thou ring him like a swine, or rule him like a bear? God can, and did Sennacherib that crooked leviathan, #Isa 27:1 37:29; and doth still the Great Turk, who desireth to devour Christendom.

Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?] Or twig, as men do lesser fishes, taken with an angle, or herrings from the fish market. These are facetious and ironic questions that are put to Job in these five first verses; hinting to him, that although he could not do any of these things, yet God could with ease.

Ver. 3. **Will he make many supplications unto thee?**] As conquered captives use to do; witness Benhadad, #1Ki 20:32, and Teridates, king of Parthians, who being brought prisoner to Nero,

thus bespake him: I come unto thee as unto my god, and will henceforth worship thee as I do the sun in heaven; I will be whatsoever thou shalt appoint me; for thou art my fate and fortune, *Σὺ γὰρ μοι, καὶ μοῖρα εἰ καὶ τύχη* (Dio in Neron.).

Will he speak soft words unto thee?] *Verba byssina*; as unto his lord and master. An elegant and pleasant prosopopoeia (personification). No, his stomach is too great to stoop so low.

Ver. 4. **Will he make a covenant with thee?**] And compound, where he cannot conquer.

Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?] To be at thy disposal, and to do thy drudgery? *q.d.* He scorns the motion. Before the fall this and all other creatures were at man's service, **#Ge 1:28 2:19,20**; but now, alas! it is otherwise. Howbeit to those that are in Christ this part of God's lost image is in part restored, **#Heb 2:6**, with **#Ps 8:4,5**, and shall be perfectly, **#Re 2:26**. What singular service the whale did Jonas in shipping him to land who knows not?

Ver. 5. **Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?**] Shall he make thee sport, as those poor birds that serve as pastime for little children? Or as the foolish Emperor Honorius delighted in his bird Roma (so he called it), at the loss whereof, when the city was taken by the Vandals, he grieved more than at all the rest? *Indignum sane, regem aves praeferre viribus*, saith the divine chronologer.

Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?] Shall your daughters tie him with a thread, which, lengthening or strengthening at their discretion, shall make his prison either larger or straiter?

Ver. 6. **Shall the companions make a banquet of him?**] The Cetarii, whale fishers, who usually go out in companies. It was anciently held impossible, and is still perilous, to take the whale and make a banquet of him; as the tongue and some other parts of the whale are good meat. Or, Make a banquet for him; shall they feast those merchants they mean to sell him to, that they may get the better price for him?

Shall they part him among the merchants?] Who might sell him out for sundry uses. See **#Job 41:1**.

Ver. 7. **Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons?]** *Harpagonibus*. Heb. With thorns; *sc.* to pull him to the shore? Opianus, Albertus Magnus, Gesner, and others now write, how whales are to be taken; and experience proves it to be seizable. They are sometimes cast upon the land by the surging rage or violence of the sea, or, by the ebbing thereof, left in a ford, where they cannot swim, and so they become a prey to the fishermen with their guns, darts, &c.

Ver. 8. **Lay thy hand upon him]** Stroke him, clap him on the back, and see if that way thou canst win upon him, since by force thou canst not catch and kill him. Or draw near and offer but the least violence to him if thou darest, and he will quickly make thee repent it; so that thou wilt have little joy either to flatter him or to fight it out with him, for he will be the death of thee.

Ver. 9. **Behold, the hope of him is in vain]** Heb. is lying. A man may promise himself or others to take the whale, but how or when will he effect it? It is a misery to lie languishing at Hope's Hospital, and after all to be disappointed; to labour all night, and take nothing, &c.

Shall not one be cast down at the sight of him?] Surely there is cause enough to be cast down, if he be so big and dreadful to behold as is reported. {See Trapp on "Job 41:1"}

Ver. 10. **None is so fierce that dare stir him up]** Unless he be ambitious of his own destruction; cruel (so the word here signifieth) to his own life, which hereby he desperately casteth away. Aristotle telleth us that fishes do sleep: and perhaps these greater fishes take more sleep. Now who dare awake them sleeping, or encounter them waking, and rolling in the waters? None surely but a mad man.

Who then is able to stand before me?] *Et est qui coram me stet?* No more surely than a man before a whale, or a glass bottle before a cannon shot. Here then we have the accommodation and application of the former discourse, which we must not look upon as cunningly devised fables, #2Pe 1:6, or read as we do the old stories of foreign businesses, but as that wherein ourselves are nearly interested and concerned, that we may give God the glory of his power (as here, far beyond that of the whale or any other creature) and of his justice, as #Job 41:11,12.

Ver. 11. **Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him?**] Who can tax me with injustice, who am bound to no man, but owner of all things? If any one can say I am beholden to him, let him prove it, and I shall readily requite it, he shall have no cause at all to complain about me as ungrateful, **#Ro 11:34,35**.

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine] The devil told our Saviour that all was his, and to whomsoever he would he gave it, **#Lu 4:6**. The pope also (that firstborn of the devil) takes upon him, as lord of all, to dispose of spirituals or temporals in all countries, as Boniface VIII wrote to Philip, king of France, who answered him with a *Sciat fatuitas tua, &c.*; and as the pope that then was gave our Henry VIII's kingdom, *primo oecupaturo*, to him that should first take it; but he slighted him with *Os Papae et oculus Diaboli in eodem sunt praedicamento*. It is for God alone to say, as **#Da 4:32**, I rule in the kingdom of men, and give it to whomsoever I will. How then can I do any man wrong who am obliged to none, but all are engaged to me for all they have?

Ver. 12. **I will not conceal his parts, nor his power]** That therein, as in a picture of the most principal piece of my workmanship, thou mayest behold how great and how glorious a God I am. In the year of grace 1577, July 2nd, the shipmen took a whale not far from Antwerp, the picture whereof was printed and published to this effect: His hide was without scales, and of a leaden colour. He was eighty-five feet long and sixteen feet high. From his mouth to his eyes was fifteen feet; from his eyes to his fins four feet and three fingers, &c. Such a kind of picture or character of this sea monster we have here, from the most skilful hand of heaven. Pliny observeth that pictures of things, exact and excellent, are seldom drawn but with great disadvantage. Not so this in the text, as will appear in the sequel.

Nor his comely proportion] Heb. Nor the grace of his disposition, *i.e. Dicam quam egregio et concinne membra eius composita sint*, I will declare how finely and fitly all his parts are proportioned and put together (Vatab.). In the most deformed creatures (as we count them) there is no part superfluous, useless, or uncomely. *Deus est magnus in minimis, nec parvus in maximis*. God is great in the smallest things and not small in the greatest things.

Ver. 13. **Who can discover the face of his garment?**] That is, saith Piscator, who can pull him out of the sea, wherewith he is covered as with a garment? Who can slip off his skin while he is alive, as men do the eel's skin, say others? Who (as men use to do when horses are to be saddled) will take off his cloth, and set the saddle upon his back? This last is Beza's paraphrase; and it suits best with that which followeth.

Or who can come to him with his double bridle?] Let it be never so large or strong, his mouth is too wide, his jaws too strong, to be held in with bit and bridle, lest he come near unto thee.

Ver. 14. **Who can open the doors of his face?**] The two leaved doors of his jaws, to let in a bridle? Samson dared to venture upon a roaring lion and rend him, as a man would rend a kid. But never dared any such thing be done to a whale.

His teeth are terrible round about] The whale's teeth are said to be 120, each tooth four cubits long.

Ver. 15. **His scales are his pride**] They are like so many glistering shields, wherein he puts his confidence and takes his pride; as thinking them impenetrable.

Shut up together as with a close seal] So closed and put together, like paper sealed with wax, as that nothing can part them. The Jews use to write upon the back of their sealed letters, *Nun, Cheth, Shin*; that is, *Niddui, Cherem, and Shemmatha*; all sorts of excommunication to those that open them.

Ver. 16. **One is so near to another, that no air, &c.**] One scale or flake is. This is more proper, say some, to the crocodile than to the whale; but who can tell the different kinds of whales, some whereof are said to have great and thick scales close compacted, as here? *Quod si squammae Leviathan ita cohaereant, ut earum opere textili densato, &c.* (Vide Cocceium in locum). Let the saints strengthen themselves by close sticking the one to the other, as the primitive Christians did; so that the very heathens acknowledged that no people under heaven did so hold together and love one another as they, being like that *Sacra cohors*, holy band of soldiers in the Theban army, which consisted ἐξ ἐραστων και ἐρωμενων, of such

only who were joined together in the bonds of love; and these they esteemed the prime of all their strength in battle (Athenaeus, lib. 3).

Ver. 17. **They are joined one to another, &c.]** They are lapped over one another, like tiles on a house. {See Trapp on "Job 41:16"}

Ver. 18. **By his needings a light doth shine]** When this dreadful monster sneezeth, or snorteth, fire breaketh out at his eyes and nose. By this needings of the whale is meant the abundance of white frothy water which he casteth forth at his nostrils, *In sublime nimbos efflat* (Plin. lib. 9, c. 6).

And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning] Bright and beamy. Olaus writeth of the Norway whales, that their eyes shine in a dark night like a fire; so that mariners have oft thought, when they have seen them, that they saw a great fire.

Ver. 19. **Out of his mouth go burning lamps]** This and those that follow are all hyperbolic expressions. Here he is brought in as a spit fire, as the devil was wont to be in plays and pageants. And by this passage some conjecture, that not the whale, but the sea dragon, is here described. Let it be what it will, it must needs be a great heat within this great fish, that sendeth forth, as it were, burning lamps and sparks of fire; and a strong sulphurous breath he must have, like the outbursts of Aetna, by this description. Aristotle saith the whale is of a hot fiery nature; and that he hath lungs, and breatheth; a pipe or passage also he hath in his forehead, whereat he throweth out the water he hath taken in, either by his breathing or eating (lib. 4, Depart. Anim. cap. 12). This transparent water, thus with a force thrown up against the sunbeams, may bear a show of lightning, or burning lamps.

Ver. 20. **Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, &c.]** While his meat heateth in his stomach for concoction; as if fire were put under some great reeking pot or caldron boiling; Heb. blown (*sufflati*); for from blowing comes boiling.

Ver. 21. **His breath kindleth coals]** Or, would kindle coals (as a smith's bellows), if there were any to kindle. Such a kindling of coal was Arius and Hildebrand of old, the Jesuits of this day, and not a few others, #Pr 26:21 Isa 33:11, "your breath, as fire, shall devour you." Some men's tongues are like gunpowder, which, touched with the least spark, will instantly be in the face. A flame goeth out of

their mouths enough to set the whole course of nature on fire, #**Jas 3:6**.

Ver. 22. **In his neck remaineth strength**] Aristotle saith, that among fishes the dolphin, whale, and such as breathe, have necks proportionate to their bodies. The word rendered remaineth is in the Hebrew lodgeth, or abideth all night; so spoken, saith one, because the whale, as also the dolphin, sleepeth with his head erected above water.

And sorrow is turned into joy before him] *i.e.* He knows no sorrows, he fears no hurt, but always rejoiceth, bearing himself bold upon his strength, God having made him to sport in the sea, #**Ps 104:26**. Others read it, And before him danceth fear (*Pavor et Pallor*; Tullus Hostilius's two gods); men dance, or start for fear.

Ver. 23. **The flakes of his flesh are joined together**] Heb. The failings, or the refuse and vilest parts, as the word is rendered, #**Am 8:6**. Now if God be so punctual in the description of these also, can any one think that he hath let pass anything in the Holy Scriptures that belong to our salvation? What need is there then of human traditions?

They are firm in themselves] Heb. molten. Firm they must be, because so joined together. *Vis unita fortior*; but dissension is the mother of dissolution. England is a mighty animal (saith a great politician) which can never die, except it kill itself.

They cannot be moved] Or, he cannot be moved. He may say, as Terminus of old, *Nulli cedo*, I give place to none unless I please.

Ver. 24. **His heart is as firm as a stone**] He is *corpore et corde validissimus*. Of the sword fish, Plutarch saith, that he hath a sword, but not a heart to use it, *μαχαιραν μεν εχει, εχει, καρδιαν δε μη εχει*. But the whale hath courage to his bulk: his heart is as firm as a stone, as his head (saith Scaliger) is as hard as a flint. In the hearts of some creatures, saith Aristotle, is found a bony or grisly hardness; but the whale's heart is all as it were a bone; and this bone as a stone.

As a piece of the nether millstone] *Metae*, upon which the whole weight lieth. The Greek call it *ονος μυλικος*, #**Mt 18:6**, the mill ass;

because it is the bigger and harder of the two. The Vulgate here for the nether millstone hath the smith's anvil, which, by hammering, is made harder.

Ver. 25. **When he raiselh up himself, the mighty are afraid]** When he shows himself like some moving mountain upon the surface of the water, the most assured pilots or passengers are seized with fear of death, and seek to make peace with God, as those mariners did, #**Jon 1:5,6**, &c.

By reason of breakings] Broughton reads, of shiverings.

They purify themselves] *Expiant se*, they beg pardon of sin, and prepare to die. Others render it aberrant, they are dispirited; and know not what course to take. Others again, they purge downwards; their retentive faculty being weakened with fear, they let go their excrements; as Loper the traitor did, when he was upon his trial before the lords of the council; and as God somewhere in Ezekiel threateneth his rebels, that for fear of his displeasure they shall not be able to hold their water.

Ver. 26. **The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold]** So close are his scales, so thick his skin, that there is no wounding of him. There was not of old, it seemeth. But now there is a way found of shooting and piercing him, so that he dieth with a horrible noise and outcry.

Nor the habergeon] A defensive weapon will be as useless as those other offensive; for the whale will soon swallow up the armed as well as the unarmed.

Ver. 27. **He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood]** He makes nothing of anything that shall be done against him. Bears and lions may be wounded with hunting weapons; other fishes with eel spears, and the like: not so the whale, or not so easily.

Ver. 28. **The arrow cannot make him flee]** Heb. Sons of the bow; as, #**Job 5:7**, sparks are called Boas of the coal. Arrows were then as much in use as bullets are now.

Slingstones are turned with him into stubble] Those stones which the sling casts with so much force make as little impression upon his body as a straw would, which the hand of a child should push.

Ver. 29. **Darts are counted as stubble**] When any thing in the decrees or decretals likes not the pope, he sets pales, that is, stubble, upon it; or *Hoc non credo*: so doth this leviathan upon all kinds of weapons; he slights them. The word here rendered darts is as strange as the weapon it signifieth is to us unknown, *lapides ballistic*, an engine whereby great stones were thrown against walls or towers (as now cannon balls), to make a breach in them. *Catapulta, aries vel simile aliquod tormentum*. Be they what they will, the whale fears them not, no, though they were as terrible to others as those two great pieces of ordinance cast by Alphonsus, duke of Ferrara; the one whereof he called the earthquake, the other grandiabolo, the great devil.

Ver. 30. **Sharp stones are under him**] Heb. Sharp pieces of the potsherd, *Acumina testacea*, which prick him no more than if he lay upon the softest couch, so hard is his belly.

He spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire] When he might lie softer, he scorns it; as our hardy forefathers some two or three hundred years ago, who ordinarily lay upon straw pallets covered with canvas, and a round log under their heads instead of a bolster. As for pillows, they said they were fit only for women in childbed, &c. (Hollinshed).

Ver. 31. **He maketh the deep to boil like a pot**] He troubleth the whole ocean, he maketh a mighty commotion in the sea, when he rolls himself therein upward and downward, and casts up water on high through a certain conveyance that he hath in his head (Plin. lib. ix. c. 3, 6).

He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment] Turning it into a team, like the scum of a boiling pot. Beza rendereth it thus, He maketh the sea like a mortar, wherein colours are beaten; that is, the whirling of the water is like unto a quern, that is turned round of the painter, to temper his colours.

Ver. 32. **He maketh a path to shine after him**] A ship doth so, much more a whale.

One would think the deep to be hoary] By reason of the white shining foam left behind him.

Ver. 33. **Upon earth there is not his like]** Heb. There is no comparison of him. Much was said before of behemoth, but leviathan is far beyond him for size and strength; which yet Mercer noteth to be the work of God, and not of nature, *quod humor solvat et infirmit;* and therefore in reason earthly creatures would be harder and stronger than those in the sea.

Who is made without fear] He seems not to come into the world but to fear nothing, and to defy all things. No creature carrieth itself so stately or stoutly as the whale.

Ver. 34. **He beholdeth all high things]** As far below him (be they never so excellent) both for bulk of body and stoutness of mind.

He is a king over all the children of pride] Or, over all the wild creatures (so Tremellius and Buxtorf interpret it), which are proud, and do domineer over the tame ones, no less than leviathan, if he were among them, would do over them.

Chapter 42

Ver. 1. **Then Job answered the Lord, and said]** After that he had been so plainly and plentifully convinced by Almighty God, 1. That he was far short of him in eternity, wisdom, power, providence, &c.; 2. That he could not stand before behemoth and leviathan, the works of his hands; Job yieldeth, submitting to God's justice, and imploring his mercy: so effectual is the word of God's grace in the hearts of his elect. It had need to be an elaborate speech that shall work upon the conscience, such as was this before going. *Vide etiam quid afflictio faciat,* saith Mercer. See here also the happy fruit of an affliction sanctified. "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob" (of Job) "be purged; and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin," **#Isa 27:9.** To make his works full, **#Re 3:2.** Job had repented before, **#Job 40:4,5,** but not so completely. *Dico hic narrari poenitentiam Iobi plenam,* saith Piscator. Here he doth it thoroughly, by a deep and downright repentance, such as was never to be repented of.

Ver. 2. **I know that thou canst do everything]** God's power is either absolute or actual. By the former he can do everything, make a world, and unmake it in an instant; of stones raise up children to Abraham, &c. By the latter, whatsoever he willeth, that he doth both

in heaven and in earth, and none can withstand him. This Job knew before, but now better, because by experience and unquestionable evidence given in by God's own mouth. And although this be but a short acknowledgment of God's power and justice, yet is it well accepted, as proceeding from a true sense of faith. *Neque exigit Deus a nobis multa verba, sed multam fidem* (Merlin).

And that no thought can be withholden from thee] *Te non solum omnia posse, sed et omnia nosse*, That thou art not only omnipotent, but omniscient, and that not so much as a thought of any man's heart (which also is of thy making) can be hid from thee; since which way soever he turneth him, he shall find thee both potent and present. The words may be read thus, And that no thought of thine can be cut off or hindered. Having spoken of God's power, he speaketh of his thoughts; to teach, saith Calvin, That God's power and his will are things inseparable, his mind and hand agree together; the one to determine, the other to effect, *Parem in eo esse voluntatem et facultatem* (Mercer). Ἄδυναται δε σοι ουδεν (Sept.).

Ver. 3. **Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?]** *Quis iste est, inquis*. Who is he, saith thou, #**Job 38:2**, that hideth counsel, &c., so Tremellius rendereth it. *Is ego ipse sum*, I am the very man that have done it, *nempe ego* (Tigurin.), and now would as gladly undo it again, by a humble confessing and disclaiming mine own folly therein, and by applying those words of thine to myself, with a holy indignation; for therein thou hast fully met with me, ἀπογενομενοι, #**1Pe 2:24**.

Therefore have I uttered that I understood not] I have rashly and imprudently, yea, gracelessly and impudently, spoken of thy judgments, and desired to dispute with thee; daring to reprehend that which I did not comprehend, and to pass my verdict on things which I was not versed in, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Broughton reads thus, Therefore I tell that I had not understanding; that is, I confess I have sinned, but I did it ignorantly, *Idcirco indico me non intellexisse* (Merc.). And so he makes way to the ensuing petition, That God would hear him, and teach him better things.

Ver. 4. **Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak]** We have had his confession; follow now his petition here, his humiliation and reformation, #**Job 42:6**. These are the parts and properties of true

repentance, that fair daughter of a foul mother, sin. But had not Job promised to speak no more, to proceed no farther? #**Job 40:4,5**. How then doth he say here, I beseech, and I will speak? The answer is easy; he would speak no more so rashly and unadvisedly as he had done, to God's dishonour, and the offence of his best friends. But he would not spare to speak supplications, as here, and to set forth his humble docility, to give glory to God, and to take shame to himself, &c.; such a silence he knew would be sinful, and savour of a dumb devil. He therefore addresseth himself to God, 1. For audience and acceptance; 2. For advice and direction. In all which he renounceth his own wisdom, and delivereth himself up wholly to God, to be taught and led into all truth and holiness. The matter, we see, is well amended with Job, since, challenging God into the schools, he once said, "Then call thou me, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me," #**Job 13:22**. So afterwards Peter, when penitent, turned his crowing into crying; and Paul, his breathing out threatenings against the saints, into "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" #**Ac 9:1,6**.

I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me] As a dutiful and docible scholar, who should be Ζητητικος, I will ask thee questions, and hang upon thy holy lips for an answer.

Ver. 5. **I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear]** God hath ordained, that as death entered into the world at first by the ear, poisoned by that old man slayer, #**Ge 3:14-19**, so life shall enter into the soul by the same door: for it is, "Hear, and your soul shall live," #**Isa 55:3**. And, The dead (in sins and trespasses) shall hear the voice of the Son of God (sounding in his ordinances); and shall live the life of grace here and of glory hereafter, #**Joh 5:25**. This great mercy Job had received, and he thankfully acknowledgeth it. But behold a greater.

But now mine eye hath seen thee] Not only in the tempest and whirlwind, those clear testimonies of thy presence, but by some other special glorious apparition (so some think), and by a spirit of prophecy (as the Hebrews would have it), by the inward teaching of thy Spirit howsoever, as Vatablus senseth it. *Et quando Christus Magister, quam cito discitur quod docetur*, saith Austin. When God by his Spirit taketh in hand to teach a man, he soon becometh a

skilful scholar. *Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia*, saith Ambrose. The Spirit is not long in teaching those that commit themselves to his tuition. The hypocrite knows God but by hearsay, as a blind man knoweth colours: such may say as those in the Psalm, *Audivimus famam*, something we have heard, and some confused notions we have got concerning God and his will; but they are merely disciplinary, but not intuitive, *id est, Per speciem propriam, &c.*, such as transform the soul into the same image; it is not that *claritas in intellectu quae parit ardorem in affectu*, that light in the understanding that kindleth the affections. Job was such, witness his next words.

Ver. 6. **Wherefore I abhor myself]** *Aspernor illa*, so Tremellius. I utterly dislike those my former base and bald conceits of thee, my hard and unsavoury speeches, mine impatient and imprudent carriages. *Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut meus sim*, as Bernard expresseth it. *Reprobo meipsum*, so Brentius; I do utterly reject myself, I condemn mine own folly: I eat those words of discontent at thy righteous proceedings. *Digna sane quae per iugulum redeant. Abiecio vitam meam*, so Mercer and Lavater render it. I cast away my life, and look upon it as lost, if thou shouldest take the forfeiture: I humbly put myself into the hands of justice, yet in hope of mercy, *Displiceo mihimetipsi, ac pervelim ut aliter dixissem ac fecissem* (Lavater.).

I repent in dust and ashes] As in an express and public penance. I throw myself here upon the ground, I put my mouth in the dust, **#La 3:24 Jer 6:26 25:34**. *Canitiem immundo perfusam pulvere turpi* (Virg. Aeneid, l. 12), I sprinkle dust and ashes upon mine head, in token that I have deserved to be as far underground as now I am above ground; I repent my presumptuous misbehaviour with as lowly a spirit as ever I sinned with a high. Lo, this was *poenitentiam agere, quod est pro malo bonum reponere*, saith Brentius. This was true repentance, to change evil for good; as piety for blasphemy, chastity for fornication, charity for envy, humility for pride, Christ for Satan. And reformation is the best repentance, saith Luther. Such as so repent are sure of comfort. The word here rendered I repent, signifieth also to take comfort, as **#Eze 32:31**. It is repentance unto life, **#Ac 11:18**, and such as accompanieth salvation, **#Heb 6:9**. Neither is it wrought in any man but by a

saving sight of Almighty God in his greatness and goodness; such as may make him at once to tremble and trust, as Job did here, as Isaiah, #Isa 6:1,5.

Ver. 7. **And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words to Job]** And Job those other again to God, it soon repented the Lord concerning his servant. *Pro magno delicto parum supplicii saris est patri*, A little punishment is enough to a loving father for a great fault (Terent.). "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord, ... for (alas) they have received of my hand double for all their sins," #Isa 40:1,2. So it seemed to him who is all heart, and who in all their afflictions is equally afflicted. God weeps on his people's necks tears of compassion; they weep at God's feet tears of compunction. Oh beautiful contention!

The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite] Because he was the oldest man, of greatest authority, and he that passed the heaviest censures upon Job, doing enough to have driven him into desperation.

My wrath is kindled against thee] Thus God passeth not sentence on Job's side till he had first angrily repressed and reprehended those three friends of his, who had assailed him without all right and reason. Let God's servants hold out faith and patience; sooner or later they shall be righted.

And against thy two friends] Bildad and Zophar who stuck so close to thee, and chimed in with thee, against a better man than any of you all. As for Elihu, he is neither commended here nor condemned. He spake well for the main, but many times took Job at the worst, and misconstrued his speeches. He is therefore punished (as ambassadors are used to be when they commit indecencies) with silence, which is the way royal to correct a wrong. The other three had great cause to be much troubled and terrified at that short, but sharpest speech, of God, My wrath is kindled against you; for, Who knoweth the power of God's wrath? saith David, #Ps 90:11. It is as the messenger of death and harbinger of hell. God never said so much to Job in all those long and large speeches he made unto him, for he knew that milder words would do, and he loveth not to over do.

Ille dolet quoties cogitur esse ferox.

By the way observe, that although these three had offended more than Job, yet he was afflicted, and they escaped free. Judgment beginneth at God's house; neither have any out of hell ever suffered more than those worthies of whom the world was not worthy, #**Heb 11:38**

For ye have not spoken the thing that is right] And yet they seemed to be all for God; and to plead his cause against Job throughout. But as in some things they were much mistaken, so they had their self respect, and were much biassed in their discourses. Hypocrites and heretics (saith Gregory here) seem unto men more righteous; but God accepteth them not for all their plausible pleas and specious pretences. #**Lu 16:15**, "Ye are they," said our Saviour to the Pharisees, "which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

As my servant Job hath] They also were God's servants, but because they had lent Satan their service against Job, and drawn from him many passionate speeches, they are for a punishment set by after a sort; as David was also when he had numbered the people, #**2Sa 24:12**, "Go and say unto David." Now it is plain David, who was wont to be my servant David, #**2Sa 7:5**. That Job is called God's servant (and that emphatically and exclusively) is a very great honour done him upon his repentance; and the like was done to David and Peter.

Ver. 9. **So Eliphaz the Temanite, &c.]** Here was *resipiscentia ex fide constans*, saith Brentius, the repentance of faith, the obedience also of faith readily yielded. Had not these been good and godly men they would have stuck at the cost of so great a sacrifice, they would also have scorned to have sought to Job, whom they had so much slighted, and to beg his prayers, of whom they had so ill deserved. But they had not so learned Christ. God, they saw well, was greatly offended and Job highly accepted; glad therefore were they by any good means to ingratiate, each of them saying to God for himself, as he did once to Caesar,

Iussa sequi tam velle mihi quam posse necesse est (Lucan)
(Lucan).

Omne trahit secum Numinis ira malum (Ovid).

The Lord also accepted Job] Whether he testified his good acceptance by consuming his sacrifice with fire from heaven is uncertain. It is enough for us to know that he showed himself reconciled unto them, and well pleased with Job's prayer for them, and their own prayers joined no doubt with his, and proceeding from faith in the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. And hitherto God's decisive sentence, whereby all the strife was graciously ended, and all parties happily and heartily reconciled. What became of Satan, a chief actor in this tragedy, we read not; *Victus enim abiit*. And as God would not once call him to account, when he had beguiled our first parents, #Ge 3:1-7, because he meant him no mercy; so here he never mentioned him, as being judged already, and by Job bravely worsted and defeated. All that we find of him is, that his commission to vex Job any further was now taken away, for so it followeth, Ver. 10. **And the Lord turned again the captivity of Job]** He took him out of Satan's clutches, who had hitherto held him prisoner, as it were, in the bands of poverty, sickness, sorrow, contempt, distress, &c. Whether all at once or by degrees God did all this for him, it skills not. Upon his prayers for his friends (which was no small evidence and effect of his piety and charity) it appears that God did all this that followeth for him. So true is that of Solomon, The reward of humility, and of the fear of the Lord is riches, and honour, and life, #Pr 22:4.

When he prayed for his friends] According to that of the apostle Paul, Being defamed we pray. This is a high degree of Christian perfection, which but few attain unto, as Merlin here bewaileth it; *O raram et singularem virtutem*, &c. And another well observeth, That God gives and forgives, according as man forgives his neighbour.

Also the Lord gave Job twice as much, &c.] Understand it both of goods and graces; which though he never parted with, yet by trial and experience he found them much increased. As for outward things, it is nothing unusual for men to recover and recruit as far as God seeth fit.

*Multa dies variusque labor mutabilis aevi
Retulit in melius; multos alterna revisens
Lusit, et in solido rursus fortuna locavit
(Virg. Aen. l. 11).*

The best way is to hang loose to these things below, not trusting in uncertain riches, but in the living God, #1Ti 6:17, who will be our exceeding great reward, and give to his sufferers a hundred fold here, and eternal life hereafter; #Mt 19:29. Optanda nimirum est iactura quae lucro maiore pensatur, saith Agricola. It is doubtless a lovely loss that is made up with so much gain. Well might St Paul say, Godliness is profitable to all things, as having the promise of both lives, #1Ti 4:8. Well might St Peter call it the divine nature, #2Pe 1:2. For as God brings light out of darkness, comfort out of sorrow, riches out of poverty, &c., so doth godliness. Let a man, with Job, bear his losses patiently, and pray for his enemies that wrong and rob him, and he shall be sure to have his own again, and more, either in money or money's worth; either in the same or a better thing: contented godliness shall be great gain to him, #1Ti 4:6, besides heaven's happiness, which shall make a plentiful amends for all, The Rabbis would persuade us that God miraculously brought back again to Job the selfsame cattle that the Sabeans and others had taken from him, and doubled them. Indeed, his children (say they), therefore, were not doubled unto him, because they perished by their own fault and folly, as one of his friends also told him. But of all this nothing certainly can be affirmed; and they do better who say, That his children being dead in God's favour, perished not, but went to heaven; they were not lost, but laid up; so that before God Job had the number of his children doubled; for they are ours still whom we have sent to heaven before us; and Christ at his coming shall restore them unto us, #1Th 4:14. In confidence whereof faithful Abraham calleth his deceased Sarah his dead: "That I may bury my dead out of my sight," #Ge 23:4; and so she is called eight different times in that one chapter, as Paraeus hath observed.

Ver. 11. **Then came there unto him all his brethren]** Then, when God had begun to restore him. As his adversity had scattered his

friends, so his prosperity brought them together again. This is the world's usage.

*Dum fueris faelix multos numerabis amicos;
Tempera si fuerint nubila, solus eris.*

Summer birds there are not a few; Samaritans who would own the Jews while they flourished but otherwise disavow them; as they did to Antiochus Epiphanes: rich Job had many friends, #Pr 14:20. Qui tamen persistebant amicitia sicut lepus iuxta tympanum, as the proverb is. All this good Job passeth by, and forgetting all unkindnesses, magnificently treateth them; as Isaac in like case had done Abimelech and his train, #Ge 26:30.

And did eat bread with him in his house] It is likely they came with their cost to make Job a feast of comfort, such as were usual in those days, #Jer 16:7 Eze 24:17. But whether they did or not, they were welcome to Job; who now never upbraids them with their forsaking him in his distress (which yet was then a great grief to him), but friendly again embraceth them, and courteously entertaineth them. This is contrary to the practice of many fierce and implacable spirits in these days, whose wrath, like that of the Athenians, is αειμνηστος, long lasting; and although they themselves are mortal, yet their hearts are immortal.

And they bemoaned him] They condoled with him, and shook their heads, as the word signifieth; not by way of deriding him, as once they had done, #Job 16, but of sorrow for their former deserting him, and assurance that they would henceforth better stick to him in what estate soever.

And comforted him over all the evil, &c.] So they should have done long before. A friend is made for the day of adversity; but better late than never. *Nunquam sane sero si serio.* See here, saith Brentius, the change of affairs, and the right hand of the Most High, and learn the fear of God; for as he frowneth or favoureth any man, so will the world do.

Every man also gave him a piece of money] Or, a lamb, to stock him again. Beza rendereth it, Some one of his cattle, and paraphraseth thus: Yea, every one of them gave him either a sheep, or an ox, or a camel, and also an earring of gold; partly as a pledge of their good will and friendship renewed toward him, and partly in consideration and recompense of that loss which he had before, by the will and previous appointment of God, sustained. *Honoraria obtulerunt*, saith Junius, they brought him these presents as pledges of their love and observance; for so were great men wont to be saluted with some gift, #1Sa 10:27 2Ch 17:5. And the same custom was among the Persians and Parthians, whose kings might not be met without some token of congratulation and symbol of honour (Sen. Epist. 17).

And every one an earring of gold] *Inaurem auream*, an earring or pendant of gold, at the receipt whereof Job might well say, as the poet did (Theog.),

Σοι μὲν τοῦτο φιλε σμικρον, εμοι δε μεγα.

To thee this is a small matter, but to me a great.

Ver. 12. **So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job]** According to Bildad's prophecy, #Job 8:7, and St James's useful observation, #Jas 5:11, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." If he afflict any of his, it is in very faithfulness, that he may be true to their souls; it is also in great mercy, that he may do them good in the latter end, #De 8:16; and this they themselves also shall both see and say by that time he hath brought both ends together, #Ps 119:71. Be ye therefore patient, stablish your hearts, #Jas 5:8. Patient Job had all doubled to him. Joseph as a slave became his master's master. Valentinian lost his tribuneship for Christ, but was afterwards made emperor. Queen Elizabeth from a prisoner became a great princess. But if God deny his suffering servants temporals, and give them in spirituals, they have no cause to complain; one way or other they shall be sure to have it. Great is the gain of godliness.

For he had fourteen thousand sheep, &c.] Cattle only are instanced, because therein especially consisted the wealth of that

country: *Pecunia a pecude*. Μηλα *pecudes et postea opes significant* (Melancth.). But other good things also doubtless were doubled unto him, as his family, possessions, grounds, houses, and especially wisdom, to make a good use of all; for commonly *Stultitiam patiuntur opes*: and what is more contemptible than a rich fool, a golden beast, as Caligula called his father-in-law, Syllanus.

Ver. 15. **And in all the land there were no women found so fair, &c.]** Beauty, though but a *bonum fragile*, and one of the gifts of God's left hand, #Pr 3:16, yet is it the flower of virtue, as Chrysippus called it; one of the greatest excellencies of nature, and singular degree of God's image in man, as another (Plato). And although virtue is *Proprio contenta theatro*, yet to others

Gratior est pulchro veniens in corpore virtus.

That virtue hath a better grace

That shineth from a beauteous face.

Such probably were Job's daughters, not fair and foolish, as those daughters of Jerusalem, #Isa 3:16, but adorned with all variety of moral virtues, as a clear sky is with stars, as a princely diadem with jewels. Hence their good father so affected them, that he

Gave them inheritance among their brethren] Making them heiresses with them in his estate; which, as it was an extraordinary expression of his love to his daughters, so it importeth, as some think, a desire in him to have his daughters live still with him among the rest of his family; either for that he was loth to part with them (the like whereof is reported of Charles the Great, who, being asked why he did not bestow his daughters in marriage, answered, That he could not be at all without their company, Val. Max. Christian. p. 308), or else as fearing lest they should be defiled with idolaters, which, peradventure, out of Job's family, were ordinary in that country.

Ver. 16. **After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, &c.]** And this was not the least part of his happiness. Length of days is a piece of Wisdom's wages, #Pr 3:16. Pliny tells of one Xenophilus, who lived 105 years without sickness (lib. vii. cap. 5). And what a

mercy εὐηρία, or a good old age, is, hath been before noted. See **#Job 5:26**. For a short braid of adversity Job had a hundred and forty years' health and prosperity; like as Joseph for his thirteen years of slavery and imprisonment, had fourscore years' liberty, prosperity, and preferment. Who would not serve thee, O King of nations?

And saw his sons] Who doubtless were good and towardly (though nothing is said of them) agreeable to their education, and answerable to Job's former children, **#Job 1:2**.

And his sons' sons] To his great joy's increase.

Even four generations] Joseph saw but three, **#Ge 50:23**. If God deny this happiness to any of his, yet he hath promised them a name in his house better than of sons and nephews, **#Isa 56:5**.

Ver. 17. So Job died, being old and full of days] How long he lived we know not. The Rabbis say, about two hundred years, which was longer than either Abraham or Isaac lived; of both whom it is likewise said, that they were *saturi dierum*, sated with this earthly life, and desirous of life eternal. To those old men that would yet live longer, we may say,

Cur non ut satur vitae conviva recedis? (Lucret.)

It is enough, Lord, said Elijah. I desire to be dissolved, said Paul. Go forth, my soul, go forth to God, said Hilarion. What make I here? said Monica. Job is now as willing to die as ever he was to dine; he is satisfied with days, saith the text, not as a meat loathed, but as a dish, though well liked, that he had fed his full of.

Laus Deo in Aeternum.

Psalms

The Book of Psalms] So Christ calleth it, #Lu 20:42. The Hebrew word signifieth hymns, or praises, because the greater part of these psalms serve to set forth the praise of God. This title seemeth to be taken from #Ps 145:1, called David's Hymn, or Psalm of praise; so highly prized by the ancient Hebrews that they pronounce him an heir of heaven who shall three times a day devoutly repeat it. The Greeks call this Book the Psalter (Athanas., Chrysost.); and deservedly give it many high commendations; as that it is the soul's anatomy, the Jaw's epitome, the gospel's index, the garden of the Scriptures, a sweet field and rosary of promises, precepts, predictions, praises, soliloquies, &c.; the very heart and soul of God, the tongue and pen of David, a man after God's own heart; one murmur of whose Michtam, or Maschil, one touch of whose heavenly harp, is far above all the buskin raptures, garish phantasms, splendid vanities, pageants, and landscapes of profaner wits; far better worthy to be written in letters of gold than Pindar's seventh ode in the temple at Rhodes (though Politian judged otherwise, liken wretch as he was), and far more fit to have been laid up, as a rare and precious jewel, in that Persian casket, embroidered with gold and pearl, than Homer's Iliad, for which it was reserved by Great Alexander. But that cock on the dunghill never knew the worth of this peerless pearl; as did our good King Alfred, who himself translated the Psalter into his own Saxon tongue; and as the Emperor Andronicus, who caused this Book to be bound up in a little volume by itself, to serve as his manual, and attend him in his running library (Turk. Hist.); for therein he found 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, as one expresseth it. All the latitude of the Holy Scriptures may be reduced to the Psalms, saith Austin, after Athanasius. Luther calleth them *Parva Biblia, et summarium utriusque Testamenti*, a little Bible, a summary of both Testaments. The Turks disclaim both the Old and New Testament, and yet they swear as solemnly by the Psalms of David as by the Koran of Mahomet. Anciently they were sung in the temples, and in the primitive Christian Church happy was that tongue held that could sound out *aliquid Davidicum*, any part of a psalm of David. Nicephorus telleth us that as they travelled and journeyed they used

to solace themselves with psalms, and that thereby there was at a certain time a Jew converted. St Paul calleth them spiritual songs, **#Col 3:16**, both because they were indited by the Holy Spirit, and for that they do singularly suit with men's spirits; for they are so penned that every man may think they speak *De se, in re sua*, of himself, and to his particular purpose, as Athanasius observeth. And, lastly, because they do after a special manner spiritualize and sanctify those that sing them in the right tune; which is, Sing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord, as the apostle there setteth it; and elsewhere hinteth unto us that there is no small edification by the choice of a fit psalm, **#1Co 14:26**.

Chapter 1

Ver. 1. **Blessed**] Heb. Oh the blessedness, the heaped up happiness, both of this life and a better, fitter to be believed than possibly could be discoursed. The Hebrew comes from a root that signifieth to go right forward, *sc.* in the way that is called holy, having *Oculum ad metam*, an eye upon the mark, *viz.* true and real happiness, such as all men pretend to, but he only attaineth to who is here described. Sulla was by his flatterers surnamed Felix, because high and mighty; and Metellus likewise, *Quod bona multa bono modo invenerat*, because rich by right means (Policrat. lib. 8, cap. 4). But he that first called riches *Bona* was a better husband than divine; and they that seek for a felicity in anything here below seek for the living among the dead. The philosophers' discourses of this subject are but learned dotages; David saith more to the point in this short psalm than any or all of them put together; they did but beat around the bush, God hath here put the bird into our hands.

Is the man] Heb. that man, with an article, with an accent, and by an excellency, as **#Jer 5:1**, that eminent and eximious man, who is rationally spiritual and spiritually rational; that man in Christ, **#2Co 12:2**, who hath learned Christ, and doth live Christ, walking as he walked, **#1Jo 2:6**, and "not in the counsel of the ungodly," &c. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord," &c. *Magnus atque admirabilis vir, si modo viri nomine designare illum fas est*, as Chrysostom saith of Babylas, the martyr, that is, a great and an admirable man, if a man we may call him, and not an earthly angel rather. He must

indeed be content to pass to heaven as a concealed man, because the world knoweth him not, #1Jo 3:1, but those that have senses exercised to discern good and evil may easily know him as he stands here described, 1. To depart from evil, #Ps 1:1 2. To do good, #Ps 1:2.

Walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly] Or restless. The counsel of such should be far from us, #Job 21:16 22:18. The Jews cast their whole nation or people into three ranks, *Reshagnim* (the word here used), that is, the profane rabble; *Tsadichim*, righteous men; and *Chasidim*, good, or gracious men. See #Ro 5:7. To these two latter are opposite here sinners and scorners; these last being the worst of wicked persons, and, therefore, set last in this gradation, as some will have it. The Septuagint here render them pests or botches, and elsewhere incorrigible, wicked (with a witness), proud, prevaricating, &c., ἄκολαστος, #Pr 20:1; κακος, #Pr 9:12; υπερηφανος, #Pr 3:34; παρηνομουν, #Ps 119:51. Beware of this sin, saith Father Latimer; for I never knew but one scorner that repented; he who is sitting down in this chair of pestilence (as having tired himself in ways of wickedness, and will not be better advised, #Pr 9:7,8, but, with Lot's sons-in-law, jeereth what he should fear) will not easily be raised out of it.

Ver. 2. **But his delight is in the law of the Lord]** *i.e.* In the whole doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, that invariable rule of truth, as Irenaeus rightly calleth it, Κανων της αληθειας ακλινης. He findeth rest nowhere, *nisi in angulo cum libello*, in a nook with this book, as Thomas Kempis was wont to say, who also with his own hand wrote out the Bible. King Alphonsus read it over fourteen times, together with such commentaries as those times afforded. Luther said he would not live in paradise without the word, as with it he could live well enough in hell. Magdalen, wife to Dr Paraeus, after she was married, and forty years of age, out of love to the Scriptures, learned to read, and took such delight in it, and especially in the Psalms, that she got them almost all by heart (Par. in Epist. ad Ja. Newer. Pastor. Heidelb.). Beza, being above fourscore years old, could say perfectly by heart any Greek chapter in St Paul's Epistles. Cranmer and Ridley had all the New Testament by heart; the former had learned it in his journey to Rome, the latter in the walks of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge.

And in his law doth he meditate day and night] *Hoc primus repetens opus, hoc postremus omittens* (Horat.). Having gathered with the bees the sweet of those heavenly flowers, he doth by meditation work his honeycomb within his hive; and at this work he is *perdius et pernox*, till he feel it to become an ingrafted word, yea, till he hath turned it *in succum et sanguinem*, and is after a sort transformed into it, **#2Co 3:18**. The Hebrew word *Hagah* here signifieth both to speak with the mouth and with the heart, to read and to meditate; because to read is not to run over a chapter, as a child at school, but to muse upon the matter, and to make some benefit of it. It is said of Pythagoras that he lived in a cave for a whole year together, that, being sequestered from the society of men, he might the better meditate upon the abstruser parts of philosophy; he used also with a thread to tie the hair of his head to a beam over him, that so when he did but nod by reason of sleep he might be awakened thereby. Is not this cheek to our drowsiness and carelessness of searching the Scriptures, and making them our daily and nightly study? Jerome exhorted some godly women to whom he wrote not to lay the Bible out of their hands until, being overcome with sleep, and not able any longer to hold up their heads, they bowed them down, as it were, to salute the leaves below them with a kiss (Jerome ad Eust. De custod. Virgin.).

Ver. 3. **And he shall be like a tree]** An olive tree, say some, from **#Ps 52:8**, which is green all the year, saith Pliny; that in Noah's flood kept its greenness though it had been so long time under the water; and is, therefore, made an emblem of the resurrection. Others will have it to be the palm tree, from **#Ps 92:12**, which likewise is always green, and very fruitful. Plutarch saith that the Babylonians make three hundred and sixty commodities of it. The tree whereon the cocoa nuts grow in the Indies is said to be such as wherewith alone a ship may be built, and furnished to sea with food and merchandise. Let it be what tree it will that is here meant, if Plato could say that man is a tree inverted, with the root above and the branches below, and that he is $\phi\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu\ \sigma\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\iota\omicron\nu$, a heavenly plant, $\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\nu\eta\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu\ \epsilon\kappa\ \Delta\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\rho\nu\omicron\varsigma$, as another hath it (Homer); much more may we say so of a godly man, that plant of renown, rooted in Christ, and fruited by the Spirit, of a right constitution and righteous conversation, **#Ga 5:25**. See **#Jer 17:8 Eze 47:12**.

Planted by the rivers of water] *In locis irriguis*, in moist places, where most trees thrive best; understand it of those waters of the sanctuary, #Eze 47:12, together with those unfailing influences of grace and consolation that are in him, as a well of water bubbling up to eternal life, #Joh 4:14.

That bringeth forth his fruit in his season] There are no barren trees in God's orchard, and yet they may have their fits of barrenness, as an apple tree sometimes hath; but they will reflourish with advantage, as those Philippians did, #Php 4:10 {See Trapp on "Php 4:10"} and bear fruit in the right season, *Nec praecocem nec serum*. Now everything is beautiful in its season, #Ec 5:11, and it was no small shame to Ahithophel, when it was told him by Hushai, the Archite, Thy counsel is good, but not now, #2Sa 17:7.

His leaf also shall not wither] Heb. fade, for want of sap or safety from Christ the root; but as the olive or palm tree, *semper in suo genere viret vigetque*, retaineth its green leaf, and hath for its motto *Nec premor nec perimor*; so doth the good soul persevere and persist in the profession and practice of the truth which is after godliness, #Tit 1:1, maugre the malice of earth and of hell. Of Tylos, an Indian island, Pliny and Austin say, That no tree therein growing doth at any time of the year lose their leaves (Plin. l. 12, cap. 11. Aug. de C. D. lib. 21, cap. 5). Certain it is that saving faith cannot be lost altogether, though it may suffer some decays, #Isa 6:13.

And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper] So #Jos 1:7,8. This and the like promises must be understood with an exception of the cross, as need requireth, #1Pe 1:6. Gain, his prosperity, that of the soul I mean, he shall be sure of, #Ro 8:28,37. Temporal also, so far as may make for his eternal good. Pintus, out of Pliny, tells us, that the palm tree will not grow well on rich ground, but in a light and sandy; and that if the soil be strong and fertile they must cast salt and ashes at the root to limit the fertility of the ground. As Christ is the true vine, so his Father is a good husbandman, and knoweth well how to order his trees of righteousness; but usually piety hath prosperity, and is profitable to all things, #1Ti 4:8. And outward prosperity, if it follow

close walking with God, is very sweet; as the cipher, when it followeth the figure, addeth to the number, though it be nothing in itself.

Ver. 4. **The ungodly are not so]** Not like any such tree before described, but rather like the cypress tree, which, the more it is watered, is the less fruitful; or like the cyparit tree, whereof Pliny writeth that it is good for nothing, no, not for show, shadow, or smell. St Jude saith, they are trees indeed, but such as are twice dead, pulled up by the roots, **#Jude 1:12**. Twice dead they are said to be, 1. Because a spiritual death is so great a death that it may well go for two. 2. Because those ungodly ones were dead, both in regard of fruit and leaves, truth of grace and any outward actings of grace. Their fruit, if any, is but hedge fruit, their leaves of formal profession wither and come to nothing; if they prosper in the world (as Sigonius observeth of Pope Zechariah that he died *rebus non tam pie quam prospere gestis*, not overly pious, and yet very prosperous) it is that they may be cut down for ever, **#Ps 37:2**: such a temporary prosperity plus *deceptionis habet quam delectationis*, saith Lactantius, is more deceitful than delightful, and is, therefore, well called by Bernard, *Misericordia omni indignatione crudelior*; a giftless gift, &c.

But are like the chaff] Not so they are, but much worse in many respects, as it is fit they should be. God will surely set a difference, **#Mal 3:18**. {See Trapp on "Mal 3:18"} A profane soldier at the siege of a town, passing a place of danger, was heard swearing; and when one that stood by warned him, saying, Fellow soldier, do not swear, the bullets fly; he answered, They that swear come off as well as they that pray. But what came of it? Soon after a shot hit him, and down he fell. "The wicked is" (as chaff) "driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death," **#Pr 14:32**. The word here rendered chaff is *Palea tenuissima et minutissime contrita* chaff beaten to dust, and, therefore, good for nothing, but apt to be whiffied up and down with every wind of doctrine, with every puff of temptation. A good man is, as a tree, stedfast, and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, **#1Co 15:58**. An evil man is, as chaff, light and worthless, *Religionem habens ephemeram*, constant in nothing so much as in his inconstancy, serves God by fits and starts, flies in his face when afflicted, as chaff doth in the face of

the winnower, while the weightier grain falls low at his feet. See **#Job 21:18 Ps 55:5 Ho 13:3 Mt 3:12**. {See Trapp on "Job 21:18"} {See Trapp on "Ps 55:5"} {See Trapp on "Ho 13:3"} {See Trapp on "Mt 3:12"}

Ver. 5. **Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment]** *i.e.* *Causa cadent et damnabuntur*, at the great assizes they shall be cast and condemned. *Vix steteris* (Terent.). **#Re 6:17**, "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" **#1Pe 4:18**. Surely nowhere, but in hell, their own place, **#Ac 1:25**: not before God, for he is a consuming fire, **#Heb 12:29**, and they chaff or stubble, fully dried, see **#Isa 33:14**; not before Christ, for he shall come in flaming fire, rendering vengeance, &c., **#2Th 1:7**; not in heaven, for it is an undefiled inheritance, neither may any dirty dog trample on that golden pavement, **#Re 22:15**; not any longer on earth, defiled by their iniquities, and, therefore, to be purged by the fire of the last day; for the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, **#2Pe 3:10**. R. David Kimchi by judgment here understandeth the day of the wicked man's death; and indeed his death's day is his doom's day, when he must take a fearful farewell, and breathe out his soul and hope together with the breath of the same dying groan, **#Job 27:8 11:20**. *Hinc illae lachrymae*, hence that lothing to depart, though some set a good face upon it when to die, as Sir Thomas Moore, who died for the pope's supremacy with a light jest in his mouth. Vespasian likewise died with a jest, and Augustus in a compliment. This was but the hypocrisy of mirth; for death is the king of terror to a natural man. See **#Heb 2:15 1Sa 15:32 28:20**. Saul, at the message of death, swooned quite away, and fell all along, *Quantus quantus erat*, as Peter Martyr phraseth it; yea, good Hezekiah wept when sentenced to death, and the approach of it was to him *Mar mar*, bitter bitterness, **#Isa 38:3,17**. He must have his faith at his fingers' ends, as one saith, that will die actively. But all men have not faith, **#2Th 3:2**, and those few that have are not always assured that their hearts shall live for ever, as **#Ps 22:26**, and that death, the devil's sergeant, to drag wicked men to hell, shall be to them the Lord's gentle usher, to conduct them to heaven, as Mr Brightman expresseth it.

Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous] They shall never set foot within heaven's threshold, within that general assembly, that

sacred panegyris {a}, ample amphitheatre, the congregation house of crowned saints and glorious angels. Tertullian saith of Pompey's theatre (which was the greatest ornament of old Rome) that it was *Arx omnium turpitudinum*, a receptacle of all kind of ribaldry and roguery. Not so heaven: "There shall ill nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie," #Re 21:27. The Irish air will sooner brook a toad, or a snake, than heaven a sinner. *Mali in area nobiscum esse possunt, in horreo non possunt*, Chaff may be with God's good grain on the floor, but in the garner it shall not (Augustin). For Christ "will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire," #Mt 3:12.

{a} *Gr. Antiq.* A general assembly; *esp.* a festal assembly in honour of a god.

Ver. 6. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous] Or, acknowledgeth, approveth, administereth, and ordereth all things to their eternal salvation; as may appear by the opposition, wherein there is a rhetorical aposiopesis. God's knowledge of men and their ways is not merely intuitive, but approbative of the good and vindictive of the evil; *εχει θεος εκδικον ομμα*. His providence (which is the carrying on of his decree) is that helm which turns about the whole ship of the universe with singular skill and justice. *Dominus diligit, et dirigit viam, id est, vitam et omne institutum iustorum*. See #Ps 37:18 142:4 Na 1:7 Pr 2:8, with the notes there. God knows the righteous by name, #Ex 33:17, knows them for his own, looks upon them and their whole course with singular delight and complacency; they are his Hephzibah, #Isa 62:4, the dearly beloved of his soul, #Jer 12:7. *Verba notitiae apud Hebracos secum trahunt affectum*.

But the way of the ungodly shall perish] Their practices and persons shall perish together, be done away, be lost for ever. And why? because the Lord knoweth them not; unless it be for black sheep, as we say, or rather for reprobate goats, #Mt 25:32-46 Hence their souls are flung out, as out of the middle of a sling, when the souls of the saints are bound up in the bundle of life, with the Lord their God, #1Sa 25:29.

Chapter 2

Ver. 1. **Why do the heathen rage?**] WHY? or for what reason? The psalm beginneth abruptly, with an angry interrogation; *q.d.* What? are they mad to attempt such things, as whereof they can neither give any good reason, nor expect any good effect? The Lord Christ, of whom David was both a father and a figure (as here appeareth), shall surely reign, maugre all the rage and resistance of his enemies, who may seem to be ambitious for their own destruction, and are therefore in this psalm schooled, and counselled to desist. Nothing is more irrational than irreligion. Why do the heathen tumultuously rage, or hurtle together, *Fremunt et ferociunt*? When the Philistines heard that David was made king in Hebron, they came up to seek him, and to dethrone him, #2Sa 5:17; so the heathen and people, that is, Gentiles and Jews, would have dealt by Christ, #Ac 4:25,26. The devil, ever since he was cast out of heaven, tumultuateth and keepeth ado; so do unruly spirits acted and agitated by him. #Da 6:15, Then those men kept a stir with the king against Daniel; it is the same Hebrew word that is here, and possibly Daniel's spirit might think of David's terms. #Joh 11:33, Jesus troubled himself, but after another manner than these his enemies; his passions were without mud, as clear water in a crystal glass; what was an act of power in Christ is an act of weakness, if not of wickedness, in others. The apostle's Greek word for this in the text denoteth rage, pride, and fierceness, as of horses that neigh, and rush into the battle, εφρουξαν, #Ac 4:25.

And the people imagine] Heb. meditate, or mutter a vain thing, an empty design, that shall come to nothing.

*Niteris incassum Christi submergere puppem:
Fluctuat, at nunquam mergitur illa ratis.*

*Dipped may the Church's ship be, but not drowned;
Christ will not fail her enemies to confound.*

Some think that by this muttering people are meant, such as act not open outrages against Christ, but yet in words murmur and mutiny, whispering treason.

Ver. 2. **The kings of the earth set themselves]** Or, stand up, as if they would do the deed, and bear down all before them. The many had acted their part, **#Ps 2:1**, and now the mighties show themselves, but go off again with shame enough. The Spanish friar used to say, there were but few princes in hell; and why? because there were but few in all. It was a poor comfort to our Henry VIII to be told upon his death bed that he was now going to the place of kings. Some such there have been as proved nursing fathers to the Church, and propagated the kingdom of Christ in their generations, **#Isa 49:23** but what a vain vaunt was that of those bloody tyrants in the primitive times, who sounded the triumph beforehand, and thus engraved the victory upon pillars of marble, *Nomine Christianorum delete qui Remp. evertabant?* What was all this but a blaze before their last light went out? or like some bulging wall that was swollen immediately before it fell? Have any ever yet waxed fierce against Christ and prospered? **#Job 9:4**.

And the rulers take counsel together] Or, have laid their foundation; for counsel is to action saith Aben Ezra here, the same that the foundation is to a building. The Chaldee hath it they consociate to rebel before the Lord, and to fight against his anointed, *Syncretismum ineunt, et quasi se fundant consiliis suis*. But with what success, see **#Isa 8:9,10**. Immanuel will overly match them.

Ver. 3. **Let us break their bands asunder, &c.]** Here these rebels are brought in proclaiming their treasonable decrees against Christ, and his adherents, who seek to promote his kingdom. Resolved they were to run riot, as lawless and aweless, and therefore they slander the sweet laws of Christ's kingdom, as bonds and thick cords (those signs of slavery, **#Jer 27:2,6,7**), as burdens and grievances. So the Popish clergy of Collen told their good Archbishop Albert (who had made use of Bucer and Melancthon to bring things into better order), that they had rather live under the Turkish government than under such a reformation (Melch. Adam in Vit. Bucer). But what saith our Saviour? "My yoke is easy, and my burden light." No more burden it is to a regenerate person than the wings are to the bird. He delighteth in the law of God after the inward man, **#Ro 7:22** It is not to him now, as once, bands and cords, but as girdles and garters, which gird up his loins, and expedite his course the better. It confineth him to live in that element where he would live; as if one should be

confined to paradise, where he would be, though there were no such law.

Ver. 4. **He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at them]** *Videt, ridet.* He seeth and smileth, he looketh and laugheth, at these giants. He sitteth in heaven, far above their reach; neither doth he much trouble himself about the matter. No more should we; but trust in him, and know that there is a council in heaven that will dash the mould of all contrary counsels upon earth; as the stone cut out of the mountain did the four great monarchies, **#Da 2:34**. See an instance hereof in latter times. Luther, that heroic reformer, was excommunicated by the pope, proscribed by the emperor, hated and cursed all Christendom over almost, yet he prospered, and the work of Christ went on in his hands. And when the Elector of Saxony, his only patron, was much afraid what would become of him, and of the business of religion, Luther out of his Patmos (as he called it), where he lay hid, writeth him a rousing letter, wherein is read this among many other brave passages: *Sciat celsitudo tua et nihil dubitet longe aliter in coelo quam Noribergae de hoc negotio conclusum est,* Let your Highness rest well assured of this, that things are far otherwise carried and concluded in heaven, than they are at the Imperial Diet held at Norinberg. After this, in the year of grace 1526, there conspired against the gospel, and the professors thereof, the emperor and his prisoner in Spain, the French king, the princes also and bishops in Germany, stirred up by the pope. The French king was set at liberty, upon the condition that he join with the emperor to root out Lutheranism, that is, true religion. This was the agreement, but God broke it; for the French king was no sooner home but he made a league with the pope and the Venetians against the emperor. The pope excuseth his falling off from Caesar by a petulant and malapert epistle. Caesar, by another letter, lay open to the world the pope's perfidy, exhorting him to peace, and concluding that they had more need to unite their forces for the extirpation of Lutheran heresy. By this means the Church had a happy halcyon, while these great ones were out, and at it.

The Lord shall have them in derision] Adonai, that is, the sustainer and upholder of all. Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, **#Re 19:16**. Lords and lowlies are all his vassals and underlings, as Constantine, Theodosius, and Valentine, those great

emperors, called themselves. This name or style Christ hath written on his vesture, that all may see it, and on his thigh, where hangs his sword, to show his absolute dominion, his unlimited empire, got and held out of the hands of his enemies, with his mind, and with his bow, #Ge 48:22. And when he is said to deride them, this is no more than to laugh at them, as the following effects show.

Ver. 5. **Then shall he speak unto them, &c.]** Heb. He shall tell them, viz. a piece of his mind, to their small comfort. As a great prince sitting on a lofty throne berateh his rebels when once he hath brought them before him, and pronounceth sentence upon them in fierce wrath, see #Jer 52:9, so will the King of heaven do by his sturdy refractories. Whether he will speak unto them by his words or by his rods, #Job 33:14,19-21, and when he will do it he hath reserved in his own power and pleasure, #Ac 1:7, but sooner or later he will not fail to do it; and

Poena venit gravior, quo mage sera venit.

And vex them] Or trouble them, as he did the builders of Babel, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, others; either by horror or conscience or corporal plagues, one way or the other he will have his penny worth of them, as he had of the old and late persecutors of his people.

Ver. 6. **Yet have I set my king]** Heb. And I have set. Heb. I have anointed; where the sign of his inauguration, or entrance into his kingdom, is put for the possession and enjoying thereof. David was anointed by God's appointment; Christ was also anointed and appointed by his Father to the office and work of a mediator; and is therefore here called his king. And, is here a sign of indignation stirred.

Upon mine holy hill of Zion] David's strong hold, and a figure of the Church, #Heb 12:22 Re 14:1 Isa 60:14, as being the seat of the kingdom, a sanctuary. Out of Zion also went forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem, #Isa 2:3: it signifieth a watch tower. In the Church Christ, angels, ministers, common Christians, watch against enemies visible and invisible.

Ver. 7. **I will declare the decree]** That irrevocable decree of the Father, for the setting up of his Son's sceptre *contra gentes*, point blank opposite to that decree of theirs, #Ps 2:3. This ordinance or

decree of his Christ is still declaring in his Church by the ministers of the gospel, whose office it is to set forth Christ to the world in all his offices and efficacies, and to bring as many as may be to the obedience of the faith.

Thou art my Son] David was so by adoption and acceptance, #Ps 89:26,27; but Christ, 1. By eternal generation, #Pr 8:22,23 Heb 1:5 2. By hypostatical union, and so God had one only Son (as Abraham had his Isaac), though otherwise he were the Father of many nations.

This day have I begotten thee] Understand it either in the day of eternity, or else of the fulness of time wherein God brought his first begotten Son into the world, and afterwards mightily declared him to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, #Ro 1:3 Ac 13:33, whence he is called the first begotten of the dead, #Col 1:18 Re 1:5.

Ver. 8. **Ask of me, and I will give thee]** All things are conveyed to Christ by asking; shall we think to have anything without asking? Or, are we not worthily miserable that will not make ourselves happy by asking? Now, through Christ's passion and intercession, it is but ask and have; open thy mouth, and I will fill it. If at any time we ask and miss, it is for the most part because we ask amiss, #Jas 4:2,3.

The heathen for thine inheritance] The kingdom of grace (the object whereof are all nations) Christ hath by donation from his Father; for his natural kingdom he hath as God coequal with his Father from all eternity.

Ver. 9. **Thou shalt break them, &c.]** *sc.* Those that will not bend thou shalt thus break. Thou shalt roughly rule them (Ainsworth). Christ's gracious government of his obedient people, though not so fully expressed here, yet it is to be necessarily understood; and in the last words of the psalm it is plainly held forth, "Blessed are they that trust in him."

Thou shalt dash them in pieces (or, scatter them abroad, being already broken) as a potter's vessel] *i.e.* Without any hope of repair and recovery. It is a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God, #Heb 10:31 He that will not be warned in

hearing shall be crushed to pieces in feeling, said that martyr, *Aut faciendum aut patiendum*. God will be obeyed either actively or passively. Look to it.

Ver. 10. **Be wise now therefore, O ye kings]** Redeem your own sorrows by trembling at God's judgments, while they hang in the threatenings; this is a high point of heavenly wisdom.

*Ergo Dei tandem verbo subscribite reges:
Ne rapiant Stygiae vos Acherontis aquae.*

These kings were not without wit and learning. Julian the apostate, for instance (who said unto the King Christ, Apostate), but they wanted, godly wisdom, and are therefore here called upon to behave themselves prudently, and to play the wise men. For as wicked men are fools in print; so, on the contrary, in our old English books a righteous man is printed a right wise man, and righteousness right wiseness. For it is the only true both wisdom, #Ps 111:10 Pr 1:7, and honour: for the righteous are princes in all lands, #Ps 45:16; yea, they are kings. Compare #Mt 13:17 Lu 10:25. Many righteous, saith the one, many kings, saith the other evangelist.

Be instructed, ye judges] *Be nurtured, ye sages; submit to Christ's discipline, acknowledge his prophetic office, here, his priestly, #Ps 2:11, his kingly, #Ps 2:12. Estote ligati, so Aben-Ezra rendereth it, Be ye bound, in opposition to that evil decree of theirs, #Ps 2:3, "Let us break their bonds," &c. And this they are advised to do forthwith, while it is called today. Now, therefore, before God the Father vex you, God the Son bruise you, with his iron mace.*

Ver. 11. **Serve the Lord with fear]** *Timore non servili sed amicali, with reverence and godly fear, #Heb 12:28. Say to Christ, as the people did to Joshua, #Jos 1:16, and as the rulers and elders of Israel did to Jehu, #2Ki 10:5, "We are thy servants, and will do all thou shalt bid us."*

And rejoice before him with trembling] *A strange mixture of contrary passions (for base fear hath torment, #1Jo 4:18), but such as is usual with God's servants, whose task it is to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, #Php 2:12. Agreeable whereunto is that of Bernard, *Laeti simus sed non securi; gaudentes in Domino**

sed caventes a recidivo. Those good women went from Christ's sepulchre with fear and great joy. We should come to him in his ordinances similarly affected.

Ver. 12. **Kiss the Son**] That Son of God, **#Ps 2:7.** *Bar* is a Hebrew word also, {see #Pr 31:2} as R. Abraham confesseth, though other Rabbis deny it; and therefore render this text, *Osculamini pure,* Kiss purely, and *Osculamini eum qui selectus est,* Kiss him who is selected, or set apart. Christ is God's elect, **#Isa 42:1 Mt 12:14.** Him men must kiss with a kiss of adoration and subjection, with a kiss of faith and love, **#1Pe 5:14.** *Osculo homagii,* as Samuel kissed Saul, **#1Sa 10:1 Ge 48:10.** Kiss his holy wounds, as Constantine did the eye of Paphnutius, that was bored out in Maximinus the tyrant's time; so shall he kiss us with the kisses of his mouth, **#So 1:2,** and with his kisses suck out the sting of death, and take away our souls with a kiss, as the Rabbis, from **#De 34:5,** say he did Moses's soul. *Mortuus, est Moses ad os Iehovae.* Maimonides. The ancient patriarchs saluted Christ afar off, and were interchangeably saluted by him, *ασπασαμενοι,* **#Heb 11:13,** for they saw by faith him who is invisible, **#Heb 11:27.** Oh get a patriarch's eye, study Moses's optics; for here the northern proverb is found true, Unkent unkist. Men know not the Son of God, and therefore love him not, kiss him not, unless it be *Osculo Iscariotico,* as the traitor kissed him. See a lofty and lively description of him **#Heb 1:2,3.**

Lest he be angry] For meek though he be as a lamb, and will not break the bruised reed, yet so angry he can be, that the kings and great ones shall be glad to flee from the wrath of this lamb, **#Re 6:16,** who hath feet like burning brass and eyes like flaming fire, **#Re 1:14,15** Plato saith of the king of bees, that although he hath no sting, yet he ruleth and governeth his commonwealth with great severity and justice. So doth the Lord Christ; and every good soul is ready to say as the poet did,

*Ut mala nulla feram nisi nudam Caesaris iram,
Nuda parum nobis Caesaris ira mali est? (Ovid.)*

And ye perish from the way] Or, in the way; that is, in medio studio, before ye come to your journey's end, to the full

accomplishment of your purposes and practices, destruction shall suddenly seize you, #1Th 5:3.

When his wrath is kindled but a little] It is sometimes let out in minimums, as #Ho 5:12, but if timely course be not taken, it grows to a great matter, as thunder doth, and as fire, that at first burns a little within upon a few boards, but, if not quenched, bursteth out in a most terrible flame.

Blessed are all they that put their trust in him] That is, in Christ, #Joh 14:1. Now to trust in him is so to be unbottomed of thyself and of every creature, and so to lean upon Christ, that if he fail thee thou sinkest; it is to rely upon him alone for safety here and salvation hereafter. This is to secure a man's title to true blessedness; and with this grave sentence the prophet shutteth up the whole psalm, showing the different condition of the godly from the wicked. {See Trapp on "Ps 2:9"}

A Psalm of David] Tremellius addeth, *Quem cecinit*, which he sang when he fled, &c. As birds in the spring tune most sweetly when it rains most sadly. This was better yet than that black sanctus (as they call it) sung by our Henry II in like case, and for like cause. For when, as some few hours before he died, he saw a list of their names who conspired with the king of France and Earl Richard (his son and successor) against him, and found therein his son John (whom he had made earl of Cornwall, Dorset, Somerset, Nottingham, Derby, and Lancaster, &c.), to be the first; he fell into a grievous passion, both cursing his sons and the day wherein himself was born; and in that distemper departed the world, which so often himself had distempered.

When he fled from] Heb. From the face of Absalom, which he had too much admired, and was now afraid of. Then when he went up Mount Olivet weeping, #2Sa 15:30, made he this psalm, say the Rabbis. So in the sack of Ziklag he comforted himself in the Lord his God, #1Sa 30:6. A Christian is never without his cordial.

Absalom his son] His darling, his tidling, his one eye. Such another good son was Barabbas, which signifies his father's son, his white boy, as we say, like as Absalom signifieth his father's peace, but it

proved otherwise; as it likewise befell Eve, when she called her firstborn Cain, and thought she had got a great boon from the Lord. But

Fallitur augurio spes bona saepe suo,

David was disappointed: for Absalom proved like the sea Pacific or calm, so it is called; but Captain Drake found it rough and troublous above measure (Heyl. Geog.). Absalom would have done by David, if he could have come at him, as afterwards Amidas did with his father Muleasses, king of Tunis, in Africa, whom he first dethroned, and afterwards put out his eyes (Turk. Hist.). In Absalom was nothing good but his name. That may have a good name the nature whereof is so ill that it is not to be named; like as, #Le 20:17, abominable incest between brother and sister is called *chesed*, or kindness, *per antiphrasin*.

Chapter 3

Ver. 1. **Lord, how are they increased that trouble me?**] He worthily wondereth at so sudden a change:

*Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo;
Et subito casu, quae valere, ruunt.*

David was deserted by all almost, and had now as many enemies as till now he had subjects, excepting a few that stuck to him. Our Henry VI, who had been the most potent monarch for dominions that ever England had, was, when deposed, not the master of a molehill; and served to show that mortality was but the stage of mutability.

Many are they that rise up against me] Many, and many, by the figure anaphora. Here is also in the original a *ομοιοτελεετον* in the words, *Tsarai* in the former clause, and *Gnalai* in the latter; not unlike that doleful ditty of the Church, #La 5:16, *Oi na lanu, chei chattanu*, Woe to us that we have sinned! which is so elegant in the original, that Mr William Whately of Bradbury (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 a hearer of his relateth (Mr Leigh, Saint's Encour. Ep. dedic.).

Ver. 2. **Many there be which say of my soul]** These scoffs and sarcasms *leniter volant, non leniter violant*. David felt them as a murdering weapon in his bones, #Ps 42:3,10, and oft complaineth of them to God, *Qui satis idoneus est patientiae sequester*; as Tertullian phraseth it, who will see that his saints shall lose nothing by their patience.

There is no help for him in God] Salvation itself cannot save him; he is at that pass that there is neither hope of better for him, nor place of worse; there is no help, health, or deliverance for him at all. The Hebrew hath a letter more than ordinary, to increase the signification. {*Hebrew Text Note*} R. David rendereth it, *Nullum auxilium, nullum auxilium*, There is no help, there is no help for him; and interpreteth it, neither in this world nor in the world to come. Thus haply his enemies argued from his sin in the matter of Uriah; concluding that God would not look at him therefore. But for that matter he had soundly repented, and made his peace, #2Sa 12:13 Ps 51:1,2, though this present conspiracy, and the trouble thereupon (which lasted six months, saith Jerome, Ex tradit. Hebraeor.), was a part of the temporal punishment of that scandalous sin, #2Sa 12:10. But that it lay not upon his conscience it appeareth, in that on his death bed he regretteth it not, as he did his not punishing of Joab and Shimei; concerning whom he therefore leaveth his charge with his son Solomon, #1Ki 2:5,8.

Selah] *i.e.* In truth, or amen, saith Aben Ezra; Plane, Tremel.; *Omnino, penitus, revera*, Polan. The Hebrews at this day accordingly add to the end of their prayers and epitapha Amen, Selah, twice or thrice repeated. The Greek maketh it only a musical notion, Διαφαλμα.

Ver. 3. **But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me]** And such a shield as will never fail me. *Prodente clypeo vulneratus sum*, I am betrayed by my shield, said Brasidas the Lacedaemonian, when he was wounded through it (Plutarch). David had a better shield than so; better than that of Ajax, in Homer, which was *επταβοειον*; better than that of Demosthenes, whereupon was written, *Quod felix faustumque sit*; better than that of Sceva at the siege of Dyrrachium,

wherewith he so long resisted Pompey's army, that he had two hundred and twenty darts sticking in it. *Densamque tulit in pectore sylvam* (Lucan.). God was to David a shield around him, as the Hebrew here hath it; and not a shield only, but a sun too, as **#Ps 84:11**. Hence it followeth,

My glory] Or, my victory, *Quia victor semper habet gloriam*, saith Aben Ezra here, because a conqueror is never without glory; such as was Caesar with his *Veni, vidi, vici*; and Cimon, the Athenian, who twice in one day triumphed over the Persian navy; and Huniades, who fought five times in one day with the Turks, and five times foiled them, and put them to flight. Whereupon he was entertained and welcomed home with most glorious acclamations of the people, some calling him the father, some the defender, of his country; the soldiers their invincible general; the captives, their deliverer; the women, their protector; the young men and children, their most loving father, &c.

And the lifter up of my head] Giving me matter of mirth, and making me, who was very sad, and thrown down with grief, joyful and cheerful. See **#Ge 40:13,20 Lu 21:28 Jer 52:31 Ps 110:7**.

Ver. 4. **I cried unto the Lord with my voice]** I prayed aloud and lustily; I roused up myself, and wrestled with God: and this was the ground of his courage and confidence. So Esther, when she had fasted and prayed, put her life in her hands, and was fearless. So Christ, when, being in an agony, he had prayed more earnestly, went and met his enemies in the face; though before his soul was heavy to the death, and he began to be out of the world, as the word signifieth, **#Mt 26:37**, ἀδημονεῖν.

And he heard me out of his holy hill] *i.e. E suo sacrario et coelesti et terrestri*, out of his heavenly and earthly sanctuary (Jun.). Zion signifieth a surehold, a goodly prospect; for that from the top of that hill a man might have seen all the country over. And it was a type of heaven, whence God seeth all, and heareth his. Lucian, the atheist, feigneth, or fancieth, that there are certain chinks in heaven through which Jupiter at certain times only heareth his suitors; which times they who take not pray to no purpose.

Ver. 5. **I laid me down and slept]** My faith was above my fear; I knew whom I had trusted. No marvel I slept so soundly, seeing Antipater was by, and watched, said Philip of Macedon (Plutarch). We may better say so of Antipater, our gracious Father. Oh the safety of a saint! He ever goes guarded with the peace of God within him and the power of God without him, **#Php 4:7 1Pe 1:5**, and hence his spiritual security. David will never break his sleep for any danger or doubt of success. Peter was found fast asleep the night before he should have been executed, **#Ac 12:6**. So was our proto martyr, in Queen Mary's days, Mr Rogers; insomuch as that, scarce with much shugging, could he be awakened, when he was called for to be burned. Some few years since Mr White, of Dorchester, being a member of the assembly of divines at Westminster, was appointed minister of Lambeth; but for the present could get no convenient house to dwell in, but one that was possessed by the devil. This he took; and not long after, his maid, sitting up late, the devil appeared to her; whereupon in a great fright she ran up to tell her master; he bade her get to bed, saying, she was well served for sitting up so late. Presently after, the devil appeared to Mr White himself, standing at his bed's feet. To whom Master White said, If thou hast nothing else to do thou mayest stand there still and I will betake myself to my rest. And accordingly composing himself to sleep, the devil vanished (Mirror for Saints, by Mr Clark, 460).

I awaked] A proverbial speech, as **#Mr 4:27**. Tamerlane could not sleep at all through care (though he endeavoured it) the night before the mortal battle between him and Bajazet (Turk. Hist. 218).

For the Lord sustained me] Heb. will sustain me. He hath done it, and I doubt not but he will do it again. Experience breedeth confidence. He hath, he will, is an ordinary Scriptural medium.

Ver. 6. **I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, &c.]** *Quomodo timeret hominem homo in sinu Dei positus?* saith an ancient. See here in David the triumph of trust in God, *Gloriatio fidei elegantissima* (Jun). David looketh not downward on the rushing and roaring streams of troubles that ran so swiftly under him, for that would have made him giddy; but stedfastly fasteneth on the power and promise of God all sufficient, and is confident. This the world wondereth at; but little do they know the force of

faith, nor the privy armour of proof that the saints have about their hearts. Achilles was said to be safe, because *Styge armatus*. A Christian is *Deo armatus*, and therefore he walketh about the world as a conqueror.

Ver. 7. **Arise, O Lord, &c.**] If the Lord do but arise only his enemies shall be scattered; those also that hate him shall flee before him, **#Ps 68:1**. And God will arise and harness when his people put his promises in suit by their faithful prayers. This Moses knew, and therefore appointed the priests, whensoever the ark removed, to say, "Rise up, Lord," &c., **#Nu 10:35**. Commanders must pray before they lead on their forces to battle, as did Huniades, and that late brave king of Sweden, more addicted to prayer than to fighting; according to that,

Vincere quisquis aves hostilem exercitum, age ante

Invictum, vincas per tun vota, Deum.

Save me, O my God] *David had many good old soldiers about him, as the Cherethites, Pelethites, Gittites, and others that would stick to him, #2Sa 15:18, — Animasque capaces mortis (Lucan.), mighty men of war, and chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field; himself also was a man of war from his youth, #2Sa 17:8, and not used to be worsted; yet he flees to God for deliverance, and pleads the covenant ("Save me, O my God"), which is that Alvearium Divini mellis, the beehive of heavenly honey. So #Ps 119:94, "I am thine, save me."*

For thou hast smilten all mine enemies on the cheek bone] Thou hast given them a box on the ear, as Queen Elizabeth once did the Earl of Essex, turning his back upon her uncivilly, upon some discontent. Or, as some great man doth a mean fellow, with whom he scorns to fight. Thou hast sent them away with smart and shame enough, **#Job 16:10**. Thou hast so handled them that now they may go seek their teeth in their throats, as the proverb is. God's hand is a mighty hand, saith Peter, **#1Pe 5:6**, it is a fearful thing to fall into it, saith Paul, **#Heb 10:31**. For who knoweth the power of his wrath? saith Moses, **#Ps 90:11**. His enemies are sure to speed worse than did Dares in Virgil (Aeneid), whom, when he had been well beaten by old Entellus, his fellows led away

Iaetantemque utroque caput, crassumque cruorem

Ore reiectantem, mistosque in sanguine dentes.

Ver. 8. **Salvation belongeth unto the Lord]** Here is much in few. Fulgentius saith, that the most golden sentence is ever measured by brevity and suavity. *Brevis et suavis, planeque aurea est haec sententia.* Salvation in the full extent of it (and it is very comprehensive) is of the Lord. It properly denoteth the privative part of man's happiness, freedom from evils and enemies of all sorts. But it importeth the positive part also, fruition of all good; and all is from the Lord, he alone is the chief efficient, and author of all, the true sospitator, the ο Σωτηρ, which, saith Cicero (Acts iv. in Verr.), is a word so emphatic, that other tongues can hardly find another word fit to express it. {See Trapp on "Jon 2:9"}

Thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah] Or, prayerwise, Let thy blessing be upon thy people. *Etiam qui imprudenter ad Absalomum desciverat* (Jun.), even upon those also who have foolishly taken part with Absalom against me (thus David prays for his rebels, as Christ and Stephen afterwards did for their persecutors and murderers), but especially upon those that do yet adhere unto me, and are shortly to fight for me. David knew that victory is of the Lord, and must be got by prayer. For if Queen Elizabeth could say, *Cui adhaereo praeest*, He whose part I take shall get the better, how much more may the Lord of hosts say so! This the people also knew, and therefore persuaded David not to venture his person among them in the field, but to stay at home and pray for them, #2Sa 18:5. It is better, say they, that thou help us out of the city; thence shalt thou help us, or cause us to be helped; that is, thy prayers shall prevail with God for our assistance, as the Rabbis sense that text.

Selah] Or, So be it, *Hoc ratum, firmumquo esto.* See #Ps 3:2.

To the chief Musician] Or, To the most excellent music master, #1Ch 25:1,2, to the chief chanter, Asaph, was this, and some other psalms, committed, that they might be sung in the best manner, and with greatest care. So Alexander, on his death bed, left his kingdom τω Κρατιστω, *Optimum optimo*, to him that should be the best of the best. Αιεν αριστευειν was Cicero's motto, that is, strive to excel others, to crop off the very top of all virtues, δρεπειν υρετων

κορυφᾶς ἀπα πᾶσων, as Scipio is said to have done; to be best at anything, to be careful to excel in good works, #Tit 3:8, and to bear away the bell, as we say, in whatsoever a man undertaketh, *Hoc iamdiu consecutus est Roscius, ut in quo quisque artificio excelleret in suo genere Roscius diceretur* (Cic. de Orat.).

On Neginoth] *i.e. Instruments pulsatilia*, stringed instruments, such as are to be touched, or played upon with the hand. Lord, saith Nazianzen, I am an instrument for thee to touch. Let us lay ourselves open to the Spirit's touch; and so make music.

Chapter 4

Ver. 1. **Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness]** That is, O thou righteous Judge of my righteous cause, and of my good conscience. David speaketh first to God, and then to men. This is the right method. We therefore speak no better to men, because no more to God. It is said of Charles V, that he spent more words with God than with men. When we are vilified, and derogated by others, as David here was, let us make God acquainted with our condition, by his example. But why doth David beg audience and mercy in general only, and not lay open to God his particular grievances? Surely because he looked upon the favour of God as a complexive blessing, that perfectly comprehendeth all the rest; as manna is said to have had all good tastes in it. For particulars, David was content to be at God's disposal. "I humbly beseech thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king," said that false Ziba to David, #2Sa 16:4; *q.d.* I had rather have the king's favour than Mephibosheth's land. David really had rather have God's love and favour than all this world's good; and therefore so heartily beggeth it above anything.

Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress] Heb. Thou hast made room for me. *Hoc autem in prophetia dictum est*, saith R. David. This was prophetically spoken. Thou hast, that is, thou wilt enlarge me who am now in distress. God will surely be nearest unto his in their greatest straits; and because they have made him the God of their mountains, he will be the God of their valleys also.

Ver. 2. **O ye sons of men]** Ye nobles, #Ps 49:1,2, who think to carry all before you with those big looks, and bubbles of words: ye who are potent at court, and therefore insolent above measure. David, having poured out his heart to God in prayer, takes heart of grace thus freely to bespeak these great ones his enemies.

How long will ye turn my glory into shame?] *i.e.* Attempt to put me beside the kingdom, whereunto God hath designed and destined me? You think, belike, to jeer me out of my right, and, by casting upon me cart loads of calumnies and contumelies, to make me desist, and hang up my hopes. But it is otherwise, believe it. #Ps 14:6,7, "Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge." But will he therefore stop praying? No; for in the next words he falls on, and says, "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" &c.

How long will ye love vanity? &c.] *i.e.* Trouble yourselves to no purpose, while ye plot and plough mischief to him who is blessed, and shall be blessed, *ingratiis vestris?* You love, you seek; that is, you both inwardly affect wickedness and outwardly act it; but all in vain.

Ver. 3. **But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly]** *Quod separatum asseruerit,* that God hath destined mine head to the diadem of the kingdom, and therefore it shall not be in your power to hinder me; *sit voluntas Dei, necessitas rei,* and this I would have you to know and rest assured of. Let us be no less confident of the crown of glory: #Lu 12:32, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And #2Ti 2:19, The foundation of God abideth sure, having this double seal, *i.e.* The Lord, for his part, knoweth who are his; and we, for our parts, may know, that if we but name the name of the Lord in prayer, and depart from evil, we shall certainly be saved.

The Lord will hear when I call unto him] Being that I am a godly man, a gracious saint, one that have obtained mercy, and am thereby made merciful to others (for so much the word signifieth), I doubt not of audience and acceptance in heaven. God regards not the prayer if the person be not right. For witches some plead that they use good prayers; in answer whereunto one saith well, *Si magicae,*

Deus non vult tales; si piae, non per tales. God heareth not good prayers from a bad man; as that state in story would not hear a good motion from an ill mouth; or, as we cannot endure to hear sweet words from a stinking breath. The blood of a swine might not be offered in sacrifices, though better to look upon than the blood of a sheep.

Ver. 4. **Stand in awe, and sin not]** Be stirred, or commoved, or troubled. Tremble and sin not. But today the word and the world too is altered; for men sin and tremble not; being arrived at that dead and dedolent disposition of those heathens who were past feeling, **#Eph 4:18,19**. St Paul rather alludeth to this text, **#Eph 4:6**, than citeth it, as some think.

Commune with your own heart upon your bed] Advise with your pillow what you have to do in a business so important as the practice of repentance, whereunto I am now exhorting you. Here, then, examine yourselves, prove your own selves, as **#2Co 13:5**. Sift you, sift you, **#Zep 2:2**. Recoil, turn short again upon yourselves, thrust your hands into your bosoms, as Moses did, and took it out again leprous, white as snow. Take a review of your hearts and lives, converse with yourselves; a wise man can never want with whom to discourse, though he be alone. But as it is a sign that there are great distempers in that family where husband and wife go several days together and speak not the one to the other; so in that soul that flieth from itself, and can go long without examination of self. A good man's business lieth most within doors, and he taketh the fittest time (night or day) for the better despatch of it, though thereby he abridge himself of his natural rest. Mr Bradford, the young Lord Harrington, and sundry others, kept journals, or day books, and oft read them over, for a help to humiliation.

And be still. Selah] Or, make a pause, dwell upon the work of self-examination till you have made somewhat of it, till you have driven it up to a reformation, as **#La 3:39,40**, Let us try, and turn. The word signifieth be dumb and hereupon all our silentaries have founded their superstitious opinions and practices; such as were those old monks of Egypt, who, saith Cassian, were umbrarum more *silentes et αλαλοι*, as speechless as ghosts. So the Carthusian monks at this

day, who speak together but once a week. Some kind of Anabaptists also will not speak a word to any but those of their own sect.

Ver. 5. **Offer the sacrifices of righteousness]** Confess your sins, and slay them; run to him who is the propitiation, Jesus Christ the righteous, present your bodies a living sacrifice, bring a contrite spirit; to do good and to communicate forget not, &c., else you offer the sacrifice of fools, as #Ec 5:1, and not of righteousness, as here. The Chaldee hath it, *Domate concupiscentias*, sacrifice and subdue your lusts.

And put your trust in the Lord] It is well observed that God brings men home by a contrary way to where they fell from him. We fell from him by distrust, by having him in a jealousy, as if he aimed more at himself than at our good. We return to him by having a good conceit of him, that he loves us better than we can love ourselves, and therefore that we ought to put our trust in him, both in life and death.

Ver. 6. **There be many that say, Who will show us, &c.]** This is *Vox populi*, the common cry; *Studium improborum vagum*, good they would have, but pitch not upon the true good. It was well observed that he who first called riches *bona*, goods, was a better husband than divine; but the most are such husbands. *O siquis daret ut videamus bonum?* Who will help us to a good bargain, a good estate? &c.; but God, the chief good, is not in all their thoughts; they mind not communion with him or conformity to him, which is the *Bonum hominis*, good of a man #Mic 6:8, the *totum hominis*, whole of a man #Ec 12:13, the one thing necessary, though nothing is less thought upon. What are these outward comforts, so much affected and admired, saith Plato, but *Dei ludibria*, banded up and down like tennis balls, from one to another? A spiritual man heeds not wealth, or at least makes it not his business. What tell you me of money? saith Paul; I need it not, but to further your reckoning, #Php 4:1. And David, having spoken of those rich and wretched people that have their portion here in all abundance, #Ps 17:14, concludeth, I neither envy their store nor covet their happiness; it is enough for me that, when I awake, *sc.* at the resurrection of the just, I shall be full of thine lineage, #Ps 17:15. Christ, who had all riches, scorned these *Bona scabelli*, earthly riches; he was born poor, lived poor, died poor; for, as Austin observeth, when Christ died he made no

will, &c., and as he was born in another man's house, so he was buried in another man's tomb. And yet he was, and still is, God blessed for ever. Cicero indeed, writing to Atticus, would have one friend wish to another three things only, viz. to enjoy health, possess honour, and not suffer necessity. How much better Paul's wish, grace, mercy, and peace, or David's desire here!

Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us] One good cast of God's countenance was more to David than all this world's wealth, than a confluence of all outward comforts and contentments. He had set up God for his chief good, and the light of God's loving countenance was the guide of that way that leadeth to that good; and hence his importunity; he cannot draw breath but in that air, nor take comfort in anything without God's gracious aspect, and some comings in from Christ. It is better, saith one, to feel God's favour one hour in our repenting souls, than to sit whole ages under the warmest sunshine that this world affordeth. Saith not David so much in the next words?

Ver. 7. **Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than, &c.]** Joys unspeakable, and full of glory, #1Pe 1:8. We read of some godly men, that they have been overwhelmed with spiritual joy, till they have cried out, Hold, Lord, stay thine hand, I can bear no more; like weak eyes, that cannot endure to bear the light. Indeed, this is not every good man's case, witness that saying of sweet Master Bath, I thank God in Christ, sustentation I have, but suavities spiritual I taste not any. And that of holy Rolloc, While I live I never look to see perfect reformation in the Church, or to feel perfect ravishing joys in mine heart. But those God's people have are far beyond all carnal comforts.

Than in the time that their corn, &c.] These indeed are the precious fruits of the earth, #Jas 5:7, but they seal not up special favour. A man may have together with them *animam triticeam*, as that rich fool had. *Animas etiam incarnavimus*, as a Father complaineth. These outward things are got within men, and have stolen away their warmest and liveliest affections from God. Not so in the saints; they must have God, or else they die. The people mourned and put on black when they heard that God would not go with them himself, but send an angel with them, #Ex 33:2,3. And

when great gifts were sent to Luther, he sent them back again with this brave speech, I will not be put off with these poor things; I look for better. Let God bestow himself upon me, and it sufficeth. As with manna there fell a dew, so to a good soul, together with corn and wine (be it more or less) there is a secret influence of God, which the carnal heart is not acquainted with. A fly cannot make that of a flower that a bee can do. The treacherous Shechemites had plenty of grain and wine, #Jud 9:27, but having not the grace of God with it, they were soon after destroyed by Abimelech.

Ver. 8. **I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep]** Heb. In peace together will I lie down and sleep; that is, saith the Syriac interpreter, *Non solum cubabo sed etiam dormiam*, I will not only lie down, but also sleep; which many cannot do for fears and cares, those gnats that keep them waking. The Arabic hath it, I sleep as securely in adversity as those can that are in prosperity. Others thus, I will lay me down together with the joy before spoken of, and confidence in God; this shall be my bed fellow; and then I am sure to rest sweetly and safely. For, Thou, Lord, only makest, thou settest me in safety, thou givest to thy beloved sleep, #Ps 127:2; that is, extraordinary quiet refreshing sleep, as the learned note upon the *Aleph quiescent* in אָרָם which is not usual.

Chapter 5

Ver. 1. **To the chief Musician]** {See Trapp on title for "Ps 4:1"}

Upon Nehiloth] Upon wind instruments. *Pneumatica, tribulata*. The Rabbis say that this psalm was made and appointed to be sung concerning Doeg and Ahithophel.

Give ear to my words, O Lord] David knew him to be a prayer hearing God, #Ps 65:2, and that his ears were always open (as the doors of the Roman Aediles were) to hear complaints and requests: hence this prayer.

Consider my meditation] *i.e.* The conceptions of my soul uttered with a low voice (*Murmur meum*, Jerome), but with most vehement affection. *Mussitationem meam*. All this the Hebrew word importeth.

Ver. 2. **Hearken unto the voice of my cry]** He thrice repeats the same request, to show the greatness of his grief and the necessity of help from heaven. Let mind and mouth, spirit and speech, go together in prayer, and then it is right, the voice of the heart is simply necessary. Moses cried to God at the Red Sea, though he said nothing. The voice of the lips is of great use also; 1. For preventing of distraction; 2. For exciting devotion.

My king] And therefore help, O king, as she said, #2Ki 5:24.

And my God] Who art in covenant with me, both offensive and defensive.

For unto thee will I cry] Thou art the proper object of prayer, as being omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent; and a God in covenant with thy people.

Ver. 3. **My voice shalt thou hear in the morning]** That fittest season, usually, for prayer, or any other serious business, παν εργον. The very heathens chose the morning chiefly for sacrifice, as Nestor in Homer, the Argonauts in Apollonius. The Persian magi sang hymns to their gods at break of day, and worshipped the rising sun. The *Pinari* and *Potitii* (certain idolatrous priests) sacrificed every morning and evening to Hercules upon the great altar at Rome. The Jews counted and called it an abomination of desolation if at any time the morning and evening sacrifice to the Lord were intermitted; so should Christians if they offer not unto him twice a day at least, viz. morning and evening, prayers and praises. Mass and meat hinder no man's thrift, say the very Papists. A whet is no let, a bait by the way hindereth not the journey; so neither doth prayer in a morning hinder a man's business, be it never so hasty or weighty, but furthereth it rather. Cardinal Wolsey, though he were Lord Chancellor, when he came in a morning out of his privy chamber, would not go abroad till he had heard two masses, nor go to bed at night with any part of his service unsaid, no, not so much as one collect (His Life and Death, by his gentleman usher, p. 18.) Mahometans, whatever occasion they have by profit or pleasure, pray constantly five times a day. Christians have a charge to continue instant in prayer, προσκαρτερειν, and to let all business

wait upon it, **#Ro 12:12**, with **#Ac 6:4**. David knew that if prayer stand still the trade of godliness standeth still. He, therefore, will be up and at it betimes, and rather break his sleep than leave such a duty undone.

In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up] Or, look out, spy like a watchman. Two military words the prophet here maketh use of; he would not only pray, but marshal up his prayers, put them in array. And when he had done, he would be as a spy upon a tower, to see whether he prevailed, whether he got the day. Gnarach. *Ordinavit, aciem disposuit. Tsaphah. Speculando expectavit.* Some men pray of course, or as a task, but never look after their prayers, or mark what answer: this is very great folly and oscitancy. Who sends forth a ship, and waits not for the return thereof? Who shoots an arrow, or casts a bowl, and looks not where it lands? Prayer is the soul's arrow, angel, seed, dove, messenger, &c. And they that take not notice how they speed deal as scoffing Pilate did, who scornfully asked Christ, What is truth? but stayed not for the answer. If God shall hearken what David speaketh, David must likewise hearken what God would speak. He must look up to God, if God shall look out of himself to David; since he humbleth himself to behold things done in heaven, **#Ps 113:6**, by a wonderful condescension: how much more, then, to look upon man, that is a worm, and the son of man, that is a worm? **#Job 25:6.** *Tantus, tantillum?*

Ver. 4. For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness] As the kings of the earth have, saith R. Solomon. Alexander the Great, promising a crown of one hundred and eighty pounds to those of his guests that drank most, caused forty one to kill themselves with drinking for that crown. King Charles IX of France gave one Albertus Tudius, a huckster's son, six hundred thousand crowns to teach him to swear with a grace (Camera. Med. Histor.). But God perfectly hateth wickedness and wicked persons. There were more remarkable expressions of God's anger upon man's sin, in the dead body of a man, than of a beast, **#Nu 11:31-34**. The one made unclean but till the evening, the other seven days. God hateth sin worse than he doth the devil, for he hateth the devil for sin's sake, and not sin for the devil's sake. He hateth sin naturally in whomsoever, like as we hate poison, whether it be in a toad or in a

prince's cabinet. We read of antipathies in nature between the elephant and the boar, the lion and the cock, the horse and the stone taraxippe, &c., but nothing so great as between God, the chiefest good, and sin, the utmost evil. Let us be like affected to our heavenly Father, as dear children, abhorring that which is evil, **#Ro 12:9**, hating it as we do hell itself, so the Greek word there signifieth, abandoning it, and abstaining from all appearance of it, as it is *offensivum Dei, et aversivum a Deo*, an offence against God, and a breach of his law.

Neither shall evil dwell with thee] Heb. sojourn with thee, or be harboured as a guest, much less as a home dweller. Peter Martyr, out of Nathan's parable, observeth, that lust was but a stranger to David, that lodged with him for a night only, **#2Sa 12:4**. Though corruption may intrude upon us, and enter, yet it may not be harboured, and dwell with us; lest the traveller become the man of the house.

Ver. 5. **The foolish shall not stand in thy sight]** Heb. before thine eyes, as thy favourites and attendants. Those furious, vain glorious mad caps, as they call them, roisterers, rioters, roaring boys, as they delight to call themselves by a woeful prolepsis of the present for the future. The word is used for mad, or raving with folly, **#Ec 2:2,12 7:9 10:13 Isa 44:25 Ps 75:5 73:3**. God hath no need of such madmen, as Achish, king of Gath, said, when they brought David before him, and he feigned himself distracted. We likewise must have no fellowship with such, **#Eph 5:11**, but reprove them rather.

Thou hatest all workers of iniquity] Though they not only act it, but art it, polish and trim their sin, that it may seem less heinous, as hypocrites do, who hide their wickedness with no less subtle sleights than Rachel hid the idols, Rahab the spies. But God will detect and detest them. {See Trapp on "Ps 5:4"}

Ver. 6. **Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing]** Whether in jest or earnest, those that lie in jest will, without repentance, go to hell in earnest. And for the officious lie some think it no fault; whereas, **#Ga 1:10**, we must not speak truth to please men, much less may we lie. The truth is, all lies are pernicious, all liars will be destroyed, but especially those that have taught their tongues to speak lies, **#Jer 9:5**, that take fast hold of deceit, **#Jer 8:5**, so that

they cannot be got off without striving: such a one was Doeg, Saul, &c.

The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man] Heb. the man of blood; for blood hath so many tongues as drops to cry for vengeance, **#Ge 4:10**, and God makes inquisition, **#Ps 9:12**, commanding that murderers should be drawn from the altar to the slaughter, **#Ex 21:14**. This made King James say, that if God did leave him to kill a man he would think God did not love him. And for deceitful persons, the Lord is the avenger of all such, **#1Th 4:6**.

Ver. 7. **But as for me]** Who am conscious of none of these foul and flagitious practices. The upright shall dwell in God's presence, **#Job 12:16 Ps 140:13**: not so the hypocrite and ungodly. He is like a vagabond begging at the gate, and not knowing whether the master of the house is providing for him an alms or a cudgel.

I will come into thine house, &c.] He knew that the ark and mercy seat were never separated.

And in thy fear will I worship, &c.] The fear of God is, 1. Servile; this David meaneth not. 2. Filial or amicable. And this, again, is either *Timor culpa*, fear to offend so good a God, and to forget his favour, **#Pr 8:13**, or *Timor cultus*, the fear that is to be expressed in our addresses to Almighty God, that reverential godly fear, **#Jer 5:22 Heb 12:28 Ps 2:11**, and here. Thus the very angels make their addresses to the most high God with greatest self abasements, **#Isa 6:5** How much more should we silly and sinful creatures! *Omnino oportet nos orationis tempore curiam intrare coelestem* (saith Bernard) *in qua Rex regum stellato sedit solio, circumdante innumerabili et ineffabili beatorum spirituum exercitu. Quanta ergo cum reverentia, quanto timore, quanta illuc humilitate accedere, debet e palude sua procedens et repens vilis ranuncula!* that is, at prayer time we should enter into the heavenly palace, where the King of kings sitteth in a stately throne, environed with an innumerable company of angels and saints. With how great reverence, therefore, godly fear, and humility should a poor paltry frog come, who is newly crawled out of his guzzle!

Ver. 8. **Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness]** That is, in thy faithfulness, and according to thy promise in that behalf made unto

me, to be my God and guide even unto death, to lead me in the way everlasting, to direct my footsteps in thy fear, &c. *Deduc me ut non titubem*, saith R. David, Lead me, that I stumble not; or if I do, yet that I fall not; for he that stumbleth and falleth not gets ground.

Because of mine enemies] Or, because of mine observers, who narrowly watch for my halting, that they might blaspheme thee, and thy religion through my default, **#1Sa 18:9**. Saul fixed his eyes upon David, but for no good to him. So **#1Pe 2:12 3:2**, wicked men spy, and pry accurately (as the word *εποπτευσαντες* signifieth) into the courses of God's people, to see what evil they can find out and fasten on. We should, therefore, walk exactly, **#Eph 5:15**, and pray earnestly, as here.

Make thy way straight before my face] Remove all rubs and remoras, and lay all plain and level, that I may walk and not be weary, run and not faint, **#Isa 40:31**.

Ver. 9. **Nor there is no faithfulness in their mouth]** Or, stedfastness; nothing that a man may bind or build upon, so slippery they are and untrustworthy.

Their inward part is very wickedness] Heb. woeful evils, heavy annoyances; their hearts are the devil's storehouses.

Their throat is an open sepulchre] And so more dangerous than if it were shut, saith Aben Ezra here. In these open sepulchres, sending out much foul stench, they frequently bury the good names of their betters. But the comfort is, that there shall one day be a resurrection as well of names as of bodies. This the apostle accommodateth, **#Ro 3:13**, to the universal corruption of mankind; and well he might, forasmuch as by nature there is never a better of us, but as there were many Marii in one Caesar, so are there many Doegs and Absaloms in the best of us all. As in water face answereth to face, so doth the heart of a man to a man.

They flatter with their tongue] The apostle, **#Ro 3:13**, rendereth it, "With their tongues they have used deceit." And it is remarkable, that in the anatomy of a natural man there he stands more on the

organs of speech, tongue, lips, mouth, throat, than on all the rest of the members.

Ver. 10. **Destroy thou them, O God**] Heb. Condemn them as guilty. They were God's enemies no less than David's, and implacable, incorrigible; and hence he so prayeth against them. *Est prophetia, non maledictio*, saith Austin, Tom. 8, in Enarr. *huius precationis*.

Let them fall by their own counsels] As it befell Ahithophel, Haman, the gunpowder traitors. Or, let them fall from their own counsels, *i.e.* nor be able to effect their evil designs, but defeated, frustrated.

Cast them out, &c.] Let those who were once a terror now be a scorn; for they are even ripe for ruin, as having added rebellion to their sin, **#Job 34:37**.

For they have rebelled against thee] And so are more thine enemies than mine, which maketh me so earnest against them, being swallowed up with a zeal for thy glory.

Ver. 11. **But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice**] Joy is the just man's portion, *et contra*, **#Ho 9:1 Isa 65:13,14**; and, according to the measure of his faith, so is his joy, **#1Pe 1:8**.

Let them ever shout] Or, shrill out, set up their note, as a peacock doth, which hath his name in Hebrew from this root.

Because thou defendest them] Heb. Thou over coverest them with thy sure defence, for upon all the glory shall be a defence. "And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain," **#Isa 4:5,6**, *Velut piis tabernaculum* (R. David). The ram skins covering the ark from the violence of wind and weather figured out Christ's protecting his people.

Let them also that love thy name] As all the virgins do who have smelt Christ's name as an ointment poured out, **#So 1:3**; {*See Trapp on "So 1:3"*}

Be joyful in thee] Heb. Exult, and leap for joy, as if they were dancing levaltos. Thus Dr Taylor, the martyr, fetched a frisk and danced when he was near unto the place where he should be burnt. Rabbi Zaddi Ben Levi repeated this verse when he was at the point of death (Mid. Tillin, in **#Ps 5**). Another, that in **#Ps 32:6**, "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee." A third, that in **#Ps 84:10**, "One day in thy courts is better," &c. A fourth, that in **#Ps 31:19**, "O how great is thy goodness," &c.

Ver. 12. **For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous]** Yea, the righteous man shall abound with blessings, **#Pr 28:20**; yea, God will bless all them that bless him, **#Ge 12:3**, or that but give him a cup of cold water, **#Mt 10:42**

With favour] Or, goodwill; *Quae praecedit nostram bonam voluntatem*, saith Augustine.

Wilt thou compass him] Or, encircle him as with a crown, and so make them "higher than the kings of the earth," **#Ps 89:27**, whose crowns cannot keep their heads from aching, but fill them with cares; which made one king cry out, *O vilis pannus*, &c. (Val. Max.), and another spake this of his crown,

*Nobilis es fateor, rutilusque onerata lapillis,
Innumeris curis sed comitata venis.
Quod bene si nossent omnes expendere, nemo
Nemo foret qui te tollere vellet humo.*

As with a shield] *A piked shield, such as doth circuire tres partes hominis*, compass about three parts of a man, saith R. Solomon on this text. Shields and bucklers, besides other bosses for ornament, had one great boss in the middle with a sharp pike in it for use, to pierce and wound the adversary. See **#Job 15:26**. God will be all in all to his people, crown, shield, &c.: they may therefore well enough rejoice, shout, leap, as in the former verse.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth] {See Trapp on title "Ps 4:1"}

Upon Sheminith] Or, upon the eight, *i.e. Intentissimo sono et clarissima voce*, to be sung aloud. An eight is the highest note in

music. See #1Ch 15:21. Others say, that hereby is meant the bass and tenor, as fittest for a mourner.

Chapter 6

Ver. 1. **O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger]** In this and some other psalms David begins so heavily, ends so merrily, that one might think they had been composed by two men of a contrary humour, as Merlin observeth. *{De l' Amour Divin.}* Every new man is two men, #Ro 7:9-25 The Shulamite hath in her, as it were, the company of two armies, #So 6:13. The Lord also chequereth his providence white and black, he speckleth his work (represented by those speckled horses, #Zec 1:8). Mercies and crosses are interwoven.

Neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure] Chastened David desires to be, as #Jer 10:24 1Co 11:32 Heb 12:7,8; but in mercy, and in measure, #1Co 10:13. "Fury is not in me," saith God, however it may sometimes seem to be, #Isa 27:4. Of furious people the philosopher giveth this character, that they are angry, 1. οἷς οὐ δεῖ, against those whom they should not; 2. ἐφ' οὐ δεῖ, for matters they should not; 3. μᾶλλον ἢ δεῖ, more than they should be. But none of all these can be affirmed of God. Anger is not in him *secundum affectum*, but seemeth so to be *secundum effectum*, when he chideth and smiteth (as angry people use to do) when there is no other remedy, #2Ch 36:13. His anger is in Scripture put, 1. For his threatenings, #Ho 11:9 Jon 3:10 2. For his punishments, #Mt 3:7 Ro 2:8. But as God therefore threateneth that he may not punish, #Am 6:12, so in the midst of judgment he remembereth mercy, and it soon repenteth him concerning his people.

Ver. 2. **Have mercy upon me, O Lord]** As the woman in the story appealed from Philip to Philip, so doth David fly from God's anger to God's grace; for he had none else in heaven or earth to repair to, #Ps 73:25. He seeks here to escape him by closing with God, and to get off by getting within him.

For I am weak] Or crushed, gnashed, extremely dejected with sickness of body and trouble of mind. Basil expounds it as his foul sins into which he fell from infirmity, and for which he was threatened with judgments by the prophet Nathan.

O Lord, heal me] On both sides: heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee, #Ps 41:4, ; heal my body, which is full of dolours and diseases, #Ps 107:18,20; for thou art Jehovah the physician, #Ex 15:26. Heal mine estate, which is very calamitous by reason of mine enemies, who wish my death, and would gladly revel in my ruins. See #Ho 6:2 Isa 30:26.

For my bones are vexed] viz. By reason of my leanness and long lying. For albeit the bones of themselves are insensible, and ache not; yet the membranes and tunicles do that compass the bones.

Ver. 3. **My soul is also sore vexed]** This was worse than all the rest. A light load to a raw shoulder is very grievous; a little water in a leaden vessel is heavy, so is a little outward grief to a laden soul. Hence Job so complaineth; and Jeremiah prayeth, Be not thou a terror unto me, O Lord; and then I much matter not what becomes of me.

But thou, O Lord, how long] *sc.* Wilt thou stand off, and not haste to my help? This is *plena affectus reticentia*, an emphatic and affectionate aposiopesis, such as is ordinary with those that are in pain and durance.

Ver. 4. **Return, O Lord, deliver my soul]** He calleth hard upon Jehovah, which sweet name of God he hath now five times in these four first verses made use of, as one that knew, and could improve, the full import of it. Here David begs of him to return, not by change of place, for God filleth all places (being

Enter, praesenter Deus hic et ubique potenter),

but *miserationis serenitate*, by a beam of his mercy, and by a dispensation of his gracious providence, altering his condition for the better, #De 30:9 Ac 15:16.

Oh save me for thy mercies' sake] *Quam pulcherrime ista supplicatio propriis et profieientibus sermonibus explicatur*; saith Cassiodore concerning this text, *i.e.* How finely and fitly is this request set forth! David pleaded not merit, but humbly craveth mercy. The heart (that piece of proud flesh) must be brought to such

a temper and tameness, as to crouch to God for the crumbs that fall from his table.

Ver. 5. **For in death there is no remembrance of thee]** Some heathens were of the opinion that when a man died all died with him; neither was there any further sense of wealth or woe for ever. Socrates doubted, but Aristotle affirmed it to be so, for aught he knew, ουδεν επι τω τεθνεωτι δοκει ουτε αγαθον, ουτε κακον ειναι (Ethic. 1.3, c. 9). Eusebius and Augustine make mention of certain Arabian heretics, who held that the soul died with the body, and so remained dead to the last day, and then they revived with the resurrection of the body. This was long since exploded as a foul error, contrary to that which the Scripture holdeth forth in many places. All that David would say here is, that dead men remember not, that is, they mention not God's worthy acts, to the quickening of others; their praises cannot provoke other men to believe in God, or serve him, as in their lifetime they might, therefore David would fain live to do more good. A certain martyr going to suffer said, he was sorry that he was going to a place where he should do God no more work, but be receiving wages only (Sever. Epist. 3). *Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sim necessarius non recuso laborem,* said a dying saint, Lord, if I may be yet useful to thy people, I should be very well content it might be so. See **#Isa 38:1 8,19**. David and Hezekiah prayed hard that they might not yet die, lest religion and the true worship of God, which they had begun to vindicate and establish, should by their decease fall to the ground, through the wickedness of their survivors and successors.

In the grave who shall give thee thanks?] *sc. Palani et cum aliis,* saith Aben Ezra, openly and exemplarily, in the company of others. Some render it, In hell who shall confess to thee? Hereby is showed the fear of God's children (saith Diodati) anguished by the feelings of his wrath, lest they should die out of his grace unreconciled, and by that means be excluded and debarred from their desired aim, to be everlastingly instruments of his glory. But it is better to take sheol here for the place and state of the dead, after their dissolution; though Dilrio will needs have it to be always in Scripture meant as hell; which if it be so, then why should Job so earnestly desire to be hid in it? **#Job 14:13**. That was a singular example of Paul the hermit, who, though dead, seemed to be serving God, and affected

those that beheld him (Adag. Sacr. in 2 Sam. xxii. Digress. 2). For he was found (saith Jerome) dead kneeling upon his knees, holding up his hands, lifting up his eyes; so that the very dead corpse seemed yet, by a kind of religious gesture, to pray unto God.

Ver. 6. **I am weary with my groaning]** I have laboured therein even unto lassitude. There must be some proportion between our sin and our sorrow. A storm of sighs, at least, if not a shower of tears; some sorrow is above tears, some constitutions are dry and will not yield tears, and in such case dry sorrow may be as available as wet. She that touched the hem of Christ's garment only was as welcome to him as Thomas, who put his fingers into the print of the nails.

All the night make I my bed to swim] So one hour's sin brought many nights' pain. Did we but forethink what sin will cost us we dare not but be innocent. *Transit voluptas, manet dolor. Nocetempta dolore voluptas,* Desire passes, grief remains. Desire hurts with empty grief. But today, saith a reverend writer (Bishop Pilkinton on #Ne 1:4), weep a man may not, for disfiguring his face; fasting is thought hypocrisy and shame; and when his paunch is full, then, as priests with their drunken nowls said matins, and belched out, *Eruclavit cor meum verbum,* with good devotion as they thought; so he blusters out a few blustering words, and thinks it repentance sufficient, &c. Another descants thus upon the text. As in Sicilia there is *fons solis,* the fountain of the sun, out of which at midday, when the sun is nearest, floweth cold water; at midnight, when the sun is farther off, floweth hot water: so the patriarch David's head is full of water, and his eyes a fountain of tears, who, when he enjoyed his health as the warm sunshine, was cold in confessing his sins; but being now visited with sickness, his reins chastising him in the night season, he is so sore troubled, and withal so hot, and so fervent, that every night he washeth his bed, and watereth, nay, even melteth, his conch with tears, &c. A third makes this good note upon these words: The place of David's sin, his bed, is the place of his repentance, and so it should be; yea, when we behold the place where we have offended we should be pricked in heart, and there again crave his pardon. As Adam sinned in the garden, and Christ sweat bloody tears in the garden. Sanctify by tears every place which we have polluted by sin; and let us seek

Christ Jesus in our bed, with the spouse in the Canticles, who saith, In my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loved, #So 3:1.

I water my couch with my tears] By couch some understand that whereon David lay in the day time for ease and refreshing, the same perhaps which David arose off when he beheld Bathsheba washing herself; where began his misery, #2Sa 11:2. Others take it for his pallet, his under bed, which he also watered by the abundance of his penitent tears. Ainsworth rendered it, I water or melt my bedstead. These are all excessive figurative speeches, to set forth the greatness of his grief and the multitude of his tears. Weeping becomes not a king, saith Euripides. But King David was of another mind, and so was he who said,

Faciles motus mens generosa capit (Ovid).

Tears, instead of gems, were the ornaments of David's bed, saith Chrysostom.

Ver. 7. **Mine eye is consumed]** Heb. gnawn, moth eaten. That eye of his that had looked and lusted after his neighbour's wife is now dimmed and darkened with grief and indignation, he had wept himself almost blind; as it is stated of Faustus, the son of King Vortigern by his own daughter, that he wept himself stark blind for the abominable incest of his parents (Prideaux's Introduct. to Hist. p. 289).

It waxeth old] Or, Is sunk in my head. Doth not do its office, but is become like an old dusty window that lets in little light. A heavy affliction to those whose eyes have been loop holes of lust and windows of wickedness, the remembrance whereof is a thorn to their blind eyes, and puts them to grievous pain, especially when their enemies shall have got it by the end, as David's had his ill pranks, and spared not to lay it in his dish.

Ver. 8. **Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity]** What a strange change is here all of a sudden! Well might Luther say, *Oratio est hirudo animae*, Prayer is the leech of the soul, that sucks out the venom and swelling thereof. Prayer, saith another, is an exorcist with God, and an exorcist against sin and misery. The prophet Isaiah calleth it a charm, #Isa 26:16, because it lays our soul distempers,

and, like David's harp, drives away the evil spirit that is upon us. Pray, therefore, when out of order, though not so fit to pray; fall upon the duty, by David's example here, and that will further fit thee for the duty. Thy leaden lumpish heart, cast into this holy fire, will heat and melt. *Quoties me oratio, quem pene desperantem susceperat, reddidit exultantem et praesumentem de venia?* saith Bernard: How oft hath prayer found me despairing almost, but left me triumphing and well assured of pardon! The same in effect saith David here, "Depart from me," &c. What a word is that to his insulting enemies, Avoid, come out, vanish! These be words used to devils and dogs, but good enough for a Doeg or a Shimei. And the Son of David shall say the same to his enemies when he comes to judgment.

For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping] Tears then have a voice (as well as blood hath), and God hath an ear for them. And as music upon the waters soundeth farther and more harmoniously than upon the land, so do prayers joined with tears: *Portae lachrymarum ne sint clausae*, let not the wounds of godly sorrow be ever so healed up in us but that they may bleed afresh upon every just occasion (R. Obad. Gaon in **#Ps 6**).

Ver. 9. **The Lord hath heard my supplication]** And thereby sealed up sweetest love to my soul; as Ahasuerus afterwards did to his Esther, by granting her request. But how knew David, and how doth many another man in like sort know that God hath heard his prayer, though as yet no visible return appeareth? I answer, This he may know, 1. By a cast of God's pleased countenance. 2. By the testimony of his own conscience, **#Php 4:6,7**, and by the assurance of faith, which saith to a man, as the angel once did to Cornelius, Thy prayers are heard and answered. Of Luther we read, that having been once wrestling hard with God by prayer for the prosperous proceeding of the Reformation in Germany, about which there was a general meeting of the states at that time, he came leaping out of his closet with *Vicimus, Vicimus*, in his mouth, that is, We have prevailed, we have got the day. God sometimes answereth his people before they pray, sometimes while they are praying, as here, and sometimes after they have prayed, but sooner or later they shall be sure of it.

The Lord will receive my prayer] He hath, and, therefore, he will. This is the language of faith, this is the triumph of trust.

Ver. 10. Let all mine enemies be ashamed] When they see all their hopes of my death and downfall disappointed.

Let them return] *Retrocedant et in terrain cadant*, saith the Arabic interpreter, Let them go backward, and fall to the earth. Some make this a prayer, some a prophecy; it comes all to one.

And be ashamed suddenly] Let them be doubly ashamed, or deboshed, and that in a moment. These sudden and still revenges are very terrible. God usually premonisheth before he punisheth, but not always. Now as blessings, the more unexpected the more welcome; so judgments, the more sudden the more grievous.

Shiggaion of David] *i.e.* David's delight or solace, say some; his mixed song, or synodee, say others.

Which he sang unto the Lord] He could sing away care, and punish his reproachers with a merry contempt, as knowing his own innocence; the property whereof is to throw off slanders, as Paul did the viper; yea, in a holy scorning, it laughs at them, as the wild ass doth at the horse and his rider.

Concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite] Which some take to be some cousin and courtier of Saul's, who had falsely accused good David (far from any such thought, **#Ps 131:1**) of affecting the kingdom, and seeking Saul's life. See **#1Sa 24:10**. But I rather understand, with the Chaldee paraphrast, Saul's self, who was of Kish, and of Jemini, **#1Sa 9:1**, and that, by a disguise of name, he is called Cush the Benjamite, that is, an Ethiopian, because of his obstinate impenitence, according to **#Jer 13:23**. So **#Am 9:7**, rebellious Israel is to God as Ethiopia. Professors shall be as deep in hell, and deeper than Turks and infidels, because of their dissembled sanctity, which is double iniquity. Wrath shall be upon the Jew first, **#Ro 2:9**; and when the foul sinner goes to hell what shall become of the fair professor? may such be asked, as are both in one. In the Ethiopian is nothing white but his teeth; so in a hypocrite, &c.

Chapter 7

Ver. 1. **O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust]** Or, I betake me to thee for safety. David found it always best to run to the old rock, #**Isa 26:4**, and to cry, "O Lord my God," pleading the covenant. This no wicked man can do; but, being beaten out of earthly comforts, he is as a naked man in a storm, and an unarmed man in the field, or as a ship tossed in the sea without an anchor, which presently dasheth on the rocks, or falleth upon the quicksands. Saul, for instance, who, being in distress, and forsaken by God, ran first to the witch, and then to the sword's point.

Save me from all them that persecute me] Where the prince is a persecutor (as in the primitive times, and here in the Marian days) many will be very active against God's people. *O sancta simplicitas*, said John Huss, martyr, when at the stake he observed a plain country fellow busier than the rest in fetching faggots.

Ver. 2. **Lest he tear my soul like a lion]** *i.e.* Put me to a cruel and tormenting death; exercising against me both cruelty and also craft, by taking me at such a time as there is none to deliver me.

Ver. 3. **O Lord my God]** {See Trapp on "Ps 7:1"}

If I have done this] *i.e.* This treachery and treason, whereof Saul doth causelessly suspect me, and wherewith his pick thank partisans unjustly charge me. As for sedition, saith Latimer, for aught that I know, methinks I should not need Christ, if I might so say. But where malice beareth mastery the doing of anything or of nothing is alike dangerous (Serm. 3, before K. Ed. VI).

If there be iniquity in my hands] Heb. in the palms of my hands, where it may be concealed. If I have secretly acted against my sovereign.

Ver. 4. **If I have rewarded evil, &c.]** If I have broke the conditions of our reconciliation, or betrayed my trust.

Yea, I have delivered him that, &c.] This was true Christianity, to overcome evil with good, #**Mt 5:44**, &c.; #**Ro 12:17**, &c. *O quam hoc non est omnium!* O how few can skill of this! Elisha made the Syrians a feast who came to make him a grave. David spared Saul, and delivered him, not without the hazard of his own life. Bradford

conducted Bourn from the pulpit at Paul's Cross (where he had cried up Popery at the coming in of Queen Mary) safe to his lodging. A certain gentleman said unto him, Ah, Bradford, Bradford, thou savest him that will help to burn thee. I give thee his life; if it were not for thee I would run him through with my sword. And it proved as the gentleman had prophesied. There he sits, I mean my lord of Bath, Mr Bourn (said Bradford in his third examination before Stephen Gardiner), which desired me himself for the passion of Christ, I would speak to the people. Upon whose words I, coming into the pulpit, I had like to have been slain with a dagger which was hurled at him, I think, for it touched my sleeve, he then prayed me I would not leave him, and I promised that as long as I lived I would take hurt before him that day. And so went I out of the pulpit, and entreated with the people, and at length brought him myself into a house. Besides this, in the afternoon I preached in Bow Church, and there, going up into the pulpit, one willed me not to reprove the people; for, quoth he, you shall never come down alive if you do it. And yet in that sermon I did reprove their fact, and called it sedition at least twenty times. For all which my doing I have received this recompense, prison for a year and half and more, and death now, which you (my lord of Bath among the rest) go about. Let all men be judge where conscience is. Thus Master Bradford, like another David, in his own defence.

Ver. 5. **Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it]** Thus he cleareth himself by a holy imprecation (the Spanish Bible hath the *Shiggaion Davidis*, in the title, *Purgatio Davidis*, as the same Hebrew word פְּשָׁעִים signifieth both sin and purification from sin, #Ps 51), taking God to witness his innocence and good conscience, and wishing evil to himself if it were otherwise. This he did from a good cause, in a good manner, and for a good end. And not as many profane ones do today, who, taxed, though never so truly, with some evil they have done, seek to justify themselves by appealing to God, and calling for his curse upon them if guilty; who, therefore, striketh such impudent imprecators immediately, as Anne Averies and others. See Mr Clark's Mirror.

And tread down my life] Heb. my lives; so usually called, saith an interpreter, for the many faculties and operations that are in life, the many years, degrees, estates thereof.

And lay mine honour in the dust. Selah] Let him brand me for a most treacherous, ignominious wretch, and let me lie buried in a bog of indelible infamy.

Ver. 6. **Arise, O Lord, in thine anger]** Here David repeateth and reinforceth his suit, filling his mouth with arguments for that purpose, such as he well knew would be of avail.

Lift up thyself &c.] Wherein they deal proudly be thou above them, to control and topple them over.

And awake for me] Sometimes God seemeth to be asleep, we must awake him; to forget, we must remind him; to have lost his mercy, we must find it for him. "Where is thy zeal and thy strength?" &c.,
#Isa 63:15

To the judyment that thou hast commanded] That is, promised, viz. that thou wilt command deliverances out of Zion. Or, which thou hast commanded to men in case of wrong done, to relieve the oppressed: and wilt not thou for me, great Judge, much more do it?

Ver. 7. **So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about]** As people love to flock to assizes, or such places of judicature, where sentence is passed upon great ones that have offended. Or thus, then shall the public sincere service of God be set up, and people shall fly to it, as the doves do to their windows.

For their sakes therefore return thou on high] Seat thyself upon thy tribunal, and do justice. Thou hast seemed to come down from the bench, as it were, and to have no care of judgment; but go up once again, and declare thy power. *Reverte, id est, ostende manure tuam esse altam*, Return, that is, show that thou hast a high hand, saith R. Solomon.

Ver. 8. **The Lord shall judge the people]** The Ethiopian judges leave the chief seat ever empty, thereby acknowledging that God is the chief judge.

Accordingy to my righteousness] viz. In this particular crime, whereof I am accused. Great is the confidence of a good conscience toward God. Such only can abide by the everlasting burnings.

Ver. 9. **Oh let the wickedness, &c.]** Put a stop to their rage and rancour.

But establish the just] The overthrow of the one will be a strengthening to the other; as it was between the house of Saul and David, #2Sa 3:1. But who are just?

The righteous God trieth the hearts and reins] *i.e.* The thoughts and affections or lusts of people, and accordingly esteemeth of them; for *Mens cuiusque is est quisque;* and God judgeth a man according to the hidden man of his heart, *Cogitationum et cupiditatum* (Junius).

Ver. 10. **My defence is of God]** Heb. My buckler is upon God. {See Trapp on "Ps 3:3"}

Which saveth the upright in heart] Of which number I know myself to be one; and do, therefore, look for his salvation.

Ver. 11. **God is angry with the wicked every day]** Or, all day long; they are under the arrest of his wrath, and liable to the wrath to come. Children they are of wrath, because of disobedience. One rendereth it, God troubled them, *sc.* by laying continually some judgment or other upon them; and yet there is no cause to fear (as the heathen did of his Jupiter) that he should be exhausted, *Si quoties peccent homines, &c.*

Ver. 12. **If he turn not]** *sc.* *Impius ab impietate sua,* saith R. Solomon, If the wicked turn not from his wickedness, by true and timely repentance.

He will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow] *i.e.* God will, God hath; and mark that he whets before he strikes, and is bending his bow, setting his arrows, preparing his instruments of death; all which must needs take up some time, and so give fair warning to these foul sinners if they have grace to make use of it. See the like #De 32:41,42. God first whets his sword before he devours flesh, and first takes hold on judgment before his judgment take hold of men. But if this be not observed and improved, *Patientia Dei quo diuturnior, eo est minacior;* and what shall wicked men plead for themselves when God shall say to them, as Reuben once did to his brethren, #Ge 42:22, Did not I warn you, saying, Sin not?

Ver. 13. **He hath also prepared, &c.**] The punishment of ungodly persons is here elegantly set forth by three similitudes. 1. From warfare. 2. From child birth, **#Ps 7:14** 3. From hunting, **#Ps 7:15,16**. Well might the Lord say, "I have used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets," **#Ho 12:10**. {See Trapp on "Ho 12:10"}

He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors] Heb. the hot burning persecutors, that are set on work by the great red dragon (Ardentes, importing their haste to perpetrate mischief). Such were Felix of Wurtemberg, who swore that ere he died he would ride up to the spurs, and Fornesius, who vowed that he would ride up to the saddle skirts, in the blood of the Lutherans. The archbishop of Tours made suit for the erection of a court called *Chambre Ardent*, wherein to condemn the French Protestants to the fire. But ere he died he had fire enough, for he was stricken with a disease called *The Fire of God*; which began at his feet, and so ascended upward, that he caused one member after another to be cut off, and so he died miserably. This was God's burning arrow against a hot burning persecutor. The like may be said of Dioclesian, that bloody tyrant, who had his house burnt over his head with fire from heaven; wherewith he was so frightened that he died soon after (Euseb. l. 5). The previously mentioned Count Felix of Wurtemberg was, the same night that he had so vowed and vaunted, choked in his own blood. So he rode not, but bathed himself, not up to the spurs, but throat, not in the Lutherans' blood, but in his own, before he died. And the like we read of Charles IX of France.

Ver. 14. **Behold, he travaileth with iniquity]** Heb. he shall travail, or he continually travaileth; he taketh as great pains to go to hell as a travailing woman doth to be delivered.

And hath conceived mischief] See **#Job 15:35**, {See Trapp on "Job 15:35"}

And brought forth falsehood] Or, a lie, that is, a disappointment. See **#Isa 26:18**. The Jews have a proverb, *Quicquid genuit mendacium, dispellit maledictio* (R. Solomon).

Ver. 15. **He made a pit, and digged it, &c.]** This simile shows, that the wicked shall not only be frustrated, but undone by their own doing; as was Absalom, Haman, our gunpowder Papists, Pope Alexander VI, and his son Caesar Borgia (Bucholcer); who, by a

mistake of the attendants at table, drank up the poisoned wine which they had prepared and set ready for some princes of Italy whom they had invited, and for whose dominions they thirsted. *Hic aut Caesar ut nullus*, saith Pontanus, who relateth the history.

Ver. 16. **His mischief shall return upon his own head]** As the Thracians' arrows did, which they in a rage (because it rained upon them unseasonably) shot up against heaven (Herodot.).

And his violent dealing upon his own pate] *i.e.* Abundantly, and apparently. Various instances might be given hereof. Henry III of France was stabbed in the same chamber where he had helped to contrive the French massacre. His brother, Charles IX, had blood given him to drink, for he was worthy:

*Quem sitiit vivens seelerata mente cruorem,
Perfidus hunc moriens Carolus ore vomit.*

John Martin of Briqueras, in France, vaunted everywhere, that he would slit the minister's nose of Angrogne. But he was shortly after assaulted by a wolf, which bit off his nose, so that he died thereof mad. Dispatch the knave, have done, said Sir Ralph Ellerken, governor of Calais, to the executioner of Adam Davilip, martyr, for I will not away till I see the traitor's heart out (Acts and Mon.). But shortly after, the said Sir Ralph in a skirmish between the French and us at Bulloin, was among others slain, and had his heart ripped out by the enemy. That was a very remarkable one of Dr. Story, who escaping out of prison in Queen Elizabeth's days, got to Antwerp, and there thinking himself out of the reach of God's rod, he got commission under Duke D'Alva, to search all ships coming there for English books. But one Parker, an English merchant, trading to Antwerp, laid his snare fair, saith our chronicler (Speed. 1174), to catch this foul bird, causing secret notice to be given to Story, that in his ship were store of heretical books, with other intelligences that might stand him in stead. The canonist, conceiving that all was cock sure, hasted to the ship, where with looks very big upon the poor mariners, each cabin, chest, and corner above board were searched, and some things found to draw him further on; so that the hatches must be opened, which seemed to be unwillingly done, and great signs of fear were showed by their faces. This drew on the

doctor to descend into the hold, where now in the trap the mouse might well gnaw, but could not get out; for the hatches were down, and the sails hoisted up, which with a merry gale were blown into England, where ere long he was arraigned, and condemned of high treason, and accordingly executed at Tyburn, as he had well deserved.

Ver. 17. **I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness]** *i.e.* His faithfulness in keeping promise with his people, and with myself in particular. I will say to his honour, as **#De 32:4**, "A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."

And will sing praise to the name, &c.] Where the psalmist mentioneth the overthrow of the wicked. *Laus praecedit et sequitur*; saith R. Joshua Ben Levi here, as in this place, and **#Ps 9:2**

To the chief Musician upon Gittith] Upon the cittern, or gittern, brought from Gath, saith the Chaldee paraphrast; or, that was used by the sons of Obed Edom, the Gittite, **#2Sa 6:10**; or, that was sung at the wine presses, as the Greek hath it, for a thanksgiving in time of vintage: This last Aben Ezra disliketh, though I see no reason why he should, *Vani heroines exponunt de torculari* (Aben-Ezra).

Chapter 8

Ver. 1. **O Lord our Lord, &c.]** The scope of this whole psalm is, to set us a wondering at and magnifying the majesty and magnificence of the Almighty; together with his inexpressible goodness to mankind; 1. In our creation in Adam. 2. In our restoration by Christ; which last is the true end of this psalm, as appeareth, **#Mt 21:15** **1Co 15:27** **Heb 2:8**.

How excellent is thy name] This David speaketh as one swallowed up with admiration at that *Nomen illud Magnificum et Maiestativum*, that glory, honour, power, wisdom, goodness, &c., that being invested in God, and manifested in the creature (God's handywork), should make us both wonder and inquire into God's excellencies, according to that of Aristotle, to admire and learn at once is a pleasant thing; and sure that which is admirable stirreth up desire to see further into it, το θαυμαστον ετοθυμητον (Arist. Rhet. 1. i. c. 11). *Admiratio peperit Philosophiam*, saith another,

Admiration brought forth philosophy: let it breed devotion in us, and a desire to praise God, who hath therefore displayed his excellencies in his works, that we might give him his due glory. The angels shouted at the creation, **#Job 38:4-6**, and shall we be dull and dumb? God tells Job of his own great works (the elephant and whale especially), and thereby brings him to a right temper. The elephant is in Chaldee called pil, of a word that signifieth wonderful; because the wonders of God's glory do so marvellously appear in him. See **#Job 40:15,16**, &c., {See Trap on "Job 40:15"} {See Trap on "Job 40:16"} The philosophers make Iris, or the rainbow, the daughter of Thaumias, or admiration (Plato); but because that when they knew God, *sc. per species Creaturarum*, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations—therefore were they given up to a reprobate sense, **#Ro 1:21,28**.

In all the earth!] Where a man cannot look beside a miracle, so full of God are all places.

Who hath set thy glory above the heavens] *Nam in eis robur Dei maxime apparet;* for in the heavens (how much more above them) doth the glory of God chiefly appear. The earth is a small point in comparison to the heavens, and is governed by them, as R. David here noteth.

Ver. 2. **Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings]** For whom God hath filled two bottles of milk against they come into the world; and in whose birth sustenance, and wonderful protection (for *Puerilitas est periculorum pelagus*), but especially in their holy and religious education, much of God's providence, power, and goodness is clearly seen and set forth to the conviction of the vilest atheists. So that, besides the earth and the heavens, we have very infants preachers of God's praises, and more effectual orators than ever were Isocrates, Demosthenes, Pericles, &c.; so our Saviour understands it, **#Mt 21:9**, where the children sang hosanna when the Pharisees were silent. It is sometimes seen, that

Ipsa Deo blandos fundant cunabula flores.

John Baptist sprang in the womb for joy of Jesus. Jerome writeth of Paula, that noble matron, that she rejoiced in nothing more than this, That she heard her niece Paula sing Hallelujah in her cradle, *In cunis balbutienti lingua Halleluiah cantare* (Hier.). Bellarmine tells us, out of Theodoret, that the children of Samosatena, playing with at tennis in the midst of the market, did solemnly cast it into the fire, because it had but touched the foot of the ass whereon Lucius the heretical bishop rode. The children of Merindal so posed and answered one another, in matters of religion, before the persecuting bishop of Cavaillon, that a religious man that stood by said unto the bishop, I must needs confess that I have often been at the disputation of the doctors in Sorbon, but yet I never learned so much as I have done by hearing these young children (Acts and Mon. fol. 865). When Mr Blecter, the bishop's chaplain, told Mr Wiseheart, the Scotch martyr, that he had a devil in him, and the spirit of error; a child that stood by answered him, saying, A devil cannot speak such words as yonder man speaketh. At the burning of John Laurence at Colchester, as he was sitting in the fire (for stand he could not, he had been so hardly used in the prison), the young children came about the fire, and cried, Lord, strengthen thy servant, and keep thy promise. Here was strength out of the mouths of little ones, taught early to speak the language of Canaan. *Sed vae, vae parentibus illis* (saith Polanus on the text), But woe, woe to those parents who make their children (whom God would have to be witnesses of his majesty) witnesses of their impiety, pride, and vanity.

That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger] *i.e.* Silence atheists and persecutors.

Ver. 3. **When I consider thy heavens]** And that men should be much in this consideration, both the bolt-upright figure of their bodies may admonish them, and also that fifth muscle which God hath set in man's eye (whereas other creatures have but four) to draw it upward, *Ut eius auxilio coelum intueremur*, saith the anatomist, that by the help thereof we might consider the heavens (Columb. de re Anatom. l. 5, c. 9). This, those Christians that do not, shall have those heathens rising up in judgment against them: Anaxagoras Clazomenius, who used to say that he was therefore born that he might contemplate the heavens; and Ennius, who blameth Epicurus for that *dum palato quid sit optimum iudicaret*,

coeli palatium non suspexerit, he did so purvey for his palace, that he looked not up to heaven's palace. Certain it is, that many men have so much to do upon earth that they cannot have while to cast an eye towards heaven, as the Duke of Alva told a great prince, who asked him if he had taken notice of the last eclipse. That wonderful globe of silver sent by King Ferdinand to Soliman, the Great Turk, lively expressing the wonderful motions and conversions of the celestial frame, the hourly passing of the time, the change and full of the moon, &c., was much more beheld and admired than heaven itself is by most people. True it is, that that globe was a most curious and strange piece of work, devised and perfected by the most cunning astronomers, for Maximilian the emperor, whose noble mind never spared for any cost to obtain things of rare and strange device. But what was all this to the heavens? that

Work of thy fingers] That is, most elaborate and accurate; a metaphor from embroiderers, or from them that make tapestry. Aben Ezra's note here is, *Digiti sunt decem, et sphaerae sunt decem*, As there are ten fingers, so there are ten spheres, &c.

The moon and the stars] No mention of the sun, because included in this word heaven; wherein by day the sun is most conspicuous, as by night, the moon and stars.

Which thou hast ordained] That was a witty speech of Cyril, They were Αθεοι κατα νυκτος, atheists by night, who worshipped the sun, and atheists by day, who worshipped the moon and stars.

Ver. 4. **What is man, that thou art mindful of him?]** Sorry, sickly man, a mass of mortalities, a map of miseries, a mixture or compound of dirt and sin? And yet God is mindful of him; he not only takes care of him in an ordinary way, as he doth other creatures, but singularly attendeth and affecteth him, as a father doth his dearest child. He is *Divini irigenii cura*, saith one; he is the end of all in a semi-circle, saith another philosopher; meaning, that all things in the world were made for man, and man made for God; neither is there so much of the glory of God in all his works of wonder as in one gracious performance of a godly person. But if we understand the text (as the apostle doth, #**Heb 2:6**) of the man Christ

Jesus, *Hic homo et filius hominis qualis et quantus est, Deus bone!*
saith Junius.

And the son of man] Heb. of earthly men; for what is the greatest potentate but *πηλός κομφώς πεφυραμενος*, a piece of clay neatly made up? (Arrian in Epictet.)

That thou visitest him?] That thou mindest him more than other creatures, and makest him Lord of all? Thy visitation preserveth his spirit, **#Job 10:12.**

Ver. 5. **For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels]** Compare here with **#Heb 2:6,7**, and it will appear that whatsoever is spoken here of man is applied to Christ, and so is proper to the saints, by virtue of their union with Christ; in which respect they are more glorious, saith one, than heaven, angels, or any creature. This is their dignity; and for their duty, they must therefore give the more earnest heed to the doctrine of the gospel, lest at any time they should leak, or let slip the same, but retain and obey it. This is the apostle's own inference, **#Heb 2:5-7**, for thus he argueth: Unto the angels God hath not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak; but to man (for whose sake the Son of God came in the flesh, for whose sake the gospel was preached, for whose sake we speak of that world to come) he hath; therefore it behoveth man to observe and obey the gospel.

And hast crowned him with glory and honour] Some refer this to the reasonable soul, whereby he not only differeth from beasts, but draweth nigh to the heavenly nature. As Rome was an epitome of the world; as Athens was the Greece of Greece; and as one said to his friend who desired to see Athens, *Viso Selene vidisti onmia*, When thou hast seen Solon thou hast seen all Athens; so man is a little world, and is therefore called every creature, **#Mr 16:15**; and the saints (in whom God's image is repaired) are called all things, **#Col 1:20**, Christ being unto them All, and in all.

Ver. 6. **Thou madest him to have dominion, &c.]** He had so at first, **#Ge 1:26**, shall have again, **#Zec 8:12 Re 21:7**; meanwhile (though *Rebellis facta est creatura homnini, quia homo numini*, the creature rebelleth against man, because man doth against God; yet) we cannot but see some footsteps remaining of that ancient

sovereignty, which the very heathens also acknowledged, and therefore fetched excellent arguments for a providence (Cicero, Plutarch, Ennius). Lions hate apes, but tear men; though *Simia quam similis, turpissima bestia, nobis*. Hereof no probable reason be given but this, that God hath put all things under man's feet; insomuch as that the most timorous men dare kick and beat the largest elephants. Indeed, by reason of sin, as was said, we see not all things subdued, #**Heb 12:8**. But why hath Nature denied to horses, asses, camels, elephants, deer, &c., a gall, which it hath given to lions, wolves, and other fierce creatures? (Bodin. Theat. Nat. p. 405). Surely herein appeareth the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God, who hath done this, that those so serviceable creatures might be the better tamed and subdued by man. Let man consider (saith one well) what excellency he hath lost through Adam's fall, and bewail his misery. Let him also, on the other side, well weigh the grace bestowed on him in Christ, and be joyful and thankful for mercy; knowing this, that if the creatures be not now subjected unto us, it is by reason of the body and relics of sin that yet remain in us; and that therefore if we would have a conquest over the creatures, we must begin first to get a victory upon sin, or else we shall never profit that way.

Thou hast put all things under his feet] The earth hath its name from treading upon it, *Terra a terendo*, teaching us, 1. To trample upon earthly things, as base and bootless; not to dote upon them without hearts, nor grasp them over greedily with our hands; as that covetous Cardinal Sylberperger, who took so great felicity in money, that when he was grievously tormented with the gout, his only remedy to ease his pain was, to have a bason full of gold set before him, into which he would put his lame hands, turning the gold upside down. But if silver and gold be a man's happiness, then it is in the earth, and so (which is strange) nearer hell than heaven, and so nearer the devil than God. The ancient Romans had for a difference in their nobility, a little ornament in the form of a moon, to show that all worldly things were mutable; and they wore it upon their shoes, to show that they trod all under their feet. 2. By this posture of all things under man's feet, God would teach him to use them as a stirrup, for the raising of his heart to those things above. A sanctified fancy can make every creature a ladder to heaven, and

say, with that Father, *Si tanti vitreum quanti rerum margaritum!* If this trash be so highly esteemed, how much more the true treasure!

Ver. 7. **All sheep and oxen, &c.**] There are beasts *ad esum et ad usum*, saith one. Some are profitable dead, not alive, as the hog; some alive, not dead, as the dog, horse, &c.; some both, as the ox; yet none so profitable as the sheep, who hath wool for raiment, skin for parchment, flesh for meat, guts for music, and was, therefore, in sacrifice so frequently offered.

Ver. 8. **The fowl of the air**] These Moses seemeth to have forgotten, in that discontented speech of his, #Nu 11:22, but God sent those murmmurers such a drift of quails (meat of kings, with their bread of angels) as he could not have imagined or hoped for.

And the fish of the sea] *Piscis* of Pasco. Many islands are maintained and people fed by fish. In the Hebrew the same word signifieth a pond, or fish pool, and a blessing. And surely it is a blessing to any country that they have plenty and dainty of these good creatures.

And whatsoever passeth, &c.] As whales, and other great fishes, which make a smooth path in a calm sea, as a ship or a boat doth, #Job 41:32, &c. {See Trapp on "Job 41:32"}

Ver. 9. **O Lord our Lord, &c.**] *Prius incipit Propheta mirari quam loqui, et desinit loqui non mirari.* The psalmist endeth as he began, transported with an ecstasy of admiration. So he begins and ends many of his psalms with Hallelujah. Between God and us the distance is infinite; and, if it were possible, our love and thankfulness should fill up that distance, and extend itself to infiniteness, saith a grave divine.

Upon Muth-labben] This was the name of a certain instrument, say some; the beginning of a song, say others, to the tune whereof this psalm was to be sung. Montanus and many more hold it to be an anagrammatism, and render it, For the death of Nabal, viz. by a covert intimation, and inversion of the letters. So in the title of #Ps 7:1, *Cush Beniemini* for Kish the Benjamite. That is,

Parcere nominibus, dicere de vitiis.

Chapter 9

Ver. 1. **I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart** This is a gratulatory psalm, wherein David shows his thankfulness, which a very heathen calleth *Maximam imo matrem omnium virtutum reliquarum*, the mother of all the rest of the virtues (Cicero). True thankfulness, as one well observeth, is here and in the next verse described, 1. By the matter of it. 2. By the manner. First, for matter, the psalmist delivereth it in four parts. 1. The acknowledging of God in all. 2. A ciphering and summing up of special mercies (of פֶּסֶם seems to come Cipher). 3. An expression of spiritual joy in God, as well as in his gifts. 4. A dedication of our songs and selves to his name.

Secondly, for the manner, he presseth, 1. Integrity for the subject and object, **#Ps 9:1 2**. Sincerity for affection and end, **#Ps 9:2**.

Ver. 2. **I will be glad and rejoice in thee]** Spiritual cheerfulness is the mother of thankfulness, **#Jas 5:13**. Birds, when got in the air, or on the top of trees, and have taken up a stand to their mind, sing most sweetly.

O thou most High] God was so first called by Melchizedek, upon a like occasion as here by David, **#Ge 14:19,20**. The Greeks might have their ἥλιος, for the sun, which they worshipped, from this Hebrew *Helion*, most High.

Ver. 3. **When mine enemies]** This, Tremellius maketh to be the form of praise which the psalmist professeth that he will sing to God, and rendereth it thus, That mine enemies returning back are fallen, &c.

And perish at thy presence] The victory is of God, and to him alone to be ascribed. The Romans in their triumphs presented a palm to Jupiter. The Grecians also thankfully ascribed to Jupiter their deliverance from the Persians, wrought by Themistocles, and there hence called him ἐλευθεριος, that is, *deliverer*.

Ver. 4. **For thou hast maintained my right]** Heb. Thou hast done me judgment. *Locus hic insignis est*, saith Polanus. This is an excellent place, and maketh much to the comfort of God's poor people that are oppressed by the world; the righteous Judge will not fail to right them. See **#Lu 18:7,8**.

Ver. 5. **Thou hast rebuked the heathen, &c.**] God first chideth the Church's enemies by lighter judgments; if these be not improved, he destroyeth them, #Ps 119:21; and, because they sought to obscure and extirpate his name from among men, therefore he puts out their name, that is, their fame and reputation, for ever and yet, or for ever and a day, as we use to say: *Ingloria vita recedit*, they go out in a snuff, as did the primitive and modern persecutors, of abhorred memory.

Ver. 6. **O thou enemy**] The same whom he called wicked one in the former verse; where the word wicked is of the singular number: *q.d.* O thou implacable wretch, that wouldst never be reconciled till thou wast ruined; which now thou art, &c. Some read it interrogatively, and with it ironically, O enemy, are destructions come to an end? and cities so wasted that they can never be repaired? *q.d.* So indeed thou hast designed it, but art fairly disappointed. And the like befell Antiochus, Nero, Dioclesian, Philip II of Spain, Charles IX of France, and other bloody persecutors, with their devilish thoughts and threats; which they could never effect and accomplish.

Their memorial is perished with them] Heb. Of them, of them (twice), for more vehemency. The Vulgate (alter the Greek) hath it *cum sonitu*, with a humming noise, so that the sound thereof ringeth all the world over. R. David rendereth it, *Memoria eorum periit; suntne illi?* Their memorial is perished; have they yet a being anywhere?

Ver. 7. **But the Lord shall endure for ever**] *Vivit Christus regnatque; alioqui lotus desperassem*, said that good Dutch divine, upon the view of the Church's enemies; *i.e.* Christ liveth and reigneth for ever, setting one foot on the earth and the other on the sea, as Lord of both; otherwise I should have been altogether hopeless. "Blessed be God that he is God," was a learned divine's motto.

Ver. 8. **And he shall judge the world, &c.**] See on #Ps 9:4.

Ver. 9. **The Lord also will be a refuge, &c.**] Heb. a high tower, *edita, arx*, wherein men are secured, and escape the impressions of an enemy. The very lame and blind, those most shiftless creatures, when they had gotten stronghold of Zion over their heads, thought that then they might securely scorn David and his host, #2Sa 5:6,7; yet their hold failed them. So did the tower of Shechem those that

ran into it. Not so the Almighty his poor oppressed. Universal experience sealeth to this truth; neither can one instance be given of the contrary. Higgaion. Selah. It is reported of the Egyptians, that, living in the fens, and being vexed with gnats, they use to sleep in high towers, whereby, those creatures not being able to soar so high they are delivered from the biting of them (Herod. lib. 2); so would it be with us, when bitten with cares and fears, did we but run to God for refuge, and rest confident in his help.

Ver. 10. **And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee]** They can do no otherwise that savingly know God's sweet attributes and noble acts for his people. We never trust a man till we know him, and bad men are better known than trusted. Not so the Lord, for where his name is poured out as an ointment, there the virgins love him, fear him, rejoice in him, repose upon him.

Them that seek thee] So they do it seriously, seasonably, constantly.

Ver. 11. **Sing praises to the Lord, &c.]** This is the guise of godly people, to provoke others to praise God, as being unsatisfiable in their desires of doing him that service, and as deeming that others see him as they do *totum totum desiderabilem*, worthy to be praised, #Ps 18:3, highly to be admired, #Ps 9:1 of this psalm.

Ver. 12. **When he maketh inquisition for blood]** For innocent blood unjustly spilled; as he did for the blood of Abel, #Ge 4:10, of Naboth, (#2Ki 9:26, "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth." Murder ever bleeds fresh in the eyes of God) of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, #2Ch 24:22; those ungrateful guests, who slew those that came to call them: "And when the king heard it" (for blood cries aloud), "he was wroth, and destroyed those murderers," #Mt 22:6,7. These shall have blood to drink, for they are worthy, #Re 16:6. God draws articles of inquiry in this case as strict and as critical as ever the Inquisition of Spain doth; the proceedings whereof are with greatest secrecy and severity.

He forgetteth not the cry of the humble] Heb. of the poor, lowly, meek, afflicted. Humility and meekness are *collactanae*, twin-sisters, as Bernard hath it.

Ver. 13. **Have mercy upon me, O Lord, &c.]** These are the words (say some) of those humble ones whom God forgetteth not; they

were God's remembrancers, see **#Isa 62:6**: or it is a prayer of David for further deliverances, according to that, "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised," **#Ps 18:3**. Between praising and praying he divided his time, and drove a holy trade between heaven and earth.

Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death] *i.e.* *Ex praesentissimo et certissimo interitu*, from desperate and deadly dangers, such as threaten present destruction; and show a man the grave even gaping for him. David was oft at this pass; and God delivered Paul from so great a death, **#2Co 1:10**: he commonly reserveth his hand for a dead lift, and rescueth those who were even talking of their graves.

Ver. 14. **That I may show forth all thy praise]** *i.e.* All that I can compass or attain unto. *Aliter omnes laudes Dei diei non possunt, quia plures ignorat homo quam novit*, saith R. David here; for all the praises of God cannot be shown forth, since those we know not are more than those we know.

In the gates of the daughter of Zion] These are opposed to the gates of death, as Aben Ezra here noteth; and betoken the most public places, and best frequented.

Ver. 15. **The heathen are sunk down, &c.]** *Hoc est initium cantici Sanctorum*, Thi is the beginning of the sacred songs, saith AbenEzra. This is the beginning of the saints' song, knit to the former verse thus: saying, The heathen, &c.

In the net which they hid, &c.] To hunters they are compared for cruelty, and to fowlers for craft. But see their success: they are sunk down in their own pit, caught in their own net. Thus it befell Pharaoh, **#Ex 15:9,10**, Jabin and Sisera, **#Jud 4:15,22,23**, Sennacherib, **#2Ch 32:21**, Antiochus Epiphanes, Maxentius the tyrant, who fell into the river Tiber, from his own false bridge laid for Constantine (Euseb. lib. 9, rap. 9), the Spanish Armada, our gunpowder Papists, &c. {See Trapp on "Ps 7:15"}

Ver. 16. **The Lord is known by the judgment, &c.]** The heathen historian Herodotus observed, that the ruin of Troy served to teach men that God punisheth great sinners with heavy plagues. "Go up to Shiloh," &c

The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands] Heb. palms, hollows, noting the close conveyance of his wicked plots and practices, but for his own mischief.

Higgaion. Selah] Ainsworth rendereth it Meditation Selah; meaning that this is a matter of deep meditation, worthy to be well minded, and spoken or sung with earnest consideration always. The word is found only here and **#Ps 92:3**, where also the wonderful works of God are discoursed. R. Solomon's note here is, *Ultimum iudicium debet esse continua meditatio*, The last judgment should be continually thought upon.

Ver. 17. **The wicked shall be turned into hell]** Heb. into into hell (twice), that is, into the nethermost hell, the lowest dungeon of hell. The word lesheolah hath a vehement inforcement from ך local, as grammarians call it, and importeth that they shall be cast into outer darkness, *In tenebras ex tenebris infeliciter exclusi, infeliciter excludendi* (August.). R. Solomon's note here is, they shall be carried away from hell to judgment, and from judgment they shall be returned to the deepest pit of hell. This, if men did but believe, they durst not do as they do, as once Cato said to Caesar.

And all the nations] The wicked, be they never so many of them, they may not think to escape for their multitudes, as among mutineers in an army, the tenth man sometimes is punished, the rest go free.

Ver. 18. **For the needy shall not always be forgotten]** Because he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. The Lord is at hand to help those that are forsaken in their hopes. Julian Lining was apprehended by Dale the promoter (in Queen Mary's days), who said unto him, You hope and hope, but your hope shall be aslope. For though the queen fail, she that you hope for shall never come at it; for there is my Lord Cardinal's grace and many others between her and it, &c. But the cardinal died soon after the queen, and (according to father Latimer's prayer) Elizabeth was crowned, and England yet once more looked upon (Acts and Mon. 1871).

Ver. 19. **Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail]** Prayers are the Church's weapons, her *bombardae et instrumenta bellica* (Luther),

whereby she is terrible as an army with banners; she prays down her enemies.

Ver. 20. **Put them in fear, O Lord]** Strike them with a panic terror, as once the Canaanites, Philistines, #1Sa 5; Syrians, #2Ki 7:6,7; Germans, in the war against the Hussites, &c. Some read it, Put a law upon them, bridle them, bound them, as thou hast done the sea, #Job 38:11. The Greek and Syriac favour this reading.

That the nations may know themselves to be but men] And not gods, as that proud prince of Tyrus, #Eze 27, and Antiochus, who would needs be styled Θεος, to such a height of pride will persecutors grow, if they prosper, and he not taken a link lower, as we say. *Homo, id est fracti*, saith R. Obad. on this text; men, that is, broken, cracked creatures, *morbis mortiquo obnoxii*, woeful wights, sorry and sickly captives. This to know savingly is the beginning of true humility, saith Augustine here.

Chapter 10

Ver. 1. **Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?]** As if thou hadst forgotten what thou hadst promised thy people in the formed psalm; which the Greek and Latin versions make to be one and the same with this, as having no title, and tending almost to the same purpose. Hence the difference in numbers, which holdeth almost to the end of the psalter, viz. to Psalm 148.

Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?] So God seemeth to do when he helpeth not presently; neither doth anything more trouble the saints in affliction than the want of God's gracious presence. This maketh them thus to expostulate and lament after the Lord; not quarrel, as those hypocrites did, #Isa 58:3, or revile, as Caligula did his Jupiter, taking up that verse in Homer, Ζευ πατερ ουτις σειο Θεων ολοωτερος αλλος, or with him (little better) in the holy history, who said, "Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any lenger?" #2Ki 6:33. The good soul knows that God waiteth to be gracious; and as he seldom cometh at our time, so at his own (which is ever the best) time he never faileth.

Ver. 2. **The wicked in his pride doth persecute, &c.]** Heb. hotly pursueth (εμπουριζεται. Chrysost.), and that out of his pride, the true cause of persecution, whatever else is pretended. And this is fitly

here alleged, and urged as an argument to move God to make haste. See #De 32:27: The saints fare the better for the insolence and outrage of their enemies, whose ruin is thereby accelerated, and somewhat God will do the sooner for his people, lest the enemy exalt himself, #Ps 140:8, and say, Our hand is high, the Lord hath not done this.

Let them be taken in the devices, &c.] As all persecutors are sure to be in which regard Tertullian well adviseth Scapula, *Si nobis non parcis, tibi parce; si non tibi, Carthagini*: If thou wilt not spare us Christians, yet spare thyself; or if not thyself, yet thy city Carthage, which else will smart and smoke for thy cruelty.

Ver. 3. **For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire]** Though the soul of the wicked desire evil, #Pr 21:10, yet he glorieth in it, as did that thrasonical Lamech, #Ge 4:23,24, and that pyrgopolynices Nebuchadnezzar, #Isa 10:9-12 Da 4:30,31. See #Ps 52:1 Php 3:19. This the just and jealous God cannot bear, as neither that which followeth.

And blesseth the covetous] *Ut sapientem et providum*, as a wise man and good husband. So they in Malachi, who said, "And now we count the proud happy," &c. *Felix scelus virtus vocatur* (Seneca).

Whom the Lord abhorreth] Smiting his hands with indignation at his dishonest gain, #Eze 22:13, like as Balak did at Balsam, with whom he was deeply displeased, #Nu 24:10.

Ver. 4. **The wicked, through the pride of his countenance]** That is, of his heart, appearing in his countenance, as a master pock in his forehead. For pride buddeth, #Eze 7:10; the pride of Israel testifieth to his face, #Ho 5:5; the thoughts are oft seen in the countenance; and the heart is printed upon the face, #Isa 3:9. It is a hard thing, saith one, to have a brazen face and a broken heart.

Will not seek] He thinks it not necessary or worth the while; and his practice is agreeable, that is, naught all over. Pride in the soul is like a great swelling in the body, which, besides that it is a dangerous symptom, unfits it for any good service; and is apt to putrefy and to break, and to run with loathsome and foul matter. So doth pride disable the soul from doing duty, and at last breaketh forth into

odious deeds, abominable to God and men. It is observed, that the ground whereon the peacock useth to sit is by that occasion made exceeding barren; so where pride roosteth and reigneth, no good groweth.

God is not in all his thoughts] God is neither in his head, as here, nor in his heart, #Ps 14:1, nor in his words, #Ps 12:4, nor in his ways, #Tit 1:16; he is wholly without God in the world, #Eph 2:1-3, he studies atheism, and all his thoughts are, There is no God, so this text may be read, he would fain so persuade himself.

Ver. 5. **His ways are always grievous]** As he pleaseth not God, so he is contrary and vexatious to men, *Viae eius semper terrent*, so Aben Ezra. The psalmist here noteth him for such a one as the Cyclopes are set forth to have been by the poets.

Thy judgments are far above out of his sight] He looketh not so high, but reckoneth that *quae supra nos nihil ad nos*. If he read them at any time, he regardeth them as little as he doth the story of foreign wars, wherein he is not concerned.

As for all his enemies, he puffeth at them] He holdeth himself man good enough to make his party good with them, and that he can overthrow them all with a puff. He defieth them and domineereth over them, as the Greek renders it, κατακυριεπει (Sept.), εκφουσα (Chrysost.).

Ver. 6. **He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved]** So said a better man once, #Ps 30:6, but he was quickly confuted. If a believer conclude, by the force of his faith, that he shall never be moved from that good estate in which Christ hath set him, this is the triumph of trust, and not the vain vaunt of presumption.

For I shall never be in adversity] The Chaldee hath it, *Quoniam non sum in malo*; and understandeth it as the evil of sin, as #Ex 32:22, and then the sense is, because the wicked man suffereth not the punishment of sin, therefore he conceiveth that he is innocent, and without sin. See #Ho 12:8, {See Trapp on "Ho 12:8"}

Ver. 7. **His mouth is full of cursing and deceit]** Such cursing men are cursed men; and for such slippery and deceitful persons the Lord is the avenger of all such, #1Th 4:8.

Under his tongue is mischief] That is, in his heart, which is by nature placed beneath the tongue, making its use of it for much mischief, #Mt 12:34 Jas 3:8. The word *Toch*, here rendered fraud, signifieth, properly, the middle of anything, *Quoniam fraus in medio cordis est*, saith R. David, because fraud is in the middle of the heart, and therehence sent into the mouth.

Ver. 8. **He sitteth in the lurking places, &c.]** A. description of a highway robber, saith Diodati, under which name are meant all violent and fraudulent men, and their actions.

Ver. 9. **He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den]** See #Job 38:40, {See Trapp on "Job 38:40"}

When he draweth him into his net] That is, into his bonds, debts, mortgages, saith Chrysostom. When a poor man is once gotten into these nets, wicked oppressors do not only rob but ravish them; coining their money upon poor men's skins, and wringing the sponges of poor people into their own purses. David compareth them to cannibals, #Ps 14:4, to greedy lions here. Another saith they are like the fish polypus, that lying in wait for other fishes upon the rock, assimilateth to the rock and taketh them in his net, which he hath naturally behind his head, and can spread at his pleasure, before they find themselves in danger (Sir Richard Berkley's Summum Bonum).

Ver. 10. **He croucheth (or crusheth), and humbleth himself]** Lion like, #Job 38:40. He can sow the fox's skin to the lion's hide for a need, and to compass his design. As proud as he is, yet in subtlety he can abase himself; and, with glavering speeches and fawning behaviour, indirectly endeavour the overthrow of the innocent and distressed. To which purpose he can put himself to pain, feign himself sick and in a dying condition (as those do that stand for the popedom), counterfeit and pretend humility, but all is hypocrisy, *Seipsum aegrum, et attritum fingit* (of David).

That the poor may fall by his strong ones] Whether teeth or paws. *Per impia decreta*, saith R. Obadiah, by his wicked decrees, by the hands of his *privados*, desperate assassins, saith another expositor.

Ver. 11. **He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten]** That is, he knoweth it not, regardeth it not. To learn is nothing else but to remember, said Socrates; and what a man hath utterly forgotten it is all one as if he had never known it; #2Pe 1:9, he "hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins," that is, he was never purged. See #Ps 10:4.

Ver. 12. **Arise, O Lord]** *Surge, age, summe Pater*; said Mantuan to the pope, stirring him up against the Turks; may we better say to the Almighty God, against his people's enemies,

O God, lift up thine hand Lift it up on high, that it may fall down the more heavily. In the first verse of this psalm the prophet complained that God stood afar off, and hid himself in time of trouble, Here he is entreated to arise, to come near, to put forth his hand for his people's help, &c.

Ver. 13. **Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God?] q.d.** It is time for thee, Lord, to arise and bestir thyself; for otherwise what will become of thy great name? The saints cannot endure that God should be slighted.

He hath said in his heart] #Ps 10:3,4. This sticks in David's stomach, and draws this prayer from him, who was now blessedly blown up with a holy zeal for God; as was also good Zuinglius, when he said, *In aliis mansuetus ero, in blasphemiiis in Christum non ita*, In other matters I can be mild and patient, but not so in case of blasphemy against Christ.

Ver. 14. **Thou hast seen it]** For thou art All-eye, whatever the wicked conceiteth to the contrary, making thee a God of clouts, as they say, or a heathen idol, which is nothing in the world.

To requite it with thy hand] *Reponendo in manu tua*, by taking it in thy hand, so some render it, *sc. ut propius intuearis, certius consideres, diiudices et vindices*, that thou mayest take a more near and narrow view of it, and duly punish it (Aben-Ezra).

The poor committeth himself unto thee] Heb. leaveth, *relinquit seipsum, et currit ad te*, he relinquisheth himself, and runneth unto thee, *Relinquit in te onus suum* (R. Solomon). Now, whosoever

committeth himself and his affairs to God shall be sure to find him a faithful depository.

Thou art the helper of the fatherless] The world's refuge, as the Grand Seignior is called; The poor man's king, as James V, of Scotland. In God "the fatherless findeth mercy," #**Ho 14:3**. And these arguments David useth in his prayer, not to move God to hear and help, but to work upon his own heart thereby, and to persuade himself to more faith, love, obedience, humility, thankfulness, whereby we are the better fitted for mercy. When a man in a ship plucks a rock it seemeth as if he plucketh the rock nearer the ship, when as, indeed, the ship is plucked nearer the reck. So is it in this case: we seem to persuade God by our arguments, when as, indeed, the change is not wrought in him, but only in ourselves; our arguments are *curarum nostrarum levamenta, et fiducia impetrandi augmenta*, the cure of our cares, and props to our faith of obtaining.

Ver. 15. **Break thou the arm of the wicked]** That arm that hath been lifted up against the godly. See #**Ps 3:8 58:7**.

Seek out his wickedness till thou find none] *Ad alios vel inficiendos, vel infestandos, #Eze 23:48*. Or, leave no sin of his unpunished. The Franciscans, to prove that Francis, the founder of their order, was without sin, foolishly allege this text, *Quaeretur peccatum illius et non inveniatur*; wherein (according to the sense of the psalmist) what do they else but wish that God would trace him quite through the course and trade of his iniquities, even to the uttermost end of them, and punish him accordingly; which is done, no doubt, long since.

Ver. 16. **The Lord is King for ever and ever]** Therefore he will doubtless do whatsoever hath been before desired, and much more than we can ask or think. Many kings have been long lived, as was Artaxerxes Mnemon, who reigned 62 years; Augustus Caesar, 56; Queen Elizabeth, 44, &c.; but died at length, to the great grief of their subjects and servants, who are ready to wish (as once the Romans did concerning Augustus) that either they had never been or never died. But God is the King immortal, invisible, &c.

The heathen are perished out of his land] The enemies, whether Jews or Gentiles, are rid out of his Church; for that is God's land by a specialty, his peculiar portion.

Ver. 17. **Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble]** The whole life of a good Christian is a holy desire, saith Austin. And the desires of the righteous shall be satisfied, **#Pr 10:24**, because they are framed by the Holy Spirit, according to the will of God, **#Ro 8:27**, and they bare the mind of Christ, **#1Co 2:16**, who knoweth the mind of the Spirit, **#Ro 8:27**, though their desires be not uttered, **#Ro 8:26**.

Thou wilt prepare their heart] *In removendis ab illo mundi negotiis*, saith R. David, and by putting them into a praying frame, and so fitting them for mercy. Where God giveth a praying heart it is sure that he will show a pitying heart. If he prepare the heart, he will also bend his ear; like as when we bid our children ask us for this or that, we mean to give it them; and as when we open a purse as wide as we can pull it, it is a sign we intend to fill it to the top.

Thou wilt cause thine ear to hear] Even while they are preparing, and before they can speak, many times, **#Isa 65:24**; or while they are praying, as **#Da 9:20 Ac 4:31**, or not long after; they shall be sure to have out their prayers, either in money or in money's worth, as they say.

Ver. 18. **To judge the fatherless, &c]** The Vulgate hath it, to judge for the fatherless and for the oppressed. It is one thing (saith Austin) to judge the fatherless and another thing to judge for him; this latter is to pass sentence on his side; which God, the righteous Judge, will be sure to do without writhing or warping; for he hath all that is required of a judge originally and eminently, viz. wisdom, justice, courage, constance, and power.

That the man of the earth may no more oppress] Or, terrify, daunt with terror, as **#Php 1:28**. *{See Trapp on "Php 1:28"}* Why should one man be terrible to another, since we are all *mortales e terra*, worms of the earth, clods of clay, and shall shortly return to the dust whence we were taken? *unde superbit homo?* "I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? And where is the fury of the oppressor?" #Isa 51:12,13. Some observe that the close of this psalm is much like that of the former. How they have been taken (by the Greek Fathers especially) for one entire psalm. {See Trapp on "Ps 10:1"}

Chapter 11

Ver. 1. **In the Lord put I my trust]** This was that which David had and held, wherewith to answer him that reproached him (and it was an excellent good one), that he trusted in God's word, #Ps 119:42. When it was that he gave this answer, "In the Lord put I my trust" (whether when Saul's courtiers, under pretence of friendship, counselled him to quit the court for fear of Saul, which he was very loth to do, see the like #Ne 6:10 Lu 13:31, or else when he was with Samuel at Naioth, #1Sa 19:18, &c., where his carnal friends might advise him, as Peter did his Master, #Mt 16:22, with a *Fuge, fuge, David, cite, citius, citissime* Flee, flee david, quick, quicker, most quickly), is uncertain. But this is certain, that all the troops of ungodliness aim and act vigorously to cast down the castle of confidence we have in God. This, therefore, we must be sure to secure, as the serpent doth his head, the soldier his shield, #Eph 6:16. This is the victory whereby we overcome the world (with its allurements or affrightments) even our faith, #1Jo 5:4. The believer walketh about as a conqueror; and he alone is the man whom the heathen poet elegantly describeth (Horat. Carm. lib. iii. Od. 7):

*Iustum et tenacem propositi virum,
Non civium ardor prava iubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni
Mente quatit solida, &c.*

*Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinae.*

The poet instanceth in Hercules and Bacchus, but had he known of David, Moses, Micah, Nehemiah, Daniel and his three friends, &c., he would rather have pitched upon them, or some others of those worthies of whom the world was not worthy, #Heb 11:38.

Flee as a bird to your mountain?] Get you gone, you and your followers (the Hebrew word flee is plural), or flee to your mountain, O bird; see you not the fowler's snare? and will you not away with all speed? Thus they sought to fright him (as birds are fearful, #**Isa 16:2**), and to make him flee from his place, as a bird fleeth from her nest, #**Pr 27:8**. But he was never without his cordial, the same that relieved him at the sack of Ziklag, where, in the fail of all other comforts, he "encouraged himself in the Lord his God," #**1Sa 30:6**, he knew that, as birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend his people; defending also he will deliver them, and passing over he will preserve them, #**Isa 31:5**. This, though it were not written in David's days, yet he had the good assurance of it in his soul.

Ver. 2. **For, lo, the wicked bend their bow]** *sc.* To shoot at you, a silly bird; you were best therefore to be packing, and not to stay till you come tumbling down, as a bird fetched off with a bolt. *Nam ecce iniquitis impii apposuerunt pedem arcui* (Beza). This hath ever been the guise of the Church's enemies, and is still, to terrify her (if they could) and affright her out of her faith and true religion. Nebuchadnezzar, for instance, Antiochus, that little antichrist, the primitive persecutors, and still the Papists, with their cruel inquisition, and otherwise. But what saith the apostle, In nothing be terrified by your adversaries, #**Php 1:28**. Be not afraid with any amazement, #**1Pe 3:6**. *Nos quidem neque expavescimus neque pertimescimus ea quae ab ignorantibus patimur*, saith Tertullian, We fear not what any of you can do to us, do your worst (*Ad Scapulain*). *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor*, said Luther, I care not for Rome's frowns or fair looks. This the blind world counteth and calleth silliness or stubbornness, but they know not the force of faith nor the privy armour of proof that the saints have about their hearts. They make ready their arrow upon the string, not in the quiver, as the Vulgate reads it.

That they may privily shoot Heb. to shoot in the darkness; so that, although the saints hide themselves in caves and dark corners, yet they are ferreted out thence by their persecutors, as David was by Saul often. And this some hold to be the meaning of that place, #**Ps 74:20**, "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of

cruelty"; that is, we can hide ourselves nowhere but the persecutors find us out.

Ver. 3. **If the foundations be destroyed**] If all things be turned "topsy turvy" in the state, and no regard had to right or wrong, *Sed vi geritur res, ut in regno Cyclopico*; if Saul, notwithstanding mine alliance to him, and innocence toward him, his many fair promises to me, and those hazards and hardships I have suffered for his sake, will needs go on to hunt me up and down, as a partridge in the mountains, and to seek mine utter undoing, what can I do to help it? how can it be but the most righteous must have his share of sufferings? See **#Ps 82:5**.

What can the righteous do?] More than glorify God, by suffering his will, and patiently wait for better times, comforting himself (as in the next verse) in this confidence, that God is in heaven, &c. Some render it, What hath the righteous done? The wicked will say that he hath undone all, and that David with his accomplices are the causes of all the public calamities and confusions. So the primitive persecutors charged the Christians (*Christianos ad leones*. Tertul.), and Papists do still the Protestants, to be the troublers of the states, the seed men of sedition, the disturbers of the Church's peace, &c., when as indeed themselves are *flagella Reip. flabella seditionis*, the only traitors and troublers of Israel; with Athaliah, they cry out, Treason, treason, when they themselves are the greatest traitors and incendiaries of Christendom. We may confidently say, with the psalmist, The foundations are destroyed, but what hath the righteous done? Some render the words thus, But those purposes or counsels (of Saul and his flatterers, **#Ps 11:2**) shall be destroyed (Saul shall be frustrated in his hope, therefore I will not flee into the mountains), but what hath the righteous done? That is, I have done nothing unrighteously against Saul, therefore I will not fly, &c.

Ver. 4. **The Lord is in his holy temple**] *i.e.* In heaven, and there hence he both can and will do much for the relief of his poor oppressed, though the righteous can do little for themselves, *Ubi deficit auxilium humanum incipit divinum* (Philo). He also knows, and will clear their innocence; for he sits between the cherubims, whence he is wont to send help, **#Ps 20:3**, and hath his throne in heaven, whence he is wont to strike terror into the enemies, **#Ps 18:8**, &c.

The Lord's throne is in heaven] This is the same with the former, serving to set forth God's sufficiency, as the following words do his efficiency, those props of David's faith, answerable to Jachin and Boaz, those two brazen pillars in Solomon's temple, *Dei solium est nostrum asylum*.

His eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men] The eye of God is taken in Scripture (saith one) either for his knowledge or for his judgment; his eye in this text pointeth out his knowledge, his eyelids his critical descant. It is a manner of speech, saith another, taken from those men's actions who, being desirous to look upon a thing more intently, do wink with their eyes, or close up one of them, that they may see the better with the other.

Ver. 5. **The Lord trieth the righteous]** Or approveth, as #**Jas 1:12**; he justifieth and accepteth him, as appeareth by the opposition here. The Vulgate rendereth it thus: *Deus interrogat iustum et impium, sc. quia per interrogatoria veritas dignoscitur*: The Lord interrogateth the just and the wicked, *sc.* that so he may sift out the truth of things. But neither doth the Hebrew word so signify, nor doth God need any such help.

His soul hateth] *i.e.* He can in no wise away with; and this is spoken of God after the manner of men, for fury, hatred, and the like affections are not in him. If it could be said of Trajan the emperor, that he neither feared nor hated any man, how much more of God! And if of the tribunal at Zante, much better of God's throne:

*Hic locus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, iura, bonos.*

Ver. 6. **Upon the wicked he shall rain snares]** His soul hateth them; and as revenge is the next effect of hatred, he will exercise horrible judgments upon them. Go on they may in their wicked ways for a time, and happily think to outrun wrath, but it shall easily overtake them, and inevitably: for the first thing that God shall rain upon them is snares, to catch and hold them fast, that they may surely suffer the rest that follow. "Take him, and lead him away safely," saith Judas concerning Jesus to the soldiers, #**Mr 14:44**. And the same in effect saith God to his judgments concerning the wicked, on

whom for that purpose he raineth snares, *i.e.* he suddenly surpriseth them; as by unexpected foul weather.

Fire and brimstone] Hell from heaven, as once upon Sodom and her sisters, figuring the vengeance of eternal fire, #**Jude 7 Re 20:10**, where the sacrifice is salted with fire, #**Mr 9:49**, that is, burneth, but consumeth not, fire being of a burning, but salt of a preserving nature, *Perdit sed non disperdit, et cruciat ita ut nunquam perimat* (Camero.). Tophet is of the most tormenting temper, the fuel thereof is fire, and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of fire, doth kindle it, #**Isa 30:33**. *Utinam ubique, de Gehenna dissereretur*, saith a Father, Oh that men would think and talk much of hell! Oh that they would take a turn in it; and, taking a view of that formidable fire fed with a river of brimstone, and blown by the breath of the Almighty, they would hasten out of their natural condition, as Lot did out of Sodom; since there is the smell of the fire and brimstone already upon them!

And an horrible tempest] *Ventus procellosissimus*, a most terrible blasting whirlwind, such as the Greeks call Prester; whereof see Plin. lib. 2, c. 48, and the Evangelist calleth Euroclydon, #**Ac 27:14**, the mariner's mischief.

This shall be the portion of their cup] *Vel, portio partis eorum, id est, ipsissima eorum portio; duplicatur idem sensus duobus verbis*, saith R. David. He seemeth to allude to the custom at feasts, where each had his cup, his *demensum*, or measure of meat and drink. Wicked ones shall drink up the cup of God's wrath (worse than that cup of boiling lead poured down the drunken Turk's throat by the command of the bashaw), though it be brimful, and have eternity to the bottom, #**Ps 75:8**.

Ver. 7. **For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness]** *sc.* As a reflection of himself, as a piece of his own image. This is better than eyes opened, limbs restored, #**Ps 146:8**.

His countenance] Heb. countenances, or their faces, in mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Doth behold the upright] With singular delight and complacency (*Vide Vicars* in loc.).

Chapter 12

Ver. 1. **Help, Lord]** It was high time to call to heaven for help when Saul cried, Go, kill me up the priests of Jehovah (the occasion, as it is thought, of making this psalm), and therein committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, as some grave divines are of the opinion, **#1Sa 22:17**. David, after many sad thoughts about that slaughter, and the occasion of it, Doeg's malicious information, together with the paucity of his fast friends and the multitude of his sworn enemies at court, breaks forth abruptly into these words, "Help, Lord," help at a dead lift. The Arabic version hath it, Deliver me by main force, as with weapons of war, for the Lord is a man of war, **#Ex 15:3**.

For the godly man ceaseth] Heb. the merciful man, who, having obtained mercy from thee, would show me mercy, and defend mine innocence; such as these are banished the court, which is now possessed by parasites and sycophants.

For the faithful fail] *Veraces*, the true and trusty ones, such as a man may safely confide in; these are rare birds. See **#Mic 7:1-3, &c.**, {See Trapp on "Mic 7:1"} {See Trapp on "Mic 7:2"} {See Trapp on "Mic 7:3"} When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith (in this sense also) in the earth? **#Lu 18:8**, hard and scarce. When Varus was slain Augustus complained that now he had none left that would deal plainly and faithfully with him. Lewis XI of France would say, that he had plenty of all things but of one. And being asked of what? Of truth, quoth he, Aurelian the emperor was brought and sold by his counsellors, for he might know nothing but as they informed him. David complaineth of Saul, that he was too apt to hearken to every claw back tell tale, **#1Sa 24:9 26:19**, so that he could have no fair dealing.

Ver. 2. **They speak vanity every one with his neighbour]** They speak falsely and fraudulently, and therein have an art, as **#Jer 9:4,5**, such as the devil hath taught them.

With flattering lips] *Blandientibus, vel dividitibus.* The Syriac version hath it, with dividing lips, such as separate very friends.

With a double heart do theft speak] Heb. With a heart and a heart. So Horace saith of Ulysses (Ode. 6, *Animus versutulus et versatilis*).

Cursus doplicis per mare Ulysssei.

The prophet here meaneth that they had one heart in their body, and another in their mouth, being desperate dissemblers, such as the French are said to be. Those men of Zebulun were none such, **#1Ch 12:33.**

Ver. 3. **The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips]** As a rotten member is cut off from the body— *Ne pars sincera trahatur*, or as a barren tree is stocked up, that it cumber not the ground. There is a wonderful sympathy between princes and parasites, whose song is *Mihi placet, quicquid regi placet*, and whose practice is to speak *suavia potius quam sans*, sweet rather than sound things. But God will cut off such lips (taking notice of the offending member), as he dealt by Doeg, Ahithophel, Shebna, Shemaiah the Nehelamite, **#Jer 29:32**, and as it were to be wished that Christian princes would do; serving them all as the Thessalians did that city in Greece called *Κολακεια*, or flattery, which they destroyed and pulled down to the ground (Hen. Steph. Apol. pro Herod.).

And the tougue that speaketh proud things] *Magnifica*, bubbles of words, blustering speeches, breathing out nothing but arrogance and contempt of God and his people. These *grandiloqui* must one day answer for their hard speeches with flames about their ears, whatever they meet with in the meanwhile, as did Nestorius, Thomas Arundel, Stephen Gardiner, and others, plagued here in their tongues, those little members that had boasted so great things, **#Jas 3:5.**

Ver. 4. **Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail]** *Dictitant enim*, this was a common word with them. And surely the tongue is a desperate weapon, made in the form of a flaming sword, and elsewhere by David compared to a tuck or rapier, **#Ps 64:3**, to a razor also, doing deceit, **#Ps 52:2** The Chaldee paraphrast hath this text thus, Because we can swear and lie, therefore we shall prevail.

Our lips are our own] Heb. are with us, that is, we have the command of our tongues, and have words at will; we can speak persuasively, and, therefore, we doubt not to persuade Saul to anything against David. Socrates, in his apology, My lords, said he to the judges, I know not how you have been affected with mine adversaries' eloquence while you heard them speak; for mine own part, I assure you that I, whom it toucheth most, was almost drawn to believe that all they said, though against myself, was true, when they scarcely uttered one word of truth. Gaius Curio, the Roman, was *ingeniose nequam*, wittily wicked (Paterculus); and the Duke of Buckingham, in his speech to the Londoners, for Richard III, gained this (though slender) commendation, that no man could deliver so much bad matter in so good words and quaint phrases.

Who is lord over us?] *sc.* To hinder us from speaking what and when we list with fineness and eloquence, though to the slaying of three at once, the tale bearer, the tale hearer, and the party traduced. R. Samuel Ben Jochai hath this note upon the text: A slanderous tongue is called *Lashon Tabithai* (*Lingua tertia*), because it slayeth three; but here it slew four, viz. Doeg, Saul, Nob, the city of the priests, and Abner, who suffered it so to be, **#1Sa 22:18,19**.

Ver. 5. **For the oppression of the poor]** Whose very oppression, though they complain not, hath a voice, and God will hear it, for he is gracious, **#Ex 22:27**. He heard Hagar's affliction, though she said nothing, **#Ge 16:11**; he heareth the young ravens that cry unto him by implication only.

For the sighing of the needy] If it be but their breathing, **#La 3:56**, God can feel it, but the sighs of his people are effectual orators, **#Ex 2:23-25 3:7**; and their tears he puts in a bottle, **#Ps 56:9**.

Now will I arise] *sc.* In the nick of time, when all seems to be lost. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. *Cum duplicarentur lateres, venit Moses*. See **#Isa 33:10**, Now, now, now.

Saith the Lord] *Dixit mihi per prophetiam*, **#Isa 22:14**.

From him that puffeth at him] That defieth him, and thinks he can blow him away at a blast; but if God arise only his enemies shall be scattered, as thistle down is by a puff of wind, **#Ps 68:1**. Some render the text, He will puff at him, that is, the oppressed will now dare to speak freely, who before durst not mute (R. David).

Ver. 6. **The words of the Lord are pure words]** Free from all insincerity or falsehood; and not like those of Saul's flatterers, vile and vicious. All God's promises are infallible, and such as a man may write upon, as they say. They are yea and Amen, **#2Co 1:20**, that is, truth and assurance. God hath hitherto kept promise with nights and days, that they shall one succeed another, **#Jer 33:20,25**, therefore much more will he keep promise with his people.

As silver tried in a furnace] In a sublimatory or crucible. The Greeks call it δοκιμων, St Peter's word, **#1Pe 1:7**.

Purified seven times] That is, sufficiently. Alchemy gold, as it will not pass the seventh fire, so it doth not comfort the heart, as true gold will.

Ver. 7. **Thou shall keep them]** That is, *Verba praedicta*, the forementioned words or promises, saith Aben Ezra. Or, keep thou them (prayerwise), and so David puts God's promises in suit. A certain good man having all taken from him, and his wife desiring to know how he and his family should live? He answered, he would now put his bond in suit; that is, he would urge God with his promises.

Thou shall preserve them] Heb. him, that is, every one of them, viz. the poor and needy, among whom David reckons himself, which shows his humility.

From this generation] So they are called for their multitude, in opposition to those few faithful ones, **#Ps 12:1**. An evil and adulterous generation they were, a bastardly brood, as **#Mt 12:39**. *Omne tempus ferct Clodios, Catones non omne feret*, saith Seneca.

Ver. 8. **The wicked walk on every side]** *In circuitu*, saith the Vulgate; the circular motion is most subtle, the devil walketh the rounds to do mischief; but better render it *circumquaque*, on every side, to show their numbers and their insolence. All places are full of

them, such dust heaps are found in every corner; when as the godly are as the salt of the earth, sprinkled here and there, as salt useth to be, to keep the rest from putrefying.

When the vilest men are exalted] Heb. *Vilities*, the abstract for the concrete, *quisquiliae*, ουτιδανοι. Oft empty vessels swim aloft, rotten posts are gilt with adulterate gold, the worst weeds spring up bravest. Chaff will get to the top of the fan when good grain, as it lieth at the bottom of the heap, so it falls low at the feet of the farmer. The reason why wicked men walk on every side, are so brisk, so busy, and who but they? is given in to be this, because losels and rioters were exalted. See **#Pr 28:12,18 29:2**. As rheums and catarrhs fall from the head to the lungs, and cause a consumption of the whole body; so it is in the body politic. As a fish putrefies first in the head, and then in all the parts; so here. Some render the text thus, When they (that is, the wicked) are exalted, it is a shame for the sons of men, that other men, who better deserve preferment, are not only slighted, but vilely handled by such worthless ambitionists; who yet the higher they climb, as apes, the more they discover their deformities.

Chapter 13

Ver. 1. **How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?]** It appeareth that when David penned this psalm (which some think was about the end of Saul's persecution, when he was forced to flee into the land of the Philistines, **#1Sa 27:1**) he was under a dreadful desertion, and that for a long while together; hence his many "How longs," and "for ever?" Christ, saith Greenham, was forsaken for a few hours, David for a few months, and Job for a few years. Luther confesseth of himself that after his conversion he lay three days in desperation; and the like is reported of Mr Robert Bolton, who felt himself for the time in the suburbs of hell, as it were. So did Heman, **#Ps 88:5**; so did David here and elsewhere. The final absence of God is hell itself. "Depart from me, ye cursed," is worse than "into everlasting fire." To be punished from the presence of the Lord is the hell of hells, **#2Th 1:9**. God seemeth to forget his dearest children sometimes for a season, to the end that they may remember themselves, and become every way better; as the lion leaves her whelps till they have almost killed themselves with roaring, that they

may become the more courageous. But, to speak properly, God cannot forget his people, **#Isa 44:16 49:14-16**. *Non deserit Deus, etiamsi deserere videatur; non deserit etiamsi deserat*, saith Austin, If he leave us for a time, yet he forsaketh us not at all. If he hide his face (as in the next words), which is a further trial, and a greater misery (for it importeth indignation, contempt, and hatred), yet it is but for a moment, though it should be during life; and he, therefore, taketh liberty to do it, saith one, because he hath an eternity of time to reveal his kindness in; time enough for kisses and embraces: meanwhile, as when the sun is eclipsed, though the earth wants the light thereof, yet not the influence thereof; so God's supporting grace is ever with his deserted.

Ver. 2. **How long shall I take counsel in my soul]** *i.e.* Conceal my grief, saith Aben Ezra, which is no small aggravation of it; or, How long shall I toss and tumble in my mind sundry counsels and purposes, but all to no purpose? This is no small affliction, when we try all courses to get out of durance, and nothing will do. Such must needs have much sorrow in their hearts.

Having sorrow in my heart daily?] Heb. by day, *sc.* when others are full of business and forget their sorrows, saith R. David. But the Greek rendereth it, day and night. David was a cheerful man, and a great musician; but at this time heaviness had possessed his heart, and his harp would not relieve him. Sadness of spirit had dried up his bones, **#Pr 17:22**, and made him a very bag of bones, a bottle in the smoke, shrinking away to nothing almost. See **#Pr 12:25 15:13**,
{See Trapp on "Pr 12:25"} {See Trapp on "Pr 15:13"}

Ver. 3. **Consider and hear me, O Lord my God]** He turns him to God in this peck of trouble (for they seldom come single), and pleads the covenant, "My God," beseeching him to see and hear both at once how it fared with him, and to send him seasonable and suitable help. It were wide with the faithful if they had not their God to repair unto in distress, pouring out their souls into his blessed bosom. This they must do most earnestly, when under a cloud of desertion; as our Saviour, being in an agony, prayed more fervently, **#Lu 22:44**; and as Micah, having lost his gods, set up his note, **#Jud 18:24**.

Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep death] *i.e.* Comfort my conscience, clear up my condition, and cheer up my drooping spirit, lest I faint away as a dying man, whose eyes through weakness wax dim, lest I fall into that *somnus ferreus*, as the poets call death, that longest sleep;

Surge, ne longus tibi somnus unde

Non times, detur (Hor. lib. 3, Od. 11).

Ver. 4. **Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him]** This David frequently deprecate as a great evil, because God's honour was concerned in it, and would suffer by it. As unskilful hunters, shooting at wild beasts, do sometimes kill a man; so persecutors, shooting at saints, hit Christ, reproach him; and this the saints are very aware of.

And those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved] Compose comedies out of my tragedies, *et iram Dei ad calumniam rapiant*. The wicked are vindictive and implacable, sick of the devil's disease, *επιχαίρεκακια*, rejoicing at other men's harms, revelling in other men's ruins; but this is to enrage God, and hasten wrath, **#Pr 24:17,18**.

Ver. 5. **But I have trusted in thy mercy]** Notwithstanding all the endeavours of earth and of hell to cast down this castle of my confidence, I will not quit it; but be still as a green olive tree in the house of God: I will trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever, **#Ps 52:8**.

Ver. 6. **I will sing unto the Lord]** How far different is the end of this psalm from the beginning! See the like **#Ps 6:1**, *{See Trapp on "Ps 6:1"}*

Because he hath dealt bountifully with me] *Qui retribuit mihi*, so Popish merit-mongers read it, and would therehence collect something in favour of their absurd tenet. But their own Vulgate translation hath it *bona tribuit*, hath given me good things. And it is well observed (Ainsworth), that though the Hebrew word be sometimes taken for rewarding evil for good, **#Ps 7:5**, or evil for evil, **#Ps 137:8**, yet from God to his people it commonly signifieth a bountiful rewarding of good things instead of evil, which we rather do deserve. So **#Ps 116:7 119:17 142:7**.

Chapter 14

Ver. 1. **The fool**] That sapless fellow, that carcase of a man, that walking sepulchre of himself, in whom all religion and right reason is withered and wasted, dried up and decayed. Nabal, a fool or a churl; Nebalah, a carcase, #Le 11:40. That apostate, in whom natural principles are extinct, and from whom God is departed; as when the prince is removing hangings are taken down. That mere animal, that hath no more than a reasonable soul, and for little other purpose than as salt, to keep his body from putrefying, φυχικός, #1Co 2:14. That wicked man, hereafter described, that studieth atheism,

Hath said in his heart] As David proves afterward by his practice; for there are practical atheists as well as dogmatic. See a like passage, #Ps 36:1, "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart" (that is, my mind gives me, and I am strongly persuaded) "that there is no fear of God before his eyes." This is the charge; but what proof is there? proof good enough, #Ps 14:2-4, "For he flattereth himself," &c. So here; he is a flat atheist; for corrupt he is, and become abominable, &c. That which Cicero (De Nat. Deor.) saith of Epicurus, that lest he should offend the Athenians, *verbis reliquit deos, re sustulit*, in words he affirmed there were Gods, but in deed he denied a Deity, is found true in many even to this day; for all places are full of them, and so is hell too. Lucian is their Old Testament, and Machiavel their New. Worse they are than Agrippa, who was almost a Christian; worse than Protagoras with his *De diis utrum sint, non ausim affirmare*. For in their hearts and lives there is heard this hellish language,

There is no God] Oh horrible! Not that atheism can ever find a perfect and continual assent in man's heart; for there is no nation under heaven so barbarous but yields that there is a God. When man fell from God this truth stood; as when cities and great buildings are overthrown by war some towers, some pinnacles, survive the violence. They lie, saith Seneca, who say that they hold there is no God; for though to thee they say so by day, yet to themselves and by night they doubt it, at least. And when they come to die they sometimes cry out they are damned; as did Thomas Blaverus, chief counsellor sometime to the king of Scots; and one Arthur Miller, a

professed atheist; and, before them both, a certain desperate dean of Paul's (Sword against Swearers).

Corrupt are they, and become abominable] Or loathsome; how should they be better, that have laid hands upon all the principles in their heads, and made a clean riddance of them, that they may run riot in sin without restraint or control? which, while others see, they also are ready to say, with that poet,

Sollicitor nullos esse putare Deus.

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 doubtings in her soul (Mr Ward's Happ. of Parad.).

There is none that doeth good] *i.e.* None to speak of, no considerable number,

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.

Ver. 2. **The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men]** As opposed to the children of God, so some take it, as **#Ge 4:26 6:2**. As a judge he looketh down, he vieweth, he taketh cognizance, ere he proceedeth to sentence. Thus he dealt with the old world, with Sodom, with Egypt, &c., to teach us not to be too hasty. No more haste than good speed, saith one. The celestial spheres, the higher they are in situation the slower in their proper motion; and the supreme judge of all useth much forbearance.

And that did understand and seek God] These only are they whom God looketh after; not the rich, but the righteous. And because knowledge is the ground of all goodness, as folly is of wickedness, **#Ps 14:1**, therefore is it here said, "any that did understand and seek God." Lo, these are these precious ones whom God regarded; such as are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, **#Ro 15:14**. "The Father seeketh such to worship him," **#Joh 4:23**.

Ver. 3. **They are all gone aside, &c.]** This is God's own report of the matter, fully answering to that before given in by David, **#Ps 14:1**. Good men have the mind of Christ, **#1Co 2:16**, and do fully concur with him in judgment and affection. David was a man after God's own heart; and the heart of Paul is the heart of Christ, saith Chrysostom. But why, then, doth not David except himself out of this *universitas declinantium*, community of stragglers that are gone aside? and why doth St Paul argue from this text that all, both Jews and Gentiles, are stark naught? **#Ro 3:10-12**. I answer, because by nature there is never a better of us; but *κακοι μεν θριπες κακοι ηδε και ιτες*, as the Greek proverb hath it. "All we like sheep have gone astray," saith the whole Church, **#Isa 53:6** *Homo est inversus decalogus*, we naturally all stand across to all goodness. The word here rendered gone aside signifieth to give back sturdily, as a stubborn heifer, that refuseth to receive the yoke.

They are altogether become filthy] Heb. stinking, yielding a worse smell than carrion doth, or than the filthy fox doth, of whom Oppianus reporteth (and experience showeth it to be true), that when he is beset on all sides by the dogs that hunt him, he bewrayeth his tail with urine and dung, of a most loathsome smell, and besmearing therewith the dogs' noses, driveth them away therewith many times (Bodin. Theat. Nat. 352). But all this is nothing to the filth and stench of sin, which made their very incense an abomination, **#Isa 1:13**; and rendereth them most like the devil, that foul spirit, that ever goeth out with a stench, as they say of him. The Hebrews have the same word for sin and a dead carcase; and again the same word for sin and stench. *רנה רנה* God's vineyard brought forth stinking grapes, *רשע* **#Isa 5:5**, and the wicked utter rotten language, *Δογος σαπρος*, **#Eph 5:4** Hence *Longinquus est Iehovah ab impiis*, The Lord stands aloof off from the wicked, **#Pr 15:29 Ps 5:5**, that is, from all for whom Christ hath not given himself "an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour," **#Eph 5:2**. The apostle rendereth it, they are useless, *ηχρηωθησον*, or, as he elsewhere phraseth it, "to every good work reprobate," **#Tit 1:16**.

There is none that doeth good] Spiritually good, and unto divine acceptation. There is many times *malum opus in bona materia*. How can you that are evil do good works? Good they may be

materially, but not formally and eventually; such were the good parts and practices of Socrates, Aristides, Scipio, Atticus, Cato, and other honest heathens; they were no better than *splendida peccata*, glistening sins, because they failed,

1. *Quoad fontem*, they did not out of the good treasure of their hearts bring forth those good things; they were strangers to the life of God, to the new nature.
2. *Quoad finem*, they brought forth fruit to themselves, #Ho 10:1, they had not good aims in their good actions. Now, *Bonum non sit nisi ex integra causa; malum ex quolibet defectu*, say the schools.

No, not one] *Usque ad unum*, i.e. *ad Christum*, saith Austin, not considering the force of the Hebrew phrase, which importeth an utter denial of any mere man that of himself doeth good.

Ver. 4. **Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?**] No, not so much as Pilate's wife had in a dream; for else they would take heed of having anything to do with those just men. But they are workers of iniquity, habituated and hardened in cruelty, fleshed in blood; and having a hoof upon their hearts, so that they are masters of their consciences, and have taken a course with them. In this question here asked the psalmist doth not so much *quaerere* as *queri*, ask as chide and complain.

Who eat up my people as they eat bread] That is, *quotidie*, daily, saith Austin; as duly as they eat bread; or, with the same eagerness and voracity. These man eaters, these *Δαοβοροι*, cruel cannibals, make no more conscience to undo a poor man than to eat a good meal when they are hungry. Like pickerels in a pond, or sharks in the sea, they devour the poorer, as those do the lesser fishes; and that many times with a plausible invisible consumption; as the usurer, who, like the ostrich, can digest any metal, but especially money.

They call not upon the Lord] viz. For a blessing upon that their bread, as some sense it; how should they, since God abhorreth them? #Ps 10:3. But better take it for neglect of the duty of prayer; they rob God of his inward and outward worship, and so deal worse with

him than idolaters do with their dunghill deities, whom they cease not to call upon. These will commit no impropriety in God's service; and be sure that their prayer (like that of Haman's, #Es 7:7) shall never be turned into sin. If they pray in extremity (as then a Joab will lay hold on the horns of the altar), it is but as blind beggars are forced to ask, though they know not of whom.

Ver. 5. **There were they in great fear]** There? and they? and in great fear? where? and who? and what kind of fear was it they were in? For answer: There, that is, in the generation of the righteous, in the assemblies of the saints, according to that, #Ps 76:3, "There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and battle. Selah." There, that is, in Salem, where is God's tabernacle; and in Zion, where is his dwelling place, #Ps 14:2, in the congregation, where the saints were praying. Or, there, that is, in the very place where they oppressed and devoured the poor, they were surprised with a sudden horror, *In loco ubi opprimunt* (R. David), even there where they had said, Peace and safety, &c., and where no fear was, #Ps 53:5, no apparent cause of such an amazement, #Isa 13:8. A panic terror fell upon them; they feared a fear, as the Hebrew hath it, but could not tell why; the hornet within stings them, and they have many a secret twinge that the world is never aware off Saul was afraid of David, and Catiline trembled upon the least noise made.

For God is in the generation of the righteous] And natural conscience cannot but do homage to the image of God, stamped upon the natures and works of the godly. See it in the carriage of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius toward Daniel, sticking stoutly to his principles. The piety, patience, mercy, goodness, expressed by the righteous when oppressed, makes the hearts of wicked men ache within them; and they are sore afraid of the name of God called upon by them, #De 28:10. Or, God is in the generation of the righteous, *sc. Ad iuvandum eum*, saith Aben Ezra, to support and succour them; and that strangely many times, the enemies themselves being judges, to their great astonishment.

Ver. 6. **You have shamed the counsel of the poor]** And thought to mock him out of his confidence, as Sennacherib did by Hezekiah, and the Jews by our Saviour. Religion was long since grown, as it is also at this day among many, not more a matter of form than of scorn. In our wretched days, as the Turks count all fools to be saints,

so many with us account all saints to be fools. He is a fool, we say, that would be laughed out of his coat; but he were a double fool that would be laughed out of his skin, that would hazard his soul because loth to be laughed at.

Because the Lord is his refuge] *Sed Iehovah Protector eius*, because he runs to God by prayer, and commits himself wholly to him for direction and success in all his enterprises; *Pudescitis, id est, facitis ut videatur putidum*, you jeer, and hold it an egregious silliness. You reject his confidence, and rely on the arm of flesh; which yet was never true to those that trusted unto it.

Ver. 7. **Oh that the salvation of Israel, &c.]** This is the second part of the psalm, wherein David prayeth to God to deliver his Israel out of the hands of those atheists and oppressors. The whole Church must be remembered in our prayers, and that ancient people of God, the Jews, not forgotten (Sanhed. c. 11). Many of their Rabbis make this whole psalm a prophecy of their dispersion among the Gentiles, their oppressors; and this a prayer for their restoration. For our sins, say they, which are many, the coming of the Messiah (that salvation of Israel) is deferred, the time of his coming is sealed up, **#Da 12:4**. *Verum enimvero Dens nos dignabitur clarissima visione cum reducer Zionem; tunc intelligemus res ipsas prout sunt*, saith Jachiades on that text; but God shall give us a clear sight of all things when he shall bring back Zion, &c. This is truth, and we must hasten that time by our heartiest wishes for that obdurate people, that a redeemer would come to them out of Zion, **#Ro 11:26**, that the covering cast over that people might be destroyed, **#Isa 25:7**, and a general joy conceived throughout all the Churches for their happy readmission.

Out of Zion] *i.e.* Out of the Church, whence all good cometh; and such blessings as are better than all else that heaven or earth affordeth, **#Ps 134:3**.

Chapter 15

Ver. 1. **Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?]** Heb. who shall sojourn? for that is our condition while here, in a foreign country, and not at home. The Church militant also is transportative, as well as the tabernacle; and not fixed to one place. Never was the ark

settled till set in Solomon's temple; neither shall we till we come to heaven. David, having described an atheist in #Ps 14:1-4, and finding but too many such in the bosom of the Church, politicians, profane persons, hypocrites, who profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, #Tit 1:16 (he that dethroneth a king doth as bad as he that denieth him), he therefore begs of God to distermine, and put a difference between the righteous and the wicked, by certain infallible distinctive notes and characters, wherein men may surely rest without danger of being deceived; since his testimony is beyond all exception, and he is *αυτοπιστος* self credible. Here, then, that grand and grave question is propounded by David as a prophet of God, consulting with him, and answered by God himself, from more authority's sake: Who is the true citizen of Zion, the free denizen of the new Jerusalem, who is a right member of the Church militant, and shall be at length of the Church triumphant? A reverend divine said once to a poor soul, that told him he was troubled about his salvation, I tell thee, said he, it is able to trouble the whole world (Sinners' Salvation, by Hooker, p. 2). Let a man but approve himself the party here described in desire at least, and endeavour, being humbled for his daily failings, and he may be confident.

Who shall dwell in thine holy hill?] Heaven is aptly compared to a hill, hell to a hole. Now who shall ascend into this holy mount? None but those whom this mount comes down unto, that have sweet communion with God in this life present, whose conversation is in heaven, though their commoration be for a while upon earth, who do here eat, and drink, and sleep eternal life.

Ver. 2. **He that walketh uprightly**] This is God's answer, for men are unsound, and unfit to judge, saith Calvin. They judge according to opinion and appearance many times, and send those to heaven that can never come there; as the pope doth his canonized saints; Mahomet, those that die in defence of Turkism; and parasitical preachers their irreligious benefactors. But God only admitteth such as are righteously religious and religiously righteous; such as through whose whole lives godliness runneth, as the woof doth through the warp. He, then, that shall be an inhabitant of heaven must first walk uprightly, or evenly. Christians, saith Tertullian, are *funambulones*, as those that walk on ropes, if they tread but one step

awry they are utterly gone; they must be *sine terrena et profunda fraude*, as R. David here glosseth, without guile, and unacquainted with the depths of the devil, #Pr 11:22; the upright in their way are opposed to the froward in heart. And such only shall dwell with devouring fire, that is, with God, #Isa 33:14,15. The Arabic version for uprightly here hath, without a cloud of vices.

And worketh righteousness] This is wrought by faith, #Heb 11:33, and such a man is acceptable to God, #Ac 10:35. But the whole life of unbelievers is sin, saith Austin, neither is there anything good without the chiefest good. It was well said of Luther, Walk in the heaven of the promise, but in the earth of the law; that in respect of believing, this of obeying.

And speaketh the truth in his heart] His λογος ενδιαθετος and προφορικος are all one, he speaks as he thinks; his speech is the lively image of his inward affection. That was no commendation to that pope and his nephew, of whom it was said, that the one never spoke as he thought, the other never performed what he spoke.

Ver. 3. **He that backbiteth not with his tongue]** That trotteth not up and down for the purpose, as the word signifieth; that walketh not about as a pedlar with his pack, as the word is, #Le 19:16, this is a bloody sin, *ibid.*; confer #Eze 22:9. Ragal, whence Regal, a foot. Many ways a man may backbite with his tongue, that unruly member.

*Imponens, augens, manifestans, in mala vertens,
Qui negat, aut minuit, tacuit, laudatque remisse.*

One observeth from this text that there is also a slander of the heart that never cometh into the tongue, sc. hard conceits and evil surmises. Some say that the word here signifieth to speak truth, but with a mischievous mind, to hurt another; as Doeg dealt by David, and is, therefore, accursed, #Ps 52:1-6., and called a liar for his labour, #Ps 120:2-3 The smutting of another man's good name in any kind behind his back is backbiting; it is an irreparable wrong; take heed of it. The eye and the good name can bear no jests, as the proverb hath it.

Nor doth evil to his neighbour] Neither by disparaging nor disprofiting him. There is an elegance in the original that cannot be translated into English.

Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour] Or receiveth, or endureth. The tale bearer carrieth the devil in his tongue; the tale hearer in his ear. Plautus wisheth that the one may be hanged by his tongue, and the other by his ear; the receiver, we say, is as bad as the thief. Not only he that maketh a lie, but he that loveth it, is excluded heaven, #Re 22:15. It is evil to sow reports and slanders, but worse to harrow them in. The heathen could say, He that easily believeth slanders, *aut improbis, out puerilibus est moribus*, is either a knave or a fool.

Ver. 4. **In whose eyes a vile person is contemned]** An abject, a reprobate, as one rendereth it; be he as high as Haman; see Esther's character of him, #Es 7:6, and Mordecai's slighting of him, #Es 3:2 (Josephus). Be he as great as Antiochus Epiphanes, to whom the Samaritans, excusing themselves that they were no Jews, wrote thus, To Antiochus, the great god. Daniel counted and called him a vile person, #Da 11:21. So Elisha despised Jehoram the king, #2Ki 3:14; we also must despise the wicked; yet *non virum, sed vitium, et salvo cuique loci sui honore*, giving honour, befitting their places, to whom honour is due, #Ro 13:7., but shunning that partiality taxed by St James, #Jas 2:3,4. The Burgess of the New Jerusalem, *reprobos reprobat, et probes probat*, he cannot flatter any man, nor fancy such as in whom he findeth not *aliquid Christi*, something of the image of God. A golden colosse, stuffed with rubbish, he cannot stoop to.

But he honoureth them that fear the Lord] As the only earthly angels, though never so mean and despicable in the world's eye. Mr Fox, being asked whether he remembered not such a poor servant of God who had received help from him in time of trouble? answered, I remember him well; I tell you I forget lords and ladies to remember such. Ingo, an ancient king of Draves and Veneds, set his pagan nobles, at a feast, in his hall below, and a company of poor Christians with himself in his presence chamber, entertaining them with the royalest cheer and kingliest attendance that might be. At which when his nobles wondered, he told them, this he did not as he

was king of the Draves, but as he was king of another world, wherein these should be his companions and fellow princes (Aeneas Sylv. cap. 20).

He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not] Covetousness he so hateth that, first, he will rather suffer loss than be worse than his oath or honest word; secondly, he lendeth, looking for nothing again; thirdly, he taketh no reward against the innocent, either as a judge or as a pleader. Of many swearers it may be said, that they can play with oaths as children do with nuts; or as monkeys do with their collars, which they can slip off at their pleasure. And of many promisers, that they are like the peacock, all in changeable colours, as often changed as moved; but this is not the guise of God's people. The Jews at this day keep no oath unless they swear upon their own Torah, or law, brought out of their synagogues (Tertul.). The Turks keep no oath further than may stand with their own convenience. The Papists hold that faith is not to be kept with heretics; and they practise accordingly. But the old Romans had a great care always to perform their word, whatever it cost them; insomuch that the first temple built in Rome was dedicated to the goddess Fidelity. In after times indeed, *Romanis promittere promptum erat, promissis autem, quanquam iuramento firmiter, minime stare*: The Romans were forward to promise and swear, but careless to perform, if Mirrhanes, the Persian general, may be believed (Procop. de Bel. Persic. lib. 1). But an oath was ever held among all nations a sacred bond, and obligatory, unless it were *contra bonos mores*, against good morals, as the lawyers speak. Joshua and the elders kept their oath to the Gibeonites, though to their inconvenience. Zedekiah was punished for not keeping touch with the king of Babylon. And one of the laws of the knights of the band in Spain was, that if any of them broke his promise he went alone by himself, and nobody spake to him, nor he to any.

Ver. 5. **He that putteth not out his money to usury]** To biting usury, so some distinguish it from Tarbith, the toothless usury. But both these are condemned, **#Eze 18:8,13**, and no man of note in all antiquity (Jews and Manichees excepted) for one thousand five hundred years after Christ hath ever undertaken the defence thereof. Here and **#Ne 5:7-11** it is plainly cried down; neither is there any ground in Scripture for that distinction of usury into biting and

toothless. The beaver biteth so sore, as that he never looseth his teeth until he have broke the bones. Usury-Usurers

Nor taketh reward against the innocent] *Olim didici quid sint munera,* said one. A good man, as he despiseth the gain of oppressions, so he shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, **#Isa 33:15**, lest the touching thereof should infect and benumb him; as Pliny writeth of the fish torpedo, and as histories report of Demosthenes, that great lawyer, tempted and prevailed with against right, by poisoning Harpalus's goblet.

He that doeth these things] For not the hearers of the law, but the doers shall be justified, **#Ro 2:13**. And to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, shall be eternal life, **#Ro 15:7**.

Shall never be moved] *Potest in momentum moveri, sed non in aeternum: resurget enim,* saith R. Solomon here, Moved he may be for a time, but not removed for ever. His soul is bound up in the bundle of life, near unto the throne of glory; when the souls of the wicked are restless as a stone in the midst of a sling, saith the Targum, in **#1Sa 15**.

Michtam of David] *i.e.* David's precious jewel, or psalm of gold, *propter mirificam eius excellentiam,* better worth than its weight in gold, both for the matter thereof, and the metre, *Insignis Ode Davidis Trem* επος χρυσουν, *prae corona aestimatur hic Psalmus* (R. Solomon). *Aureum flumen orationis,* said Cicero, concerning Aristotle's Politics; there is in that book a golden flood of discourse; and *Liber iste auro contra non carus,* said another, concerning the lives of the philosophers written by Diogenes Laertius, No gold is comparable to that gallant piece. How much more may the same be said of this notable psalm! as that which, beside many other remarkable matters, lively setteth forth the mystery of Christ's passion and resurrection, with the fruit of both; this he doth more like an evangelist than a prophet, and may, therefore, be called (as likewise Isaiah is) the evangelical prophet. And whereas, saith learned Beza, he calleth the Messiah *Chasid*, **#Ps 16:10** (that is, as I interpret it, that man upon whom the Father hath most plentifully poured out all his grace and bounty, which also we all draw from

him alone by faith), David seemeth in this one word to have summed up the whole doctrine of the gospel.

Chapter 16

Ver. 1. **Preserve me, O God]** Keep me safe unto the kingdom, both temporal and eternal, which thou hast promised me; and now that I am fleeing to the Philistines for shelter, **#1Sa 27:1** (for that is held to be the time when he composed this golden psalm), guard me, guide me, keep me by thy power through faith unto salvation. This prayer of his David was well assured should be granted; and, therefore, he giveth thanks, **#Ps 16:7**.

For in thee do I put my trust] This was a most powerful plea, for to trust God is the highest honour we can do him, it is to set the crown upon his head. See **#Jud 9:15**. And if such shall be forsaken God will be a great loser in his glory, whereof he is very tender.

Ver. 2. **O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord]** Or, I have said unto the Lord; and so I had rather read it, with Jerome and the Septuagint; because the letter *Jod* may be wanting in *Amarti*. See the like, **#Job 42:2 Eze 16:59**. David was here *extra se abreptus*, carried beyond himself, and so might easily speak short, and say *Amart* for *Amarti*; like as Moses, in a passion, said to God, *At* for *Atta*, **#Nu 11:15**, as not able to speak out. *Amor Dei est ecstaticus, &c.*

Thou art my Lord] Heb. Thou my Lord, so the next words, My good not unto thee; all concise and abrupt, out of deepest affection; broken language from a broken spirit, spending and exhaling itself into God's blessed bosom.

My goodness extendeth not to thee] But if it did I could with all my heart beteem it thee; even the very best of my best; but what can I give thee save only τα σο εκ των σου, since all is thine own? **#1Ch 29:14,16 Ps 24:1**; thou needest no sacrifices, **#Ps 50:8**, neither art thou delighted therein, **#Ps 51:18 Isa 1:11**. All that thou requirest is mercy, **#Ho 6:5 Mic 6:8 Mt 12:7**. Therefore I will seek out those thy receivers, the saints, that are in the earth, &c. {See Trapp on "Job 35:6"}

{See Trapp on "Job 35:7"} {See Trapp on "Job 35:8"}

Ver. 3. **But to the saints]** The family of faith were, by a specialty, the object of David's bounty. Socrates, seeing a certain man giving alms to all he met, whether they were good or bad, said, *male pereas qui ex gratiis cure sint virgines, facias scorta*. David, the better to persuade with God to preserve him safe to the kingdom, promiseth two things: first, that he will cherish and countenance the godly party; secondly, that he will cashier and cast out all kinds of idolatry, and maintain to his utmost the sincere service of God, **#Ps 16:4**.

And to the excellent] Or, noble, glorious, wonderful, magnificent. The saints are princes in all lands, **#Ps 45:16**; of an excellent spirit, **#Pr 17:27**; more excellent than their neighbours, dwell they wheresoever, **#Pr 12:26**. They are styled the glory, **#Isa 4:5**, a crown of glory, **#Isa 62:3**, a royal diadem, *ibid.*, a kingdom of priests, **#Ex 19:6**, higher than the kings of the earth, **#Ps 89:27**, greater than the four famous monarchies, **#Da 7:18**, worthies of whom the world is not worthy, **#Heb 11:38**, fitter to be set as stars in heaven. And surely as stars, though seen sometimes in a puddle or stinking ditch, though they reflect there, yet have they their situation in heaven; so the saints, though here in a low condition, yet are they fixed in the region of happiness.

In whom is all my delight] Heb. *Cheptsibam*. So the Church is called God's Hephzibah, **#Isa 62:4**. Next to communion with God the communion of saints is most delectable. It is the very being bound up in the bundle of life, which was the blessing of Abigail upon David. *Ipsè aspectus viri boni delectat*, saith Seneca, the very sight of a good man (morally good) delighted; what, then, of a saint? **#Ezr 10:3**. This the heathen persecutors knew, and, therefore, banished and confined the Christians to isles and mines, where they could not one come at another, as Cyprian observeth.

Ver. 4. **Their sorrows shall be multiplied]** Many sorrows shall be to those wicked idolaters, **#Ps 32:10**, some of their own creating by their superstitions and will worships (*vide* Plutarch, *περι δεισιδαιμονιας*); others from a jealous and just God; others from the devil, who acteth and agitateth them, beateth and whippeth them (as at this day he doth the poor Indians, who worship devils in most terrible figure; believing that they are permitted of God to punish or

spare them at their pleasure); and some they shall be sure of from me whenever I come to the kingdom. Some, after the Chaldee, read it, their idols are multiplied. The old heathens had thirty thousand in Hesiod's days. In China there are said to be at this day no fewer than a hundred thousand idols, which they use to whip if they come not at a call to help them. Before a sick man they put the devil's picture, that he may learn to know him in another world, and take him for his friend.

That hasten after another god] Or, that endow another god. Superstition is not only painful but chargeable. The story is told of one king of England, that he bestowed as much upon a cross as the revenues of his kingdom came to in a year. Idolaters lavish out of the bag, and spare for no cost; witness the Papists' vowed presents and memories, as they call them, hung up in honour to their male and female saints, the Lady of Loretto especially. But it was the serpent's grammar that first taught men to decline God in the plural number, *Eritis sicut Dii*, you will be as gods, as Damianus observeth from **#Ge 3:5**, and hence that innumerable rabble. The Jesuits boast of their *Ignatii Apotheosis*; and Cardinal Bembus is not ashamed to say of his St Francis, *quod in deorum numerum ab Ecclesia Romana sit relatus* (Hist. Venet.). Is not this abominable idolatry? **#1Pe 4:3**.

Their drink offerings of blood] Many heathens sacrificed to their idols (that is, to devils) with man's blood, against all laws of humanity and piety. Thus they sacrificed to Bellona, the sister of Mars; as also with blood let out of their own arms (Euseb. de Praep. Evangel.). The priests of Baal (who perhaps was Mars) cut and lanced themselves, **#1Ki 18:28** So do the Mahometan priests of today; as the Papists whip themselves, &c. The old idolaters offered their children in sacrifice to Moloch, or Saturn. David abhorreth the thought of such inhumanities, *Neque deos illegitimos, nec illegitime colam*, saith he, I will have no such doings.

Nor take up their names into my lips] But spit them out of my mouth with utmost detestation, according to the law, **#Ex 23:13**. It repented Austin that ever he had used the word Fortune, that heathen goddess (Epist. ad Damas.). And *Absit ut de ore Christiano sonet*

Jupiter omnipotens, &c., saith Jerome, Let no Christian mouth say, Jupiter omnipotent, or swear *Mehercule, Mecastor*. The primitive Christians would not call their days of the week *dies Martis, Mercurii, &c.*, as Trismegist had named them; but the first, second, third, &c., day of the week. All occasions or semblances of idolatry should be shunned; it is not safe being at Satan's mess though our spoon be never so long, saith one. See #Ho 2:16,17 Zec 13:2 De 12:2.

Ver. 5. **The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance]** Therefore I have neither need nor mind to run a madding after dumb idols; for he is good original, universal, all sufficient, and satisfactory, proportionable, and fitting to my soul; so that, having him, I am abundantly provided for.

And of my cup] A phrase taken from those shares that every one had assigned unto him at feasts, #Ge 43:34 1Sa 1:4 9:23: *q.d.* Thou art my meat and my drink, Lord, and I am very well content with my condition, be it better or worse. That which gives quiet in any portion, is, First, The favour and presence of God; Secondly, That it is from the hand of a Father; Thirdly, That it comes to us in the covenant of grace; Fourthly, That it is the purchase of Christ's blood; Fifthly, That it is an answer of prayers, and a blessing from above on honest endeavours.

Thou maintainest my lot] Upholdest me in a good condition, who should otherwise soon lose and forego it, were it in mine own keeping. And here the psalmist useth four several words, all to the same sense, *ad corroborandum*, saith R. David.

Ver. 6. **The lines are fallen]** In allusion to those lines wherewith they measured land when they parted it. See #De 32:9 Ps 105:11 78:55 Ac 26:18 Eph 1:11. David, having God for his portion, could say with Jacob, I have all things, #Ge 33:11. Paul also saith the same, #Php 4:18, and further telleth us that, having nothing, he yet possessed all things; for why, he had got the divine art of contentation, #Php 4:12, and so could be either on the top of Jacob's ladder or at the bottom; he could sing either *Placentia* or *Lachrymae*, abound or be abased, &c. *Sine Deo omnis copia est egestas* (Bern.).

In pleasant places] From the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison, said that Italian martyr, dating his letter. *Tua praesentia, Domine, Laurentio ipsam craticulam dulcem fecit*, said that ancient; Thy presence, Lord, made Laurence's gridiron pleasant to him. *Quia in Deo est portio mea, est quasi in loco amaeno* (R. David).

Yea, I have a goodly heritage] I have as much (in content at least) as he who hath most. The bee is as well pleased with feeding on the dew, or sucking from a flower, as Behemoth that grazeth on the mountains. The lark when aloft seeth farther, with a little eye, than the ox on the ground with a greater.

Atque suum tiritiritiritirlire cantat.

Ver. 7. **I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel]** David frequently consulted with God by Abiathar the priest, whom God, by a sweet providence, sent unto him with an ephod for a comfort in his banishment, **#1Sa 22:20**. Saul had slain those that wear the ephod, therefore God answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets, **#1Sa 28:6**, as he did his servant David; who therefore blesseth him, when the other runneth from him to the witch for counsel, and from her to the sword's point.

My reins also instruct me] God hath not only illuminated me, whereby I shall be the better able to endure a great fight of affliction, **#Heb 10:32**, but he hath also sanctified me, and honoured me with holy inspirations, and feeling of the Spirit of adoption, whereby mine internal thoughts and secret motions do dictate and suggest unto me what I ought to do and undertake. Methinks I hear a sweet still voice within me, saying, This is the way, walk in it; and this in the night season, when I am wrapped in rest and silence; or, night after night, the Spirit is a continual spring of counsel and comfort within me, prompting me to make God my portion, and to choose this good part that shall never be taken away from me.

In the night seasons] When commonly we are prone to evil (*Nox et Amor, &c. Iliia pudore vacat, &c.* (Ovid.)), and which is the wicked man's fittest opportunity, **#Job 24:13,15,16**, &c. It must not content us that God by his word hath given us counsel, but we must labour to be inwardly taught of God. A man may read the figure

upon the dial, but he cannot tell how the day goes, unless the sun shine upon the dial; we may read the Bible over, and hear it opened and applied, but can learn nothing till the Spirit shine into our hearts, #2Co 4:6, and so our reins instruct us, &c.

Ver. 8. **I have set the Lord always before me**] Heb. I have equally set, or proposed. The apostle translatheth it, "I foresee the Lord always before my face," #Ac 2:25. I set the eye of my faith full upon him, and suffer it not to take to other things; I look him in the face, *oculo irretorto*, as the eagle looketh upon the sun; and *oculo adamantino*, with an eye of adamant, which turns only to one point; so here, I have equally set the Lord before me, without irregular affections and passions. And this was one of those lessons that his reins had taught him, that the Holy Spirit had dictated unto him.

Because he is as my right hand] To help me that I fall not, saith R. David, or as a thing that I cannot but remember, as being of continual use to me. It is as necessary to remember God, as to draw breath, saith Chrysostom.

I shall not be moved] *i.e.* Not greatly moved, as #Ps 62:2. Though Satan stand at the right hand of a godly man, to resist and annoy him, #Zec 3:1, yet so long as God is at his right hand, to assist and comfort him, and he at God's right hand, #Ps 45:9 (which is a place of honour and safety), he cannot be moved. The gates of hell shall never prevail; Christ, our Samson, hath flung them off their hinges.

Ver. 9. **Therefore my heart is glad, &c.**] That is, I am all over in very good plight, as well as heart can wish or need require; I do overly abound exceedingly with joy. God forgive me mine unthankfulness and unworthiness of so great glory (as that martyr, Mr Philpot, said). In all the days of my life I was never so merry as now I am in this dark dungeon, &c. Wicked men rejoice in appearance, and not in heart, #2Co 5:12; their joy is but skin deep, their mirth frothy and flashy, such as wetteth the mouth, but warmeth not the heart. But David is *totus totus, quantus quantus exultabundus*, his heart, glory, flesh (answerable, as some think, to that of the apostle, #1Th 5:23, spirit, soul, and body), were all over joyed.

My flesh shall also rest (or confidently dwell) in hope] Namely, in this world, as in a way faring lodging; then in the grave, as a place of safeguard and repose; and at last in heaven, as in its true and eternal mansion (Diodati).

Ver. 10. **For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell]** That is, my body in the grave (*animamque sepulchro condimus* -Virg, de Polydori funere. Aeneid. iii.), or in the state of the dead, #Ge 37:35. That soul is sometimes put for a carcase or dead corpse, see #Job 14:22 Le 19:28 21:1,11 Nu 5:2 6:6 19:13, which place is expounded, #Eze 44:25. David can confidently write upon his grave, *Resurgam*, I shall rise again. This many heathens had no hope of, #1Th 4:13 (Horat. lib. iv. Od. 7).

*Cum semel occideris,
Non Torquate, tuum genus, aut facundia, non te
Restituet pietas, &c.*

Yet some heathens believed both the immortality of the soul, and therefore durst die (— animaeque capaces mortis —), and the resurrection of the body, as did Zoroastes, Theopompus, Plato; and as do the Turks today.

Neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one, &c. That is, the Messiah that is to come out of my loins, and who saith to me and all his members {as #Isa 26:19} in effect, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust," &c. {See Trapp on the title Michtam "Ps 16:1"} The former part of this verse seems to be spoken of David, the latter of Christ; like as #Job 35:15, the former part is of God, the latter of Job. See the margin. Christ's resurrection is a cause, pledge, and surety of the saint's resurrection to glory; for joy whereof David's heart leaped within him. Christ's body, though laid in the corrupting pit, could not see, that is, feel, corruption, it was therefore a pious error in those good women who brought their sweet odours to embalm his dead body, #Lu 24:1.

Ver. 11. **Thou wilt show me the path of life]** This being applied to Christ, seemeth to show that as man he did not yet fully understand that inexplicable glory wherewith the Father would glorify him after death with himself, #Joh 17:5. Sure it is, that David did not, nor can

any man living, **#1Co 2:9**: here is as much said as can be said (but words are too weak to utter it). For quality, there is in heaven joy and pleasures. For quantity, a fulness, a torrent, whereat they drink without let or loathing. For constancy, it is at God's right hand, who is stronger than all, neither can any take us out of his hand; it is a constant happiness without intermission. And for perpetuity, it is for evermore. Heaven's joys are without measure, mixture, or end. *Contra Acheron, ab αα χαρειν, quod sit illaetabilis unda; vel ab αχος and υπιν (ut vult Plato) quod fluat luctuosus undis.*

A Prayer of David] He was a man of prayer; but this was his appeal to God, the supreme Judge, as the word importeth.

Chapter 17

Ver. 1. **Hear the right, O Lord]** Heb. Righteousness, which crieth unto God no less than blood doth, **#Ge 4:10** Or, hear the right, that is, my prayer, saith R. David, rightly made with heart and voice. Or, Hear, O righteous Lord, as Christ also saith, O righteous Father, **#Joh 17:25**

Attend unto my cry] Some profane persons bear well their crosses, because their cause is good; but they cry not when God bindeth them, **#Job 36:13**. Or, if they cry, they cry out of hard fortune, as the Athenians did when their good General Nicias was slain, and their army routed in Sicily (Thucyd.); or against dame Virtue, as if it were no more than a mere name, as Brutus did, when beaten out of the field (Dio). Or, against providence, as if there were a mist over the eye of it, as Pompey did, when discomfited by Caesar; so blaming the sun, because of the soreness of his own blear eyes. But David (greatly wronged by Saul and his courtiers) by humble and hearty prayer maketh his request known to God with thanksgiving, **#Php 4:6**. And this, like his harp, drove away the evil spirit of grief and discontent.

That goeth not out of feigned lips] His devotion was not sorrowful, as is that of hypocrites; it was not an empty ring, a mere outside, the labour of the lips, but the travail of the heart; it was sincere and thoroughly wrought, as St James hath it, ενεργουμενη, **#Jas 5:16**. Wicked men speak God fair, but it is as the devil did our Saviour, to

be rid of him, or as those, #Ps 78:36, who flattered him with their mouths, and lied unto him with their tongues.

Ver. 2. **Let my sentence come forth from thy presence]** Let it be both pronounced and executed forthwith.

Let thine eyes behold, &c.] *i.e.* Make it appear that thou both seest and likest mine integrity; and that thou winkest not at men's wickednesses.

Ver. 3. **Thou hast proved my heart]** And knowest me to be no dissembler and traitor, as they wrongfully charge me, while they muse as they use.

Thou hast visited me in the night] In which God is wont to stir up and inmind men of his will, #Job 4:13,14, as being all gathered within themselves; and when the darkness doth unmask them of worldly dissimulation.

Thou hast tried me] As metallaries do their gold and silver.

And shall find nothing] Heb. hast not found, חָסַד deficit, saith Aben Ezra; no blot or blemish, that is, not the spot of God's children, #De 32:5, no dross or deceit that may not well consist with godliness.

I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress] My general purpose is such, though I may have my particular failings. I speak my whole heart, so far as I know it. *Magna est concordia cordis et oris.*

Ver. 4. **Concerning the works of men]** *sc.* Which ought to be done by them according to thy law. Or, which they are wont to do, whether right or wrong, I have not now to say, but this I can safely say by thy mercy, that

By the word of thy lips] Which I have taken for the rule and rudder of my life,

I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer] *Effractoris*, of the breach maker; such as is the bridge maker of Rome, at this day.

David meaneth that he had shunned the society of graceless persons, #Ps 26:4 Pr 24:21 Jer 15:17; and taken heed to his ways, that he offended not with his tongue, while the wicked was present, #Ps 39:1,2, lest the wicked should rejoice at his misdemeanors, #Ps 38:17.

Ver. 5. **Hold up my goings in thy paths, &c.]** Keep me within the circle of thy word, as thou hitherto hast done; make me to walk exactly, and as in a frame, #Eph 5:15. Grant me thy preventing, concomitant, and subsequent grace: O thou God of all grace, perfect, strengthen, stablish me, #1Pe 5:10.

That my footsteps slip not] By the malice of Satan, who seeks to subvert such as are most eminent, to the scandal of the weak, and scorn of the wicked; by the corruption also of mine own heart, *Qua quisque sibi Satan est*, as one well saith, whereby every man is a Satan to himself: could we but divorce the flesh from the devil, there would be no such danger. And, lastly, by the allurements or affrightments of this present evil world; the way whereof is like the vale of Siddim, slimy and slippery, full of slime pits and pit falls, springs and stumblingblocks.

Ver. 6. **I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me]** *q.d.* Thou wast always wont to hear me, and therefore I presume thou wilt. Experience breeds confidence.

Incline thine ear] See how he reinforceth his former request; as if he would wring the blessing out of God's hands by a holy violence, and take no denial.

Ver. 7. **Show thy marvellous lovingkindness, &c]** *Mirificas benignitates tuas*; less than a marvellous mercifulness will not serve David's turn, he was so hardly bestead; *ut nisi mirabiliter feceris, pereo*. We now alive have lived in an age of miracles; and God hath dealt with our land, not according to his ordinary course, but according to his prerogative; by a miracle of his mercy have we hitherto subsisted, and by a prop of his extraordinary patience.

O thou that savest, &c.] *Servator sperantium*. Choice must be made in prayer of fit titles and attributes of God; such as may strengthen faith and quicken affection.

From those that rise up against them] Or, against thy right hand. The saints are at Christ's right hand, #Ps 45:9, as Christ is at the Father's; and he puts his holy hand between them and harm.

Ver. 8. **Keep me as the apple of the eye]** Heb. As the black of the apple of the eye, two words to the same sense, for more vehemence, *q.d. Serva me studiosissime*. The apple of the eye, that little man in the eye (as the Hebrew word importeth, the girl, κορη, as the Greeks for like cause call it), is the tenderest piece of the tenderest part, the eye; which is kept most diligently, and strongly guarded by nature with tunicles. David therefore fitly prayeth to be so kept. (*Huc pertinet locus* Cicer. De Nat. Deor.).

Hide me under the shadow of thy wing] Another excellent similitude taken from fowls, which either cover their young with their wings from the scorching heat of the sunbeams, as doth the eagle; or keep them thereby from the cold, or from the kite, as hens do. God's love to and care of his poor people is hereby shadowed out; as it was likewise by the outspread wings of the cherubims in the sanctuary. See #Ru 2:12 De 32:10 Zec 2:8 Ps 36:8 57:2 Mt 23:37.

Ver. 9. **From the wicked that oppress me]** Heb. that waste me, i. e. that cast me out into banishment, despoiled of all. This hard usage of his enemies drove David into God's blessed bosom; as children misused abroad run home to their parents.

From my deadly enemies] Heb. my enemies against the soul, i. e. the life at least, if not the soul, which they would gladly destroy. Some malice is so mischievous, that it would ruin body and soul together; as that monster of Milan, the enemies of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, whose bodies they delivered to the fire, and their souls to the devil. David elsewhere complaineth of his enemies, that they did Satanically hate him, #Ps 55:4. "Beware of men," saith our Saviour, #Mt 10:17, for one man is a devil to another.

Ver. 10. **They are inclosed in their own fat]** See #Job 15:27, {*See Trapp on "Job 15:27"*} They abound in all delights, and therefore soare not to speak proudly. They have closed up their eyes in their fulsome fat, *ut non videant nec timeant te*, saith R. Solomon, that they can neither see nor fear thee. *Adipem suum obesant* (Tram.).

With their mouth they speak proudly] Heb. in pride, that is, *Palam et pleats buccis*; openly and with full mouth they condemn God and men; they belch out blasphemies, and do what they please. Ver. 11. **They have now compassed us in our steps]** i.e. Me and my company; so that we cannot stir any whither but we are in danger of them. "In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths," #Pr 3:6. "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him," &c., #Ps 32:5. Keep within God's precincts, and thou shalt be under his protection. He took order that a bird should be safe upon her own nest.

They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth] i.e. *Hoc unum spectant ut ruamus* (Junius). They are earnestly bent and firmly resolved upon our ruin, as one that fixeth his eyes upon another, to mark him, or to know him again; or as bulls, ready to run at one, set their eyes downward.

Ver. 12. **Like as a lion that is greedy, &c.]** Cruelty and craft are conjoined in the Church's enemies; as the ape never wandereth alone, they say, without his companion. David here pointeth out some one special enemy (Saul likely), who should have been a shepherd, but proved a lion.

As a young lion lurking] Therefore as we tender our safety, keep close to God, out of whose hands none can take us, no, not the roaring lion of hell.

Ver. 13. **Arise, O Lord, disappoint him]** *Anticipa faciem eius*, that is, that raging and ravening lion; step between me and him, and stop his fury, defeat his purpose, and disable his power.

Which is thy sword] As Assyria is called the rod of his wrath. Attila styled himself, *Orbis flagellum*, the wrath of God and the scourge of the world. So Tamerlane was commonly called, the wrath of God and terror of the world. Some render it, by thy sword, i.e. or thy might and power; see #Job 40:19?; or, by thy word execute thy judgment.

Ver. 14. **From men which are thy hand]** This, saith one, is David's Litany, From those men, &c., good Lord, deliver me. God's hand they are called, as before God's sword. Titus, son of Vespasian,

being extolled for destroying Jerusalem, said, I have only lent God my hand, but he hath done the work.

From men of the world] Heb. From mortals of this transitory world, *qui sunt mundani, mundum spirant et sapiunt*, the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, as opposed to the citizens of the New Jerusalem, **#Re 12:12**; such as having incarnated their souls (as that Father speaketh) are of the earth, speak of the earth, and the earth heareth them, **#Joh 3:31**, mind earthly things only, as if they were born for no other purpose. *Terrigenae fratres animam habentes triticeam*, as those stall fed beasts in the gospel. *A mortuis* i.e. *impiis qui sunt mortui in vita eorum* (R. Gaon).

Which have their portion in this life] And they love to have it so; saying, with the prodigal, "Give me the portion that belongeth to me." They crave it, and they have it, but with a vengeance (*Munera magna quidem misit, sed misit in hamo*), as the Israelites had quails to choke them, and afterwards a king to vex them, a table to be a snare to them, &c. By the way observe, that wicked men have a right to earthly things (a man must needs have some right to his portion; what Ananias had was his own while he had it, **#Ac 5:4**), and it is a rigour to say, they are usurpers. As when the king gives a traitor his life, he gives him meat and drink that may maintain his life; so it is here; neither shall wicked men be called to account at the last day for possessing what they had, but for abusing that possession. As for the saints who are heirs of the world, with faithful Abraham, and have a double portion, even all the blessings of heaven and of earth, conferred upon them, though here they be held to strait allowance, let them live upon reversions, and consider that they have right to all, and shall one day have rule of all, **#Re 3:21** *Mendicato pane hic vivamus, annon hoc pulchre sarcitur?* &c. What though we here were to live upon alms, saith Luther, is there not a good amends made us, in that here we have Christ the bread of life in his ordinances, and shall hereafter have the full fruition of him in heaven? The whole Turkish empire is nothing else but a crust cast by our Father to his dogs; and it is all they are likely to have, let them make them merry with it. Wilt not thou (saith another) be content, unless God let down the vessel to thee, as to Peter, with all manner of beasts of the earth, and fowls of the air, **#Ac 10:12**. Must you

needs have first and second course? *Difficile est ut praesentibus bonus quis fruatur et futuris; ut hic ventrem illic mentem reficiat, ut de deliciis ad delicias transeat, ut in coelo et in terra gloriosus apparent,* saith Jerome, It is a very hard thing to have earth and heaven too, &c. Gregory the Great trembled whensoever he read those words of Abraham to the rich glutton (who thought this life to be his saginary or boar's frank), "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things," #**Lu 16:25**. "Ye have lived in pleasure upon earth," #**Jas 5:5**, no fit place for such a purpose. God did not turn you out of one paradise that you should here provide yourselves of another; earth is a place of banishment and bondage. Of the wicked's prosperity here, see #**Job 21:7,8**. {See Trapp on "Job 21:7"}
{See Trapp on "Job 21:8"}

And whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasures] That is, with gold, and other precious things dug out of the earth, saith Aben Ezra; *Opimis rebus,* saith Junius; with abundance of outward blessings and benefits, saith another; which are called God's hidden treasures, not because they are not seen, but because they are not so well perceived and used Of the ungodly, as were meet; or because the reason of their present plenty of all things is hidden from them, and yet it appears not but shall be made manifest that these fattening ware are but fitting for the slaughter.

They are full of children] Which they send forth as a flock, #**Job 21:11**. {See Trapp on "Job 21:11"} Or, their children are full *carne porcina*, saith the Arabic here, or of worldly wealth, and mountains of money left them by those faithful drudges, their rich but wretched parents and progenitors, whose only care was to heap up hoards of wealth for their posterity.

Ver. 15. **As for me]** I neither envy nor covet these men's happiness, but partly have and partly hope for a far better.

I will behold thy face in righteousness] Which none can do but the pure in heart, #**Mt 5:8**, and those that keep close to God in a constant communion, being justified and sanctified persons.

I shall be satisfied] Better than those muckworms and their children are.

When I awake] sc. Out of the dust of death, at the resurrection.

With thy likeness] With the visible sign of thy glory in heaven, #1Jo 3:2.

To the chief Musician] Some render it, *Ad triumphandum*; and well they may; for this is old David's εἰνικιον, or triumphant song after so many victories and deliverances; and it is twice recorded in Scripture, with very little variation, {see #2Sa 22} for the great worth and weightiness of the matter; that we may the more observe it, and be the better versed in it. This here recorded seemeth to be the review of it, and hence those small additions and alterations that are found here and there, but not of any great moment.

A Psalm of David] Who having now gotten some breathing while from his troubles, gave not himself to idleness or worldly pleasures (as the Romans used to do after that they had once ridden in triumph), but, calling to mind God's great mercies towards him, composed this sweet psalmody to his glory.

The servant of the Lord] So he stiled himself before, #Ps 36:1, when he first entered upon the kingdom; and now here again, when being to lay it down together with his life, he breatheth out his holy soul to God in this divine ditty.

Sic ubi fata vocant, &c.

This he did after that, as a faithful servant of the Lord, he had done all the wills of God, #Ac 13:22, had served out his full time, #Ps 18:36, and dwelt in God's house to length of days, #Ps 23:6.

Who spake unto the Lord the words of this song] God lets out his mercies to us for this rent of our praises; and is content we have the benefit of them, so he may have the glory. The Hebrews give this note here; every man for whom there is wrought a miracle of mercy, and he thereupon uttereth a song, hath his sins forgiven him. This is better yet than that of the Papists, who promise pardon of sin to those that shall hear two masses a day. We who have received so

many mercies should compass God about with songs of deliverances, and not only *servire Deo, sed et adulari*, serve God and make obeisance, as Tertullian hath it.

From the hand of all his enemies] Heb. From the palm of other enemies, as less considerable, but from the hand (or clutched fist) of Saul.

And from the hand of Saul] His greatest enemy, and of longest continuance. So Christ is said to save his people from their sins, by a specialty, **#Mt 1:21**, because they do us the most mischief.

Chapter 18

Ver. 1. **I will love thee, O Lord my strength]** Heb. I will love thee dearly and entirely, *ex intimis visceribus*, from the very heart-root, from the bottom of my bowels; with like intention of affection, as a tender hearted mother doth her dearest babe, that is her own bowels; herself of the second edition. Neither did David herein supererogate: For God requireth to be loved with all the heart, mind, soul, strength, as one that is best worthy; good without measure, that hath loved us without measure, and therefore is without measure by us to be beloved. *Modus sit sine mode* (Bern.). Not that we are bound to love God *in quantum est diligibilis* so much as he is lovely or love worthy; for so God can only love himself; but, *Nihil supra, aequae, aut contra*, nothing must we love above God or so much as God, much less against God; we must be able to say affectionately, with David, **#Ps 73:25,26**, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." And as Bernard, *Amo te, Domine, plus quam mea, meos, me* I love thee, Lord, more than my goods, my friends, myself. A Christian begins with loving God for himself, but he ends in loving himself, and all other, both persons and things, in and for God. His friend he loveth in the Lord, his foes for the Lord; but God he loveth absolutely, and for himself, affecting not only a union with him, but even a unity, his heart being turned, as it were, into a very lump of love, as was Mary's, **#Lu 7:47**. Histories tell of a certain woman that came to Vespasian the emperor, professing that she was in love with him; he commanded that a liberal reward should be given her for the same; and when his

steward asked him under what item he should put that gift in the book of account, *Vespasiano adamato*, said the emperor, Item, To her that loved Vespasian. God, saith the apostle, is not unrighteous, to forget your labour of love, &c., #**Heb 6:10**. "I love them that love me," saith Christ, #**Pr 8:17**. And his love is not like the winter sun, which hath light, but no heat; he is the strength of his people, their rock, fortress.

Ver. 2. **The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, &c.**] *i.e.* He is all in all for my preservation. Ten words, say the Hebrews, he here heapeth up, in reference to ten signal victories; or rather because his thankful heart was so enlarged, that he could never satisfy himself in saying what God had been to him and done for him; and hence this congeries, or heap of holy expressions; and all to show that God is a rock of refuge, a firm fortress, a receptacle of rest, a sanctuary of safety to all his saints in time of trouble. David had had his share, and had been put to his shifts; glad to hide himself, as he could, in rocks and strong holds that sheltered him from the storm. To these he alludeth when he calls God his rock, fortress, &c.

And my deliverer] Rocks and strong holds do not always deliver (witness the Shechemites, Jebusites, Arimasphes), but God always doth.

And the horn of my salvation] *Qui veluti cornu petit et conficit hostes meos*, saith Vatablus; who goeth and dispatcheth mine enemies. A metaphor either from horned beasts, or else (as some will have it) from the ancient custom of wearing horns of iron upon their helmet, for a crest or military ornament; whereupon the raised horn was a sign of victory, and the horn beaten down a sign of being overcome.

Ver. 3. **I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised**] Or, is the proper object of praises, because he is good and doth good, #**Ps 119:68**. David vows to praise him,

1. By loving him entirely.
2. By trusting in him steadfastly, #**Ps 18:1**
3. By calling upon him continually, here, and #**Ps 116:2,3**, which psalm is very like to this (in the beginning especially) both for matter and method.

So shall I be saved, &c.] He hath often proved the power of prayer, especially when he came ready prepared to praise God for the return of prayer; and thence he is bold to promise himself all good.

Ver. 4. **The sorrows of death compass me]** Or, the pangs, pains, throes as of a travailing woman, these environed me, or came thick and threefold upon me, *perveniebant usque ad* נף even to my face (as the Rabbins descant upon the word), or flew upon me; desperate and deadly dangers assailed me. Medrash. Tillin. *Aphaphuni pro gnaphaphuni*. The worst of an evil escaped is to be thankfully acknowledged, and highest strains of eloquence therein to be used so that pride be avoided, and the praise of God only aimed at.

And the floods of ungodly men] Heb. of Belial, that is, of Belialists, acted and agitated by the devil; these same tumbling upon him like many and mighty waters, *Fluctus fluctum trudit. Torrentes Belial terrebant me*.

Ver. 5. **The sorrows]** Or, throes, or cords, such as wherewith they bind malefactors led forth to execution.

The snares of death prevented me] David knew how to make the most of a mercy; he means, I was almost surprised, and all hope of help seemed to be anticipated; if help should come, it would come too late.

Ver. 6. **In my distress I called upon the Lord]** This was David's *anchora sacra*; sacred anchor, prayer, he knew, could never come too late, nor God want a way to deliver his distressed. The time of affliction is the time of supplication; and man's extremity is God's opportunity.

And cried unto my God] He grew more and more earnest. We must pray and not faint, #Lu 18:1, but rise in our suits.

Out of his temple] i.e. Heaven, whereof the temple was a type, as being the place of God's special presence, and of transcendent holiness.

Ver. 7. **Then the earth shook and trembled, &c.]** Upon David's prayer all this befell; like as, #Ac 4:31, the house shook wherein they were praying; and the thundering legion procured thunder and

rain; and so did Samuel by his prayers, #1Sa 12:17,18. But this terrible tempest here described is to be taken rather allegorically than historically. The prophet, in most lofty and lively terms and expressions (far above the strain of the most sublime either poets or orators), describeth God's powerful presence and concurrence in David's conquests.

The foundations also of the hills] That is, so vehement was the earthquake, that it shook, as it were, the roots of the mountains, which lie deep within the ground, #2Sa 22:8. These hills are called the foundation of heaven, as #Job 26:11, the pillars of heaven; because the tops of high mountains seem to touch the clouds, and the heavens seem to lean upon them; and because the earth is in the centre of the world, about the which the heavens do continually turn.

Because he was wroth] Or, burn did his nose. So

Ver. 8. **There went up a smoke out of his nostrils]** As angry men breathe vehemently, and seem to spit fire by their blustering speeches and menaces, so here ανθρωποπαθως *omnia, quae tamen θεοπρεπως sunt intelligenda.*

Ver. 9. **He bowed the heavens]** *i.e. Velociter venit,* saith R. David, he came speedily to destroy mine enemies.

And darkness was under his feet] He came invisible.

Ver. 10. **And he rode upon a cherub]** Which word hath affinity with rehub, a chariot. Hereby is noted God's swiftness in coming to succour David. He waits to be gracious, and when it is a fit season he comes leaping and skipping over the mountains of Bether or division, all lets and impediments. Gabriel came to Daniel with weariness of flight, #Da 9:21.

He did fly upon the wings of the wind] For, by the ministry of angels, God raiseth and stilleth the winds (Vatablus).

Ver. 11. **He made darkness his secret place]** As a king, that, being angry, withdraweth himself from his subjects, and will not be seen of them. *Vel quia decreta Dei veniunt invisibiliter,* said R. David.

Ver. 12. **At the brightness that was before him, &c.]** *i.e.* At his bright presence, his thick clouds (wherein he was enveloped) passed,

or did cleave, as it were, in sunder; whence came hailstones mixed with coals of fire, or lightnings out of the clouds; which God maketh at once airy seas and airy furnaces; fetching fire out of the midst of water, and hard stone out of the midst of thin vapours.

Ver. 13. **The Lord also thundered in the heavens]** *Quasi pro classico, et auspicio proelii ineundi.*

Ver. 14. **Yea, he sent out his arrows, &c.]** *Tandem permiscetur omnia grandine flammis et fulminibus tanquam telis et sagittis Dei adversus hostes pugnantis.* After the advance guard, #Ps 18:12, the great ordnance, #Ps 18:13, the battle begins, and all is on a hurry.

Ver. 15. **Then the channels of waters were seen]** The force of this terrible tempest is further set forth by the effect of it, a dreadful concussion of the universe; not without an allusion to the drying up of the Red Sea and of Jordan before Israel: which deliverances stood for archetypes, or chief patterns, to all posterity.

Ver. 16. **He sent from above, he took me]** He rescued me as by a hand reached me from heaven. *Deus εκ μηχανης*, or, he sent his angels to secure me.

He drew me out of many waters] As he had once done Moses, #Ex 2:10, who there hence also had his name. Musaeus, for the same cause, calleth him *υδρογενης*, water spring.

Ver. 17. **He delivered me from my strong enemy]** Saul; this he oft instanceth, rolling it as sugar under his tongue, and turning aside often to look upon it, as Samson did to see his dead lion fetching honey out of it.

For they were too strong for me] And then God's help was most seasonable when David found himself outmatched.

Ver. 18. **They prevented me, &c.]** They took me on the sudden, and unprovided. The children of this world are wiser, &c.

But the Lord was my stay] Or, my staff, whereon I so leaned as that if he had failed me I had been all along.

Ver. 19. **He brought me forth also, &c.]** He freed me out of all straits, and stated me in a most happy condition.

He delivered, because he delighted in me] All was of free grace and favour, not of any merit. And this he purposely premiseth as a caution to the ensuing profession of his inherency.

Ver. 20. **The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness]** viz. The righteousness of my cause; and my freedom from such crimes of disloyalty and ambition, wherewith mine enemies charged me, as if pricked on by my pride I sought the kingdom. As also, according to mine honest desire and endeavour in all things else to keep a good conscience, void of offence toward God and men. This, though God's own work, and a debt most due to him, yet he is pleased graciously to reward.

Ver. 21. **For I have kept the ways of the Lord]** For the main, and for the most part, though not without some particular stumblings and startings aside, against my general resolution and the tendency of mine heart.

And have not wickedly departed from my God] By an utter defection; I have not been transformed into sin's image, by projecting sin, by falling into it with full consent, and by lying under the power of it. *Non ex superbia sed errore*, saith E. David here; not of presumption have I offended, or with a high hand, but of infirmity, and with reluctance; rising up again by repentance, and renewing my covenant.

Ver. 22. **For all his judgments were before me]** Mine obedience (in desire and endeavour at least) was universal, extending to the compass of the whole law; and this is a sure sign of sincerity, Hence in the next words,

Ver. 23. **I was also upright before him]** This he had because he kept God's commandments, as **#Ps 18:22**, had respect to them all, **#Ps 119:6**, both to the *magnalia* and *minutula legis*, which he kept as the apple of his eye, **#Pr 7:2**, even all God's wills, **#Ac 13:22**, and was therefore approved in Christ, as Apelles, **#Ro 16:10**, and passed for an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile, as Nathanael, **#Joh 1:47**.

And I kept myself from mine iniquity] *i.e.* From my *peccatum in deliciis*, my darling sin, whereto I am either by nature or custom most inclined and addicted; from the iniquity of my heart and secret thoughts, which no man can charge me with, saith Aben Ezra; from

that sin of disloyalty, which Saul and his courtiers charge me with, say others.

Ver. 24. **Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me]** See on #Ps 18:20. Reward and mercy are joined together in the second commandment; and, #Ps 62:12, it is a mercy in God to reward a man according to his work.

According to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight] *i.e.* Which he hath beheld in me; though mine enemies were of another judgment, *Qua illo iudice praeditus sum* (Vatab.).

Ver. 25. **With the merciful, &c.]** *Hypothesin hic ad thesin transfert.* It is as if he should say, I and mine enemies are a pattern of thy truth and justice, that thou wilt do good to those that are good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked paths, thou, Lord, shalt lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, #Ps 125:4,5.

Ver. 26. **With the pure, &c.]** *Cum candido candide agere soles.* The pure shall have all that heart can wish.

And with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward] Or, thou wilt wrestle, *viz.* with such cross pieces, as proudly and perversely err from thy precepts, as it were, on purpose to thwart thee, or to try masteries with thee. Against such stubborn persons God threateneth not eight degrees (which are the highest notes in music and degrees in qualities, as the philosopher distinguisheth them), but twenty and eight degrees of wrath, #Le 26:18,21,24,28. *Exiget ab iis rationem minutissimorum,* saith R. Obad. Gaon upon this text; he will reckon with them for their least offences, and not bate them an ace of their due punishment. He will pay them home in their own coin, over shoot them in their own bow, fill them with their own ways, be as cross as they are, for the hearts of them; yet still in a way of justice, though he break the necks of them in wrestling, and send them packing to their place in hell. Ainsworth rendereth it, With the froward thou wilt show thyself wry. It is a similitude taken from wrestlers, and noteth a writhing of one's self against an adversary. Compare herewith #De 32:5. They are a perverse and crooked generation (the same two words that are here in this text); the latter importeth, that they wriggled and writhed after the manner of wrestlers that wave up and down, and wind the other way, when one

thinks to have them here or there. But all will not serve their turn to save them from punishment. God will be sure to meet with them, his word will lay hold on them, and their sin shall find them out.

Ver. 27. **For thou wilt save the afflicted people]** Even the same whom before he had called merciful, or godly, upright, pure, here are the afflicted, and seem by God to be neglected; but he will save them assuredly, though he bear long with them, #Lu 18:7.

But wilt bring down high looks] In Samuel it is, "Thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down," #2Sa 22:28, *q.d.* God's eyes are upon them all the while that he spareth them, to watch for a fit season to ruin them.

Ver. 28. **For thou wilt light my candle]** Or, Thou hast lighted my candle, that is, thou hast bettered my condition, which seemed to be put out in obscurity. The wicked man's is, #Job 18:6 21:17 Pr 13:9.

The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness] He hath, and yet still will turn my grief into joy, as #Es 8:17, and meanwhile direct and comfort me in mine afflictions; as a candle is a great comfort in the dark, though it doth not make day where it comes, as the sun doth,

Ver. 29. **For by thee have I run through a troop]** Though but a little man, yet by God's help he achieved great matters, did great exploits. *Homo tricubitalis*, saith a Father concerning Paul; *Et coelum ascendit*: so here. Some render it, *Currebam accinctus*: I ran well appointed (Bucholcer); and they interpret it of his victory over Goliath, whom he ran upon and cut off his head, after that he had hurled at him with as good a force; *Perinde ac si fundae suae tunicis non lapillum, sed Deum ipsum induisset ac implicuisset*, saith one; as if he had got not a stone, but God himself, into the bought of his sling.

And by my God have I leapt over a wall] That is, I have stormed a walled town, or fort, with very little ado; being no less valiant and venturous than Alexander the Great was among the Indians; but upon far better grounds, because in the strength of God, as at the fort of Zion.

Ver. 30. **As for God, his way is perfect]** All his dispensations toward his children, his actions and directions, his providences and

promises, are most trusty and true; having neither vice, vanity, insincerity, nor deceit in them, #2Sa 22:31.

The word of the Lord is tried] This is a famous sentence, and was much in the mouths of God's people. See #Pr 30:5, {See Trapp on "Pr 30:5"}

Ver. 31. **For who is God save the Lord?]** *Fictitios Deos et vanas spes prosternit*, saith Vatablus. Here he striketh down to the ground all false gods and all vain hopes. *Contemno minutulos istos Deos mode Iovem mihi propitium habeam*, said a heathen. David might much better say, I care not for those petty deities, so I may have Jehovah to favour me.

Ver. 32. **It is God that girdeth me with strength]** It is a metaphor, saith Vatablus, either from a soldier's belt, which buckleth his armour close to him, and maketh him more steady; or else from the reins themselves, in which the Scripture sometimes placeth strength and vigour. God did all for David; and hath here the glory of all his valour and victories.

And maketh my way perfect] *i.e.* Completeth and prospereth all my designs and enterprises. For want hereof many attempt much, but effect little or nothing. Antiochus, king of Syria, was called Magnus for undertaking much and performing little. Guicciardin saith of Charles VIII, in his expedition to Naples, that he came into the field like thunder and lightning, but went out like a snuff; more than a man at first, and less than a woman at last.

Ver. 33. **He maketh my feet like hinds' feet]** Heb. He matcheth my feet, like hinds' feet; that is, not only swift, if I have occasion by flight to provide for myself, or to pursue mine enemies flying before me; but also steady, if I come into any dangerous places. Asahel was swift of foot as a wild roe, #2Sa 2:18. Josephus saith of him, that he contended with horses in running. Saul and Jonathan are said to be swifter than eagles, #2Sa 1:23. Achilles was ποδας οκυς, saith Homer. The hind, when pursued by the wolf, runs most swiftly; witness the poet (Horat. lib. 1, Od. 15, 23):

Quem tu, cervus uti vallis in altera

*Visum parte lupum, graminis immemor,
Sublimi fugies mollis anhelitu.*

And again,

Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloe, &c.

But they that wait upon the Lord have a promise that they shall not only run as hinds, but mount up as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint, **#Isa 40:31**.

He setteth me upon my high places] Where, having by flight or fight escaped, I am secured; yea, he hath advanced me, and brought me to this high honour, *Securus postquam evasi ab illis* (R. David).

Ver. 34. **He teacheth mine hands to war]** David ascribeth all his military skill and success to God; so did not other great warriors, Alexander, Scipio, Fabius, &c., but sacrificed to their own nets, and were ready to say, as Sesostris, king of Egypt, did when he had conquered any country, he was wont to set up pillars with these words engraven upon them, This country I got by mine own strength and valour, ταυτην την χωρην ωμοισι τοις εμοισιν εκτησαμη (Herodot. l. 2).

So that a bow of steel, &c.] Which is more flexible and stronger than a bow of iron; whence is that, **#Job 20:24**.

Ver. 35. **Thou hast also given me, &c.]** *i.e.* Thou hast preserved and settled me. {See Trapp on "Ps 5:12"}

And thy gentleness hath made me great] Or, Thy meekness hath multiplied me, *i.e.* Thou hast so far stooped to my meanness as to advance me to this height of honour. Or, by thy humbling me thou hast magnified me, according to **#1Pe 5:6 Pr 15:33**.

Ver. 36. **Thou hast enlarged my steps under me]** Or, Thou hast widened my passage, and made room for me; when the wicked man's strong passages are straitened, **#Job 18:7**, his pace impeded.

And my feet did not slip] Heb. mine ankles, or my heels; Sept. my footsteps.

Ver. 37. **I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them, &c.]** Of David we may say, as one did of Julius Caesar, you may perceive

him to have been an excellent soldier by his very language; for he wrote with the same spirit he fought. *In eo tanta vis, id acumen, ea concitatio*, saith Quintilian concerning Caesar's Commentaries, *ut illum eodem animo dixisse appareat quo bellavit*.

Ver. 38. **I have wounded them that they were not able to rise]** Much less to resist. And herein he was a type of Christ; all whose foes shall be his footstool, **#Ps 110:1**.

Ver. 39. **Thou hast girded me with strength, &c.]** See **#Ps 18:32**. It is God that weakeneth or strengtheneth either part, **#Eze 30:24**, and rendereth their weapons vain or prosperous, **#Isa 54:17 Jer 50:9**.

Thou hast subdued under me, &c.] David ascribeth all to God, and useth wonderful variety of expressions in setting forth his benefits.

Ver. 40. **Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies]** *sc.* To chop them off at my pleasure; or to cut the throats.

Ver. 41. **They cried]** Through grief and impatience, *clamore incondito*, as beasts when in durance fill the air with loud outcries.

Even unto the Lord] As nature prompteth men in an extremity to look up for help; but because it is but the prayer of the flesh for ease, and not of the spirit for grace, and a good use of calamities, and not but in extreme despair of help elsewhere, therefore God hears them not. In Samuel it is, They looked, but there was none to save them; *q.d.* If they could have made any other shift God should never have heard of them. Therefore *Sero, inquit Nero*.

Ver. 42. **Then did I beat them as small as the dust]** When God once withdraws his protection and help from a people it is an easy matter to tread them down and beat them in pieces. Lay hold upon him, therefore, as the Church did, and hang on. Say, as **#Jer 14:21**, Do not abhor us for thy name's sake; for as Bodin said well of obtaining, so for retaining, religion and civil rights, *Non disputationibus, sed rogationibus agendum*, prayer is most prevalent. If once our shadow depart, &c., woe be unto them when I depart from them.

I did cast them out, &c.] *Evacuabam eos*, I dealt by them as men do by the sweepings of the house, or noisome excrements. God

sometimes dungeth his vineyard with the dead bodies of his enemies.

Ver. 43. **Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people]** viz. In the rebellions under Absalom, and Sheba, the son of Bichri. These, like bubbles which children blow up into the air, were soon blown out; and fell into the eyes of those who with the blasts of disloyalty and ambition held up the same.

Thou hast made me head of the heathen] Philistines, Syrians, Ammonites, &c. This is most true of Christ, head of his Church, which consisteth of all nations, and most of these were unknown unto him as man; and, by hearing of him, they were brought to submit unto him, when the apostles came and preached him among them. Hence it followeth,

Ver. 44. **As soon as they hear of me]** Heb. At the hearing of the ear; that is, by the preaching of the gospel they shall be brought to yield the obedience of faith.

The strangers shall submit] Heb. falsely, deny or dissemble with me; their submission is forced and feigned, they dare do no less; they receive my yoke, but their hearts I have not, *Subiectio fucosa et hypocritica*. Christ hath many such false hearted subjects, fawning and feigning profligate professors, carnal gospellers, &c.

Ver. 45. **The strangers shall fade away]** As do the dry leaves of trees; their vigour and confidence shall perish in a moment.

And be afraid out of their close places] Whence they shall come creeping to me, their conqueror, to seek favour. And this may very fitly also be applied to Christ and his subjects, who must be driven unto him out of their close places, or starting holes of self confidences, self conceitedness, &c., by the spirit of bondage, before they will unfeignedly submit to Christ's government.

Ver. 46. **The Lord liveth]** Or, *Vivat Dominus*, Let the Lord live. It is spoken, saith Calvin, after the manner of men, who use such kinds of acclamations to the kings whom they love and honour. The wicked could wish God extinct, that so they might never come to an account before him; but the saints cry out, Let the Lord live, let Christ reign, &c. Blessed be God that he is God, was a learned man's motto. Luther's was, *Vivit, sc. Christus. Si non viveret,*

vellem me non unam horam vivere, de., Christ is alive, otherwise I would not wish to live an hour. Another good man saith, Christ liveth and reigneth, *alioque totus totus desperassem*, otherwise I should be utterly out of hope (Miconius).

Let the God of my salvation be exalted] *Triumphali elogio ab omnibus celebretur*; let him be set up in all hearts and houses.

Ver. 47. **It is God that avengeth me]** Heb. that giveth vengeance for me; whence also he is called the God of vengeance, **#Ps 94:1**, and the God of recompenses, **#Jer 51:56**.

And subdueth the people under me] It is the great work of God to persuade the hearts of so many millions to obey one man.

Ver. 48. **He delivereth me from mine enemies]** This David hath never done with, but goeth over it again and again, as desirous to do the Lord all the right that might be.

From the violent man] That is, from Saul, saith R. David, and him he mentioneth last, *quia erat principium omnis Davidicae gloriae*, because the fall of his house was the rise of all David's glory. The Chaldee hath it, From Gog and his armies.

Ver. 49. **Therefore I will give thanks, &c.]** See how the psalmist in these three last verses endeth as he began.

Among the heathen] This the apostle applieth to Christ and his people, as a prophecy of his kingdom, and of the calling of the Gentiles, **#Ro 15:9**. I, that is, Christ (but yet in the person of his faithful, and especially his ministers), will praise thee, or confess unto thee, &c.

And sing praises unto thy name] Which to have done *absurdum fuisset apud surdos*, would have been absurd, had not those heathens had their ears opened.

Ver. 50. **Great deliverance giveth he to his king]** In Samuel it is, He is the tower of salvation for his king. This tower is Messias, say the Jewish doctors, *Qui est turris salutis*. Oh that those poor creatures would once run to that strong tower and be safe.

To David and to his seed for evermore] That is, to Christ (who was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, **#Ro 1:3 Ac 13:23**), and to all faithful Christians, who are called Christ's seed, **#Isa 53:10 Ps 72:17**. *Filiabitur nomine eius*, the name of Christ shall endure for ever, it shall be begotten as one generation is begotten of another; there shall be a succession of it to the world's end.

The heavens declare the glory of God] The world, saith Clement of Alexandria, is *Dei Scriptura*, the first Bible that God made for the institution of man. The heavens (here instanced as a chief part of that *Mundi totius machina*) are compared to a scroll that is written, **#Re 6:14**. As in a horn book, which little ones carry, there be letters in a paper within which appear through the same; so, under the blue sapphire of the firmament, is spread a sheet of royal paper written all over with the wisdom and power of God. This book was imprinted, saith one, at the New Jerusalem, by the finger of Jehovah, and is not to be sold, but to be seen, at the sign of glory, of every one that lifts up his eyes to heaven; where he may plainly perceive *Deum esse mentem, architectricem, intelligentem, sapientem, potentem, &c.* This lesson is fairly lined out unto us in the brows of the firmament, which, therefore, we are bidden to behold and discern; since therein God hath made himself visible, yea, legible, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that men are left without excuse, **#Ro 1:20**. But because this book of nature (with its three great leaves, heaven, earth, and sea), though never so diligently read over, cannot bring a man to the saving knowledge of God in Christ, nor make him perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works, behold another and better Book, even that of the Holy Scriptures, set forth, **#Ps 19:7,8, &c.**, of this psalm, that like as where the philosopher endeth the physician beginneth; so, where nature faileth us, Scripture may inform and comfort us. In this excellent psalm, then, we have the sum of all true divinity, saith reverend Beza, the end whereof is to give us that knowledge of God, and of his holy worship, whereby we may be made partakers of eternal life. Here, then, in the six first verses the prophet showeth that God manifesteth his glory to mankind by his works; and, first, by the work of creation, **#Ps 19:1**; next, of government, **#Ps 19:2,3, &c.**, and that, 1. In the revolution of the starry sky, which revolution, first, causeth a perpetual vicissitude of days and nights, and so declareth the glory of God. 2.

It bespeaketh all people at once, as a catholic preacher of God's glory, #Ps 19:4,5. Secondly, in the constant course of the sun (that common servant, as his name importeth), #Ps 19:4, who, with his motion, #Ps 19:5, enlighteneth all things with his light, and pierceth all things with his heat, #Ps 19:6. Thus "the heavens declare the glory of God"; that is, they yield matter and occasion of glorifying him, according to that, #Ps 145:10, "All thy works praise thee, O Lord; but thy saints bless thee." Some philosophers, and with them some Rabbis (Maimonides), have deemed, or rather doted, that the heaven was a living creature, and did actually praise and serve God. But this conceit is exploded by the wiser sort; and that axiom maintained, *Formica coelos dignitate superat*, An ant, because a living creature, is more excellent than the whole visible heavens. As for the saints and servants of God, it is truly affirmed by divines that there is not so much of the glory of God in all his works of creation and providence as in one gracious action that they perform.

And the firmament showeth his handywork] The expanse or outspread firmament. It is taken both for the air, #Ge 1:6, and for the sky, #Ge 1:14, the whole cope of heaven, which showeth, *Quam eleganter et ad amussim operetur Deus manibus suis*; how neatly and exactly God worketh with his hands, which are attributed to him for our weakness' sake (Vatablus).

Ver. 2. **Day unto day uttereth speech]** Some read it, one day succeeding another uttereth (or welletth out, as a fountain, continually, and plentifully) speech, yet without sound, *Sicut fons scaturiens* (R. Menahem); by a dumb kind of eloquence, *eructant*; by a continual revolution and succession of days men are instructed concerning the power and providence of God, as also concerning his truth and faithfulness; for if God had hitherto kept promise with nights and days, that one shall succeed the other, will he not much more keep promise with his people? #Jer 33:20,25.

And night unto night showeth knowledge] Days and nights by their perpetual course and order, *Dei potentiam et sapientiam concelebrant*; there being no less necessity of the night in its kind than of the day. The knowledge it showeth us is, that man in himself is weak, and cannot long hold out hard labour; that he is permitted to sleep a while, and take his rest; that he must abridge himself of some

part of his rest to commune with his own heart on his bed, and be still; that if he bestir not himself, and do up his work quickly, the night of death cometh, when no man can work, &c.

Ver. 3. **There is no speech nor language where their voice]** And yet few hear these universal preachers, these *Regii Professores*, these real expositors of the divinity, as one styleth them, who do preach to all people at once, *Non solum diserte sed et exerte, at surdis plerumque fabulam*, they are by the most as little respected as is the cuckoo in June.

Ver. 4. **Their line is gone out through all the earth]** Or, their rule, or direction, or delineation, or Scripture, {*confer #Isa 28:13*} *Quod in coelis tanquam in volumine omnibus conspicuo descripta sit Dei gloria*, because that in the heavens, as in an open book, is written down the glory of the Creator. The like is done also in other less considerable creatures; every of which do after a sort write as well as speak, and have a pen as well as a tongue. The Chaldee word אַעבַב for a mint signifieth also a book of histories, because in that one herb large stories of God's wisdom, might, and love are described unto us. The same word also that signifieth an ear of grain signifieth a word, הַלִּילִם because every field of corn is a book of God's praise, every land a leaf, every sheaf a verse, every ear a word, every corn of wheat a letter, to express the glory of God by, *Praesentem narrat quaelibet herba Deum*. Antony, the hermit, being asked by a certain philosopher how he could contemplate high things having no help of books? answered, That the whole world was to him instead of a well furnished library; this he had ready by him at all times and in all places, and in this he could read when he pleased the great things of God (Aug. de Doct. Christ. 1. 1; Niceph. l. 8, c. 40). Bernard also saith that was the time when he had no other masters, *nisi quercus et fagos*, but the oaks and beech trees.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun] That prince of planets, but servant to the saints of the Most High, as his name importeth: so sweet a creature he is, that Eudoxus, the philosopher, professed that he would be content to be burnt up by the heat of it so he might be admitted to come so near it as to learn the nature of it. A tabernacle, or flitting tent, it is here said to have in the heavens; because it never stayeth in one place, but courseth about with incredible swiftness.

Ver. 5. **Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber]** *sc.* After long expectation, with a great, deal of pomp and gaiety; such is the sun rising, when he first showeth himself above our horizon. Kimchi addeth, that as the bride groom when he is abroad hasteneth home to his bride, so doth the sun to his descent, *anhelat ad occasum*, #Ec 1:5.

And rejoiceth as a strong man (or champion) to run a race] Readily running, and effectually affecting all things with his heat. The Persian angari, or posts, the ostrich, the wild ass, the bustard, the dromedary, the eagle, is nothing so swift as the sun. Bellarmine saith (*De Ascens. Mentis in Demn*), that he runneth in the eighth part of an hour seven thousand miles. This dumb creature gives check to our dulness; as Balaam's ass also did to that prophet's madness.

Ver. 6. **His going forth is from the end of the heaven]** *i.e.* From the east unto the west, in which course, notwithstanding, while he compasseth the circle of heaven and earth, he visiteth the south and the north, and is unweariable.

And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof] *i.e.* From the benefit of the sun's heat, who is *ut cor incorpore*, as the heart in the body, saith Aben Ezra; all things feel the quickening heat of the sun; not only the roots of trees, plants, &c., but metals and minerals, in the bowels of the earth.

Ver. 7. **The law of the Lord is perfect]** Or, doctrine; the whole word of God, commonly distinguished into law and gospel, is perfect, immaculate, sincere, entire, complete. If Cicero dared to say, that the law of the twelve tables in Rome did exceed all the libraries of philosophers, both in weight of authority and fruitfulness of matter, how much rather is this true of God's law! saith a learned writer. Nothing may be added to it without marring it, #Pr 30:6. Note this against Jewish, Popish, and Turkish traditions and additions; as also against anti-scripturists, and who at first rejected all books but the Bible, and after that grew so wise as to be religious enough without that also. And last of all they came to blaspheme that blessed book, as a dead letter, and a beggarly element, &c.; when as the apostle telleth us, that all Scripture is pure, precious, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, &c., that the man of God

may be perfect, &c., #2Ti 3:16,17. Here in this and the two following verses it is easy to observe—1. That every one of them are in the Hebrew written with ten words. 2. That here is a sixfold commendation of God's holy word. (1.) By the several names thereunto given, law, testimony, statutes, &c (2.) By the nature, perfect, sure, right, &c. (3.) By the effects, converting the soul, making wise the simple, &c.

Converting the soul] This no doctrine besides can do. *Integra est doctrina, ae proinde animos redintegrat.* Plato went thrice to Sicily to convert Dionysius the tyrant, but could not. Ambrose saith well of Polemo, who of a drunkard, by hearing Xenocrates, became a philosopher, *Si resipuit a vino, fuit semper tamen temulentus sacrilegio.* If he gave over his drunkenness, yet he continued still drunk with superstition. Seneca the philosopher wrote a book (now lost) against superstitions, but yet lived and died in them; *Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat,* saith Austin of him, he exercised what he condemned, and would not leave what he did so utterly dislike. But the word works a transmutation, an entire change of the mind and manners, a new creation, #2Co 5:17.

The testimony of the Lord is sure] These words are faithful and true, #Re 22:6, they are all in righteousness, neither is there in them anything perverse or froward, #Pr 8:8. Testimonies they are called, 1. Because they testify (as a record) to all ages what the will of the Lord is, #Joh 5:39 2. They were given with great contestation, and pressing of all men to keep them. 3. They will be a witness against all such as do not. The gospel also is called a testimony, #1Co 2:1 2Th 1:10 Isa 8:20.

Making wise the simple] That is, the humble, teachable, and such as are not puffed up with a conceit of their own wisdom, #1Co 7:18, the very entrance into God's word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple, or to the persuadable, #Ps 119:130. It is reasonable milk, #1Pe 2:2.

Ver. 8. **The statutes of the Lord are right]** As being the issue of the most righteous will of God. Of human laws Demosthenes saith, that they are ερημα των Θεων, the invention of the gods. Much better

may we say the like of this law here commended; right it is, because it teacheth men the right way to life, *non flexuosum quale doter care et cautio humana*; right also, because it speaketh right to every man's case and condition, *de quolibet in re sua*, affording a salve for every sore, a medicine for every malady; so that it may better be called, than was that famous library at Alexandria, η της φυξης ιατρεια, physic for the soul, food and physic both, and of the best sort, the best of the best.

Rejoicing the heart] This is the proper work of the gospel; the sweet promises whereof hid in the heart, and there mingled with faith, make it to overly abound exceedingly with joy, and to conceive strong consolation; the martyrs of all ages, for instance. And although it be the doctrine of the cross, yet *Lecyθος habet in malis*, it hath cordials of comfort, such as the world can neither give nor take away. The gospel is a precious book; every leaf drops myrrh and mercy. We should therefore prize it much more than Caesar did his Commentaries; *Maior fuit cura Caesari libellorum quam purpurae*; for, swimming through the waters to escape his enemies, he carried his books in his hand above the waters, but lost his robe. Now what were his books to God's?

The commandment of the Lord is pure] And so differeth from human laws, which establish wickedness sometimes; as those of Lycurgus did some kind of theft, adultery, &c. Human doctrines also are mixed with many errors. Irenaeus justly taxeth Plato for this, that he did *laete gypsum miscere*, mingle lime with milk, stain the pure stream of divine truth with fabulous narrations and fopperies. But every word of God is pure, **#Ps 12:7 18:32**. {See Trapp on "Ps 12:7"} {See Trapp on "Ps 18:32"}

Enlightening the eyes] Giving both light and sight, **#Ac 26:18**, the saving knowledge of God and his will, of ourselves and of our duties; and bringing us out of darkness into his marvellous light, **#1Pe 2:9**. When Christ came preaching, the people which sat in darkness saw a great light, **#Mt 4:16**. And we have a more sure light of prophecy, whereunto we must take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, **#2Pe 1:19**. While the moon looketh directly upon the sun, she is bright and beautiful; but if she once turn aside,

and be left to herself, she loseth all her glory, and enjoyeth but only a shadow of light, which is her own; so while men with humility and teachableness turn their faces toward Christ revealed in the gospel, and those stars in his right hand, the faithful ministers, to receive illumination and instruction; God doth graciously vouch safe unto them the glorious light of saving knowledge. But when they turn their backs upon him and his oracles, and will needs walk by the light of their own tinder boxes kindling a fire, and compassing themselves with sparks, #Isa 1:11, they are sure to be bewildered, and to lie down in sorrow.

Ver. 9. **The fear of the Lord is clean]** That is, the doctrine which teacheth the true fear of God is such as cleanseth the conscience, ferreteth out corruption, sanctifieth the whole man, #Joh 17:17 15:3 Ac 20:32 26:18.

Enduring for ever] "For ever, O Lord, thy word is established in heaven." #Ps 119:89. Heaven and earth shall pass, but not one jot or tittle of the law; not one hair of that sacred head shall fall to the ground, #Mt 5:18; should all the powers on earth make war against the very paper of the Scriptures, they cannot possibly destroy it. What God hath written he hath written, and it shall stand inviolable to the world's end. Antiochus, Epiphanes, Dioclesian, and other tyrants have attempted to burn up all Bibles, but could never effect it. Other laws and religions are antiquated and altered, as all histories testify; not so this.

The judgments of the Lord are true] Heb. truth, as coming from a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and righteous is he, #De 32:4. All his sayings are faithful, and therefore worthy of all acceptance, #1Ti 1:15. The Eternity of Israel cannot lie, #1Sa 15:29. He will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth, #Ps 89:33,34. Μονιμον η αληθεια, saith Plato; truth is lasting, and γλυκεια η αληθεια, , Truth is sweet, said Mercury's priests when they ate their figs. Divine truths should be so to us in a special manner. And as Cyprian, in any great doubt or difficulty, would call to Paulus Concordiensis (who was his notary), for Tertullian's works, saying, *Da magistrum*, Reach hither my master; so should we call for the Bible, and therehence fetch satisfaction and settlement, as holding it infallible.

And righteous altogether] Not one of them to be found fault with; but all of them every way complete and absolute. *Iustificata sunt simul*, so some render it, they are altogether justified. What a high esteem the Jews at this day have of the law hath been elsewhere noted; while they carry it usually about their synagogues at the end of their service in procession, with many ornaments of crowns and sceptres; the children kissing it as it passeth by them. To their disciples they prescribe, not to write any letter of the law without a copy, no line of it without a rule, no parchment but made of the skin of a clean beast, no word must be written in a different colour. No man might carry it behind him, but lay it next to his heart in his travel; nor read it, but in a clean place; nor sell it, though the copy were moth eaten, and himself half famished (Schicard. *de iure Reg. Heb.*). The last day of the feast of tabernacles they call Shimchah Torah, the rejoining at the law. They have chosen also, then, two, that are called *sponsi legis*; one of which is to read the end of it, called Chathan Torah, the bridegroom of the law ended; the other Chathan Bereshith, because he presently beginneth it again; these are to express joy (Leo Modena of Jewish Rites).

Ver. 10. More to be desired are they than gold] Old people are all for profit, young for pleasure; here is gold for the one, yea, the finest gold (gold of Fez, *Aceto melle*, Plin. l. xi. c. 15), in great quantity; here is honey for the other, yea, live honey dropping from the comb, liquor of the honeycomb. As manna had all sorts of sweet tastes in it; so hath the word to those that have spiritual senses exercised to discern good and evil. Great is the sweetness of human learning to those that have got a taste of it, as it was to Pythagoras and Plato, who travelled far for it; to Julian the apostate, who preferred the study of it before all pastimes whatsoever; to M. Aurelius, the emperor, who said he would not leave the knowledge he might learn in one hour for all the gold that he possessed; to Alphonsus, king of Arragon, who preferred his skill in the mathematics before the empire of Germany when it was offered unto him; he professed that he had rather lose his jewels than his books, and all his kingdoms rather than that little learning he had attained unto. How, then, should we prize divine learning, which is infinitely more precious, profitable, and pleasant! David had much of it, and yet he cries to God ever and anon, "Teach me thy statutes." Moses was but newly

come down from the mount, and he presently prays, as one insatiate, "Lord, show me thy glory." The angels themselves know not so much of the mystery of Christ but they would fain know more, #1Pe 1:12 Eph 3:10, &c.

Ver. 11. **Moreover by them is thy servant warned]** Clearly admonished, or furbished and brightened, #Da 12:3, made circumspect. God's testimonies were David's counsellors, #Ps 119:24, better than ever was Polybius to Scipio, Agrippa to Augustus, Seneca to Nero, Anaxagoras to Themistocles, Plato to Dio, Aristotle to Alexander or Nigidius to Cicero; princes of old had their Μημονες, Monitores, remembrancers. David desired no better than God's statutes for his learned counsel, and by them he resolved to be ruled; for so it followeth,

And in keeping of them] Xenophon writes that in Lycurgus's laws this was much to be admired, that whereas all men commended them, yet no other city besides that of Sparta would ever observe them. Men do rather praise right things than practise them; as it was said of Demosthenes. But David was of another strain; he, after a large encomium of God's commandments, is set upon the keeping of them; and the rather because

In keeping of them there is great reward] Not only for keeping, but in keeping of them. As every flower hath its sweet smell, so every good action hath its sweet reflection upon the soul; and as Cardan saith, that every precious stone hath some egregious virtue, so here, righteousness is its own reward, though few men think so and act accordingly:

*Haud facile invenies multis e millibus unum,
Virtutem pretium qui putet esse sui.*

Howbeit, the chief reward is not till the last cast, till we come to heaven. The word here rendered reward signifieth the heel, and, by a metaphor, the end of a work, and the reward of it, which is not till the end. Gnekebh sic τέλος apud Graecos. Sicut opus non est usque ad mortem perfectum, sic nec merecs, saith R. David here; As the work is not done till death, so neither is full wages till then to be had.

Ver. 12. **Who can understand his errors?]** This David speaketh doubtless out of a deep sense of his own imperfections and defects in what the law (so much by him commended) requireth; and to prevent mistakes, lest any man, hearing him speak of great reward, should think that heaven may be merited and salvation attained by a man's own righteousness. No such matter, believe it, saith holy David, I have neither done the law nor deserved the reward, but do fly to God by prayer; and three things I have to beg of him: First, That he would graciously pardon my secret sins and errors, unknown to myself, or at least to others. Secondly, That he would keep me from proud and presumptuous sins, **#Ps 19:13**. Thirdly, That he would bridle my tongue and mind from speaking, or but thinking, aught that may be offensive to his majesty, **#Ps 19:14**. For the first of these, *Humanum est, errare et ignorare suum*, It is incident to every man to err, and then to be ignorant of his errors (Jun.). Certain it is, that our lives are fuller of sins than the firmament is of stars, or the furnace of sparks. And if the best man's faults were written in his forehead, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes, as the proverb hath it. David here seeth such volumes of corruptions in his heart, and so many foul erratas in his life, that he cannot but cry out, Who can understand, &c., O cleanse, &c. The most perfect saints are the most sensible of their imperfections; as the more delicate the senses are the more sharply are they affected with what offends them, **#Ro 7:14 1Co 15:9,10**. Alas for us (saith one good man)! *Ipsae lachrymae sunt lachrymabiles*; we had need to weep over our tears, sigh over our sobs, mourn over our griefs, &c. Look how when we have swept a room never so clean (saith Spinaeus, De Instit. Christian.), if the sun do but come into it at the windows, we soon espy abundance of filthy motes, mingled with the beams thereof; so is it with our hearts, when once enlightened. What a blind buzzard then was he that said, *Non habeo, Domine, quod mihi ignoscas*, Lord, I have nothing for thee to pardon! And no wiser was Bellarmine, that great scholar, but ill read in his own heart, if that be true that is reported of him, viz. that when the priest came to absolve him, he could not remember any particular sin to confess till he went back in his thoughts as far as his youth. Of Philip III, king of Spain, it is said, that he lived so strictly that he never committed any gross crime or wilful wickedness; yet coming to die, he cried out, Oh that I had never reigned! Oh that I had lived

a private life in the wilderness, that I might not have now to answer for not doing the good or hindering the evil that I might have done in my government! (Val. Max. Christ. 263).

Cleanse thou me from secret faults] Secret from myself, many of them (sins of ignorance and of inadvertency), secret from the world, more of them, heart sins, but not secret from the Lord, **#Ps 90:8 Heb 4:13**. These are of daily and hourly incursion, involuntary and unavoidable infirmities, yet are they sins properly so called; and we must be cleansed from them by the merit and Spirit of Christ; they must be repented of in general at least; and then there is a pardon of course for them, and they do not usually distract and plunge the conscience.

Ver. 13. **Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins]** Heb. Withdraw, inhibit, for we are naturally prone to the worst of sins, even the best of us, and to lie buried with the world in a bog of wickedness, adding rebellion to sin, and doing wickedly with both hands earnestly, unless God rein us in, and restrain us from such enormities. Pray we therefore as here, *Etiam a superbiis contine servum tuum* (Midrash Tillin. in **#Ps 19:13**). David's murdering Uriah was a sin of this sort. The Rabbis here observe how the prophet riseth in his request, first for pardon of lesser sins, and then for power against greater; like as a beggar, say they, first craves a little water, and then a morsel of bread. We should do so.

Let them not have dominion over me] Sin will rebel, but it must not reign in our mortal bodies, it must not play King, and bear sway in the soul. Pray hard against that in chief, *Ne iniquitas victrix dominetur*, that our lusts be not our lords, that vice vanquish us not.

Then shall I be upright] Then, when I have gotten both pardoning and prevailing grace, to be cleansed from infirmities and kept from presumptions and arrogance, which *cum temerario ausu et fastu fiunt contumaciter*, I shall be upright in God's account and entire in his obedience.

And shall be innocent from the great transgression] That sin unto death, **#1Jo 5:16**; that wickedness with a witness, for which there remaineth no more sacrifice, **#Heb 10:26**, and unto which a way is

paved by sins of presumption with a high hand committed against knowledge and conscience.

Ver. 14. **Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation, &c.]** *Sint ad beneplacitum verba, &c.* Let both my words and thoughts, as well as my life and actions, be to favourable acceptance; let them be such as may suit with thy law and will.

O Lord, my strength] Heb. my rock, *In Mare, vel in Marah, vel in hoc mundo,* say the Rabbis; in the sea of sorrow, and all along the wilderness of this world (Midrash Tillin.).

And my redeemer] Or, my near kinsman, who is Jesus Christ, in whom we may look for all good from God, by virtue of the covenant. This David well understood, and therefore he layeth all the weight on this, "O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

A Psalm of David] Or, concerning David; so Kimchi. Or, for and on the behalf of David; so Aben Ezra. David, as a prophet, dictated this form of prayer to be made by the people for himself, their king; when he went forth to fight their battles, probably, against the Ammonites and Syrians; or, when he fled from Absalom, and was to help them from the city by his prayers, **#2Sa 18:3**, as Aben Ezra thinketh.

Chapter 19

Ver. 1. **The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble]** Great men, though gracious, as David, have their distresses, and must pray for themselves then; not trusting to the prayers of others for them; as did that profane Earl of Westmoreland, who said he had no need to pray, since he had tenants enough to pray for him (Camden).

The name of the God of Jacob defend thee] Heb. set thee in a high place, such as God's name is, **#Pr 18:10**, the righteous run thereto and are safe, as in a tower of brass or town of war. By the name of God is meant, *Deus nominatissimus*, the most renowned God, saith Junius, and worthy to be praised, as **#Ps 18:3**. And he is called the God of Jacob here, saith another; first, because Jacob was once in the like distress, **#Ge 32:6,7**; secondly, because he prayed to the like purpose, **#Ge 35:3**; thirdly, because he prevailed with God as a

prince; and there God spake with us, #**Ho 12:5**; fourthly, because God of Jacob is the same with God of Israel; and so the covenant is pleaded.

Ver. 2. **Send thee help from the sanctuary**] Or, from his holy heaven, saith Tremellius; without which vain is the help of man. God is all the doer in battles; and whencesoever the sword comes, it is bathed in heaven, #**Isa 34:5**, whatsoever Ajax, Timotheus Atheniensis, and other atheists think to the contrary: God will send from heaven and save me, saith holy David.

And strengthen thee out of Zion] *i.e.* Out of the assemblies of the saints, where they are praying hard for thy welfare. See #**Ps 76:2,3**, {See Trapp on "Ps 76:2"} {See Trapp on "Ps 76:3"}

Ver. 3. **Remember all thy offerings**] Before they went to war they were wont to offer sacrifices, as did Saul; though by his haste therein he lost his kingdom, #**1Sa 13:9**. From the people of God the heathens had also learned this course and custom. *Io Paeon* is the force of *Jehovah Peneh* that is, Lord, look upon us. The devil (God's ape) had taught the Athenians, when they began the battle, to use these words, and thereby to hearten one another. The Romans also did the like, and would not desist till they had an auspicious answer; hence also they called a sacrifice *hostiam* because when they went against their enemies they offered it.

And accept thy burnt sacrifice] Or turn it to ashes (and so seal up his acceptance); or make it fat, *i.e.* take delight in it, as men do in fat things full of marrow, saith R. Solomon.

Selah] This is added to show, saith Vatablus, with how great fervency the people ought to pray for their king.

Ver. 4. **Grant thee according to thine own heart**] David's heart was according to God's heart (otherwise this had not been a warrantable petition), and therefore might say (and the people on his behalf), as once Luther did, *Fiat voluntas mea; mea, Domine, quia tua*, Let my will be done; mine I say, Lord, because the same with thine.

And fulfil all thy counsel] Answer thee, *ad cardinem desiderii*, as a Father expresseth it (Aug. Confess. l. 5, c. 8). Let it be unto thee

even as thou wilt. Sometimes God doth not only grant a man's prayer, but fulfilleth his counsel; that is, in that very way, by that very means, which his judgment pitch upon in his thoughts.

Ver. 5. **We will rejoice in thy salvation]** *i.e.* We are well assured that God will save us by thee, O king; and that shall produce a general joy among us. This confidence prayer hath begotten in him; for it is a sure grain, and if man would sow more of it in God's bosom, they shall not fail to reap the fruit and comfort of it in their greatest need. Pray, that your joy may be full.

And in the name of our God will we set up our banners] Our flags of defiance to the enemy, or our tokens of triumph to God's glory, who hath given us the victory. The Romans, when they had conquered an enemy, rode in triumph to the Capitol, where in all humility they presented a palm, or laurel bush, to Jupiter.

Ver. 6. **Now know I that, &c.]** This is *Vex populi* ; I, that is, all we; but they speak as if they had been all one, and had uttered it all with one mouth; such was their unity and consent in prayer. Or, it is *sermo uniuscuiusque in Israele*, as Kimchi will have it, the triumph of their trust.

He will hear him from his holy heaven, &c.] He will hear him; he will do for him. *Haec duo documents*, saith Junius; by these two ways (besides the word) the Church comes to know the grace and goodwill of her God.

Ver. 7. **Some trust in chariots, &c.]** *i.e.* In their national accommodations and military provisions; but these were never true to those that trusted them. All is but an arm of flesh.

But we will remember, &c.] *i.e.* In the remembrance of his excellent attributes, whereof we have had such proof, we will take courage.

Ver. 8. **They are brought down, &c.]** They lie flat by the fall they have taken, being confuted in their confidences, as Benhadad was of old; as of late, the French at the battle of Agincourt, Sigismund the young king of Hungary, and many others.

But we are risen] Who before seemed to lay along, *Et tanquam sideratos humi serpere*. God helpeth his when forsaken of their hopes almost.

Ver. 9. **Save, Lord]** A short but pithy prayer: *Quam multa quam paucis*.

Let the king hear us] They beg of God that the king may hear them, so as to govern and defend them in equity and tranquillity; or, *Respondent Rex* (so Aben Ezra rendereth it), Let the king say Amen to our prayers to thee and our requests to him.

Chapter 20

Ver. 1. **The king shall joy in thy strength]** This psalm dependeth upon the former, and is therefore fitly set next unto it. Some call it David's triumphant song of praise, for victory gotten over the Ammonites and Syrians. For that victory it was certainly which he and the people had begged so fervently, **#Ps 20**, and promised solemnly to rejoice in God's salvation &c., **#Ps 21:5**, as here is done accordingly. Vow and perform unto the Lord your God: bring presents, &c., **#Ps 76:11**.

And in thy salvation] All is God's. As Joab once sent to David to come and take the honour of the victory over Rabbah of the Ammonites; so dealeth David by the Lord. His posy was, *Non nobis, Domine*; not by us, O Lord, his practice was to drive a holy trade between earth and heaven, receiving and returning, importing one commodity and transporting another: prayers and praises were his whole life.

Ver. 2. **Thou hast given him his heart's desire]** Good men are sure to have out their prayers either in money or in money's worth, as they say; in that very thing they desire, or a better. If God cross them, it is in faithfulness to their souls when the wicked boasteth of their heart's desire **#Ps 10:3**, which yet he hath for a mischief *Deus saepe dat iratus, quod negat propitius*. {See Trapp on "Ps 20:4"}

And hast not withholden, &c. Selah] *Ac si dicat, O magnam et admirabilem Dei benevolentiam erga Davidem!* saith Vatablus. This Selah is added here to set forth the very great and wonderful love of God to David, in hearing his suits after that sort.

Ver. 3. **For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness]** Not staying till he asked them of thee. He had but a thought of building thee a house and thou sentest Nathan to tell him that thou wouldest build him an everlasting house, and stablish his throne to all perpetuity, #2Sa 7:16. So #Isa 65:24, "Before they call, I will answer," &c.

Thou settest a crown of pure gold upon his head] *Hebraei dicunt per hoc intelliigi favorem Dei,* the Jewish doctors by this crown understand the favour of God; confer #Ps 103:4. God had set a crown of lovingkindness and tender mercies upon his head by pardoning all his iniquities, as it is there; and he blesseth God for this as a far better crown than that which he took from off the head of the king of Ammon and set upon his own, #2Sa 12:30.

Ver. 4. **He asked life of thee]** *Quando fugiebat a Saule,* saith R. Solomon, when he fled from Saul; rather when he went into the field against his enemies, carrying his life in his hand. His life we begged, #Ps 20:1,2, and thou hast not only given him his life, but a long continued series of lives in his successors, #2Sa 7:13 Ps 72:15, yea, life everlasting in Christ, his Son according to the flesh. See #Ps 61:6. Thus God is better to his people than their prayers; and when they ask but one blessing he answereth them, as Naaman did Gehazi, with, Nay, take two. Hezekiah asked but one life, and God gave him fifteen years, which we reckon at two lives, and more. He giveth liberally, and like himself; as Great Alexander did when he gave the poor beggar a city; and when he sent his schoolmaster a ship full of frankincense, and bade him sacrifice freely.

Ver. 5. **His glory is great in thy salvation]** He was at first slighted, even by his own, as a petty prince; and the Philistines came up to seek him, that they might suppress him before he grew too strong for them; insomuch as he, for fear of them, went down to the hold, #2Sa 5:17, but soon after he became formidable to them and the rest of the neighbouring nations, whom he subdued and reigned over. The like hereunto befell our Queen Elizabeth, who, how low soever at first, became at length, as her enemies confessed, the most glorious woman that ever swayed sceptre, because *posuit Deum adiutorem suum.*

Honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him] A growing weight of glory, a load of it, even before man. The saints, when they come to heaven, shall have an exceeding, excessive, eternal weight of glory, #2Co 4:17, such as if the body were not upheld by the mighty power of God it were impossible it should ever bear it.

Ver. 6. **For thou hast made him most blessed for ever]** Heb. Thou hast set him to be blessings. For as the wicked, when destroyed by some horrible judgment, are examples to others of God's curse, #Isa 65:15 Jer 29:22 2Pe 2:6 *Iudaeus sim, si fallam*, Let me be Judas if I lie, say the Turks at this day, when they would assure anything for a certainty; so the godly, when in a special manner blessed, are patterns of blessings to others, that in them they may bless themselves or others, #Ps 72:17 128:4 Ge 12:2 48:20 Ru 4:11,12 Ps 37:26. So here they shall say, *Tanto rerum successu polleas, quanto David*, Mayest thou be as successful as ever David was.

Thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance] One good cast whereof David long since preferred before all the world's good, #Ps 4:6. See the note there.

7. **For the king trusteth in the Lord]** So then his joy was the joy of faith, which is unspeakable and full of glory; and he must needs be safe who relieth upon God, #Isa 26:4.

He shall not be moved] *sc.* From the prosperous success of his affairs and state; the beauty and bulwark whereof is God's never failing mercy.

Ver. 8. **Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies]** Thine, because ours; for thou art in a league with us, both defensive and offensive: now our enemies act as if they were out of the reach of thy rod, but thou wilt easily hunt them down and root them out. Pursued they shall be by thee, and overtaken, run they never so far, never so fast.

ουδεις ανθρωπων αδικων τισιν ουκ αποτισει.

Ver. 9. **Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven]** *i.e.* Thou shall lay upon them grievous and exquisite miseries, #La 5:10. He alludeth to the overthrow of Sodom, saith Vatablus.

The Lord shall swallow them up] As the fire doth the fuel. Some think the prophet here alludeth to that direful kind of punishment

which David inflicted upon the Ammonites whom he made to pass through the brickkiln, #2Sa 12:31, perhaps the furnace of their idol Moloch or Milcom, wherein they caused their children to pass through the fire, #2Ki 16:3 23:10.

And the fire shall devour them] Hell fire, saith the Chaldee paraphrast.

Ver. 10. **Their fruit shalt thou destroy]** *i.e.* Their labour, and that which comes thereof, #Pr 21:16,31; they shall toil to no purpose; the gains shall not pay for the pains, *Nulla emolumenta laborum* (Juven.).

And their seed] For as personal goodness is profitable to posterity; so on the contrary; as in the second commandment: they are *peremptores potius quam parentes* (Bern.).

Ver. 11. **For they intended evil against thee]** Because against thy people. He that wrongeth a subject is arraigned for injury done to the king, his crown and dignity. And as a certain gentleman of Normandy was executed for but intending only to kill Francis II, king of France, which he told to a priest, *sub sigillo confessionis*, not thinking ever to hear further of it again; so here.

Ver. 12. **Therefore shall thou make them turn their back]** Who faced the very heavens, and ran, as it were, full butt against thee; such was their impudence and insolence. But thy wrath shall so meet them in the teeth, wheresoever they turn, that they shall be forced to give over their chase and pursuit of thy people. Thou shalt make them turn their back; Heb. their shoulder; whence some sense the words thus, Thou shalt bind them back to back, and cast them into the sea of perdition. Some read the words thus, Thou shalt set them as a butt or mark to shoot at: and this agreeth best with that which followeth, *Pone eos ut metam* (Kimchi).

Against the face of them] Which is elegantly compared to the white; as their bodies to the whole mark or butt.

Ver. 13. **Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength]** *Finit Psalmum cum laude, sicut inceptit*, saith Aben Ezra. He closeth up the psalm, as he began it, with praise and prayer that God would arise and destroy the rest, as he had already done some of their enemies. God's power and strength is in itself infinite, and cannot be

exalted or amplified; but in respect of us it is said to be exalted when exerted and put forth for the defence of his people.

So will we sing and praise thy power] This they restipulate; as knowing that it would please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs, **#Ps 69:31**.

Upon Aijeleth Shahar] On, The morning hart or stag; such a one as the huntsman severs out in the morning from the rest, to hunt for that day. It showeth, saith one, David's and Christ's early and incessant persecution and hunting (by those dogs, **#Ps 22:16**) till they came to their kingdoms. David had his share of sharp afflictions, doubtless, when he penned this psalm: witness that graphic description of his greatest grief in all parts and powers of body and soul, **#Ps 22:14-16**, &c. But his mind and thoughts were by God's Holy Spirit carried out to Christ's most dolorous and inexpressible sufferings; to the which all his were but as flea bitings, as the slivers or chips of Christ's cross; and this was no small mitigation of his misery. When the Jews offered our Saviour gall and vinegar he tasted it, but would not drink. The rest he left for his people, and they must pledge him, filling up that which is behind of his sufferings, **#Col 1:24**, though for a different end, as for exercise, example, trial, witness of truth, &c.

Chapter 21

Ver. 1. **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** David had prayed, "O forsake me not utterly," **#Ps 119:8**. In part and for a time he knew God might forsake him, to his thinking at least. But what saith Austin? *Non deserit Deus etiamsi descrere videatur; non deserit etiamsi deserat,* God forsaketh not his, though he seem sometimes to do so; he leaveth them sometimes, but forsaketh them never; as in an eclipse, the earth lacks the light of the sun, but not the influence thereof. David could at the same time call God his God thrice over, which are words of faith, and do plainly evince that this desertion under which he groaned was neither absolute nor real, but only that he was in a great distress and perplexity; so that he did believe, and yet not believe (Plato, though a heathen, could say that a man may do so). See the like **#Ps 31:22 Jon 2:4**; see the note there. Our Saviour, in his deepest distress on the cross, when coping

and conflicting with the wrath of his heavenly Father, who (beside the wrath of men and rage of devils in that three hours' darkness especially) fought against him with his own bare hand, he suffered more than can be imagined, took up this pathetic exclamation, and, as some think, repeated this whole psalm. Then it was that he felt in soul and body the horror of God's displeasure against sin, for which he had undertaken. Then it was that the Deity (though never separated from his humanity, no, not in death, when soul and body were sundered for a season) did ησχαζειν, as a Father speaketh, suspend for a time the influence of its power, and lie hidden, as it were, *neque vires suas exserebat*, not putting forth its force, as formerly. Hilary hath a good note upon this part of Christ's passion: *Habes conquerentem relictum se esse, &c.*, Here thou hast him complaining as forsaken of God; this showeth him to have been a man: but withal thou hast him promising paradise to the penitent thief; this speaketh him God.

Why art thou so far from, &c.] I roar and am not relieved, as to ease: God will have his people feel what an evil and bitter thing sin is, **#Jer 2:19**, and therefore he holdeth them presently long upon the rack. Christ also, under the deep sense of our sins, for which he suffered, offered up prayers, with strong crying and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, **#Heb 5:7**.

Ver. 2. O my God, I cry in the day time, &c.] This was a sore temptation, that his heartiest prayers were not heard. This might have made him jealous of God; to have had hard conceits of him and heavy conceits of himself. But saith he in the following verses, Thou art holy, and thy name is to be sanctified, though I be not gratified. And moreover, others have called upon thee and have been heard, **#Ps 22:4,5**, though I now for mine unworthiness am denied. For "I am a worm, and no man," **#Ps 22:6**. Thus it puts him not off that he is not heard, as others; but humbles him. It drives him not (as is usual with carnal people in like case) to shifting courses, as a dog that hath lost his master will follow after any one for relief. A Christian never prevaileth so little by his prayers but that he will take heart of grace to come again to God. Silence, or sad answers, do not utterly dishearten him. He ceaseth not wrestling till he hath wrested the blessing out of God's hand with Jacob, and gotten

matter of praise for his prayers granted, as David here doth, ere he had done the psalm, #Ps 22:24,25.

Ver. 3. **But thou art holy**] And therefore to be sanctified in righteousness, #Isa 5:16, whatever betide me or my prayers. I also will trust and try thee to the uttermost, for thou waitest to be gracious; and being a God of judgment, thou best understandest when and how to dispense and deal forth thy favours to thy suppliants, #Isa 30:18. And if I ask good things of thee and miss, it is because I ask amiss, #Jas 4:3. If I be straitened, it is not in thee, but in mine own bowels. They that have conduit water come into their houses, if no water come, they conclude not the spring to be dry, but the pipes to be stopped or broken. If prayer speed not, we must be sure the fault is not in God, but in ourselves; were we but ripe for mercy he is ready to extend it to us, and even waits for the purpose.

O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel] *i.e.* The sanctuary, where thou art continually praised by thine Israel, who have the happiness to receive thine answer to their suits, though I cannot. Some render it, *O sancte, sempiternae, et laudatissime.*

Ver. 4. **Our fathers trusted in thee**] They trusted, and trusted, and trusted, they lengthened out their trust. The Hebrew word for hope or trust signifieth also a line; because thereby the heart is stretched out as a line to the thing hoped for; and he that believeth maketh not haste.

And thou didst deliver them] Never could any instance be given to the contrary. Let the success of our forefathers' confidence, and hope unfailable, flowing from faith unfeigned, confirm our fiducial dependence upon gospel promises.

Ver. 5. **They cried unto thee**] Having first trusted: it is the prayer of faith that does the deed.

And were not confounded] *Deo confisi, nunquam confusi.* I trust God and shall never be confounded.

Ver. 6. **But I am a worm, and no man**] David, saith a learned man, in the Arabic tongue signifieth a worm; to which he may here seem to allude. I am a worm, saith he; I am dust and ashes, saith Abraham; less than the least of thy lovingkindnesses, saith Jacob; *Nos autem*

quid sumus? saith Moses. Thus the saints express themselves in a low language, as so many broken men. Contrarily the wicked speak big words, bubbles of words, as Peter hath it, *ampullantur*; as Pharaoh, who said, "Who is the Lord?" Nebuchadnezzar, "Who is that God that can deliver you?" #Da 3:15; "Who is Lord over us?" &c., #Ps 12:4. Our Lord Christ, of whom the greatest part of this psalm must be understood, emptied and humbled himself to the utmost, #Php 2:7,8, that we might be exalted; this Sun of righteousness went ten degrees back in the dial of his Father, that he might come unto us with health in his wings, &c.

A reproach of men] *Reiectamentum hominis, et nullificamen populi*, as Tertullian phraseth it. So was Christ, #Isa 53; so were his apostles, #1Co 4:13; we are made the sweepings of the world, the offscourings of all things, the very dung cart into which every man casteth his filth to be carried through the dung port. Why, then, should we think much to be slighted?

Ver. 7. **All they that see me laugh me to scorn]** *Contemptus populi ludibriis et opprobriis declaratur*, #Lu 22:63. The apostle speaketh of cruel mockings, #Heb 11:36. The Pharisees, who were covetous, derided him, #Lu 16:14, and set his people on the stage, as it were, for mocking stocks, #Heb 10:36. Now, *post Carthaginem vinci neminem pudit*, saith the historian. If Christ, David, and other precious men were so disgraced and abused by the world, what matter is it for us?

They shoot out the lip, they shake the head] God is sensible of any the least affront or offence done to his people, be it but in an unseemly gesture, as Laban's lowerings, {#Mt 27:39} and sets them upon record against the day of account.

Ver. 8. **He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him]** Is this a prophecy of our Saviour's sufferings, or a history rather? See #Mt 27:43, {See Trapp on "Mt 27:43"}

Seeing he delighted in him] A most virulent irony, whereby they sought to cajole him of his confidence, and so to drive him into utter desperation and destruction.

Ver. 9. **But thou art he that took me out of the womb]** When, but for thine almighty midwifery, I might have been strangled; or, as an

untimely birth, never seen the sun. It is no less than a miracle that the child is kept alive in the womb, and perisheth not in the midst of those excrements, and that, in coming forth, it dieth not, &c. The very opening and shutting again of the body when the child is to be born is a thing so incomprehensible that some naturalists acknowledge the immediate hand and power of God in it. But because it is a common mercy little notice is taken or use made of it.

Thou didst make me hope] Or, keptest me in safety; for *puerilitas est periculorum pelagus*, a thousand deaths and dangers little ones are subject to; but God preserveth and provideth: *et haec non sunt per accidens*, saith Kimchi, these things are not by chance, but by Divine providence.

Ver. 10. **I was cast upon thee from the womb]** *Id est, a patre et matre mea*, saith Kimchi, by my father and my mother, whom thou, Lord, feddest, and filledst her breasts, that she might suckle me, *Veluti expositivus tibi fui a matrice* (Vat.). Did men but seriously consider what kept and fed them in the womb, and at the breasts, when neither they could shift for themselves, nor their parents do much for them, they would conclude he would much more now by their holy prayers, honest endeavours, &c.

Thou art my God from my mother's belly] This is a privilege proper to children born within the covenant, and they may claim it; they have God for their God from their nativity; and they may lay their reckoning so in all their addresses unto God.

Ver. 11. **Be not far from me, for trouble is near]** And so it is high time for thee to put forth a helping hand. *Hominibus profanis mirabilis videtur haec ratio*, to profane persons, this seemeth to be a strange reason, saith an interpreter; but it is a very good one, as this prophet knew, who therefore makes it his plea.

For there is none to help] Set in, therefore, O Lord, and help, at a dead lift, poor me, who am forsaken of all other hopes.

Ver. 12. **Many bulls have compassed me]** Young bulls, which noteth their lustiness and courage. *Tauri bene saginati et petulci*.

Strong bulls of Bashan] A far country beyond Jordan, famous for fat and fierce cattle. Hereby are meant princes and potentates,

persecutors of Christ and his people, against whom they run and rush with utmost might and malice, but not always with desired success. Of the wild bull it is said, that of all things he 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 hard at him, as hard as he can drive; but the hunter slipping aside, the bull's horns stick fast in the tree; as, when David slipped aside, Saul's spear stuck fast in the wall. In like manner, saith a divine, Christ standing before the tree of his cross, put on a red garment dipped and dyed in his own blood, as one that cometh with red garments from Bozra, #Isa 63:1. Therefore the devil and his agents, like wild bulls of Bashan, ran at him. But he, saving himself, their horns stick fast in the cross; as Abraham's ram by his horns stuck fast in the briers.

Ver. 13. **They gaped upon me with their mouths]** As if they would have swallowed me up at a bit, like so many *lycanthropi*, or savage cannibals.

As a ravening and a roaring lion] *Rapiens et rugiens leo, licet non sit mos boum rapere*, Bulls do not use to raven though they roar (Kimchi); but the malignities of all fierce and fell creatures are to be found in cruel persecutors. 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, bulls, boars, and bears, and with all manner of cruel and harmful beasts, and in the midst of a great many furious men, or rather monsters, assaulting her every moment and minute; for this is her condition in the world.

Ver. 14. **I am poured out like water]** *i.e.* I am almost past all recovery, as water spilt upon the ground.

And all my bones are out of joint] Or, disparted, as on a rack, or by a strappado. Who hath not heard how Lithgow, the Scot, was used at Malaga, in Spain, by the bloody inquisitors? after that he had passed through the greatest part of the known world, and travelled through forests, wildernesses, and deserts, where he met with thieves and murderers, lions, bulls, bears, and tigers, and escaped them, how they starved him, wounded him, disjointed him, in ten hours' time laid seventy various torments upon him, though they had

nothing against him but suspicion of religion. And yet, after this, God wonderfully delivered him, so that he was brought on his bed wounded and broken to King James, whose letters of recommendation he had for his safe travel through the world, and to whom he made this relation to the face of Gundamour, the Spanish ambassador. This was much, but yet little or nothing to Christ's sufferings, whence that passage in the Greek litany, Δι αγνωστων σου παθηματων, &c., By thine unknown sufferings, good Lord, deliver us.

My heart is like wax, &c.] Fear and faintness causeth an extreme sweat (such as was that of our Saviour in his agony, #Lu 22:44), it disableth also the members from acting their parts, and softeneth the heart, #Job 23:16.

Ver. 15. **My strength is dried up like a potsherd]** My spirits are utterly spent, my natural moisture quite wasted and dried up, *Viror meus. Humidum radicale membra in unum conglutinans* (Aben Ezra); so that I am even like a skin bottle in the smoke, &c. For "my strength" some read my palate.

And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws] That which feedeth and facilitateth the motion of the tongue in speech is exhausted. Consider here the greatness of the divine displeasure poured upon Christ, our surety. Words are too weak to utter it.

And thou hast brought me into the dust of death] Here is the utmost of our Saviour's humiliation. While alive he was a worm and no man; but now he is lower; for a living dog is better than a dead lion, saith Solomon. O humble Saviour, whither wilt thou descend? Oh that the same mind might be in us, that was in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 16. **For dogs have compassed me]** That is, men of mean rank; opposed to bulls and lions, *i.e.* great ones, and interpreted in the next words, the assembly of the wicked, the rude rabble, and of rancorous disposition, #Job 30:1 Pr 26:11 Mt 7:6 Php 3:2 Ps 59:7,15. A.D. 1556, at Wessensten, 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 (Melch. Adam in Vit. Jac. And.).

They pierced my hands and my feet] *sc.* When they nailed Christ to the cross, #**Mt 27:35 Joh 20:25**. Where let me simulate, saith a learned man, the orator's gradation, *Facinus vincire civem Romanum, &c.* It was much for the Son of God to be bound, more to be beaten, most of all to be slain; *Quid dicam in cruce[m] tolli?* but what shall I say to this, that he was crucified? that was the most vile and ignominious of all punishments; it was also a cruel and cursed kind of death; which yet he refused not: and here we have a clear testimony for his cross, which the devil would fain wring from us by his agents, the Jews, with their Keri and Chetib. See Galatin. l. 8, c. 17; l. 1, c. 8; Mercer in #**Job 7:20**.

Ver. 17. **I may tell all my bones]** Now especially, when stretched out upon the cross, *Quando pendens extentus erat in ligno,* saith Austin. *Derident maciem meam,* saith Kimchi.

They look and stare upon me] *Aspiciunt, id est, despiciunt, ut* #**So 1:6**, saith Kimchi, they feed their eyes and passions with my misery, as #**Lu 23:35**. This *απιχαρεκακια* is the devil's disease, and declareth a devilish disposition, *sc.* for a man to make himself merry in other men's misery.

Ver. 18. **They part my garments among them, and cast lots]** A very clear testimony to us that our crucified God (as they scornfully term him) was the true Messiah, so long since fore prophesied of, and accordingly accomplished, #**Lu 23:34 Job 20:24**. Such texts as this we should make much of, as the best and surest evidences of our Christian faith, #**2Pe 1:19**.

Ver. 19. **But be not thou far from me, O Lord]** Here he resumeth and reinforceth his former prayer, after a most pathetic description of his so doleful condition. Faith wadeth out of trouble (as the moon doth out of a cloud) by hearty and affectionate prayer.

O my strength] God is so to a believer, then especially when he feeleth himself weak as water.

Haste thee to help me] Who am now in an exigent, and am therefore bold, without limitation, to request thee to haste away to me.

Ver. 20. **Deliver my soul from the sword]** *i.e.* From desperate and deadly danger, from the wicked, which is thy sword, #**Ps 17:13**.

My darling from the power of the dog] Heb. Mine only one from the hand, &c., as #Ge 9:5. *Sic est anima in corpore, ut in domo lutea, nec habet socium,* saith R. David here; The soul is alone in its cottage of clay, and hath no companion. That was a mad fellow who gave out that he had two souls, one for God, and another for whomsoever would have it. If the dog, that is, the devil, as some interpret this text, lay hands on this darling, it will be found to be all that a man hath, his alonely soul, the loss whereof our Saviour showeth to be both incomparable and irreparable, #Mt 16:26.

Ver. 21. **Save me from the lion's mouth]** #2Ti 4:17. David was oft snatched out of death's mouth, and so was Christ; for although he had his life taken away upon the cross, yet was it (as Calvin here well observeth) more miraculously and by greater power restored after death, than if he had been delivered from the cross; and it is a greater miracle to raise the dead than to heal the most dangerously sick, and to stay the life when it is departing.

For thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns] See #Heb 5:7. It is ordinary with David to call his enemies by the names of the fiercest creatures. This here mentioned, whether the unicorn, or rhinoceros, or some other wild beast, see #Job 39:9, &c. *Cornua habet fortiora aliorum cornibus,* saith Aben Ezra; *Et audivi quod deiecit seipsum ab alto monte super cornu eius, irrupto illo permanente. Asperrimam feram appellat Plinius.*

Ver. 22. **I will declare thy name, &c.]** Here beginneth the second part of this psalm, which is gratulatory, and declaratory of the fruit of Christ's passion and resurrection, who is not here ashamed to call us brethren; but doth communicate the kingdom to us as coheirs with himself.

In the midst of the congregation] viz. That I may not sing alone, but in consort with others, and be their precentor.

Ver. 23. **Ye that fear the Lord, praise him]** viz. For your redemption by Christ's death and resurrection. Neither are any fit for such a purpose but such as fear the Lord. Excellent words become not a fool's mouth, saith Solomon; Christ would not suffer the devil to confess him. To be praised by a praiseless person is no praise, saith Seneca.

All ye seed of Jacob] *i.e. Illi qui diligunt eum.*

All ye the seed of Israel] *Qui timent, sed adhuc non diligunt,* saith R. David; but I like not his distinction; for none do truly fear God but those that love him, **#Ho 3:5.**

Ver. 24. **For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction]** *Vel responsionem, id est orationem, quae est responsio linguae,* **#Pr 16:1.** With men a poor man's tale cannot be heard; and the answer given to such cuts off half the petition, as the echo doth the voice; but here it is otherwise. "I know thy poverty," saith Christ to one of the seven Churches; "but" (that is nothing) "thou art rich." God thinks not the worse of his suppliants for their meanness, but the better rather.

Ver. 25. **My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation]** Where it may be most public and exemplary. They that neglect public service for private do but read their own indictment, pray their own punishment.

I will pay my vows, &c.] My peace offerings vowed in my distress: these are heavily paid by most people, according to that Italian proverb, The danger once escaped, the saint is defrauded. See David's care, **#Ps 116.** and elsewhere.

Ver. 26. **The meek shall eat and be satisfied]** They shall be well filled at my peace offering feast, saith David; at my holy supper, saith Christ; and in me shall have the full fruition of all good things; as at a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines refined on the lees, **#Isa 25:6** *Nec copiam huius saeculi concupiscent nec timebunt inopiam,* saith Austin; Here they shall neither covet the wealth of this world nor fear the want of it.

They shall praise the Lord] viz. At the eucharist, and after.

Your heart shall live for ever] *Apostrophe ad mansuetos emphatica.* You meek of the earth and seekers of the Lord, who have eaten of Christ's flesh that was given for the life of the world, **#Joh 6:51,** your heart shall live for ever; and if so, then in death itself. As Aristotle giveth the reason of the swan's singing a little before his

death, because generous blood goeth then to the heart, making it cheerful, and that thence cometh the melody.

Ver. 27. **All the ends of the world shall remember**] Shall turn short again upon themselves, as those Solomon prayed for, #1Ki 8:47, and the prodigal, #Lu 15:17.

And turn to the Lord] From their dead idols, #1Th 1:9.

And all the kindreds of the nations, &c.] Christ, when he is lifted up, shall draw all men to him, #Joh 12:32; the heavenly eagles from all parts shall fly to this dead, but all-quickenning carcase, and shall feed thereupon.

Ver. 28. **For the kingdom is the Lord's]** The spiritual kingdom over the Church, and the universal kingdom over all the world, belongeth unto Christ, the eternal God.

Ver. 29. **All they that be fat upon the earth]** *i.e.* Rich and prosperous, wealthy and well liking, these shall feed on Christ, and be furthered thereby in his service; so shall also the poorer sort, called here,

They that go down to the dust, and that cannot keep alive, &c.] That is, that are low kept, and half dead, through hunger and misery.

Ver. 30. **A seed shall serve him]** And be saved by him, a remnant reserved for royal use, a chosen generation, #Ro 9:20 Isa 53:10.

Ver. 31. **Declare his righteousness]** *i.e.* His mercy and goodness, they shall propagate his praise to all posterity.

That he hath done] Or performed, viz. the salvation promised by Christ.

Chapter 22

Ver. 1. **The Lord is my shepherd]** This psalm may well be called David's Bucolicon, or pastoral; so daintily hath he struck upon the whole string, through the whole hymn. *Est Psalmus honorabilis*, saith Aben Ezra; it is a noble psalm written and sung by David; not when he fled into the forest of Hareth, #1Sa 22:5, as some Hebrews will have it (R. Kimchi, R. Solom.); but when, as having overcome all his enemies and settled his kingdom, he enjoyed great peace and quiet, and had one foot as it were upon the battlements of heaven.

The Jews at this day use for the most part to repeat this psalm after they are set down to meat (Leo. Modena). God is often in Scripture called the Shepherd of his people, #Ps 80:1 Eze 34:12,14,15 Isa 40:11 Joh 10:11 1Pe 2:25, although *non est officium magis contemptibile quam opilionis*, saith R. Jos. Bar. Haman, there is not a more contemptible office than that of a shepherd. Every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians. But God disdaineth not to feed his flock, to guide, to govern, to defend them, to handle and heal them, to tend and take care of them; and all this he hath tied himself by covenant to do, #Eze 34:25: well therefore might David confidently conclude,

I shall not want] *Non deficiam, iudigebo, destituar.* The wicked in the fulness of his sufficiency is in straits, #Job 20:22. Tantalus-like, he is ever wanting; content he hath none. Contrarily, true piety brings true plenty, and a saint is never to seek of well contenting sufficiency, #1Ti 6:6, for to him, *Parva seges satis est.* A small crop is enough, And he saith,

*Discite quam parvo liceat producers vitam,
Et quantum natura petat, &c.
(Lucan. Pharsi. l. 4).*

Ver. 2. **He maketh me to lie down in green pastures]** In folds of budding grass, where he feedeth me daily and daintily, plentifully and pleasantly, as among the lilies, #So 6:3; that is, amidst the ordinances (David here seemeth to resemble powerful and flourishing doctrine to green pastures, and the secret and sweet comforts of the sacraments to the still waters), where I shall not need to bite on the bare ground, but may go in and out, and find pasture, #Joh 10:9, such as will breed life, and life in more abundance, #Joh 10:10 Isa 49:10; fat pastures he provideth, #Eze 34:14; and fair cotes, or coverts from the sun's heat, as the word here used may also be rendered. Confer #So 1:6,7. Virgil saith, it is the office of a good shepherd,

Aestibus in mediis umbrosam exquirere vallem.

He leadeth me (Heb. gently leadeth me) beside the still waters] Heb. waters of rests, *Ex quibus diligunt oves bibere*, saith Kimchi,

such as sheep love to drink of, because void of danger, and yielding a refreshing air. Popish clergymen are called the inhabitants of the sea, #Re 12:12, because they set abroad gross, troubled, brackish, and sourish doctrine, which rather bringeth barrenness to their hearers, and gnaweth their entrails, than quencheth their thirst or cooleth their heat (Brightman). The doctrine of the gospel (like the waters of Siloah, #Isa 8:6), run gently, but taste pleasantly.

Lens fluit Nilus, sed cunctis annibus extat

Utilior (Claud.).

Ver. 3. **He restoreth my soul]** He reduceth me, when like a lost sheep I have gone astray, #Ps 119:176. A sheep, saith Aristotle, is a foolish and sluggish creature, *Et omnium quadrupedum stupidissimum*, most apt of anything to wander, though it feel no want, and unabled to return. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib. Swine in a storm run home, and at night will make for the trough; but a sheep can make no shift to save itself from tempests or inundation; there it stands and will perish, if not driven away by the shepherd. Lo, such a silly shiftless thing is man left to himself. But blessed be God for Christ, that best of shepherds, who restoreth the lost soul, and maketh it to return into the right way, giving it rest, and causing it to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness, #Lu 1:74.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness] Or, in plain, smooth, easy paths, or sheep tracks, wherein I may walk unweariably, unblameably, without cessation or cespitation. The ways of sin are craggy, crooked, full of error and terror, leading to those precipices that tend to destruction. From such stand off, saith Christ to his sheep, who are all rational, and will be ruled by him, #Joh 10:1-17

For his name's sake] *i.e.* Of his free grace, and for his mere mercy's sake. Otherwise he would never do us any of these good offices, but let us alone to perish in our own corruptions.

Ver. 4. **Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death]** In the most dark and dangerous places, where there is *Luctus ubique, pavor, et plurima mortis imago*, those dark places full of cruelty, #Ps 74:20, where wolves wait for me. Though I walk (not step) through (not cross) the valley (not a dark entry only) of

the shadow of death (the darkest side of it, death in its most hideous and horrid representations), I will not fear; for I fear God, and have him by the hand; I must needs be *tutus sub umbræ leonis*, safe by his side, and under his safeguard. If God be for us, who can be against us?

For thou art with me] Hence my security. See a promise answerable to it, **#Joh 10:28**. Christ is not to lose any of his sheep, **#Joh 17:12**. Having therefore this ark of God's covenant in our eyes, let us cheerfully pass the waters of Jordan, to take possession of the promised land. *Cur timeat hominem homo, in sinu Dei positus?* saith a Father.

Thy rod and thy staff] He pursueth the former allegory; shepherds, in driving their flocks, have a rod or wand in their hands, wherewith they now and then strike them; and a staff or sheep hook on their necks, wherewith they catch and rule them. Of Christ's rods and staves, see **#Zec 11:7**, &c.; foolish shepherds have only *foreipes et mulctram*, **#Zec 11:15**. R. Solomon by rod here understandeth afflictions, by staff support under them, a good use and a good issue.

They comfort me] God's rod, like Aaron's, blossometh; and, like Jonathan's, it hath honey at the end of it.

Ver. 5. **Thou preparest a table before]** Here he makes use of another metaphor from a liberal feast maker, or (as some will have it) from a most kind father, making provision for his dearly beloved child: so did God for David, both in regard to temporals and spirituals. God had given him (as he doth all his people) all things richly to enjoy, all things needful for life and godliness, the upper and nether springs, the blessings of the right hand and of the left, *bona throni, et bona scabelli*, as Austin phraseth it. Now, outward prosperity, when it followeth close walking with God, is very sweet; as the cipher when it followeth the figure addeth to the number, though it be nothing in itself. David's table was laden with God's creatures, and did even sweat with variety of them. God had let down to him, as afterwards he did to Peter, a vessel with all manner of beasts of the earth and fowls of the air in it, **#Ac 10:12**. This he is very sensible of and thankful for, as a singular favour.

In the presence of mine enemies] *i.e.* In sight and spite of them, *hostibus videntibus et ringentibus*. God doth good to his people, maugre the malice of earth and of hell.

Thou anointest my head with oil] A piece of entertainment common in those times and among that people, #**Lu 7:36-38**, to show the greater respect to their guests. And although this is not every good man's case in temporal respects, yet at the word and sacraments God anointeth his guests with the oil of gladness.

My cup runneth over] He had not only a fulness of abundance, but of redundancy. Those that have this happiness must carry their cup upright, and see that it overflow into their poor brethren's emptier vessels.

Ver. 6. **Surely goodness and mercy, &c.]** *Utique bonitas et beneficentia*, or, as Tremellius hath it, *Nihil nisi bonum et benignitas*, Nothing but goodness and lovingkindness, &c. This is his good assurance of God's favour for the future, grounded upon God's promise; whereby he was well assured that mercy should follow him, though he should be so foolish as to run from it; like as the sun, going down, followeth the passenger that goeth eastward, with his beams.

And I will dwell, &c.] Devoted to his fear, I will stick to him in life, in death, and after death. Apprehensions of mercy in God must work resolutions of obedience in us.

A Psalm of David] The Greek addeth, of the first day of the week (because wont to be sung in the temple on that day), which is now the Christian sabbath, in memory of Christ's resurrection and rule over all, which is here celebrated.

Chapter 23

Ver. 1. **The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof]** He alone is the true proprietary, #**Job 41:11 De 10:14**, and the earth is *Marsupium Domini*, as one saith, the Lord's great purse; the keeping whereof he hath committed to the sons of men, #**Ps 115:16**; like as also he hath given the heavenly bodies to all peoples, #**De 4:19**, every star being God's storehouse, which he openeth for our

profit, **#De 28:12**, and out of which he throweth down riches and plenty into the earth, such as the servants of God gather, and the rest scramble for. What use the apostle putteth this point to, see **#1Co 10:26,28**, {See Trapp on "1Co 10:26"} {See Trapp on "1Co 10:28"} Other uses may well be made of it; as, that kings and princes bear not themselves as lords of all (the Turk and pope so style themselves; the great cham of Tartary every day as soon as he hath dined causeth, they say, his trumpets to be sounded; by that sign giving leave to other princes of the earth, his vassals, as he conceiteth, to go to dinner), but the Lord's *vicarii et villici*, viceregents and stewards, to whom they must give an account of all. Again, that God's dear children cannot want anything that is good for them; since they have so rich a Father, who seems to say unto them, as **#Ge 45:20**, Regard not your stuff, for all the good of the land is yours. To him that overcometh will I give to inherit all things; I have all things, **#Php 4:18 2Co 6:10**.

The world and they that dwell therein] This is God's universal kingdom by right of creation, **#Ps 24:2**; besides which he hath a spiritual kingdom over his elect (*ut docet nos pulcherrimus hic psalmus*, this this most beautiful psalm teaches us, saith Beza), who are here described, **#Ps 24:4-6**, and encouraged to enlarge their desires after their sovereign in the exercise of faith and use of means, and to give him the best entertainment, **#Ps 24:7-10**. For the Church is Christ's temple; and every faithful soul is a gate thereof to let him in, as **#Re 3:20**.

Ver. 2. **For he hath founded it upon the seas]** The solid earth he hath founded upon the liquid waters. This Aristotle acknowledgeth to be a miracle; as also that the waters, which are naturally above the earth, overflow it not, but are kept within their shores, as within doors and bars. This is the very finger of God, and a standing miracle, worthy to be predicated to his praise all the world over, **#Job 38:6-8**, &c. {See Trapp on "Job 38:6"} {See Trapp on "Job 38:7"} {See Trapp on "Job 38:8"} See also **#Ge 1:9**, {See Trapp on "Ge 1:9"}

And established it upon the floods] Upon the waves and surges of the sea; which, but for God's decree, would soon surmount it. The dry land is that which is here called Tebel, οικουμένη, the habitable world. And this is God's universal kingdom, which because less

considerable, the prophet speaketh but little of it in comparison, as hastening to the spiritual.

Ver. 3. **Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord]** *Montem caelestem significat*, saith Vatablus, he meaneth into heaven; for the prophet's purpose is to show, that although God made all, yet he will not save all; but that there is a select number, culled and called out of the many, who shall be everlastingly happy; and these are here characterized, as they are also, **#Ps 15**, wherewith this psalm hath great affinity, and is thought to have been composed at the same time, that is, saith R. David, *post negotium Ornani Iebusaei*, after the business with Araunah the Jebusite, when God by fire from heaven had pointed out the place where the temple should be built, **#1Ch 21:26 22:1**.

And who shall stand in his holy place?] Stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion? *Tautologia haec est Hebraeis perquam familiaris*. Who is a true member of the Church militant? and shall be no less of the Church triumphant?

Ver. 4. **He that hath clean hands]** The clean in hands, that is, of innocent and unblamable conversation; *debet esse purus corde, ore, opere*, saith Kimchi; he must not touch that unclean thing, **#2Co 6:17**. *Non magna munera, sed immunis manus mensque sincera Deo placent*. Men must lift up pure hands in prayer, **#1Ti 2:8**, or else their incense will stink of the hand that offereth it, **#Isa 1:13**. *Immunis aram si tetigit manus* (Horat.). Those that draw near to God must not only have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, but their bodies also washed with pure water, **#Heb 10:22**.

And a pure heart] Which, while Pilate wanted, it nothing profited him to wash his hands in the presence of the people. Heaven is a holy place; and they that would go thither must cleanse themselves from "all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," **#2Co 7:1**. The serpent could screw himself into Paradise; but no unclean creature ever came into God's kingdom. The citizens of heaven must here affect purity of heart, aim at it, and in some measure attain to it too; the old frame of impure motions being dissolved, &c.

Who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity] *i.e.* *Ad idols vel opes*, saith one, that is, to idols or riches, #Jer 22:27, but hath lifted it up in the ways of the Lord, as Jehoshaphat did, #2Ch 17:6, and David, #Ps 25:1, not heeding or hankering after the world's delights or the devil's delusions. Some write the word *Shau*, signifying vanity, with a little *Vau*, *ad indicandum quod minima vanitas est vitanda, &c.*, to show that he who would dwell in God's holy mountain must carefully avoid the least vanity, that is, keeping God's commandment as the apple of his eye, that will bear no jests, #Pr 7:2. Some, for his soul, read my soul; he hath not taken in vain my soul, that is, saith R. Obadiah, That soul inspired by God (which I also have received), he taketh not in vain, he misemployeth not in iniquity, but consecrateth to the service of God, whose image and superscription it beareth.

Nor hath sworn deceitfully] Or inured his tongue to any other kind of the language of hell, rotten communication, to the dishonouring of God, or deceiving of others. Perjury is here instanced for the rest, as one of the most heinous. But Geraldus reckoneth up four and twenty different sins of the tongue; all which every inhabitant of the new Jerusalem is careful to avoid, as the devil's drevil, no way becoming his pure lip.

Ver. 5. **He shall receive the blessing of the Lord]** *i.e.* *Omnimodam felicitatem*, all manner of mercies, saith Vatablus; he shall be as happy as heart can wish; for great is the gain of godliness. See my Righteous Man's Recompense.

And righteousness, &c.] *i.e.* The fruit and reward of righteousness, which the righteous God will not fail to bestow upon all his; even the crown of righteousness, #2Ti 4:8. A grave interpreter hath here observed, that there is such a reciprocation between the description of this reward and the persons described, that the blessedness assured to the persons exciteth them to the care of piety; and this care of piety bringeth unto them a sure and firm expectation of blessedness (Ames).

Ver. 6. **This is the generation of them that seek him]** These are the true seekers, far different from those that so style themselves today; being no better indeed than the Jesuits' by-blows {*bastards*}, as one wittily calleth them, though they are not yet so wise as to know their

own father (Mr Baxter). These are a generation too, but an evil and adulterous one, in these last and loosest times of abounding and abetted errors.

That seek thy face] *i.e.* Thy favour, that desire nothing more than to be in communion with thee and conformity unto thee.

O Jacob] Or, O God of Jacob. As the Church is called Christ, **#1Co 12:12**; so God is here called Jacob, such a near union there is between him and his people. Or, this is Jacob. So the true seekers are fitly called, first, because Israelites indeed, **#Joh 1:47 Ro 9:6**; secondly, because they see God face to face, as Jacob did at Penuel, **#Ge 32:24,26,29,30**; thirdly, because they also, as here, do bear away a blessing, **#Ho 12:4**, even righteousness from the God of their salvation, as in the verse foregoing. *Adiecitur Selah ut ostendatur quantopere haec sententia sit consideranda* (Vatab.).

Ver. 7. **Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c.]** Here he calleth unto hell gates, say the Papists; to the heavens, say others, to give way to Christ's ascension thereinto, as the firstfruits, and the opener of the way to all his members; and he doubleth the same speech, **#Ps 24:9**, for the joy that he had in the contemplation thereof; bidding them again and again lift up and be lifted up; a phrase or term taken from triumphal arches, or great porticoes, set up or beautified and adorned for the coming in of great victorious and triumphant captains. Justin. p. 55. *Recipite Christum in portas novae Hierosol.* (Cyril). There are at this day to be seen at Rome the ruins of Constantine's triumphal arch erected at that time when he entered the city triumphing over the tyrant Maxentius, *quem vicit signo crucis*, who conquered by the sign of the cross, as Eusebius reporteth; making Christ to triumph at Rome, after those ten bloody persecutions; with which triumph this psalm may fitly be compared, saith a learned interpreter. Our late annotators tell us of a fashion in ancient times, that when they would solemnize the entrance of any prince, or others that had well deserved of the public, they would break down the walls, and pull off the gates of the city; partly for more free entrance, and partly to show that their city needed no wall nor gates as long as they had such a guardian and protector within it. It is likely, say they, that David by these words doth allude to some such custom. Or, as Calvin and others will have it, to the temple to be set

up by Solomon; which he wisheth were done, that so he might bring in the ark of the covenant, hitherto transportative, into the place of its rest, **#Ps 132:14**. Certain it is, that the saints, those living temples of the Lord, are here called upon to lift up their hearts in the use of holy ordinances; yea, therein to be abundantly lifted up through faith, with a joyful and assured welcome of the King of glory, who will thereupon come in to them, by the ravishing operation of his love, benefits, and graces.

Ver. 8. **Who is this King of glory?**] The gates are brought in as asking this question, saith R. David. This is the angels' admiration at the coming in of Christ's humanity into heaven, saith Diodati. Rather, it is the question of the faithful concerning the person of their King, whom they hereby resist not: but for their further confirmation, desire to be better informed of him, and his never adored enough excellencies.

The Lord strong] Jehovah the essentiator, the eternal God; the most mighty and puissant warrior; who, if he do but arise only, his enemies are scattered, and all that hate him fly before him, **#Ps 68:1**.

Ver. 9. **Lift up your heads, &c.**] See **#Ps 24:7**. And learn, that in matters of moment we must be more than ordinarily earnest and importunate with ourselves and others.

Ver. 10. **Who is this King of glory?**] The best are *acute obtusi* in the mystery of Christ crucified; and must therefore by study and inquiry grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, **#2Pe 3:18**, praying for that Spirit of wisdom and revelation, for the acknowledgment of him, **#Eph 1:17**.

The Lord of hosts] He who hath all creatures at his beck and check, the Lord of Sabaoth, **#Ro 9:29 Jas 5:4**, where the word signifying hosts or arms is used untranslated, because well understood both by Jews and Gentiles, as is also Hosanna, Hallelujah, Amen.

A Psalm of David] An excellent psalm; the second of those seven called by the ancients penitential; and such as may well serve us for a pattern of our daily prayers; as wherein David begetteth three things (answerable to those two last petitions in the Lord's prayer), first, pardon of sin; secondly, guidance of God's good Spirit; thirdly, defence against his enemies (Beza). It appeareth that this psalm was made by David when he was well in years, **#Ps 25:7**, after his sin in

the matter of Uriah (that great iniquity, as he calleth it, **#Ps 25:11**, saith Vatablus), and some gather, from **#Ps 25:19**, that he framed this psalm when Absalom was up in arms against him, **#Ps 25:19** (compared with **#Ps 3:1**). See also **#Ps 25:15,22**. It may seem therefore that when he came to Mahanaim, **#2Sa 17:24,27** (where God showed him marvellous lovingkindness in a strong city, **#Ps 31:21**, and wherehence he was at the people's request to help them, or to cause them to be helped, viz. by his hearty prayers for God's assistance, **#2Sa 18:3**), he composed this psalm with more than ordinary artifice, viz. in order of alphabet, as he hath done also some few others, both for the excellency of the matter and likewise for help of memory; for which cause also St Matthew summeth up the genealogy of Christ into three fourteens; all helps being but little enough. Nazianzen and Sedulius have done the like; the former in his holy alphabet, *Αρχην παντων*, &c., and the latter in his hymn, *A Solis ortus cardine Beatus auctor saeculi*, &c.

Chapter 24

Ver. 1. **Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul]** *i.e.* *Praeparo cor meum*, saith R. Solomon. My heart maketh its faithful addresses to thee (and not any other), with strength of desire and delight, with earnest expectation and hope of relief. *Ad te orando non ad idola*. See **#Jer 22:27 De 24:15 Ps 86:5**, Cyprian saith, that in the primitive times the minister was wont to prepare the people's minds to pray by prefacing *Sursum corda*, Lift up your hearts. The Jews at this day write upon the walls of their synagogues these words, *Tephillah belo cavannah ceguph belo neshamah*; that is, a prayer without the intention of the affection, is like a body without a soul; and yet their devotion is a mere outside, saith one, a brainless head, and a soulless body; *Antiquum obtinent*, **#Isa 29:13**, Buxtorf. Abbreviat. This people draweth nigh to me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. A carnal man can as little lift up his heart in prayer as a mole can fly. A David finds it a hard task; since the best heart is lumpish, and naturally beareth downward, as the poise of a clock, as the lead of a net. Let us, theretbre, lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us; and pray God to draw us up to himself, as the loadstone doth the iron, &c.

Ver. 2. **O my God, I trust in thee**] I pray in faith, which is as the fire, and my prayer as the flame that ariseth out of it. Faith is the foundation of prayer; and prayer is the fervency of faith. Now David knew that the hand of faith never knocketh at the gate of grace in vain.

Let me not be ashamed] Shame is the daughter of disappointment. This David deprecateth; *Quaeque repulsa gravis*. See **#Job 6:20**.

Let not mine enemies triumph over me] By saying that I pray to no purpose, as Rabshakeh did, **#Isa 35:6**. I say (saith Hezekiah) I have words of my lips, prayer; prayer? but alas, what is that more than empty words, an airy nothing? Counsel and strength are for the battle. Thus he.

Ver. 3. **Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed**] Be nosed and twitted with my disappointments, as they are sure to be if I be repulsed by thee and worsted by mine enemies; all thy praying people shall have it cast in their teeth and laid in their dish.

Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause] Let shame be sent to the right owner, even to those that deal disloyally, unprovoked on my part. And so it was; for Ahithophel hanged himself; Absalom was trussed up by the hand of God, and despatched by Joab; the people that conspired with him partly perished by the sword, and partly fled home, much ashamed of their enterprise. Oh the power of prayer! what may not the saints have for asking!

Ver. 4. **Show me thy ways, O Lord**] *q.d.* However other men walk towards me, yet my desire is to keep touch with thee; for which purpose I humbly beg thy best direction. See **#Ex 33:13 Isa 2:3**.

Teach me thy paths] *Assuefac me* ; inure me to thy paths, *Sicut parvulus ad ambulandum assuetus*, saith Kimchi, as a little one is taught to find his feet.

Ver. 5. **Lead me in thy truth, and teach me**] *i.e.* *Assidue doce et urge*. David was a great proficient in God's school, and yet he would learn more; so sweet is divine knowledge. Four times together here prayeth David to be further instructed. See Moses in like manner

holily encroaching upon God, #Ex 33:12,13,16,18, as if his motto had been that of Charles V, *Ulterius*, More yet.

For thou art the God of my salvation] Perfect, therefore, that which concerneth me. "Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the works of thine own hands," #Ps 138:8. Thou hast written me down in thy book of preservation with thine own hand. Oh read thine own handwriting, and save me, said Queen Elizabeth in her troubles.

Ver. 6. **Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies]** Heb. thy bowels, which thou mayest seem to have lost, but I shall find them for thee. Where are thy bowels and thy compassions? are they restrained? If thou hast forgotten them (but that cannot be) I shall be thy remembrancer, and read them over unto thee out of the register of a sanctified memory.

For they have been ever of old] *Etiam ad Adamum, qui vixit quasi mille annis*, Ever since Adam, and so onward, saith R. Solomon; and why not then to me, who am one of thine, to whom thy mercy successively belongeth in my generation, as it did to mine ancestors in theirs?

Ver. 7. **Remember not the sins of my youth]** Which, though long since committed, must not be remembered without remorse; since for them God often punisheth men in their age, #Job 13:26 Jer 3:25. It is not the last sand that emptieth the hour glass, nor the last blow that throweth down the oak. 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 after; as Joab's killing of Abner slept all David's days, &c. It is not safe to be at odds with the Ancient of days. This David knew, and, therefore, was willing to clear all old scores, to get pardon for youthful lusts, lest they should put a sting into his present sufferings. And that being thoroughly done, as he could expect mercy and direction from God, so if any should maliciously upbraid him with his bygone iniquities he could answer, as Austin did in like case, *Quae tu reprehendis, ego damnavi*, What thou reprehendest in me I have long since condemned in myself. And as reverend Beza, when a spiteful Papist hit him in the teeth with his wanton poems set forth in his youth, and

long before repented of, *Hic homo invidet mihi gratiam Christi*, This fellow, said he, envieth me the grace of Jesus Christ.

Nor my transgressions] Or, *prevarications, in personam Uriae*, in the matter of Uriah, saith R. Obadiah; the sins of mine age, saith Kimchi; all my faults of former and later time, saith another. David was well in years when he defiled himself with Bathsheba. In many young men the rose is cankered in the bud. And again, as the canker soonest entereth into the white rose, so doth corruption easily creep into the white head. David prayeth God to forgive him his sins, both of former and of latter time; and not to forgive them only, but to forget them too; "Remember not the sins," &c. And as he fitly joineth memory of mercies and forgetfulness of sins, so he forgetteth not to subjoin,

According to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord] Do all of free grace, not for any motive or merit of mine. Lorinus, a Jesuit, here bringeth in sundry passages (as well he may), **#Ps 6:8 51:3 69:14 86:5,15 106:45 119:156 136:7 Da 9:18 Isa 55:7**, to prove that all is of mercy, and not of merits.

Ver. 8. **Good and upright is the Lord]** *i.e.* Gracious and righteous, or faithful; and hence it is that our God is merciful, as **#Ps 116:5**; hence it is that we poor creatures are not overwhelmed, *aut magnitudine peccatorum, aut mole calamitatum*, either with the greatness of our sins, or the multitude of our miseries.

Therefore will he teach sinners in the way] *i.e.* Sensible sinners, meek and mortified, as in the next verse, self-judging, and self-condemned; those will he teach to turn to him, and to walk before him in all well pleasing; and this doctrine of election must needs be good, because he is good; and certain, because he is upright.

Ver. 9. **The meek will he guide in judgment]** Or, the poor (*viz.* in spirit) will he make to tread in judgment; to foot it aright, to walk judiciously, to behave themselves wisely, as David did, **#1Sa 10:14**, so that Saul feared him, **#1Sa 23:22**. Natural conscience cannot but stoop to the image of God, shining in the hearts and lives of the really religious.

And the meek will he teach his way] Such as lie at his feet, and say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth; such as whose hearts are supple and soluble, tractable and teachable, so as that a little child may lead them, #**Isa 11:6**. Austin was such a one, *En adsum senex*, saith he, *a iuvene coepiscopo episcopus tot annorum, a collega nondum anniculo paratus sum discere*, i.e. I am here an old man, ready to learn of a young man, my coadjutor in the ministry, who hath scarce been one year in the service (Aug. Epist. 75, ad Arvil. Epis.).

Ver. 10. **All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth]** All the passages and proceedings, both ordinantial and providential, whereby he cometh and communicateth himself to his people, are not only mercy (though that is very sweet), but truth; they come to them in a way of a promise from God, as bound to them by covenant; this is soul-satisfying indeed; this turns all that a man hath to cream, when every mercy is a present sent him from heaven by virtue of a promise.

Unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies] *i.e.* His law (that singular testimony of his goodness towards them), called a covenant, because he bargaineth with us, as it were, that we should keep it; which because we can never do, he undertaketh to perform his own part and ours too. *Lex iubet, gratis iuvat*, he worketh all our works in us, and for us; he giveth us to be what he biddeth us to be: this is the everlasting covenant, and the fruits of it are sure mercies, compassions that fail not.

Ver. 11. **For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity]** Never did prisoner at the bar beg more earnestly for his life than David did for pardon of his great offence, especially in the matter of Uriah; for that lay heaviest. *Peccatum cum Bathsheba cuius petit antehac remissionem, et nunc repeto* (R. David). Could he but get off the guilt of that, it were an easy matter for him to glory in tribulations with Paul, #**Ro 5:3**, and to cry out, with Luther, *Feri Domine, feri; nam a peccatis absolutus sum*: Smite, Lord, smite; for I am a pardoned sinner, and therefore all is in mercy, and for good.

For it is great] But that is nothing to so great a God, who delightest in mercy, and makest thy power appear in pardoning the many and horrid sins of thy poor penitents. The high heaven covereth as well

tall mountains as small mole hills. The vast ocean swalloweth up huge rocks as well as little pebbles. St Paul was (for the first table) a blasphemer, and (for the second table) a persecutor, and injurious; "but I obtained mercy," saith he; and why? that the grace of our Lord might appear to be exceeding abundant, even to an overflow, **#1Ti 1:13,14**, and that the glory of free grace might be so much the more manifested, **#Ro 5:20**. The more desperate was my disease the greater is the glory of my Physician, who hath fully cured me, said Austin once to one, who upbraided him with his former loose living. Ver. 12. **What man is he that feareth the Lord?**] This question implieth, first, a paucity of such, as **#Ho 14:9**; secondly, the felicity of such as, out of a reverential fear of God, sue to him for pardon of sin, and seek to be made his servants. *O quanta est felicitas istius viri!* Oh the heaped up happiness of such a rare man! (Vatab.) David admireth it here (utitur exclamations Mol.); and well he may, for he hath close communion with God, and sweet communication of Christ's secrets, as followeth.

Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose] *i.e.* That the good man shall pitch upon. God will direct him in all dealings to make a good choice; and will give good success. This is not in a man's own power to do, **#Jer 10:23**. But the "steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way," **#Ps 37:23**. He was a pillar of fire and cloud to the Israelites, **#Ex 14:19**, and carefully chose out their way for them; not the nearest alway, but yet the safest.

Ver. 13. **His soul shall dwell at ease]** Heb. shall lodge in good, even then when his body haply is tossing on his sick bed, and at great unrest, *Conquiescet quemadmodum de nocte quiesci solet* (Trcmel.). One being asked how he did? answered, My body is weak, my soul is well. He shall be freed from the devil of discontent, and have a blessed self sufficiency; such, and better than he had whom Horace describeth, Epod. 2, *Beatus ille qui procul negotiis, &c.*; blessed is that man who is far from trouble, such as good Jacob had, when he said, I have enough, my brother, &c. Godliness only hath such a contentedness, **#1Ti 6:6**.

And his seed shall inherit the earth] God's love dieth not with the parents; but reviveth in their posterity, **#2Sa 7:12**.

Ευσεβειων παιδεσσι τα λωια, δυσσεβειων δ ου.

It would be a great stay of mind to us, if God should say of our children, as once David did of Mephibosheth, and afterwards of Chimham, I will take care of them, and see them well provided for. He doth upon the matter say as much and more to every believer.

Ver. 14. **The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him]** It is neither learning nor labour that can give insight into God's secrets, those *Arcana imperii*, #Mt 13:12, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, "the mind of Christ," #1Co 2:16; these things come by revelation rather than discourse of reason, and must therefore be obtained by prayer. Those that diligently seek him shall be of his cabinet council, shall know his soul secrets, and be admitted into a gracious familiarity and friendship: #Joh 15:15, "Hence forth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth: but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known to you."

And he will show them his covenant] As having no greater secret to impart to them, than by showing them the covenant of grace, his good pleasure and purpose of their eternal salvation; to make them "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God," #Eph 3:19. The Jews bragged much of God's covenant, but here they are given to understand, that only such as fear God are covenanters. #Ac 13:16, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience."

Ver. 15. **Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord]** I look him full in the face, and confidently expect deliverance. This he speaketh, saith one, in reference to the army that he had sent out to meet Absalom, #2Sa 18:1, nothing doubting of getting the day.

For he shall pluck my feet out of the net] Of evil concupiscence, saith Aben Ezra; rather of my foes, those crafty and cruel fowlers.

Ver. 16. **Turn thee unto me]** Heb. Face about towards me.

And have mercy upon me] There being no such mercy as to have thy favour. This is a voluminous mercy.

For I am desolate and afflicted] As all creatures flag and hang the head when the sun is eclipsed. Misery is an object of mercy; as it was to the compassionate Samaritan.

Ver. 17. **The troubles of my heart are enlarged]** Whereby my heart is sorely straitened, so that I can hardly breathe: Oh, "hide not thine ear at my breathing," at my cry, **#La 3:56**. *En patet in curas area lata meas*; all afflictions enter into mine heart, as by a wide gate (R. Obad.). *Cor vix capax tribulationum mearum* (Vat.).

Out of my distresses] Wherewith I am pent up and pinched; as afterwards Paul was pricked with the messenger of Satan.

Ver. 18. **Look upon mine affliction and my pain]** My griefs, under which I groan and labour, My concupiscence, saith Aben Ezra, against which I strive, but prevail not.

And forgive all my sin] Heb. lift up, take away; lay them on the true scape goat, on that Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, **#Joh 1:29**.

Ver. 19. **Consider mine enemies, for they are many]** This was to David half a promise, and a whole reason that he should be helped; since it was to come to an extremity. If God but look out of the pillar of cloud upon the Egyptian army, it is enough for their utter confusion, **#Ex 14:24**.

And they hate me with cruel hatred] Of their craft he had complained, **#Ps 25:15**, now of their cruelty. These are never sundered in the Church's enemies; as the asp, they say, never goeth without his mate. See **#Isa 34:16**.

Ver. 20. **O keep my soul]** The repetition of the self same petition argueth earnestness, and is not always battology.

Let me not be ashamed] Rendered scornful and scandalous.

Ver. 21. **Let integrity and uprightness preserve me]** Integrity of conscience and uprightness of conversation.

For I wait on thee] viz. For the accomplishment of thy promise, That with the upright thou wilt show thyself upright, **#Ps 18:25**.

Ver. 22. **Redeem Israel, &c.]** *In vita vel post mortem meam*, Either while I live, or after my death (R. David). This is every good man's

care and prayer. None is in case to pray for the Church, that hath not first made his own peace with God.

Chapter 25

Ver. 1. **Judge me, O Lord]** i.e. Judge between me and mine enemies; not between me and thee, as R. David expoundeth it, for then I am sure to be found faulty.

For I have walked in mine integrity] viz. Toward Saul, whatever his flattering courtiers suggest against me; as **#Ps 7**, which is much like this, and made, as it may seem, about the same time as this, viz. about the beginning of Saul's persecution raised against David, **#1Sa 22:7,8**, who thereupon appealeth here to God's just judgment, and stands upon his justification, as holding fast faith and a good conscience.

Therefore I shall not slide] Or, not far; I shall not be greatly moved, **#Ps 62:2**. Moved I may be, but not removed; shaken, but not shivered; thrust at, but not thrown down, &c., because bottomed and built upon the Rock of Ages, **#Isa 26:4 2Co 4:8**.

Ver. 2. **Examine me, O Lord, and prove me]** It must needs be a good conscience that thus boldly offereth itself to God's trial; so **#Job 31:6**.

Try my reins and my heart] i.e. Mine affections and thoughts; for these are *sibi mutuo causae*. While I mused the fire kindled, **#Ps 39:3**. David was neither ambitious nor factious, as his adversaries represented him.

Ver. 3. **For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes]** And that is a strong tie upon my conscience. The cords of love are the cords of a man, **#Ho 11:4**. To sin against mercy is to sin against humanity, it is no less than bestial, than devilish. When, therefore, I am tempted to recompense evil for evil thy lovingkindness comes before me, and reineth me in.

And I have walked in thy truth] i.e. According to thy word: I have led a Bible conversation, though solicited to do otherwise by the courtiers and politicians, with that profane proverb of theirs,

πουλυποδος νουν εσχε (Theog.), comply with the times, and be not so strait laced: *Religiosum oportet esse, sed non Religantem.*

Ver. 4. **I have not sat with vain persons]** Who are void of God's holy fear, but filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, &c., #Ro 1:29. Courtiers are such for most part, and David never delighted in such company, to sit with them, especially when they were acting mischief; which while Cromwell did at the condemnation of Lambert, martyr, and Sir John Cheek at other such like meetings, they were cast upon no small snares and inconveniences. See #Jer 15:17.

Neither will I go in with dissemblers] Heb. close workers of iniquity, secret and sly sirs, such as hide themselves to do evil, as the Chaldee hath it, *Qui secreto male agunt*, and can carry their wickedness cleanly and closely, so as that the world shall be little the wiser, *versatiles et versutili, multiplices, Protei;* such as can serve the times, and shift their sails to the setting of every wind, Machiavellians, Ahithophels, Jonadabs, #2Sa 13:3. These men's wisdom may serve them, as the ostrich's wings, to make them outrun others upon earth, though it be into hell's mouth, but help them never a whit toward heaven. David, therefore, would have nothing to do with them, he would neither enter, walk, nor sit with any such, {confer #Ps 1:1} they should not sprinkle him with their court holy water.

Ver. 5. **I have hated the congregation of evildoers]** The Church malignant, whose lives are a mystery of iniquity, as Josephus saith of Antipater; *qui omnia turbant et miscent, tantum ut ipsi crescere possint*, as Aristophanes saith of Cleon; care not whom they ruin, so they may raise themselves, nor what mischief they work to others, so they may drive on their own sinful designs. Luther said of the monks in Germany, that they were so bad, *tam desperatae malitiae, ut nihil cogitent quod non idem patrare ausint*, that they would stick at no villany whatsoever. David held it a hell to be in company with such incarnate devils. It was once the prayer of a good gentlewoman when she was to die, being in much trouble of conscience, O Lord, let me not go to hell where the wicked are, for, Lord, thou knowest I never loved their company here.

And will not sit with the wicked] But hate the very garment spotted by the flesh, #**Jude 2,3**; that is, avoid evil company, saith Mr Perkins, as #**Le 15:4**; so #**De 22:12**. It is not safe coming near stinking carrion, except one have the wind of it. Sin is as catching as the plague.

Ver. 6. **I will wash mine hands in innocency]** As #**Ex 40:32 1Ti 2:8**; see #**De 21:6 Isa 1:15 Jas 5:8**. If in our addresses to God we cannot wash our hands in innocency, yet we must wash them in tears: *Quem poenitet peccasse, pens est innocens*, saith Seneca, Penitence is well nigh as good as innocence; but one way or other be sure to come clean when you come to God's altar, when you draw nigh to him in holy duties. We wash our hands every day, and often, but when we are to sit with some great person we scour them with balls. *Sic Egyptii sacerdotes apud Herod. in Euterpe, terrio quoque die corpus eradunt, &c.*; so here, we must be always holy, but especially when we present ourselves to the holy eyes of our Creator. And hereby David differentiates himself from the wicked in the use of ordinances, wherein they were as forward as the best (Doeg may set his foot as far into the sanctuary as David, and cry, The temple of the Lord, &c.), but cared not to come clear thereunto; their hands were full of blood, their hearts full of wickedness.

So will I compass thine altar, O Lord] *i.e.* I will cover it with sacrifices and oblations, and perform what is required of me diligently and cheerfully. The people might not touch the altar, but only see afar off what was done there by the priests. Howbeit, those that were more zealous among them, to the end that they might have a full view of the services, stood not still in one place, but stirred up and down on all sides of the altar; and some such thing David did when he is said to have danced before the Lord, #**2Sa 6:14**.

Ver. 7. **That I may publish]** This was the end David propounded to himself in all his solemn services; that he might set up God, and not serve himself upon God.

And tell of all thy wondrous works] All God's mercies to his are wonders if well weighed in their several circumstances. But we commonly deal by them as Solomon did by the brass of the temple, it was so much that he weighed it not.

Ver. 8. **Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house]** Much more the people, and the ordinances there, but most of all the Lord himself of that house (as if a man love the schoolmaster for his child's sake he loveth his child much more), and hence it is that I so hate the society of the ungodly; for what communication hath Christ with Belial? The word rendered habitation some derive from a word that signifieth the eye, and, therefore, render it sight, or beauty; the Seventy *εὐπρεπειαν*, comeliness. The Protestants at Lyons, in France, called their public meeting place paradise.

And the place where thine honour dwelleth] *i.e.* Where thou thyself dwellest, or thine ark, which is called God's glory, **#1Sa 4:21 Ps 78:61**, yea, God's self, **#Ps 132:5**, and God's face, **#Ps 105:4**.

Ver. 9. **Gather not my soul with sinners]** I have loved thy house, which sinners never delighted in; therefore "gather not my soul with sinners"; so the Syriac senseth it. Let me not die the death of sinners, for I never cared for their company; so the Rabbis. {*See Trapp on "Ps 26:5"*} Let me not share with them in punishment, for I could never abide their practice. Balaam would die the death of the righteous, but he liked not of their life. Euchrites would be *Croesus vivens, et Socrates mortuus*. like like Croesus and die like Socrates, Sir Walter Raleigh would live a Papist (there being no religion like that for licentious liberty and lasciviousness), but die a Protestant. We have some that would gladly dance with the devil all day, and then sup with Christ at night; live all their lives long in Delilah's lap, and then go to Abraham's bosom when they die. But this cannot be, as David well understood; and, therefore, both eschewed the life of a wicked person, and deprecated his death: Gather not, or take not away, &c. The righteous is taken away (Heb. gathered, **#Isa 57:1**, as men gather flowers and candy them, preserve them); with such to be gathered David would hold it a happiness, but not with sinners with sanguinaries; for such are gathered but as house dust, to be cast out of doors.

Ver. 10. **In whose hands is mischief]** Wicked contrivance. Here we have the true portraiture of a corrupt courtier, such as Saul's were.

Ver. 11. **But as for me, I will walk]** Whatever others do, their example shall be no rule to me to deviate. See my Righteous Man's Recompense, D. 1.

Redeem me, &c.] For I am likely to suffer deeply for my singularity.

Ver. 12. **My foot standeth in an even place]** *i.e.* Mine affections are in an equal tenor. A good man is τετραγωνος ολοκληρος, the scales of his mind neither rise up toward the beam, through their own lightness, or their overly weened opinion of prosperity; nor are too much depressed with any load of sorrow, but hanging equal and unmoved between both, give him liberty in all occurrences to enjoy himself.

I will bless the Lord] For performance of promises; chiefly in that great panegyris *{general assemble}* #Heb 12:23

Chapter 26

Ver. 1. **The Lord is my light]** That is, my comfort and direction, he that dissolveth all my clouds of terrors within and troubles without. To these all he opposeth God's all sufficiency, as making for him, and as being all in all unto him, light, salvation, strength of life, what not? and therehence his full assurance; and such a masculine magnanimity as feareth not the power of men and devils, be they who they will, and do what they can. *Animo magno nihil est magnum.* When a man can out of this consideration, God is my light (in things of the mind) and my salvation (in things of the body, as Aben Ezra expoundeth it), contemn and reckon all things else as matters of small moment, it shows he hath in truth apprehended God; and this is true holy magnanimity.

The Lord is the strength of my life,] He that keeps life and soul together, saith Aben Ezra, as the spirits do soul and body; and therefore, *Quis potest me interimere,* saith Kimchi, who can do me to death?

Of whom shall I be afraid] Faith fortieth the heart against distrustful fears, which it quelleth and killeth. In a fright it runneth to the heart, as the blood doth, and relieveth it, setting it εξω βελων και φοβου, out of the gunshot of creature annoyances. *Expertus loquor;* for

Ver. 2. **When the wicked, even mine enemies, came upon me]** Made impression upon me, with utmost violence and open mouth, as

if they would have devoured me, like a cannibal; or as a lion doth a sheep, *inhumanissime, ferarumque more*, saith Junius, barbarously and beastly.

They stumbled and fell] *Irritis conatibus corruerunt*, they utterly lost their design, as did those Amalekites who had sacked Ziklag, **#1Sa 30:16-19**, and Saul often. If a man stumble and fall not, he gets ground; but if after much blundering he kiss the ground, he falleth with a force. David's enemies did so, *corruerunt et conciderunt*; they were irreparably ruined.

Ver. 3. **Though an host should encamp against me]** See **#Ps 3:6**, {See Trapp on "Ps 3:6"} We should propound the worst to ourselves (the best will bring with it, as we say), especially if we find our faith to be in heart and vigour, as here David's was.

Though war should rise against me] War is a complex evil, and is, therefore, called so by a speciality: **#Isa 45:7**, "I make peace, and create evil," that is, war. Sin, Satan, and war have all one name, saith a learned divine; evil is the best of them: the best of sin is deformity; of Satan, enmity; of war, misery.

In this will I be confident] In this? In what? In this one ensuing petition, saith Aben Ezra; or, in this that I have said before, "The Lord is my light and my salvation"; in this confident gloriation of mine, which is such as an unbeliever is a perfect stranger unto.

Ver. 4. **One thing have I desired of the Lord]** One thing above the rest. Every one of God's suppliants, have some special request that he mainly insisteth on; and King David's was the liberty of God's sanctuary, and enjoyment of his public ordinances, *ut cultu Dei libero et legitimo uti possit* (Jun.).

Hoc primus petit, hoc postremus omittit.

This was dearer to him than wife, children, goods, all. This suit he knew to be honest, and, therefore, he began it; and being so, he is resolved never to give it over, but to prosecute it to the utmost, and to persevere in prayer (which is a great virtue, **#Ro 12:12**) till he had prevailed.

That will I seek after] As God's constant remembrancer, who loveth to be importuned, and, as it were, jogged by his praying people. Herein David showed himself a true Israelite, a prince of God, and, as Nazianzen styleth Basil the Great, Ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμῶν τῶν τοῦ πνεύματος, a man of desires flowing from the Spirit. He knew well that a faint suitor doth but beg a denial.

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord] *i.e.* In the place where was the ark, with the prophets, priests, Levites, Asaph and his brethren, &c., with whom David desired to be taken up in the service of God, free from secular cares and delights, at times convenient. Pyrrhus told Cyneas that when he had finished his wars once he would then sit still and be merry. The Roman generals, when they had once triumphed over their enemies, might take their ease and pleasure for ever after. But good David resolves to improve his rest, whenever God shall grant it him, to perpetual piety; "That I may dwell," saith he, or sit "in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life": this was the height of his ambition, this was David's delight.

To behold the beauty of the Lord] Heb. the delight, amenity, or pleasantness of Jehovah: *hoc est cultum Dei ordinatum*, saith Kimchi, those ceremonial services which were their gospel, and Christ in figure, #Heb 8:5, whom David desired to contemplate.

And to inquire in his temple] Heb. Early to inquire, that is, earnestly, what that good and holy and acceptable will of God is. Here it was that David used to seek satisfaction and resolution of his doubts and scruples when at any time he was gravelled, #Ps 73:16,17. Some render it, *ut lustrem templum eius*.

Ver. 5. **For in time of trouble he shall hide me]** This protection he boldly promiseth himself as a fruit of his faith, fostered by the use of the ordinances. He knew that the only way to be safe was to get under God's wing, #Ps 91:4, to take sanctuary there, to be hid under God's altar; for upon all the glory there is a defence, #Isa 4:5. Joash was preserved six years in the sanctuary, where he was hid. The sanctuary is called God's hidden place, #Eze 7:22, and his saints his hidden ones, #Ps 83:3.

In his pavilion] The Hebrew *Succoh* is written with a little *Samech*, {Hebrew Text Note} to show, say the Masorites, that a little pavilion or cottage where God is shall be sufficient to safeguard the saints, *Quod tabernaculum exile συν θεω, est asylum tutissimum.*

In the secret of his tabernacle] I shall be as safe as if I were shut up in his holy ark.

He shall set me upon a rock] Out of mine enemy's reach.

Ver. 6. **And now shall mine head be lifted up]** See #Ps 3:4, and take notice how clear David was upon his prayer, of the possession of the promise, that he should both get the better of his enemies, and enjoy the public ordinances.

Sacrifices of joy] Heb. of loud shouting, *hoc est sacrificia cum canticis*, saith R. Solomon. Sacrifices with triumph, alarm, or jubilation to the Lord; not with profane triumphings, as the manner of the world is, as if by mine own strength or prudence I had gotten the victory. So at the battle of Agincourt, when our Henry V had beaten the French, the honour of the day was, by the king's command, ascribed only to God. He would not suffer his broken crown or bruised armour to be borne before him in show; or any ballads to be set forth or sung in his honour, &c. (Speed. Daniel).

Ver. 7. **Hear, O Lord, when I cry]** This was his form of prayer, or to this effect, when he was in any distress or danger. As a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he had weapons, not only defensive (the shield of faith, helmet of hope, breastplate of righteousness, &c., as #Eph 6:14-18), but also offensive, viz. the darts of prayer, as here, and the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, as in the next.

Ver. 8. **When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, &c.]** Or, "My heart said unto thee" (or, for thee, and in thy stead), Let my face seek thy face, &c. Or concerning thee, said my heart; that is, I have constantly considered of those words of thine "Seek ye my face," and, therefore I come confidently unto thee. See #De 4:19. Upon which commandment (involving a promise) David seems to ground this speech of his. R. Solomon hath it thus, Thou hast said to my heart, Seek ye my face; that is, Thou hast told me by thy Spirit that all Israel should seek thy face, and as for me, I will surely seek thy face.

My heart said unto thee, &c.] My heart, moved and inspired by thy Spirit working in me a gracious compliance, echoed out as it were, "Thy face," &c. See the like **#Jer 3:22**, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God." Every godly person hath the duplicate of God's law in his heart; and is willingly cast into the mould of his word, **#Ro 6:17**.

Ver. 9. **Hide not thy face far from me]** For then it will be to no purpose for me to seek it; eclipse not thy favour, withhold not thy succour, but meet me; yea, prevent me with thy loving kindness. *Tantum velis, et Deus tibi praeoccurrent,* saith an ancient.

Put not thy servant away in anger] Thy servant I am, though a sinful servant, and such as provoketh thee to displeasure; nevertheless reject me not, as thou hast done Saul, and sundry others, for their misdoings. **#2Sa 24:10**, "Take away the iniquity of thy servant"; and to prove himself so, he addeth, "for I have done foolishly"; as some godly learned think, hereby intimating, that if he deserved not to be called God's servant in regard of his late sin, yet in regard of his latter service of confession. God puts away many in anger for their supposed goodness, but not any at all for their confessed badness.

Thou hast been my help, leave me not, &c.] It is a good note that one giveth upon these words: The godly many times have such earnest affections in prayers, that they can hardly content themselves with any words to express their minds withal.

Ver. 10. **When my father and my mother forsake me]** Or, For my father and my mother do forsake me (that is, they are not able to help me), but thou, &c., **#1Sa 22:1,3**. There is an ocean of love in a parent's heart toward their even untoward children, as was in David toward Absalom, after all his unnatural miscarriages; insomuch as Joab upbraideth him with it, **#2Sa 19:6**. But all the mercies of all the fathers and mothers in the world put together make not the tith of God's mercy toward his children, **#Isa 41:15**.

Then the Lord will take me up] Heb. will gather me, that is, take me into his care and keeping. In the civil law we find provision made for outcasts and friendless persons; some hospitals to entertain

them, some liberties to comfort and compensate their trouble. It is sure that in God the forlorn and fatherless find mercy, #**Ho 14:3 1Sa 22:2,3 Joh 9:35 Jer 30:17**. In the Israelites' marching through the wilderness, at the fourth alarm arose the standard of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali; and to these was committed the care of gathering together the lame, feeble, and sick, and to look that nothing was left behind; whence they were called the gathering host, #**Jos 6:9**. Unto this, some think, David here alludeth.

Ver. 11. **Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me, &c.**] *Deus non deserit suos, dum eos docet ac ducit*, God shows that he forsaketh not his (whatever other friends do) so long as he teacheth and leadeth them. See #**Ps 25:4,5**. {See Trapp on "Ps 25:4"} {See Trapp on "Ps 25:5"}

In a plain path] Heb. In a way of plainness, wherein I may escape mine enemies' ambushes.

Because of mine enemies] Or, Because of mine observers; so it may be read (*propter insidiatores meos*); such as Saul and Doeg were, who looked upon David with an evil eye, and watched for his halting. It was the wisdom of the Lacedaemonians always to send two ambassadors together which disagreed among themselves; that so they might mutually eye one another's actions (Aristot. Polit. lib. ii. cap. 7). The wicked will be eyeing and prying into the practices of good people, who must therefore watch and pray.

Ver. 12. **Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies**] Heb. unto the soul; for the wicked are carried on against the godly, with all their soul, as it were.

For false witnesses] Such as whereof Saul's court was full, viz. his *Aiones et Negones*, who fed his humour by traducing and denigrating innocent David.

And such as breathe out cruelty] As Saul breathed out threatening against the disciples, #**Ac 9:1**; so did David's spit fires.

Ver. 13. **I had fainted, unless I had believed**] Saved he was then by his faith, which drank to him as it were in a cup of Nepenthes, and fetched him again when ready to swoon and sink. See #**Ps 119:92**. The word rendered unless here is (as the Masorites note) one of the fifteen Scripture words, that were extraordinarily pointed by the men

of the great synagogue (*Lule habet puncta supra and infra*). {*Hebrew Text Note*} The reason whereof given by Kimchi and others (as if David doubted of his salvation) is not satisfactory nor sound.

To see the goodness of the Lord] That is, to taste; one sense usually put for another; the soul also hath her senses; and these must be habitually exercised to discern good and evil, #**Heb 5:14**.

In the land of the living] That is, here on earth, #**Ps 116:9 Isa 38:11**, where men live; and I myself have not only a portion of life with them, but a promise of many good things besides. To blame, therefore, was good David, when he said in his haste, All men are liars, prophets, and all who had promised him the kingdom, #**Ps 116:10**. But the best have their passions; which they daily outgrow, and add to their faith patience, #**2Pe 1:5,6**. And albeit as Calvin here noteth, every one's case is not like David's, who had particular promises concerning this life, beyond many other faithful persons; yet, because according to every man's faith it shall be unto him, let us all likewise trust in God, as we are all hereupon exhorted in the next words.

Ver. 14. **Wait on the Lord]** *Expecta, expecta*. See how earnest good David is with himself and others; for he knew men's dulness, and the difficulty of the duty. Religious men find it more easy to bear evil than to wait till the promised good he enjoyed; #**Heb 10:36**, the spoiling of their goods required patience; but this more than ordinary. Let our distance from God, our dependence upon him, and our undone condition without him, be but considered; and we shall be the more willing to wait, yea, to want and go without some things, that we are but too much set upon.

Be of good courage] Be confirmed, hold fast, play the man (as the Seventy have it, and the apostle useth the same word, #**1Co 16:13**), and let not the big words of thine enemies make thee to cast away thy confidence, which hath so great recompense of reward.

And he shall strengthen thy heart] Or, let thine heart be confirmed, cheer up, hold out faith and patience.

Wait, I say, on the Lord] *i.e. De die in diem expecta*, wait still; do it from one day to another. God is a free agent, neither is it fit for us to send for him by a post. Many of his promises bear a long date; but they are sure and infallible. Wait, therefore; and why? See **#Hab 2:3**. {See Trapp on "Hab 2:3"}

Chapter 27

Ver. 1. **Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock]** That thou mayest grant me what I begged so earnestly of thee in the former psalm especially, **#Ps 28:4**, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after," &c. For this psalm is of the same subject with that; and seemeth to have been made much about the same time, viz. after that David had twice spared Saul's life, **#1Sa 24:4-6**, &c.; **#1Sa 26:12,21**. Only here he expresseth himself, not as if he had been a private person, and in daily danger of his life; but as destined and designed to the kingdom by Almighty God, to whom, therefore, he prayeth for himself and the people, and against their implacable enemies, with so great confidence, as that he presently praiseth him for his request obtained, **#Ps 28:6**.

Be not silent to me] Cease not, as deaf, from me. If God seem to be deaf to us, we must cry the louder; that, having prepared our hearts by such a seeming silence, he may cause his ears to hear, **#Ps 10:17**, which he will not fail to do when once we set up our note, and make bitter moan.

Lest, if thou be silent, &c.] Here are his reasons to help his hope to be heard. God is well pleased that we argue it out with him in prayer.

Like them that go down into the pit] Or, dirty dungeon, that is, the grave; or, as Kimchi, lest I be as the wicked, that go down to hell. "The righteous perisheth," **#Isa 57:1**, that is, the world looks upon them as lost.

Ver. 2. **When I lift up my hands]** An ordinary gesture in prayer, expressing faith (for they held out their open hands, as craving beggars with the palms upward, **#1Ki 8:22**) and helping fervency; while hands and heart went up together to God in the heavens, **#La 3:40**. *Preces fundimus, ecelum tundimus, misericordiam extorquemus, &c.* (Tertul.).

Toward thy holy oracle] Called Debhir, because therehence God spake and gave answer. Toward this (a type of Christ, the Word essential) David lifteth up his hands; that it might be as a ladder whereby his prayer might get up to heaven. The devil also, who delighteth to be God's ape, but for man's mischief, gave oracles at Delphi and elsewhere (Herod. Clio); but *λοζα et mendacia*, doubtful and lying; as to Croesus, Pyrrhus, others. But the eternity of Israel cannot lie, #1Sa 15:29; every word of God is pure, he is a shield to them that put their trust in him, #Pr 30:5.

Ver. 3. **Draw me not away with the wicked]** Who seek to draw me away from my settled purpose of attending upon thee, *απερισπαστως*, #1Co 7:35, and are therefore likely to be drawn away by thee to execution, as malefactors are drawn, hanged, and quartered (there wanteth but a hurdle, a horse, and a halter, said Belknap, to do me right), as Sisera was drawn by God to the river Kishon to be ruined, #Jud 4:7.— *Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt* (Sen.).

Which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts] Saul and his courtiers are here noted.

Astutam vapido servantes pectore vulpem (Pers.).

The Florentine secretary (Machiavel) was not born of many years after; but the devil was as great a master then as afterwards; and David oft complaineth of it.

Ver. 4. **Give them according to their deeds]** God loveth to retaliate; and David, out of a public and prophetic spirit (not from private revenge, or troubled affections), taketh thus upon him to imprecate.

And according to the wickedness of their endeavours] They were therefore old, habituated, irreclaimable sinners whom he thus cursed, and against such this and such like imprecations are still in force.

Give them after the works of their hands] Because they regard not the works of thine hands, #Ps 28:5. *Par pari*, saith Aben Ezra here.

Ver. 5. **Because they regard not the works of the Lord]** That is, saith Kimchi, the worship of God they care not for; but follow the vanities of the world. Or, the works of God in heaven and earth; the consideration whereof is a part of God's worship. Or, "they regard not the works of the Lord," that is, the first making; nor

The operation of his hands] That is, the present disposing of his creatures, either by way of mercy or judgment, whereof these brutish persons make no observation at all, **#Ps 92:5-7 Isa 5:12**; particularly they neither regard my present affliction, **#Am 6:6**, nor believe my future exaltation to the throne, as God hath promised me, but oppose it all they can, and would gladly prevent it, which yet they cannot, but will be found fighters against God.

He shall destroy them, and not build them up] Destroy them in this world, and not build them up in the world to come, say the Rabbis. Or, as others, he shall break them down, as men do old rotten ruinous houses, and never more repair or rebuild them. *Non potest Deus non perdere iudiciis suis, qui non erudiuntur documentis* (Jun.). They that will not be ruled shall be ruined. See **#1Sa 2:25**.

Ver. 6. **Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard, &c.]** God will one day turn the prayers of his people into praises. David, **#Ps 28:1**, had said, Be not silent to me; here, Blessed be God, for he hath answered me. So Jehoshaphat had his *Baca* soon turned into *Berachah*, **#2Ch 20:18,19**. See David's syllogism; and mark his conclusion, **#Ps 66:18-20**, not according to the rules of logic, but better.

Ver. 7. **The Lord is my strength and my shield]** So that I am furnished and harnessed within and without. See **#Ps 18:2**.

My heart trusted in him, and I am helped] Faith substantiateth things not yet seen, **#Heb 11:1**, it altereth the tenses, saith one, and putteth the future into the present tense, as here.

My heart greatly rejoiceth, &c.] Inwardly I am glad, warmed at heart; and outwardly cheerful, even unto singing. And what will David sing? See his ditty in the next words.

Ver. 8. **The Lord is their strength]** Not mine only, as #Ps 28:7, but the strength of all and every one of the holy community, of true Christians, partakers of Christ's unction, of his Spirit.

Ver. 9. **Save thy people]** The Church must share in our prayers.

And bless thine inheritance] Which cannot but be dear to thee.

Feed them also] For they are but ill-favouredly fed by Saul.

Lift them up] Over all their enemies, as #Ps 27:6.

Chapter 28

Ver. 1. **Give unto the Lord]** *Verbo et confessione*, saith Kimchi. By word and confession, as #Jos 7:19 Jer 13:16; acknowledge him the King immortal, invisible, &c., and yourselves his vassals; as did those three best emperors, Constantine, Theodosius, and Valentinian. *Cedite, colite*, step back, stoop, humble and tremble before this dread Sovereign of the world; bear an awful respect to the Divine Majesty, the high thunderer, the great wonder worker, unless you will come short of brute beasts and dumb creatures.

O ye mighty] Heb. Ye sons of the mighty, grandees and potentates, who are readiest to rob God of his glory, and being tumoured up by their worldly wealth and greatness, to deem or rather dream themselves demi-gods, such as may do what they list, as not accountable to any mortal. The Septuagint render it, O ye sons of rams. These bellweathers should not cast their noses into the air, and carry their crest the higher, because the shepherd hath bestowed a bell upon them more than upon the rest of the flock.

Give unto the Lord] Give, give, give. This showeth how unwilling such are usually to give God his right, or to suffer a word of exhortation to this purpose.

Glory and strength] By ascribing all to him, casting down your crowns at his feet, setting up his sincere service wherever ye have to do, &c.

Ver. 2. **Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name]** Which yet you cannot do, for his name is above all praise, *Nominatissimam et celeberrimam* (Jan.), #Ps 148:13, but you must aim at it. The Rabbis observe that God's holy name is mentioned eighteen different times in this psalm; that great men especially may give him the honour of his name, that they may stand in awe and not sin, that they may bring presents to him who ought to be feared, and those also the very best of the best, since he is a great King, and standeth much upon his seniority, #Mal 1:14.

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness] Or, in his glorious sanctuary; therefore glorious, because there they might see God's face, and hear his voice in his ordinances. Away, therefore, with your superstitions and will worships, and bring your gifts to his beautiful sanctuary; for nowhere else will he receive them. Send a lamb to this ruler of the earth, #Isa 16:1, as a homage penny.

Ver. 3. **The voice of the Lord is upon the waters]** Thunder is here called, and fitly, the voice of the Lord (being brought, as one instance of those many other glorious works of his in nature), because it comes from him alone. Natural causes there are assigned of it; but we must not stick in them, as Epicurus and his hogs would have us. (The ancient Romans said *Deus tonat, Deus fulgurat*, for which now *tonat, fulgurat*.) The best philosophy in this behalf is to hear God Almighty by his thunder speaking unto us from heaven, as if he were present; and to see him in his lightnings, as if he cast his eyes upon us, to behold what we had been doing. This voice of the Lord is fitly instanced as an evidence of the Divine power and majesty; because it is so dreadful, even to the greatest atheists; as it was to Caius Caligula, that potent emperor, ready to run into a mouse hole in a time of thunder (Sueton.).

The God of glory thundereth] And men quake before him; as worms at such a time wriggle into the corners of the earth. And yet your dive clappers duck net at this rattle in the air, though they do at a far smaller matter. So, many tremble not at God's terrible threats, that yet are afraid of a penal statute.

The Lord is upon many waters] viz. When he thundereth. *De aquis pendulis loquitur*, saith Vatablus; He speaketh of the waters in

the clouds, which are many, and of great force, as appeared in the general deluge; and doth still appear by that infinite inundation of rain that followeth upon the thunder claps. Some render it, The Lord, or, The voice of the Lord, is above many waters, *i.e.* above the loud roaring of many waters, which is even drowned by the thunder.

Ver. 4. **The voice of the Lord is powerful]** So that it shaketh heaven and earth, #**Heb 12:26.** *Cogitent ergo principes quantum infra Deum subsidant, &c. (Validum est et vehemens tonitru. Vat. Beza).* Let those that think themselves some great business consider God's infinite power, putting forth itself in thunders and tempests, and they will soon be crest fallen.

The voice of the Lord is full of majesty] Heb. in majesty; it is magnificent and immutable, though some fools have attempted to imitate it (as a certain king of Egypt, and Caligula, the emperor), by certain engines and devices.

Ver. 5. **The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars]** *i.e.* The thunder, and those things that either go before it or follow it, as lightnings, thunder bolts, storms, tempest, &c., breaking and turning up by the roots huge trees.

The Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon] Which are the tallest, thickest, and most durable of any place in the habitable world. What a shame is it, then, that our hard hearts break not, yield not, though thunderstruck with the dreadful menaces of God's mouth! *Corripimur sad non corrigimur, &c.* A fearful case. Let the tall cedars see to it. *Nam per Cedros intelligit αλληγορικως quicquid est eximium in mundo.* Where is that hammer of the nations, Nebuchadnezzar? that terror of the world, Tamerlane, &c.? Are they not broken in pieces as a potter's vessel?

Ver. 6. **He maketh them also to skip like a calf]** Young living creatures are full of motion. God by his thunder and earthquake thereupon (for so the Hebrews understand it) maketh not only those huge trees, the splinters of them, to fly up into the air, but also the mountains, whereupon they grow, to skip and jump out of their places and aloft from their centre.

Lebanon and Sirion, &c.] Or, Harmon, two known mountains, #**De 3:9.**

Ver. 7. **The voice of the Lord divideth (Heb. cutteth out) the flames of fire]** *i.e.* The lightning, which the thunder is said to strike, or cut out, because it causeth them to shoot and glide; it immediately followeth one flash, and goeth before another; dispersing and darting them hither and thither.

Ver. 8. **The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness]** *i.e.* The beasts abiding in the wildernesses; the most savage creatures, those that lie in woods, and are most fearless of men, are put to pain by thunder, and made to travail with trembling.

The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh] Through which the Israelites passed into Canaan, #Nu 13:27, the beasts whereof were cruel, #De 8:15 32:10. *Animalia quantumvis horrifca* (Jun.). Beza paraphraseth, *et Arabum tesqua succutit*, it shaketh the cottages of the Arabians.

Ver. 9. **The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve]** Which they naturally do not without a great deal of difficulty, #Job 39:4-6.

{See Trapp on "Job "39:4"} {See Trapp on "Job "39:5"} {See Trapp on "Job "39:6"}

And discovereth the forests] By driving the beasts into their dens, baring the forests of their leaves and fruits, turning up trees by the roots, and so making a clear prospect through woods and groves, as one phraseth it.

And in his temple doth every one speak of his glory] Heb. every one, or, every whit of it, saith Glory; every godly man observing his dreadful thunder, and other his stupendous works, saith Glory be to God on high. Some conceive this psalm was appointed by David to be sung in the temple in time of thunder; which is not unlikely (Moiler.). There are that make God to be the nominative case to the verb speaketh, and render it thus; and in his temple, or palace, doth he utter all his glory (Tremel.). As if the psalmist should say, Much of his glory God uttereth in his thunder; but all in his temple. For whatsoever there he speaketh with his mouth he fulfilleth it with his hand, #Ps 115:3 119:91 33:9 Isa 44:26. See a like collation of God's works and word, with a praelation of this above those, #Ps 19:1-7 111:7.

Ver. 10. **The Lord sitteth upon the flood]** He reigned in that general deluge in Noah's days, #Ge 6:7, and doth still over those

horrible inundations that follow upon thunder and strong tempests; ruling that raging element, and governing all by his providence and sovereign power.

Yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever] And over all; therefore all, even the mightiest, should give him glory, as **#Ps 29:1**.

Ver. 11. **The Lord will give strength unto his people]** To bear up their hearts in time of thunder or other terrible occurrences, *In tempore tonitru* (Aben Ezra).

The Lord will bless his people with peace] *Pace omnimoda*, with peace internal, external, eternal: for godliness hath the promises of both lives, of prosperity, safety, and welfare both of soul and body.

A Psalm and Song] *i.e.* A holy hymn, first framed in metre, then sung with men's voices.

At the dedication of the house of David] Either when it was newly built, **#2Sa 5:11**, confer **#De 20:5 Ne 12:27**, saying, as he once,

*Iamque, meos dedo tibi, Princeps, iure Penates,
Tu mihi ius dederas, posse vocare meos.*

God so loveth his people that their walls are ever in his sight, **#Isa 49:16**; they should therefore have holiness to the Lord written upon them, **#Zec 14:20**, sanctified they should be by the word and prayer, **#1Ti 4:5**. Or else, after he had defiled it by his adultery with Bathsheba, and Absalom had much more defiled it by his abominable incest and other villanies, See **#2Sa 20:3**.

Chapter 29

Ver. 1. **I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up]** *De puteo peccati caenoso*, saith Kimchi, out of the miry pit of sin; or out of the ditch of deadly danger, say others. Therefore I will extol thee, that is, I will have high and honourable conceptions of thee. I will also do mine utmost, both by words and deeds, that thou mayest be acknowledged by others to be as thou art, the great and mighty monarch of the whole world.

And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me] Beside all former victories, Absalom and Sheba were lately slain.

Ver. 2. **I cried unto thee]** In some great sickness, say some, that befell him about the time that he built his house of cedar, #2Sa 5:11, that he might not be overjoyed, and take a surfeit; or rather, when, by my son's rising up against me, I was likely to have lost my state and kingdom.

And thou hast healed me] That is, helped me, as #Jon 2:6, thou hast restored and re-established me in my kingdom. Kimchi senseth it thus, Thou hast delivered my soul from hell, though in this world thou hast grievously afflicted my body.

Ver. 3. **O Lord, thou hast brought up, &c.]** Here he saith the same again as before; the better to set forth the greatness of the benefit, and so to excite himself to due thankfulness. The uttermost extremity of a calamity is to be acknowledged after we are delivered out of it, #Isa 38:10.

Thou hast kept me alive] Thou hast rescued me from instant death; and this I look upon as a resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 4. **Sing unto the Lord]** Here he calleth in help to praise God, as holding himself too weak to do it alone. Publication of God's praises should be seconded by provocation of others to do the like. David thought one mouth too little to do it.

O ye saints of his] Or, O ye, his merciful ones, that, having partaken of his mercy, are ready to impart the same to others; and not to pull up that bridge before them that yourselves have once gone over (Chasid. Plus, Benignus).

At the remembrance (or memorial) of his holiness] That is, at his tabernacle, say some; that his holiness, his grace, and goodness may be always had in remembrance, say others; and that which he doth for us be carefully kept upon record.

Ver. 5. **For his anger endureth but a moment]** Though it lasts all a man's life; for what is that to eternity? *Puncture est quod vivimus et puncto minus.* But it soon repenteth the Lord concerning his servants; whom, out of love displeased, he correcteth for a short

braid, #Isa 54:7,8 1Co 14:17 Isa 26:20 Heb 10:37. *Tantillum, tantillum, adhuc pussillum*. Bear up, therefore, faint not, fret not.

Flebile principium melior fortuna sequetur.

If our sorrows be long, they are light; if sharper, the shorter. The sharp north east wind never lasteth three days; nothing violent is permanent.

In his favour is life] *Vita in voluntate*, else we should die in our sins; but his favour never faileth. Kimchi here noteth that of those thirteen attributes of God, #Ex 34:7, twelve are mercy, and one only is anger. Joseph, for his thirteen years of servitude and imprisonment, had fourscore years' freedom and preferment. David's persecution by Saul was but a moment to his following happiness, when once he came to the kingdom.

Weeping may endure for a night] Diseases and aches are worst toward night. At eventide, lo, there is trouble; but before morning it is gone, #Isa 17:14; mourning lasteth but till morning, and then departeth; as did Lot's two angels. The morning of the resurrection, howsoever, shall put a period to all our miseries, and make a plentiful amends.

But joy cometh in the morning] Heb. singing; *flebilibus modis modus adhibebitur*. God turneth his people's sighing into singing, their musing into music, tears into triumph, wringing of hands into clapping of hands for joy, &c. And as there is a vicissitude of nights and days, so of crosses and mercies of God's people, while they are in this vale of misery and valley of tears. God chequereth his providences (saith one) white and black; he speckleth his work, as is set forth by those speckled horses among the myrtle-trees, #Zec 1:8. Mercies and crosses are interwoven. This world is called a valley of tears, or, as some render it, of mulberry trees, #Ps 84:6. Between them both they may make up an emblem of the saints' condition here. Tears are moist; mulberries grow in dry places. God's people have their interchanges of joys and sorrows while here. See in this and the following verses the circle God goes in with them. David was afflicted and delivered in this verse; in the next he grew wanton.

Then he is troubled again, #Ps 30:7, crieth again, #Ps 8:9. God turneth his mourning into mirth again, #Ps 30:11,12.

Ver. 6. **And in my prosperity I said]** Or, in my tranquillity. Then it was that he was overgrown with security; as was also Job, #Job 29:18-20; {See Trapp on "Job "29:18"} {See Trapp on "Job "29:19"} {See Trapp on "Job "29:20"} #Job 9:18. How many have burnt their wings about Job's candle? #Job 29:3, saith one. Oh the hazard of honour! damage of dignity! how soon are we broken upon the soft pillow of ease! Lunatics, when the moon is declining and in the wane, are sober enough; but when full, more wild and exorbitant. Flies settle upon the sweetest perfumes when cold; so do sin and Satan's temptations on the best hearts, when dissolved and dispirited by prosperity: watch therefore. Adam in paradise was overcome, when Job on the dung hill was a conqueror.

I shall never be moved] *Excessere metum mea iam bona*. David, by misreckoning of a point, missed the haven, and had almost run upon the rocks. (*Niobe apud Ovid*), *Maior sum quam cui possit fortuna nocere*. How apt are the holiest to be proud and secure! even as worms and wasps eat the sweetest apples and fruits. What reason had David to promise himself more than ever God promised him, immunity from the cross? Did he think (as Dionysius afterwards did, but was clearly confuted soon after) that his kingdom, and with it prosperity, was tied unto him with cords of adamant? What though he sat quietly now at Jerusalem, #2Sa 11:1, free from fear of enemies, and could find time to look and lust after his neighbour's wife, would this always hold, thought he? and could not God set up his own darling Absalom, to put him to trouble? No; David said in his prosperity, *Non vacillabo*, I shall never be moved; and why?

Ver. 7. **Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain, &c].** Yea, but there is no mountain so strong that may not be moved, if not removed with an earthquake. Is it not as easy with God to blast an oak as trample a mushroom? And what though God in his favour had settled strength to David's mountain? what though he had constituted and established it sure as Mount Zion (for there was David's *arx, et aula regia*) which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever? #Ps 125:1; yet, by a turn of his countenance only, God can soon dissweeten all in his enjoyments, and plunge him into a deplorable condition.

Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled] *i.e.* Thou didst suspend the actual influence and communication of thy grace (the Chaldee calleth it Shechinah, the divine presence), and I was all death. The life of some creatures consisteth in the end; so doth that of the saints in the light of God's countenance. And as in an eclipse of the sun there is a drooping in the whole face of nature, so when God hideth his face the good soul laboureth and languisheth. And as none look at the sun but when it is in the eclipse, so neither prize we God's loving countenance till we have lost it.

Ver. 8. **I cried to thee, O Lord, &c.]** For what reason? I felt myself, all that while that I was deserted, in a kind of hell above ground. *Haec tentatio initium aliquod et gustus fuit illerum inenarrabilium dolorum quos impii sentiunt in omni aeternitate.* David felt himself now in the suburbs of hell, as it were; and doth therefore set up as loud a cry after God as once Micah did after his idols, #Jud 18:24, and far greater cause he had.

And unto the Lord I made supplication] He knew that the same hand alone must cure him that had wounded him; neither was God's favour recoverable, but by humble confession and hearty prayer. Some think to glide away their groans with games, and their cares with cards; to bury their terrors and themselves in wine and sleep. They run to their music, with Saul; to building of cities, with Cain, when cast out of God's presence, &c., *sed haeret lateri lethalis arundo;* but as the wounded deer that hath the deadly arrow sticking in his side, well he may frisk up and down for a time, but still he bleedeth, and will ere long fall down dead; so it is with such as seek not comfort in God alone, as make not supplication to him for him; as return not to God, who hath smitten them, nor seek the Lord of hosts, #Isa 9:13.

Ver. 9. **What profit is there in my blood, &c.]** *i.e.* In my life, say some; *q.d.* To what purpose have I lived, since religion is not yet settled? In my death (say others, and better), violent death especially, and out of thy favour? Now, all believers have ever abhorred such a kind of death before they were reconciled to God, and had a true feeling of his grace (Diodati).

Shall the dust praise thee? &c.] See #Ps 6:6. {See Trapp on "Ps 6:6"}

Ver. 10. **Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me]** When Faith had once said to God what it hath to say, it will wait for a good answer, relying on his mercy, and expecting relief from the Lord, as here David doth; looking, in the mean while, through the anger of his corrections, to the sweetness of his loving countenance; as by a rainbow we see the beautiful image of the sun's light in the midst of a dark and waterish cloud.

Ver. 11. **Thou hast turned for me my mourning, &c.]** *Sustulisti luctum, et laetitiam attulisti.* {See Trapp on "Ps 30:5"}

Ver. 12. **To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee]** *i.e.* That my tongue, oiled from a heart enlarged, may exalt thee, according to my bounden duty and thine abundant desert. A good tongue, that watcheth all opportunities to glorify God and edify others, is certainly a man's great glory; but an evil tongue is his foul shame. Basil expoundeth glory by *το πνευμα*, the spirit or soul. The Chaldee Paraphrast, *Laudabunt te honorabiles mundi*, The glorious ones of the world shall praise thee.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever] *Epiphonematica et pathetica conclusio, Davidi ex summis calamitatibus erepto familiaris.* He concludeth as he began, engaging his heart to everlasting thankfulness; and therein becoming a worthy pattern to all posterity.

A Psalm of David] Made, say Vatablus and others, at that time when Saul pursued David in the wilderness of Maon, **#1Sa 23:24**. But by many circumstances and passages of this psalm it appeareth more probable that it was, as the former, composed when Absalom was up, **#2Sa 15:10-12** Sss **#Ps 31:11,12,22** of this psalm, with **#2Sa 17:24,27 19:33**; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 7, cap. 9.

Chapter 30

Ver. 1. **In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust]** *Hic Psalmus varia mixtus et magna effectuum vicissitudine insignis est.* This psalm is strangely mixed and made up of many and divers passions and petitions, according to the change of times and estate. In the time of affliction he prayeth, in the time of consolation he praiseth the Lord, **#Ec 7:15**. In these three first verses is little said but what had been before said, and is already opened.

Let me never be ashamed] *i.e.* Repulsed, worsted, defeated.

In thy righteousness] And not according to mine own righteousness, saith Kimchi, or, according to thy faithfulness.

Ver. 2. **Bow down thine ear to me, deliver me]** This repetition of his petition is no vain babbling, as #Mt 6:9, but an effect and an evidence of greatest earnestness, as #Mt 26:44.

For an house of defence] Where the enemy can as little hurt me as when I was in the hold, #1Sa 22:4.

Ver. 3. **For thou art my rock and my fortress]** Such places David had been forced to fly to; but still he trusted in God.

Lead me, and guide me] *Duc me, et deduc me.* A metaphor from captains and generals, who lead on their armies with greatest art and industry (Vatab.).

Ver. 4. **Pull me out of the net]** That noted net, as the Hebrew hath it; *Nam Zu denotat rem notam omnibus,* saith Kimchi. David was not caught in it; but the enemies presumed he would be, so selling the hide before the beast was taken; as did likewise the proud Spaniards, when, coming against England in 1588, they triumphed before the victory, and sang,

*Tu quae Romanas suevisti temnere leges,
Hispano disces subdere cells iugo.*

But blessed be God, the net brake, and we escaped, #Ps 124:7.

For thou art my strength] *As a tree is strongest at the root, and a branch or bough next the trunk or stock, and the farther it groweth out from thence the smaller and weaker it groweth too; so the nearer the creature is to God the stronger; and on the contrary.*

Ver. 5. **Into thine hand I commit my spirit]** So did our Saviour, so did St Stephen, and divers of the dying martyrs, with these very words, most apt and apposite surely for such a purpose. But what a wretch was that Huberus, who died with these words in his mouth, I

yield my goods to the king, my body to the grave, and my soul to the devil.

Thou hast redeemed] And so hast best right unto me.

O Lord God of truth] I know whom I have trusted.

Ver. 6. **I have hated them that regard lying vanities]** *i.e.* Idols, or aught else besides the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, #1Ti 6:17 Jon 2:8. {See Trapp on "Jon 2:8"} *Vanitates vanitatis*, Vatablus rendereth it, and telleth us that some understand it of astrology. R. David doth so in this note of his upon the text, *Astrologos et incantatores in fuga mea non consului, sed in Domino et prophetis eius confisus sum*; I have not consulted astrologers and soothsayers in my trouble, but have trusted to the Lord and his prophets.

Ver. 7. **I will be glad and rejoice]** In the midst of trouble faith will find matter of joy; as extracting abundance of comfort in most desperate distresses from the precious promises and former experiences.

Thou hast known my soul in adversity] God knows our souls best, #Ps 1:6, and we know him best, in adversity. #Isa 63:16, the Church thought she should know him in the midst of all his austerities.

Ver. 8. **Thou hast not shut me up, &c.]** *i.e.* Not given me into their power. See #Ps 27:12.

Thou hast set my feet in a large room] So that I can freely and fearlessly go in and out. See #Ps 25:15.

Ver. 9. **Have mercy upon me, O Lord]** *Antiquum obtine*, Do now, Lord, as thou hitherto hast done.

For I am in trouble] Overwhelmed with the terrors of death, and ready to sink, *animus mihi pendet*, I know not what to do.

Mine eye is consumed with grief] *Computruit facies mea*, mine eye (*nitor oculi, vel facies*) is gnawn away, or worm-eaten.

Yea, my soul, and my belly] Belly may be taken for the whole body, which was pined away and infeeble with pensiveness.

Vatablus by soul understandeth the natural appetite after meat, and by belly the digestion, both which were decayed.

Ver. 10. **For my life is spent with grief, &c.**] Which threateneth the thread of life, and soon snappeth it in sunder, #2Co 7:10. See #Pr 17:22,25. {See Trapp on "Pr 17:22"} {See Trapp on "Pr 17:25"}

My strength faileth] So that I stumble and stagger, #Ps 27:2.

Because of mine iniquity] Or, my misery; for sin hales misery at the heels of it; and the Scripture often confoundeth the names of the cause and of the effects.

And my bones are consumed] Heb. moth eaten.

Ver. 11. **I was a reproach among all mine enemies]** Such as Shimei, who now insulted lustily; *Leoni mortuo vel mus insultat.*

But especially among my neighbours] My near allies and friends, such as Absalom and Ahithophel; these most vexed me.

And a fear to mine acquaintance] It is no new thing that those which should most love men do sometimes, either for fear or flattery of others, make least account of them.

They that did see me without (or, in the streets) fled from me] To shift for themselves; since to own me, whom they could not help, was bootless, and, besides, perilous.

Ver. 12. **I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind]** How soon dead men are forgotten, even by those that promise to remember them longest of all, experience teacheth; trust not to protestations of best friends in that case.

I am like a broken vessel] Of which there is no further use or esteem.

Ver. 13. **For I have heard the slander of many]** Or, as Calvin, Mollerus, and others render it, *magnorum*, of the great ones, such as take counsel (so it followeth here), which the vulgar seldom do; and their tongues oft are no slander, as we say.

Fear was on every side] *Magormissabib*, Pashur's new name and doom, #Jer 20:3,4; but good David's condition at this time: without were fightings, within were fears.

While they took counsel together against me] See #2Sa 16:20, where we have an exposition of this verse. {See Trapp on "2Sa 16:20"}

Ver. 14. **But I trusted in thee, O Lord]** In this distress I acted my faith upon thy power and promises; this was right, and that which God aimed at; for we can no way more honour him. Hence it is that he is very jealous of our trust; neither can he endure that any idol of jealousy should be set up in our hearts.

I said, Thou art my God] In nearest relation and dearest affection, whatever befallth me.

Ver. 15. **My times are in thy hand]** Both the time of my abode on earth and all those various occurrences of that time, all is predetermined by thee; particularly how long I shall suffer, and when I shall be delivered. See #1Ch 29:30 Job 7:20.

Deliver me from the hand of mine enemies] Oh command deliverances for me; for thou canst easily do it. And here observe how David riseth in his requests; he laid the covenant for a foundation, and then he well knew he might be bold to ask anything.

Ver. 16. **Make thy face to shine, &c.]** Which by reason of the clouds of affliction clustering about me, I cannot for present perceive. {See Trapp on "Ps 4:6"} {See Trapp on "Ps 30:7"}

Save me, &c.] *i.e.* Deliver me out of these dangers.

Ver. 17. **Let me not be ashamed]** *i.e.* Disappointed of my hopes.

Let the wicked be ashamed] For they call not upon God, but shame those that do, #Ps 14:4,6.

Let them be silent in the grave] Let their large spoken mouths be stopped with a spadeful of mould.

Ver. 18. **Let the lying lips be put to silence]** Heb. the lips of a lie, mendaciorum artifices, as #Jer 9:3,5. Among the Persians it was *αἰσχιστον το φευδεσθαι*, held a base shame to tell a lie. Oh that it were so among Christians! When shall that golden age return, that

the argument may again proceed, *Sacerdos est, non faller; Christianus est, non mentietur*; He is a minister, he will not deceive; he is a Christian, therefore he will not lie? (Herod. in Clio; Xenoph. Cyroep.; Strab. lib. 15).

Which speak grievous things] Heb. a hard thing; *dura et atraciaverba*, durable and longlasting reproaches, such as stick, and leave a scar, though the wound be healed up. *Calumniare audacter, aliquid saltem adhaerebit*. Such mouths shall one day smoke for it, **#Jude 15**.

Proudly and contemptuously] Heb. In pride and contempt. It is pride that causeth contempt of others. Compare **#Pr 3:34 1Pe 5:5**. David elsewhere complaineth of proud, rhetorical mockers.

Ver. 19. **Oh how great is thy goodness]** The prophet venteth himself by way of exclamation, as finding it unspeakable; fitter to be believed than possible to be discoursed; words are too weak to utter it. What shall we say to these things? quoth that great apostle, **#Ro 8:31**.

Which thou hast laid up] Heb. hidden. Besides that good which God worketh openly for his before the sons of men, a great part of his wonderful kindness is hidden from the world, and in part also from themselves, both in respect of the fountain, **#1Jo 3:1,2 Col 3:3**, the fulness, **#1Co 2:9**, and the inward sealing up thereunto, **#1Co 2:11,12 Re 2:17 Pr 14:10**.

For them that fear thee; that trust in thee] For faith must be actuated; and when we have such a precious promise as this we must suck and be satisfied, **#Isa 66:11**, put on to get the goodness of God to work, which is done by believing. Catch hold, as David did, **#1Ch 17:23-26**; and make the utmost of God's loving-kindness laid up in a promise; press it, and oppress it, till the goodness be expressed out of these breasts of consolation.

Ver. 20. **Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence]** In the golden cabinet of thy gracious providence, where they shall be as safe as if they were in heaven.

Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion] A kind of speech taken from princes' retiringrooms and withdrawing chambers, which are sacred places (Diodati).

From the strife of tongues] From the calumnies and contumelies of graceless tongue-smiters. The Arabic rendereth it, from the insurrection of tongues. Sedition is first in the tongue, and then in the hand; an unruly tongue setteth on fire, **#Jas 3:5** But the saints have a promise that as no weapon formed against them shall prosper, so every tongue that riseth against them in judgment shall be condemned, **#Isa 54:17**.

Ver. 21. **Blessed be the Lord]** This should always be in a Christian's mouth, as *Deo gratias* was in Austin's. He can never want matter, and should, therefore, ever find a heart.

For he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness] *Mirificavit bonitatem suam*, hath been far better to me than my hopes.

In a strong city] In Mahanaim, **#2Sa 18:27**, where it is likely he made this and some other psalms.

Ver. 22. **For I said in my haste, I am cut off, &c.]** A frightful and sinful saying, doubtless, full of diffidence and despair. See the like **#Ps 116:11 Job 9:16 Jud 13:22 Ps 77:3 Joh 2:4**. Thus he spake when he, trembling, fled, and was posting away.

Nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication] A pitiful poor one though it were, and full of infirmity. God considereth whereof we are made; he taketh not advantages against his suppliants; it would be wide with them if he should.

Ver. 23. **O love the Lord]** Let not your hasty discontent beget in you hard thoughts of God or heavy thoughts against yourselves, as it hath done in me; but love him, trust him, and he will do you right.

And plentifully rewardeth] Heb. repayeth abundantly, or with surplus, *in seipso vel in semine suo*. It may be rendered, Upon the remainder, and understood of the proud man's posterity, wherein God will be sure to meet with him.

Ver. 24. **Be of good courage, &c.**] Bear up, be stout, and steadfast in the faith under trials. See #Ps 27:14, with the note. Thus good courage cometh not but from the true love of God, #Ps 31:23.

A Psalm of David, Maschil] *i.e.* Giving instruction, or making prudent; for David here, out of his own experience, turneth teacher, #Ps 32:7, and the lesson that he layeth before his disciples is the doctrine of justification by faith, that ground of true blessedness, #Ro 4:6,7. *Docet igitur hic Psalmus vere preciosus praecipuum et proprium fidei Christianae caput*, saith Beza, This most precious psalm instructeth us in the chief and principal point of Christian religion; and it differeth herein from the first psalm, that there are set forth the effects of blessedness; but here the cause: *Quomodo etiam est Paulus cum Iacobo conciliandus*, saith he.

Chapter 31

Ver. 1. **Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven**] The heavy burden of whose trespasses is taken off, as the word importeth, and he is loosed, eased, and lightened. Sin is an intolerable burden, #Isa 1:3, such as presseth down, #Heb 12:1; a burden it is to God, #Am 2:13; to Christ it was, when it made him sweat water and blood; to the angels, when it brake their backs, and sunk them into hell; to men, under whom the very earth groaneth, its axle tree is even ready to crack, &c.; it could not bear Korah and his company; it spewed out the Canaanites, &c. Oh, then, the heaped-up happiness of a justified person, disburdened of his transgressions! The word here rendered transgression signifieth treachery, and wickedness with a witness. Aben Ezra saith, David hereby intends his sin with Bathsheba; and surely this psalm and the one and fiftieth may seem to have been made upon the same occasion, they are tuned so near together.

Whose sin is covered] As excrements and ordure are covered, that they may not be an eyesore or annoyance to any. Sin is an odious thing, the devil's drivel or vomit, the corruption of a dead soul, the filthiness of flesh and spirit. Get a cover for it, therefore (*sc.* Christ's righteousness, called a propitiation, or coverture, and raiment, #Re 3:18), *Ut sic veletur, ne in iudicio reveletur*, that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear.

Ver. 2. **Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity]** Let no man think this triplication of the same thing needless or superfluous; since the poor soul, afflicted with sense of sin and fear of wrath, is not easily persuaded of pardon; but when faith would lay hold on the promise Satan rappeth her on the fingers, as it were, and seeks to beat her off. Besides, by such an emphatic repetition and heap of words to one purpose, the great grace of God in pardoning men's sin, is plainly and plentifully declared and celebrated; it being a mercy that no words, how wide soever, can sufficiently set forth. By the word iniquity some understand original sin, that *peccatum peccans*, as the schools call it, that *πανσπερμια*, common cause and impure seminary of all actual disobediences. Neither this, nor any of the fruits of it, doth the Lord impute, reckon, count, or think to the pardoned sinner, #2Co 5:19. *Cui non cogitat peccatum*, so some render it, To whom he thinketh no sin, that is, he reputeth or imputeth it not for a sin, he putteth it not into the reckoning, #Isa 43:25 48:9,11; the bill or bond is cancelled, #Col 2:14, and there remaineth no action. Christ is our surety, #Heb 7:22. Now the surety and debtor are in law reputed as one person. Christ is made sin for us, that is, in our stead or place, that we might be "made the righteousness of God in him," #2Co 5:21.

And in whose spirit there is no guile] *Sed sincere et sine dolo a suis peccatis resipiscit, et ad Dei misericordiam se recipit.* The justified are also sanctified, #1Co 6:11; they hide not their sins, as Adam; they neither excuse nor extenuate what evils they have done, but think and speak the worst of their sins; they lay load upon themselves; they hate hypocrisy, and detest dissimulation; it is a question whether they do more desire to be good or abhor to seem only to be so. Basil, as he commendeth that sentence of Plato, that seeming sanctity is double iniquity; so he justly condemneth that saying of Euripides, I had rather seem to be good than be so indeed. That maxim of Machiavel is the same for sense, that virtue itself should not be sought after, but only the appearance; because the credit is a help, the use an encumbrance. The pardoned sinner is sanctified throughout, washed not only from his sin (the guilt and filth of it), but his swinish nature also (the love and liking of it); he hath no mind to return to his vomit or wallowing in the mire, saith R. Solomon here; he saith not, *Resipiscam et denuo peccabo, vel*

peccabo et resipiscam, as R. David senseth it, I will repent, and then sin again; or sin again, and then repent. This he knoweth to be incompatible with faith unfeigned, and hope unfailable, #1Ti 1:5
1Jo 3:3.

Ver. 3. **When I kept silence]** *i.e.* While I, through guile of spirit (for this leaven of hypocrisy is more or less in the best hearts, though it sway not there), concealed my sin, and kept the devil's counsel, contenting myself with his false medicines and placiboes. That old manslayer knoweth well that as sin is the soul's sickness, so confession is the soul's vomit; and that there is no way to purge the sick soul but upwards. He, therefore, holdeth the lips close, that the heart may not disburden itself. David, by his persuasion, kept silence for a while, but that he found was to his ruth; and if he had held so it might have been to his ruin. Men, in pain of conscience, will shirk for ease rather than sue for pardon; as the prodigal first joined himself to a citizen, then ate husks, &c., before he would resolve to return. Satan had first seduced David, and then gagged him, as it were, that he might keep silence. But then God took him and set him upon the rack, where he roared till he resolved to confess. And the like befell Bilney, Bainham, Whittle, and many other of the martyrs, who, having first yielded, could never be at rest within themselves till they had publicly confessed their fault, and retracted their subscriptions to those Popish articles.

My bones waxed old] *i.e.* My strength wasted and wore away, I was in a pitiful plight, *per febrim forsam*, saith an expositor, by a fever, possibly, the fruit of his inward affliction. So bitter and burdensome is sin cloaked and close kept.

Through my roaring all the day long] Like a wild beast, *belluinos potius quam humanos gemitus et querimonias fudi*, I rather roared to the enfeebling of my body than repented to the easing of my conscience (Jun.). I cried out for pain, but prayed not for pardon. As a lion in a snare roareth, as a bird in a gin fluttereth, so it fareth with hypocrites under God's hand (and with better men too sometimes, and for a season); but especially in pangs of conscience, they bellow like bulls in a net, or swine when a sticking; they beat the air with many brutish roarings and ragings, which avail them no more than if

an ox should break out of the slaughter house after the deadly blow given him; the sting of conscience still remaineth.

Ver. 4. **For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me]** See what God can do when once he taketh a man to do. Day and night he had sinned against God; therefore day and night he suffereth; and glad he may be that he so escapeth, and is not forced to undergo an eternity of extremity. Some think that this psalm and the sixth were made much about a time, when David was recently recovered of some grievous fit of sickness. It may be meant only of his inward terrors, or chiefly, at least; his body suffering by sympathy, as having shared in his sin.

My moisture is turned into the drought of summer] My natural radical moisture, the oil that maintaineth the lamp of life, is dried up and become like a lump of clay; the vigour also and verdure of my soul is quelled and consumed with the fire of thy fierce wrath. God will bring his best people to this if they put him to it; that they shall find it to be the greatest folly in the world to buy the sweetest sin at so dear a rate.

Selah] I speak it feelingly. *O quantum tormentum, &c. O aridum et exhaustum me prae maestitia, &c.,* O my pitiful condition! (Vatablus).

Ver. 5. **I acknowledged my sin unto thee]** Though it were long first, yet thou broughtest me to it. The soul is ready to hang her comforts on every hedge, to shift and shirk in every bycorner for comfort, rather than to repair to the right fountain. Lot should have escaped to the mountains at first; but he would needs go to Zoar; which yet was soon too hot to hold him: David should have acknowledged his sin ere this time; he should speedily have cast up the poison he had swallowed down, before it got to the vitals; but he had no mind to it till he had tasted of the whip, and then he agonized his sin unto the Lord, he put himself into the hands of justice, in hope of mercy. The properties or conditions of sound confession are these, say the schoolmen in this four lines of verse:

*Sit simplex, humilis confessio, pura, fidelis,
Atque frequens, nuda et discreta, lubens, verecunda,
Integra, secreta, et lachrymabilis, accelerata,*

Fortis, et accusans, et se punire parata.

And mine iniquity have I not hid] *In confession we must show the Lord the iniquity of our sin, the filthiness of our lewdness, the abomination of our provocations, #Ro 7:13. We must bring out our sins (as they took the vessels of the sanctuary, #Ezr 8:34) by number and by weight; laying open how many transgressions are wrapped up in our sins, and their circumstances. See for this #Le 16:21.*

I said, I will confess, &c.] *i.e. I resolved and purposed so to do; but ere that could be done "thou forgavest," &c. God's ear was in David's heart before his confession could be in his tongue. So, at another time, he did but conceive a purpose to build God a house, and God rewarded it with the building and establishing of David's house, #2Sa 7:12,13,16*

And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin] *The sting and stain of it, the criminal and penal part of it, the worst thing that was in it; not the fire only, but the filth that was in it; reserving still to thyself a power of fatherly corrections and medicinal miseries. *Vel peccatum peccati. Utitur duobus vocabulis ad aggravandum peccatum suum* (Kimchi). As we say, *terra pulveris, or caenum luti*. But the iniquity of sin is wiped off by the sponge of true confession. *Homo agnoscit, Deus ignoscit*. Man no sooner acknowledgeth the debt but God crosseth the book. It is, therefore, good counsel that a father giveth, *Fac confitendo propitium, quem tacendo non facis nescium*, Confess and find mercy; since by a senseless silence thou canst not keep thy sins from God's knowledge of them. Let out that bad blood by opening a vein, that good health may enter.*

Per miserere mei, tollitur ira Dei.

Know you what? said Henry VIII to the duke of Suffolk, concerning Stephen Gardiner, when he had confessed his Popery, for which he should have been the morrow after sent to the Tower; he hath confessed himself as guilty in this matter as his man, and hath with much sorrow and pensiveness sued for my pardon. And you know what my nature and custom hath been in such cases, evermore to

pardon them that will not dissemble, but confess their fault, &c. (Acts and Mon. fol. 1177).

Selah] *q.d.* I speak it joyfully, there being no such matter of mirth in all the world as the sweet sense of forgiveness of sin. *O singularem (inquit David hic) Dei erga homines peccata sua agnoscentes gratiam et benevolentiam!*

Ver. 6. **For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee]** "For this," that thou hast so graciously done for me, the godly shall gladly perform these two duties; the prayer of faith and the obedience of faith. As I have been an example to them of sin, which is now my grief, so I shall be to them of good, and that is my comfort. Where note, first, That every godly man is a praying man. God hath no dumb children in his house. Secondly, That such will be making use of God's dealings with others for their own instruction and comfort, "For this." Thirdly, That they will observe the fittest times to make their addresses to God; as courtiers watch their— *mollissima fandi tempora.*

In a time when thou mayest be found] *i.e.* In a time of need, say some, **#Ps 50:15**; or, in a time of favour (as the Chaldee here hath it), **#Isa 55:6**, before the decree bring forth, **#Zep 2:2**, before the drawbridge be taken up, the day of grace be expired, **#Joh 7:34 8:21 Heb 6:6 Lu 13:29.**

Surely in the floods of great waters] In the greatest of outward troubles or inward perplexities.

They shall not come nigh unto him] *sc.* To prejudice his eternal salvation; freed he shall be, if not from the smart, yet from the hurt, of personal crosses; and for public calamities, he shall be delivered, if not from the common destruction, yet from the common distraction. Washed he may be, as Paul was in the shipwreck, but not drowned with those floods of great waters; be they never so great, they are bounded. Besides, the godly man *rescipiscit antequam superveniant fluctus miseriarum*, as R. Obad. here noteth, repenteth before those floods come upon him, and so redeemeth his own sorrows. For he saith thus,

Ver. 7. **Thou art my hiding place, &c.**] And therefore I, being a pardoned person, shall be in safety under thy wings, #Ps 91:4, per totum.

Thou shalt preserve me from trouble] Either from it or in it; that I be not hurt by it. The godly, after one trouble, must prepare for another; after one deliverance, expect another. A company cometh, as she said.

Thou shalt compass me about with songs] *i.e.* Plentifully furnish me with matter of praise, *ita ut laetus Paeana canam*. And like as in a lottery, at every prize the trumpet soundeth; so at every deliverance I will sing aloud to thy glory. All my springs shall be in thee.

Ver. 8. **I will instruct thee and teach thee, &c.**] No disgrace is it then for great men to be teachers of others. Here we have a prince preacher; such as was also Solomon, George prince of Anhalt, and others.

I will guide thee with mine eye] *i.e.* With my careful inspection and oversight; I will see that thou profit in godliness. The Chaldee hath it, I will counsel thee, and set mine eye upon thee for good. Thus Christ counselled Peter with his eye, #Lu 22:61. Ministers must watch over their people, and see that all go right. Hence they are called seers, superintendents, bishops.

Ver. 9. **Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule**] David having, according to the title Maschil, promised to teach, useth this preface to bespeak attention. Be not uncounsellable, irreclaimable, such as Basil (Ad Evag. Epist. 10) complaineth of, *qui neque quid sit verum sciunt, neque sustinent discere*, who neither knew, nor would be taught, what was true, and fit to be practised. Of the rhinoceros some write, that slain he may be, caught he cannot be. Others, that he is animal *animo indomito*, a most untameable creature; for if he be taken, he presently dieth of sullenness. Such spirits we meet with not a few, who yet would take it in foul scorn to be reckoned horses and asses, that have no understanding, neither will be taught any. To these the psalmist here saith, *Ne obstupescite, et obbrutescite ad exercitationes Dei, &c.* Be not as horse or mule, lest ye be led through a fool's paradise into a true prison. Be not headlong,

headstrong, untameable, untractable, &c. The horse and mule are instanced, as well known among the Jews, and used to be ridden on.

Which have no understanding] And yet the horse knoweth his owner, &c. Strange things are reported of Bucephalus, and Julius Caesar's great horse. Of the Egyptian Mamelukes' horses it is reported, that they were so docible, that at certain signs or speeches of the rider they would with their teeth reach him up from the ground a lance, an arrow, or such like thing; and as if they had known the enemy, run upon him with open mouth, and lash at him with their heels; and had by nature and custom learned not to be afraid of anything.

Whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle] Lest they kick and bite thee, *Ne mordeat nocentve tibi* (Jun.). Such is the mad world's wages and usage of the most faithful preachers. B. Ridley lamented it in his time; the great ones spurned privily against those that went about most busily and wholesomely to cure their sore backs. As for Latimer, Lever, Bradford, Knox, saith he, their tongues were so sharp, they ripped in so deep to their galled backs, to let out the filthy matter, that they could never abide them. Thus he, and much more concerning King Edward VI's courtiers (Acts and Mon. 1616). The words may be read thus, Whose mouth, except it be held with bit and bridle, they will not come nigh unto thee, that is, thou wilt not be able to rule them. It is a good observation of a modern divine, Not the unruly colt only, but the horse that is broken, hath a bit and bridle also. So even the godly need the bridle of the law, *ne spiritum sessorem excutiant*, lest they cast their rider.

Ver. 10. **Many sorrows shall be to the wicked]** This is David's doctrine (his use followeth in the next verse), Many pains, or great smarts, are for the wicked, &c. And as Luther saith, Let him that can rightly distinguish between law and gospel give thanks to God, and know himself to be a good divine; so say I, let him that is firmly persuaded of this truth here delivered know himself to be a good proficient in Christ's school: for it is the principle of all holy learning.

Ver. 11. **Be glad in the Lord]** Joy is the just man's portion. A pardoned sinner, as **#Ps 32:1,2**, is here called upon (in a use of consolation) to be as merry as mirth can make him; for what should

all such a one? as we say of a rich man. Viscount Lisle, in Henry VIII's time, died for joy of an unexpected pardon. But what was that to God's pardon of all sins?

Chapter 32

Ver. 1. **Rejoice in the Lord, O ye rightness]** That is, O ye upright in heart, as it followeth here, and as **#Ps 32:11**. For as there he ended, so here he beginneth, calling upon the saints to be cheerful; and indeed there is hardly any duty more pressed in the Old and New Testament, or less practised. To quicken them, therefore, to so necessary but much neglected a duty, this psalm seemeth to be added to the former, purposely to excite us, by many arguments, to consecrate our whole lives to the singing and setting forth of God's worthy praises. In which regard *nihil potest esse hoc carmine augustius*, saith Beza, this is surely a most excellent psalm; and if it were well practised we might have a very heaven here; as because it is not, we lose very much of the combrt of our lives. Only that cautionating counsel of Bernard would not be forgotten, *Laeti simus, non securi; gaudentes in Spiritu Sancto, sed tamen caventes a recidivo*; Let us be cheerful, but not secure; and rejoice in the Holy Ghost, but take heed we let not fall the watch of the Lord. *Crede mihi res severa est gaudium verum*, Believe me, true joy is a severe matter, said Seneca. We may better say so of spiritual joy, which he never tasted of, neither doth any stranger meddle with. And if Plato could tell the musicians, philosophers could tell how to be merry without music; much more may God's people. *Quid nobis cum fabulis, cure risu?* saith Bernard, What have we to do with carnal mirth and jollity? &c.; we have meat to eat, and music to our meat, that the world knoweth not of; let us make us merry with it.

For praise is comely for the upright] For them, and for none but them; high words are not fit for a fool, saith Solomon. *Laudari ab illaudato*, to be praised by a praiseless person is no praise at all (Seneca). That State in story would not approve of good words from an evil mouth; no more doth God, **#Ps 50:15,16**. Christ would not suffer the devil to confess him. Hypocrisy slurreth all it toucheth. If a man should sing a good song with his voice, and play a bad one on his instrument, it would make but a black sanctus. Such is the praise of the unupright; who had better therefore be silent, unless

themselves were better, since they do not only lose their labour, but commit sin. Displeasing service is double dishonour; and dissembled sanctity double iniquity.

Ver. 2. **Praise the Lord with harp]** Or cittern, Jubal's invention, #Ge 4:21, much used by David and others of old under the Jewish pedagogy, as a help to devotion, as were also other musical instruments, here and elsewhere mentioned. Now it is otherwise; the best melody is to sing psalms with grace in our hearts; and for other music, when Aristotle was asked what he thought of it, he answered, *Iovem nec canere, neque citharam pulsare*, that Jupiter regarded it not.

Ver. 3. **Sing unto him a new song]** *sc.* Upon every new emergent occasion. God reneweth his mercies not only every morning, but every moment: so should we our praises; every breath we draw should praise the Lord, #Ps 150:6. Doth God give comforts? praise him, and they shall be continued. Doth he send crosses? praise him, and they shall be removed, saith a Father; but "in everything give thanks"; and that not coldly and cursorily, but ardently, and with utmost affection; for which cause this duty is so reiterated here, and pressed with such forcible arguments in the following verses, as might work upon the very stones almost; much more men, for whose sakes all this fair fabric of the world was erected.

Play skilfully (or lustily) with a loud noise] Make good music, set all your skill and might at work to magnify the Lord. It is not an easy matter to praise God aright; it must be done *Corde, ore, opere*, with the very best of the best. *Benefacite canendo, cum iubilatione.*

Ver. 4. **For the word of the Lord is right]** Every word of God is pure and precious, #Pr 30:5; his commandment holy, and just, and good, #Ro 7:12; but by word here we are to understand God's counsel and decree concerning the creation and government of the world, which is unquestionably right, and agreeable to sound reason, and therefore they are to blame that dislike his doings. If any evil befall them, the saints confess God's righteousness, and praise him, as #Isa 12:1 Ps 10:1, saith Kimchi here.

And all his works are done in truth] Or, in faith; that is, in faithfulness, without deceit or fickleness. This is to be understood as the execution of God's decree, all is done well, and equitably.

Ver. 5. **He loveth righteousness and judgment]** *q.d.* How can he do otherwise than right, whose nature is such that he loveth righteousness and judgment? that is, *probat probanda, et damnat damnanda.*

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord] So that we cannot look any way, but matter of praise presents itself to our view. The whole nature of things is set forth, as an ample theatre of God's wisdom, justice, and goodness.

Ver. 6. **By the word of the Lord were the heavens made]** His fiat, or, Let them be, gave them a being. Or, by his essential Word, which is his Son, the second person in Trinity, **#Pr 8:27 Joh 1:3 Col 1:16 Heb 1:2.** *Solo ipsius iussuet nutu.*

And all the host of them] These are first mentioned, because the most glorious of all the works of God, so **#Ps 19:1.**

By the breath of his mouth] By his word and command. Or rather, by his Holy Spirit, the third person in Trinity, inseparable from the other two, as well in essence as in operation. See **#Ge 1:1,2.** {See Trapp on "Ge 1:1"} {See Trapp on "Ge 1:1"} It hath been elsewhere noted, that in Thebe, a town of Egypt, they worshipped a God whom they acknowledged to be immortal. But 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 by the breath of his mouth, as here. Varro addeth, that in way of thankfulness, they dedicated a sheep to him, to be offered in sacrifice (Plut. de Iside et Osiride; Varro de Re Rust. l. ii. cap. 1). This text was commonly urged by the ancients for the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; which Olympus, an Arian bishop, denying, was struck with three thunderbolts and killed in a bath.

Ver. 7. **He gathereth the waters of the sea together]** Confining them to their concave, to the pit he digged for them. *Ecce altera misericordia,* saith Kimchi here, Behold another mercy; without the which the earth would be uninhabitable, unless by fishes only; because the waters would cover the earth.

As an heap] This showeth that the sea is higher than the earth. Sailors observe, that their ships move faster to the shore than from

it, whereof what other reason can be given but the height of the waters above the land?

He layeth up the depth in storehouses] In his treasures; that is, he secretly hideth them, and limiteth them to a certain place (that they overwhelm not the earth) by his almighty power, **#Jer 5:22 Job 38:16**. See there.

Ver. 8. **Let all the earth fear the Lord]** viz. For these stupendous works of his, sufficient to strike an awe into all creatures of the Divine majesty, **#Jer 5:22**. "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob," **#Ps 114:7**.

Ver. 9. **For he spake, and it was done]** So true is that saying, *Dei dicere est facere*. For God to say is to do. And a great shame it is to men to disobey the great Creator; and not rather to follow the example of the unreasonable and insensible creatures.

And it stood fast] The whole order of nature remaineth as he set it; firm, fast, and unmoveable.

Ver. 10. **The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought]** *i.e.* He counterworketh the devil and his imps, who would overturn and destroy the fair order of nature, mingle heaven and earth together, as it were, and soon mar all. God frustrateth the counsels and attempts of such tumultuating firebrands and trouble states; and maugre their malice preserveth politics, laws, judgments, and natural equity; without which mankind could not long subsist. "Who, then, would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain," **#Jer 10:7 Re 15:4**.

Ver. 11. **The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever]** That counsel of his, whereby he hath decreed to maintain government among men, to relieve the oppressed, to punish the wicked, to uphold the Church, is firm and inviolable. *Divinum consilium dum devitatur, impletur; humana sapientia dum reluctatur, comprehenditur*; saith Gregory. There is a council in heaven that will dash the mould of all contrary counsels upon earth.

Ver. 12. **Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord]** viz. By special favour and covenant. The preservation of the Church (which hath so few friends on earth, and so many enemies in earth and hell) is justly brought as an evident argument of the Divine providence. Christ standeth upon Mount Zion; and that mountain shall be exalted

above all mountains. The Church, as it is highest in the favour of God, so it shall be set above all the world; and her enemies shall be in that place that is fittest for them, the lowest, the footstool of Christ.

The people whom he hath chosen] Some read it, people which hath chosen him for their inheritance. It cometh all to one. See #**De 26:17-19**.

Ver. 13. **The Lord looketh from heaven]** *Ita respicit universos quasi singulos, ita singulos quasi solos.* And this doctrine of God's particular providence is, *fides nationum quarum Deus est Dominus*, saith Kimchi, taught in the Church only.

Ver. 14. **From the place of his habitation he beholdeth]** And this is a very great condescension, since he humbleth himself to behold things in heaven, #**Ps 113:6**, to look out of himself upon the saints and angels; how much more upon the inhabitants of the earth!

Ver. 15. **He fashioneth their hearts alike]** *i.e.* One's as well as another's. *Unum pariter ac aliud* (Kimchi). The Arabic hath it, *Format sigillatim*, he fashioneth them severally one after another; and not all souls together, as the Origenists and some Jewish doctors held.

He considereth all their works] Their hearts are not hid from him (since he made them, as is said before), much less their works. These God considereth, and therefore men had need consider them, and turn their feet to his testimonies, #**Ps 119:59**.

Ver. 16. **There is no king saved by the multitude of an host]** Witness Sennacherib, Xerxes, Bajazet. Away, then, with creature confidence; it will be the ruin of all that rest in it, whether it be in men or means that they trust. See #**Ps 62:9,10**. {See Trapp on "Ps 69:9"} {See Trapp on "Ps 69:10"}

A mighty man] Or, a giant, Goliath for instance. As the most skilful swimmers are often drowned; so here.

Ver. 17. **An horse is a vain thing]** And yet a warlike creature, full of terror {See Trapp on "Ps 32:9"} and so swift in service, that the Persians dedicated him to the sun (Pausan.). See #**Job 41:20 Pr 21:31**, {See Trapp on "Job 41:20"} {See Trapp on "Pr 21:31"}

Ver. 18. **Behold, the eye of the Lord is on them that fear him]** He looketh upon such with singular delight; not without sweet intimations of his singular kindness and care of their good.

Upon them that hope in his mercy] Here we have a description of that true Church which God will never forsake; *sc.* It is a company of such as truly serve God, and boast not of their merits; but, possessing their souls in hope and silence, wait for his mercy.

Ver. 19. **To deliver their soul]** Freedom from troubles he promiseth not; but deliverance in due time he assureth them; and support in the mean while, to keep them alive in famine.

Ver. 20. **Our soul waiteth for the Lord]** *i.e.* Patiently tarrieth the Lord's leisure. We can both wait and want for a need.

Ver. 21. **Our heart shall rejoice in him]** We shall be sure of a happy issue and event; but yet so as that we pray for it, as in the next words.

Ver. 22. **Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee]** Not that we would have no more mercy than we have trust; but we would show that our trust is bottomed upon thy promises, and that we humbly expect the full accomplishment of the same, in due time.

Chapter 33

Ver. 1. **A Psalm of David]** An alphabetical psalm, which David (newly delivered from the Philistines, who had taken him prisoner, and presented him to their king as a special prize) composed with singular art; as fit to be committed to memory by all godly people, who may here meet with many excellent lessons and cordial comforts. *Semper in ecclesia hic psalmus piis fuit commendatissimus* (Moller).

When he changed his behaviour] Heb. *Gustum, hoc est gestum.* This he did (being put to his shifts), but not without sin, for he was *splendide mendax* (as Horace, lib. iii. Od. 11, saith of Hypermnestra), at the best; neither can this dissimulation or officious lie of his be excused; as some have by distinctions endeavoured it, but in vain.

Before Abimelech] Or, Achish, king of Gath, #1Sa 21:10, for he was *binominis*, saith Aben Ezra; or else Abimelech, that is, father king, was his title of honour; as Augustus would be styled *Pater Patriae*, the father of his country. R. Solomon saith that Abimelech was a common name to all the Philistine kings, as Pharaoh to the Egyptian.

Who cast him out] For a mad man, #1Sa 21:15, wherein there was a sweet providence of God, who can order our disorders to his own glory and our good; like as a craftsman with a crooked tool can make straight work; or as an apothecary of a poisonous viper can make a wholesome treacle.

And he departed] Into some parts of Judea, where he might repent of his sin first (as Peter did when got into a corner), and then compile this psalm of thanksgiving to God, who had so graciously delivered him out of that hard and hazardous condition, not only above, but against his desert.

Chapter 34

Ver. 1. **I will bless the Lord at all times]** As not satisfied with anything I can do herein at any time. The saints have large hearts, and could betem the Lord a great deal more service than they are able to perform. A certain martyr said at the stake, I am sorry that I am going to a place where I shall be ever receiving wages and do no more work.

His praise shall continually be in my mouth] For this remarkable mercy especially, which I will still be telling of, and speaking good of God's name to as many as I can possibly extend unto. This thankful man was worth his weight in the gold of Ophir.

Ver. 2. **My soul shall make her boast in the Lord]** This holy gloriation is a Christian's duty not to be neglected. The Church in the Canticles is much in it; and so is St Paul. It showeth a heart full of joys unspeakable and full of glory, #1Pe 1:8. And, besides, God is thereby greatly glorified, #Jer 9:23,24.

The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad] Not for my sake only, but their own, as conceiving good hope of like deliverance. But, then, they must be as I am, not only humbled, but humble; low, but lowly.

Ver. 3. **O magnify the Lord with me]** As not sufficient to do so great a work himself, he calleth in the help of others. We read of a monster rather than a man, who lying on his death bed, not only himself swore as fast and as furiously as he could, but desperately desired the bystanders to help him with oaths, and to swear for him. I knew the man, saith mine author (Bolton, Assize Serm.). And should not we much more call upon others to join their forces with ours in magnifying the Lord? Birds, when they come to a full heap of corn, will chirp and call in for their fellows. Charity is no churl; goodness is diffusive.

And let us exalt his name together] And so begin heaven beforehand. Aben Ezra glosseth thus, *Quasi diceret, Nos omnes simul ad laudandum Deum sumus imbecilles*, We are all too weak for this work, though we should all do our utmost at it.

Ver. 4. **I sought the Lord]** Even when I was in the enemies' hands, and playing my pranks as a mad man among them; I prayed secretly and inwardly, I sent up some ejaculations, as **#Ne 2:4**, and was heard, though unworthy.

And delivered me out of all my fears] Which were not a few, **#1Sa 21:13**, besides his inward terrors upon his unwarrantable practices to save his life. Sense fights sore against faith, when it is upon its own dunghill (in a sensible danger I mean), to the great disturbance of the conscience afterwards. George Marsh, afterwards a martyr in Queen Mary's days, being examined before the Earl of Derby, kept himself close in the sacrament of the altar, as they called it. But afterward, thus he writeth to a friend; I departed much more troubled in my spirit than before; because I had not with more boldness confessed Christ, but in such sort as mine adversaries thereby thought they should prevail against me; whereat I was much grieved; for hitherto I went about, as much as in me lay, to rid myself out of their hands, if by any means, without openly denying Christ and his word, that could be done (Acts and Mon. fol. 1419). Thus he; but no rest he had in his mind till he had better declared himself, though to the loss

of his life. A man had better offend all the world, than his own conscience. David, not without much ado, recovered his peace, for which he here heartily blesseth God.

Ver. 5. **They looked unto him, and were lightened]** They, that is, my servants and fellow soldiers who accompanied me first to Nob, #1Sa 21:2,4 Mt 12:3,4, and afterwards to Gath (as it is probable); these being in the same danger, looked likewise unto God by faith, hope, and prayer; and were lightened; that is, comforted, cheered, directed, yea, delivered together with David. Or, they flowed together, viz. to God, as rivers roll to the sea, or malefactors run to the sanctuary, #Isa 2:2 60:5.

And their faces were not ashamed] *i.e.* They were not repulsed, disappointed, made to hide their heads, as #Re 6:15,16.

Ver. 6. **This poor man cried]** Meaning himself, to whom it seemeth he pointed the finger, or laid his hand on his heart, when he said, This poor man, *Hic vilis, et ovium pastor*; saith Theodoret, this mean shepherd not long since; but rather, This miserable sinner, who whilome rashly ran such a hazard, and so unworthily deported himself in the presence of King Achish; this poor soul, I say, cried, but silently and secretly, as Moses did at the Red Sea, as Nehemiah did in the presence of the king of Persia.

And the Lord] Who might better be called the poor man's king, than was James IV, king of Scotland.

Heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles] And the like he will do for all that, in like ease, being poor in spirit, make their humble addresses unto him. It is good to communicate unto others our experiences. See the like done, #Ps 116:6 Ro 8:2 1Ti 1:15.

Ver. 7. **The angel of the Lord encampeth round about, &c.]** Not one guardian angel only, as some have hence conceited, nor Michael the archangel only, that angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ, as Augustine expoundeth this text, but a host of created angels, those ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation, #Heb 1:14. For although Christ, the Captain of our salvation, needeth not their help for the safeguard of his people; yet for our comfort he maketh use of the holy angels, who meet us still, as they did Jacob at Mahanaim (where they made a lane for him, as

the guard doth for their prince, as the word importeth), #Ge 32:1; they minister many blessings to us, though invisibly; stand at our right hands, #Lu 1:11, as ready to relieve us as the devils are to mischief us, #Zec 3:1; yea, they pitch camp round about us, *Sicut hostes sunt in circuitu*, (Kimchi), (oh the dignity and safety of a saint in this respect!) fight in battle array against our enemies, #Da 10:20 (the heathens speak much of their Castor and Pollux fighting for them and Hesiod telleth of thirty thousand demi-gods that were φυλακες μεροπων ανθρωπων, keepers of mankind), and convey them at death, as they did Lazarus, through the enemies' country, the air, into Abraham's bosom, #Lu 16:22

Ver. 8. **O taste and see, &c.**] viz. With the mouth of your mind, and with the eyes of your faith perceive, and experiment the goodness of God in choosing and using such instruments as the angels, and otherwise, in the manifold expressions of his love to us; wherein if we take not comfort the fault is merely in ourselves; we being like him who hath pleasant and nourishing meat, but will not make use of it. The saints taste how good the Lord is, and thence long after him. *Optima demonstratio est a sensibus*. As he that feels fire hot, or as he that tasteth honey sweet, ye need not use arguments to persuade him to believe it; so here, let a man but once taste that the Lord is good, and he will thenceforth, as a new born babe, desire the sincere milk of the word, #1Pe 2:2,3, neither will he take any more content in the world's tasteless fooleries than in the white of an egg or a dry chip. *Gustato spiritu desipit omnis caro*, saith Gerson, All flesh is savourless to him that hath tasted of the Spirit. Paul, after his rapture, looked with scorn and pity on all the world's glittering poverty. His mouth doth not water after homely provisions, who hath lately tasted of delicate sustenance. Oh, let us get spiritual senses habitually exercised to discern good and evil, #Heb 5:14. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, saith our Saviour to the Jews: *q.d.* Ye accept my words because ye have not the Spirit, ye have but flesh, that is, a common knowledge, no sound taste; and therefore it is that my words relish not with you.

Blessed is the man, &c.] See #Ps 2:12. {See Trapp on "Ps 2:12"}

Ver. 9. **O fear the Lord, ye his saints]** Ye that, having tasted of God's sweetness, are separated from the world with its lusts, and can live with a little *αγιοι quasi αγιοι*, fear the Lord, and then you shall

not need to fear want of anything; for he is all-sufficient to those who are altogether his, and withdraw not from him by mistrust or misdoing.

For there is no want to them that fear him] *Habent omnia, qui habent habentem omnia.* David, when captive among the Philistines, wanted not. Paul had nothing, and yet possessed all things. Contrarily, the wicked, in the fulness of his sufficiency, is in straits, **#Job 20:22.**

Ver. 10. **The young lions do lack and suffer hunger]** And yet they will have it, if it is to be had. *Haec est sceleratorum imago,* saith Beza. Lionlike wicked oppressors, rich cormorants, as the Septuagint render it, who live on the spoil of poor people, and are never satisfied, do yet perish with famine, as Eliphaz saith of the old lion, **#Job 4:11;** and come oft to great poverty, so that they pine away and miserably perish, *Donec misere tabescant* (Beza.)

But they that seek the Lord] That, content with his blessing alone, seek not their nourishment any other way but from his hand, and will rather lie in the dust than rise by evil principles; these have an autarky, a self-sufficiency, such as godliness is never without, **#1Ti 6:6.** Some Rabbis say (Aben Ezra in loc.) that the servants of Achish had almost famished David (under pretence haply of reducing him to his right mind), but God sustained him by miracle, as he did Elias, **#1Ki 17:6,14**

Shall not want any good thing] Want they may, this or that, which they may think would be good for them; but God knoweth it to be otherwise; or else they should be sure of it. Of good nothing followeth of itself but good, but if by accident any evil followeth, yet it is turned into good to such as seek the Lord in sincerity.

Ver. 11. **Come, ye children, hearken unto me]** Ye that are little and low in your own eyes, as seeing your want of holy learning.

I will teach you the fear of the Lord] That best trade, whereby you shall be sure to be kept from want; for by humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life, **#Pr 22:4.** He, then, who shall teach this fear should be honoured, and respected as a father. The Jews at this day account a man's teacher, or tutor, worthy of

more respect than his father; for he hath given him only his being, the other his well being (Leo Modena).

Ver. 12. **What man is he that desireth life?**] This is David's doctrine; and to draw company about him, he proclaimeth and promiseth that which he well knew every man coveteth, happy life, many days, and a comfortable enjoyment of all. Now, who is it that would have these? saith he. Austin bringeth in all sorts, saying, *Ego et ego*, I would, and I would. But as all men desire health, but few take a right course to get it, and keep it; so all would be happy, but few hearken to this wholesome counsel, for the compassing of true happiness.

Ver. 13. **Keep thy tongue from evil, &c.**] This is a hard saying, think the most; who will therefore rather venture it than yield to be so tied up. The tongue is an unruly member, and can hardly be hampered. But who would not temper his tongue, and bind it to the good abearance, for true blessedness? Who would not rather bite it off, and spit it out (as that ancient martyr did his, into the face of the tyrant, who solicited him to deny Christ), than miss heaven? Ficinus after his tract *De sanitate tuenda*, of keeping good health; and another, of recovering health; and a third, of prolonging life; because all will not do, wisely addeth a fourth, of laying hold on eternal life; which cannot be done but by mortifying this earthly member, a loose and lewd tongue. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned, saith the Judge himself, #Mt 12:37: compare #Ge 49:21, with #De 33:23, and it will appear that good words ingratiate with God and men.

Ver. 14. **Depart from evil, and do good**] For negative goodness helpeth not. A man must so abstain from evil as that he do good, or he doth nothing. It is said of Ithacius, that the hatred of the Priscillian heresy was the best that could be said of him; this was but a slender commendation.

Seek peace and pursue it] As hunters do the prey. If it fly from thee, make after it; it will pay thee for thy pains. It is said of Frederick III, emperor, that he putting up many injuries, he reigned quietly fifty and three years and five months. He had need be patient that would be at peace. *Ut habeas quietum tempus, perde aliquid*, was a proverb at Carthage; not unlike that of ours, Do anything for a quiet life. *Concedamus de iure ut careamus lite* (Val. Max.

Christian. 304, Augustine). And if, in this pursuit of peace, thou meet with many rubs and remoras *{obstructions}*, yet be not discouraged, considering what follows in the two next verses.

Ver. 15. **The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous]** He seeth and weigheth the wrongs they sustain for peace sake, and they shall be no losers thereby; provided that their pursuit of peace proceed from the filial fear of God, which David here professeth to teach, **#Ps 34:11**. God's eyes are intent, his ears attent, to these righteous ones. *Palam, clam* (as Aben Ezra here), openly, secretly, he will right them and recompense them. Should not God see, as well as hear, saith another, his children should want many things. We apprehend not all our own wants, and so cannot pray for relief of all. He (of his own accord without any monitor) is wont to aid us.

And his ears are open to their cry] Heb. are to their cry. Or, as St Peter hath it, His ears are into their prayers; to show, that though their prayers are so faint and feeble that they cannot enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts, yet that he will bow down and incline his ears unto, nay, into their prayers, their breathings, **#La 3:56**.

Ver. 16. **The face of the Lord is against them that do evil]** Let not such dream of a long and happy life, as **#Ps 34:12**. This they are apt to do; but shall be carried from a fool's paradise to a true prison. For that people may not imagine God to be *μονοφθαλμαν*, and so made up of mercy as to forget his judgments, the wicked are here assured, that the face of the Lord is against them, that he beholdeth them from heaven with a terrible countenance, that he is grievously angry with them, and will surely and severely punish them, and theirs after them.

To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth] And so to cross them in the thing that they most coveted, viz. to renown themselves among men. God writeth them in the earth in opposition to those whose names are written in heaven, **#Lu 10:20**, because they forsook the Lord, the fountain of living waters, **#Jer 17:13**.

Ver. 17. **The righteous cry, &c.]** This is often inculcated for our better assurance; because we are apt to doubt if delayed. See **#Ps 34:6**.

Ver. 18. **The Lord is nigh unto them, &c.]** More nigh than the bark is to the tree, for he is with them and in them continually; pouring

the oil of his grace into these broken vessels, *quorum corda peccata eorum non amplius retinent, sed, ut vas fracture, effundunt*, saith Aben Ezra here, whose hearts retain not their sins any longer, but pour them out as water before the Lord.

And saveth such as be of a contrite spirit] Such as are ground to powder, as it were, with sense of sin and fear of wrath; yet not without good hope of mercy. These God delivereth out of their dangers; and in fine bringeth them to eternal blessedness.

Ver. 19. **Many are the troubles, &c.]** *Dei sunt nuntii*, these are God's messengers, saith Kimchi, and they seldom come single. See #Jas 1:2. {See Trapp on "Jas 1:2"} Sent they are also to the wicked, #Ps 32:10, but on another errand, and for another end. The righteous, *per augusta ad augustum, per spinas ad rosas, per motum ad quietem, per procellas ad portum, per crucem ad caelum contendunt*, through many tribulations they enter into God's kingdom. Not so the wicked; their crosses are but a typical hell.

But the Lord delivereth him out of them all] No country hath more venomous creatures, none more antidotes, than Egypt; so godliness hath many troubles, and as many helps against trouble.

Ver. 20. **He keepeth all his bones]** Which are very many. Perhaps, saith Aben Ezra here, David had been scourged by the Philistines, but his bones were not broken, nor were our Saviour's, #Joh 19:36.

Ver. 21. **Evil shall slay the wicked]** For lack of such deliverance, as #Ps 34:19, *malum iugular authorem mali* Their malice shall prove their mischief. The Arabic hath it (but not right), *mors impii pessima*. Aben Ezra better senseth it thus, One affliction killeth the wicked; when out of many God delivereth the righteous.

Ver. 22. **The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants]** Though to themselves and others they may seem helpless and hopeless, yet they shall not perish in their sins and for their sins, as do the wicked.

Chapter 35

Ver. 1. **Plead my cause, O Lord]** We may safely pray the same, when oppressed with calumnies and false accusations, as now David was by Saul's sycophants, or, as others think, when he was in great heaviness, and even heart sick; after that Amnon had defiled Tamar, and Absalom had slain Amnon; his disaffected subjects, such as

Shimei, insulted over him, and said, it was just upon him for the matter of Uriah, and other miscarriages; which they wrongfully charged him with. See a promise in this case, **#Isa 49:21**.

Fight against them, &c.] Or, devour them that devour me; for in Niphal only it signifieth to fight.

Ver. 2. **Take hold of shield and buckler]** Jehovah is a man of war, **#Ex 15:3**, and so he is here stirred up to harness himself; not that he needeth weapons defensive, as here, or offensive, as **#Ps 35:3**, for he can destroy his enemies, *solo nutu ac flatu*, with a nod, or a blast; but this is spoken after the manner of men, and for our better apprehension of God's readiness to relieve his distressed ones.

Ver. 3. **Draw out also the spear]** viz. That thy contending and appearing for me may appear to be sufficient and glorious.

And stop the way] Heb. And stop, viz. the doors, as **#Ge 19:6,10** **2Ki 6:32**, lest the malcontents come in and kill me. Or, shut me up from my persecutors, that they find me not; like as, afterwards, God hid Jeremiah and Baruch, when sought for to the slaughter.

Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation] *Facito ut haec animula te sibi testantem audiat, &c.* Inwardly persuade my heart to firm affiance in thee, amidst all mine afflictions.

Ver. 4. **Let them be confounded and put to shame]** Here David beginneth his imprecations; which yet *non maledicens dixit sed vaticinantis more praedixit*, saith Theodoret, he doth not utter as cursing, but as prophesying rather. If we shall at any time take upon us thus to imprecate (as we may in some cases), we must see to it, first, that our cause be good. Secondly, that we do it not out of private revenge; but merely for the glory of God. Thirdly, *ut ne voculam quidem nisi nobis praeunte Dei, non carnis, spiritu effundamus*, that we utter not a syllable this way but by the guidance of God's good Spirit.

Ver. 5. **Let them be as chaff]** *Facti sint a corde suo fugitivi*, let them fly before their own consciences, restless and uncertain whither to turn themselves.

And let the angel of the Lord chase them] It may be understood both of the evil angels and of the good, ready at God's command to

do execution upon his enemies. Chaff driven before the wind may rest against a wall; but where shall they rest who are chased by an angel? "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" #1Pe 4:18. Surely nowhere.

Ver. 6. **Let their way be dark and slippery]** Heb. Darkness and slipperiness. If a man have neither light nor firm footing, and a fierce enemy at his heels, what shift can he make for himself? The word rendered slippery is of a double form (like that *libbi secharchar*, my heart panteth or beateth about, throbbeth, #Ps 38:10), to increase the signification. See #Jer 23:12. The soul of a wicked man is in a sling, #1Sa 25:29, violently tossed about.

Ver. 7. **For without cause have they hid for me, &c.]** The wicked are so acted and agitated by the devil, their task master, that, though they have no cause to work mischief to the saints, yet they must do it; the old enmity, #Ge 3:15, still worketh; but this rendereth their destruction *certiorem et celeriorem*, more sure and more swift.

Ver. 8. **Let destruction come upon him unawares]** *i.e.* Upon the whole rabble of them, as if they were all but one man. Or else he striketh at some chieftain among them. Let his destruction be as sudden as signal.

Ver. 9. **And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord]** This was what he aimed at in his foregoing imprecations, viz. the glory and praise of God, and not his own wreaking his spleen upon his enemies.

Ver. 10. **All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee?]** Not my soul only, but my body also shall join in this joyful acclamation; yea, my bones shall say, &c., that is, whatsoever strength and vigour is in me, it shall be spent in celebrating thy praises. Or, although I have nothing left me but skin and bones, so poor am I grown, yet I will not be wanting to the work.

Ver. 11. **False witnesses did rise up]** So they did afterward against the Lord Christ and sundry of his faithful servants, as St Paul, Athanasius, Eustathius, bishop of Antioch (falsely accused of adultery, and deposed, about the end of Constantine the Great's reign), Cranmer, charged with adultery, heresy, and treason; Philpot, with parricide; Latimer, with sedition; whereof he was so innocent, that he feared not to say in a sermon before the king, As for sedition, for aught that I know, methinks I should not need Christ, if I may so say.

They laid to my charge things that I knew not] Such as whereof I was not only innocent, but ignorant also. The Hebrew is, They asked me, and so would have, by cunningly contrived questions, made me mine own accuser.

Ver. 12. **They rewarded me evil for good]** To render good for evil is divine, good for good is human, evil for evil is brutish; but evil for good is devilish.

To the spoiling of my soul] *i.e.* To the depriving me of that life which I have so often hazarded to save theirs. *Intentant caedem* (Kimchi). Or, this their devilish dealing with me, *erat mihi quasi mors amarum*, was as bitter as death to me.

Ver. 13. **But as for me, when they were sick]** *i.e.* Any way afflicted, when they ailed anything.

My clothing was sachcloth] I put myself in mourners' habit; *Incedebam atratus*, to testify my good affection toward them.

I humbled my soul with fasting] *In die designate*, in a solemn day set apart for the purpose; as the ׀ with a patach showeth (Kimehi). *Ieiunium est humilitas mentis, miserationis expensa, charitatis illecebra, allevamentum infirmitatis, alimentum salutis*, saith Ambrose, Fasting is the affliction of the soul, the cost of compassion, &c.

And my prayer returned into mine own bosom] *i.e.* Though they had no benefit by it, yet myself had; for no faithful prayer is ineffectual; like Jonathan's bow, it never returned empty, #2Sa 1:22. I received the fruit of my prayers for them upon my bosom.

Ver. 14. **I behaved myself as though he had been, &c.]** My brother a thousand times. This was much to do to an enemy; but possibly all this might be before they fell out.

I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth, &c.] The mother is usually most dearly beloved, and not without cause, as having been *ante partum onerosa, in partu dolorosa, post partum laboriosa* (Kimchi). Or, as a suckling crieth in the loss of his nurse.

Ver. 15. **But in mine adversity]** Heb. in my halting; when through weakness I could not but halt before my best friends, as we say.

Morbis est sic dictus quia incedere nequit nisi cum dolore quasi claudicando (Aben-Ezra).

Yea, the abjects gathered themselves together] *Claudi congregati sunt, et secundum claudicationem meam claudicabant, ut me deriderent*, so the Syriac senseth it. They halted, as I did, by way of derision; but they should have known, first, that mocking is catching, as we say. Cicero confesseth that while he laughed at one Hircus, a very ridiculous man, he became as bad almost himself: *Dum illum rideo, pene factus sum ille* (Epist. 9, lib. 2). Secondly, that such cruel mockings are grievous sins, and such as God will severely punish. Some render it the smiters, that is, the tongue smiters, as **#Jer 18:18**. Others, the smitten, that is, the abjects, the vile persons: the basest can mock, as did Tobiah the servant, **#Ne 2:19**, and those pests, **#Ps 1:1**.

And I knew not] Or, such as I knew not, took no notice of, they were so base. See the like, **#Job 30:8**.

They did tear me] *sc.* With their tongues, as dogs toss and tear carrion with their teeth, *Scindunt illud quod reparare nequeunt, non per pœnitentiam*, saith Kimchi. They tear that which they cannot make good again, no, not by repentance, viz. my good name. Or, they rent, *sc.* their garments, as if they had been very sorry for me, as **#Ge 37:36 Job 2:12**. This they did, as Austin speaketh, *simulatione miseriae, non compassione misericordiae*, out of deep dissimulation.

Ver. 16. **With hypocritical mockers in feasts]** *Cum sannionibus placenta vel cibi*, with hypocritical mockers for a cake or dainties. There is an elegance in the original, which showeth it to be proverbial, and cannot be translated R. Solomon telleth us here, that they who delighted in flatteries gave their flatterers cakes baked with honey, to make them the more to flatter them. Solomon telleth of some that will transgress for a piece of bread, **#Pr 28:21**. So those parasitic prophets, **#Eze 13:19**. Or, I am made their table talk, as **#Ho 7:8**, scornfully deriding me at their feasts and in their cups, *Mensarii scurrae*.

Ver. 17. **Lord, how long wilt thou look on?**] *i.e.* Carry thyself as a spectator of my miseries and a tolerator of mine enemies, those architects of mine afflictions.

Rescue my soul from their destructions] *i.e.* Their snares and ambushes, whereby they seek to destroy me.

My darling from the lions] {*See Trapp on "Ps 22:20"*}

Ver. 18. **I will give thee thanks in the great congregation]** For example's sake to others; for *Magnates magnetos*. #Ac 18:8, when Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed, many of the Corinthians believed also. Great men are the looking glasses of the country, according to which most men dress themselves; many eyes are upon them; they had need, therefore, to be exact, for they are sure to be exemplary.

Ver. 19. **Neither let them wink with the eye]** Which is the gesture of a malicious scoffer, #Pr 6:13 10:10. *Ne amarulenter ludificentur me* (Trem.).

Ver. 20. **For they speak not peace]** Which yet God doth to his people, #Ps 85:9, and that is their comfort. "I am for peace," saith David elsewhere, "but when I speak, they are for war," #Ps 120:7.

Against the quiet of the land] *i.e.* Against myself, and such as I am, who study to be quiet and to do our own business, #1Th 4:11, affecting rather quietness from the world than acquaintance with it.

Ver. 21. **They opened their mouth]** As if the very banks of blasphemy had been broken down.

Our eye hath seen] Eye for eyes, unless we would say that all the wicked are so conjoined, that they may seem to have but one eye, heart, head, &c., and then they say, as Hannibal did, when he saw a ditch full of man's blood, *O formosum spectaculum!* O gallant sight! *O rem regiam!* as Valesus said, when he had slain three hundred Protestants.

Ver. 22. **This thou hast seen, O Lord]** This answereth to that before, #Ps 35:21. Our eye hath seen it, as Aben Ezra observeth. So doth

Keep not silence] To that they opened their mouth wide against me. Ibid.

Ver. 23. **Stir up thyself and awake]** This is the same in effect with the beginning of the psalm; to show his ardour and intention of affection.

Ver. 24. **According to thy righteousness]** *i.e.* For the honour of thy justice, wherein else thou art likely to suffer.

And let them not rejoice over me] For I quarter arms, as I may so say, with thee, Lord; and my disgrace will reflect upon thee.

Ver. 25. **Ah, so would we have it]** Heb. Ah, ah, my soul; that is, our desire; we are *voti compotes*.

We have swallowed them up] As swine do swill or ravenous beasts their prey.

Ver. 26. **Let them be ashamed, &c.]** They shall so; and this prayer against the Church's enemies shall still speak effectually.

Ver. 27. **Let them shout for joy, &c.]** He concludeth with hearty prayer for the Church, as he doth in various other psalms.

That favour thy righteous cause] Though perhaps they dare do no more than inwardly favour it and by their prayers to God promote it.

Let them say continually, &c.] Let them have continual cause to praise God for this sweet property, that he delighteth in his people's prosperity, and afflicts them not from his heart, nor grieveth the children of men, but for their greatest good, #La 3:35.

Ver. 28. **And my tongue, &c.]** I do solemnly promise that thy praises shall never die on my hand, &c.

A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord] See #Ps 18:1, title. Then he had well nigh finished his rule, here he is about to begin it, and therefore assumeth this title. *Servus est nomen officii*, servant is a name of office or duty. Tertullian saith of Augustus (we may better of David), *Gratius ei fuit nomen pietatis, quam potestatis*, He took more pleasure in names of duty than of dignity; so those heavenly courtiers rejoice rather to be styled angels, that is, messengers, and ministering spirits, than thrones, principalities, powers, &c.

Chapter 36

Ver. 1. **The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart]**

Some say it is *libbi* for *libbo*, *Jod* for *Vau*, and render it within (or in the midst of) his own heart; and so make it the same in sense with **#Ps 14:1**, but these make too bold with the text (Jerome, Vulgate). David, that zealous servant of God, was fully persuaded of, and deeply affected with, the profligate wickedness of some graceless persons (such as were Saul, and his blood-sucking sycophants {*malicious accuser*}), that they were stark atheists, and had not the least spark of common goodness left in them; that they had neither the fear of God nor shame of the world to rein them in from any outrage. This is mine opinion of them, saith David, I am strongly so conceited, and I will give you my grounds. "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."

Ver. 2. **For he flattereth himself in his own eyes]** This is the first proof of the foregoing charge and the fountain of all the foregoing exorbitances. See the like **#2Ti 3:2**; there self-love brings all out of order, here self-flattery. *Sibi palpum obtrudit*, he stroketh himself on the head, and saith, I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst, and rebellion to sin, **#De 29:19**. Thus he sootheth and smootheth up himself, neither shall any one persuade him but that his penny is as good silver as the best of them all. Thus he calleth evil good and good evil; and, proudly bolstering himself in his sinful practices, he maketh a bridge of his own shadow, and so falleth into the ditch of destruction.

Until his iniquity be found to be hateful] Till God by his judgments uncase him, and men, out of utter hatred of his execrable practices, tell him his own to his teeth. Thus Stephen Gardiner, being charged of cruelty by Mr Bradford, answered in open court, I, for my part, have been challenged for being too gentle oftentimes; which thing Bonnet confirmed, and so did almost all the audience, that he had ever been too mild and moderate. But Doctor Taylor told him another tale, when he said to him, How dare you for shame look me or any Christian man in the face, seeing you have forsaken the truth, denied our Saviour Christ, done contrary to your oath? &c. So Bonner, They report me, said he to the lord mayor, to seek blood, and call me Bloody Bonner; whereas God knows I never sought any

man's blood in all my life. To whom Mr Smith, the martyr, answered, Why, my lord, do you put on this fair vizer before my lord mayor, to make him believe that you seek not my blood, to cloak your murders through my stoutness, as you call it? Have you not had my brother Tomkins before you, whose hand when you had burnt most cruelly, you burnt his whole body; and not only of him, but of a great many of Christ's members? &c. So, upon the martyrdom of Master Philpot, a certain unknown good woman in a letter to Bonner wrote thus: Indeed, you are called the common cutthroat and general slaughter slave to all the bishops of England; and therefore it is wisdom for me and all other simple sheep of the Lord to keep us out of your butchery stall as long as we can, especially since you have such store already that you are not able to drink all their blood, lest you should break your belly; and therefore you let them lie still, and die for hunger, &c. And soon after, you have broken a pot indeed (Mr Philpot), but the precious word contained therein is so notably therewithal shed abroad, that the sweet savour thereof hath wonderfully well refreshed all the true household, or congregation of Christ, that they cannot abide any more the stinking savour of your filthy ware, that came from the dunghill of Rome, though your lordship's Judases set them to sale everywhere to fill up your bags, &c. Thus these blood suckers stunk above ground, and it is probable that the saints shall look upon such in the next world, throughout all eternity, with execrable and everlasting detestation.

Ver. 3. **The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit**] That is, saith Calvin, he hath something to say to excuse and justify himself, to the hardening of his heart and hastening of his destruction; and there is no wool so coarse but will take some colour. But God will one day wash off his varnish with rivers of brimstone; he can skill of no other language but that of hell; the words of his mouth are, *desiderium et dolus*; there is no truth, and as little trust to be put in anything that he speaketh. And why? there is no fear of God before his eyes. See a like text, **#Ro 3:13-15**.

He hath left off to be wise, and to do good] That little light he once had he hath lost, and cast off such good practices as once in hypocrisy he performed; neither will he learn to do better. *Dicit*

reprobos fugitare rationem bene agendi, ne vitam suam in melius corrigere cogantur; saith Vatablus.

Ver. 4. **He deviseth mischief upon his bed]** He bendeth his wits and beateth his brains, *perdius et pernox*, breaking his sleep to plot and plough, to contrive and effect mischief. Vanity or villany is his whole study. He is always either weaving spiders' webs or hatching cockatrices' eggs.

He setteth himself in a way that is not good] And there meaneth to keep him, as the word importeth; set he is, and he will not be removed, being every whit as good as ever he meaneth to be. *Statuit se;* there you left him, and there you may find him, for he is no changeling; and that is a piece of his silly glory.

He abhorreth not evil] *Sed studiosissime amplectitur;* but doeth wickedly with hands earnestly, and taketh long strides towards hell, which is but a little before him, as if he feared it would be full ere he came thither (Jun.). If he do abstain from any wickedness, yet he abhorreth it not. It is for the evil consequents of sin (viz. shame, loss, punishment) that he forbeareth it; and not because it is *offensivum Dei, et aversivum a Dei*, an offence against God, and a turning away from God; that is no argument at all to him, *sed fertur laxis habenis in quaevis flagitia*, but he is hurried headlong into all wickednesses, as vultures fly swiftly to the most stinking carcasses.

Ver. 5. **Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens]** Yea, far above them, **#Ps 108:4**, and over all thy good and men's bad works. Otherwise thou couldest never endure such provocations of the profane rout; who yet live upon thee, and share in thy general goodness, *admiratur David incredibilem Dei patientiam, &c.* (Vat.).

And thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds] God's mercy goeth usually yoked with his truth, and bounded by it; lest any should presume upon it, considering that God is faithful as well as merciful; faithful, I say, to fulfil both his promises and his menaces too. And as he hath mercy unmeasurable and truth unfailable for his saints, so he hath righteousness and judgments for the wicked, as it followeth.

Ver. 6. **Thy righteousness is like the great mountains]** Heb. mountains of God, *pro more linguae, quae quando magnificat aliquid, addit nomen Dei, ut #Jon 3:3 Ge 30:5 Re 15:2 Ps 68:16*

80:11, saith R. David, that is, after the manner of the Hebrew tongue, which, when it would magnify anything, addeth the name of God; because as anything is nearer to God the more excellent it is (*Sic Διος σταλαγμους, Arat. in Diosem, αντι του μεγαλους*). The like is to be found also in heathen authors. David meaneth that as God's mercy is matchless, so his justice is unmoveable; and we are to give him the glory of the one as well as the other, since they are both alike in him; for whatsoever is in God is God.

Thy judgments are a great deep] A fathomless abyss, *in quam deiecis impios, et nunquam evadunt*, saith Kimchi, wherein the wicked sink irrecoverably. Thy providential dispensations also are past finding out, **#Ro 11:33**. They are to reason as the sea is to shallows; and therefore we must do by them as the Romans did by a certain lake of unknown depth, they dedicated it to Victory.

O Lord, thou preservest man and beast] Such is thy beneficence, answerable to thy patience before celebrated. Thou not only bearest with men's evil manners, even to admiration; but abundantly providest for their being and wellbeing; of such, I mean, as walk about the world with hearts as full as hell of all kind of wickedness. Howbeit, *bonitas tua ad atheum est sicut illa ad bestiam*, saith Kimchi, here thou dost but for the atheist as thou dost for the beast, and by that course of common preservation and kindness which runneth toward all, that none need doubt a providence.

Ver. 7. **How excellent (Heb. precious) is thy lovingkindness!**] That special love and favour that thou vouchsafest to thine own elect only. Oh, this is incomparable and inexpressible! It maketh a vast difference between the righteous and the wicked, though the blind world observeth it not.

Therefore the children of men] Who are also the children of God, by a better birth, **#Joh 1:12,13**, and that is their greatest preferment, **#1Jo 3:1**. Ludovicus, surnamed the Saint, king of France, would needs be called Ludovicus de Pissiaco rather than take greater titles, because there he became a Christian. He thought no birth to a new birth in Christ, no parentage to that of God to his Father.

Put their trust in the shadow of thy wings] As chickens in a storm, or when the puttock threateneth, hover and cover under the hen. See #Ps 91:4 Mt 23:37.

Ver. 8. **They shall be abundantly satisfied]** Heb. watered, inebriated. They shall be plentifully provided for, as the domestics; they shall have a confluence of all comforts and contentments for this life and a better; for godliness hath the promises of both. *Hic locus est consolationis plenissimus*, saith one.

And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasure] And so utterly quench their thirst after the world and sin.

*Clitorio quicumque sitim de fonte levarit,
Vina fugit.*

Ver. 9. **For with thee is the fountain of life]** *Vena vitae, verae vitae scaturigo*, A fountain communicateth its water, and yet is not exhausted. *Fontium perennitas*, is one of the wonders in nature: what shall we say of this Divine fountain of life, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, overflowing and ever flowing?

In thy light shall we see light] viz. Of knowledge and comfort. What is the air without light? or anything else without God? *Absque Deo omnis copia est egestas*, saith Bernard. In the former comparison, with thee is the fountain (or vein) of lives, the prophet alludeth either to waters, as is aforesaid, or to metals; to show that as the veins of gold, silver, and the like, do lie in bank in the bosom and bowels of the earth; so doth life in God. Or, to the veins of the body, which, as so many rivers or rivulets, derive their blood from that red sea, the liver. Certain it is, that man hath neither life nor light in himself till it be communicated unto him from God.

Ver. 10. **O continue thy lovingkindness]** Heb. Draw it out at full length, extend and exercise it, lengthen and perpetuate it. Thus the godly, greatly taken with the sweetness of God's house, and rapt in the admiration of his transcendant goodness towards them, pray for a continuance thereof; intimating also by the manner of expression that God's peculiar mercies to his are a continued series; there is a connection between them, yea, a concatenation. And as in a chain one link draweth on another, so doth one mercy another, unless we break the chain by our unthankfulness.

Unto them that know thee...to the upright in heart] Here we have a just description of the heirs of God's promises, and of the partakers of his peculiar mercies. First, They must be knowing persons; know they must God and his will, themselves and their duties. Secondly, They must be upright in heart; for knowledge without practice is like Rachel, beautiful, but barren; or like rain in the middle region, where it doth no good. "A good understanding have all they that do his precepts," #Ps 111:10, and such only are upright in heart.

Ver. 11. **Let not the foot of pride come against me]** The wicked do *manibus pedibusque obnixè omnia facere*, that they may ruin the righteous (Terent.); but God can divert them, manacle them, shackle them, that they shall neither march against his people nor meddle to unsettle their faith. Nevertheless, he looketh to be sought unto for these things, #Eze 36:37 Da 10:12, I came forth for thy word, saith the angel, that is, upon thy prayer.

Ver. 12. **There are the workers of iniquity fallen]** There, where they plotted or practised the downfall of the righteous; as Henry III of France was stabbed in the same chamber where he and others had contrived the Parisian massacre. God taketh notice of the very place where sin is committed, to punish accordingly; as he did Abimelech, Ahab, the Jews, that cried, "Crucify him! crucify him!" &c.

They are cast down] With a force; the angel of God chasing them, according to my prayer, which now methinks I see to be graciously answered. It must needs go ill with the wicked when the saints shall turn them over to God to be tamed, and taken an order with.

And shall not be able to rise] Because laid for dead by an almighty hand. The righteous falleth seven times in a day, and riseth again; not so the workers of iniquity.

Chapter 37

Ver. 1. **Fret not thyself because of evil-doers]** Who prosper in the world when better men suffer many times. This made good David sick of the fret, as himself testifieth, #Ps 73:14-16, till better informed and settled, by repairing to the sanctuary, #Ps 73:17. He wrote this thirty-seventh psalm for the good of God's people; lest

they, being scandalized in like manner, and stumbling at the same stone that he had done, should want direction, and so fall into inconvenience, temptation, and a snare. David was old when he wrote this psalm, as appeareth, **#Ps 37:25**, "I have been young, and now am old," therefore should his counsel here given be the more acceptable. He might as well say to men's tumultuating passions, as once Augustus did to his mutinous soldiers, and thereby quieted them, *Audite senem iuveues, quem iuvenem senes audierunt*, Hear old men you youth, rather than old men hear the youth. Fret not yourselves, fret not yourselves, I say, to do evil. Be not angry at God, as Jonah was; or aggrieved, as Jeremiah, **#Jer 12:1**; and Habakkuk, **#Hab 1:13**; as if the Divine providence did not justly divide to every man his due estate, and do him right; but have patience a while, yea, let patience have line and rope, her perfect work, as St James hath it; and quiet your boiling spirits with that word, wherewith Christ becalmed the raging sea, "Peace; be still." God will unriddle his providences ere long; and then men shall see the reason of all occurrences, and that all was done in singular wisdom. Pompey, beaten out of the field by Caesar, complained that there was a mist over the eye of providence; when as indeed all the fault was in the soreness or dimness of his own eyes, and the twinkling light of Nature's rush candle. Seneca saw as far and said as much to this matter as a heathen could, in his tract, *Cur malis bene sit, &c.* Whu is it well for the wicked, But it is the sanctuary alone that can afford sound satisfaction to a soul thus puzzled; as for philosophical comforts and counsels in this case, Cicero said well of them, *Nescio quomodo imbecillior est medicina quam morbus*, However it cometh to pass, the disease is too hard for the medicine.

Neither be thou envious against, &c.] Their prosperity is their portion, all they are likely to have, **#Ps 17:14**; and what is it more than a small annuity for term of life, in the utmost part of that large lordship, whereof thou art the heir, and shalt shortly be the possessor? Queen Elizabeth envied the milkmaid, when she was in prison. But if she had known what a glorious reign she should have had afterwards for forty-four years she would not have envied her. And as little needeth a godly man, though in misery, to envy a wicked man in the ruff of all his prosperity and jollity, considering what he hath in hand, much more what he hath in hope.

Ver. 2. **For they shall soon be cut down like the grass]** *Faenea quadam felicitate temporaliter florent,* as Austin phraseth it, but their felicity is short-lived; this proud grass shall be mowed down ere long, #Ps 92:7, if not sooner, yet at death howsoever, which unto them is but a trapdoor to hell. Envy me not my grapes, said that soldier, I must die for them. So may wicked men say of their present prosperity, which is but like Haman's banquet before execution.

Ver. 3. **Trust in the Lord, and do good]** These and the following are excellent means and medicines against the fret. True faith will trust in God where it cannot trace him; it will also work by love, and by doing good approve itself to be right; as it appeared by the fruits that it was a good land; and as it appeared by the coats that Dorcas was a good woman.

So shalt thou dwell in the land] Heb. Dwell thou in the land, viz. be content with thy lot, not looking at the larger allowances of wicked rich men; who the more they have of the fat of the earth the more they will fry and blaze in hell. Do thou abide in thy station, and serve God's providence in thy particular calling.

And verily thou shalt be fed] Fed like a sheep, under the conduct and keeping of a good sheppherd, as the word signifieth. Kimchi readeth it, *Pasce in veritate,* Feed others with the truth; as the lips of the righteous feed many. Tremellius rendereth it, *Pascere fide,* feed on faith; that is, nourish thyself, and live by it, according to that of Habakkuk, #Hab 2:4, "The just shall live by his faith." Some render it, *Pasce fidem,* feed faith, sc. by pondering the promises of God, which are, *Pabulum fidei,* the food of faith. Others, *Pascere fideliter,* get thy living faithfully and honestly by thy true labour.

Ver. 4. **Delight thyself also in the Lord]** While others delight in riches and pleasures; as if there were no other happiness but to have and to hold, no sport unless men may have the devil their playfellow. The like counsel hereunto giveth St Paul to his son Timothy, #1Ti 6:12; while others lay hold as with tooth and nail on riches, &c., lay thou hold on eternal life; make God thy portion, and thou art made for ever.

And he shall give thee the desires of thy heart] It shall be unto thee even as thou wilt. It is said of Luther, that he could have what

he would of Almighty God. What may not a favourite, who hath the royalty of his prince's ear, obtain of him? It is said of Sejanus, that in all his designs he found in Tiberius, the emperor, so great facility and affection to his desires, that he needed only to ask and give thanks.

Ver. 5. **Commit thy way unto the Lord]** Heb. Roll thy way, &c. That is, depend wholly upon him for direction and success in all thine undertakings and affairs; easing thy mind to him by prayer, and casting thyself by faith upon his care and conduct: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord," saith David elsewhere, *Volve*, i.e. *omnem necessitatem in eum exoneres* (Kimchi).

Trust also in him] Things are therefore repeated in this psalm, that they may take the better impression, and beget encouragement.

And he shall bring it to pass] It, that is, whatsoever thou committest to him.

Ver. 6. **And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light]** God will so oil thy good name that infamy shall not stick to it. Dirt will stick upon a mud wall, not so upon marble. But say thou be aspersed and denigrated by calumnies and contumelies cast upon thee, and thou lie under them for a time, as the earth doth under the darkness of the night; yet as the morning suddenly arising driveth away that darkness, so shall God clear up thy wronged innocence; and as the moon wadeth out of a cloud, so shalt thou get over all thy troubles in this kind or any other; it shall be with thee as it was once with Cato, whom Seneca calleth the lively picture of virtues, who was thirty-two times accused in open court, and as many times cleared and absolved.

And thy judgments as the noonday] At the day of judgment, howsoever, if not sooner; then there will be a resurrection as well of names as bodies.

Ver. 7. **Rest in the Lord]** Heb. Be silent to the Lord; *Digito compesce labellum*, lay thine hand upon thy mouth when chafing ripe, when ready to let fly at those that wrong thee. The more silent the patient is the more shrill the wrong will be; as, #Nu 12:2, while Moses is dumb, God speaks; deaf, God hears and stirs; the less he said and did the more God struck in for him: and the less any man

striveth for himself the more is God his champion; so he do it to the Lord, that is, in obedience to him, and not for a name, as some heathens did.

And wait patiently for him] Or, put thyself to pain for him; that is, though it go against the hair with thee, and thou find it hard to suffer evil, and to wait patiently for better, yet do it for his sake, and therein thou shalt do thyself no disservice at all.

Who bringeth wicked devices to pass] And pleaseth himself in them, because for present he prospereth; as Dionysius did in his sacrilege, because no harm to him followed upon it. *Saeculi laetitia est impunita nequitia*, saith Austin.

Ver. 8. **Cease from anger, and forsake wrath]** *Repetitio est, ut magis iuculet*, saith Vatablus; This precept is doubled and redoubled, that we may the better retain and practise it. Angry a man may be, and must be at evildoers, inasmuch as they break God's law, **#Ps 119:134**, pollute his name, **#Eze 36:20,23 Ro 2:23,24**; procure the judgments of God upon others also, **#Jos 22:18**; pull down swift destruction upon themselves, **#2Pe 2:1 Ro 2:5**. Thus Moses was angry, **#Ex 32:19**; and our Saviour, **#Mr 3:5**; yet not so angry but that they could at some time pity those they were displeased with, and pray for them too. This they that cannot do are inordinately and sinfully angry, and must at any rate suppress such passionate distempers.

Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil] And he shall have nmch ado not to overdo, not to do amiss, that bridleth not his passions; for these, like heavy bodies down steep hills, once in motion, move themselves, and seldom know any ground but the bottom. *Ne igitur accendaris ira saltem ad malefaciendum*. Kimchi rendereth it, *Ne misceas teipsum*, Come not in company with the ungodly, at least to do evil; to do as they do. So to those words in the first verse, "Fret not thyself because of evildoers," the Chaldee addeth, to be like unto them.

Ver. 9. **For evildoers shall be cut off]** Yea, they shall soon be cut off, **#Ps 37:10**, and so shall all such as, having a while fretted at them, do at length revolt to them; as David was ready to do, once at least, **#Ps 73:12-14**, and as some others did out and out, as they say,

#Ps 37:10, therefore his people return hither to their temporal undoing at least.

But those that wait upon the Lord] For deliverance in due season, and for accomplishment of the promises. All good people are such expectants, and should they die in a waiting condition (for comfort, I mean), yet are they blessed, because God hath said, Blessed are all they that wait for him, **#Isa 30:18**.

They shall inherit the earth] Having a right to all, as heirs of the world together with faithful Abraham, **#Ro 4:13**, and although it be detained from them for a while, as the promised land was from the Israelites, by the Amorites, till their sins were full, **#Ge 15:16**; yet the saints shall one day have power over all things; and meanwhile they are sure of a sufficiency, if not a superfluity. An heir during his minority is many times held to strait allowance, and forced to borrow of servants; so it is with the saints.

Ver. 10. **For yet a little while and the wicked, &c.]** *Tantillum, tantillum, adhuc pauxillum;* wait, therefore, and fret not. See **#Ps 37:9**, the same in effect with this and the next; for more certainty of the matter, and to correct our short spiritedness, who would have things done straight upon it or not at all.

Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place] There is neither root nor branch to be found, tale nor tidings to be heard of him, he is utterly vanished, and banished out of the world.

Ver. 11. **But the meek shall inherit the earth]** Our Saviour (and probably from hence) saith the same, **#Mt 5:5**. {See Trapp on "Mt 5:5"} {See Trapp on "Ps 37:9"}

And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace] Because cured of the fret, and well content with their present condition; hence that εθυμια, rectitude of mind, the mother of all true mirth; when the wicked are in a perpetual disquietude, στασιαζει γαρ αυτων η φυχη, they are never at rest.

Ver. 12. **The wicked plotteth against the just]** Plotteth and practiseth, being set on by that old manslayer, who lendeth the wicked man his seven heads to plot, and his ten horns to push.

And gnasheth upon him with his teeth] Saying unto him, when he hath laid hold on him, *Nunc inveni te*, as Kimchi paraphraseth, Now I have found you, and shall be even with you. Art thou come, thou villain? said Stephen Gardiner to Doctor Taylor, martyr, when he first appeared before him. How darest thou look me in the face for shame? Knowest thou not who I am? (Acts and Mon.) Thus that proud prelate, gnashing his teeth, and boasting great matters with his tongue; and he was bravely answered, as hath been before related.

Ver. 13. **The Lord will laugh at him]** See #Ps 2:4. The righteous also shall have a time to laugh at him, #Ps 52:6, and meanwhile comforteth himself with this, that God laughed at him, and that therefore himself had no great cause to cry, since *ridendo irritos reddit*, by laughing at them he blasted all their designs, and that with disgrace; men love not to be laughed at.

For he seeth that his day is coming] His dismal day, his death's day (which will also be his doomsday), that day wherein God hath determined to slay them with their own sword, and to save the righteous; as it is in the two next verses. But especially that last and great day of the world, wherein

Dicetur reprobis, Ite, Venite probis.

He will say to the roprobate, go, and come to the righteous.

Ver. 14. **The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow]** That they may assault the righteous, both *cominus*, nearer hand, and *eminus*, at a distance; for which purpose they come against him (like a walking armoury) with sword, bow, and other instruments of death; as resolved to kill and slay. "We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," #Ro 8:36.

Ver. 15. **Their sword shall enter into their own heart]** As did Saul's, and his armourbearer's, #1Sa 31:4,5 see #Ps 7:1.

Per quod quis peccat, per idem punitur et ipse.

And their bows shall be broken] Neither their bows only, but their arms also, #Ps 37:17. They shall utterly be disarmed and disabled

when once God takes them to do; which is commonly when they are at the strongest and most confident.

Ver. 16. **A little that the righteous man hath, &c.**] Whereas it was said before, the meek shall inherit the earth, some man might object that such are commonly poor enough; and that is no small affliction, as the heathens (Menander, Euripides, Alcus, &c.) have affirmed; and experience assureth it. Hereunto it is answered that "a little that the righteous man hath is better," &c., as a box of pearls is more worth than many loads of pebbles. And as a bird with a little eye, and the advantage of a wing to soar with, may see far wider than an ox with a greater; so the righteous, with a little estate, joined with faith, tranquillity, and devotion, may have mere pleasure, feel more comfort, see more of God's bounty, than one of vast possessions, whose heart cannot lift itself above the earth, as one well observeth. Some render it thus, Better is the little of one righteous man than the plenteous mammon of many wicked. The bee is as well (if not better) content with feeding on the dew, or sucking from a flower, as Behemoth, that grazeth on the mountains. Here the psalmist speaketh, saith Vatablus, of the secret blessing of God; *Quia etsi in diem victitent, e caelo tamen non secus ac manna pascuntur*; for although they have but from hand to mouth, yet they are fed from heaven, as it were, with manna.

Ver. 17. **For the arms of the wicked shall be broken**] *i.e.* His power, valour, all that wherein they think their strength and help standeth. See #Ps 37:15; the strongest sinew in the arm of flesh cracks.

But the Lord upholdeth the righteous] Though seemingly never so weak and wealthless.

Ver. 18. **The Lord knoweth the days of the upright**] *In bonum novit*, #Ps 1:6 *id est prolongat*, saith Kimchi; he knoweth, that is, he acknowledgeth, approveth, hath a gracious regard unto, their days and the events thereof; he hath decreed to a minute how long they shall suffer, and what happiness shall succeed their sufferings.

And their inheritance shall be for ever] Here long; and hereafter eternal. What they want here, shall be there made up abundantly.

Ver. 19. **They shall not be ashamed]** They shall hold up their heads when others droop; neither shall they be without comfort in times of common calamity, as Noah was— *media tranquillus in unda*.

And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied] God will work wonders rather than they shall want anything that is good for them; as he fed the Israelites in the wilderness, Elijah by the ravens, Jeremiah by a special providence in the siege. As Rochelle was relieved by an extraordinary shoal of fish cast in upon them by Divine providence. And as Leyden, besieged by the Duke of Alva and forced for their sustenance to search and scrape dunghills, to boil old leather, &c., was rescued by the turning of the winds and swelling of the tide, which forced the duke to raise the siege and be gone.

Ver. 20. **But the wicked shall perish]** In the midst of their wealth and greatest abundance; their money shall perish with them.

And the enemies of the Lord] These are worse than those wicked aforementioned, said Theodoret; they are such as go on still in their trespasses, #Ps 68:21.

Shall be as the fat of lambs] Which in sacrifices was wholly to be burnt and consumed, #Le 3:15-17.

Into smoke shall they consume away] Smoke the higher it ascendeth the sooner it vanisheth. *Quanto fuerit globus ille grandior, tanto vanter;* saith Austin. They shall be consumed in the smoke of Gehenna, or hell, saith the Chaldee here.

Ver. 21. **The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again]** Either because he cannot, he is so unable; or because he cares not, he is so unconscionable, *Non sunt reddendo*. But in the midst of his wealth he is many times wanting; in the fulness of his sufficiency he is in straits; and to supply his necessities, sticketh long in the usurer's furnace, which leaveth him at last neither metal nor matter.

But the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth] Of that which is his own, to which end he hath a great care to pay his debts. When Archbishop Cranmer discerned the storm which after fell upon him in Queen Mary's days, he took express order for the payment of all

his debts, which, when it was done, a most joyful man was he. How hospitable he was and liberal, Tremellius testifieth in his epistle before his Comment on Hosea.

Ver. 22. **For such as be blessed of him, &c.**] See #Ps 37:9,11.

Shall be cut off] *In hoc saeculo et future*, saith Kimchi. Or this verse may be taken as a reason of the former, viz. why are wicked rich men so necessitated and righteous men so enabled, enlarged? God curseth the one, but blesseth the other, and that is it which maketh the odds between them.

Ver. 23. **The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord]** Heb. The steps of a man; for good men only are reckoned of by God, #Jer 5:1. So a wife is put for a good wife, #Pr 18:22. A bad wife is but (according to Lamech's second wife's name) Zillah, that is, the shadow of a wife. Now, as God chose out the Israelites' way for them all along the wilderness; so he doth still for those that are good, not always the shortest way, but the safest; not always the straightest way, but that which most conduceth to their journey's end. As therefore Israel in the wilderness, so must we follow God, though he seem to lead us in and out, backward and forward, as if we were treading a maze.

And he delighteth in his way] His way it is called, for encouragement sake, though it be God alone who chooseth and chalketh out his way, yea, causeth him to keep his commandments, Ezek. xxvi. *Certum est nos facere quod facimus; sed ille facit ut faciamus*. God doth all our works for us.

Ver. 24. **Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down]** See #Pr 24:16. If he fall, yet he falleth forward; and if he be cast down, yet he continueth not, *Quum ruit non corrui* (Vat.); so #2Co 4:9; as do the wicked, #Eze 32:4, whom God casteth into the briers, and there leaveth them.

For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand] God's hand is still under his; and his goodness lower than they can fall. His supporting grace preserveth them from utter recidivation; his Almighty power, from utter destruction.

Ver. 25. **I have been young, &c.**] Here he recordeth an experiment of his (such as whereof #Ps 119 is mostly made up), and if other

men's experiences agree not altogether with his, it is no wonder; kings use not to mind beggars. Or he might only mean vagrants; according to that, "Let their children be vagabonds, and beg their bread." Good men may be compelled to crave their bread, as David himself did of Ahimelech, the high priest; as Elijah did of the widow of Sarepta; as those *pauperes de Lugduno*, and many others have lived upon alms. But seldom or never have good people needed to crave relief of the ungodly.

Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken] Left he may be for a time, as the lion leaveth his whelps till they are almost famished, and have well-nigh killed themselves with roaring, to make them more hardy and valiant, but never forsaken, no, though he beg his bread; because God hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The righteous is never forsaken, nor his seed too, said Mr Perkins. God may cast godly parents into want, but their godly children shall surely be blessed. Others understand by righteous here, merciful men, who give alms for the love of God, and therefore come not to poverty, #Ps 112:5,9 Pr 11:24,25 Ps 41:1. See Mr Bradford's sweet letter to Mr John Hall and his wife, prisoners for the gospel (Acts and Mon. 1495).

Ver. 26. **He is ever merciful, and lendeth]** Heb. Every day, according to others' necessity and his own ability; for to stretch beyond the staple were to mar all. But he is ever "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," #1Ti 6:17, as Mr Wiseheart, the Scotch martyr, whose charity had never an end, night, day, nor noon, saith Mr Fox; and Thomas Tomkins, an English martyr, very forward to lend, looking for nothing again.

And his seed is blessed] Heb. is in the blessing, that is, receiveth grace and communication of all true goodness from God; and praises, goodwill, and good wishes from men (Diod.).

Ver. 27. **Depart from evil, and do good]** See #Ps 34:14.

And dwell for evermore] *Sine indigentia*, saith Kimchi, without such indigency and poverty as may drive thee abroad, and make thee beg thy bread. Universal righteousness secureth a man from such straits.

Ver. 28. **For the Lord loveth judgment]** See #Ps 11:7.

But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off] See #Job 18:19, {See Trapp on "Job 18:19"}

Ver. 29. **The righteous shall inherit, &c.]** This verse hath been expounded before, and is here repeated for more assurance, *Verba toties inculcata viva sunt, vera sunt, sana sunt, plana sunt.*

Ver. 30. **The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom]** Having spoken of the privileges of the righteous, he now describeth them, *Tales autem sunt non quicumque nomen iustorum praetexunt, &c.* Such are not all they that pretend to righteousness, or can talk of it; but that can speak of it fruitfully, feelingly, and from an outward principle. And as he talketh, so he walketh, *ne dicta factis erubescant,* as Tertullian hath it; lest his life should seem to give the lie to his lips.

Ver. 31. **The law of his God is in his heart]** He hath a Bible in his head and another in his heart; he hath a good treasure within, and there hence bringeth good things; he speaketh not by rote, and as a bungler, or as a philosopher only; but by proof, and as one that can say, I believed, I have felt it, and therefore have I spoken.

None of his steps shall slide] How should they, when they walk so exactly, and by such a rule? Jeremiah holding to it, durst say, Lord, if I am deceived, thou hast deceived me.

Ver. 32. **The wicked watcheth the righteous]** See #Ps 10:8-10, {See Trapp on "Ps 10:8"} {See Trapp on "Ps 10:9"} {See Trapp on "Ps 10:10"} *Speculatur,* he accurately observeth, looking this way and that, as a watchman in a watch tower. Thus Saul eyed David, and laid out for him. Thus Jeroboam watched those of the ten tribes that went to Jerusalem to worship, he watched them, and waylaid them, #Ho 5:1.

And seeketh to slay him] All malice is bloody, and there want not those still that carry about Cain's bloody club, hating to the death that goodness in another that they neglect in themselves.

Ver. 33. **The Lord will not leave him in his hand]** For he knoweth how to deliver his, #2Pe 3:9, as that apostle could say by good experience, #Ac 13:50, when he was *inter saxum et sacrum,* as they say.

Nor condemn him, when he is judged] Heb. Condemn him for wicked; but clear and acquit him when falsely accused, yea, when wrongfully condemned.

Ver. 34. **Wait on the Lord]** Bind him not to a day, wake not the Beloved till he please.

Keep his way] For, out of God's precincts out of his protection.

When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it] See and smile, look and laugh, **#Ps 52:6,7**, {See Trapp on "Ps 52:6"} {See Trapp on "Ps 52:7"}

Ver. 35. **I have seen the wicked in great power]** Or, formidable to others; first, a terror, and, shortly after, a scorn.

And spreading himself like a green bay tree] Or, cedars of Lebanon, as the Greek hath it, *i.e.* priding himself in his great prosperity.

Ver. 36. **Yet he passed away, &c.]** The Greek and Latin have it, I passed by. See **#Ps 37:10**. How soon and utterly withered and wasted the fig tree Christ cursed! so forcible is his curse.

Ver. 37. **Mark the perfect man, &c.]** As we must treasure up experiences ourselves; so we must stir up others to do the like. There is a woe to such as consider not the operation of God's hands, **#Isa 5:12**.

For the end of that man is peace] Though his beginning and middle may be troublesome, yet his end (his after end, at least) shall be peace. He shall by death enter into peace, rest in his bed, **#Isa 57:2**.

Ver. 38. **But the transgressors, &c.]** Here the end is worse than the beginning. Sin ever ends tragically.

The end of the wicked shall be cut off] Their end is not death, but destruction; they are killed with death, **#Re 2:23**, life and hope end together.

Ver. 39. **But the salvation of the righteous, &c.]** *Etenim ut paucis omnia complectar*; their salvation, temporal and eternal, is of the Lord; so is also the destruction of the wicked, as is here necessarily implied.

He is their strength, &c.] That they faint not, sink not under the heaviest burden of their light afflictions, which are but for a moment.

Ver. 40. **And the Lord shall help them, &c.]** He shall, he shall, he shall. Oh the rhetoric of God! the safety of the saints! the certainty of the promises!

A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance] Made purposely for a memorial, both of what he had suffered and from what he had been delivered. See #1Ch 16:4 Ex 30:16 Le 2:2 6:15. *Recordatio autem intelligitur miseriae ex misericordia, #Ps 132:1 Isa 62:6 63:7.* It is probable that David had so laid to heart the rape of his daughter Tamar, the murder of his eldest son, Amnon, the flight of his next son, Absalom, and other troubles that befell him (Basil thinks Absalom's conspiracy, Ahithophel's perfidy, Shimei's insolence, &c.), that it cost him a great fit of sickness; out of which hardly recovering, he penned this and some other psalms (as the 35th, 39th, 40th), but this especially, for a memento, to remind him of his own recent misery and God's never failing mercy to him. Both these we are wondrous apt to forget, and so both to lose the fruit of our afflictions, by falling afresh to our evil practices (as children soon forget a whipping), and to rob God, our deliverer, of his due praises; like as with children eaten bread is soon forgotten. Both these mischiefs to prevent, both in himself and others (for we are bound not only to observe God's law, but also to preserve it as much as may be from being broken), David composed this psalm, for to record, or to cause remembrance (see the like title, #Ps 70:1), and for a form for a sick man to pray by, as Kimchi noteth; not to be sung for those in purgatory, as some Papists have dreamed.

Chapter 38

Ver. 1. **O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath]** He beginneth and endeth the psalm with petitions, filleth it up with sad complaints; wherein we shall find him groaning, but not grumbling; mourning, but not murmuring, for that is not the guise of God's people. He beginneth with *Eheu Iehova non recuso coargui et castigari.* "Correct me, O Lord, but with judgment; not in anger, lest thou bring me to nothing," #Jer 10:24. See #Ps 6:1. {See Trapp on "Ps 6:1"}

Ver. 2. **For thine arrows stick fast in me]** *i.e.* Sicknesses of body and troubles of mind, #**Job 6:4 Ps 18:14**. The Jewish doctors say, that he had a leprosy for six months; and that the Divine presence was taken away from him; so that he complained not without uause (R. Obadiah). But these were *sagittae salutis*, saith Chrysostom; arrows of salvation, love tokens from the Lord, *Dens amat quos sagittat* (Aug.), not unlike Jonathan's arrows, #**1Sa 20:36**, and he had been forewarned of them by Nathan the prophet, #**2Sa 12:9-12**, and so bore them the better. *Praevisa iacula minus feriunt*, Darts foreseen are in a manner dintless.

And thy hand presseth me sore] Heb. Thou lettest down thy hand upon me. Now, God's hand is a mighty hand, #**1Pe 5:6**, and the weight of it is importable, but that *una eademque manus*, &c.

Ver. 3. **There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger]** This was the immediate cause of David's misery, it came from love displeas'd; and scandalous sins seldom scape better. But, blessed be our Almighty physician, who bringeth health out of sickness, by bringing thereby the body of death into a consumption.

Neither is there any rest in my bones] *Bis repetit, more lugentium*. He saith the same thing twice, as mourners use to do; but with an aggravation of his pain, reaching to his very bones.

Because of my sin] This was the remote cause of his present sufferings; and is the true mother of all man's misery. Now when these two (God's wrath and man's sin) meet in the soul, as medicine and sickness in the stomach, there must needs be much unrest till they be vomited up by confession. It is as natural for guilt to breed disquiet as for putrid matter to breed vermin. Let God therefore be justified, and every mouth stopped.

Ver. 4. **For mine iniquities are gone over my head]** So that I am even overwhelmed by them, and almost drowned in perdition and destruction. *Sicut aquae praevalentes in quibus erat absorptus* (Kimchi). The gospel is *post naufragium tabula*; and assureth us that God hath cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea; and this keepeth the head of a sinking soul above-water.

As an heavy burden] How light soever sin seemeth in the committing, it will lie full heavy, even as a talent of lead, #Zec 5:7, or as a huge mountain, #Heb 12:1, when once we come to a sight and sense of it, when God's wrath and man's sin shall face one another, as the former verse hath it, according to the original. *A facie irae tuae. A facie peccati mei. A facie stultitiae meae.* From the face of your wrath, from the face of my sin, from the face of my foolishness.

Ver. 5. **My wounds stink and are corrupt]** What his grief or disease was we read not; some say the leprosy; some take all this allegorically. The word rendered wounds, signifieth stripes, scars, wales, *Livores vibices tumices*, mattery sores, running ulcers, the effects of the envenomed arrows of the Almighty. Could we but foresee what sin will cost us we durst not but be innocent. That we do not is extreme foolishness, as David here acknowledgeth.

Because of my foolishness] In not considering beforehand the heinousness of my sin nor the heaviness of the divine displeasure. The word signifieth unadvised rashness, #Pr 14:17, and it is probable he meaneth his great sin with Bathsheba, wherein he was miscarried by his lusts to his costs. See #Ps 107:17,18. Because of my foolishness, *i.e. Quia non praeveni Nathanem confessione*, saith R. Obadiah, because I anticipated not Nathan's coming, by a voluntary confession of my sin unto the Lord.

Ver. 6. **I am troubled (Heb. wryed;) I am bowed down, &c.]** *Incurvus et prorsus obstipus, atroque vultu squallidus, vix corpus traho*, I am a pitiful poor creature, and in a most heavy condition, as appeareth by my gait, my gesture, my looks, and habit. See #Ps 35:14.

Ver. 7. **For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease]** The loins, those seats of lust, are now grievously inflamed and pained with some imposthumated matter or pestilential carbuncle: *Morbo vilissimo quem nominare dedecet*, saith Aben Ezra. *Femora mea prorsus occupat ardens uleus* (Vat.). *In quibus est concupiscentia* (Theodoret). God oft punisheth sin in kind, and speaketh to the conscience in its own language, that such a sickness was the fruit of such a sin.

And there is no soundness in my flesh]

*Principium dulce est, sed finis Amoris amarus,
Laeta venire Venus, tristis abire solet.*

Sin is as the poison of asps, which first tickles him that is stung, and maketh him laugh; till, by little and little, it gets to the heart and then puts him to intolerable torture.

Ver. 8. **I am feeble and sore broken]** Through the length and nature of my distemper, #**Isa 38:10,12**. The same Hebrew word signifieth pining sickness and a thrum, because of the thinness and weakness of it.

I have roared] But not repined. This nature prompteth to, when we are in extremity; and grace is not against it.

Ver. 9. **Lord, all my desire is before thee]** Confused desires, broken requests, if from a broken spirit, are upon the file of heaven, and stand before God till they may have an answer.

And my groaning is not hid from thee] No, not my breathing, #**La 3:56**. God can feel breath; but the groanings of his people go to his heart.

Ver. 10. **My heart panteth]** Heb. runneth about, or is tossed to and fro, *circuivit cor meum, inordinate movetur; et non quiescit*, saith Aben Ezra. The Hebrew word signifieth such a kind of motion as that of merchants, who run up and down from one country to another. Also the two last radicals are doubled; to note that it is more than an ordinary stirring and motion of the spirit, because it is not come to its rest. All earthly things to the soul are but as the air to the stone; can give it no stay till it come to God, the centre. As the circle is the most perfect figure, because it beginneth and endeth, the points do meet together, as (mathematicians give the reason) the last point meeteth in the first, from whence it came. So shall we never come to perfection or satisfaction (saith the reverend man) till our souls come to God, till God make the circle meet, &c. The wicked walk the round from one creature to another, #**Ps 12:8**, but they come not at God; and hence they are so dissatisfied. Return to thy rest (Heb. rests), saith David to his soul, that is, to God, to whom he here maketh his moan. *Miser animus in varias subinde partes abreptus me deserit.*

As for the light of mine eyes] That *lumen ami cum* of mine eyes is almost quite benighted.

Ver. 11. **My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore]** Heb. my stroke, which, therefore, some Jewish doctors will have to be the leprosy, which was noisome and contagious; and, therefore, by the law of God, none were to come near such, *Prae horrore detrectantes accedere* (Trem.). So among the Persians none might come near a Pisaga (so they called a leper), and therefore Megabyzus, having offended Artaxerxes, kept himself five years from court, pretending himself a leper, and in that space made his peace with the king (Ctes. Pers.). But in David's friends, who dealt thus with him, it was not so much fear of danger as pride and perfidy that made them deny him all duty and friendship, **#Ps 31:11**. Job was so used, **#Job 6:15**; and our Saviour, when he hung naked on the cross, **#Lu 23:49**; and St Paul, when he made his defence before Nero, **#2Ti 4:16**. So was not Orestes by his friend Pylades, nor Damon by his Pythias, nor Achilles by Patroclus, which made Alexander cry out, *O felicem iuvenem!* O faithful youth, Trouble trieth who are friends, who traitors (Sophoc.; Val. Max.; Plutarch in Alex.).

Ver. 12. **They also that seek after my life]** That seek and would suck my blood. As his friends were slack to help him, so his foes were active to hurt him. This David relateth before the Lord, that he may pity him, and be so much the more engaged to him; for he knew that where human help faileth divine beginneth.

Speak mischievous things] *Exitialia*, such things as wring from me that lamentable voice, Woe and Alas, woeful evils, תוהו from הוה, *voce σχετλιαστικη*.

And imagine deceits] Or, Murmur.

Ver. 13. **But I, as a deaf man, heard not]** But possessed any soul in patience; in quietness and confidence was my strength, **#Isa 30:15**. As they were masters of their tongues, so was I of mine ears. He that cannot bear calumnies, reproaches, and injuries, cannot live, saith Chytraeus; let him even make up his pack, and get him out of the world. Virus Theodorus sends to advise with Melancthon what to do when Osiander preached against him? Melancthon desired him for

God's sake to make no reply, but to behave himself as a deaf man, that heard not. Virus writeth back that this was very hard; yet he would obey. Another bravely answered one that railed upon him, *Facile est in me dicere, cum non sim responsurus*, Thou mayest speak what thou wilt, but I will hear no more than I wish, and punish thee with silence, or rather with a merry contempt. Princes use not to chide when ambassadors offer them indecencies, but to deny them audience. That man certainly enjoyeth a brave composedness who setteth himself above the flight of the injurious claw.

And I was as a dumb man, &c.] He answered them by silence and taciturnity; which is the best answer to words of scorn and petulance. Thus Isaac answered his brother Ishmael; and our Saviour Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphas; and Giles of Brussels, when the barking friars reviled him, held his peace continually; insomuch that those blasphemers would say abroad that he had a dumb devil in him. This is a great victory, not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, #1Pe 3:9. *Nihil fortius, nihil magis egregium quam audire noxia, et non respondere contraria*, saith Cassiodore, Nothing is more courageous, or egregious, than to hear reproaches and return no answer. As, on the contrary, *In rixa is inferior est qui victor est*, In a brawl he goes by the worst that hath the better, saith Basil. And, *Sile, et funestam dedisti plagam*, saith Chrysostom, Say nothing in such a case, and thou thereby givest thine adversary a deadly blow.

Ver. 14. **Thus I was as a man that heareth not]** He doubleth his speech, to show his holy pertinace in a prudent and patient silence, though greatly provoked. David was, as it is reported of Severus, the emperor, *επιμελης των πρακτεων*, careful of what was to be done by him, but careless of what was said of him by others. As Augustus, he did but laugh at the satires and buffooneries published against him. He knew that as physical pills must not be chewed, but swallowed whole; so must many injuries and indignities, *Convitia spreta exolescunt*.

Ver. 15. **For in thee, O Lord, do I hope]** This was the ground of his patience, and differenced it from that of heathens, which was rather pertinace than patience, and came not from a right principle.

Thou wilt hear] Or answer; and, therefore, what need is there of my answer?

Ver. 16. **For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise, &c.]** He spread their vile speeches before the Lord, as afterwards good Hezekiah did Rabshakeh's letter; and as it was said of Charles V., that he spake more to God than to men; so did David. His former silence, therefore, was not either from stupidity (a sheep bitten by a dog is as sensible thereof as a swine, though he make not so great a noise) or inability to make his own defence, if it had been to any purpose, for he was both innocent and eloquent; but he thought it far better to sustain himself in faith and patience, and meekly to commit himself to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Besides, he feared lest if he spake at all in this case, he should speak unadvisedly with his lips (as it is very easy to exceed), and so give occasion to the enemy to triumph, as the Papists did over Luther, for his hot and hasty speeches.

When my foot slippeth] Or, When my tongue lasheth out in the least, they desire no other sport, but lay it in my dish as a foul disgrace. My motto, therefore, shall be, and my practice according, *Taceo, Fero, Spero*, I say nothing, but suffer, and hope for better.

Ver. 17. **For I am ready to halt]** *i.e.* To misbehave myself and so to mar a good cause by ill-managing it, and then what will become of thy great name? This is a very forcible motive to prevail with a jealous and just God.

And my sorrow is continually before me] That is, my sin, as #Ec 11:10: or, my sorrow, but much more my sin the cause of it.

Ver. 18. **For I will declare mine iniquity]** To them that visit me in this disease, saith Aben Ezra, that they may pray for me, according to #Jas 5:16; or rather to God, that he may pardon me and ease me. Or thus, When I declare, &c. Then

Ver. 19. **Mine enemies are lively, &c.]** *q.d.* It is nuts to them, and they soon compose comedies out of my tragedies, growing more insolent by mine afflictions, and upbraiding me with my sins.

Ver. 20. **They also that render evil for good]** While they rejoice at my misery, who fasted for them in their adversity, #Ps 35:15.

Are mine adversaries] Heb. They satanically hate me, as if they were transformed into so many breathing devils.

Because I follow the thing that good is] This was devil-like indeed; this was to hate and persecute God in David (Tertul.). Thus Cain, the devil's patriarch, hated his brother Abel, and slew him. And why? "Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous," #1Jo 3:12. For like cause Moab fretted at Israel, #Nu 22:3,4, and the courtiers at Daniel, #Ps 6:5.

Ver. 21. **Forsake me not, O Lord]** This was that he most of all feared, spiritual desertion. So Jeremiah, Be not thou a terror unto me, O God; and then I care not what else can befall me.

O my God, be not far from me] Though my friends stand aloof, #Ps 38:11, yet be thou ever at hand to help me.

Ver. 22. **Make haste to help me]** *Nam mora frangit etiam fortes,* God oft delayeth, that he may set an edge on our desires; he holdeth us in request, that he may commend his blessings to us.

Chapter 39

Ver. 1. **I said, I will take heed]** He resolved so, #Ps 38:13,14, *sc.* to continue as one deaf and dumb, to use Isaac's apology to scoffing Ishmael, viz. no apology, unless it be that which is real; for *vivendo melius arguuntur obtrectatores, quam loquendo,* slanderers and railers are best answered by silence. *Eiusdem sensus est hic Psalmus cum priori* (Kimchi).

That I sin not with my tongue] A hard task, a long lesson, as Pambus, in the Ecclesiastical History, found it by experience; and after many years' trial could not take it out. For the tongue is an unruly member; and "if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body," #Jas 3:2. David resolved to temper his tongue, and to keep a bridle or a muzzle for his mouth, while he was in extremity of pain, and in the presence of the wicked, who lay at the catch, and would soon exclaim; but his heart deceived him, for he quickly after brake his word, #Ps 39:3, and made a rash request, #Ps 39:4, so great need is there that the best pray to God to keep the door, as #Ps 141:3.

Ver. 2. **I was dumb with silence]** As not willing either to open the mouths of those dead dogs or to cast pearls before those sensual swine.

I held my peace, even from good] That good which I might have spoken in mine own defence and their reproof, *ne miscerem illud cum malo*, saith one, lest some evil should be mingled with it; as mud and gravel is with the clear water that runs down a current. *Intellige de bono licito, non de bono necessario et praecepto.*

And my sorrow was stirred] Heb. troubled; though I had somewhat to do to do it. Corruption must be curbed and kept in by violence, **#Jas 1:26.**

Hanc fraenis, hanc tu compesce catenis.

Ver. 3. **My heart was hot within me]** It was almost suffocated for want of vent. By heat of heart and fire kindled, saith one, the prophet meaneth, not only the greatness of his grief, as they that are grievously sick feel great force and power of heat; but he meaneth also some motions that he had to impatience and fretting; to which fault they are very much subject that are hot, and given to heat: thus he. This distemper to prevent, God and Nature have placed the heart near unto the lungs, *ut cum ira accenditur, pulmonis humore temperetur*; that, when it is heated with wrath, it may be cooled and qualified by the allay of the lungs.

While I was musing the fire burned] This showeth that thoughts and affections are the mutual causes one of another; so that thoughts kindle affections, and these cause thoughts to boil. And hence it is, saith a reverend man (Dr Goodwin), that new converts, having new and strong affections, can with more pleasure think of God than any.

Then spake I with my tongue] But better he had held his tongue, according to his first resolution. The Greeks have a saying, Let a man either keep silence or speak that which is better than silence. Austin paraphraseth thus: When I refrained so from speaking, for fear of speaking evil, that I spake no good, I was troubled at this my silence, lest my sin should be counted greater for this silence than my virtue in refraining from speaking evil.

Ver. 4. **Lord, make me to know mine end]** This Austin expoundeth of heaven, the end of all his troubles, which he now sighed after. But Vatablus, Calvin, and most modern interpreters conceive that David

doth here ingenuously confess that he grudged against God; considering the greatness of his grief and the shortness of his life.

And the measure of my days] *An ad malorum quae perfero compensationem sufficient,* whether they are likely to be enough to make me amends for nay grievous sufferings. This he seemeth to speak either out of impatience, or curiosity, at least.

That I may know how frail I am] How soon ceasing and short lived. *Quam durabilis sum* (Trem.). Vatablus hath it, *quam mundanus sim*, how long I am like to be a man of this world, this vale of misery and valley of tears.

Ver. 5. **Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth]** *i.e.* Four fingers broad (which is one of the least geometrical measures, or a spanlong), as some interpret it. Now, to spend the span of this transitory life after the ways of a man's own heart is to bereave himself of a room in that city of pearl, and to perish for ever. Or take it for a handbreadth; should a man, having his lands divided into four parts (answerable to those four fingers' breadth), leave three of them untilled? should he not make the best of that little time that he hath, that he be not taken with his task undone? Themistocles died about a hundred and seven years of age; and when he was to die he was grieved upon this ground: Now I am to die, saith he, when I begin to be wise. But *stultus semper incipit vivere*, saith Seneca; and such complaints are bootless. Oh live quickly, live apace, and learn of the devil at least to be most busy, as knowing that our time is short, **#Re 12:12**. To complain of the miseries of life, and to wish for death, as David here seemeth to do (and as did Job, **#Job 3:19 6:9 7:15**; and Moses, **#Nu 11:11,15**; Elijah, **#1Ki 19:4**; Jeremiah, **#Jer 20:14**; Jonah, **#Jon 4:3**), is a sign of a prevailing temptation, and of a spirit fainting under it. We must fight against such impatience; and learn to do the like by life, as we do by a lease, wherein, if our time be short, we rip up the grounds, eat up the grass, cut down the underbrush, and take all the liberty the lease will afford.

Mine age is as nothing] Heb. My world, that is, my time of abroad in the world, is but a *magnum Nihil*, as one saith of honour,

Puncture est quod vivimus, et puncto minus; a mere salve vale,
hello and goodbye a nonentity.

Verily every man at his best state] When he is best constituted and underlaid, set to live, as one would think, *firmus et fixus*, settled on his best bottom, yet even then he is all over vanity. *Profecto omnimoda vanitas omnis homo est quantumvis constitutus maxime* (Tremel.). All Adam is all Abel, as the original runs elegantly, alluding to those two proper names, like as **#Ps 144:3,4**, Adam is Abel's mate, or man is like to a soon vanishing vapour; such as is the breath of one's mouth, {see #Jas 4:14} a feeble flash, a curious picture of nothing.

Ver. 6. **Surely every man walketh in a vain show]** Heb. in an image, or in a shadow, as **#Job 14:2**; in the shadow of death, as some sense it; his life is like a picture drawn upon the water, saith Theodoret; it passeth away as a hasty, headlong torrent. Verily, surely, surely, it is so; Selah, you may seal to it.

Surely they are disquieted in vain] Heb. They keep a stir, and trouble the world, as did great Alexander; who, surfeiting of his excessive fortunes, from the darling of heaven, came to be the disdain of the earth, which he had so oft disquieted. Two fits of an ague could shake great Tameriane to death. So the Emperor Adrian, who, troubling himself and others to little good purpose, died with this saying in his mouth, *Omnia fui, et nihil profuit*, I have tried all conclusions, but got nothing. And saith not Solomon as much in his Ecclesiastes?

He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them] *i.e.* Enjoy them. See **#Ec 2:18,19**, and be moderate. Think when you lock up your money in your chest, saith one, who shall shortly lock you up in your coffin. Think how that this very night thy soul may be required of thee; and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? **#Lu 12:20**.

Ver. 7. **And now, Lord, what wait I for?]** *q.d.* *Absit ergo ut de istis quisquiliis sim anxius*, Far be it from me to trouble myself about these transitory trifles; I am bent to depend on thee alone, to wait for thy favour, and desire it above all earthly felicity; to place all my

hope on thee alone (Beza), who, being my Lord, wilt not, canst not cast off thy poor servant, who desireth to fear thy name.

Ver. 8. **Deliver me from all my transgressions]** But especially from that of impatiently desiring to die out of discontent, #Ps 39:4. The sense of this one sin brought many more to remembrance; as a man, by looking over his debt book for one thing, meets with more. God giveth the penitent general discharges; neither calleth he any to an after reckoning.

Make me not the reproach of the foolish] Let not any wicked one (for such are all fools in God's dictionary) lay this folly in my dish, that I so foolishly desired death in a pet.

Ver. 9. **I was dumb, I opened not my mouth]** Or better thus, I should have been dumb, and not have opened my mouth, according to my first resolution. I should not have reasoned, or rather wrangled, with thee, as #Ps 39:4, but have kissed thy rod in a humble submission, and have known that the rod of Aaron and pot of manna must go together. Macrobius writeth that the image of Angeronia among the old Romans was placed on the altar of Volupia with the mouth closed and sealed up; to signify, that such as patiently and silently bear their griefs do thereby attain to greatest pleasures.

Because thou didst it] This is indeed a quieting consideration, and will notably quell and kill unruly passions. Set but God before them when they are tumultuating, and all will be soon hushed. This made Jacob so patient in the rape of his daughter Dinah; Job, in the loss of his goods by the Sabaean spoilers; David, in the barkings of that dead dog Shimei; that noble lord of Plessis, in the loss of his only son, a gentleman of marvellous great hopes, slain in the wars of the Low Countries. His mother, more impatient, died of the grief of it; but his father laid his hand on his mouth when God's hand was on his back; and used these very words, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it."

Ver. 10. **Remove thy stroke away from me]** Having first prayed off his sin, he would now pray off his pain, though it less troubled him; and for ease he repaireth to Jehovah, that healeth as well as woundeth, #Ho 6:1.

— *nam qui tibi vulnera fecit,
Solut Achilleo tollere more potest
(Ovid. Trist).*

I am consumed by the blow of thine hand] Heb. By the conflict or buffetings. Oh, keep out of his fingers, for it is a fearful thing to fall into them, #**Heb 10:31**, *Cavebis autem si pavebis.*

Ver. 11. **When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity]** Or shouldst thou but correct him according to his iniquity; correct him, I say, or instruct him. Kimchi's note here is, *Morbi sunt interpretes inter Deum et homines increpantes, ut #Job 33:19.* Diseases are God's chiding messages or real rebukes.

Thou makest his beauty] Heb. whatsoever in him is desirable, all his prime and pride, *pulchritudinem et praestantiam*, his beauty and bravery, as that of Jonah's gourd.

To consume away like a moth] Heb. To melt away as a moth, which is easily crushed between one's fingers, #**Job 4:19**; or actively, as a moth, *caeco morsu*, doth secretly and suddenly consume the most precious garment, so dost thou the wicked by thy secret curse, though themselves or others little observe it. *Quamvis non palam fulminet e caelo Deus (Vat.).*

Surely every man is vanity. Selah] See #**Ps 39:5**.

Ver. 12. **Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear, &c.]** My prayer, my cry, my tears. See how his ardency in prayer grew by degrees, and so availed much, #**Jas 5:16**. We must rise in our requests, pray, cry, weep, ask, seek, knock, let the Lord see that we are in good earnest; and then we may have anything. Tears have a voice, and are very effectual orators.

For I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner] And in that respect subject to many miseries and molestations, Satanical and secular, till I shall *repatriasse*, get home (as Bernard expresseth it); and this was the condition of all my godly predecessors, who yet found favour with thee, and so I hope shall I.

Ver. 13. **O spare me, that I may recover strength]** *Ut refociller, reficiar.* Job maketh the like request, #**Job 10:20**. Some breathing

while they would have, and a time to recollect themselves, before that last, great encounter. They say in effect, *Differ, habent parvae commoda magna morae.*

Before I go hence, and be no more] No more seen among men. It is said that Richard III caused the dead corpses of his two smothered nephews to be closed in lead, and so put in a coffin full of holes, and hooked at the ends with two hooks of iron; and so be cast into a place called the Black Deepes, at the Thames' mouth, whereby they should never rise up nor be any more seen. "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not," #Ge 42:36. The righteous perish, #Isa 57:1. When once I go hence, saith David here, viz. to my long home, #Ec 12:5, there will be a *Non ego*, an end of me and to this world; wherefore I beg a little respite.

Σοι μὲν τούτο, Θεε, σμικρον, εμοι δε μεγα.

Chapter 40

Ver. 1. **I waited patiently for the Lord]** Heb. In waiting I waited; *Diutissime quidem, sed optimo successu;* I prayed and waited, I waited and prayed again; persevering in prayer, and begging audience, as #Ps 39:12, with which Basil maketh this psalm to cohere; and well he may, for it seemeth to be of the same time and argument with the two former. *Est sensus eiusdem cum duobus prioribus.* R. Obadiah saith, that David composed this psalm after that he was recovered of his leprosy, #Ps 38:7.

And he inclined unto me] *i.e.* He began at length to show favour; for he waiteth to be gracious, and well knoweth that *desideria dilatione crescant, et cito data vilescant;* nothing is lost by holding his people long in request.

Ver. 2. **He brought me up also out of a horrible pit]** *E puteo sonitus, ut #Isa 51:14,* out of a noiseful pit, where there is a continual hurry by the great fall of waters into it: he meaneth out of dreadful dangers, out of a desperate disease, saith R. Obadiah; who also by rock here understandeth perfect health, *Sanitatem in corpore, sanctitatem in corde.*

Out of the miry clay] *E luto, luto,* saith Kimchi, for here are two words used of one and the same sense; to show that, as a bemired beast, he was in a perishing condition till God pulled him out, and set him on firm ground.

And established my goings] That I might not relapse into the same or fall into another malady or mischief.

Ver. 3. **And he hath put a new song in my mouth]** *i.e.* New matter, which I shall soon contrive into a new song, by the help of his Holy Spirit; for I cannot breathe out a desire after him except he first give me breath therewith, and so put a new song in my mouth.

Even praise unto our God] *i.e.* Unto Christ, saith Junius, to whom and of whom the Church singeth, saith he, in the following verses.

Many shall see it, and fear, and trust in the Lord] Their eye shall affect their heart, both with fear of and faith in the Lord, that bringeth greatest things to pass, and is fearful in praises, doing wonders, #Ex 15:11.

Ver. 4. **Blessed is that man, &c.]** See #Ps 2:12.

And respecteth not the proud] Who are set in opposition to believers, as they are also, #Hab 2:4. Self-justitiaries especially, and meritmongers: faith is a humbling grace.

Nor such as turn aside to lies] As do heretics and idolaters. These the true believer, out of the greatness of his spirit, slighteth, how great soever they be; *animo magno nihil magnum.*

Ver. 5. **Many, O Lord my God, are thy works which thou hast done]** Many and great, and all for them that trust in thee; who therefore must needs be blessed, as #Ps 40:4.

And thy thoughts which are to us-ward] Thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give us an expected end, #Jer 29:11.

They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee] No, nor yet out of order; and yet we must be reckoning and relating them as we are able, to God, and men, by speaking good of his name; and at this David was old excellent, as we say.

If I should declare and speak of them] By wholesale we must do it, though we cannot so well by retail; particulars also must be instanced, as Moses doth to Jethro, **#Ex 18:7,8**, and for that end catalogues must be kept. See one **#Jud 10:11,12**.

Ver. 6. **Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire]** Comparatively to the obedience of faith, **#1Sa 15:22**, without which, when hypocrites thought to bribe God by cold ceremonies, they were rejected. Christ is the end of the law to all that believe; that Lamb of God, slain from the beginning of the world, is the only expiatory sacrifice, and the foundation of that fore-mentioned blessedness, **#Ps 40:4**. Now, since Christ suffered, the Levitical sacrifices being abolished, we have none to offer but such as are gratulatory, to show our thankfulness for such a Redeemer, whose perfect obedience, with the fruit of it, is here and in the following verses both described, and set forth for an absolute pattern to us of performing our duty toward God, for this inexplicable mercy. Confer **#Heb 10:5,6**, &c. Here we have in Christ for our instruction, and in David also (his type) for our example, 1. A firm purpose of obedience, in a bored ear add a yielding heart. 2. A ready performance thereof, "Lo, I come." 3. A careful observance of the word written, "In the volume of thy book it is written of me," **#Ps 40:7** 4. A hearty delight in that observance, **#Ps 40:8** 5. A public profession and communication of God's goodness to others, **#Ps 40:9,10** (D. Ames). Now, we should labour to express Christ to the world, to walk as he walked, **#1Jo 2:6**; our lives should be in some sense parallel with his life, as the transcript with the original. He left us a copy to write by, saith St Peter, **#1Pe 2:21**

Mine ears hast thou opened] Heb. digged, bored; a hearing ear hast thou bestowed upon me, which is a singular favour; for life entereth by the ear, **#Isa 55:3**, as did death at first, **#Ge 3:19** Oh, pray that God would make the bore wide enough; that the inward ears being drawn up to the outward, one sound may pierce both at once.

Ver. 7. **Then said I, Lo, I come]** Christ became obedient even to the death, yea, that of the cross, **#Php 2:8**. Christ's people also are a willing people, **#Ps 110:3**, their obedience is prompt and present, ready and speedy, without delays and consults, **#Ps 119:60**, without capitulation and security, **#Isa 56:6**.

In the volume of the book] *In libro plicatili*, in thy law, which was anciently (and is still this day among the Jews) written in paper or parchment rolled up; because it will last longer rolled than folded.

It is written of me] Of Christ, in many places; for he is both author, object, matter, and mark of both Testaments. Of David also, and all God's people, doth the law speak with fruit and efficacy; and they do use to read their own names, written, as it were, in every precept, promise, threatening. Look how men read the statute book of the land, as holding themselves highly concerned therein: so here.

Ver. 8. **I delight to do thy will, O my God]** To Christ it was his meat and drink, **#Joh 4:34**, he set his face to do it, and to suffer it, **#Lu 9:51**; yea, he was straitened, pained, till it was done, **#Lu 12:50**. And the same mind is also in the saints that was in Christ Jesus, **#Php 2:5**. They delight in the law of God after the inward man, **#Ro 7:22**, they prefer it before their necessary food, **#Job 23:12**.

Yea, thy law is within my heart] Heb. in the midst of my bowels; there is the counterpane, the duplicate of the law written, yea, printed, **#Jer 31:33 2Co 3:3**. Rip up my heart (said Queen Mary) when I am dead, and there shall you find Calais, the loss whereof (it is thought) killed her. Rip up the most men's hearts, and there you shall find written, The god of this present world. But God's law is in good men's hearts, to live and to die with it: *O beata Apocalypsis* (said that martyr, catching up that revelation cast into the same fire with him to be burnt), O blessed revelation, how happy am I to be burned with thee in my hands!

Ver. 9. **I have preached righteousness in the great congregation]** David did this, but Christ much more, by the everlasting gospel, sent the whole world throughout. Great was the company of preachers, and large was their commission. See a draught of it **#Ac 26:18**.

I have declared thy faithfulness, and thy salvation] Righteousness of Christ imputed, faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promises, salvation the end of faith, lovingkindness and truth the ground of all the former, God's lovingkindness, or mercy moving him to promise, and his truth binding him to perform; these are those pearls that

Christ by his preachers casteth before people, if they be but as forward to take them as he is to tender them. How beautiful should the feet be of those that bring such glad tidings! and how heavy will the dust of such feet be, shaken off against despisers!

O Lord, thou knowest] *sc.* That I have herein done mine utmost, and with an upright heart.

Ver. 10. **I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart]** Or, if he did, as #Ps 119:11, it was, that having wrought it first on his own affections, he might afterwards utter it a *corde ad cor*, from the heart to the heart, and so be able to save himself and those that heard him.

I have declared thy faithfulness, &c.] See #Ps 40:9.

Ver. 11. **Withhold not thou thy tender mercies, &c.]** Whereas, while the saints are on earth there will be a perpetual interchange of comforts and crosses; prayers must be joined with praises, and care taken that, confirmed by former experiences, they still depend upon God. *Nunc in luto adhuc haerens et cum residuo calamitatum collectans precatur Deum.*

Let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me] *Tuos illos custodes mihi ad latus adhibe*, let those two attributes of thine be mine angel guardians at all times. {See Trapp on "Ps 25:10"}

Ver. 12. **For innumerable evils have compassed me]** Heb. have mustered upon me. Many (or millions) are the troubles of the righteous; none out of hell ever suffered more than they: an elegant exaggeration of their afflictions we have in this verse, and such as cannot well be understood by any but those that have been wellbeaten porters to the cross of Christ.

Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me] *i.e.* The punishment of mine iniquities, #Ge 4:13, my sin hath found me out. If this be taken of Christ, he is *Maximus peccatorum*, the greatest of sinners by imputation, #2Co 5:20 Isa 53:6, for our sins (which here he calleth his) he suffered; and here his bitter agony in the garden is graphically described; neither is it absurd to say, that as he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree, he was first redeemed by himself, and afterwards we.

Therefore my heart faileth me] *i.e.* My wit, courage, counsel is wasted by earnest thinking upon them. *Scientia mea eis numerandis deficit*, as Kimchi glosseth.

Ver. 13. **Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me]** Do it of thy free grace, and mere mercy of thy good will and gracious liking (as the word *ευδοκία* signifieth), beside the consideration of my woeful misery laid forth, **#Ps 40:12**, as an object of thy mercy.

Ver. 14. **Let them be ashamed and confounded together, &c.]** These and the like imprecations must be looked upon as prophecies. Besides, David looked upon them not as his enemies only, but God's as well; and such also as were desperate and irrecoverable. So Paul prayed against the coppersmith, the Church against Julian, &c.

Let them be driven backward, &c.] A Christian may without sin be sensible of indignities; only it must be the mourning of doves, and not the roaring of bears.

Ver. 15. **Let them be desolate for a reward]** A poor reward; but such as sin payeth to her servants: "the wages of sin is death." Sin payeth all her servants in black money. See **#Ps 35:21**. The word here rendered reward signifieth a heel. It is as if the prophet should say, Let one desolation tread upon the heels of another, till they be utterly undone.

Ver. 16. **Let all those that seek thee rejoice]** viz. When they hear of my deliverance. The saints have both their joys and griefs in common with their fellow members, as being in the body, **#Heb 13:3**; both in the body of Christ and in the body of flesh and frailty.

Ver. 17. **But I am poor and needy]** A stark beggar neither will I hide from my Lord (as once Joseph's brethren said to him, when they came for corn) mine extreme indigence, my necessitous condition; I am one that get my living by begging.

Yet the Lord thinketh upon me] He is the poor man's King, as hath been said; and Christ is *cum Patre dator; inter nos petitor*; as Augustine hath it; that is, he gives with the Father, and at the same time prays with the suitor, who must therefore needs speed.

Thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying] Deliver me speedily, lest I perish utterly. God, saith one, is sometimes

troubled with too much help, but never with too little; we are sometimes too soon, but he is never too late.

A Psalm of David] Of the same sense with the four former psalms, saith Kimchi.

Chapter 41

Ver. 1. **Blessed is he that considereth the poor]** Heb. that wisely considereth concerning the poor; the poor weakling, whose health is impaired, whose wealth is wasted. Austin rendereth it, *Qui praeoccupat vocem petitori*, He that preventeth the request of the poor beggar; wisely considering his case, and not staying till he crave; which possibly out of modesty he may be loth to do. The most interpret it of a charitable judgment passed upon the poor afflicted, not holding him therefore hated of God because heavily afflicted, as Job's friends did. *At vobis bene sit qui de me quantumvis calamitoso rectius iudicatis*, so Beza here paraphraseth; Well may you fare, my friends, who censure better of me, though full of misery; and deal more kindly with me. The word Maschil signifieth both a prudent judgment and a desire to do all good offices, saith one. It signifieth to give comfort and instruction to the weak, saith another, wisely weighing his case, and ready to draw out, not his sheaf only, but his "soul to the hungry," **#Isa 58:10**. This is a blessed man, presupposing him to be a believer, and so to do it from a right principle, viz. "Charity out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," **#1Ti 1:5**.

The Lord will deliver him] *i.e.* The poor weakling; and the other also that dealeth so mercifully with him; both shall be delivered; according to that of our Saviour, **#Mt 10:41**. Delivered, I say, he shall be in due time; supported in the mean while; a good use and a good issue he shall be sure of. Some make it David's prayer, The Lord deliver him, &c. Others, the merciful man's prayer for the poor afflicted (Kimchi).

Ver. 2. **The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive]** Life in any sense is a singular mercy. "Why is a living man sorrowful?" **#La 3:39**; if he be alive, though afflicted, he hath cause to be thankful; how much more if alive to righteousness! The Arabic here

interpreteth it, *dabit illi filios in quibus post mortem vivat*, he will give him children, in whom he may live after his death.

And he shall be blessed upon the earth] With wealth, and other accommodations; so that the world shall look upon him as every way blessed.

And thou wilt not deliver him into the hands of his enemies] Heb. Do not thou deliver him. This maketh Kimchi conclude, that all this is but *oratio visitantis consolatoria*, the prayer of him that visiteth the sick man, for his comfort.

Ver. 3. **The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing]** Whether through sickness of body, as #Isa 38:2, or sorrow of heart; for in such case also men cast themselves upon their beds, #1Ki 21:4. This God, and not the physicians, will do for the sick man, *die septimo*, on the seventh day, saith R. Solomon, when he is at sickest.

Thou wilt make all his bed] Heb. Thou wilt turn, thou wilt stir up feathers under him, that he may lie at ease; and this by the hand of those poor whom he had considered. Or, Thou wilt turn all his bed, that is, his whole body, from sickness to health, as Kabvenaki senseth it.

Ver. 4. **I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal]** Heal me in mercy, and begin at the inside first. Heal my soul of sin, and then my body of sickness; heal me every whit. These, to the end, are the sick man's words, saith Kimchi. And this is the character of the Lord's poor man, to whom the foresaid comforts do belong, saith another.

For I have sinned against thee] He crieth *peccavi*, not peril. *Sanationem a capite orditur*; he beginneth at the right end.

Ver. 5. **Mine enemies speak evil of me]** Notwithstanding my piety and devotion; that is no target against persecution. David's integrity and the severity of his discipline displeased these yokeless Belialists; they were sick of his strict government, and longed for a new king who would favour their wicked practices; such as was Absalom, whom they shortly after set up. David they could not endure, because he did justice and judgment to all the people. These libertines were of the Egyptian mode; *loquaces et ingeniosi in*

praefectorum contumeliam, its ut qui vitaverit culpam, infamiam non effugiat, such as loved to speak evil of dignities; and could not give their governors (how blameless soever) a good word (Seneca).

When shall he die, and his name perish?] Nothing less would satisfy their malice than utter extermination. But David recovereth, and his name surviveth, when they lie wrapt up in the sheet of shame.

Ver. 6. **And if he come to see me**] That is, Ahithophel, or some such hollow hearted Holophanta (Plaut.).

He speaketh vanity] Pretending that he is very sorry to see me so ill at ease; and letting fall some crocodile's tears perhaps, *Ore pro mea sanitate orant sed corde quaerunt malum* (Midrash Tillin.).

His heart gathereth iniquity to itself] As toads and serpents gather venom to vomit at you.

When he goeth abroad, he telleth it] Boasting to his treacherous brotherhood of his base behaviour.

Ver. 7. **All that hate me, whisper together against me**] Heb. *Mussitant*, they mutter, as charmers use to do. These whisperers are dangerous fellows, #Ro 1:29, like the wind that creepeth in by chinks in a wall or cracks in a window. *A vento percolato, et iuimico reconciliato, libera nos, Domine*, saith the Italian.

Against me do they devise] *Cogitant quasi coagitant*.

Ver. 8. **An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him**] Heb. A thing of Belial, a vengeance, hath befallen him; God, for his foul offence, hath put him over to the devil to be tormented by a pestilential disease, that will surely make an end of him, *Omnnes impietates quas perpetravit* (R. Solom.). So Genebrard (that mad dog), in the fourth book of his Chronology, A. D. 1563, reckoning up those divers diseases whereof Calvin died, all which was well known to be false, addeth, *An Herodes terribilius animam Satanae reddiderit, equidem nescio*, Whether Herod yielded up his soul to the devil in a more horrible manner, I know not. With as little charity did Evagrius say of Justinian, the great lawgiver, *ad supplicia iusto Dei iudicio apud iuferos luenda profectus est*, he went to hell

torments, when he died by God's just judgment. And Luther of Ecolampadius, *Se credere (OEcopolampadium ignitis Satanae telis et hastis confossum subitanea morte periisse* (Lib. de Missa privata, A. D. 1533)— *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* This false conceit is sufficiently confuted by the history of his life and death set forth by Simon Grynaeus, as also is that concerning Calvin, by his Life written by Beza, and others.

Ver. 9. **Yea, mine own familiar friend]** Heb. the man of my peace. This was a great cut to David, *τιγαρ μειζον ελκος η φιλος αδικων*, saith Sophocles. What greater wound can there be than a treacherous friend? such as was Ahithophel to David, Judas to our Saviour, Brutus to Julius Caesar (who was slain in the Senate house with three and twenty wounds, given for most part by them whose lives he had preserved), Magnentius to Constans, the emperor, who had formerly saved his life from the soldiers' fury; Michael Balbus to the Emperor Leo Armenius, whom he slew the same night that he had pardoned and released him. This evil dealing made Socrates cry out, *φιλοι ουδεις φιλος*, Friends, there is hardly a friend to be found; and Queen Elizabeth complain, that in trust she had found treason; and King Antigonus pray to God to preserve him from his friends; and King Alphonsus to complain of the ingratitude of his favourites.

In whom I trusted] So did not our Saviour in Judas, for he knew him better than so, and therefore this clause is left out, **#Joh 13:18**, where he applieth this saying to himself. Jerome and some others apply the whole psalm to Christ, and for that end they render these words actively, *Cui credidi*, to whom I intrusted or committed my ministry.

Who did eat of my bread] My fellow commoner, with whom I had eaten little less than a bushel of salt. A man's enemies are many times those of his own house, the birds of his own bosom. Judas dipped in the same dish with Jesus, betrayed him with a kiss. *Caveatur osculum Iscarioticum*. Beware the kisses of Judas.

Hath lift up his heel against me] Heb. Hath magnified the heel, or the foot sole, *sc.* to supplant me, or to trample upon me, or to spurn against me. *Metaphora ab equis calcitronibus*, saith Vatablus, a

metaphor from unruly and refractory horses. See #Jud 15:8. It importeth contempt, despite, and cruelty.

Ver. 10. **But thou, O Lord, be merciful unto me]** As storms beat a ship into the harbour, so did men's misusages drive David to God; and as children, meeting with hard measure abroad, hie home to their parents, so here.

And raise me up] From off this bed of weakness, and from under their feet of insolence and cruelty.

That I may requite them] Not in a way of private revenge (for that was utterly unlawful, and would not bear a prayer), but of justice, as I am a king, and a lawful magistrate. The fear of this might haply make Ahithophel (foreseeing that all would be naught on Absalom's side) to save the hangman a labour.

Ver. 11. **By this I know that thou favourest me]** This is the triumph of trust and the fruit of faithful prayer; ever answered, sometimes before it is uttered, sometimes in, and sometimes alter the act; but we may be sure of an unmiscarrying return if we pray and not faint, #Lu 18:1, even such as shall bring us word that God favoureth our persons.

Ver. 12. **And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity]** Which earth and hell had conspired to rob me of, but in vain, through thy help. My shield is yet in safety. My faith faileth me not, nor yet mine innocence in regard of men, or the righteousness of my cause.

And settest me before thy face for ever] So that, being never out of thy sight, I cannot possibly be out of thy mind. Confer #1Ki 17:1.

Ver. 13. **Blessed be the Lord God of Israel]** Thus he sweetly shutteth up this first book of the psalms (as some distinguish) with a pathetic doxology, redoubling his Amen, *Fiat, Fiat*, to show his fervency, and most earnest desire that God should be blessed by his whole Israel. This was the custom of the Scribes to do, saith Kimchi, when they had finished any book. The other four books of psalms (as they are reckoned) end in like manner.

From everlasting to everlasting] *i.e.* From the beginning of the world to the end of it; or, as the Chaldee hath it, from this world unto the world to come.

Amen, and Amen] So be it, and so it shall be. *Dictio est acclamationis, approbationis, et confirmationis.* The Rabbis say, that our amen in the close of our prayers must not be, first, hasty, but with consideration, #1Co 14:16. Secondly, nor maimed or defective; we must fetch out our hearts after it, and be swallowed up in God. Thirdly, nor alone, or an orphan; that is, without faith, love, and holy confidence. The spirits of the whole prayer are contracted into it, and so should the spirit of him that prayeth.

Maschil, for the sons of Korah] Korah and his compilers were swallowed up quick by the earth in the wilderness for their gainsaying, #Nu 16, but some of his sons, disliking his practice, escaped, and of them came Heman (the nephew of Samuel), a chief singer, #1Ch 6:23. Now, to him and his brethren was this and some other of David's psalms committed, both to be kept as a treasure, and to be sung in the sanctuary, for comfort and instruction under affliction, according to the signification of the word Maschil; whereof see #Ps 32:1, title, *παθηματα γαρ μαθηματα.* *Nocumenta documenta.*

Chapter 42

Ver. 1. **As the hart panteth after the water brooks]** Heb. As the hind. Greek, *η ελαφος*, for in females the passions are stronger, saith an interpreter here, *quicquid volunt, valde volunt.* This creature is naturally hot and dry, about autumn especially (as Aristotle testifieth), but when hunted extremely thirsty. Chrysostom and Basil say, that she eateth serpents, and so is further inflamed by their poison. Now, as the hunted and heated hind *glocitat*, breatheth and brayeth after the water brooks,

So panteth my soul after thee, O God] He saith not, after my former dignity and greatness, before Absalom disturbed me, and drove me out (though he could not but be sensible of such a loss; we know what miserable moans Cicero made when sent into banishment; how impatient Cato and many others were in like case,

so that they became their own deathsmen), but after thee, Lord, and the enjoyment of thy public ordinances; from which I am now, alas, hunted and hindered. *Amo te Domine plus quam mea, meos, me* (Bern.). After that God's Holy Spirit hath once touched a soul it will never be quiet until it stands pointed Godward.

Ver. 2. **My soul thirsteth for God]** More than ever it did once for the water of the well of Bethlehem; and that, because he is the living God, the fountain of living waters, that only can cool and quench my desires, #**Jer 2:13 17:13**, so as I shall never thirst again, #**Joh 4:14**, whereas of all things else we may say

Quo plus sunt potae, plus sitiuntur aquae.

The Rabbis note here, that David saith not so hungereth, but so thirsteth my soul; because men are more impatient of thirst than of hunger; they can go several days without food, but not without drink. Alexander lost a great part of his army marching through the wilderness of the Susitans by lack of water (Curt. ex Diodoro).

When shall I come and appear before God?] Heb. and see the face of God? viz. in his tabernacle. *Eheu igitur quando tandem mihi miserrimo dabitur, ut te in aede tun conspiciam?* These earnest pantings, inquietations, and unsatisfiable desires after God and his ordinances, are sure signs of true grace. But woe to our worship scorners, &c.

Ver. 3. **My tears have been my meat day and night]** Hunters say the hart sheddeth tears, or something like tears, when he is pursued, and not able to escape. Hereunto David might allude. Sure it is, that as hinds calving, so men, by weeping, cast out their sorrows, #**Job 39:3**.

Expletur lachrymis egeriturque dolor.

And, *Affert solatium lugentibus suspiriorum societas*, saith Basil, sighs are an ease of sorrow. Of Mr Bradford the martyr it is reported, that in the midst of dinner he used oft to muse, having his hat over his eyes, from whence came commonly plenty of tears dropping on his trencher.—*αγαθοι δ αριδακρυες ανθρωες*. The better any are, the

more inclined to weeping; as David than Jonathan, #1Sa 20:41 Here we have him telling us that his tears were his meat, so #Ps 80:5, or his bread, as Gregory readeth it; and he giveth this reason, that, like as the more bread we eat the dryer we are, and the more thirsty; so the more tears of godly sorrow we let fall the more we thirst after that living fountain springing from above. David's greatest grief was, that he was banished from the sanctuary; and next to that, the reproachful blasphemy of his enemies hitting him in the teeth with his God, as if not able or not willing to relieve him now in his necessity, and bitterly upbraiding him with his hopes as altogether vain.

Whiles they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?] *Violenti certe impetus*, saith Vatablus here. These were violent shocks indeed; and such as wherewith David's faith might have been utterly overthrown, had it not been the better rooted, and with it upheld, by the special power of the Spirit of grace. Other of God's suffering saints have met with the like measure. At Orleans, in France, as the bloody Papists murdered the Protestants, they cried out, Where is now your God? What is become of all your prayers and psalms now? Let your God that you called upon save you if he can. Others sang in scorn, Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord; others, Have mercy on us, Lord, &c. The queen mother of Scotland, having received aid from France, forced the Protestants for a while to retire to the highlands, whereupon she scoffingly said, Where is now John Knox's God? My God is now stronger than his, yea, even in Life; but her brags lasted not long; for within a few days six hundred Protestants beat above four thousand French and Scots, &c. (Mr Knox's Life, by Mr Clark). God's servants fare the better for the insolencies of their enemies; who, when they say, Where is now their God? might as well say between the time of the new and old moon, Where is now the moon? when as it is never nearer the sun than at that time.

Ver. 4. **When I remember these things]** viz. My present pressures compared with my former happiness, *Miserum sane est, fuisse felicem*. The Epicures held (but I believe they did not believe themselves therein) that a man might be cheerful amidst the most exquisite torments, *ex praeteritarum voluptatum recordatione*, by the remembrance of his former pleasures and delights (Cir. de Fin. 1.

ii.; Sen. de Bon. l. iv. c. 22). David found this here but a slight and sorry comfort, though he better knew how than any of them to make the best of it; and his delights had been far more solid and cordial.

I pour out my soul] See #Job 30:16, {See Trapp on "Job 30:16"}

For I had gone with a multitude] Heb. a thick crowd, or throng of good people, frequenting the public ordinances, and David in the head of them. One rendereth it, *In umbra vel umbrella, sicut mos est Orientalium ambulare umbrellis contra ardorem solis accommodatis.*

I went with them to the house of God] *Lente itabam,* I went with a gentle pace, *gressu grillatorio.* He speaketh, saith Vatablus, of the order observed by the faithful when they went to the sanctuary, viz. in comely equipage, singing praise to God, and confessing his goodness.

Ver. 5. **Why art thou cast down, O my soul?]** Here David seemeth to be *Homo divisus in duas partes,* saith Vatablus, a man divided into two parts, as indeed every new man is two men; and what is to be seen in the Shulamite but as it were the company of two armies? #So 6:13. David chideth David out of his dumps. So did Alice Benden, the martyr, rehearsing these very words (when she had been kept in the bishop's prison all alone nine weeks with bread and water), and received comfort by them in the midst of her miseries (Acts and Mon. 1797).

And why art thou disquieted in me?] A good man's work lieth most within doors; he hath more ado with himself than with all the world besides; he prayeth oft, with that ancient, *Libera me Domine a malo homine meipso,* Deliver me, Lord, from that naughty man, myself. How oft do we punish ourselves by our passions, as the lion that beateth himself with his own tail! Grief is like lead to the soul, heavy and cold, sinking it downward, taking off the wheels of it, and disabling it for duty; like as a limb that is out of joint can do nothing without deformity and pain. Keep up thy spirit, therefore, and watch against dejection, whatsoever befalls thee, yea, against all distempers; since they hinder comfortable intercourse with God, and that spiritual composedness, that sabbath of spirit, that we must

enjoy, or else we cannot keep that continual holyday (εορταζομεν), #1Co 5:8. How many are there who through unnecessary sadness come to heaven before they are aware!

Hope thou in God] Faith quieteth the soul first or last, saith reverend Dr Sibbes on these words. There will be stirring at the first; as in a pair of balances, there will be a little stirring when the weight is put in, till it come to a poise; so in the soul, it comes not to a quiet consistency till there be some victory of faith, till it rest and stay the soul.

For I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance] Heb. the healths of his countenance, *Adhuc confitebor ei salutes vultus eius*. Chrysostom bringeth in a man laden with troubles coming into the church, where, when he heard this passage read, Why art thou cast down? hope in God, he presently recovered (Homil. in Genes.). Ver. 6. **O my God, my soul is cast down within me]** Though before he had schooled himself out of his distempers yet now he is troubled again; such are the vicissitudes and interchanges of joy and sorrow that the saints are here subject unto; as soon as the spirit gets the better, as soon the flesh; sometimes good affections prevail, sometimes unruly passions. Affections are the wind of the soul, passions the storm. The soul is well carried when neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet tossed with tempests to move disorderly.

Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan] That is, saith one, I will call to mind former experiments there, and take comfort. Or, I will remember thee, as I may, here at Mahanaim beyond Jordan, under the mount Hermon, and that other little hill (where I have found thee in my meditations and prayers propitious unto me), though I cannot now worship thee in the beauty of holiness, being driven out by my ungracious son Absalom from the place where thine honour dwelleth.

Ver. 7. **Deep calleth unto deep]** *Vorago voraginem advocat, i.e.* one calamity inviteth another, *Gurges gurgitem excipit* (Beza); *Aliud ex alio malure*, they come thick and threefold; the clouds return after the rain, #Ec 12:2; as one shower is unburdened another is brewed. One affliction followeth and occasioneth another, without

ceasing or intermission; so that they are grown, as it were, to an infiniteness, as #Ps 40:12.

At the noise of thy waterspouts] *i.e.* Thy clouds pouring down in full force, in a storm at sea especially, by a cataclysm of waters falling at once out of the clouds, sometimes to the overwhelming and breaking of a ship. This mariners call a spout. #Ps 18:4, The floods of Belial made me afraid.

All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me] *Fluctus fluctum trudit;* yet not without the Lord; the enemies and the evils that befell him are called God's waves or breakings, *Propter peccata nostra a te immissa* You have been against us on account of our sins. (Kimchi).

Ver. 8. **Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness]** He will after all this misery send forth a commission and a command to set me free; and his *mandamus* command will do it at any time.

And in the night his song shall be with me] When others that are without God in the world have restless nights, the gnats of cares and griefs molesting them, a saint can sing away care, and call his soul to rest, as #Ps 116:7, being filled with peace and joy through believing; such as setteth him a singing to God's glory.

And my prayer unto the God of my life] *i.e.* My praises, which are a chief part of prayer, #1Ti 6:1. Thanksgiving is an artificial begging, *Gratiarum actio est ad plus dandum invitatio.*

Ver. 9. **I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me?]** *Tene veto mei immemorem esse?* Thus I will in a familiar manner expostulate with him, and lay my case open unto him, as to a friend. The flesh suggesteth that he is forgotten, but faith holdeth its own, fastening on the Rock of ages.

Why go I mourning] Heb. Black, as one that is in mourning weeds; or, that had lain among the pots.

Ver. 10. **As with a sword in my bones]** Heb. a murdering weapon, which, when thrust into the bones, causeth most exquisite pain; so deeply was good David affected with the dishonour done to God by

his blasphemous enemies; it went to the very heart of him, as a dagger.

While they say daily] {See Trapp on "Ps 42:3"}

Ver. 11. **Why art thou cast down]** See #Ps 42:5.

Who is the health of my countenance] *i.e.* The Author of my manifold, present, and apparent safety; such as shall make me look blithe and beautiful, cheery and chirp.

Chapter 43

Ver. 1. **Judge me, O God]** This psalm is, as it were, an epitome or an appendix to the former, and little differing in words or matter.

Plead my cause] See #Ps 35:1.

Against an ungodly nation] Heb. a nation not mild or merciful; so he calleth Absalom's complices, who sought and would have sucked his blood. Such are a people of God's wrath and of his curse.

O deliver me, &c.] From Absalom, or Ahithophel, or the whole faction.

Ver. 2. **For thou art the God of my strength]** As being in covenant with me, both offensive and defensive. In the Lord Jehovah is a Rock of ages, or everlasting strength, #Isa 26:4, for God of my strength, #Ps 42:9, is my rock.

Why go I mourning] See #Ps 42:9.

Ver. 3. **O send out thy light]** *i.e.* Thy comforting grace, opposed to that, #Ps 43:2, I go mourning, or in black.

And thy truth] *i.e.* Thy faithfulness, opposed to the deceitful man, #Ps 43:1. The Rabbis interpret light and truth by Christ and Elijah; the Arabic maketh it a prayer for the Jews' conversion, *Lux et veritas piorum comites.*

Yet them bring me unto thy holy hill] Zion, the place of holy assemblies for God's service, *Iterum commendatur hic dignitas*

ministerii publici: Vae igitur illis qui caducorum bolorum usum reditaunt sacri ministerii iactura, qui conciones sacras et sacramenta ulro negligunt, &c.

And to thy tabernacles] So called, either because it was set up at sundry times in sundry places, while it was transportative; or else because it was parted by veils into several rooms, **#Heb 9:2,3**.

Ver. 4. **Then will I go unto the altar of God]** Not without store of sacrifices. God's service is now nothing so costly; and should, therefore, be more cheerfully performed. Heathens had their altars, &c., all save the Persians.

Ver. 5. **Why art thou bowed down, &c.]** See **#Ps 42:5,11**.

Maschil] *i.e.* Making wise, or giving instruction; for which purpose this psalm was composed by David (as it is most probable), or some other excellent prophet, for the use of the Church, which is *haeres crucis*, the heir of the cross, as Luther speaketh; and is here instructed how to carry herself under it, and to get benefit by it.

Chapter 44

Ver. 1. **We have heard with our ears]** *i.e.* We have both heard and heeded it, with utmost attention and affection. It is not a redundancy, but an emphasis that is here used.

Our fathers have told us] According to that they were commanded, **#De 6:1-10** and elsewhere, to whet good things upon their young children, and to propagate the memory of God's noble acts to all posterity, **#Ex 12:26 13:14 Jos 4:6,7 Ps 78:4,6**. Hear this, saith Basil, and blush, ye fathers, that neglect to teach your children. They made their mouths as it were books, wherein the noble acts of the Lord might be read to his praise, and to the drawing of their children's hearts unto him.

What work thou didst] All which they faithfully related and carefully recorded, for the use of after ages. **#Ps 102:18**, "This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord."

Ver. 2. **How thou didst drive out the heathen]** *i.e.* The Canaanites. These God, the great proprietary of all, supplanted, after that they

had for a long time grown there as trees, and abounded with all kind of sensual delights, till they had filled the land from one end to the other with their uncleanness, #Ezr 9:11.

How thou didst afflict (or break in pieces) the people, and cast them out] Or, cause them (the Israelites) to spread and propagate (so Mollerus readeth it), as the vine sendeth out her branches.

Ver. 3. **For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, &c.]** Men are apt to arrogate to themselves, and say, as Luther hath it, *Hoc ego feci*. I made this, Sesostris, king of Egypt, when he had conquered any country, was wont to set up pillars, and thereupon to engrave these words, This land I got in possession by my own power, he was afterwards slain by his own servants (Herod. lib. 2).

But thy right hand] *Quia per eam praelia et opera facta sunt*, saith Kimchi. God is the great doer in all achievements.

And the light of thy countenance] *i.e. Illustris praesentia tua qua praeivisti et praeluxisti eis*, thy gracious presence and conduct (Junius).

Because thou hadst a favour unto them] Free grace was the fundamental cause of all their felicity. God loved them because he loved them, #De 7:7. He chose them of his love, and then loved them for his choice.

Ver. 4. **Thou art my King, O God]** Heb. Thou art he, my King; Or, Thou art the same, my King, *i.e.* the same that thou wast to those of old. Oh, see to thy subjects, as ever thou hast done.

Command deliverances for Jacob] A Mandamus from thee will do it; he spake the word, and it was done. Some read it, Command deliverances, O Jacob; that is, O God of Jacob, as #Ps 24:6.

Ver. 5. **Through thee will we push down our enemies]** *Cornu petemus*, a metaphor from horned creatures, as #De 33:17. This we shall soon do if thou do but only give the word of command; for together with thy word goeth forth a power.

Through thy name] *Tuo nomine et numine, auspicio et ductu*.

And hast scattered us, &c.] Oh the many miseries of such a banishment! The poet Tyrtaeus thus expresses it:

*Est miserum, patria amissa laribusque vagare:
Mendica et timida voce rogare cibos.
Cum natisque errare suis, et coniuge moesta,
Et cum matre pia, cumque parente sene.*

Ver. 12. **Thou sellest thy people for nought]** Thirty for a penny the Jews were sold by the Romans, saith Josephus, at the last devastation.

And dost not increase thy wealth by their price] Thou takest thy first chapman (as the pope gave England, in Henry VIII's time, *Primo occupaluro*, to him that could first seize it), and hast not made thy best of them; but given them away, for whom thou wast wont to give great nations, #**Isa 43:3**. All the comfort in this case was, that yet they were dear to God as his sons, though sold for slaves to the enemies, as may be seen, #**Isa 50:1 52:3**.

Ver. 13. **Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours]** This to a generous spirit is very grievous. The Cappadocians were noted for a servile people; and Tiberius said of his Romans, that they were *homines ad servitutem parati* men prepared for slavery, (Ammian. 1. 2). The Jews at this day hear ill among all nations for a nasty and sordid people. *O Marcomanni, O Quades, O Sarmatae, tandem alios vobis deteriores inveni*, said that emperor, O Marcomans, O Quades, O Sarmatians, I have at length found a more odious and contemptible people than you are any, meaning the Jews, with whose stench he was much annoyed.

Ver. 14. **Thou makest us a byword among the heathen]** Who use to say, As base as a Jew, as wretched as an Israelite, &c. The Turks at this day say, *Iudaeus sim si fallam*, If I be not as good as my word, count me a very Jew. We use to say, As hard hearted as a Jew. Thus is fulfilled that which was threatened #**De 28:37 1Ki 9:7 Jer 24:9**.

Ver. 15. **My confusion is continually before me]** Heb. All the day long, or every day; so as that there is neither hope of better nor place of worse.

Ver. 16. **For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth]** Reproacheth religion, blasphemeth God and his people, as if he eared not what became of them; and his dispensation seemeth to say as much: this reflecteth upon the saints, and maketh them cry out—

— *Pudet haec opprobria nobis,*

Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

Ver. 17. **All this is come upon us; yet]** This they allege, viz. their constance as an arguent of their sincerity, and a motive to pity. Apply this, with Jerome, to Christians, and then it is the voice of martyrs.

Neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant] *ie.* We have not relinquished the true religion, or revolted to dumb idols; but held us close to thy sincere service. And, therefore, if that heathen emperor going against his enemy could say, *Non sic Deos coluimus ut ille nor vinceret,* We have not so served the gods that they should serve us no better than to suffer us to be worsted (Antonin. Philosoph.); how much more may God's faithful servants be confident of his help, and say, "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.**

Ver. 18. **Our heart is not turned back]** *Metaphora a stadio,* saith Vatablus. As those that run a race stand not at a stay, much less turn back again; so neither have we either stopped or stepped backward, but advanced still toward the mark, having *Nondum metam,* We have not yet attained, for our motto, as St Paul had, **#Php 3:12;** being in nothing terrified by our adversaries, nor afraid with any amazement, **#Php 1:28 1Pe 3:6.**

Neither have our steps declined] We have watched over every particular action; God's people are best when at worst.

Ver. 19. **Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons]** *ie.* In deserts haunted by dragons, see **#Isa 34:13 35:7,** whereinto we are driven in banishment, and there hast crushed us, and covered us with the shadow of death, *ie.* deadly calamity (Or. κακωσεως).

Ver. 20. **If we have forgotten the name of our God]** *ie.* Foregone our religion, as renegadoes, denying the Lord that bought us. In the

time of the Maccabees many defected to Paganism; Demas, forsaking Paul, became an idolatrous priest at Thessalonica, saith Dorotheus; Julian turned Pagan; Damascen, Mahometan, as some write; Harding, an obstinate Papist. In the Palatinate, when, not forty years since, taken by the Spaniard, scarce one man in twenty stood out, but fell to Popery, as fast as leaves fall in autumn.

Or stretched out our hands to a strange god] This Ignatius, Laurentius, and thousands of those primitive Christians would die, rather than be drawn to do. So the three children, the seven brethren, &c. Origen, for yielding a little, was excommunicated.

Ver. 21. **Shall not God search this out?]** What pretences or excuses soever be used for the colouring and covering of the same.

For he knoweth, &c.] See #Mt 10:26, {See Trapp on "Mt 10:26"}

Ver. 22. **Yea, for thy sake are we killed, &c.]** *q.d.* Thou knowest that for thy sake, and not for vain glory, or out of pertinace, &c., we are killed. It is the cause, and not the punishment, that maketh the martyr. Some suffer as malefactors rather, *Potes videre hominem morte affici, quare mortificetur nescis* (Aug.).

We are counted as sheep for the slaughter] As those Christians in Calabria, A. D. 1560, thrust up in one house together, as in a sheepfold, and butchered individually; {#Ro 8:36} besides those many, whose names being written in red letters of blood in the Church's calendar, are written in golden letters in Christ's register in the book of life, as Prudentius hath it.

Ver. 23. **Awake, why sleepest thou?]** Considering all the premises, stir up thyself, and come and save us? carest thou not that we perish?

Ver. 24. **Wherefore hidest thou thy face?]** God sometimes concealeth his love, as Joseph did, out of increasement of love; he retireth, but faith fetcheth him out, as the woman of Canaan did, #Mr 7:24,25.

Ver. 25. **For our soul, &c.]** Soul and belly (or body), both are oppressed, and lie suppliant at God's feet; resolved there to live and die together.

Ver. 26. **Arise for our help]** Heb. A help for us, a sufficient help, proportionable to our necessities. The Hebrew hath a letter more than ordinary. *{Hebrew Text Note}*

Upon Shoshannim] The name of an instrument with six strings, saith Kimchi. Or, concerning the lilies, **#So 2:1,2**, that is, the Messiah and his people, saith Kabuenaki. The city Shushan had its name from lilies there plentifully growing; as Rhodes from roses, Florence from flowers, &c.

Maschil] It is not said, as elsewhere, of David; and yet some will have him to have been the penman, others Solomon, epitomizing his Book of Canticles; with which indeed it is of the self-same argument, viz.

A Song of loves] An epithalamium or nuptial verse, made at the marriage of Solomon and the Shulamite. As for Pharaoh's daughter, various good divines are of the opinion, that neither here nor in the Canticles any respect is had or allusion made to that match of Solomon with her, so expressly condemned by the Holy Ghost, **#1Ki 11:1-3**, *ut per absurdum mihi videatur, illud matrimonium existimare fuisse tantae rei typum*, saith learned Beza. Ainsworth rendereth it, A song of the well beloved virgins, friends of the bridegroom and bride, **#Ps 45:9,14**, to set forth Christ in his glory, and his Church in her beauty. So, when Jerome had freed the Locrians from the tyranny of Anaxilos and Cleophron, the virgins sang his praise, as is to be read in Pindarus's Odes; which Politian preferred before David's psalms, *auso nefario*, like an atheist as he was.

Chapter 45

Ver. 1. **My heart is inditing a good matter]** Heb. frieth, *sicut quae in sartagine friguntur*, as things are fried in a frying pan, **#Le 7:9**. The prophet, being to sing of such a sublime subject, would not utter anything but what he had duly digested, thoroughly thought upon, and was deeply affected with, *Exordium ut vocant floridum*. What a high pitch flieth St Paul whenever he speaketh concerning Christ? See **#Eph 1:6 2:4,7 3:19**. The like is reported of Origen: *Nusquam non ardet*, saith Erasmus; *sed nusquam est ardentior quam ubi*

Christi sermones actusque tractet; that he was ever earnest; but most of all when he discoursed of Christ (Praefat. ad Origen. Opera). Of Johannes Mollias, a Bononian, it is said, that whensoever he spake of Jesus Christ his eyes dropped; for he was fraught with a mighty fervency of God's Holy Spirit; and, like the Baptist, he was first a burning (boiling or bubbling), and then a shining light. *Ardor mentis est lux doctrinae.* Zeal of mind is the light of doctrine.

I speak of the things which I have made touching the king] Or, I will speak in my works, that is, in this psalm, concerning the king, viz. Solomon, and him that is greater than Solomon in all his glory, Christ, the King of the Church. Works he calleth this poem, not for the greatness, but for the exquisiteness thereof; it being *breve et longum planeque aureum;* utpote in quo universa pane salutis nostrae mysteria continentur; as containing almost all the mysteries of man's salvation.

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer] *i.e.* I will roundly and readily relate what I have so well ruminated; and dexterously deliver my most mature meditations concerning the mystical marriage of Christ and his Church. This is a good precedent for preachers. Demosthenes would have such a one branded for a pernicious man to the commonwealth who durst propose anything publicly which he had not beforehand seriously pondered. And Aristides, being pressed to speak to something propounded extempore, answered, Propound today, and I will answer tomorrow; for we are not of those that spit or spun up things, &c.

Ver. 2. **Thou art fairer than the children of men]** Heb. Thou art double fairer. The Hebrew word is doubled, *ad corroborandum,* saith Kimchi; *Valde Pulchruisti* (Vat.). It may very well be that Solomon was, for his beauty, another Nireus; and for his eloquence, another Nestor; wisdom might make his face to shine. Of Christ we are sure, that his body, being of the finest temperament, and no way diseased, could not be but very beautiful. The Roman register reporteth him to have been of a reverend countenance, his stature somewhat tall, his hair after the colour of the ripe hazel nut, his forehead smooth and plain, his face without wrinkle, mixed with moderate red, his eyes grey, various, and clear (Lentulus ad Senat. ap. Magdeb. Cent. 1). Surely if Stephen's face was "as the face of an

angel," and if with his bodily eyes he could pierce the heavens, and see there what he would; how much more could the Lord Christ, whose very manhood came the nearest unto God of any that ever was or could be? His very countenance did express a Divinity in him. And what if to the Jews, who esteemed him not, but maligned him, and crucified him, he had "neither form nor beauty?" #Isa 53:2; what if he were so broken at thirty-three years of age, with continual pains and grief for them, that they judged him well-nigh fifty? #Joh 8:57; yet he was every way complete and comely above all the children of men; yea, above all the angels in heaven; for in him the "Godhead dwelt bodily," #Col 2:9, and we "beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," #Joh 1:14. His soul was like a rich pearl in a rough shell; like the tabernacle, goat's hair without, but gold within; or as Brutus's staff, *cuius intus solidum aurum corneo velabatur cortice* (Plutarch). He was all-glorious within; had a fulness of grace above that of Adam, #Joh 1:16, as much as a creature was capable of; and more near familiarity with the Godhead than any creature.

Grace is poured into thy lips] So that thou canst gracefully deliver thyself in a set speech. Solomon could, no doubt, as another Phocion or Pericles; in whose lips, *πειθω τις επεκαθηρο*, said Eupolis, sat a strange persuasive faculty; so that he could prevail with the people at his pleasure. Jesus Christ could much more do so; for together with his words there went forth a power; he spoke as never man spake; he spoke with authority, and not as the Scribes; all that heard him wondered at the words of grace that proceeded out of his mouth, #Lu 4:22 Isa 50:4.

Therefore God hath blessed thee] Or better, because that God hath blessed thee, and endowed thee with such gifts and graces.

Ver. 3. **Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty (O Heros).**] This is one of Christ's titles, #Isa 9:6, the giant, or the mighty strong God, the valiant champion of his Church. And his sword is the word of his mouth, #Re 1:16 Heb 4:12 Isa 49:2. All the wars in the conquest of Canaan were types of the spiritual wars under the gospel, whereby the nations were subdued to the obedience of the faith, #2Co 10:4 Eph 6:11. Christ hath his sword then, a two-edged sword; and he is here called upon to gird it to his

thigh (after the manner of those easterns, as we do our skins, hangers, wood-knives), that is, to take unto him his authority, and to exercise it for the conversion of his people and confusion of his enemies. *Additur ei gladius quem non ostendet velut ειδωλον, sed quem etiam destringat:* A sword he hath, not for show, but for service; whence it is added, "with thy glory and thy majesty."

Ver. 4. **And in thy majesty ride prosperously]** Heb. Prosper thou, ride thou upon the word of truth, *Equita super verbum veritatis*, of meekness and of righteousness, *q.d.* Ride thou in thy triumphant chariot, as it were, drawn by those three glorious graces, truth, meekness, and righteousness; and governed by the word, as by the chariot man. *Cui divinissimae allegoriae explicandae pro rei gravitate ac dignitate integro volumine opus esset*, saith Beza, for the explaining of which most divine allegory, according to the worth of it, a whole volume might well be full written. The kings of the earth for the most part have their chariots drawn by other horses, viz. pride, ambition, cruelty, &c., as Sesostris, king of Egypt,

Qui Pharios currus regum cervicibus egit.

And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things] *i.e.* Shall enable thee to perform them. Christ, riding on his white horse (his apostles and preachers), went forth conquering and to conquer, **#Re 6:2**. Solomon was no such swordman as was Jesus Christ.

Αμφοτερος Βασιλευς τ αγαθος, κρατερος τ αιχητης.

Ver. 5. **Thine arrows are sharp, &c.]** Peter's converts were pricked at heart; and Stephen's hearers were cut to the heart, **#Ac 2:37 7:54**. Christ can fetch in his rebels afar off; he hath arrows as well as a sword, to wound them; that men may either bend or break, yield or become his footstool; one way or other he will surely have the better of them.

Ver. 6. **Thy throne, O God]** Here the prophet directeth his speech not to Solomon (who never took upon him the name of God, as did Sesostris, king of Egypt, Antiochus Θεος, Caligula, and some other proud princes), but to Christ, **#Heb 1:8**, who is God, blessed for ever, αυτοθεος, not so called by an excellence only, as the angels are, **#Ps 8:5 Heb 2:1-9**, nor by office and title only, as magistrates are gods, **#Ps 82:6**, nor catachrestically and ironically so called, as

the heathen gods, nor a diminutive god, inferior to the Father, as Arius held, but God by nature, every way co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, #**Joh 1:1 Pph 2:6 1Jo 5:20**. Hold this fast; for it is the rock, #**Mt 16:16**; it is of the very foundation; so that if we believe it not there is no heaven to be had, #**1Jo 5:20**. As for his kingly office here described, it belongeth to him as Mediator, and what is here spoken of him is to be understood of his whole person; for so is he Head of the Church, and King of Israel, for ever.

The sceptre of thy kingdom, &c.] Thy government is not with rigour, but with righteousness; thou camest rightly by it, casting out Satan the usurper, #**Mt 12:29 Heb 2:14**; and dost most righteously administer it, #**De 4:8**.

Ver. 7. **Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness]** Solomon did so for a great while (nay, Nero's first five years were such that Trajan was wont to say that none ever attained to the perfection of them), but Christ continually; neither can he do otherwise, *Haec vere heroica est nemesis*. See #**Mt 3:10-12 Joh 5:30 Mt 12:18-20**.

Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed] *i.e.* For which purpose God hath anointed thee his Messiah, or Christ, #**Ps 2:2**.

With the oil of gladness] *Quia totus mundus in unctione Christi et eius missione laetabitur*; saith Kimchi; so called because the whole world should be cheered up by the unction and mission of Messiah; he received the Spirit without measure, that of his fulness we might all receive, and grace for grace, righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Above thy fellows] *i.e.* *Ex reliquorum regum numero eximendus*, above all earthly potentates (Beza); the best whereof (as David, Josiah) had their faults and flaws; or rather, above thy saints, thy fellow brethren by grace, and co-heirs of glory; they have *Plenitudinem Vasis*, but thou, *Fontis*; neither only art thou anointed *Prae consortibus*, above thy fellows, but *Pro consortibus*, for those thy fellows, as some render it, and it is very comfortable.

Ver. 8. **All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia]** Things not only of good savour, but of great price. Myrrh some take to be musk, aloes amber, cassia a kind of cinnamon, which in Galen's time was very rare and hard to be found, except in the storehouses of great princes. And Pliny reporteth that a pound of cinnamon was worth a thousand denarii, that is, a hundred and fifty crowns of our money. This description, then, of Christ's clothing doth allegorically set forth the sweetness and pleasure that the Father findeth in him (εν ω ευδοκησα, #Mt 3:17), and that we also find, while he is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, #1Co 1:30, {confer #2Co 2:15} and that out of his ivory palaces, *i.e.* his heavenly habitation, from which he beholdeth us, and raineth down righteousness upon us.

Whereby they have made thee glad] *i.e.* *Servi et sodales tui*, thy fellow friends and servants, who stand and hear the bridegroom, and rejoice greatly by reason of his voice, #Joh 3:29, yea, make him glad by their ready obedience, setting the crown upon his head, and adorning him, as it were, with all his bravery in the day of his espousals, #So 3:11, and making him say, How fair, how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! #So 7:6.

Ver. 9. **Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women]** Thy ladies of honour attending upon thy royal consort (for after the description of Christ, the bridegroom, followeth another, of the queen, his bride, and of the royal nuptials): or, Kings' daughters are in thy preciousnesses, that is, in thy comeliness that thou hast put upon them, #Eze 16:14; for all the Church's bravery is borrowed, and all her daughters, *i.e.* members, are adorned not with their own proper attire, *Sed regio mundo et ornatu*, out of the King Christ's wardrobe; this is the righteousness of the saints, #Re 19:8, viz. imputed and imparted.

Upon thy right hand] Which is a place of dignity and safety. As Christ is at the Father's right hand, so the Church is at Christ's right hand; where, as his wife, she shineth with her Husband's beams. This is very comfortable.

Did stand the queen] Heb. the wife, *adiutorium illi exacte respondens*, as #Ge 2:18, saith Aben Ezra. Of our Edward III the

chronicler saith, that he was happy in his wife, a lady of excellent virtue, who drew evenly with him in all the courses of honour that appertained to her side; and seemed a piece so just cut for him, as answered him rightly in every joint (Daniel's Hist.).

Ver. 10. **Hearken, O daughter, and consider; incline thine ear]** The prophet's, or rather Christ's, counsel to the Church, and each member thereof, wholly to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, **#Tit 3:12**; to leave all, and to cleave to Christ. This, because it is soon said, but not so soon done, he presseth in many words all to one purpose, Hearken, see, incline thine ear. Self-denial is a most difficult duty, and yet so necessary, that if it be not done we shall be undone.

Forget also thine own people, &c.] All evil opinions must be unlearned, and all evil practices abandoned, and all our love transferred and transfused upon Christ; or we cannot be a fit spouse for him. Christ's spouse must {as #De 21:11-13} shave her head, pare her nails, and bewail her father and mother, that is, her natural inbred evils and corruptions.

Ver. 11. **So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty]** If thou deny thyself and forego all others to please him alone he shall set his whole heart upon thee, and be ravished with thy love, as **#Pr 5:19**. How could that Persian lady's husband do less than love her, who, having been at Cyrus's wedding, and asked how she liked the bridegroom? Like him? said she, I know not how I like him; for I looked upon no man there but mine own husband. Aspasia Milesia was very dear to Cyrus, because she was *καλή και σοφή*, fair, and wise (Aelian).

For he is thy Lord] And, therefore, not to be slighted by thee for his great love, as many of the Persian monarchs were (Ahasuerus, for instance), but revered and obeyed, as Augustus was by his wife Livia.

Ver. 12. **And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift]** **#Isa 23:18**. The Tyrians, that wealthy people, when once converted (think the same of other nations) shall leave hoarding and heaping; and find another manner of merchandise and employment of their

substance, viz. to feed and clothe God's saints, and maintain his ministers.

Ver. 13. **The king's daughter is all glorious within]** In the inner man, #Eph 3:16, the hidden man of the heart, #1Pe 3:4. Great is the glory of the new creature; but not discerned by the world, through which the saints must be content to pass as concealed persons; and not think much to have the greater part of their ware in the inner part of their shop, and not all on the board or stall.

Her clothing is of wrought gold] *Ex vestibus auro ocellatis.* Clothed she is with humility, and other golden graces; as with that party-coloured garment, whereby kings' daughters, as Tamar, were anciently distinguished from others.

Ver. 14. **She shall be brought]** {See Trapp on "Ps 45:13"} she shall be presented to Christ a glorious Church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing, #Eph 5:27 Re 21:2.

Ver. 15. **With, gladness and rejoicing]** As at marriages is usual. Samson's wife, solecised in weeping at such a feast. Oh the joy! said that dying saint. But what in the meanwhile?

Ver. 16. **Instead of thy fathers, &c.]** The Church shall still bring forth children to her husband Christ, and there shall be a succession of his name, #Ps 72:17.

Whom then mayest make princes] The saints are kings in righteousness, though somewhat obscure ones, as was Melchisedec.

Ver. 17. **I will make thy name, &c.]** This is a second benefit promised to the Church, viz. everlasting renown, with highest estimation and imitation to the world's end.

Upon Alamoth] *i.e.* Upon the Virginals. Virgins with their shrill treble tune, #1Ch 15:20, used (belike) to sing this triumphant psalm, and to play it on the instrument; and their hearts were somewhat suitable to it. The penman some think to have been David, upon occasion of those notable victories, #2Sa 8:1-14; others, Solomon, for the virgins to sing and play at his wedding, #Ps 45:8,9 So 1:2; others, Isaiah, either upon the overthrow of those two kings, Rezin and Pekah, #2Ki 16:5 Isa 7:8, confer #Jud 5:11, or else after the slaughter of Sennacherib's army by an angel; then the virgin daughter of Zion (much more than before) despised him, and

laughed him to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem shook her head at him, #Isa 37:22, and sang as followeth:

Chapter 46

Ver. 1. **God is our refuge and strength]** *Deus nobis est receptus, et robur* (Tremel.). All creatures, when in distress, run to their refuges, #Pr 30:26 Ps 104:18 Pr 18:11 Da 4:10,11 Jud 9:50,51. So do the saints to God Almighty, for the safe-guarding of their persons, as here, and #Isa 25:4. Luther, when in greatest distress, was wont to call for this psalm, saying, Let us sing the forty-sixth psalm in concert; and then let the devil do his worst.

A very present help in trouble] Or, we have abundantly found him a help in tribulation (Joh. Manlii loc. com.). God, as he is not far off his people at such a time, so he needeth not much entreaty; but when we are nearest danger he is nearest to deliver, as in the gunpowder plot prevented eight or nine hours before it should have been acted; masses were sung in Rome for the prospering of it; but no prayers particularly made in England for the preventing, nor could be. Here God was, if ever, *auxilium praesentissimum*.

Ver. 2. **Therefore will we not fear, though the earth, &c.]** No, not in the greatest concussions of states and revolutions in nature. Earthquakes are very dreadful, and lay whole cities on heaps sometimes, as Antioch often, which was thence called Θεοπολις (Lege Plin. lib. 2, cap. 83, 88); but though not some part only, but the whole earth should be turned topsy-turvy, as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down, #2Ki 21:13; yea, though heaven and earth should be mingled, #Heb 12:26, in this also the believer would be confident, because God is with him, #Ps 23:4 27:1, whose praise and promise is to see to his servants' safety in the greatest dangers, and to set them out of the gunshot.

And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea] Though all the world should be reduced again into that first chaos of confusion (Horat. Od. 3, lib. 3).

*Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinae.*

Ver. 3. **Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled]** Heb. Be mudded; yet we will not fear, viz. with base distrustful fear, *Ut omnes procellae horribili cum boatu circumsonent. Tauti est experientiam sensumque auxilii divini habere.* The tempestuous rising and roaring of the sea is so terrible, that Aristotle saith, whosoever feareth it not is either mad or senseless (Ethic. 3. 7). Fear not, saith the angel to St Paul himself in that dreadful storm, **#Ac 27:24**, which implieth that he was afraid with a natural fear; and he might be so without sin. An awful fear of God is consistent with faith; neither is any believer guilty of a stoic apathy. The very devils believe and tremble, **#Jas 2:19**. The apostle's word there implieth that they roar as the sea roareth, and shriek horribly.

Though the mountains shake, &c.] As sometimes promontories fall with the force and impetuous beating of the sea upon them. Admit all this and more (whether in a sense literal or allegorical; set forth it is in a strain high and hyperbolic), yet we will bear up, and be bold to believe that all shall go well with us. *Id quod Propheta miris verborum figuris additis illustrat* (Beza).

Ver. 4. **There is a river, &c.]** *Interea civitas Dei*, amidst all these garboils and hurly-burlies abroad the Church shall be helped with a little help, as **#Da 11:34**, that, through weaker means, she may see God's greater strength. That contemptible brook Kidron (whereof read **#Joh 18:1**, compassing some part only of the city Jerusalem, or passing through the middle of it, as some write), together with the *riverets Siloe* and others that run into it, shall be able, through God, to save her from the power and greatness of her enemies. Confer **#Isa 8:6**, and this place shall be the better understood.

The holy place of the tabernacles] This was the beauty and bulwark of Jerusalem, viz. the temple, the continued sincere service of God; this was the tower of the flock, and the stronghold of the daughter of God's people, **#Mic 4:8**. See **#Isa 26:1,2**. And these rivers of the sanctuary, these waters of life, drawn with joy out of the wells of salvation, the precious promises, made glad the city of God, the consciences of believers, and caused them to triumph over all troubles.

Ver. 5. **God is in the midst of her]** Hence the Church is called Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there, **#Eze 48:35**, there he hath set

him up a mercy seat, a throne of grace, and paved his people a new and living way thereunto with the blood of his Son, so that they may come boldly, obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, **#Heb 4:14**.

She shall not be moved] Or, not greatly moved, **#Ps 62:2**, in those great commotions abroad the world, **#Ps 46:2,3**. This bush may burn, but shall not be consumed; and that by the blessing of him that dwelt in the bush, **#De 33:16** Built she is upon a rock, **#Mt 16:18**, and so is every particular believer, **#Mt 7:25**. And if at any time they be in distress,

God shall help her, and that right early] Heb. when the morning appeareth; that is, in the nick of time, when help shall be most seasonable and best welcome, **#Ex 14:23**, *Begneth haveshugnah* (Kimchi). Mourning lasteth but till morning, **#Ps 30:5**; the Church is invincible, ακινητος και ανικητος).

Ver. 6. **The heathen raged]** Among themselves, and against the Church (Christ mystical, as **#Ps 2:1,2**) with great three and fury: *Quia ab ascensore suo Daemone perurgentur*; as Bernard giveth the reason, because the devil rideth them, and spurreth them on.

The kingdoms were moved] To remove and root out the Church, but that will not be; because in the thing wherein they deal proudly God is above them. See those three sweet similitudes, **#Zec 12:2,3,6**.

He ultered his voice] Thunder struck the enemies, and saved his people by a miracle of him mercy, **#Ps 18:6,7**.

The earth melted] *Contra naturam suam, quia est arida*, saith Aben Ezra; against the nature thereof, for it is dry. By the earth some understand the enemies, who had almost filled the whole land with their multitudes.

Ver. 7. **The Lord of hosts is with us]** Even the Lord, who commandeth far other hosts and armies than the enemy hath any; and this they shall see by our spiritual security.

The God of Jacob is our refuge] Heb. our high tower, such as our enemies cannot come at. When he calleth him the God of Jacob he hath respect to the promises, saith Vatablus; God's power and goodness are the Church's Jachin and Boaz.

Ver. 8. **Come, behold the works of the Lord]** *Venite, videte.* Come, see. God looks that his works should lie well observed, and especially when he hath wrought any great deliverance for his people. Of all things, he cannot abide to be forgotten.

What desolations he hath made in the earth] How he hath dunged his vineyard with the dead carcasses of those wild boars out of the forest, that had infested it. Those four mighty monarchies had their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin; but the Church remains for ever.

Ver. 9. **He maketh wars to cease]** As the Lord putteth the sword in commission, bathing it in heaven; so he can quiet it, and command it up at his pleasure. He did so when Sisera was slain, and when Sennacherib. The Church hath her halcyons.

He breaketh the bow, &c.] "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper," #Isa 54:17. The Spanish Armada was set forth with infinite labour and expense; but soon dispersed and defeated.

He burneth the chariots] *In quibus instrumenta bellica vel victualia pro militibus circumgestant,* saith Aben Ezra, *i.e.* their carriages for ammunition and provisions.

Ver. 10. **Be still, and know, &c.]** *q.d.* As you must come and see, #Ps 46:8, so come and hear what the Lord saith to those enemies of yours, *Cessate, et scitote,* Be still, sit, and know, *Ex vestris saltem malis discite,* learn, by what ye have felt, that there is no contending with omnipotence. I will be exalted, asking you no leave, &c.

Ver. 11. **The Lord of hosts, &c.]** See #Ps 46:7 Ps 47:1

A Psalm for the sons of Korah] *Carmen triumphale,* saith Mollerus; a panegyric oration, saith Beza, written by David when topful of most ardent zeal, and sung by the Korites in that stately solemnity, whereat he brought at length the Lord's holy ark into the city of David; which gallant history is lively set forth, #2Sa 6 1Ch 15 And the use that David doth here make of it, viz. concerning Christ's kingdom, and the benefits thereby, concerneth us as much,

or rather more than that ancient people. The Rabbis with one consent say, that this psalm is to be understood *De diebus Christi*, of the days of the Messiah, who was prefigured by the ark, and should be the joy of all nations.

Chapter 47

Ver. 1. **O clap your hands, all ye people**] As they used to do at their king's coronation, #2Ki 11:12, show your joy for and interest in Christ your King, by manifesting your righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Other joys are mixed and dearly bought, but this is sincere and gratuitous, as the prophet Isaiah setteth forth elegantly, #Ps 9:3,5-7.

Shout unto God, with the voice of triumph] Heb. of shrilling. God's praises are to be celebrated with all manner of cheerfulness; and we are to be vexed at the vile dulness of our hearts, that are no more affected and enlarged hereunto; seeing all causes of joy are found eminently in God, and he is so well worthy to be praised, #Ps 18:3. Jews and Gentiles are here jointly called upon joyfully to praise their Redeemer.

Ver. 2. **For the Lord most high is terrible**] Amiable to his own, terrible to his rebels. This Son, if not kissed, will be angry, #Ps 2:12 This Lamb, for a need, can show himself a lion; as he is the Father of mercies, so the God of recompenses, &c., and being most high, he can easily overtop and subdue the stoutest of his enemies.

He is a great King over all the earth] As having taken possession, by his wonderful ascension, of the universal kingdom given him by his Father, and gathered himself a Church out of all mankind, which he wonderfully ruleth and defendeth against the rage of earth and of hell.

Ver. 3. **He shall subdue the people under us**] This was typified in the government of the Israelites, then ascendant in David's days, but fulfilled when Christ rode abroad on his white horse, the apostles, conquering and to conquer, #Re 6:2 *Quando Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca Christo patuerint*, as Tertullian hath it: Christ subdued the Britons and others, whom the victorious Romans could never come at. The Chaldee hath it, He shall kill the people

under us, *sc.* with the sword of the Spirit, the word; "when the law came, sin revived, and I died," #Ro 7:9. The Hebrew is, He shall speak the people under us; that is, he shall, by the preaching of the gospel, powerfully persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem, #Ge 9:27. Tremellius rendereth it, *Cogit in caulam populos*, he gathereth the people into the fold, viz. that, there may be one sheepfold and one shepherd, as #Joh 10:16 Eph 2:14 (Jun. ex Aben Ezra, and R. Judah).

And the nations under our feet] Hence the Jews to this day dream (as did also the disciples, soured with their leaven) of an earthly kingdom, wherein the Messiah at his coming shall subdue the nations, and distribute their provinces and wealth among his Jews. But Christ's kingdom is of another nature, and the nations are already subdued to the Church, which remaineth one and the same, although the Jews be as branches broken off, and others set in their place. #Ro 11:24. Besides, by the nations under the Jews' feet is meant (say some) that the Gentiles should be scholars, and the Jews schoolmasters, as it were, unto them; for so sitting under the feet, or at the feet, signifieth in Scripture, #Ac 22:3 Lu 10:39 2Ki 2:5. The teacher was called Joshebh, or sitter; the scholar Mithabbek, or one that lieth along in the dust, in token of his humble subjection. And in this sense Seneca somewhere saith, that the basest of people (meaning the Jews) gave laws unto all the world.

Ver. 4. **He shall choose our inheritance for us]** Or, He hath chosen. Of his free grace he espied out the land of Canaan for his people Israel, flowing with milk and honey, and such as was the glory of all lands, #Eze 30:6; and as much, yea, much more hath he done for the whole Israel of God, both of Jews and Gentiles, by electing them to an inheritance immortal, undefiled, reserved in heaven for them, #1Pe 1:4.

The excellency (or high glory) of Jacob whom he loved] *i.e.* All those high and honourable privileges wherein Jacob once, and now all the faithful, may well glory and rejoice, {see #Ro 9:4,5} having as great both abundance and assurance of God's grace and goodness as Jacob ever had.

Ver. 5. **God is gone up with a shout]** The ark is here called God, as also #Ps 132:5, and the face of God, #Ps 105:4; because from the

ark, in the midst of the cherubims, God spake to his people, and they by looking towards it had a sure symbol of the divine presence. The bringing of it up with pomp and solemnity into Mount Sion was a type of Christ's wonderful ascension into heaven, triumphing over all his and our enemies, #Col 2:15 Eph 4:8, and joyfully entertained by saints and angels in heaven. The Jews, ever apt to work themselves (as one saith of them) into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage, understand this passage of the future reduction of the ark into the sanctuary, where it was once; and for the which they most earnestly pray still, as Buxtorf writeth (De Synag. Jud c. 13).

With the sound of a trumpet] *Concrepantibus tubis;* and in like sort he shall return, #Ac 1:11 1Th 4:16.

Ver. 6. **Sing praises to God, sing praises]** Do it with all alacrity, assiduity, being of that martyr's mind who said, Should I do nothing else all the days of my life, yea, as long as the days of heaven shall last, but kneel upon my knees, and repeat over David's psalms to the glory and praise of God, yet should I fall infinitely short of what is my duty to do.

Ver. 7. **For God is King of all the earth]** *q.d.* Our King, said I? it is too little; he is King of all the earth. A title vainly taken by some proud princes, as Sesostrius, king of Egypt, who would needs be called κοσμοκράτωρ, Lord of the whole world. So a decree went out from Augustus Caesar, that all the world should be taxed, #Lu 2:1. The Great Turk, Amurath III, styled himself, God of the earth, governor of the whole world, &c.; but these were but bubbles of words, as St Peter hath it, God is the sole monarch of the whole world, παμβασιλευς.

Sing ye praises with understanding] *Non bacchantium more,* but prudently, and with a well composed mind, saith Vatablus; *Psalmo Didasealico,* saith Tremellius, with such a psalm or song as whereby ye may rightly inform one another concerning his kingdom and your own duty. Heb. Sing ye Maschil, that is, one of the psalms that bear that title, as some sense it; or, every one of you that hath skill in songs, as others, *Quotquot sapientes intelligentes et periti estis psallendi.*

Ver. 8. **God reigneth over the heathen]** This is his universal kingdom, whereof before, #Ps 47:7, and yet never can too much be said of it.

God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness] He is in a special manner King of his Church, as Ahasuerus was of his Esther, called his throne, #Ex 17:16 (because the hand upon the throne of the Lord, that is, Amalek's hand upon the Church, as some interpret it). His throne of glory, #Jer 14:21; and here the throne of his holiness, because Christ (who is called God so many times in this psalm) loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and so present it to himself a glorious Church, #Eph 5:25-27.

Ver. 9. **The princes of the people are gathered together]** Or, the voluntary of the people. The great ones disdain not to meet with the meanest at the public assemblies, for performance of holy duties; but thither they flee one with another, as the doves do to their windows, #Isa 60:8, glorying in this, that they are Christ's vassals, as did Constantine, Valentinian, and Theodosius, those three great emperors, casting their crowns at his feet, and willing to come under the common yoke of his obedience, with the rest of the people of the God of Abraham, the common sort of Christians (Socrates).

For the shields of the earth belong unto God] That is, those princes and magistrates also, #Ho 4:18 Ps 89:18, belong to the covenant of election; though not many mighty, not many noble are called, #1Co 1:26, and it was grown to a proverb, *omnium bonorum Principum imagines in uno annulo sculpi posse*. The Spanish friar was wont to say there were but few princes in hell; and why? because there were but few in all. If such shall show themselves shields to their people to protect them from wrong; and not sharks, rather, to peel them and pillage them God will own and honour such. Others thus: the shields of the earth belong to the Lord, that is, the militia of the world is his; he hath and can quickly raise the *Posse comitatus* of all countries.

He is greatly exalted] How should he be otherwise who hath so great a command, and useth it for the defence of his people?

Especially if the grandees of the earth become religious, and draw on others by their example and liberality? *Magnates Magnetes*.

A Psalm and Song for the sons of Korah] When and by whom compiled we certainly know not. If by David, probably it was upon occasion of the Philistines coming up to seek him, but were sent away back with shame and loss, **#2Sa 5:7,9**. If upon the slaughter of Sennacherib's army by an angel, Isaiah or some other prophet of those times (as there were many) might be the penman. It seemeth to be of the same time and occasion with **#Ps 76**

Chapter 48

Ver. 1. **Great is the Lord]** Greater, **#Job 33:12**, greatest of all, **#Ps 95:3**, greatness itself, **#Ps 145:3**. A degree he is above the superlative.

And greatly to be praised] No mean praises can be meet for so great a majesty. It must be *modus sine modo* (Bern.).

In the city of our God] *i.e.* In the Church; for others will not, cannot do it to divine acceptation. Galen (lib. 3, de usu part.), amazed at the wonderful frame of man's body, sang a hymn to the Maker thereof, but yet he lived and died a Pagan.

Ver. 2. **Beautiful for situation]** A beautiful nymph, so R. Solomon. Or, beautiful for the branch that droppeth balsam, saith Moller; *Pulcher surculo*, beautiful branch, that is, for the ark there seated. Or, for the tract and climate, as **#Jos 12:23**, situated on the north side of Jerusalem, as **#Isa 14:13**, in a cold, dry, and clear air, as **#Job 37:22**. *Sanantur illi, qui illic infirmi conveniunt*, saith Kimchi, they which come thither weak are made well.

The joy of the whole earth] Not only of the whole land, because thither three times a year the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord, **#Ps 122:4**, not only of the East, whereof Jerusalem was held and called the queen, *Urbium totius Orientis clarissima*, saith Pliny, see **#La 1:1**, but also of the whole earth, *Sumen totius orbis*, as one calleth it, and Rabshakeh himself (in that more ingenuous than Strabo) confesseth Judea to be a land of grain and wine, of

bread and vineyards, #Isa 36:17. Hence it is called the excellency of Jacob, #Ps 47:4, the goodness of the Lord for wheat and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; for all which men should come to sing in the height of Zion; but especially for spiritual blessings, that their souls might be as watered gardens, and they not sorrow any more at all, #Jer 31:12; but come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, #Isa 35:10, for the grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, therehence appearing, #Tit 2:11 Isa 2:3,4. If Plutarch could say of Rome in Numa's time, that the neighbour villages, sucking in the air of that city, breathed righteousness; how much better might the same be said of this city of the great King, where God himself was resiant, and his sincere service was established! #Ps 132:13.

Ver. 3. **God is known in her palaces for a refuge]** As the city was an ornament to the whole country, so was God to the city, as being a common refuge to both; and as having his holy temple there, not a professed sanctuary for impiety, as Florus spitefully stiled it, but far better deserving than Numa's new temple in Rome did, to be called πιστοως και ειρηνης ιερον, the sacrary of faith and peace, where the true God was truly worshipped, and found to be a very present help in trouble, the best bulwark.

Ver. 4. **For, lo, the kings were assembled]** The princes of the Philistines, #2Sa 5:5. Or, Sennacherib's princes, which were all kings, #Isa 10:8. Oecolampadius, upon #Isa 13:19, saith, that there were twenty and two kingdoms in Assyria; these all came with combined forces to lay Jerusalem desolate, but could not effect it.

They passed by together] They could do this city (dear to God, and secured by him, the Athenians boasted that they were θεοφιλεις, beloved of God, the Hierosolymitans were surely so) no more harm than as if they had been so many wayfaring men that had passed by it with their staves in their hands.

Ver. 5. **They saw it, and so they marvelled]** None of them could say, as Caesar, *Veni, vidi, vici*, I came, I saw, I conquered, but the contrary; they no sooner saw this heaven guarded city, but their hearts misgave them; and they were ready to say, as that duke of Saxony did, who intending to make war upon the bishop of Magdeburg, and understanding that he made no great preparation for defence of himself and his territories, but sought help from heaven

by fasting and prayer, *Insaniat alius*, said he, God bless me from such a madness as to meddle with a man who confideth in God, and committeth himself wholly to his protection.

They were troubled and hasted away] Heb. They fled with a hasty or headlong flight, being smitten with a sudden terror, such as was that of the Egyptians, when their chariot-wheels were taken off; of the Philistines, when for haste they left their gods behind them, #2Sa 5:20,21; of the Syrians, #2Ki 7:6,7, when they left all and ran for their lives; of the Assyrians, when the angel had slain a hundred eighty-five thousand in their camp, &c.

Ver. 6. **Fear took hold upon them there]** By "so" in the former verse, and "there" in this, the shameful flight of these enemies is lively deciphered, and, as it were, pointed at with the finger. So #Ps 14:5, "There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous."

And pain as of a woman in travail] Their grief was no less than their fear; and it came upon them, *Certo, cito, subito*, suddenly, sorely, irresistibly, inevitably.

Ver. 7. **Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish]** *i.e.* Of the ocean, or of the Mediterranean Sea, #Isa 2:16 23:1,6,10,14. The meaning is, Like as thou, O God, with thine east wind, that Euroclydon especially, which Pliny calleth *Navigantium pestem* (the mariner's mischief), art wont to dash and drown the tallest ships at thy pleasure; so thou both canst and wilt deal by thy Church's enemies. To whom, therefore, this text should be as those knuckles of a man's hand were to Belshazzar, to write them their destiny; or as Daniel was to him, to read it unto them.

Ver. 8. **As we have heard]** viz. By the relation of our forefathers, #Ps 44:1, or rather by the promises contained in the Holy Scriptures, which now we see verified and exemplified in our signal deliverances. Jerusalem's constant protection then is here assevered and assured, *per comparationem promissionis et experientim simul, et similiter eam contestantium*. See the like #Job 42:5. {See Trapp on "Job 42:5"}

In the city of our God] The Church is the city of the living God, #Heb 12:22, a city that breedeth men, yea, conquerors, as Herodotus

(Clio) saith of Ecbatana, the metropolis of the Medes, and as Pindarus (Nemeis, Od. 2) of another place,

Θρεφαι φωτα μαχαταν δυνατος, &c.

God will establish it for ever] There shall be a Church till the world's end, opposing all her enemies.

Ver. 9. **We have thought upon thy lovingkindness]** Heb. We have silently mused or minded, as being amazed, or rather amazed, thereat, not able to speak for a while, we were so transported when we met in thy temple for the purpose to praise thee, as for thy lovingkindness towards us, so for thy power and justice exercised on our enemies.

Ver. 10. **According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise]** *i.e.* It is infinite and inexpressible, #Ps 148:1 145:3. God's name is exalted above all blessing and praise, as those holy Levites acknowledge, #Ne 9:5. The distance between God and us is infinite, and we should labour to fill up that distance, if possible, with our praises.

Thy right hand is full of righteousness] *i.e.* Of noble acts, which thou hast done for us, according to thy promise, #Ps 25:10.

Ver. 11. **Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters, &c.]** Let the Church catholic, and each particular member thereof: give God the glory of his justice, and see that their joy be spiritual.

Ver. 12. **Walk about Sion, and tell the towers thereof]** *q.d.* Are they not still the same and as many as they were before the approach of the enemy? is anything diminished or defaced by the late stage or assault? "Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there," &c., #Isa 37:33.

Ver. 13. **Mark ye well her bulwarks]** Not at all impaired. The Great Turk could never have gotten the Rhodes but by treachery, notwithstanding his long and mighty batteries made upon that place day and night. How he raged at the last assault of Scodra, and blasphemed, see Turk. Hist. p. 423. Geneva is environed with enemies, French, Spanish, Savoy, Pope, and barred out from all aid of neighbour cities and Churches; yet is upheld, as it were, by an immediate hand of heaven, as Beza hath set forth in an elegant

emblem, *Hanc urbem non nisi miraculose stetisse et stare per multos annos res ipsa clamat.*

Ver. 14. **For this God is our God]** To draw them up to this consideration it was, that the prophet so calls upon people to view Zion, &c., and to take notice that she might well have written upon her gates (as that city Hippocrates writeth of had) *Intacta manet*, the daughter of Zion is a maid still, through the prowess of her champion.

Even unto death] And after too; for this is not to be taken exclusive. He will never leave us, nor forsake us.

Chapter 49

Ver. 1. **Hear this, all ye people]** This that is of so great consequence and universal concernment, viz. that the saints should not be frightened nor perplexed at the present prosperity of graceless persons; but consider that death at utmost shall render them extremely miserable, and at the day of judgment men shall return and discern a manifest difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not, **#Mal 3:18.**

Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world] "Hear, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken it," **#Jer 13:15.** The inhabitants of the world, Heb. of the transitory world, are like men in a mill, through hurry of business; or as one that is running a race, to whom, though never so good counsel be given, he cannot stay to hear it. Of such we use to say, that they hear with their harvest ears (harvest is a time of great pleasure, and great business), and hence it is that we have so ill a seedtime for the word. We had need to wish, as Harding once did, that we could cry out against sin as loud as the bells of Oseny; yea, as those catholic preachers, whose voice is heard in all speeches and languages, **#Ps 19:3.**

Ver. 2. **Both low and high, rich and poor together]** Heb. Both sons of Adam, or earthy man, and sons of Ish, or nobleman

quorum

Ex meliore luto finxit praecordia Titan.

Diogenes once made a like outcry at Athens, Ακουσατε ανδρες, Hear, O ye men; and when a company came about him expecting what he would say to them, he looked upon them and said, Ανδρας εκαλεσα ου ακθαρματα, I called for men, and not for slaves (varlets).
Ver. 3. **My mouth shall speak of wisdom**] Heb. Wisdoms and understandings; and yet the matter of this psalm was nothing extraordinary for the main of it; so that a profane person would have come out with his

Quid dignum tanto tulit hic promissor hiatu?

But good points are not therefore to be slighted, because commonly handled; but therefore the better to be heeded, and proof to be made by practice, what that good and holy and acceptable will of God is that is so much pressed upon, as **#Ro 12:2**.

Ver. 4. **I will incline mine ear to a parable**] *q.d.* I desire you to do no more than I will do myself. I believed, therefore have I spoken; I have wrought my doctrine upon mine own affections first, and shall dig it out of mine own bosom for your benefit. It is a parable I must tell you, or a master sentence, yea, it is a mystery, a riddle, as the other word here signifieth.

I will open my dark sayings] The doctrine of life eternal, and the judgment to come, here more clearly delivered than anywhere else almost in the Old Testament, is a mystery.

Ver. 5. **Wherfore should I fear in the days of evil?**] All the days of the afflicted are evil, **#Pr 15:15**. But why should either I, or any other afflicted servant of God, be overly troubled, as if some strange thing had befallen us; or staggered at the better condition of worse men, all things considered?

When the iniquity of my heels] Or, of my supplanters, mine enemies, those naughty men (called here iniquity in the abstract) who seek to trip up my heels, and do surround me with their snares for that purpose. See **#Ps 56:7**. Or thus, "When the iniquity of my heels," &c. That is, as some will have it, when my sins come to my remembrance, or are chastened upon me. Every man's heel hath some iniquity. As we shall have some dirt cleaving to our heels whiles we walk in a dirty world; so there is some defilement upon

all our actions, which we may call the iniquity of our heels. "He that is washed," saith our Saviour to Peter, "needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit," #**Joh 13:10**. The comparison seems to be taken from those that wash in baths; for although their whole bodies are thereby made clean, yet going forth they touch the earth with their feet, and so are fain to wash again; in like manner the saints, although bathed in that blessed fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, #**Zec 13:1**, and thereby freed from the stain and reign of sin; yet their feet or heels have some filth on them, some relics of corruption do still cleave to them, and cause them some sorrow; yet ought they not to fear, or be dismayed, but by the practice of mortification purge themselves daily from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, #**2Co 7:1**.

Ver. 6. **They that trust in their wealth**] Which was never yet true to those that trusted in it; and yet it is wondrous hard to have wealth, and not in some measure to trust in it; that is, to think ourselves simply the better and the safer for it, as our Saviour showeth, and his disciples, after some wonderment, at length understood him; so #**Mr 10:23,24**. Hence that strict charge, #**1Ti 6:17**.

And boast themselves in the multitude of their riches] Contrary to #**Jer 9:23**. This psalm sets forth the better gloriation of a believer in the grace of God, and in his blessed condition, wherein he is lifted up above the greatest worldlings.

Ver. 7. **None of them can by any means redeem his brother**] And therefore all money that hath been given for masses, dirges, trentals, *{A set of thirty requiem masses, said on the same day or on different days, CED}* &c., hath been cast away; seeing Christ is the only Redeemer, and in the other world money beareth no mastery. Neither can a man buy off death, though he would give never so much. Death will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content though thou givest many gifts, as Solomon saith in another case, #**Pr 6:35**. Fie, quoth that great Cardinal Beaufort, will not death be hired? Will money do nothing? Why should I die, being so rich? If the whole realm would save my life, I am able either by policy to get it or by riches to buy it (Acts and Mon. in H. 6). Lewis XI would not hear of death all the time of his last sickness, but when he saw there was no remedy, he sent for holy water from Rheims, together with Aaron's rod, as they called it, and other holy relics, thinking therewith to stop death's mouth, and

to stave him off; but it would not be (Epit. Hist. Gall.). *O Miser* (saith one thereupon) *hoc assidue times quod semel faciendum est? Hoc times quod in tua manu est ne timeas? Pietatem assume, superstitionem omitte; mors tua vita erit, et quidem beata atque aeterna* (Val. Max. Christ., p. 391).

Ver. 8. **For the redemption of their soul is precious]** *i.e.* The price of life is greater than that any man, how wealthy soever, can compass it. Money is the monarch of this world, but not of the next.

And it ceaseth for ever] *i.e.* The purchase of a longer life ceaseth, there is no such thing, believe it, **#Job 36:18,19 De 23:22 Zec 11:12.** To blame, then, were the Agrigentines, who did eat, build, plant, &c., as though they should live for ever.

Ver. 9. **That he should still live for ever]** As every wicked man would, if it might be had for money; for he knoweth no happiness but to have and to hold; on the other side of the grave he looketh for no good; whereas a godly man holdeth mortality a mercy, as **#Php 1:23**, he hath *Mortem in desiderio et vitam in patientia*, as Fulgentius saith, he desireth to die, and yet is content to live; accepting of life rather than affecting it, enduring it rather than desiring it.

And not see corruption] Heb. the pit of corruption. The Chaldee understandeth it as hell; to the which the wicked man's death is as a trap door.

Ver. 10. **For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool]** This to be a truth, *etiam muta clamant cadavera*, the dead corpses of both do preach and proclaim, by a dumb kind of eloquence. Death maketh no difference; *Pallida mors aequo, & c.* It is appointed for all men once to die. It lieth as a man's lot, as the word *αποκεῖται* signifieth, **#Heb 9:27**, and all men can say, We are all mortal; but, alas, we say it for most part, *magis usu quam sensu*, more of custom than feeling; for we live as if our lives were riveted upon eternity, and we should never come to a reckoning.

*Heu vivunt heroines tanquam mors nulla sequatur;
Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret.*

And the brutish person perish] His life and his hopes ending together. But it would be considered, that wise men die as well as fools, good men die as well as bad, yea, good men oft before the bad, #Isa 57:1. Jeroboam's best son died before the rest, because there was some good found in him (ωκυμοροι οι θεωριλεις).

And leave their wealth to others] Nec aliis solum, sed et alienis, to mere strangers; this Solomon sets forth as a great vanity. It was therefore a good speech of a holy man once to a great lord, who had showed him his stately house and pleasant gardens: You had need make sure of heaven, or else when you die you will be a very great loser.

Ver. 11. **Their inward thought is, that their houses, &c.]** Some join this verse to the former, and read the words thus: Whereas each of them seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool, &c., yet their inward thought is, &c., they have a secret fond conceit of their own immortality, they would fain believe that they shall dwell here for ever. The Hebrew runneth thus, Their inwards are their houses for ever; as if their houses were got within them, as the Pharisee's goods were, #Lu 11:14, τα ενωντα. So here, *Internum vel interiora*; not the thoughts only, but the very inmost of the thoughts of wicked worldlings, the most retired thoughts and recesses of their souls, are about these earthly things; these lie nearest to their hearts; as Queen Mary said when she died, Open me, and you shall find Calais at my heart. It was a pitiful case, that a rotten town lay where Christ should, and yet it is ordinary.

They call their lands after their own names] So to make them famous, and to immortalize them at once. Thus Cain called his newly built city Enoch, after the name of his son, whom he would thereby have to be called Lord Enoch of Enoch. This is the ambition still of many, that take little care to know that their names are written in heaven; but strive to propagate them, as they are able, upon earth, Nimrod by his tower, Absalom by his pillar, Alexander by his Alexandria, Adrian by his Adrianople, &c. But the name of the wicked shall rot, #Pr 10:7, and those that depart from God shall be written in the earth, #Jer 17:13, &c.

Ver. 12. **Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not]** Howsoever he think to eternalize himself, and be grown never so

great, die he must, whether lord or lowly; and die like a beast, a carrion beast (unless he be the better man), but only for this pillow and bolster. At one end of the library at Dublin was a globe, at the other a skeleton; to show, that though a man was lord of all the world, yet he must die, his honour must be laid in the dust. The mortal scythe (saith one) is master of the royal sceptre, and it moweth down the lilies of the crown as well as the grass of the field. *Perperam accommodatur hic versiculus*, saith another; this verse is not well interpreted of the first man, Adam, to prove that he sinned the same day wherein he was created, and lodged not one night in paradise.

He is like the beasts that perish] *Pecoribus, morticinis*, saith Junius, the beasts that die of the murrain, and so become carrion, and are good for nothing.

Ver. 13. **This their way is their folly]** This their fond conceit of an immortality is an egregious folly, fully confuted by every day's experience; for the longest lived person dies at last, as did (beside the antediluvian patriarchs) Joannes de Ternporibus, armour bearer to Charles the Great, who died A.D. 1139, aged three hundred sixty-one years (Asted's Chronol. 475). So the old man of Bengala, in the East Indies, who was three hundred and thirty-five years old when he came to the Portugals, from whom, for his miraculous age, he received a yearly stipend till he died (Naucler. Purehas. Pilg., p. 481). He that lived in our days till one hundred and fifty years, or thereabouts, yielded at length to nature; and yet men dote and dream still of an immortality. The first doom that ever was denounced was death, "Thou shalt surely die"; and the first doubt that ever was made was concerning death, "Ye shall not surely die"; ever since which time there is something of the spawn of that old serpent left in our natures, prompting us to doubt of that whereof there is the greatest certainty; and although every man granteth that he shall die, yet there is scarce any man that futureth not his death, and thinketh that he may live yet, and yet, and so long: this is folly in a high degree, and we should be sensible of it, labouring to become neither fond of life nor afraid of death. &&&Longevity-Long lived men

Yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah] Heb. delight in their mouth, are as wise as their ancestors, tread in their track, take

up their inward thoughts, #Ps 49:11, observe the same lying vanities, and so forsake their own mercies, #Jon 2:8. Selah, *q.d.* O wonderful, for, see the issue of their folly.

Ver. 14. **Like sheep they are laid in the grave]** These fatlings of the world, these brainless young nobleman, that will not be warned by other men's harms, but walk on in the same dark and dangerous ways, whatever cometh of it, these chop into the grave (as a man that walketh in the snow may do suddenly into a marl pit, and there be smothered), or rather are there pent up, as sheep are thrust up in a stall, or stable, to be slaughtered there (and in hell their souls); they lie as grapes in a winepress, pickled herrings in a barrel, stones in a lime furnace, tiles in a brick kiln, &c. *Tanquam pecudes*, like sheep, saith the psalmist here; and Junius's note is, *Morticinas puta in cloacis, exquiliis vel puticulis proiectas*; like sheep, that dying of the murrain, are thereupon cast into ditches, jakes, bogs.

Death shall feed on them] They shall be meat for worms, yea, they shall be killed with death, #Re 2:23, which is worse than all the rest; sin, as a heavy gravestone, presseth them to death, &c.

And the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning] *i.e.* At the resurrection, when the saints shall share with Christ in his kingdom (when the wicked shall be his footstool), and shall judge the world, yea, the angels. Others by morning understand suddenly, or seasonably, as #Ps 46:5.

And their beauty shall consume in the grave] All their pomp and bravery wherein they came abroad while alive (as Agrippa and Bernice came to the tribunal with a great deal of fancy, #Ac 25:23), and with which they affect to be buried in state.

Sic transit gloria mundi .

So passes the honour of the world. #1Co 7:31.

From their dwelling] Whence they are carried to the grave, that dark house of all living, #Job 30:23. Some render the text thus, *Infernus habitaculum ipsius*, Hell shall be their habitation. Tremellius thus, *Et formam eorum consumat infernus receptam ex habitaculo eius*, and hell consume their shape (that is, their bodies now

reunited to their souls), received out of its house, that is, out of the grave.

Ver. 15. **But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave]** Heb. from the hand of hell: *q.d.* I am, and shall be in far better condition both in life, at death, and after death, than any of the world's darlings. *Spe bona docti ab indoctis differunt, dixit Chilo;* why then should I fear, as **#Ps 49:5**; why should I envy their seeming happiness, which will have so sad a catastrophe, as **#Ps 49:14**. I shall have heaven, and that is more worth than all.

For he shall receive me. Selah] A notable text indeed, and well worthy of a Selah; a clear testimony for the immortality of the soul, and for a better life after this, as is well observed. *Hae sunt parabolae, et haec sunt aenigmata,* saith a good interpreter. These are those parables, and these are those dark sayings, mentioned **#Ps 49:4**, riddles to the wicked, but cordials to the faithful.

Ver. 16. **Be not thou afraid]** David was comforted, and so he would have others to be; for as it was said of a certain bishop of Lincoln, that he held nothing his own but what he had bestowed upon others, *Hoc habeo quodcunque dedi;* so the saints think their comforts nothing so comfortable unless others may share in them, and fare the better by them.

When the glory of his house is increased] viz. By a numerous offspring, stately building, gay furniture, great rents and revenues; for as they say of the metal they make glass of, it is nearest melting when it shineth brightest; so are the wicked nearest destruction when at greatest lustre.

Ver. 17. **For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away]** Nothing but a shroud, as that great emperor caused to be proclaimed at his funeral. He was a fool that on his death bed clapped a piece of gold into his mouth, and said, Some wiser than some; I will take this with me. See **#Job 1:21 1Ti 6:7**. {See Trapp on "Job 1:21"} {See Trapp on "1Ti 6:7"}

His glory shall not descend after him] No, nor be able to breathe one cold blast upon him, when he is burning in hell. Oh that wicked rich men would think of this, before the cold grave hold their bodies, and hot hell hold their souls.

Ver. 18. **Though whilst he lived he blessed his soul]** As that rich fool did, #Lu 12:16-21, and that king of France, who, puffed up with the marriage of his sister to the king of Spain, called him by a new title, *Tres-heureuse Roi*, the thrice happy king; but was soon after accidentally slain by the captain of his guard running at tilt with him, at the solemnizing of that same marriage, in the very beginning of his supposed happiness.

And men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself] Feathering thine own nest and pampering thine own carcase; thou shalt be sure of parasites and trencher flies, who will highly commend thee, though against their own consciences, #Ro 1:32. The world generally admireth the happiness of such as live at full, and ask what should such a one ail? The Irish ask what they meant to die?

Ver. 19. **He shall go to the generation of his fathers]** *i.e.* To the grave, or albeit he come to the age of his fathers, that is, live here very long.

They shall never see light] Either have any sound comfort at death or any part in God's kingdom.

Ver. 20. **Man that is in honour and understandeth not]** *Versus amoibaesus.* See #Ps 49:12, there is but little difference; *Stultitiam patiuntur opes.* The more a man hath of worldly wealth, and the less of spiritual and heavenly understanding therewith, the more bestial he is, and shall be more miserable. Caligula called his father-in-law, Marcus Silanus, χρυσουν προβατον, a golden brute, *Quid cervo ingentia cornua, cum desit animus?*

Vel mihi da clavem, vel mihi tolle seram.

A Psalm of Asaph] Who was both a music master, #1Ch 25:2, and a psalm composer, #2Ch 29:30. The most are of the opinion that this psalm was made by David, and committed to Asaph to be sung, after that Israel had been afflicted with three years' famine and three days' pestilence, and the angel had appeared to David, and set out the place where the temple should be built, #2Sa 21:1-3 2Sa 24:13-18 1Ch 21:18 22:4 (Jun.).

Chapter 50

Ver. 1. **The mighty God, even the Lord]** Heb. The God of gods, whether they be so deputed, as angels, magistrates; or reputed only, as heathen deities, **#1Co 8:5**. Jehovah or Essentiator, is God's proper name. Some say God is here thrice named, to note the Trinity in Unity (R. Nahum ap. Nebien).

Hath spoken] *sc.* By the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, spoke much like, **#Jude 14**. The Rabbis say that this psalm is *De die iudicii futuro*, of the day of judgment. Others, that it is the Lord's judging of his Church, drawn according to the model of the great and last judgment, whereunto it serveth as a preparation or a warning piece.

And called the earth from the rising, &c.] The "habitable part of God's earth; the sons of men," **#Pr 8:31**, with **#Mal 1:11**. These are all called to attest the equity of God's proceedings against a hypocritical nation, children that were corrupters. For God hath thus far instructed all men, that he is to be honoured of all, with all manner of observance, **#Ro 1:20**. Let this be pressed upon all sorts, said Zalcucus the Locrian lawgiver, in the preface to his laws 1. That there is a God. 2. That this God is to be duly worshipped.

Ver. 2. **Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty]** Heb. the whole perfection, or the universality of beauty, *Perfectissimae pulchritudinis locus* (Trem.); because there especially was God's glory set forth in his holy ordinances, and more clearly manifested than in all his handiwork besides. See **#Ps 48:2**.

God hath shined] Like the sun in his strength, sometimes for the comfort of his people, as **#Ps 80:1**; sometimes for the terror of evildoers, as **#Ps 94:1**, and here. But evermore God is terrible out of his holy places, **#Ps 68:35 89:7**.

Ver. 3. **Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence]** He doth daily come and sit upon the tribunal in his Church by the ministry of his servants, **#Mt 18:17**, who must reprove sinners with all authority, and show themselves sons of thunder, that they may save some at least with fear, snatching them out of the fire, **#Jude 23**, as Peter, **#Ac 2:40**, and Paul, **#2Co 5:11**, but especially when, to work

upon the Proconsul Paulus Sergius, he set his eyes upon Elymas the sorcerer, as if he would have looked through him; after which lightning followed that terrible thunder crack, "O thou full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the straight ways of the Lord?" #Ac 13:9,10.

A fire shall devour before him] As he gave his law in fire, so in fire shall he require it.

And it shall be very tempestuous round about him] Not before him only, but around him; lest the wicked should hope to escape by creeping behind him. That was a terrible tempest that befell Alexander the Great and his army marching into the country of Pabaza; when, by reason of continual thundering and lightning, with hailstones and lightning bolts, the army was disorganized and wandered any way; many dared not stir out of the place (Curtius, lib. 3, ex Diodor.). Tremellius rendereth it wish wise, but in a parenthesis, Let our Lord come, and let him not be silent. The saints know that they shall be safe, when others shall smoke for it; because God is their God.

Ver. 4. **He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth]** That these dumb creatures may be as so many speaking evidences against an unworthy people, and witnesses of God's righteous dealings against them. See #De 32:1 Isa 1:2 Mic 6:2. The Chaldee thus paraphraseth, He will call the high angels from above; and the just of the earth from beneath.

Ver. 5. **Gather my saints together unto me]** This seemeth to be spoken to the angels, those active instruments and executioners of God's judgments. By saints here understand professors at large, all that live in the bosom of the Church visible, and partake of the external privileges only; such as are in the vine, but bear no fruit, #Joh 15:2; have a name to live, but are dead, #Re 3:1; such as whose sanctity consisteth only in covenanting by sacrifice. Basil saith that such are called saints to aggravate their sins; as a man that hath an honourable title, but hath done wickedly; and is, therefore, the rather to be condemned. When one pleaded once with a judge for his life, that he might not be hanged, because he was a gentleman,

he told him that therefore he should have the gallows made higher for him.

Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice] But were never brought by me into the bond of the covenant; for then the rebels would have been purged out from among them, as it is **#Eze 20:37,38.**

Ver. 6. **And the heavens shall declare his righteousness]** Those catholic preachers, whose voice goeth out aloud to the end of the world, **#Ps 19:4 50:4.**

For God is Judge himself] And from him is no appeal; every transgression and disobedience from him shall receive a just recompense of reward, **#Heb 2:2**, even those corruptions that are most inward, and lie up in the heart of the country, as it were; those pollutions not of flesh only, *i.e.* worldly lusts and gross evils, but of spirit also, **#2Co 7:1**, more spiritual lusts, as pride, presumption, formality, self-flattery, carnal confidence in external legal worships, the sin principally taxed in this Jewish people here in the next verses.

Ver. 7. **Hear, O my people, and I will speak, &c.]** What sweet and winning language is here for a preface! God's proceedings against sinners, whom he might confound with his terrors, is with meekness and much mildness, **#Ge 3:9,11 4:9 Mt 22:11 26:50.** Be we herein followers of God as dear children, **#Jos 7:19 Ga 6:1 2Ti 2:19.**

O Israel, I will testify against thee] *i.e.* I will expostulate with thee, and convince thee. This is a mercy which the Lord vouchsafed our first parents when they had sinned; the serpent he would not so much as examine, but doomed him presently.

I am God] And should, therefore, have been better obeyed.

Even thy God] And, therefore, thou of all others shouldest have had more care, and not have despised me with seeming honours by presenting me with outside services.

Ver. 8. **I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices]** *i.e.* For thy neglect of them, but for thy resting in them, sticking in the bark, bringing me the bare shell without the kernel, not referring thy

sacrifices to the right end and use; but satisfying thyself in the work done. This was afterwards the sin of the Pharisees, is still of the Papists, and of too many carnal gospellers, who think they have served God, for they have been at church, done their devoir, for they have said their prayers, &c. Yea, many of the better sort among us hold only a certain stint of daily duties, as malt horses their pace, or mill horses their round, that move much, remove little, out of custom or form. Yea, the best find it hard enough to be in duty in respect of performance, and out of duty in respect of dependence; to do all righteousness, and yet to rest in none but Christ's.

Or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me] Heb. Thy burnt offerings have been continually before me; so that I am satiated with the very sight of them, #Isa 1:11; there God complained that all his senses were wearied, and his soul vexed, by the abundance of their outward ceremonies, but want of moral service.

Ver. 9. **I will take no bullock out of thy house, &c.]** *q.d.* Keep them to thyself, I need them not; thou settest a high price upon them, and thinkest to ingratiate with me by them; I value them not, nay, I loathe them, *Sordet in conspectu Iudicis quod fulget in conspectu operantis.* "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God," #Lu 16:15. Displeasing service is double dishonour.

Ver. 10. **For every beast of the forest is mine]** God is the great proprietary; and all is his by primitive right. It is but of his own, therefore, that any man giveth him aught; as David freely acknowledgeth, #1Ch 29:14; and that great emperor, who, dedicating his rich communion table to Jesus Christ, wrote upon it *τα σο εκ των σων σοι προσφερομεν*, Thine own, and of thine own, Lord, present we unto thee (Justinian apud Cedren.). And yet vain man is apt to conceit that God is obliged unto him when he offereth unto God any part of his goods.

And the cattle upon a thousand hills] Or, upon the hills of a thousand owners.

Ver. 11. **I know all the fowls of the mountains]** *i.e.* *In numerato habeo*, saith Vatablus, they are always before me ready at my service.

And the wild beasts of the field] R. Solomon interpreteth it reptiles, the creeping things of the field; others, *copiam volucrum in vallibus*, the abundance of birds that are up and down the fields and valleys.

Ver. 12. **If I were hungry, I would not tell thee]** I would not employ thee to cater or purvey for me. But it befalls not God to be hungry, as not only heathens held, and, therefore, said that their Jove was gone into Ethiopia to be feasted, but some carnal Jews also, who conceived that a fat sacrifice was as acceptable to God as a fat dinner was to themselves (Homer. Lucian).

For the world is mine, and the fulness thereof] *Quicquid avium volitat, quicquid piscium natat, quicquid ferarum discurrit*, as Seneca hath it; all is the Lord's, he made all, maintaineth all, and may, therefore, at his pleasure make use of any; he needeth not be beholden; but the truth is, he needeth not any such broken supports. See **#Ps 24:7**.

Ver. 13. **Will I eat the flesh of bulls, &c.?**] *q.d.* Are you so thick brained as to think so?

Verecundum in patria, crassoque sub aere nati?

No; "He that killeth an ox" (unless he kill his corruptions too) "is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb" (unless he see his own guilt, and be carried out to the immaculate Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world) is "as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation" (unless therewith he offer up himself for a whole burnt sacrifice, **#Ro 12:1**) is "as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense" (unless he lift up holy hands in prayer without wrath, and without doubting, **#1Ti 2:8**) is "as if he blessed an idol," **#Isa 66:3**.

Ver. 14. **Offer unto God thanksgiving]** That pith of your peace offerings, that sacrifice more acceptable to God than an ox that hath horns and hoofs, **#Ps 69:31**. Oh cover God's altar with the calves of your lips, giving thanks to his name, **#Heb 13:15**.

And pay thy vows unto the Most High] Say not God a thank only, but do him thanks; the life of thanksgiving is the good life of the

thanksgiver. Our praises should be real and substantial: vow and perform to the Lord your God, #Ps 76:11.

Ver. 15. **And call upon me]** These two, praising God for what we have, and praying for what we want, do take up the whole duty of man; a holy trade is hereby driven between heaven and earth, and sweet intercourse maintained between God and man.

In the day of trouble] At any time, but then especially; the time of affliction being the time of supplication; for then we are fittest to call, and then God is readiest to give answer, then we may have anything, #Zec 13:9.

I will deliver thee] It is but ask and have; and surely he is deservedly miserable who will not make himself happy by asking. When there was a speech among some holy men what was the best trade? One answered, beggary; it is the hardest and richest trade (Dr Preston). Common beggary is indeed the easiest and poorest trade; but prayer he meant, it is like the ring given a nobleman in this land by Queen Elizabeth, with this promise, that if he sent that ring to her at any time when he was in distress she would remember and deliver him. He sent it, but it never came to her hands; but prayer never miscarrieth.

And thou shall glorify me] *Servati sumus, ut serviamus*, #Lu 1:74. And yet it is ten to one that any returneth, with the leper, to give God the glory of a deliverance. *Plerique ut accipiant importuni, donec acceperint inquieti, ubi acceperint ingrati*, saith Bernard truly: Most men are importunate that they may receive good at God's hands, restless till they have it, and are careless to return thanks afterward (De Consid. l. 4). Out upon such an ingratitude, hateful even among heathens.

Ver. 16 **But unto the wicked God saith]** To the fair professor, but foul sinner, to the hypocrites in Sion, #Isa 33:14, to the sacrificing Sodomites, #Isa 1:10,11, those that take upon them to be teachers of others מִרְמוֹל especially, #Ro 2:20,21. Origen, after his foul fall, opening the book and lighting upon this text, was not able to preach, but brake out into abundance of tears.

What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?] Since they are holy, and ought to be handled by such as are holy, #**Isa 52:11**; else they are dishonoured, #**1Sa 2:17**, God's name blasphemed, #**Ro 2:23,24**, foul sinners hardened, #**Mt 23:15**: *Ore loqueris de illis, seal corde odisti* (Syr. Interp.). *Quid verba audiam cam facta videam?* say such; *dicta factis erubescunt*, saith Tertullian, their practice shameth their profession. And, therefore, to such we may say, as Great Alexander did to one Alexander, a soldier of his, but a coward, Either give up thy name or be a soldier; so may we say to such profligate professors. Or as Archidamus, the Lacedemonian, said to his son, rashly conflicting with the Athenians, *Aut viribus adde, aut animis adime*; so here, Either add practice, or lay away profession.

Or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?] Boasting thyself to be one of mine, and blurting out good words, when the root of the matter is not in thee. If that state in story would not hear a good motion from an ill mouth, much less will God.

Ver. 17. **Seeing thou hatest instruction]** Or discipline, thou wilt not be brought to live strictly, to exercise godliness; thou refusest to be reformed, hatest to be healed. Bucer and Melancthon framed a form of reformation, with approbation of the peers and states; but the clergy of Cullen rejected it with slander, and said that they would rather live under the Great Turk than under a magistrate that should seek to settle such a reformation (Melch. Adam in Vit. Bucer).

And castest my words behind thee] They are near in thy mouth, but far from thy reins, #**Jer 12:2**; denying in thy life what thou professest with thy lips; Ethiopian like, being white in the mouth only; or as lilies, white, but unsavoury. The Jews at this day show very great respect to the law, which no man may touch but with the right hand, and with a kiss of reverence; no man may carry it behind him, but must lay it next to his heart, in his travel (Schichard). They are enjoined to take up any paper which they see lying on the ground; and the reason is lest haply the name of God be written in the paper, and ignorantly trodden underfoot. Christians, though free from such superstitious curiosity, yet, full of religious care, should observe every tittle in God's word, lest they should trample upon any. And when corruption boileth (saith a reverend man) think the gospel of Christ, professed by you, lieth prostrate before you; and

will ye trample upon that gospel? will ye tread underfoot the blood of the covenant, as if it were a profane thing? #Heb 10:29.

Ver. 18. **When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him]** *Mala opera hic memorata sunt in secreto*, saith Kimchi. These evils hereafter mentioned are secretly acted by those that pretended to better things, {see #Eph 5:12} and, therefore, heaven and earth are called to witness against them, #Ps 50:4. See #Jer 20:2-7 *Servi ut taceant iumenta loquentur*, the very beasts have a verdict to pass upon secret sinners, as the ass upon Balaam, and those horses upon Cardinal Angelot, who was so basely covetous that by a secret way he used to go into his own stable, and steal the oats from them (Pontan. lib. de Prin.).

And hast been partaker with the adulterers] 1. In thy desire, supposing thyself with them. 2. In thy filthy acts, though closely carried; as the Popish priests, whose rule is, *Si non caste, lumen caute*.

Ver. 19. **Thou givest thy mouth to evil]** Heb. Thou sendest, the devil borroweth thy mouth, and thou lettest him have it.

And thy tongue frameth deceit] Heb. joineth, knitteth, compacteth.

Ver. 20. **Thou sittest]** In the seat of the scornful, on the ale bench, &c.

And speakest against thy brother] Thy slanderous tongue, like a mad dog, biteth all it meeteth with; not thy near allies excepted: so inhuman are hypocrites.

Ver. 21. **These things hast thou done, and I kept silence]** I suffered them, seemed to wink at them, bearing with thine evil manners.

Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself] A good fellow, an approver, an abetter of thy lewd pranks and practices. *Cogitabas quod Ehiah erat sicut tu*, so Kimchi reads it. This is the evil use that wicked men make of God's patience, they transform him into an idol after their own fancy, they have base and bald conceits of him.

But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee] Thou shalt see them once in their ugly hue, to thy conversion or confusion. Men's actions are in print in heaven, and unless they make their peace with the Judge in his privy chamber of mercy, and so stop his open judicial proceedings in court, he will one day read them aloud in the ears of all the world. Meanwhile God looketh upon old sins (which he seemed to wink at) as now presently committed (for as there is no beginning of eternity, so no succession), and whatsoever he hath threatened, whatever arrows are in the bow string, will one day fly and hit, and strike deep. Woe be to men! God shall break up that filthy sink of sin that is in them; surely they will then be as little able to bear the stench thereof as Judas was, who sought help of a halter.

Ver. 22. **Now consider this, ye that forget God]** That cast him and his counsels behind your backs, before he awaken your drowsy consciences, and rouse up the lion that lieth sleeping in your bosoms, like Cain's dog, #Ge 4:7, with his dog-sleep; and before you come to answer for all, with flames about your ears.

Lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you] From the wolf a shepherd may rescue his lamb, not so from the hungry lion, #Am 3:12 Isa 31:4. God's power is irresistible, his punishments unavoidable.

Ver. 23. **Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me]** So his praise be cordial, oral, real, with recognition of my benefits, estimation, retribution; this is the best sacrifice he can bring me.

And to him that ordereth his conversation aright] That walketh accurately and exactly; walketh as in a frame, treading gingerly, stepping warily, not lifting up one foot till he find sure footing for the other.

I will show the salvation of God] *i.e.* Give him a prospect of heaven here, and hereafter a full fruition of it.

A Psalm of David] Who was not ashamed to do open penance here in a white sheet, as it were; so did Theodosius the emperor, at the reprehension of Ambrose, after the slaughter at Thessalonica; he spent eight months, saith Theodoret, in weeping and lamentation; he fell down on his face in the place of the penitents, and said, My soul

is glued to the earth, &c. Henry IV (then king of Navarre only, afterwards of France also), having abused the daughter of a gentleman in Rochel, by whom he had a son, was persuaded by Monsieur Du-Plessis to make a public acknowledgment of his fault in the church, which also he did before all the nobility of his army. This counsel being thought by some to be too rigorous, Du-Plessis made this answer, That as a man could not be too courageous before men, so he could not be too humble in the presence of God (Life of Phil. de Morn., by Mr Clark).

When Nathan the prophet came unto him] Rousing him out of a long lethargy, into which sin and Satan had cast him. See here the necessity of a faithful ministry, to be to us as the pilot was to Jonah, as the cock to Peter, &c.; as also of a friendly admonitor, such as David had prayed for, **#Ps 141:5**, and here he is answered. David had lain long in sin without repentance to any purpose; some remorse he had felt, **#Ps 32:3**, but it amounted not to a godly sorrow, till Nathan came; and in private, dealing plainly with him, more prevailed than all the lectures of the law or other means had done all that while.

After he had gone in to Bathsheba] This was the devil's nest-egg that caused many sins to be laid, one to and upon another. See the woeful chain of David's lust, **#2Sa 11:1-12:25**, and beware.

Chapter 51

Ver. 1. **Have mercy upon me, O God]** It was wont to be, O my God, but David had now sinned away his assurance, wiped off his comfortables; he dares not plead propriety in God, nor relation to him, as having forfeited both. At another time, when he had greatly offended God by numbering the people, God counted him but plain David, "Go and say to David," **#2Sa 24:12**, whereas before, when he purposed to build God a temple, then it was, "Go tell my servant David," **#2Sa 7:5**. Sin doth much impair and weaken our assurance of God's favour; like as a drop of water falling on a burning candle dimmeth the light thereof. The course that David taketh for recovery of this last evil is confession of sin, and hearty prayer for pardoning and purging grace. In the courts of men it is safest (saith Quintilian)

to plead *Non feci*, Not guilty; not so here, but *Ego feci, miserere miserimi peccatoris, misericors Deus*. Guilty, Lord, have mercy, &c.

Per miserere mei tollitur ira Dei.

According to the multitude of thy tender mercies] They are a multitude of them, and David needeth them all, for the pardon of his many and mighty sins; that where sin had abounded grace might superabound, it may have a superpleonasm, **#1Ti 1:14**.

Blot out my transgressions] Out of thy debtbook; cross out the black lines of my sins with the red lines of Christ's blood; cancel the bond, though written in black and bloody characters.

Ver. 2. **Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity]** Heb. Multiply, wash me; so **#Isa 55:7**. God is said to multiply pardon as much as we multiply sin. David apprehended his sin so exceeding sinful, his stain so inveterate, so engrained, that it would hardly be ever gotten out till the cloth were almost rubbed to pieces; that God himself would have somewhat to do to do it. He had been in a deep ditch, **#Pr 23:27**, and was pitifully defiled; he therefore begs hard to be thoroughly rinsed, to be bathed in that blessed fountain of Christ's blood, that is opened for sins and for uncleanness, **#Zec 13:1**; to be cleansed not only from outward defilements, but from his swinish nature; for though a swine be washed never so clean, if she retain her nature, she will be ready to wallow in the next guzzle. The time of our being here is *αιων λουτροφορος*, as Nazianzen calleth it, *i.e.* our washing time. Wash thy heart, O Jerusalem, that thou mayest be clean, **#Jer 4:14**, not by thinking to set off with God, and to make amends by thy good deeds for thy bad; this is but *lutum luto purgare*, to wash off one filth with another; but by the practice of mortification, and by faith in Christ's meritorious passion; for he hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, **#Re 1:5**. Other blood defileth, but this purifieth from all pollutions of flesh and spirit, **#1Jo 1:7**.

And cleanse me from my sin] In like manner as the leper under the law was cleansed. Leprosy, frenzy, heresy, and jealousy, are by men counted incurable; *Sed omnipotenti medico nullus insanibilis*

occurrit morbus, saith Isidore, to an Almighty physician no disease is incurable. There is indeed a natural Novatianism in the timorous consciences of convinced sinners, to doubt and question pardon for sins of apostasy, and falling after repentance; but there need be no such doubting, since God, who hath bidden us to forgive a repenting brother seventy times seven times in one day, will himself much more. All sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven to the sons of men, &c., #Mt 12:31.

Ver. 3. **For I acknowledge my transgressions]** And therefore look for pardon, according to thy promise. *Homo agnoseit, Deus ignoscit.*

And my sin] My twisted sin and sadly accented; mine accumulative sin, voluminous wickedness, that hath so many sins bound up in it, as Cicero saith of parricide.

Is ever before me] To my great grief and regret, my conscience twitteth me with it, and the devil layeth it in my dish. This maketh him follow God so close, resolved to give him no rest till he hath registered and enrolled the remission of his sins in the book of life, with the bloody lines of Christ's soul saving sufferings, and golden characters of his own eternal love.

Ver. 4. **Against thee, thee only, have I sinned]** This he spake in respect of the secrecy of his sins, say some; whence also it followeth, "And done this evil in thy sight." David sent for Bathsheba by his servants, but they knew not wherefore he sent for her, saith Kimchi; neither knew any one why letters were sent to Joab to kill Uriah; but because he refused to obey the king, bidding him go home to his house, &c. Others thus, Against thee only, that is, thee mainly; for every sin is a violation of God's law; the trespass may be against man, but the transgression is ever against God. Others again thus, Against thee, &c., that is, against thee, so good a God, have I thus heinously offended, giving thereby thine enemies occasion to blaspheme thee. This, I take it, is the true meaning.

And done this evil in thy sight] Which was to despise thee, #2Sa 12:10, not caring though thou lookedst on.

That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, &c.] *i.e.* Declared to be just, whatever thou hast denounced against me or shalt inflict upon me. The unrighteousness of man commendeth the righteousness of God, **#Ro 3:4,5**. To thee, O Lord God, belongeth righteousness, but unto us confusion of face, saith Daniel, **#Ps 9:7**.

Ver. 5. **Behold, I was shapen in iniquity]** This he allegeth, viz. his original depravity, not as an excuse, but as an aggravation of his actual abominations, which he saith were committed out of the vile viciousness of his nature. See **#Ps 58:3,4**, . The Masorites here observe, that the word rendered iniquity is full, written with a double ך, *Vau*, to signify the fulness of his sin; *{Hebrew Text Note}* whole evil being in every man by nature, and whole evil in man; which, when the saints confess, they are full in the mouth, as I may so say; they begin with the root of sin (not at the fingers' ends, as Adonibezek did), stabbing the old man at the heart first, and laying the main weight upon original corruption, that indwelling sin, as the apostle calleth it, **#Ro 7:14**, ; that sin of evil concupiscence, as the Chaldee here; that *peccatum peccans*, as the schools. Cicero likewise had heard somewhat of this when he said, *Cum primum nascimur, in omni continuo pravitate versamur*; As soon as ever we are born we are forthwith in all wickedness. Augustine saith, *Damnatus homo antequam natus*, Man is condemned as soon as conceived.

And in sin did my mother conceive me] Heb. warm me; this Aben Ezra interpreteth to be our great grandmother Eve, *Quae non parturiebat antequam peccabat*. David meant it doubtless of his immediate mother, and spake of that poison wherewith she had warmed him in her womb, before the soul was infused. Corruption is conveyed by the impurity of the seed, **#Job 14:4 Joh 3:6,31**. Sin may be said to be in the seed inception and disposition, as fire is in the flint. Let us therefore go with Elisha to the fountain, and cast salt into those rotten and stinking waters. And for our children, let us labour to mend that by education which we have marred by propagation.

Ver. 6. **Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts]** *Quam tamen mihi defuisse res ipsa demonstrat*; but this truth hath not been found in me, when I acted my sin in that sort, and did mine utmost to hide it from the world. I have showed little truth in the inward parts, but have grossly dissembled in my dealings, with

Uriah especially, whom I so plied at first with counterfeit kindness, and then basely betrayed him to the sword of the enemy. Sinisterity is fully opposite to sincerity, treachery to truth.

And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom]

Thus, by faith, saith one, he riseth out of his sin, being taught wisdom of God. Others read it, Thou hast made me to know, &c. And yet have I sinned against the light of mine own knowledge and conscience; although thou hast taught me wisdom privately, *Et eheu quam familiariter*; as one of thine own domestics, or disciples. Some make it a prayer, Cause me to know wisdom, &c.

Ver. 7. **Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean]** Sprinkle me with the blood of Christ by the hyssop bunch of faith, not only taking away thereby the sting and stink of sin, but conferring upon me the sweet savour of Christ's righteousness imputed unto me. See **#Heb 9:13,14,19**, where he calleth it hyssop; of which see Dioscorides, lib. 3, chap. xxvi., xxviii. David multiplieth his suit for pardon, not only in plain terms, but by many metaphors.

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow] So we cannot be by any washings of our own, though with snow water, **#Isa 1:16**. The bride's garments are made white in the Lamb's blood, **#Re 1:14**; the foulest sinners washed in this fountain become white as the snow in Salmon, **#Isa 1:18 1Co 6:11 Eph 5:27**. *Peccata non redeunt*.

Ver. 8. **Make me to hear joy and gladness]** God will speak peace unto his people, he createth the fruit of the lips to be peace, **#Isa 57:19**, &c. No such joyful tidings to a condemned person as that of a pardon. Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. *Feri, feri, Domine, nam a peccatis absolutus sum*, said Luther. David's adultery and murder had weakened his spiritual condition, and wiped off all his comforts; but now he begs to be restored by some good sermon or sweet promise set home to his poor soul.

That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice] By leaping over God's pale he had broken his bones; and fain he would be set right again, by a renewed righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, by his former feelings of God's favour.

Ver. 9. **Hide thy face from my sins]** We are not able to endure God's presence, much less his justice for our sins; nor can there be

any sound peace of conscience while he frowneth. His favour is better than life, but his displeasure more bitter than death itself. See #2Sa 14:32.

And blot out all mine iniquities] See how one sin calleth to mind many thousands; which though they lie asleep a long time, like a sleeping debt, yet we know not how soon they may be reckoned for. Make sure of a general pardon; and take heed of adding new sins to the old.

Ver. 10. **Create in me a clean heart, O God]** His heart was woefully soiled with the filth of sin and the work of grace interrupted; he therefore prayeth God to interpose and begin it again, to set him up once more, to rekindle those sparks of the spirit that lay almost quite smothered; to put forth his Almighty power for that purpose, to farm that Augaeon stable of his heart; to sanctify him throughout in spirit, soul, and body; and to keep him blameless unto the coming of his Son #1Th 5:23.

And renew a right spirit within me] Or, a firm spirit, firm for God, able to resist the devil, steadfast in the faith, and to abide constant in the way that is called holy.

Ver. 11. **Cast me not away from thy presence]** Deprive me not of communion with thee and comfort from thee; for that is a piece of hell torments, #2Th 1:9. Cain's punishment, which possibly David might here mind, as being guilty of murder; and Saul's loss of the kingly spirit, #1Sa 15:15, might make him pray on.

And take not thine holy Spirit from me] David knew that he had done enough to make the Holy Spirit loathe his lodging; he might also think that the Spirit had utterly withdrawn himself, and others might think as much, beholding his crosses, #Jer 30:17. But the gifts and callings of God are without repentance; and where the Spirit once inhabiteth, there he abideth for ever, #Joh 14:16: an interruption there may be of his work, but not an intercision; and a saint falling into a gross sin may lose his *ius aptitudinale ad caelum*, but not his *ius haereditarium*; his fitness, but not his right to heaven, that holy place.

Ver. 12. **Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation]** He had grieved that holy thing, that Spirit of God whereby he was sealed to the day

of redemption, #Eph 4:30, and is therefore at a loss for comfort; he had vilipended that patent of his pardon which God had passed under his hand and seal; God therefore calleth for it home again into the pardon office, as it were, that he may know the worth by the want. A man may sin away, not only the sense and comfort of his pardon, but the evidence and knowledge of it, as that place of Peter seemeth to imply, #2Pe 1:9. Mountebanks, who wound their flesh to try conclusions upon their own bodies how sovereign the salve is, do oft feel the smart of their presumption, by long and desperate wounds: so God will let his Davids see what it is to make wounds in their consciences to try the preciousness of his balsam; such may go mourning to their graves (Dr Sibbes' Soul's Confl.). And though with much ado they get assurance of pardon, yet their consciences will be still trembling, till God at length speak further peace; even as the waters of the sea after a storm are not presently still, but move and tremble a good while after the storm is over.

And uphold me with thy free spirit] Heb. Firmly sustain me with thy noble or princely Spirit, that may make me steady and ready to come off roundly in thy service. Sin against conscience disableth for duty, taketh away freedom to it and stability in it. David, therefore, prays God to fix his quicksilver, to balance his lightness, to settle and fill that vain and empty heart of his with something that may stay and stablish it, that may also free and enlarge it (for where the Spirit of God is there is liberty, #2Co 3:17), that he might yield prompt and present obedience to God in all things; and withal might be apt and able to teach transgressors, as he promiseth to do in the next words.

Ver. 13. **Then will I teach transgressors thy ways]** *Instruunt nos Patres tum docentes, tum labentes,* saith Augustine: Two ways the saints teach us. First, By their doctrine. Secondly, By their falls and failings. David had taught men this last way to his cost, that it is *triste mortalitatis privilegium licere aliquando peccare;* now he promiseth by his example and instruction to teach transgressors, those that are in the very bonds and hands of the devil, God's ways of mercy to the penitent; and that they must either turn to God or burn for ever in hell.

And sinners shall be converted unto thee] They shall give not the half, but the whole turn; and it shall appear by them. The turning of a sinner from evil to good is like the turning of a bell from one side to another; you cannot turn it but it will make a sound, and report its own motion.

Ver. 14. **Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God]** Heb. from bloods; in every drop whereof is a tongue crying for vengeance. Besides, if David's adultery was a sin of infirmity (he was preoccupied, as #Ga 6:1), yet his murdering of Uriah, and many others that fell together with him, was a sin of presumption; a deliberate premeditated evil, done in cold blood, and therefore lay very heavily upon his conscience. Howbeit he obtained pardon for this great sin also; so that it never troubled him on his deathbed, as some other did, though not so great, whereof he had not so thoroughly repented, #1Ki 2:5-9

Thou God of my salvation] By making choice of this so fit an attribute, he stirreth up himself to take better hold.

And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness] That is, of thy faithfulness in performing thy promise of pardon to the penitent. As Aaron's golden bells sounded, so should our tongues sound God's praises, and sing them aloud, shrill them out.

Ver. 15. **O Lord, open thou my lips]** Which now I find stopped and sealed up, as it were, with the sin that doth so easily beset me; so that whereas I promised before to "sing aloud of thy righteousness," this I shall never be able to do without thy special furtherance, *nisi verba suppedites et tanquam praeaeas*, unless thou please to supply me both with affections and expressions, as well as with matter of praise.

And my mouth shall show forth thy praise] David had not been dumb till now, all the while he lay in his sin, but all he did was but liplabour, and therefore lost labour. Daniel confesseth the like of himself and his people, #Da 9:13, "All this evil 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." Prayed they had, but because they turned not from their iniquities, they got nothing by their prayers or praises. God is a fountain, and if he meet with a fit

pipe (as is an ordinance rightly performed), there he usually conveyeth his grace; but if he meet with a foul pipe and obstructed, there he doth not confer a blessing. The Pharisees were not a button the better for all their long prayers, because rotten at heart.

Ver. 16. **For thou desirest not sacrifice]** This is the reason why David restipulateth praise, if God will pardon his great sin, **#Ps 51:15**, viz. because he well understood that God preferred praise before all sacrifices whatsoever, provided that it came from a broken spirit, **#Ps 51:17**, rightly humbled for sin, and thankfully accepting of pardon. See **#Ps 50:14,15,23**.

Thou delightest not in burnt offering] viz. Comparatively, and indeed not at all without a contrite heart.

Una Dei est, purum, gratissima victima, pectus (Nazianzen).

Much less, then, doth God respect the sacrifice of the mass, that hath no footing or warrant in the word. A certain Sorbonist finding it written at the end of St Paul's Epistles *Missa est, &c.*, bragged he had found the mass in his Bible. And another reading **#Joh 1:44**, *Invenimus Messiam*, made the same conclusion (Beehive, cap. 3). Some of them, as Bellarmine for one, would fain ground it upon **#Mal 1:11**. Others fetch the name *Missa* from the Hebrew mass for tribute (Buxtorf); which comes from *Masas*, to melt (because it many times melteth away men's estates), *Recte quidem*, saith Rivet; *per missam scilicet pietas omnis liquefacta est et dissoluta*.

Ver. 17. **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit]** *i.e.* Such a heart as lieth low, and heareth all that God saith; such a sacrifice or service as is laid on the low altar of a contrite heart, which sanctifieth the sacrifice (Mr Abbot); such a person as with a self-condemning, self-crucifying, and sin-mortifying heart, humbly and yet believingly maketh out for mercy and pardon in the blood of Christ, this, this is the man that God expects, accepts, and makes great account of.

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise] This is great comfort to those that droop under a sense of sin and fear of wrath, being at next door to despair. Bring but a broken heart,

and God will receive you graciously, pouring the oil of his grace into your broken vessels, This comforted Bernard on his deathbed, he died with this sentence in his mouth. Austin caused it to be written on the wall over against his bed where he lay sick and died. Many poor souls even in times of Popery had heaven opened unto them by meditating on this psalm; and especially on this verse **#Ps 51:17**. (Jo. Manl. loc. com. 73)

Ver. 18. **Do good in thy good pleasure unto Sion]** Having made his own peace with God, he now prayeth for the Church: and the rather, because by his foul sins he had hazarded, or rather exposed, both Zion and Jerusalem, Church and State, to divine displeasure. *Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.*

Build thou the walls of Jerusalem] *i.e.* Protect, defend, and maintain the civil state, grant all things necessary for its safety and well-being; supply of all wants, confirmation and increase of all blessings. Thus pray we, **#Jer 29:7 Ps 122:6-8**; for except the Lord keep the city, &c. See **#Isa 5:1-3 27:3**. He is a wall of fire, **#Re 20:9**, of water, **#Isa 33:20,21**; say, therefore, as **#Isa 26:1**, and beware of security, sensuality, senselessness, &c.

Ver. 19. **Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices, &c.]** *i.e.* Such as are offered in faith, and according to the will of God, **#Ps 4:6**.

Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar] They shall be free hearted and frequent in thy work and service; *Vae torpori nostro*, Woe to our dulness and backwardness in these happy days of peace and free profession, which we had need improve as they did, **#Ac 9:31**. Otherwise, we may desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and not see it, **#Lu 17:22**. Go to Shiloh, &c.

A Psalm of David] Or the same time and argument, likely, with **#Ps 58**

Maschil] Or, to teach that the end of the wicked is evil; *Redarguit pravos mores*, saith the Syriac.

When Doeg the Edomite] When Abiathar escaping the slaughter slave, the blood hound (as Edomite may signify), came and told David what was befallen the priests and their city. This was no small

affliction to David; the rather, because by telling the priest a lie, himself had occasioned the massacre. Hereupon, for the comfort of himself and other good people who were startled at this sad accident, and might be deterred thereby from helping David, he penned this psalm.

When Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, &c.] Doeg is a fit name for a courtier; for it signifieth a solicitous or bushy headed fellow, a petty officier, a propping companion, an informer, one that listeneth after rumours, and carrieth tales to curry favour. An Edomite he was by nation; but a proselyte in pretence at least, and one that was at that time detained before the Lord, either by virtue of some vow, or because it was the sabbath day and he would not travel on it, or to perform some other religious service, #1Sa 21:7: this dissembled sanctity was double iniquity; and he became a type of Judas, as some make him.

He came and told Saul] Like a parasite and a tale bearer as he was: when as he should rather have told Ahimelech, that David was out of Saul's favour, and sought for to the slaughter, as Kimchi here noteth on #Ps 52:3, but he concealed that, that he might accuse Ahimelech; and so slew three at once (saith another Rabbi), viz. himself, Saul, and Ahimelech, *calumniatorem, calumniatum et calumniam audientem*.

And said, David is come to the house of Ahimelech] Few words, but full of poison; *leviter volant non leviter vulnerant. Verba Doegi erant pauci, sed multum nocua* (Kimchi). See the story more at large #1Sa 22:9. The Rabbis say (from #Le 14:44, where the same word is used of the leprous house, that is here, #Ps 52:5, of Doeg's doom) that he was for this fact smitten with leprosy; and afterwards sent to hell, which they gather from #Ps 120:4 (Midrash Tillin).

Chapter 52

Ver. 1. **Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, thou mighty man]** Or, thou giant; for so he seemed to himself when he had slain *tot inermes nec repugnantes*, so many naked men, not making any resistance, though they were the priests of Jehovah; and afterwards

had smitten the innocent inhabitants of the city of Nob, together with the women, the infants, and the cattle; like another Ajax *flagellifer* or Hercules *furens* ; and now vaunted himself in that mischievous prowess.

Egregiam vero laudem, &c.

The Hebrew word for boasting here signifieth also madness, when it is taken in the worse sense, as #Jer 46:9 Pr 2:14; and to boast of his heart's desire is the note of an atheist, #Ps 10:3.

The goodness of God endureth continually] Maugre thy spitefulness, God is good to Israel, to the pure in heart, and will be so. The Rabbis make this the sense, If Ahimelech had not relieved me, God would have stirred up some other to have done it (R. Solomon). Some others understand it thus, The goodness of God towards thee, a wicked wretch, endureth all the day. This should lead thee to repentance. But thou, after thy hardness, &c., #Ro 2:5.

Ver. 2. **Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs]** *i.e.* Venteth the mischievous devices of thy mind, being an interpreter and an instrument fit for such a purpose, *Cogitat, id est eructat*. Such another Doeg was Nicholas Saunders, priest, the firebrand of Earl Desmond's rebellion in Ireland, A. D. 1580, a restless and wretched man, whose foul mouth was at length stopped with famine that had been ever open to stir up rebellions against the state; that had uttered so many blasphemies against God and his holy truth, and invented so many loud and lewd lies against men.

Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully] That, instead of shaving the hair, lanceth the flesh, *Excindit carnem cure crinibus* (R. Solomon); or, missing the beard, cutteth the throat, *Consulto aberrans iugulum petit*, when Dionysius the tyrant would not trust any barber (no, not his own daughters) to shave him; but singed off his own hair with hot coals. The slanderer's tongue, as sharp as a razor or as the quills of a porcupine, slasheth and gasheth the good names of others, and that many ways, viz. both by denying, disguising, lessening, concealing, misconstruing things of good report; and also by forging, increasing, aggravating, or uncharitable spreading things of evil report; not for any love to the truth nor for

respect of justice, nor yet for the bettering of the hearer or the delinquent; but only to prejudice the one, and to incense the other. This was Doeg's sin, and denominateth him a liar, #Ps 52:3, though he had spoken only the truth.

Ver. 3. **Thou lovest evil more than good]** Indeed, evil only, and not at all good, whatever thou pretendest. Thy heart is naught, and thence it is that thy tongue is so mischievous, as stinking breath cometh from corrupt inwards.

And lying, rather than to speak righteousness] For thou hast cunningly insinuated, for thine own base ends and against thine own conscience, that those innocent and faithful priests were of the combination; and so hast built thyself upon their ruins, thou false *sycophant, artifex doli*. Selah.

Ver. 4. **Thou lovest all devouring words]** *Verba devoratoria* ; the Greek hath it, καταποντισμου, that devour and swallow up, so as the sea doth things cast into it. So elsewhere, their throat is an open sepulchre, which devoureth all bodies, but rendereth none without a miracle. Some render it, *Verba voraginis*, the words of a whirlpool, which first turns men around, and then sucks them in. Others, *Verba absorptionis*, in reference to that use of the tongue, which is to sup up dish meats; *Sic lingua attrahit homines ita ut absorbeantur*, saith Vatablus. The Vulgate hath it, *Verba praecipitationis*, words that hurl one down headlong, *Ex editis aedium vel rupium*, as Hilary hath it, from the top of houses, or high rocks.

O thou deceitful tongue] Because, although it were for most part truth that he spake, yet he did it maliciously, and by dissimulation passed over that which might have made for Ahimelech, viz. that he relieved David in the simplicity of his heart, as thinking him to be high in the king's favour, and employed by him. Hegesippus saith of Pilate, that he was *Vir nequam, et parvi faciens mendacium*, a naughty man, and one that made no bones of a lie: such another was Doeg (De excid. Jerus. l. 2. c. 5).

Ver. 5. **God shall likewise destroy thee]** Here are *quot verba tot tonitrua*, so many words, so many thunderclaps. As thou hast destroyed the Lord's priests and their whole city, razing and harassing it; so God will demolish and destroy thee utterly, as a house pulled down to the ground, so that one stone is not left upon

another, #Le 14:45. So shall God pull down Doeg from that high preferment which he by sycophancy hath got at court, *Iudicium ipsum lethale describitur*.

He shall take thee away] As a coal of fire is taken with the tongs, #Isa 30:4, that it do no further mischief. Some render it, He shall burn thee, *Exuret te* (Vatab.). R. Gaon, He shall terrify thee.

And pluck thee out of thy dwelling place] Or, shall sweep thee out of thy tabernacle. R. Gaon interpreteth it, Beth hamidrash, the Lord's tabernacle, whereinto a Doeg may set his foot as far as a David, but God will pluck him thence.

And root thee out of the land of the living] *Everret et evertet te cum tota familia*, He shall utterly ruin thee and thine, leaving thee neither root nor branch, chick nor child.

Selah] *i.e. Veritas est*, saith Aben Ezra. It is even so; think not that these things are spoken only in *terrorem*, for a scarebug, for they shall all be surely fulfilled upon thee.

Ver. 6. **The righteous also shall see and fear]** With a reverential fear, from which shall spring sincere service. *Aliorum perditio tua sit cautio*, Let other men's perdition be our caution; let us wash our feet in the blood of the wicked. There is an elegance in the original that cannot be translated into English.

And shall laugh at him] With a holy laughter; not that of irrision, but of exultation in God, or his righteous executions.

Ver. 7. **Lo, this is the man]** Or, rather, now the monster to be pointed at; once so mighty, now so miserable, *O quantum haec Niobe, &c.*, what a strange change is here, &c. As the true Israelite is pointed out with a Behold, for imitation, #Joh 1:47, so is this counterfeit Israelite for detestation.

That made not God his strength] But carried the matter as if he had been some petty god within himself.

But trusted in the abundance, &c.] Never true to those that trusted them.

And strengthened himself in his wickedness] Heb. in his woeful evil, in his putting many poor creatures to their "Woe is me!"

Ver. 8. **But I am like a green olive tree, &c.]** Thus, when Doeg blasted David, David blessed himself. Let him flourish in the court, I shall much more in the house of God. My name shall be precious among the saints when he stinketh above ground; he shall wither when I shall be fresh, flourishing, and fruitful.

I trust in the mercy of God] Not in riches, as Doeg; and this faith is the root of my fruitfulness, cheerfulness, &c. Gul. Parisiensis reporteth of true crystal, that by touching only it reviveth the decayed virtue of other precious stones; sure it is, that faith reviveth the virtue of other precious graces.

Ver. 9. **I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it]** Hast delivered me from Doeg and others, *Quod non perierim centies*; or, Thou hast done execution upon Doeg; *i.e.* Thou wilt undoubtedly do it.

And I will wait on thy name] *i.e.* Depend upon thy promises and providence.

Maschil, a Psalm of David] Purposely set down here the second time {see #Ps 6:1} to instruct what every man is by nature, and that he who is scholar to his own carnal reason is sure to have a fool to his master. The heathens are very obstinate in propugning man's nature, witness Cicero, and both the Senecas, saying, that if men would but follow the bent of their own natures they could not do amiss. And we have much ado to persuade people that their natures are so foul, their ways so wicked, &c. Twice, therefore, is this psalm recorded, that all may be convinced that there is no safety in such a condition; nothing better than to hasten out of it.

Chapter 53

Ver. 1. **The fool, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Ps 14:1"}

Ver. 2. **God looked down, &c.]** {See Trapp on "Ps 14:2"}

Ver. 3. **Every one of them is gone back]** Diogenes in a great assembly going backward of purpose, and seeing every one laughing

him to scorn, asked them aloud, if they were not ashamed so to do? since he went backwards but once, they did so all the days of their life.

Ver. 4. **Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?**] *Etiam scient in fine, et dolebunt*, saith one, Know they shall, to their sorrow, in the end, that they have eaten that on earth which they must digest in hell.

Ver. 5. **There were they in great fear**] Heb. They feared a fear. God they feared not, of men they were greatly feared, and yet here they feared a fear where no fear was, viz. without themselves, only *facti sunt a corde suo fugitivi*, they feared and fled before their own consciences, their own trembling heart, #De 28:65; the sound of fear that is in their ears, #Job 15:21; the sound of a leaf chaseth them, #Le 26:36; they flee where none pursueth, #Pr 28:1. Naturalists tell us of a certain little bird, *quae fertur metu ne in ipsam coelum ruat, imponere sibi semper dormienti alterum pedem*, which for fear lest the sky should fall on her head, sleepeth still with one foot laid upon her head. The Gauls that dwelt near the Adriatic Sea, being asked by Alexander the Great what they most feared, answered, *ne supra se coelum corruat*, lest the sky should fall upon them. Galen writeth of a certain melancholic fellow, who hearing that Atlas supported heaven with his shoulders, was therefore sore afraid lest he should faint under the burden; and therefore carried his arm before him to save his head. Heraclides, out of Anacreon, telleth of one Artemon, a timorous man, who kept home as much as might be, having ever a couple of servants to hold a brazen buckler over his head, lest anything should fall upon him from above; and if he were at any time necessitated to go abroad, he was carried in a horse litter that touched the ground almost; and was thereupon called Periphoretus (Plut. in Pericle).

For God hath scattered the bones] *i.e.* The strength, the strong troops, saith the Chaldee; they want decent burial, as #Jer 22:19, saith the Syriac.

Thou hast put them to shame] viz. The poor afflicted, #Ps 14:5, because

God hath despised them] *i.e.* Subjected them to the contempt of the wicked.

Ver. 6. **Oh that the salvation]** Heb. Salvations; *indicat plenam salutem*, Let it show full salvation, saith Kimchi.

Maschil] Instructing us, saith one, to draw near to God, as dangers draw nearer to us.

When the Ziphims] Which signifieth flourishing, *Erant autem Ziphaei ex stirpe Caleb #1Ch 2:42. ut et Nabal, sed degeneres;* they might have flourishing estates, but they had withered souls; else they would never have sought twice ever to have betrayed good David into the hand of Saul, **#1Sa 23:19 26:1.**

Came and said to Saul] If a ruler hearken to lies all his servants are wicked, **#Pr 29:12;** *{See Trapp on "Pr 29:12"}*

Doth not David hide himself with us?] viz. In the wood and wilderness near unto our city? But what if he did, should they therefore discover him, and so pull the vengeance of God upon themselves and their city? George Eagles (alias Trudgeover the world) hid himself in a grain field, was exposed by Ralph Lurdain for money, and burnt at Chelmsford; where afterwards the same Lurdain was hanged for stealing a horse; and confessed it was just in God upon him, for betraying that innocent man. (Acts & Mon.)

Chapter 54

Ver. 1. **Save me, O God, by thy name]** *i.e.* By thyself, and especially by thy goodness, whereby thou art *nominatissimus in ecclesia*, well known in thy Church, as a main piece of thy name, **#Ex 34:6,7.**

Ver. 2. **Hear my prayer, O God]** He runs to God by most earnest prayer, for our instance and instruction in like case; for we must prepare for the like trials, *nec de cruce disputandum est otiose et velut in umbra, &c.*

Ver. 3. **For strangers are risen up against me]** He meaneth not foreigners, but home dwellers; Saul, Doeg, Ziphims, *Nothi et spurii*, strangers to religion, reason, common humanity; Jews outwardly, but not inwardly; heathens upon the matter, **#Ps 59:5 Am**

9:7 Re 11:2. The pope showed himself no better in delivering up for money Zemes the Great Turk's brother, who fled to him for safeguard of his life, wrongfully sought after.

Oppressors seek after my soul] *i.e.* My life at least; my soul also they would destroy, if it lay in their power, as the Papists delivered up John Huss to the devil when they burnt him; and would not allow Jerome of Prague a confessor, though he requested it. So the monster of Milan, that made his enemy first curse Christ in hope of life, and then stabbed him to death, saying, Now go soul and body to the devil (Bodin. de Rep.). So he that, for spite, procuring a man to be hanged, and seeing him penitent, said, I am afraid the rogue will go to heaven.

They have not set God before them] This was the root of all their outrages, they made no reckoning of God, *prout est iudexet vindex mali*, as he is a severe judge, and a sharp revenger of sin and wickedness.

Ver. 4. **Behold, God is mine helper]** And that mine enemies might have seen, had they set God before them. The Dutch have a proverb, Where God hath a mind to destroy a man, he first putteth out his eyes.

The Lord is with them that uphold my soul] That favour my righteous cause, and wish my welfare, as doth Jonathan, and the rest that fear God; who although they be but few and feeble in comparison, yet they have God with them and for them (*non interfuit modo, sed etiam praefuit*), and how many do you reckon him for? as Antigonus once said. David was environed, and in great danger to be surprised; but God rescued him by an invasion of the Philistines, **#1Sa 23:27,28**. The Lord knoweth how to deliver his, **#2Pe 2:9** R. Moses expounded it, God is *loco omnium, et super omnes*, instead of all, and above all.

Ver. 5. **He shall reward evil unto mine enemies]** Or, mine observers, that watch me a mischief. I shall escape out of trouble, and they shall come in my stead, **#Pr 11:8**.

Cut them off in thy truth] *i.e.* According as thou hast pronounced against such as seek and suck innocent blood.

Ver. 6. **I will freely sacrifice unto thee]** Or, liberally; not with an ill will and pinchingly. The Arabic rendereth it, *Laudabo te obediens*. Praise is the best sacrifice, and obedience is the best praise.

I will praise thy name, O Lord; for it is good] Thy name is good, and it is a good thing to praise it; for thereby men do thee right, help thee to thine own, secure to themselves former favours, and procure future.

Ver. 7. **For he hath delivered me]** *i.e.* He surely will. This is the language of faith; this is the triumph of trust.

And mine eye hath seen my desire upon mine enemies] This was not an evil eye of envy or private revenge; such as was that of him, who, when he saw a pit full of man's blood, cried out, *O formosmn spectaculum!* O brave sight! or that of Antichrist, who hath oft glutted his eyes with many such goodly bloody sights; as when he caused the massacre of Paris to be painted in his palace, and had the admiral's head sent him for a present; but as admiring God's justice on his enemies, and love towards his people, he was well pleased with such a providence, and beheld it with comfort (Thuan.). The Arabic rendereth it, *Oculus meus requievit*. My eye rested. Tremellius, mine eye beholdeth mine enemies; I dare now boldly look them in the face, being strengthened with thy night, &c.

A Psalm of David] Whether made upon occasion of his flight from Keilah, #1Sa 23:2, or from Absalom, #2Sa 15:16. *Idem est argumentum, et idem usus huius Psalmi atque, superioris,* saith Beza; this and the former psalm are of the same argument and for the same use. It is most probable that this psalm was written when Absalom was up, and Hushai related unto Zadock the troubled state of the city, #2Sa 17:15, with which compare #Ps 55:9-11 of this psalm. For thereupon David, put into a great perturbation, as #Ps 55:4,5, wished for the wings of a dove, not the pinions of a dragon, that he might fly far away.

Chapter 55

Ver. 1. **Give ear to my prayer, O God]** David's danger was present, his prayer therefore is pressing, being not the labour of his lips, but

the travail of his heart. The breath that cometh from the lips is cold, not that which cometh from the lungs.

Hide not thyself] As men when they are not willing to be sued unto will not be seen.

Ver. 2. **Attend unto me, and hear me]** Heb. answer me, that is, grant me deliverance from this death which threateneth me. This is his sense, as appeareth by the sequel; though at present he could not instance, but only beggeth audience.

I mourn in my complaint] Heb. I toss this way and that way; I am so much troubled *ut meipsum lamentando huc et illuc versare, et mire agitare cogar. Prae dolore moveo me nunc huc nunc illuc* (Campensis).

And make a noise] *Plungo, et perstrepo.* Of our Saviour it is said, that, being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; he bent, as it were, all his nerves, and set up his note, #**Lu 22:44**.

Ver. 3. **Because of the voice of the enemy]** He may very well intend Shimei's bitter revilings, #**2Sa 16:5**, &c.

For they cast iniquity upon me] They tumble it on me, as men do stones or anything else upon their besiegers, to endamage them; so did these, sin, shame, anything, upon innocent David, to make him odious.

And in wrath they hate me] Heb. they Satanically hate me.

Ver. 4. **My heart is sore pained within me]** No otherwise than a woman is pained in travail; *cordicitus doleo.* I am pained deep in my heart.

And the terrors of death are fallen upon me] Caused, doubtless, by the deep sense and conscience of his late grievous sins.

Ver. 5. **Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me]** Fearfulness of heart, and trembling of body, *Timor cordis, tremor corporis;* which last falleth out, when as the spirits flying back to the heart, to relieve it, leave the outward parts destitute.

And horror hath overwhelmed me] This was David's infirmity; for he should have better fortified his heart against that cowardly passion of fear; the devil also had a finger in it. At another time David could better resolve and say, What time I am afraid I will trust in thee.

Ver. 6. **And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove!**] *Ut citissime et longissime fugerem*, that I might swiftly fly far off from Absalom's pursuers; as the dove saveth herself by flight, and not by fight, scoureth away to the rocks and deserts, **#Jer 48:28**. Many souls are swifter of flight than doves; but these hold out better. R. Jonah saith, that whereas other birds, when they are wearied with flying, do rest them upon rocks or trees, and are taken; the dove doth not so, but letteth down one wing, and flieth with the other, and thereby escapeth the pursuer (R. Jonah, apud Kimchi).

For then would I fly away] But whither he saith not, because he knew not. The Church in the Revelation fled into the wilderness, **#Re 12:6** God provided a Pella for those primitive Christians. Luther, being asked where he would be at quiet from his enemies? answered, *Sub coelo*, under heave, somewhere God would secure him.

Ver. 7. **Lo, then would I wander far off]** Far from the force and fury of these breathing devils. Jeremiah wisheth the like, as being tired out by the ungodly practices of his countrymen, **#Ps 9:2**. And many a dear child of God, forced to be in bad company, cries, Oh that I had the wings, &c. Or if that Oh will not set him at liberty, he takes up that Woe, to express his misery, Woe is me, that I sojourn in Meshech, &c.

And remain in the wilderness] Among wild beasts; which were better than to abide with these lycanthropi *{a}*, men more cruel, savage, and bloody than any beasts.

{a} A kind of insanity described by ancient writers, in which the patient imagined himself to be a wolf, and had the instincts and propensities of a wolf. Now occasionally applied as a name of those forms of insanity in which the patient imagines himself a beast, and exhibits depraved appetites, alteration of voice, etc., in accordance with this delusion.

Ver. 8. **I would hasten my escape from the windy storm, &c.]** I would thrust my ship into any creek in the whole world, go as far as my legs, nay, wings, could carry me. Of the swiftness of the dove's

flight, see Plin. l. 10, c. 37; and how David hastened his flight from Absalom, see #2Sa 15:14.

Ver. 9. **Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues]** Heb. Swallow them up, O Lord, and divide their tongues; by an allusion, as some conceive, to those two famous judgments of God upon Dathan and Abiram, first, #Nu 16:31-33, and then, secondly, upon the Babel builders, #Ge 11:6-9, both which were thrown out for examples to all succeeding ages (as St Jude saith of the Sodomites, #Jude 7), and are to be considered by the saints, as here, in their prayers against their enemies. How God answered this prayer to David, see #2Sa 17:1-14, &c.

For I have seen violence and strife in the city] *i.e.* In Jerusalem, something I have seen, but more outrages I have heard of, since Absalom with his army came into it. The rude soldiers plunder the poor citizens at pleasure, and cannot agree among themselves in dividing the spoil.

Ver. 10. **Day and night they go about it, upon the walls thereof]** The ruffian soldiers do, as in garrisons is usual; or violence and strife do; so that in no place are good men in safety from rapines and robberies.

Mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it] What work may be thought to be made the common soldiers, among the women especially, when Absalom openly defileth his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel! #2Sa 16:22. When Tilly took Magdeburg in the late German wars, besides many other outrages, the ladies, gentlewomen, and others, like beasts and dogs, they yoked and coupled together, leading them into the woods to ravish them. Such as resisted they stripped naked, whipped them, cropped their ears, and so sent them home again.

Ver. 11. **Wickedness is in the midst thereof]** As if it were no longer, as once, Theopolis, but Poneropolis, for all kind of naughtiness there.

Deceit and guile depart not from her streets] The Vulgate hath it, *Usura et dolus*, Usury and guile; and Theodoret's note here is, *Notandum est, non mode Novi Testamenti perfectionem, sed Legis*

statum faenus damnare, that usury is condemned in both Old and New Testament.

Ver. 12. **For it was not an enemy that reproached me]** Ahithophel's perfidy and villany troubled David more than all the rest; there not being any wound worse, as Sophocles saith, than the treachery of a friend, ουδεν μειζον ελκος η φιλος αδικων; he being such a kind of enemy, *quem neque fugere, neque fugare possumus*, as Bernard hath it, whom we cannot easily prevent. See #Ps 41:9.

Then I could have borne it] Though as a burden; but nothing so grievous; I should not have much mattered it.

Ver. 13. **But it was thou, a man mine equal]** Heb. according to my rank, my compeer, my colleague, mine Alter-ego, my bosom friend, one that stood even with me, and upon the same ground, as it were.

My guide] In all mine affairs and actions; so that I thought nothing well done that I did not by his advice and counsel; my duke, my doctor, my Rabbi Davidis, as Rabbi David hath it, out of Kabuenaki.

Ver. 14. **We took sweet counsel together]** It was my great delight to confer and consult with him, especially about the things of God and the exercises of religion; which is or should be *sacratissimum inter homines vinculum*, the straitest tie of all. *Religioa religando*.

And walked unto the house of God in company] But so do those false Italians, who carry a pocket Church book with a pistol hid in the binding, which, turning to such a page, dischargeth; a plot to entrap him whom they hate, even while they are in their devotions together, when there is the least suspicion (II Mercurio Italico, Introd.).

Ver. 15. **Let death seize upon them]** *Irruat super illos mors*, as a merciless landlord, as a cruel creditor, or as he in the Gospel, who took his fellow by the throat, and said, Pay that thou owest me. A sad time it must needs be with the wicked when death shall come upon them with a writ of *Habeas corpus*, and the devil with another of *Habeas animam*. *Capiat illos mors*, Thou shalt have the spirit. Let death seize them, so Aben Ezra rendereth it; *Exigat mors in eos*, so Kimchi, a הַשׁוֹן #Ps 89:22. Here it is written, saith he, without an Aleph, {*Hebrew Text Note*} as it were, with a swift hand; and as if death and seize were all one word; to note the sudden stroke of

death, and that it will soon despatch them. To which sense also some render it, *Decipiat eos mors*, Let death deceive them, be too nimble for them.

And let them go down quick into hell] As did Dathan and his complices, **#Nu 16:31-33** *{See Trapp on "Ps 55:9"}* According to this imprecation Ahithophel and Judas, hanging themselves, went to hell alive, that is, hale and well; not enfeebled by sickness first. Augustine saith that heretics do the like, falling with open eyes, and self-condemned.

For wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them] Heb. in their sojourning place (for here we are but guests and sojourners), and in the middle of them, that is, in their hearts and houses both, *undique circumfluunt malitia et maleficiis*, they are as naught as need to be.

Ver. 16. **As for me, I will call upon God]** Or, I have called upon God, *sc.* for good to be done to myself, **#Ps 55:1**, &c., and for evil to mine enemies, **#Ps 55:9**, &c. (of which sort of imprecations. *{See Trapp on "Ps 35:4"}*)

And he hath heard me] I know he hath, both for myself, **#Ps 55:17,18**, and against them, **#Ps 55:19-21**. For what reason? first, they fear not God, **#Ps 55:19**; secondly, they break covenant, **#Ps 55:20**; thirdly, they use deceit, **#Ps 55:21**. These courses will work their ruth and ruin.

Ver. 17. **Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray]** So Daniel prayed three times a day, **#Da 6:10**; and in the temple they prayed at the third, sixth, and ninth hour of the day. The saints set themselves certain hours to pray in (besides extraordinary occasions putting them upon that daily sacrifice), the better to arouse their spirits, and to keep constant intercourse with God. Papists have their set times; and Mahometans, whatever occasion they have, either by profit or pleasure, to divert them, will pray five times every day. This they do by form and custom, not by conscience: take we heed of those ordinary traitors, formality and customariness; it hath been bewailed before that many hold only a certain stint of daily duties (as malt-horses their pace, or mill-horses their round), and rest upon

them when they have done, using the means as mediators, and so fall short, of Christ.

And cry aloud] Rousing up myself, and wrestling with God, not in a customary, frigid, bedulling way; but with all intention of spirit and contention of speech.

And he shall hear my voice] How should he do otherwise, I coming upon him with such earnestness? *Preces fundimus, coelum tundimus, misericordias extorquemus*, saith those primitive Christians whose prayers came before God as the noise of many waters, **#Re 14:2**.

Ver. 18. **He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle]** This he speaketh upon his prayer, by the force of his faith; as being assured of victory before the battle was fought or stroke struck, as they say.

For there were many with me] *i.e.* God's holy angels, as **#2Ki 6:16,17**. *Vel multi ex Israele orantes pro Davide*, sic Aben Ezra.

Ver. 19. **God shall hear]** *sc.* My prayers which are on the file before him, and as solicitors with him. *Mittamus preces et lachrymas, cordis legatos*, saith Cyprian. Up go prayers, down come deliverances.

And afflict them] *Ludit ambiguitate verbi*. The same word signifieth to afflict and to answer, *q.d.* he shall answer me, but afflict them; answer them with blows, with bitter answers.

Even he that abideth of old] And is therefore no changeling; the Eternity of Israel cannot lie, nor repent; "for he is not a man, that he should repent," **#1Sa 15:29**; neither can mine enemies hide themselves from him in any starting holes. *Sedet Deus ad iudicandum, et surgit ad puniendum* (Aug.).

Selah] *Id est, modo honorabili*, saith R. Gaon. Or, So be it, O Lord. It is set in the middle of the verse, as respecting both parts of it.

Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God] Changed they are not by repentance (which is such a change of the

heart, as bringeth forth a reformed life), but continue obstinate and obdurate; neither have they any alterations in their outward estate; they are not poured from vessel to vessel, have a constant prosperity (such as Demetrius called *mare mortuum*, a dead sea), and do therefore settle upon their lees, cast away all care of God and his service.

Ver. 20. **He hath put forth his hands, &c.]** That wicked Ahithophel hath. The Fathers understand it of God and his judgments.

He hath broken his covenant] His oath of allegiance, and a particular oath when he was sworn of David's counsel. The Scythians were strict covenant keepers (Herod. Melp.); and the Carthaginians infamous for the contrary; as now the Turks are.

Ver. 21. **The words of his mouth were smoother than butter]** Full finely he could soothe and smooth me up, while he was my counsellor, with his pithanology.

Mel in ore, verba lactis:

Fel in corde, fraus in factis.

But war was in his heart] *Heb. His heart was war. So in another psalm David saith of himself, "I am peace"; but when I speak of it, they are for war.*

His words were softer than oil] *So were Joab's to Amasa; Judas's to Christ; Cambyses' to his brother whom he slew; Andronicus's to his nobles, put to death by him, while he wept over them, as if he had been the most sorrowfull man alive. Whereupon the historian crieth out, Oh deep dissimulation and crocodile's tears, &c.! The wiser sort deemed Andronicus's praisings to be the beginnings of a man's disgrace; his bounty, his undoing, and his kindness, his death.*

Ver. 22. **Cast thy burden upon the Lord]** *Dare tuum, vel donum tuum*, that is, whatsoever thou wouldest have the Lord bestow upon thee, cast it first by faith upon him in prayer, *Agedum igitur animula men cur te diutius excrucias?* (Beza); even all thy cares, businesses, travails, and troubles. This David speaketh first to himself, and then to others. R. Solomon maketh this God's answer to David's prayers, *Spiritus sanctus sic respondit*, saith he.

And he shall sustain thee] Or, victual thee, nourish thee as a foster father; thou shalt have thy σιτομετριον, thy *demensum*, thy due allowance: as Joseph did his father and brethren, *chepi tappam*, according to the mouths of their little ones, #Ge 47:12; as Barzillai at this time nourished David at Mahanaim, #2Sa 17:27 19:32.

He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved] Or if moved, yet not greatly moved, #Ps 62:2, nor removed, He will establish the just, #Ps 7:9.

Ver. 23. **But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction]** Into the deep Gehenna, saith the Chaldee; thou shalt hurl them into hell, from their lofty tops here.

Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days] Heb. shall not half their days; that is, shall be soon cut off, die in the flower of their age, come to an untimely end (*Ad generum Cereris, &c.*); either the sword in battle or the sword of justice shall cut them off; or some treachery of men, or their own intemperance, or God's immediate hand, shall make an end of them betimes, and before they come to the full age of a man, or before they have effected their evil designs (Luther rendereth it, *Non dimidiabunt negotia*), or before they are in fit case to die, *Tempore non sue*, #Ec 7:17, then when it were better for them to do anything than to die. Our Richard III and Queen Mary reigned the shortest while of any other since the conquest. Charles IX of France, that bloody prince, died young, of a bloody disease, &c. Absalom and Ahithophel came to tragic and unhappy ends; so did all the primitive persecutors, those cruel crafties.

But I will trust in thee] For safety here and for salvation hereafter.

Upon Jonath-elem-rechokim] Meaning himself, who had wished before the wings of a dove, #Ps 55:6, and was now the dove of dumbness among foreigners, Philistines, those ravenous hawks that were ready to seize and tear him, *Fatua columba*, #Ho 7:11. Dumb he was fain to feign himself, and worse, among them (see #Ps 34:1, the title; #1Sa 22:17, &c.), and therein was more of the serpent than of the dove.

Michtam of David] *Davidi insigne aureolum*, David's jewels, or golden ingot. See #Ps 16:1, title. This Michtam he made likely (as also #Ps 34:1) when, gotten away from Gath, he came into the cave of Adullam, #1Sa 22:1.

Carmine secessum scribentis et otia quaerunt.

Chapter 56

Ver. 1. **Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up]** Sup me up (as the Hebrew word soundeth), make but one draught of me, or suck me in as a whirlpool, swallow me up as a ravenous wild beast. The devil is said to seek whom he may swallow down {#1Pe 5:8} at a gulp, as it were; and his imps are as greedy, but that they are gagged by God. The man here mentioned is Ishbibenob, the brother of Goliath, saith the Chaldee; but they do better who understand it to be Saul and his complices.

He fighting daily oppresseth me] Pliny saith of the scorpion, that there is not one minute wherein he doth not put forth the sting. The like do Satan and his instruments.

Ver. 2. **Mine enemies (or observers) would daily swallow me up]** *Anhelant observatores mei*. To set forth the indignity of the thing, he repeateth the same sentence again in the plural number; noting that there were not a few of them bitterly bent by might and main to mischief him, a poor forlorn, friendless man.

For they be many that fight against me, O thou most High] Or, though there be many that fight for me from on high, that is, the angels, as Aben Ezra rendereth and senseth the text.

Ver. 3. **What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee]** This was bravely resolved: *Quid timet hominem homo in sinu Dei positus?* Faith quelleth and killeth distrustful fear; but awful dread, it breedeth, feedeth, fostereth, and cherisheth.

Ver. 4. **In God I will praise his word]** Having placed my confidence in God, I will take his bare word for my security. He hath promised to make me king, #1Sa 16:13, and he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, or alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth,

#Ps 89:33. The word of God cannot be broken, **#Joh 5:35.** David once doubted it, but he soon took himself up for halting, **#Ps 116:11.**

I will not fear what flesh can do unto me] Flesh is *terminus diminuens*. What can proud flesh do against the God of the spirits of all flesh? Man is but despicable flesh at the best.

Ver. 5. **Every day they wrest my words]** Or, my matters; they distort and pervert everything I say, or do, from the true intention, and all to make a traitor of me. That I carried myself wisely in the court, valiantly in the field, faithfully toward Jonathan, cautiously for the safeguard of mine own life, shifting as I could from one place to another; all this they say was done out of affectation for the kingdom, and as seeking Saul's death. So they dealt by our Saviour in the Gospel, taking that with the left hand which he tendered with the right, and many times marring a good text by an ill gloss put upon it. So Simon the leper served that good woman, who made an ewer ^{a} of her eyes and a towel of her hair, **#Lu 7:34.** Men should interpret everything the best way, and not as logicians do, *Sequi partem deterioorem*.

All their thoughts, &c.] ^{See Trapp on "Ps 56:1"}

^{a} A servant who supplied guests, etc. at table with water to wash their hands.

Ver. 6. **They gather themselves together]** They convene and combine to do me mischief; and should not God's people meet often together to counterplot such malignants, and to pray them down? *Cum bent, cum probi coeunt, cum pii, cum casti congregantur, non est factio dicenda, sed curia: Et e contrario, illis nomen factionis accommodandum est, qui in odium bonorum et proborum conspirant,* saith Tertullian (Apol. advers. Gentes, cap. 39, Num. 520).

They mark my steps] They spy and pry into my practices, that they may take any advantage; this calls for careful and exact walking, **#1Pe 2:21 Heb 12:13.**

Ver. 7. **Shall they escape by iniquity?]** *q.d.* No, let them never think it, their sin will surely find them out, as cunning as they are; and since they are so foolhardy as to walk upon iniquity's fireworks, let

them look to be blown up; and they shall have my prayers to that purpose.

In thine anger cast down, &c.] It is prophetic as well as optative.

Ver. 8. **Thou tellest my wanderings]** Or, thou cipherest up my flittings, and hast them in *numerato*, ready told up; my vagaries while hunted up and down like a partridge, and hushed out of every bush, so that I have nowhere to settle. St Paul was at the same pass, *αστατουμεν*, saith he, we have no certain abode, **#1Co 4:11**; and so were sundry of the holy martyrs and confessors, who wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, &c., driven from post to pillar, from one country to another, God all the while noting and numbering all their flittings, yea, all their footings, bottling up their tears, booking down their sighs, as here, and **#Mal 3:16**; see **#Mt 10:30**. The Septuagint, for my wanderings, or flittings, have my life, ζωνη, to teach us, saith one, that our life is but a flitting.

Put thou my tears into thy bottle] Heb. my tear, that is, every tear of mine; let not one of them be lost, but kept safe with thee, as so much sweet water. It is a witty observation of one, that God is said in Scripture to have a bag and a bottle, a bag for our sins, a bottle for our tears; and that we should help to fill this as we have that. There is an allusion here in the original that cannot be translated into English.

Are they not in thy book?] *sc.* Of providence; where they cannot be blotted out by any time or tyrants.

Ver. 9. **When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back]** For how should they stand before so mighty a God? Of the power of prayer for the beating back of enemies, besides the Scripture, histories are full; that famous *Victoria Halleluatica* for instance.

Ver. 10. **In God will I praise his word]** The Jewish doctors observe that Elohim, God, is a name importing justice; and that Jehovah, Lord, holdeth out mercy, according to that, **#Ex 34:6**, Jehovah, Jehovah merciful, gracious, &c. But if God should seem neither to show his mercy upon us nor his justice upon our enemies, we must nevertheless adhere to his word or promise, and patiently wait his performance; which will be as sure as he is God and Lord. {See Trapp on "Ps 56:4"}

Ver. 11. **In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid, &c.]** When news came to Luther, that both the emperor and pope had threatened his ruin, he bravely answered, *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor*; I care for neither of them, I know whom I have trusted. See #Ps 56:4.

Ver. 12. **Thy vows are upon me, O God]** *Sunt tua post, quam vovi* (Arab.). I am a votary ever since I was at Gath, there and then I vowed, that if the Lord would vouchsafe to bring me out of that brake I would do as became a thankful man every way. And now I am *Damnatus votorum*, as the Latin expression is; vow I must, and pay to the Lord my God; *Ecce ego Domine*, Lord, I am ready, do thou but set me up an altar, and I will offer a sacrifice; restore me to thy sanctuary, and I will do it exactly, in the ceremonies and formalities thereof; meanwhile, mine heart and lips shall not be wanting to give thee praise in spirit and truth, I will render praises unto thee.

Ver. 13. **For thou hast delivered my soul from death]** Which was the very thing I begged of thee when I was at worst, viz. that thou wouldest save my life, which then lay at stake; I also then solemnly took upon me such and such engagements, which lie upon me as so many debts, and I am in pain till I have paid them. This if I shall do effectually,

Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling] Yea, I know thou wilt, Lord, for every former favour of thine is a pledge of a future.

That I may walk before God in the light of the living?] Called elsewhere the land of the living; that is, in this present life, spending the span of it in thy fear, and labouring to be every whit as good as I vowed to be at the time when I was in great distress and danger. Pliny, in an Epistle of his to one 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 futures esse profitemur infirmi*, i.e. That you hold out to be such when well as you promised to be the time when weak and sick, &c.

Al-taschith] i.e. Destroy not; μη διαφθειρης (Sept.). David being in imminent danger of destruction in the cave, might send up this short request as it were in a fright, before he uttered this ensuing prayer. Al-taschith in such an exigent might well be an effectual prayer; as

was the woman of Canaan's Lord, help me, and the sick man's Abba, Father; or these might now be his words (to Abishai, or some other of his servants, whose fingers even itched to be doing with Saul), as afterwards they were upon a like occasion, #1Sa 26:9. Destroy not Saul. See thou do it not.

Michtam of David] See #Ps 16:1, title.

When he fled from Saul in the cave] #1Sa 24:1, or, into the cave for shelter; and where, when he might have cut Saul's throat, he cut his coat only, and was inwardly checked for it; nevertheless the Spirit came upon him, which was no small comfort, as Aben Ezra here observeth, and he said,

Chapter 57

Ver. 1. **Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful]** *q.d.* Now or never help at a dead lift. *Bis, pro more rogantium, ad corroborandum,* saith Kimchi. Other Jewish doctors give this reason of the repetition of his petition: "Be merciful," &c., lest either I fall into Saul's hands, or Saul into mine; lest desire for revenge prick me on to kill him. Or, have mercy on me, that I sin not; or if I do sin, that I may repent (Midr. Tillin.)

For my soul trusteth in thee] An excellent argument, so it comes from the soul, so it be heart-sprung.

Yea, in the shadow of thy wings, &c.] As the little chicken in danger of the kite hovereth, and covereth under the hen.

Until these calamities be over past] For long they will not continue. *Nubecula est, cito transibit,* said Athanasius of the Arian persecutions, which for present were very sharp. So Master Jewel, about the beginning of Queen Mary's reign, persuading many to patience, said often, *Haec non durabunt setatem,* This sharp shower will soon be over.

Ver. 2. **I will cry unto God most high]** Who can easily overtop Saul, as high as he is, and all his complices; against whom I have

this comfort, that in the thing wherein they deal proudly God is above them, #Ex 18:11.

Unto God that performeth all things for me] And in me, #Isa 26:12; doth not his work to the halves, but is both author and finisher of my faith, and other affairs, #Heb 12:2 Php 1:6 Ps 138:8. Here are the two props of David's prayer: First, God's sufficiency, he is the most high. Secondly, His efficiency, he perfectly accomplisheth all things for me.

Ver. 3. **He shall send from heaven and save me]** Rather than fail, I shall have an angel to rescue me; for although the Lord usually worketh by means, yet he can work by miracles, and will do it if there be a just occasion; howsoever, his mercy and his truth he will be sure to send, and that is enough, He will be seen in the mount, he will repent for his servants when he seeth their power is gone, #De 32:36, when there is *dignus vindice nodus*, an extremity fit for Divine power to interpose.

Ver. 4. **My soul is among lions]** And so is a lively picture of the Church in all ages. 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, &c. *Talis est ecclesia in hac vita, sicut et in historia Danielis pingitur.*

And I lie even among them that are set on fire] *sc.* With rage and hellish hatred. Others expound it actively, of those *Ardeliones aulici*, those court incendiaries, who enraged Saul and the nobles against David, as a traitor and pest. See #1Sa 24:10.

Even the sons of men] *i.e.* Carnal men, that, being in their pure naturals, have no goodness at all in them.

Whose teeth are spears and arrows] Such was Doeg, that dead dog, and others void of the Spirit, which is *neque mendax, neque mordax.*

Ver. 5. **Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens]** That is, saith the Chaldee, above the angels.

And let thy glory be above all the earth] That is, above the inhabitants of the earth. There are, saith Kimchi, that think thou either wilt not, or else canst not, save; oh, let thy power appear for the conviction of all such who now lift up themselves, and seem at least to touch the heaven with one finger.

Ver. 6. **They have prepared a net for my steps]** So that I can hardly keep foot out of snare. I dare not lift up one foot till I find sure footing for the other; and that is hard to do. See Saul's charge to the Ziphites, #1Sa 23:22.

My soul is bowed down] I am glad to shrink in myself (as fearful people use to do), that I may shun those gins and snares that they have set to maim and mischief me.

They have digged a pit, &c.] They have forced me into this subterranean cave; and, behold, Saul himself is cast into mine hands, in this mine hiding hole.

Οι αυτω κακα τευχει ανηρ, αλλω κακα τευχων.

Ver. 7. **My heart is fixed, O God]** I am both ready and resolute; I doubt not about deliverance, and am well prepared to praise God. It is fit he should have the fruit of his own planting, and that of the best too; otherwise it is no better than the refreshing of him that standeth by a good fire, and saith, Aha, I am warm.

Ver. 8. **Awake up, my glory]** He rouseth himself out of his natural drowsiness, as Samson once went forth and shook himself.

I myself will awake early] Or, I will awaken the morning, as the cock, by his early crowing, is said to do.

Non vigil ales ibi cristati cantibus oris

Evocat auroram -(Ovid. Metam. lib. 11).

Ver. 9. **I will praise thee, O Lord...among the nations]** This was done by Christ calling the Gentiles, #Ps 18:49 Ro 15:9.

Ver. 10. **For thy mercy is great, &c.]** God's mercy is ordinarily in the psalms bounded by his truth; that none may either presume him more merciful than he hath declared himself in his word; or else despair of finding mercy gratis, according to his promise.

Ver. 11. **Be thou exalted, &c.]** *Versus amoibaeus:* see #Ps 57:5, only that is in way of prayer; this, of praise.

Chapter 58

Ver. 1. **Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation?] Or, O council;** you that are gathered together on a knot, under a pretence of doing justice, and promoting the public good by giving faithful advice to the king. *Una ligati, ut #Ge 37:7, vel ab אָלֵם Mutus quia congregatio ante oratorem est quasi mutus* (Aben Ezra). *Colloquitur Abnero et reliquis,* saith Kimchi, David here talketh to Abner and the rest, who, to please Saul, pronounced David a rebel, and condemned him absent for an enemy to the state. And forasmuch as there is no greater injury than that which passeth under the name of right, he sharply debateth the matter with them whom he knew of old to be very corrupt; painting them out in their colours, and denouncing God's heavy judgments against them for their unjust dealings with him. The word rendered congregation is not found elsewhere in that sense. It signifieth dumbness; and is by the Spanish translators rendered, *O audientia* by antiphrasis, *ut lucus, quia non lucet.*

Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?] i.e. O ye carnal profane persons that savour not the things of the Spirit; *q.d.* ye are fit persons to make counsellors of state. *Sedes prima et vita ima* agree not. *Dignitas in indigno est ornamentum in luto,* saith Salvian. You do much misbecome your places.

Ver. 2. **Yea, in heart ye work wickedness]** These the devil worketh it as in a forge; ye are always plotting and ploughing mischief, and that not so much for fear of Saul, or to please him, as out of the naughtiness of your own hearts; and all this you know in your consciences to be true. Kimchi saith, that the word *Aph,* or yea, importeth, that their hearts were made for a better purpose; and therefore their sin was the greater. *Corruptio optimi pessima.*

Ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth] *i.e.* Your bribes, saith Kimchi; these we weigh or poise, *quasi essent recta,* as if there were no hurt in them: so Demosthenes weighed Harpalus's goblet, to the great danger of his country, and his own indelible infamy. *Manus vestrae concinnant iniquitatem* (Vul.). The Arabic

rendereth it, *Manus vestrae in tenebris immersae sunt*, your hands are drowned in darkness; you seem to do all according to law and justice (pictured with a pair of balances in her hand), when, indeed, you weigh out wrong for right, and do things *κατα προσκλισιν*, by partiality, #1Ti 5:21, by tilting the balance on the one side, *Trutina iustior. Prov. ζυγον μη παραβαινειν* (Pythag. Symb.).

Ver. 3. **The wicked are estranged from the womb]** *q.d.* These enemies of mine are old sinners; hardened and habituated in wickedness from the very womb; it hath also grown up with them, and quite turned away their hearts from God and goodness, whereunto they stand utterly across, and have an innate antipathy; they are not only averse thereto, but adverse also; yea, to their sinews of iron they have added brows of brass, #Isa 48:4. Sinful, indeed, we are all by nature, and a birth blot we bring into the world with us, making us strangers to and strayers from God. But some God sanctifieth even from the womb, as he did Jeremiah; and some by the light of nature, not altogether extinct, and by God's restraining grace, are reined in from notorious outrage in sin. Whereas others, cast off by God, and suffered to walk after their own heart's lusts, *in pesus indies proficiunt*, wax every day worse and worse, as the apostle speaketh, till their iniquity be full, and so wrath come upon them to the utmost. But as young nettles sting straight, and young crab fish go backward, and young urchins are rough; so naughty nature soon appeareth in little ones. Valezatha, the youngest of Haman's sons, is by the Hebrews said to be the most malicious; and hath therefore one letter ך in his name bigger than the rest. {*Hebrew Text Note*}

They go astray as soon as they be born] Heb. from the belly; *Partus sequitur ventrem*, no sooner could they do anything but they were doing evil, lipping out lies and slanders very early.

Ver. 4. **Their poison is like the poison of a serpent]** Their inbred corruption (the spawn of that old serpent, #Ge 3:1-14) is strong, and full of infection, able to kill both the party in whom it is and the other also upon whom it is cast. Malice drinketh up the most part of its own venom, but some it spitteth out upon others; for it is not like the maid whom Avicen mentioneth, who, feeding upon poison, was herself healthy, yet infected others with her venomous breath, #De 32:33. Hot poison have they, like as the hot poison of a serpent (so

some render it), yea, of the worst sort of serpents, the asp (for *serpentum quot colores tot dolores*, saith Isidore), the venom whereof is incurable, saith Pliny, lib. viii. c. 3; unless the members touched therewith be immediately cut off.

They are like the deaf adder (or asp) that stoppeth her ear] So that their naughtiness is not natural only, but habitual, acquired, wilful; they refuse to be reformed, they hate to be healed, and must, therefore, be turned over to God with a *Noluerunt incantari*, they would not be reclaimed, they are uncounselable, unpersuadable. The adder or asp here hath her name Pethen, from persuasibleness, but it is by antiphrasis. Wicked men are likewise said to be ἀπειθεῖς, unpersuaded, or disobedient, #**Tit 1:16**, and children of disobedience, #**Eph 2:2**, such as whom *Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris*, speak you never so persuasively, ye shall never persuade. Nay, but we will have a king, said they of old, when they had nothing else to say. So Pharaoh, when clearly convinced, sent for the sorcerers.

Ver. 5. **Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers]** Such there are, the devil's spellmen, #**Ec 10:8**, that can enchant some kind of serpents, and some they cannot, as #**Jer 8:17**. That the serpent here spoken of, when she beginneth to feel the charmer, clappeth one of her ears close to the ground, and stoppeth the other with her tail, is affirmed by Jerome, Austin, and Cassiodorus. Vide Plin. lib. 2, c. 7; 1. 8, c. 3. *Quum coeperit incantatorem suum pati, allidit unam aurem terrae et cauda obturat alteram* (Aug. in loc.; Horat. Epist. 2). And that she doth this, although by hearkening to the charmer, provoking her to spit out her poison, she might renew her age, is affirmed by others; semblably, perverse people will not be persuaded to live happily, reign everlastingly.

— *At Paris ut vivat regnetque beatus,
Cogi posse negat.*

Ver. 6. **Break their teeth, O God]** Disarm and disable them from doing me mischief. See #**Ps 3:7 10:13 57:4**, to which last he seemeth here to refer.

Ver. 7. **Let them melt away as waters]** As snowwaters before the sunbeams, quickly melted, and soon drunk in by the dry earth, #**Job 24:19**. In Peru, they say, there is a river called the diurnal river, or

the day river, because it flows with a mighty current in the day, but in the night is dry, because it is not fed by a spring, but caused merely by the melting of the snow, which lieth on the mountains thereabouts.

When he bendeth his bow] *i.e.* Let him be utterly frustrated, let all his mischievous designs and endeavours be blasted, and come to nothing. In that famous battle between Theodosius and Maximus, *Milites nobis qui aderant retulerunt*, saith Augustine (De Cit. Dei, l. 5, c. 26), *extorta sibi esse de manibus quaecunque iculabantur; cum a Theodosii partibus in adversarios vehemens ventus iret; et non solum quaecunque in eos iaciebantur concitatissime raperet, verum etiam ipsorum tela in eorum corpora retorqueret*: the soldiers told us that their darts thrown against the Christians were, by a violent wind, brought back upon themselves. Accordingly some render this hemistich thus: When he bendeth, &c., let him be as they that cut off themselves, *Iethmalalu reciprocam habet significationem. Et hoc Saulo contigit.*

Ver. 8. **As a snail which melteth]** The psalmist heapeth up many very fit similitudes agreeable to these men's avarice and ambition, which was to raise themselves and their posterity to great estates; but all should come to nothing suddenly.

Ver. 9. **Before your pots can feel the thorns, &c.]** Of this text we may say, as one doth of another, it had been easy had not commentators made it so knotty. I am for that of Drusius, *Tractum a semicrudis carnibus olla extractis priusquam ignis calorem senserint*, It is a comparison taken from raw flesh, taken out of the pot before it hath felt the full force of the fire (Proverb, clas. 2, l. 2. #Pr 30:16).

Both living, and in his wrath] *i.e.* When they are most vigorous and vivacious, to see to, his wrath shall sweep them away.

Ver. 10. **The righteous shall rejoice, &c.]** Giving God the glory of his justice against his enemies and care of his poor people. See #Ex 15:1 Re 15:3 Es 7:10 8:9 Pr 11:10.

He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked] A speech borrowed from great conquerors, wading up to the ancles in the blood of their enemies; or, as some think, from those that tread the

wine-press with joy. Some make this the sense: the righteous, seeing the ruin of the wicked, shall become more cautious; according to that, *Alterius perditio tua sit cautio*.

Ver. 11. **So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward]** Not the religious only, but the rational, *Passim et palam haec duo profitebuntur*; shall everywhere, and all abroad, say, as here,

There is a reward] See my Righteous Man's Recompense.

Verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth] Sitteth not idle in heaven, letting things run here at sixes and sevens, as fate or blind fortune will. *Curiosus est, plenusque negotii Deus*, saith Cicero.

Al-taschith] Destroy not, preserve me from this ambush. See #Ps 57:1, title.

When Saul sent, and they watched the house] But were disappointed by Michal shifting him out of the way, preferring a husband before a father, though she had otherwise no great goodness in her. The glory of this deliverance David wholly ascribeth to God, and seeketh help of him.

Chapter 59

Ver. 1. **Deliver me from mine enemies, O God]** This psalm is the same in substance with those aforegoing, viz. David's desire to be delivered from Saul's craft and cruelty.

Defend me from them] Heb. Set me on high, far out of their reach.

Ver. 2. **Deliver me from the workers of iniquity]** Saul's assassins and bloodhounds, hired to despatch me.

Ver. 3. **The mighty are gathered against me]** The seven sons of Saul, say the Rabbis, who were afterwards hanged, #2Sa 21:1-9, with a company of cut-throats attending them (R. Obad. Gaon in loc.).

Ver. 4. **They run and prepare themselves]** At Saul's command, never inquiring into the cause, right or wrong; but taking his will for warrant good enough.

Awake to help me] Heb. to meet me, *sc.* in mercy, *Ut occurras et succurras mihi*, or, at my calling, as some render it.

And behold] {See Trapp on "Ps 34:15"}

Ver. 5. **Awake to visit all the heathen]** These pagan Israelites, who might have some heathens also among them, Saul's slaughtermen, men fleshed in blood.

Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors] Heb. that treacherously work iniquity, that do it *consulto et data opera*, desperadoes, reprobates, destined to eternal destruction.

Ver. 6. **They return at evening]** *sc.* To mine house at Gibeah of Saul, hoping to find me then at home again; as if, like the hunted hare, I must needs return to my old form.

They make a noise like a dog] When coming the second night also they missed of David they barked and howled like mad dogs, ready to take every one they met by the throat.

And go round about the city] Ferreting and searching after him in all places, and perhaps surrounding the city to surprise him.

Ver. 7. **Behold, they belch out with their mouth]** Calling me traitor wherever they come, and seeking to double murder him, viz. by detraction, and by deadly practice. As a fountain casteth out waters, so do graceless men wickedness, #Jer 6:7.

Swords are in their lips] Or, to their lips they add swords; they word it not only, but are armed and well-appointed. But it is well that they blurt out their bloody purposes, and so give warning, *Hunc tibi pugionem mittit Senatus; detexit facinus fatuus, et non implevit.*

For who, say they, doth hear?] *i.e.* Who, that we need care for? David's friends, they thought, durst not utter their discontent; and for God they took no great thought, #Ps 10:3 55:20.

Ver. 8. **But thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them]** *q.d.* Thou not only hearest, but jeerest, at their madness, and wilt bring all their purposes to nought with little ado; and, as it were, playing and sporting. See #Ps 2:4.

Ver. 9. **Because of his strength will I wait on thee]** The stronger Saul is the more will I adhere to thee. Or thus, His strength will I reserve to thee; that is, I will turn him over to thee, who act far stronger, to take an order with him; to put a hook into his nose, and a bridle into his jaws, and to bring me at length to the kingdom.

For God is my defence] Heb. my high place; therefore what need I fear him, or his emissaries.

Ver. 10. **The God of my mercy shall prevent me]** Or, God will prevent me with his mercy, *sc.* before I ask or think; howsoever, in the opportunity of time he will not fail me.

God shall let me see, &c.] See #Ps 54:7.

Ver. 11. **Slay them not, lest my people forget]** *Marcet sine adversario virtus*, the natural heat decayeth if it have not wherewith to wrestle. Carthage was not to be destroyed, that Rome might not want an adversary. The saints have the relics of corruption left in them for exercise of their graces. "Slay them not," saith David; and the Chaldee addeth, *statim*, forthwith, or outright, but by degrees rather; "lest my people," my followers and fellow soldiers, forget their skill in arms or thy judgments on the enemies.

Scatter them by thy power] That they may wander, as Cain did, and be restless. Or, shake them to and fro, as meal is shaken in a sieve; let them be dissipated, and by degrees wasted, that they may be as so many standing monuments of the divine justice, *ut eo sint illustriora et testatiora tun iudicia*, as the dejected people of the Jews are today.

Ver. 12. **For the sin of their mouth, &c.]** The Arabians have this proverb, Take heed lest thy tongue cut thy throat. Many a man's mouth is a purgatory to the master. Hard words must be reckoned for, #Jude 15; the Jews find it so, and will do.

And for cursing, &c.] Cursing men are cursed men.

Ver. 13. **Consume them in wrath, &c.]** But by degrees, as #Ps 59:11, slowly, but surely and severely; that they may feel themselves wasted. There may be much poison in little drops, *paulatim seu gradatim et in fine penitus corruant* (Kimchi).

And let them know] Know to their cost; or, let men know.

Ver. 14. **And at evening let them return, &c.]** Let these backsliders in heart be filled with their own ways; run about for hunger, as before they did for malice, **#Ps 59:6**. Here the prophet mindeth to mock them, saith an interpreter, *Revertantur famelici* (Vat.). *Sit poena eorum sicur peccatum* (Kimchi).

Ver. 15. **Let them wander up and down for meat]** *Sicut mendici de ostio ad ostium faciunt*, as beggars do from door to door, saith Kimchi.

And grudge if they be not satisfied] Murmur against God and men, howling against heaven, as hungry wolves, **#Isa 8:21**. Others understand it thus, Let them run to and fro for meat, that is, to devour me, as **#Ps 27:2**; but surely they shall not be satisfied, but miss their design, though they tarry all night, watching for me.

Ver. 16. **In the morning]** That time wherein they thought to have surprised me, **#1Sa 19:11**, but thou hast secured me. See **#Isa 65:14**.

Ver. 17. **O my strength]** All David's strength was derivative; in himself he was weak as water.

Upon Shushan-eduth] An instrument so called, or to the tune of some song so called. The words signify the lily of the testimony; or, of kingly ornament; whereof many make manifold constructions, but they are all conjectural.

Michtam of David, to teach] The Hebrews have a proverb, *Lilmod lelammed*, Men must, therefore, learn that they may teach. David here imparteth what he had learned of God's goodness; and would teach others, especially when they go to war, as **#Jud 3:2 2Sa 1:18**, to call upon God, and to lean upon his promises; as himself had done with singular success.

When he strove with Aram-naharaim] *Cum rixaretur, contenderet*. Mesopotamia, called here Aram-naharaim, lay between those two famous rivers, Euphrates and Tigris; and so seemeth to have been a part of that earthly paradise, **#Ge 2:10-14**, whereof since Adam's fall and Noah's flood, *cecidit rosa, mansit spina*, saith one, the rose is gone, the thorn only remaineth. A country fruitful beyond belief, as Herodotus hath it; but inhabited by such as here joined with the Ammonites and other enemies of the Church;

and were, therefore, sought by David, and at length vanquished. See #1Ch 19.

And with Aram-zobah] Or, Coelesyria, whereof Damascus was the metropolis.

When Joab returned] *sc.* From the slaughter of the Syrians.

And smote of Edom] That is, of the Edomites, who had set upon Israel in the south, when Joab with the army was fighting against the Syrians in the east. Joab, therefore, at his return took them to do; and slew twelve thousand, after that Abishai had first slain six thousand of them, all which eighteen thousand are said to have been slain by David, as being *Rex et Radix victoriae*, saith Kimchi, the king and root of the victory, #2Sa 8:13.

In the valley of Salt] Where Abraham had once fought with the four victorious kings, #Ge 14:9,14,15, and afterwards Amaziah with the Edomites. likewise slaying ten thousand, #2Ki 14:7, In the midst of these conflicts and bustles David is thought to have written this psalm, together with #Ps 44 Ps 108

Chapter 60

Ver. 1. **O God, thou hast cast us off]** Some gather from this sad complaint that David was sometimes worsted in these wars, though it be not particularly so recorded in the Scriptures (Aben Ezra). *Dubia est martis alea*, Κοινος ενναλιος, #2Sa 11:25; the best cause hath not always the best success, #Jud 20:21,25. Others think that the psalmist here complaineth of the sad condition of the Israelites after that Saul was slain in Mount Gilboa, and the Philistines tyrannized at their pleasure, #1Sa 21:7. Whereupon also followed these civil dissensions and seditions, while some of the tribes set up Ishbosheth, and others went after David. These miseries he here mentioneth the rather that God's goodness in the present settlement of the kingdom might the better appear. Hence most interpreters read the words in the preterpluperfect, Thou hadst cast us off, thou hadst

scattered us, &c.; but now it is well with us for the present, and better yet it will be.

Ver. 2. **Thou hast made the earth to tremble]** By sundry fearful and dismal fractions and concussions in our state.

Thou hast broken it] In allusion to earthquakes.

Heal the breaches thereof] Remedy the disorders, and cure the diseases, like a good physician. The Greeks call a king *αναξ αβ ακος*, Medela from his healing office; God is Jehovah, the physician, the Sun of righteousness hath healing under his wings.

For it shaketh] *Nutat ac mox ruitura videtur* it will surely down if not timely shored up.

Ver. 3. **Thou hast showed thy people hard things]** God will be sure to plough his own ground, whatsoever becometh of the waste; and to weed his own garden, though the rest of the world should be let alone to grow wild.

Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment] *Vinum vacillationis*, we are intoxicated with our afflictions, according to that, **#De 28:28,34**, we are drunk with them, or rather mad, and put quite besides all faith and hope in a manner, *Fuimus obstupefacti tanquam venefica potione*.

Ver. 4. **Thou hast given a banner]** All the forementioned had formerly befallen them, but now it began to be better, the scene to be altered, banners erected, and displayed in token of victory, and for a singular sign of God s favour, in that juncture of time and deplored condition of theirs.

Because of the truth. Selah] Heb. From the face of the truth, that is, with reference to thy promises, which thou failest not to fulfil.

Ver. 5. **That thy beloved may be delivered]** Heb. thy darlings, those that fear thee, **#Ps 60:4**, for, for their sakes it is that God doth good to a people; to all others he seemeth to say, as Elisha once did to Jehoram, that wicked king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? &c. Were it not that I regarded such and such people, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee, **#2Ki 3:13,14**.

Save with thy right hand] Heb. Save thy right hand, which seemeth to be afflicted together with us; because the enemies say, he cannot save us; thus Kimchi expoundeth it.

Ver. 6. **God hath spoken in his holiness]** He hath assured me all these following places; therefore I looked upon them long since as already mine, and now I am master of them.

I will rejoice] As having peaceable possession of all; though I have come hardly by it. Now I see that whatsoever God by his servant Samuel assured me of, was true, and to be trusted; albeit I sometimes doubted of it, #Ps 116:11 1Sa 27:1.

I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth] Which places, though they longest held out against me under Ishbosheth, yet now that they are come in, they shall have civil usage under me, and be better dealt with than those outland enemies, Moab, Edom, &c., now brought under my subjection.

Ver. 7. **Gilead is mine and Manasseh]** These countries on the other side of Jordan the Syrians haply had gotten, and now David had recovered them.

Ephraim also is the strength of my head] Because a populous and potent tribe. Junius thinks David here alludeth to that of Moses in his blessing of this tribe, #De 33:17; as in the next words to that of Jacob, #Ge 49:10.

Judah is my lawgiver] There, viz. at Jerusalem, sitteth the Synedrion, #Nu 11:16, and there is my sovereign court of justice, #Ps 122:5, and of that tribe, Christ, the great lawgiver of his Church, shall spring.

Ver. 8. **Moab is my wash pot]** A pot wherein to wash my feet, a vessel of dishonour, such as at my pleasure I will break in pieces, #Ps 2:9; and such as I reserve of them alive, shall be my scullions and underlings, glad to do my drudgery. *Non vas coquendi carnes, sed lavandi pedes* (Kimchi).

Over Edom I will cast out my shoe] *i.e.* Walk through their country as a conqueror; or, I will tread them under my feet; or, I will throw my shoe at the heads of them, and make them to take it up; or, I will

make no more of subduing them, than of casting my shoe over them. *Exutos mihi calceos et in ipsorum caput proiectos attollere iubebo* (Beza).

Philistia, triumph thou because of me] *i.e.* Cry me up for thy king; *Si velis, et videas quid in extremum eveniet*, saith Kimchi. Or, triumph thou over me (by an irony) as thou lately didst over Saul and his sons in Mount Gilboa; and as since that time thou camest forth to seek me, but wentest home again by weeping cross.

Ver. 9. **Who will bring me into the strong city?**] Into Rabbah of the Ammonites, which at length he got, #2Sa 12:29-31, and now wisheth for. Kimchi readeth it in the perfect tense, Who has led me into the strong cities? who has brought me into Edom? Hast not thou, O God? &c.

Ver. 10. **Wilt not thou, O God?**] Or, hast not thou, &c. The glory of all victories is to be given to God *in solidum*. Strong cities are nothing, when he will have them subdued, and sacked.

Which hadst cast us off] See #Ps 44:9. The Church's prosperity, like checker work, is intermingled with adversity.

Ver. 11. **Give us help from trouble]** Give it us whensoever we need it; as hitherto thou very graciously hast done.

For vain is the help of man] As they had lately experimented in Saul, a king of their own choosing, but not able to save them from those proud Philistines. No more could the Romans the Britons, oppressed by their northern enemies. They sent Aetius, the Roman praefect of Gaul, and thus complained to him: The barbarous enemy beateth us to the sea, the sea beateth us back to the enemy; between these two kinds of deaths we are either murdered or drowned (Dan. Chron.). But their implorations prevailed not; for Aetius at that time had enough to do to keep his own head, and Valentinian, the empire. The saint's comfort is, that where human help faileth Divine beginneth, as Philo told his countrymen, when rejected by Caius the emperor.

Ver. 12. **Through God we shall do valiantly]** *Faciemus militiam*, some render it, and it is true of the spiritual warfare also; we shall be more than conquerors, even triumphers, #2Co 2:14. *Meminisse oportet ista nunc esse ad spirituales Ecclesiae hastes potius quam*

adversus armatas terra capias referenda, saith Beza, in his argument and use of this psalm.

He it is that shall tread down our enemies] Corporal and spiritual; this is a part of Christ's kingly office, to the which he will not be wanting. *Psalmus hic est de Messia imperante, sicut David*, saith Kimchi, out of Derash Rabboth. This psalm is concerning Messiah reigning, as David did.

To the chief Musician upon Neginah, &c.] *Vincenti in melodiis Davidis* (Vatab.). It is probable that he made this psalm when, driven out of his kingdom by his son Absalom, he took up at Mahanaim beyond Jordan, #2Sa 17:24, and therehence prayed from the ends of the earth, or rather of the land, #Ps 61:2. Howbeit R. Obadiah saith, that this psalm is *De pugna cum Aram in confinibus Israel*, concerning the battle with the Syrians in the borders of the land. See #2Sa 10:14, &c., and #1Ch 19:16, &c.

Chapter 61

Ver. 1. **Hear my cry, O God]** Heb. my shouting, my sad outcry; for he was in great extremity, #Ps 61:2, and seeks ease by prayer. This is the way, #Job 22:21 Php 4:6,7, walk in it. Prayer hath *virtutem pacativam*; it doth sweetly settle the soul, and lodge a blessed security in it.

Ver. 2. **From the ends of the earth]** Or, of the land. In all places men may lift up holy hands, #1Ti 2:8 Joh 4:21, and speed. A desert may be a goodly oratory. *Sic dicit respectu arae a qua exulabat longe in bello contra hostes* (R. Sol.).

When my heart is overwhelmed] Or, covered over, *Ut fit in deliquis et lipothimiis*, as is usual in swoons. See a like expression #Ps 102:1 title; #La 3:65, where the word rendered sorrow of heart signifieth such a covering like a shield, such a lid put over the heart, that is suffocated, as in the *Cardiaca passio*. David's harp was not more out of tune than his heart sometimes; he prayeth, and is helped.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I] *i.e.* Do for me that I cannot do for myself; set me in safety.

Ver. 3. **For thou hast been a shelter for me]** Thou hast, and therefore thou wilt, is an ordinary Scripture medium, and well it may; for God is unchangeable, and his decree for preserving his people is (as the poet saith well) ου παλιναγρε τον, Irrevocable.

Ver. 4. **I will abide in thy tabernacle]** *Et scribam mirabilia tua in memoriale,* saith R. Obadiah by way of gloss; and I will there register up thy wonderful works. Or, I shall there worship thee, and do thee acceptable service again, though at present I am banished or bruised abroad. He saith not, I shall abide in my palace, but in thy tabernacle, which he more highly esteemed. Some render it, I shall dwell in thy tent, or pavilion royal, making it a metaphor from warfare, where those that are in the king's own tent must needs be in greatest safety. And this sense suiteth well with the following words, I will trust in the covert of thy wings.

Ver. 5. **For thou, O God, hast heard my vows]** *i.e.* My prayers, which had vows of thankfulness annexed unto them. *Hinc Graeci precationem dicunt* προσευχην.

Thou hast given me the heritage] Even the sure mercies of David, grace and glory; and inheritance in the world to come, as the Chaldee hath it; besides what we have here.

Ver. 6. **Thou wilt prolong the king's life]** The King Christ, saith the Chaldee, who shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shah prosper in his hand, **#Isa 53:10**. David himself also lived and reigned longer than most kings do, being old and full of days.

And his years as many generations] *sc.* In his sons and successors. So **#Ps 72:17**, *Filiabitur heroine eius*. The name of Christ shall endure for ever, it shall be begotten as one generation is begotten of another, there shall be a succession of Christ's name.

Ver. 7. **He shall abide before God for ever]** Or, He shall sit, viz. upon the throne, a long while in his person; but for ever in his Son Christ, **#Lu 1:32,33**: and this affordeth sweet and singular comfort to the whole Church and each member thereof; forasmuch as the dignity of a king cannot stand unless his subjects be in safety.

O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him] *Hos duos custodes adhibe quibus unis innitatur;* let these two (thy mercy and

thy truth) be the supporters of his throne, let them be of his lifeguard, let them be his due and prepared portion, as the Hebrew word Man here used signifieth (Junius). Some understand the words thus, furnish the king with these two virtues, clemency and truth, that thereby his throne may be established. See #Pr 20:28 29:14.

Ver. 8. **So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever]** *Conclusio votiva*. Praise is so pleasing a service to God, that he indented with his people for it, #Ps 50:15, and they, knowing his mind therein, do usually restitulate that they will perform it; as holding it the least that they in conscience can do, and knowing it the most that they are able to do. They present it, therefore, to God, as that Grecian did his small gift to Augustus, saying, Ει πλεον ειχον πλεον εδιδουν, If I had a better thing I could well beteem it thee.

That I may daily perform my vows] Which, till they be paid, a true-hearted votary is in pain; for he accounteth them due debts to God.

A Psalm of David] Who being well assured that his prayers in the former psalm were heard, and should be answered, breaketh forth into his triumphant profession of his faith. Lo, here the happy fruit of faithful and fervent prayer.

Chapter 62

Ver. 1. **Truly my soul waiteth upon God]** Waiting is nothing else but hope and trust lengthened; and hereof David giveth us an excellent example in his own person, *Idque tanta tamque vegeta cum magnitudine animi, cui ipsae quoque sententiae et voces respondent,* and with so good a courage set forth in suitable expressions, that he who hath this psalm by heart, and hath laid it to his heart, cannot but be transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, #2Co 3:18.

From him cometh my salvation] Take it in the full extent, not only as it signifieth the privative part of man's happiness, but the positive part also, and preservation therein.

Ver. 2. **He only is my rock, &c.]** See #Ps 18:2,3.

I shall not be greatly moved] *Non labascam multo lapsu* (Vatabl.), for the Lord putteth under his hand. I shall not be moved greatly, or into the great abyss, *Tehom Rabi bah* (as Aben Ezra hath it), into hell (as other Rabbis sense it); I shall not be tempted above that I am able, as #1Co 10:13; persecuted I may be, but not relinquished; cast down, but not cast off, #2Co 4:9: shaken, but for my better settlement at last.

Ver. 3. **How long will ye imagine mischief against a man?]** What though I am but a man, and in your eyes a mean despicable creature; yet know ye, that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself, #Ps 4:3, where David bespeaketh his enemies with like sharpness as here for their malice and madness against him. The Hebrew word rendered imagine is found only here: the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it, How long will ye rush against a man? επιτιθεσθε, *Irruitis*. Austin, *Quosque apponitis super hominem? sc. onera et opprobria*, How long lay you load of injuries and indignities upon me?

Ye shall be slain all of you] Or, will ye be murdered? Will ye run upon the pikes? Are you ambitious of your own ruin?

As a bowing wall shall ye be] Borne down by the weight of your own wickedness. As a bulging wall standeth not long, and as a rotten hedge, if but trod on, breaketh under a man; so shall ye be suddenly destroyed, and with little ado. Thus he threatened his enemies, the proudest of them, being himself gotten upon the rock that was higher than he, #Ps 61:2.

Ver. 4. **They only consult to cast him down from his excellency]** Or, yet they consult; *q.d.* Notwithstanding all that I can say or that God will do to them, they will on in their evil devices and endeavours against me; there is no reclaiming of them. *Deus quos destruit dementat*.

They delight in lies] Not only he that maketh a lie, but he that loveth and delighteth in it when made by another, shall be shut out of heaven, #Re 22:15 Ro 1:32.

They bless with their mouths] Heb. with his mouth, that is, every one doth so; neither is there ever a better of these glavering companions, dissembling scrubs.

Ver. 5. **My soul, wait thou only upon God]** They trust not God at all, that is, not alone. He that stands with one foot on a rock and another foot upon a quicksand, will sink and perish as certainly as he that standeth with both feet on a quicksand. David knew this, and therefore calleth earn and earnestly upon his soul (for his business lay most within doors) to trust only upon God. See #Ps 62:1.

For my expectation is from him] If he will not help me, none else shall; but it is he that saith, Look unto me and be saved, for I am God, and there is none else, #Isa 45:22.

Ver. 6. **He only is, &c.]** *Versus amoibaeus.* See #Ps 62:2.

I shall not be moved] Before it was, I shall not be greatly moved; now upon further exercise of his trust, it is, I shall not be moved. *Ita in lucta crescit lux fidei, et tides firmior;* faith is made stronger by trials.

Ver. 7. **In God is my salvation and my glory, &c.]** By these many adjuncts and attributions David helpeth his faith, and quelleth the commotions of his headstrong affections. See #Ps 18:2.

Ver. 8. **Trust in him at all times]** As well in the fail of outward comforts as in the abundance of them, trust him without a pawn; trust in a killing God, as Job did.

Pour out your hearts before him] *sc.* In prayer, #1Sa 1:11, first, rend your hearts, *ut effundatur peccatum,* saith Kimchi, and then pour them out as water, #La 2:19, not as oil, which sticks to the side of the vessel that held it, but as water, that will out every drop; make a plain and full confession of all your sins in prayer, lest God say to you of your sins, as Samuel did to Jesse of his sons, Are these all? See the practice hereof in those penitent Israelites, #1Sa 7:6, and give not over the practice of mortification, till you feel your hearts fall asunder in your bosoms like drops of water. If iniquity be harboured there, prayer is obstructed; and if it do break out, it will have the scent and savour of that iniquity upon it.

God is a refuge for us] A safe and sure refuge; not as men who are a lie, #Ps 62:9, and were never true to those that trusted them.

Ver. 9. **Surely men of low degree are vanity]** Man is a depending creature, and, like the vine, must have somewhat to lean upon; apt he is to leave God, and cleave to the creature, to make either men or means his refuge; David therefore dehorteth from both, in this and the next verse showing that men of what degree soever are in nowise to be confided in. The word rendered vanity denoteth a vain light thing, such as is the breath of one's mouth or a bubble on the water

Men of high degree are a lie] There is no more truth nor assurance in them than in a false tale; also they frustrate men's hopes, as a barren fruit tree, #Heb 3:17.

They are altogether, lighter, .& c.] Put all mankind into one bundle, into one balance, and vanity into the ether, and it will weigh them down, *Ut ascendant ipsi prae vanitate simul.*

Ver. 10. **Trust not in oppression, &c.]** In the fail of persons. Some may think that things may be trusted to, as wealth, wit, power, &c., but especially wealth, #1Ti 6:17. Trust not to that, saith the Psalmist, whether it will be ill or well gotten, unless you covet to be deceived; for, first, he who getteth riches and not by right shall leave them in the midst of his days, and in his end be a fool, a poor fool God will make of him, #Jer 17:11, *Male parta male dilabentur.*

If riches increase] Though by means lawful and laudable, though they come in at the street door, and not at a postern, *Non minimum felicitatis argumentum Metello fuit bona malta bona mode invenisse* (Policrat. lib. 8, c. 4), yet

Set not your heart upon them] Place not your felicity in them, think not yourselves simply the better or the safer for them. Be not puffed up with outward things, as a bubble with a child's blast in a walnut shell, when he hath in it a little scope. Wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon that which is not? #Pr 23:5. An eagle will not catch flies (that is no game for her), much less will she make a flight at nothing, when there is no game sprung at all. He is the true rich man, who loveth his riches poorly, saith one.

Ver. 11. **God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this]** The Septuagint have it thus, Once spoke God, these two things have I heard; that is, say some, in the second commandment, where mention is made of God's jealousy and mercy, #Ex 20:5,6. Others, Once and again spoke God, and I have heard it. Or, God spoke once, I heard him twice, viz. by an after deliberate meditation upon what I had heard; I preached over the sermon as it were again to myself, and so heard it a second time.

That power belongeth unto God] He is well able to punish the wicked, #Ezr 8:22. {See Trapp on "Ezr 8:22"}

Ver. 12. **Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy]** viz. To set thy power a-work for the good of thy people. And as these two, God's power and God's mercy, are the two pillars, the Boaz and the Jachin of every believer, (hence Job #Job 42:2, having spoken his power, he speaketh of his thoughts of peace towards his people) so they are sufficient proofs of the doctrines before delivered, and do evince the truth of that which followeth.

For thou renderest to every man according to his work] viz. Judgment to the wicked and mercy to the righteous; where the Syriac interpreter giveth this good note, *Est gratis Dei ut reddat homini secundum opera bona, quia merces bonorum operum est ex gratis.* It is mercy in God to set his love on them that keep his commandments, #Ex 20:6.

When he was in the wilderness of Judah] That is, of Idumea, saith Genebrard, which bordered upon the tribe of Judah; but better understand it either of the forest of Hareth, #1Sa 22:5, or of the wilderness of Ziph, #1Sa 23:14, where David was, *In deserto desertus exul, et omnis fere consolationis inept,* not only destitute of outward comforts, but in some desertion of soul; *Et sic miserrimus, et calamitosissimus oberravit,* saith Beza.

Chapter 63

Ver. 1. **O God, thou art my God]** And that is now mine only comfort; *Divini mellis alvearium,* the bee hive of heavenly honey.

Early will I seek thee] Now they who seek God early have a promise that they shall find him. Aben-Ezra rendereth it, *Sicut mercator gemmas, inquiram re*, I will diligently seek thee, as a merchant doth the precious stones מֵרַחֵק (Mercator).

My soul thirsteth for thee] Thirst is *Taclith hattaavah*, say the Rabbis, the perfection of desire. The whole life of a Christian is nothing else but *Sanctum desiderium*, saith Austin. How many broken spirits spend and exhale themselves in continual sallies, as it were, and egressions of affection unto God, thirsting after, not only a union, but a unity with him?

My flesh longeth for thee] *Non habet haec vex secium*, saith Aben-Ezra; this word is here only found. It is a notable metaphor, saith another interpreter, taken from women with child, to express the earnest affection that he had to God-ward. The Septuagint rendereth it ποσαπλως, *Quam multipliciter*. His soul, his flesh, all was on a light fire, as it were, with ardent affection towards God (R. Solomon).

In a dry and thirsty land] Where I am hardly bestead, and at a great fault for outward accommodations, but much more for sweet and spiritual communion with thee in holy ordinances; there lieth the pinch of my grief.

Ver. 2. **To see thy power and thy glory]** To feel those heart-ravishing apprehensions of thine incomparable excellencies from thyself immediately; who canst be to thy people in their banishment as a little sanctuary, #Eze 11:16, and supply all their wants out of thine all sufficiency, who art rich in mercy to all that call upon thy name.

So as I have seen thee in the sanctuary] Where were to be seen the house of God, #Ex 25:8 De 12:5, the throne of glory from the beginning, #Jer 17:12, the ark of the covenant, #Ex 25:22, the tables of the covenant laid up in the ark, #Ex 28:21, the mercy seat, #Ex 25:21, the oracle, #Ex 25:22 Nu 7:89, the ceremonies that showed the estate of the faithful both by nature and by grace, and indeed were their gospel, and Christ in figure. These were glorious sights and signals which, therefore David dearly desired, and more

bewailed the want of them, than of all outward comforts and contentments.

Ver. 3. **Because thy lovingkindness is better than life]** Mr Bradford, being threatened by Stephen Gardiner (then Lord Chancellor), answered, I know to whom I have committed my life, even into his hands which will keep it, so that no man may take it away before it be his pleasure, therefore his goodwill be done; life in his displeasure is worse than death, and death in his true favour is true life (Acts and Mon. fol. 1459). This made him and the rest of the holy martyrs that they loved not their lives unto the death, **#Re 12:11**. The sight of God, though but in that dark glass of the ceremonies, would have been better to David than life with the appurtenances, those Βωτικά, riches, honours, pleasures, &c. See **#Ps 4:7,8**.

My lips shall praise thee] God's love shed abroad in the heart cause the lips of them that are asleep to speak, **#So 7:9**.

Ver. 4. **Thus will I bless thee while I live]** I will divide my time between praises and prayers, and so drive a holy trade between heaven and earth. See **#Ps 18:3**.

I will lift up my hands] *i.e.* Pray, as **#Ps 141:2 1Ti 2:8**.

In thy name] *i.e.* Cleaving to thy goodness and mercy. *Fretus tuo auxilio*.

Ver. 5. **My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness]** Heb. as with fatness and fatness; *bis, ad corroborandum*, saith Aben Ezra, *q.d.* I shall be top full of comfort, *animo adipe et medullis sanctissimarum deliciarum tuarum saginato*. A soul taken up with God's praises cannot but over abound exceedingly with joy, *Ita ut inter Dei laudationem et nostram consolationem sit quasi circulus perpetuus et infinitus*, saith one; praises increase joy, and joy causeth perpetual praises.

And my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips] Heb. with lips of jubilations or exultations, *labiis canoris*, as if I were in a rapture of ecstasy, *Toto gutture laudes tuas personabo*.

Ver. 6. **When I remember thee upon my bed]** Heb. beds, in the plural; because he took up his lodging in many places, having

heaven sometimes for his canopy; and well content to break his sleep for God's service.

In the night watches] The ancients divided the night into certain watches, #Mr 13:35.

Ver. 7. **Because thou hast been my help]** This was the matter of his meditation, and hereby he helped his faith.

Therefore in the shadow of thy wings, &c,] *Metaphora a pullis pipientibus sub alis Matrum,* saith Junius.

Ver. 8. **My soul followeth hard after thee]** *Adhaesit anima mea post te.* As hard as mine enemies do after me, even hard at heels, as we say; *Sic trahit sua quemque voluptas.* A Christian's close cleaving to God is the continent cause of all his comfort. This we must beg of God, #Jer 13:11, *sc.* that we may cleave to God with full purpose of heart, #Ac 11:23, and if he seem to withdraw, to follow him hot foot, and press his footsteps.

Thy right hand upholdeth me] For otherwise I should faint and fail in the pursuit of thee; my short legs and pury heart would never hold on.

Ver. 9. **But those that seek my soul to destroy it]** Heb. *Ad pracipitium,* to hurl it down headlong, shall themselves be laid low enough, even in the slimy valley where are many already like them, and more (shall come after them), #Job 21:31,32. And this assurance of his enemies' downfall David had gotten by his meditations on God, #Ps 63:6.

Shall go into the lower parts of the earth] *i.e.* Into the grave at least, if not into hell; they shall be abyssed into hell, into eternal perdition, saith Diodati.

Ver. 10. **They shall fall by the sword]** Heb. They shall make him run out (like water) by the hand of the sword. A plain prophecy of Saul's death, and the manner of it. See alike phrase #Jer 18:21 Eze 35:5.

They shall be a portion for foxes] Or for any other "beasts of prey"; they shall not have the honour of burial, but lie above ground,

to be devoured by beasts and birds. See this fulfilled upon Saul's complices, #1Sa 31, and the antichristian rout, #Re 19:21.

Ver. 11. **But the king shall rejoice in God]** *i.e.* I shall, who am anointed and appointed king after Saul, and therefore doubt not to speak thus of myself, as if I were king already. Wicked men *praesumendo sperant, et sperando pereunt*, hope groundlessly, and perish by their presumption; but true believers trust God upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible, and according to their faith so is it unto them.

Every one that sweareth by him shall glory] By whom? not by the king (though the Egyptians did so of old, and the Spaniards to this day, in the pride of their monarchs, swear by the life of their king), but by God, the sole and proper object of an oath; for to swear by his name in due manner is a special piece of his service, and is here put for the whole. So, then, every one that sincerely serveth God shall be glad and thankful to God that David reigneth; for now *παντα καλωσ εσται* (as the raven is said to have crouped from the Capitol when Augustus came to the empire), all shall go well with them, according to their own heart's desires (Dio).

But the mouth of them that speak lies] A fault whereof Saul's courtiers were deeply guilty. Some take this for a general description of all graceless and godless persons, who are liars habitually at least; as godly men are right swearers, and fearers of God's name.

Shall be stopped] Either with shame and confusion, or with death, as was Saul's and his flatters'. Saunders's foul mouth was stopped with famine (as hath been above noted), that had uttered so many blasphemies against God, and so many lies against men.

A Psalm of David] Of like argument with the former. The Arabic prefaceth, when Taluth (*i.e.* Saul) persecuted him. By this and many the like psalms we may see that David did not complain for nothing; and his singular constancy under so many trials may well make us resolve as Jerome did when he had read the Life of holy Hilarion, he rolled up the book and said, Well, Hilarion (David) shall be the champion that I will imitate.

Chapter 64

Ver. 1. **Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer]** Or, in my meditation. To an effectual prayer must concur meditation, invocation, affection, and belief of audience, as here.

Preserve my life] Heb. lives; so usually called for the many faculties, operations, revolutions, commodities of life.

Ver. 2. **Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked]** Or, from the mystery of evil doers, from the Church malignant, that mystery of iniquity. See the contrary, #Ps 111:1.

From the insurrection, &c.] Heb. from their tumult, their *hurricum*, their open force, as well as from their secret fraud. Let thy protection equal their projects, who turn every stone to undo me.

Ver. 3. **Who whet their tongue like a sword]** The tongue in its form resembleth a flaming sword, and being set on fire of hell, it woundeth deeply and dangerously. It is ordinary with David to compare *aulicas criminationes cum armis castrensibus*, court calumnies with warlike weapons, #Ps 5:6,9,10 Ps 11:5,6 Ps 57:4. See there.

And bend their bows to shoot their arrows] Heb. bend their arrow, that is, as #Ps 11:2, "they bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string," &c. See a like phrase #Jer 9:3.

Even bitter words] Virulent and venomous, *quae leviter volant, non leviter violant*; for as Medius in Plutarch saith, though the wound they make be haply healed, yet there will be still a scar, ηη ουλη μενει της διαβολης (Plut.). An aspersion, though not fully believed, leaveth behind it a lower estimation of the party than before.

Ver. 4. **That they may shoot in secret at the perfect]** Innocence and integrity is no target against calumny; but every Zopyrus shall be sure of his Zoilus, who, right or wrong, will shoot him down if he can, *Aliquid saltem adhaerebit* (Machiavel).

Suddenly do they shoot at him] As the hunter when he lieth hidden in a bush; or as when hedges are lined, as they call it, with musketeers, which gall and kill.

And fear not] They are not at all touched either with reverence toward God or respect to man, but are utterly debauched, they ride on without reins, &c. There is an elegance in the original that cannot be translated into English.

Ver. 5. **They encourage themselves in an evil matter]** Thus he riseth in his complaint, and showeth how, by the neglect of piety and humanity, they were grown obdurate and obstinate, yea, confident, or rather impudent, in their evil practices.

They commune of laying snares privily] viz. To entangle and entrap me. See **#Ne 4:11**, {See Trapp on "Ne 4:11"}

They say, Who shall see them?] God, who is all eye, shall, but they, having hid God from themselves, think they can likewise hide themselves and their snares from God. But

- εχει θεος εκδικον ομμα

Ver. 6. **They search out iniquities]** *Abstrusissima quaeque exquisierunt*; they search the devil's skull for new inventions; who is ready enough to lend them his seven heads to plot and his ten horns to push at good people. How wittily wicked was Saul to destroy David, if he could have done it! See his counsel to the Ziphites, **#1Sa 23:22**.

They accomplish a diligent search] Heb. a search searched, *i.e.* They seek out all occasions, they try all tricks, they do all that can be done to undo me. Whereunto he fitly subjoineth this epiphonema by way of exclamation, *Adeo intimum viri et cor profundum est*, So deep is the inward part and heart of man (for so I read it)! so deep and fathomless, so deceitful, and desperately wicked.

Ver. 7. **But God shall shoot at them, &c.]** He shall overshoot them in their own bow, pay them home in their own coin; he will deal with them *lege talionis*, for he loveth to retaliate, see **#Ps 64:4**, they shall find that he can handle his arms a fair deal better against them than they did against David.

With an arrow suddenly] As was Ahab, and the rich fool, **#Lu 12:16-21**, while he sat pruning himself like a bird on a bough, death

fetched him off suddenly by his shaft shot at him, and down he came tumbling. See #1Th 5:3.

Ver. 8. **So they shall make their own tongue, &c.]** According to #Pr 12:13 Ps 59:12. {See Trapp on "Pr 12:13"} {See Trapp on "Ps 59:12"}

And all that see them shall flee away] With horror and astonishment. Heb. They shall wander about in their flight; this is spoken of their favourites and abettors fearing to fall under the like punishment, and being agitated by the furies of their own evil consciences.

Ver. 9. **And all men shall fear]** Seeing such and such banged up in gibbets, as it were, for a terror to others, *Poena ad paucos, metus ad omnes.*

And shall declare the work of God] viz. His power and providence, which some doubt till thus powerfully convinced, as Claudian was by the destruction of Ruffinus.

*Abstulit hunc tandem Ruffini poena tumultum,
Absolvitque deos; et non iam ad culmina rerum
Iniustos crevisse queror; tolluntur in altum,
Ut lapsu graviore ruant—*

Ver. 10. **The righteous shall be glad in the Lord]** Not myself only, but all the saints shall be comforted, confirmed, and occasioned to make their boast in God with a holy gloriation, *Inde arripient sanctae cuiusdam iactantiae argumentum* (Beza).

A Psalm and Song of David] Made by him, as it is thought, when the people were delivered from that three years' famine for the slaughter of the Gibeonites, #2Sa 21:1, and that three days' pestilence for David's sin, in numbering the people, #2Sa 24:13-15

Chapter 65

Ver. 1. **Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion]** *Tibi silentium, laus tibi, Deus, in Zion;* so Beza rendereth it. There is first a deep silence in Sion, and then due praise; a silence of admiration, a silence of religious awe and devotion, such as was afterwards that in the Christian Church, #Re 8:1, or a silence of expectation to receive mercies; and a praise, by way of retribution, for mercies received.

Or, silence in all other places (not sensible of God's favours), but praise in the Church, where God is magnified: first, for blessings proper and peculiar to his own people; secondly, for preserving commonwealths, and thereby providing graciously for human society; and, thirdly, for giving men all things richly to enjoy, as in the end of this psalm.

And unto thee shall the vow be performed] That is, solemn thanks shall be rendered. Thy people stand ready pressed with their praises and memories, as Joseph's brethren once did with their presents, against the time that he showed himself.

Ver. 2. **O thou that hearest prayer]** And art thereby known to be the true God, #1Ki 18:38,39, and no such dull deity as the heathens worshipped, #Isa 45:16,19 Mic 7:17,18. O happy we that have to deal with such a prayer hearing, sin pardoning God! #Ps 65:3. Basil compareth prayer to a chain, the one end whereof is linked to God's ear, and the other to man's tongue.

Flectitur iratus voce rogante Deus.

Unto thee shall all flesh come] And well they may, since he keepeth open house; his mercy doors are ever wide open, as were the doors of the Aediles, or city chamberlains in Rome, that all who had occasion of complaint might have free access unto them at any time. A good housekeeper is seldom without company. Why ply we not the throne of grace upon such encouragement? Why, since we are not straitened in God, are we straitened in our own bowels? Why make we not ourselves happy by asking, since we may have but what we will of God, even all that heaven and his grace can afford us?

Ver. 3. **Iniquities prevail against me]** And seek to choke my prayers; they prick me in the foot, as it were, that I cannot come to thee in prayer; or not with that confidence; but that is more than needs, since

As for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away] So that if we turn from them they shall not hinder good things from us. No man was ever rejected by God for his confessed badness, as sundry

have been for their supposed goodness: witness the publican and the Pharisee, #Lu 18:9-14

Ver. 4. **Blessed is the man whom thou choosest]** Whom thou choosest for thy love, and then lovest him for thy choice.

And causest to approach unto thee] *i.e.* Effectually callest. Here vocation is fetched from the fountain (as is also justification in the former verse), viz. God's free election. See that golden chain, #Ro 8:30.

That he may dwell in thy courts] viz. To bear thy word, and partake of thine ordinances. For our Saviour telleth the Jews, He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear him not, because ye are not of God, #Joh 8:4; our worship scornors, then, have a black brand upon them.

We shall be satisfied] He maketh himself one of the number of God's elect (as Paul also doth often), and therehence concludeth to himself and the rest a beatifical communion of all good things.

Ver. 5. **By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us]** As he did when he gave the law in Mount Sinai, and ever after in his oracles and ordinances. God loveth at once familiarity and fear; familiarity in our conversation, and fear in his worships; he loves to be acquainted with men in the walks of their obedience; yet he taketh state upon him in his ordinances, and will be trembled at in his word and judgments.

Who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, &c.] *i.e.* Of all thine elect abroad the whole world.

Of them that are afar off upon the sea] The islanders,

Ut penitus toto disiuncti abs orbe Britanni.

Venice is said to be situated six miles distant from any firm land, and built in the heart of the Adriatic Sea, the waters whereof do flow into the city, and beat upon it, through all the streets thereof. Now, it may be hoped that God hath many souls even in such places; since

there are thought to be no fewer than twenty thousand Protestants in Seville itself, a chief city of Spain (Spec. Europ.). It was long since foretold that the isles should wait for God's law, #Isa 42:4 51:5 60:9.

Ver. 6. **Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains]** Why, then, should it seem incredible that he will do all manner of good to his elect, for whose sake he made all at first, and still upholdeth all by the word of his power? so he doth also states and kingdoms (oft compared to mountains in Scripture; see #Jer 51:25 Isa 13:2 Zec 4:7), that the Lord God might dwell among men, viz. in his Church and chosen people.

Being girded with power] With prevailing power, as the word signifieth.

Ver. 7. **Which stilleth the noise of the seas]** Making a calm at his pleasure; he hath the sea itself, that brutish creature, at his beck and check; so hath he also devils, and masterless men, who seek to subvert civil government, and to lay all level. Hence it followeth,

The noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people] When they are in hurly-burly, and contentions among themselves (Virg. Æneid).

— *Saevitque animis ignobile vulgus,
Iamque faces et saxa volant, furor arms ministrat.*

Now it is God only that can assuage these tumults; others may stir strife, but God only can stint it, saith Pindarus, Ραδιον πολιν σεισαι και του τυχοντος, αλλ αυθις καθισταναι μονου θεου θερας. It is he alone

Qui terram inertem, qui mare temperat

*Ventosum, et urbes regnaque tristia,
Divosque mortalesque turbas
Imperio regit unus aequo.
(Horat. Od. 4, lib. 3.)*

Ver. 8. **They also that dwell in the uttermost parts, &c.]** And are, therefore, *Duri, horridi, immanes, latrociniis dediti, omnium denique pessimi,* not farther distant from the sun than from all

humanity, except the Sun of righteousness shine upon them, as he hath done upon us here in England.

Are afraid at thy tokens] Thy notable works, thine executions.

Thou makest the outgoings of the morning, &c.] That is, the inhabitants of east and west, or the vicissitudes of day and night, whereby men are occasioned to praise and glorify God. See #Jer 31:35. The Jews at this day, as they are bound to say over a hundred benedictions every day, so these two among the rest: when they go forth in a morning they say, Blessed be he who hath created the greater lights; and in the evening they say, Blessed be he who causeth the darkness of the night (R. Solom. in loc.).

Ver. 9. **Thou visitest the earth, &c.]** *i.e.* With a gracious rain, and so makest it to become an *alma parens* to men and beasts.

With the river of God] With thy sweet showers coming out of the clouds, as out of a great watering pot, #Ps 147:8, *Pluvia de coelo replens flumina* (Aben Ezra).

Thou preparest them corn] As a good housekeeper doth for his family. How easy were it with God to starve us all!

Ver. 10. **Thou waterest the ridges, &c.]** The forementioned mercy of God in producing a harvest he further amplifieth and explaineth by the parts, that men might be the more sensible; and not, like brute beasts, content themselves with a natural use of the creature, but taste and see how good the Lord is.

Ver. 11. **Thou crownest the year with thy goodness]** While each month produceth its several fruits or commodities; so that the whole is, as it were, a crown royal; but especially a year of extraordinary plenty, such as was the last of Queen Mary, when wheat was sold for five shillings a quarter, malt for four shillings and eightpence, and a bushel of rye for fourpence (Mr Clark's Martyrol.).

Thy paths drop] Thy wagon tracks; the clouds are God's chariot; or, wheresoever thou passest there is plenty.

Ver. 12. **Rejoice on every side]** Heb. Are girded with joy, which in time of drought seems to be clad in sackcloth.

Ver. 13. **The pastures, &c.]** Here is stately rhetoric all along.

Chapter 66

Ver. 1. **Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands]** Heb. All the earth; shout aloud for joy, as the people did at the return of the ark, so that the earth rang again. God shall one day show himself to be the God, not of Jews only, but of Gentiles also; these shall as well cry Christ as those Jews; these say Father, as those Abba. And as there was great joy in Samaria when the gospel was there first received, #Ac 8:8, so shall there be the like in all other parts of the earth.

Ver. 2. **Make his praise glorious]** Heb. Put glory to his praise; so #Jos 7:19. God's glory is as himself, eternal and infinite, no way capable of our addition or detraction; howbeit, to try how we prize it, and will exalt it, he declareth that he accounteth himself made more glorious by us when we receive him into our hearts as King of glory, and praise him accordingly.

Ver. 3. **Say unto God]** Hereby it appeareth that this, among other psalms of like nature, was written for the perpetual use of the Church, and to serve for a set form of praising God, as occasion required, either in public or private.

Shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee] Heb. shall lie unto thee; that is, saith Kimchi, shall deny that they ever did anything against thee, or thy people. Or, rather, they shall perforce acknowledge thy power and prowess; as Julian the apostate did in his last *Vicisti Galilae*; they shall also yield obedience to thee, such as it is, because they can neither will nor choose; this *Virtus nolentim nulla est*.

Ver. 4. **All the earth shall worship thee]** Heb. they shall bow down to thee, stoop to thy government, submit to the sceptre of thy kingdom; they shall become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. *O dieculam illam! O mora! Christe veni*.

Selah] Let that thy kingdom come; come speedily, come in our days, as the modern Jews pray daily (*Bimherah, Beiamenu*).

Ver. 5. **Come and see]** *Venite, videte*; he taketh good people by the hand, as it were, leading them to the sight of God's stupendous proceedings, which may not be slighted, #Isa 5:12.

Toward the children of men] For they are his chief care, and about them is his providence principally exercised.

Ver. 6. **He turned the sea into dry land]** A mercy much celebrated, and not without cause, in all later ages.

They went through the flood on foot] That is, through the river Jordan, when it had overflowed the banks; and met with no enemy on the other side to forbid their landing.

There did we rejoice in him] We who were then in the loins of our forefathers, and so shared in their joy. See **#Ho 12:4**. {See Trapp on "Ho 12:4"}

Ver. 7. **He ruleth by his power]** As sole sovereign, universal monarch, αυτοκρατωρ, παντοκρατωρ. Sesostris, king of Egypt, would needs be stiled κοσμοκρατωρ, emperor of the whole world (Herod. l. 2); he lived about the time of Samson, and perished by the hands of his own householdservants.

His eyes behold the nations] For which purpose they run to and fro through the earth, **#2Ch 16:9**.

Let not the rebellious, &c.] Heb. the off fallen, froward, and refractory persons; these shall soon be repressed and crest fallen.

Ver. 8. **O bless our God, ye people]** We must not only publish God's praises, but provoke others also so to do.

Ver. 9. **Which holdeth our soul in life]** Heb. putteth, that is, bestoweth life on us, preserveth it, restoreth it. Some think this psalm was made upon David's deliverance from the giant that sought to kill him, **#2Sa 21:16**.

And suffereth not our feet to be moved] David gave back divers paces, say the Hebrews, but was seasonably rescued by Abishai, who slew the Philistine.

Ver. 10. **For thou, O God, hast proved us]** *Non ut ipse sciat sed ut scire nos faciat*, saith Austin. God proveth his people, not thereby to better his own knowledge of them, **#Joh 2:25 6:6 21:17 Ac 1:24**, but to bring them to a better knowledge of their own both vices and graces. It is not known what corn will yield till it come to the flail;

nor what grapes, till they come to the press. Grace is hid in nature, as sweet water in rose leaves; the fire of affliction fetcheth it out.

Thou hast tried us as silver] The wicked also are tried, **#Re 3:10**, but they prove reprobate silver, **#Jer 6:28,30**, or, at best, as alchemy gold, that will not bear the seventh fire, as Job did, **#Job 23:10**.

Ver. 11. **Thou broughtest us into the net]** A metaphor from hunters or fowlers, *Utitur figuris tanquam in poemate*.

Thou layedst affliction upon our loins] *Coarctationem in lumbis*; we are not only hampered, as in a net, but fettered, as with chains; as if we had been in the jailor's or hangman's hands.

Ver. 12. **Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads]** Subjected us to the villanies and outrages of the basest persons, who have used us more like beasts than men.

We went through fire and through water] That is, through variety of sharpest afflictions, noted out by this proverbial passage; fire and water are merciless elements, *Aelius Pertinax fortunae pila pervulgate dicebatur, quod variis casibus exercitus fuit*. It is the true Christian's comfort that nothing befalleth him but by a sweet providence; and that God goeth along with him into both fire and water, **#Isa 43:2**, to see that he take no hurt by either.

But thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place] Heb. moist, that is, into the air, saith Aben Ezra, opposed to fire and water, where we might draw breath, and live comfortably. *In locum irriguum, in refrigerium*. It is but winking, said that martyr at the stake, and we shall be in heaven immediately. The Arabic hath it, *Eduxisti nos ad requiem*. Confer **#Ac 3:19**.

Ver. 13. **I will go into thine house, &c.]** I will begin to others in that public solemn thanksgiving, and not grudge at the cost; I will be *Vir gregis*, as the he-goat before the flocks, **#Jer 50:8**.

Ver. 14. **Which my lips have uttered]** Heb. have opened, that is, which I have uttered *diductis labiis*, with lips wide open. *Videmus qualiter vota nuncupari soleant*, saith Vatablus, Here we see after what sort vows use to be made, when we are under any pressing affliction; but when once delivered, how heavily many come off in point of payment.

And my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble] Then men will promise anything for ease and release. But what saith the Italian proverb? *Sciapato il morbo, fraudato il Santo*, when the disease is cured the saint is defrauded. Horace calleth upon Mecaenas, who in his sickness had vowed to build a temple,

— *Reddere victimas*

Aedemque votivam memento:

Nos humilem feriemus agnam.

Ver. 15. **I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings]** Heb. marrow, the very best of the best; and better I could betem the Lord if I had it.

With the incense of rams] Which, being offered in faith, and as figures of that great sacrifice to come, shall be accepted of God for a sweet smelling savour.

I will offer bullocks with goats] *Faciam boves;* this Eccius allegeth, but absurdly, to prove the Popish unbloody sacrifice of the mass; as if Christ, when he said, This do ye in remembrance of me, had meant, Thus sacrifice ye.

Ver. 16. **Come and hear]** He had said before, "Come and see," #Ps 66:5. He held it a greater honour *prodesse quam praeesse*.

All ye that fear God] For such only will hear to good purpose; others either cannot or care not.

And I will declare, &c.] Communicate unto you my soul-secrets and experiments. There is no small good to be gotten by such declarations. Bilney, perceiving Latimer to be zealous without knowledge, came to him in his study, and desired him for God's sake to hear his confession. I did so, saith Latimer, and, to say the truth, by his confession I learned more than before in many years. So from that time forward I began to smell the word of God, and forsake the school doctors and such fooleries (Acts & Mon.).

Ver. 17. **I cried unto him]** I prayed fervently and frequently.

And he was extolled, &c.] My prayers were soon turned into praises, which I silently framed within myself even while I was praying.

Ver. 18. **If I regard iniquity in my heart]** If I have but a month's mind to it, as we say; if I cast but a leering look towards it; if there be in me but an irresolution against it; how much more, then, if I allow it and wallow in it? He who chooseth to hold fast sin doth, by his own election, forsake mercy, **#Jon 2:8**, neither let such a man think that he shall receive anything at the hands of God, **#Jas 1:7**. As in a wound, a plaster prevaieth not while the iron remaineth within; so neither prayer while sin rankleth. God will never accept a good motion from a bad mouth, as that State in story would not. A man may deliver an excellent speech, but, because of his stinking breath, we may have no pleasure to hear him; so in this case. Prayer as a pouring out of the heart, as hath been already, observed. If iniquity harbour there, prayer is obstructed, and if it do break out, it will have the scent and savour of that iniquity upon it, and thereby displease. Kimchi maketh this strange sense (quite from the purpose, and from the truth), If I regard iniquity only in my heart, so that I break not forth into outward act, God will not hear, *i.e.* so hear, as to impute it, or to account it a sin. Pharisaice.

Ver. 19. **But verily God hath heard me]** As I well perceive by his answer, full and enlarged, as the cloud that riseth out of the earth in thin and insensible vapours, falleth down in great and abundant showers.

Ver. 20. **Blessed be God, &c.]** This is the conclusion of David's syllogism, in this and the two former verses; and herein his logic is better than Aristotle's.

Chapter 67

Ver. 1. **God be merciful unto us]** *sc.* In sending his Son, and calling his elect, both among Jews and Gentries, to the participation of that gift, **#Joh 4:10**; that benefit, **#1Ti 6:2**.

And bless us] Specially with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus, **#Eph 1:3**.

And cause his face to shine upon us] Giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, **#2Co 4:6**,

who is the brightness (or glittering refulgency, *απαυγασμα*) of his Father's glory and the express image of his person, #**Heb 1:3**, the dayspring from on high, #**Lu 1:78**, *Sereno suo vultu nos irradiet* (Beza). In this prayer the psalmist plainly alludeth to that blessing pronounced upon the people by the high priest, #**Nu 6:23-27**, and showeth that all cometh from Christ, the true Aaron, the High Priest of the new covenant.

Ver. 2. **That thy way may be known**] Thy way of worship, that way that is called holy, the gospel, #**Ac 19:23 18:25,26**, the way of salvation, #**Ac 16:17**.

Thy saving health] That is, thy Christ, #**Lu 2:30,32**.

Ver. 3. **Let the people praise thee, O God**] Enlarge the bounds of thy Church; and bring in the hallelujahs of the Gentiles also. Let them praise thee (that pronoun "thee" is emphatic and exclusive), and not their gods of gold and silver. Let them turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, #**1Th 1:9**.

Ver. 4. **O let the nations be glad, &c.**] As they cannot but be upon their sound conversion, #**Ac 8:8**, there being no such joy as the joy of faith, and that a man's name is written in heaven. Beatus Ludovicus would be called Ludovicus de Pissiaco rather than take greater titles; because there he became a Christian.

For thou shalt judge the people righteously, &c.] Not rigorously, keeping thy Church in safety amidst the greatest ruins of the world and collisions of empires.

And govern the nations upon earth. Selah] Heb. Thou shalt gently lead them, as a shepherd doth his flock or a father his child. Lord, hasten it.

Ver. 5. *Versus amoibaesus*. See #**Ps 67:3**.

Ver. 6. **Then shall the earth yield her increase**] *Omnia opera nostra erunt prospera*, All shall go well with us, and we shall abound with blessings of both lives. The gospel is a cornucopia; and they that receive it shall have all that heart can wish or need require; all creatures shall conspire to make them happy. The earth, which was cursed for man's sin, and hath lain bedridden, as it were, ever since, shall put forth her utmost strength for good people's use. God will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth, &c., #**Ho**

2:21,22, when once men's hearts bear fruit to the Lord, **#Mt 13:19,23 Heb 6:7**. Jerome interpreteth these words of the Virgin Mary bringing forth the child Jesus. Others thus, Then shall the earth bring forth innumerable servants of God.

Ver. 7. **God shall bless us]** God is thrice named here and in the former verse, to note the trinity of persons, as Ramban wrote, In more Nevochim, and had, therefore, his book burnt by the Jews in France. And whereas it is thrice here said "God shall bless us," it importeth that the blessings here meant are more than terrene and bodily blessings.

A Psalm or Song of David] Made at that time when, having overcome his enemies, he brought *arcam in arcem*, the ark of God into the tower of Sion. Confer **#Ps 68:1** with **#Nu 10:35**. Herein also he treateth of the greatest secrets of Christ's kingdom, and prophesieth of things to come, as **#Ac 2:30,31**; witness the apostle, **#Eph 4:8**.

Chapter 68

Ver. 1. **Let God arise]** He need do no more that his enemies may be scattered, though never so closely united, *etiamsi cataphraetus incedat Satan*, as Luther speaketh; *digitum suum tantum moveat, et dissipabuntur hostes*, Let the Lord but stir his finger only, let him but look unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire, and they shall be troubled, as **#Ex 14:24**, *funduntur et fugantur cum primum se exserit Deus*, as those Philistines, **#2Sa 5:17-25**

Let them also that hate him flee before him] Athanasius telleth us that evil spirits may be put to flight by this psalm; and that Antony, the hermit, fought against the devil with this verse, and worsted him. This may be done also as well with other texts of Scripture. Luther encountered the devil with that sentence, Thou hast put all things under his feet (Colloq. Mens.); another Dutch divine with this, The Son of God came to dissolve the works of the devil; a third with those words, The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head (Cramerus). As the rocks repel the boisterous waves— *conantia frangere, frangunt*; so doth Christ, the Rock (the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, **#Da 2:45**), all his Church's enemies.

Ver. 2. **As smoke is driven away, &c.**] Smoke at first sight seemeth formidable, but soon vanisheth; and the higher it ascendeth the sooner it is dissipated: so here. Guicciardine saith of Charles VIII of France, that he came into the field like thunder and lightning, but went out like a snuff; more than a man at first, and less than a woman at last. A semblably of God's enemies.

As wax melteth before the fire, &c.] Wax is a more solid substance than smoke, but, held to the fire, it quickly dissolveth. The psalmist both prayeth and prophesieth here, that the downfall of the Church's enemies may be *praeceps et praesentissimum*, sad and sudden, as is elegantly set forth by these two similitudes.

Ver. 3. **But let the righteous be glad**] When he seeth the vengeance, **#Ps 58:10** {See Trapp on "Ps 58:10"} while this wise King scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them, **#Pr 20:26**.

Let them rejoice before God] Heb. At the presence of God, from which the wicked must flee, **#Ps 68:1**. See **#Isa 33:14**.

Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice] Heb. rejoice with gladness; overabound exceedingly with joy, as St Paul did, **#2Co 7:4**. Joy is the just man's portion, which the wicked may not meddle with, **#Ho 9:1**.

Ver. 4. **Sing unto God, sing praises**] *Cantate, Psallite*, do it daily and duly, not in a customary, formal, bedulling way. For a help hereunto was this psalm penned, *quo nihil ornatius, magnificentius, divinius denique scribi a quoquam possit*, saith learned Beza, in a lofty and lively style.

Extol him that rideth upon the heavens] Exalt him so, as when a heap is made up unto a great height. Beza rendereth it, *Sternite viam equiti deserti*, Cast up or pave the way for him that rideth in the desert. Confer **#Isa 40:3,4 Mal 3:1 Mt 3:3**. The Septuagint render it, *οδοποιησατε*, Raise up the way, and make it ready (as they use to do before kings that ride in triumph), that the King of glory may come into your hearts, those deserts indeed.

By his name Jah] The same with Jehovah, that proper and incommunicable name of God. Some of the heathens called it Jao, as

Diodorus Siculus, Macrobius, &c. Holy and reverend is this name, *Αυταυτος*, *Essentiator*; and it is here and elsewhere given to Christ. See it interpreted **#Re 1:4**.

Ver. 5. **A father of the fatherless, &c.]** *Pupillorum pater, et viduarum vindex*, a title that God much glorieth in; and although he rideth upon the heavens, and is higher than the highest, yet so low stoopeth he to our meanness; neither will he leave his people orphans or comfortless, **#Joh 14:18**, for

God is in his holy habitation] Not in heaven only, but in and with his Church on earth; the ark and mercy seat were never sundered.

Ver. 6. **God setteth the solitary in families]** *i.e.* He blesseth them with issue. See **#Ps 113:9**, and so he doth the Church, **#Isa 54:1**, in these days of the gospel especially.

He bringeth out those which are bound in chains] As he did Peter, **#Ac 12:7**, Paul and Silas, **#Ac 16:25,26** Some read it thus, He bringeth out those which are bound, in commoditates, into places where they may live commodiously and cheerfully. As on the other side,

The rebellious dwell in a dry land] *In locis torridis, aridis, exsuccis et siticulosis*, in dry and desert countries, where they are destitute of God's blessing and his soul refreshing comforts. The Hebrew word signifieth a bleak or white soil, such as is all Egypt where the Nile arriveth not, viz. a whitish sand, bearing no grass, but two little weeds, of which they make glass. Where the river watereth is a black mould, so fruitful, say travellers, as they do but throw in the seed, and have four rich harvests in less than four months. Hence Egypt is called the world's granary.

Ver. 7. **O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people]** Here the former benefits of God to his people are recited, *et additis miris coloribus depicta potius quam descripta*, and rather depainted out in lively colours than described. We must stir up ourselves to thankfulness for what God hath done for our forefathers; neither must the memory of his mercies ever grow stale with us.

Ver. 8. **The earth shook, the heavens also dropped]** *Velut in sudorem soluti*, as if they had been put into a sweat; in so terrible a manner was the law given, that God's fear might fall upon us, **#Ex**

20:18-21 As for the gospel, it is that rain of liberalities, **#Ps 68:9**, confirming God's inheritance when it is weary.

Even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God] Some render it, *a facie Dei huius Sinaici, a facie Dei, Die Israel*. These two verses are taken out of Deborah's song, **#Jud 5:4,5**.

Ver. 9. **Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain]** Heb. Thou didst speak out a rain of liberalities. Spiritually this meaneth the doctrine of the gospel, **#De 32:2 Isa 45:8 Ho 14:6**, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, bestowed freely and plentifully.

Ver. 10. **Thy congregation hath dwelt therein]** *Pecus tuum*, thy cattle, so some render it, and interpret it as the flocks and herds, whereby of his goodness God prepared for his poor, those creatures being profitable both *ad esum et ad usum*.

Ver. 11. **The Lord gave the word]** That is, the occasion. *De victu dixit, nunc de victoria*, saith Vatablus; how God provided his people of victuals the psalmist had told us, now of the victory; the good news whereof shall soon be in every one's mouth, like the word in an army, with joyful acclamations and outcries, *Deus obtulit occasionem laetandi, ovandi et triumphandi*.

Great was the company (Heb. army) of those that published it] Such are the preachers of the gospel, **#Ro 10:15**, an office taken now from the angels, and given to the ministers; whence that angel turned over Cornelius to Peter for further information, **#Ac 10:1-6** The Hebrew word for publishers or preachers here is feminine, not to countenance our *praedicantrissae* (such as was that Jezebel Mrs Hutchinson of New England), but to show the weakness of the means (fishermen and the like) that God is pleased to use in this great work, for the greater manifestation of his power in the success, as some conceive, *Ut imbecillitatem ministrorum Ecclesiae notet* (Moller).

Ver. 12. **Kings of armies did flee apace]** Heb. did flee, did flee. Or, shall flee, shall flee; which one interpreteth of devils (called principalities and powers), formerly using to give oracles; but after Christ's birth ceasing to do so. As also of Licinius and other tyrants fleeing before Constantine, the first Christian emperor. See **#Re 9:11**. Antichrist is the king of locusts, and he fleeth daily before the *Evangelici*, the new gossellers, as he calleth them. Bellarmine

complaineth, that ever since we held the Pope to be antichrist, *non mode non crevit eius imperium, sed semper magis ac magis deerevit*, his kingdom hath not only not increased, but more and more daily decreased (Lib. iii. de Pont. Rein., cap. 21).

And she that tarried at home divided the spoil] That is, *tota congregatio quae non pugnabat*, says Kimchi. Or, the women also (those *domi portae*) came forth to pillage. These days of the gospel do abound with many godly matrons and holy virgins. And it is easy to observe that the New Testament affordeth more store of good women than the Old.

Ver. 13. **Though ye have lien among the pots]** *Inter Chytropodas. Quasi obruti toti et oppleti fuligine et tenebris*, black and sooty, as the black guard of an army, or as scullions in a kitchen, who lie sometimes all night, like beasts, in a chimney corner; or as your forefathers in Egypt, when their shoulders were not yet removed from the burden, nor their hands from the pots, **#Ps 81:6**. The meaning is, though ye have been in a low and loathsome condition, yet now ye shall shine and flourish. *Verba sunt mulierum*, saith Kimchi, these are the words of those women, *annunciatrices* preachers, in **#Ps 68:11**. Beza maketh them to be the psalmist's words to those women that divided the spoil, **#Ps 68:12**. *Vixistis adhuc puellae, &c.*, ye have hitherto dwelt at home, and washed pots, &c., but now, being enriched by the spoils, ye may come abroad fair and trim, like white doves with gilt feathers.

Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove] Ye shall fly swiftly from the storm of cruel persecution, saith the Syriac interpreter; yea, you shall shine, and make a glorious show, *sicut niveae columbae per medium acrem inter volitandum aureum quendam splendorem eiaculantur*. See **#Isa 54:11-13**: the Church's bricks made in her bondage shall be turned into sapphires.

Ver. 14. **When the Almighty scattered kings in it]** *i.e.* In the wilderness as they passed; or in Canaan which they possessed, according to **#Ps 68:1**. Or, scattered kings for her, that is, for his Church, or for her that tarrieth at home, **#Ps 68:12**, a periphrasis of the Church, in the times of primitive persecution especially, till the Almighty scattered those persecuting princes. Some of the Jewish doctors understand it to be Gog and Magog.

It was white as snow in Salmon] Or, she was white as snow in Salmon; not only as the wings of a dove, but glorious and glittering as snow on that high hill, #**Jud 9:47,48**. At the top of the Alps nothing is to be seen but snow, which hath lain there beyond the memory of man, and, as some say, ever since the flood. The same may be as true of Salmon, which some here take for a noun substantive common, and render it, *albescet in caligine*, thou shalt wax white in darkness. The old Emperor Andronicus, lighting upon this verse in his psalter, and applying it to himself, was much settled and satisfied concerning his troubles (Turk. Hist. fol. 164).

Ver. 15. **The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan]** Bashan was fat and fertile, but Sion was better; because the place where God's honour dwelled, any relation to whom doth greatly ennoble any place or person: so #**Ge 17:21,22**, Ishmael have I blessed, twelve princes shall he beget; but my covenant will I establish with Isaac. Since thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, #**Isa 43:4**.

Ver. 16. **Why leap ye, ye high hills?]** Why do ye pride and please yourselves in your privileges of nature, so far above this of Sion? *Quare contenditis, montes gibbosi?* so some render it, and tell us, that the original word *ratsad* is Syriac, and significth to envy, to irritate, to insult, or contend with any one.

This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in] This low, little, barren hill of Sion; and God's election maketh the difference, as it did of Aaron's rod from the rest, and doth still of the Church from the rest of the world. The Lamb Christ is on Mount Sion, #**Re 14:1**.

Ver. 17. **The chariots of God are twenty thousand]** Heb. The chariot, to note the joint service of all the angels, who are here called Shinan, of their changeableness now taken away by Christ, say some; of their pre-excellency above other creatures, say others, as being second or next unto God, the chief princes, the nobles of that court, as #**Da 10:13**, Michael one of the chief princes. The Seventy render it εὐθυμουντων, the cheerful ones such as are in joy and tranquillity, freely serving God in all his wars, carrying the elect, and marching about them.

The Lord is among them, as in Sinai] *i.e.* The angels make Sion as dreadful to all her enemies as those angels made Sinai at the delivery of the Law. See **#Heb 12:22**.

In the holy place] Holy for the time while God appeared there, so **#2Pe 1:18**, Tabor is called the holy mount.

Ver. 18. **Thou hast ascended on high]** As a conqueror doth on his triumphal chariot; the Romans ascended up to the Capitol, leading their captives bound behind them, and giving gifts unto the people (Plut. in *Æmyl*). They might have this custom from David, and these words might be the people's acclamation to David, or, as some think, both the kings and people's acclamation to the ark, that notable type of Christ, to whom St Paul applieth it, **#Eph 4:8,9**, and teacheth us to understand it of his wonderful ascension.

Thou hast led captivity captive] *i.e.* Thou hast captivated those that once held us in captivity; for so God's justice required, **#Isa 33:1**, so he had forepromised, **#Isa 24:22 Re 13:10**, and so Christ hath fulfilled, **#Col 2:15**, saving his people to the uttermost, from sin, death, hell, and the devil, who had taken them alive captive at his pleasure, **#2Ti 2:26**.

Thou hast received gifts for men] Heb, in man; some render it in Adam, *Qualia erant in Adamo, tails dat Christus*, saith Eugubinus, Christ gave such gifts to his people (for if he received with one hand, he gave with the other, and the fruits of his victories are all for his subjects) as were in Adam, *Sed Beth servilis non praeponitur proprio nomini*. True it is, that he repaireth God's once lost image in them, but the gifts here meant are mentioned by the apostle, **#Eph 4:11**, viz. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, &c. Lo, these were those gifts that Christ bestowed upon his Church at the day of his coronation, and solemn inauguration into his throne, at the time of his trimphant ascension. These he received that he might give; and he held it more blessed to give than to receive. A like expression we have **#Ho 14:2**. "Receive us graciously," Heb. Take good, *sc.* to bestow it upon us, as **#Ac 2:23**.

Yea, for the rebellious also] Rebellion at first, till thou hast given them a better heart. See **#Ro 4:5 5:6**, or, if they continue so, yet they may share in common gifts and external privileges.

That the Lord God might dwell among them] viz. In his religion and true worshippers, for which end he giveth restraining grace to the very rebellions.

Ver. 19. **Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us]** *sc.* With blessings, or with crosses turned into blessings, as being sanctified, and having their properties altered; for of themselves they are fruits of sin, and a piece of the curse. Let us not load him with our iniquities, &c.

Ver. 20. **He that is our God, is the God of salvation]** Or, This God is unto us a God of salvation, in the plural, so that he can save us, and doth, from a thousand deaths and dangers; and when he hath delivered us today, he both can and will do it again tomorrow; he hath for his people *omnimodam salutem*.

And unto God the Lord belong the issues from death] When we think there is no way but one for us, he appeareth as out of an engine, and pulleth us out of death's jaws. The Lord knoweth how to deliver his, **#2Pe 2:9**, from the most desperate and deadly dangers. Peter might well say it, for he had the experience of it, **#Ac 12:7-11**; Christ hath the keys of death, **#Re 1:18**, the sole dominion and disposal of it. *Servat nos a morte, sicut ipse primus exibat e manu mortis.*

Ver. 21. **But God shall wound the head of his enemies]** *Cruentabit caput*, a wound in the head if deep (and God strikes no small blows) is mortal. Christ will break the head of those that bruise his heel, that attempt anything against him and his. By head here Diodati understandeth the devil, that prince of the world, **#De 32:42 Ps 110:6 Hab 3:13**. Evil spirits in Scripture are called *Shegnirim*, shag-haired, **#Le 17:7 Isa 13:21**. And they go on in their trespasses; they do infinitely hate God, and sin that sin against the Holy Ghost every moment. But the most understand it of wicked men.

And the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still, &c.] This is God's enemy, that by his wilful wickedness striketh, and as it were

shooteth, at God, runneth upon him, even upon his neck, and upon the thick bosses of his bucklers, #Job 15:25,26, His hairy scalp, setting forth his fierceness, #Job 5:5. Note this against anti-roundheads. See #Eze 44:20.

Ver. 22. **The Lord said]** That is assurance good enough.

I will bring again from Bashan] Og the giant's country, where Israel was in no small distress and danger till that monster was taken out of the way, #Nu 21:33 De 3:1,2: *q.d.* I will, if need require, and as occasion serveth, do as much for mine again as I did once at Bashan, and at the Red Sea. Some interpret this and the following verses of the calling of the Jews. The glorious things (saith one) which God will effect in their behalf are here reduced to five heads: First, the bringing of them home from most extreme difficulties, naming Bashan, because of the slaughter spoken of, #Ps 68:14, and the deep of the sea, alluding to #Ex 14:16, peradventure he meaneth the drying up of Euphrates before them. For this first head aimeth at those times, the beginning of the Jews' repair unto their country. The second head is, the great and famous victory that God will give, delivering them out of those difficulties and distresses, #Ps 68:22. See #Isa 63:1-4. The third head is, the Jews' thorough conversion, by occasion of that singular mercy of God, #Ps 68:23, and the form of a goodly Church (under the type of the old synagogue) set up among Jacob's posterity, #Ps 68:24, the ten tribes as well as the tribe of Judah; which is concluded by acknowledging their strength to come from God, a prayer to perfect his work begun, and a spur to put into these kings of the east (as they are so called, #Re 16:12), to present in the temple at Jerusalem (in the public congregation) testimonies of their thankfulness, #Ps 68:25-28. The fourth head is, the taming of their proud enemies, and the forcing them at least to counterfeit a subjection, #Ps 68:29. The fifth head is, the general calling of all the kingdoms of the earth to join themselves unto the Church of Christ, which shall follow the conversion of the Jews. And this he shutteth up with provoking all nations to give unto God the praises that are due unto him for it; and his own particular thanksgiving, #Ps 68:30-34. Thus he.

Ver. 23. **That thy foot may be dipped]** Heb. redded, imbrued, made gore bloody. Hereby is implied a very great slaughter. Confer #Re 19:17,18,21.

Ver. 24. **They have seen thy goings, O God]** Namely, the holy manner of conducting the ark with even and proportionable restings and settings down (Diod.). See #2Sa 6:13. The ark is here and elsewhere called God, because a symbol of his special presence. When we are called to hear God's word, and pray publicly, though we see not God, yet we may see his goings *Deus enim ipse chorum agit, et primas tenet in illo incessu* (Vatab.).

Of my God, my King] David, though he were a king, yet held himself but God's mandatory, or substitute.

Ver. 25. **The singers went before, &c.]** Thus they were marshalled, when the ark was conducted to Mount Sion, everything being done decently and in order. Christ ascending into heaven, and settling his kingdom, is perpetually praised by his Church.

Ver. 26. **Bless ye God in the congregations]** *i.e.* *Catervatim ac turmatim*, by troops and companies.

Even the Lord from the fountain of Israel] That is, from the heart, say some, which is the true fountain of praising God. Others understand it as Christ, who is of the fountain of Israel, #Ro 9:5; there are those who think that the study of the Hebrew tongue is here recommended to us. Reuchlin was wont to say, that the Latins drank out of cisterns, the Greeks out of ponds, but the Hebrews out of the fountain itself. Calvin and the most interpreters read the words, *Ye that are of the fountain of Israel, springing out of his loins.* See #De 33:28 Isa 48:1 51:1.

Ver. 27. **There is little Benjamin with their ruler]** Though before they had stood out for Saul and his house, yet now they bore a part in this solemn celebrity, as being next unto the sanctuary. Of this tribe was St Paul, *Tricubitalis ille homuncio, sed insatiabilis Dei cultor*; as Chrysostom calleth him, little in stature, but in labours more abundant. The first precious stone in the foundation of the New Jerusalem is a jasper, #Re 21:19, which in Aaron's breastplate was the last, #Ex 28:20, on which Benjamin's name was graven. This intimateth, saith Ainsworth, the last now to be first, and chief in Christian Churches.

The princes of Judah and their council] Or company, or purple-arrayed ones. Beza rendereth it, *Lapidatores eorum*, the stoners of

the enemies. The word is found here only; and Forsterus thinketh that our Saviour alludeth to it when, as #**Mr 3:17**, he calleth James and John Boanerges.

The princes of Zebulun] *Sic absolvitur pompa triumphalis.* These are mentioned as most remote, bringing up the rear. In those tribes Christ walked, and therehence he called sundry of his disciples.

Ver. 28. **Thy God hath commanded thy strength]** A brave expression, admired by Longinus, a heathen rhetorician. See the like #**De 28:8 Ps 33:9 42:8 44:4**. God both made and ruleth the world without tool or toil; he enableth his people to subsist and to resist their enemies by his will only, and by the efficacy of his word. *Suppeditavit tibi Deus tantum robur; nequid superbias,* saith Vatablus.

Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us] *Petamus ut det, quod ut habeamus iubet,* Pray to the God of all grace to make us the same that he requireth us to be.

Ver. 29. **Because of thy temple]** Or, out of thy temple at Jerusalem, *q.d.* strengthen us out of thy temple, out of the fulness that is in thy Son, thereby typified.

Shall kings bring presents unto thee] {*See Trapp on "Ps 68:22"*}

Ver. 30. **Rebuke the company of spearmen]** Or, lancemen; Heb. the beast of the reeds; that is, say some, voluptuous persons that wallow in wealth, plenty, and pleasure, #**Job 40:21**, *Sicut Pontifices, Cardinales, Episcopi et horum satellites.* as Popes, cardinals, bishops and their underlings. Behemoth lieth in the fens, which Gul. Parisiensis applieth to the devil in sensual hearts; reeds grow not but in fat and moist places: but they do better who render it the rout, or crew, of the cane; that is, men that bear reeds or canes, whereof spears, arrows, and lances were wont to be made; these men, or rather beasts, cruel, savage, and bloody, rebuke, that is, repress.

The multitude of the bulls] The commanders and chieftains.

With the calves of the people] The common soldiers.

With pieces of silver] With a homage penny, as they call it.

That delight in war] That make a sport of it, as Joab, #2Sa 2:14; as Pyrrhus, king of Epirotes, who made a recreation of warfare. So did not David, though, necessitated thereunto for the glory of God, he was a man of war from his youth. If we princes, said our Henry VII, should delight in war, or take every occasion that is offered, the world should never be quiet, but wearied with continual wars.

Ver. 31. **Princes shall come out of Egypt]** The Gentiles shall one day be called, and caused *Deum verum cognoscere et colere*; even Egypt, that archenemy of the Church; and Ethiopia, the offspring of cursed Ham.

Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God] Heb. shall make her hands to run; whereby is noted her speediness in giving or in receiving the gospel, *Manibus pedibusque obnixè omnia faciet* (Terent.). It is likely that that good eunuch, #Ac 8:26-39, preached the Christian verity which himself had embraced, for goodness is diffusive; and birds, when they come to a full heap of corn, will chirp and call in for their fellows. The Habassines are still a kind of Christians, the Nubians have forsaken the faith once delivered, and embraced instead of it partly Mahometanism, and partly idolatry, through lack of ministers, as Alvarez reports (Hist. Aethi. cap. 137).

Ver. 32. **Siny unto God, ye kingdoms]** No such joy as that of the converted; #Isa 35:10, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads," &c. Bernard, for a certain time after his conversion, remained, as it were, deprived of his senses, by the excessive consolations he had from God. The like befell Cyprian, Austin, and others.

Ver. 33. **To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens]** *i.e.* The highest heaven, #De 10:14.

Which were of old] And do still remain in the same state.

Lo, he doth send out his voice] *i.e.* Thundereth, as #Ps 29:3; whensoever, therefore, we hear it thunder, *Sciamus Deum ipsum*

loqui, hoc est sensibilem reddi. Let us know that God himself speaks, this is to restore us to our senses.

Ver. 34. **Ascribe ye strength unto God]** The high thunderer, υψιβρεμετης (Altitonans); acknowledge your own nothingness, submit to his government.

His excellency is over Israel, and his strength, &c.] *i.e.* His glory shineth no less in Israel than the thunder roareth in the clouds.

Ver. 35. **O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places]** So the sanctuary is called, because divided into three parts; and here hence God was terrible in his manifestations to his people, and in his operations to his enemies. See #Ps 67:2,3.

Blessed be God] Hereupon, saith one, God was called in Israel, *Baruc-hu*, the Blessed, as #Mr 14:61, with #Mt 26:63. See #Lu 1:68.

A Psalm of David] *Quando rebellabat Sheba*, saith the Syriac, made upon the occasion of Sheba's rebellion presently after Absalom's. Hence he cries out, as one almost overwhelmed,

Chapter 69

Ver. 1. **Save me, O God]** Thou, who delightest to save such as are forsaken of their hopes. The Fathers generally take this psalm to be prophetic touching the passion of Christ, and his praying then to the Father. David had his troubles which gave occasion to the penning of this psalm, but those were all but as a picture and prelude of Christ's far greater sorrows, *Spiritus autem sanctus manifeste se prodit in hoc psalmo.*

For the waters are come in unto my soul] Ever after Noah's flood, that dismal destruction, great and grievous afflictions were set forth by the rushing in of waters, and overwhelming therewith. God's wrath was poured upon Christ as a mighty torrent of waters, and, therefore, this expression applied to him hath a special emphasis; his soul was heavy even to the death. *Fluctus fluctum trudebat*, One deep called upon another, &c. Oh the soul of sufferings which his soul then suffered!

Ver. 2. **I sink in deep mire]** Heb. in the mire of depth, or gulf, as Babylon was afterwards called, **#Isa 44:27**. Here he stuck, and under water, and so must perish, if he had not present help.

Ver. 3. **I am weary of mg crying]** As a drowning man, while he can be heard, crieth for help.

My throat is dried] Or, parched, *raucitate laborant fauces*.

Mine eyes fail] With much weeping and long looking. This is a piece of the curse, **#Le 26:16**. Christ became a curse for us, **#Ga 3:13**.

Ver. 4. **They that hate me without a cause, &c.]** Christ, besides his inward fears and griefs caused by the sense of his Father's wrath for our sins, was set against and assaulted both by men and devils (in that three hours' darkness especially) with utmost might and malice.

Then I restored that which I took not away.] *Quod non rapui reddebam*. David was dealt with as a felon or false dealer. Christ also was crucified for saying that he was the Son of God, **#Joh 19:7**, though he held it no robbery to be equal with God, **#Php 2:6**. The martyrs likewise were loaden with many calumnies and false criminations, that they might seem to suffer not as martyrs, but as malefactors.

Ver. 5. **O God, thou knowest my foolishness]** *Secundum dici, non secundum esse; ironica enim est locutio*. Thou knowest mine innocence, and how free I am of that folly, and those foul faults, wherewith they falsely charge me.

Ver. 6. **Let not them...be ashamed for my sake]** Give me not up to passions of dishonour, to opprobrious practices, whereby religion might be reproached, or good people reviled and abused, much less staggered and set at a stand by my sufferings.

Ver. 7. **Because for thy sake I have borne reproach]** Whatever mine enemies pretend, they strike at thee, Lord, through my sides; and for thy sake alone it is that I am so bespattled, that I am even ashamed to look any one in the face. The most innocent may, upon the fulness of an aspersion, be put out of countenance.

Ver. 8. **I am become a stranger unto my brethren]** No otherwise than as if I were a mamzer (so the Hebrews call a bastard), that is, a strange blot to the family. Christ came to his own, but they received

him not; yea, his own brethren believed not on him, #Joh 7:5 This, when the Turks read in our Gospel, they wonder; and the Jews, therefore, slander his miracles, for not so manifest as we conceive.

Ver. 9. **For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up]** *Non amat qui non zelat.* David's love to God (much less the Lord Christ's) would not suffer him to bear with God's dishonour and the contempt of his ordinances. And this was it that procured him so much ill-will, and such a general alienation from nearest friends and allies.

And the reproaches of them that reproached thee] Wicked men soon set their mouths against heaven, and fall foul upon God himself. This David (and the Son of David) could not endure, *nec aliter amare didicit*, as Basil once answered those that blamed him for appearing so far for his friend, to his own great danger (Chrysost. lib. 2, de Sacerdot.).

Ver. 10. **When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting]** That I might thereby beat down my body, and tame that rebel flesh of mine.

That was to my reproach] They said I did it in hypocrisy and design. So they dealt by the Baptist, that crucifix of mortification, #Lu 7:33.

Ver. 11. **I made sackcloth also my garment]** A fashion at solemn fasts among the Easterlings; as if they thought the coarsest clothing too good for them; and but for shame would have gone stark naked.

I became a proverb to them] *Dictorium.* They would say, with mocking Michal, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, as one of the vain fellows!" #2Sa 6:20.

Ver. 12. **They that sit in the gate]** Men of authority and dignity, who should have showed more grace and gravity. The saints are sure of enemies of all sorts. David was traduced at public and private meetings, *seriis et ludicris, sobriis et ebris.*

And I was the song of the drunkards] Heb. of the drinkers of strong drink; the ale stakes made ballads on their ale bench, *de macie mea et miseria.* These servants tear and toss my name, as curs do carrion.

Ver. 13. **But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord]** So St Paul, "Being defamed," saith he, "we pray." Christ in like case committed himself to God in well-doing, #1Pe 2:15

In an acceptable time] Or, there will be an acceptable time.

Flebile principium melior fortuna sequetur.

Ver. 14. **Deliver me out of the mire]** *i.e.* *De civitate Gehennae*, from the state of hell, saith the Hebrew scholiast; {a} out of that deadly danger whereof he had complained, #Ps 69:2. Alphonsus, king of Arragon, by a gracious condescension, helped a laden ass out of the mire with his own hand, and is renowned for it in history (Val. Max. Christ. 41). God helpeth his out full oft, and little notice is taken of it.

{a} One who writes explanatory notes upon an author; esp. an ancient commentator upon a classical writer.

Ver. 15. **Let not the waterflood overflow me]** See #Ps 69:1.

Let not the pit shut] Leave me not helpless and hopeless.

Vivere spe facias qui moriturus eram.

Ver. 16. **Hear me, O Lord, for thy lovingkindness is good]** It is not like the winter sun, that lighteth but heateth not; it is like the summer sun, that doth both.

Ver. 17. **And hide not thy face from thy servant]** Who am devoted to thy fear, and do, therefore, implore and expect thy favour.

For I am in trouble] And so a fit object of thy pity.

Ver. 18. **Draw nigh unto my soul]** Who seemest to be afar off; so the flesh suggesteth when help is any whit deferred.

Because of mine enemies] Who else will excessively insult.

Ver. 19. **Thou hast known my reproach]** That is enough for David, that God taketh cognizance of the injuries and indignities cast upon him; for he will surely right him.

Ver. 20. **Reproach hath broken mine heart, &c.]** He knew his own innocence, and yet it much grieved him to be so defamed; for he knew that a good man should be as much as might be not only

without fault, but without suspicion of a fault, as Augustus Caesar was wont to say of his house. Howsoever, it is happy that a true Christian hath always his cordial by him, #2Co 1:12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience.

And I looked for some to take pity] Heb. to lament with me, or to shake the head over me as mourners use to do, to run to my comfort, and to condole with me. David's friends failed him in this office also. But that was not all.

Ver. 21. **They gave me also gall for my meat]** *Venenum vel eicutam;* and so showed themselves miserable comforters.

And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink] This befell David in figure, but Christ in the letter, #Mt 27:34. It were happy if the vinegar given him might melt our adamantine hearts into godly sorrow.

Ver. 22. **Let their table become a snare before them]** Let them eat their bane, and drink their poison; while all their cares are sauced with the wrath of God: *Quoniam hoe mode cibarunt me,* saith Kimchi, because they have served me on this sort. By "table," saith another interpreter, we are to understand all means of comfort and refreshing, both of body and soul, which turn to the ruin of the wicked, even an odour of death unto death, #2Co 2:15,16.

And that which should have been, &c.] Tremellius rendereth it, *Pro retributionibus, pro tendicula ipsis,* for recompenses, for a trap to them #Ro 11:9; others, *Pacifera in rete!* others again, *Et ubi pacem sperant, illic impingant,* Where they hope for peace let them fall.

Ver. 23. **Let their eyes be darkened]** Let them be infatuated and besotted, that they may go hoodwinked to hell.

And make their loins continually to shake] *Ne fugiant,* saith R. Obadiah Gaon, that they may not be able to fly, or otherwise to help themselves; for in the loins and reins of a man lieth his strength, #De 33:11. The Syriac hath it, *Lumbi eorum sint curvi,* viz. under their enemies' burdens. See #Ro 11:10, bow down their backs.

Ver. 24. **Pour out thine indignation upon them]** By indignation, saith Basil, we are to understand speedy vengeance; by wrath,

durable. This is befallen the nation of the Jews to the utmost, #**1Th 2:14-16**, or to the end, as some render it.

Ver. 25. **Let their habitation be desolate]** Heb. their palaces, or castles, so named of being fair and high built, in row and order. It is here put not only for their habitation, but for their function. See #**Ac 1:20**.

And let none dwell in their tents] *Lege et luge*, Read and lament, saith one, speaking of the ruin of Jerusalem by the Romans, under Vespasian, and again under Hadrian, by whom all Judaea was left almost uninhabited, the Jews utterly banished, and forbidden upon pain of death to look toward their own country (Dio in Hadrian). At this day there be not to be found in Jerusalem itself a hundred households of Jews. Behold the severity of God for the contempt of Christ and his people (Breerwood's Enquirer).

Ver. 26. **For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten]** Christ was "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted," #**Isa 53:4**. Him they persecuted to the death, and abused, when he was at the greatest under, with bitter taunts and Satanical sarcasms; so the pagans and Papists dealt by the dying martyrs; and so profane persons and malicious miscreants do still by God's poor afflicted; falling as cursed curs upon the dog that is worried; and as when a deer is shot the rest of the herd push him out of their company: so here. Now, if it could be said of Mithridates, that he hated such as maliciously persecuted virtue forsaken of fortune; much more may we think doth God abhor such cruel criminals as are here spoken of. See #**Isa 47:6 Ob 1 Zec 1:15**.

And they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded] *Narrationes contexunt*, they frame discourses to the grief of thy wounded ones, pouring into their wounds not oil, or balsam, but vinegar, or salt water, Heb. they number, or cipher up the grief; that is, saith one, they study and devise new ways of torturing them, so that he who would speak of them all, must keep a remembrance of their number.

Ver. 27. **Add iniquity unto their iniquity]** Punish one sin with another (by giving them up to a reprobate sense, to an incurable hardness), and plague them soundly for their sin. The same Hebrew

word signifieth both sin and punishment; these two are tied together with chains of adamant.

And let them not come into thy righteousness] *i.e.* Hold them not righteous, nor bestow upon them thy crown of righteousness.

Ver. 28. **Let them be blotted out, &c.]** Wherein they were never indeed written among those living in Jerusalem, #**Isa 4:3**, those firstborn whose names are written in heaven, #**Heb 12:23**, but they accounted themselves of that number, and were so esteemed by others. This was a mistake, and the psalmist prayeth God to make it appear so, *Ne videantur in albus tuorum relati quibus verae vitro donum destinasti.*

Ver. 29. **But I am poor and sorrowful]** The Church is usually so, and may sing, as here, *Vaani gnani, &c.*, but her comfort is, 1. That Christ saith unto her, as #**Re 2:9**, I know thy sorrow and poverty (but that is nothing), thou art rich. 2. That her poverty is not penal, but medicinal; God's dispensation to fit her for better riches; as a wise physician purgeth a foul body till he bring it almost to skin and bone; but why? that, having made it poor, there may be a spring of better blood and spirits.

Ver. 30. **I will praise the name of God]** *i.e.* *Agnitmn Deum.* I will thankfully agnize and recognize God's great goodness to me in this deliverance, with mine uttermost zeal and skill.

Ver. 31. **This also shall please the Lord better, &c.]** True thankfulness is *opimum et optimum saerificium*, those calves of our lips, #**Ho 14:3 Heb 12:15**. These calves or bullocks (as in the text) must, 1. Have horns and hoofs, be young and tender, the very best, of the best. 2. They must be slain; our thanks must proceed from a mortified mind. 3. They must be sacrificed; where is required, (1.) An altar, our praises must be tendered in the mediation of Christ. (2.) Fire, our hearts must be inflamed with zeal and ardency. (3.) Our hands must be laid on the head of the bullock; that is, we must in all humility confess our unworthiness, &c. This will surely please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

Ver. 32. **The humble shall see this and be glad]** David's great care was for others' confirmation and comfort; much more Christ's, witness that holy prayer of his, #**Joh 17:9**

Your heart shall live] Which before was all lifeless. Pray that ye may joy. David did so often, **#Ps 6**, &c.

Ver. 33. **For the Lord heareth the poor]** He is the poor man's king, the wronged man's refuge; Trajan the emperor is renowned for this, that when he was mounted for a battle, he alighted again to bear the complaint of a poor woman that cried unto him for justice (Aeli. Spart.); and our Edward VI for this, that he would appoint certain hours to sit with the master of the requests, only to despatch the causes of the poor. God is much more to be magnified.

Ver. 34. **Let the heaven and earth praise him]** As they do in their kind; and have good cause so to do for their restoration by Christ, **#Ro 8:21**.

Ver. 35. **For God will save Zion]** *i.e.* The Church universal.

And will build the cities] The particular Churches.

That they may dwell there] viz. The seed of his servants, **#Ps 69:36**.

Ver. 36. **The seed also of his servants shall inherit]** The faithful and their posterity after them shall be incorporated into the Church, and partake of all good things to all perpetuity.

A Psalm of David] Made, likely, or rather made use of from **#Ps 40:14,15**, &c., when Sheba, the son of Bichri, was up in rebellion after Absalom's death, **#2Sa 20:1**, &c. See **#Ps 69:1**, title.

To briny to remembrance] Worthy to be remembered, and followed as a pattern of prayer. Some make this psalm an appendix to the former, as **#Ps 43**., is to **#Ps 42**. Others make it a part of the next psalm; which is, therefore, say they, without a title.

Chapter 70

Ver. 1. **Make haste, O God, to deliver me]** As a father runs without legs when his child is hazarded.

Ver. 2. **Let them be ashamed]** See **#Ps 40:14 35:26,27**.

Ver. 3. **Let them be turned back for a reward]** *Vel sicut per insidias vel supplantationem, more athletarum,* אֶבְרָכָם, Let them be supplanted, defeated.

That say, Aha, aha] Augustine rendereth it, *Euge, Euge*, that is, Well done; and giveth this note upon it, *Plus persequitur lingua adulatoris quam manus interfectoris*, The tongue of a flatterer may mischief a man more than the hand of a murderer. The apostle, **#Heb 11:37**, ranketh their tempting and flattering promises among their bloody deeds, their rising tongues with their terrifying jaws.

Ver. 4. **Let all those that seek thee, &c.]** *Piorum characteres*, saith one, a godly man characterized, by his search after God, his joy in him, his love to him, his praises of him.

Let God be magnified] *In illo quicquid ego; ille, non ego*, saith Augustine.

Ver. 5. **But I am poor and needy]** See **#Ps 69:29**, {See Trapp on "Ps 69:29"}

Chapter 71

Ver. 1. **In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust]** See **#Ps 31:1**, {see Trapp on "Ps 31:1"} It appeareth by **#Ps 71:9,18**, that this psalm was written by David in his old age, when Absalom or Sheba was in rebellion against him, though haply for haste, and in that fright he could not superscribe it as he did the rest. The Greek title, viz. of David, a psalm of the sons of Jonadab, and of them that were first captived, hath no footing in the original Hebrew.

Ver. 2. **Deliver me in thy righteousness]** Let my deliverance be the fruit of thy promise and of my prayer; and so it will be much the sweeter.

Ver. 3. **Thou hast given commandment]** *sc.* To thine angels, and all other thy creatures; or, thou hast commanded, that is, thou hast promised.

Ver. 4. **Out of the hand of the unrighteous]** That seeketh by fraud to undermine me, and by force to overturn me.

And cruel man] *Qui totus in fermento iacet;* sour as leaven, sharp as vinegar.

Ver. 5. **For thou art my hope]** Helpless I may seem, but hopeless I am not.

Ver. 6. **By thee have I been holden up from the womb]** As in the womb I lived upon thee, so from the womb. The same that breedeth us feedeth us; that matter that nourisheth the child in the womb

striking up into the breasts, and by a further concoction becoming white, is made milk for it.

Thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels] Else I had never been born alive. That a child is born, *fieri videmus*, saith Galen, *sed quomodo fiat, admirari tantum possumus*. Avicenna calleth it, *Opus supra mirabilia omnia mirabile*, the greatest wonder in the world. Surely, if a child were born but once in a hundred years' time, we should all run to see so strange a work, saith another.

Ver. 7. **I am a wonder unto many]** Or, unto the great ones, a monster to the mighty, *quia credo quod non video*, as Austin glosseth, because I believe what I yet see not, viz. that this storm shall blow over, and I be resettled in my throne.

Ver. 8. **Let my mouth be filled with thy praise]** Minister unto me still fresh matter for my spirit to work upon.

Ver. 9. **Cast me not off in the time of old age]** For now I have most need of thee. The white rose is soonest cankered, so is the white head soonest corrupted.

Saepe nigrum cor est, caput album—

Satan maketh a prey of old Solomon, Asa, Lot, others; whom when young he could never so deceive. The heathens, therefore, well warn us to look well to our old age, as that which cometh not alone, but is infested with many diseases both of body and mind. This David knew, and therefore prayed, as here, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." He is a rare old man that can say with Caleb, **#Jos 14:10,11**. *Omnia fert aetas, animum quoque*.

Ver. 10. **For mine enemies]** Who, rather than their lives, would bereave me of mine; these would double murder me, first by detraction, and then by deadly practice.

Ver. 11. **God hath forsaken him]** For his late sin against Uriah; and as may appear by his present distress, his forlorn proscribed condition.

Ver. 12. **O God, be not far from me]** The insolence of his enemies sets an edge upon his prayers *Oratio sine malis est avis sine alis*. Our Saviour in his agony prayed the more earnestly, **#Lu 22:44**.

Ver. 13. **Let them be confounded and consumed]** Here he beginneth *diris devovere*, to devote his foes to destruction, who soon also found that these were not *bruta fulmina*, as the pope's bulls are (wittily compared by one to a fool's dagger, rattling and snapping without an edge), but that there was an energy in them, though haply not felt for present; and that they had better have angered all the witches in the country than occasioned David thus to curse them in the name of the Lord.

Ver. 14. **But I will hope continually]** I will lengthen out mine hope, as a line drawn out. Tremellius renders it, I am in expectation still of completing thy praise, and will go on therein, viz. when thou shalt have completed my deliverance

Ver. 15. **My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation]** Lo, here, a sweet and comfortable conjunction of God's righteousness and our salvation. See #2Th 1:6,7.

For I know not the numbers thereof] Or, though I know not, &c., by a modest correction, since they may be celebrated, but not enumerated.

*Littora quot conchas, quot amaena rosaria flores,
Quotve soporiferum grana papaver habet:
Sylva feras quot alit, quot piscibus unda natatur,
Et tenerum pennis acra pulsar avis (Ovid.).*

So many, and ten thousand times more, are God's lovingkindnesses. The psalmist elsewhere venteth himself by an exclamation, #Ps 31:19. {See Trapp on "Ps 31:19"}

Ver. 16. **I will go in the strength of the Lord God]** *Ingrédia in potentia Domini*, I will do what I can, with God's help, in glorifying his name, though I cannot do as I would and as I ought; *Narrabo res inenarrabiles*, and then entreat those that hear me to think higher things of God than I am able to utter.

Even of thine only] For that is enough, and more than I can well do; I will not once mention (as profane persons use to do) mine own wisdom, valour, &c.; alas, they are not worthy to be named in the same day with thine.

Ver. 17. **O God, thou hast taught me]** Happy David in such a school master. All the faithful are taught of God; outwardly by his word and works, inwardly by his Spirit: *Et quando Christus magister quam cito discitur quod docetur? Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia* (Aug. Ambrose).

Ver. 18. **Now also when I am old and gray headed]** Now, that the plum tree is full of blooms, the map of age is figured in my forehead, the calendar of death appeareth in the furrows of my face; let me do nothing to spot my white head. Let me, with the sun, give greatest glimpse at the going down, and, with the rose, retain my sweetness, though I have lost my colour. See **#Ps 71:9**.

And thy power to every one that is to come] *Mirus fervor Davidis in celebranda bonitate Dei*, saith Vatablus here. David would propagate God's praise to all posterity.

Ver. 19. **Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high]** Far above the reach of human reason; yet for the strengthening of my hope, I will look up after it, though mine eye should be tired in the way.

Ver. 20. **Thou which hast showed me great and sore troubles]** *Angustias magnas et malas*, and hast thereby taught me, **#Ps 71:17**, *Quae nocent, docent*.

Shall quicken me again] And this is one singular height of thy righteousness, that thou carriest thy people through so many deaths, and causeth them to ascend from the lowest ebb of affliction to the highest pitch of comfort. Stoics ascribe such occurrences to fate, epicures to fortune, but David to God alone.

Ver. 21. **Thou shall increase my greatness]** *Meam, id est Tuam, quam mihi dedisti*, saith the Arabic gloss here; my greatness, that is, thy greatness which thou hast given me.

Ver. 22. **I will also praise thee with the psaltery]** *In organo natali*, with an instrument made like a bottle.

O thou Holy One of Israel] Who sanctifiest thine throughout, and art to be sanctified of thine throughout all eternity, **#Isa 5:16**.

Ver. 23. **And my soul, which thou hast redeemed]** Hearts and lips shall concur in this work. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet as that which cometh from the depth of the breast. 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.

Ver. 24. **My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness]** Advisedly talk, and upon due deliberation. What a mad edict was that of Henry II of France, that men should not talk at all of Scriptural matters! And that of the Jesuits at Dola, forbidding any talk of God, either in good sort or in bad!

A Psalm for Solomon] Whom his father David had crowned while yet alive; and now, at point of death, leaveth him this last bequeath as a *basilicon doron*, a direction in point of government, and a prediction of a most flourishing reign thereupon; this last he so describeth, that by a spirit of prophecy, attributing eternity thereunto, he riseth up from Solomon to Christ, of whom he was a type; like as also the promise made to David, concerning Solomon and Christ, was conceived in such terms by God himself, as if they had been almost one and the same person, #2Sa 7:13,14 1Ch 22:10. (Beza).

Chapter 72

Ver. 1. **Give the king thy judgments, O God]** *i.e.* Give me, for that little time I have here to live and reign, skill and will to do it aright, and as thy law requireth.

And thy righteousness unto the king's son] To Solomon, and his successors; for David's great care was the welfare of God's people after his decease, for which end he both prayeth, and principleth his son Solomon; and herein his great piety to the end appeareth. I could not but love the man (said Theodosius, the emperor, concerning Ambrose) who, while he lived he heartily wished that the contentions that were in the Church might be quenched, though it were with his blood; so when he died he was more solicitous of the Church's welfare than of his own.

Ver. 2. **He shall judge thy people with righteousness]** *sc.* If thou please to remember thy promise to me, and to answer this my prayer of faith founded thereupon.

And thy poor] Or, thine afflicted. The people (the poor afflicted especially) are the Lord's and therefore not to be tyrannized over and trampled on by their governors.

Ver. 3. **The mountains shall bring peace]** *i.e.* They shall not be so pestered and infested by thieves and robbers, who usually haunt and hide themselves in hills and hollow places.

By righteousness] By right administration of justice, as it was here in King Alfred's days, who ordained that his subjects should be divided into tens, or tithings, every one of which severally should give bond for the good abearing of each other; and he who was of that dissolute behaviour, that he could not be admitted to these tithings, was forthwith conveyed to the house of correction. The most ancient of these men were called by a specialty the tithing men.

Ver. 4. **He shall judge the poor of the people]** Indeed all, indifferently, without respect of persons; but a poor man's tale shall be heard, and his cause judged, as well as a rich man's. Under Christ's government it shall be so howsoever; "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich," saith he, **#Re 3:9**. Amongst men, both in suits of love and of law, money maketh mastery; not so here.

And shall break in pieces the oppressor] The tale bearer, saith the Greek; the slanderer, saith the Latin; the devil, say some. Over these he shall turn the wheel.

Ver. 5. **They shall fear thee]** Who hast blessed them with so good a king; such as maketh it his main care to set up God, wherever he hath to do.

As long as the sun and moon endureth] The Lacedemonians publicly professed, *Quoad sol eodem itinere meabit, quo nunc meat, eo usque nunquam societatem cum Xerxe coibimus*, While the sun shall hold on his course we will never make a league with Xerxes.

Ver. 6. **He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass]** That is, he shall be very dear to us, and much delighted in. See **#Job 29:23**, {*See Trapp on "Job 29:23"*}

As showers that water the earth] This is chiefly fulfilled in Christ, who, by raining down righteousness, maketh his Church to grow and flourish.

Ver. 7. **In his days shall the righteous flourish]** As watered gardens, #Jer 31:12, or as the willows by the water courses, #Isa 44:4, παντα καλωσ εσται.

And abundance of peace] The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effects of righteousness quietness, and assurance for ever, #Isa 32:17. Christ's subjects have peace, peace, #Isa 25:3, a multiplied peace, a multiplied pardon, #Isa 55:7; where sin aboundeth grace superaboundeth; neither can they commit more than God will remit unto them.

Ver. 8. **He shall have dominion also from sea to sea]** Solomon shall, from the Mediterranean, in the west, to the Persian Sea, or Indian Ocean, in the east.

And from the river unto the ends of the earth] *i.e.* From Euphrates, and the northern countries, to Egypt, and the uttermost parts of all Africa. This was a type of Christ's universal dominion throughout the whole world, #Zec 9:9 Ps 110:1.

Ver. 9. **They that dwell in the wilderness]** Wild, barbarous, rude people; such as were the ancient Britons our progenitors, till Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shone upon them, till they were brought to the obedience of faith; *Tunc enim sensim evanuit feritas, indies exulavit immanitas, corruiit crudelitas, &c.*, for then it was otherwise (Bond in Horat.).

And his enemies shall lick the dust] A ceremony much in use among the easterlings. *Prostrati adorant honoratiorem*, saith Herodotus of the Persians; they worship their betters, by falling to the ground before them; and how Tiridates, king of Parthians, worshipped Nero, is to be read in Dio Cassius. Christ's foes shall all be made his footstool.

Ver. 10. **The kings of Tarshish, and of the isles]** *i.e.* All the kings of the earth, which being encompassed with the ocean, is therefore by the old geographers called a great island. Judaea, though part of the continent, is called an isle, #Isa 20:6, because separated from other countries; with whom God would have his people to have as little to do as might be, that they might not be corrupted with foreign fashions. This was accomplished partly in Solomon; see #1Ki 4:21,34 10:25; perfectly it is, and shall be in Christ: *De Solomone*

certum est, de Christo certius, saith Kimchi; all the kingdoms of the earth shall one day be his kingdoms; he shall be the universal Monarch, and he alone.

Ver. 11. **Yea, all kings, &c.**] Of Christ this is and shall be verified without a hyperbole. Constantine, Valentinian, and Theodosius, three emperors, called themselves Christ's vassals, as Socrates reporteth; Canutus set his crown upon the crucifix, &c.

Ver. 12. **For he shall deliver the needy**] See on #Ps 72:4. If the people complained of Solomon's government, and cried out to his son Rehoboam, *Alleva iugum*, Ease our yoke laid upon us by thy father, it was out of a sinful discontent; *αει γαρ το παρον βαρυ*, saith Thucydides, people seldom know when they are well, but are ever quarrelling at and complaining of the present government; yea, even of Christ's easy yoke and light burden, as if importable.

Ver. 13. **He shall spare the poor and needy**] Hereby David showeth his son and all his successors, *Qualis debeat esse rex bonus*, what manner of man a king ought to be. Regiment without righteousness turneth into tyranny; it is but robbery with authority. O. Scipio Nasica for his good government was surnamed Optimus by the Senate, and had a house given him at the public charge, in Via Sacra, that the poor might repair to him.

Ver. 14. **He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence**] Those two noted engines of all mischief to the poor, viz. privy deceit (usury, the Septuagint and Vulgate render it) and open violence, *επιβουλη και επιβολη*, fraud and force, craft and cruelty.

And precious shall their blood be in his sight] He shall be very tender of their lives, that they be not causelessly cast away, either in times of peace or war. Precious also in the sight of the Lord Christ is the death of his saints, his martyrs, #Ps 116:15.

Ver. 15. **And he shall live**] The king shall, according to the poor man's prayer when relieved; or the poor shall, and the king shall give him gold brought from Sheba, or Arabia the Happy. Whereupon

Prayer shall be made, &c.] By the poor for him, or through him (applying it to Christ), and for the increase of his kingdom, and for his coming.

Ver. 16. **There shall be an handful of corn, &c.]** *i.e.* The barren mountains shall yield grain abundantly, and by handfuls; as Egypt did in those seven years of plenty, #Ge 41:47.

The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon] The grain shall rattle and rustle, like the trees in Lebanon, shaken by the wind.

And they of the city shall flourish] Men also shall increase and multiply, #Jer 31:27, to a very great number, as piles of grass Christ's subjects shall.

Ver. 17. **His name shall endure for ever]** *i.e.* His kingdom, for it shall not be *nomen inane*. Other kingdoms have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin; not so Christ's, and this is great comfort.

His name shall be continued] *Filiabitur nomine eius*, it shall be begotten as one generation is begotten of another. Heb. his name shall be childed; that is, so continued as families are continued; there shall be a constant succession of Christ's name to the end of the world; there will still be Christians who are his children, #Heb 2:13,14. The old Hebrews tell us, that *Jinnon* (the Hebrew word here used) is one of Christ's names.

And men shall be blessed in him] Or, they shall bless themselves in him, viz. in Solomon, but especially in Christ, of whom Solomon was but a shadow.

All nations shall call him blessed] If all generations shall call the mother of Christ blessed, #Lu 1:48, how much more Christ himself!

Ver. 18. **Blessed be the Lord God]** *Sunt verba componentis*; these are the words of the psalmist, say the Rabbis, blessing God, who had given *Leigneph choach*, strength to him fainting to finish the second book of the Psalms, as he had done the first; or rather praising God for all the forementioned benefits by the Lord Christ, *Sunt verba scribae, ut hodie*, Aben Ezra, ex R. Jehudah.

Ver. 19. **And blessed be his glorious name]** Blessed and blessed; so unsatisfiable and unwearable are the saints in blessing God for a Christ; and surely God expecteth that with one mind and one mouth this should be done by all his, at all times, #Ro 15:6, and that they

should say to Christ, as **#Jud 8:22**. Rule thou over us, for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

Amen, and Amen] *{See Trapp on "Ps 41:13"}*

Ver. 20. **The prayers of David are ended]** That is, this was his last prayer (in time, though not in order), and is therefore well to be considered. Or, so end the prayers that were both written and set in order by David; the rest seem to have been gathered together by Ezra, or some other holy man, after the return from Babylon.

A Psalm of Asaph] Who was not only an excellent musician, but a prophet also, an orator, and a poet; not unlike (for his style) to Horace, or Persius. This, and the ten next psalms, that bear this name in the front, consist of complaints for the most part, and sad matters.

Chapter 73

Ver. 1. **Truly God is good to Israel]** Or, yet God is, &c. Thus the psalmist beginneth abruptly after a sore conflict; throwing off the devil and his fiery darts, wherewith his heart for a while had been wounded. It is best to break off temptations of corrupt and carnal reasonings, and to silence doubts and disputes, lest we be foiled. He shoots (saith Greenham) with Satan in his own bow who thinks by disputing and reasoning to put him off.

To such as are of a clean heart] Such as are Israelites indeed, and not hypocrites and dissemblers. For "as for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity" (as malefactors are led forth to execution); "but peace shall be upon Israel," **#Ps 125:5**, "upon the Israel of God," **#Ga 6:16**.

Ver. 2. **But as for me, my feet were almost gone]** *i.e.* I was well nigh brought to believe that there was no Divine providence; as the Athenians did when their good General Nicias was worsted and slain in Sicily (Thucyd.); as Pompey did, when having the better cause, he was overcome by Caesar; as Brutus did (that last of the Romans as he was called for his courage), when beaten out of the field by Antony, he cried out Ω $\tau\lambda\eta\mu\omega\nu$ $\alpha\rho\epsilon\tau\eta$, now I see that virtue is nothing, but all things are moderated by fortune, whom he

charged his children therefore to worship, as a goddess of greatest power.

My steps had well nigh slipped] *Quasi nihil effusi sunt gressus mei*, that is, as Kimchi interpreteth it, *Status meus erat tantillus quasi nullus esset pro figendo pede locus*, I had scarce any fastening for my feet, my heels were gone almost. What wonder, then, that heathens have been stounded and staggered?

*Cum rapiant mala fata bonos (ignoscite fasso)
Sollicitor nullos esse putare Deos,*

saith Ovid. And to the same purpose another poet,

*Marmoreo Licinus tumulo iacet, et Cato parvo,
Pompeius nullo; quis putet esse Deos?*

Ver. 3. **For I was envious at the foolish]** Heb. at the *braggadocios*, the vain glorious, the mad boasters; *factabundis*, I emulated, and stomached their prosperity, compared with mine own far worse condition. Godly men, though cured of their spiritual frensy, yet play oft many mad tricks; one while fretting at the prosperity of their adversaries, and another while murmuring at their own afflictions, or plotting courses how to conform themselves to the world, &c.

When I saw the prosperity of the wicked] This hath ever been a pearl in the eyes, not of the heathens only, but of better men. See #Jer 12:1,2 Hab 1:3 Ps 37:1,2. Yet Seneca writes a treatise of it, and shows the reasons, if at least he believed himself therein. Erasmus passes this censure of him; read him as a Pagan, and he writes Christian like; read him as a Christian, and he writeth Pagan like.

Ver. 4. **For there are no bands in their death]** Or, no knots and knarls; they die without long sickness, or much pain, or trouble of mind. If a man die like a lamb, and pass out of the world like a bird in a shell, he is certainly saved, think some. The wicked are here said to die quietly, as if there were no loosening of the band that is between soul and body. Julian the apostate died with these words in his mouth; *Vitam reposcenti naturae tanquam debitor bonae fidei redditurus exulto*, that is, I owe a death to nature, and now that she

calleth for it, as a faithful debtor, I gladly pay it (Ammian.). The princes of the Sogdians, when they were drawn forth to death by Alexander the Great, *carmen more laetantium cecinerunt, tripudiisque gaudium animi ostentare caeperunt*, they sang and danced to the place of execution (Curt. lib. 7, ex Diodor.).

But their strength is firm] They are lively and lusty, they are *pingues et praevalidi*, fat and fair liking; fat is their fortitude, so some render it; others, strong is their porch or palace.

Ver. 5. **They are not in trouble as other men]** But live in a serene clime, under a perpetual calm; as he did of whom the story is told, that he never had any cross, but at last was nailed to a cross, Polycrates I mean, king of Egypt. Marullus telleth us, that Ambrose coming once to a great man's house, who boasted that he had never suffered any adversity, he hasted away thence, and said he did so, *ne una cum homine perpetuis prosperitatibus uso periret*, lest he should perish with the man that had been so extraordinarily prosperous (Marul. lib. 5, c. 3). And no sooner was he and his company departed, but the earth opened and swallowed up that man's house, with all that were in it.

Ver. 6. **Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain]** The pride of their hearts breaketh forth in their costly habits, while they are *torquati, et auro ac gemmis amicti*, setting up their plumes, as peacocks, which have their names in Hebrew from the joy they take in their fair feathers; so do these glory in their pride, and are puffed up with a foolish persuasion of their own prudence. *Vermis divitiarum est superbia*, Charge the rich that they be not high minded, #1Ti 6:17. He is a great rich man, says Austin, and greater than his riches, who doth not therefore think himself great because he is rich. *Magna cognatio*, saith another, *ut rei sic nominis, divitiis et vitiis*, He is a rare rich man that is not the worse for his wealth. The palm tree, they say, will not grow in a rich ground, but salt and ashes must, in that case, be cast at the root, to qualify the strength of the soil; so grace will not grow in a fat heart, without the salt of mortification and ashes of humiliation. "Their heart is fat as grease, but I delight in thy law," #Ps 119:70.

Violence covereth them as a garment] Violence or wrong-dealing, is the perpetual companion of pride, and covereth them as a garment

finely fitted to their bodies, as was the harlot's habit #Pr 7:10. Aben-Ezra rendereth it, *obruit eos*, overwhelmeth them; that is, domineereth over them. Some Rabbis render, *Nates eorum violentia tegit*.

Ver. 7. **Their eyes stand out with fatness]** The Chaldee hath it, the similitude of their face is changed through fatness. See #Job 15:27. The Greek, for the wealth which they have, their eyes are lifted up. The Latin, their iniquity proceedeth as it were from fatness.

They have more than heart can wish] Heb. They pass the thoughts of the heart; which the Greek rendereth, no man think how wicked they are; those stall fed Sodomites, for instance. See #Jer 5:28. So Aben Ezra, *Transgressiones perpetrare quas cogitare nefas est*, they are more wicked than can be imagined; others, they covet beyond measure, and are insatiable, thinking to enclose the whole world in their net, as Timothy the Athenian did cities and towns in his toils (Plut. in Sulla). Our translation is not to be disliked; neither yet are all to be accounted wicked that have more than heart could wish. *Bonus Deus Constantinum magnum tantis terrenis implevit muneribus, quanta optare nullus auderet*, saith Augustine (De Civ. Dei, lib. 5, c. 25).

Ver. 8. **They are corrupt, and speak wickedly]** Their pride, before taxed, #Ps 73:6, buddeth, and budgeth, #Eze 7:10; like a foul swelling in the body, it breaketh out into sores of all sorts, odious words and deeds, abominable to God and man. *Diffiuunt et loquuntur in malitia rapinata*, they melt and are spilt in sensual delights and dissolute practices. Or, they let loose themselves, and keep not within compass. Or, they secretly corrupt and make to stink the good names of others, *sc.* while they speak evil of them, and reproach them. *Tabifici sunt*, so Tremellius rendereth it.

They speak loftily] *De celsitudine*, from aloft; *lapides loquuntur*, they threaten thunderbolts, throw daggers, *fastuosa voce omnes territant*.

Ver. 9. **They set their mouth against the heavens]** They howl upward, as wolves; bark at the moon, as dogs; piss against the sun; belch out blasphemies against God, as did Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Dionysius the tyrant, Antiochus, antichrist, #Re 13:6 (Pope Julius III for instance, who would have his pork meat,

forbidden him by his physicians, *al despito di Dio*); the Great Turk at the siege of Scodra, and again at the Rhodes; besides Hacker, in Queen Elizabeth's time, and the ranters in ours *Dionysius commisso sacrilegio Deum dicebat sacrilegis bonam navigationem concedere*.

And their tongue walketh through the earth] Snapping at every one they meet, like a mad dog; and not sparing to speak, or rather to spue out, whatsoever lieth uppermost. Thou shalt not walk up and down as a slanderer, or pedlar with his pack, which he opens soon, and disperseth his wares, **#Le 19:16**. That is a true saying of Seneca, *Ut quisque est dissolutissimae vitro, ita est solutissimae linguae*, As any one is more dissolute in his life, so he is more heedless of his speeches.

Ver. 10. **Therefore his people return hither]** *i.e.* Some good men are as wise (or rather as foolish) as I have been, to miscensure on this manner, and to repent me of my repentance, or to say, as **#Ps 73:11**, "How doth God know?" &c.

And waters of a full cup are wrung out unto them] That is, because the wicked drink wine in bowls, their servants wringing the rich ripe grapes thereinto, as **#Ge 40:11**. Or, because God sendeth them (his people) perpetual and extreme afflictions, which is meant, say some, by drinking off a cup, and squeezing all the liquor into it. Others read it, Full waters are wrung out to them, that is, say they, these their thoughts and speeches savouring of infidelity, shall cost them abundance of tears; as Peter's fall did him.

Ver. 11. **And they say, How doth God know?]** Even the godly, through infirmity, are drawn sometimes to doubt God's providence and government, because of the inequality of events in human affairs. It had like to have cost the psalmist here a fall, and made him almost cast off all care of religion. Basil, also, was in some doubt of the Divine providence, under the heat of the Arian persecution. For hath the Lord utterly forsaken his Churches? saith he; is it now the last hour? In the next age Salvian (for the satisfaction of some good people) was forced to write eight books, *De gubernatione Dei, et de iusto praesentique eius Iudicio*, of God's governing the world, and the righteousness of his proceedings. Upon a like occasion Austin wrote those twenty-two most excellent and elaborate books, *De Civitate Dei*.

Ver. 12. **Behold, these are the ungodly]** *q.d.* If God do take knowledge of things here below, and ordereth all events, how is it that the ungodly prosper, while better men suffer?

Who prosper in the world] An ill character, everything considered. See #Ps 17:14. {See Trapp in "Ps 17:14"} Behold, these are the ungodly, the fortunate men of the world, so some render it. He that liveth in the height of the world's blandishments is not far from destruction. *Periculosa est summe bona corporis valetudo*, saith Hippocrates, The height of health is nearest to sickness and death.

They increase in riches] They wallow in wealth; God pouring honey into their hives; but for a vengeance.

Ver. 13. **Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain]** For all is to little purpose, if the cards play on this fashion, if the good must be thus extremely under, and the bad on top of the wheel. Surely I have troubled myself to no purpose or profit; if it be so, why am I thus? as she said. I read of a profane soldier, who at the siege of a town, passing a place of danger, was heard swearing, and when one that stood by warned him, saying, Fellow soldier, do not swear, the bullets fly, he answered, They that swear come off as well as those that pray; but soon after this a shot hit him, and down he fell. It is not safe for saints to symbolize with sinners in such desperate speeches; lest the Lord hear it and be displeased.

Omne trahit secum numinis ira malum (Ovid).

Ver. 14. **For all the day long have I been plagued]** God's best-beloved are most afflicted, neither have any out of hell ever suffered more than the heirs of heaven. See my treatise called God's Love tokens.

And chastened every morning] *Singulis matufinis*, I am no sooner awake than some new misery seizeth me, *quasi egisset excubias*, as if it had laid wait for me.

Ver. 15. **If I say I will speak thus]** If I should give way to such a wicked thought, &c. Here the Spirit beginneth to get the upper hand, to gain the wind and the hill of the flesh. The Spirit would always get the better of the flesh, were it upon equal terms. But when the flesh shall get the hill, as it were, of temptation, and shall have wind

to drive the smoke upon the face and eyes of the combatant, that is, to blind him, upon such a disadvantage he may seem to be overcome.

Behold, I shall offend against the generation, &c.] As if they were no children, because so sharply chastened; whereas the saints are unto God as the apple of his eye, that little man in the eye, as the word signifieth. The eye is a tender part; yet when dim and dusky we apply sharp powders or waters to it, to eat out the web, pearl, or blindness, and yet love it never the less. No more doth God his children, though he apply corrosives or caustics to their flesh, if need require.

Ver. 16. **When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me]** Heb. it was labour in mine eyes, labour in vain, I could do no good on it, *sed labyrinthis et Maeandris inextricabilibus implicabar*, I did but tread a maze, for God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways (of providence) are past finding out; they are far above the reach of human reason.

Ver. 17. **Until I went into the sanctuary of God]** And there consulted with the Scriptures, heard the lectures of the law, prayed, went through all the exercises of God's school.

Then understood I their end] To be such as God pronounceth of them in the Scriptures, and as the effect and common experience sometimes declareth. For some wicked God punisheth here, lest his providence, but not all, lest his patience and promise of judgment, should be called into question, saith Austin, in **#Ps 36:12**

Ver. 18. **Surely thou didst set them in slippery places]** Where they can have no more certainty than if they went upon the smoothest ice, or walked upon a mine of gunpowder. The Turks, seeing so few of their viziers to die in their beds, have taken up this proverb, He that is even in the greatest office is but a statue of glass.

Thou castedst them down into destruction] *Improbos ex magna prosperitate tanquam ex Tarpeia rupe in barathrum perditienis praecipitasti*. Haman for instance.

Ver. 19. **How are they brought into desolation! &c.]** Such as the psalmist expresseth by an exclamation, caused by an admiration at God's dreadful judgments which his faith beheld as present and

unavoidable, and such as astonished the beholders. See it in the literal and mystical Babylon, #Jer 51:37,41 Re 18:10,17.

They are utterly consumed with terrors] Heb. They are ended, they are consumed with troublesome frights; especially when from their death beds they behold that three-fold terrible spectacle, death, judgment, hell, and all to be passed through by their poor souls.

Ver. 20. **As a dream when one awaketh]** Such is the wicked man's pomp and bravery, know, what are dreams but pleasant follies and delusions, the empty bubbles of the mind, children and tales of fancy, idle and fruitless notions, mere baubles? See #Isa 29:7,8. The fisherman in Theocritus dreamt that he was some demi-god; but when he awaked all his golden hopes vanished (*Sic Mycillus apud Lucian*). The Chaldee explaineth it, As the dream of a drunken man; who, sleeping on the steep of a rock, may think himself a king; and starting for joy, may soon break his neck at the bottom.

So, O Lord, when thou awakest thou shalt despise their image] That is, that whereof they dreamt, and whereon they do still dote, viz. their worldly pomp and pride, which is nothing else but *magnum nihil*, a glorious fancy, a nonentity. Some read it thus, When thou shalt raise up (the dead), thou shalt despise their image, that is, their souls; they shall rise to everlasting shame and contempt, #Da 12:2.

Ver. 21. **Thus my heart was grieved]** Heb. leavened and soured, *sc.* with the greatness of godly sorrow, *et quasi aceto acri perfundebatur*; it was steeped, as it were, in vinegar. So Peter wept bitterly; waters of Marah flowed from his eyes.

And I was pricked in my reins] Pricked at heart, as those, #Ac 2:37, put to as much pain as those that have the stone in the kidneys, exceedingly grieved for my misconstruing and miscensuring of God's ways and people.

Ver. 22. **So foolish was I and ignorant]** By this befooling and beasting himself, he retracteth and bewaileth his former fluctuation and folly, #Ps 73:2,3. This is the proper fruit of his godly sorrow, #Ps 73:12.

I was as a beast before thee] Heb. Behemoth, as a great beast, or as many beasts in one. Thus he aggravateth and layeth load upon his sin, and so must we.

Ver. 23. **Nevertheless I am continually with thee]** Or, yet I was always with thee, *sc.* when at worst. Infirmities discard us not. The marriage knot is not dissolved by every falling out; nor the league between princes broken by the wrongs done by pirates.

Thou hast holden me by my right hand] That I should not utterly fall from thee; there was still a supporting grace, *Quando pes meus vacillabat* (Aben Ezra).

Ver. 24. **Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel]** We had his repentance, #Ps 73:21,22, his faith, #Ps 73:23, and here we have his hope of safety here and salvation hereafter.

And afterwards receive me] As thou didst holy Enoch.

Ver. 25. **Whom have I in heaven but thee?]** I would I were in heaven with thee, so Aben Ezra rendereth it; and to the same sense Beza paraphraseth, *Apage terra, quod utinam Deus in coelo iam et tecum essem: quid enim est in terra quod me vel tantillum retineat?*

Ver. 26. **My flesh faileth, and my heart faileth]** Some think that the psalmist, through egression of affection unto God, having spent and exhaled his spirits, fell into a swoon; out of which he recovered again by the joy of the Lord, which was his strength, even the rock of his heart. The Greek saith, The God of my heart.

Ver. 27. **For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish]** How can they do otherwise, when as salvation is far from them? #Ps 119:155. And upon this ground it is that I do so earnestly desire to be with thee; since

Thou hast destroyed (or shut up from punishment) all them that go a whoring from thee] Having their hearts full of harlotry, as appeareth by their courting the creature.

Ver. 28. **But it is good for me to draw nigh to God]** To hang ever upon thee (in this general defection of others) by the faith of the gospel, #Heb 7:19, by putting my trust in thee, that I may declare all thy works, and relate my experiments. A circle is the most perfect figure, because it beginneth and endeth; the last point meeteth in the first, from whence it came. We shall never come to perfection or

satisfaction till we draw nigh to God, till God make the circle meet, &c.

A Psalm of Asaph] Concerning the Babylonish captivity, saith Kimchi; which either was here foretold by David's Asaph, or bewailed by another of that name, who lived at that very time, when the Jews groaned under those grievous calamities.

Chapter 74

Ver. 1. **O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever?**] The greatness of their grief and diuturnity of their misery draw from them such expressions of discontent, as if they were doubtful of an utter dereliction.

Why doth thine anger (or thy nose) smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?] Anger is a fire, and in men or other creatures enraged a smoke seemeth to go out of their nostrils. Xenophon saith of the Thebans, when they are angry they breathe fire. This, then, is spoken of God after the manner of men.

Ver. 2. **Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased]** His complaints end not in murmuring and grunting against God; but in humble petitions, so intermingled with sighs and groans, as that his speech is not so plain and perfect as at other times. That which he mainly urgeth is the covenant, that hive of heavenly honey, as one calleth it.

The rod of thine inheritance] Inheritances were wont to be measured out by rods and perches. Assyria is the work of God's hands, but Israel (as a further favour) is his inheritance, **#Isa 19:25**.

Ver. 3. **Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations]** *i.e.* Make haste to help, *accurre, advola*, as **#Ge 29:1**. Or, lift up thy feet, *viz.* to tread down thy enemies. A metaphor from combatants, *Qui elevant pedes et passus, ut violentius in hostem invehantur*. Some have rendered it, The loftiness of thy feet is perpetually (*i.e.* irreparably) desolated, understanding thereby the temple, that place of God's feet, **#Eze 43:7**

All that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary] Or, every one that hath done evil to his enemy in the sanctuary, whither he fled for safety.

Ver. 4. **Thine enemies roar]** When they give the onset, or after the victory; our roaring boys are so called by a woeful prolepsis, here, for hereafter.

They set up their ensigns for signs] They set them up upon the very temple (as if they had conquered God himself), those their trophies and monuments of victory, *Posuerunt signa sua, signa* (Kimchi). Some refer us for the sense of these words to **#Eze 21:21**; others render them thus, They have brought in their signs, or profane pictures, for the sacred signs; and so have polluted these holy places (R. Solom.). Besides what Antiochus did (concerning which see the books of Maccabees and Josephus) in aftertimes, the arms of Rome were set upon the temple, and a swine engraven over the gate; this was the abomination of desolation foretold by our Saviour, **#Mt 24:15**.

Ver. 5. **A man was famous according as, &c.]** *i.e.* Time was when the workmen got them a name, by cutting down and fitting the timber for this building the temple, renowned throughout the whole world for costly and choice materials, for curious and exact workmanship, for spiritual employment, and for mystical signification; never was there the like edifice.

Ver. 6. **But now they break down the carved work thereof]** The Chaldeans did with military violence, and afterwards the Romans under Titus, who could not preserve it from the soldiers' fury, though he desired so to have done, as some historians have told us. Now, if the enemies' rage were so great as is here described against the outward marks of religion, how much more should our zeal kindle against the most costly or curious monuments of idolatry and superstition? Zisca, the valiant Bohemian, overthrew three hundred monasteries with their idols, 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.

Ver. 7. **They have cast fire into thy sanctuary]** Heb. They have sent thy sanctuary into the fire. So the French Papists, under the conduct of the Guises, dealt by the public meeting houses of the

Protestants there, and particularly by that church at Lyons which was called Paradise, *Hoc apud Ethnicos erat horrendum*. The heathens observed of such as destroyed temples that they commonly came to some fearful end, by thunderbolts or otherwise.

Ver. 8. **Let us destroy them together]** "Them," that is, the saints; let us prey upon them, as hawks do upon doves: or "them," that is, the temples and schools; these the devil ever sought to destroy, as contrary to his kingdom; and so he doth still by the Turks and Papists and other heretics.

They have burnt up all the synayoyues] These were a kind of chapels of ease to the temple at Jerusalem, and in these the people met frequently, on the sabbath especially, for holy exercises, as we do in our churches. The good centurion built one of these, #Lu 7:5. See #Jas 2:2.

Ver. 9. **We see not our signs]** Those testimonies of God's special favour, the public ordinances, together with the legal ceremonies, which was then Christ in figure, *q.d.* we are utterly benighted as to thee-ward.

There is no more any prophet, &c.] Hence some conclude that this psalm was written about the end of the Babylonish captivity, when there was Chathimath Chazon, a sealing up of prophecy, as #Da 12:9, unless it were so that they had prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, &c., but took no notice of them, through extremity of calamity, as #Isa 59:10.

Neither is there among us any] The want of the word, the stopping of the true ministers' mouths, &c., should touch us to the quick.

Ver. 10. **O God, how long shall the adversary reproach?]** When they had none to tell them how long their miseries should last, they could turn them to God to inquire (such is the boldness of faith), and withal to require of him speedy help, since himself else were likely to suffer in his glory, as a God not able to help and befriend his people.

Ver. 11. **Why withdrawest thou thy hand]** Some by hand understand the left hand, and so both hands are withdrawn, yea, held behind (*retrovertis*), after the manner of those that have little to do, and less to care for.

Out of thy bosom] Another posture to the same purpose, #Pr 19:24 26:15.

Ver. 12. **For God is my Kiny of old]** He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. I doubt not, therefore, but he will see to the safety of his loyal subjects.

Working salvation in the midst of the earth] *i.e.* Openly, and to the view of all. Jerusalem is in the midst of Judaea, and Judaea is in the midst of the earth; the very centre and navel of the habitable world, say the Fathers; it joineth those of the east to the west by the midland sea, and those of the north to the south by the same sea, running out as far as the Lake of Maeotis, very far north, and by the Red Sea descending very low into the south. This country, therefore, God seemeth purposely to have espied out, as himself speaketh, that therehence he might send abroad salvation into all parts. And hereabout some gather from #Joe 3:2. Christ will sit to judge the world at the last day, #Ps 50:1,2.

Ver. 13. **Thou didst divide the sea, &c.]** "Thou" in this and the following verses is emphatic and exclusive, *q.d.* thou, and none but thou.

Thou brakest the heads of the dragons] Or crocodiles. So he calleth Pharaoh's chieftains, who were Satan's swordmen, and with him had their heads broke at the Red Sea.

Ver. 14. **Thou brakest the heads of leviathan]** *i.e.* Of Pharaoh himself. See #Isa 26:1 Eze 29:3. Egypt is situated between two seas; and a great part of it overflowed by the river Nile. Pharaoh, therefore, is fitly compared to the master fish, and his captains to crocodiles.

And gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness] *i.e.* To the birds and wild beasts, who fed upon the dead carcasses of the Egyptians cast upon the shore; the Israelites having first taken the spoil of them, whereby they were provided of many necessaries for their voyage toward Canaan.

Ver. 15. **Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood]** *i.e.* *Fontium et torrentium scatebras et latebras,* thou didst set the rock

abroach once and again, #Ex 17:6 Nu 20:11, *rescissis ipsius naturae legibus*.

Thou driedst up mighty rivers] Jordan (wherein some say met two great rivers, Jor and Dan), whereunto the Chaldee here addeth Arnon and Jabbok, whereof see #Nu 21:14 De 2:37.

Ver. 16. **The day is thine, the night also is thine]** He had argued with God, and strengthened his own faith from God's extraordinary works; and now he doth the like from his ordinary works in nature, with the alternate course thereof, wherein appeareth a kind of image of the seasonable driving away of calamities, and turning all things into a desired state, #Ps 30:5 La 3:23.

Thou hast prepared the light and the sun] *i.e.* That first light scattered abroad the heavens, but afterwards gathered into the sun, as into a vessel. By light some understand here the moon, that other great luminary; it being the manner of the Hebrews, *nomen generis restringere ad speciem deteriolem*.

Ver. 17. **Thou hast set all the borders of the earth]** Securing it from the overflowings of the sea, and appointing to the several nations the bounds of their habitations.

Thou hast made summer and winter] *Plasmasti ea*. Now thou, that hast done all this and more for mankind in general, wilt thou be wanting to thy Church?

Ver. 18. **Remember this]** Forgetfulness befalleth not the Lord; nevertheless he giveth us leave to be his remembrancers, and not to keep silence when he is concerned, #Isa 62:6.

That the enemy] See #Ps 74:10.

And that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name] This irketh the saints worse than their own particular sufferings. The Egyptians, out of their respect to their *Mercurius Trismegistus*, would not rashly pronounce his name; no more would the Grecians their god Jupiter, no, not when they sware by him. Should not we be much more tender and respective of the holy and reverend name of our God, taking it ill when by any it is blasphemed?

Ver. 19. **O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove]** *Turturillae tuae*, that groaneth unto thee; being not more innocent, chaste, mild, simple, and sociable, than weak, shiftless, and unable to defend herself from those beasts of prey. *Turtur minimus censetur in columbarum genere* (Arist.). Optatus observeth, that no fowl is more preyed upon by hawks, kites, &c., than the dove. *Columbea mas et foemina dormiunt et pascuntur eodem in loco* (Arist. Hist. Anim. lib. 8, c. 3); yet are there still more doves than hawks or kites for all that. So the Church increaseth, notwithstanding all persecutors, *Patitur et non rapit* (Kimchi).

Unto the multitude] Or, to the beast, the wild company. The same word is put here also immediately for the congregation or lively flock of Christ.

Ver. 20. **Have respect unto the covenant]** This the Church knew to be her best plea; and, therefore, she so plieth it.

For the dark places of the earth are full of cruelty] That is, saith Basil, those places where men are in the darkness of ignorance, not knowing God, are full of ambition and tyranny. Others make this the sense, We can hide ourselves nowhere but the persecutors ferret us out.

Ver. 21. **O let not the oppressed, &c.]** *Contusus non revertatur confusus*, let him not take the repulse, be disappointed of his expected help from heaven.

Ver. 22. **Plead thine own cause]** For if we miscarry, thou art sure to suffer among the proud Chaldees as an impotent God.

Remember how the foolish man, &c.] See #Ps 74:18.

Ver. 23. **The tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth daily]** Heb. ascendeth, viz. up to heaven, as #Jon 1:2, there is no ho with them. *Mundi laetitia est impunita nequitia*, If the Lord take them not a link lower, as we say, they will grow intolerably insolent.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith] That is, Destroy not; the Chaldee paraphraseth, In the time when David said, Destroy not the people. The psalm seemeth to have been made either by Asaph in David's name, or by David himself (and by him committed to Asaph), at such time as the difference depending between him and Ishbosheth, many were slain on both sides. This drew from David an

Al-taschith, not long before he was anointed king over all Israel.
#2Sa 5:1-5

Chapter 75

Ver. 1. **Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks]** Heb. We celebrate thee, O God, we celebrate thee; viz. both for mercies and crosses sanctified; for these also are to be reckoned upon the score of God's favours.

For that thy name is near] *Nomen, id est numen,* Thy name, that is, thyself, art near, *ad liberandum invocantem,* as Aben Ezra expoundeth it, to deliver those that call upon thee.

Ver. 2. **When I shall receive the congregation]** *i.e.* The government of all the twelve tribes, as I believe I shall do shortly, according to God's promise to me by Samuel.

I will judge uprightly] That a man is in truth, that he is in his own particular place and station, that he is really, that he is relatively.

Ver. 3. **The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved]** Both Church and commonwealth here are utterly out of order; I shall endeavour mine utmost to set all to rights, and so to preserve the world from ruin, which subsisteth by and for the sake of God's Israel, *Absque stationibus non staret mundus.*

I bear up the pillars of it] *Semen sanctum statumen terrae,* #Isa 6:13, The holy seed upholdeth the state. David did (as Lucan saith of Cato), *toti genitum se credere mundo;* Jesus Christ much more; he is the true Atlas, upholding all things by the word of his power, #Heb 1:3.

Ver. 4. **I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly]** Boast not yourselves so proudly and petulantly, but submit to God's decree, and my government; how much more to Christ's!

Lift not up the horn] *Metaphora a tauris cornupetis.*

Ver. 5. **Lift not up your horn on high]** Against the high God; so Tremellius rendereth it.

Speak not with a stiff neck] Some render it, with an old neck; let old things pass, and now speak with a new and humble throat. Hard words and stout speeches, uttered from a mind vehemently moved out of its place (as the word here used importeth), shall be one day dearly answered for, #**Jude 15**.

Ver. 6. **For promotion cometh neither from the east]** *Dignitatis nullum est emporium*. Ambitionists used to look this way and that way how to advance themselves, but all in vain. *Hispania monarchia Catholica debetur divinitus, sed in Utopia*, saith one.

Nor from the south] Where the warm sunshine is.

Ver. 7. **But God is the judge]** He sitteth at the stern, and ordereth all human affairs according to the good pleasure of his will.

He putteth down one, and setteth up another] As was seen in Saul and David, in the four great monarchies, in Bajazet and Tamerlane, besides many others. Virtue exalteth the meanest, when villany tumbleth down the mightiest. Agathocles, the son of a potter, became king of Sicily. Valentinian, the son of a rope maker, became emperor of Rome. Justinus was first a swine herder, then a herdsman, then a carpenter, a soldier, and after all, an emperor. If Alexander, to show his greatness, advanced Abdolominus from a poor gardener to be king in Sidon, what cannot the Lord do? Tamerlane having overcome Bajazet, asked him whether ever he had given God thanks for making him so great an emperor? who confessed ingenuously he never thought of it. To whom Tamerlane replied, that it was no wonder so ungrateful a man should be made a spectacle of misery. For you, said he, being blind of one eye, and I lame of a leg, was there any worth in us why God should set us over two great empires of Turks and Tartars, to command many more worthy than ourselves?

Ver. 8. **For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup]** A cup of affliction, whereof all must drink, more or less. The Chaldee calleth it a cup of curse. Affliction is in itself a fruit of sin and a piece of the curse.

And the wine is red] And so more powerful and piercing, #**Pr 23:31,32**. That is an affliction, and grievous, that God maketh to be so.

It is full of mixture] *i.e.* Ready prepared, as #Pr 9:2 Re 14:10, or mingled with spices, to make the wine more hot and inebriating, *Vinum aromaticum*.

And he poureth out of the same] The saints sip of the top only, they drink *illud solum quod est suavius et limpidius*, the sweeter and clearer part of God's cup. Excellently Mr Bradford, martyr, in a certain letter of his, Drink, saith he, of God's cup willingly, and at the first, when it is fullest; peradventure if we linger, we drink at length of the dregs with the wicked, if at the beginning we drink not with God's children (Acts and Mon. fol. 1487).

But the dregs thereof] The full vials of Divine vengeance.

All the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them] They shall drink them every drop, yea, though it be eternity to the bottom. This shall be worse to them than was that ladlefull of scalding lead poured down the throat of a drunken man, by the command of a Turkish bashaw.

Ver. 9. **But I will declare for ever]** viz. God's great goodness in mine advancement to the kingdom, and the rest of those wonderful works, #Ps 75:1.

I will sing praises, &c.] This thankful man was worth his weight in the gold of Ophir.

Ver. 10. **All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off]** By promising the due administration of vindictive and remunerative justice, he seeks to insinuate into the people's affections, who, after Isbosheth's death, came in to make him king.

But the horns of the righteous shall be exalted] Dignity shall wait upon desert, which shall cause it again to be waited upon by respect. Thus it should be in the courts of all princes. In Cyrus's court, though a man should seek or choose blindfold, he could not miss of a good man, saith Xenophon (Cyropaed. l. 8).

A Psalm or Song of Asaph] Or, for Asaph; either made prophetically, by Asaph himself, or by some other psalmist, who committed it to Asaph's successors, to be played and sung. The

Hebrews say it is made *de bello Gogi*, of the war with Gog and Magog, that is, the Eastern and Western antichrists. The Greeks say *De Assyriis* (περι των Ασσυριων. In Hexaplo), of Sennacherib and his host; and surely the matter of the psalm is such as very well agreeth with that overthrow. Confer **#Ps 46 Ps 48**

Chapter 76

Ver. 1. **In Judah is God known**] *Nobilis est*, saith Tremellius; *Notior est*, saith another interpreter; *i.e.* Better known he is now than ever; not by his word only, which is preached in Judah, but by his wondrous works; this especially of destroying the Assyrians at Lachish, in the tribe of Judah.

His name is great in Israel] Greater now than ever, God having made himself a glorious name, **#Isa 63:14**. Egypt rang of this slaughter of the Assyrians, as Herodotus testifieth; so did all other countries doubtless.

Ver. 2. **In Salem also is his tabernacle**] *i.e.* In Jerusalem, which was first called Salem, **#Ge 14:18 Heb 7:1**. Secondly, Jebus, **#1Ch 11:4 Jos 15:8 18:28**. Thirdly, Jerusalem, **#Jos 15:63 2Sa 5:6**, not as if ιερων Σολυμων, or Σολομωντος, Solomon's temple (as Hegesippus would have it, and hence likely came the aspiration Hierusalem), but from that famous Jehovahjireh, **#Ge 22:14,2**; which Jireh being added to Salem, maketh it Jerusalem, the vision of peace. Here God was pleased to pitch his tabernacle, movable, and mean, in respect of God's greatness, **#1Ki 8:27**.

And his dwellingplace in Zion] Which therefore will save and see to, as every man doth to the place of his habitation. *Lustrum eius, q.d.* In Zion *desidet ut leo ad praedam paratus* (Metaph.).

Ver. 3. **There brake he the arrows of the bolt,**] There? Where? Surely in Zion, in the holy assemblies where the saints were praying, there the arrow, shield, spear, &c., were broken. This made the queen-mother of Scotland say, that she more feared the prayers of John Knox than an army of thirty thousand fighting soldiers. The king of Sweden, as soon as he set foot in Germany, fell down to prayer, and what great things did he in a little time! Now for the fruit of prayer, cried those great gallants at Edgehill fight, and did great

exploits. The word here rended arrows signifieth fiery darts, see #Eph 6:16; a burning coal, #Job 5:7; a lightening bolt, #Ps 78:48; the plague, or carbuncle, #De 32:24 Hab 3:5. Strabo saith that Orites, Gynmetes, and Ethiopians shot fiery arrows: so might the Assyrians. Confer #Ps 120:4.

The shield, and the sword, and the battle] Both the men and the munition. This Herodotus had heard of, but misrelates the history, lib. 2.

Ver. 4. **Thou art more glorious and excellent]** Or, more bright and magnificent. Glorious God was before, but now more glorious by this late deliverance, illuminating his people with his marvellous light.

Than the mountains of prey] Those vast hosts of Assyrians lying now upon the mountains around Jerusalem, and plundering the country at their pleasure. Thou, Lord, art far more illustrious and admirable than all those *Grassatores populi, ac reges quantumvis elati*, those mountains of lions and leopards, #So 4:8, the kingdoms of this world, enemies to the Church.

Ver. 5. **The stout-hearted are spoiled]** Heb. have yielded themselves up for prey: those that escaped the stroke of the angel, fled as fast as they could for their lives, leaving all behind them. The Rabbis expound it, they are spoiled of their understanding, infatuated.

They have slept their sleep] Their long ironsleep (as the poets call it) of death. The destroying angel hath laid them fast enough and safe enough.

And none of the men of might] *Viri divitiarum*, the Vulgate rendereth it, men of riches, such as are all worldlings, but men of might is better; these men of their hands could not find their hands, when God's angel took them to do.

Ver. 6. **At thy rebuke, O God, &c.]** *i.e.* With thy mighty word of command, and without any more ado. God can nod men to destruction, #Ps 80:16, blow them into hell, #Job 4:9, rebuke them to death, as here; do it with as much ease as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim, #Isa 25:11,

The chariot and horse] The chieftains of the army.

Ver. 7. **Thou, even thou, art to be feared]** Herodotus saith, that under Sennacherib's statue in Egypt, was written, Let him that looketh upon me learn to fear God, Εμε τις εσορευων ευσεβης εστω.

And who may stand in thy sight?] Thou canst look them to death.

Ver. 8. **Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven]** From thence is God's wrath revealed plainly and plentifully, **#Ro 1:18**, and thence he oft appeareth for his people as out of an engine.

The earth feared] All was hushed, as after a thunder clap.

Ver. 9. **When God arose to judgment]** Being stirred up, as it were, by the prayers of his people, as **#Ps 76:2,3**.

To save all the meek of the earth] Who cease not to seek the Lord, to seek righteousness and judgment, **#Zep 2:3**.

Ver. 10. **Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee]** As when Sennacherib's army was destroyed, the Israelites sang praise, yea, the Egyptians built altars, as **#Isa 19:19**. God by his wisdom ordereth and draweth the blind and brute motions of the worst creatures unto his own honour; 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 bloodthirstiness of the leech to a cure, saith a reverend man.

The remainder of wrath shall thou restrain] Heb. shall thou gird; that is, curb and keep within compass. The Greek hath it, εορταζει σοι, it shall keep holy day to thee; that is, cease from working, or acting outwardly, how restless soever it be within.

Ver. 11. **Vow, and pay to the Lord]** A plain precept; and yet Bellarmine saith, *Vovere nusquam est praeceptum*. As for vowing to saints, he granteth, that when the Scriptures were written the Church had no such custom (Lib. ii. de Monach. cap. 17; De Cult. Sanetor. cap. 9). Saint worship then is but new worship.

Let all that be round about him] All the neighbouring nations; and so they did, after Assyria's overthrow, **#2Ch 32:21,23**.

To him that ought to be feared] Heb. to fear, that is, to God, the proper object of fear, called therefore fear, by an appellative property.

Ver. 12. **He shall cut off the spirit of princes]** *Vindemiabit*, he shall slip them off as one would do a bunch of grapes, or a flower between one's fingers; easily, suddenly, as he dealt by Sennacherib's princes, *Auferet de vita, ut de vite botros*.

He is terrible to kings] Enemies to his Church, as most kings are.

A Psalm of Asaph] Or, for Asaph; David's melancholy psalm some call it, made by him when he was in grievous affliction and desertion. Out of which he seeketh to wind by earnest prayer, by deep meditation upon God's former favours and unchangeable nature; and, lastly, by calling to mind God's wondrous works of old, both in proving and in preserving his Church and chosen.

Chapter 77

Ver. 1. **I cried unto God with my voice, &c.]** I prayed instantly and constantly, and sped accordingly. No faithful prayer is ineffectual.

Ver. 2. **In the day of my trouble]** The time of affliction is the time of supplication, #Ps 50:15.

My sore ran in the night] Heb. My hand was poured out; that is, stretched out in prayer; or wet with continual weeping. *Non fuit remissa, nec retracta in lectum*.

And ceased not] Or, was not tired; in allusion, belike, to Moses's hands held up against Amalek; though

My soul refused to be comforted] I prayed on, though I had little heart to do it (as Daniel afterwards did the king's work, though he were sick), or though with much infirmity, while I rather wrangled with God, by cavilling objections, than wrestled with him, as I ought to have done; by important prayer.

Ver. 3. **I remembered God, and was troubled]** *Tumultuabar, fluctuando perstrepebam*; for God seemed to be angry, and to cast out my prayers; this made me mourn, and little less than murmur.

My spirit was overwhelmed] With sense of sin and fear of wrath. This was a very grievous and dangerous temptation, such as we must pray not to be led into, or at least not be left under, lest we utterly despair.

Ver. 4. **Thou holdest mine eyes waking]** Thou holdest the watches of mine eyes, that is, mine eyebrows, saith the Chaldee, so that I can neither sleep nor speak. Job complaineth of the like misery, **#Job 7:8** See **#Ps 38:10**

That I cannot speak] *Curae leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*

Ver. 5. **I have considered the days of old]** What thou didst for Adam, Abraham, Israel, in Egypt, &c., all which was written purposely, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. See **#De 32:7**.

Ver. 6. **I call to remembrance my song in the night]** *i.e.* My former feelings and experiments, being glad, in this scarcity of comfort, to live upon the old store, as bees do in winter.

I commune with mine own heart] **#Ps 4:4**, see there.

And my spirit made diligent search] For the cause and cure of my present distempers.

Ver. 7. **Will the Lord cast off for ever?]** No, nor at all, though the extremity and length of the psalmist's grief put him upon these sad interrogatories, with some diffidence, touching the nature and promise of God.

Will he be favourable no more?] So the devil and carnal reason would have persuaded him; and did haply for a time. But this very questioning the matter showeth he yet lay languishing at hope's hospital, waiting for comfort. The soul may successively doubt, and yet believe.

Ver. 8. **Is his mercy clean gone for ever?]** They that go down into the pit (of despair) cannot hope for God's truth, **#Isa 38:18**, but so doth not any saint in his deepest desertions.

Doth his promise fail for evermore?] Hath he retracted his promises, recalled his oracles confirmed with oath, seal? No, he will

not suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth, #Ps 89:33.

Ver. 9. **Hath God forgotten to be gracious?**] So it seemeth sometimes to those that are long afflicted and short-spirited; but what saith the prophet? Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, they may prove unnatural, and grow out of kind, as Medea, and those Suevian women (Heyl. Geog.), who threw their young children at the Romans, under the conduct of Drusus, son-in-law to Augustus, instead of darts, yet God will not forget his people, #Isa 49:15. Indeed, he can as soon forget himself, and change his nature.

Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?] These things the psalmist speaketh not as utterly despairing, but as one courageously, wrestling against an old manslayer, and a misgiving heart of his own. *Homines vero securi, et voluptatibus ebrii, nihil horum intellgunt.* This is little understood by profane sensualists, who, therefore, reap no great benefit by the reading of these psalms.

Ver. 10. **And I said, This is my infirmity**] My frailty and folly. Here he begins to recollect, and recall himself, as every good soul will, after its extravagancies and outbursts. Vatablus rendereth it, *Mors mea est*, This is my death; Beza, *Caedes mea haec*, This is my death wound, *sc.* whereof I should surely die, were it not for the change of God's hand upon me.

But I will remember, &c.] This is supplied out of the following verse. Some make no such supply, but render the text thus, The right hand of the Most High can change these things. Others, This is the change of the right hand of the Most High, and is therefore to be taken patiently; shall we receive good at God's hands, and not evil? #Job 2:10. I am not utterly deserted, but only the case is a little altered, the right hand of the Most High alternated.

Ver. 11. **I will remember the works, &c.**] Remember, and commemorate, as the Hebrew (by a double reading) importeth.

I will remember thy wonders] God is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, #Isa 28:29, and as we behold the sun in the waters, so God in his works. *Saeculum speculum*, the world is a

glass or theatre, but especially the Church, wherein God setteth forth his wonders to the view of all.

Ver. 12. **I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk, &c.**] *{See Trapp on "Ps 45:1"}*

Ver. 13. **Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary]** There it is only that I can get satisfaction about thy proceedings, **#Ps 73:17**. There I am taught, that thou art righteous in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works, **#Ps 145:17**. Some render this text, Thy way, O God, is in holiness. Some by sanctuary understand heaven; *q.d.* Thy way is in heaven, far above man's reach.

Who is so great a God as our God?] And therefore no wonder his ways are so incomprehensible.

Ver. 14. **Thou art the God that doest wonders]** In the daily defence and government of thy Church. Thou art the great *Thaumaturgus*, or wonder worker.

Thou hast declared thy strength among the people] As among the Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, &c. *Vere magnus est Dens Christianorum*, said one Calocerius, a heathen.

Ver. 15. **Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people]** viz. Out of the bondage of Egypt, that memorable mercy; but nothing to that of ours and theirs from sin's thralldom.

The sons of Jacob and Joseph] Joseph is instanced, *quia nobilis inter fratres, vel in malis quae pendit, vel in bonis quae rependit*, as Austin hath it (De Doct. Christ. 1. iv. c. 6).

Ver. 16. **The waters saw thee, O God...they were afraid]** This is check to such as will not see to fear so mighty a God. "Lord," saith the prophet, "when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; but they shall see and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them," **#Isa 26:11**.

Ver. 17. **The clouds poured out water, the skies, &c.]** Calvin taketh this to be a description of that hideous tempest, **#Ex 9:18-26**, the seventh plague of Egypt. But others with more probability hold, that the prophet here hath respect to that very time mentioned in the former verse, when the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians out of the fiery and cloudy pillar, and so troubled and turmoiled them with stormy tempests, that their chariot wheels fell off, and

themselves sank as lead in the mighty waters, #Ex 14:24,25 15:10. Of these terrible tempests mention is made also by Justin.

Ver. 18. **The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven]** Heb. in the sphere or round orb of the air. Of the thunder in the air, see #Job 37:2-5 Ps 29 This made the Egyptians say, Let us flee, for God fighteth for Israel against us.

The lightnings lightened the world] Such flakes of fire there were with flashes of lightning, as darkened the sun, and made the whole heaven seem to be on a light fire.

Ver. 19. **Thy way is in the sea, &c.]** A way of thine own miraculous making. God usually goeth a way by himself.

And thy footsteps are not known] Not so much as is the way or an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, or the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, #Pr 30:19. Let God alone with his own work, commit we ourselves to him in well doing, and it shall go well with us, no question of it. *Pit viam desperatae salutis, impii foveam insperatae mortis intrant* (Oros.).

Ver. 20. **Thou leddest thy people like a flock]** And so he still leadeth his Church with much love and care, by good magistrates and ministers, who are as his under-shepherds.

Maschil of Asaph] *Ode didasealiea Asaphi*. The six first verses are proemial, wooing attention from the dignity, difficulty, antiquity, certainty, &c., of the matter in this psalm discoursed on, containing an abstract of the whole Pentateuch, and acquainting us with the ancient way of preaching, which was a historical narration of the miraculous mercies that God had from time to time conferred upon his people, their hateful abuse of his benefits, and their punishments thereupon. This is to be seen in various psalms, in St Stephen's sermon, #Ac 7, and St Paul's, #Ac 13, *et est sane valde venerandum istud sanctae antiquitatis monumentum*, This is a very venerable monument of holy antiquity, and teacheth us the right use of history, *quae dicta est παρα το ισταναι τον πουν*, saith Plato.

Chapter 78

Ver. 1. **Give ear, O my people, to my law]** *i.e.* To my doctrine, which hath its name in Hebrew from darting it into the soul; and

these are the psalmist's words in God's name, calling for utmost attention.

Incline your ears, &c.] Lay them close to my lips, that no parcel of this sacred language fall to the ground by your default. *Ενωτιζεσθε, Aurizate, auribus haurite,* Receive it into your ears; yea, draw up the ears of your mind to the ears of your bodies, that one sound may pierce both, **#Ac 2:14 Isa 55:3.** "Hear, and give ear; be not proud; for the Lord hath spoken it," **#Jer 13:15.**

Ver. 2. **I will open my mouth in a parable]** I will speak freely and plainly (I will open my mouth, **#Mt 5:2 Ac 10:34**), and yet acutely and accurately. See **#Ps 49:4**, {*See Trapp on "Ps 49:4"*}

I will utter dark sayings of old] Heb. I will well out (as from a spring or fountain) dark or sharp sayings, transacted and recorded of old, but of good use for ever. Difficulty doth not discourage, but rather whet on heroic spirits to a more diligent inquiry. Aben Ezra noteth here, that **#Ps 78:9**, "The children of Ephraim," &c., is a parable, and **#Ps 78:25**, "Man did eat angels' food," is a riddle, or dark saying.

Ver. 3. **Which we have heard and known]** Hearing and seeing are the two learned senses, whereby knowledge, yea, life, entereth into the soul, **#Pr 2:2,10 Isa 55:3.**

And our fathers have told us] Have delivered down to us from hand to hand, whetting upon us the written word, **#De 6:7**, and adding thereunto, for explication, many other things fit to be known.

Ver. 4. **We will not hide them from their children]** The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit with, **#1Co 12:7**, neither is any one born (much less born again) for himself; but must be as useful as may be in his generation,

Paulum sepultae distat inertiae

Celata virtus -(Hor.).

The praises of the Lord] *The praise worthy acts of God for his people, and against their enemies; for these two are not sundered, #Php 1:28.*

Ver. 5. **For he established a testimony in Jacob, &c.**] Lest any should attribute too much to ancient traditions, and to show that antiquity must have no more authority than what it can maintain; the psalmist here (as afterwards the prophet Isaiah) calleth them to the law and to the testimonies; for if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, **#Isa 8:20**.

Ver. 6. **Who shall arise and declare them**] *i.e.* Succeed their parents both in their place and office of teaching their posterity; not suffering the truth which is after godliness {#*Ti* 1:1} to fail and fall in the streets, **#Isa 59:14,15**, or if it do, raising it up again, and restoring it to their utmost.

Ver. 7. **That they might set their hope in God**] *Summa legis divinae et scopus*, this is a brief of the Bible, viz. to believe in God and obey his law; both which men shall the better do, if they forget not his works.

Ver. 8. **And might not be as their fathers**] Fathers are not always to be followed, **#Eze 20:18,19**. He zealously affected his fathers, but not well, who said, I will follow them *sicut bos armentum, etiamsi ruant*, though I fall with them (Cicero Epist.).

A stubborn and rebellious generation] *Aver satrix et irritatrix*.

A generation that set not, &c.] Double-minded men, unstable in all their ways, **#Jas 1:8**, having *religionem ephemeram*, as Beza said of Baldwin, that Ecebolius II.

And whose spirit was not stedfast with God] As was that martyr's who said, Though you may pluck the heart out of nay body, yet you shall never pluck the truth out of my heart. The heavens shall sooner fall, said another, than I will forsake the truth I have once received.

Ver. 9. **The children of Ephraim being armed, &c.**] This the Rabbis interpret of eight thousand Ephraimites, who would needs break prison, as it were, out of Egypt (before the time that God had set for their deliverance thence), and seize upon Palestine, the promised land; but with evil success; for they were slain by the men of Gath, to the great grief of their father Ephraim, **#1Ch 7:21-23**, and to the increase of their servitude in Egypt, **#Ex 1:8-14** This is *historia Caballica*. See R. Solomon on those words, **#Ex 15:14**, the people shall hear and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the

inhabitants of Palestina, who, remembering what a slaughter they once made of these Ephraimites, shall fear the just revenge of that cruelty. Others interpret this text by #Jud 1:29, and some by #2Ki 17:1-18, with #Ho 10:6-8, &c., but this to me seemeth most likey. These are ancient things, and of such the psalmist promiseth to treat, #Ps 78:2,3.

Being armed and carrying bows] Trusting to their own strength and warlike preparations, and choosing rather to be counted temerarious than timorous.

Turned back in the day of battle] Carnal confidence seldom comes home otherwise than weeping.

Ver. 10. **They kept not the covenant, &c.]** And so betrayed themselves into the hands of divine justice, they were worthily worsted. See #2Ch 15:2.

And refused to walk in his law] They were set upon it, and would not be ruled by their father Ephraim, or any other that counselled them to the contrary; and haply said the like to them that Archidamus did to his too daring son, *Aut viribus adde aut animis adime*, Either add to thy forces or abate of thy courage.

Ver. 11. **And forgot his works, and his wonders]** Forgetfulness is a grave; *et ingrato quicquid donatur, deperditur*; all is lost that is conferred on an ungrateful person.

Ver. 12. **Marvellous things did he, &c.]** Whereof they were eye-witnesses, and therefore could not plead ignorance or excuse. The Hebrew hath it, a marvel, or a miracle, collective.

In the field of Zoan] Corruptly called afterward Tan and Tanis; a populous and principal city of Egypt even in Isaiah's time, #Isa 19:11-13; about 23 miles from Memphis, saith Josephus: there Moses wrought his miracles (Ptolemy. Strabo).

Ver. 13. **He divided the sea]** Making it fordable for them, and fixing those fluid waters, like stone walls, on each hand of them, while they passed through with ease and safety. Every main affliction is our Red Sea; which, while it threatens to swallow, preserveth us.

Ver. 14. **In the daytime also he led them with a cloud]** This cloud not only conducted them, but also compassed them in on every side,

both to keep them from the parching heat of the sun, and to save them from the sight and violence of their enemies, #Ex 13:21. A figure of God's guidance of his Church, and protection over the same, #Isa 4:5 Ne 9:9.

Ver. 15. **He clave the rocks]** And set them abroad, both that in Rephidim, #Ex 17:1-8, and the other in Kadesh, #Nu 20:1-13 Moses Nehamides, on #Ex 17:1-8, saith, that the old Jewish doctors held that the rock of Rephidim not only yielded waters like a river all those forty years wherein they were in the wilderness, but followed them also there whithersoever they went. This agreeth well with that of the apostle St Paul, #1Co 10:4, who sweetly allegorizeth this history.

As out of the great depths] *i.e.* In great abundance, *Ad satietatem usque.* Rocks sooner yield fire than water; but what cannot God do?

Ver. 16. **He brought streams also out of the rock]** *Idem enuntiat per Epexegetim, ad miraculi magnitudinem ostendendam.* The same again, to set forth the greatness of the miracle. This was a standing miracle, as was also the pillar of cloud, the pillar of fire, and the manna.

Ver. 17. **And they sinned yet more against him]** The better he was to them the worse were they toward him, as if God had hired them to be wicked; and this was ordinary with them, and is still among us. Oh the Divine patience!

By provoking the most High in the wilderness] *In terra arida ubi Deo indies indigebant, ibi peccabant,* saith Aben Ezra here. This was another aggravation of their sin.

Ver. 18. **And they tempted God in their heart]** In their hearts first, but afterwards also with their lips. The psalmist here striketh at the root of their wickedness.

By asking meat for their lust] Not for their necessity (that had been more excusable, #Pr 6:30), but to satisfy their inordinate appetite, to gratify their licorish palate.

Ver. 19. **Yea, they stake against God]** Their villanous and foul thoughts blistered and brake out at their lips.

Can God furnish a table?] This was a blasphemous question. God can do more than he will; but whatsoever he will do shall be done, and nothing can hinder it. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," said he in the Gospel. And this was better than that of the other, who said, "If thou canst do any thing, help us," #**Mr 9:22** Ver. 20. **Behold, he smote the rock, &c.]** And so showed his power; we cannot deny it; but now for his will.

Can he give bread also?] They should have said, Will he serve our lusts? but that they were ashamed to say.

Can he provide flesh for his people?] *i.e.* Dainty and delicate flesh, such as is that of quails, meat for a king; for they carried their cattle out of Egypt with them; and so they could not be without ordinary flesh, too good for such unthankful miscreants.

Ver. 21. **Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth]** *Efferbuit, excaudit.* Anger is a kind of fire, a boiling of the blood about the heart, through desire of revenge. "But fury is not in me," saith God, #**Isa 27:4**. If anger be ascribed unto him, as here, it is an expression fitted to our apprehension, because he doeth that which angry men use to do, viz. chide and smite for sin; but all in a way of justice, and without the least perturbation.

So a fire was kindled] It began to smoke and burn.

And anger also came up] Ascended, *i.e.* Flamed, for anger beginneth at the heart, and then cometh up into the brain, face, nostrils.

Ver. 22. **Because they believed not in God]** As faith is a radical and complex grace; so is unbelief a radical sin, a teeming vice, #**Heb 3:12**, a wellspring of wickedness; many sins are bound up in it, as Cicero saith of parricide.

And trusted not in his salvation] *i.e.* In his saving promises.

Ver. 23. **Though he had commanded the clouds]** Though he had served them as never prince was served in his greatest state, yet all served not turn.

And opened the doors of heaven] *Rupturas nubium*, raining down upon them plenty of manna; so that it was not hunger, but humour, that set them a lusting.

Ver. 24. **And had rained down manna upon them]** Manna signifieth, What is this? whereunto in the allegory answereth, This is my body. Or, according to others, it signifieth a prepared portion, prepared by God, so that they might presently eat of it, though they might grind, or pound, or bake, or boil it also, they might do anything with it, as they might with meal; whence it is here called the corn of heaven, that is, a seed which was unto them instead of corn.

Ver. 25. **Man did eat angels' food]** Heb. the bread of the mighty, *Pan de nobles* (Hispan.); (Angels are called mighties, **#Isa 10:34 Re 18:21**); such delicate bread as might beseem angels to eat, if they did eat any at all; such as the poets feign to be their Nectar, and Ambrosia. Or, the bread of the mighty, *sc.* that mightily strengthened them.

He sent them meat to the full] Heb. meat taken in hunting; so called, because dainty as venison, or, *quia semper ambulabant, et in via quasi eam venabantur*, *sc.* **#Jos 1:11** (Aben Ezra).

Ver. 26. **He caused an east wind to blow]** *Pergere*, to go, to pass away, and to give place to the south wind.

And by his power he brought in the south wind] That it might bring in the quails. Now Pliny writeth (lib. 10, c. 23), that quails, though they love to fly with the wind, because of their heavy bodies and small strength, yet not with the south wind, because it is moist, and so more heavy than the north wind, which therefore they rather delight in. And if this be true, here is another miracle, saith an expositor, that these quails were brought in by that wind, which, when it bloweth, they commonly rest and hide themselves.

Ver. 27. **He rained flesh also upon them as dust]** *Dapibus illos compluit*. This he had done once before for them; see **#Ex 16:12,13**, with **#Nu 11:18-21,31-33**; their unbelief, therefore, and impatience this second time was the more heinous.

Ver. 28. **And he let it fall in the midst of their camp]** A day's journey on each side, and about two cubits above the earth, **#Nu 11:31**, in such abundance, that Moses could not believe it were

possible to be done, though all the fish in the sea should be gathered together, and turned into flesh, #Nu 11:31.

Ver. 29. **So they did eat, and were well filled]** But better they had fasted. Many eat that on earth which they must digest in hell; these here were murdering morsels.

He gave them their own desire] They were heard, *ad voluntatem, non ad utilitatem. Deus saepe dat iratus quod negat propitius.* God's gifts to a graceless man are giftless gifts; and he had better a great deal be without them.

Ver. 30. **They were not estranged from their lust]** Satiated they were, but not satisfied. It is as easy to quench the fire of Aetna as the thoughts set on fire by lust.

Ver. 31. **The wrath of God came upon them]** Heb. ascended, as a flame, which the bigger it groweth the higher it getteth.

And slew the fattest of them] Those that had glutted and stuffed themselves like a woolpack, being *nitida et bene curata cute pingues*, fat and fair-liking.

And smote down the chosen men of Israel] Or, The young men, who by a hasty testament bequeathed that new name, Kibroth-hattaavah, that is, the graves of lust, to the place they lay buried in.

Ver. 32. **For all this they sinned still]** They utterly lost the fruit of their calamities; which godly men hold a very great loss.

And believed not] Neither mercies nor crosses duly affected them.

Ver. 33. **Therefore their days did he consume in vanity]** So that they never saw the promised land, for the which they came out of Egypt; but their carcasses fell in the wilderness. Who knoweth, saith a reverend man, whether God purpose not to wear out this present generation that hath been defiled with the superstition of the world, that we may not see the good that he will bring upon this Church?

And their years in trouble] Or, in terror, for they were in continual fear of God's wrath, of their enemies round about, of wild beasts, fiery serpents, &c.

Ver. 34. **When he slew them, then they sought him]** *Fictis scilicet, quibusdam et fucatis pollicitationibus*, with a few

dissembled devotions. So many now, when deadly, sick, will be wondrous good. *Nuper me amici cuiusdam languor admonuit, optimos esse nos dum infirmi sumus* (Plin. Ep. 26, 1. 7). As iron is very soft and malleable while in the fire, but soon after returneth to its former hardness; so many, while afflicted, seem very well affected, but afterwards soon show what they are. William Rufus, in a fit of sickness at Gloucester, vowed upon his recovery to see all vacancies in the Church furnished; which he did, but with so great ado as showed that, having escaped the danger, he would willingly have deceived the saint, saith the chronicler. In the sweating sickness here in England, so long as the ferventness of the plague lasted there was crying, *Peccavi, peccavi*, I have sinned, I have sinned, the ministers were sought for in every corner, You must come to my lord, you must come to my lady, &c.; but this lasted with many little longer than the disease; so deceitful is man's heart, and desperately wicked. Most men are nailed to the earth (saith one well), as Sisera was by Jael; and will not so much as lift up their eyes to heaven, unless it be as hogs do, who go noddling down and rooting in the earth all their life, and never look upward till, being ready to be killed, they are laid flat upon their backs and forced; so these, till wrestling with the pangs of death, they are fastened to their sick-beds, &c.

And they returned] But they gave but the half turn, they turned not even unto God with all their heart, as **#Joe 2:12**.

And inquired early after God] Heb. *Manicabant sive aurorizabant Deum, aurora velut anticipata*; they were up and at it by peep of day.

Ver. 35. **And they remembered]** Misery is the best art of memory. But this remembrance of God was but as letters written in the sand, or as a picture drawn on the ice, that long continueth not; it was but a flash, and while they were in a good mood; it was but as Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which he had soon forgotten. They remembered God, *lingua non corde*, with the tongue, but not with the heart, as Aben Ezra here glosseth. They gave God a mess of fair words, calling him Rock, Redeemer, &c., but he is not to be so courted and complimented; goats may be fed with leaves, but God is not mocked.

Ver 36. **Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth]** They looked pitifully, as the fox caught in a gin doth, but it is only to get out; they spake God fair, as the devil in the Gospel did our Saviour, but it was only to be rid of him. They worshipped him, as the Indians do the devil, that he may do them no hurt. The Latin word *Colo*, to worship, is by some derived of the Greek word *κολακευειν*, to flatter, and the English word flatter, from the Greek *λατρευειν*, to worship. Sure it is that many men's devotion is mere dissimulation.

And they lied unto him] *sc.* While they called him Rock, Redeemer, and all was but from the teeth outward; which how much God abhorreth as a ludibrious devotion, see #**Jer 3:4,5**. And here it is said to be the middle of the psalter; for hitherto the Hebrews reckon one thousand two hundred sixty and three verses; and as many they note to be yet left in the second part.

Ver. 37. **For their heart was not right with him]** It was still the old heart, without any sincere change, and that can never hold out the hardships of holiness, but will deviate and falsify; the rack may make it roar, the rod flutter, but all is in hypocrisy. A hypocrite would cozen God of heaven if he could tell how.

Neither were they steadfast] See #**Ps 78:8**.

Ver. 38. **But he, being full of compassion]** Not standing upon terms nor taking advantages; a sin pardoning God, whose mercy rejoiceth against (or glorieth over) judgment, #**Jas 2:13**; it is of his mercy that we are not consumed, #**La 3:22**, if he should deal with us in strict justice, *Et delicta nostra ad calculos vocare*, there were no abiding by it, Psal. cxxx. 1; clxiii 1.

Yea, many a time turned he his anger away] With patience and piety, he overcame their provocations, although they tempted him ten times, that is, very often, #**Nu 14:22**.

And did not stir up all his wrath] Heb. He multiplied to turn away his wrath, *Strenue curavit ut cohiberet iram suam*, he let fall some drops of his wrath, but would not shed the whole shower of it.

Ver. 39. **For he remembered that they were but flesh]** *i.e.* Frail and feeble, full of sin and misery., {see #Ge 6:3} altogether unable to grapple with God's wrath.

A wind that passeth away, &c.] *Et in suis reciprocationibus evanescens.* For winds neither return thither whence they blow, nor yet pass from one coast to another, but are wasted in the middle of the world, by the force of the sun and by their own motion, as Aristotle concludeth in his discourse concerning metaphors. Now, what is man (saith Nazianzen) but soul and soil, breath and body, a puff of wind the one, a pile of dust the other, no solidity in either?

Ver. 40. **How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness]** *Exclamatio pathetica.* Ten times at least in the first two years, Nu 16-19 What, then, in all the rest? *Quis fando possit enarrare tot rebelliones.* From the very day they came out of Egypt they were always contending against the Lord, as Moses telleth them, when he was taking his leave of them, **#De 31:16-18.**

And grieve him in the desert] Where they were at his mercy, and at his immediate finding.

Ver. 41. **Yea, they turned back and tempted God]** They did it afresh, and after some resolutions and short winded wishes of doing better.

And limited the Holy One] *Designarunt,* they prescribed to him, and set him his bounds which he must not pass; as Popilius, the Roman ambassador, drew a circle round about King Antiochus, and bade him give answer ere he stirred out of it, for he would be put off no longer. Now, God is limited, when as either his power is questioned, as **#Ps 78:20**, or his will circumscribed, as if he were bound to serve man's lusts, or means appointed him whereby he must work, and not otherwise.

Ver. 42. **They remembered not his hand]** Forgetfulness is the root of rebellion and of all vice, as the Genevists well note here. Eaten bread is soon forgotten, *Nihil citius senescit quam gratia* (Seneca).

Nor the day when he delivered them] *viz.* From Pharaoh, but so soon as they had sucked the honey they despised the flower.

Ver. 43. **How he had wrought his signs in Egypt]** That stage of wonders. See #Ps 78:12.

In the field of Zoan] A great city in Egypt, whereof read #Isa 19:11,13 30:4 Eze 30:14. Josephus, Antiq. lib. 1, cap. 9. See #Ps 78:12.

Ver. 44. **And had turned their rivers into blood, &c.]** Seven of those ten plagues of Egypt are here instanced, to aggravate the forgetfulness or perfidy of the Israelites. Good turns aggravate unkindness, and our offences are increased by our obligations.

And their floods, that they could not drink] *Usque adeo ut aquae potabiles totam, alioqui stagnantem Aegyptum, deficerent.* The Rabbis say (who told them I know not) that out of the same vessel an Egyptian drank blood and an Israelite water (Midras Tilling).

Ver. 45. **He sent divers sorts of flies among them]** *Miscellam muscarum venenatarum,* venomous flies and flying serpents, whose poison and sting did even corrupt the land, #Ex 8:24. The Greek rendereth it κυνομυϊαν, the dog-fly.

Ver. 46. **He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar]** Together with the grasshopper, #Ex 10:12-15, God's great army, #Joe 2:11

And their labour] *i.e.* The fruits of the earth, which they had laboured for; they lost both their husbandry and their harvest.

Ver. 47. **He destroyed their vines with hail]** Heb. He killed, *Quia planta habet animam vegetativain, ut* #Job 14:8, saith Kimchi.

And their sycamores with frost] Or, with great hailstones mingled with fire, running along and catching, #Ex 9:24. Confer #Re 16:21.

Ver. 48. **He gave up their cattle also to the hail]** Moses saith men also, who were brained and burned by it.

Ver. 49. **By sending evil angels among them]** *i.e.* Some messengers of his wrath and displeasure, whether good or evil angels it skills not.

Ver. 50. **He made a way to his anger]** Heb. He weighed a path, recompensing their unjust stiffness with his just judgments, and proceeding in his anger from lighter plagues to that heaviest of all the rest, the slaying of all the flower of Egypt in one night, #Ps 78:51.

Ver. 51. **And smote all the firstborn in Egypt]** *Certo pestis genere perniciosissimo et acutissimo.* The Rabbis say that in each house was a dead corpse, viz. the chieftain of the family, whether there were a firstborn in it or not, #Ex 12:30.

In the tabernacle of Ham] Who was the father of Mizraim, the founder of the Egyptians, #Ge 10:6, who vainly boasted that they were *αυτοχθονες*, as ancient as their land. Herodotus, the author of that story, tells us also of a certain great town in Egypt called Chemmim, from Cham likely.

Ver. 52. **But made his own people to go forth like sheep]** *i.e. Tuto et lente,* softly and safely, as #Ge 33:13, tending them with all tenderness, and providing for their necessities.

Ver. 53. **And he led them on safely, so that they feared not]** Or, if they did, it was without cause, *Cur enim metuat hominem homo in sinu Dei positus.*

Ver. 54. **And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary]** *i.e.* Of Judea, which country he had consecrated to himself for the place and chief seat of religion; whence it is called, the holy land. It had been a loathsome land, #Ezr 9:11, filled with filthiness from corner to corner, but now otherwise. How it was afterwards again polluted, see #Isa 1:21-23.

Even to this mountain] Moriah, whereon stood the temple; or, to this mountainous country of Judea.

Which his right hand, &c.] See #Ps 44:3.

Ver. 55. **He cast out the heathen also before them]** *i.e.* In their sight, and for their sake.

He divided them an inheritance by line] Not a material line, but mathematical, saith an interpreter; whereby we may perceive that the way of making maps was anciently in use among the Hebrews (Geneb.).

And made the tribes of Israel, &c.] Notwithstanding all their former provocations. "See that none render evil for evil to any man,

but ever follow" (by God's example) "that which is good, both among yourselves and toward all men," #1Th 5:15.

Ver. 56. **Yet they tempted and provoked, &c.]** Neither God's judgments on their enemies nor his mercies to themselves could keep them within the bounds of obedience; but in a land of uprightness they would deal unjustly, and not behold the majesty of the Lord, #Isa 26:10.

Ver. 57. **But turned back, &c.]** They had a kind of willingness and velleity, a kind of wambling, as one speaketh, but it boiled not up to the full height of resolution for God.

They were turned aside like a deceitful bow] *Non semper feriet quodcumque minabitur arcus;* but a deceitful bow, that turneth back into belly, as we say, will be sure to deceive the archer, though he level his eye and his arrow never so directly to the mark, and think with himself to hit it. Lo, such a false rotten bow is man's deceitful heart; and hence the arrows of his purposes and promises vanish oft in the air, as smoke.

Ver. 58. **For they provoked him to anger with their high places]** After the manner of the heathens; yet with a good intention, as they called it; because God is to be everywhere worshipped. But this was against an express law, #De 12:2 Ex 20:3,4.

Ver. 59. **When God heard this]** Sin crieth aloud in God's ears, though it be never so closely and cunningly carried.

And greatly abhorred Israel] As appeareth all along the Book of Judges, whereof this verse is a summary.

Ver. 60. **So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh]** Whither it had been brought from Gilgal, and where it had rested a long while, but was forsaken of God when once idolized, #1Sa 4:3-5

The tent which he placed among men.] Which was a very great condescension, #Isa 66:1. Confer #Joh 1:14 Pr 8:31.

Ver. 61. **And delivered his strength., his glory, &c.]** *i.e.* His ark, which is elsewhere called the strength of God, #1Ch 16:11 2Ch 6:41, and the glory of God, #Ps 26:8 63:3, because out of it he was wont to declare his power and glory, and to make himself visible after a sort.

Ver. 62. **He gave his people also unto the sword]** *sc.* Of the Philistines, who slew thirty thousand of them in one battle, #1Sa 4:10, they lost him and themselves too; the ark having been a far better defence to them than the Palladium to the Trojans.

Ver. 63. **The fire consumed]** The fire of warlike force, which quickly licketh up all, and layeth waste.

And their maidens were not given in marriage] Heb. praised, as they were wont to be at their weddings with nuptial songs, and *epithalamia*, which the Hebrews call *Hillulim*, and the bridechamber, Beth-halulah, the house of praise.

Ver. 64. **Their priests fell by the sword]** Hophni and Phineas did, #1Sa 4:11, both in one day, as had been foretold, #1Sa 2:34.

And their widows made no lamentation] As being themselves either killed with grief, as Phineas's wife, or carried captive. Here were *ingentia beneficia, flagitia, supplicia*.

Ver. 65. **The Lord awaked as one out of sleep]** *Humanitus dictum;* the Philistines haply had such bald conceits of him, that either he slept, or, if awake, that he was overcome with wine.

Ver. 66. **And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts]** *viz.* With emerods, #1Sa 5:6,9,12, *infami podicis ignominia affecit illos*, he punished them, as we do puny boys on their posteriors.

Ver. 67. **Moreover he refused, &c.]** He would dwell no longer at Shiloh, which was in the tribe of Ephraim.

Ver. 68. **But chose the tribe of Judah]** He chose it for his love, and then loved it for his choice. The word tribe we borrow from the Romans, who at first divided the multitudes into three parts, called thereof tribes. The Hebrew name signifieth a rod or sceptre, and fitly agreeth to Judah.

Ver. 69. **Like high palaces]** Not places, as some books absurdly have it. Like the earth, there shall be a Church to the world's end.

Ver. 70. **He chose David also]** God chooseth not as man doth, #1Co 1:26, yet Alexander the Great advanced Abdolominus, a poor gardener, to be king in Sidon.

And took him from the sheepfolds] The art of feeding cattle and the art of ruling men are sisters, saith Basil.

Ver. 71. **From following the ewes]** So Saul from seeking asses, Agathocles from making pots, Valentinian, ropes, &c. Placilla called upon her husband Theodosius, the emperor, to remember from what mean estate God had called him to the highest honours, ἐξ οἴων, εἰς οἴα.~

Ver. 72. **So he fed them, &c.]** See #Ps 78:70. He was not *malus vir bonus princeps* (as is said of our Richard III), but every way accomplished, and active for the good of his subjects.

A Psalm] Of like subject with #Ps 74, bewailing the same calamity of the Jews, whether under Nebuchadnezzar or Antiochus is uncertain; but foreseen by Asaph, or described by some other prophet, and committed to some of Asaph's successors to be sung. *Cantant iusti etiam in adversis;* as birds in the spring tune most sweetly when it raineth most sadly.

Chapter 79

Ver. 1. **O God, the heathen]** *Ex abrupto orditur;* q.d. Canst thou endure it? Is it not high time for thee to set in? Lo, they have filled the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel, #Isa 8:8, that is, O thou who art God with us, who givest with the Father, who prayest with the suitor (*Cum parte dater, inter nos petitor.* Aug.), and who in all our afflictions art afflicted.

Thy holy temple have they defiled] *Spoliando, funestando, et omnia profana impiaque munera obeundo.* See #Ps 74:7.

They have laid Jerusalem on heaps] *In rudera,* into an orchard keeper's cottage, saith the Vulgate, οπωροφυλακιον (Sept.). An elegant hypotyposis.

Ver. 2. **The dead bodies of thy servants]** Either they denied them the honour of burial (which is reckoned among the τα νομιζόμενα, the dues of the dead), or else they mangled their dead bodies, and exercised their rage upon them, as the Papists did upon Huss and Zwinglius, and many of the English martyrs. A barbarous practice, as Pausanias judged it in Herodot. Calliope, Νεκρῶ λυμαινέσθαι πρεπει μαλλον βαρβαροισιν, &c.

The flesh of thy saints, &c.] Of thy beneficiaries, whose souls are with thee in heaven; these have not so much as a burying place on earth, but lie like common carrion, *Morticina*, like cattle that die of the murrain, and are most ignominiously dealt with; and yet these are God's saints, and, in some sense, martyrs.

Ver. 3. **Their blood have they shed like water]** *Contemptim vel abiecte*. They made no more reckoning of it than of ditch water; and were ready to say, as Hannibal did when he saw a ditch full of men's blood, *O formosum spectaculum!* O beautiful sight!

And there was none to bury them] Either none to bury them at all, which the Jews accounted worse than death, #Ec 6:3, and the Romans extreme cruelty, *Immanitatis est Scythicae non sepelire mortuos* (Sen. ad Martiam); or none to bury them *cum ritibus*, with the accustomed rites and ceremonies, as Jacob was buried, #Ge 50:1-13, but not Jeconiah, #Jer 22:18.

Ver. 4. **We are become a reproach to our neighbours]** To the Edomites, Philistines, Syrians, Tyrians, &c., who do now compose comedies out of our tragedies.

A scorn and derision to them that are round about us] *Quorum opprobriis, ludibriis, et contumeliis sumus expositi*. This was more grievous to them than stripes or wounds, saith Chrysostom; because these being inflicted upon the body, are divided after a sort between soul and body; but scorns and reproaches do wound the soul only. *Habet quendam aculeum contumelia*, they leave a sting behind them, as Cicero observeth, Actio in Ver.

Ver. 5. **How long wilt thou be angry? &c.]** Or, how long? wilt thou be angry for ever? The psalmist knew that the enemies were but God's executioners; and that if he were but once pacified, they should soon be put out of office.

Shall thy jealousy] viz. For our idolatry, #Ex 20:3-5

Ver. 6. **Pour out thy wrath, &c.]** Even the full vials of it.

That have not known thee] More than by the book of the creatures, wherein there is indeed a *τογνωστον του θεου*, something of God manifested, #Ro 1:19,20, even his eternal power and Godhead,

rendering men without excuse, but nothing of his goodness and patience, leading them to repentance, #Ps 2:4.

That have not called upon thy name] A note of profaneness, #Ps 14:4.

Ver. 7. **For they have devoured Jacob]** As wolves and other ravenous creatures do the simple sheep.

His dwellingplace] Or, his cottage, his sheepcote.

Ver. 8. **O remember not against us former iniquities]** Or, the iniquities of them that were before us, wherewith we also are justly chargeable; the sin of the golden calf, saith the Arabic here, an ounce whereof is in all our sufferings to this day, say the Jews. Alexander slew the Branchidae, and utterly destroyed their city, because their forefathers had long before endeavoured to betray Greece into the hands of Xerxes, ως προδοτας ανειλεν (Diodor. Curt. lib. 7).

Speedily prevent us] Lest they come too late; for we are at last gasp.

Ver. 9. **Help us...for the glory of thy name]** A speeding argument. God will do much for his own glory, his wife, as it were.

Purge away our sins] Which nothing can do but tender mercy.

Ver. 10. **Where is their God?]** See #Ps 43:3. So Turks at this day (when they have the better of Christians) cry, Where is the Christian's God? We are the right Mussulmans, &c.

By the revenging of the blood of thy servants, &c.] For the which make thou inquisition, and do justice.

Ver. 11. **Let the sighing of the prisoner, &c.]** It was lately in many places of this land a like difficult thing to find a wicked man in the enemy's prisons or a godly man out of them. The sighs of such were shrill in God's ears.

Preserve thou those that are appointed to die] Heb. The children of death, those that being destined to destruction, seem to be as much in death's power as children are in their parents'. The Arabic

rendereth it, *Redime filios occisorum*, Redeem the children of those who are slain, lest the name of their parents be blotted out.

Ver. 12. **Into their bosom]** Full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, #Lu 6:38. See #Isa 65:6,7 Jer 32:18.

Wherewith they have reproached thee] viz. In reproaching us, who do quarter arms, as it were, with thee.

Ver. 13. **So we thy people...will give thee praise]** A service which the saints know to be so acceptable to God, that they commonly promise it, and accordingly perform it, #Ho 14:2, engaging also their children, as here, to do the like.

Upon Shoshannim-Eduth] Which some render the lilies of the testimony, and interpret of the Jewish polity or commonwealth, called by Josephus θεοκρατεια, that is, a God-government. Kimchi saith that Shoshannim-Eduth is species *toni nobis hodie ignota*, a kind of musical strain not known to us today.

Chapter 80

Ver. 1. **Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel]** Thou that feedest thy people, watchest over them, defendest, redeemest, reducest them; thou that handlest them, curest them, washest them, drivest them as they are able to go, carryest them in thy bosom, doest all the offices of a good shepherd for them. In calling upon God it is wisdom to make choice of fit appellations and attributes, such as may strengthen our faith and increase our fervour.

Thou that ledest Joseph] Joseph is named *quia nobilis inter fratres*, saith Austin; the first birthright was taken from Reuben, and given to Joseph, #1Ch 5:1, hence he is put for the whole people.

Thou that dwellest between (or sittest upon) the cherubims] Those winged creatures that covered the mercy seat, the ark, and the two tables of the law within it; and all, to set forth Christ covering the curses of the law, and graciously dwelling with the sons of men, to the admiration of angels.

Shine forth] Show thy power in saving thy people and punishing their enemies. Shine as the sun doth in his strength.

Ver. 2. **Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh]** These three tribes went next after the ark, when it removed, #Nu 2:18-24,10:22-24

Stir up thy strength] Which seemeth at present to lie dormant.

Ver. 3. **Turn us again]** Turn again our captivity, or show thyself reconciled unto us in Christ, who is here called the face of God, as some conceive.

Ver. 4. **O Lord God of hosts]** *Iehova bellipotens Deus*. God hath his upper and nether forces, as his horse and foot, ready pressed, say the Rabbis.

How long wilt thou be angry] Heb. wilt thou smoke? As angry people seem to send out smoke at their nostrils.

Against the prayer of thy people] This is a sore affliction to the saints, that their prayers seem to be ineffectual.

Ver. 5. **Thou feedest them with the bread of tears]** *Panibus fletu intinctis* (Chald.). It is as ordinary with them to weep as it is with men to eat and drink (Kimchi).

And givest them tears to drink in great measure] *Trientales* they are *Tricongii* in a sense, to their sorrow. They are afflicted even to utmost satiety. See #Ps 42:3. Holy Bradford oft mused at his meal, having his hat over his eyes, from whence came commonly plenty of tears dropping on his trencher (Acts aud Mon. 1457).

Ver. 6. **Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours]** We have as many enemies as neighbours, all striving to enslave us. We are crushed between them as corn is between millstones.

And our enemies laugh among themselves] Make them merry in our misery, revel in our ruins.

Ver. 7. **Turn us again, O God of hosts]** See #Ps 80:3, and observe that there it was only, "Turn us again, O God," here, "O God of hosts," and #Ps 80:19, "O Lord God of hosts." As the bird by much waving gathereth wind under the wing, and mounteth higher; so doth faith in prayer, *viresque acquirit eundo*.

Ver. 8. **Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt]** The Church is oft set forth by this similitude. The Rabbis say that Solomon made a

vine of gold in the temple. Athenaeus telleth us that the kings of Persia sat under a golden vine having bunches of smaragds and other stately stones. All this was nothing to God's vine, that plant of renown, brought out of Egypt (where it got no good, #Eze 34:29 20:8), and set in a better soil.

Ver. 9. **Thou preparedst room before it]** Espying out a fit place to plant it in, #Eze 20:6, and making clean work before it, as some render the words (*Expurgasti coram ea*), by pulling up those bad and barren weeds, the Canaanites, that might have hindered its growth.

And didst cause it to take deep root] viz. By thy digging, dressing, watering, and mounding it; as of all possessions, none requireth greater care than that of vineyards, saith Care; and there is a peculiar affection in men toward the vine above all trees, as another observeth.

Ver. 10. **The hills were covered, &c.]** The Israelites grew amain in wealth, power, and multitude of men; witness their huge armies and valiant acts, though the country was not above 200 miles long, and 50 miles broad.

Ver. 11. **She sent out her boughs unto the sea]** The midland sea.

And her branches unto the river] Euphrates. This was first done in David's days.

Ver. 12. **Why hast thou then broken down her hedges?]** *i.e.* Taken away thy mighty hand hitherto held over her. This befell not till they degenerated into a strange vine, #Jer 2:21, and brought forth wild grapes, #Isa 5:4.

Ver. 13. **The boar out of the wood]** All swine (but wild ones especially) are *vitibus inimici*, saith Theodoret, destructions to vines. And Melancthon thinks that therefore God forbad the Jews to eat swine's flesh, *Eo quod sues omnia sursum deorsum vertant vastentque*, because they turn up all, rooting things up by the roots, as the word here signifieth, *Exvineavit*, ελωμνηατο αυτην (Sept.). Austin understands it of Vespasian, others of Antiochus, or Antichrist.

And the wild beast] The soldiers, #2Ch 25:18.

Ver. 14. **Visit this vine]** Some understand it of Christ's incarnation, **#Lu 1:78.**

Ver. 15. **And the vineyard]** *Vitiarium, surculum, plantulam.*

Ver. 16. **They perish]** *Scilicet palmites, et propagines,* **#Ps 80:10,11.**

Ver. 17. **The man of thy right hand]** *i.e.* Israel, or the Messiah.

Ver. 18. **So will not we go back]** A promise of gratitude, which is usually annexed to prayers for deliverance.

Ver. 19. **Turn us again]** See **#Ps 80:7.** Prayers are like arrows of deliverance, which would be multiplied and enlarged, **#2Ki 13:17.**

Upon Gittith] An instrument brought from Gath, or used by Obed Edom, the Gittite; or a psalm to be sung at the vintages, *i.e.* at the Feast of Tabernacles. It containeth a solemn thanksgiving (for which cause also that feast was instituted), with so great joy, that Plutarch took occasion therehence to write, but falsely, that the Jews did then keep a feast, or holy day, to Bacchus, *ωσχοφορία.*

Chapter 81

Ver. 1. **Sing aloud unto God]** Be loud and large in his praises, set them forth cheerfully and courageously. God loveth zeal in all his services, *In symposio gaudium cantu accendite.*

Ver. 2. **Bring hither the timbrel]** These instruments then used in God's service (as a part of the Jewish pedagogy) were types of that spiritual joy which we should express in holy duties, no less than if we heard the most exquisite music. There should be continual music (habitual joy) in the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. **Blow up the trumpet in the new moon]** And the like at other solemn feasts, three whereof (all in the seventh month to be kept) Beza thinketh to be here plainly and distinctly noted. These feasts were a shadow of things to come, but the body is in Christ, **#Col 2:16,17.**

Ver. 4. **For this was a statute]** The keeping of it therefore is not arbitrary, but necessary: *Aut faciendum aut patiendum.*

And a law] Which was to be kept as the apple of the eye, **#Pr 7:2.**

Ver. 5. **This he ordained in Joseph]** Put for all Israel, as **#Ps 80:1,** though the Chaldee understandeth it of Joseph in person, and the next words of his going through the land of Egypt to gather corn in

the seven plentiful years, and that at his first coming into Egypt he understood not their language.

When I heard a language] Idolatrous language, say some, contrary to the language of Canaan: this God knew not, that is, liked not, **#Isa 19:18**; or, rather a strange foreign language, which is no small grievance, **#Jer 5:15 Eze 2:6 1Co 14:11**, to those especially who understand no otherwise than by blows, as beasts do men.

Ver. 6. **I removed his shoulder from the burden]** From the woeful slavery of Egyptian tyrants and task masters, *Sordidissimo ministerio*.

His hands passed away from the pots] Or baskets, wherein was carried earth for brick clamping and pot making, &c., whereunto they were so close tied that they might not stir a foot from their daily work, till God delivered them. Some say that the pyramids were built by them.

Ver. 7. **Thou calledst in trouble]** Their trouble called, though themselves had been silent. I have seen, I have seen the afflictions of my people, &c., but they cried to the Lord at the Red Sea, **#Ex 14:10,15**, and were delivered.

I answered thee in the secret place of thunder] *i.e.* In the pillar of cloud that stood between the two armies, and thundered against the Egyptians, **#Ex 14:24**; confer **#La 3:44**.

I proved thee at the waters of Meribah] When thou hadst but newly foot out of snare, and yet there and then thou showedst thyself. O thine ungratefulness, &c. This hath been thy manner from thy youth.

Ver. 8. **Hear, O my people, &c.]** Notwithstanding thy many and mighty provocations at Meribah and elsewhere, I made a covenant with thee at Mount Sinai, and gave thee right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments, **#Ne 9:13**.

Ver. 9. **There shall no strange god]** This is the first and chief commandment, wherein all the rest are contained, saith Luther.

Ver. 10. **Open thou thy mouth wide, &c.]** If thou be straitened, it is not in me, but in thine own bowels; he secretly taxeth them for their ολιγοπιστια and their ολιγοφουγια in prayer, their faithlessness and

faint-heartedness, whereby they do deny, as it were, their own prayers: ask largely, and speed accordingly.

Ver. 11. **But my people would not hearken]** Here beginneth the second part of the psalm, which is objurgatory, and very suitable to the season of the year at that feast, that if it were a fruitful year the Israelites might see and acknowledge God's goodness therein; as, if otherwise, they might accuse themselves, and not the Lord.

Israel would none] Heb. acquiesced not in me, was not well affected to me, but had hearts full of harlotry, *Perplexis cogitationibus* (Vat.).

Ver. 12. **So I gave them up]** I left them as a ship without a rudder; as a horse without reins, to go whither they would, and do what they would. This is a fearful judgment (*poena rebellionis maxima*), **#Ho 4:14 Ro 1:28 2Th 2:11,12.**

And they walked in their own counsels] To their own ruin, because 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.**

Ver. 13. **Oh that my people had hearkened unto me]** A wish after the manner of men; to set forth God's great desire of our welfare, which he here uttereth, as it were, with a sigh and a groan.

Ver. 14. **I should soon have subdued]** I would have turned the scales, and made them as much overweight to their enemies as they were to them.

And turned my hand, &c.] God, with a turn of his hand, can overturn his enemies, and relieve his little ones, **#Zec 13:7.** If he but spread forth his hands, as a swimmer spreadeth forth his hands to swim, he shall bring down the pride of oppressors together, **#Isa 25:11.**

Ver. 15. **The haters of the Lord should have submitted]** Heb. lied, that is, yielded feigned obedience, as **#Ps 18:44.**

But their time should have endured for ever] *i.e.* Their strength, saith the Chaldee; their tranquillity and prosperity, say others. Theodoret referreth it to the enemies thus: The time of their calamity shall endure for ever, they shall be eternally miserable.

Ver. 16. **With the finest of the wheat]** Heb. With the fat or marrow of wheat, with the choicest of picked nourishment.

And with honey, &c.] *Hyperbole incomparabilis felicitatis et foecunditatis.* See #De 32:13, shadowing out the sweetness of the word and sacraments.

Chapter 82

Ver. 1. **God standeth in the congregation of the mighty]** There God is present and president by a particular providence, as Lord paramount, *Ut praeses Synodi*, and chief magistrate, higher than the highest, #Ec 5:8 Job 31:14 Eph 6:9. The Ethiopian judges, they say, do ever leave the chief seat of judicature empty for him, *Locus praesidis est medius locus in cœtibus*; and Solomon, for like reason, calleth that seat the holy place, #Ec 8:10. There Elohim (that is, the judge and avenger) standeth, or setteth himself, to behold the actions and affections of judges, and to pass a censure upon their sentences. Good, therefore, was the counsel of Jehoshaphat to his judges when to ride circuit, #2Ch 19:6, "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord your God be upon you; take heed and do it," &c. Judges should sit in as great, though not so slavish, a fear of offending as Olanes, in the history, did upon the flayed skin of his father Silannes, nailed by Cambyses on the tribunal; or as a Russian judge, that feareth the boiling caldron or open battocking; or the Turkish Senate, when they think the Great Turk to stand behind the arras at the dangerous door.

He judgeth among the gods] *i.e.* Among the magistrates (as our Saviour interpreteth it, #Joh 10:34,35), who are called gods. First, By analogy, *tanquam Deum imitantes*, saith Theodoret, as resembling God, by having the power of life and death. Secondly, By participation, *tanquam lumina illuminata*, saith Austin; as stars participate their light from the sun, so do rulers their authority from the supreme Majesty. Thirdly, By deputation from God, whose viceregents they are, and to whom they must be accountable for their mal-administration.

Ver. 2. **How long will ye judge unjustly]** viz. Through a cycloplical contempt of God's severity.

Ne pecces, Deus ipse videt.

Will ye represent and express God to the world as a corrupt, crooked, and unrighteous judge?

And accept the persons of the wicked?] Heb. lift up their faces, and show them more favour than others that are much more honest? Barabbas oft is released, and Christ crucified. *Alter habet aequum, sed alter habebit aequum,* said that partial emperor, This man hath the right on his side, but the other shall carry the cause, for all that.

Ver. 3. **Defend the poor and fatherless]** These are God's clients, and this is God's counsel, worthy to be written with letters of gold on the walls of all judicatories, as having in it better direction for a statesman than all Lipsius' beehive or Machiavel's spider web. These two Latin verses are said to be written over the judgment seat in Xante,

*Hic locus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,
Nequitiam, pacem; crimina, iura, bonos.*

Ver. 4. **Rid them out of the hand of the wicked]** Heb. of the turbulent, who make ado, as the devil doth, and vex others.

Ver. 5. **They know not, neither will they understand]** *q.d.* There is no good to be done upon these uncircumcised vice gods, as they may in the worst sense be best styled; it is bootless to advise them to better, for they are set; they are as good every whit as ever they mean to be; and as for their duty, *nec cogitant, nec curant,* they neither know it nor care to know it, but blunder on in the dark, and are led blindling by their base lusts, which so they may satisfy, they pass not what becomes of the weal public, but oppose with crest and breast whatsoever crosseth their sinful designs. Hereby they cause mighty concussions, and draw down heavy judgments, **#Isa 24:18,19.** *Pessimi dantur, et ruunt omnia.*

Ver. 6. **I have said, Ye are gods]** As **#Ps 82:1**, but doubly so, if good too; if they excel both in virtue and power, as Aristotle joineth them, *κατ' ἀρετήν και την πολιτικήν δύναμιν*; I have said, *is vox potestatis constituentis,* whence that of the apostle, All power is of God, **#Ro 13:1.**

And all of you are children of the most High] Invested (as princes' sons and heirs are oft) with part of my power, and intrusted with the administration of mine earthly kingdom by the exercise of vindictive and remunerative justice, Niceph. 1. 18, *scribit summum principem gentis Turcicae dictum fuisse Taifau, i.e. Filium Dei.* The Chaldee paraphraseth, As the angels of the High; and Kimchi, As the stars, which have dominion over these inferior bodies. Confer #**Job 38:7.**

Ver. 7. **But ye shall die like men]** Yea, if wicked, like beasts, but only for their pillow and bolster. *Super cubilia forsam in honore moriuntur, quo a bestiis differunt, sed non in morte,* saith Kimchi. God, who had so highly advanced such, will lay them low enough; even in the slimy valley (if not in hell), where are many already like them, and more shall come after them, #**Job 21:31,32.** Our Henry VIII was told on his death bed that he should go to the place of princes; which was no great comfort, if the old proverb be true, that hell is paved with the crowns of princes and helmets of soldiers. The Spanish friar used to say, there were but few princes in hell; for what reason? there were but few in all.

And fall like one of the princes] Of the heathen tyrants, which are oft slain by the people, as most of the Caesars before Constantine were. *Ad generum Cereris, &c.* Some of the fathers, Arnobius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, &c., understand it to be Beelzebub and his fellows, *qui acerbissimis et exquisitissimis tormentis cruciantur,* who are most tormented in hell, #**2Pe 2:1,** *Potentes potenter torquebantur.* Some read it, And ye, O princes, shall fall as one, *i.e.* as others do. A necessary consideration for great ones, who are apt to dream of an immortality, or, at least, to drive off the thoughts of death.

Ver. 8. **Arise, O God, judge the earth]** Take the matter into thine own hand, for it is but time, all things here being, so ill-ordered by thy substitutes; *nam alioqui prae iudiciorum constupratione terra tota videtur collapsura,* all will be nought else.

For thou shalt inherit all nations] Thou, Lord Jesus, shalt, #**Ps 2:8 Heb 1:2 Re 11:15.** Come, therefore, yea, come quickly.

Chapter 83

Ver. 1. **Keep not thou silence, O God]** *Ter idem dicit ad vehementiam.* He saith the same thing thrice, to show his earnestness. The Hebrew is, Be not silent to thee, that is, in thine own cause, as **#Ps 83:5**. The Septuagint and Vulgate have it, O God, who is like unto thee?

Ver. 2. **For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult]** *Concurrunt magno impetu, conatu, et ardore,* Thine, because ours; for there is a league offensive and defensive between God and his people; the Church must, therefore, needs be invincible, because God is so.

Have lifted up the head] Being insolent and confident, they bear their noses high in the air, uttering loud and lofty language; as did Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib, **#2Ki 18:17**, to which times some refer this psalm, as others to those of Jehoshaphat, **#2Ch 20:1,2** (Kimchi).

Ver. 3. **They have taken crafty counsel, &c.]** They have negotiated this league with much subtilty and sollicitation, *conferunt et captant consilia*, they are cruel crafties. *Malignaverunt consilium*, saith the Vulgate.

And consulted against thy hidden ones] Hidden under the hollow of thy hand, under the shadow of thy wing; and therefore safe from strife of tongues or force of hands, **#Ps 27:5 31:21**, *Commodum instituto epithetum.* The Greek rendereth it, Thy saints, such as whose life is hid with Christ in God, **#Col 3:3 1Jo 3:2**. The same Hebrew word is used for the inward oracle of the temple, **#Eze 7:22**, a type of heaven, the saints' country.

Ver. 4. **They have said, Come, &c.]** The wicked have their Come, **#Pr 1:11**, as well as the saints, **#Isa 2:3,5 Zec 8:21**, but for a worse purpose.

Let us cut them off] "Them," by way of contempt, as not worth naming, they were so base. The devil and his imps would utterly root out the Church; but that cannot be, **#Jer 31:36 Mt 16:18**.

That the name of Israel, &c.] But Israel hath still a name, when Moab, Ammon, Edom, &c., live but by fame only. See **#Jer 48:2**.

Ver. 5. **They have consulted together with one consent]** Heb. with one heart, *concorditer*; as if they had all but one heart. This was not unity, but conspiracy; such as is that of Papists, #Re 17:13,14.

They are confederate against thee] Heb. They have stricken a covenant, viz. with oaths and solemn ceremonies, cutting the sacrifice in twain, and passing between the parts thereof, as #Jer 34:18.— *caesa iungebant foedera porca* (Virg. Æneid. 8).

Ver. 6. **The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites, &c.]** *Exercitu ex variis gentibus conflato*, at odds among themselves, and yet well agreed for a mischief to the Church, who might ever well say, as the hare in Martial,

*In me omnis terraeque aviumque marisque rapina est;
Forsitan et coeli, si canis astra tenet.*

As dogs, fighting and intertearing one another, can give over and join together to follow the harmless hare that passeth by them; so here. If Manasseh be against Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh, yet they will be both against Judah.

And the Hagarenes] *Who came also of Hagar, as well as the Ishmaelites; but were a distinct people, and would be called Saracens, from Sarah, the freewoman, for honour' sake, as if the promises made to Abraham and Sarah had belonged to them (Saracens, in Arabic, is thieves). Ptolemy maketh mention of the Saracens, and placeth in Arabia, the seat of the Hagarenes, where there is also a city called Agra, of Hagar, likely. Aben Ezra saith they came of Hagar, by another husband. The Chaldee calleth them Hungarians.*

Ver. 7. **Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek]** Sic enarrat et enumerat inimicos decem conglobatos, #Eze 27:9. Answerable whereunto were the ten kings of Christendom, who gave their power to the beast. Gebal might be the inhabitants of Gabel, a city of Phoenicia, saith Stephanus; or of Syria, saith Strabo, which Volateran saith was called Gibel in his time, but anciently Biblus. See #Jos 13:5.

Ver. 8. **Assur also is joined with them]** The Chaldee paraphraseth, Sennacherib, also the king of Asshur, &c. So doth the Turk, with the Church's enemies; howbeit, Italy is the mark he shooteth at; and the

Protestants have the happiness (as also America) to be farther out of his way, and no part of his present aim, for the greatest part of them.

Ver. 9. **Do unto them as unto the Midianites]** And how that was, see #Jud 6:1-8:21. *Preces sunt bombardae et instrumenta bellica Christianorum* saith Luther.

Ver. 10. **Which perished at Endor]** A place in the tribe of Manasseh near unto that ancient river, the river Kison, #Jos 17:11 1Sa 28:7

They became as dunq] They lay unburied, rotted above ground, and were spread as compost upon soil.

Ver. 11. **Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb]** Oreb signifieth a crow, Zeeb a wolf. Zebah a cut-throat, Zalmunna a forbidder of shadow, or quiet, to his subjects; fit names for tyrants and persecutors of God's people.

Ver. 12. **Let us take to ourselves the houses of God]** Covetous impropiators and oppressors have learned this language. *Possidebant Papistae, possident Rapistae,* saith one wittily.

Ver. 13. **O my God, make them like a wheel]** Heb. Like a rolling thing, such as is thistle down, saith R. Solomon, *Capita carduorum.* Gr. like a top, *Torque illos in modum trochi,* whirl them about as boys do their tops.

As the stubble] As before he had brought examples, so here similitudes, to show what he would have done to the enemy.

Ver. 14. **As the fire burneth a wood]** *Maxime quando a vento flabellatur* , when blown up by a fierce wind it soon turneth a wood into a waste.

And as the flame setteth, the mountains on fire] Those sulphury mountains, such as Etna, Vesuvius, Peitra mala, a mountain in the highest part of the Apennines, which perpetually burneth, say travellers, *Il Mercurio Italico*, 178.

Ver. 15. **So persecute them with thy tempest]** *Turbina eos* , that they may stand or stay nowhere.

And make them afraid, &c.] So fright them with thy heavy judgments that all their wit and courage wherewith they should help themselves may be expectorated.

Ver. 16. **Fill their faces with shame]** By confounding their confidences, and blasting their designs. They promised themselves a triumph, but let them have the canvas.

That they may seek thy name, O Lord] *Ut inviti cogantur quis sit tam potens Jehovah rogitare* , that they may even in despite of their heads be compelled to inquire after thee. It is storied of Sennacherib, that, after the destruction of his huge army at Jerusalem, demanding of some about him what might be the reason that the irresistible God of heaven so favoured the Jewish nation, as he had found by sad experience? answer was given, that Abraham, from whom they descended, sacrificed unto him his only son, which purchased this protection to his posterity. 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 his (Bib. Castal. Tabul.).

Ver. 17. **Let them be confounded, &c.]** This and the following verse are an exposition of the former verse. The Rabbis have a saying, *nulla est obiectio in Lege, quae non habet solutionem in latere* , The Scripture is its own interpreter.

Ver. 18. **That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah]** The essentiator, #Isa 44:6, with #Ac 17:25 Re 1:4,8. The Jews pronounce not this name at all, but use Adonai or Elohim for it. The first among the Christians that pronounced it was Petrus Galatinus, following the pronounciation of the Syriacs and Greeks. Genebrard will have it pronounced Jahue, and bitterly inveigheth against Beza and ethers as profaners of God's name, who call God Jova, or Jehova; *vocabulo novo* , saith he, *barbaro, fictitio, irreligioso et Iovem Gentilium redolente*. It is very likely that of this holy and reverend name of God, the Gentiles called their greatest god Jove and Jupiter, that is, Jah-pater (Aug. do Consens. Evang. l. 1, c. 22). Pausanias also telleth us that the poets thus sang unto him, *Zeun ην, Zeus εστι, Zeus εσσεται, ω μεγαλε Zeu*. And Varro, the most learned of the Romans, thought Jove to be the God of the Jews. But he and all men should have known, as here, that Jehovah is God alone; and so have sought to the Jews (of whom alone was salvation, #Joh 4:22) for better understanding in the things of God's kingdom, acknowledging him to be the most High above all the earth, and

contemning *minutulos istos deos modo Iovem sibi propitium haberet*, as another heathen said.

A Psalm] Or the same subject with the forty-second, and made when David was banished, either by Saul or Absalom, or else when busied abroad in his wars, #2Sa 8:1-14, and so debarred from the use of God's public ordinances.

Chapter 84

Ver. 1. **How amiable are thy tabernacles]** viz. For thy word's sake that is there preached, and thy worship there performed. The Protestants at Lyons, in France, called their place for public meeting to serve God Paradise. Chrysostom calleth it the place of angels and archangels, the kingdom of God, yea, heaven itself (Hom. 36, ad #1Co 14). Another calleth it, The heavenly exchange between God and his people; they present duty, he confers mercy. Luther saith he would not live in paradise without the ordinances; as with them he could frame to live in hell itself: and a small village with a godly pastor, and a good people in it, is an earthly paradise, saith he. If that Italian martyr could date his letter, From the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison, what may we think of the free use of the ordinances? what of heaven? *nam facile litera transfertur ad Spiritum.*

Ver. 2. **My soul longeth]** As she did who said, Give me children or else I die. His soul once longed for the waters of the well of Bethlehem, but not so earnestly as now to draw waters with joy out of those wells of salvation.

My heart and my flesh] *Ut sit sanctitas in corde, et sanitas in corpore.* And for obtaining of this, whole David crieth aloud, as a child when hungry crieth every whit of him, hands feet, face, all cry; and then the mother flings by all, then she flies and outruns herself; so here: The desires of the righteous shall be satisfied, #Pr 10:24.

Ver. 3. **Yea, the sparrow]** *Avis communissima,* haunteth about houses, buildeth about windows, and there chirpeth.

And the swallow a nest for herself, &c.] She hath her name in Hebrew from her liberty to fly boldly, and to nestle in men's chimneys, #Pr 26:2. The Hebrew word נָרַךְ, for a nest, hath the first

letter larger than the rest, to note God's providence in teaching birds to build. {*Hebrew Text Note*}

Even thine altars] Or, Oh thine altars! (so some read it) by a passionate exclamation, importing strongest desires after them. The want of God's ordinances should pinch us to the heart.

Ver. 4. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house] viz. Those menial servants of thine, the priests and Levites, who have their lodgings near thee, and their employment about thee, *Exclamatio pathetica ex abrupto* (Trem.). This is still the happiness of God's ministers, whose holy function and calling (both in the preparation to it and execution of it) leadeth them to God, and holdeth them with him.

They will be still praising thee] As having hearts full of heaven and consciences full of comfort. There cannot but be music in the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 5. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee] *i.e.* Who is enabled by thee, both in body and mind, to come from the place of his abode to the solemn feasts.

In whose heart are the ways of them] Here the old translation, In whose heart are thy ways, is far better, *i.e.* As he bringeth his body to the ordinances, so he hath thy ways or laws engraven in his heart.

Ver. 6. Who passing through the valley of Baca] εν τη κοιλαδι του κλαυθμωνος (Sept.). That is, of tears, say some; of mulberry trees, say others; the one are moist, the other use to grow in more dry places. Between them both they may serve, saith one, to make up a more complete emblem of this miserable world, made up of woes and wants. *In hoc exilio*, saith Bernard, *in hoc ergastulo*, *in hac peregrinatione*, *in hac valle lachrymarum*, &c.

Make it a well] They are as cheerful in their travel to God's house as if they had plenty of water all the way. *Finis edulcat media*, the joy of the Lord is their strength, whereby they are carried on an end, as they say, to their journey's end, the joyful preconceit of appearing before God in Zion allaying their great thirst.

Ver. 7. They go from strength to strength] *i.e.* Lustily and constantly, *turma turmae subinde sese adiungente*, one company coming this way, and another that, out of their several parishes, and

so they grow stronger, and go more comfortably on together, *Pergunt turmatini* (Beza). Some render it, *de doctrina in doctrinam, vel de academia in academiam*; they grow till they come to a perfect knowledge of God.

Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God] And then think their pains, though never so great, well bestowed, though then they saw God's face but obscurely, in the dark glass of the ceremonies. Popish pilgrims, though used hardly, and lose much of their estates, yet satisfy themselves in this, I have that I came for, viz. the sight of a dumb idol. What, then, should not we suffer to see God in his ordinances? &c.

Ver. 8. **O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer]** Satisfy my yearnings, pantings, and inquietations of mind after the liberty of thy sanctuary, #Ps 84:2. These very desires he calleth prayers.

Ver. 9. **Behold]** Not only hear, #Ps 34:15, with the note.

Look upon the face of thine anointed] *Christi, cuius festina adventum*, saith Kimchi; do me good for Christ's sake.

Ver. 10. **For a day in thy courts]** Every flower hath its sweetness; so hath every holy duty its comfort.

I had rather be a doorkeeper] As the Korites were, to whom this psalm was committed; and for whose encouragement this might be spoken. A doorkeeper is first in, last out; so would David be in holy assemblies. Tardy hearers would be loth to beg this office out of his hand.

In the tents of wickedness] *Tentoriis vexationis*, Kimchi.

Ver. 11. **For the Lord God is a sun and shield]** A universal, all-sufficient, and satisfactory good, proportionate to our necessities.

The Lord will give grace and glory] One would think that were enough, yea, but then here is more than enough, "No good thing will he withhold," &c., and thence is David's desire so to be about him.

Ver. 12. **O Lord of hosts, &c.]** *Conclusio Epiphonematica.*

Chapter 85

Ver. 1. **Lord, thou hast been favourable, &c.]** God's free grace and favour is fitly premised, as the fountain and mother of all the following mercies. This is that other book, **#Re 20:12**, that hath our names in it, and our pardon.

Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob] Of old from Egypt, and alate from the Philistines; who, after Saul's death, miserably tyrannized over Israel, till David delivered them. Some hold that this psalm was composed at the end of the Babylonish captivity; others conceive it may be a prayer for the conversion of the Gentiles, who are brought in speaking, the whole psalm throughout.

Ver. 2. **Thou hast forgiven the iniquity, &c.]** This is worthily mentioned as a main mercy, as a chief fruit of free grace.

Thou hast covered all their sins] That that filthy thing may be no longer an eyesore unto thee. In the original there are six *homoiototeleuta*, which is an elegancy not to be translated into English.

Ver. 3. **Thou hast taken away all thy wrath]** Heb. thou hast gathered it, thou hast recollected it, that we might not bear it; when sin is once remitted, wrath is soon removed.

Thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness, &c.] Here are six hasts drawing in the next turn, **#Ps 85:4**. God hath, and therefore God will, is a strong medium of hope, if not a demonstration of Scripture logics. See **#2Co 1:10**.

Ver. 4. **Turn us, O God of our salvation]** Turn us, and we shall be turned; do as thou ever hast done, for thou art Jehovah, thou changest not, but art yesterday, today, and the same for ever.

And cause thine anger, &c.] *Labefacta iram tuam erga nos.*

Ver. 5. **Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?]** *Dilato Christo tuo vel tuo adventu?* Such expostulations mixed with faith are *Vis Deo grata*, as saith Tertullian, such as God is well pleased with.

Ver. 6. **Wilt thou not revive us again?]** Who for present are all amort, as it were, free among the dead? free of that company?

That thy people may rejoice in thee] A joyless life is a lifeless life, *Mortis habet vices quae trahitur vita gemitibus.*

Ver. 7. **Show us thy mercy, O Lord]** Thy fatherly mercy, *στοργην.*

And grant us thy salvation] Thy Christ, and our Jesus, **#Lu 2:30.**

Ver. 8. **I will hear what God the Lord will speak]** I will not repine, but listen what answer God giveth to my prayer, and patiently wait a good issue of my troubles.

For he will speak peace unto his people] viz. By his promises, and by his providences.

And, to his saints] For all God's people are righteous ones, **#Isa 60:21**, justified and sanctified, **#1Co 6:11.**

But let them not turn again to folly] *i.e.* To the ways of the world and of carnal reason, lest they smart for their rashness, and God never take their words again.

Ver. 9. **Surely his salvation is nigh them, &c.]** Though they be so bleared oft with tears that they cannot see it, and so discouraged that they have even done looking for it, **#Lu 18:7,8.**

That glory may dwell in our land] The Fathers both by salvation and glory dwelling with men understand Christ, **#Joh 1:16.**

Ver. 10. **Mercy and truth are met together]** As in God (his mercy is ever bounded by his truth), so in all his people, there is a sweet conjunction and concatenation of graces, **#2Pe 1:5**; and this is an effect of Christ's kingdom in men's hearts, **#Ro 14:17**, *Iam fides et pax, et honor pudorque Priscus, et neglecta redire virtus Audet; apparetque beata pleno Copia cornu* (Horat.).

Righteousness and peace have kissed each other] Have friendly saluted, in allusion to the manner of the Eastern nations. See **#Isa 32:17 Ps 119:105.**

Ver. 11. **Truth shall spring out of the earth]** *i.e.* Heaven and earth shall be full both of truth and righteousness. Many understand all concerning Christ. See **#Joh 3:13.** Others, concerning extraordinary plenty of all good things.

Ver. 12. **Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good]** Yea, best of all, viz. his Holy Spirit (#Lu 11:13, with #Mt 7:11), with a largess of outward comforts.

Ver. 13. **Righteousness shall go before him]** Men shall walk before God in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives, #Lu 1:75; they shall not rest in outward blessings, #Ps 85:12, or be satisfied with such low things, but be led up thereby to the care of higher.

And shall set us in the way of his steps] So that we shall go an upper (and therefore a better) way, #Pr 15:24, having our feet where other men's heads are; and so departing from hell beneath, which even gapeth for the unrighteous.

A prayer] Left for a form, for a help to devotion, as was also #Ps 102:1 title.

Chapter 86

Ver. 1. **Bow down thine ear, O Lord]** As the careful Physician doth to his feeble patient; so Basil glosseth here.

For I am poor and needy] Having nothing to live on but what my friends privately send me, or what I can get by plundering from the Lord's enemies, #1Sa 30:26.

Ver. 2. **Preserve my soul, for I am holy]** Or, a favourite, a saint, merciful, such a one as upon whose heart the tender mercies of the Almighty, shed forth abundantly, do leave a compassionate frame. David had the Divine nature transfused into him; he was holy as God is holy; and merciful as God is merciful (in quality though not in equality), but all of free grace; and this he pleadeth for his own safety.

Save thy servant] *Serva servum tuum*, thy devoted servant, and not thy beneficiary only.

Ver. 3. **Be merciful unto me]** Lest any should, by the former words (I am holy), suspect him to be a merit monger, he beggeth mercy, with instancy and constancy of request.

Ver. 4. **Rejoice the soul of thy servant]** True and solid joy entereth the soul by the door of fervent prayer. Pray that your joy may be full.

I lift up my soul] In prayer, **#Ps 25:1**, and confident expectation of an unmiscarrying return thereof, as **#De 24:15**.

Ver. 5. **For thou, Lord, art good, &c.]** Lord, I am hell, but thou art heaven, said that martyr; faith wrappeth herself up in the promise, and goeth boldly to God by prayer.

And plenteous in mercy] Both to forgive sin and to give good, **#Ho 14:2**.

Ver. 6. **Give ear, O Lord, &c.]** The hearing of our duties is earnestly to be sought and reckoned among our chiefest mercies.

Ver. 7. **In the day of my trouble, &c.]** God's petitioners must pray and believe, and believe and pray, *quasi in circulo*. David had said, **#Ps 86:5**, God is much in mercy to all that call upon him; here he assumeth and concludeth, but I in the day of my trouble will call upon him; therefore he will answer me.

Ver. 8. **Among the gods]** Whether deputed or reputed.

There is none like unto thee] Either in essence or in operation. See **#Ex 15:11**.

Ver. 9. **All nations whom thou hast made shall come, &c.]** It were fit they should, **#Re 4:11**; it is to be hoped they shall, **#Isa 11:10 43:9**; not by change of place, but of heart, renouncing their irreligions, and yielding unto Christ the obedience of faith. Some understand this text of that general assembly at the last day.

Ver. 10. **For thou art great]** Great is the Lord without quantity, good without quality, everlasting without time, omnipresent without place, containing all things without extent; within all things, and contained of nothing; without all things, and sustained of nothing, &c. Now, the least glimpse of this knowledge is worth all the gleams of human wisdom.

And doest wondrous things] The schools have laid down a threefold way of knowing God: first, negation of imperfections; secondly, affirmation of perfections; thirdly, causation of great works.

Ver. 11. **Teach me thy way]** David knew much of God, and yet he desireth to be taught more; delivering himself up to God's discipline, and saying, as once Solon did,

γηρασκω δε αιει πολλα διδασκομενος

Unite my heart to fear thy name] *i.e.* To serve thee with simplicity and godly sincerity, #2Co 1:12, cleaving to thee with full purpose of heart, #Ac 11:23, and attending upon thee without distraction, #1Co 7:35. As thou art God alone, {#Ps 86:10} so let my heart be toward thee alone. Behold, I find it divided, disjointed, and so disabled for duty (for *anima dispersa fit minor*), Oh do thou unite it, I beseech thee, giving me that one heart thou hast promised, until we all come unto that oneness of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, &c., #Eph 4:13.

Ver. 12. **I will praise thee]** While he prayed, he found his prayer answered; and therefore thus breaketh forth into praises.

Ver. 13. **Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell]** That is, from deadly and desperate dangers. Some understand it to be the damnation of hell which David had deserved by his sins. The Rabbis' gloss is, *A loco adulteris appropriato*.

Ver. 14. **O God, the proud]** The strangers, some read it (by the change of a letter in the original), who are commonly cruel.

And the assemblies of violent men] *Nebulonum*, some render it, sturdy varlets, *fastuosi ac feroces*.

Ver. 15. **But thou, O Lord, art a God full, &c.]** These are part of those thirteen attributes of Almighty God, set down and proclaimed by himself, #Ex 24:6. Middoth, the Rabbis call them, that is, properties.

Ver. 16. **O turn unto me]** Or, look toward me; the life of a believer consisteth in the light of God's countenance.

Give thy strength unto thy servant] Master, pray lend me your hand, saith the servant to his master when he wants help.

And save the son of thine handmaid] *q.d.* I was born in thy house, came of religious parents, &c., therefore do me good for their sakes at least, as Ishmael was blessed for Abraham's.

Ver. 17. **Show me a token for good]** Make me king, as thou hast promised; and meanwhile so deliver me, that my greatest adversaries may be convinced of their malice and madness. At the death of some of the martyrs strange tokens were shown, as they had foretold: Latimer, Hauks, Smith, Samuel, &c., for instance. Son of God, shine upon me, said Hunter at the stake, and the sun shone out of a dark cloud so full, that he was forced to look another way (Acts and Mon. 1544, 1547, 1398).

A Psalm or Song] Made, likely, by David, after that he had settled the ark in Mount Sion, #2Sa 6, and understood that the temple should be built in Mount Moriah; in which two mountains (or rather one mountain with two tops) the Rabbis say that this psalm was composed, and thereunto they draw the next words, "His foundation," or the argument of this psalm, is in and of those holy mountains. But this seemeth not to be the sense.

Chapter 87

Ver. 1. **His foundation is in the holy mountains]** Which cannot be removed, but abide for ever, #Ps 125:1. Some read it, The foundation thereof, viz. of the temple, but especially of the Church universal, that spiritual temple (built of living stones by God, the best architect, Christ himself being the chief cornerstone), is in the holy mountains; for out of Zion went forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; which is therefore called the mother Church, and των εκκλησιων ακροπολις, the chief Church, the reef of the Gentile Churches, #Ro 11, the conversion whereof is here foretold, #Ps 87:1, and perpetual happiness promised (Damasc. l. 4. c. 13).

Ver. 2. **The Lord loveth the gates of Zion]** Nothing but his mere love moved him to make choice of it, above all other places, there to declare his power, presence, and goodness. He first chose it for his love, and then loved it for his choice; and so he doth his Church.

Ver. 3. **Glorious things are spoken of thee]** *Dicta et praedicta*, told and foretold of thee, Heb. in thee, *sc.* by the holy prophets, especially concerning the Christian Church. See #Isa 60:1-5, to the end of that prophecy. *Nihil honorificum non praedicatur de te; et nihil praedicatur de te quin sit honorificentissimum* (Jun.).

Thou city of God] The glory of God, #Ac 7:1, the great King, #Mt 5:35, the only potentate, #1Ti 6:15, who maketh his Church the place of his residence, &c.

Selah] *O rem dignam perpetua admiratione*, Oh wonderful!

Ver. 4. **I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon]** Rahab is Egypt, and so called for its strength and pride. Babel, the chief city of the Babylonians. These were deadly enemies to Jerusalem, which was ground between them as between a pair of millstones, but they shall be reckoned hereafter, saith God, among his domestics, among those that know me, or rather are known of me. See #Isa 19:19,21,25 1Pe 5:13.

Behold Philistia] The Philistines were ever bitter enemies to the Israelites, but shall be converted and become children of the Church. See #Isa 56:1 44:5.

And Tyre] Which shall leave heaping and hoarding, and employ her merchandise to feed and clothe God's saints, #Isa 23:18 Ac 21:8,4.

With Ethiopia] Heb. Cush, of Cush, the son of Ham, their father and founder, #Ge 10:6. Ethiopians they were called from their burnt faces. The eunuch received the gospel, and published it, Acts viii.; the Christian faith was professed among them, as it is thought, from the apostle's time; though now, for over a hundred years, they have again forsaken it.

This man was born there] *Natus, id est, renatus in illa*. The men of these several and other countries were born, that is, born anew, and so made free denizens of the new Jerusalem, fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God, #Eph 2:19.

Ver. 5. **And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her]** *i.e.* Converted; and so a daily accession made to the Church of Christ, as it was by Peter's sermon, &c., and now so many nations: Behold, the world is gone after him, said these envious Pharisees, #Joh 12:19; and the Papists grudge as much at the late glorious Reformation, begun by Luther, wherein so many rejoice, and shall do to all eternity. Bucholcerus blesseth God that he was

born in the days and was bred under the discipline of holy Malancthon, Luther's colleague:

Divisae his operae, sed mens fuit unica; pavit

Ore Lutherus oves, flore Melancthon apes.

Beatus Ludovicus would be called Ludovicus de Pissiaco rather than take greater titles, because there he became a Christian. He thought no birth equal to a new birth in Christ; no parentage to that of God to his Father, the Church to his mother, Christ to his elder brother, &c. Some apply this text to the places of holy men's birth, and tell us, that he loves the very ground his servants tread on, the very air they first breathe in, their walls are continually before him, #Isa 49:16, he thinks the better of the houses where they dwell.

And the highest himself shall establish her] So that the gates of hell shall not unsettle her. Other states and polities have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin; not so the Church.

Ver. 6. **The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people]** When he maketh his cease book (called the writing of the house of Israel, #Eze 13:9, the Lord's book of remembrance, #Mal 3:16, the register of the living in Jerusalem, #Isa 4:3), he shall muster them in the roll of his soldiers, number them in the catalogue of his citizens, call them in the nomenclature of his disciples, &c. A glorious privilege surely.

Ver. 7. **As well the singers as the players, &c.]** There shall be an exuberancy of joy in the Holy Ghost, the only comfortable soul ravishing music, far beyond that of the material temple.

All my springs are in thee] *i.e.* All my thoughts run upon thee, with greatest delight. My eyes are wholly fixed upon thee, so some read it; others, My bowels are in thee, making these to be the words of the psalmist (Calvin; R. Solomon); but methinks they do better that make them to be the words of God, promising plenty of grace and comfort to his people, as from everflowing, overflowing fountains.

A Psalm or Song] *Psalmus totus luctuosus*, a doleful ditty, beginning and ending with complaints; and therefore sung in the primitive times, among other penitential psalms, as the public confession of persons excommunicated.

Upon Mahalath Leannoth] A musical instrument sounding heavily as a shaulm doth, and therefore called infirmity, for humbling, or for antiphenies. A fit title.

Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite] *i.e.* The instruction of Heman, who was a very wise man, #1Ki 4:31, descended of Zerah, the son of Judah, #1Ch 2:4, and thence called the Ezrahite, brother to Ethan, who penned the next psalm, #1Ch 2:6. *Nobile par fratrum.*

Chapter 88

Ver. 1. **O Lord God of my salvation]** This is the only one expression of his faith found in this whole psalm, and it nmst be understood that he thus believed and prayed, as here, #Ps 88:2, when he was at worst, and most despairingly complained.

I have cried day and night unto thee] Though in such a state as they were, #Ac 27:20, when neither sun nor star appeared, yet he cast anchor, and prayed still for day.

Ver. 2. **Let my prayer come before thee]** He did not cast out brutish and wild complaints and moans in misery, as it is natural for people to do, but poured forth his soul into God's blessed bosom, and now prayeth an answer.

Ver. 3. **For my soul is full of trouble]** *Hypotyposis hominis luctuosissime affecti.* Here we have the lively picture of a man under bitter affliction. Extraordinary wise he was, and extraordinary troubles he had. None out of hell suffer more than God's dearest children. This good man felt himself in the suburbs of hell, as it were.

And my life draweth nigh unto the grave] Or, unto hell. The same word signifieth both, because death is hell's harbinger, and would be so to the elect, but for Christ.

Ver. 4. **I am counted with them, &c.]** I am looked upon as irrecoverable, given up for desperate. *Conclamatum est.*

I am as a man that hath no strength] A man no man; weak as water, ακιας αναρ ανθρωπος.

Ver. 5. **Free among the dead]** Free of that company, one of the many among the manes, or ghosts; a free denizen of that society of that moiety of mankind that are dead. Yea, I am *mortuorum minimus*, as R. Jonah rendereth it, according to the Arabic, *A mundo manumissus*.

Like the slain that lie in the grave] That are thrown on heaps into a pit, as after a field fought (R. David).

Whom thou rememberest no more] As to this present world, and as it may seem to others, with whom out of sight out of mind; dead folk are soon forgotten. Varro thinks *Lethum*, death, hath its name *απο την ληθης*, from forgetfulness; because they which have now forgotten all the world should soon be forgotten of the world.

And they are cut off from thine hand] Thy providence over them in matters belonging to life is at an end.

Ver. 6. **Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit]** *In cisterna infimorum*, in the deepest dungeon, *in lutoso lacu*, such as Jeremiah was cast into, **#Jer 37:15,16**

In the deeps] *In voraginibus*, out of which none escapes, nothing can be buoyed up, as they call it.

Ver. 7. **Thy wrath lieth hard upon me]** So it did upon David, **#Ps 32:3**, but especially upon the Son of David, the Lord Christ, of whose sufferings these were but types, or as chips of his cross.

And thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves] But all this while it is thy doing, and that carrieth comfort in it.

Ver. 8. **Thou hast put away mine acquaintance, &c.]** Job and David complain of the like misery. *Optimum solatium sodalitium*; but woe to him that is alone.

I am shut up] Miserably included in this forlorn comfortless condition, a perpetual prisoner.

Ver. 9. **Lord, I have called daily upon thee]** Which he would not have done if he had cast away his confidence; for "how shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed?" **#Ro 10:14**. The

saints, when they want the sun, yet they have the daystar in their hearts.

Ver. 10. **Wilt thou show wonders to the dead?**] Wilt thou delay to deliver me till I am dead, and then raise me again by a miracle, that I may praise thee? But he should have considered that God neither needeth our poor praises nor can his help ever come too late.

Shall the dead arise] Heb. the giants, that is, those that are swallowed up of death, as the giants were of the deluge.

Ver. 11. **Shall thy loving kindness, &c.**] The same again, and #Ps 88:12 a third time, *pro more dolentium*. See #Ps 6:5 30:9.

Ver. 12. **In the land of forgetfulness**] So the state and place of the dead is called; and why: {See Trapp on "Ps 88:5"}

Ver. 13. **But unto thee have I cried**] Oh, condescend to thy poor crying creature in extremity.

In the morning] {See Trapp on "Ps 5:3"}

Ver. 14. **Lord, why castest thou off, &c.**] Luther saith of himself, that after his conversion he lay three days in desperation. And afterwards, he sometimes suffered such desertions, *ut nec calor, nec sanguis, nec sensus, nec vex, superesset*, saith an eyewitness (Just. Jon. Ep. ad Melan.).

Ver. 15. **I am afflicted, &c.**] He was brought up in the school of temptations, and kept in this form from his youth. He was put soon to it, and so deep lessons had he set him, that he had like to have lost his wits. I am distracted, saith he, I am held upon the wheel.

Ver. 16. **Thy fierce wrath, &c.**] As rivers of brimstone.

Have cut me off] *Multis excisionibus ideoque duplicatur Tau*.

Ver. 17. **They compassed me about**] As the water compasseth the earth like a girdle.

Ver. 18. **Lover and friend, &c.**] See #Ps 88:8, and mark how mournfully he concludeth; as doth also the Church, #La 5:22.

Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite] Who having out lived Solomon, and seen both the defection of the ten tribes from the house of David, and the woeful work made by Shishak, king of Egypt, in the kingdom of Judah, #2Ch 12:1-9 composed this psalm (as it may seem), and left it for an eruditive or instruction to all succeeding ages what to do in such dismal changes and concussions. That

Jewish doctor mentioned by Aben Ezra was more ignovent than wise, who would neither read nor hear this psalm, *Quia videtur dura de Deo proferre*, because it seemeth to speak harshly of God, **#Ps 89:39**.

Chapter 89

Ver. 1. **I will sing of the mercies of the Lord]** God's mercies moved him to promise, his faithfulness bindeth him to perform; Ethan promiseth to celebrate both, were the times never so bad, their case never so calamitous.

I will make known thy faithfulness] Which yet I am sometimes moved to make question of. Thus the psalmist insinuateth before he complaineth, *Ut faciendum docent rhetores in causis invidiosis*; wherein he showeth himself a right rhetorician.

Ver. 2. **For I have said]** I believed, therefore have I spoken it; I dare say it shall be so, because thou hast said it (so the Greek here hath it). What God saith we may write upon it, because all the words of his mouth are in righteousness, neither is there anything froward or perverse in them, **#Pr 8:8**.

Mercy shall be built up for ever] Till the topstone be laid, and judgment be brought forth into victory, **#Mt 12:20**; the sure mercies of David fail not.

Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the heavens] Or, with the very heavens; that is, so sure as they are established. If that martyr could say, The heavens shall sooner fall than I will forsake the truth I have learned; how much more may we say so of God's unfailable faithfulness! See **#Ps 89:33**.

Ver. 3. **I have made a covenant with my chosen]** *i.e.* With Christ (who is God's elect one, **#Isa 42:1**), and in him with all his people, **#Eph 1:4**.

I have sworn unto David] The father and figure of Christ, who is frequently called David, and is here chiefly to be understood. O happy we, for whose sake God hath sworn! saith Tertullian; and O most wretched, if we believe him not thus swearing!

Ver. 4. **Thy seed will I establish for ever]** David's for a long time, but Christ's for ever and aye.

And build up thy throne to all generations] Christ's kingdom hath no end, **#Isa 9:7 Lu 1:33**. This is very comfortable. The Jews understanding this promise of David's kingdom, have oft attempted the restoration of it; but in vain, and to the ruin of their nation.

Ver. 5. **And the heavens shall praise thy wonders]** Heb. thy miracle, viz. in their circumgyration (which showeth a first mover), in their embroidery, influences, &c., yielding matter and occasion of praise. And thus, All thy works praise thee, O Lord; but thy saints bless thee, **#Ps 145:10**. And so by heavens here we may understand the angels of heaven (as they are called, **#Mt 24:36**), as by the congregation of saints the Church universal in heaven and earth, by whom God is highly praised for the covenant of grace.

Ver. 6. **For who in the heaven can be compared? &c]** Thou far transcendest the brightest cherub, all Whose excellence is but derivative, a drop of thine ocean, a spark of thy flame.

Who among the sons of the mighty] *Inter chores Angelorum*, saith the Chaldee: What angel, what man?

Ver. 7. **God is greatly to be feared in the assembly, &c.]** Heb. Daunting terrible in the secret of the saints very much. The holy angels make their addresses unto him with greatest reverence and self-abasement; for they know that he humbleth himself to behold things in heaven, **#Ps 113:4-6**. How much more, then, should we set ourselves to serve him with reverence and godly fear, since our God is a consuming fire! **#Heb 12:28,29**.

Ver. 8. **Who is a strong Lord, like unto thee]** Heb. Who is like thee, mighty Jah? This is to magnify God, when we get above all creatures, in our conceptions of him.

Or to thy faithfulness round about thee?] To those that are round about thee; or, thou art full of faithfulness.

Ver. 9. **Thou rulest the raging of the sea]** That it overwhelm not the earth: this work of God's power is often celebrated, as well it may, all things considered.

Ver. 10. **Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces]** *i.e.* Egypt, which is called Rahab for its strength and pride.

As one that is slain] Or, as one deadly wounded; as such a one is soon despatched, so here, *Vox Halal vulneratum lethaliter designat.*

Thou hast scattered, &c.] See **#Isa 25:11**, {*See Trapp on "Isa 25:11"*}

Ver. 11. **The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine]** Thou madest them by thy power, and thou maintainest them by thy providence; thou doest whatsoever thou wilt in both, **#Ps 115:3.**

As for the world, &c.] See **#Ps 24:1 50:12.**

Ver. 12. **Tabor and Hermon]** That is, the west and east of Judaea, but put here for the west and east of the world. Judaea was the world of the world, as Athens the Greece of Greece, as Solon the epitome of Athens.

Ver. 13. **Thou hast a mighty arm]** Men should, therefore, both tremble before God, and trust in him, **#1Pe 2:6.**

Strong is thy hand] Even thy left hand, *q.d. tu polles utraque manu*, thou hast both hands alike powerful.

Ver. 14. **Justice and judgment are the habitation (or basis) of thy throne]** These are the supporters and pillars.

Mercy and truth, &c.] These are the forerunners, or satellites; I should much fear justice and judgment, saith Austin, were it not that mercy and truth comfort me: "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," **#Joh 1:17.**

Ver. 15. **Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound]** *Iubilationem*, the sound of thy word, the free use of thine ordinances; serving thee with cheerfulness, and giving thee thanks with exaltation of heart, and rapture of spirit. *Scias unde gaudeas quod verbis explicare non possis*, saith Austin. *Accipe quod sentitur antequam discitur*, saith Cyprian, writing to Donatus, concerning the joy of his conversion.

They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance] In the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 16. **In thy name shall they rejoice all the day]** Or, every day. *Bonis semper feriae*, Ἀνηρ αγαθος πασαν ημεραν εορτην ηγειται,

saith Diogenes in Plutarch. God crowneth the calendar of good men's lives with many festivals.

Ver. 17. **For thou art the glory of their strength]** And hence it is that they are filled top full with comfort, and do over abound exceedingly with joy in all their tribulation, **#2Co 7:4**.

Ver. 18. **For the Lord is our defence]** Heb. our shield; the body cannot be wounded, but through the shield.

And the Holy One of Israel is our king] How, then, can any one cry aloud? **#Mic 4:9**.

Ver. 19. **Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one]** i.e. To Samuel, thy priest and prophet, **#1Sa 16:12**, one of those few that lived and died with glory.

I have laid help upon one that is' mighty] I have called David to the kingdom, and qualified him for the purpose; but the person chiefly intended here is Christ, 'able to save them to the uttermost who come to God by him,' **#Heb 7:25**.

I have exalted one chosen out of the people] One of mean parentage, or one of singular parts, drained from the dregs, and sifted from the brans of the vulgar.

Ver. 20. **I have found David]** The Father seeketh such as worship him in spirit and in truth, **#Joh 4:23**. The whole Trinity agreed upon Christ for a mediator.

With my holy oil have I anointed him] How Christ was appointed and anointed to the mediatorship. {See Trapp on "Ps 45:7"}

Ver. 21. **With whom my hand shall be established]** I will conduct and carry him through all conditions with comfort. See **#Ezr 8:22**, {See Trapp on "Ezr 8:22"}

Mine arm also shall strengthen him] i.e. *Omnipotentia mea et opitulatio* , the arm hath more strength than the hand.

Ver. 22. **The enemy shall not exact upon him]** Or, shall profit nothing, not prosper at all, as the Chaldee and Greek have it.

Nor the son of wickedness] Heb. of injurious evil, one that is set upon mischief, as Aaron said, this people is wholly set upon wickedness, #Ex 32:22.

Ver. 23. **And I will beat down his foes, &c.]** Victory over enemies is of the Lord; he may better say than any mortal monarch, *Cui adhaereo, praest,* He whom I take part with is sure to prevail.

That hate hint] That secretly malign him, though they can do him no mischief.

Ver. 24. **But my faithfulness and my mercy]** My power without him according to promise, and my peace within him that passeth all understanding, shall guard his heart and mind in Christ Jesus, #Php 4:7.

Shall his horn be exalted] He shall be eminent and eximious.

Ver. 25. **I will set his hand also in the sea]** He shall be a vice-god, #Da 12:7 Re 10:1. Herodotus saith that the Aeginetae gave the Persians earth and water, in token of subjection to Darius, their king. Christ is the true *κοσμοκράτωρ*, a title anciently usurped by Sesostris, king of Egypt.

Qui Pharos currus regum cervicibus egit.

Ver. 26. **He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father]** This was a royalty above all the rest, #Joh 1:12 1Jo 3:1, and applied to Christ, the only begotten Son of God; it sets him above all the angels, #Heb 1:4-8

My God] This is the beehive of heavenly honey.

Ver. 27. **Also I will make him my firstborn]** Christ is the firstborn of every creature, and in all things hath the pre-eminence. David also shall be the highest prince on earth, blessed and accepted far beyond any of them: *O nimium dilecte Deo, & c.* O excessively esteemed God.

Ver. 28. **My mercy will I keep for hint]** It shall be ready at all times for his relief, even the sure mercies of David, neither will I utterly take it from him, as I did from Saul.

And my covenant shall stand fast with him] Faster than the mountains, #Isa 54:10, firmer than the courses of sun and moon, day and night, #Jer 31:35,36 33:20,21.

Ver. 29. **His seed also, &c.]** This is chiefly meant of Christ and his kingdom.

And his throne as the days of heaven] i.e. As the kingdom of heaven, eternal; for the aspectible heaven is corruptible.

Ver. 30. **If his children forsake my law, &c.]** If they fall into sins of commission; if they shoot beyond the mark.

And walk not in my judgments] If they fall into sins of omission, and shoot short. Where note, that every transgression and disobedience (that is, every commission and omission) receiveth a just recompence of reward, #Heb 2:2.

Ver. 31. **If they break my statutes]** Heb. If they profane or make void; q. d. be their sins never so heinous, I will forgive them; though I take vengeance (temporal) of their inventions, #Ps 99:8.

And keep not my commandments] Not-serving of God, not-sacrificing is a sin, #Mal 3:18 Ec 9:2. See #Ps 89:30.

Ver. 32. **Then will I visit their transgression with the rod]** The sins of the saints are transgressions, yea, they are treacheries, and shall be visited with the rod; yea, with the rod of men, #2Sa 7:14, of weak, sickly, frail men, as the word there signifieth, that have but weak hands, and can give no hard blows; such shall rather see God's care than feel his power in their sufferings. Only they shall see that he will not pass by their sins without a sensible check.

Ver. 33. **Nevertheless my lovingkindness, &c.]** For that were to break covenant: I will correct him in mercy, and in measure. *Sinite virgam corrigentem, ne sentiatis malleum conterentem,* saith Bernard.

Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail] *Non mentiar in veritate mea,* God is very careful to keep touch with his.

Ver. 34. **My covenant will I not break]** Heb. I will not profane my covenant, though they have profaned my statutes, #Ps 89:31.

Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips] But will pardon their failings, and cause them to keep my commandments.

Ver. 35. **Once have I sworn by mine holiness]** Which is as deep an oath as I know how to take; for my holiness is myself, who am most holy, and the fountain of all holiness. By this I have sworn once, that is, once for all, *immobiliter, immutabiliter*.

Ver. 36. **His seed shall endure for ever]** Christ "shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands," #Isa 53:10 *filiabitur nomine eius*, #Ps 72:17. See there.

Ver. 37. **It shall be established for ever as the moon]** If his sons be good they shall shine as the sun in his strength, saith Kimchi; as, if they be not, yet they shall be as the moon that shineth, though for a time obscured or eclipsed. A fit resemblance, saith Ainsworth, of the throne or Church of Christ, which hath not always one face or appearance in the world, though it be perpetual. The Papists would have this moon always in the full; and if she show but little light to us they will not yield she is the moon. And yet, except in the eclipse, astronomers demonstrate that the moon hath at all times as much light as she hath in the full; but oftentimes a great part of the bright side is turned to heaven, and a lesser part to the earth: and so the Church is ever conspicuous to God's eye, though it appear not always so to us.

And as a faithful witness in heaven] As oft, then, as we see the sun and moon in heaven let us think of the constance of God's covenant, and the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom. By this "faithful witness" some understand the rainbow, #Ge 9:13-17.

Ver. 38. **But thou hast cast off and abhorred]** So it seemed to the psalmist through infirmity of the flesh (though his faith did *ubique micare*, appear ever and anon amidst his complaints), and so the enemies reported and insulted.

Thou hast been wroth with thine anointed] *sc.* Out of love displeased. And here, as likewise in the verses following, *omnia sunt Asyndeta, ad vehementiam*.

Ver. 39. **Thou hast made void the covenant]** This passage a certain Spanish Rabbi stumbled at (as hath been noted on the title of this psalm), but without cause; for all these things are spoken *κατα*

δοξαν, and not κατ αληθειαν, according to opinion, and not according to the truth of things. And, therefore, Kimchi saith well here, Many wonder at this psalmist, and I do as much wonder at their wondering, &c.

Thou hast profaned his crown] By rendering his regal dignity contemptible. The Greek rendereth it, his sanctuary, *αγιασμα αυτου*..
Ver. 40. **Thou hast broken down all his hedges]** Or, walls. The walls of Sparta were their militia, of England are their ships, of all lands their laws, #**Ec 10:8**.

Thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin] Or, to consternation and deadly fright.

Siqua manet gelida formidine concutis arcem

(Buchanan).

Ver. 41. **All that pass by the way spoil him]** They rob and rifle him: such havoc was made by Shisbak, and is still by the Church's enemies, #**Heb 10:34**.

He is a reproach to his neighbours] Who now look upon him as a king of clouts, and ask, Where is his invincible majesty?

Ver. 42. **Thou hast set up]** Thou seemest to be on their side.

Thou hast made all his enemies] To revel in his ruins.

Ver. 43. **Thou hast also turned the edge]** Disarmed and disabled him.

And hast not made him, &c.] But turned his courage into cowardice.

Ver. 44. **Thou hast made his glory to cease]** Heb. his brightness, the splendent glory and dignity of the kingdom. Some understand it of the priesthood, and the following words of the kingdom.

Ver. 45. **The days of his youth hast thou shortened]** Thou hast nipped him in the bud, snatched him away by an untimely end, as a young man is sometimes in his prime and pride.

Thou hast covered him with shame. Selah] Thou hast wrapped him up in the winding sheet of shame. Lord, this is true.

Ver. 46. **How long, Lord? &c.]** Here faith prevaieth against flesh, and falleth a praying, and at length a praising God.

Ver. 47. **Remember how short]** See #Ps 39:5.

Wherefore hast thou, &c.] As thou mayest seem to have done, unless they may cheerfully serve thee and enjoy thee.

Ver. 48. **What man is he that liveth, &c.]** *q.d.* Since die we must, let us live while we may, to some good purpose.

Selah] *q.d.* Mark it, and meditate well and oft on this savoury subject.

Ver. 49. **Lord, where are, &c.]** *q.d.* Thou seemest to have lost them, and we would fain find them again for thee.

Ver. 50. **Remember, Lord]** Thou seemest to have forgotten us and our sufferings, and we would fain remind thee.

Ver. 51. **The footsteps of thine anointed]** Heb. The heels or soles of the foot, that is, his doings and sufferings. The Chaldee and others render it, *tarditares, moras Christi tui*, the delays of thy Christ in coming, whom, therefore, they taunt us with, *velut tardigradum vel loripedem et claudum*, and say, Where is the promised Messiah?

Ver. 52. **Blessed be the Lord, &c.]** *sc.* For a Christ; or for adversity as well as for prosperity; and this not formally and slightly, but earnestly, and with utmost affection, Amen, and Amen.

A Prayer of Moses] Made by him, belike, when he saw the carcasses of the people fall so fast in the wilderness; committed to writing for the instruction of those that were left alive, but sentenced to death, #Nu 14:26-38, and here fitly placed as an illustration of that which was said in the precedent psalm, #Ps 89:48, "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah."

Chapter 90

Ver. 1. **Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place]** In all our troubles and travels through this wilderness, and before, we have not been houseless and harbourless, for "Thou hast been our dwelling place," our habitacle of refuge, as some render it, *Maon. habitaculum*

tutum. We use to say, A man's house is his castle. The civil law saith, *De domo sua nemo extrahi debet, aut in ius vocari, quia domus tutissimum cuique refugium atque receptaculum*, No man ought to be drawn out of his house at the suit of another; because his house is his safest refuge and receptacle. He that dwelleth in God cannot be unhoused, because God is stronger than all; neither can any one take another out of his hands, #**Joh 10:29** Here, then, it is best for us to take up as in our mansion house, and to seek a supply of all our wants in God alone. It was a witty saying of that learned Picus Mirandula, God created the earth for beasts to inhabit, the sea for fishes, the air for fowls, the heaven for angels and stars. Man, therefore, hath no place to dwell and abide in but the Lord alone. See #**Eze 11:16 2Co 6:8-10**.

Ver. 2. **Before the mountains were brought forth**] And they were made at the creation, not cast up by the flood, as some have held. Moses first celebrateth God's eternity, and then setteth forth man's mortality; that the one being set over against the other, as Solomon speaketh in another case, #**Ec 7:14**, God may be glorified, and man comforted, which is the main end of the Holy Scriptures, #**Ro 15:4**, and far beyond those *consolatiunculae Philosophicae*.

Ver. 3. **Thou turnest man to destruction**] *Ad minutissimum quiddam*, so Beza rendereth it, to a very small business, to dust and powder. Others, *ad contritionem vel contusionem*, by turning loose upon him various diseases and distresses; thou turnest him out of the world, #**Ec 1:13**. And generally, thou sayest of all and singular sons of men,

Return, ye] Your bodies to the earth, according to the decree, #**Ge 3:17-19**, your souls to God, that gave them, #**Ec 12:7**. And here the course of man's life is compared, saith one, to a race in a tilt or tourney, where we soon run to the end of the race, as it were, and then return back again. *Intelligit Moses vitam humanam similem esse gyro*, saith another. Man's life is compared to a ring or round; we walk a short round; and then God gathers us in to himself. One, being asked what life was? made an answer answerless, for he presently turned his back and went his way. We fetch here but a turn, and God saith, "Return, ye children of men." This some make to be an irony; as if God should say, Live again, if ye can. Some apply it to the resurrection, others to mortification and vivification.

Ver. 4. **For a thousand years in thy sight, &c.]** *q.d.* Live men a longer or shorter space, *Serius aut citius*, thou endest their days; and in comparison of thine eternity, *Puncture est quod vivimus et puncto minus*, it is a small span of time that the longest liver hath upon earth, #2Pe 3:8 Ps 39:5. *Non multum sane abest a nihilo*. Some would hence infer, that the day of judgment shall last a thousand years; *fides sit penes authores*.

When it is past] We judge better of the shortness of time, when it is past.

And as a watch in the night] Which is but three hours' time; for soldiers divide the night into four watches, and our life is full of the darkness of error and terror.

Ver. 5. **Thou carriest them away as with a flood]** Suddenly, violently, irresistibly, by particular judgments, besides that general necessity of dying once, #Heb 9:27. This is set forth by a treble comparison, of floods, sleep, and flowers here; and indeed the vanity and misery of man's life is such, as cannot sufficiently be set forth by any similitudes. See #Ps 90:9,10.

They are as a sleep] Or dream; the dream of a shadow (σκιας οναρ), saith Pindarus, the shadow of smoke, saith another.

They are like grass] An ordinary comparison, #Isa 40:6 Jas 1:10,11

Ver. 6. **In the morning it flourisheth]** So doth man in his prime and vigour, his bones full of marrow, his breasts of milk.

In the evening it is cut down] So is man by death's mortal scythe, which moweth down the lilies of the crown as well as the grass of the field. In the evening grass will cut better, and the mowers can better work at it.

Ver. 7. **For we are consumed by thine anger]** Justly conceived for our sins, #Ps 90:8. This is a cause of death that philosophy discovereth not, as being blind, and not able to see far off, and therefore cannot prescribe any sufficient remedy against the tear of death, such as is here set down, #Ps 90:12, but such as made Cicero

complain, that the disease was too hard for the medicine, and such as left men either doubtful (Socrates, for instance) or desperate, and devoid of sense, as Petronius in Tacitus, *Qui in ipsis atris morris delicias quaesivit*, solaced himself with singing such light sonnets as this;

*Vivamus men Lesbia atque amemus,
Rumoresque senum severiorum
Omnes unius aestimemus assis.*

And by thy wrath are we troubled] *Consternati sumus*, Death stings us and sticks us; the motion and mention of it is terrible to us, through sense of sin and fear of wrath, #**Heb 2:15**. *Symmachus et Aquila transtulerant acceleravimus*.

Ver. 8. **Thou hast set our iniquities before thee]** As a judge doth the misdeeds of a malefactor, together with the proofs and evidences.

Our secret sins] Which we either never took notice of or had utterly forgotten (the sins of our youth, some render it, but not so well), those sins which we had hoped to have secreted, such was our hypocrisy.

In the light of thy countenance] This light thou hast made use of for the discovery of our inmost evils, those that lie most up in the heart of the country, as it were, as the murmurings and misbelief of our hearts, &c., these thy pure eyes, more clear and radiant than the sun itself, have plainly discerned. Nature teacheth us that the fiery eye needeth no outward light, but seeth *extramittendo*, by sending out a ray, &c.

Ver. 9. **For all our days are passed away]** Heb. do turn away the face. See #**Ps 90:3**.

We spend our years as a tale that is told] The grace whereof is brevity, *q.d. dicto citius*. Some render it, as a thought, that ariseth and passeth. To this sense the Greek poet;

Αιφα γαρ ωστε νοημα παρερχεται αγλαυς ηβη.

The Chaldee hath it, *Ut flatus oris in Hyeme*, as the breath of one's mouth in winter. See #Jas 4:14.

Ver. 10. **The days of our years are threescore, &c.**] So Solon in Laertius saith, the term of man's life is seventy years, this few exceed, and fewer attain to. To the same sense speaketh Macrobius also (Lib. 1., Som. cap. 6), saying, *Septies deni anni a Physicis creditur meta vivendi, et hoc vitae humanae perfectum spacium terminatur; &c.* The Fathers lived longer; but as men's wickedness increased, so their days decreased; and now their lives are daily shortened, the generations despatch away, that the world may the sooner come to an end. If Moses and Aaron of old, and *Iohannes de temporibus*, and some few others of latter time, live longer, even to a hundred or more, these are singular examples, and it is of the generality that the psalmist here speaketh.

And if by reason of strength, &c.] One readeth it thus; And if by fortitude fourscore years, even their latitude is labour and sorrow; that is, this enlarging of the time bringeth nothing but labour and misery, because now the body is diseased (Dr Major).

For it is soon cut off] As a web, or as grass.

And we fly away] As a bird upon the wing, or as an hour of the day.

*Qui nescit quo vita modo volat, audiat horas;
Quam sit vita fugax, nos docet iste sonus.*

I am not eternity, said Epictetus, but a man; that is, a small part of the whole, as the hour is of the day; I must therefore come and go away as the hour doth (Enchirid.).

Ver. 11. **Who knoweth the power of thine anger?**] None doth, since it is such as no man can either avoid or abide; and such is men's stupidity, that few will believe till they feel it; no, though their lives be so short and uncertain.

Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath] *Ira tua non est minor timore nostro;* let a man tear thee never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more, if once he fall into thy fingers.

Ver. 12. **So teach us to number our days]** The philosopher affirms, that man is therefore the wisest of creatures, because he alone can number, *Bruta non numerant*. But in this divine arithmetic of numbering our days (to the which all other is not to be compared, no, though we could, as Archimedes boasted, number the stars of heaven, or the sands by the sea shore), God himself must be our teacher, or we shall never do it to purpose. R. Solomon observeth, that the word ׀ rendered "so" here, if taken as numeral letters, maketh seventy, and the years of our life are seventy; out of which, say other Rabbis, if we deduct the time of childhood and youth, which is vanity, the time of sleep, repose, repast, and recreation (which is more than the one half), and the time of affliction and grief which we enjoy not, what a poor pittance will life be reduced unto!

That we may apply our hearts] Heb. that we may cause them to come; for naturally they hang off, and make strange.

Unto wisdom] To the true fear of God, and mortification of sin, which is the sting of death, and makes it a trap door to hell. This is hard to do, but must be done; or men are undone for ever. To live with dying thoughts is the way to die with living comforts.

Ver. 13. **Let it repent thee]** Or, comfort thou thy servants.

Ver. 14. **O satisfy us early]** As thou didst our fathers with manna.

Ver. 15. **Make us glad according]** Let us have a proportion at least.

Ver. 16. **Let thy work appear]** Thy proper work, which is to show mercy; for to do justice is thy work, thy strange work, #Isa 28:21.

And thy glory unto their children] That they at least may enter into the land of Canaan, according to #Nu 14:31.

Ver. 17. **And let the beauty of the Lord, &c.]** *i.e.* The bounty; the Italian rendereth it, *La Giocondita, jucunditas Domini sit in nos*.

And establish thou the work, &c.] Thus we had all need to pray; for,

*Nullius est felix conatus et utilis unquam,
Consilium si non detque iuuetque Deus.*

Chapter 91

Ver. 1. **He that dwelleth in the secret place, &c.**] The safety of a saint is in this whole psalm (*Quo nihil neque solidius neque splendidius dici potest*) set forth to the life, *Verbis vivis, animatis sententiis et spiritus fervore flagrantissimo.*

Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty] Under the pleasant and assured defence of God; he shall lodge under the shadow of Shaddai, and there sing away care and fear.

Ver. 2. **I will say of the Lord]** I dare say it is so as I have said, said the psalmist (whom the Jews make to be Moses), and I will presently make proof of it in myself; *Non verbis solum praedicans, sed exemplis.* Some conceive that the believer having heard the former proposition, **#Ps 91:1**, is here brought in professing his faith; and saying to the psalmist, Behold, I dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and shall I abide under the shadow of the Almighty? The answer follows.

Ver. 3. **Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler]** *i.e.* Of the devil and his emissaries, **#2Ti 2:26**, who, by force and fraud, seek to ensnare the saints. *Gratiae privativae multo plures sunt quam positivae,* saith Gerson. God daily delivereth his from innumerable deaths and dangers. By fowler here some understand the punishing angel, **#2Sa 24:15-17**, and conceive that this psalm was penned upon occasion of that great plague that followed upon David's numbering the people; for then, if ever, both prince and people stood in need of special comfort, and here they have it. Divine consolations are therefore sweet, because seasonable and suitable.

And from the noisome pestilence] That uncomfortable and contagious disease. The Vulgate rendereth it, and from rough words. In Hebrew Dabhar signifieth a word, Debher, a pest; an evil tongue hath the pestilence in it, *Ab excidio exitiorum.*

Ver. 4. **He shall cover thee with his feathers]** As the hen doth her chickens; *Fides est quae te pullastrum, Christum gallinam facit, ut sub pennis eius speres; nam salus in pennis eius,* saith Luther; it is faith which maketh thee the little chicken, and Christ the hen; that thou mayest hide, and hope, and hover, and cover under his wings; for there is health in his wings.

And under his wings shalt thou trust] For without faith what use is there to us of the promises. *Non de se debet sperare Christianus; si vult esse firmus vapore materno nutriatur, ut pullus gallinaceus,* saith Austin; Let no man hope for safety or strength but under Christ's wings graciously stretched out over him.

Ver. 5. **Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night]** Thou shalt be freed, if not from the common destruction, yet from the common distraction.

Impavidum ferient ruinae.

Nor for the arrow that flieth by day] Sudden ill occurrences *quae nec praevident nec praecavent fideles,* the arrows of death shall come whisking by thine ears, and not hit. (Hor. lib 2, Od. 13.)

Quid quisque vitet nunquam homini saris

Cautum est in horas—Improvisa lethi

Vis rapuit, rapietque gentes.

True faith is a target, and sayeth a man if not from the smart, yet from the hurt of evil accidents.

Ver. 6. **Nor for the pestilence]** Called before terror, and arrow, as some conceive, Hippocrates calleth it τὸ θεῖον, the divine disease, because sent more immediately from God, as an evil messenger. Not but that a good man may die of the plague, as did Oecolampadius, and many others; Hezekiah is thought to have had it, so had reverend Beza (his family was four different times visited herewith), who was much comforted under that and other heavy afflictions by this sweet psalm, which, therefore, he hugged and held most dear all the days of his life, as himself witnesseth in his argument and use of this psalm.

Nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday] For the noonday devil (so the Vulgate rendereth it after the Septuagint), as, for pestilence walking in darkness, one old English manuscript hath goblin. The Chaldee here expounds it, the company of devils. As in the next verse, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand,"

&c. R Solomon expoundeth, A thousand devils shall pitch their tents on thy right hand and on thy left; but shall not hurt thee, because the good angels shall guard thee against them. But it is better to understand all (as before) of the pestilence, though I doubt not but the devil, that old man slayer, hath a hand in this and other common calamities, yet not without the Lord's overruling power limiting him. Ver. 7. **A thousand shall fall, &c.**] This deadly disease lays heaps upon heaps (as we have had lamentable experience), and scarce leaveth living enough to bury the dead, as in the days of Decius the emperor.

But it shall not come nigh thee] Thou shalt be antidoted and privileged; *sc.* if God see it good for thee, {see #Ps 91:6} and thou be careful to serve his providence. The Turks shun not the company of those that have the plague; but pointing upon their foreheads, say, It was written there at their birth when they shall die. Thus to do is not to trust God, but to tempt him.

Ver. 8. **Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold]** And say, Oh the severity of divine justice! Oh the venomous and mischievous nature and effects of men's sin! Behold the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell severity, but toward me goodness, if I continue in his goodness; otherwise I shall also be cut off, **#Ro 11:22.**

And see the reward of the wicked] Thyself being, as it were, shot free; thy sincerity prevailing for thy safety.

Ver. 9. **Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, &c.]** Because thou hast done as I do, thou shalt speed as I have sped; for God is rich in mercy to all his.

Even the Most High thy habitation] See **#Ps 90:1.**

Ver. 10. **There shall no evil befall the]** No devoratory evil, as Tertullian expresseth it; nothing that tendeth *ad exitium*, but only *ad exercitium*, and such as shall end in thy good.

Neither shall any plague] What a wonderful separation made the Lord between the houses of the Israelites and the Egyptians, **#Ex 11:7.** See **#Job 5**, and take these places, as **#Ps 91:6.** For it may befall a saint to share in a common calamity; as the good corn and weeds are cut down together, but for a different end and purpose,

— *Non te tua plurima, Pantheu,
Labentem textit pietas* —

Ver. 11. **For he shall give his angels charge over thee]** This guard of angels, many angels, yea, all, if need be, to secure every poor believer, how meanly soever he thinks of himself, or is esteemed by others, is no small privilege. See **#Mt 4:6**. {See Trapp on "Mt 4:6"}

To keep thee in all thy ways] In all thy lawful and Christian undertakings; for no further doth God or his holy angels take charge of thee. If we keep not within God's precincts, we cannot look for his protection. Wefts and strays fall to the Lord of the soil. The State secureth none that are abroad at undue hours, that travel not between sun and sun. Divines observe, that the devil, citing this text, **#Mt 4:6**, left out these words on purpose, as not for his purpose; yet doth not our Saviour so much as upbraid him with this mutilation, nor yet tell him of that which followeth, **#Ps 91:13**, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder," &c., to teach us, in dealing with an adversary, not to lie at the catch, but answer to the thing, &c.

Ver. 12. **They shall bear thee up in their hands]** {See Trapp on "Mt 4:6"} Be sensible of the many good offices done us by the blessed angels, not once looking for our thanks.

Ver. 13. **Thou shalt tread upon the lion, &c.]** No creature shall harm thee, so as to hinder thine eternal happiness. See **#Isa 11:6-8 Ho 2:18 Job 5:23 Mr 16:18**. This text was shamefully abused by Pope Alexander, A.D. 1159, when at Venice he trod upon the neck of the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, and said, as here, *super leonem et aspidem ambulabis*, &c.

Ver. 14. **Because he hath set his love upon me, &c.]** Because he cleaveth unto me, and acquiesceth in me. *Ardet me, amplexus est me*. Thus God is brought in speaking toward the close of all, for greater assurance. Aben Ezra saith that it is the speech of God to his angels.

I will set him on high, because he hath known my name] And hence it is that his heart is so set upon me. They that know God's name will surely trust in him, **#Ps 9:10**. "Thy name is as an ointment poured out, therefore do the virgins love thee," **#So 1:3**. But unken

unkist, as the northern proverb hath it; men, therefore, care not for God because they know not his excellencies.

Ver. 15. **He shall call upon me]** This is an indispensable duty, and will be cheerfully performed by those who know and love the Lord.

I will deliver him, &c.] As he did David, Joseph, Daniel, and others.

Ver. 16. **With long life, &c.]** He shall have enough of this life present even to a satiety, and heaven in the end. The Hebrews call this psalm *Canticum de accidentibus*. When Beza came first to the Reformed Church he found them singing this psalm, and was greatly encouraged.

A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day] The sabbath in the Hebrew hath its name from resting (**שָׁבַת**), and is near allied to two other words, the first whereof signifieth to sit still (**בָּשַׁט**), and the second to worship and give praise (**שָׁבַח**). On this day they met for works of piety (as sacrificing, reading and expounding the Scriptures, praying, singing, as here, &c.) and of mercy, #**Mt 12:2-8,11,12**. And this psalm, treating of God's great works, was purposely set for a canon of sanctifying that day called by the Jews the queen of days; in praise whereof, before and after meat, they daily say certain verses.

Chapter 92

Ver. 1.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord] And the sabbath day is a good time to do it in; for then (as Kimchi here noteth) men are at leisure and liberty to do it most solemnly; the better day the better deed.

And to sing praises unto thy name] The psalmist commends it, and presently sets upon the doing of it. So #**Ps 122:6,7**, he no sooner bids pray for the peace of Jerusalem, but himself prays, "Peace be within thy walls," &c.

Ver. 2. **To show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning]** Every morning, that God may have the firstfruits of the day, but especially

on the sabbath morning, when we awake and rise, *ad quietem et ad delicias animi et corporis*, as Kimchi here hath it. The Jews bless God at the sabbath's coming in and going out.

And thy faithfulness in the night] Breaking our sleep for that purpose; yea, we must be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, #Pr 23:17, how much more on the sabbath day! then our whole work must be ravished in spirit, doing no work, but such as whereby we either bless God or look to receive a blessing from God; none but such as wherein we would the Lord should find us at his coming; which Lactantius saith will be on the sabbath day.

Ver. 3. **Upon an instrument of ten strings, &c.]** This was part of the Jewish pedagogy; and teacheth us to use all lawful means to enforce ourselves to that, whereunto we are so dull and backward.

Ver. 4. **For thou, Lord, hast made me glad, &c.]** And I will improve this cheerfulness to thankfulness, #Jas 5:13. On the sabbath we ought *solummodo spiritualibus gaudiis repleri*, to be filled with spiritual joys only, saith the Council of Paris, held A.D. 820.

I will triumph in the works of thy hands] *sc.* The works of creation, administration, but especially of redemption.

Ver. 5. **O Lord, how great are thy works!]** Surely so great that I cannot utter them, and must, therefore, thus vent myself by an exclamation.

Expleri mentem nequeo, ardescoque tuendo

(Virgil.)

And thy thoughts are very deep] Here, then, we must do as those Romans did, who, when they found a lake the depth whereof was unknown, they dedicated it to Victory. Cry, O the depth! and there rest us.

Ver. 6. **A brutish man knoweth not]** A sottish sensualist, who hath his soul for salt only, to keep his body from putrefying (as we say of swine); he takes no knowledge of God's great works, but grunts and goes his ways, contenting himself with a natural use of the creatures, as beasts do.

Ver. 7. **When the wicked spring as the grass, &c.]** This the fool admireth, calling the proud happy, &c., #Mal 3:15, and not

considering that that proud grass shall be mown down, and that that flourish shall soon perish.

It is that they shall be destroyed for ever] Not grow again, as mown grass doth: *Exoriuntur ut exurantur*. It is but as Haman's banquet before execution.

Ver. 8. **But thou, Lord, art most high, &c.]** *q.d.* Flourish the wicked never so much, shoot they up never so high, thou art higher, and in the thing wherein they deal proudly thou art above them, **#Ex 18:11.**

Ver. 9. **For, lo, thine enemies, &c.]** The psalmist, by this demonstrative particle "lo," points to it as it were with the finger, as a thing most evident and undoubted.

Shall be scattered] *Disparant se, dissiliunt,* dispart themselves.

Ver. 10. **Like the horn of an unicorn]** Which is very fair, hard, and well lifted up. See **#Nu 23:26.** I am in good plight.

I shall be anointed] It is well for the present, and it will be better hereafter.

Ver. 11. **Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies]** Or, on mine observers, who watch for my halting.

Ver. 12. **The righteous shall flourish like the palm]** A tree that groweth not in these cold climates, but where it doth is noted for tall, constantly green, long lived, sweet, firm, straight, &c., *εμπεδοφυλλος* (Theoph.).

*Nititur in pondus palma et consurgit in altum;
Quo magis et premitur, hoc mage tollit onus.*

Though it hath many weights at the top, and many snakes at the bottom, yet is still saith, Nec premor, nee perimor.

Like a cedar] Not like grass, as the wicked do, **#Ps 92:7.**

Ver. 13. **Those that be planted]** Having taken deep root there. Hypocrites are only thrust in, as a stake, into the earth. Mnason was an old disciple, Andronicus and Junia were in Christ before Paul, and therefore of note among the apostles for well-rooted and fruited, **#Ro 16:7.**

In the courts of our God] In Christ, and under the ordinances.

Ver. 14. **They shall still bring forth fruit in old age]** *Quantumvis veteres, non veterascent,* though old, yet shall they retain their former vigour and verdure, and be like that Persian tree in Theophrastus, that at the same time doth bud, blossom, and bear fruit, *pullulantes et succulentae.*

They shall be fat and flourishing] *Vividi et vegeti* (Bucholcer), not as the Brabanti or Flemings, *qui quo magis senescunt, eo magis stultescunt,* saith Erasmus, the elder the foolisher; nor as Trapezuntius, who outlived all his learning; but as Moses, whose sight failed not, his heat abated not; as wine, the older the better; as the sun, which shineth most amiably toward the descent.

Ver. 15. **To show that, &c.]** This is one of their principal fruits, to give God a testimonial, such as good old Moses doth, **#De 32:4.**

Chapter 93

Ver. 1. **The Lord reigneth]** *i.e.* The Lord Christ. Kimchi here noteth that all the following psalms till the hundred and first are *de diebus Christi,* of the days of Christ. Here we have his empire and regality asserted, first, by his works; secondly, by his word, **#Ps 93:5.** See the like **#Ps 19:1,2,7,8, &c.,** and that manifestation of himself by his word far preferred.

He is clothed with majesty] He hath now put off his arms, and put on his robes, he will henceforth rule all wisely and righteously.

The Lord is clothed with strength] For the battle, in case his enemies stir, to attempt against him, **#Ezr 8:22.**

The world also is established] The earth, though it hang like a ball in the air, without a basis, *Ponderibus librat a suis,* yet is unmoveable; how much more the Church!

Ver. 2. **Thy throne is established of old]** Christ shall reign, *utcunque, fremant scelerati, et omnia quantum in se est conturbent,* rage the wicked never so, for he is Jehovah, **#Ps 93:1,** the Eternal: here,

— *Firma aeternus qui concidet arce.*

Ver. 3. **The floods have lifted up, O Lord]** Armies of enemies have attempted great matters, but thou hast soon quelled and quashed them. *Immota manet* may well be the Church's motto.

*Aura tonet, sonet unda maris, fremat orbis et orcus;
Tu tamen insertos nos tibi, Christe, tegis.*

The floods lift up their waves] The word for waves hath its name from dashing or breaking (*Anaphora*); the enemies do but beat themselves into foam and froth against Christ the rock, *qui instar rupis quae in mari vadoso, horridi Iovis, et irati, ut ita dicam, Neptuni fervidis assultibus undique verberata, non cedit aut minuitur; sed obtendit assuetum fluctibus latus; et firma duritie tumentis undae impetum sustinet ac frangit* (Woverius).

Ver. 4. **The Lord on high is mightier]** He defeats tyrants and persecutors, be they never so terrible for noise and number. If he but thunder they are hushed, and glad to wriggle, as worms, into their holes.

Ver. 5. **Thy testimonies are very sure]** Thy promises infallible; and therefore rage the world never so, thou shalt still have a holy catholic Church, such as whose principles, practices, and aims are divine and supernatural; such as walk worthy of God in all well pleasing, and inasmuch as they have these rich promises, do cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, #2Co 7:1.

Holiness becometh thine house] God looks to be served like himself; he will be sanctified of all those that draw near unto him in holy duties, #Le 10:3. This the heathens were not altogether ignorant of, and therefore at their sacrifices the priests cried out *τις τηδε*, who is here? whereunto the people that were present answered, *πολλοι αγαθοι τε παρεισι*, here are many, and those good men all (Erasmus Praef. in Adag.)

— *Procul, hinc procul, este profani.*

Chapter 94

Ver. 1. **O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth]** Heb. Jehovah, God of revenges; so #Jer 51:56, "The Lord God of recompences." "Vengeance is mine," saith he, "I will repay," #De 32:35. And it is best he should, for he returneth "a just recompense of reward," #Heb 2:2; whereas men seek oft an unequal revenge, #Heb 10:30, as a stab for the lie given; and, besides, in seeking the lives of others, they sometimes lose their own.

Show thyself] Heb. shine forth, appear for thy poor wronged servant. David knew the law, and submitted to it; he turneth over his enemies to God to be ordered by him, neither did he himself herein any disservice. "I seek not mine own glory" (so mine own revenge), saith Christ, but there is one that seeketh it. God never faileth to do it, to be their champion, who strive not for themselves; only they must wait his leisure, and not usurp his executions.

Ver. 2. **Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth]** Judges, as they ascend the tribunal, so when to pass sentence they usually stand up. See #Isa 33:10. And hereunto the psalmist alludeth.

Ver. 3. **Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long?]** *Bis, quia de die in diem gloriantur,* saith Aben Ezra. Twice he saith it, because the wicked boast day after day, with such insolence and outrage, as if they were above control.

Ver. 4. **How long shall they utter]** Heb. They will bluster (or well-out, as a fountain), they will speak hard things (speak millstones, throw daggers), they will boast themselves (talk largely of their good parts and practices); all this is expressed by an elegant asyndeton, ^{a} to show that they did all this ordinarily and incessantly.

Ακολαστον εχοντες γλωσσαν, αισχιστην νοσον

(Euripid.).

^{a} A rhetorical figure which omits the conjunction.

Ver. 5. **They break in pieces thy people]** They make potsherds of them. And this is the best use they make of thy patience; break it off, therefore.

Ver. 6. **They slay the widow and the stranger]** Those sacred persons, thy proper clients; to such a height of hard heartedness are

they grown, that they pity not them whom nature and courtesy would show compassion to.

Nulla fides, pietasque viris qui castra sequuntur.

Let us bless ourselves out of the bloody fingers of barbarous and brutish men, skilful to destroy.

Ver. 7. **Yet they say, The Lord shall not see]** To all other their enormities they added this, that they denied a Divine providence, and professed profaneness. *Irridendum vero, curam agere rerum humanarum illud quicquid est summum,* saith Pliny, lib. 2, c. 7, delivering the sense of all other atheists.

Ver. 8. **Understand, ye brutish]** Ye that are ringleaders to the rest, but no wiser than the reasonless creatures; yea, therefore worse, because ye ought to be better. Polybius complaineth of man's folly, above that of other creatures, in those words, *Caeterae animantes ubi semel offenderint, cavent; non vulpes ad laqueum, lupus ad foveam, cants ad fustem temere redibunt; Solus homo ab aeve ad aevum peccat fere in iisdem.*

Ver. 9. **He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?]** Shall the author of these senses be senseless? Our God is not as that Jupiter of Crete, who was pictured without ears, and could not be at leisure to attend upon small matters. He is οὐς *et* νοῦς; he is also ολοφθαλμος, all eye, all ear. We read of a people called Panotii God only is so, to speak properly.

He that Formed the eye, shall he not see?] He saith formeth, because there are many forms or species in the eye continually; and as the optic virtue in the eye seeth all, and is seen of none, so doth God much more. All David's ways were in God's sight, all God's laws in David's sight, **#Ps 119:168.**

Ver. 10. **He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not be correct?]** *Qui totis gentibus non parcat, vos non redarguet?* He that punisheth profane nations that know him not, shall he spare you? **#Am 3:2.** Shall not tribulation and anguish be upon the Jew first? **#Ro 2:9.** The Chaldee thus paraphraseth, He that gave a law to his people, shall he not punish them when they transgress it?

He that teacheth man knowledge] Shall not he know? is to be supplied to make sense. The psalmist seemeth so displeas'd at men's doubting or denying of this, that he could not perfect his sentence, through passion of mind. Some causes, indeed, do give that which themselves have not; as the lifeless heaven enliveneth, the dull whetstone sharpeneth. But here it is far otherwise, and woe be to such as act not accordingly, **#Isa 29:15**.

Ver. 11. **The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity]** Or worse; that they are ever weaving spiders' webs, or else hatching cockatrices' eggs, **#Isa 59:5**. This sentence St Paul allegeth against the world's wizards, **#1Co 3:20**, who, the wiser they were the vainer they were, **#Ro 1:21**. As Austin, writing to a man of great parts, saith, *Ornari abs te Diabolus quaerit*, The devil would fain be tricked up by thee.

Ver. 12. **Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, &c.]** And thereby effectest that his vain thoughts lodge not within him, **#Jer 4:14**; but that the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return to thee, &c., **#Isa 55:7**. *Feri Domine, feri*, said Luther, Strike whiles thou pleasest, Lord; only to thy correction add instruction, *Ut quod noceat, docent*. See my Love Tokens.

And teachest him out of thy law] Lashing him, but with teaching him, *ut resipiscat, et serviat tibi corde perfecto*, saith Kimchi here, that he may repent and serve thee with an upright heart; for which purpose affliction sanctified is of singular use. *Crux voluntatis Dei schola, morum disciplina, felicitatis meditatorium, gaudii Spiritus Sancti officina, breviter bonorum omnium thesaurus*, saith Brentius, on **#Job 33:16**.

Ver. 13. **That thou mayest give him rest]** Here usually, but hereafter certainly. *Mors aerumnarum requies* was Cbaucer's motto; Those that die in the Lord shall rest from their labours. Meanwhile they are chastened of the Lord that they may not be condemned with the world, **#1Co 11:32**.

Until the pit be digged for the wicked] Until the cold grave hold his body, and hot hell hold his soul.

Ver. 14. **For the Lord will not cast off his people]** Though he cast them into the furnace of affliction. The wicked he bringeth into

misery, and there leaveth them to come off as they can, #Eze 22:20 29:5. Not so the saints, #Zec 13:9 Isa 43:2 Heb 13:5.

Nor forsake his inheritance] Because his. *Patriam quivis amat, non quia pulchram, sed quia suam* (Seneca). All love their own.

Ver. 15. **But judgment shall return unto righteousness]** All shall be set to rights, and every one have his due, according to #Ro 2:6-10, if not sooner, yet at the day of judgment without fail. Some give this sense, severity shall be changed into mercy, the rigour of the law to the clemency of the gospel. Others thus, judgment shall return to righteousness, that is, to its own place, *licet defertur iudicium non aufertur*.

And all the upright in heart shall follow it] viz. In their affections; they are carried out after it, earnestly desiring that dear day when God will unriddle his providences, and clear up his proceedings with the sons of men. Some read, shall follow him, that is, God; being brought home to him by their afflictions, they shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Not so every loose ungirt Christian or profligate professor.

Ver. 16. **Who will rise up for me]** *q.d.* But a very few fast friends find I at court, Jonathan excepted. Some there are that will sprinkle me with court holy water, as they say, give glossing speeches; but it is little that they will do, and yet less that they will suffer for me. Faithful friends, saith one, are gone on pilgrimage, and their return is uncertain.

Ver. 17. **Unless the Lord had been my help]** He loveth to help at a pinch; he usually reserveth his hand for a dead lift. See #2Ti 4:16,17.

My soul had almost dwelt in silence] *i.e.* In the dark cloisters of death. The Greek and Latin translators render it, In hell.

Ver. 18. **When I said, My foot slippeth]** I stand on a precipice, and shall be down, *Hypotyposis est*.

Thy mercy, O Lord, held me] I have subsisted merely by a miracle of thy mercy, by a prop of thine extraordinary pity and patience.

Ver. 19. **In the multitude of my thoughts within me]** My perplexed, intricated, ensnarled, intertwined (as the branches of a

tree) cogitations and ploddings upon my daily sufferings; when I know not what to think, or which way to take to.

Thy comforts delight my soul] The believer is never without his cordial; he hath comforts that the world knows nothing about. The good Landgrave of Hesse, being held prisoner for a long time together by Charles V, emperor, said that he could never have held it out so, but that he felt the divine consolations of the martyrs. *Martyr etiam in catena gaudet, &c.*, saith Austin. *Crux inuncta est*, saith Bernard. Godliness hath many crosses, and as many comforts; like as Egypt hath many venomous creatures, but withal many antidotes against them.

Ver. 20. **Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee]** Shall tyrants and oppressors (who do exercise regiment without righteousness) entitle thee to their wicked proceedings, and go unpunished? See #**Isa 36:10 37:36**; the throne or tribunal is called, The holy place, #**Ec 8:10**; woe, then, to those that pollute it!

Which frameth mischief by a law?] As did the primitive persecutors, with their bloody edicts against Christians; and the Popish bishops, of whose laws that of Politian was verified,

*Inventum Actiae dicuntur iura Draconis:
Vera est fama nimis, nil nisi virus habent.*

Some render it Procter, vel contra legem, beside or against law.

Ver. 21. **They gather together]** Heb. run by troops, as thieves do.

Against the soul] Which they would gladly destroy if it lay in their power. This the Popish persecutors oft attempted, but God hath better provided, #**Mt 10:28**.

Ver. 22. **But the Lord is my defence]** Heb. my high place, where I am set out of their reach.

Ver. 23. **And he shall bring upon them, &c.]** See #**Ps 7:15,16**.

Chapter 95

Ver. 1. **O come, let us sing unto the Lord]** It is thought by this beginning that this psalm was not penned by David for private use, but for public assemblies, to be sung by the congregation on the

sabbath and such like times. It may very well be that they began their morning sacrifice with this psalm, as the Latin Church also afterwards did their matins, or morning service.

Let us make a joyful noise] With a clear and loud voice, as of a trumpet; singing with grace in our hearts unto the Lord.

Ver. 2. **Let us come before his presence]** Heb. prevent his face, be there with the first. "Let us go speedily... I will go also," #Zec 8:21. Let praise wait for God in Sion, #Ps 65:1. Rabbi Gaon, *Praeveniamus et ante diem iudicii*, Let us make haste, saith he, to do it, before the day of judgment; and lest we be taken with our task undone. Others, Let us anticipate his face, that is, prepare our hearts at home, before we come into the public; or, let us give thanks for mercies already received, that we may make way for more.

With psalms] *Oratione prorsa et vorsa.*

Ver. 3. **For the Lord is a great God]** Understand it of Christ, as the apostle also does, #Heb 3:4 1Co 10:4

Above all gods] Whether reputed so, or deputed, as kings.

Ver. 4. **In his hand are the deep places]** Heb. searching, that is, much searched after, but found to be unsearchable.

The strength of the hills] Heb. The heights, such as will sport a bird to get to the top of them. Depths and heights are his, ארוע, *volucris volans in altum* (R. Solom.).

Ver. 5. **The sea is his, &c.]** Canute confuted his flatterers (who told him that all things in his dominions were at his beck and check) by laying his command on the sea to come up no higher into his land, but it obeyed him not.

And his hands formed the dry land] Worship him, therefore, #Re 4:8-11

Ver. 6. **O come, let us worship and bow down]** With our whole bodies prostrate on the ground, our hands and feet stretched out (Kimchi). The Jews' gesture of adoration at this day is the bowing forward of their bodies, for kneeling they use none (no more do the Grecians), neither stir they their bonnets in their synagogues to any man, but remain still covered.

The Lord our maker] Who hath not only created us, but advanced us, as he did Moses and Aaron, #1Sa 12:6.

Ver. 7. **The people of his pasture]** Whom he turns not out into commons and fallows, but feeds among lilies, #So 2:16.

And the sheep of his hand] His cades brought up at hand, eating of his meat and drinking of his cup, and lying in his bosom, as Uriah's ewe lamb did, #2Sa 12:3.

Today if ye will hear his voice] *i.e.* While the day of grace lasteth, which is not long, #2Co 6:2. *Qui paenitenti veniam spondit, peccanti crastinum non promisit,* saith Gregory.

Ver. 8. **Harden not your heart]** By unbelief, and the deceitfulness of sin, #Heb 3:12,13, which gradually affirms the heart against God.

As in the provocation] As your fathers did at Massah and Meribah; be not you as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as they were, #Ac 7:51.

Ver. 9. **When your fathers tempted me]** Ten times, all along the wilderness, #Nu 14:22, though

They saw my work] Both mercies and judgments, #Ps 98:8, yet they were refractory and unmalleable.

Ver. 10. **Was I grieved]** *Litigavi, vel cum taedio pertuli.*

That do err in their hearts] Wandering, though not so wide as to miss of hell.

They have not known] *viz.* Practically and savingly.

Ver. 11. **Unto whom I swear]** When put past all patience, *Patientia laesa fit furor.*

Should not enter, &c.] Thus God sweareth *cum reticentia,* to show how greatly he was incensed.

Chapter 96

Ver. 1. **O sing unto the Lord a new song]** For this new mercy of the ark now brought into Jerusalem from the house of Obededom, #1Ch

15:25, but especially of Christ, typified by the ark, who should be preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up to glory, #1Ti 3:16.

Sing unto the Lord, all the earth] Which they could not do aright till they had heard, believed, and were sealed, #Eph 1:13. Unbelievers can have no true notion of God but as of an enemy; and, therefore, all their verbal praises are but a black *sanctus*, suitable to such saints.

Ver. 2. **Sing unto the Lord, &c.]** David was at this time full of affection and exultation of spirit (insomuch as Michal mocked him for it, #1Ch 15:29), and thence this heap of holy expressions to the same purpose. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Show forth his salvation] Evangelize, preach the gospel of salvation by Christ. See #Ps 40:10 2Sa 18:18 Isa 61:1, where the same word is used.

From day to day] Other news delight us only at first hearing; but the good news of our redemption is sweet from day to day, *ac si in eodem die redemptio fuisset operata*, saith Kimchi here, as if it were done but today. *Tam recens mihi nunc Christus est*, saith Luther, *ac si hac hora fudisset sanguinem*, Christ is now as fresh unto me as if he had shed his blood but this very hour.

Ver. 3. **Declare his glory]** Heb. Cipher it up in the particulars, that God be no loser by you.

His wonders among all people] There is a world of wonders in the work of man's redemption by Christ; and all other mercies meet in this, as the lines in the centre, streams in the fountain.

Ver. 4. **For the Lord is great]** *Vere magnus est Christianorum Deus*, said Calocerius, a heathen; he is *omni laude maior, et merito metuendus*, saith David here, and elsewhere often. Sound out, therefore, and send abroad his worthy praises, that others may hear and fear.

Ver. 5. **For all the gods, &c.]** *Deunculi, deastri*, those petty gods, those dunghill deities of the heathens, are nullities; indeed, they are devils, and those idols were their receptacles, and, as it were, their

bodies, from whence in some places they gave oracles; but were silenced at Christ's coming in the flesh, to the great amazement of their superstitious worshippers.

But the Lord made the heavens] With singular artifice, #**Heb 11:10**, using *παση σοφιας μηχανη*, every engine of wisdom (Clem. Alex. Paid. l. 1. c. 9).

Ver. 6. **Honour and majesty are before him]** These are his harbingers, and they go often coupled, as #**Ps 104:1 Ps 111:3 Ps 145:5 Job 40:10**, &c. By the former, seemeth to be meant outward port and splendour; by the latter, inward reverence and respect following thereupon.

Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary] God's glory shineth more in his Church than in all the world besides.

Ver. 7. **Give unto the Lord]** See #**Ps 29:1,2**. One rendereth it, *Tribuite ponderose, unde בְּהִבּוּ onus pondus portate*; to show that our praises of God should be ponderous and substantial.

Ver. 8. **Give unto the Lord the glory, &c.]** It was hard for the heathens to forego their superstitions (Cicero resolved he would never do it, &c.), therefore they are here so pressed to it. See #**Re 14:6,7**, with the notes there. One expositor giveth this note here, *Ternarius numerus est sacer ob mysterium Triadis; ideo enim eo scriptura gaudet*. The Scripture oft presseth or expresseth things thrice over, in reference to the mystery of the holy Trinity.

Bring an offering] Reasonable service, #**Ro 12:1**; spiritual sacrifices acceptable by Jesus Christ, #**1Pe 2:5**.

Ver. 9. **O worship the Lord, &c.]** Supplicate *proni*, fall flat on your faces (Geneb.). See #**Ps 95:6**.

In the beauty of holiness] *i.e.* In his courts, as #**Ps 96:8**, or in holy beauty, as some render it; that is, in true faith, and with good affections.

Fear before him] Rejoice before him with trembling, #**Ps 2:11**

Ver. 10. **Say among the heathen]** *Proclamate undique praecones, &c.*, Make proclamation everywhere, that now the Lord Christ reigneth; and that there shall be a general jubilee.

The world also shall be established] There is no true stability but where Christ reigneth; he will settle peace and good order, which the devil, that turbulent spirit, and his agents, desire to disturb, and to set all on a hurry comb.

Ver. 11. **Let the heavens rejoice, &c.]** Let there be a general joy for the general renovation by the coming of Christ, #Ro 8:22, after which the whole creation groaneth also. Basil and others by heaven, earth, &c., understand angels, men of all sorts, as islanders, seamen, fieldmen, woodlanders, &c. *Vel est similitudo ad denotandam in mundo pacem,* saith Kimchi, Or it is a similitude to note peace all over the world. And surely when Christ came there was a universal *aut pax aut pactio,* saith Florus, peace or truce, under the government of Augustus.

Let the sea roar] Heb. thunder; *Externo fragore et bombo testetur internam animi laetitiam,* let it testify its joy *perstrependo et reboando,* by roaring its utmost.

Ver. 12. **Let the field be joyful, &c.]** And so give check to the hardness of man's heart, not at all affected with those benefits by Christ, wherein they are far more concerned than these insensible creatures; which yet have lain bedridden, as it were, ever since man's fall, and earnestly wait for the manifestation of the sons of God, #Ro 8:19.

Ver. 13. **Before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh]** Certainly, suddenly, happily, &c., for this is the sum of all the good news in the world, that Christ cometh and cometh; that is, saith Basil, once, to show the world how they shall be saved; and a second time, to judge the world for neglecting so great salvation, &c.

Chapter 97

Ver. 1. **The Lord reigneth]** This is matter of greatest joy to the righteous. *Gaudeo quod Christus Dominus est, alioqui totus desperassem,* I am glad that Christ is Lord of all; for otherwise I should utterly have been out of hope, saith Miconius, in an Epistle to Calvin, upon the view of the Church's enemies.

Let the multitudes of isles be glad] As more happy herein than any of those called the Fortunate Islands, or than Cyprus, anciently

called Macaria, that, is, The blessed isle, for her abundance of commodities.

Ver. 2. **Clouds and darkness are round about him]** As once at the delivering of the law, so now in publishing the gospel, he is no less terrible, having vengeance in store for the disobedient, #2Co 10:6. It is a savour of death to unbelievers. Christ came to send fire on the earth, #Lu 12:49.

Righteousness and judgment, &c.] Mercy Christ hath for the penitent, judgment for the rebellious, who seek to dethrone him. Woe to those gospel sinners.

Ver. 3. **A fire goeth before him]** For even our God is a consuming fire, #Heb 12:29 (and not the God of the Jews only), as shall well appear at the last day, #2Th 1:8. {See Trapp on "Ps 97:2"}

Ver. 4. **His lightnings enlightened the world]** His apostles, those *fulmivia Ecclesiastica*, shall spread gospel light, and amaze people; the Lord working with them, and confirming their word with signs following, #Mr 16:20

Ver. 5. **The hills melted like wax]** Nothing shall be so stout and steady as to be able to stand before them.

Before the Lord] *Adon, Dominator*, the maker and master of all, the rightful proprietary. The Latin translation hath it, All the earth is before the face of the Lord.

Ver. 6. **The heavens declare his righteousness]** As so many Catholic preachers, #Ps 19:1 50:4,6. By heavens some understand angels, concurring with men to glorify God. Others, the heavenly bodies pleading God's cause against atheists and idolaters. They that worshipped the sun were atheists by night; and they that worshipped the moon were atheists by day, as Cyril wittily.

Ver. 7. **Confounded be all they that serve graven images]** Those instruments of idolatry, and lurking places of devils, *diabolicae inspirationis et iustinctus participes*. Such and their servants we may lawfully pray against.

That boast themselves of idols] As did that idolatrous Micah, #Jud 17:4,5, Nebuchadnezzar, #Da 3:1-7; Julian, called, therefore Idolian; the Papists at this day. See Dr Rainolds *de Idololatria Romana*.

Worship him, all ye gods] *i.e.* All ye angels, saith the Greek and Arabic; and the apostle saith the same, #**Heb 1:6**, proving Christ to be God-man. This psalm, saith Beza, is highly to be prized of all Christ's, as containing a most divine epitome of all gospel mysteries. Ver. 8. **Zion heard, and was glad]** Heard what? the downfall of the devil's kingdom, and the erecting of Christ's sceptre; this was good news to the Church, and her children. Berne was the first town that after the Reformation burnt their images. Zurich followed on an Ash Wednesday, which they observe and celebrate every year to this day, with all mirths, plays, and pastimes, as an Ash Wednesday of God's own making.

Ver. 9. **For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth]** Declared now to be so with power, as #**Ro 1:4**, and the world convinced of singular sottishness in fancying other divinities.

Thou art exalted above all gods] "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," #**Eph 1:21**. Here, then, we have the super-exaltation of Christ's person; and the apostle manifestly alludeth to it, #**Eph 4:10** **Php 2:9**.

Ver. 10. **Ye that love the Lord]** As having tasted of Christ's sweetness, being justified by his merit, and sanctified by his Spirit, #**1Pe 2:4** **1Co 6:11**; carried after him with strength of desire, #**Ps 42:1**, and delight, #**Ps 73:25**. Such as these only are Christ's true subjects; others will pretend to him, but they are but hangbys, unless the love of Christ constrain them to hate evil, to hate it as hell, #**Ro 12:9**. Sin seemeth to have its name of *Sena* to hate (the word שִׂנְאָה here used), because it is most of all to be hated, as the greatest evil; as that which setteth us farthest from God, the greatest good ἀποστρυγγοντες. This none can do but those that love the Lord Christ in sincerity; for all hatred comes from love. A natural man may be angry with his sin, as a man is sometimes with his wife or friend for some present vexation; but hate it he cannot; yea, he may leave it (for the ill consequents of sin), but not loathe it. If he did, he would loathe all, as well as any, for hatred is ever against the whole kind of a thing, saith Aristotle, το μισος προς τα γεννη (Rhetor. lib. 2).

Ver. 11. **Light is sown for the righteous]** The righteous is *haeres crucis*, the heir of the cross; and many are his troubles. A child of

light may walk in darkness and have no light, **#Isa 50:10**, yet Christ will not leave him comfortless, **#Joh 14:16**, light is sown for him. It is yet seeding time, and that is usually wet and dropping; and the seed must have a time to lie, and then to grow, ere a crop can be expected; there must be also weeding and clodding, &c. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it. Be ye also patient, stablish your heart," &c., **#Jas 5:7,8**. We look not to sow and reap in a day, as he saith of the Hyperborean people far north, that they sow shortly after the sunrising with them, and reap before the sunset, *sc.* because the whole half year is one continual day with them (Heresbach de re Rust.). Deliverance will come in God's good time; and as before the morning light is the thickest darkness, as the seed that lieth longest underground cometh up at length with greatest increase, so here. *Semen modicum, sed messis foecunda*, saith Aben Ezra on the text.

And gladness for the upright] This clause expoundeth the former.
Ver. 12. **Rejoice in the Lord]** See **#Ps 32:11**, {*See Trapp on "Ps 32:11"*}

At the remembrance of his holiness] That is, of himself; for whatsoever is in God is God; as also of his works and benefits, whereby he giveth you so good occasion to remember him.

A Psalm] The Greek addeth, of David. A man might think it were rather of John Baptist pointing out Christ, and his kingdom, as if already come, with the great good thereby accruing to the saints.

Chapter 98

Ver. 1. **O sing unto the Lord a new song]** See **#Ps 96:1**, and observe how the compiler of the psalms hath hereabout set together sundry psalms of the same subject.

His right hand and his holy arm] His is emphatic, and exclusive; *q.d.* Christ alone hath done the deed, he is our sole Saviour, **#Isa 59:16 63:5**. In the justification of a sinner Christ and faith are alone, saith Luther, *Tanquam sponsus et sponsa in thalamo*. As wax and water cannot meet together, so neither can Christ and anything else in this work. Away, then, with that devilish doctrine of the saints' merits, *Quibuscunque tandem pigmentis illita obtrudatur*. If any

commend or go after any other way to salvation besides Christ, he doth according to the Greek proverb, draw mischiefs to himself; as the wind Caecius doth clouds, Κακα εφ εαυτον ελκει ως ο Καικιας νεφος, (Aristot. in Meteor.).

Ver. 2. **The Lord hath made known his salvation]** His way of saving his people by his Son, Christ, #Mt 1:21: this mystery, so long kept secret, is now made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, #Ro 16:25,26.

His righteousness] Made ours by imputation; this the Jews to this day deride, and the Papists call it putative, in a jeer.

Ver. 3. **He hath remembered his mercy, and his truth]** His mercy moving him to promise, and his truth binding him to perform, #2Sa 7:18,21, and hence all our happiness.

Ver. 4. **Make a joyful noise]** Bless God for a Christ. The Argives, when delivered by the Romans from the tyranny of the Macedonians and Spartans, *Quae gaudia, quae vociferationes fuerunt! quid fiorum in Consulem profuderunt!* what great joys expressed they! what loud outcries made they! the very birds that flew over them fell on the ground, astonished with their noises (Plut. in Flamin.). The crier at the Nemean games was forced to pronounce the word liberty *iterumque iterumque*, again and again.

Ver. 5. **Sing unto the Lord with the harp]** *Tum cithararum tum vocum mutuis vicibus;* do your utmost in the most superlative manner you can devise.

Ver. 6. **Make a joyful noise]** By the repeating and inculcating of this exhortation is intimated our dulness and backwardness to a business of this nature; the necessity of the duty, and excellency of the mercy that can never be sufficiently celebrated.

Ver. 7. {See Trapp on "Ps 96:11"}

Ver. 8. {See Trapp on "Ps 96:12"}

Ver. 9. {See Trapp on "Ps 96:13"}

Chapter 99

Ver. 1. **The Lord reigneth]** Even the Lord Christ, as #Ps 97:1.

Let the people tremble] Let them serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. By the people some understand the Jews, and

by the earth all other nations; let there be a general subjection yielded to the sceptre of his kingdom.

Ver. 2. **The Lord is great in Zion]** In his Church he giveth many great testimonies of his power and presence, and is therefore magnified by his people.

And he is high above all the people] In the things wherein they deal proudly he is above them, #Ex 18:11.

Ver 3. **Let them praise thy great and terrible name]** *Nomen illud maiestativum.* Some hereby understand the name Jehovah, of which #Jos 7:9, "What wilt thou do to thy great name?" And #Jer 44:26, "I have sworn by my great name." But God's name is usually put for God's self.

For it is holy] And therefore to be sanctified in righteousness, #Isa 5:16.

Ver. 4. **The king's strength also loveth judgment]** *i.e. Abest a Tyrannide.* God abuseth not his kingly power to tyranny, but joineth it with his justice and uprightness. Regiment without righteousness is but robbery with authority. The Arabic hath it, *Magnificentia regis est, ut diligat aequitatem.*

Ver. 5. **Exalt ye the Lord our God]** Have high apprehensions of him and answerable expressions; set him up, and set him forth to the utmost.

And worship at his footstool] *i.e.* At his temple, saith the Chaldee; at the ark of the covenant, say the Rabbis. Austin interpreteth it of Christ's humanity; which, although of itself it is not to be adored, because it is a creature, yet as it is received into unity of person with the Divinity, and hath a partner agency with the Godhead according to its measure in the works of redemption and mediation, #1Ti 2:4, it is to be worshipped. But how hard driven was that second synod of Nice, when they abused this text, among many others, to prove the worshipping of images and pictures!

Ver. 6. **Moses and Aaron among his priests]** Or chief officers, as #1Ch 18:17. Moses was, if not a priest, yet a continual intercessor for the people, and a type of Christ, the great mediator of his Church. Aben Ezra calleth him *Cohen haccohanim*, the priest of priests; and Philo, writing his Life, concludeth, this was the life and

death of Moses the king, the lawgiver, the prophet, and the chief priest.

And Samuel] A man that could do much with God likewise, **#Jer 15:1**, and is therefore (as some conceive) called Pethuel, that is, a persuader of God, **#Joe 1:1** (Alsted).

Ver. 7. **They kept his testimonies]** And so showed that they called upon God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, **#Heb 10:22**.

Ver. 8. **Thou wast a God, &c.]** A sin pardoning God, **#Ne 9:17**. So thou wast to them under the law, so thou wilt be to those under the gospel.

Though thou tookest, &c.] Though Moses might not enter for his unbelief, and Samuel smarted for indulging his sons.

Ver. 9. **Exalt the Lord]** *Versus amoibaeus*. See **#Ps 99:5**.

A Psalm of praise] *Suavis et gravis*, short and sweet; appointed, likely, to be sung at the thank offerings, *quando pacifica erant offerenda*, say the Italian and Spanish annotators. See **#Ps 100:4**. Enter with thanksgiving, or with thank sacrifice, **#Le 7:12**.

Chapter 100

Ver. 1. **All ye lands]** Both Jews and Gentiles, **#Ro 15:10,11**, for your common salvation.

Ver. 2. **Serve the Lord with gladness]** The Cabbalists have a proverb, The Holy Ghost singeth not but out of a glad heart. Cheerfulness is much called for in both Testaments, God loveth a cheerful server.

Ver. 3. **Know ye that the Lord he is God]** Be convinced of it, ye heathens, whose fantasies have forged false gods; and ye Jews, acknowledge the true God to be Three in one, and One in three.

It is he that hath made us] And newly made us; "for we are his workmanship" (a second time) "created in Christ Jesus unto good works," **#Eph 2:10**. The word signifieth, saith Kimchi, *Ornare beneficiis, afficere donis, gratiis cumulare* {confer **#Isa 12:6**}; and so is distinguished from *Bara*, to create, and *Jatsar*, to form. William of Malmesbury telleth of a certain emperor of Germany, who, coming by chance into a church on the sabbath day, found there a most

misshapen priest, *pene portentum naturae*, insomuch as the emperor much scorned and contemned him; but when he heard him read those words in the service, "For it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves," the emperor checked his own proud thoughts, and made inquiry into the quality and conditions of the man, and finding, upon examination, that he was a very learned and devout man, he made him archbishop of Collen, which place he discharged with much commendations.

We are his people, and the sheep] See #Ps 95:7. This is a privilege proper to the communion of saints.

Ver. 4. **Enter into his gates, &c.]** As sheep into his sheepfolds, frequent his public ordinances, wait at the posts of the gates of wisdom; there, as at a heavenly exchange, the smuts present duty, and God confers mercy.

Ver. 5. **For the Lord is good]** Though we be evil, he giveth us all these good things gratis; and although we provoke him daily to punish us, yet his mercy is everlasting: like a fountain, it runneth after it hath run; and as the sun, which shineth after it hath shined. See #Zec 13:1 Joh 1:27.

And his truth endureth to all generations] Heb. to generation and generation. He saith not, for ever, saith an interpreter, because his promises are true, but under a condition, which perhaps the following generations will not observe; the condition is to the promise as an oar in a boat, or stern of a ship, which turns it another way.

A Psalm of David] Wherein he promiseth and pre-engageth, that whenever he came to the kingdom he will be a singular example, both as a prince and as a master of a family; in which respect this psalm should be often read and ruminated by such, that their houses may be as the house of David, #Zec 12:8, and as the palace of George, prince of Anbalt, which was, saith Melancthon, *Ecclesia, Academia, Curia*, a church, an academy, and a court. Bishop Ridley read and expounded this psalm oftentimes to his household, hiring them with money to learn it and other select scriptures by heart. A good governor is like that nobleman who had for his impress two bundles of ripe millet bound together, with this motto, *Servare et Servari meum est*; for the nature of the millet is both to guard itself

from all corruption and also those things that lie near it. That is a rare commendation that is given the late reverend and religious Dr Chatterton, that he was a housekeeper three and fifty years, and yet in all that time he never kept any of his servants from church to prepare his meal, saying, That he desired as much to have his servants know God as himself (His Life by Mr Clark).

Chapter 101

Ver. 1. **I will sing of mercy and judgment]** David's ditty was composed of discords. Mercy and justice are the brightest stars in the sphere of majesty; the main supports of a throne royal; howbeit there should be a pre-eminence to mercy, as one well observeth from #Mic 6:8. Mercy must be loved, and not shown only; justice must be done, and no more. The sword of justice must be bathed in the oil of mercy; a well-tempered mixture of both preserveth the commonwealth, #Ro 13:3,4.

Unto thee, O Lord, will I sing] Acknowledge thee alone, the bestower of these graces, and thy glory as the end. These are matters that philosophers and politicians mind not.

Ver. 2. **I will behave myself wisely]** I will begin the intended reformation at myself, and then set things to rights in my family, which while Augustus did not he was worthily blamed by his subjects, and told, that public persons must carefully observe,

Aedibus in propriis quae recta aut prava gerantur (Plut.).

Cato said, that he could pardon all men's faults but his own. But Cato the wise wanted the wisdom from above, and was therefore short of David, who promiseth here to be merry, "I will sing," and yet wise, "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way"; that is, in an upright conversation, and in a faithful discharge of the great trust committed unto me.

Oh when wilt thou come unto me?] In the performance of thy promise concerning the kingdom? For I am resolved not to anteverte thee, but to wait thy coming; *Est suspirium pii animi ex abrupto*, like that of Jacob, "I have waited, O Lord, for thy salvation," #Ge

49:18. Or, When wilt thou come, viz. to reckon with me? For come thou wilt.

I will walk within my house with a perfect heart] And "although my house be not so with God," yet "this is all my desire" (and shall be mine endeavour), "although he make it not to grow," #2Sa 23:5. I will walk incessantly, *Indefinenter ambulabo* (Kimchi), walk in the midst of mine house, *sicut cogitabundus et intentus ambulat huc et illuc*, #2Ki 4:34, and this I will do in the uprightness of mine heart; for that a man is in truth, that he is at home. Follow hypocrites home to their houses, and there you shall see what they are. Look upon stage players, and you may see them act the parts of kings and honest men, but follow them to their own houses, and there they are but base servants.

Ver. 3. **I will set no wicked thing (Heb. thing of Belial) before mine eyes]** That is, in my thoughts, saith Kimchi; for the thinking faculty is in the forepart of the brain, as are also the eyes. I will not gaze upon forbidden objects, nor venture upon a temptation to or an occasion of sin. I will also be wise and wary in the choice of my servants and under officers. Theodosius's court was *virtutum officina, non vitiorum sentina*, saith Pareus. And Archbishop Cranmer's house was *schola vel palaestra pietatis et literarum*, saith Tremellius. See above on the title of this psalm.

I hate the work of them that turn aside] Of treacherous men and apostates; such as Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great found (by proof made) some of his counsellors and courtiers to be, and therefore turned them off, saying, He cannot be faithful to me who is unfaithful to God; *Pietate sublata fides tollitur* (Euseb.).

It shall not cleave to me] I will none of them, neither shall any such wickedness hang at my heels, to hinder my progress in piety and good government.

Ver. 4. **A froward heart shall depart from me]** *i.e.* Say some, I will endeavour to put off the old man with the lusts thereof, #Eph 4:22, the old crooked frame shall be dissolved, and a better erected. I will not know evil, that is, regard, or allow it, #Ps 1:6. Others understand the text of rotten hearted and wicked counsellors, whom David would abhor and abandon.

Ver. 5. **Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour]** Heb. Him that in secret tongue smiteth his fellow friend, will I suppress. This David purposed to do, but this he did not so thoroughly in the case of poor Mephibosheth, belied by false Ziba; his resolution was *maledicos et maleficos a se depellere*, to drive away from him sycophants, backbiters, flatterers; but there is a great sympathy between princes and such pests, those harpies and gaping crows of courts, as one calleth them. (*Sorices et tineas palatii appellabat* Constant. Mag.). David promiseth fair to purge and eliminate from his house and court of such, and to cut them off, *secundum leges regni*, according to the laws of the kingdom, as Aben Ezra glosseth.

Him that hath an high look] Pride will sit and show itself in the eyes as soon as anywhere. A man is seen for what he is, *in oculis, in poculis, in loculis*, say the Rabbis. See #Pr 6:17.

And a proud heart] Heb. a wide or broad heart, that thinketh great things of himself, and seeketh great things for himself.

I will not suffer] Heb. I will not, *sc.* away with, or endure at any hand. The Greeks, and after them others, read, I will not eat with them. *Legunt ocal pro ucal;* and by large of heart, they understand belly gods, men of large appetites, such as were the two sons of Eli, Belialists, and Hellicones.

Ver. 6. **Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land]** *i.e.* Let them live where they will, I will hearken them out, and find them out. The Rabbis say, that here David repenteth him of taking into his service and tuition those indebted and discontented persons, men of broken fortunes and loose manners, #1Sa 22:1,2, and resolveth to be better advised in the choosing and using of his retinue when he cometh to the kingdom, that his court might be like that of Cyrus, whereof Xenophon saith, that though a man should seek or choose blindfold, he could not miss of a good man (Cyrop. l. 8). Zonaras mainly commendeth Valentinian I and Leo Armeuius, emperors, for their good choice of both civil and military officers. He condemneth as much Macrinus for the contrary.

He shall serve me] λειτουργησει μοι, he shall be of honourable employment about me, as Joseph was to Pharaoh, Cromwell to Henry VIII, his vicar-general.

Ver. 7. **He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house]** If I may know him to be such a one, I shall soon cashier him, and serve him as Philip of Macedon afterwards did two of his evil servants; the one whereof he compelled to run out of his country, and the other to drive him. David was not guarded and surrounded, as many princes are today, *Magno agmine Aionum, Negonum, Ganeonum, Palponum, Gnathonum, Balatronum.*

He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight] Liars are frequent in courts, as in Saul's, and do much mischief. The good Emperor Aurelius was much abused by them. Lewis XI of France complained that he had plenty of all things but of only one; and being asked of what? Of truth, quoth he. Augustus took on exceedingly when Varus was slain in battle, and gave this for a reason, *Quod non esset a quo verum audiret,* because he had not now a friend from whom he could hear the truth of things.

Ver. 8. **I will early destroy all the wicked of the land]** All, without partiality, and betimes, in matutinis, without delay, making it my morning's work to do justice; for then was judgment executed, **#Jer 21:12.** Or, I will do it daily, and as duly as the house is swept. See **#La 3:23,** *Indesinenter regnum, regiam Ecclesiamque purgabo a male* (Trem.).

That I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of God] All the notorious debuchers from the Church; that I may weed out those wicked ones, those trouble towns, those desperadoes, the botches of human society. And here David describeth the utmost and chief end of civil government (that which the philosophers never dreamed of), viz. That God may be purely and sincerely served in his city, that is, in his Church.

A Prayer of the afflicted] Or, for the afflicted, made by Daniel, or some other prophet, not long before the return out of Babylon, where they suffered much but prayed little, as Daniel confesseth, **#Da 9:13.** Here, therefore, they are taught to take unto them words, and say, "Hear my prayer, O Lord," &c. In greatest afflictions there

is place left for prayer, #Ps 130:1, and something God will yield to it, when most bitterly bent against a people, #Mt 24:20,21.

When he is overwhelmed] Pressed out of measure above strength, #2Co 1:8, *ad deliquium animae*, till heart faint and faith seem to fail, bowing down through weight of grief, *ac si pars una corporis alia esset operta*; for so the word here used signifieth, saith Kimchi, as if one part of the body were overcovered with another. *Estque pulchra collatio in verbis gnataph et shaphac, quae naturam fidei depingunt*, saith Mollerus; faith may be under a cloud for a season, but it will recover, and pour out its complaint before the Lord.

Chapter 102

Ver. 1. **Hear my prayer, O Lord]** O Lord Christ, for so this psalm is to be understood, as the apostle showeth, #Heb 1:6

And let my cry] Which is, that thou wouldest be pleased to bring us poor exiles back to our own country; and so this prayer is answerable to that of #Da 9

Ver. 2. **Hide not thy face from me]** For this would be worse than all the rest. See #Jer 16:13, "I will cast you out of this land, and I will show you no favour." This last was a cutting speech, and far worse than their captivity; and yet,

Non exul curae dicitur esse Deo.

Answer me speedily] *Festina, responde*. In our earnest prayers we may press for expedition in general, not tying God to any particular time, as those Bethulians did in the Book of Judith.

Ver. 3. **For my days are consumed like smoke]** Which the higher it mounteth the sooner it vanisheth. Some read it, in the smoke. So #Ps 119:83, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke," dried and withered, *exsuccus et exsanguis*.

And my bones are burnt as an hearth] *Ossa mea quasi frixa contabuerunt*. My strength is gone, *Veluti sartagine* (Arab.). Here, to the twelfth verse, is a most lively picture of a dejected person,

such as can hardly be paralleled; teaching us to be deeply affected with the Church's afflictions.

Ver. 4. **My heart is smitten]** Blasted with thine indignation, that *ventus urens et exsiccans*.

So that I forget to eat my bread] I am stomachless, through want of that heat that my heart should supply.

Ver. 5. **By reason of the voice of my groaning]** A broken spirit drieth the bones, #Pr 17:22, and, by drinking up the marrow and radical moisture, casteth all into a consumption.

Ver. 6. **I am like a pelican]** Or bittern, which liveth in lonely places, and crieth out dolefully, #Isa 34:11 Zep 2:14.

I am like an owl in the desert] *Avis lucifuga*, a night bird, a night raven, the Vulgate hath it; others, a bat, a cuckoo, but mostly an owl, that *noctis monstrum*, as Pliny, lib. 10, cap. 12, speaketh of her, *nec cantu aliquo vocales sed gemitu*, hated of all other fowls, which never come near her, but to keep a wondering at her.

Ver. 7. **I watch]** I can as little sleep as eat, #Ps 102:4. That nurse of nature, and sweet parenthesis of men's griefs and cares, sleep, departeth from me,

Nec membris dat cura soporem.

And am as a sparrow] That hath lost his mate, so have I mine associates, which is a sore loss, for *optimum solatium sodalitiū*.

Ver. 8. **Mine enemies reproach me all the day]** This is an evil that man's nature is most impatient with. See Psal. cxxxvii.

And they that are mad against me] That let fly at me, or that once praised me, flattered me. So the Sept.

Are sworn against me] Have sworn my death, or do swear and curse by me, as the Turks do at this day, when, to confirm a truth, they say, *Iudaeus sim si fallam*, I would I were a Jew, it is so. See #Zec 8:13 Isa 6:11-13 Jer 29:22. God make thee as Ahab, and as Zedekiah, &c.

Ver. 9. **For I have eaten ashes like bread]** Being cast on the ground as a mourner, I know not whether I eat bread or dust; this relisheth to me as well as that, my mouth is so out of taste.

And mingled my drink with weeping] I forbare not to weep, no, not while I drank; for tow is dry, and wine driveth away sorrow, we say; not so from me. Wine is called by Simonides in Athenaeus ἀμυντωρ δυσφροσυναων, an expeller of sadness.

Ver. 10. **Because of thine indignation]** This lay heavier upon the good man's heart than all the rest, God was displeased.

For thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down] That is, that I might fall with the greater poise. *Significatur gravissima collisio. De coelo in terram* (R. Solom.). Here the prophet accuseth not God of cruelty, but bewaileth his own misery. *Miserum est fuisse felicem*, It is no small unhappiness to have been happy.

Ver. 11. **My days are like a shadow that declineth]** As at sunset the shadows are at longest, but not longlasting.

And I am withered like grass] Mown down, and laid a drying.

Ver. 12. **But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever]** And therefore we, thy covenanters, shall be restored, #La 5:19.

And thy remembrance] Which thou hast of us, and we of thee.

Ver. 13. **Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion]** This he speaketh with as much confidence as if he had been in God's bosom; for he knew the promise of deliverance after 70 years' captivity. See the like #Hab 1:12.

For the time to favour her, &c.] This he understood by books, as #Da 9:2, and therefore presseth God to a speedy performance. God loveth to be burdened with his own word, to be sued upon his own bond, &c. But besides the promise, the psalmist had another ground of his confidence, and that is in the next.

Ver. 14. **For thy servants take pleasure in her stones]** They pity her, and wish her welfare; much more then dost thou. He argueth from that sweet, tender, melting frame of spirit that was found in the faithful, which is but a reflex of that far sweeter that is in God.

And favour the dust thereof] The ruins and the rubbish, heartily desiring and expecting a re-edification and restoration, whereof they had a sweet promise, **#Am 9:9**, and for the spiritual temple to be built of Jews and Gentiles, they had many more. See all that followeth.

Ver. 15. **So the heathen shall fear, &c.]** By the restoration of Jerusalem, where the Messiah was to be born and manifested, the everlasting gospel shall be preached, and the Gentiles converted to the faith.

And all the kings of the earth] Caught by those fishermen, and their successors in the ministry.

Ver. 16. **When the Lord shall build up Zion]** Isaiah had foretold that the second temple should be more glorious than the first, **#Isa 54:11 60:17**, the stones whereof were types of those living stones whereof that spiritual temple was to be built, **#1Pe 2:5**, and wherein God would manifest more of his glory than ever he had done in all the world besides.

Ver. 17. **He will regard the prayer of the destitute]** Heb. of the poor shrub that is in the wilderness, trod upon by beasts, unregarded, worthless; heath, juniper, wild tamarisk, *Humilesque myricae* (Virg.). Tremellius rendereth it *Nudatissimi*; others *Excitantis se*, the prayer of one that stirreth up himself to take hold of God, and thereby prevaieth with him. I came for thy prayer, saith the angel to Daniel, **#Ps 10:12**.

Ver. 18. **This shall be written for the generation to come]** This, that the poor shrub hath sped so well in prayer, together with all other the particulars of this psalm, and indeed the whole Scripture, **#Ro 15:4**. So little truth is there in that assertion of the Jesuits, that the epistles of the apostles were intended only for the use of those Churches or persons to whom they were first written.

And the people which shall be created] "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works," **#Eph 2:10**, his regenerated people; for God planteth the heavens, and layeth the foundations of the earth, that he may "say to Zion, Thou art my people," **#Isa 51:16**.

Ver. 19. **For he hath looked down from the height, &c.]** This is no small condescension, since he abaseth himself to look upon things in heaven, **#Ps 113:6**.

From heaven did the Lord behold the earth] That is, his poor despised servants, that are in themselves no better than the earth they tread on.

Ver. 20. **To hear the groaning of the prisoner]** Those prisoners of hope held so long captive in Babylon, the cruelty whereof is graphically described, **#Jer 51:34**.

Ver. 21. **To declare the name of the Lord in Zion]** This shall be the business of the converted Gentiles, to make up one catholic Church with the Christian Jews, and to bear a part in setting forth God's worthy praises. See **#Ps 102:18**.

Ver. 22. **When the people are gathered together]** *sc.* To the Lord Christ; for to "Shiloh shall be the gathering of the people," **#Ge 49:10**.

And the kingdoms to serve the Lord] As they did under Constantine the Great, Valentinian, Theodosius, which three emperors called themselves *vasallos Christi* (as Socrates reporteth), the vassals of Christ: and the like may be said of other Christian kings and princes since, who have yielded professed subjection to the gospel, and cast their crowns at Christ's feet.

Ver. 23. **He weakened my strength in the way]** This is the complaint of the poor captives yet undelivered, *In via, hoc est in vita, quia hic sumus viatores, in coelo comprehensores*, here we are but on our way to heaven, and we meet with many discouragements.

He shortened my days] viz. According to my account; for otherwise in respect of God our days are numbered.

Stat sua cuique dies.

Ver. 24. **Take me not away in the midst of my days]** Heb. Make me not to ascend, *Serus in coelum redeam*. Fain I would live to see those golden days of redemption. Abraham desired to see the day of Christ, **#Joh 8:56**; Simeon did, and then sang out his soul. All the saints after the captivity looked hard for the consolation of Israel.

Thy years are throughout all generations] And that is the comfort of thy poor covenanters, who are sure to participate of all thy goods.

Ver. 25. **Of old thou hast laid the foundation, &c.]** Here is a clear proof of Christ's eternity, #**Heb 1:10**, because he was before the creation of the world, and shall continue after the consummation thereof, #**Ps 102:26,27**. So the saints a *parte post*. #**1Jo 2:17**, "The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Ver. 26. **They shall perish]** *i.e.* They shall change form and state, being dissolved by the last fire, #**2Pe 3:7,10**.

But thou shalt endure] Heb. stand, and with thee thy Church, #**Mt 22:32**.

Yea, all of them shall wax old as a garment] Which weareth in the wearing; so do the visible heavens and the earth, whatever some write *de constantia naturae*. Isaiah saith it rotteth as a book (that is *venerandae rubiginis*), and wasteth away as smoke, #**Isa 65:17 66:22**.

As a vesture shalt thou change them] The Greek hath roll them: confer #**Isa 34:4**, ελιξεις αλλαξεις.

Ver. 27. **But thou art the same]** *Tu es tu* (Arabic). Therefore immutable, because eternal, *ut nihil tibi possit accedere vel decidere*,

Ver. 28. **The children of thy servants shall continue]** By virtue of the covenant, and that union with thee which is the ground of communion. If it could be said of Caesar, that he held nothing to be his own that he did not communicate to his friends, how much more of Christ! *Propterea bene semper sperandum, etiamsi omnia ruant*. The Church is immortal and immutable.

A Psalm of David] Which he wrote when carried out of himself, as far as heaven, saith Beza; and therefore calleth not upon his own soul only, but upon all creatures, from the highest angel to the lowest worm, to set forth God's praises.

Chapter 103

Ver. 1. **Bless the Lord, O my soul]** *Agedum animule mi, et intima men viscera*. A good man's work lieth most within doors; he is more taken up with his own heart than with all the world besides; neither

can he ever be alone so long as he hath God and his own soul to converse with. David's harp was not oftener out of tune than his heart, which here he is setting right, that he may the better make melody to the Lord. Music is sweet, but the setting of the strings in tune is displeasing; so is it harsh to set our hearts in order, which yet must be done, and thoroughly done, as here.

And all that is within me] All my faculties and senses. The whole soul and body must be set awork in this service; the judgment, to set a right estimate upon mercies; the memory, to recognize and retain them, #De 6:11,12 8:14; the will, which is the proper seat of thankfulness; the affections, love, desire, joy, confidence; all must be actuated, that our praises may be cordial, vocal, vital. In peace offerings God called for the fat and inwards.

Ver. 2. **Bless the lord, O my soul]** David found some dulness and drowsiness; hence he so oft puts the thorn to the breast; hence he so impetuously instigateth his soul, as one here phraseth it.

And forget not all his benefits] Forgetfulness is a grave; look to it: eaten bread is soon forgotten with us, as it is with children; neither perisheth anything so soon with many as a good turn, *Αμναμονες οι βροτοι* (Pindar). Alphonsus, king of Arragon, professed that he wondered not so much at his courtiers' ingratitude to him (who had raised many of them from mean to great estates, which they little remembered) as at his own to God.

Ver. 3. **Who forgiveth all thine iniquities]** David not only taketh upon him with a holy imperiousness, laying God's charge upon his soul to be thankful; but intending to show himself good cause why to be so, he worthily beginneth with remission of sin, as a complexive mercy, and such as comprehendeth all the rest. He had a crown of pure gold set upon his head, #Ps 21:3; but here he bleaseth God for a better crown; #Ps 103:4, "Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness," &c. And how was this crown set on his head but by forgiving all his iniquities?

Who healeth all thy diseases] Corporal and spiritual. *Quod sanitas in corpore id sanctitas in corde.* Jehovah Rophe, or the Lord the physician (as he is called, #Ex 15:26), cureth his people on both

sides, maketh them whole every whit. See **#Isa 19:22 Mt 8:17**. He bore our diseases.

Ver. 4. **Who redeemeth thy life from destruction]** From hell, saith the Chaldee; from a thousand deaths and dangers every day. All this Christ, our kind kinsman, doth for us, dying virtually as oft as we offend.

Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness, &c.] Encircleth and surroundeth thee with benefits, so that which way soever thou turnest thee, thou canst not look beside a blessing. {See Trapp on "Ps 103:3";

Ver. 5. **Who satisfieth thy mouth]** Heb. thy jaws, so that thou art top full, eating as long as eating is good. God alloweth thee an honest affluence of outward comforts; open thy mouth wide, and he will fill it, **#Ps 81:10**.

So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's] The eagle is of all birds the most vegetous and vivacious, renewing her youth and health, they say, at every ten years' end, by casting her old feathers, and getting new, till she be a hundred years old (*Aquila senectus*. Proverb). Augustine observeth that when her bill is overgrown, that she cannot take in her meat, she beateth it against a rock, and so *excudit onus rostri*, she striketh off the cumbersome part of her bill, and thereby recovereth her eating. That which hindereth our renovation, saith he, the rock Christ taketh away, &c. See **#Isa 40:31**.

Ver. 6. **The Lord executeth, &c.]** The words are both plural, to show that God will execute *omnimodam iustitiamet iudicium*, all and all manner of justice and judgment, relieving the oppressed, and punishing the oppressor to the full.

Ver. 7. **He made known his ways unto Moses]** Even right judgments, true laws, good statute and commandments, **#Ne 9:13,14**. The Rabbis by ways here understand God's attributes and properties (Middoth they call them), those thirteen proclaimed, **#Ex 34**, after that Moses had prayed, **#Ex 33:13**, "Show me thy ways"; and the next words favour this interpretation.

His acts to the children] His miracles in Egypt, and all along the wilderness, where they fed upon sacraments.

Ver. 8. **The Lord is merciful and gracious]** These are Moses's very expressions, **#Ex 34:6**. Theodoret calleth him, worthily, the great ocean of divinity, &c.

Ver. 9. **He will not always chide]** His still revenges are terrible, **#Ge 6:3**, with **#1Pe 3:19**, but God, being appeased towards the penitent people, will not show his anger so much as in words, **#Isa 57:16**.

Neither will he keep his anger for ever] Much less must we, **#Le 19:18 Eph 4:26**, though against his enemies God is expressly said to keep it, **#Na 1:2**.

Ver. 10. **He hath not dealt with us after our sins]** Heb. our errors, our involuntary and unavoidable infirmities.

According to our iniquities] Heb. perversely committed; for of these evils also the saints are not free; but God beareth with more than small faults, especially if not scandalous.

Ver. 11. **For as the heaven is high above the earth]** How high the third heaven is cannot be conjectured. But for the middlemost heaven (wherein the sun, moon, and stars are placed), how exceeding high it is may be guessed and gathered, in that the stars (whereof those of the first magnitude are said to be every one above a hundred and seven times as big again as the whole earth) do yet seem to us but as so many sparks or spangles. See **#Pr 25:3 Eph 4:10**.

So great is his mercy] The heavens are exceeding high above the earth, but God's mercy to his is above the heavens, **#Ps 108:4**. The original word, *gabbar*, here used, is the same with that, **#Ge 7:20**, used for the prevailing of the waters above the mountains.

Ver. 12. **As far as the east, &c.]** And these we know to be so far asunder that they shall never come together. The space also and distance of these two is the greatest that can be imagined, **#De 4:32 Ps 113:3 Isa 45:6**.

So far hath he removed our transgressions] The guilt of them, whereby a man stands charged with the fault, and is obliged to the punishment due thereunto. See **#Isa 43:25 38:17 Mic 7:19 Eze 33:16**. *Peccata non redeunt*. Discharges in justification are not repealed, called in again.

Ver. 13. **Like as a father pitieth]** There is an ocean of love in a father's heart. See #Lu 15:20 Ge 33:2,13,14 34:3, how hardly and with what caution Jacob parted with Benjamin. Sozomen maketh mention of a certain merchant, who offering himself to be put to death for his two sons who were sentenced to die, and it being granted that one of the two (whom he should choose) should be upon that condition delivered; the miserable father, *aequali utriusque amore victus*, equally affected to them both, could not yield that either, of them should die, but remained hovering about both, till both were put to death.

So the Lord pitieth, &c.] So and ten thousand times more than so; for he is the Father of all mercies, and the Father of all the fatherhoods (*Parentela*) in heaven and earth, #Eph 3:15.

Ver. 14. **For he knoweth our frame]** Our evil concupiscence, saith the Chaldee; *Figulinam et fragilem constitutionem nostram*, saith Junius, that we are nothing better than a compound of dirt and sin.

He remembereth that we are dust] Our bodies are (for our souls are of a spiritual nature, *divinae particula aerae*), and sooner or later to be turned to dust again.

Ver. 15. **As for man, his days are as grass]** The frailty of man's life, intimated in the former verse, is here lively painted out under the similitude of grass, as likewise in many other Scriptures. See #Ps 37:2 90:5,6, &c.

As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth] Take him in all his gaiety, his beauty, and his bravery, he is but as a flower; and that not of the garden, which hath more shelter and better ordering, but of the field, and so more subject to heat, weather, pulling up, or treading down, #Isa 40:6-8.

Ver. 16. **For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone]** Heb. it is not; that is, it neither continues any longer in being nor returns any more into being: so here, #Job 14:7-12.

And the place thereof shall know it no more] Though, while it stood and flourished, the place of it seemed as it were to know nothing but it, the glory and beauty of it drew all eyes to it, &c.

Think the same of men in their flourish, soon forgotten, as dead men out of mind, #Ps 31:12.

Ver. 17. **But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting]** God is from all eternity and unto all eternity kind to all that fear him, in what age of the world soever they live.

And his righteousness unto children's children] That is, his kindness or bounty; for so the word *tsedachah* should be taken, according to #Ps 112:8,9 2Co 9:9.

Ver. 18. **To such as keep his covenant]** For else they shall know God's breach of promise, as it is #Nu 14:3,4. Neither shall it benefit them to have been born of godly parents.

To those that remember his commandments] That resolve to do them, though in many things they fail, *Qui faciunt praecepta etiamsi non perficiant*, that wish well to that which they can never compass, #Ps 119:4,5. If they cannot open the door, yet if they give a pluck at the bolt or a lift of the latch, there is comfort.

Ver. 19. **The Lord hath prepared]** Or, fixed, founded, firmed, established. Here God is further praised for his most excellent Majesty, which appeareth, first, from the loftiness of his throne; secondly, from the largeness of his dominion.

Ver. 20. **Bless the Lord, ye his angels]** In stirring up the angels to praise God, he awaketh himself; and for this purpose, *Incipit a superioribus, et finit in infirmis*, saith Kimchi here, he calleth in the help of all the creatures, from the highest to the lowest; and, after all, concludeth as he began, with a saying to himself.

That excel in strength] Heb. Giants for strength, such as can prevail, and do great exploits, yet is all their strength derivative, they have it from God (who is *Hagibbor*, the mighty one, #De 10:17), and hence the angel Gabriel hath his name, God is my strength. Labour we to be like unto the angels, strengthened with all might, &c., #Col 1:11, walking about the world as conquerors, able to do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth us, #Php 4:13.

That do his commandments] viz. Cheerfully, speedily, universally, humbly, constantly. Let us do accordingly, else we mock God when we pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Ver. 21. **Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts]** That is, all his creatures, which are fitly called God's hosts, first, for their number; secondly, for their order; thirdly, for their obedience.

Ye ministers of his] Whether in State or Church. Kings are God's ministers, #Ro 13:4,6. So are angels, #Heb 1:14, like as ministers are angels, #Re 2:1; they have exchanged names, their office is, angel-like, to wait upon God, to stand before him, to serve in his presence, and to bless his name.

Ver. 22. **Bless the Lord, all his works]** Whether living or lifeless; for all thy works praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints bless thee, #Ps 145:10. *Benedicite ter, ad mysterium Triadis*, saith an interpreter.

Bless the Lord, O my soul] Whatever others do, let me be doing at it, as #Jos 24:14,15.

Chapter 104

Ver. 1. **Bless the Lord, O my soul]** This was much in David's mouth, as *Deo gratias* was in Austin's. See #Ps 103:1,22, after which this psalm is fitly set. There he blesseth God for his benefits to himself and the whole Church; here, for his works of creation and government common to the whole world. The Greek and Latin translations prefix this title, *David de generatione Mundi*. υπερ του κοσμου συστασεως, *Continet opera Bereshith*, saith Kimchi. It is of the same subject with the first chapter of Genesis, the first five days' works are here after a sort considered and celebrated, as a mirror wherein God's majesty may be clearly discerned. This psalm is by some called David's natural theology.

Thou art very great] *Non molis dimensione, sed virtutis et rerum gestarum gloria*, Thou hast made thee a great name by thy works of wonder.

Thou art clothed with honour and majesty] *i.e.* With thy creatures, which are as a garment, both to hide thee in one respect, and to hold thee forth in another, to be seen.

Ver. 2. **Who coverest thyself with light]** That lovely creature that first shone out of darkness, and is chief among all things sensible, as coming nearest to the unapproachable glory of God; like as the robe

royal is next unto the king. Herod upon a set day came forth arrayed in royal apparel, in cloth of silver, saith Josephus, which being beaten upon by the sun's beams, dazzled the eyes of the people, and drew from them that blasphemous acclamation, #Ac 12:21. God, when he made the world, showed himself in all his royalty; neither can we ascribe too much unto him.

Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain] The whole expanse or firmament is as a canopy over God's throne, or rather as a curtain or screen between us and the Divine majesty, the sight whereof we cannot bear.

Ver. 3. **Who layest the beams of his chambers in the waters]** God, as he hath founded the solid earth upon the fluid waters, #Ps 26:9; so the highest heaven upon those waters above the firmament, #Ge 1:7 Ps 17:11. This notably sets forth the wisdom and power of this Almighty architect, since artists say, *In solido extruendam*, The foundation of a building should be hard and rocky, and experience sealeth to it.

Who maketh the clouds, &c.] These are his chariot royal, drawn (or rather driven) by the winds, as his chariot horses.

Ver. 4. **Who maketh his angels spirits]** Immaterial substances, fit to attend upon the Father of spirits, and with speed to move suddenly and invisibly into most remote parts.

His ministers a flaming fire] Seraphims they are called for their burning zeal, like so many heavenly salamanders; as also for their irresistible power; the angel that destroyed Sennacherib's army is held to have done it by burning them within, although it appeared not outwardly, as some have been burnt by lightning.

Ver. 5. **Who laid the foundations of the earth]** Heb. He hath founded the earth upon her bases. See #Ps 24:2 Job 38:4,6. {See Trapp on "Ps 24:2"} {See Trapp on "Job 38:4"} {See Trapp on "Job 38:6"}

That it should not be removed for ever] Neither can it be, by reason of its own weightiness whereby it remaineth immovable in the centre of the universe. Say it should move any way, it must move towards heaven, and so ascend, which is utterly against the nature of heavy bodies.

Ver. 6. **Thou coverest it with the deep as with a garment]** *Operueras*, Thou hadst at first covered it, till thou for man's sake hadst made a distinction; for else such a garment would this have been to the earth as the shirt made for the murdering of Agamemnon, where he had no issue out.

The waters stood above the mountains] As the garment, in the proper use of it, is above the body; and so they would still, did not God, for our sakes, set them their bounds and borders.

Ver. 7. **At thy rebuke they fled]** At thy word of command and angry countenance, overawing that raging and ranging creature: so Christ rebuked the winds and waves.

They hasted away] They ran away headlong, as for life.

Ver. 8. **They go up by the mountains]** They run any way, in post haste, breaking through thick and thin, and nowhere resting, till embodied in the abyss, their elemental place and station. This is check to our dulness and disobedience. If a man had been present, saith one, when God thus commanded the seas to retreat from the earth, he might have seen both a terrible and a joyful spectacle.

Ver. 9. **Thou hast set a bound, &c.]** A certain compass and course; an argument of God's singular and sweet power and providence. See **#Job 38:10,11**, {See Trapp on "Job 38:10"} {See Trapp on "Job 38:11"}

Ver. 10. **He sendeth the springs into the valleys]** God doth this; he by certain issues or vents sendeth forth the waves of the sea (which here and there break out in springs, leaving their saltness behind them), that men and other earthly creatures might have that ὕδωρ μεν ἀριστον (as Pindarus styleth it), for the satisfying of their thirst and for other necessary uses. This is David's philosophy, and his son Solomon saith the same, **#Ec 1:7**; though Aristotle assign another cause of the perennity of the fountains and rivers.

Ver. 11. **They give drink to every beast]** A great mercy, as we have lately found in these late dry years, 1653, 1654, wherein God hath given us to know the worth of water by the want of it, *Bona sunt a tergo formosissima*.

The wild asses] Those hottest creatures, **#Job 39:8-11**.

Ver. 12. **By them shall the fowls of the heaven]**

Assuetae ripis volucres, et fluminis alveo (Virg.).

Which sing among the branches] Most melodiously, many of them; therefore it is reckoned as a judgment to lose them, #Jer 4:25 9:10.

Ver. 13. **He watereth the hills from his chambers]** That is from his clouds, he giveth water to hills and high places, where wells and rivers are not.

The earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works] *i.e.* With the rain of thy clouds, dropping fatness.

Ver. 14. **He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle]** He caused it to grow at first, before cattle were created, #Ge 1:11,12. And so he doth still, as the first cause; by rain and dew from heaven, as the second cause.

And herb for the service of man] *Ad esum et ad usum*, for food, medicine, &c., #Ge 1:29. Green herbs, it seemeth, was a great dish with the ancients, which, therefore, they called *Holus*, *ab* ολον. Aristippus told his fellow philosopher, who fed upon them, If you can please Dionysius you need not eat green herbs, he presently replied, If you can eat green herbs you need not please Dionysius, and be his parasite.

That he may bring forth food out of the earth] *Alma parens Tellus* "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat," &c., #Joh 6:27.

Ver. 15. **And wine that maketh glad]** That he may the more cheerfully serve his Maker, his heart being lifted up, as Jehoshaphat's was, in the ways of obedience, #Jud 9:13 Pr 31:6,7.

And oil to make his face to shine] The word signifieth ointments of all sorts, whereof see Pliny, lib. 12, 13. These man might want and subsist; but God is bountiful.

And bread which strengtheneth, &c.] In nature, *Animantis cuiusque vita est fuga*; were it not for the repair of nutrition the

natural life would be extinguished. The Latins call bread *panis*, of the Greek *παν*; because it is the chief nourishment.

Ver. 16. **The trees of the Lord are full of sap**] Heb. are satisfied, viz. with moisture, sucked by their roots out of the earth plentifully watered, whereby they are nourished, grow mightily, and serve man for meat, drink, medicine, &c.

The cedars of Lebanon] These are instanced, as tallest and most durable. God's temple at Jerusalem was built of them; and so was the devil's temple at Ephesus, for he will needs be God's ape.

Ver. 17. **Where the birds make their nests**] Each, according to their natural instinct, with wonderful art.

As for the stork] That Pietaticultrix, as Petronius calleth her (and her name in Hebrew soundeth as much), because she nourisheth and cherisheth the old ones whereof she came; whence *αντιπελαργειν*, *Genetricum senectam invicem educant* (Plin.). *Ciconiis pietas eximia inest* (Solin.).

Ver. 18. **The high hills are a refuge**] These wild, but weak, creatures are so wise, as to secure themselves from violence; when pursued they run to their refuges; and should not we to God, for the securing of our comforts, and safeguarding of our persons?

Ver. 19. **He appointed the moon for seasons**] Most nations reckoned the year by the moon, rather than by the sun.

The sun knoweth his going down] As if he were a living and intelligent creature; so justly doth he observe the law laid upon him by God, and runs through his work. See **#Job 38:12**.

Ver. 20. **Thou makest darkness**] Which, though it be dreadful, yet is it useful, and in the vicissitude of light and darkness much of God's wisdom and goodness is to be seen. We must see that we turn not the day into night, nor night into day, without some special and urgent occasion.

Ver. 21. **The young lions roar**] Rousing themselves out of their dens by night, and then usually seizing upon what prey God sendeth them in; for they are at his, and not at their own, finding.

And seek] Like as the young ravens cry to him, **#Ps 147:9**. by implication only. See **#Joe 1:18,20**.

Ver. 22. **They yather themselves together]** viz. Into their dens and lurking holes, smitten with fear of light and of men. A sweet providence, but little considered.

Ver. 23. **Man goeth forth unto his work]** His honest employment in his particular place and calling, whether manual or mental; eating his bread in the sweat either of his brow or of his brain.

Until the evening] That time of rest and refreshment. The Lord Burleigh (William Cecil), when he put off his gown at night, used to say, Lie there, Lord Treasurer; and, bidding adieu to all state affairs, disposed himself to his quiet rest.

Ver. 24. **O Lord, how manifold, &c.]** *q.d.* They are so many and so great that I cannot recount or reckon them up, but am even swallowed up of wonderment; all that I can say is, that they are *magna et mirifica*. In man's body only there are miracles enough, between head and foot, to fill a volume.

The earth is full] It is God's great purse, #Ps 24:1.

Ver. 25. **So is this great and wide sea]** *Latum manibus, id est sinibus;* yet not so great and wide as man's heart, wherein is not only that leviathan, some special foul lusts, but creeping things innumerable, crawling bugs and baggage vermin.

Wherein are creeping things innumerable] Far more, and of more kinds, than there are on earth.

Ver. 26. **There go the ships]** The use whereof was first showed by God in Noah's ark, whence afterwards *Audax Iapeti genus*, Japhet's offspring sailed, and replenished the islands.

There is that leviathan] Whereof see #Job 41, with notes.

Ver. 27. **These wait all upon thee]** The great housekeeper of the world, who carvest them out their meet measures of meat, and at fit seasons. Of thee they have it, *per causarum concatenationem*.

Ver. 28. **That thou givest them they gather]** Neither have they the least morsel of meat but what thou castest them by thy providence. *Turcicure imperium quantum quantum est nihil est nisi panis mica quam dives paterfamilias proiecit caniubs,* saith Luther.

Thou openest thine hand] By opening the bosom of the earth thou richly providest for them, ο δοτηρ εαων.

Ver. 29. **Thou hidest thy face]** *i.e.* Thou withdrawest thy favour, thy concurrence, thine influence, they are troubled, or terrified, a cold sweat sitteth upon their limbs, *animam agunt*, they shortly expire; for in God we live, move, and have our being, #Ac 17:28 A frown of Augustus Caesar proved to be the death of Cornelius Gallus. Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor of England, died Sept. 20, 1591, of a flux of his urine and grief of mind conceived upon some angry words given him by Queen Elizabeth (Camden).

Thou takest away their breath] Heb. Thou gatherest it, callest for it again, viz. their vital vigour.

Ver. 30. **Thou sendest forth thy spirit]** *Virtutem vivificam.*

They are created] Others of the same kind are; and so the face of the earth is renewed, while another generation springeth up. This is matter of praise to their Maker.

Ver. 31. **The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever]** Or, Let glory be to the Lord for ever, *sc.* for his great works of creation and conservation.

The Lord shall rejoice in his works] As he did at the creation, when he saw all to be good, and very good; so still, it doth God good, as it were, to see the poor creatures feed, and men to give him the honour of all.

Ver. 32. **He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth]** This must be considered, that God may be as well feared as loved and praised.

He toucheth the hills, and they smoke] It is, therefore, ill falling into his hands, who can do such terrible things with his looks and touches.

Ver. 33. **I will siny unto the Lord]** Though others be slack to do God this right, to help him to his own, to give him the glory due to his name, yet I will do it, and do it constantly, so long as I have a breath to draw.

Ver. 34. **My meditation of him shall be sweet]** Or, Let it be sweet unto him, let him kindly accept it, though it be mean and worthless, through Christ's odour poured thereinto.

I will be glad in the Lord] Withdrawing my heart from other vile and vain delights, or, at least, vexed at mine own dullness, for being no more affected with such inexplicable ravishments.

Ver. 35. **Let the sinners be consumed, &c.]** Such sinners against their own souls, as when they know God, or might know him by his wonderful works, glorify him not as God, neither are thankful, **#Ro 1:21**; but pollute and abuse his good creatures, to his dishonour, fighting against him with those lives that he hath given them.

Bless thou the Lord, O my soul] The worse others are the better be thou, kindling thyself from their coldness, &c.

Chapter 105

Ver. 1. **O give thanks unto the Lord]** Some tell us that this and the two following psalms were the great Hallelujah sung at solemn times in their assemblies. But others say better, that the great Hallelujah (as the Hebrews called it) began at **#Ps 113.**, and held on till **#Ps 119**, which they at the passover began to sing after that cup of wine they called *Poculum hymni seu laudationis*.

Call upon his name] Call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, **#Ps 18:3.** *{See Trapp on "Ps 18:3"}* Our life must be divided between praises and prayers.

Ver. 2. **Sing unto him, sing]** Both with mouth and with musical instruments.

Talk ye] Or, meditate ye, let your heart indite a good matter, and your tongue be as the pen of a ready writer, **#Ps 45:1.**

Ver. 3. **Glory ye in his holy name]** Of his power and goodness. See **#1Co 1:31**, with **#Jer 9:23.** *Non est gloriosior populus sub coelo quam Iudaicus,* saith Alsted; there is not a more vain glorious people under heaven than the Jews; but "we are the circumcision, which worship in spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," **#Php 3:3.**

Let the heart of them rejoice, &c.] All others are forbidden to rejoice, **#Ho 9:1**, and bidden to weep and howl, **#Jas 5:1.**

Ver. 4. **Seek the Lord, and his strength]** That is, his ark, at the remove whereof to Jerusalem this psalm was sung, #1Ch 16:7-36, &c. Called it is God's strength and God's face here; yea, even God himself, #Ps 132:5. It is as if he should say, Frequent holy assemblies, as ever you desire to draw nigh to God, and to have your faith in him confirmed.

Ver. 5. **Remember his marvellous works, &c.]** Deeply and diligently ponder both the works and words of God, comparing the one with the other, that ye may the better conceive of both.

Ver. 6. **O ye seed of Abraham, &c.]** Do thus, or else your pedigree will profit you no more than it did Dives in the flames, that Abraham called him son. An empty title yieldeth but an empty comfort.

Ver. 7. **He is the Lord]** Jehovah, the essentiator, the promise keeper, therefore praise him. He is also in covenant with us, and will we not do him this right?

His judgments are in all the earth] His executions upon the Egyptians and Philistines are far and near notified and discoursed.

Ver. 8. **He hath remembered his covenant]** #1Ch 16:15 it is, "Be ye mindful always of his covenant." God ever remembereth, though we many times forget it, and ourselves.

The word which he commanded] The conditions of the covenant.

Ver. 9. **Which covenant he made with Abraham, &c.]** Whom he found an idolater, #Jos 24:2. He justified the ungodly, #Ro 4:5.

And his oath] "That by two immutable things," &c., #Heb 6:18

Ver. 10. **And confirmed the same, &c.]** So God sealeth and sweareth to us again and again, in every sacrament, that all doubts of his love may be taken away, and our hearts lifted up (as Jehoshaphat's, #2Ch 17:6) in the way of the Lord.

Ver. 11. **Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan]** That most pleasant of all lands, #Eze 20:6, a type and pledge of heaven to the faithful.

Ver. 12. **When they were but a few men in number]** Seventy souls at their going down into Egypt, which yet (say the Hebrews truly) were more worth than the seventy nations of the whole world besides. Howbeit, God chose them not for their worth or number, but loved them merely because he loved them, #De 6:7,8.

Ver. 13. **When they went from one nation to another]** There were seven several nations in that land wherein they sojourned, flitting from place to place, and having no settled habitation, αστατουνηρες, #1Co 4:11.

From one kingdom] Forced by famine, or other necessity. See #Ge 12:10 20:1-7 Ge 26:1-5

Ver. 14. **He suffered no man, &c.]** So as utterly to oppress them; for otherwise they had their illuses; such as was the taking away of Sarah, casting out of Isaac, the rape of Dinah, &c. Strangers meet many times with hard measure.

Yea, he reproved kings] #Ge 12:17 20:3. Kings and queens must not think themselves too good to nurse God's little ones, yea, to do them homage, licking up the dust under their feet, #Isa 49:23.

Ver. 15. **Touch not mine anointed, &c.]** This God speaketh not of kings, but to kings, concerning his people who have an unction from the Father, being sanctified and set apart for his peculiar. To touch these is to touch the apple of God's eye, #Zec 2:8; they are sacred persons.

And do my prophets no harm] The patriarchs were such, #Ge 20:7, so are still all godly ministers, whom they who harm by word or deed have not so much knowledge as Pilate's wife had in a dream. See #Ps 14:4.

Ver. 16. **Moreover he called for a famine]** How easy is it with God soon to starve us all by denying us a harvest or two! If he do but call for a famine it is done.

He brake the whole staff of bread] Either by withdrawing bread, that staff of man's life, or his blessing from it; for man liveth not by bread alone (or at all), but by every word, &c., #Mt 4:4, without which bread can no more nourish us than a clod of clay, *In pane conclusus est quasi baculus, qui nos sustineat*. See #Hag 1:6. {See Trapp on "Hag 1:6"}

Ver. 17. **He sent a man before them]** An eminent and eximious man, *Cuius vita fuit coelum quoddam lucidissimis virtutum stellis exornatum*, to be their friend in the court, and to provide for their livelihood. No danger befalleth the Church but God beforehand

provideth and procureth the means & preservation and deliverance, #2Pe 2:9.

Even Joseph, who was sold] God ordereth the disorders of the world to his own glory and his people's good.

Ver. 18. **Whose feet they hurt with fetters]** God hereby fitting him for that great service; as he did afterwards Moses, by forty years' banishment in Midian, and David, by Saul's persecution, till his soul was even as a weaned child, #Ps 131:2.

He was laid in iron] Heb. His soul came into iron; or, the iron entered into his soul; but sin entered not into his conscience. See a like phrase #Lu 2:35.

Ver. 19. **Until the time that his word came]** The time that God's purpose and promise of deliverance was fulfilled. This word of God profane persons call fate, fortune, &c.

The word of the Lord tried him] That he was affliction proof, and still retained his integrity, #1Pe 1:7.

Ver. 20. **The king sent and loosed him]** By his own master, Potiphar, who had laid him there at his wife's instance. Such as are bound ignominiously for righteousness' sake shall be one way or other loosed honourably.

Ver. 21. **He made him lord of his house]** Thus, for his short braid of imprisonment, whereof he never dreamed, Joseph hath eighty years' preferment, more than ever he dreamed of: God's retributions are very bountiful.

Ver. 22. **To bind his princes at his pleasure]** To overawe and to overrule them, to bind them in prison, if need so required, as himself had been bound, and that at his pleasure, or according to his own soul, *sine consensu Pharaoh*, saith Rabbi Solomon; without Pharaoh's consent, as he dealt by Potiphar, say other Rabbis.

And teach his senators wisdom] Policy and piety, which yet the Egyptians long retained not.

Ver. 23. **Israel also came into Egypt]** Whither he feared to go, till God promised him his presence and protection, #Ge 46:3,4. God saith the same in effect to us, when to descend into the grave, Fear not to go down, I will go down with thee, and be better to thee than

thy fears. Jacob's best and happiest days were those he spent in Egypt.

Ver. 24. **And he increased his people greatly]** Against all the power of Egypt set against them.

And made them stronger than their enemies] They were not so for present, but the Egyptians conceited and feared they would be so.

Ver. 25. **He turned their heart to hate]** Men's hearts are in God's hands, and he formeth and fashioneth their opinions of and affections to others at his pleasure, yet without sin.

To deal subtilly with his servants] Seeking to imbase and enervate their spirits by base drudgeries imposed upon them. So afterwards dealt the Persian tyrant with Hormislaus, and the Great Turk with the Christians.

Ver. 26. **He sent Moses his servant]** *Quando duplicantur lateres, venit Moses*, say the Jews at this day.

And Aaron, &c.] God usually sendeth his by two and two, for mutual helps and comfort.

Ver. 27. **They showed his signs]** Heb. the words of his signs; for God's wondrous works are vocal, they are real sermons of God's power and justice. See **#Ex 4:8**.

Ver. 28. **He sent darkness]** Palpable darkness, by reason of most black and thick vapours of the earth mingling themselves with the air; such as Aben Ezra said that he once felt, sailing upon the ocean, the gross vapours there putting out the light of fire and candle, and not suffering them to be re-enkindled.

And they rebelled not against his word] They, that is, the plagues called for, came immediately, with an *Ecce me*. Or, they, that is, Moses and Aaron, refused not to denounce and inflict those plagues, though Pharaoh threatened to kill them; where a man would wonder at Pharaoh's hardness and hardiness, that being in the midst of that deep and dreadful darkness, he could rage against God, and threaten with death his servant Moses. The Arabic (reading וַל for אַל) rendereth it, *Et irritarunt sermonem eius*; and they (the Egyptians) provoked his word, or rebelled against it.

Ver. 29. **And he turned their waters into blood]** A just hand of God upon them for their cruelty in drowning the Hebrew infants, and a real forewarning, if they could have seen it, of the death of their firstborn, and their final overthrow at the Red Sea.

And slew their fish] Which was a great part of their food; *piscis a pascendo dictus.*

Ver. 30. **The land brought forth frogs in abundance]** Like grass that grows upon the ground, or as fishes spawned in the sea, as the word signifieth, #Ge 1:20. Some think they were not common frogs, *sed venenatas et horrendas, quales sunt rubetae et bufones,* but toads and lizards; crocodiles, some think, came out of the river, and destroyed people (Aben-Ezra).

In the chambers of their kings] *Regis et regulorum inter medias enses, medias custodias;* this was the finger of God; as it was likewise when a town in Spain was overturned by conies, and another in Thessaly by moles, a city in France undone by frogs, and another in Africa by locusts (Plin. l. viii. c. 29).

Ver. 31. **He stake, and there came divers sorts of flies]** Heb. a mixture, *sc.* of wasps, hornets, dog flies (the most troublesome of all other *κυνομυιαι*), all sorts of insects.

And lice in all their coasts] This the magicians could not do, *Quid ciniphe vilis, &c.?* saith Philo, What is baser than a louse? yet hereby God can tame the sturdiest of his rebels. Some kings and other nobles have died of the lousy disease; as Herod, Philip of Spain, &c.

Ver. 32. **He gave them hail for rain]** Rain was rare in Egypt; but now they had hail for rain, a giftless gift. Heb. he gave their rain hail, #Ex 9:23.

And flaming fire in their land] That they might see that he was Lord of all the four elements.

Ver. 33. **He smote their vines also, and their fig trees]** Of the fruitfulness of these trees in Egypt, strange things are reported by Solinus and others; but this extraordinary hail mingled with fire, marred them in the spring, when they promised great store of fruit, *trusis botris et baccis.*

And brake the trees] Yea, dashed out the brains of men and beasts that were abroad, as Moses addeth.

Ver. 34. **He spake, and the locusts came]** These are called God's great army, and their terrible invasion is graphically described, **#Joe 2:3-5**, &c.

Ver. 35. **And did eat up all the herbs]** All that the fiery hail had not blasted and beaten down.

And devoured the fruit of their ground] But not yet the fruit of their bodies, that plague was reserved to the last, to show God's longsuffering, and lothness to destroy men.

Ver. 36. **He smote also all the firstborn]** This he did last of all, the next spring after the first plague inflicted, *et non nisi coactus*, as that emperor once said when he subscribed a writ for execution of a certain malefactor.

The chief of all their strength] *Et ubi non erat primogenitus, moritur epitropus*, say the Hebrews, where was not a firstborn, there the steward died; so that there was no house in Egypt without a dead corpse, as there are few among us without many dead souls.

Ver. 37. **He brought them forth also with silver and gold]** Which they had dearly earned in Egypt, but could not get, till God, the right owner of all, set them in a course, **#Ex 12:35,36**, dispensing with his own law.

There was not one feeble person] But all able and fit for their journey, *Viatico et firma valetudine instructi*.

Ver. 38. **Egypt was glad when they departed]** For they said, We are all dead men, **#Ex 12:33**. The devil for like cause spake Christ fair to be rid of him, **#Mr 1:24**.

For the fear of them fell upon them] God can make the very name and countenance of his servants fearful to their oppressors.

Ver. 39. **He spread a cloud]** It must needs be a very large one that could cover such an army from the extraordinary heats there; for the deserts of Arabia are extreme hot, both by reason of the climate and also of the sand's reflecting the sunbeams. So still upon all the glory (the Church) shall be a covering, **#Isa 4:5**.

And fire to give light, &c.] A fiery pillar against the error, terror, and danger of the darkness. See #Ne 9:19.

Ver. 40. **The people asked]** Not as suppliants, but as malcontents, and therefore had what they asked, with a vengeance.

And satisfied them with the bread of heaven] Never was any prince in his greatest state so served as these miscreants were; and yet we fare better than they in God's holy ordinances.

Ver. 41. **He opened the rock]** Set it abroad, giving them *pluviam escatilem, et petram aquatilem,* as Tertullian hath it.

They ran in the dry places] *Per deserta Sinis et Tzinis,* saith Junius. See #1Co 10:4.

Ver. 42. **For he remembered his holy promise]** Holy, that is, firm, and inviolable, Heb. the word of his holiness, that is, his sacred and gracious engagement, whereby he had made himself a voluntary debtor to Abraham's posterity.

And Abraham his servant] To whom he had passed his promise four hundred and thirty years before. *Nullum tempus occurrit regi.*

Ver. 43. **And he brought forth his people with joy]** According to his promise made to Abraham; and according to the time they were afflicted, so were they comforted, #Ps 90:15.

Ver. 44. **And gave them the lands of the heathen]** God doth not his work to the halves, he will perfect that which concerneth us, #Ps 138:8, and preserve all his unto his heavenly kingdom, #2Ti 4:18.

And inherited the labour of the people] Their cities, towns, villages, fields, vineyards, all done to the hand of the Israelites. We shall also enter into our Master's joy, mansions made ready for us, &c.

Ver. 45. **That they might observe his statutes]** Here the psalmist showeth the final cause of all the service of God; what should be the result, his praise.

Praise ye the Lord] *Loquitur ad prudentes,* saith Aben Ezra, this he speaketh to those that are wise; for high words become not a fool, saith Solomon.

Chapter 106

Ver. 1. **Praise ye the Lord**] Though scattered among the heathen, and in a sorrowful condition, #Ps 106:47. In prosperity praise the Lord, saith Austin, and it shall increase upon thee. In adversity praise him, and it shall be better with thee.

O give thanks unto the Lord, &c.] This verse was, say some, the foot or tenor of the song in many sacred hymns.

For his mercy endureth for ever] Even to those also that have sinned against his goodness.

Ver. 2. **Who can utter, &c.**] *i.e.* To the just worth of them; none can: they are fitter to be admired than possible to be uttered. It is enough that we do what we can toward the work. God accepteth according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, #2Co 8:12; he taketh it for no small praise when we thus acknowledge him to be above all praise.

Who can show forth all his praise?] *Quis fando exprimat?* Surely none can. David saith he will, #Ps 9:1, but soon found his utter inability; for according to thy name, O Lord, so is thy praise, saith he in another psalm. The best way is, as here in the ensuing verses, to submit to God's justice, and to implore his mercy, and to study integrity, #Ps 106:3-6.

Ver. 3. **Blessed are they that keep judgment, &c.**] That are of right principles and upright practices; this is real and substantial praising of God. Thanks doing is the proof of thanksgiving; and the good life of the thankful is the life of thankfulness. Those that say God a-thank only, and no more, are not only contumelious, but injurious.

And he that doth righteousness] So preaching forth the virtues (or praises) of God who hath called him into his marvellous light, #1Pe 2:9, and composing his whole course, *velar spectatum aliquod simulaehrum et documentum laudis eius constans atque perpetuum* (Jun.).

Ver. 4. **Remember me, O Lord, with the favour, &c.**] The psalmist would have favour, and special favour, mercies, and sure mercies, proper to God's peculiar, and with these he would be remembered; grace he would find, such as might help in time of need, #Heb 4:16.

"God remembered Noah," #Ge 8:1. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things," #Mt 6:32. Though our ark be driven in a tempestuous sea, yet it shall neither sink nor split while we sail in the thoughts of God.

O visit me with thy salvation] A gracious spirit will not be satisfied with low things, common mercies,

Ver. 5. **That I may see the good of thy chosen]** *Ut videam in bonum*, that I may see it, and partake of it, have both the vision and fruition of thy great goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, #Ps 31:19, giving them a taste thereof aforehand, as a few grapes of that promised Canaan.

Of thy nation] *i.e.* By this name God's elect are here and elsewhere styled, and therefore the Jews have no reason to reproach us, as they do, by it; calling us *Gel*, and *Mamzer-goi*, bastard heathens.

Ver. 6. **We have sinned with our fathers]** Adding to their heap, and making up their measure, #Mt 23:32. People think the example of their fathers a sufficient excuse. Jerome once (but not well) desired leave of Austin to err with seven Fathers whom he found of his opinion. I will follow my forefathers, saith Cicero, although I fall together with them. See #Jer 44:17. But so would not these good souls, as neither Jeremiah, #Jer 3:25, nor Daniel, #Da 9:5, whose confession suiting and symbolizing with this (together with that we read #Ps 106:47), maketh some think that this psalm was penned for his people's use then when they were captives in Babylon.

We have committed iniquity, &c.] Sin must be confessed with utmost aggravation. I will hear how full in the mouth these are against themselves, laying on load, while their sins swell as so many toads in their eyes.

Ver. 7. **Our fathers understood not]** *i.e.* They weighed them not, improved them not, but as the dull earth is surrounded by the heavens, yet perceiveth it not; so were these with miracles and mercies, yet understood them not.

Even at the Red Sea] Not only while they were on the bank they feared to enter, but also even when they were passing and walking

over that dry land made for them by a miracle, they did still continue their murmurings and mutinings.

Ver. 8. **Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake**] Here he comes, in with a *Non-obstante*. So #**Isa 57:17**. Now, if God will save for his name's sake, what people is there whom he may not save?

That he might make his mighty power to be known] The Lord hath other things to look unto than presently to punish his people when they most deserve it.

Ver. 9. **He rebuked the Red Sea also**] *Ingentia beneficia, flagitia, supplicia*, as appeareth in the subsequent verses.

So he led them through the depths] *Inter duas aquarum congeries*, between two mountains of waters, which stood on each hand of them as a wall, and made a lane. Every main affliction is our Red Sea; which while it threateneth to swallow us up, preserveth us.

Ver. 10. **And he saved them, &c.**] From Pharaoh, that perfect enemy of theirs, that pursued them with a deadly design, but was happily prevented.

Ver. 11. **And the waters covered their enemies**] The preservation of the Church is ever accompanied with the destruction of its enemies, that the mercy may appear the greater.

Not one of them left] Left alive to carry the news.

Ver. 12. **Then believed they his words**] Then for a flash, while the memory of the mercy was fresh and warm; but ere they were three days older they murmured again; it proved not so much as a nine days' wonderment; they were soon at oldward.

They sang his praise] #**Ex 15:1-21** A temporary faith and joy.

Ver. 13. **They soon forgot his works**] Heb. They made haste, they forgot. This is an aggravating circumstance. See #**Ga 1:6 Ex 32:8 De 9:16**.

They waited not for his counsel] For the performance of what he had purposed and promised; they were short-spirited and impatient.

Ver. 14. **But lusted exceedingly**] Heb. lusted a lust. See #**Nu 11**, they had a sufficiency, but must have superfluities, as belly-gods;

not want, but wantonness, set them a lusting, and that in the wilderness, where they knew that in an ordinary way it was not to be had.

And tempted God] Whom they should have trusted rather, since he waiteth to be gracious, and being a God of judgment, knoweth best when to deal forth his favours, **#Isa 30:18 49:8.**

Ver. 15. **And he gave them their request]** *Deus saepe dat iratus quod negat propitius* (Aug.).

Munera magna quidem misit, sed misit in hamo

(Martial).

Quails they had, but to choke them; as afterwards a king, but to vex them, &c.

But sent leanness into their soul] *i.e.* Into their bodies, such a loathing as caused leanness, **#Nu 11:20**, a plague upon their bodies, a curse upon their souls. Many men eat that on earth which they digest in hell. It is dangerous feeding on sin's murdering morsels.

Ver. 16. **They envied Moses also]** Korah and his complices did; and because the people punished them not, they are all accused as guilty of that conspiracy, and looked upon as a rabble of rebels against heaven.

And Aaron the saint of the Lord] Separated to the priesthood. The Rabbis tell us that they had chosen Dathan instead of Moses, and Abiram for Aaron.

Ver. 17. **The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, &c.]** Korah is not here mentioned, haply for his sons' sakes, who were famous prophets and music masters in David's days. As for On the son of Peleth (one of the chief conspirators), the Rabbis say that by the good counsel of his wife he repented, and so escaped.

Ver. 18. **And a fire was kindled in their company]** It is both a just presage and desert of ruin not to be warned. Let seditious persons and schismatics take heed; for even our God also is a consuming fire, **#Heb 12:29.**

The flame burnt up the wicked] And among the rest Korah, as some conceive. Dathan and Abiram are stigmatized for their stubbornness, #Nu 26:9, as was afterwards Ahaz, #2Ch 28:22, and before them all Cain, #Ge 4:15, and Lamech, #Ge 4:24.

Ver. 19. **They made a calf in Horeb]** *i.e.* In the country near to that mountain, where they at same time saw visible tokens of God's dreadful presence. Well might Aaron say of this people, that they were wholly set upon wickedness, #Ex 32:22. This piece of idolatry they had learned belike of the Egyptians, who worshipped Apis in such a shape, so catching is sin, and so dangerous is ill company (Lege Lacrant. and Aug. lib. 1, de Mirab. Script. cap. 15).

Ver. 20. **Thus they changed their glory]** *i.e.* Their God, #Ro 1:23, the Creator for a contemptible creature.

Of an ox that eateth grass] *Tunc stercola egerit, et multum inquinatur;* as R. Solomon here glosseth. They pretended not to worship the calf, but God in the calf, as did also Jebu, #2Ki 10:16,29 2Ch 11:15, and as the idolatrous Papists do at this day. See #Ex 32:5,6. Yet the text here saith, "They worshipped the molten image, they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox." And although some of the Rabbis would excuse this gross idolatry of their forefathers, yet others, more wise, bewail it, and say that there is an ounce of this golden calf in all their present sufferings.

Ver. 21. **They forgot God their saviour]** This is often mentioned as the mother of all the misrule among them.

Ver. 22. **Wondrous works in the land of Ham]** *i.e.* Among the Egyptians, Ham's posterity.

And terrible things by the Red Sea] All which were buried, together with the remembrance of God, the doer.

Ver. 23. **Therefore he said that he would destroy them]** Idolatry is a people desolating sin. God was once in a mind to have destroyed this people utterly, and to have left none but Moses, #Ex 32:10,31, &c., promising him a great fortune if he would have suffered it; but he, tendering God's glory more than his own greatness, refused it: choice and excellent spirits use to do so.

Had not Moses his chosen] "Chosen" to represent Christ in his mediatorship.

Stood up in the breach] A metaphor from military matters. When a stronghold is besieged, and a breach made, valiant soldiers use to make up that breach with their own bodies, till the enemy be beaten back. God's wrath was even breaking in upon the people. Moses prayed instantly and constantly, even the most part of those forty days and nights he spent in the mount, #De 9:9,11,18,25, and at length prevailed. See #Eze 13:5 22:30.

Ver. 24. **Yea, they despised the pleasant land]** Heb. The land of desire, flowing with milk and honey, *sumen totius terrae*, as one calleth it; Egypt they preferred before it, though it were a gage of heaven; as Cardinal Bourbon did his part in Paris, before his part in paradise.

They believed not his word] *sc.* That he would, or indeed could, give them that good land. He that believeth not maketh God a liar.

Ver. 25. **But murmured in their tents]** Where they sat discontented (after the report of the spies), and, as we say, sick of the sullens; they would not attempt a conquest, but bewailed their hard fortune, and let fly on all hands, keeping a clutter and a rattle.

Ver. 26. **Therefore he lifted up his hand]** *i.e.* He solemnly swore, as #Nu 14:30, or he was fetching his full blow at them.

To overthrow them in the wilderness] Which also befell them according to their own wicked wish. Let men false heed of wishing evil to themselves, lest God say Amen to it.

Ver. 27. **To overthrow their seed also among the nations]** This clause of God's oath is not expressed in Numbers, but drawn there hence as a fearful consequence, both here by the psalmist, and also by the prophet Ezekiel, #Eze 20 And R. Solomon's note upon this text is, *Tunc erat decretum de desolando Templo, ut lachrymas pro re magna, sicut ante pro nihilo effunderent*, Then was the desolation of the temple (though it fell out long after) determined, that those malcontents who cried for nothing before, might have somewhat to cry for.

Ver. 28. **They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor]** Heb. they were unequally yoked, as #2Co 6:14.

Quam male inaequales veniunt ad aratra iuveni.

They separated themselves to that shame, Priapus, #Ho 9:10, who had his name from showing all, *Ab operatione seu nudatione pudendorum*; and his worshippers were most impudent servants.

And ate the sacrifices of the dead] *i.e.* Of idols opposed to the living God. The beginning of idolatry, some say, was the attributing of divine honours to great persons when they were dead. The heathens showed the sepulchres of their oldest deities.

Ver. 29. **Thus they provoked him]** God cannot brook men's devices in matters of religion; he will have no other worship than what himself hath appointed.

And the plague brake in upon them] As a deluge, or as an army, very impetuously, to the destroying of twenty-four thousand persons.

Ver. 30. **Then stood up Phinehas]** *Animose surrexit* (Vatab.). By a secret, heroical, and extraordinary motion of God's Spirit, such as may not be drawn into example. All things reported and commended in Scripture may not be imitated. One Birchet, by example of Phinehas and Ehud, thought he might have killed a great personage in this land, whom he looked upon as a naughty man, and God's enemy. A particular example will afford a general instruction, when the equity of the thing done is universal, and the cause common, otherwise not, saith learned Junius.

And executed judgment] Not tarrying for the sentence of the judges. The Chaldee rendereth it, And prayed. Execution of justice is that actual, magisterial, and majestic kind of prayer that will stay the plague when nothing else will.

Ver. 31. **And that was counted unto him for righteousness]** God not only condemned him not of rash zeal, but looked upon what he had done as a piece of singular service, and rewarded it accordingly.

Ver. 32. **They angered him also at the waters of strife]** Yet he made not the least semblance of it to Moses, but only bade him smite the rock, which, if he had then done, and no more, he had done right. God is *Bagnal Chemah*, master of his anger, #Na 1:2, so was not meek Moses at this time. The best are miscarried by their passions sometimes, to their cost.

So that it went ill with Moses for their sakes] *i.e.* By their means he was kept out of Canaan, which was a great cross to him, and his repentance, as to that favour, came too late, for God was resolved.

Ver. 33. **Because they provoked his spirit]** So that he was in a pelt to the grieving of God's good Spirit within him, **#Eph 4:30,31**. *O tantaene animis coelestibus irae?*

So that he spake unadvisedly] Some render it only, he spake, or he pronounced; he should not have spoken at all to the people, as having no order from God so to do in that transaction, but only to the rock. Whereas he not only smote the rock, and smote it twice, but spake to the people, and spake rashly, or idly (the Greek word βαττολογεω is thought to come from the Hebrew Bata here used), yea, bitterly, calling them rebels, and falling foul upon them with distrustful interrogations and misimplications, *Et perperam locutus est. Contra charitas, ου περπερευεται, #1Co 13:4*. This is called rebellion, **#Nu 20:10,11,24**, and severely punished in God's favourite Moses.

Ver. 34. **They did not destroy the nations]** For which neglect of theirs pity would be pleaded. But there is a cruel mercy, saith one; there is a pious cruelty, saith another. Cursed is he that doeth the Lord's work deceitfully, and cursed is he that restraineth his sword from blood when God biddeth him strike. Saul and Ahab felt the dint of this curse, and so did these Israelites, for sparing the Canaanites, whether out of pusillanimity or foolish pity.

Ver. 35. **But were mingled among the heathen]** With whom they made leagues and marriages, **#Jude 3**, and so were soon corrupted by them. It is dangerous to converse with graceless people, their very example is a compulsion; see **#Ga 2:14**; how much more their evil counsel!

Ver. 36. **And they served their idols]** The devil is ειδωλοχαρης, saith Synesius, a lover of idolatry, and he speaks through idolaters as through his trunks, persuading people to like practice, as did Julian, whom an ancient, therefore, called Idolian.

Which were a snare unto them] Or, a ruin, as some render it; they were first drawn in, and then undone by them.

Ver. 37. **Yea, they sacrificed their sons, &c.]** The devils are here called Shedim, destroyers (in opposition to Shaddai, the Almighty),

and worthily; for they make it their work to waste and spoil people of their dearest children, as here, of their precious souls, with the blood whereof they do daily glut themselves.

Ver. 38. **And shed innocent blood, &c.**] This was *furor Diabolicus*; but what may not the devil do with his drudges, when God's word cannot obtain the smallest things of us?

Whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan] Prompted thereunto by that old manslayer. This was practised by Manasseh, Ahaz, and others not a few, #Jer 7:19 Eze 16 *Haec atrocitas frequens apud gentes.*

And the land was polluted with blood] *Impiata est abominabilis reddita est quasi hypocrita.* See #Ezr 9:11. As a hypocrite is a fair professor, but a foul sinner, so here.

Ver. 39. **Thus were they defiled]** Great sins do greatly pollute; neither are men by anything more disadvantaged than by doting upon their own devices.

And went a whoring] They followed it earnestly, and with delight.

Ver. 40. **Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled]** Sin doth as naturally draw and suck judgments to it as the loadstone doth iron, or turpentine fire.

Insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance] This was the greatest of all miseries, and a piece of hell.

Ver. 41. **And he gave them into the hand of the heathen]** That they might suffer by them with whom they had sinned, and with whom, by compliance, they hoped to have ingratiated.

Ver. 42. **And they were brought into subjection]** Heb. they were bowed down, or humbled, who would not humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he might exalt them.

Ver. 43. **Many times did he deliver them]** And as many times told them, *Servati estis ut mihi servatis,* I have, therefore, saved you that ye might serve me the better; *Sed surdo fabulam,* but they would not hearken.

η χαρις αλλαξαι την φυσιν ου δυναται (Theogn.).

Ver. 44. **Nevertheless he regarded their affliction]** See for proof hereof the whole Book of Judges, and take notice of God's philanthropy, who heareth men's afflictions, as he did Hagar's, **#Ge 16:11**, and is oft found of them that seek him not, **#Isa 65:1**. See **#2Ki 14:26,27**.

When he heard their cry] Heb. their shrill outcry; not for joy (as the word is mostly taken), but for grief.

Ver. 45. **And he remembered for them his covenant]** Which could not be vacated or abolished by the wickedness of men, but stood firm and inviolable, inasmuch as God is faithful and merciful.

And repented] That is, changed his severity into clemency. God's repentance is not a change of his will, but of his work, *Mutatio rei, non Dei*.

Ver. 46. **He made them also to be pitied]** God can soon turn the hearts of tyrants, and make them of lions lambs, &c.

Ver. 47. **Save us, O Lord our God]** This is the main request of the psalm, and the chief thing intended; for for this cause prefaced the prophet, as **#Ps 106:1,2**, &c., and reckoned up the people's sins and God's deliverances, that he might bring in this, "Save us," as thou ever hast done.

To give thanks unto thy holy name] Good ends propounded in prayer is a special means of speeding. Hypocrites do all in themselves, so do not the saints, **#Ho 14:8**; and all for themselves, as **#Zec 7:5 Ho 10:1**, which is not the saints' practice, **#So 5:1**, they have good aims in their good actions.

Ver. 48. **Blessed be the Lord]** viz. For our return out of captivity, which we foresee, believe, and give thanks for beforehand.

Praise ye the Lord] Thus they speak one to another, by way of excitation, ὑμνησατε μετα μελους το ον, so Justin Martyr rendereth it.

Chapter 107

Ver. 1. **O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good]** He is good, and doeth good, **#Ps 119:68**, not to his Israel only, as is set forth in the two foregoing psalms, but to all mankind, which is *Divini*

ingenii cura, as one saith, whatever atheists and epicures say to the contrary, denying a Divine providence: witness that profane distich of theirs:

*Nempe nihil positum est, et sors incerta vagatur;
Fertque refertque vices, et habent mortalia casum.*

For his mercy endureth for ever] *Notwithstanding men's many and mighty provocations.*

Ver. 2. **Let the redeemed of the Lord]** Four sorts of whom are afterwards instanced: 1. exiles; 2. prisoners; 3. sick persons; 4. seamen. These and the like must praise him in a special manner for their deliverance.

From the hand of the enemy] Or, of distress.

Ver. 3. **And gathered them out of the lands]** He beginneth with wayfaring men and exiles, because, according to Tyrtæus, *Non exul curae dicitur esse Deo.*

And from the south] Heb. from the sea, that is, as the Chaldee expoundeth it, from the southern sea, called the Red Sea.

Ver. 4. **They wandered in the wilderness, &c.]** This is a sad case, *Mendicum patria amissa laribusque vagari.*

Πλαγχθοσυνης ουκ εστι κακωτερον αλλο βροτοισι.

And yet this is the case of all God's redeemed ones while they are here, #**Heb 11:38 1Pe 2:12.**

Per varios casus per tot discrimina rerum

Tendimus in patriam veram vitamque perennem.

Ver. 5. **Hungry and thirsty, &c.]** The Lord's exiles meet many times with the like exigents in the wilderness of this wicked world; but let them be content, and say, We are well for the present, and it will be better with us hereafter (Melancthon).

Exul erat Christus; comites nos exulis huius

Esse decet, cuius nos quoque membra sumus.

Ver. 6. **Then they cried unto the Lord]** Though under a wrong name, it may be, as of Jupiter, Mercury, &c.; and, in an uncertain way, as Hecuba did with her, *O Iupiter quicquid es sive caelum hoc, sive mens, quae vehitur in coelo, &c.*; and as those mariners in #**Jon 1:5**, who cried every man to his god, and, lest they might all mistake the true God, they awaken Jonah, to call upon his God.

And he delivered them out of their distresses] Out of his general goodness and compassion to the poor creature; like as he heareth the young ravens that cry unto him, no otherwise than by implication only, and out of mere necessity. God is the Saviour of all men, but especially of those that believe.

Ver. 7. **And he led them forth by the right way]** Better than that Dea Vibilia among the Romans, of whom they fancied that she set them right when out of the way at any time; or Minerva among the Athenians, who, they said, turned all their evil counsels to the best unto them.

That they might go to a city of habitation] Grow to a state of settlement, to Jerusalem, saith the Chaldee; to that city which hath a foundation, may we say, whose maker and founder is God, #**Heb 11:10**.

Ver. 8. **Oh that men would praise the Lord, &c.]** Heb. that they would confess it to the Lord, both in secret and in society. This is all the rent that God requireth; he is content that we have the comfort of his blessings, so he may have the honour of them. This was all the fee Christ looked for for his cures, Go and tell what God hath done for thee. Words seem to be a poor and slight recompense; but Christ, saith Nazianzen, calleth himself the Word.

Ver. 9. **For he satisfieth the longing soul, &c.]** This as a recapitulation of the first part, #**Ps 107:5-7**, and setteth forth the reason why the redeemed should praise God out of the sweet experience they have had of his wonderful providence and goodness toward them.

And filleth the hungry soul with goodness] This flower the blessed Virgin picketh out of David's garden (among many others out of

other parts of Holy Scripture, wherein it appeareth she was singularly well versed), and puts it into her posy, #Lu 1:53.

Ver. 10. **Such as sit in darkness, &c.**] Here come in the second sort of God's redeemed or rescued ones, viz. captives and prisoners, whose dark and doleful condition is in this verse described.

And in the shadow of death] In dark caves and horrid prisons, where there is *Luctus ubique payor, et plurima morris imago*. Such was Joseph's first prison, Jeremiah's miry dungeon, Lollards' tower, the bishop of London's coalhouse, &c.

Being bound in affliction and iron] Or, in poverty and iron, as Manasseh was. Many are the miseries that poor prisoners undergo. Good Savonarola had the experience of it, and Zegeidine, and the martyrs, and various of God's dear servants in the recent wars here. A certain pious prince, discoursing about the dangers that were to be then expected for the profession of religion, said, *Nihil so magis metuere quam diuturnos carceres*, that he feared nothing so much as perpetual imprisonment.

Ver. 11. **Because they rebelled against the words of God]** Sin is at the bottom of all men's miseries, as the procreant cause thereof; for God afflicteth not willingly, nor grieveth the children of men, #La 3:33, but they rebel against his words written in the Scriptures, or, at least, in their hearts; and so he is concerned in point of honour to subdue them.

And contemned the counsel] A foul fault. See #Lu 7:30.

Ver. 12. **Therefore he brought down their heart]** That proud piece of flesh, *Quod erat elatum et verba Dei contempsit*, saith Kimchi, which had stouted it out with God, and thought to have carried it away with a strong hand; as Manasseh, that sturdy rebel, till God had hampered him, and laid him in cold irons.

Ver. 13. **Then they cried unto the Lord]** See #Ps 107:6.

And he saved them, &c.] This is comfort to the greatest sinners; if they can but find a praying heart, God will find a pitying heart, and rebels shall be received with all sweetness, if at length they return, though brought in by the cross.

Ver. 14. **He brought them out of darkness]** He sent his mandamus {a}, as #Ps 44:4, and that did the deed, as #Ac 5:19 12:7.

{a} Originally applied generically to a number of ancient writs, letters missive, or mandates, issued by the sovereign, directing the performance of certain acts.

Ver. 15. **Oh that men, &c.]** See #Ps 107:8.

Ver. 16. **For he hath broken the gates of brass]** If Samson could do so, how much more the Almighty, whom nothing can withstand! Nature may be stopped in her course, as when the fire burned not. Men may not be able to do as they would. Angels, good or bad, may be hindered, because in them there is an essence and an executive power, between which God can step at his pleasure, and interpose his veto; but who or what shall hinder the Most High?

Ver. 17. **Fools because of their transgression]** *Propter viam defectionis sum*, by means of their defection, their departing away from the living God, through an evil heart of unbelief, #Heb 3:12.

And because of their iniquities] The flood gates whereof are set open, as it were, by that their defection from God; for now what should hinder?

Are afflicted] Heb. do afflict themselves, procure their own ruth, if not ruin, and so prove sinners against their own souls, as those, #Nu 16:30-33

Ver. 18. **Their soul abhorreth]** That is, their stomach loatheth it as unsavoury, though it be never so dainty: an appetite to our meat is an inconceivable mercy, and, as we say, a sign of health.

And they draw near unto the gates of death] *Iam ipsum mortis limen pulsant;* as till then little sense of sin or fear of the wrath to come. See #Job 30:19-23. {See Trapp on "Job 30:19"} {See Trapp on "Job 30:20"} {See Trapp on "Job 30:21"} {See Trapp on "Job 30:22"} {See Trapp on "Job 30:23"}

Ver. 19. **Then they cry, &c.]** *Quando medicus et medicinae non prosunt*, saith Kimchi, when physicians have done their utmost. See #Ps 107:6.

Ver. 20. **He sent his word, and healed them]** He commanded deliverance, and it was done; unless there he an allusion to the essential Word, who was afterwards to take flesh, and to heal the diseased.

And delivered them from their destructions] Heb. from their corrupting pits or graves, which do now even gape for them. And he calleth them theirs, *quia per peccatum foderunt eas*, saith Kimchi, because by their sin themselves have digged them.

Ver. 21. **Oh that men, &c.]** See #Ps 107:8.

And for his wonderful works] Men are *miseri cordiis et miraculis obsesse*, and it were no hard matter to find a miracle in most of our mercies.

Ver. 22. **And let them sacrifice, &c.]** If they have escaped sickness, let them offer a passover; and if they have recovered, a thankoffering. Heathens in this case praised their Esculapius; Papists their Sebastian, Valentine, Apollonia, &c. Ears of wax they offer to the saint, who, as they suppose, cureth the ears; eyes of wax to the saint that cureth the eyes, &c. But it is Jehovah only who healeth us.

And declare his works, &c.] Memorize and magnify them.

Ver. 23. **They that go down to the sea in ships]** Here we have a fourth specimen or instance of God's gracious and wise dispensations towards men, in their trading or trafficking by sea. These are said to go down to sea, because the banks are above it; but the water is naturally higher than the land, and, therefore, sailors observe that their ships fly faster to the shore than from it. But what a bold man, saith the poet, was he that first put forth to sea! (Horat. Od. lib. 1, 3.)

Illi robut, et aes triplex

Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci

Commisit pelago ratem

Primus, nec timuit praecipitem Africum, &c.

That do business in great waters] Merchants and mariners, who fish, and find almug, or coral, saith Kimchi, who do export and import commodities of all sorts.

Ver. 24. **These see the works of the Lord, &c.]** In sea monsters, as whales and whirlpools, and sudden change of weather, and the like,

not a few; ebbs and flows, pearls, islands, &c. These are just wonders, and may fully convince the most stubborn atheist that is.

Ver. 25. **For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, &c.]** Of this Seneca, though a heathen, could say, *Inter caetera providentiae divinae opera hoc quoque dignum est admiratione, &c.*, Among other works of the Divine providence this is admirable, that the winds lie upon the sea for the furtherance of navigation, &c.

Ver. 26. **They mount up to the heaven, they go down, &c.]** An elegant hypotyposis or description of a storm at sea; like whereunto is that in Virgil,

Tollimur in coelum curvato gurgite, et iidem

Subducta ad manes imos descendimus unda.

***Their soul is melted because of trouble]** They are ready to die through fear of death. Juntas understandeth it of extreme vomiting, as if they were casting up their very hearts. Anacharsis for this cause doubted whether he should reckon mariners among the living or the dead. And another said, that any man will go to sea at first I wonder not; but to go a second time thither is little better than madness.*

Ver. 27. **They reel to and fro, &c.]** *Natant nautae, et vacillant cerebro et pedibus.*

And are at their wit's end] All their skill and strength faileth them at once; they can do no more for their lives. Heb. All their wisdom is swallowed up; that is, the art of navigation is now to no use with them.

Ver. 28. **Then they cry unto the Lord]** "Then," if ever: hence that speech of one, *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare*, He who cannot pray, let him go to sea, and there he will learn. See #Ps 107:6.

Ver. 29. **He maketh the storm a calm]** "He," that is, God Almighty, whose the sea is, and he made it, #Ps 95:5; not the Pagans Neptune, or the papagans' St Nicholas.

So that the waves thereof are still] If, therefore, the voluptuous humours in our body (which is but as a cup made of the husk of an acorn in respect to the sea) will not be pacified when the Lord saith

unto us, "Be still"; every drop of water in the sea will be a witness of our monstrous rebellion and disobedience.

Ver. 30. **Then are they glad because they be quiet]** All is hushed on the sudden, as #Mt 8:26, both their fears and the sea's outrages being quickly reduced to a peaceable period.

So he bringeth them to their desired haven] This is more than they then wished for: God is many times better to men than their prayers.

Ver. 31. **Oh that men would, &c.]** See #Ps 107:8.

Ver. 32. **Let them exalt him also in the congregation, &c.]** *i.e.* In all public meetings, ecclesiastical and civil.

Ver. 33. **He turneth rivers into a wilderness]** Hitherto the psalmist hath set forth God's good providence in delivering men from several deaths and dangers; now he declareth the same in his just and powerful transmutations in nature, while according to the good pleasure of his will he changeth men's condition, either from good to evil, or from evil to good, beyond all expectation; it is even he that doeth it, whatsoever a company of dizzy headed men dream to the contrary, as one phraseth it. It is God who drieth up those rivers, whereby the land was made fat and fertile, #Isa 41:17.

Ver. 34. **A fruitful land into barrenness]** Heb. saltness. See #Lu 14:34,35 De 29:23 Jud 9:45. Salt breedeth barrenness, by eating up the fat and moisture of the earth. Some think the psalmist here alludeth to Sodom and her sisters turned into the Red Sea.

For the wickedness of them that dwell therein] Hereof Judea is at this day a noble instance (besides many parts of Asia and Africa, once very fruitful, now, since they became Mahometan, dry and desert). Judea, saith one, hath now only some few parcels of rich ground found in it; that men may guess the goodness of the cloth by the fineness of the shreds. Greece, which was once *Sol et sal gentium*, saith another, *terrarum flos, fens literarum, nunc vel Priamo miseranda manus; -nunc in Graecia desideramus Graeciam;* it is nothing like the place it was once.

Ver. 35. **He turneth the wilderness, &c.]** Some places, again, God (to show his power and providence) of sterile maketh to become fertile; Polonia, for instance, and other northern countries. Germany and France were of old full of woods and lakes, as Caesar and

Tacitus testify; now it is otherwise. So in America to this day. So various desert places of Egypt and Ethiopia, when once they became Christians, became fruitful.

Ver. 36. **And there he maketh the hungry to dwell]** As our English, and other plantations in America, where sundry poor people get fair estates.

That they may prepare a city] The building of cities is of God, and so is their conservation.

Ver. 37. **And sow the fields, and plant vineyards]** These are noble employments, such as the ancient patriarchs were much in, and the most honourable among the Romans, as Coriolanus, Marcus Curius, Cato Major, &c. Our forefathers, if they could call any one *bonum eolonum*, a good husbandman, they thought it praise enough, saith Cicero.

Which may yield] The thankful earth yielding, by God's blessing, her *gratum onus*, full burden to the laborious tiller.

Ver. 38. **He blesseth them also, &c.]** See #Pr 10:12 Ps 127:1 Jas 4:15. They are out that rest in natural causes.

Ver. 39. **Again, they are minished]** *Minorati sunt*. This also is of the Lord, who hath treasuries of plagues, and cannot be exhausted.

Ver. 40. **He poureth contempt, &c.]** See #Job 12:21,24, {See Trapp on "Job 12:21"} {See Trapp on "Job 12:24"} *Poena tyrannorum est contemptus, exilium, nex*, saith Genebrard. All the policy or king craft cannot save them.

Ver. 41. **Yet setteth he the poor]** The godly poor, as he did David.

And maketh him families like a flock] Of sheep, which multiply exceedingly in a short time.

Ver. 42. **The righteous shall see it, and rejoice]** It shall cheer them up to see that the reins of government are in God's hand; and to behold such love in such providence.

And all iniquity shall stop her mouth] Shall be down in the mouth, as we use to say, {see #Job 5:16} and have her tongue chambered.

Ver. 43. **Whoso is wise]** Heb. Who is wise? *q.d.* not many. *Exclamatio querulatoria* (Piscat.). *Rari quippe boni*. None but those that observe providences, and lay up experiences; which, if men

would do, they might have a divinity of their own, were they but well read in the story of their own lives.

Even they shall understand, &c.] And as for those providences that for present he understandeth not, *reiecit in Dei abyssos*; he believeth that there is a reason for them, and that they shall one day be unriddled.

Chapter 108

Ver. 1. **O God, my heart is fixed]** For #Ps 108:1-5 of this psalm, see the notes on #Ps 57:7-11. And for #Ps 108:6-13, see the notes on #Ps 60:5-12.

A Psalm of David] Written by him, *usque adeo terribili et horriffica oratione*, saith Beza, in such terrible terms, as the like is not to be found in Holy Scripture; wherefore it is to be read and used with very great judgment, and not as those miscreants of whom Faber writeth, *Quod more magico clam murmurabant hunc Psalmum per modum execrationis in eorum hostes*, that after a conjuring fashion they muttered out this psalm, by the way of curse upon their enemies.

Chapter 109

Ver. 1. **Hold not thy peace]** But plead my cause, clear mine innocence.

O God of my praise] The object of my praises, or thou that keepest up my credit, as a witness, judge, and avenger of mine integrity.

Ver. 2. **For the mouth of the wicked]** There is nothing more easy than to wag a wicked tongue.

They have spoken against me with a lying tongue] But with so much impudence as if it were a very truth. Socrates in his Apology, My lords, said he to the judges, I know not how you have been affected with mine accusers' eloquence, while you heard them speak. For mine own part, I assure you that I, whom it toucheth not, was almost drawn to believe that all they said, though against myself, was true, when they scarce uttered one word of truth.

Ver. 3. **They compassed me about also, &c.**] So that I could not find out any way to clear myself, though never so innocent.

And fought against me] So they smote Jeremiah with the tongue, and our Saviour suffered the opposition of sinners, **#Heb 12:3**

Ver. 4. **For my love they are mine adversaries]** Heb. they satanically hate me. To render evil for evil is brutish, but to render evil for good is devilish.

But I give myself to prayer] Heb. But I am prayer, or, a man of prayer, as **#Ps 120:7**, But I am peace. So, being defamed, we pray, **#1Co 4:12**. When our Saviour was wearied out with the people's obstinace, he turned himself to God in prayer, **#Mt 11:26**, and prayed for his crucifiers, **#Lu 23:34** Send me to my toads again (in the dungeon), where I may pray for your lordship's conversion, said Saunders, the martyr, to Winchester.

Ver. 5. **And they have rewarded me]** See **#Ps 109:4**.

Flectere naturam gratia nulla potest.

Ver. 6. **Set thou a wicked man over him]** Whose tender mercies may be cruelties; let the devil be his taskmaster. Thus he prayed against Doeg, or Ahithophel, but certainly Judas, **#Ac 1:20**. And so the primitive Christians prayed against Julian the apostate, and afterwards against Arius the heretic, whose death was *precationis opus non morbi*, the effect of prayer, rather than of his disease, saith Socrates, lib. i. cap. 15. We are bound to pray daily, "Thy kingdom come," but must be advised how we pray, as David here doth, against particular persons; his curses here and elsewhere are indefinite, or conditional; either he nameth not the man, or intendeth it if God intend it so; or they are *non tam vota quam vaticinia*, not so much prayers as prophecies.

And let Satan (or an adversary) stand at his right hand] To withstand him and get the better of him, as **#Zec 3:1**. Or, to aggravate his fault before an unjust judge.

Ver. 7. **When he shall be judged]** Let him be cast in all his suits, *causa excidat*.

And let his prayer become sin] *Quot apud iudicem preces adhibebit tot sibi mulctas aecersat*, If he beg favour of the judge, let it be the worse for him, as it befell Haman, #Es 7:7,8.

Ver. 8. **Let his days be few]** Let his execution be hastened, as Haman's was. Ahithophel and Judas were their own deathsmen. Doeg, doubtless, came to an ill end; and so did other persecutors. See the Book of Martyrs.

And let another take his office] *Praefecturam*. Officers are oftentimes the Church's chief enemies; Popish bishops especially, as here in Queen Mary's days. Judas was guide to those that took Jesus, #Ac 1:16,20.

Ver. 9. **Let his children be fatherless]** Helpless and shiftless. A sore vexation to many on their death beds, and just enough on graceless persecutors. But happy are they who, when they lie a dying, can say, as Luther did, *Domine Deus gratias ago tibi quod volueris me esse pauperem, &c.*, Lord God, I thank thee for my present poverty, but future hopes. I have not any houses, lands, possessions, money, to leave behind me. Thou hast given me life and children, behold, I return them back to thee, and beseech thee to nourish them, teach them, keep them safe, as hitherto thou hast done me, O thou Father of the fatherless, and judge of widows.

Ver. 10. **Let his children be continually vagabonds]** Let them wandering wander, as #Ge 4:12 Cain's curse. Let them rogue about, — *et timida voce rogare cibos*. This is many times a token of God's wrath.

Out of their desolate places] Or, for that their places are desolate, and will afford them no help.

Ver. 11. **Let the extortioner catch all that he hath]** As it were in nets and snares, that is, in bonds, debts, mortgages; so Chrysostom expoundeth #Ps 10:9. *Et ipsum et omnes eius facultates inexplicabilibus suis laqueis immites foeneratores irretiant*, Let the merciless usurer make a prey of him and his estate.

And let the stranger, &c.] Who hath no right to it, and will show as little mercy. The Chaldee here hath it, *Colligat fiscus omnia quae ipsius sunt*. And *Quae non capit Christus, rapit fiscus*, saith Bernard.

Ver. 12. **Let there be none to extend mercy to him]** Let God in his justice set off all hearts from him that had been so unreasonably merciless. Thus no man opened his mouth to intercede for Haman; Judas was shaken off by the priests, and bid see to himself, &c.

Neither let there be any to favour his fatherless] *Pupillis pusillis.* Let there be none to plead their pupil's cause against the griping extortioner, or the stranger that violently invadeth their right.

Ver. 13. **Let his posterity be cut Off]** *Sit eius exitus excidium,* so some render it, let his end be destruction; and it is better to take it, as we translate, "Let his posterity," &c. Let them be razed and rooted out of remembrance, they and their whole race.

Let their name be blotted out] That they may not live, so much as by fame. The Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, have no memorial but what they have in the Bible, and that is for no good. And the like may be said of Meroz, **#Jud 5:23**, which seemeth to have been some city near the place where the battle was fought; but what it was none can determine, since there is no mention elsewhere to be found of it, which seemeth to be an effect of that bitter curse pronounced against it. See **#Pr 10:7**.

Ver. 14. **Let the iniquity of his fathers, &c.]** In whose sinful steps he treadeth, be charged upon him.

And let not the sin of his mother] Who bred him no better, but cockered him in wicked courses, and gave him no good example, *Partus fere sequitur ventrem.*

Ver. 15. **Let them be before the Lord]** Stand ever upon record in his presence, to provoke him to wrath. A heavy curse indeed.

Ver. 16. **Because that he remembered not to show mercy]** Here the prophet beginneth to show why he useth such doleful imprecations against his enemies, viz. not out of a spirit of revenge, or a false zeal, but as truly seeking God's glory, and his Church's safety, which could not otherwise be procured, unless these merciless men were devoted to destruction. He remembered not, that is, *de industria oblitus est et omisit,* he forgot and neglected it on purpose.

Ver. 17. **As he loved cursing, &c.]** "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," **#Pr 14:14**. Cursing men are cursed men,

as were easy to instance in sundry, as Hacker, hanged in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and Sir Jervase Elloways, lieutenant of the Tower in King James's days, according to their own wishes. See Mr. Clark's Mirror, p. 210, &c. The Jews are still great cursers of Christians, they shut up their daily prayers with *Maledic Domine Nazaraeis*, and how it cometh home to them who knoweth not, even wrath to the utmost? #1Th 2:16.

Ver. 18. **As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment]** *Ut vestis commensurata corpori*, as the inner garment that sticks closest to the body, and is not done off but with much ado, as he hath wrapped, and trussed up himself in cursing.

So let it come into his bowels like water] Let him have his belly full of it, and his bones full too.

And like oil] Which easily soaketh through. See #Nu 5:22.

Ver. 19. **Let it be unto him as a garment]** Yet as an inner, but outer garment also, that men may see and say, This is an accursed person; the visible vengeance of God pursueth him.

Ver. 20. **Let this be the reward]** *Opus vel operae precium*. The same Hebrew word signifieth work and wages, *Actio et merces*, #Job 7:2 Isa 49:4; persecutors shall be sure of their payment.

Ver. 21. **But do thou for me]** *Fac mecum, sis mihi a latere*, stick to me, act on my behalf, and for my benefit.

Ver. 22. **For I am poor and needy]** As a leper showeth his ulcers to move pity, so doth David his indigency and ailments.

And my heart is wounded] I have my inward troubles also: or I am *cordicitus vulneratus*, almost dead, *animam ago*.

Ver. 23. **I am gone like the shadow]** *Abii, perii, evanui*, I vanish, as the long shadows do so soon as the sun setteth.

As the locust] Leapeth from hedge to hedge, so do I from place to place, being tossed from post to pillar, *αστατουμεν*, #1Co 4:11

Ver. 24. **My knees are weak through fasting]** Either for lack of meat or stomach to it; *genua labant*, my knees buckle under me, the strong men bow themselves, #Ec 12:3.

My flesh faileth of fatness] I am lean and low brought. Christ might well cry out, "My leanness, my leanness"; so busy he was for his Father, and so worn out, that they judged him well nigh fifty, when he was not much over thirty, **#Joh 8:57**.

Ver. 25. **I became also a reproach]** In respect to my leanness.

They shook their heads] This is threatened as a curse, **#De 28:15-68**, but may befall the best, as it did our Saviour, **#Ps 22:7 Mt 27:39**

Ver. 26. **Help me, O Lord]** Prayer, like those arrows of deliverance, must be multiplied, as our trouble is lengthened and lieth on.

Ver. 27. **That they may know]** That I am delivered merely by thy presence and power. It is the ingenuity of the saints, in all their desired or expected mercies, to study God's ends more than their own.

Ver. 28. **Let them curse, but bless thou]** Yea, the rather, as **#2Sa 16:12**; and I wot well that those whom thou blessest shall be blessed, as Isaac once said of his son Jacob, **#Ge 27:33**.

When they arise] To plead their own cause, *causa excidant*.

Ver. 29. **As with a mantle]** *Sicut diploide*, saith the Vulgate, as with a doublet, *q.d.* Let them be doubley ashamed; for which purpose also he here doubleth his prayer.

Ver. 30. **I will greatly praise the Lord]** *Diligenter et impense*. God's blessings are binders; and great deliverances call for suitable praises, the neglect hereof is *crimen stellionatus, cousenage*.

Ver. 31. **For he shall stand at the right hand]** As a faithful and powerful (*παραστατης* or *υπεραπιστης*) champion, and not as Satan standeth at the persecutor's right hand, **#Ps 109:6**.

From those that condemn him] Heb. from the judges of his soul, *sc.* Saul and his courtiers, who judged him worthy of death,

A Psalm of David] Concerning Christ, saith R. Obadiah, and so say Christ himself, **#Mt 22:44**, and his apostles, **#1Co 15:25 Heb 1:13 10:12,13**, though some Rabbis maliciously say otherwise, as R. Joseph, *caecus qui hic caecutit*, to say the best of him, and other Jewish doctors, who stagger here in their expositions, as drunkards, *ως οι μεθουοντες* (Chrysostom).

Chapter 110

Ver. 1. **The Lord said unto my Lord]** In this one verse we have a description of Christ's person, his wars and his victory; so that we may say of it (and so indeed of the whole psalm, which is an epitome of the gospel), as Cicero did of Brutus's laconical epistle, *Quam multa, quam paucisi* How much in a little. {See Trapp on "Mt 22:44"}

Sit thou at my right hand] Sit thou with me in my throne, having power over all things in heaven and earth, **#Mt 28:18** Christ, as man, received what, as God, he had before.

Until I make thine enemies thy footstool] Foes Christ hath ever had, and shall have to the world's end; but then they shall be all in a place fittest for them, viz. under Christ's feet; even those who now set up their crests, face the heavens, and say unto the King, *Apostata*, stouting it out with him.

Ver. 2. **The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength]** That is, the gospel, that sceptre of Christ's kingdom, that power of God to salvation, unto as many as believe, mighty through God to work wonders, **#2Co 10:5 Ac 20:32**, even the preaching of Christ's cross.

Out of Zion] For salvation is of the Jews, **#Joh 4:22 Isa 2:3 Mic 4:1,2** Abide ye in Jerusalem till, &c., **#Ac 1:8**

Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies] Among Jews, Pagans, Turks, Papagans; those that will not bend, let them break; those that will not stoop to thy government, let them feel thy power, **#Ps 45:5**.

Ver. 3. **Thy people shall be willing]** All Christ's subjects are volunteers, free hearted, like those isles that wait for God's law, **#Isa 42:8 Zec 8:21**. They love to be his servants, **#Isa 56:6**. *Lex voluntarios quaerit*, saith Ambrose.

In the day of thy power] *Copiarum tuarum*, of thine army, or of thy militia, when thou shalt lead on thy Church militant, and be in the head of them, conquering and to conquer, **#Re 6:2**. Some understand it to be the Christian sabbath day.

In the beauties of holiness] *i.e.* In Church assemblies, in the beauty of holy ordinances, at the administration whereof, Christ's birth dew,

that is, the influence of his Spirit and his presence in those ordinances, is from the womb of the morning, *i.e.* is of that generating and enlivening virtue that the dew of the teeming morning is to the seeds and plants of the earth. An apt similitude both to express the multitude of Christ's converts, and the manner of their heavenly generation. See #**Mic 5:7**. {See Trapp on "Mic 5:7"}

Ver. 4. **The Lord hath sworn, &c.**] Christ's priestly office, as well as his kingly, is here described, whereof how many and how great mysteries there are, see Heb. vii., with the notes. The Church is collected and conserved not only by Christ's kingly power, but also by his priestly mediation.

Thou art a priest] 1. To expiate. 2. To intercede.

After the order of Melchisedek] Who whether he were Shem, or some other, is not easy to determine. Melchisedek was a king and a priest. Christ was more, a priest, a prophet, and a king. These offices have met double in some others; as Melchisedek was king and priest, Samuel a priest and a prophet, David a king and a prophet; but never met all three in any but in Christ alone.

Ver. 5. **The Lord at thy right hand]** Before, Christ was at the Father's right hand; here, the Father at his; this is to show the equality of the Father and the Son, saith Jerome. Athanasius, by Lord here, understandeth the Holy Ghost. Others, by thy right hand, will have the Church to be meant, who is promised protection and victory. The Lord Christ shall slay her enemies in battle, #**Ps 110:5**, compel them to flee and turn their backs, #**Ps 110:6**, pursue them fleeing, #**Ps 110:7**, as #**Jud 7:5-7,19-23**

Ver. 6. **He shall judge among the heathen]** Do execution upon his enemies, as #**Ps 110:1**, whether kings or commoners.

He shall fill the places] The ditches of their own camps.

He shall wound the heads] Heb. head; *cruentabit caput*, whereby some understand the Roman empire, with its image, antichrist with his adherents, who are called heathens, #**Re 11:2**. Others, Turks and Saracens, reading the next words, Over the land of Rabbah, the chief city of the Ammonites, who were likewise Arabians; and so they

make it an allusion to David's victories over the Ammonites, #2Sa 10:6-19 12:26-31

Ver. 7. **He shall drink of the brook in the way]** *i.e.* Of the wrath of the Almighty, pointing to Christ's state of humiliation, as in the next words to his exaltation; or, he shall content himself with a low condition here, such as was that of Elijah when he drank of the brook, #1Ki 17:1-7 Or, in the eager pursuit of his enemies, he shall drink hastily of the water next at hand, *i.e.* as Gideon and his soldiers did, *Vivet pauperem vitam, λιπον βιον* (Chrysost.). *Aerumnas omnes durissimae militiae perferet* (Beza).

Therefore shall he lift up the head] Maugre the heads of his enemies, he shall rise again, reign, and triumph, and so shall all his members, after that through many tribulations they have entered into the kingdom of heaven. Christ's and their sufferings are but a drinking of the brook, not a spring of water for perpetuity; they are but a dark entry into our Father's house, a dirty lane to a stately palace; shut but your eyes, as that martyr at the stake said, and there will be a change immediately. Look how the disciples, after they had taken Christ into the ship, were presently at shore, after a tempest; so the saints have no sooner taken death into their bosoms, but they are landed presently at the quay of Canaan, at the kingdom of heaven.

Chapter 111

Ver. 1. **Praise ye the Lord]** At the passover especially; for this and the other hallelujatical psalms that follow (called by the Jews the Great Hallelujah) were sung at that and other solemn feasts, in praise of God for his manifold mercies.

I will praise the Lord] *Musica huius Psalmi in signis est, siquis eam consequi potuit.* The great art used in the composure of this and some other psalms (after the order of the Hebrew alphabet) serveth both to set forth their excellence and for the help of memory.

Ver. 2. **The works of the Lord are great]** *Magnalia;* no small things are done by so great a hand. *Grandior solet esse Deus in parvulis quam in magnis; in formicis maior anima quam in elephantis, in nanis quam in gigantibus.*

Sought out of all them] *q.d.* Great though they be, yet are they seriously sought into and found out by those that delight therein; and the deeper they dive into them the sweeter they find them. Basil diligently described many creatures; and so did Ambrose after him. Pliny (who was himself a very great searcher in nature's secrets) telleth of one who spent eight and fifty years in learning the nature of the bee, *Et nondum assecutus sit onmia*, and yet could not attain to all. Our anatomists find still new wonders in the body of a man, &c. God hath showed singular skill in his works, that men might admire him; but woe to such as regard not his handiwork, **#Isa 5:12**. Ver. 3. **His work is honourable]** Heb. honour and glory, they all come tipped and gilt, with a glory upon them, a *centro ad coelum*. This the brutish man knoweth not, **#Ps 92:6**.

His righteousness endureth for ever] His judgments are sometimes secret, but always just.

Ver. 4. **He hath made his wonderful, &c.]** *Memorabilia reddidit mirabilia sua clemens et misericors Iehova*.

Ver. 5. **He hath given meat]** Heb. a prey, *Escam demensam*; as he did manna to the Israelites, to each a homer; so to all his he giveth food convenient for them, **#Pr 30:8**, *Cibum et potum, quae sunt divitiae Christianorum* (Jerome).

He will ever be mindful of his covenant] To pass by his people's sins, and to supply all their necessities; all his paths to such are not mercy only, but truth, **#Ps 25:10**

Ver. 6. **He hath showed his people, &c.]** To them it is given to see, but not to others who are delivered up to a judiciary blindness. "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and hidden things which thou knowest not," **#Jer 33:3**.

That he may give them, &c.] Yea, power over all nations, **#Re 2:26**

Ver. 7. **The work of his hands]** They speak him a true and just God. Chrysostom taketh truth here for mercy, and noteth that God usually mixeth mercy with justice; yet sometimes he sendeth an evil, an only evil, **#Eze 7:5**

All his commandments] That is, his promises added to his commandments; or they are so called, because firm and sure, as the commandments of an emperor.

Ver. 8. **They stand fast for ever and ever]** The promises are infallible, good sure hold, not yea and nay, but yea and amen.

And are done] *i.e.* Ordained, made, and ratified.

Ver. 9. **He sent redemption unto his people]** Once out of Egypt, ever out of Satan's thralldom.

He hath commanded his covenant for ever] *Sic cum populo suo pactus est ut de ipsius paeti observatione certis edictis caverit*, as he covenanted, so he looketh his commandments should be respected, which are as binding to us as his covenant is to him; and, through grace, his covenant is as binding to him as those are to us.

Holy and reverend is his name] Which, therefore, we should not presume in a sudden unmannerliness to blurt out. The Jews would not pronounce it. The Grecians (as Suidas observeth), when they would swear by their Jupiter, forbare to mention him. This is cheek to the profaneness common among us. Let those that would have their name reverend labour to be holy as God is holy.

Ver. 10. **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom]** Or the principal point and chief perfection. See **#Pr 1:7 Job 28:28**. {See Trapp on "Pr 1:7"} {See Trapp on "Job 28:28"}

A good understanding have all they] So much a man knoweth in true account, as he doth; hence understanding is here ascribed to the will; so **#Job 28:28**. See **#Ec 10:2**. Some render it, Good success.

His praise endureth for ever] *i.e.* God's praise; for they that understand it of the godly wise man understand not the propriety of the Hebrew word Tehillah, saith an interpreter.

Chapter 112

Ver. 1. **Praise ye the Lord]** See **#Ps 111:1**.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord] That obediently feareth him as said before, **#Ps 111:10**; that feareth the Lord, as Abraham

did, #Ge 22:12, who is the blessed man here described, say the Jewish doctors (Midrash Tillin in #Ps 112), because he kept the whole law from Aleph to Tau (this psalm also is alphabetical, as the former) with his whole heart, delighting in God's commandments, and hastening to fulfil them; as when he left his country, circumcised his family, sacrificed his son.

That delighteth greatly in his commandments] And thereby showeth that his fear of God is filial and amicable, not base and servile, which ever carrieth torment along with it; and he that so feareth is not made perfect in love, #1Jo 4:18; cannot but hate him whom he so feareth, for *Quem metuunt oderunt*.

Ver. 2. **And his seed shall be mighty upon earth]** As Abraham's was, and, besides, the reward of his humility and fear of the Lord was riches and honour, and life, #Pr 22:4. For godliness is profitable to all things, having the promises of this life, and of that to come, #1Ti 4:8, as in this psalm is fully set forth.

The generation of the upright, &c.] Personal goodness is profitable to posterity; and the contrary.

Ver. 3. **Wealth and riches]** Wealth enough, as the word *Hon* signifieth, a well contented sufficiency. His "chambers shall be filled with all precious and pleasant riches," #Pr 24:4.

His righteousness endureth for ever] He is not the worse for his wealth, nor drawn aside by the deceitfulness of riches, which yet is hard and happy.

Ardua res haec est opibus non tradere mores:

Et cum tot Croesos viceris, esse Numam

(Martial).

Ver. 4. **Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness]** *i.e.* Joy in tribulation, as did unto the martyrs, plenty in penury, as "having nothing, and yet possessing all things," #2Co 6:10. If they have not an external affluence, yet they have an internal influence of grace and comfort, which is far better and sweeter, #1Ti 6:6. Some render the words thus, He who is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous (*i.e.* God), causeth light to arise in darkness upon the

upright; who also is, according to his measure, and by participation from God, gracious, merciful, and righteous.

Ver. 5. **A good man showeth favour, and lendeth]** A public spirited man, #Ro 5:7, maketh his moderation to be known to all men, #Php 4:5, and lendeth, looking for nothing again, #Lu 6:35. Thence it is that to him light ariseth in darkness; the merciful shall have mercy, #Mt 5:7. Some render it, *Bene viro qui miseratur*, Well is the man, or, Well will it be with the man, that pitieth and lendeth. The Hebrew hath it, that is pitying and lending, ever in such actions.

He will guide his affairs with discretion] Heb. with judgment; neither illiberal nor prodigal; not withered handed when he should give, nor yet stretching beyond the staple; for that were to spoil all. Tremellius rendereth it, *Moderatur res suas, ex officio*.

Ver. 6. **Surely he shall not be moved for ever]** *Non mutabit*. The world thinketh liberality to be the ready way to beggary; but it is otherwise; #Isa 32:8, "The liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things he shall stand." Not getting, but giving, is the way to wealth.

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance] Namely, with the righteous. Demetrius hath good report of all good men, and of the truth itself, #3Jo 12. As for wicked men, *Calumnias eorum nunquam effugit*, there is no escaping their cavils and calumnies (Vatab.).

Ver. 7. **He shall not be afraid of evil tidings]** When the miserly miscreant is ready to make away himself, for fear of what evil may follow, this man is undaunted and unappalled. The fear of God so ballasteth his heart, that he floateth steadily; and blow what wind it will, he saileth safe to the port. *Fides famem non formidat*, Faith feareth no famine, nor anything else; when as a sound of fear is ever in the wicked man's ears, #Job 15:4

His heart is fixed] viz. Upon the promise of God; and hence he hath a spiritual security, a blessed sabbath of spirit; he is freed, if not from the common destruction, yet from the common distraction; for he knoweth whom he hath trusted. *Praeclara est aequabilitas in omni vita, et idem semper vultus, eademque frons*, saith Cicero. It is a brave thing to have a well composed spirit in all changes, and to

look alike, however the world goeth. The heathens tell us that Gaius Laelius was such a one, and Archimedes, and Socrates, who are said to have been far above all fear of, or grief at, any disaster (Aelian. lib. 9). But that could not be, because their hearts were not fixed, trusting in the Lord. And how Socrates (the best of them) staggered and faltered when he came to die, appeareth by his last speech, as it is related both by Plato and Cicero.

Ver. 8. **His heart is established**] Heb. underpropped, shored up.

He shall not be afraid] Of any adverse power, **#Ps 3:6 27:1**

Until he see his desire] Which his faith will once work out.

Ver. 9. **He hath dispersed**] Or, made a scatter, yet with discretion, giving liberally, but most of all where is most need, and with a specialty of respect to the family of faith, **#Ga 6:16**

His righteousness endureth for ever] The reward of his charity is lasting, or his charity is never at an end, *Sic vocat eleemosynas* (Aben Ezra); he giveth after that he hath given, as a spring runneth after it hath run, as the sun shineth after it hath shone. See **#2Co 8:4,5**

His horn shall be exalted] *i.e.* His head, as **#1Sa 2:1,10**.

Ver. 10. **The wicked shall see it**] *Vir improbus et reprobus*; the covetous wretch who sat a brood upon his bags, and befooled the bountiful man, shall himself come to beggary, which he so much feared, and be ready to eat his own nails through envy at the other's prosperity; and because he cannot come at his heart, he feeds upon his own, yea, puts himself into a hell above ground, both for pain of loss and pain of sense, as here.

Chapter 113

Ver. 1. **Hallelujah**] See **#Ps 111:1**.

Praise, O ye servants of the Lord] None but such can do it, or are fit for it; and for such praise is comely, **#Ps 147:1**, as unthankfulness is an ugly sin, but especially in ministers, those servants of the Lord, by a specialty.

Praise the name of the Lord] *Ter repetit, Trinitatem subindicando*, saith one; others note that by this threefold Praise ye, the psalmist taxeth men's dulness, and exciteth their diligence to this divine duty.
Ver. 2. **Blessed be the name of the Lord]** Praise him with utmost intention and extension of spirit and of speech. God is therefore called, by an appellative proper, The Blessed One, *Baruc-hu*, #Mr 14:61 Lu 1:68.

From this time, &c.] *A nunc et usque*.

Ver. 3. **From the rising of the sun]** *i.e.* All the world over, in all places and at all times. North and south are not mentioned (but included), because not so well peopled.

Ver. 4. **The Lord is high, &c.]** He looketh on the earth as on an ant hill. All nations to him are but as a drop of a bucket, #Isa 40:15 *Quantilla ergo es tu istius guttae particula?* (Aug.).

And his glory above the heavens] These are far beneath him in glory as in situation. Angels understand him not fully.

Ver. 5. **Who is like, &c.]** See #Ps 89:6. He is imparallel.

Who dwelleth on high] Heb. Who exalteth to dwell. Oh that we could fly a pitch any way proportionable by exalting his name together, #Ps 34:3.

Ver. 6. **Who humbleth himself]** Lo, it is a condescension in God to vouchsafe to look out of himself upon the saints and angels, how much more upon us, since sin setteth us farther beneath a worm than a worm is beneath an angel!

Ver. 7. **He raiseth up the poor, &c.]** David, for instance, besides many others, as Agathocles, Numa, Maximinianus, &c., whom he raised from the lowest stair to the very highest step of honour and opulence.

Ver. 8. **That he may set him with princes]** See #1Sa 2:8, Hannah's song, whereof this seemeth to be an abridgment.

Ver. 9. **He maketh the barren woman to keep house]** Heb. to dwell in a house, that is, to have a house full of children, and so to build her husband's house, #Ru 4:11. This is applied to the Church

(which is the theatre of the world, wherein God showeth his special providence and power), **#Isa 54:1 Ga 4:26,27.**

Chapter 114

Ver. 1. **When Israel went out of Egypt]** *E medio gentis, id est, ex visceribus Aegyptiorum, qui eos quasi deglutiebant,* Out of the midst of that nation, that is, out of the bowels of the Egyptians, who had, as it were, devoured them; thus the Jewish doctors gloss upon this text (Midr. Tillin. in **#Ps 114**).

From a people of strange language] And yet more estranged affections, jeering them, and their religion, as the word *lognez* (which is of affinity with *logneg*, a scoffer) seemeth to sound. Afterwards it was prophesied that five cities in the land of Egypt should speak the language (or lip) of Canaan, **#Isa 19:18**, viz. when the Lord should turn to them a pure language, **#Zep 3:9**.

Ver. 2. **Judah was his sanctuary]** Or sanctity, or sanctification. This was a happy change for them, from their Egyptian idolatry, **#Eze 23:19**, like as it was from their Egyptian servitude, when Israel became God's dominions, dominations, and signiories.

Ver. 3. **The sea saw it, and fled]** When God will deliver his people, and perform his promises unto them, nothing shall hinder, but all creatures shall contribute their helps; for they are all his servants, **#Ps 119:91**.

Ver. 4. **The mountains skipped like rams]** *sc.* At the giving of the law, **#Ex 19:18**, which also causeth heartquakes in believers; but the unjust knoweth no shame, **#Zep 3:5**; is past feeling, **#Eph 4:19**.

Ver. 5. **What ailed thee, O thou sea?]** Or, what came to thee? can there any natural reason be given, or was it God's powerful presence only that caused you to run retrograde? Atheists and unbelievers will search the devil's skull to find out something whereby they may elevate God's great works, and elude his arguments; as Pharaoh sat not down under the miracle, but sent for the magicians, and hardened his own heart.

Ver. 6. **Ye mountains, that ye skipped, &c.]** These two verses teach us, saith one, that we may many times ask questions; and yet neither doubt of the matter nor be ignorant in them.

Ver. 7. **Tremble, thou earth, &c.**] Heb. Be in pain, as a travailing woman; for if the giving of the law had such dreadful effects, what should the breaking thereof have?

At the presence of the God of Jacob] Whom Jacob, that is, God's covenanted people, knoweth and confideth in amidst all his austerities, #**Isa 63:16**, and can boldly say, as #**Hab 1:12**, "Art not thou from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die."

Ver. 8. **Which turned the rock into a standing water**] Set the rock of Rephidim abroach, and made it not only a standing water (*stagnum*, as here), but a running river; for the rock followed them: and that rock was Christ, #**1Co 10:4**, with #**Joh 4:14 7:38**.

The flint into a fountain of waters] Still God worketh for his people, in *oppositis mediis* (as Luther expresseth it), by contrary means; and rather than they shall want necessaries, he both can and will work miracles.

Chapter 115

Ver. 1. **Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us**] This is the godly man's motto, and his daily practice. See #**Ge 41:16 Ac 3:12,16 1Co 15:10 Lu 19:16**. Not we, but thy talents, have gained other five, and other two (Georg. Fabric. *Chenmieenses virus de seipso*).

*Fabricius studuit bene de pietate mereri;
Sed quicquid potuit, gloria, Christe, tua est.*

There is no merit at all in us, saith the Chaldee here; the bowls of the candlestick had no oil but that which dropped from the olive branches. It is therefore very good counsel that Austin gives his friend Boniface, In omnibus bonis actibus tuis illi da claritatem, tibi humilitatem, In all thy good deeds give God the glory, and take up lowly thoughts of thyself.

Ver. 2. **Wherefore should the heathen say**] Why should they thus be suffered or occasioned to blaspheme thee, and twit us with our religion? Hence some conceive that this psalm was made in the time of the Babylonish captivity by Daniel (saith one Jewish doctor), when he expounded Nebuchadnezzar's dream; by the three worthies

(saith another), when they were in the fiery furnace. See #Ps 42:10 79:10.

Ver. 3. **But our God is in the heavens]** Where your *terrícola* country, your fearful idols never were; like as one, being asked by a Papist, Where was your religion before Luther? answered, In the Bible, where your religion never was. This "but" seemeth uttered with indignation. Αξιωματικωτατος μεν εστιν ο Βασιλευς ημων, saith Basil, on a like occasion; our God is no dunghill deity.

He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased] Without either help or hindrance of any.

Ver. 4. **Their idols are silver and gold]** Take them at the best, they are no better; and what is silver and gold but the guts and garbage of the earth? But some of them might say, as Priapus in Horace,

Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum.

Herodotus telleth us, that Amasis had a large laver of gold, wherein both he and his guests used to wash their feet. This vessel he brake and made a god of it; which the Egyptians devoutly worshipped. And the like idolomany is at this day found among Papists; what distinction soever the world would fain make between an idol and an image, which indeed (as they use them) are all one.

The work of men's hands] And therefore they must needs be goodly gods, when made by bunglers especially, as was the cross of Cockram; which, if it were not good enough to make a god, would make an excellent devil, as the mayor of Doncaster merrily told the complainants (Acts and Mon. fol. 1340).

Ver. 5. **They have mouths, but speak not]** Unless the devil haply speak in them, and by them, as at Delphos; or the false priests, as here, in times of Popery.

Eyes have they, but they see not] And yet with wires and other devices they were made here once to goggle their eyes, to move their chaps apace, as well apaid when something of worth was presented them; as if otherwise, to look at eyes' end, and to hang a lip.

Ver. 6. **They have ears, but they hear not]** But are as deaf as door nails to the prayers of their suppliants. The Cretans pictured their Jupiter without ears; so little hearing or help they hoped for from him. Socrates, in contempt of heathen gods, swore by an oak, a goat, a dog; as holding these better gods than those. Varro saith, they that first brought in pictures to be worshipped, *Ii civitatibus suis et metum dempserunt, et errorem addiderunt*, took away fear, and brought in error (Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. iv. cap. 31.)

Noses have they, but they smell not] As the painter may paint a flower with fresh colours, but not with sweet savour, with this motto, No further than colours; so the carver may draw out an image, but not make it draw its breath, with this motto, No further than fashion.

Ver. 7. **They have hands, but they handle not]** Curious and artificial (for art is Nature's ape), but useless, and for show only. If Esculapius, or the lady of Loretto, restore the lame or the blind, it is the devil with his lying wonders, **#2Th 2:9**

Feet have they, but they walk not] As those pictures in Plato made by Daedalus, which, if they were not bound, would fly away; or Vulcan's three-footed stools in Homer, which are feigned to have run on wheels of their own accord, to the meeting of the gods, and after that to return in like sort back again. The Tyrians besieged by Alexander chained up their god Hercules, that he might not go from them in that calamity, and yet they were not delivered.

Neither speak they through their throat] They do not so much as chatter like a crane, or mourn as a dove, **#Isa 38:14**, but are dumb idols, as the apostle calleth them. These are things commonly known, but profitably thus inculcated, for the shaming of senseless idolaters; who yet are so bewitched that they will needs dote upon these gods of their own making. *O vanas hominum mentes, &c.*, Oh the spirit of fornication, &c.

Ver. 8. **They that make them are like unto them]** Blind and blockish, *Vervecum in patria crassoque sub aere nati*; given up by a just God to a judiciary stupidity. See **#Isa 44:9-11**, &c.; **#Re 9:20**, Their foolish hearts were darkened, and they were delivered up to a

reprobate sense, to an injudicious mind, #Ro 1:24-31, to strong delusions, vile affections, just damnation.

So is every one that trusteth in them] Idols were never true to such as trusted in them; but such deserve to be deceived, as being miserable by their own choice, #Jon 2:8.

Ver. 9. **O Israel, trust thou in the Lord]** Whatever others do, #Jos 24:15, and the rather because others do not, #Ps 119:42; the worse they are, the better be ye.

He is their help and their shield] God is engaged in point of honour to help and protect those that trust in him.

Ver. 10 **O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord]** Ministers must be patterns to others of depending upon God, and living by faith; as did Mr Bradshaw, Mr Lancaster, and many other famous preachers of latter times, whom God inured to a dependence from day to day upon his providence for provisions; and (as a grave man of God sometimes said, whereas many others have, and eat their bread stale) these received their bread and ate it daily new from his holy hand.

Ver. 11. **Ye that fear the Lord]** *Peregrini ex omni populo*, saith Aben Ezra, devout persons out of every nation dwelling among the Jews, though not absolute proselytes, #Ac 2:5 10:2 13:16. Such also, fearing the Lord, are heirs of the promises; and therefore may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me," #Heb 13:6.

Ver. 12. **The Lord hath been mindful of us: he will bless us]** God hath, God will, is an ordinary Scripture medium, as hath been above noted.

He will bless the house of Israel] Not help and keep them only, but bless them with the blessings of both lives; for he is no penny father, &c. See #Eph 1:3.

He will bless the house of Aaron] Ministers were ever a distinct order from the rest. Note this against the Libertines, who would gladly make a jumble, affirming the ministry to be as arrant, a juggle as the Papacy itself.

Ver. 13. **He will bless]** Such shall abound with blessings, #Pr 28:20.

Both small and great] Whether in age or degree, #Ac 10:34,35.

Ver. 14. **The Lord shall increase you]** Or, the Lord increase you (*detach tephilla*, prayer wise), as the Rabbis read it.

You and your children] The care of whose welfare prevaieth far with religious parents, and sitteth close upon their spirits.

Ver. 15. **Ye are blessed of the Lord, &c.]** And therefore shall be blessed, as Isaac said of his son Jacob, #Ge 27:33.

Which made heaven and earth] And will rather unmake both again than you shall want help and comfort.

Ver. 16. **The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's]** As the special place of his delight and dwelling; yet not so as if he were there cooped up and concluded; for God is immense and omnipresent, yea, totally present, wheresoever present. The heavens have a large place, but they have one part here, and another there; not so the Lord; he is not commensurable by the place, but everywhere all present.

But the earth hath he given] Or, let out, as to his tenants at will, for he hath not made them absolute owners, to do therein what they will, and to live as they list. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton," #Jas 5:5. A heavy charge. Calvin tells of a loose fellow that used in his cups to allege this text.

Ver. 17. **The dead praise not]** Therefore be active for God while we are upon earth; where for this he giveth us life and livelihood. See #Ps 6:6.

Ver. 18. **But we will bless the Lord]** For if he lose his praise in us, he will lose it altogether; and so all things will come to nothing; *quod absit*.

Chapter 116

Ver. 1. **I love the Lord]** Heb. I love, because the Lord hath heard, &c., *Vex abrupta et ecliptica*, an abrupt concise ecliptical expression, betokening an inexpressible, inconceivable passion, or rather pang of love, such as intercepteth his voice for a time, till recollecting himself, and recovering his speech, he becometh able to tell us, not only that he loveth, or is well satisfied (*Sat habeo*.

Tremel.), but also why he loveth, and is all on a light flame, as it were, viz.

Because he hath heard my voice] Though but an articulate incondite voice: **#La 3:56**, "Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry."

And my supplications] My prayers for grace, when better formed and methodized.

Ver 2. **Because he hath inclined his ear]** As loth to lose any part of my prayer, though never so weakly uttered; therefore be shall have my custom; **#Ps 65:2**, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come."

As long as I live] Heb. In my days, that is, say some, while I have a day to live. Others sense it thus, in the time of my affliction, {confer #Ps 137:7 La 1:21} which by the word days he noteth to be of long continuance.

Ver. 3. **The sorrows of death compassed me]** See **#Ps 18:4,5**, *Pictura poetica ingentium periculorum*. Sorrows, or pangs, and those deadly ones, and these compassed me as a bird in a snare, or a beast in a gin.

The pains of hell (or the griefs of the grave) gat hold] Heb. found me, as **#Nu 32:23**.

I found trouble and sorrow] Straits inextricable cause sorrows inexplicable. The word signifieth such sorrow as venteth itself by sighing, **#Isa 35:10 51:11**.

Ver. 4. **Then called I upon the name of the Lord]** That strong tower, whereunto the righteous run and are safe, **#Pr 18:10**. Others have other refuges, the witch of Endor, the god of Ekron, the arm of flesh, &c.

O Lord, I beseech thee] *Ana, blandientis et deprecantis particula*. The psalmist here hath a sweet way of insinuating, and getting within the Lord; which, oh that we could skill of (*Sic et Nau #Phm 20 Re 1:7*).

Deliver my soul] *q.d.* It is my soul, Lord, my precious soul, "that is sought after; oh, deliver my soul, from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog," #Ps 22:20.

Ver. 5. **Gracious is the Lord, &c.]** Gracious God is said to be, and merciful, that we despair not; righteous also, that we presume not. Or, faithful in performing his promises, as #1Jo 1:9, and this was David's comfort amidst his sorrows.

Ver. 6. **The Lord preserveth, the simple]** Heb. the persuasible (opposed to the scorner, #Pr 19:25), the plain hearted (opposed to the guileful, #2Co 1:12 11:3 Ro 16:19), the destitute of human help, that committeth himself to God, and patiently resteth on him for support and help, #Ps 102:1-17.

I was brought low] Or, drawn dry; I was at a great under, at a low ebb; I was exhausted or emptied as a pond, strengthless, succourless, clean gone in a manner.

And he helped me] The knowledge that David had of God's goodness was experimental. See the like #Ro 8:2. A carnal man knoweth God's excellencies and will revealed in his word only, as we know far countries by maps; but an experienced Christian, as one that hath himself been long there, #1Co 2:14-16.

Ver. 7. **Return unto thy rest, O my soul]** The psalmist had been at a great deal of unrest, and much off the hooks, as we say; now, having prayed (for prayer hath *vim pacativum*, a pacifying property), he calleth his soul to rest, and rocketh it asleep in a spiritual security. Oh, learn this holy art; acquaint thyself with God, acquiesce in him, and be at peace; so shall good be done unto thee, #Job 22:21 *Sis Sabbathum Christi* (Luther).

For the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee] Of Sertorius it is said, that he performed his promises with words only. And of the Emperor Pertinax, that he was *magis blandus quam beneticus*, rather kind spoken than beneficial to any; not so the Almighty, *Hinc dictus est χρηστολογος*.

Ver. 8. **For thou hast delivered my soul, &c.]** The better to excite himself to true thankfulness he entereth into a particular enumeration of God's benefits. It is not enough that we acknowledge what God has done for us in the lump, and by wholesale. See, #Ex

18:8, how Moses brancheth out God's benefits. So must we, rolling them as sugar, and making our utmost of them.

Ver. 9. **I will walk before the Lord]** *Indesinenter ambulabo*. I will not only take a turn or two with God, go three or four steps with him, &c., but walk constantly and in all duties before him, with him, after him. Hypocrites do not walk with God, but halt with him, they follow him as a dog doth his master, till he comes by a carrion; they will launch no farther out into the main than they may be sure to return at pleasure safe again to the shore.

In the land] *i.e.* Here in this world, called also "the light of the living," #Ps 56:13 52:5 Job 28:13.

Ver. 10. **I believed, therefore have I spoken]** *Fundamentum et fulcrum verae spei est fides viva*. Hope is the daughter of faith, but such as is a staff to her aged mother; and will produce a bold and wise profession of the truth before men, as also earnest prayer to God. It is as the cork upon the net, though the lead on the one side sink it down, yet the cork on the other keeps it up. Some translate the words thus: "I believed when I said I am greatly afflicted: I believed when I said in my haste all men are liars." *q.d.* Though I have had my offs and my ons, though I have passed through several frames of heart and tempers of soul in my trials, yet I believed still, I never let go my hold, my grip of God, in any perturbation.

Ver. 11. **I said in my haste]** In my heat, trepidation, concussion, outburst. Saints may have such, as being but men, subject to like passions; and as meeting with many molestations, Satanic and secular; and left sometimes to themselves by God, as was good Hezekiah, for their trial and exercise. The sea is not so calm in summer, but hath its commotions; the mountain so firm, but may be moved with an earthquake. Dogs in a chase bark sometimes at their own masters; so do men in a passion let fly at their best friends. When the taste is vitiated it mistastes. When there is a suffusion in the eye (as in case of the jaundice) it apprehends colours like itself. So here: Abraham felt the motion of trepidation; meek Moses was overangry at Meribah; so was Job, Jonah, Jeremiah, &c. *Ira* comes of ire, say grammarians; because an angry man goes out of himself, off from his reason; and when pacified, he is said *redire ad se*, to return to himself.

All men are liars] Prophets and all. Samuel hath deluded me, I doubt, in promising me the kingdom, which I shall never come to. See #1Sa 27:1. Some make the meaning to be thus, What can I hope for, seeing every man betrayeth me, and that I can trust nobody? The truth is, that every man is a liar, either by imposture, and so in purpose, or by impotence, and so in the event, deceiving those that rely on him, #Ps 62:9.

Ver. 12. **What shall I render unto the Lord]** This he speaketh as one in an ecstasy (*Amor Dei est ecstaticus*), or in a deep demur what to do best for so good a God. Such self-deliberations are very useful and acceptable, and thereunto are requisite, 1. Recognition of God's favours. 2. Estimation. 3. Retribution, as here.

Ver. 13. **I will take the cup of salvation]** *Calicem salutem, vel omnis salutis* (Vatab. Trem.). As in the drink offerings, or as at the feast after the peace offerings. See #1Ch 16:3. Wherein the feast maker was wont to take a festival great cup; and in lifting it up to declare the occasion of that feast; and then, in testimony of thankfulness, to drink thereof to the guests, that they in order might pledge him. This was called a cup of salvation, or a health cup, but not in the drunkard's sense. To this the apostle seemeth to allude, #1Co 10:17, when he calleth the sacramental cup the cup of blessing. Jerome rendereth it, *Calicem Iesu accipiam*.

And call upon the name of the Lord] Pray unto him, and so praise him. Or, I will proclaim and preach his praises, as #1Pe 2:9.

Ver. 14. **I will pay my vows]** This word "pay" importeth that vows lawfully made are due debt; and debt, till paid, is a disquieting thing to an honest mind, #Ro 13:8. The saints, in distress especially, used to make their prayers with vows. Hence prayer is in Greek called προσευχη, a service with vows. Mr Philpot, martyr, first coming into Smithfield to suffer, kneeled down, and said, I will pay my vows in thee, O Smithfield (Acts & Mon.).

Ver. 15. **Precious in the sight of the Lord]** *Rara, chara*, God doth not often suffer his saints to be slain, #Ps 37:32,33; or, if he do, he will make inquisition for every drop of that precious blood, #Ps 9:12. See #Ps 72:14. {See Trapp on "Ps 72:14"} This David delivereth here as a truth that he had experimented.

Ver. 16. **O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant]** *Euge, O Iehovah, &c.*, by a real and a heavenly compliment; thus he

insinuateth, and, therefore, promiseth praise to God, #Ps 116:17, and safety to himself, according to that, #Ps 119:94, "I am thine, save me."

And the son of thine handmaid] That is, of Ruth, say the Rabbis; or rather of his immediate mother, a good woman, and haply better than his father, *Quia religiosior patre* (Genebrard); as Manoah's wife had a stronger faith than himself; and Priscilla is named before her husband Aquila.

And the son of thine handmaid] Not born abroad, and bought or brought into thy family; but *tuus quasi vernaeulus, et a ventre ad serviendum dispositus*, born and bred up to thy service, of a child little.

Thou hast loosed my bonds] Of affliction, of corruption, and made me Christ's freeman, brought me into the glorious liberty of thine own children.

Ver. 17. **I will offer to thee, &c.]** I will perform to thee not ceremonial service only, but moral and spiritual; such as thou shalt accept through Christ, #Col 3:17.

And will call, &c.] See #Ps 116:13.

Ver. 18. **I will pay]** See #Ps 116:14.

Now] Vows were to be paid without either diminution or delays, #De 23:21,23. And herein Jacob (who is by the Hebrews called *Votorum Pater*, the father of vows) was too short; for it was long ere he went up to Bethel.

In the presence of all his people] For good example' sake. This also was prince-like, #Eze 46:10, the king's seat in the sanctuary was open, that all might see him there, #2Ki 11:14 23:3.

Ver. 19. **In the courts of the Lord's house]** *In coetu sacro*; in the great congregation, #Ps 22:25 35:18, where there is a more powerful, lively, and effectual working of the Spirit, #Ps 89:7 Heb 4:1 1Co 14:24.

Chapter 117

Ver. 1. **O praise the Lord, all ye nations]** viz. For Christ, that gift, #Joh 4:10, that benefit, #1Ti 6:2, that desire of all nations, #Hag 2:7, that good tidings of great joy to all people, #Lu 2:10, who are by him received into the glory of God, #Ro 15:7,11, where the apostle thus applieth this Scripture; and the Jewish doctors confess that this short and sweet psalm is to be understood *de beneficiis Messiae*, of Christ and his benefits (Kimchi).

Praise him, all ye people] *Laudationibus commendate emn*, so Tremellius rendereth it; praise him with a force, and, as it were, with a violence, with all your might; ye cannot possibly overdo.

Ver. 2. **For his merciful kindness is great]** *Invaluit*, hath prevailed over us, breaking through all obstacles and impediments, whether within us or without us, eating its way through all rocks and remoras; and though we would put it back, yet it will overcome us; his grace is irresistible, neither can it ever be taken away.

And the truth of the Lord] As his mercy alone moved him to make promise, so his truth bindeth him to perform the same. See #2Sa 7:18,21. The word of promise bindeth God, and, therefore, it may seem to be stronger than God. If his merciful kindness prevail over us, as #Ps 117:1, his truth prevaieth over him. The Jewish doctors observe that the word *Emeth*, here used for truth, consisteth of *Aleph*, the first letter of the alphabet; *Mem*, the middlemost letter thereof; and *Tau*, the last: to show that as God is *Alpha* and *Omega*, so the truth of God is the all in all of our comfort. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; this is the sum of all the good news in the world.

Chapter 118

Ver. 1. **O give thanks, &c.]** See #Ps 106:1.

Ver. 2. **Let Israel now say]** All the Israel of God, for only such are fit to praise God: excellent words become not a fool; the leper's lips are to be covered.

Ver. 3. **Let the house of Aaron now say]** Ministers are chieftains, #Heb 13:7,17, and should be as the chief chanters in God's praises.

Ver. 4. **Let them now that fear the Lord say]** See #Ps 115:11, and observe that the psalmist beateth upon the *to vuv* (as doth also the

apostle, #2Co 6:2), Now, now, now, saith he; because, for aught we know, it is now or never, today or not at all; the dead praise thee not, #Ps 6:5.

That his mercy, &c.] This is the fourth time in four verses, as #Ps 136, in every one of those twenty-six verses; like as a bird that having gotten a note, recordeth it over and over.

Ver. 5. **I called upon the Lord in distress]** Heb. out of distress, *q.d.* I celebrate not God's mercy of course, but out of experience.

The Lord answered me] Heb. Yah answered me with a large roomth. See #Ps 4:2.

Ver. 6. **I will not fear, &c.]** See #Ps 56:4,11.

Ver. 7. **The Lord taketh my part with them that help me]** Not only as one of my helpers, but instead of all, and more than all. How many reckon ye me at? said that general to his soldiers, who were afraid of their enemy's numbers; *Cui adhaereo praeest*, He whom I take part with must needs prevail.

Ver. 8. **It is better to trust in the Lord, &c.]** Luther on this text calleth it, *Artem artium, et mirificam, ac suam artem, non fidere hominibus*, that is, the art of arts, and that which he had well studied, not to put confidence in man; as for trust in God, he calleth it, *Sacrificium omnium gratissimum et suavissimum, et cultum omnium pulcherrimum*, the most pleasant and sweetest of all sacrifices, the best of all services we perform to God.

Than to put confidence in man] *Quia mutatur aut fortuna, aut voluntas, aut vita*, saith Genebrard, because either men may die, or their affections may die, or their wealth decay.

Ver. 9. **Than to put confidence in princes]** *In ingenuis*. Great men's words, saith one, are like dead men's shoes; he may go barefoot that waiteth for them. "Surely men of high degree are a lie," #Ps 52:9.

Ver. 10. **All nations compassed me about]** This is still the condition of Christ's Church in this evil world, to be hated of all, and set against with utmost might and malice. *Haud perinde crimine incendiique odio humani generis convicti sunt*, saith Tacitus, of those Christians at Rome put to cruel deaths by Nero, who, having

for his pleasure fired the city, fathered it upon them, as people hated of all men.

But in the name of the Lord] *i.e.* By faith in God's power and promises. We might also do great exploits against our spiritual enemies, did we but set upon them with God's arms, and with his armour; did we but observe the apostle's rule, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," &c., #Col 3:17. Ver. 11. **They compassed me about; yea, &c.]** They thought to make sure work of me indeed; as Saul and his men, when they hemmed him in at Maon, #1Sa 23:26; as the Church's enemies, when they had gotten her as a bird into the snare of the fowler, #Ps 124:7; as when the adversaries said, "They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them," #Ne 4:11.

But in the name of the Lord I will destroy them] *Enervabo, excidam.* The word signifieth, *Non otioso nec dormienti contingere victorias, sed certanti et praelianti,* that he foiled not his foes without pains and peril (Plat. in Syde). Towns were said to come into Timotheus's toils while he slept; but that was but a fiction of those that envied him.

Ver. 12. **They compassed me about like bees]** Like so many swarms of bees, which, being angered,

- Venenum

Morsibus inspirant, et spicula caeca relinquunt
Affixae venis, animasque in vulnere ponunt
(Virgil)

Bees, to be revenged, lose their stings, and therewith their lives, or, at least, they become drones ever after (Aristot.). Wicked men are no less spiteful; they care not to undo themselves, so they may wrong the saints; yea, they are not unlike the scorpion, of which Pliny saith, that there is not one minute wherein it doth not put forth the sting.

They are quenched (or kindled) as the fire of thorns] Which is quickly kindled, and as quickly quenched, leaving no coals behind

it. See **#Ec 7:6**. *Ex spinis non fiunt carbones* (Kimchi). The enemies of the Church may make a blaze, but they are but a blast.

Ver. 13. **Thou hast thrust sore at me]** Thou, O Saul, or thou, Ishbibenob, **#2Sa 21:16**, or thou, O Satan, setting such a work.

But the Lord helped me] He sent from heaven and saved me; he came in the nick of time, as it were, out of an engine.

Ver. 14. **The Lord is my strength and song]** *i.e.* The matter of my song, and mean of my joy. Trust in God shall once triumph.

Ver. 15. **The voice of rejoicing, &c.]** *q.d.* Though themselves are but travellers, and their habitations tabernacles or tents; yet are they not without the joy of their salvation, which is unspeakable and full of glory; so that they go merrily on their way, feeding on this honeycomb (as once Samson), and God's statutes are their songs in the house of their pilgrimage, **#Ps 119:54**.

The right hand of the Lord, &c.] This and that which followeth is the righteous man's ditty, which he singeth incessantly. See on **#Ps 118:4**.

Ver. 16. **The right hand of the Lord is exalted]** By right hand here some understand the humanity of Christ, God's hand and our handle, whereby we come to take hold of God.

The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly] Thrice he celebrateth God's right hand; to set forth his earnest desire to say the utmost; or in reference to the sacred Trinity, as some will have it, *Haec est vox Epinicii*.

Ver. 17. **I shall not die, but live]** This he was well assured of by faith; as was also the Church in Habakkuk, **#Hab 1:12**, "Art not thou from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die." Learned Keckerman, lying on his death bed, and desirous, if it had so pleased God, to have lived a while longer for the finishing of those excellent pieces he had in hand, made use of these words of the psalmist, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord" (he was then upon his System of Natural Philosophy), but God had otherwise appointed it, and he submitted.

Ver. 18. **The Lord hath chastened me sore]** *Corripuit me seria et severa castigatione*; and yet David was his darling.

But he hath not given me over unto death] It might have been worse, may the afflicted saint say; and it will yet be better: It is in mercy and in measure that God chastiseth his children. It is his care that the spirit fail not before him, nor the souls which he hath made, **#Isa 57:16**. If his child swoons in the whipping God lets fall the rod, and falls a kissing it, to fetch life into it again.

Ver. 19. **Open to me the gates of righteousness]** So the gates of the sanctuary are called, because holiness becometh God's house for ever; to keep out the profane, porters were appointed, see **#2Ch 23:19**; and such were the *Ostiarum in foras*, the primitive Church; their word was, *Canes*, Dogs out of doors (Prosper.). See **#Re 22:15**.

Ver. 20. **This gate of the Lord]** Some make the former verse the request of the people, and this to be God's answer thereunto. Others make that to be David's speech to the Levites, and this their answer: *q.d.* This beautiful gate is fit to be opened to the Lord alone; if others enter, they must be righteous ones only, and that to praise him.

Into which the righteous shall enter] *sc.* With God's good leave and liking. Others may haply thrust into the Church, but then God will say, Friend, how camest thou in hither? who required these things at your hands? who sent for you? O generation of vipers, who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come? "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" **#Pr 21:27**.

Ver. 21. **I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me]** Luther rendereth it, because thou hast humbled and afflicted me; but with thou art become my salvation.

Ver. 22. **The stone which the builders refused]** David, and the Son of David were by those, who seemed to be somewhat laid aside, and slighted as objects and refuse ones; but wisdom was ever justified of her children.

Is become the head stone of the corner] *Lapis diatonus sive frontatus*, whereby the Church is supported, as the sides and weight of a building are by a principal binding cornerstone, against all blasts.

Ver. 23. **This is the Lord's doing]** That David should ever come to the kingdom, that Christ should so be raised from the lowest ebb of

humiliation to the highest tide of exaltation, this is a wonder of wonders, a matchless miracle.

And it is marvellous in our eyes] As all God's works are to those that have spiritual senses habitually exercised; but especially the great work of man's redemption by Christ.

Ver. 24. **This is the day which the Lord hath made]** The queen of days, as the Jews call the sabbath. Arnobius interpreteth this text of the Christian sabbath; others, of the day of salvation by Christ exalted to be the head cornerstone; in opposition to that dismal day of man's fall.

We will rejoice] Or, let us rejoice. Dull we are, and heavy to spiritual joy; and are therefore excited thereto.

Ver. 25. **Save now, I beseech thee]** Hosanna, as #Mt 21:9, a usual acclamation of the people to their new kings.

Send now prosperity] God will send it, but his people must pray for it; I came for thy prayers, #Da 10:11,12

Ver. 26. **Blessed be he that cometh]** Blessed be Christ. *Vivat Christus eiusque insignia*, said John Clark of Melda, when, for declaring against the Pope's indulgencies, he was burnt in the forehead with a hot iron (Scultet. Annul.).

We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord] Thus say the priests to the people. Ministers must bless those that bless Christ, saying, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," #Eph 6:24; as if any do not, let him be Anathema Maranatha, #1Co 16:22.

Ver. 27. **God is the Lord who hath showed us light]** By giving us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," #2Co 4:6, he "hath brought us out of darkness into his marvellous light," #1Pe 2:9.

Bind the sacrifice with cords] Make them fast there, till the priests shall have time to offer them. Spare for no cost in showing your thankfulness for Christ and his benefits. Some render it, *Obligatæ solennitates in frondosis*; Austin hath it, *in confrequentationibus*.

Ver. 28. **Thou art my God, and I will praise thee]** The people are taught to say thus; and the Greek, Arabic, and Latin translations repeat here, **#Ps 118:21**, "I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me; and art become my salvation." People can never be sufficiently thankful for their salvation by Christ. It is their duty, and should be their desire.

Ver. 29. **O give thanks unto the Lord, &c.]** *Repetit proaemium pro epologo.* See **#Ps 118:1**.

Chapter 119

Ver. 1. **Blessed are the undefiled]** Pindar and other poets had their *Ogdoades* or *Oetonaries*. This alphabetical poem (as Sixtus Senensis calleth it) is David's, doubtless (though it hath no title to show so much), written in the days of his banishment under Saul; and far more worthy to be written in letters of gold than Pindar's seventh ode, which that profane fellow Politian preferred before any psalm of David, the sweet singer of Israel. How much better his countryman Jacobus Furnius, who translated this psalm into Greek and Latin verses, in so many *Octounties*; and beginning each verse thereof with the same letter, after the manner of the Hebrew composure; which is very artificial, both for the excellence of the matter and for the help of memory. The Jews are said to teach it to their little ones being the first thing they learn; wherein they take a very right course, both in regard to the heavenly matter, and plain style fitted for all capacities. David (in his troubles especially) was a man much in meditation of God's word, and here he giveth us in his thoughts of it. When a book is set forth, verses of commendation are oft prefixed. David seemeth to set this Divine psalm as a poem of commendation before the Book of God; mentioning it in every verse (unless it be one only, **#Ps 119:122**), under the name of testimonies, laws, statutes, word, judgments, precepts, &c.

Who walk in the law of the Lord] Who walk towards heaven in heaven's way; avoiding the corruptions that are in the world through lust, **#2Pe 1:4**.

Ver. 2. **Blessed are they that keep his testimonies]** Angels do so, and are blessed, **#Re 22:9**.

And that seek him] *Sincere ac sollicite*; that seek not his omnipresence (what need they?), but his gracious presence.

Ver. 3. **They also do no iniquity]** *i.e.* No wilful wickedness; as do those workers of iniquity, whose whole trade it is, and whose whole life is nothing else but one continued web of wickedness, spun out and made up by the hands of the devil and the flesh, an evil spinner, and a worse weaver.

They walk in his ways] Without cessation or cespitation.

Ver. 4. **Thou hast commanded us, &c.]** These are *verba vivenda, non legenda*, words to be lived, and not read only, as one well saith of this whole psalm; neither is it enough that we understand or ponder God's precepts, but we must practise them, if we would be happy.

To keep thy precepts diligently] *Nimis, valde, vehementer. Odi nimium diligentes*, saith one; but where the business is weighty, and the failing dangerous, one can hardly be too diligent. Let a man here do his utmost, he shall not overdo.

Ver. 5. **O that my ways were directed, &c.]** David can wish well to that perfection which he cannot attain unto. The whole life of a good Christian is a holy desire, saith Austin; and this is always seconded with endeavour; without the which, affection is like Rachel, beautiful but barren.

Ver. 6. **Then shall I not be ashamed]** *i.e.* I shall be highly honoured both by thee and all thy people; able to look thee and them in the face, free from an evil conscience.

When I have respect unto all thy commandments] Mine obedience being universal both for subjects and objects: this is a sure sign of sincerity, such as entitleth a man to true blessedness, #Ps 119:1. A hypocrite is *funambulus virtutum*, as Tertullian phraseth it; he hath a dispensatory conscience; his obedience is partial, and such as goeth in a narrow track; it extendeth not to the compass of the whole law, and is therefore lost labour.

Ver. 7. **I will praise thee with uprightness]** David was yet but a learner; and if God would teach him to profit in knowledge and holiness, he would lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to him.

Ver. 8. **I will keep thy statutes]** Yea, and that very much, or with vehemence, as some read it, *usque valde*; this he had said before was God's command, **#Ps 119:4**, and he would do it. *Iussa sequi tam velle mihi quam posse necesse est* (Lucan).

O forsake me not] Or if at all (as thou mayest without breach of promise), yet not very much; not *usque valde*; not utterly. Christ, saith Greenham, was forsaken for a few hours, David for a few months, and Job for a few years; seven years, saith Suidas, for the trial and exercise of his faith and patience. This might seem to them *usque valde* but it was not *usquequaque sive semper aut perpetuo*. Leave them God did to their thinking, but forsake them he did not; forsake them he did in regard of vision, but not in regard of union; *non deserit etiamsi deserat*, saith Austin.

Ver. 9. **Wherewithal shall a young man]** *Semipuer*, a lad, a stripling, who hath his name in Hebrew of tossing to and fro; confer **#Eph 4:14**, and the same word signifieth youth and tow, **#Isa 1:31**, or rather the shreds that fall from tow and flax, when whiffied; to note the vanity of youth, and its aptness to be enkindled, when once affections begin to boil within them. The Greek word for a youth comes from another that signifieth to be hot, and to boil up, or scald, $\eta\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ of $\alpha\theta\omega$, and $\alpha\zeta\eta\omicron\varsigma$ of $\zeta\epsilon\omega$. Such a one, therefore, had need (if ever he think to be blessed, as **#Ps 119:1**) to cleanse his ways by cleaving to the word; since an impure heart and an undefiled inheritance will not stand together.

Cleanse his way] *Mandabit, id est emendabit*. The Hebrew word signifieth the cleansing of glass, which though it be very clean, yet will it gather filth even in the sunbeams, and of itself; which noteth the great corruption of this slippery age, and what care must be taken that it may shine as picked glass, or clearest crystal.

By taking heed thereto according to thy word] Which is of a purifying property, **#Joh 15:3 17:17**, and can cleanse the heart of a young man also, where lusts are strong, stains deep, and will not out without fuller's soap. There is a sharpness in these wholesome (or healing) words, that maketh us sound in the faith, and sincere in practice; as it did Mr Paul Bains, whose conversation, when he came first to Cambridge, was so irregular, that his father, being grieved at

it before his death, left with a friend forty pounds by the year, desiring that his son might have it if he amended his manners; else not. He did so, and had it (Mr Clark's Lives). When a child is come to be thirteen years and a day old, the Jews account him a man, and call him Barmitsuah, a child of the commandments; because bound to live by the law (Leo Modena of Jewish rites).

Ver. 10. **With my whole heart have I sought thee]** And that of a child little, being nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, **#1Ti 4:6**. I did all the wills of God, and so became a man after his own heart, **#Ac 13:22**.

O let me not wander] As I shall surely, if thou but withdraw thy grace; for I subsist merely by thy manutension.

Ver. 11. **Thy word have I hid in my heart]** *Ut peculium in apotheca;* as treasure; or as an amulet in a case or chest; as the pot of manna in the ark.

That I might not sin against thee] See but the commination against the temptation, and it will be a special preservative. Eve held the precept, but faltered in the threat. The Rabbis have a saying, *In cuius corde est lex Dei, imaginatio mala non habet in eum dominium,* He who hath the law of God in his heart is armed against evil lusts.

Ver. 12. **Blessed art thou (or be thou), O Lord]** viz. For what thou hast already taught me of thy will, and my duty.

Teach me thy statutes] *Gratiarum actio est ad plus dandum invitatio.* David had never enough, but craveth more; "Teach me thy statutes," saith he, that I may bless thee better.

Ver. 13. **With my lips have I declared]** Heb. have I ciphered up; these have been the matter of my discourse; and out of the good treasure of my heart *{#Ps 119:11}* have I brought forth those good things, for the good of others, **#Mt 12:35**.

Ver. 14. **I have rejoiced]** Heb. I have inwardly rejoiced. Pleasures of the mind are unspeakably joyous. Eudoxus was content to have been burnt by the sun presently, might he but come so near it as to learn the nature of it. Pliny perished by peeping into the fire of Etna. Archimedes lost his life by being too intent upon his mathematical studies.

As much as in all riches] Heb. in all opulency and affluence.

Ver. 15. **I will meditate]** Or, confabulate, talk freely of them, as worldlings do of their wealth, and ways to get it, *αδολεσχισω* (Sept.).

And have respect unto thy ways] As an archer hath to his mark.

Ver. 16. **I will delight myself]** *Deliciabor*; the Arabic hath it, *lectitabo leges tuas*, I will oft read over thy laws.

I will not forget] Men do therefore forget the word, because they delight not in it; they seldom forget where they lay their money.

Ver. 17. **Deal bountifully with thy servant]** *Per indebitam gratiam retribue*. Of thy free grace confer good upon me; and that not scantily, or niggardly, but liberally, and like thyself. The word sometimes signifieth to repay, to recompense; but therehence to infer matter of merit, on man's part, is too sandy a foundation for such a lofty Babel.

That I may live] Who am in deaths often; and that I may comfortably subsist in the feeling of thy favour, as **#1Sa 25:6**.

And keep thy word] For which end only I desire life. See the like, **#Ps 118:17**. *Non aliter petit vitam, quam ut praestet se fidelem Dei cultorem*, saith Arnobius. David doth no otherwise desire life, than for this, that he may faithfully serve God. *Non peto vitam propter delicias mundi* (Kimchi).

Ver. 18. **Open thou mine eyes]** Heb. unveil them, *velamen amove, volumen evolve*, give sight and light; irradiate both organ and object. In spirituals we are not only dim sighted, but blind as beetles, **#1Co 2:14**. Oh pray for that precious eye salve, **#Re 3:17**, for that supernal light, **#2Co 4:6**, and whensoever we open the Bible to read, say, as here, "Open thou mine eyes," &c., as when we close it up again say, "I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad," **#Ps 119:96**.

Wondrous things] *Mirabilia magna, mysteria*; such as none can understand and unriddle but such as plough with God's own heifer, **#1Co 2:11**.

Ver. 19. **I am a stranger in the earth]** And therefore apt to lose my way, without a guide; I shall surely else be wildered and lost.

Hide not thy commandments from me] viz. In the spiritual sense and effectual operation of them. Philosophers observe, that *lumen est vehiculum influentiae*, light is the convoy of influence; as it begets the flower in the field, the pearl in the earth, &c., so the foundation of all renovation is illumination; hence David so earnestly beggeth it here, and **#Ps 119:17**.

Ver. 20. **My soul breaketh]** The Seventy render it, My soul hath desired to desire thy judgments. How many broken spirits do even spend and exhale themselves in continual sallies, as it were, and egressions of affection to God and his judgments! *Comminuitur; debilior fit*. The stone will fall down to come to its own place, though it break itself in many pieces; so the good souls.

Ver. 21. **Thou hast rebuked the proud, &c.]** Thou chidest them, threatenest them, plaguest them, and so settest it on as no creature can take it off. And this is one reason why I love and observe thy laws, *ne paria patiar*, lest I should suffer in like sort; since men must do it or die for it.

Ver. 22. **Remove from me reproach and contempt]** Cast upon me by those proud haughty scorers, **#Ps 119:21**, and that for nothing but because I keep thy statutes; therefore it is that they despise and defame me; but do thou, Lord, take an order with them; behold, I put them into thine hands, and myself upon thy care to clear me, and set me right; for I am well resolved.

Ver. 23. **Princes also did sit, &c.]** By public invectives; such as were those of our Henry VIII, and of Lewis, king of Hungary and Bohemia (two very potent princes), against Luther. *ωρβδν Denotat continuum clamorem* (Kimchi).

Ver. 24. **Thy testimonies are my delight]** *In mediis crucibus;* to them I run as to my cordial; they are my pleasure and pastime.

And my counsellors] My learned counsel, by whose advice I do all; here I am sure to find *consolationem, et consultissimam directionem*, counsel and comfort in all my necessities.

Ver. 25. **My soul cleaveth unto the dust]** Those princes, my persecutors (Saul's counsellors), have brought me to death's door, as **#Ps 44:25 22:15**. I am in a forlorn condition; as far below hope as

they are above fear. Theodoret expoundeth it of humility; and Theodosius the emperor used these words, when reproved by Ambrose for the slaughter at Thessalonica, he lay on the ground and humbly begged pardon (Theod. Eccles. Hist. l. 5, c. 18).

Ver. 26. **I have declared my ways]** My sins and troubles; those thou hast remitted, and these thou hast remedied.

Teach me thy statutes] Show me how I may walk worthy of such a love; and live up to my mercies.

Ver. 27. **Make me to understand, &c.]** Give me a mouth and wisdom, that I may not talk at random of thy words and works; but understandingly and fruitfully.

Ver. 28. **My soul melteth]** Heb. droppeth away like water; I weep out my life, together with my grief.

Strengthen thou me according to thy word] Support me by thy promise.

Ver. 29. **Remove from me the way of lying]** A sin that David, through diffidence, fell into frequently. See #1Sa 21:2,8, where he roundly telleth three or four lies; and the like he did, #1Sa 27:8,10: this evil he saw by himself, and here prayeth against it.

And grant me thy law] For a preservative from this foul sin; herein gratify me, good Lord.

Ver. 30. **I have chosen the way of truth]** I am fully bent against lying, and am resolved to speak truth; though I have done otherwise sometimes, through frailty.

Thy judgments have I laid before me] Thereby to fright my conscience, that I might not so much as equivocate. Some render it *iudicia tua aequiperavi*, I have kept pace with thy judgments, *sc.* in the bent and bias of my heart at least.

Ver. 31. **I have stuck unto thy testimonies]** Hitherto I have done so; let me now shrink from them, or hang loose to them, lest I lose the things that I have wrought, and shame myself for ever by my backsliding.

Ver. 32. **I will run the way]** Do thy work with utmost diligence and delight, come off roundly and readily therein, take long strides toward heaven.

When thou shalt enlarge my heart] By thy free spirit, and by the joy of faith; when thou shalt have oiled my joints, and nimble my feet, then shall I run and not be weary, walk and not faint, **#Isa 40:31**; our promises of obedience must be conditional, since without Christ we can do nothing, **#Joh 15:5**.

Ver. 33. **Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes]** Which is both hard to hit and dangerous to miss; teach me, therefore.

And I shall keep it] *Lex iubet, gratia iuvat.* Oh beg of God that we may persevere, since the evening crowneth the day, &c.

Ver. 34. **Give me understanding]** We can neither know nor do God's will without divine light and aid, as appears clearly by this fifth octonary, which, therefore, Austin made so great use of against the Pelagians.

Ver. 35. **Make me to go in the path]** Which I shall soon forsake if thou guide me not.

Te duce vera sequor, te duce falsa nego.

For therein do I delight] After the inward man, **#Ro 7:22**. Thou hast given me to will, give me also to work what is well pleasing in thy sight.

Ver. 36. **Incline my heart]** Through the exercises of thy word, and the working of thy Spirit.

And not to covetousness] Which draweth away the heart from all God's testimonies, and is the root of all evil, **#1Ti 6:10**. Some think it is put here for all other vices. The Chaldee hath it, and not to mammon, that mammon of iniquity, as Christ calleth it, the next odious name to the devil. Now, to good God inclineth man's heart efficiently (say the schools), but to evil, deficiently, *sc.* by withdrawing his grace; for he is a free agent, and not bound to any. David prayeth God to supersede him from this wickedness, and Luther saith he was never tempted to it.

Ver. 37. **Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity]** Lest looking cause liking and lusting, **#1Jo 2:16**. In Hebrew the same word signifieth both an eye and a fountain; to show that from the eye, as from a fountain, floweth much mischief and by that window

Satan oft winds himself into the soul. This David found by experience, and therefore prays here, Turn away, transfer, make to pass mine eyes, #2Sa 11:12. Job steppeth one degree farther, viz. from a prayer to a vow, #Ps 31:1; yea, from a vow to an imprecation, #Ps 119:7. He knew the danger of irregular glancing and inordinate gazing.

And quicken thou me in thy way] Who shall else die of the wound in the eye. Alexander called the Persian maids *Oculorum dolores; Ut vidi, ut perii*. Grief of the eyes so that to be seen is to be ruined. The Israelites were appointed to make them fringes with blue ribbons to lock upon, that they might remember all God's commandments and do them, and not seek after their own heart and their own eyes, after which they used to go a whoring, #Nu 15:39. Ver. 38. **Stablish thy word unto thy servant]** *i.e.* Make good thy promise; we must by our prayers put the promises of God in suit, and God will perform them.

Who is devoted to thy fear] And so am an heir of the promises. Or, which (word) is (given) for the fear of thee, that thou mayest be feared.

Ver. 39. **Turn away my reproach]** Cover it, cure it, suffer it not to break forth, to my disgrace among men.

For thy judgments are good] But their tender mercies are mere cruelties; if, therefore, at any time I fall into opprobrious and reproachful practices; Lord, be thou my judge, and not they: for thy judgments are like thyself, good, and righteous, &c.

Ver. 40. **Behold, I have longed after thy precepts]** This he could boldly and safely say to God, offering himself to his trial for the truth of his desires. See #Heb 13:18.

Quicken me in thy righteousness] His desires and affections were not so large and lively but that he needed to be yet farther quickened *Nemo est ex omni parte beatus*. No one is from every part blessed.

Ver. 41. **Let thy mercies come also unto me]** Let them come to me, or else I shall never come to them. #1Pe 1:13, "Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you." #Ps 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me," as the setting sun doth the

wayfaring man that goes from it. The Arabic rendereth it, Let thy mercies come upon me, or cover me, as a garment. So the Spirit of the Lord clothed Amasa, #1Ch 12:18, and, ye shall be clothed "with power from on high," #Lu 24:49.

Even thy salvation] Safety here and salvation hereafter. Austin expoundeth it of Christ.

Ver. 42. **So shall I have wherewith to answer]** *i.e.* To stop an open mouth. Verbal apologies are sometimes necessary, but real always; we should, by a pious conversation, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, who, like Blackamoors, despise beauty; like dogs, bark at the shining of the moon. We are also to beg deliverance of God, for the confutation of such as say we shall never be delivered.

Ver. 43. **And take not the word of truth utterly]** Give me free utterance, "that in nothing I be ashamed; but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ may be magnified in my body," &c., #Php 1:20. Despoil me not of my courage in a good cause, let not Satan rob me of that jewel: *Ne auferas, id est ut spoliū, ut* #Ex 12:36 (Aben Ezra). I have read of a nobleman, who when he came into jeering company of great ones, would begin and own himself one of those they called Puritans, and so anticipated them.

Ver. 44. **So shall I keep thy law continually]** If thou please to give me to believe with the heart, and to confess with the mouth, I shall surely persevere in the profession and practice of the truth.

Ver. 45. **And I will walk at liberty]** In the full latitude of thy commandments, and not by wilful wickedness ensnare and ensnarl myself, as those do who, in the fulness of their sufficiency are in straits, and in pursuit of their lusts do pierce themselves through with many sorrows. The Italian senseth it, I will walk in peace of conscience.

Ver. 46. **I will speak of thy testimonies, &c.]** *Nullō vel terrore vel splendore mundano impeditus.* Kings commonly abound with all things but only truth, as Alphonsus, king of Arragon, complained. David would deal plainly with them, though never so high; especially when he should come to be of equal level with them, and so to have better opportunity.

Ver. 47. **And I will delight myself]** *sc.* In contemplation of thy word. Aristotle telleth us that the principal pleasure is to be found in contemplation (Ethic. lib. 10).

Ver. 48. **My hands also will I lift up, &c.**] Removing all rubs, and pulling thy word to me with both hands earnestly, with my whole man, with my whole might; *Utraque manu capessim*, *επεκτεινομενος*, straining the body, and stretching out the hands to do mine utmost at it, while others put it from them with a force, and so judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, #Ac 13:46.

Ver. 49. **Remember thy word**] God is not unrighteous to forget, #Heb 6:10, yet we must, as his remembrancers, #Isa 62:6, put his promises in suit, #Eze 36:37.

Upon which thou hast caused me to hope] God giveth us to do what he biddeth us to do, #Eze 36:27.

Ver. 50. **This is my comfort**] The promises yield strong consolation. Philosophical comforts are of little force, as Plato acknowledgeth, and Cicero bewaileth in his Epistle to Octavius

For thy word hath quickened me] When I was at last cast, and drawing my last breath, as it were.

Ver. 51. **The proud have had me greatly in derision**] Scoffing proceedeth from pride, #Pr 3:34, with #1Pe 5:5.

Yet have I not, &c.] They cannot flout me out of my zeal.

Ver. 52. **I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord**] This was to have a holy memory, well fraught with profitable matter, such as are examples of God's dealing with his people and their enemies in all ages.

And was comforted] Some degree of comfort followeth every good action; as heat accompanieth fire, as beams and influences issue from the sun.

Ver. 53. **Horror hath taken hold upon me**] *Horripilatio, turbo, vortex*, a horrible tempest, #Ps 11:6, such as surpriseth holy Habakkuk, #Hab 3:16.

Because of the wicked] To think of their heinous sins and horrible punishments, which they dread not, dream not off See #Da 4:19.

Ver. 54. **Thy statutes have been my songs**] Thy promises, which bind thee by grace, as statutes do us by duty, and are every whit as sure. By these I lopped off my cares, fears, and griefs, as with a

pruning or paring knife; I pared them round till none was left.
Metaphors falcibus.

In the house of my pilgrimage] *In hoc exilio, in hoc ergastulo, in hac peregrinatione, in hac valle lachrymarum* (Bern.). Travellers sing to deceive the tediousness of the way; so did David, and hereby he solaced himself under that horror, **#Ps 119:53**. Great is the comfort that cometh in by singing of psalms with grace in our hearts.

Ver. 55. **I remembered thy name, &c.]** Breaking my sleep for the purpose, to meditate on thy holy attributes, word, and works.

And have kept thy law] Which could not have been kept, if not kept in firm and fresh memory. See **#1Co 15:2**.

Ver. 56. **This I had]** This comfort, or this remembrance, or this ability to keep thy law.

Because I keep thy precepts] A strange reason, I kept it because I kept it; but every new act of obedience fitteth for a following act, **#Ro 6:19**. As in sin, so in grace, **#Mr 4:24**, acts increase habits, and facilitate the work.

Ver. 57. **Thou art my portion, O Lord]** While other men's portion *sunt divitiae vel deliciae*, nothing short of God can satisfy me.

I have said, &c.] *i.e.* Purposed and promised the obedience of faith.

Ver. 58. **I intreated thy favour]** Heb. thy face, that is, thy Christ, saith Ambrose and Hilary: this David did in the sense of his own utter inability to do as he had promised.

Be merciful unto me, &c.] This was the sum of his petition, and must be the main of ours.

Ver. 59. **I thought on my ways]** At self-examination beginneth sound conversion, **#La 3:39,40 Hag 1:5,7 2Co 13:5**.

And turned my feet] Finding all to be naught, and stark naught (contrary to what God found in his works upon a review, all good, and very good), set upon a new course.

Ver. 60. **I made haste, and delayed not]** Heb. I distracted not myself about had-I-wist, but minded the one thing necessary. *Nolite*

tempus in nugis terere: vel cras, ut ille seria, hodie morituri protelare, saith one; Haste, haste, haste; delays are dangerous, opportunities are headlong, and once past, irrecoverable.

Ver. 61. **The bands of the wicked have robbed me]** In these late stripping times many a poor man's whole life's settings were lost in an instant.

But I have not forgotten thy law] I have encouraged myself in the Lord my God, as at the sack of Ziklag, **#1Sa 30:6**

Ver. 62. **At midnight will I rise]** To speak with a friend. The primitive Christians had their *Hymniantelucani*, saith Pliny, their *αλεκτροφωνια*, saith Clement and Cyprian; and this the monks allege for defence of their superstitious night services.

Because of thy righteous judgments] God's word read and preached is a main matter of thankfulness; so are his works.

Ver. 63. **I am a companion of all them]** Though never so mean, if there be *aliquid Christi* in them. Grace is of a uniting property, and purgeth out partiality, **#Jas 2:1,2.**

That keep thy precepts] The best proof of true fear of God, **#Ps 103:13 Ac 10:35.**

Ver. 64. **The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy]** Thy mercy is over all thy works. This is thy general goodness, But

Teach me thy statutes] *Non peto a te aliam misericordiam* (Aben Ezra); this is that I beg above all, viz. the lively light of thy law and word; sound and saving knowledge. A gracious spirit cannot be satisfied with low things.

Ver. 65. **Thou hast dealt well with thy servant]** Men must be no less praiseful than prayerful. Shall we come to the well of life thirsty, and then turn our backs upon the Rock that followeth us?

According to thy word] *sc.* Of promise; this sweeteth a blessing.

Ver. 66. **Teach me good judgment]** Heb. good taste, for the soul also hath her senses; and as the mouth tasteth meat, so the ear trieth words; the mind relisheth religion.

For I have believed thy commandments] But would do yet more: #1Jo 5:13. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Ver. 67. **Before I was afflicted I went astray]** Especially through high mindedness and earthly mindedness, which are purged out by affliction, and grace increased; as fish thrive better in cold and salt waters, as the walnut tree is most fruitful when most beaten. Master Ascham was a good schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth, but affliction was a better, &c. See my Treatise on #Re 3:19.

But now I have kept thy word] Now that I have been lashed to it, and have paid for my learning; *Vexatio dat intellectum*, Smart maketh wit. As the scourging and beating of the garment with a stick beateth out the moths and dust, so do afflictions corruptions from the heart. *Quae nocent, docent*. Corrections of instructions are the way of life, #Pr 6:23

Ver. 68. **Thou art good, and doest good]** Good in thyself (indeed there is none good but thyself) and good to thy creatures, inexpressibly bounteous and beneficial.

Teach me thy statutes] And so impart unto me thy special goodness, that I may resemble thee in being and doing good; full of goodness, filled with knowledge, #Ro 15:14.

Ver. 69. **The proud have forged a lie against me]** Heb. They have cunningly and finely aspersed me. *Mendacium mendacio assuentes*, piecing one lie to another, and drawing together iniquity with the cart ropes of vanity. *Concinnarunt, artificiose confinxerunt*.

But I will keep thy precepts] Notwithstanding their slanders; and the rather.

Ver. 70. **Their heart is as fat as grease]** Gross as grease; curdled as milk or cheese, say the Septuagint, congealed and baked as it were in their sins. *Obtusum et quasi adipe obductum*; fat things are less sensible, and fat-hearted people are noted by Aristotle for dull and stupid.

But I delight in thy law] *Illa me pasco et sagino*, therewith I feed and fat myself.

Ver. 71. **It is good for me that I have been afflicted]** And thereby humbled; for else the fruit of affliction is lost, and they are always impaired that are not improved by their sufferings, as all God's people are sure to be at length. The Lacedemonians of old (and the same is said of the Hollanders of late) grew rich by war, and were bettered when all other kingdoms were undone by it. The saints make benefit of their crosses, which to others are destructive.

That I might learn thy statutes] Luther saith of some of Saint Paul's Epistles, that they can never be understood but by the cross. *Qui tribulantur, sacras literas melius intelligunt* (saith he in another place) Through trials they better understood the Bible. *securi et fortunati eas legunt sicut Ovidii carmen*, that is, the afflicted do best understand the Scriptures, when the wealthy and secure read them but as one of Ovid's poems.

Ver. 72. **The law of thy mouth is better unto me, &c.]** For what is all this trash to that true treasure, those lively and life giving oracles? Dionysius worthily preferred Plato before Aristippus, because the one was ever craving money of him, but the other books. It is reported of Plato, that for three choice books he gave thirty thousand silverlings or florins. Now, what were all his books to the Bible? To blame, then, was that Anabaptist, who said in Melancthon's hearing that he would not give two pence for all the Bibles in the world (Joh. Maul. loc. com. 78).

Ver. 73. **Thy hands have made me and fashioned me]** *Plasmaverunt*, which Basil interpreteth of the body curiously wrought by God, #Ps 139:15,16 as "made" of the soul; *q.d.* Thou art my Maker, I would thou shouldst be my Master (*Formaverunt, firmaverunt*). A body hast thou fitted me, #Heb 10:5, a reasonable soul also hast thou given me, capable of salvation; I am an understanding creature still; neither have I lost my passive capacity of thy renewing grace.

Give me understanding] And thereunto add sincere affection, #Ps 119:80, that these may run parallel in my heart, and mutually transfuse life and vigour into one another.

Ver. 74. **They that fear thee will be glad, &c.]** As hoping that they shall also in like sort be delivered and advanced.

Because I have hoped in thy word] And have not been disappointed. The Vulgate rendereth it *super speravi*, I have overly hoped; and Aben Ezra glosseth, I have hoped in all thy decree, even that of afflicting me, as in the next verse.

Ver. 75. **I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right]** That is, that I suffer deservedly. To thee, O Lord, belongeth righteousness, &c., #Da 9:7

And that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me] That thou mayest be true to my soul, and not suffer me to run on to my utter ruin; or, in faithfulness, that is, in measure, as #1Co 10:13.

Ver. 76. **Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness]** That I faint not, neither sink under the heaviest burden of these light afflictions.

According to thy word unto thy servant] To thy servants in general, and, therefore, I trust to me, who am bold to thrust in among the rest, and to put my name in the writ.

Ver. 77. **Let thy tender mercies come unto me, &c.]** He repeateth the same thing in other words, and re-enforceth his request; showing that he could not live without divine comforts.

For thy law is my delight] Thou hast my heart and goodwill; which showeth that I am thy workmanship in a spiritual sense also, #Eph 2:10. Oh look upon the wounds of thine hands, and forget not the work of thine hands, as Queen Elizabeth prayed.

Ver. 78. **Let the proud be ashamed]** Theoderet thinks that David here prayeth not against, but for, his enemies, *quando quidem confusio et ignominia salutem procreat*. But that is not likely.

For they dealt perversely with me] Writhing my words and deeds to a wrong sense; or, they would pervert me.

But I will meditate in thy precepts] Or, I will speak of them, and so stop their mouths, and save myself from them.

Ver. 79. **Let those that fear thee]** These are fitly opposed to those proud ones, as #Mal 3:13,16.

Turn unto me] From whom they have shrunk in mine affliction.

And those that have known thy testimonies] *Deum cognoscere et colere*, to know and serve God is the whole duty of a man, saith Lactantius.

Ver. 80. **Let my heart be sound]** For the main, though I have many failings. Pray we against hypocrisy.

That I be not ashamed] As all dissemblers once shall be.

Ver. 81. **My soul fainteth for thy salvation]** Saying, as those good souls, **#Jer 8:20**, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Physicians let their patients' blood sometimes, *etiam ad animae deliquium*, till they swoon again. Howbeit, they have a care still to maintain nature; so doth God the fainting spirits of his people by cordials, **#Isa 57:16**.

But I hope in thy word] *Vivere spe vidi qui moriturus erat*.

Ver. 82. **Mine eyes fail]** God sometimes deferreth to help till men have stopped looking: **#Lu 18:8**, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith?" hardly. This he doth to commend his favours to us, and to set a price on them.

Saying, When wilt thou comfort me?] This is a *prosopopoeia*, as if David's eyes said thus, while they earnestly expected comfort.

Ver. 83. **For I am become like a bottle in the smoke]** Shrivelled, wrinkled, withered, dried up. My body by long suffering is but a bag of bones, and that black and sooty; confer **#Ps 32:3 102:3**. My soul in danger of being bereft of all spiritual moisture.

Yet do I not forget thy statutes] Nay, I do the rather remember them, and fetch relief from them.

Ver. 84. **How many are the days of thy servant]** *i.e.* Mine evil days, **#Pr 15:15**. All the days of the afflicted are evil; {see #Ps 37:12} and these soon seem many to us.

When wilt thou execute judgment, &c.] This is the voice of those martyrs, **#Re 6:10,11**, who are thereupon willed to have patience, till the number of their brethren is fulfilled.

Ver. 85. **The proud have digged pits for me]** The pride, cruelty, and craftiness of wicked persecutors are foretokens of their utter

destruction. The Greek rendereth it, They have told me tales; #Pr 16:27, "An ungodly man diggeth up evil."

Which are not after thy law] Neither they nor their pits. But what care they for thee or thy law? and shall they thus escape by iniquity? #Ps 56:7.

Ver. 86. **All thy commandments are faithful]** Heb. faithfulness, that is, they are true, sure, equal, infallible.

They persecute me wrongfully] For asserting thy truths, and adhering thereunto.

Help thou me] The more eagerly men molest us the more earnestly should we implore the Divine help.

Ver. 87. **They had almost consumed me upon earth]** In heaven I shall be out of their reach. But this is their hour, and the power of darkness, #Lu 12:53.

But I forsook not thy precepts] No trouble must pull us from the love of the truth. You may pull my tongue out of my head, but not my faith out of my heart, said that martyr. The saints choose affliction rather than sin.

Ver. 88. **Quicken me after thy lovingkindness]** David under long affliction had his dumps and dullnesses; as the best faith, if long tried, will flag and hang the wing. He, therefore, rouseth up himself, and wrestleth with God for quickening grace; which he promised to improve, and not to receive the grace of God in vain; "so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth."

Ver. 89. **For ever, O Lord, thy word]** It is eternal and perpetual, neither can it be vacated or abolished by the injury of time or endeavours of tyrants. The Bible was imprinted at the New Jerusalem by the finger of Jehovah, and shall outlive the days of heaven, run parallel with the life of God, with the line of eternity. The saints also and angels in heaven live by the same law as we do here, and we pray to be conformed unto them.

Ver. 90. **Thy faithfulness is unto all generations]** He singles out God's word of promise, and shoves it to be immutable and unmoveable as the earth is in the middle of heaven, by the word of God's power. See #Jer 33:25.

Thou hast established] See #Job 26:7. {See Trapp on "Job 26:7"}

Ver. 91. **They continue this day]** God never brake promise with them, #Jer 33:20,25, much less will he with his people, for whose use he made them.

For all are thy servants] All creatures are at God's beck and check, except evil angels and men, those great heteroclitēs {a}, who yet do God's will, though against their own wills.

{a} A thing or person that deviates from the ordinary rule; an "anomaly".

Ver. 92. **Unless thy law had been my delight]** Unless it had been settled in my heart (as well as it is in heaven) for my singular comfort, I had been crushed.

I should then (or long since) have perished] The Landgrave of Hesse told me at Dresden, saith Melancthon, that it had been impossible for him to have borne up under the manifold miseries of so long an imprisonment, *nisi habuisset consolationem ex verbo divino in suo corde*, but for the comforts of the Scriptures in his heart (Joh. Manl. loc. com. 139).

Ver. 93. **I will never forget thy precepts]** That is, thy promises, which are as sure and firm as the commands of the most absolute monarch upon earth. And here the prophet proposeth his own example for a pattern to others; for, as Pacatus writeth in his panegyric to Theodosius the emperor, *blandissime iubetur exemplo* examples are sweet precepts.

For with them thou hast quickened me] Thou hast fetched me again, when ready to faint, as #Ps 119:92.

Ver. 94. **I am thine, save me]** Every man will see to his own, unless he be worse than an infidel; and shall not God?

For I have sought thy precepts] And can thereby prove myself to be thine. Where it is implied that all that we are to seek in our obedience are the precepts themselves; the thing especially we are to aim at is obedience itself to the precepts.

Ver. 95. **The wicked have waited]** Nothing less than destruction will satisfy persecutors; but the Lord knows how to deliver his

Peters out of the hands of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews, #Ac 12:11 2Pe 2:9.

But I will consider thy testimonies] And therewith hearten and harden myself against their insolences and attempts for my hurt. Ver. 96. **I have seen an end of all perfection]** viz. Here below.

Tempore tacta ruunt praetoria —

Fairest buildings, strongest persons, goodliest empires, have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin, *Omnis finis finem vidi* (Syr. Interp.).

*Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendencia filo;
Et subito casu quae valere ruunt;
Omnia fortunae variis stant obvia telis:
Aut etiam longo tempore victa cadunt.*

But thy commandment is exceeding broad] *It is endless, infinite, perpetual, and withal of largest extent; witness that of charity, which is the complement of the law, and the supplement of the gospel. David, though he had proceeded further 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; like as those great discoverers of the newly found land confess still a plus-ultra.*

Ver. 97. **O how love I thy law!]** Such a pang of love he felt as could not otherwise be vented but by a pathetic exclamation; and this was wrought in him by the thoughts of the largeness and lastingness of God's law. Plato prized one book (called Sophron) above all the rest, whereof he had many. Richard de Bury, bishop of Durham (Floruit, A. D. 1333), as he had more books than all the bishops of England besides, so in his book called Philobiblos, he saith of himself, *ecstatico quodam librorum amore potenter se esse abreptum*, that he was carried out of himself by love to good books, but not so much as David was to God's blessed Book. Queen Elizabeth, at her coronation, received the Bible, presented unto her, with both her hands; and, kissing it, laid it to her breast, saying, that the same had ever been her chiefest delight (Speed.).

It is my meditation all the day] *Sive locutio, commentatio, occupatio,* my daily discourse, study, or employment; as love is never idle.

Ver. 98. **Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than my enemies]** So that I outwit them; and my holy simplicity is too hard for their sinful subtlety. "Be wise as serpents."

For they are ever with me] Heb. It is ever with me, that is, every one of thy commandments; I am expert in them; or, It is mine, I have made them mine own by meditation; I have turned them *in succum et sanguinem;* I have incorporated them, as it were, into my soul.

Ver. 99. **I have more understanding than all my teachers]** *i.e.* I have understood by much reading more than they ever taught me, while I referred all to practice; and so came to know more of God's mind than they did. A friend, saith Chrysostom, that is acquainted with his friend, will get out the meaning of a letter or phrase which another could not that is a stranger; so it is in the Scripture. And here, *Indocti rapiunt coelum,* a pious swain is better learned than a proud philosopher, saith a certain devout Dominican. Our King Alfred was held the best in all his kingdom, both for understanding and for interpreting the Holy Scriptures.

For thy testimonies are my meditation] I do particularly apply the word heard to mine own necessities; and work it upon mine affections by an after deliberate meditation.

Ver. 100. **I understand more than the ancients]** Whom yet age, use, and experience have taught much; but by the practical study of the word I outgo them all; with reference to those hoary heads, the seniors of the Synedrion, be it spoken, *Non prolixa facit sapientem barba.*

Ver. 101. **I have refrained my feet, &c.]** I have clapped up my unruly affections close prisoners, and hampered them; abandoning every error in judgment and enormity in practice.

That I might keep thy word] Which I shall never do but by self-denial and mortification.

Ver. 102. **I have not departed from thy judgments]** *i.e.* From thy law, which is called judgments, because God will thereby judge the world.

For thou hast taught me] *sc.* To cleave close unto them with full purpose of heart; and not to be drawn aside by any either allurements or fright.

Ver. 103. **How sweet are thy words unto my taste!]** Heb. to my palate; *Syr. coelis gutturis mei*, the roof of the mouth resembleth heaven. Epicurus was worthily blamed by Ennius for that *dum palatē quid sit optimum iudicabat, coeli palatium non suspexerit*, while he looked so much to his palate, he looked not at all to the heavenly palace. David was no hog of his herd; he had sweetmeats to feed on that the world was not aware of.

Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth] Mercury's priests were wont to say, when they did eat their figs, γλυκεια η αληθεια, Truth is sweet. The comedian saith, after Solomon, ηδυ το φως, "Light is sweet." The pleasures of the mind are far beyond those of the body.

Ver. 104. **Through thy precepts I get understanding]** Those are the statutes of heaven; and as men, by studying the statute book, get worldly wisdom, so they may hereby get heavenly.

Therefore I hate every false way] Whether in point of opinion or practice. I shall look upon Auxentius as a devil so long as he is an Arian, saith Hilary. And I would shun a heretic as I would do a devil, for he is sent on his errand, saith another.

Ver. 105. **Thy word is a lamp unto my feet]** Without the direction whereof, both for my whole course of life, and for every particular action thereof, I cannot but be in dreadful darkness and desperate downfalls.

Ver. 106. **I have sworn, and I will perform it]** A religious vow is nothing else but a solemn promise, or rather oath made to God to use this or that means, either to avoid some evil whereunto he findeth himself inclined, or to be set onwards in the performance of some duty unto which he finds himself very backward, *Masora sepes legi, decimae divitiis, vota sanctimoniae, silentium sapientiae* (Pirke Aboth). Thus, #Ne 10:1, they take a new oath, and seal to it. Thus Job, #Job 31:1, and Jacob, #Ge 28:21,22, called, therefore, the father of vows.

That I will keep thy righteous judgments] Keep them as I am able, and as thou by thy grace shalt enable me, #Ps 119:32. Peter was too peremptory, Jephthah too hasty.

Ver. 107. **I am afflicted very much]** *Usque valde*, extremely. If David be so fully bent to obey God, he shall have troubles great store; #1Ti 3:12, All that will live godly, and are set upon it, shall suffer persecution. Zeal for Christ draweth troubles to itself, as the wind Caecias doth clouds.

Quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word] Help me to keep my promise, to perform mine oath, notwithstanding these troubles growing upon me. A vow made without prayer is never kept.

Ver. 108. **Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings]** My prayers and praises; prayers for thine assistance, and praises for thine enablements, #Ps 50:14 107:22

And teach me thy judgments] This is a request that David hath never done with.

Ver. 109. **My soul (or life) is continually in my hand]** *i.e.* Continually hazarded and ready to be laid down for righteousness' sake. I am neither fond of life nor afraid of death in this case; I make no more of life than a child doth of his bird, which he carrieth in the palm of his hand held open. See #Jud 12:3 Job 13:14.

Yet do I not forget thy law] Notwithstanding all these dangers; nay, I love it, and like it so much the better, as those, #Ps 44:17 Ro 8:2-4, and that holy martyr who caught up the Revelation cast into the same fire with himself, and cried, *O beata Apocalypsis*, &c. Oh blessed revelation.

Ver. 110. **The wicked have laid a snare for me]** Such as, rather than their lives, would have had mine; such as sought and fain would have sucked my blood.

Yet I erred not from thy precepts] I held the king's highway, and leaped not over the hedge to avoid a piece of foul way.

Ver. 111. **Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage]** *Perpetui nec unquam alienaudi patrimonii vice*, A patrimony that I prize, and will never part with, since I hold it from thee as a child of thy grace.

For they are the rejoicing of mine heart] Other heritages have their troubles. *Qui habet tetras, habet querras*, saith the lawyer; but the just man's joy is unmixed.

Ver. 112. **I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes]** This is the fruit of my Christian contentation and spiritual joy, "I have inclined my heart." Indeed, thou, Lord, hast done it, for thou art the only heart maker and heart mender; but thou countest and callest it my doing, for mine encouragement in thy service. *Certum est nos facere quod facimus, sed Deus facit ut faciamus*, saith Austin.

Always even to the end] For else I shall lose the things that I have wrought, and not receive a full reward, **#2Jo 8**.

Ver. 113. **I hate vain thoughts]** Which, though they may swarm in my head, shall never lodge in my heart, **#Jer 4:14**, for there I have entertained a better guest.

Thy law do I love] All hatred proceedeth from love, and is *προς το μενος*, against the whole kind, as Aristotle speaketh. True love to God's law enrageth the hearts of God's people with a holy hatred of heresies and perverse devices.

Ver. 114. **Thou art my hiding place and my shield]** To defend me from deadly darts and dangers. See **#Ps 18:2 32:7**. God either preserveth his from common calamities or from the hurt of them.

I hope in thy word] And am content to stay thy time. "He that believeth maketh not haste."

Ver. 115. **Depart from me, ye evildoers]** For what reason? there is no doing my duty in your company; besides, a double danger: 1. Infection of sin; 2. Infliction of punishment, **#Re 18:4**.

For I will keep the commandments] Which it booteth me not to set about unless I do first abandon your society, hating the garment spotted by the flesh, that is, avoiding evil company (saith Mr Perkins), that remora or pest of true piety. See **#Le 15:4**.

Ver. 116. **Uphold me according unto thy word]** The promise is the soul's support. Turn we the palm and not the backside of the hand to this staff, leaning upon it, praying hard for the accomplishment of it, and then be content, though we can say but as that holy man, Mr

Paul Bain, did: I thank God in Christ, sustentation I have, but suavities spiritual I taste not any.

And let me not be ashamed of my hope] Let me not be defeated, disappointed, frustrated. This David knew he should not be (for *spes in terrenis incerti nomen boni; spes in divinis nomen est certissimi*, #Heb 11:1 Ro 5:5), but yet thinks fit to seek it by prayer; as Elijah foretold abundance of rain, but yet went up to the top of Carmel and prayed for it, #1Ki 18:41,42.

Ver. 117. **Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe]** No longer are we safe from sin and punishment than God putteth under his hand; we subsist merely by his manutension; and if he withdraw his grace never so little we are down on all four, as we say.

And I will have respect, &c.] Saints shall persevere, because they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Ver. 118. **Thou hast trodden down all them, &c.]** Thou, as a mighty king or conqueror, hast made use of them for a footstool, as Sapore, king of Persia, did Valentinian the Roman emperor, and as Tamerlane did Bajazet.

For their deceit is falsehood] They think themselves to be out of the reach of thy rod, but they will find it somewhat otherwise.

Ver. 119. **Thou pullest away all the wicked of the earth like dross]** Consuming them in the fire of thy wrath, and casting them out as refuse; {see #Isa 1:25} *vel quasi rubiginem existimasti*, thou hast reckoned them as rust (Kimchi); whereas the saints are preciously esteemed, as the least filings of gold are.

Therefore I love thy testimonies] *Quia purgant a scoriis hypocritas, et intus est ut foris:* because they take out the precious from the vile, and make men the same within as without.

Ver. 120. **My flesh trembleth]** *Horripilatur*, #Job 4:15. In the saints is a mixture of contrary passions, fear and great joy, as was in those holy women, #Mt 28:8, and the one makes way for the other.

Ver. 121. **I have done judgment and justice]** I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day, #Ac 23:1; my cause is right, and my carriage righteous. But innocence is no target against detraction and deadly practice; therefore

Leave me not to mine oppressors] Or traducers for they will soon exceed their commission, #Zec 1:15.

Ver. 122. **Be surety for thy servant for good]** *Obi vadimonium;* appear for me, and nonsuit all accusations against me; or, undertake for me that I shall keep thy laws, as I have said and sworn to do: *Sis fide iussor meus.* Some observe that this is the only verse throughout the whole psalm wherein the word is not mentioned under the name of law, judgments, statutes, or the like terms. And they make this note upon it; where the law faileth there Christ is a surety of a better testament. There are that render the words thus: Dulcify or delight thy servant in good, that is, make him joyful and comfortable in the pursuit and practice of that which is good, *Oblecta servum* (Muscul.).

Ver. 123. **Mine eyes fail for thy salvation]** Not my bodily eyes only, but the eyes of my faith. See #Ps 119:81,82.

And for the word of thy righteousness] That is, for thy faithful promises, which many times bear a long date.

Ver. 124. **Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy]** *i.e.* Show me so much mercy as to teach me thy statutes. *Cathedram in ccelis habet qui cords docet.* Divine learning is of God's free favour. If common skill, then this much more cometh "forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working," #Isa 28:19.

Ver. 125. **I am thy servant, give me understanding]** I have voluntarily hired myself unto thee, chosen the things that please thee, and taken hold of the covenant, loving to be thy servant, #Isa 56:4,6. Now, this is all the wages I crave of thee, "Give me understanding," &c. This David speaketh, saith one, in a real and heavenly complement with his Maker.

That I may know thy testimonies] Work done in the dark must be undone again; David, therefore, would fully know his Master's mind, that he might acceptably do it.

Ver. 126. **It is time for thee, Lord, to work]** For else what will become of thy great name, and of thy poor people? This the psalmist speaketh not as prescribing God a time, but as reminding him of his own glory and of his people's necessity.

For they have made void thy law] They would if they could, as our Antinomians, dogmatic and practical, our aweless, lawless Belialists, untameable, untractable.

Ver. 127. **Therefore I love thy commandments]** I like them the better because they slight them, and prize that way the more they persecute. I kindle myself from their coldness, and while they greedily grasp after gold, and fine gold, I lay hold upon eternal life, **#1Ti 6:10-12.**

Ver. 128. **Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right]** "Therefore," from the same ground again as before, by a holy antiperistasis.

I esteem, &c.] *Rectificavi,* I have declared them to be right in every part and point, against those that wrangle and wrest them to a wrong sense. I esteem every parcel of truth precious, and am an utter enemy to every heterodoxy. The many "alls" in this verse used (not unlike that in **#Eze 44:30**) showeth the integrity and universality of his obedience. "All" is but a little word, but of large extent.

I hate every false way] Whether in point of opinion or practice; all sinful deviations and prevarications. Hatred is ever against the whole kind of a thing, saith Aristotle (Rhet. lib. 2.)

Ver. 129. **Thy testimonies are wonderful]** As comprehending high and hidden mysteries, such as are far above the reach of human reason; such as the very angels admire and adore. A man must have more than common faith to subject his reason to them. But all men are Socinians by nature; they will believe God's word no farther than they can see reason; which while men make the rule of their faith (as did the wise Greeks, the rational Romans), they stumble at the preaching of the cross of foolishness; and disbelieve the riches of Christ, which are unsearchable.

Therefore doth my soul keep them] Though I cannot comprehend them, yet I am comprehended by them; and though I cannot do them as I would, yet I am doing at them as I can. I admire what I cannot attain to.

Ver. 130. **The entrance of thy words giveth light]** So soon as men are over the threshold of thy house, *sese lux quaedam inenarrabilis*

conspiciendam offert, a marvellous light shineth about them; so little cause is there that any should accuse God's word of darkness and hardness; or give way to negligence and carelessness of the Scriptures, because they are wonderful. *Lex, lux*, the law is a light, #Pr 6:23, and the gospel a great light, #Mt 4:16 2Pe 1:19.

I giveth understanding to the simple] And maketh them subtle, #Pr 1:4, so they be but docible. The very first rudiments of religion make wise the rude, so they be not refractory.

Ver. 131. **I opened my mouth and panted]** Heb. and sooped in the air, as one that laboureth for life. Oh the sighs and the groans that I incessantly breathed forth out of zeal to thy law! Oh the strong affections kindled on the hearth of my heart! for,

I longed for thy commandments] The Septuagint renders it by *επιποθεω*, which signifieth a most vehement desire, impatient of delays. As one that runneth himself out of breath. *Sitio propter legem sicut dracones propter pluviam*, #Job 29

Ver. 132. **Look thou upon me, &c.]** Face about towards me, and give me a glimpse at least of thy grace; for full fruition I expect not in this present life. *Brevis hora, parva mora*.

As thou usest to do unto those, &c.] Common mercies satisfy not a saint; he must have peculiar favours, spiritual blessings in heavenly things, even the sure mercies of David. He pleads for a child's part.

Ver. 133. **Order my steps in thy word]** Let me walk as in a frame, walk by rule exactly, accurately, #Eph 5:15. Here he prayeth that he may keep the affirmative precepts, saith Aben Ezra; as in the next words, the negative.

And let not any iniquity have dominion over me] Let it not reign, though it doth rebel; let it be like those beasts in Daniel, whose dominion was taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time, #Ps 7:12.

Ver. 134. **Deliver me from the oppressions of man]** *Homo homini lupus*. David, besides his corruptions within, met with oppressions and persecutions without; so shall all that will live godly in Christ Jesus; let them never dream of a delicacy in religion.

So will I keep thy precepts] Not say, as those miscreants, **#Jer 7:10**, "We are delivered to do all these abominations"; but as good old Zechariah, **#Lu 1:74,75**, *Servati sumus ut serviamus*, We have been served so that we may serve. We are delivered that we might serve God without fear, &c.

Ver. 135. **Make thy face to shine upon thy servant]** David could not live out of God's favour nor without his direction; he therefore here and elsewhere prayeth heartily for both.

Ver. 136. **Rivers of waters run down mine eyes]** My countenance is clouded, and even furrowed, with continual tears shed for thy dishonour; therefore lift up upon me the light of thy loving countenance. It grieveth me greatly to see thy law violated, and the transgressors thereof so careless of their own eternal good. This was Lot's case at Sodom, **#2Pe 2:7,8**, and is many a good man's still; every profane wretch being a Hazael to his eyes, a Hadadrimmon to his heart. The Septuagint and Vulgate read, Mine eyes have drawn down issues of waters (*i.e.* they have wept abundantly), because they (that is, those eyes of mine) have not kept thy law. So Aben Ezra; *Quia ipsi oculi non observassent legem tuam*. David had walked after the sight of his eyes, and the lust of his heart; this is now his grief. Thus they; but not so well.

Ver. 137. **Righteous art thou, O Lord]** Essentially and efficiently.

And upright are thy judgments] Which are sometimes secret, but always just, as the Emperor Mauricius also acknowledged, when his wife and children were slain before his eyes by the traitor Phocas.

Ver. 138. **Thy testimonies which thou hast commanded]** *i.e.* The gospel, as **#Isa 8:20**. And the commandment thereof to hear Christ, **#Mt 17:5**, and to believe in his name, **#1Jo 3:23**; this is a faithful and true saying, **#1Ti 1:15**, not *avengelaion*, as the Jews blasphemously call it, or *fabula de Christo*, a fable about Christ, as that blackmouthed pope.

Ver. 139. **My zeal hath consumed me]** Hath meagred and impaired me much. In the Hebrew the last letter is doubled, to increase the signification. *{Hebrew Text Note}* Zeal is the extreme heat of all the affections.

Ver. 140. **Thy word is very pure]** And calleth for purity. Hence wicked men slight it; but saints the rather embrace it, desirous to be conformed to the heavenly pattern.

Ver. 141. **I am small and despised]** *Minutus*, a worm and no man, an abject and outcast, *nullificamen hominis*, &c.

Yet do I not forget thy precepts] My mean condition impaireth not my constancy.

Ver. 142. **Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness]** When all other laws and sentences, though engraven in brass or marble, shall decay and determine, thy law lasteth for ever, and so shall they that observe it.

And thy law is the truth] And therefore lasting. *Μοιμον η αληθεια*, saith Plato. The eternity of Israel cannot lie, **#1Sa 15:29**.

Ver. 143. **Trouble and anguish have taken hold of me]** Heb. have found me. Those (as we say of foul weather) come before they are sent for; yet are they not without the Lord. It is he that putteth his under the black rod.

Yet thy commandments, &c.] God and his word are never so sweet to the saints as in adversity.

Ver. 144. **The righteousness of thy testimonies, &c.]** This is the same with **#Ps 119:142**.

Give me understanding] An ignorant life is a lifeless life. *Fuit non vixit*. The life of God is the only life. But from this men are alienated by the ignorance that is in them, **#Eph 4:18**.

Ver. 145. **I cried with my whole heart]** This showeth that he had not only a gift of prayer, but a spirit of prayer.

Ver. 146. **I cried unto thee; save me]** Salvation properly denoteth the privative part of a man's felicity, but includeth the positive part also: this must be got by prayer.

Ver. 147. **I prevented the dawning of the morning]** I was up and at it before daybreak. This is check to our sluggishness.

I hoped in thy word] The word furnished his hope, and his hope his prayer.

Ver. 148. **Mine eyes prevent the night watches]** By this verse and the former it appeareth that he spent whole nights in prayer and meditation of God's word. Jerome counselled some godly women

thus, *Tenenti codicem somnus obrepat, et cadentem faciem pagina sacra suspiciat* (Hier. ad Eusta.).

Ver. 149. **Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness]** Showed heretofore to others of thy servants, and to me frequently.

Quicken me according to thy judgment] *i.e.* According to thy promise.

Ver. 150. **They draw nigh that follow after mischief]** Those *scelerum assidui sectatores prompti sunt ac parati.*

They are far from thy law] And so having nothing to restrain their rage; since they have cast their cords from them.

Ver. 151. **Thou art near, O Lord]** To counterwork and control the enemy; as also to safeguard and support thy people.

Ver. 152. **Concerning thy testimonies, &c.]** The sempiternity of God's word is an excellent prop to faith and help in prayer; to those especially who are of long experience, and have well laid up their experiments. David had learned this truth of a child little. See **#2Ti 3:17.**

Ver. 153. **Consider mine affliction, and deliver me]** *Vide commiserationes oculis,* look upon it, and let thine eye affect thy heart; say as once, "I have seen, I have seen the affliction of thy people."

Ver. 154. **Plead my cause, and deliver me]** *Litiga litigium meum.* Be both mine advocate and my redeemer.

Ver. 155. **Salvation is far from the wicked]** How can it be otherwise? when as God is neither in their heads, **#Ps 10:4**, nor hearts, **#Ps 14:1**, nor words, **#Ps 12:4**, nor ways, **#Tit 1:16**, can these have part or portion in his salvation?

For they seek not] This contempt of God's word is a plain proof that no part or piece of God's favour belongeth to them.

Ver. 156. **Great are thy tender mercies, &c.]** Or, many and mother-like. This is great comfort to greatest sinners.

Ver. 157. **Many are my persecutors]** Truth never wanted an adversary; and goes seldom without a scratched face.

Yet do I not decline] But still adhere to thy word; when others fall off as fast as leaves fall from trees in autumn.

Ver. 158. **I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved]** Or, I abhorred them, or, I contended with them; not so much because they were mine as thine enemies.

Because they kept not thy word] Which all men are bound not only to observe, but to preserve as much as may be.

Ver. 159. **Consider how I love thy precepts]** And love facilitateth duty, helping us over all the hardship of holiness. It yieldeth also much boldness to a man to offer it to God, as here, for a proof of his sincerity.

Ver. 160. **Thy word is true from the beginning]** Heb. The beginning of thy word is true; *Primarium illud est in verbo tuo quod est firmissimum*, this is a special praise of thy word, that it is very sure. These words are faithful and true, **#Re 22:6**, from the one end of the Bible to the other. Some render it thus, Thy most excellent word is truth. This most excellent word Kimchi interpreteth to be particularly that in the head or preface to the decalogue, Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy God, Jehovah is one. Theodoret will have it to be that promise made to Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed. Some read it, every chapter of thy word is truth.

Ver. 161. **Princes have persecuted me without a cause]** And

Quae venit indigne poena, dolenda venit.

But better without a cause than for evil-doing, **#1Pe 4:12-19** David suffered by these potentates, because he was small and despised, **#Ps 119:141**, as a little dog is worried by the bigger, as the lesser fishes are devoured by the greater.

But my heart standeth in awe of thy word] The fear of God driveth out the fear of the creature, **#Isa 8:12,13**.

Ver. 162. **I rejoice at thy word]** *Libenter omnibus omnes opes concesserim, &c.*, I would gladly leave all the wealth in the world to others, saith Cicero (Epist. lib. 9), so that I might without disturbance live and die in the study of learning. What marvel, then, that David was so taken with heavenly learning?

As one that findeth great spoil] Which as it Cometh oft unexpectedly (and is therefore the better welcome), so the profit is usually very great (as was at the sack of Constantinople), and the pleasure (besides the honour) is no less than the profit, because gotten from an enemy. George Fransperg, a general in the Imperial army, under the conduct of Charles Bourbon, that sacked Rome in the time of Pope Clement VII, caused a halter to be carried near his colours, saying that with that he would hang the pope, the better to encourage his soldiers, who were almost all Lutherans, whom he promised to lead to Rome; showing them the great opportunity they had to enrich themselves with the spoils of that city (Hist. of the Counc. of Trent, p. 43).

Ver. 163. **I hate and abhor lying]** *Utitur atroci verbo, abominatus sum*, I hate it as I hate hell itself; and yet lying was David's sin after a special manner. See **#Ps 119:29**. {See Trapp on "Ps 119:29"}

But thy law do I love] All hatred comes from love of the contrary. "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil," **#Ps 97:10**.

Ver. 164. **Seven times a day do I praise thee]** *Septies, id est, saepissime*, very oft in the day; whensoever God setteth me up an altar I am ready with my sacrifice. Mahometans pray constantly five times a day; those of Morocco six times. Papists foolishly and superstitiously allege this text for their seven Canonical hours, as they call them. The Jews pronounce a hundred benedictions every day (Leo Modena).

Ver. 165. **Great peace have they which love thy law]** The fruit of righteousness shall be peace, **#Isa 32:17**, even the peace of God, the joy of faith, a heaped up happiness.

And nothing shall offend them] Heb. they shall have no stumbling block; *non pereunt, quicquid accadat*, though they fall, they shall arise; for the Lord putteth under his hand, **#Ps 37:24**

Ver. 166. **Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation]** This saying he borrowed from good old Jacob, **#Ge 49:18**

And done thy commandments] Done them as I could; done them to Divine acceptance through Christ; and hence I have hoped: **#1Jo 3:3** "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, as God is pure."

Ver. 167. **My soul hath kept thy testimonies]** *sc.* As well as mortality will afford.

And I love them exceedingly] "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," #Ro 7:22. "I trust I have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly," #Heb 13:18.

Ver. 168. **I have kept thy precepts]** All thy laws are in my sight; like as all my ways are in thy sight. I desire to approve myself to thee in the discharge of every part and point of my duty; in all my ways I acknowledge thee, #Pr 3:6. Here note, that all along this 21st octonary the psalmist propoundeth himself for a pattern of piety.

Ver. 169. **Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord]** That is, as some will have it, let this whole preceding psalm, and all the petitions (whereof we have here a repetition) therein contained, be highly accepted in heaven.

Ver. 170. **Let my supplication, &c.]** The same again; neither is this battology, {a} but fervency in begging audience.

{a} A needless and tiresome repetition in speaking or writing.

Ver. 171. **My lips shall utter praise]** *Eructabunt labia mea hymnum.* A metaphor either from a fountain casting out waters; *vel a ructu qui eibum copiosum sequitur. Semper, et hilariter.*

Ver. 172. **My tongue shall speak]** True goodness is diffusive; charity is no churl.

Ver. 173. **Let thy hand help me]** To do what I have promised.

For I have chosen thy precepts] Refusing Satan's cut-throat kindness.

Ver. 174. **I have longed for thy salvation]** So do all men; but then David will take a right course for it (so will not all).

And thy law is my delight] This the most men mind not.

Ver. 175. **Let thy judgments help me]** *sc.* To heaven: together with God's word, there goeth forth a power.

Ver. 176. **I have gone astray, &c.]** And of myself shall never return.

Seek thy servant] Do all the offices of a good shepherd for me, #Lu 15:4-7

For I do not forget] The root of the matter is still in me, I am recallable, and ready to hear thy voice, **#Joh 10:3**.

A Song of degrees] A most excellent song, Tremellius rendereth it; and so indeed this and the fourteen following are, both for the matter and for the form or manner of expression, which is wondrous short and sweet, as the very epigrams of the Holy Ghost himself, wherein each verse may well stand for an oracle. And in this sense Adam Hammahalah, or a man of degrees, is put for an eminent or excellent man, **#1Ch 17:17**. Others understand it otherwise; wherein they have good leave to abound in their own sense; since *sine periculo hic erratur*, an error here is not dangerous.

Chapter 120

Ver. 1. **In my distress I cried unto the Lord]** *Oratio sine malis est, ut avis sine alis*, Distress addeth wings to our devotions. Our Saviour, being in an agony, prayed more earnestly, **#Lu 22:44**. So do all his members, and especially when they lie under the lash of a lying tongue, as here, **#Ps 120:2**. "Being defamed, we pray," saith Paul, **#1Co 4:13**.

And he heard me] "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," **#Jas 5:16 Zec 13:9**. He that prayeth ardently speedeth assuredly, **#Ps 91:15**, and the unmiscarrying return of prayer should be carefully observed and thankfully improved, **#Ps 66:20**.

Ver. 2. **Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips]** This was David's distress, and it lay heavy upon his spirit; so it did upon Job's, and Jeremiah's, **#Jer 20:10**; the scourge of tongues he felt as sharp as scorpions. Of the mischief of an evil tongue see **#Jas 3:1-9 Ps 52:2-4 Ps 12:3**. {See Trapp on "Ps 12:3"}

Ver. 3. **What shall be given unto thee? &c.]** That is (as Austin senseth it), what remedy is there for thee? *q.d.* None at all. *Contra sycophantarum morsum non est remedium*, saith Seneca. But others better, what gain gettest thou what profit makest thou of thy lying and slandering? Hurt thou mayest another, but not help thyself. Thou art not like the maid whom Avicen speaketh of, who feeding herself with poison, was herself healthy, yet infected others with her venomous breath; but rather like the traitor of whom Augustus said,

I like the treason, but hate the traitor. The slander is oft applauded when the slanderer is abhorred.

Or what shall be done unto thee, &c.] Heb. added; *Nihil praeter plagas durissimas*, as #Ps 120:4.

Thou false tongue?] This he seemeth to say to Doeg, who is here called a false fellow and a liar, though he spake but the truth against the Lord's priests, because not for any love to the truth, nor for respect of justice, nor of the bettering either of Saul or the priests, but only to prejudice these and to incense the other.

Ver. 4. **Sharp arrows of the mighty]** Arrows sharp, and shot with force. A false tongue is likened to a sharp razor, #Ps 52:4; to a sharp sword, #Ps 57:5; to sharp arrows, #Pr 20:18; here it hath sharp for sharp: as God loveth to retaliate; and he is the giant, or mighty one here, that shooteth these sharpest shafts, that inflicteth most exquisite punishments on such; as once on Dives, whose tongue smoked for it, *quia lingua plus peccaverat*, as saith a Father, because he had so offended with the tongue.

With coals of juniper] Which being a fat kind of wood, of gummy or salty matter, maketh a very scorching fire, and quick coals, such as last long, some say a month and more, and smell sweet (*Flamma redardescit quae mode nulla fuit*. Theophrast., Plin.); lo, upon these coals will God broil lying lips and a deceitful tongue, pleasing himself and others in that execution.

Ver. 5. **Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech]** That is, in Muscovio, say some; in Hetruria, say others; in Cappadocia rather, Magog's country, #Eze 38:2,3; anywhere out of the bosom of the true Church; or (as some sense it) in the Church, but among Israelites worse than any Ishmaelites or Pagans.

That I dwell in the tents of Kedar!] With Kedarens or Saracens, as they were afterwards called. Among these David was in danger *ne cum lupis ululando tandem et ipse ex ove lupus evaderet*. Guilt or grief a good man is sure to get by being in bad company, which maketh him cry, "Oh that I had the wings of a dove," &c.; or if that "Oh" will not set him at liberty, then he taketh up this, "Woe is me," to express his misery. *Pia vero est illa tristitia, et si dici potest*

beata miseria, vitis alienis tribulari, non implicari; dolere contrahi, amore non attrahi, saith Austin. It is hard and happy not to comply with ill company.

Ver. 6. **My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace]** With Saul, that implacable tyrant, and with other barbarous and brutish persons, skilful to destroy. The very society of such (be they never so tame and civil) is tedious and unsavoury to a good soul; like the slime and filth that is congealed when many toads and other vermin join together. Long, therefore, and too long seemeth it to a saint to sojourn with such. Lord (said a certain good woman upon her death bed, and doubting of her salvation), send me not to hell among the wicked, for thou knowest I never loved their company all my life long.

Ver. 7. **I am for peace]** Heb. I am peace, or peaceable, as far as is possible, **#Ro 12:18**; this was David's motto, and must be every man's study. But it is not peace, but party, that many men mind, *Maxima pars studiorum est studium partium.*

But when I speak, they are for war] They cry the alarm, being *beliosi et bellicosi*; salamander like, they live in the fire of contention; scorpion like, they are always putting forth the sting. Their spirits lie like that haven, **#Ac 27:12**, towards the south-west and north-west, two opposite points; neither will they be otherwise, but the more they are sought to the worse they are. This is the guise of graceless persons.

A Song of degrees] On, of ascensions, in singing whereof there should be ascensions in our hearts. See **#Ps 120:1**.

Chapter 121

Ver. 1. **I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills]** Not to your mountains, **#Ps 11:1**, human helps and carnal combinations, **#Jer 3:23**, much less to those mountains, *in quibus gentes idola collocant et colunt*, wherein the heathens set and serve their idols, **#De 12:2**, but to Zion and Moriah, where God's sanctuary is, **#Ps 87:1**, or rather to heaven, **#Ps 18:9**, with **#2Sa 22:10,14**, where God himself is; and so it followeth.

Ver. 2. **My help cometh from the Lord]** To whom, therefore, alone I must look for help. *Sursum corda, sursum etiam capita.*

Naturalists tell us, that of those twenty-eight muscles whereby the head is moved, twelve lift up the head behind, and two only before let it downward; to teach us to contemplate heaven more and earth less (Bodin. Theat. Naturae, 413). Others advertise us, that it is one main end why God hath set in man's eye a fifth muscle; whereas other creatures have but four; one to turn downward, another to hold forwards, a third to turn the eye to the right hand, a fourth to the left hand; but no unreasonable creature can turn the eye upward, as man can, that he may look up to God (Columb. de re Anatom. l. 5, c. 9).

Which made heaven and earth] And will rather unmake both again, than his people shall want seasonable hell.

Ver. 3. **He will not suffer thy foot to be moved]** Not greatly moved, #Ps 62:2, an utter prolapsion.

He that keepeth thee will not slumber] And if King Philip could say that he could sleep securely because his friend Antipater watched by him, may not we be much more confident who have God to keep us?

Ver. 4. **Behold, he that keepeth, &c.]** He repeateth that sweetest promise (that we may roll it as sugar under our tongues, that we may suck and be satisfied, #Isa 66:11), and setteth it forth with a behold, *q.d.* mark it, "and know thou it for thy good," #Job 5:27.

Shall neither slumber nor sleep] Shall not fetch one wink of sleep. *Dormitamus priusquam dormiamus,* we slumber before we sleep; but God shall do neither. His seven eyes {#Zec 3:9} are ever open, yea, they run to and fro through the whole earth, #Zec 4:10, *sc. spectat universes, quasi singulos; sic singulos, quasi solos.* Howbeit, he looketh with special care and complacency on the godly, #Isa 66:2.

Ver. 5. **The Lord is thy keeper]** His peace within thee and his power without thee shall safeguard thee to his heavenly kingdom, φρουρησει, #Php 4:7.

The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand] To shelter and shield thee from all annoyances, as the pillar of cloud did the Israelites in the wilderness, as the poet feigneth that Paris, out matched by Menelaus in a duel, was by Venus wrapped in a cloud, and carried off.

Ver. 6. **The sun shall not smite thee by day]** So choice and chary is God of his children, that he will have no creature to hurt them (parching heat by day or pinching cold by night), but both north and south must blow good to them, #So 4:16, and all creatures must cater for them, #Ho 2:21,22, yet ever with exception of the cross, if need be, #1Pe 1:6. But let the pope be the sun and the emperor the moon (as the canonists called them), yet the sun shall not smite the Church by day nor the moon by night. Luther was at the same time excommunicated by the pope and proscribed by the emperor; yet died he in his bed.

Ver. 7. **The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil]** Whether of sin or of punishment; from the hurt if not from the smart thereof.

He shall preserve thy soul] Which is oft untouched when the body is in durance. A sick servant of Christ being asked how he did, answered, My body is sick, my soul is well.

Ver. 8. **The Lord shall preserve thy going out, &c.]** Thou shalt have his safe-conduct, his public faith for thy defence, in all thy lawful enterprises at home and abroad; together with good success in all thine affairs and actions, #Pr 3:6.

Chapter 122

Ver. 1. **I was glad when they said unto me]** The flourish of religion is the chief joy of the good Christian. Hence the evangelical jubilee among the Protestant party. Gregory Nazianzen writes that his father being a heathen, and often besought by his wife to become a Christian, had this verse suggested unto him in a dream, and was much wrought upon thereby. Wolfgangus Schuch, a Dutch martyr in Lotharing, hearing the sentence of his condemnation to the fire, began to sing this psalm (Acts & Mon. fol. 807).

Let us go into the house of the Lord] "I will go also," {as #Zec 8:21} said holy David; who was much cheered at his people's forwardness in God's service, and became their captain.

Ver. 2. **Our feet shall stand within thy gates]** Where the ark (at times transported) was now fixed; this was their great joy, so should it be ours that the true religion is now settled among us, and that we are at a certainty. There was a time when good Melancthon groaned out, *Quos fugiamus habemus, quos sequamur non intelligimus,* We

know whom we should fly (viz. the Papists), but whom to follow we yet know not (Respons. ad Staphyl.).

Ver. 3. **Jerusalem is builded as a city, &c.]** None such for uniformity of buildings or unanimity of citizens. There is no such oneness in all the world as among true Christians; and this the very heathens observed and commended. As the curtains of the tabernacle were joined by loops, so were they by love. And as the stones of the temple were so close cemented together that they seemed to be all but one stone, so was it among the primitive saints.

Ver. 4. **Whither the tribes go up]** Thrice a year all the males appeared before the Lord in Sion; the females also, as many as would (as Hannah, the Virgin Mary, &c.), but they were not bound. At which times there was such a general meeting as no city could show the like; a type of that great panegyris, #**Heb 12:22,23**.

Unto the testimony of Israel] The ark was so called, in regard of the tables of the covenant kept therein, as two letters of contract between God and men, saith Aben Ezra, #**Ex 15:16**; those two tables are called the testimony.

Ver. 5. **For there are set thrones of judgment]** These are the two chief praises of any place. 1. The exercise of God's sincere service. 2. The administration and execution of public justice.

Ver. 6. **Pray for the peace of Jerusalem]** Peace is a voluminous mercy, and must therefore be prayed for, peace both of conscience and of country. It is well with bees when they make a noise in the hive; but with men, when they are at quiet in Church and State. Among the Persians he that offered sacrifice prayed not only for himself, but for all his countrymen, and especially for the king (Herodot. lib. i.).

They shall prosper that love thee] And out of love, pity and pray for thee.

Ver. 7. **Peace be within thy walls]** David had no sooner admonished others of their duty, but himself beginneth to them, *Quod iussit et gessit*. what he ordered he accomplished.

Ver. 8. **For my brethren and companions' sakes]** David was not all for himself (as the manner is in these last and loosest times), but, as one of a public spirit, he did

— *toti genitum se credere genti.*

Ver. 9. **Because of the house of the Lord our God]** Where David's heart was, and wherein he held it a happiness to be but a doorkeeper, #Ps 84:10, so much endeared unto him was God's sincere service. O pass we into the likeness of this heavenly pattern.

I will seek thy good] I will both pray it and promote it.

Chapter 123

Ver. 1. **Unto thee lift I up mine eyes]** Praying by them rather than by words, mine afflictions having swollen my heart too big for my mouth. {See Trapp on "Ps 121:1"}

Ver. 2. **Behold, as the eyes of servants]** For direction, defence, maintenance, mercy in time of correction, help when the service is too hard, &c.; so do our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, viz. for direction and benediction.

Ver. 3. **Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy]** This is *preces fundere, coelum tundere, misericordiam extorquere*, as Tertullian hath it; to wring mercy out of God's holy hands, by our utmost importunity.

For we are exceedingly filled with contempt] We are made the very scum and scorn of our proud imperious enemies. This the nature of man is very impatient of, and can hardly brook; for there is none so mean but holdeth himself worthy of some regard; and a reproachful scorn showeth an utter disrespect, which issueth from the very superfluity of malice.

Ver. 4. **Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease]** And therefore insolent and unsufferable, for *κορος υβριν τικτει*, ease breedeth forgetfulness, yea, it maketh men scornful and wrongful to others.

Chapter 124

Ver. 1. **If it had not been the Lord, &c.]** God may far better say than our Henry VIII, *Cui adhaereo, praeest*, He whose part I take is sure to prevail. But Christ hath ever been the Church's champion, and hence she is insuperable. The Chaptain of the Lord's hosts is Captain of our salvation, #Jos 5:14 Heb 2:10.

Ver. 2. **When men rose]** Monsters rather; but such as think themselves the only men alive, and us the only slaves and zanies.

Ver. 3. **Then had they swallowed us up quick]** As the great fish do the little ones, as hungry lions, or wolves, ravin up their prey. Ptolemy Lathurus, king of Egypt, slew thirty thousand Jews, and compelled the living to feed upon the dead. Adrian the emperor made a decree, that he who had not slain a Jew should himself be slain (Gualth Praef. in Marc. R. Obad. Gaon in Ps 124).

When their wrath was kindled against us] Heb. in the flagrancies or inflammations of their anger.

Ver. 4. **Then the waters had overwhelmed us]** As once the Red Sea did the Egyptians, or as the general deluge did the old world.

The stream had gone over our soul] Neither could we have withstood it by any art or industry.

Ver. 5. **Then the proud waters, &c.]** The same again, to note the greatness both of the danger and of the deliverance. And it may teach us not lightly to pass over God's great blessings, but to make the most of them.

Ver. 6. **Blessed be the Lord, &c.]** *Deo gratias*, thanks be to God was much in Austin's mouth, and should be so in ours, but especially upon some signal deliverance. How was God blessed at Berachah? #2Ch 20:26

As a prey to their teeth] Who meant to have made but a breakfast of us, and had already devoured us in their hopes, but God defeated them.

Ver. 7. **Our soul is escaped, &c.]** Man's extremity is God's opportunity. See #Ge 22:14 Eze 37:11 2Ki 19:3,4.

The snare is broken, &c.] God hath with as much ease delivered us as a bird net is broken.

Ver. 8. **Our help is in the name of the Lord, &c.]** Experience should breed confidence, #Ro 5:4,5 2Co 1:10 Ps 48:14 Ge 22:10,11, &c.; write up experiences therefore, oft rub them over, and then conclude as here, and as #Php 1:6 2Ti 4:17,18.

Who hath made heaven and earth] God's power is the prop of our faith, and pricks on to prayer; commit we ourselves to him as to a faithful Creator, #1Pe 4:19, of infinite might and mercy; and say, as

those good souls, as Aben Ezra, Hitherto God hath helped us; he hath, and therefore he will, &c.

Chapter 125

Ver. 1. **They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion**] Great is the stability of a believer's felicity. Winds and storms move not a mountain; an earthquake may, but not easily, remove it. That mystical mount Zion, the Church, *immota manet*, is unmoveable; so is every member thereof, for the main of his happiness.

Ver. 2. **As the mountains are round about Jerusalem**] That is, say some, as the angels; but we take it literally. Jerusalem was surrounded with many high mountains, which were a great safeguard to it; yet did not always defend it, as the Lord doth his, by being a wall of fire round about them, #Zec 2:5.

Ver. 3. **For the rod of the wicked shall not rest**] Fall upon the lot of the righteous it may, notwithstanding that former promise of God's protection; but he will take care they be not tempted above that they are able, #1Co 10:13; he sets the time, and appoints the measure, #Ps 30:5 Re 2:10.

Lest the righteous, &c.] Overcome by impatience, or drawn aside by the world's either allurements or affrightments, should yield and comply, or seek to help themselves out of trouble by sinister practice. God (saith Chrysostom) doth like a lute player, who will not let the strings of his lute be too slack, lest it mar the music, nor suffer them to be too hard stretched or screwed up, lest they break.

Ver. 4. **Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good**] But afflicted by those men of thy hand, #Ps 17:14, who are the rod in thine hand, #Isa 10:5. Do good in thy good pleasure (for nothing can be claimed by the very best) to such, according to thy promise, #Ps 125:3, which here I put in suit for them; let the Lord be with the good, #2Ch 19:11.

And to them that are upright in their hearts] For such only are good indeed, and approved in Christ, as was Apelles, #Ro 16:10, and Nathanael, #Joh 1:47, notwithstanding their infirmities. Hypocrisy imbaseth the purest metal, turneth gold into rusty iron; sincerity doth the contrary by a divine kind of alchemy.

Ver. 5. **As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways]** *In lubricitates vel tortuositates*, such as pretend piety to their worldly and wicked designs and dealings; dissemblers, wapers, *versuti et vafri*, who would defraud God of heaven if they could tell how.

The Lord shall lead them forth] *Quantumvis reluctantes*, as cattle led to the slaughter; or malefactors to execution. *Transfugas arboribus suspendunt*, they hang up fugitives, saith Tacitus concerning the Germans; there is martial law for such, **#Heb 10:38,39**, as there is for scoundrels among us.

With the workers of iniquity] They shall to hell with the rest of the wicked crew, notwithstanding their professions and pretences of piety, whereunto they are perfect strangers; hypocrites are the freeholders of hell, and other evil persons are, as it were, tenants to them; shall have their part with them, **#Mt 24:51**.

But peace shall be upon Israel] Peace shall be upon them and mercy, **#Ga 6:16**. "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid," **#Zep 3:13**.

Chapter 126

Ver. 1. **When the Lord turned again]** viz. From Babylon; and therefore that which some translations have in the title, A psalm of David (which is not in the Hebrew) would be left out; for it seemeth to have been penned by Ezra, or some prophet of his time.

We were like them that dream] *Tanta fuit liberationis admirabilitas*, so admirable was the deliverance, that we could hardly believe it; as fearing the certainty, and yet hoping the truth. Such a passion was upon Peter when enlarged by the angel, **#Ac 12:7-11**; upon the Grecians when set free by Flaminius, the Roman general; *Maius gaudium fuit*, saith the historian, *quam quod universum homines caperent, &c.*, their joy was too large for their hearts, they scarcely believed their own ears when the crier proclaimed their liberty, but had him say over that sweet word liberty again; they also looked upon one another with wonderment,

velut somnii vanam speciem, saith Livy. And such an ecstasy is the new convert in; as was Cyprian, Austin, Bernard; witness their own writings (lib. xxxiii., Cyp. Epist. lib. i., Aug. Confes. lib. vi. cap. 12, Gosr. in Vit. Bernard).

Ver. 2. **Then was our mouth filled with laughter]** We laughed amain, and shrilled or shouted aloud, when we found that it was *υπαρ non ουαρ*, as Plato speaketh, not a dream, but a done thing, which (before) we held *optabile potius quam opinabile*, incredible altogether.

Then said they among the heathen] They who were wont to jeer us, #Ps 137:3. God can soon alter the case of his afflicted people. See #Es 8:17, {See Trapp on "Es 8:17"}

The Lord hath done great things] *Magnifica* :so, *Vere magnus est Deus Christianorum*, the God of the Christians is a great God indeed, said Calocerius, a heathen, observing his works done for his people.

Ver. 3. **The Lord hath done great things]** *q.d.* It is a shame, then, for us not to say so, much more; and, by a holy avarice, to take the praises out of their mouths, who are no sharers in it, but spectators only. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, speaking good of his name.

Ver. 4. **Turn again our captivity, O Lord]** Perfect what thou hast so happily begun for us.

As the streams in the south] *i.e.* Miraculously, say some, as if thou shouldest cause rivers to run in dry and desert places; or comfortably, as if thou shouldest refresh such hot parts with plenty of water. Or, suddenly. The south is a dry country, where are few springs, but oft land floods, caused by the showers of heaven. The Jews at this day pray for a speedy rebuilding of their temple. They cry all together, *Templum tuum brevi, valde cito, valde cito, in diebus nostris citissime nunc aedifica, Templum tuum brevi*, that is, Build thy temple quickly, very quickly, in our days, &c. Should not we be as earnest for the mystical temple (Buxt. de Synag. Jud. cap. 13).

Ver. 5. **They that sow in tears]** Whether ministers (as some restrain the sense), who serve the Lord with many tears and temptations,

#Ac 20:19, but see little fruit; or others, who sow in the tears of affliction and compunction for sin, the cause thereof; his *foecunda sine dubio messis indulgentiae orietur*; saith Arnobius, these shall certainly reap in joy pardon of sin, **#Isa 1:16**, power against it (these troubled waters cured the soul, as the tears of vine branches cure the leprosy), increase of grace. The lily is sown in her own tears, saith Pliny; so is grace: the olive is most fruitful when it most distilleth; so here, These April showers bring on May flowers, and make the heart to be like a watered garden, besides an access of glory; for they that weep with men shall laugh with angels; their tears shall be turned into triumphs, their sadness into gladness, their sighing into singing, their musing into music, &c. See **#Mt 5:4**. This the proto-martyr foresaw, and therefore (Bernbus de St Stephano),

Ibat ovans animis, et spe sua damna levabat.

Ver. 6. **He that goeth forth and weepeth]** Heb. he that going goeth, &c., which Luther interpreteth of temptations continued, and mutually succeeding one another; taking their turns upon a poor soul.

And weepeth] Going and weeping, and asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, **#Jer 50:4,5**. Some faces appear most orientally beautiful when most instamped with sorrow.

Bearing precious seed] Such as are hope and faith in the truth of God's promises. Some render it seed of acquisition, such as the poor seeds man hath got, *prece et precio*, by praying and paying dear for it. Some, bearing a seedbasket, or seed-lop, *canistrum* (Leo Judae Bucer).

Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing] Only he must have patience, **#Jas 5:7**.

Bringing his sheaves with him] Or, after so me, their handfulls, even gripes of gladness, as Philpot the martyr rendereth it. Then shall Abraham, the good mower, saith another, bind us up into sheaves as pure corn; and fill his bosom full with us; carrying us into the Lord's barn, to make a joyful harvest in heaven.

A Song of degrees for Solomon] As **#Ps 72:1**. Penned by David not long before his death, and left his son Solomon, to teach him that nothing can be gotten or kept, no, not children begotten, but by God's blessing. This last was a fit lesson for Solomon, who, by so many wives and concubines, left but one only son that we read of, and him none of the wisest. Some render it, A Song of degrees of Solomon, making him the penman of it; yea, Origen from this inscription entitleth Solomon to all the songs of degrees; but that is not likely (Lib. 3, *περι αρχων*, cap. 1).

Chapter 127

Ver. 1. **Except the Lord build the house]** Not the fabric only, but the family and the government thereof; there is no good to be done if God set not to his fiat, and say, Let it be done; if he blast or not bless men's endeavours and policies, they are all but *arena sine calce*, sand without lime, they will not hang together, but, like untempered mortar, fail asunder. There is a curse upon such as idolize themselves, and kiss their own hands, though they be industrious, Jehoiakim, for instance, **#Jer 22:24-30** *αρ`+\u0966 ι0\u0955 ι0 \u0960 αρ \u0955 ι640 \u0966 ι-320 Θεου διδοντος μηδεν ισχυει φθονος\u0960 αρ \u0955 ι640 \u0966 ι-320 Και μη διδοντος μηδεν ισχυει πονος* (Naz.).

Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman] Whether civil or military, *frustra nititur; qui Deo non innititur*. Politicians stand on their own heads, like children, and shake their heels against heaven, but all in vain. Soldiers, some of them, are ready to say, with Ajax, I acknowledge no God but my sword, &c. Such shall be surely befooled and confuted; and God's blessing declared to be all in all.

Ver. 2. **It is vain for you to rise up early]** *Diluculantes surgere, tardantes sedere*, to toil and moil ^{a} in the world. It were to be wished that this *Nisi, nisi, frustra, frustra*, were ever sounding in the ears of worldlings, who will needs act upon their own principles; "God is not in all their thoughts."

To eat the bread of sorrows] *i.e.* Hardly gotten, or that men can scarce betem themselves, they are so miserable and parsimonious; or, bread eaten with carefulness, as **#Eze 12:19**: certainly men may

sooner by their care add a furlong to their sorrow than a cubit to their comfort.

For so he giveth his beloved sleep] *Dilecto sue*, to each of his beloved ones; not without an allusion to Solomon's other name, Jedidiah, God's darling. To these he giveth sleep, extraordinary, quiet, refreshing sleep (ΨN with an *Aleph quiescent*, which is not usual), that is, he giveth wealth without labour, as to others labour without wealth, saith Kimchi; the world comes tumbling in upon them, as we say, they have it *quasi per somnium*, as towns were said to come into Timotheus's toils while he slept (Plut.); without anxiety, they break not their sleep for the matter, but live by faith, and make a good living of it too, *Omnia necessaria benignissime Dominus quasi per iocum largitur* (Beza).

{a} To make oneself wet and muddy; to wallow in mire

Ver. 3. Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord] This Solomon could not but be sensible of. See the title of this psalm; especially, if by children are meant good children, as, #Pr 18:22, by a wife is meant a good wife. And here the poor man that hath no inheritance otherwise hath one from the Lord; for such are oft full of children; neither may he wish, as one graceless man did, that God would keep such his blessings to himself, for he had too many of them.

Is his reward] That is, his free gift; and God will be their exceeding great reward, if, by their parents' prayer and good education, they prove towardly, as the Lord's heritage, and as arrows in the hand, &c.

Ver. 4. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man] Heb. of a giant, who shooteth them with a courage, and is cunning at it. As clean and well kept arrows. This similitude importeth that children must have more in them than nature; for arrows are no arrows by growth, but by art; so they must be such children, the knottiness of whose nature is refined and reformed, and made smooth by grace; and then they are cared for. As, if they prove otherwise, they are a singular heartbreak to their poor parents, who are seen to sit under Elijah's juniper, wishing for death, and saying, with Moses, #Nu 11:14,15, I am not able to bear all this sore affliction, "because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee,

out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness."

So are children of the youth] Or, young sons, or lads, springlings, striplings, vegetous and vigorous, able to be a guard to their aged parents against the children of violence, who seek to press in upon them at the door, as the Sodomites dealt by righteous Lot, {see #Ps 127:5} besides the service they may do to the commonwealth (as did the Horatii and Curiatii) by their *impetus heroici*, valour and virtue.

Ver. 5. **Happy is the man that hath his quiver]** That is, his house, full of them, so they be good children; for else to be childless is a mercy, it is ευτυχης ατυχια, a blessed misery, saith Euripides; and Aristotle concludeth that πολυγονια is no blessing, unless it be ευγενεια, that is, to have a numerous issue, unless they be virtuous.

They shall not be ashamed] Neither father nor children, *se enim illi mutuo muniunt ac firmant*, they help each other.

But they shall speak with the enemies] *Periment*, saith Tremellius, they shall foil them, and nonsuit them.

Chapter 128

Ver. 1. **Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord]** This psalm is fitly subjoined to the former, and it is λογος επιθαλαμιος, a kind of wedding sermon, written for the instruction and comfort of married couples, and showing that *Coniugium humanae est divina Academia vitae*. And it is to be observed that here all men are spoken to as wedded; because this is the ordinary estate of most people. See #1Co 7:1,2. At this day every Jew is bound to marry about eighteen years of age, or before twenty.; else he is accounted as one that liveth in sin; and how the Popish clergy, professing continence, have turned all places into so many Sodoms, who knoweth not?

That walketh in his ways] The true reverential fear of God will easily form the heart to a right obedience. They that fear the Lord will keep his covenant, #Ps 103:13,18, and therefore was the law delivered at first in that terrible manner.

Ver. 2. **For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands]** That is, thou shalt reap and receive the sweet of thy sweat, whether it be of the brow or of the brain, according to the kind of thy calling. And although thou be forced to live by the labour of thine hands (whence man's life is called the life of his hands, #**Isa 57:10**), yet that shall be no hindrance to thy happiness, but a furtherance of thine account.

Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee] The Chaldee thus expoundeth it, Happy thou in this world; and good shall it be unto thee in the world to come.

Ver. 3. **Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine]** Full of bunches and clusters of rich ripe grapes; so she of children, and those virtuous; the little ones hanging on her breasts, as grapes on the vine; the elder as olive plants, straight, green, fresh, and flourishing, #**Ps 52:8**, legitimate also; as the olive admitteth no other graft. Indeed, the olive set into the vine yieldeth both grapes and olives, whereby is represented the natural affection that is between the mother and her children. The vine and the olive are two of the best fruits; the one for cheering the heart, the other for clearing the face, #**Ps 104:15**; the one for sweetness, the other for fatness, #**Jud 9:13**, both together implying that a great part of a man's temporal happiness consisteth in having a good wife and children. It is said of Sulla that he had been happy had he never been so married, *Si non habuissem uxorem*; and Augustus' wish was (but all too late), *Utinam aut caelebs vixissem, aut orbis perissem*, Oh that I had either lived single or died childless (Suetonius).

By the sides of thine house] Where vines are usually planted, that they may have the benefit of the sun. The modest wife is *domiporta*, found at home, as Sarah in the tent; not so the harlot, #**Pr 7:12**.

Thy children like olive plants] See the note before on this verse.

Round about thy table] Making a most delectable enclosure.

Ver. 4. **Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed, &c.]** "Behold," and "that thus"; *q.d.* Know it for a truth, and rest assured of the blessedness of married couples, whatsoever the devil and his agents (speaking basely of marriage) suggest to the contrary, so be it they

fear the Lord, for that is it that sweeteneth and sanctifieth all estates of life whatsoever.

Ver. 5. **The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion]** viz. With spiritual benedictions, **#Eph 1:3**, and these are far better than all other that heaven and earth afford, **#Ps 134:3**.

And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem] *i.e.* The prosperity of the Church, without which all other comforts are to a good soul but as so many Ichabods; a good Christian enjoys them not, but is even sick at heart of the afflictions of Joseph, **#Am 6:6**.

Ver. 6. **Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children]** A faithful man shall abound with blessings, **#Pr 28:20**, he shall have all that heart can wish or need require.

And peace upon Israel] Procured in part by thy piety and prayers.

Chapter 129

Ver. 1. **Many a time]** Or, much, and long.

Have they] *i.e.* The persecutors that deserve not a name. The rich man is not named (as Lazarus is), because not worthy, **#Lu 16:19**. They shall be written in the earth, **#Jer 17:13**.

Afflicted me] *i.e.* The whole community of saints; spoken of here in the singular, for their, 1. unity; 2. paucity.

From my youth] The first that ever died, died for religion; so early came martyrdom into the world.

May Israel now say] Who yet are promised peace, **#Ps 128:6**; but so was Josiah, and yet he died in battle, **#2Ch 34:28**. But the very God of peace had sanctified him throughout, and so altered the property of his affliction, that it was subservient to his salvation.

Ver. 2. **Many a time, &c.]** *Anadiplosis ad exaggerationem, q.d.* They have done it and done it again, but could never achieve their design, viz. to supplant and eradicate me; which might not be. *Oppugnarunt (non expugnarunt,* however the Vulgate so rendereth here). The Church is invincible. Athens took upon her of old to be so; and Venice alate boasteth the like; but time hath confuted the

one, and may soon do the other; when the Church shall stand firm, because founded on a rock. More truly may it be said of it than it was once of Troy,

*Victa tamen vinces, eversaue Troia resurges:
Obruet hostiles illa ruina domes
(Ovid. de Fast.).*

Ver. 3. **The plowers plowed upon my back]** Which was never without some cross upon it, yea, some plough passing over it. The Church is God's husbandry; and he will be sure to plough his several, whatever becometh of the wild waste. She is his threshingfloor, #**Isa 21:10**, and hath but little rest or respite. Enemies are flails to thresh off our husks, files to brighten our graces, ploughs and harrows, without which we should bear but a very thin crop. God's people do γεωργειν τας συμφορας, sow the seed of prayer in the long furrows which those ploughers made on their backs; like as the Jews in their feasts break their glasses, as Jerusalem was broken.

They made long their furrows] Heb. furrow; as if there were *totum pro vulnere corpus*. Here, haply, the psalmist alludeth to those exquisite torments whereunto many of the martyrs were put, *sulcati fidiculis*.

Ver. 4. **The Lord is righteous]** That is a ruled case, and must be held for a certain truth, whatever we are, or our persecutors.

He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked] That is, their harness, their plough traces (*nam continuatur tropus rusticus*), so that the plough is loose and the horses at liberty; all their forces and designs are broken.

Ver. 5. **Let them all be confounded, &c.]** And if those that hate Zion, how much more those that hurt her with their virulent tongues or violent hands!

Ver. 6. **Let them be as the grass, &c.]** They are cursed with a witness whom the Holy Ghost thus curseth in such an emphatic manner, in such exquisite terms.

Ver. 7. **Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand]** As holding it not worth gathering in. Wicked men are useless creatures; as

Stratonicus, in Athenaeus, saith, that the hill Haemus was for eight months in the year very cold, and for the other four it was winter.

Ver. 8. **Neither do they which go by say, &c.**] As they use to do to harvestmen, #Ru 2. Christianity is no enemy to courtesy; yet in some cases saith not, God speed, #3Jo 10.

Chapter 130

Ver. 1. **Out of the depths have I cried unto thee**] *i.e.* *Ex portis ipsis desperationis*, from the very bosom and bottom of despair, caused through deepest sense of sin and fear of wrath. One deep calleth to another, the depth of misery to the depth of mercy. Basil and Beza interpret it, *Ex intimis cordis penetratibus*, from the bottom of my heart, with all earnestness and humility. He that is in the low pits and caves of the earth seeth the stars in the firmament; so he who is most low and lowly seeth most of God, and is in best case to call upon him. As spices smell best when beaten, and as frankincense *maxime fragrat cum flagrat*, is most odoriferous when cast into the fire; so do God's afflicted pray best when at the greatest under, #Isa 19:22 26:16 27:6. Luther, when he was buffeted by the devil at Coburg, and in great affliction, said to those about him, *Venite, in contemptum diaboli Psalmum, de profundis, quatuor vocibus cantemus*, Come, let us sing that psalm, "Out of the depths," &c., in derision of the devil (Joh. Manl. loc. com. 43). And surely this psalm is a treasury of great comfort to all in distress (reckoned, therefore, of old among the seven penitentials), and is, therefore, sacrilegiously by the Papists taken away from the living and applied only to the dead; for no other reason, I think, saith Beza, but because it beginneth with "Out of the depths have I cried"; a poor ground for purgatory, or for praying for the souls that are there, as Bellarmine makes it.

Ver. 2. **Lord, hear my voice**] *Precum exauditio identidem est precanda*, Audience must be begged again and again; and if he once prepare our heart it is sure that he will cause his ear to hear, #Ps 10:17; as when we bid our children ask this or that of us, it is because we mean to give it them.

Ver. 3. **If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities**] This and the next verse contains, saith one, the sum of all the Scriptures. Twice he here nameth the Lord, as desirous to take hold of him with both his hands. Extremity of justice he deprecateh; he would not be dealt

with in rigour and rage. *Extrema, fateor; commeritus sum, Deus; Quid enim aliud dixero?* It is confessed I have deserved the extremity of thy fury; but yet let me talk with thee, {as #Jer 12:1} or reason the case.

O Lord, who shall stand?] Stand in judgment, as #Ps 1:5, and not fall under the weight of thy just wrath, which burneth as low as hell itself? How can any one escape the damnation of hell, which is the just hire of the least sin, #Ro 6:23; and the best man's life is fuller of sins than the firmament is of stars, or the furnace of sparks? Hence that of an ancient, *Vae hominum vitae, quantumvis laudabili, si, remota misericordia, iudicetur;* Woe to the best man alive should he be strictly dealt with! surely if his faults were but written in his forehead it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.

Ver. 4. **But there is forgiveness with thee**] This holds head above water, that we have to do with a forgiving God, #Ne 9:31; none like him for that, #Mic 7:18; for he doth it naturally, #Ex 34:6; abundantly, #Isa 55:7; constantly, as here; there is (still is) forgiveness and propitiation with God: so #Joh 1:27, the Lamb of God doth take away the sins of the world; it is a perpetual act, and should be as a perpetual picture in our hearts.

That thou mayest be feared] *i.e.* Sought unto and served. It is a speech like that, #Ps 65:2, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." If there were not forgiveness with God, no man would worship him from his heart, but fly from him as from a tyrant; but a promise of pardon from a faithful God maketh men to put themselves into the hands of justice, in hope of mercy. Mr Perkins expoundeth the words thus, In mercy thou pardonest the sins of some, that thou mightest have some on earth to worship thee.

Ver. 5. **I wait for the Lord**] I wait, and wait, viz. for deliverance out of misery, #Ps 130:1, being assured of pardoning mercy. *Feri, Domine, ferii; a peccatis enim absolutus sum,* said Luther, Strike, Lord, while thou wilt, so long as my sins are forgiven; I can be of good comfort; I can wait, or want for a need.

And in his word] viz. Of promise, that ground of hope unfailable, #Ro 5:5; of faith unfeigned, #1Ti 1:5.

Ver. 6. **My soul waiteth for the Lord]** Or, watcheth for the Lord, Heb. my soul to the Lord, an eclipical, concise speech, importing strong affection, as doth also the following reduplication, *Prae custodibus ad mane, prae custodibus ad mane.*

I say, more than they] Or, more than they that watch for the morning wait for the morning; wherein they may sleep, which by night they might not do.

Ver. 7. **Let Israel hope in the Lord]** Hope and yet fear, as **#Ps 130:4** (with a filial fear); fear, and yet hope.

Plenteous redemption] Are our sins great? with God there is mercy, matchless mercy. Are our sins many? with God is plenteous redemption, *multa redemptio*; he will multiply pardons as we multiply sins, **#Isa 55:7**.

Ver. 8. **And he shall redeem Israel]** By the value and virtue of Christ's death, by his merit and Spirit, **#1Co 6:11**.

Chapter 131

Ver. 1. **Lord, my heart is not haughty]** Though anointed and appointed by thee to the kingdom; yet I have not ambitiously aspired unto it, by seeking Saul's death, as his flatters persuaded him; nor do I now, being possessed of it, proudly domineer (as is the manner of most potentates) and tyrannize over my poor subjects; but with all modesty and humility (not minding high things) I do condescend to them of low estate, **#Ro 12:16**. Now, *in alto positum non altum sapere, difficile est, et omnino inusitatum; sed quanto inusitatus, tanto gloriosius* (Bucholc.). It is both hard and happy not to be puffed up with prosperity and preferment. Vespasian is said to have been the only one that was made better by being made emperor.

Nor mine eyes lofty] Pride sitteth and shows itself in the eyes as soon as in any part. *Ut speculum oculus est artis, ita oculus est naturae speculum.*

Neither do I exercise myself in great matters] Heb. I walk not; *maneo intra metas*, I keep within my circle, within the compass of my calling; not troubling myself and others by my ambitious

projects and practices, as Cleon did, Alcibiades, Caesar Borgia, and others, ambitionists.

Or in things too high for me] Heb. wonderful; high and hidden things, that pass my apprehension, and which it behoveth me, *mirari potius quam rimari*, to admire rather than to pry into. *Arcana Dei sunt Area Dei*. The Bethshemites paid dear for peeping into the ark. Phaeton is feigned by the poets to have perished by taking upon him to rule the chariot of the sun; and Bellerophon, by seeking to fly up to heaven upon his Pegasus, to see what Jupiter did there (Horat. lib. 4, Od. 11).

Terret ambustus Phaeton avaras

Spes; et exemplum grave praebet ales

Pegasus, terrenum equitem gravatus

Bellerophontem.

Ver. 2. **Surely I have behaved]** Heb. if I have not, &c., a deep asseveration, such as hath the force of an oath, *Si non composui et sedavi*.

And quieted myself] Heb. stilled or made silent my soul; chiding it when distempered or noiseful, as the mother doth her weanling.

As a child that is weaned of his mother] Who neither thinketh great things of himself nor seeketh great things for himself; but is lowly and fellowly, #Mt 18:1, innocent and unaware, taking what his mother giveth him, and resting in her love.

My soul is even as a weaned child] Who will not be drawn to suck again, though never so fair and full strutting a breast. So not David, the world's dugs.

Ver. 3. **Let Israel hope]** See #Ps 130:7.

Chapter 132

Ver. 1. **Lord, remember David]** Origen holdeth Solomon to have been penman of all these songs of degrees, as hath been before noted. But as that is not likely (see the titles of #Ps 122:1 124:1 131:1), so divers interpreters conceive this to be his; because much of it is the same with that prayer he made at the dedication of the

temple, #2Ch 6:16,14,42. Here, then, he prayeth God to remember David, that is (not his merits and suffrages, as the monks would have it, but), the promises made unto him (for the which Solomon praised God as well as for the performance to himself, #2Ch 6:10), and his singular solicitude about the house and worship of God, which was so great, as that it affected, yea, afflicted his spirit; whence it followeth here, "and all his afflictions"; for which it is, #2Ch 6:42, the mercies or kindness of David, *Ita ut dormire non potuerit* (Kimchi.)

Ver. 2. **How he sware unto the Lord]** Out of the abundance of his affections, #1Ch 29:3, {see #Ps 119:106} he solemnly took God to witness; and this he did, say the Rabbis, at that time when he saw the punishing angel, and was terrified.

And vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob] Jacob is mentioned, say the Hebrews, *Quia primo vovit*. because he first vowed to God, #Ge 28:20, whence he is called, *Pater votorum*, the Father of vows (Kimchi, Aben Ezra).

Ver. 3. **Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house]** *i.e.* Of my newly built house, #1Ch 15:1 2Sa 1:2. Those in Malachi were not so well minded, #Ps 1:4.

Ver. 4. **I will not give sleep to mine eyes]** viz. With any good content; or, more than needs must.

Ver. 5. **Until I find out a place for the Lord]** The Jewish doctors tell us, that as the earth is in the middle of the world, so is Judea in the middle of the earth, Jerusalem in the middle of Judea, the temple in the middle of Jerusalem, and the ark in the middle of the temple.

An habitation] Heb. habitations; haply because the temple consisted of three parts, or partitions.

Ver. 6. **Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah]** At Bethlehem Ephratah, David's birth place, there we heard of it long since by our progenitors. "Of it," that is, of the ark, saith Chrysostom; of God's resting place, saith Austin; of the place where Christ should be born, saith Jerome; where the temple should be set, saith Aben Ezra; where the Shechinah, or Divine presence should reside, say other Rabbis, *Dicit eam in foemin*, *i.e. diviuam praesentiam* (R. Arama).

We found it in the fields of the wood] At Jerusalem, say some; or at Kirjathjearim, as others will have it. The Chaldee interpreteth it of the wood of Libanus; the place, saith he, where the patriarchs worshipped.

Ver. 7. **We will go into his tabernacles]** We will cheerfully and unanimously frequent his public worship, in the place he hath pitched upon (called his gates, and his courts, #Ps 100:4), saying as #Ps 132:8,9,10: επου τω θεω, follow God, was the rule among the very heathens.

We will worship at his footstool] *i.e.* At his ark, where he uttered oracles and wrought miracles, &c., which yet was but his footstool, to lift his people heavenward, Christward, who was the truth of that type, the ark, the mercy seat.

Ver. 8. **Arise, O Lord, into thy rest]** The place of thy rest; for the ark was transportative till settled in Solomon's temple; so, till we come to heaven, we are in continual motion.

Thou, and the ark of thy strength] The ark in the temple was the chiefest evidence of God's presence, and the most principal type of Christ, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily. The word is aron, which is put for a coffin, coffer, or chest, #Ge 50:26 2Ki 12:9. This showeth, that all the counsels of God, all the love and favour of God, all that God accounteth precious, are treasured up in Christ, #Col 2:3 1:13 Isa 42:1 Heb 10:12.

Ver. 9. **Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness]** *i.e.* With salvation, as #Ps 132:16. No surer sign of God's gracious presence with a people, than a powerful ministry, clothed with inward purity and holiness, represented by the holy garments.

And let thy saints shout for joy] *i.e.* Those that are converted by such a ministry, let those that are justified by faith have peace with God, and joy unspeakable, full of glory.

Ver. 10. **For thy servant David's sake]** For thy covenant's sake made with him, and for thy Christ's sake, who is oft called David, as #Ho 3:5, so for the Lord's sake, #Da 9:17.

Turn not away the face of thine anointed] Of thy Christ; defer not his coming, or deny not my request, as #1Ki 2:16,17,20.

Ver. 11. **The Lord hath sworn in truth]** The eternity of Israel cannot lie, #1Sa 15:29, yet tendering our infirmity, he sweareth and sealeth to us.

Of the fruit of thy body] David was excellent at making the utmost of a promise, at pressing and oppressing it, till he had expressed the sweetness out of it, #Isa 66:11. See how he improveth God's promise, and worketh upon it, #1Ch 17:23-26. Solomon had learned to do the like.

Ver. 12. **If thy children will keep my covenant]** Although God's covenant is free, yet it is delivered under certain conditions on our part to be observed; which are as an oar in a boat, or stern in a ship, turning it this way or that, &c.

For evermore] For a long season; and Christ, for all eternity.

Ver. 13. **For the Lord hath chosen Zion]** He chose it for his love; and loved it for his choice.

Ver. 14. **This is my rest for ever]** It was so because God was pleased to make it so; he rested in his love; he would seek no farther, #Zep 3:17.

For I have desired it] This alone made the difference, as it also did between Aaron's rod and the rest that were laid with it.

Ver. 15. **I will abundantly bless her provision]** Her stock and her store; so that she shall not want necessaries, which yet she shall hunt for (that is, labour for), as the Hebrew word importeth; and know how she comes by; *Viatico eius affatim benedicam* (Trem.): therefore it is added,

I will satisfy her poor with bread] Dainties I will not promise them; a sufficiency, but not a superfluity; poor they may be, but not destitute; bread they shall have, and of that, God's plenty, as they say; enough to bring them to their Father's house, where is bread enough. Let not, therefore, the poor Israelite fear to bring his offerings, or to disfurnish himself for God's worship, &c.

Ver. 16. **I will also clothe her priests, &c.]** So that they shall save themselves and those that hear them, #1Ti 4:16. Thus God answereth his people's prayers both for temporals and spirituals; see

#Ps 132:9, and that with an overplus of comfort; they shall shout aloud.

Ver. 17. **There will I make the horn of David to bud]** A metaphor from those living creatures, *quorum ramosa sunt cornua*, which have snags in their heads (as deer have), which are unto them instead of boughs. For "horn," some read beam of David. Confer **#Lu 1:78**.

I have ordained a lamp] *i.e.* A successor (— *cui lampada tradat*), and that a glorious one at length, Christ, who is $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\phi\omega\varsigma$, light essential, **#Joh 12:46**. Of Ascanius the son of Aeneas, and likewise of Tullus Hostilius, it is reported, that light flames were seen about their heads when they lay in their cradles; and that thereby was foreshadowed that they should be kings.

Ver. 18. **His enemies will I clothe with shame]** Shame shall be the promotion of all such fools as set against Christ and his people; yea, they shall be clothed with it; so that it shall be conspicuous to all men.

But upon himself shall his crown flourish] His royal diadem, whereby he is separated (Nezer) and distinguished from other men. Alexander dropped his diadem once into the water, and because he who fetched it out, put it on his own head while he swam out with it, he cut off his head. Our Edward IV hanged one for saying he would make his son owner of the crown; though he only meant his own house (having a crown for the sign) in Cheapside.

Chapter 133

Ver. 1. **Behold, how good and how pleasant it is]** This David is thought to have said to the people, when, after eight years' unnatural war, they came together to Hebron, to anoint him king over all Israel, **#2Sa 5:1-5** Behold, be affected with that happiness of yours which no tongue can utter. *Accipe quod sentitur antequam discitur*, as Cyprian saith in another case.

How good and how pleasant] Precious and profitable, sweet and delectable, $\lambda\iota\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \lambda\alpha\mu\tau\rho\nu$, dainty and goodly, as **#Re 18:14**. Communion of saints is the next happiness upon earth to communion with God.

For brethren] Whether by place, race; or grace, which last is the strongest tie; and should cause such a harmony of hearts as might resemble that concord and concert that shall be in heaven. The Thebans in their armies had a band of men they called the holy band; consisting of such only as were joined together in the bonds of love, as would live and die together; these they made great account of, and esteemed the strength of their armies, *ιερος λοχος εξ εραστων και ερωμενων* (Athenaeus, lib. 3).

To dwell together] Heb. even together, that is, even as God dwelleth with them, **#Ps 132:13,14**, to be "kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love," **#Ro 12:10**, to be as those primitive Christians were, **#Ac 2:24-27**, of one heart and of one soul. The number of two hath by the heathens been accounted accursed, because it was the first that departed from unity.

Ver. 2. **It is like the precious ointment]** This similitude setteth forth the pleasure and amenity of it; as the other (from the dew) the profit and commodity. *Sic miscuit utile dulci*. This ointment was most rich (as made up of the chiefest spices, **#Ex 30**), and very fragrant, refreshing the senses, not of Aaron oaly, but of all about him; so doth Christian unity and amity (that "fruit of the Spirit," **#Ga 5:22**) far beyond that common friendship so highly extolled by Cicero, and other heathens; and is therefore here fitly compared to that nonsuch odoriferous ointment.

Upon the head, that ran down upon the beard] So the Spirit of grace, that oil of gladness, **#Ps 45:7**, poured out abundantly, even to a redundancy, upon Christ the Head, runneth down upon all the members of his body mystical, even to the meanest, so that they have grace for grace.

Ver. 3. **As the dew of Hermon]** Moisteneth and maketh fertile the country of Bashan. Hermon is a very high hill ever covered with snow; whence ariseth a perpetual vapour, the original and fountain of dew, to all Jewry.

And as the dew that descended] The spiritual dew dispensed from God in Sion, where he is sincerely served.

For there the Lord commanded the blessing] A powerful expression, highly commending brotherly love as a complexive blessing and such as accompanieth salvation.

Chapter 134

Ver. 1. **Behold, bless ye the Lord]** This short psalm (the last of the fifteen gradualls) is *breve Sacerdotum speculum*, saith an expositor; a mirror for ministers, who are first excited by a Behold, as by the sounding of a trumpet, or the ringing of a sermon bell. And, secondly, exhorted to praise God, and to pray unto him; whereunto if we add their teaching of Jacob God's judgments, whereof Moses mindeth them, **#De 33:10**, what more can be required of Archippus, to the fulfilling of his ministry? and if he be slack, he must be told of it, **#Col 4:17**, yet with all due respect and reverence to his office, **#1Ti 5:1**. And it were far better, if they would rouse up themselves with the wakeful cock, and not keep sleepy sentry in the sanctuary.

All ye servants of the Lord] Ye priests and Levites, who are God's servants, but of a more than ordinary alloy; servants of noblest employment about him. Such are all faithful ministers; each of them may say with Paul, **#Ac 27:23**, "Whose I am, and whom I serve."

Which by night stand in the house of the Lord] Keeping watch and ward there in your turns, **#Nu 18:1,2**, &c.; **#1Ch 9:33**. The Rabbis say, that the high-priest only sat in the sanctuary (as did Eli, **#1Sa 1**), the rest stood, as ready prest to do their office.

Ver. 2. **Lift up your hands in the sanctuary]** Or, Lift up holy hands, as **#1Ti 2:8**. One readeth it, out of the Hebrew, Lift up your hands, sanctuary, that is, ye sanctuary men, *continens pro contento*. Hearts and hands must both up to heaven, **#La 3:41**, and God be glorified both with spirits and bodies, which are the Lord's, **#1Co 6:20**.

And bless the Lord] Like so many earthly angels; and as if ye were in heaven already, say,

Ver. 3. **The Lord that made heaven and earth]** And therefore hath the blessings of both lives in his hand to bestow. See **#Nu 6:24**.

Bless thee out of Zion] They are blessings indeed that come out of Zion; choice, peculiar blessings, even above any that come out of heaven and earth. Compare **#Ps 128:5**, and the promise, **#Ex 20:24**, In all places where I put the memory of my name I will come unto thee and bless thee.

Chapter 135

Ver. 1. **Praise ye the Lord, Praise ye]** Praise, praise, praise. When duties are thus inculcated it noteth the necessity and excellence thereof; together with our dulness and backwardness thereunto.

O ye servants of the Lord] See **#Ps 134:1**.

Ver. 2. **Ye that stand in the house]** See **#Ps 134:1**.

In the courts] Where the people also had a place, **#2Ch 4:9**, and are required to bear a part in this heavenly Hallelujah.

Ver. 3. **Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good]** *sc.* Originally, transcendently, effectively; he is good and doeth good, **#Ps 119:68**, and is therefore to be praised with mind, mouth, and practice.

For it is pleasant] An angelical exercise, and, to the spiritually minded man, very delicious. To others, indeed, who have no true notion of God but as of an enemy, it is but as music at funerals, or as the trumpet before a judge, no comfort to the mourning wife, or guilty prisoner.

Ver. 4. **For the Lord hath chosen]** God's distinguishing grace should make his elect lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to him.

And Israel for his peculiar treasure] Such as he maketh more reckoning of than of all the world besides. The Hebrew word here rendered peculiar treasure, seemeth to signify a jewel made up of three precious stones, in the form of a triangle, *Segullah inde dici Segol, grammatici volunt*. The saints are God's jewels, **#Mal 3:17**, his ornament, yea, the beauty of his ornament, and that set in majesty, **#Eze 7:20**, his royal diadem, **#Isa 62:3**.

Ver. 5. **For I know that the Lord is great]** As well as good, #Ps 135:3. This I believe and know, {#Joh 6:69} saith the psalmist; and do therefore make it my practice to praise him.

And that our Lord is above all gods] Whether they be so deputed, as magistrates, or reputed, as idols.

Ver. 6. **Whatsoever the Lord pleased]** This the heathens did never seriously affirm of any their dunghill deities; sure it is that none of them could say, I know it to be so. *De diis utrum sint, non ausim affirmare*, said one of their wise men.

Ver. 7. **He causeth the vapours]** Not Jupiter, but Jehovah. {See #Jer 10:13} He is the right *Nubicoga*, maker of the meteors, whether fiery, airy, or watery, #Job 26:8,9 28:26,27 37:11,15,16 38:9. See the notes there.

He maketh lightnings for the rain] Or, with the rain, which is very strange, viz. that fire and water should mingle, and hard stones come out of the midst of thin vapours.

He bringeth the wind out of his treasures] Or, coffers, storehouses, where he holdeth them close prisoners during his pleasure. This the philosopher knew not, and thence it is that they are of so diverse in their opinions about the winds. See #Job 36:27,28 37:11,15,16 throughout.

Ver. 8. **Who smote the firstborn of Egypt]** And thereby roused up that sturdy rebel Pharaoh, who began now to open his eyes, as they say the blind mole doth when the pangs of death are upon him; and to stretch out himself, as the crooked serpent doth when deadly wounded.

Ver. 9. **Who sent tokens and wonders]** Vocal wonders, #Ex 4:8, to be as so many warning pieces.

Ver. 10. **Who smote great nations]** Who, by their great sins, had greatly polluted their land; and filled it with filth from one end to another, #Ezr 9:11.

And slew mighty kings] Heb. bony, big, massive fellows, *quasi ossatos, sive torosos*, as the word signifieth.

Ver. 11. **Sihon king of the Amorites]** A giant like Cyclops.

And Og king of Bashan] Of whom the Jews fable, that, being one of the antediluvian giants, he escaped the flood, by riding astride upon the ark.

Ver. 12. **And gave their land for an heritage]** Which he might well do, as being the true proprietary and paramount.

Ver. 13. **Thy name, O Lord, &c.]** Else, *O nos ingratos!*

Ver. 14. **For the Lord will judge his people]** *Iudicabit, id est vindicabit,* he will preserve them, and provide for their welfare.

And he will repent himself] This is *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus.* Some render it, He will be propitious; others, He will take comfort in his servants. See **#Jud 10:16.**

Ver. 15. **The idols of the heathen]** See **#Ps 115:4-6, &c.**

Ver. 16. **The idols of the heathen]** See **#Ps 115:4-6, &c.**

Ver. 17. **Neither is there any breath in their mouths]** If they utter oracles, it was the devil in them, and by them. As for those statues of Daedalus which are said to have moved, spoken, and run away if they were not tied to a place, &c., it is either a fiction, or else to be attributed to causes external and artificial, as quicksilver, &c. (Aristot.; Diod.; Sic.; Plato).

Ver. 18. **They that make them, &c.]** See **#Ps 115:8.**

Ver. 19. **Bless the Lord]** And not an idol, **#Isa 66:3,** as the Philistines did their Dagon; and as Papists still do their male and female saints.

Ver. 20. **Ye that fear the Lord]** Ye devout Proselytes.

Ver. 21. **Blessed be the Lord out of Zion]** Therehence he blesseth, **#Ps 134:3,** and there he is to be blessed.

Which dwelleth at Jerusalem] That was the seat of his royal residence, *per inhabitationis gratiam,* saith Austin, by the presence of his grace; who, by his essence and power, is everywhere.

Enter, prmsenter, Deus hic et ubique potenter.

Chapter 136

Ver. 1. **O give thanks unto the Lord]** This psalm is by the Jews called Hillel gadol, the great gratulatory. See **#Ps 106:1 107:1 118:1.**

For his mercy endureth for ever] His covenant mercy, that precious Church privilege; this is perpetual to his people, and should perpetually shine as a picture in our hearts. For which purpose this psalm was appointed to be daily sung in the old church, by the Levites, #1Ch 16:41.

Ver. 2. **For his mercy endureth for ever]** This is the foot or burden of the whole song; neither is it any idle repetition, but a notable expression of the saints' unsatisfiability in praising God for his never failing mercy. These heavenly birds, having got a note, record it over and over. In the last psalm there are but six verses, yet twelve Hallelujahs.

Ver. 3. **O give thanks unto the Lord of lords]** That is, to God the Son, saith Jerome; as by God of gods, saith he, in the former verse, is meant God the Father; who, because they are no more but one God only, it is added,

Ver. 4. **To him who alone doeth great wonders]** Wondrous things the creature may do, but not wonders; *mira sed non miracula*. God alone is the great *Thaumaturgus*, that is, wonder worker.

Ver. 5. **To him that by wisdom, &c.]** *Singulari ingenio et summa industria*, yet without tool or toil. See #Heb 11:10. {See Trapp on "Heb 11:10"}

Ver. 6. **To him that stretched out the earth, &c.]** A perpetual mercy to all earthly creatures, as is elsewhere set forth, #Ge 1:9 Ps 24:2.

Ver. 7. **To him that made great lights]** Without which we should have no more comfort of the air we breathe in than the Egyptians had in that three days' darkness. Now the sun and moon are called great luminaries, not great stars or bodies (for the sun is less than some stars, and the moon is least of all), first, for the excellence of light which these two do more abundantly impart to the earth; and, secondly, for the effects they work; the sun by his access making all green and flourishing, and the contrary by his recess; the moon by its various aspect causing humours and marrows to increase or decrease, &c.

Ver. 8. **The sun to rule by day]** Heb. for the rulings by day, *sc.* by his light, heat, motion, and influences, whereby he worketh upon these inferior bodies, being a servant to all, as his name importeth, notwithstanding his ruledom; and therefore in no wise to have been worshipped.

Ver. 9. **The moon and stars to rule by night]** For by day they all veil to the sun; from whom also they borrow much of their light. The moon hath her name in Hebrew from moisture, as refreshing the earth with her cool influences; and thrusting forth precious things therein, #De 33:14.

Ver. 10. **To him that smote Egypt]** See #Ps 135:8.

Ver. 11. **And brought out Israel]** viz. By that last plague; for the former would not do. God will have the better of his enemies, for the good of his people; for it is not fit that he should lay down the bucklers first.

Ver. 12. **And with a stretched out arm]** A metaphor from soldiers' exercising their arms, with utmost might and sleight.

Ver. 13. **To him which divided the Red Sea]** Into twelve several parts, say the Jews, for the twelve tribes to pass through.

Ver. 14. **And made Israel to pass, &c.]** It is many times hail with the saints, when ill with the wicked. Abraham from the hill seeth Sodom on fire.

Ver. 15. **But overthrew Pharaoh]** *Praecipitavit*, pitched him in headlong; having before paved a way for him. *Subito tollitur qui diu toleratur*.

Ver. 16. **To him which led his people]** As a horse, that they should not stumble, #Isa 63:13; as a shepherd his sheep; providing for them so, as never was any prince so served in his greatest pomp.

Ver. 17. **To him which smote great kings]** Great, as those times accounted them, when every small city almost had their king; Canaan had thirty and more of them. Great also in regard of their stature and strength; for they were of the giant's race, #De 3:11-13
Am 2:1

Ver. 18. **And slew famous kings]** *Magnificos, sumptuosos, fastuosos, et arrogantes*.

Ver. 19. See #Ps 135:11. Sihon's country was afterwards called Decapolis, and the metropolis of it Scythopolis (Joseph. de Bel, l. 3, c. 2.)

Ver. 20. See #Ps 135:11. Sihon's country was afterwards called Decapolis, and the metropolis of it Scythopolis (Joseph. de Bel, l. 3, c. 2.)

Ver. 21. **And gave]** #Ps 135:12 Jos 12:7, he paid them well for their pains, after that he had made use of their sword and service against those sinners against their own souls.

Ver. 22. **And gave]** #Ps 135:12 Jos 12:7, he paid them well for their pains, after that he had made use of their sword and service against those sinners against their own souls.

Ver. 23. **Who remembered us in our low estate]** Still God helpeth those who are forsaken of their hopes, *et vindictae gladium miserationis oleo emollit*, as Nicephorus saith.

Ver. 24. **And hath redeemed us]** Or, broken us off, pulled us away, as by violence; for they would never else have loosed us. This is *priori maior misericordia*, a greater mercy than the former, saith Kimchi; to redeem is more than to preserve.

Ver. 25. **Who giveth food to all flesh]** Food agreeable to their several appetites and temperaments, suitable and seasonable.

Ver. 26. **O give thanks unto the God of heaven]** His mercy in providing heaven for his people is more than all the rest.

Chapter 137

Ver. 1. **By the rivers of Babylon]** Tigris and Euphrates; for the land of Shinar (where Babel was founded, and afterwards Babylon built) was, as most geographers think, a part of the garden of Eden, fruitful beyond credulity; but to the poor captives all this was no comfort, when they remembered the desolations of their country, and the loss of their former liberty. The bird of paradise, they say, once taken and enraged, groaneth incessantly, till she die.

There we sat down, yea, we wept] "He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him," saith Jeremiah of the mourner, #La 3:28, who is much in meditation; so were these, bewailing bitterly their sin and misery, with their heart sounding as a harp, #Isa 16:1, where, if one string be touched, all the rest sound.

When we remembered Zion] The former solemnities, the present desolations.

Ver. 2. **We hanged our harps]** Harps we had, and knew how to handle them (the Jews were famous artists, noted for their skill, specially in poetry, music, and mathematics), but we had little mind to it as now the case stood with us; our country lying desolate, ourselves could not be but disconsolate. *Barbiton hic paries habebit* (Horat. lib. 3, Od. 26).

Ver. 3. **For there...they required of us a song]** *sc.* In disdain and derision of our religion; *q.d.* Will ye sing no more holy songs in honour of your God? hath he utterly cast away all care of your welfare, and you the like of his service? Have you never a black *sanctus* to sing us? or cannot you sing care away? &c.; where are your wonted ditties, the words of a song? *Ehodum, bellos nobis illos vestrae Sionis modulos cantillate* (Beza).

And they that wasted us] *Cumulatorcs nostri, vel concumulatores nostri, vel homines eiulatum nostrorum,* they that made us howl singing, as **#Isa 52:5**. Or, *In suspensionibus nostris,* after that we had hanged up our harps, as **#Ps 137:2**, το ακαιρον πανταχου λυπηρον (Isocr.).

Sing us one of the songs of Zion] Wherewith ye were wont to praise God. So Belshazzar abused the bowls of the sanctuary. So the bloody persecutors at Orleans, as they murdered the Protestants, required them to sing, Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord; and have mercy on us, Lord, &c.

Ver. 4. **Shall we sing the Lord's song? &c.]** No; for that were to profane holy things; and as Nazianzen speaketh, κωμωδιαν τα μυστηρια. And besides, they had as much mind to be merry then, and thus, as Samson had to play before the Philistines. Music in mourning is not more unseasonable than unsavoury. When our Edward III had the king of Scots and the French king both prisoners together here in England, he held royal jousts, and feasted them sumptuously. After supper, perceiving the French king to be sad and pensive, he desired him to be merry as others were. To whom the French king answered, as here, How shall we sing in a strange land? *Quid nobis cum fabulis, cum risu,* saith Bernard, *in hoc exilio, in hoc ergastulo in hac valle lachrymarum?* Let us cast away carnal mirth, and groan earnestly to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, **#2Co 5:2**.

Ver. 5. **If I forget thee, O Jerusalem]** As I might seem to do, should I herein gratify these idolaters; or otherwise obey them, rather than God. The Jews at this day, when they build a house, they are, say the Rabbis, to leave one part of it unfinished and lying rude, in remembrance that Jerusalem and the temple are at present desolate. At least, they use to leave about a yard square of the house

unplastered, on which they write, in great letters, this of the psalmist, "If I forget Jerusalem," &c., or else these words, *Zecher leehorban*, that is, The memory of the desolation (Leo Modena of the Rites of the Jews).

Let my right hand forget] *Fiat abalienata atque emortua*, Let it be paralytical and useless, unfit to touch the harp.

Ver. 6. **If I do not remember thee]** *Hi gemitus Sanctorum sunt gemitus Spiritus sancti*, these are the very sighs unutterable, that precede joys unspeakable and full of glory. Either our beds are soft or our hearts hard, that can rest when the Church is at unrest, that fed not our brethren's hard cords through our soft beds.

If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy] Heb. if I cause it not to ascend above the head of my joy. Christ in his ordinances must be our chiefest comfort, overtopping all other; and devouring all discontents whatsoever.

Ver. 7. **Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom]** Those unbrotherly bitter enemies. The Jews call Romists Edomites.

Rase it, rase it] *Discooperite, discooperite*.

Diruite, ex imis subvertite fundamentis

(Buchanan).

Darius, hearing that Sardis was sacked and burnt by the Athenians, commanded one of his servants to say to him thrice always at supper, Sir, remember the Athenians to punish them, Δεποτα μεμνεο Αθηναιων (Herod.).

Ver. 8. **That art to be destroyed]** *Spoliatrix*, saith the Syriac, **#Isa 33:1**.

Happy shall he be] *i.e.* Well rewarded with wealth and good wishes.

Ver. 9. **That taketh and dasheth thy little ones]** So at the destruction of Troy (Horat. l. iv. Od. 6).

Sed palam captis gravis (heu nefas, heu)

*Nescios fari pueros, Achivis
Ureret flammis, etiam latentes
Matris in alvo.*

Chapter 138

Ver. 1. **I will praise thee with my whole heart]** Which no hypocrite can do; though he may pray in distress from the bottom of his heart. A grateful man is a gracious man, viz. if he come with a true heart, as the apostle hath it, **#Heb 10:22** (Aben Ezra).

Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee] That is, before angels, who are present in holy assemblies, **#1Co 11:10** (as was represented by those cherubims pictured in the temple), as also before princes and potentates, see **#Ps 138:4**. (Kimchi).

Ver. 2. **I will worship toward thy holy temple]** Wheresoever I am the face of my soul shall turn, like the needle of a dial, by sacred instinct, towards thee, in the ark of thy presence, in the Son of thy love (Abbot).

For thy lovingkindness and for thy truth] For thy grace and truth, which come by Jesus Christ: the ark and mercy seat were never sundered. God's lovingkindness in Christ moved him to promise, his truth binds him to perform, and hence our happiness.

For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name] Or, Thou hast magnified thy name in all thy words. Or, Thou hast magnified above all things thy name by thy word; that is, Thou hast got thee a very great name, by fulfilling thy promises, and by setting on thy word with power.

Ver. 3. **In the day when I cried, &c.]** This he worthily celebrateth as a singular favour, a badge of grace, **#Ps 66:18**, and pledge of glory, **#Ac 2:21**.

And strengthenedst me with strength in my soul] With strength in the inward man, **#Eph 3:16,20**, with spiriual mettle, with supporting grace; keeping head above water. My body is weak, my soul is well, said that dying saint. I am as full of comfort as heart can hold, said a certain martyr. The apostle speaketh of the new supplies of the Spirit

of Jesus Christ, *επιχορηγεω*, #**Php 1:19**; the joy of the Lord is strengthening, #**Ne 8:10**.

Ver. 4. **All the kings of the earth shall praise thee**] Such of them as shall read these psalms of my composing; or otherwise shall hear of thy gracious dealing with me, according to thy promise. Such also as shall hereafter be converted to the faith; for though "Not many mighty, not many noble, are called," #**1Co 1:26**, yet some are, and these shine in the Church like stars of the first magnitude.

Ver. 5. **.Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord**] As having tasted the excellence of the comforts of godliness (far surpassing those of the crown and sceptre), and felt the power of God's word subduing them to the obedience of faith, whereby they come to rule with God, to be faithful with his saints, and to sing their songs.

Ver. 6. **Though the Lord be high, &c.**] Even "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," #**Isa 57:15**. See on #**Ps 113:6,7**.

Yet hath he respect unto the lowly] This maketh that ancient cry out, *Videte magnum miraculum*, See here a great miracle; God is on high; thou liftest thyself up, and he flieth from thee; thou bowest thyself down, and he descendeth unto thee (Aug. de Temp.). Low things he looketh close upon, that he may raise them higher; lofty things he knoweth afar off, that he may crush them down lower. The proud Pharisee pressed as near God as he could; the poor publican, not daring to do so, stood aloof off; yet was God far from the Pharisee, near to the publican. The Lord Christ is a door to heaven, but a low door; he who will enter in thereby, *humiliet se oportet, ut sano capite intrare contingat*, saith Austin, he must needs stoop to save his head piece.

But the proud he knoweth afar off] As not vouchsafing to come near such loathsome lepers. For pride is like a great swelling in the body, apt to putrefy, break, and run with loathsome and foul matter. Hence God stands off from such, as odious and abominable; he cannot abide the sight of them; *Superbos a coelo longe propellit*, as the Chaldee here paraphraseth, he driveth the proud far enough off from heaven, yea, he thrusteth them into hell, to their father Lucifer, that king of all the children of pride, as leviathan is called, #**Job 41:34**.

Ver. 7. **Though I walk in the midst of trouble]** Even in the vale of the shadow of death, so that I seem little different from a dead man.

Thou wilt revive me] That is, restore me from so great a death, as #2Co 1:10.

Thou shall stretch forth thine hand] Thou shall interpose thy help between me and them, and save me harmless; as the poets feign their gods did those whom they favoured. Thou shall strike them with thy left hand, and save me with thy right; so Tremellius senseth it.

Ver. 8. **The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me]** He will not do his business to the halves, leave it in the midst, but carry it on to a consummation, and lay the top stone of grace; this I am well assured of. See #Php 1:6. Only I must pray, and do my part; having an eye still to God's everlasting mercy in Christ.

Forsake not the works of thine own hands] Look upon the wounds of thy hands, and forsake not the works of thy hands, prayed Queen Elizabeth. And Luther's usual prayer was, 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. Though the good work of grace be begun in us, yet we can neither persevere in that grace, nor bring it forth to act, without new grace; even as trees, though they be fitted to bear fruit, yet, without the influence of the heavens, they cannot put forth that fitness in fruit, &c.

A Psalm of David] There is not in all the five books of psalms so notable a one as this, saith Aben Ezra, concerning the ways of God and the workings of conscience. It was penned, saith the Syriac interpreter, upon occasion of Shimei's railing upon him for a bloody man and a Belialist, #2Sa 16:5-13 Here, therefore, he purgeth himself by an appeal to God, and delivereth up his false accusers to God's just judgment, #Ps 139:19.

Chapter 139

Ver. 1. **O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me]** Even mine heart and reins, #Jer 17:10, hast thou searched as with lights, #Zep 1:12, by an exact scrutiny, by a soul searching inquisition, whereby thou art come to know me through and through; not only

me natural, as #Ps 139:15,16, but also me civil and moral, as #Ps 139:2,3, &c.; neither stayeth thy knowledge in the porch or lobbies (my words and ways), but passeth into the presence, yea, privy chamber; for

Ver. 2. **Thou knowest my downsitteing and mine uprising]** All my postures, gestures, practices, *sive sedeam, sive surgam*, whether I sit, stand, walk, lie; thou searchest and knowest all. Some search, but know not; thou dost both; thine eyes behold, thine eyelids try, the children of men, #Ps 11:4. {See Trapp on "Ps 11:4"}

Thou understandest my thought] Heb. my familiar thoughts, such as I am delighted in; *voluntatem meam*, some render it, my will; others, *propinquitatem meam*, my nearness, and that afar off, even from heaven, being *intimo meo mihi intimior*; not so far from me as the bark is from the tree, the skin from the flesh, or the flesh from the bones.

Afar off] *Eminus, a longe praenovisti, antequam moveantur*, saith Chrysostom; thou knowest my thoughts before I have conceived them; my thoughts in posse, from all eternity; so great is thy sagacity and perspicacity. As a man that knoweth what roots he hath in his garden, though there be not a flower appearing, yet he can say, when the spring comes, this and this will come up; so here, God knows our whole frame, our principles, &c.

Ver. 3. **Thou compassest my path]** Or, Thou winnowest; if there be any chaff or trash, thou wilt make it fly; thou art at both ends of all my works and enterprises, both by day and by night, *Perdius et pernox*. Neither art thou only at my fingers' ends, but at my tongue's end too.

Ver. 4. **For there is not a word in my tongue]** Though not yet uttered, or but whispered only.

Thou knowest it altogether] Every tittle of it; thou understandest the language of men's hearts.

Ver. 5. **Thou hast beset me behind and before]** As a beast that is pursued, as an enemy that is begirt and environed; and lest I should think by some means to make escape (as David did from Saul and his host, by a providence, #1Sa 23:27; as Hannibal did from the Romans, by a stratagem).

Thou hast laid thine hand upon me] As by an arrest; so that I am thy prisoner, and cannot stir a foot from thee.

Ver. 6. **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me]** I can hardly conceive of this thine omniscience and omnipresence, but am ready to measure thee by myself, and according to mine own model. And, indeed, for a creature to believe the infinite attributes of God, he is never able to do it thoroughly without supernatural grace.

It is high, I cannot attain unto it] Since it far exceedeth the reach of reason, and is much above my capacity and understanding. I stand at gaze, and am aghast, and that is the nearest that I, a poor finite, foolish creature, can come to so infinite a wisdom. It was, therefore, a good speech of them who, being asked what God was? answered, *Si scirem, Deus essem*, If I knew that, I should be a God.

Ver. 7. **Whither shall I go from thy spirit?]** Here he argueth God's omniscience from his omnipresence; and this the heathens also had heard of, as appeareth by their *Iovis omnia plena;* and—*quascunque accesseris oras,*

Sub Iove semper eris, &c.

Empedocles could say that God is a circle, whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference is nowhere. They could tell us that God is the soul of the world; and that as the soul is *tota in tota, et tota in qualibet parte,* so is he; that his eye is in every corner, &c.; to which purpose they so portrayed their goddess Minerva, that which way soever one cast his eye she always beheld him. But these divine notions they might have by tradition from the patriarchs; and whether they believed themselves in these and the like sayings is much to be doubted.

Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?] Surely no whither; they that attempt it do but as the fish which swimmeth to the length of the line with a hook in the mouth.

Ver. 8. **If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there]** That is thy proper place; and there Aristotle, in his Book of the World, *ad Alexandrum* affirmeth that God is only *essentialiter et actu.* This was to proclaim himself an arrant atheist; for God filleth all places,

and is comprehended of no place, being totally present wheresoever present; for we must not conceive that God is commensurable by the place, as if he were partly here and partly elsewhere; but everywhere, all present.

Ver. 9. **If I take the wings of the morning]** The morning light is diffused in an instant all the whole welkin over. If I could fly never so swiftly from one end of the heaven to the other, saith David, I should be never the nearer. This is a poetic expression.

And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea] Or of the west, whither the sun, setting, is said to hasten and hide himself. The Syriac and Arabic have it, If I take the wings of the eagle and dwell, &c. And of the eagle they write, that when she would change her feathers she falleth down into the sea.

Ver. 10. **Even there shall thy hand lead me]** *i.e.* Thy power and providence shall dispose of me; I shall flee but from thy hand to thy hand, as guilty Jonah did.

Ver. 11. **The darkness shall cover me]** The Hebrew phrase is taken from beasts that lie a-squat, saith Diodati, *Nocte latent mendae, sed non Deum*. The guilty conscience sharketh up and down for comfort, but getteth none.

Ver. 12. **Yea, the darkness hideth not]** Heb. darkeneth not from thee, because thine eyes are fiery, **#Re 1:14**, such as need no outward light; they are more light and radiant than the sun in his strength.

The darkness and the light, &c.] *Deo obscura clarent, muta respondent, silentium confitetur;* saith an ancient; Night will convert itself into noon before God, and silence prove a speaking evidence.

Ver. 13. **For thou hast possessed my reins]** The seat of mine affections. Thoughts kindle affections, and these cause thoughts to boil; they are causes one of another, and both well known to God. For who possesseth lands or houses, but he knoweth the right title and rooms thereof? saith an expositor.

Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb] But not from thine all-piercing eyes, though in so dark a place, and wrapt up in *secundines* .

Ver. 14. **I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made]** *Mirificatus sum mirabilibus operibus tuis*, saith Montanus; neither can I wonder enough at thy workmanship. The greatest miracle in the world is man; in whose very body (how much more in his soul!) are miracles enough (between head and feet) to fill a volume. Austin complaineth that men much wonder at high mountains of the earth, huge waves of the sea, deep falls of rivers, the vastness of the ocean, the motions of the stars, *et relinquunt seipsos nec mirantur*, but wonder not at all at their wonderful selves. Galen, a profane physician, writing of the excellent parts of man's body, and coming to speak of the double motion of the lungs, could not choose but sing a hymn to that God, whosoever he were, that was author of so excellent and admirable a piece of work, *Fernel. de abdit, rerum causis*.

And that my soul knoweth right well] That is, so well as to draw hearty praises from me to my Maker. But for any exact insight, hear Solomon: "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all," #Ec 11:5. Some read the words thus, Thy works are wonderful, and so is my soul, which knoweth right well; *q.d.* my rational and intelligent soul is an admirable piece indeed. Nothing in the world, saith one, is so well worthy to be wondered at as man, nothing in man, as his soul.

Ver. 15. **My substance was not hid from thee]** *Ossatio mea, id est, ossium et artuum compages*, the structure of my bones and joints. But was not he a wise man (and yet wise enough otherwise) who, being asked upon his death bed what his soul was? seriously answered, that he knew not well; but he thought it was a great bone in the middle of his body? (Pemble's Mischief of Ignorance).

Was not hid from thee] For thou hast both the names and number of every part, to a nerve or an artery. Aquinas saith that at the resurrection the bodies of the saints shall be so clear and transparent that all the veins, humours, nerves, and bowels shall be seen, as in a glass. It is sure that they are so to God when first formed in the womb.

When I was made in secret] That is, in the womb of my mother. As curious workmen, when they have some choice piece in hand, they perfect it in private, and then bring it forth to light for men to gaze at; so here.

And curiously wrought] *Variiegatus, et quasi acu pictus*, Embroidered and wrought as with the needle; whence man is called a microcosm, or little world. Bodine observeth that there are three regions within man's body (besides all that is seen without), answerable to those three regions of the world: elementary, ethereal, and celestial (Vide Lactant. de Dei Opificio; Galen. de Usa Part.; Cic. 2, de Nat. Deor.). His entrails and whatsoever is under his heart resemble the elementary region, wherein only there is generation and corruption; the heart and vitals, that are divided from those entrails by the diaphragm, resemble the ethereal region; as the brain doth the heavenly, which consisteth of intelligible creatures.

In the lowest parts of the earth] That is, in my mother's womb, as before. See #Eph 4:9. The Syriac interpreteth it (but not so well), when I shall die, and be buried, and my bones turned to ashes, yet thou shalt know them.

Ver. 16. **Thine eyes did see my subsance]** *Galmi; est semen coagulatum ante formationem membrorum*, saith Kimchi; when I was but an embryo, or hardly so much. *Disponit Deus membra culicis, et pulicis*, saith Austin; how much more of man? The word signifieth my wound up, or unwrought up, mass.

And in thy book all my members were written] A metaphor from curious workmen, that do all by the book, or by a model sat before them, that nothing may be deficient or done amiss. Had God left out an eye in his common place book, saith one, thou hadst wanted it.

Which in continuance] In process of time, and by degrees.

When as yet there was none of them] But all was a rude lump. This is a great secret of nature, and to be modestly spoken of.

Ver. 17. **How precious also are thy thoughts unto me]** *i.e.* The thoughts of thy wisdom, power, and goodness, clearly shining in

these wondrous works of thine; it does my heart good to think and speak of them.

How great is the sum of them!] viz. Of thy works, and of my thoughts thereon. I cannot count them, much less comprehend them. To blame are such as trouble not their heads at all about these matters. Surely, when the Lord made man's head with so many closures and coverings to his brain, the seat of understanding, he intended it for some precious treasure. Many locks and keys argue the price of the jewel they are to keep; and many papers wrapping a token within them the use of that token.

Ver. 18. **If I should count them, &c.]** *q.d.* They are infinite and immerable. Archimedes, that great mathematician, bragged, that he could number all the sands in the habitable and inhabitable world, but no man ever believed him. See #1Sa 13:5 2Sa 17:11 Ps 78:27.

When I awake, I am still with thee] Still taken up with some holy contemplation of thy works and wisdom. These thoughts I fall asleep with, and these I awake with. As I rake up my fire overnight, so I find it in the morning.

Ver. 19. **Surely thou wilt slay the wicked]** Those that traduce and slander me for a hypocrite and a Belialist. Some render it, Oh that thou wouldest slay them! inasmuch as they hate me for my zeal, and forwardness to turn the wheel of justice over them, and to give them their due and condign punishment; for, for mine own part, I cannot abide them, but bid them avaunt, with

Depart from me therefore, ye bloody men] Ye that dare to destroy so goodly a piece of God's handiwork as man is above described to be. See #Ge 9:6. Or, ye that seek to double, undo me; first by detraction and then by deadly practice. See #Eze 22:9, "In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood."

Ver. 20. **For they speak against thee wickedly]** Inasmuch as they speak against me; *Tua causa erit inca causa*, Your cause will be my cause, said Charles V, emperor, to Julius Pflugius, who complained he had been wronged by the Duke of Saxony; so saith God to every David. This Luther knew, and therefore wrote thus to Melancthon, *Causa ut sit magna, magnus est actor, et auctor eius; neque enim nostra est.* The cause is Christ's; and he will see to it and us. Moses

told the people that their murmurings were not against him, but against the Lord, #Ex 16:8. As unskilful hunters, shooting at wild beasts, kill a man sometimes, so while men shoot at Christians, they hit Christ.

And thine enemies take thy name in vain] While they would despoil thee of thine omnipresence, omnipotence, &c., casting thee into a dishonourable mould, as it were, and having base and bald conceits and speeches of thee and thine. Kimchi interpreteth it of heretics, those false friends, but true enemies to God; of whom they make great boasts, as did the Gnostics, Manichees, Novations, and lately the Swenckfeldians (who styled themselves the confessors of the glory of Christ), and many of our modern sects. p &&& Heretics-False friends of God

Ver. 21. **Do not I hate them, O Lord]** And therefore hate them because they hate thee? This the Hebrews understand of heretics and apostates. See a like zeal in that angel of Ephesus, #Re 2:2.

And am not I grieved] Or, irked, made ready to vomit at (as at some loathsome spectacle), fretted, vexed.

Ver. 22. **I hate them with a perfect hatred]** That is, unfeignedly, and with a round heart (saith one), for this only cause, that they are workers of iniquity. It was said of Antony, he hated a tyrant, not tyranny; and of Crassus, he hated a covetous man, not covetousness. It may as truly be said of a hypocrite, he hates sinners, not sins; these he nourisheth, those he censures. David was none such; and yet, as something mistrusting his own heart, he thinks good to add,

Ver. 23. **Search me, O God, and know my heart]** Look into every corner and cranny, and see whether it be not so as I say, viz. that I hate wicked men merely for their wickedness; and for no self-respect have I thus cast down the gauntlet of defiance unto them, and bidden them battle. We should not rest (saith a reverend man) in our heart's voice; nor accept its deceitful applause. But as once Joshua seeing the angel examined him, Art thou on our side, or on the adversaries'? so should we deal in this case; yea, beg of God to do it for us, and do it thoroughly, as here: this is a sure sign of sincerity, void of all sinisterity.

Ver. 24. **And see if there be any wicked way in me]** Heb. any way of pain, or of grief, or of provocation; any cause of sin that is

grievous to God or man, *quae spiritum tuum vexat, ut Ps. 78* (Aben Ezra). A saint alloweth not of any wickedness, walloweth not in it, maketh it not his trade, is not transformed into sin's image, the great scum abideth not in him, but (as in right wine or honey) it is continually cast out. The good heart admitteth not the mixture of any sin. Sin may cleave to it, as dross to silver, but it entereth not into the frame and constitution; it is not woven into the texture of a good man's heart; there is no such way of wickedness to be found in him, no such evil heart of unbelief as to depart away from the living God, **#Heb 3:12**. There is no time wherein he cannot say, as **#Heb 13:18**, "Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to please God."

And lead me in the way everlasting] Heb. in the way of eternity, or of antiquity, that good old way, **#Jer 6:16**, traced by Adam, Abraham, Moses, &c., and that leadeth to heaven. Rid my heart of those remnants of hypocrisy, and help me to perfect holiness in the fear of God, **#2Co 7:1**.

Chapter 140

Ver. 1. **Deliver me O Lord, from the evil man]** Made of malice, in which is steeped the venom of all vices.

Preserve me from the violent man] Man of violences, who, vulture-like, *{#Re 11:10}* liveth by rapine. Such were Saul and his informers.

Ver. 2. **Which imagine mischief in their heart]** Where the devil worketh night and day as a mintman; as a smith in his forge; or an artificer in his shop. A godly man is said to have right thoughts, **#Pr 12:5**, and that his desires are only good, **#Pr 11:23**. An evil man is called a man of wicked devices, **#Pr 12:2 14:17**, being *ingeniose nequam*, wittily wicked, as it was once said of Gaius Curio, the Roman lawyer.

They are gathered together for war] Heb. they gather wars, as serpents gather poison to vomit out at others. *Coacervant praelia*, q.d. *sunt tanquam tubae belli*.

Ver. 3. **They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent]** Which, by reason of his sharp tongue, striketh more deeply.

Adders' poison] *Venenum Ptyados*. R. Solomen readeth spiders' poison; others, asps!, vipers'; malice turneth men into serpents, saith Chrysostom.

Ver. 4. **Keep me]** Who am thus sought and set for; but thou canst rescue me.

To overthrow my goings] *Praecipitare*, to hurl me down headlong.

Ver. 5. **The proud have hid a snare, &c]** They are restless to ruin me, adding all kind of craft to their cruelty.

Ver. 6. **I said unto the Lord]** Danger drove David home to God; as bugbears do little children to their parents.

Ver. 7. **In the day of battle]** Heb. of armours; for battle David never had any with Saul, but declined it.

Ver. 8. **Grant not, O Lord, &c.]** For if they should be *votorum compotes*, masters of their desires, they would be intolerably insolent, so as to say, Our high hand, and not the Lord, hath done all this, **#De 32:27**.

Ver. 9. **As for the head]** The chieftain, the ringleader, Doeg, or Saul himself. Or thus, let mischief cover the heads of my besiegers, let it fall upon their pates, as **#Ps 7:16** *Similitudo est a sacrificiis, quorum capita execrabantur*.

Ver. 10. **Let burning coals fall upon them]** *Conflagrent ut corruant. Haec sunt non tam vota quam vaticinia*.

Ver. 11. **Let not an evil speaker]** Heb. a man of tongue, whereof Geraldus reckoneth up twenty-four several sins; a world of wickedness, St James calleth it, **#Jas 3:6**

Evil shall hunt the violent man] The angel of death shall hunt him into hell, saith the Chaldee. Of the blackbird's excrements is made bird lime, to catch him. Gaius Marius was slain with the sword he made when he was a cutler. *Propiis pennis perire grave est*, was Julian's motto. God's judgments against sinners are feathered from themselves, as a fowl shot with an arrow feathered from her own body.

Ver. 12. **I know]** For I have a promise for it, and that is infallible.

Ver. 13. **Shall give thanks]** He shall have no other cause.

The upright shall dwell in thy presence] When the hypocrite shall be dog out-of-doors, #**Job 13:16**.

Chapter 141

Ver. 1. **Lord, I cry unto thee]** No distress or danger, how great soever, shall stifle my faith or stop my mouth; but make me more earnest, and my prayers, like strong streams in narrow straits, shall bear down all before them.

Make haste unto me] Lest help come too late.

Ver. 2. **Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense]** Faithful prayer is *αναβασις του νοου* (saith Darnasen), the ascension of the heart to God. In this incense how many sweet spices are burned together by the fire of faith, as humility, hope, love, &c., all which come up for a memorial before God, #**Ac 10:4**; and the saints (as Manoah's angel) ascend up in the flame, and do wondrously, #**Jud 13:19,20**, while their pillars of smoke are perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the spice merchants, #**So 3:6**, that is, with the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, #**Heb 9:24**, those sweet odours poured into the prayers of saints, #**Re 5:8 8:4**, for want whereof the incense of the wicked is abomination, #**Isa 1:13**, as stinking of the hand that offereth it.

As the evening sacrifice] The *sacrificium iuge*, that was offered every morning and evening, #**Ex 29:39 Nu 28:4**, in reference to that immaculate Lamb of God, slain from the beginning, for an offering and a sweet smelling savour, #**Eph 5:2**. Chrysostom telleth us, that the Greek Church made use of this psalm in their evening liturgy.

Ver. 3. **Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth]** *Orat pro patientia*, saith one, here he prayeth for patience; lest by giving himself leave to overlash, he make the matter much worse. The best patience, long tried and hard put to it, may miscarry, to its cost.

Keep the door of my lips] That it move not creaking, and complaining, as on rusty hinges, for want of the oil of joy and gladness, *Dal pro Deleth per Apocopen poetieam*. David had somewhat to do with his tongue, as we see, #**Ps 39:1,3**, and when he had carted the ark, how untowardly spake he, as if the fault were

more in God than himself, that there was such a breach made in Uzzah, #1Ch 15:2. It was but need, therefore, thus to pray,

Ver. 4. **Incline not my heart]** Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. For the better ordering of his words, therefore, he prayeth, not to be delivered up to Satan, and to his own heart's lust (as he was, #1Ch 21:1, with #2Sa 24:1), for God tempteth no man, but the devil and his own concupiscence, #Jas 1:13,14, but to be bent the better way by God's overpowering, efficacious grace, and to be stablished with his free spirit.

To practise wicked works] The Vulgate rendereth it, *ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis*, to frame excuse for mine offences; but that, when I have over reacted, I may confess and forsake, and so find mercy. *Gnalai significat operari cum occasione, praetextu, causa.*

And let me not eat of their dainties] Their murdering morsels of iniquity; or their flatteries and baits, whereby Saul's courtiers sought to ensnare him. The Chaldee expoundeth it of their songs at banquets.

Ver. 5. **Let the righteous smite me, &c.]** In case I do offend in word or deed, let me never want a faithful reprove, who may smite me as with a hammer (so the word signifieth), reprove me sharply, #Pr 23:35 Zec 13:5 Tit 1:13, cuttingly, as the apostle's word importeth, yet mildly and lovingly, #Ga 6:1 Pr 9:8 19:25 25:12, with soft words, but hard arguments, *αποτομως*.

It shall be a kindness] David thought the better of Nathan for so roundly reproving him, #2Sa 12:7-12, and made him of his counsel, #1Ki 1:32 Peter thought the better of Paul for dealing so plainly with him at Antioch, #Ga 2:11-16, and maketh honourable mention of him, and his writings, #2Pe 3:15,16 It is said of Gerson, that great chancellor of Paris, that *nulla re alia tantopere laetaretur, quam si ab aliquo fraterne et charitative redargueretur*; he rejoiced in nothing so much as in a friendly reprehension; great pity it was that none bestowed a chiding on him for being so active against John Huss and Jerome of Prague, at the council of Constance (Mr Clark's Martyrology). Of Queen Anne Bullen it is reported, that she was not only willing to be admonished, but required her chaplains freely and

plainly to tell her of whatsoever was amiss. Her daughter, Queen Elizabeth, was well pleased with Mr Deering's plain dealing, who told her in a sermon that once she was *tanquam ovis*, but now *tanquam indomita iuvenca*, as an untamed heifer; and speaking of the disorder of the times, These things are so, said he, and you sit still and do nothing, &c.

It shall be an excellent oil] Heb. a head oil, such as they poured on their friends' heads; and that was of the best.

Which shall not break my head] My heart it may. Or, let him not make it fail my head, let him not cease to do me this good office daily; I shall count it a courtesy, and requite it with my best prayers for him, in his greatest necessity.

For yet my prayer also shall be in their calamity] I will not curse them for their good counsel, rail at them for reproving me, or insult over them in misery as justly met withal; but pray for them, and prize them as my best friends.

Ver. 6. **When their judges are overthrown]** As I like just reprehensions, so I suffer unjust persecutions from the grandees of the nation, who shall shortly be dejected from their dignity, and dashed, as it were, against the rocks. And then,

They shall hear my words] The common people that have been seduced by their evil rulers to think the worst of me, shall be brought to a right understanding of things, and undeceived; so that they shall set by those words of mine that they have been treated contemptuously and slighted.

Ver. 7. **Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth]** *i.e.* I and my company are in a dying condition, free among the dead; yea, if taken we should be put to most cruel deaths, hewn in pieces, or pulled limb from limb, and left unburied; and our dead bodies mangled by a barbarous inhumanity, as wood cleavers make the shivers fly hither and thither. This is the perilous case of me, and my partisans, *Non una et simplici morte contenti sunt.*

Ver. 8. **But mine eyes are unto thee]** Afflictions to the saints are *tanquam scalae et alae*, to mount them to God.

Leave not my soul destitute] *Ne exinantias,* make not bare my soul, viz. of thy protection.

Ver. 9. **Keep me from the snare, &c.]** See #Ps 145:5.

Ver. 10. **Let the wicked fall]** *Metaphora a piscibus,* saith Tremellius, as fishes in casting nets, #Isa 19:8.

Whilst that I withal escape] The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead, #Pr 9:8. It appeareth at length that simple honesty is the best policy, and wicked policy the greatest simplicity, and most self-destructive.

When he was in the cave] *sc.* Of Engedi, #1Sa 24:1 *Loquitur in spelunca, sed prophetat in Christo,* saith Hilary.

Chapter 142

Ver. 1. **I cried unto the Lord with my voice]** *sc.* Of my heart, and more with my mind than mouth; for if he had been heard, he had been taken up by the enemy. Thus Moses cried, but uttered nothing, #Ex 14:15, *Egit vocis silentio, ut corde clamaret* (Aug.). Thus Christ cried, #Heb 5:7.

Ver. 2. **I poured out my complaint]** Heb. my mussionation.

I showed before him] Plainly and plentifully, how my danger increased to a very crisis, as one expresseth it.

Ver. 3. **When my spirit was overwhelmed within me]** Or, covered over, with grief, as the Greek expoundeth it.

Then thou knewest my path] *sc.* That I neither fretted nor fainted; or, thou knewest how to make a way to escape, #1Co 10:13. The Lord knoweth how to deliver his, #2Pe 2:9.

Ver. 4. **I looked on my right hand]** Not a man would appear for me. *Αφιλον το δυστυχεσ,* misery is friendless for the most part. See #2Ti 4:16. *Nulla fides unquam miseros delegit amicos.*

Ver. 5. **I cried unto thee, O Lord]** I ran to thee, as my last refuge, in the fail of all outward comforts. #Zep 3:12, they are an "afflicted poor people"; and being so, "they trust in the name of the Lord."

Ver. 6. **For I am brought very low]** Exhausted and drawn dry; utterly wasted, and disabled to help myself any way, *Depauperatus sum* (Vat.).

Ver. 7. **Bring my soul out of prison]** *i.e.* Out of this distress, wherewith I am no less straitened than if in prison.

The righteous shall compass me about] Heb. shall crown me; that is, shall encircle me, as wondering at thy goodness in my deliverance; or they shall set the crown on mine head, as the saints do likewise upon Christ's head, {#So 3:11} to whom this psalm may be fitly applied all along, as above said.

Chapter 143

Ver. 1. **Hear my prayer, O Lord]** He prayeth once and again for audience; and would have God to hear him with both ears. Thus he prayed (saith the Greek title of this psalm) when his son Absalom was up in arms against him; and it may seem so, by the next words, *De fuga ab Absalom* (R. Obad. Gaon).

Ver. 2. **And enter not into judgment with thy servant]** This is *insignis sententia, siqua usquam in sacris literis extat* (saith Beza), an excellent sentence as any is in all the Bible, saying the same that St Paul doth, #Ro 3:24, that justification is by faith alone, and not by works. David would not be dealt with in strictness of justice. Lord, go not to law with me, so some render it; go not into the judgment hall, so the Chaldee. All St Paul's care was, that when he was sought for by God's justice, he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, &c., #Php 3:9. The best lamb should be slaughtered, except the ram had been sacrificed, that Isaac might be saved. Woe to the life of man, saith an ancient, though never so commendable, if it should have judgment without mercy; if there be not an *επιεικεια* to moderate that *ακριβοδικαιον*, the severity of utmost right. We read of a certain Dutch divine, who being about to die, was full of fears and doubts. And when some said to him, You have been so active and faithful, why should you fear? Oh, said he, the judgment of man and the judgment of God are different. *Sordet in conspectu Iudicis, &c.*

Ver. 3. **For the enemy hath persecuted my soul]** *Quasi rabie ferali percitus*, he hath raged unreasonably. The utmost of a danger is to be related before the Lord in prayer, and to be acknowledged after we are delivered out of it, by way of thankfulness.

Ver. 4. **Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed]** God's dearest children have their passions; against that stoic apathy. A sheep bitten

by a dog is no less sensible of the pain thereof than a swine is; though he make not such an outcry.

Ver. 5. **I remember the days of old]** Wherein I was delivered from the lion and the bear; yea, from the hand of all mine enemies, and from the hand of Saul, **#Ps 18:1**, title. More than this, *Saecula antiquitus praeterita recolo*, I run over and ruminare all the ancient monuments of thy mercy to the patriarchs and others; since all that is written was "written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope," **#Ro 15:4**. See **#Ps 77:4,6**.

Ver. 6. **I stretch forth my hands unto thee]** As a poor beggar for an alms. Beggary here is not the easiest and poorest trade, but the hardest and richest of all other.

My soul thirsteth after thee] And is therefore a fit subject for thy Spirit of grace and comfort to be poured upon, **#Isa 44:3 55:1**.

Ver. 7. **Hear me speedily]** A very pathetic prayer uttered in many words to like purpose; as the manner is, in extreme danger.

My spirit faileth] I am ready to sink and to swoon. This David knew; God hath a great care that the spirit fail not before him, and the souls which he hath made, **#Isa 57:16**. When Bezoard stone is beaten we see that none of it be lost; not so when ordinary spices: so here, for ordinary spirits God cares not much what becometh of them, as he doth of the choice spirits of his people.

Ver. 8. **Cause me to hear...in the morning]** *Mane, id est mature*, as soon as may be, or (at least) as is meet, make me to hear of joy and gladness, speak comfort to my conscience, and help to my afflicted condition.

Ver. 9. **Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies]** Deliverance from enemies is a fruit of our friendship with God.

Ver. 10. **Teach me to do thy will]** *Orat nunc pro salute animae, ut ante pro corporis*, saith Kimchi. Now he prayeth for his soul's health; and would be as well delivered from his corruptions within as from his enemies without. Lord, save me from that naughty man myself, said an ancient.

Thy spirit is good] The fruit of it is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, **#Eph 5:9**, and it is the Spirit only that

quickeneth, **#Joh 6:63**, by purging out the dross that is in us, **#1Pe 1:22**, setting us to work, **#Eze 36:27**, helping our infirmities, **#Ro 8:26**; stirring us up to holy duties, partly by immediate motions, and partly by the ministry of the word made effectual, **#1Pet 1:2 2Th 2:13**. And, lastly, sanctifying the offering up both of ourselves and of our services to God, as the altar sanctifieth the gift, **#Ro 15:16**. Cyril gathereth from this text, that the good Spirit is God, because none is good but God.

Into the land of uprightness] Or, on even ground, as **#Isa 26:7,10 Ps 26:12**, or into the right land, *i.e.* heaven, *Per viam planam et aequam*.

Ver. 11. **Quicken me, O Lord]** Who am no better than a living carcass, a walking sepulchre of myself.

Bring my soul out of trouble] I can bring it in, but thou only canst bring it out.

Ver. 12. **Cut off mine enemies]** Because not so much mine as thine; and those also implacable and irrecoverable. Elsewhere he saith, Slay them not, lest my people forget. *{See Trapp on "Ps 59:11"}*

For I am thy servant] See **#Ps 116:16**, *{See Trapp on "Ps 116:16"}*

A Psalm of David] The Greek addeth, against Goliath; and the Chaldee, for the hurtful sword, **#Ps 144:10**, hath Goliath's sword.

Chapter 144

Ver. 1. **Blessed be the Lord my strength]** See **#Ps 18:1**, and observe how this psalm suiteth with that.

Which teacheth my hands] Used to the hook and harp, and not to the sword and spear; but God hath apted and abled them to feats of arms, and warlike exploits. It is God that giveth skill and success, saith Solomon, **#Pr 8**, wisdom and ability, saith Daniel, **#Da 2:19-23** And as in the spiritual warfare, so here, our weapons are mighty through God, **#2Co 10:4**, who promiseth that no weapon formed against his people shall prosper, **#Isa 54:17**.

Ver. 2. **My goodness and my fortress]** See #Ps 18:1, with the notes, His *epithetis et elogiis eblanditur Deum*, saith an interpreter (Genebr.).

Who subdueth my people under me] This is the work of God, and not of kingcraft, to make men good subjects who are naturally discontented at the present government, be it never so good, and apt to rebel, *αι το παρον βαρυ* (Thucyd.).

Ver. 3. **Lord, what is man?]** What am I, that thou shouldest do all this for me? or, what is the strongest man alive, when such a giant as Goliath so suddenly and easily is slain by me?

That thou makest account of him?] *Tantus tantillos et tales*, saith a Father.

Ver. 4. **Man is like to vanity]** See #Ps 39:6 62:9. *Adam Abelo compar est*, Adam is Abel's mate.

His days are as a shadow] Which is a mere privation, and hath no subsistence at all.

Ver. 5. **Bow thy heavens, O Lord]** Come to my help suddenly and seasonably, as it were out of an engine, *εκ της μηχανης*.

Touch the mountains] These high and haughty enemies of mine, do thou but lightly touch them, and it shall suffice; they shall soon burn, and be turned into smoke, as the mountains that are thunder struck.

Ver. 6. **Cast forth lightning, and scatter them]** All this was done according to David's desire, #Ps 18:13,14. God sometimes answereth his suitors *ad cardinem desiderii*; and saith unto them, Be it unto you even as ye will. This is a wonderful condescension.

Ver. 7. **Send thine hand from above]** Heb. hands, both hands, all thy whole power; for I need it.

Ver. 8. **Whose mouth speaketh vanity]** They keep touch no further than will serve their own turns.

And their right hand] No, though they give their hands upon it that they will keep promise.

*Multis annis iam transactis,
Nulla fides est in pactis.*

Ver. 9. **I will sing a new song]** Upon the receipt of any new mercy, like as in a lottery, at every new prize drawn the trumpet soundeth.

Ver. 10. **It is he that giveth salvation (or victory) unto kings]** Ferdinand, king of Arragon, sending his son against the Florentines, thus bespake him: *Victoria mihi crede, non hominum disciplinis aut industria comparatur; sed Dei O.M. benignitate et arbitrio, Deum igitur imprimis cole, in eum confide, a quo tum victorias omnes tum optima quaeque provenire dubio procul est, &c.*: Believe me, son, victories are not gotten by art or industry, but given of God (Val. Max. Christian., p. 516).

Who delivereth David his servant] All kings are God's servants for the common good of mankind, saith Plutarch, but David by a specialty (Plut. προς ηγεμονα παιδευτον).

From the hurtful sword] Of Goliath, saith the Chaldee, and of all his other enemies; for (as it was said of Queen Elizabeth) he swam to the crown through a sea of sorrows, and might rather marvel that he was, than muse that he should not be, were it not that God's holy hand had protected him beyond expectation.

Ver. 11. **Rid me, and deliver me]** He repeateth his former petition, **#Ps 144:7,8**, for an utter riddance of those ill members that stood in the way of Israel's welfare, and broke off David's new song or psalmody, **#Ps 144:9**.

Ver. 12. **That our sons may be as plants, &c.]** As young plants, fair and flourishing.

That our daughters may be as corner stones, &c.] Tall and trim, comely of person and costly arrayed, resembling the polished pillars at palace gates. Tremellius rendereth the last words of this verse, *sint structura templi*, may be the building of the temple, that is, may be such living stones as may be used to the building and polishing of God's Church, that we may altogether grow up to a holy temple in the Lord, **#Eph 2:21 4:12,13**. For, indeed, what can better preserve Jacob from confusion, or his face from waxing pale, than to see his children, the work of God's hands, framed and fitted for God's building. This maketh religious parents to sanctify God's name (as here), even to sanctify the Holy One, and with singular encouragement, from the God of Israel, **#Isa 29:22,23**.

Ver. 13. **That our garners]** Heb. our corners, *i.e.* that every corner of our houses may be filled with pleasant and precious riches.

That our sheep] *Foetosae multiparae, mille duplicantes, myriadificantes.*

Ver. 14. **Nor going out]** viz. To encounter the enemy, or to be led into captivity.

No complaining] No outcries but harvest homes.

Ver. 15. **Happy is that people]** That hath such a confluence of outward comforts. In Hezekiah's days only it was so, say the Rabbis, peace, plenty, and posterity. The Syriac rendereth it questionwise: Is not the people happy that is in such a case? No, not except they have God to boot; as, if they have, they are happy howsoever, #De 33:29: *ut vita carnis anima est, ita beatitudo hominis Deus,* saith Austin.

David's Psalm of praise] Heb. David's praise or hymn, well worthy, saith learned Beza, to be made use of by all men for a rule and pattern of praising God. *Perfectum illius rationalis cultus exemplum* (Beza). It is one of those psalms that are artificially made up after the order of the alphabet, and so highly prized by the Rabbis, that they doubt not to promise heaven to him who shall thrice every day pray over this psalm, *corde, ore, et opere* (Kimchi. R. Arama).

Chapter 145

Ver. 1. **I will extol thee, my God, O king]** *i.e.* O Christ, the King of kings, whose vassal I profess myself, as did afterwards also those three most Christian emperors, Constantine, Valentinian, and Theodosius.

Ver. 2. **Every day will I bless thee]** No day shall pass me without a morning and evening sacrifice; besides, what is more, upon all emergent occasions. The Jews have above a hundred benedictions which they are bound to say over every day; and one among the rest, for the benefit of evacuation. If I were a nightingale, saith Epictetus, a heathen (In Encher.), I would do as a nightingale; but since I am a man, what shall I do? I will praise my Maker, and never cease to do it: I exhort also all men to do the like.

Ver. 3. **Great is the Lord]** See his greatness set forth by Moses, #De 10:17.

And greatly to be praised] viz. According to his excellent greatness, #Ps 150:2, which yet cannot be.

And his greatness is unsearchable] *Tantum recedit quantum capitur;* saith Nazianzen. He is above all name, all notion, all parallel in nature: we can see but his back parts, and live; we need see no more that we may live.

Ver. 4. **One generation shall praise thy works to another]** God's praises are many, and man's life short, and one generation succeedeth another: let them relate God's wonderful works one to another, and so perpetuate his praises to all posterity.

Ver. 5. **I will speak of the glorious honour]** Or, I will meditate of the glory of the honour of thy magnificence. I will discourse of those high and honourable conceptions that I have of thee, which yet words (how wide soever) are too weak to utter, such is thy transcendent excellence and surpassing glory.

And of thy wondrous works] Wherein thou art in some sort to be seen, as the beams of the sun are made visible by reflection; and letters, being refracted and broken, in a pair of spectacles, are made legible to a dim eye.

Ver. 6. **And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts]** Those that will not talk of thy bounty shall be made to say, Oh the severity of God!

Ver. 7. **They shall abundantly utter]** *Eructabunt:* as a fountain casteth out waters plentifully and constantly, so shall those that are like minded to me abundantly and artificially (even with songs) set forth thy goodness and faithfulness; saying, and singing,

Ver. 8. **The Lord is gracious, &c.]** See #Ps 86:5,15 103:8.

Slow to anger, and of great mercy] *De quo pene possit ambigi sit ne ad irascendum tardior, an ad parcendum promptior* (Bcza).

Ver. 9. **The Lord is good to all]** And of this he hath not left myself without witness, #Ac 14:17.

And his tender mercies are over all his works] Holding the whole creation together, which else (by reason of the curse for man's sin, hurling confusion over the world) would long since have been shattered and dissipated.

Ver. 10. **All thy works shall praise thee]** *i.e.* Minister matter of thy praise.

And thy saints shall bless thee] viz. Upon that account. If it were not for a few saints on earth God should lose his glory here, in great part.

Ver. 11. **They shall speak of the glory]** That kingdom of the saints of the Most High, which is far beyond the grandeur and splendour of all the four great monarchies, as is to be seen **#Da 7:27**.

Ver. 12. **To make known to the sons of men]** This is the end why the Church is collected and the gospel preached. God aimeth at his own glory in all, as well he may, since he hath none higher than himself to whom to have respect.

Ver. 13. **Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom]** It cannot be overturned (that is comfortable to all Christ's subjects), as other flourishing kingdoms are, which have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin. Alexander's kingdom continued but twelve years only, and fell with him; so did Tamerlane's greatness.

Ver. 14. **The Lord upholdeth all that fall]** None of his subjects can fall below his helping hand, his sweet support.

And raiseth up all those that are bowed down] Either with the burden of sin or misery in any kind. Alphonsus, king of Arragon, is famous for helping with his own hand one of his subjects out of a ditch. Of Queen Elizabeth it is recorded, to her eternal praise, that she hated (no less than did Mithridates) such as sought to crush virtue forsaken of fortune (Camden). Christ bruise not the broken reed, but upholdeth it; he quencheth not the smoking wick, but cherisheth it.

Ver. 15. **The eyes of all wait upon thee]** Heb. look up with hope to this great housekeeper of the world. The elephant is said to turn up the first sprig towards heaven when he comes to feed. The young ravens cry to God for food, **#Ps 147:9**; at least by implication.

Their meat] Suitable to their various appetites.

Ver. 16. **Thou openest thy hand]** With kingly munificence.

And satisfiest the desire] Or, of thy good pleasure thou satiatest.

Ver. 17. **The Lord is righteous in all his ways]** This we must hold for an undoubted truth, though we see not always the reason of his proceedings. Sinful men dare to reprehend oft times what they do not comprehend.

Ver. 18. **The Lord is nigh unto all those, &c.]** He is ever at hand, to hear and help his faithful suitors and suppliants; these have the royalty of his ear, free access, sure success.

To all that call upon him in truth] That draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water, **#Heb 10:22.**

Ver. 19. **He will fulfil the desire, &c.]** Or, the will, the pleasure, *Beneplacitum*. Hence that bold request of Luther, *Fiat voluntas mea*, let my will be done. But then he addeth, *Mea, Domine, quia tua*, My will, because thine, and no otherwise. They that do the will of God shall have their own will of God. See **#1Jo 3:22**. The king can deny you nothing.

Ver. 20. **The Lord preserveth all them that love him]** See **#Ps 91:14-16**. {See Trapp on "Ps 91:14"} {See Trapp on "Ps 91:15"} {See Trapp on "Ps 91:16"}

But all the wicked] That love not God, but their base lusts.

Ver. 21. **My mouth shall speak, &c.]** This he had oft before promised; but engageth again, that he may not start back.

And let all flesh] But especially men, good men; for high words beseem not a fool. But it well becometh the saints to be thankful, *nec servire Deo solum sedet adulari*, as Tertullian speaks.

Chapter 146

Ver. 1. **Praise the Lord, O my soul]** See **#Ps 103:1**.

Ver. 2. **While I live will I praise the Lord]** George Carpenter, the Bavarian martyr, being desired by some godly brethren, that when he was burning in the fire he would give them some sign of his constance, answered, Let this be a sure sign unto you of my faith and perseverance in the truth, *quod usque dum os aperire, aut certe*

hiscere licebit, that so long as I am able to hold open my mouth, or to whisper, I will never cease to praise God, and to profess his truth. *Id quod et fecit*, saith mine author, that which also he did; and so did many other martyrs besides (Scultet. Annal. dec. 2, p. 110).

While I have any being] Either in this world or in the next; for then also, and much more, I shall praise God.

Ver. 3. **Put not your trust in princes]** But in God alone; this being a principal piece of his praise; it is a kind of setting the crown on his head. See #**Jud 9:15**. The word rendered princes signifieth liberal, bountiful ones, *ευεργεται*, so princes would be accounted; but there is no trusting to them without God, or against him.

Nor in the son of man] The arm of flesh. See #**Ps 118:8,9**.

In whom there is no help] For themselves, saith Aben Ezra; much less for others.

Ver. 4. **His breath goeth forth]** It is but in his nostrils at best; every moment ready to puff out; cease from him, therefore, Isa. ii. Man, say the Rabbis, is but a bladder full of air, which can stand on no ground; but, pricked with a pin, it shriveleth to nothing. Man, saith a Father, is nothing else but soul and soil, breath and body; a puff of wind the one, a pile of dust the other, no solidity in either (Naz.).

He returneth to his earth] Of which he was made, and to which he is condemned, #**Ge 3:19**, and upon which he hath too much set his affections, being *totus terreus*, entirely of earth; and so the sooner forfeiteth all. It was therefore good counsel that one once gave to a great man, who had showed him his stately house and pleasant gardens: You had need make sure of heaven, my lord, or else, when you die, you will be a very great loser. But this few princes think of; which made the Spanish friar say, There were but few princes in hell; for what reason? there were but few in all.

In that day his thoughts perish] His golden thoughts, his shining white thoughts, *irritae diffluunt*, come to just nothing. Princes may haply have in their heads whole commonwealths, and the affairs of many kingdoms; as Alexander had, and Tamerlane, who died of an ague in the midst of his great preparations for the conquest of the

Greek empire. Or, his thoughts (*ad alios benefaciendos*, as Aben Ezra expoundeth it) of doing thee and others good; these fall to the ground with him. Great men's words are like dead men's shoes, saith one; he may go barefoot that waiteth for them. Wherefore

Ver. 5. **Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help]** Since he is the King immortal, all powerful, as **#Ps 146:6**, and no less willing, since he is a God in covenant.

Whose hope is in the Lord his God] This is a well grounded hope indeed, and such as will not drag after a man. The leper believed Christ's power, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Martha believed his will to raise her dead brother, but doubted of his power; since he had now been four days in the grave. He that is confident of both is upon sure ground, and happy indeed.

Ver. 6. **Which made heaven, and earth, &c.]** And, therefore, can help, doubtless.

Which keepeth truth for ever] And, therefore, will; since he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth, **#Ps 89:33-37** And this "for ever" is opposed to that mortality and mutability of earthly princes, **#Ps 146:4**.

Ver. 7. **Which executeth judgment]** *Vindicat violatos*. This should draw custom and company about him; as all that were in distress fled to David, and he became their captain.

Which giveth food to the hungry] As he did to Elijah, by the ravens; to Hunniades, by his shepherd, with whom he supped on coarse fare, and found it sweet; to the town of Rochel, by a shoal of fish extraordinarily cast up into it by the tide, when they were straitly besieged and distressed.

The Lord looseth the prisoners] As he did Peter, **#Ac 12:7-11**, and still he knoweth how to deliver his, saith the same Peter, who could speak it by good experience, **#2Pe 2:9**.

Ver. 8. **The Lord openeth the eyes]** Both of body and mind, as in the Gospel. As for those miracles, which Tacitus and Suetonius attribute to Vespasian (as that he made a blind man see with spittle, healed another that was lame, and another that had a dry hand, by treading upon it), they are the miracles of Christ, which those

profane authors would cast upon their emperor. Tacitus writeth that the blind man said to Vespasian that the god Serapis sent him to him. Now, the Paynims did think that the Christians did worship Serapis, as appeareth by the Epistle of Adrian, the emperor, to Severianus, the consul, that in the town of Alexandria they that worshipped Serapis were Christians, &c.

The Lord raiseth, &c.] As he did that daughter of Abraham in the Gospel, whom Satan had bound and bowed down twelve years, #Lu 13:16, and as he doth still, #Isa 61:1.

The Lord loveth the righteous] And this is more than all the rest. God dispenseth outward blessings, but not always in love.

Ver. 9. **The Lord preserveth]** These all are his clients, because neglected by the world, as yielding no profit.

He turneth upside down] As one doth a dish that is washed and wiped, #2Ki 21:13.

Ver. 10. **The Lord shall reign for ever]** *Non sibi, sed in salutem nostram,* for our sakes he reigneth, that he may execute judgment, give food, loose prisoners, open eyes, &c.

Supplices idem, timidosque terra

Erigit vultus, et honore donat.

Therefore trust in him, and him alone, and that way praise him

Chapter 147

Ver. 1. **It is good to sing praises]** For, 1. Hereby we glorify God, #Ps 50:23, and so do him right; for he is the proper object of praises, worthy only to be praised, #Ps 18:3 2. Hereby we do good to ourselves, secure former favours, which else we forfeit, and procure further blessings, which else we forestall. Hereby also we make things good in themselves to become good to us.

For it is pleasant] A very foretaste of eternal life; hence so many of David's psalms are eucharistical.

And praise is comely] No fairer sight than to see God's altar covered with the calves of our lips, and ourselves in our priestly robes, giving thanks to his name, #**Heb 13:15**, professing our no-deserts, and whole dependence upon him. As on the contrary, an unthankful man is an ugly, ill-favoured spectacle.

Ver. 2. **The Lord doth build up Jerusalem]** He is the only architect of his Church. He layeth the foundation of it in election (saith a good expositor), and buildeth it progressively by faith and sanctification; and finisheth his work of grace and his people's happiness in glorification.

He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel] He will surely bring home his banished; yea, because they called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after, therefore I will restore health unto thee, &c., #**Jer 30:17**. *Qui nil sperare potest, desperet nihil.*

Ver. 3. **He healeth the broken in heart]** Pouring the oil of his grace into none but those broken vessels.

And bindeth up their wounds] As a good shepherd, #**Zec 11:4**, that good Samaritan, #**Lu 10:34**, and as a good surgeon dealeth by his patient. But let no man ever think that God will lap up his sores before they be searched, or scarf his bones before they be set.

Ver. 4. **He telleth the number of the stars]** Which to man is impossible, as Aristotle maintaineth against those astronomers, that tell us they are a thousand and some hundreds. But Abraham was a great astronomer; yet he could never do it, #**Ge 15:5**, and the wiser sort of astrologers have rightly distinguished the stars into numerable and innumerable as to men.

He calleth them all by their names] As knowing exactly their nature; and authoritatively commanding every of them to do his pleasure. How much more can God call together his outcasts, and cause them to return; especially since he calleth those things that are not as if they were, #**Ro 4:17**

Ver. 5. **His understanding is infinite]** Heb. of his understanding there is no number; for he knows not only the kinds and sorts of things, but even the particulars, though they exceed all number. *Sic spectat universos quasi singulos; sic singulos, quasi solos.* That

philosopher did not say nothing, who, being in danger of shipwreck in a light starry night, said, Surely I shall not perish, there are so many eyes of providence over me.

Ver. 6. **The Lord lifteth up the meek**] This truth was well known to the very heathens, who have said the same thing; as Herodotus in Polymnia, Euripides in Hara, and Aesop being asked by Chilo (one of the seven wise men of Greece), what God was doing? answered, He is humbling the haughty, and exalting the lowly, τα μεν υψηλα ταπεινουν; τα δε ταπεινα υψουν..

Ver. 7. **Sing unto the Lord**] Heb. answer, that is, sing by turns, as #Ho 2:15 De 31:21. Or, answer God's goodness by thankfulness and obedience.

Ver. 8. **Who covereth the heaven with clouds**] As #1Ki 18:45, and still, as there is need. It is not by nature, or hap hazard, as men are apt to dream, and are therefore so often told this truth, and admonished, that the second causes do but serve the Divine providence, in these common occurrents.

Who prepareth rain for the earth] Rain (which is nothing else but the flux of a moist cloud, out of the middle region of the air), as it cometh by a decree of God, #Job 28:26, so it is wholly at his disposing when and where it shall fall, even to a drop, #Am 4:7.

Ver. 9. **He giveth to the beast his food**] See #Job 39:3 Ps 104:27,28. {See Trapp on "Job 39:3"} {See Trapp on "Ps 104:27"} {See Trapp on "Ps 104:28"}

And to the young ravens which cry] By sending flies into their mouths as they cry, say the Rabbis; or by a certain moist air, as Euthymius; or by small worms put into their mouths, *magno providentiae symbolo*, though they be such contemptible creatures, and very carnivorous, by reason of the vehemence of natural heat in them, so that a little will not satisfy them, yet God feedeth them. {See Trapp on "Job 39:3"}

Ver. 10. **He delighteth not in the strength of the horse**] Plutarch in Numa saith the same, Θεος ουκ εστι φιλιππος, God careth not for horses, or any such helps as wherein carnal people confide, as if they had no need of God. Origen observeth that in the conquest of Canaan, the enemies had horses and chariots, but Israel had none. And it is expressly cautioned that the king of Israel "shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt,

to the end that he should multiply horses," #De 17:16, lest they should occasion him or his people to trade with that idolatrous people, #1Ki 10:26,28, or to trust in the number and strength of that warlike creature, a horse, #Pr 21:31.

He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man] How swift soever, as Achilles, ποδαζ ωκυς, or Asahel, as light of foot as a wild roe, #2Sa 2:18. None sooner perish in the waters, nor oftener, than those that are most skilled in swimming and diving, because they do too much trust to their skill; so it is here; for there is no outrunning of Divine vengeance. *Nemo scelus gerit in pectore qui non idem Nemesin in tergo;* your sin will find you out. Here "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," #Ec 9:11.

Ver. 11. **The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him]** That put themselves into the hands of justice, in hope of mercy. These are his Hephzibahs, his darlings in whom he taketh singular delight and complacency.

*Mentemque habere quis bonam;
Et esse corculis datum est.*

Ver. 12. **Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem]** Whatever the world doth, let not the Church defraud God of his due praises; "though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend," #Ho 4:15. God's blessings go round about graceless and ungrateful people; and they are no more moved than the earth that hath the circumference carried about it, and itself standeth still; but the saints must be of another alloy, #Col 3:15, and there is good reason for it.

Ver. 13. **For he hath strengthened the bars, &c.]** So that the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. God hath promised to break in pieces those gates of brass, and cut in sunder those bars of iron (as Samson did the gates of Gaza), #Isa 45:2, to perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle his saints, #1Pe 5:10, to be a wall of fire round about them, &c.

He hath blessed thy children within thee] Making them to be many, #Isa 54:1, and all taught of God, #Ps 147:13, children that will not lie, #Isa 63:8.

Ver. 14. **He maketh peace in thy borders]** Peace, peace, #Isa 26:3, peace of country and of conscience.

And filleth thee with the finest of the wheat] Heb. with the fat of wheat, called fat of kidneys of wheat, **#De 32:14**. See **#Ps 81:16**. Judaea was once called and counted *Sumen totius terrae*, breeding sow of the whole earth, not so much for the nature of the country, as for the blessing of God thereupon; for now it is nothing so fruitful. But the saints have still the bread of angels, a feast "of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," **#Isa 25:6**.

Ver. 15. **He sendeth forth his commandment, &c.]** He speaketh the word, and it is done immediately; he can make a nation to conceive and bring forth all at once, **#Isa 66:7,8**. Ahasuerus had his posts to carry abroad his edict; God needeth none such; all creatures are at his beck and check.

Ver. 16. **He giveth snow like wool]** For whiteness, lightness, plenty, softness, warmth; for snow, though it be very cold, yet by keeping in the vapours and exhalations of the earth, it causeth an inward warmth to it, and so maketh it very fruitful, say philosophers, *Vellera nivis* (Virg. Georg.). In which respects the Rabbis say that one day of snow doth more good than five of rain.

He scattereth the hoar frost like ashes] When blown about by the wind. It heateth also and drieth (as ashes) the cold and moist earth, nippeth the buds of trees, &c. *Unde pruina dicitur a perurenda*, saith Sextus Pompeius, *Cinis monet ignem subesse quem foveat*.

Ver. 17. **He casteth forth his ice like morsels]** Or, shivers of bread. It is a witty saying of one from this text: The ice is bread, the rain is drink, the snow is wool, the frost a fire to the earth, causing it inwardly to glow with heat; teaching us what to do for God's poor.

Who can stand before his cold] Who can endure it, when and where it is extreme especially; as in Russia, Friezeland, &c.

Ver. 18. **He sendeth out his word, and melteth them]** See **#Ps 147:15**. Of the force of God's word of command are given all the former instances, he can as easily melt the hardest heart by his Word, made effectual to such a purpose by his Holy Spirit. If that wind do but blow, the waters of penitent tears will soon flow, as in Josiah, **#2Ch 34:27**. See **#Zec 12:10**.

Ver. 19. **He showeth his word unto Jacob]** The Jews were God's library keepers; and unto them (as a special favour) were committed

those lively and life giving oracles, #Ro 3:2; there is a "chiefly" set upon it; like as #Lu 12:48, to know the Master's will is the great talent of all other; there is a "much" in that.

His statutes and his judgments unto Israel] Even right judgments, true laws, good statutes and commandments, #Ne 9:13 Ro 9:4,5. Prosper's conceit was that Judaei were so called because they received *ius Dei*, the law of God.

Ver. 20. **He hath not dealt so with any nation]** He had not then; but now, blessed be God, he hath dealt so with many nations, in these last happy days of reformation especially; wherein the knowledge of God's holy Word covereth the earth, as the waters cover the sea; and of England it may be said, as once of the Rhodes, *semper in Sole, sita est Rhodos*, that it hath the sun ever shining upon it. This we should prize as a precious treasure, and praise the Lord for it, *corde, ore, opere*. by heart, mouth and work.

And as for his judgments, they have not known them] And therefore lie in deadly darkness; wherein, though they wander woefully, yet not so wide as to miss of hell.

Chapter 148

Ver. 1. **Praise the Lord]** And again, "Praise ye the Lord"; and so often, in this the rest of the hallelujatical psalms. In praising God the saints are unsatisfiable, and would be infinite (as his perfections are infinite), so that they make a circle (as one phraseth it), the beginning, middle, and end whereof is hallelujah.

From the heavens: praise him in the heights] Or, high places. As God in framing the world began above and wrought downward, so doth the psalmist in this his exhortation to all creatures to praise the Lord.

Ver. 2. **Praise ye him, all his angels]** Whose proper office it is to adore and praise God, #Job 38:7 Isa 6:3 Heb 1:6, which also they do constantly and completely; as those that both perfectly know him and love him. Jacob saw them, 1. Ascending, to contemplate and praise the Lord, and minister to him, #Lu 2:13 Da 7:10 Mt 18:10 Ps 103:20:2. Descending, to execute God's will upon men, for mercy to some, and for judgment to others; which tendeth much to his praise.

And David, by calling upon these heavenly courtiers, provoketh and pricketh on himself to praise God.

Praise ye him, all his hosts] *i.e.* His creatures (those above especially, which are as his cavalry), called his hosts for their,

1. Number 2. Order; 3. Obedience.

Ver. 3. **Praise ye him, sun and moon]** These do, after a sort, declare the glory of God, #Ps 19:1,2 Hab 3:3; not with mind and affection, as if they were understanding creatures (as Plato held, In Epimenide), but by their light influences, admirable motions, and obedience, whereby *quasi mutis vocibus*, by a dumb kind of eloquence, saith Nazianzen, they give praise to God, and bid check to us for our dulness and disorders.

Praise him, all ye stars of light] A light, then, they have of their own (besides what they borrow of the sun), which they withhold at God's appointment, #Isa 13:10, and influences they have which cannot be restrained or resisted, #Job 38:31,32.

Ver. 4. **Praise him, ye heavens of heavens]** Whereby he meaneth not the lowest heavens, the air whereon we breathe, and wherein birds fly, clouds swim, &c., as some would have it; but the highest heaven, called by St Paul the third heaven, the habitation of the crowned saints and glorious angels; called by philosophers *coelum Empyreum*, and here by the psalmist the heavens of heavens, as King of kings, Song of songs, &c., by an excellence. See #De 10:14.

And ye waters that be above the heavens] *i.e.* Above the air, and that do distinguish between the air and the sky, as the *Primum Mobile* doth between the sky and the highest heavens, *Superius suspensae aquarum fornices*.

Ver. 5. **For he commanded, and they were created]** His fiat only made all; this is celebrated by that heavenly choir, #Re 4:11.

Ver. 6. **He hath also stablished them for ever]** viz. The course and appointed motions of the heavens, which he hath settled by a covenant, and hath not falsified with them, #Jer 33:25; much less will he with his faithful people.

Ver. 7. **Praise the Lord from the earth]** The psalmist proceedeth to factor for God among the inferior creatures; beginning with the lowest in the waters beneath, as the dragons or great whales; and

then coming to rain and snow, &c., which are made out of the waters above.

Ye dragons, and all deeps] Of sea dragons, see Aelian. lib. 4, Animal. cap. 12: they live partly in the sea and partly on the land, as do crocodiles. These also yield matter of God's praise.

Ver 8. **Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours]** This latter is the matter of those former meteors which he purposely minglcth with those forementioned miracles of land and waters, the more to set forth the power of God, because these seem to have no settledness of subsistence, and yet in them he is made visible.

Stormy wind fuelling his word] The winds blow not at random, but by a Divine decree; and God hath ordered that whether north or south blow they shall blow good to his people, #So 4:16. He saith to all his creatures, as David did to his captains concerning Absalom, Handle them gently for my sake.

Ver. 9. **Mountains, and all hills]** These praise God by their form, hugeness, fruits, prospects, &c.

Fruitful trees] These, by the variety of their natures and fruits, do notably set forth the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Almighty; while they spend themselves and the principal part of their sap and moisture in bringing forth some pleasant berry, or the like, for the use of man, who is thereby engaged to bless God.

Ver. 10. **Beasts]** *i.e.* Wild beasts, that are fullest of life; and thence have their name in the Hebrew tongue.

And all cattle] Domestic and tame beasts, even to the elephant; which is said to turn up the first sprig towards heaven, in token of thankfulness, by a natural instinct, when he comes to feed.

Creeping things] Whether in earth or sea; all these are summoned in by the psalmist to pay their tribute of praise, and to do their homage to the Most High.

Ver. 11. **Kings of the earth]** These are doublybound to God (as Queen Elizabeth wrote to the French king); first, as they are men; and next, as they are so great men; but this is little considered. Tamerlane, having overcome Bajazet, asked him whether ever he

had given God thanks for making him so great an emperor? who confessed ingenuously he never thought of it.

Princes, and all judges of the earth] These are thrice called upon, because hardly persuaded to pay God his rent, as holding themselves too high to do him homage.

Ver. 12. **Both young men, and maidens]** Souls have no sexes; let the choice youths and the *compt lasses quae totae occupantur in sese ornandis*, saith Kimchi, who are much taken up in tricking and trimming themselves, leave that folly, and give glory to God.

Ver. 13. **Let them praise the name of the Lord]** Join in this harmony of hallelujah.

His glory is above] Being deeper than earth, higher than heaven.

Ver. 14. **He also exalteth the horn]** *i.e.* He graceth them singularly.

A people near unto him] And in that respect happy above all people on the earth, #De 4:7 33:29, because in covenant with him and near allied to him, as the word here importeth.

Chapter 149

Ver. 1. **Praise ye the Lord]** See #Ps 148:1.

Sing unto the Lord a new song] A New Testament song, of a new argument, and for new benefits by the coming of Christ, whereof this psalm is prophetic. Old things are past, all things are become new, #2Co 5:16; new commandments, new promises, new sacraments, new grace, new praises, new privileges.

In the congregation of saints] His beneficiaries, whose joint praises must come before him as the sound of many waters; this is heaven upon earth.

Ver. 2. **Let Israel rejoice in him that made him]** And new made him, #Eph 2:10, and thereby highly advanced him, as #1Sa 12:6. The Hebrew hath it, In his makers, to show the Trinity of persons concurring in the work both of creation and regeneration. So #Ge 1:26 Job 35:10 Isa 54:5 Ec 12:1. See #Ps 100:3.

Be joyful in their King] *i.e.* In Christ, whose kingdom is such as should swallow up all discontents, and make us everlastingly merry, **#Mic 4:9**. If Seneca could say to his friend, Polybius, *Fas non est, salvo Caesare, de fortuna tua queri, Hoc incolumi salvi tibi sunt tui, &c.*, It is not fit for thee to complain of thine hard fortune so long as Caesar is alive, and well; how much more may it be said so to Christians, so long as Christ is alive, and reigns!

Ver. 3. **Let them praise his name in the dance]** Or, with the pipe, *tibiis et tympanis et omni musices organicae genere*, by all lawful means possible.

Ver. 4. **For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people]** **#Ps 35:27**, when they are under the cross especially, and thereby make meek. This the very heathen saw, and could say, *Spectant Dii magnos viros, cum calamitate aliqua colluctantes. Ecce spectaculum, ad quod respiciat operi suo intentus Deus*, saith Seneca of Cato, and other gallant Roman spirits (Lib. de Provid. c. 2). How much more may we say the like of God's looking with singular delight on Abraham (Jehovah-jireh, "the Lord seeth," **#Ge 22:14**, Job, Stephen, Laurence, and other faithful martyrs, suffering courageously for his truth, and sealing it with their blood!

He will beautify (or glorify) the meek with salvation] *i.e.* Not only deliver them, but dignify them in the eyes of all; **#Ps 91:15**, I will deliver him, and glorify him. Bradford and such we shall look upon, likely (saith a grave author, Mr Bolton), with thoughts of extraordinary love and sweetness in the next world through all eternity; as Bonner and such with execrable and everlasting detestation.

Ver. 5. **Let the saints be joyful in glory]** *i.e.* In their glorious estate by Christ, notwithstanding their present poverty. "Let the brother of low degree rejoice (or glory) in that he is exalted," **#Jas 1:9**.

Let them sing aloud upon their beds] How hard soever; as Philpot and his fellow sufferers did. when they roused in the straw. Jacob had never more sweet intercourse with God than when his head lay upon the hard stone, at Bethel. Some by "beds" here understand the temples and schools. Confer **#Isa 57:1,2** Others render it, *Ovabunt de cubilibus suis*, They shall sing aloud for their beds, that is, for their sweet and solid tranquillity.

Ver. 6. **Let the high praises (or the exaltations) of God be in their mouth]** Heb. in their throat. So Isa. lviil. 1, "Cry aloud"; Heb. cry in the throat, set up thy note.

— *Sic clames, ut Stentora vincas.*

And a two-edged sword in their hand] Such an invincible power shall the saints have, as whereby they shall subdue all their enemies, corporal and spiritual. See #**Heb 13:12 Re 1:16 19:15**. There was more than metal and form in Goliath's sword, delivered by the priest to David; whose arm was not so much strengthend by it as his faith: so is every good Christian's by that two-edged sword of the Spirit; he may well write upon it, as that renowned Talbot in the reign of Henry VI did upon his sword, in blunt and boisterous language, *Sum Talbotti* I am Talbot (this was engraven upon the one side of the blade, and upon the other) *pro vincere inimicos meos* For to conquer my enemies (Speed). See #**2Co 10:4,5**.

Ver. 7. **To execute vengeance upon the heathen]** viz. Upon a just calling, and not for private revenge; yea, that soldier can never answer it to God that strikes not more as a justicer than as an enemy, be his cause never so good. But that is the most noble vengeance that is executed upon men's lusts; while they thrust the sword of the Spirit into the throats of them, and let out their life blood. That is a good sense that some give of these words, viz. that the saints, when they go forth to battle, should go with holy songs in their mouths, as well as with swords in their hands. See #**Jud 7:19,20, &c.; #2Ch 20:21, &c.**; the *victoria Halleluiatica* was got on this manner here in Britain, under the conduct of Germanus, against a mighty army of Pelagian Picts and Saxons. Ussier. de Brit. Eccles. Primord. This was the course and custom of the Angrognians in Piedmont against their Popish persecutors; and the like we read of the other French Protestants at the siege of Montaubon; that I mention not those gallant spirits at Edgehill battle with their reboated, Now for the fruit of prayer; together with the many psalms sung by that religious army in their several stations, whereof I have been an ear-witness.

Ver. 8. **To bind their kings with chains]** Restraining their vices, and bringing them to the obedience of faith. See #**Isa 45:14**. This is doubtless a desirable servitude, or rather freedom; this is not as

chains and fetters, but as girdles and garters, to gird up their loins, and to expedite their course the better.

Ver. 9. **To execute upon them the judgment written**] The Jews thought they might kill any idolaters; and now to kill a Christian is counted by them a meritorious work. The wicked are apt to exceed their commission, #Zec 1:15. So may the saints. David was too cruel to the Ammonites, #2Sa 12:31, Theodosius to the Thessalonians. Here, therefore, they are limited to the word "written."

This honour have all his saints] As having obtained like precious faith, #2Pe 1:1.

Chapter 150

Ver. 1. **Praise ye the Lord**] See #Ps 148:1.

Praise God in his sanctuary] It is probable, saith Beza, that *hoc Psalmo mirifici ardoris plano*, by this psalm, which is so full of wonderful ardour, the holy singers of the sanctuary did mutually stir up one another to praise the Lord. It hath been noted before, that here we have in six verses twelve hallelujahs. Some by "sanctuary" understand heaven; others, the hearts of believers.

Praise him in the firmament of his power] Or, for the firmament wherein appeareth his power, #Ps 21:1. Or, for the Church, and the firmament of faith.

Ver. 2. **Praise him for his mighty acts**] Those wonderful effects of his creative and providential omnipotence.

Praise him according to his excellent greatness] Or, Greatness of greatness; which yet can never be done, but must be endeavoured. Propound the highest pitch and best patterns.

Ver. 3. **Praise him with the sound of the trumpet**] With all your might and members, with utmost joy and jollity in the Lord. Lord, I am a musical instrument, saith Nazianzen, for thee to touch, that I may sound forth thy glory and praise (Orat. de Basilio).

Ver. 4. **Praise him with the timbrel and dance**] Or, pipe. But these are ancient things (as it is said in another case, #1Ch 4:22), and now out of date. When the use of these musical instruments crept into the

Christian Churches (which was not till lately) great abuses crept in with it; the preaching of the word was changed into songs and anthems, little understood by those that sang them, and that grave and simple psalmody or singing of psalms (so much used of old and by this blessed Reformation restored to the Church) was jostled out, or rather turned in *turpissimum lenocinium* (as one justly complaineth), such as Nebuchadnezzar made before his golden image, #Da 3:1 Justin Martyr *musices usum reprehendit qu. 107, ad Orthodox. Sic Theodoret Lib. de Sacrific.* When Aristotle was asked what he thought of music, he answered, *Iovem nec canere, nec citharam pulsars;* thinking it an unprofitable art to men, that was no more delightful to God. Plato told the musicians who pressed into his company, that philosophers could do well enough without them. There is (no doubt) a lawful use of music, and great power it hath to move men's minds one way or another, #2Ki 3:15 1Sa 16:23. But in God's public worship it is dangerous to do anything without his special warrant, though we intend never so well in so doing; as we see in Uzzah. Temple music was part of the Jewish pedagogy, of the Levitical worship; and therefore cannot be retained without injury to Christ.

Ver. 5. **Praise him upon the loud cymbals]** These were, saith Cicero (in Pison.), *instrumenta aerea, concava, tinnula, in matris Deorum sacris usurpata;* bells, some render it. The apostle speaketh of a tinkling cymbal; and a grave divine complaineth, that God cannot please some hearers unless he speak tinkling and tickling words (Dr Stough on #2Ti 1:13).

Ver. 6. **Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord]** Or, Let every breath praise the Lord. *Tam Dei meminisse opus est quam respirare,* saith Chrysostom. We have all as much reason to praise God as we have need to draw breath; our breath should be like the smoke of the tabernacle, or those pillars of incense therehence ascending. Tremellius rendereth it, *Tota ipsa anima laudet Iah,* Let the very whole soul of us praise the Lord.

Praise ye the Lord] The psalmist had made an end, and yet he hath not done. When we have said our utmost for God's praise we must rest unsatisfied, and begin anew.

Hoc primum repetas opus, hoc postremus omittas.

